

LGBTI+S' RESISTANCES AND SPATIAL PRODUCTIONS IN ISTANBUL:
A PATH TOWARDS THE RIGHT TO THE CITY

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A PATH TOWARDS THE RIGHT TO THE CITY**

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ABSTRACT

LGBTI+S' RESISTANCES AND SPATIAL PRODUCTIONS IN ISTANBUL: A PATH TOWARDS THE RIGHT TO THE CITY

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Building upon ethnographic material from the fieldwork conducted in Istanbul, this study examines LGBTI+s' path towards the right to the city by looking into their experiences, the problems they encounter, and the resistance practices they come up with to tackle these obstacles. The utter aim of the thesis is to trace LGBTI+s' efforts for the construction of an inclusive and non-discriminatory life for themselves and then for the society as a whole, by taking in-visibility as a lens while looking into their micro and macro resistances and by highlighting their potential to produce spaces for furthering their resistance practices.

Throughout the dissertation, while the spatial focus is put on the reproduction of everyday spaces, LGBTI+s' ways to resist towards what is oppressing them, the resistances they come up with to overcome all that has been cornering them into an urban "spacelessness" are portrayed. Most importantly, the ways in which they contribute to the production of space in Istanbul are discussed while addressing the meaning-making processes and collectively accumulated designations they attach to different types of urban spatialities. The focus is put on the cases of their spatial productions and appropriations that are born out of their micro and macro resistance

practices, which result into ‘cocoons’. It is furthermore argued that their pursuit for the right to the city is ingrained in their resistances and their spatial appropriations.

Keywords: LGBTI+, Resistance, Production of Space, Istanbul, the Right to the City

ÖZ

LGBTİ+'LARIN İSTANBUL'DAKİ DİRENİŞLERİ VE MEKANSAL ÜRETİMLERİ: KENT HAKKINA GİDEN BİR YOL

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İstanbul'da yürütülen saha çalışmasından elde edilen etnografik verilere dayanan bu çalışma, LGBTİ+'ların kent hakkına giden yolda yaşadıklarını, karşılaştıkları engelleri ve bu engelleri aşmak için ortaya koydukları direniş pratiklerini incelemektedir. Tezin nihai amacı, LGBTİ+'ların görünürlüklerinin-görünmezliklerinin bir mercekle gibi ele alınarak, onların yeni alanlar üretme potansiyellerine vurgu yaparken, mikro ve makro düzeyde gerçekleşen direnişlerine bakıp, LGBTİ+'ların önce kendileri, sonra da toplum için kapsayıcı ve ayrımcı olmayan bir yaşam inşa etme çabalarının izini sürmektir.

Bu tezin mekânsal odak noktası gündelik mekânların yeniden üretimi üzerine konumlanmış olup, tez boyunca LGBTİ+'ların kendilerini baskı altında tutmaya çalışanlara karşı direnme biçimleri, onları kentsel bir "mekânsızlık" içine sıkıştıran her şeyi aşmak için ortaya koydukları direnişleri anlatılmaktadır. En önemlisi, kentteki farklı mekânsallık tiplerine yükledikleri anlam oluşturma süreçleri ve kolektif olarak biriktirilen anlamlandırmalar ele alınırken, İstanbul'daki mekân üretimine nasıl katkıda buldukları tartışılmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, mikro ve makro direniş pratiklerinden doğan ve "kozalar"a dönüşen mekânsal üretimlerine ve sahiplenişlerine

vurgu yapılmaktadır. LGBTİ+'ların kent hakkı arayışlarının, kendi direnişlerine ve mekânsal sahiplenmelerine dayandığı ileri sürülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: LGBTİ+, Direniş, Mekân Üretimi, İstanbul, Kent Hakkı

*Dedicated to my grandmother, Sabriye Biçer, who supported me, taught me to resist,
and whose values I have kept alive in me since she passed away from this world.*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ÖZ	vi
DEDICATION.....	viii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS	xi
LIST OF TABLES.....	xvi
LIST OF FIGURES	xvii
LIST OF PICTURES.....	xviii
LIST OF MAPS.....	xix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	xx
CHAPTERS	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. My Research’s Origin.....	1
1.2. Locating My Research by Avoiding Slippery Grounds.....	7
1.2.1. Fixation on Visibility.....	9
1.2.1.1. Lurking in-between Affordable In-Visibilities	10
1.2.2. Overlooked Nature of Different Types of Resistances	12
1.2.2.1. A Mix Analysis of Micro and Macro Resistances.....	14
1.2.3. Shadowed Agency of the Individual.....	16
1.2.3.1. Emphasis on the Power of “Individual”	18
1.2.4. Lack of Examples from Non-Western Contexts.....	20

1.2.4.1. Situated and Feminist Perspectives.....	21
1.3. Contextual Framework.....	23
1.3.1. Gender and Sexuality in The Turkish Context	23
1.3.2. “Who Would Have Thought?” (<i>Nerdeen Nereye</i>).....	27
1.3.3. Literature Review on LGBTI+s in Turkey	36
1.4. Scale, Methods and Methodology of the Research.....	51
1.5. Lexicon and Theoretical Premises	55
1.5.1. “LGBTI+”	57
1.5.2. The Body.....	59
1.5.3. In-Visibilities	61
1.5.4. The City and Other Dimensions of Urban Space.....	62
1.5.5. “Space” and “Place”	62
1.5.6. “Space” and “Production of Space”.....	64
1.5.7. Public / Private Spaces.....	65
1.5.8. Right to Difference, Right to the City.....	66
1.5.9. Everyday Life and Everyday Spaces	67
1.5.10. Resistances, Tactics	69
1.5.11. Affordability	71
1.5.12. Cocoons.....	71
1.6. Contribution of This Study	77
1.7. Thesis Structure	80
2. METHODOLOGY, METHODS, AND FIELDWORK PROCESS.....	85
2.1. The Foundational Grounds	87
2.1.1. An Ethnographic Approach	89
2.1.2. A Feminist Approach.....	91
2.1.2.1. A Feminist Approach to Lefebvre’s Spatial Understanding.....	93
2.1.3. The Interpretive Paradigm	95

2.2.	The Fieldwork and Post-Fieldwork Process	96
2.2.1.	Methods Used to Reach out to Respondents and Characteristics of Respondents	96
2.2.2.	Qualitative Research Methods	102
2.2.2.1.	Semi-Structured In-Depth Interviews Based on Respondents' Narratives of Different Spatialities	103
2.2.2.2.	Semi-Structured In-Depth Interview Guides	104
2.2.2.3.	Informal and Casual Conversations	108
2.2.2.4.	Participant Observation.....	108
2.2.3.	Post-Fieldwork Process	109
2.2.3.1.	The Analysis	111
2.3.	Researcher's Ultimate Objective	112
2.3.1.	The Researcher's Positionality Dilemma	113
2.3.2.	Self-Reflexivity and Situatedness	115
2.3.3.	Ethics and Privacy	117
3.	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS.....	118
3.1.	Theories on Space.....	120
3.2.	Production of Space and the Spatial Triad.....	121
3.3.	Right to the City and Right to Difference.....	124
3.4.	The Feminist Critique	128
3.5.	Theories on Resistances	131
	ANALYSIS SECTIONS	139
	PART 1: THE LENS OF IN-VISIBILITIES.....	141
4.	UNDERSTANDING IN-VISIBILITIES.....	142
4.1.	In-Visibilities in the Lives of LGBTI+s	143
4.1.1.	The Visibility of Coming-Out: Empowering for Some, Threatening for Others	144
4.1.1.1.	Empowering Feature of Visibly Coming Out.....	147

4.1.1.2.	Threatening Feature of Visibly Coming Out	149
4.1.2.	Invisibilities at “Home” with their Families	151
4.1.3.	Romantic and Erotic Invisibilities “Outside of Home”	164
4.2.	Subjective and Relative In-Visibilities	167
4.2.1.	Bisexual and Lesbian Women’s Invisibilities.....	168
4.2.2.	Hyper-Visibilities of Gay Men and of Women with Trans Experience.....	172
4.3.	LGBTI+s Shadowed by Society’s Hypocrisy on Visibilities	173
4.4.	In Lieu of a Conclusion of Part 1	180
	PART 2: LGBTI+S’ MICRO AND MACRO RESISTANCES.....	184
5.	MICRO RESISTANCES	186
5.1.	Affordable Micro Resistances Circling Around In-Visibilities	189
5.2.	Negotiations over Sexed and Gendered Bodies.....	200
5.2.1.	Resisting Through Salient Bodies.....	211
5.2.2.	Gay Men’s Stereotypes and Fitting in	215
5.3.	Resisting Through Queerness	218
5.4.	Verbal Resistances: Humor, Sarcasm and <i>Lubunca</i>	224
6.	MACRO RESISTANCES	230
6.1.	LGBTI+ Identity and the Meaning of “Belonging”.....	231
6.2.	LGBTI+ Activist Movement and Its Resisting Actors	236
6.3.	Women’s Resistance within the LGBTI+ Movement and in Other Spatial Realms.....	244
6.4.	In Lieu of Conclusion of Part 2.....	251
	PART 3: LGBTI+S’ SPATIAL PRODUCTIONS AND APPROPRIATIONS.....	258
7.	REPRODUCTION OF EVERYDAY SPACES	260
7.1.	Home is Where the Heart is	264
7.1.1.	Production of Alternative “Homes”.....	271
7.2.	Leisure Places and Exploitation.....	273

7.3.	LGBTI+s' Neighborhoods in Istanbul.....	282
7.3.1.	Cihangir and Beyoğlu.....	286
7.3.2.	Kurtuluş.....	292
7.3.2.1.	“Kurtuluş is Our Salvation”.....	296
7.3.2.2.	Ghettoization and Entrapment in Kurtuluş.....	301
7.4.	Pride Marches and Protests: Taking Back the Whole City.....	308
7.5.	In Lieu of a Conclusion of Part 3: Cocoons.....	318
8.	CONCLUSIONS.....	327
	REFERENCES.....	348
	APPENDICES	
A.	MORE INFORMATION ON THE THEORETICAL DISCUSSIONS OF THE THESIS.....	369
B.	THE INTERVIEW GUIDE USED DURING THE FIELDWORK TO CONDUCT IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS (TURKISH).....	376
C.	THE INTERVIEW GUIDE USED DURING THE FIELDWORK TO CONDUCT IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS (ENGLISH).....	384
D.	GETTOLARI DEĞİL ŞEHRİN TAMAMINI İSTİYORUZ (WE DON'T WANT THE GHETTOS, WE WANT THE FULL CITY)” (ORIGINAL TURKISH VERSION).....	392
E.	“WE DON'T WANT THE GHETTOS, WE WANT THE FULL CITY” (ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY LGBTINEWSTURKEY.COM).....	394
F.	“GETTOLARI DEĞİL ŞEHRİN TAMAMINI İSTİYORUZ” BANNER.....	396
G.	KAOS GL'S 1996 CAMPAIGN – “EŞCİNSEL GETTOLAR DEĞİL “KENT”İN TAMAMINI İSTİYORUZ” BANNER.....	397
H.	TRANSCRIPTION RULES PROVIDED TO THE PROFESSIONAL TRANSCRIPTION TEAM (TURKISH).....	398
I.	CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT SIGNED BY THE PROFESSIONAL TRANSCRIPTION TEAM (TURKISH).....	400
J.	CURRICULUM VITAE.....	402
K.	TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET.....	407
L.	THESIS PERMISSION FORM / TEZ İZİN FORMU.....	431

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Tricky Situations and This Thesis' Offerings (Table prepared by the author).....	9
Table 2. Theses Written in the Field of Sociology and Anthropology by Decades and Type (Table Prepared by the Author).....	37
Table 3. Who, When, Where? of the Official Interviews (Table prepared by the author).....	100
Table 4. Being an Insider and/or Outsider to the Story (Table prepared by the author).....	114
Table 5. Lefebvre's Theoretical Concept of the <i>Production of Space</i> (Table prepared by the author).....	124

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Number of Theses Written in the Field of Sociology and Anthropology by Years (Figure Prepared by the Author).....	37
Figure 2. Conceptual Mapping of the Emerging Terms (Figure Prepared by the Author with the background photo taken by Noor Sethi on Unsplash).....	56
Figure 3. Reading through Emerging Themes from the Fieldwork (Figure prepared by the author).....	140
Figure 4. Layers of Analysis of LGBTI+s' Spatial Production and Appropriation (Figure prepared by the author)	263

LIST OF PICTURES

Picture 1. A Singular Cocoon	73
Picture 2. Ensemble of Cocoons	73
Picture 3. Formulation Process of a Cocoon of a Silkworm (Picture created by the author by cropping a video)	74

LIST OF MAPS

Map 1. Beyoğlu District (Map Prepared by the Author on Google Maps)	43
Map 2. Cihangir with Ülker, Pürtelaş, Sormagir Streets and Kazancı Slope (Map prepared by the author on Google Maps)	287
Map 3. Kurtuluş with its ‘official’ borders and Kurtuluş with the borders set by the respondents (Map prepared by the author on Google Maps).....	294

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BBC	The British Broadcasting Corporation
COE	Council of Europe
HRW	Human Rights Watch
LGBTI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Plus for everyone else who may not identify with one of these other represented signs
NIMBY	Not in my backyard
SOGIE	Sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression
SPoD	Social Policy, Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Studies Association

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. My Research's Origin

My interest and involvement with the LGBTI+¹ movement started around 2010-2011 when I was in the gender and sexuality master's program in Amsterdam. It was in 2011 that I became more familiar with the movement, its discourse, and its organizational nature. Throughout these years I contacted LGBTI+ organizations to get to know better the roots of LGBTI+ activism in Turkey. During that time of my first involvement, I was able to gather information about the segregated ghettos, about how society was pushing toward the farthest, isolated, and imperiled points of the city. I also became cognizant of unlawful house evictions and lynch attempts. While witnessing the organized movement's persistent justice-seeking attempts, I became familiar with their LGBTI+s' daily life narratives. This accumulation of knowledge and first-hand narratives made me look deeper into institutional violence towards women with trans experience for my master's thesis.

In the context of my master's thesis, my curiosity moved towards understanding the other side of the story, as a result, I reached out to law enforcement officers and listened to what they were going to say about brutality occurrences. After one or two unofficial preliminary meetings with police officers, I decided to focus on police

¹ LGBTI+ stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and Plus (+) (In Turkish it is read as "*Le-ge-be-te-i Artı*"). While the most commonly used term to describe the grouping of this community is LGBT or LGBTQ throughout this thesis, I will be referring to this group as LGBTI+. While conducting the fieldwork the most preferred terminology in the Turkish geographical setting among the majority of narrators of this thesis has been LGBTI. By the time I started writing the thesis, this term has been updated with an addition of + to the end of it. The sign plus (+) aims to encompass queer, asexual, pansexual, gender fluid, and non-binary people and it aims for inclusiveness. I will be elaborating on the terminology used by the narrators later in this introductory chapter.

brutality towards trans sex workers in Istanbul through the perspectives of police officers (Zerey, 2011). One of the most important conclusions I gathered indicated the individual police officers' side of the story, and I tried to portray up to what points their attitudes/actions towards LGBTI+ issues differed from the institutionalized police force's position, which required them to use excessive force and brutal actions in order to attain a goal that was not framed by the law, but which was defined almost arbitrarily based on 'morality norms'. The hierarchical power relations within the police institution necessitating and rewarding obedience to existing rules and superiors' orders impacted its actors' (police officers) perceptions and experiences. The fieldwork I conducted for my master's project opened my eyes. It pushed me towards investigating the 'agency' embedded in the mundane life where brutality, inequality, and injustices were taking place in an orderly manner. I also came to realize how urban negotiations and the issue of 'space' and the production of space (Lefebvre, 1991b) mattered critically in making sense of LGBTI+s' resistances. An organized version of the rebellious act for the liberation of LGBTI+s has already been going on for over 20 years in Turkey via LGBTI+ collective action mechanisms (organizations and communities) and it has been carrying a lot of individual stories along with LGBTI+ organizations' records.

After coming back to Istanbul, I decided to take part in the preparation meetings for Trans Pride Week which was going to take place for the third time in Istanbul in 2012. In those meetings, I realized how interconnectedness made all participants feel empowered at the end of each meeting. Meanwhile, I started to look into trans organizations' ways of organizing, I tried to understand the means used to combat poor and dangerous working conditions of sex workers and continuous police brutality in public places towards all LGBTI+s but especially towards women with trans experience². Years have passed, and my involvement with LGBTI+ movement

² In my thesis, instead of using the wording 'trans man/woman' to identify women and men who have trans experience, I chose to use 'woman/man with trans experience' wording. In an interview (retrieved March 9, 2020, from <https://www.birgun.net/haber/olum-degil-cozum-lazim-290999>), Derin Solak, a woman with trans experience and LGBTI+ rights activist said this when she was discussing her identification: "We do not find it right to just say 'trans'. Trans means covering the true identity of women and men like us. I am not only a trans, but a woman through my birth, my formation, my statement. That is why we find it more correct to call it a woman or a man with trans experience. I am a born woman, a woman since I knew myself. So, my adventure of life and femininity starts from the day I was born. We are now living in a world where we can read through declarations without costing a body. It has to be so already. Every woman has a birth story, and I am one of the women who was

deepened crescively. I started volunteering for an LGBTI+ organization located in Istanbul (SPoD (Sosyal Politika Cinsiyet Kimliği ve Cinsel Yönelim Çalışmaları Derneği) (*Social Policy Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Studies Association*)), throughout the years I took numerous roles within the organization itself. During that time, I got the chance to get to know and cooperate with different organizations located in Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Bursa, Çanakkale, Eskişehir, and Mersin and I met numerous national and international activists.

Thru the years, I witnessed and experienced in myself what LGBTI+s' daily life practices, the problems encountered, and the disadvantageous positions look like. During this period that I was taking place in the LGBTI+ movement, I became surrounded by an LGBTI+ social circle while trying to find my own voice. And as a result of these experiences, I noticed that LGBTI+s' demands from society and the authorities were quite similar to one another regardless of their individual involvement and/or belonging to the organized movement or to a collectivity on a daily basis. At times, organizations posited a direct impact on individuals' daily life practices and yet, at other times, individuals' agencies, their networks, their friends, and 'chosen families' were what they depended on while dealing with the burdens of the 'urban life' in general. Their ultimate aim appeared to be similar: to protect their 'spatial domains' from the danger of violence and to appropriate and reterritorialize it and to reclaim the city.

An important part of my observations prior to my Ph.D. thesis project came from two distinct sources: one of them was my experiences with my few acquaintances and the other was the experiences I encountered after I started volunteering on a continuous basis for the LGBTI+ organization (SPoD) and started to take part continuously within the activist collective movement. I was able to see how my acquaintances' daily life and their attempts at individualization and to be afloat were affecting the ways they operated in the course of the everyday rhythm.

On the other hand, what I was grasping from my observations as a volunteer did not have the same tone nor the same course of events as the one with my acquaintances.

born like this.”. Therefore, throughout the whole thesis, I preferred this terminology when I was expressing myself, but I stayed loyal to the respondents' wording in their verbatims.

The Istanbul Pride march following Gezi Park uprising (which will be touched upon as a part of the contextual framework in Chapter 1.3 and then later in Chapter 7) in the year of 2013 was the largest up until that year (Pearce, 2014) and it was an encouraging event for many other LGBTI+s to actually take action in different platforms. It drove all to rethink their own everyday urban lives and what can be done about it. These times of revolutionary actions mattered a lot to many LGBTI+s, and among them, there were also a few who became more involved in the activist movement. I was noticing that people were genuinely excited to see the changes as the outcome of their actions in different social settings. But what I also noticed was the continuity of oppression that was taking different or similar forms than before.

One of the things I observed was that the people around me and the people in their circle of friends were acting with common reasoning towards everyday oppression that they encountered at their home, on the street, in a café, or at school and work. For some, the resistance never stopped, it got stronger and evolved and as for others, it remained limited with the ‘same old’ tactics and routine. I think it was that continuity that I wanted to capture for my thesis: I wanted to show how LGBTI+s’ resistances, whether on micro or macro levels, kept on opening “breathing rooms” for them and why it mattered to continue the resistance against oppression incessantly in order to get a fair shot at and full access to the city and to urban life.

Since I was becoming more involved in the movement, I was also trying to understand LGBTI+s’ standpoints with regard to existing discourses on gender and sexuality, on the ways they manage to deal with the everyday, institutionalized and domineering forms of oppression. While we were discussing some issues with their thereat landlords, or when they were trying to find a new apartment, or go to a café with their partners, I realized the pain points were more or less similar. LGBTI+s I encountered during those years were aware of the small number of cafés and bars that were considered “LGBTI+ friendly”, where one would not encounter problems because of their gender/sexual identity. For some, these bars and cafés were not their favorite places but knowing they could go there if they wanted to get comfort made them feel at ease. Being understanding of each other’s problems and difficulties were uniting them. It was an intentional but informal web of security that was being formed around the people that came together to evade the oppression that was present in their

everyday lives. This web of support, security, and serenity was showing that even within fragmented spatialities, uncoordinated connections, and limited involvement in the activist movement, LGBTI+s living in Istanbul were connected to each other through a spatio-temporal clustering formed over their semi-coordinated togetherness, in-visibility, and resistances. This connection was established by bringing in their own resistances, collective memories, and shared experiences to melt in the same pot in the form of shielding.

Through their multifaceted resistances emerged rooms to breathe, to continue. With my doctoral study and the fieldwork that I conducted; I called these emergences cocoons³. While these cocoons were being formed, a more secure life was being established on an everyday basis; LGBTI+s' mundane rhythms were including a certain level of freedom, and yet they did not feel safe enough whenever they had to go to another part of the city that they were not used to and whenever they felt alone at that particular location. Visibility remained a critical issue; they consciously

³ Cocoon is a conceptual model that I visualized as a result of my fieldwork, the analysis process, and the numerous inspirations I gathered from my readings over the course of many years. Although this concept will be explained in greater detail in the following sections of this dissertation, here I would like to provide a brief description and also some of its components according to my conceptualization. The *Oxford Dictionary*'s description indicates that the origin of the word derives from French (*cocoon* attached with the meaning an eggshell or a cocoon and a diminutive of *coca* 'shell'). The word is described as "a silky case spun by the larvae of many insects for protection as pupae.". The allegorical meaning of the word is given as "something that envelops someone in a protective or comforting way." The act of cocooning, according to the Oxford Dictionary is equivalent to the act of "enveloping in a protective or comforting way." Thus, the cocoon is closely attached to protection and comfort. Cocoons are known to enclose one insect at a time, and they are also known to give space for the development and preparation of their occupant.

And yet in this thesis, this concept, albeit protective, does not only indicate a "comfort space" and my usage of this concept signifies a space that is linked with resistance. It is both the result and also the continuance of resistances that occur in visible or invisible ways.

The concept also embeds in itself the communal resisting behavior with cocoons laying one next to the other, connected to one another via fine threads. Therefore, it is not explored solely as an individualistic metaphor, but rather as a combination of both the singular and communal formations.

I make use of the concept of cocoons to represent LGBTI+s' unique spatial productions and appropriations through their resistances in the course of their everyday lives while looking for a space of their own and while asking for their 'right to the city' in the urban setting. The usage of the concept, therefore, implies both the micro (individualistic and somewhat crude) acts of resistances as well as the macro resistance mechanisms aiming at the existing oppressive system on a collective level.

In my own formulation, LGBTI+s produce their cocoons in invisible and visible ways. The cocoon helps to cover them and also to acquire imaginary and lived spaces. Even though the concept might be closely related to the concept of "closet", it is not because its existence, in my formulation, depends on and furthermore produces resistances that lead the way to the right to the city. In this perspective, the cocoon, which is the result of resistances, by providing a relative sense of security, safety, and appropriation may seem to be the end product, but it is not. It is a pathway toward liberation. This is the very act of resisting that forms the cocoon, to begin with, and cocoons all together engender further resistances.

remained invisible at times, and at other times, visibility became the tool to appropriate a spatial territory. The freedom was conditional, and it had its temporal and spatial limits: it was only available at certain times of the day, in certain parts of the city, if they were surrounded by the people that made them feel secure and safe enough. The “cocoon” helped them to remain sheltered and feel safe at different times, in different ways, some of them subtle and others in visible ways; and it also helped them to reproduce the space they were located in, to reappropriate it in in-visible manners. I came to the realization that the cocoon “forged its own - appropriated – space” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.31).

For my doctoral thesis, I decided to understand how this conditional freedom came to the emergence and how LGBTI+s were coping with oppression in their everyday lives. I wanted to document when and how LGBTI+s start searching for sheltered areas for themselves, and what kind of tools they pursue in their search for peace and serenity in their everyday lives. What kinds of resistances are they able to come up with? How do they “produce” the sheltered living spaces they need for themselves? What is the extent of freedom and liberation these spaces are able to provide them compared to what they have been wanting to achieve and to what they have dreamt of? These were the questions that initially came to my mind prior to my fieldwork.

To satisfy my curiosity, I decided to document the answers to my questions and transform them into my thesis project. And as I will show briefly later in this section and then in detail in the next chapter (Chapter 2), I gathered and focused on the narratives of LGBTI+s and I looked into their own life narratives of Istanbul. I realized afterward that while I was collecting their stories of everyday ‘grievances’ I was also collecting their narratives of resistances that they were applying at different spatial layers in in-visible ways, their descriptions of the production of space and appropriation of urban spatial layers. Moreover, what I also understood was that our discussions were leading toward their pursuit of the right to the city. Departing from there, I tried to portray their mundane rhythms and how their resistances came into play. I also took into account their understanding, comprehension, and relation to different urban spatial layers and their entanglement with the collective movement.

This chapter is meant to provide a road map for the thesis. The chapter started with a section focusing on my research's origin (1.1) and then this part is followed by a discussion of the important issues affecting the positioning of my research (1.2). Next, I will be providing the contextual background of my study by presenting the literature review part (1.3) and then I will provide a glimpse of the scale, methods, and methodology that I employed in my thesis (1.4). In order to better explicate and situate the discussions that will be undertaken throughout the dissertation, I will also be providing a lexicon with key terms and terminology (1.5) and lastly, I will be portraying the contribution of this research (1.6) and the thesis structure (1.7).

Now, I would like to show the factors that I took into account while positioning my research.

1.2. Locating My Research by Avoiding Slippery Grounds

Space and LGBTI+'s narratives of their resistance in Istanbul are at the center of my study. The city, a fruitful area to explore and experience non-normative gender identities and sexualities, especially in the Western hemisphere (Aldrich, 2004), is considered the place where acceptance of (and sometimes tolerance towards) LGBTI+s is rendered possible. Scholars (Castells, 1983; Giesecking, 2013) discussed how urban mechanisms and sexuality took interchangeable roles in the constructions of networks of friendship and romantic involvements, cruising areas for sexual entanglements, spatial reflections on social, moral codes, which were then discussed along with codes of safety and, of course, solidarity.

When examining the relationship between the urban space and LGBTI+s' resistances in everyday spaces of Istanbul, I came to realize that there were certain situations that needed more attention and emphasis (Table 1). What I understood throughout my dissertation reading and writing process was that the Western-based academic work had put too much stress on the importance of visibility and on the need to fight this invisibility by 'coming out'. This fixation created conflictual results when I tried to apply those tactics to non-Western examples, such as the case of Istanbul. Second, I realized that this perspective embowered LGBTI+s' micro resistances tactics and their contribution to the production of space and I saw a big value in deciphering and

including the ‘familiar’, which is “not necessarily the known” (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.15) along with the implementation of the obvious ones- thus the resistances that were operating on the macro level as well. This resulted in a mixed analysis of micro and macro resistances throughout the dissertation. The third point that I aimed to address was related to the first and the second points, which was the lack of attention given to the individual agency of LGBTI+s and their everyday struggles. I argue that the individual’s contributions to the production of the urban space via their resistance tactics at play remain unseen, because of the immanent focus put on macro (collective) resistances and efforts. Here, I agree with De Certeau who indicates that “each individual is a locus in which an incoherent (and often contradictory) plurality of such relational determinations interact” (De Certeau, 1984, p.xi). And as a result, my study attempts to be a detailed exploration of both the individual efforts to resist the oppressive, heteropatriarchal, and cissexist gender and sexuality norms in Istanbul on an everyday basis, along with the collective determinations aiming at the right to the city of LGBTI+s (and others oppressed groups as well). My fourth point is about providing the necessary contextual ground to introduce a situated perspective while analyzing LGBTI+s’ spatial entanglements on different layers of the urban space in Istanbul. I suggest including a feminist and situated perspective to my analysis of LGBTI+s in Istanbul as an investigation angle to better and holistically understand the socio-cultural background, the relationship, and meaning-making processes of LGBTI+s and also to comprehend their resistance mechanisms and the ultimate demand for the “right to the city”⁴ will be discussed later in detail) in the context of

⁴ According to Lefebvre, the urban is an ‘oeuvre’ of its inhabitants (Lefebvre, 1996, p.117) and, it is constantly being produced and reproduced. The right to the city emerges as the request for the rights of different individuals and social groups to participate in the making-do practices of urban life and collective living. The right to the city is at the same time a demand not to be ousted from the centrality of urban life through mandated displacement towards the urban fringes (both physically and socially). Accordingly, the denial of the right to the city translates as hindering of these individuals to engage in the reproduction of the urban space.

In this thesis, I took Lefebvre’s indications as a bearing for myself, that is, I agree and suggest in my study that the exclusion of social groups from the urban would mean their exclusion from “civilization” (Lefebvre, 1996, p.195). Lefebvre’s right to the city concept shows itself as a resistance to being removed from urban life to the point that individuals and social groups can argue against these arbitrary limitations and instead ask for their inclusion in urban life (Lefebvre, 1996).

Based on this explanation, when I made use of the concept of ‘the right to the city’ in this thesis, I considered it as a reformulated right based on inhabitants’ ability to use and change the urban space at their discretion (while accepting that inhabitation is more than just the physical and bodily occupation of space).

Istanbul. I furthermore believe that this would potentially help grasp better their production of everyday urban spaces of Istanbul and their path to the ‘right to the city’.

Table 1. Tricky Situations and This Thesis’ Offerings (Table prepared by the author)

Tricky situations	Thesis’ Offerings
Fixation on visibility	Lurking in-between affordable in-visibilitys
Overlooked nature of different types of resistances	A mix analysis of micro and macro resistances
Shadowed agency of the individual	Emphasis on individual narratives and agency along with collective determinations
The lack of non-Western context in socio-spatial entanglements	Situated and feminist perspectives

Thus, the results of my thesis touch on 4 important factors: emphasis upon the issue of in-visibilitys and their affordability, a mixed analysis of micro and macro level resistances, the power of individual narratives and agency and, lastly feminist and situated perspectives. Now, before moving into the contextual framework and to the lexicon section that I aim to use throughout the analysis discussions, I would like to elaborate more on the interrogations (and realizations) that I will be touching upon in the analysis section of my fieldwork results.

1.2.1. Fixation on Visibility

The customary understanding of the relationship between LGBTI+s’ and the urban space put an emphasis on fighting against invisibility, on attempts to create spaces that rendered this forced invisibility less detectable and offered LGBTI+s a possibility for visibility (Giesecking, 2013). The examination of resistances against spatial injustices shows that the attention was greatly put on either the movement’s or collective actions’ effort of visibility. This positioning abreast of ‘visibility’ became the norm to follow in order to access recognition, justice, and liberation. Visibility turned out to be the tool to be represented and thus to be recognized (Giesecking, 2013). In this respect, visibility started to operate as the core element of LGBTI+ movement, especially in the Western world. The produced discourse that was based on visibility became the one and only way to access social and spatial justice in the Western world, which as a

result rendered those who did not declare their visibility less recognized and out of political interest (Alcoff, 2005). Actions of collective movements around the world (in Turkey and also in the Western World (specifically in the US (Giesecking, 2013)) have consistently been emphasizing reclaiming public space via visible spatialized rallies. Slogans during Pride Marches especially in the Western Hemisphere address some LGBTI+s whereas leaving those who are marked, forced, or choose to be invisible due to different socio-cultural conditions outside of their reach (Giesecking, 2013). I lament similar to Lefebvre who, while questioning the disappearance (or even the murder) of ‘time’ in our modern days, touched upon the erroneous and yet incessant focus on visibility (and readability, intelligibility trio) (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.96), and I suggest an alternative perspective to analyze the visibility issue.

1.2.1.1.Lurking in-between Affordable In-Visibilities

What is counted is what is used, not the ways of using. Paradoxically, the latter become invisible in the universe of codification and generalized transparency. Only the effects ... of these waves that flow in everywhere remain perceptible. They circulate without being seen, discernible only through the objects that they move about and erode (De Certeau, 1984, p.35).

I find it critically important to highlight how much the meaning in the real world is constructed on qualitative rather than quantitative social components. Features and qualities of events and relationships in-between these occurrences usually turn into the basis of our investigations. For this thesis, I will be focusing on the qualitative displays of LGBTI+s’ revolt and resistances. By doing so, I aim to distance myself from only investigating the obvious and the visible and I try to open up an academic space to ‘the invisible’ and to ‘the ordinary’ by focusing on their qualitative displays. My position is in accordance with Lefebvre’s understanding of ‘possibilities’ for everyday life for which he claims that “we should acquire a sense of qualitative changes, of modifications in the quality of life - and above all of another attitude of the human being” (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.246). The analysis of the in-visibilitys potentially includes things that happen at scales or in dimensions that were not directly investigated, from their political involvement or apolitical stances to their interactions with family members, from their understanding of the public spaces to their retaliation steps to the privately defined spaces. It also covers resistance mechanisms that one can *afford*.

Thus, instead of focusing on visibility alone, I realized that detecting the points where invisibilities or negotiations of in-visibility are rooted and how they evolve, as well as focusing on LGBTI+s' experiences and their own interpretations of what is surrounding them would eventually open new ways of detecting resistance practices. I also thought that this would, as a result, pave the way for new platforms to combat invisibility. I believe that this shift of focus from the visibility towards what "one can afford to act upon" would make room for the improvement of the understanding that shapes the ways we explore relationships within complex structures and concepts. I think providing space for the 'invisible', thus making "the invisible" "visible" also helps reconsider existing power structures and inequalities (Giesecking, 2013). By addressing this tricky situation, I aim to portray LGBTI+s' numerous empowerment tools in everyday urban spaces by making LGBTI+s' differences⁵, invisible stories detectable and experienceable along with their visibility-oriented tools. Put in a nutshell, one of my aims in this thesis is to bring an alternative viewpoint to the existing reinforcement of the obvious visibility by touching upon the affordable nature of visibility and invisibility while discussing the placement of LGBTI+s in the urban space and in the context of the production of space. I try to unveil LGBTI+s resistances that might have been tagged as 'invisible' or 'insufficient' while also discussing the visible and yet unexplored resistances.

This brings me to my second point: the resistances. Why the focus on resistances? Because I argue that spatial appropriation occurs through the reinforcement of the resistances posited upon the axis of in-visibility and the resistances show themselves through the deployment of the "difference". The determinant factor in in-visibility is the affordability of the actions that regulate the risks one can take while establishing a

⁵ Here I would like to briefly refer to Lefebvre's concepts of *difference* and *differential space* that I took inspiration for my thesis. Lefebvre's conceptualization of difference and thus of the 'differential' approach does not embody the existing difference on a verbal level nor does it recognize openly "natural distinguishing characteristics" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.64). Lefebvre (1991b) rather suggests that the struggles to "establish differences" (p.64) and the "political action of minorities" (p.55) would in the end change the existing mechanisms of oppression driving from the alienated forms of social difference. In this sense, differential space is produced when groups with differences attain *autogestion* because they refuse the existing oppressive system's norms. In Lefebvre's understanding, the differential space does not indicate a location per se, but it is rather a way of appropriation of spatiality that aims to resist the oppressiveness, which tries to tame or erase differences.

As a result, as it will be apparent from the analysis sections below, while the "abstract space" is demanding homogeneity through the elimination of 'difference' from its milieu, the differential space is born out of the emphasis put on those differences (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.52).

relationship with the different layers of the urban space. Now I would like to continue with this second point focusing on resistances.

1.2.2. Overlooked Nature of Different Types of Resistances

Departing from my first point, another critical issue that I aim to address at the arch of my dissertation is with regard to my analysis of micro and macro level resistances. Although I will be explaining in greater detail in the theoretical chapter, I would like to briefly describe here what micro and macro levels of resistances mean. I consider the micro level to address to “everyday” forms of resistances that usually operate in the microgestural realm; while the macro level consists of collective forms of resistances that may occur during the everyday or “out-of-the-ordinary” times but definitely in the macrogestural realm (Lefebvre, 1991b, pp.215, 385).

I would like to elaborate on the term “everyday life” with reference to Merrifield who said:

Everyday life, instead, possessed a dialectical and ambiguous nature. On the one hand, it's the realm increasingly colonized by the commodity, and hence shrouded in all kinds of mystification, fetishism, and alienation . . . On the other hand, paradoxically, everyday life is likewise a primal site for meaningful social resistance . . . Thus, radical politics has to begin and end in everyday life, it can't do otherwise. Nobody can get beyond everyday life (Merrifield, 2002, p.79).

With all these activities, everyday life constitutes an area where actions, mostly repetitions, familiarity, and banality are thought to take place. As Lefebvre (1991a) puts it, the everyday transforms into such a form that it becomes impossible to get out of it; even those who claim to have gone out of it, have been trapped in it (p.40). The everyday, in this sense, consists of contradictions such as “illusion and truth, power and helplessness” (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.21).

Lefebvre's work *Critique of Everyday Life* (1991a) was a criticism of the “dominant class” (p.29) that brought upon a dogmatic and caducous view and practice of the everyday life itself. Accordingly, De Certeau (1984), Lefebvre (1991a), Scott (1989) all pointed out how the everyday life and everyday spaces could also operate as a site for resistance since it could empower different marginalized groups to revolt against

existing systems of oppression and discriminative mechanisms of regulation.⁶ In this field of recurrences that operates without questioning and with repetition, individuals may not be aware of what they do, and why they do so, they might also have remained obscured about what makes some actions meaningful and how the cultural background operates in the process of acquiring meaning.

I agree with Lefebvre who thought that in order to understand space, one should not only look into “special moments”, as he calls them but rather one should adopt a more holistic approach to space and accordingly to its history as well (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.48). Despite a respectable number of studies and contributions made to the understanding of the relationship between LGBTI+s in urban spaces, there are still important questions that were not entirely addressed, especially in a non-Western geographical context. A critical part of this underexplored domain consists of the investigation of the complete package of lived experiences and resistances of LGBTI+s.

In that regard, I was puzzled by the questions of ‘where does everyday life occur?’, ‘where do every day private and public spaces start and where do they end?’ during my initial phases of writing and I tried to find answers to my inquiry throughout my thesis by taking Lefebvre’s (1991a) indication about leisure (p.30) and also the impact of family life (p.31) into account; this time I tried to question the congruence of the private and public spaces and of everyday and ‘festivity’ (out-of-the-ordinary) times. Moreover, I also adopted Lefebvre’s remark on how we should not “fall into the trap

⁶ Even though it is a topic that I will be exploring in the upcoming pages, I would like to point out that de Certeau considered resistance mechanisms during the everyday life as temporal and non-territorial actions (de Certeau, 1984). Whereas Lefebvre opted for a more optimistic approach toward the power of the everyday life, and he mentioned the possibility of a revolution in the condition that “a *subjective* element” is founded (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.182).

In addition to these scholars, I find it important to mention Asef Bayat whose work also focuses on documenting the different aspects of resistance practices by focusing on Middle Eastern geographical settings. Bayat, with reference to Scott’s work, is highlighting the power of the less powerful in subverting and unsettling the dominant system and accordingly power holders in his work (Lilja et al., 2017). And yet, there is also a criticism brought upon it, that the focus rarely shifts from the “hidden, quiet and individualistic” forms of resistances in Scott’s work, and yet there are other, more driven, and more goal-oriented resistances in “the struggles of the urban poor” (Lilja et al., 2017, p.43). Bayat’s formulation of the resistance adds up and grows that of Scotts in terms of its actors, thus their doers, and in terms of its echoing results. Bayat’s formulation shows that everyday forms of resistances do not always need to be hidden and that in fact, the subalterns, with their “quiet encroachment” can mobilize together to make a public claim (Lilja et al., 2017, p.52). I will touch upon the reasons why I did not include Bayat’s perspective and instead stick with De Certeau, Lefebvre, and Scott later on in the thesis.

of treating space as space ‘in itself’” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.90). In addition to these Lefebvrian discussions, challenging the pre-existing dichotomy between public-private spaces brought along the discussions of LGBTI+s’ empowerment tactics. In that regard, while questioning the fictional borders of public and private spaces, what I came to realize was that LGBTI+s are the ones bending this strict spatial division via their empowerment tools and togetherness that I considered to take the forms of micro and macro resistances. Below, I will be providing my interpretation and contribution to these questions and discussions.

1.2.2.1. A Mix Analysis of Micro and Macro Resistances

While trying to find answers to my question, I realized that an important element in the practical organization of everyday life is related to the distinction made between private life and public life which then results in the distinction made between private and public spaces, too. However, I thought that the everyday life was too complex to be examined through either a public or a private life perspective⁷ since it covered political, public and private lives simultaneously in itself. I understood at this point that these spaces became too intertwined to be dealt on their own because of the disappearance of stringent borders between private and public spaces. And I also comprehended that the ‘home’ overflows into the streets and the streets enter into the households, contributing to the daily ‘disorganization’. Accordingly, I considered Massey’s argument that “different ways of conceptualizing this aspect of ‘the spatial’ ... provide very different bases for the politicization of space” (Massey, 1994, p.251) as a bearing for myself.

Even though the everyday makes strong references to the inured and unchanging, just as Lefebvre (1991a) points out, it is through this familiarity and repetition that one can understand its completeness. In fact, Marcuse argues that Lefebvre’s use of the

⁷ Although I will be elaborating later, here I also would like to point out that Lefebvre’s ‘right to the city’ concept falls short of including private spaces as spaces of everyday resistances. This concept remains also unresponsive to include LGBTI+s among social groups that possess the potential of transforming the urban space. With my study, I also aim to extend the coverage area of the concept of Lefebvre’s right to the city concept. I decided to develop a critical approach with Lefebvre’s right to the city discourse, because I claim that, resistances also persist in private space and thus they should not be limited to the exploration of public spaces. In this sense, I agree with the “fundamental feminist principle that change begins “at home” with everyday practice and experience” (Rankin, 2012, p.113).

concepts of ‘the urban’ and ‘the city’ as substitutes for ‘society’ puts an accent on how the everyday life and the spatial domain it occupies plays a critical role (Marcuse, 2010, p.91).

Considering the power of everyday life in making sense of the course of the events and meaning-making processes, the repetitions that take place in daily life must be discovered so that this investigation would give us information about how the whole processes of meaning-making and action-taking take shape (Lefebvre, 1991a). Having said this, I also argue that the everyday urban life represents the sociality in which individuals possess (a) right to the city, which in return renders all socio-spatial entanglements and webs of power relations integrally political.

I thought that Lefebvre’s sociological perspective would be the right tool to contribute to the debate and to the investigation of LGBTI+’s resistances for two reasons. First, it is because of the essence of his sociological thought since it “seeks an understanding and reconstitution of the integrative capacities of the urban as well as the conditions of practical participation” (Lefebvre, 1996, p.153) and also because it aims for “the transformation of life in its smallest, most everyday detail” (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.226). And second, it is because Lefebvre’s sociological understanding, his approach, and implementation of non-economic realms of everyday life, which Marxist ideology has historically neglected to investigate, helped me reconfigure better LGBTI+s’ everyday life realities which in return helped me to review “the means by which [the everyday life] can be transformed” since “the aim is to change life and to lucidly recreate the everyday life” (Lefebvre, 1991a, pp.148, 227).

I also thought that the investigation of LGBTI+s’ resistance practices and their means of ‘making do’ on a daily basis (De Certeau, 1984), would provide insights to discover the agency of individuals and the way this agency contributes to the production of urban spaces. I think this is very critical in the sense that my analysis aims to show the interconnections between the individual and the collective, the private and the public, the micro and macro levels as well as the disappearing borders between them, and this is in tandem with Lefebvre’s view of Marxism in itself. He says that “by a process of rational integration it can pass from the individual to the social- from the level of the individual to the level of society” (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.148).

In this context, first, I decided to include “micro resistances” into my analysis and this micro level consists of everyday forms of resistances. The everyday resistance is described as “quiet, dispersed, disguised or otherwise seemingly invisible” (Vinthagen & Johansson, 2013, p.2) and also as “anonymous, often undeclared” (Scott, 1989, p.37). This form of resistance has been overlooked by researchers. In fact, these resistances were usually seen as separate from the conventional forms of activism carried by actors of social movements (Vinthagen & Johansson, 2013, p.8). I think the detection of everyday resistances is “an art in itself” and therefore I highly value the examination of the invisible, hidden, subtle resistances along with the visible, outspoken, and collective ones. As a second step, I decided to implement an analysis on “macro resistances” that involve resistances carried out both on everyday and out-of-the-ordinary times by the collective resistance mechanisms.

I think that the construction of an inclusive and non-discriminatory society would only be possible through the unification of all efforts and practices on the way to it. Therefore, with my research I aim to put emphasis on all the resistances circling around in-visibility and on their potential to offer space for further (maybe collective but definitely revolutionary) resistance practices. Moreover, I also planned to take into consideration both public and private spaces as places of resistances, particularly by including the concept of home in my analysis since the home is a “mediated site of gendered and intimate publicness” (Şahin, 2018, p.744), which, I believe, would help me contribute to this missing gendered perspective in Lefebvre’s right to the city concept (please see p.66 where I discuss the concept in greater detail) and also contribute to the discussion on everyday resistances.

This second point brings me to the third point of interest that I aim to tackle with my thesis: the shadowed agency of the individual.

1.2.3. Shadowed Agency of the Individual

Lefebvre (1991b) points out a set of very important questions for the analysis of the production space that I took inspiration from while positioning my thesis. He argues that it would be possible to find the presence of political power in the analysis of a productive capacity. Lefebvre describes this political power through a dialectical

relationship between the demand and the command – pointing out the presence of a power dynamic in-between them. The questions that he addresses are directly related to the identification of its actors: “‘Who?’, ‘For whom?’, ‘By whose agency?’, ‘Why and how?’” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.116). So, I started asking myself these questions in the context of my thesis and while I tried to answer them, I realized that I needed to put an emphasis on the resolutions that I attained.

Moreover, Scott, in his theory of everyday forms of resistances points out a critical issue that constitutes one of the positions that I take throughout my dissertation. He says that most of the time, the focus of social scientists has been posited upon actions of resistances that posed many problems for authorities. The source of these actions mostly stemmed from “publicly organized political opposition” (Scott, 1989, p.34). Given that the effect of minor initiatives or small and unnoticeable solidarity networks and more importantly of individual efforts was not in the field of interest of social sciences for a long period of time nor that the effect of such resistances was easily detectable, these efforts remained silent and shadowed to outsiders.

Acts of collective resistances such as protests, Pride Marches are among the visible outcomes of collective actions. These communal formations may range from activist groups to support initiatives and even further to social movement approaches. The impact social movements and their operating agents have when it comes to achieving their ultimate goals (justice, equality, inclusion, recognition, liberation, etc.), is undeniable and the LGBTI+ movement is no different in this respect. In that regard, the collective/social/activist movement carries great importance to achieve changes in the everyday life of LGBTI+s. According to Scott, they do so, because they are able to inscribe themselves upon the historical records via the “manifestos, minutes, membership lists, ..., police reports” (Scott, 1989, p.34).⁸ However, micro resistances stemming from the actions of the individuals most of the time remained outside of the written scriptures, hence outside of the scope of analysis of social sciences. It is this

⁸ As it will be seen in the upcoming section entitled “Contextual Framework”, this is also the case for LGBTI+ movement in Turkey with the records of organizations and initiatives in the forms of written materials (such as reports, oral history projects, event records, etc.). De Certeau’s description of the “writing” is also in tandem with this point of view; he says that writing is “the concrete activity that consists in constructing, on its own, blank space ...—the page—a text that has power over the exteriority from which it has first been isolated” (De Certeau, 1984, p.134).

lack of attention to the centrality of individual's actions and experiences that I aim to address in my thesis.

1.2.3.1. Emphasis on the Power of “Individual”

Herewith this dissertation, I suggest that LGBTI+s' everyday life practices and resistance mechanisms formed by “atomized” individuals take a role in their access to the city. I, therefore, suggest an analysis of the transformation of urban spaces by the actions of its “users who are not its makers” (De Certeau, 1984, p.xiii). At this point, I also agree with Merrifield who indicated that “fully developed individuality came about through differentiated practice ... and differentiated practice was only possible through a differential space, through one's “right to the city”, through an urban revolution” (Merrifield, 2002, p.72) pointing out that there is a cyclical relationship between the individual's realization, their spatial reproduction and “the right to the city”.

In this study, I argue that LGBTI+s, as individuals, have the capacity to transform their everyday spaces; and then by doing so they contribute to the presence and continuance of ‘difference’ of the society in which they live. Therefore, I think the ways in which individuals maneuver social norms need to be investigated because “free development of each, ... is the condition for the free development of all, just as the free development of all is the condition for the development of each” (Merrifield, 2002, p.76).

As it will be apparent in the analysis section, LGBTI+s' response bearing acts of resistance against oppression, inequalities, and injustices show differences depending on the affordability of their context, political conditions, and also on the spatial milieu one is located at. Different tactics applied on a daily basis to resist injustices are not easy to detect because individuals manage to combine these tactics in complex and subtle ways. While at the same time, LGBTI+ movement takes certain measures to show resilience on a public level and this is usually done via actions of visibility. These public declarations' aim is to create a holistic change in the existing system by reestablishing the oppressed and marginalized groups' (in this case LGBTI+s') ‘right

to the city' (Lefebvre, 1996) and also their 'right to difference'⁹ (Lefebvre, 1991b). LGBTI+s, the community, the movement and its organizations and other formations are in fact all simultaneously trying to attain the necessary means to challenge the current oppressions in the conceived space, which are occurring by the means of the reinforcement of heteropatriarchal oppressive and homogenizing power structures.

The power of organizing and becoming a whole, making statement-oriented public appearances is doubtlessly very empowering and they contribute to the transformative processes over the current oppressive and excluding systems. However, not every individual who identifies him/her/themselves as LGBTI+ is taking part in the organized activist movement or actively taking place in the formation of such groups. As I suggested above as an alternative perspective to the fixation on visibility, I take a similar stand towards being focused on collectivity and movement-oriented activism.

While the organized movement and community formations relentlessly work to reproduce and appropriate urban spaces for LGBTI+s (by reverberating rights-based discourses and organizing publicly noticeable events such as Pride marches); individuals, regardless of their involvement with the organized movement, produce their own spaces on a continuous basis. In this thesis, while examining LGBTI+s' tactics to overcome existing oppressiveness, I take support from my ethnographic inquiry of LGBTI+s and I look deep into the ways that individuals contribute to the production of urban spaces while examining their understandings of various spatialities as well as their executed resistance tactics because I think that "appropriating the external world and organically connecting objectivity and subjectivity... [is] giving instead direction to our view of the future, to our views and our consciousness" (Merrifield, 2002, p.78). With this positioning that I adopt in this dissertation, I aim to put a stop to the perception of the individual as "a fiction, a myth, ... an empty, negative form - a pleasant illusion for each human grain of sand" and I

⁹ According to Lefebvre, the urban space is accompanied by the notions of "difference, recurrence, reciprocity" (Lefebvre, 1991b., p.149). In here, I saw the need to assert the right to the city with the right to difference since it signals the expansion of the right to the city's claim. In the cases that I will be developing in the analysis section, I will position the right to the city concept as an embraced tool, consciously or unconsciously by LGBTI+s in order to bring in the necessary liberation and the right to "be" in everyday urban spaces, which are made of "encounter, assembly and simultaneity" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.101).

aim to emphasize its “becoming ... more social, more human - and more individual” features (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.248).

Put in a nutshell, I suggest examining the production of space and reformulation of urban spaces as a site of resistance through a perspective that requires a greater emphasis on individual agency, regardless of a state/sense/act of belonging of that particular individual to the activist/collective movement. My approach does not reject the old power structures, but instead, I attempt to contribute to the existing conceptual and theoretical frameworks to cover resistance activities that occur in shifting everyday spatial milieus. My contribution aims to be a combination of the results of organized collective actions such as reinforcement of collective identity, Pride Marches, demonstrations, or protests since they are taking a very important part in seeking the right to the city, together with the acts of resistance that I found to be more transgressive, discursive, differently carried out by an individual or by many individuals separately, and on acts that require instantaneous imagination/creativity and continuity/repetition, based on the oppressive power’s nature and requisiteness. My suggested emphasis on the power of the individual agency requires a rethinking of the kind of ideas that pave the way to engender a revised theoretical framework for resistance practices and also for the production of the spatial milieus that they are taking place.

1.2.4. Lack of Examples from Non-Western Contexts

The Western World has witnessed multiple developments in diminishing the presence of unequal and unjust spatial regulations in the context of LGBTI+s. These developments were tied to the transformations in legal, economic and socio-cultural areas such as the appropriation of legal rights, and amelioration in the context of economic, social life conditions of LGBTQ+ identified people (Giesecking, 2013; Hubbard et al., 2015). Many of these attempts often directly or tacitly embarked on a fundamental difference of these groups, greatly influenced by the norm and traditions of the West, which was characterized by modernity and democracy (Savcı, 2011).

While at the same time, in non-Western geographies and cultures heteronormative and patriarchal values carried the role of building blocks of the socio-cultural regime, these

socio-economic and legal developments and socio-cultural changes that were occurring in the Western World did not take place and remained most of the time absent from social transformations; these geographies remained unhinged. However, I believe it would not be correct to interpret this lack of change as a matter of defeat or unsuccess. Resistance in itself is a continuous act and contributes, even though slowly, to the reformulation of existing systems and different cultural and social settings that necessitate different solution approaches.

In the Turkish example, these issues reveal themselves as problematic points. Since preexisting codes in a complex social system may render individuals of that society highly agentic, their spatio-temporalities inevitably impact their ability to be tactical in terms of their resistances. For this, I suggest adopting another perspective which is a feminist and a situated one.

1.2.4.1. Situated and Feminist Perspectives

The focus of academic writing is posited upon “the global cities of the West” and this results in the inclusion of “different inflections of sexuality in non-metropolitan, non-Western and more “ordinary” cities” (Hubbard et al., 2015, p.299). While investigating my fieldwork results, asking myself some questions, and accordingly while coming up with new ideas to analyze the relationship between LGBTI+s and the urban space in Istanbul, I also realized adding a situated and feminist perspective to resistances, the production of space and the right to the city, which falls short in including heteropatriarchal power relations into the equation and their impacts on the subjects of oppression, would also help me better explore this topic.

The inclusion of situatedness into the equation implies the adoption of a feminist perspective. This position focuses on how one can make use of their “positional perspective as a place from where values are interpreted and constructed rather than as a locus of an already determined set of values” (Alcoff, 1988 as cited in Naples, 2003, p.22). Due to the complexity of gender and sexual identities’ experiences across the place, space, socio-political, and cultural contexts, I needed such a viewpoint to be able to present different layers of lived experiences. I suggest that situatedness would bring the perspective of understanding the attributes and meanings attached to spaces

within their own contextual and social affiliations. Thus, I propose that rather than scrutinizing this issue through universal concepts and contexts, it would be better to hear and look through the narrator's lens, in their own contexts.

I wanted to concentrate on the importance of meanings, and conflicts arising from these meanings, and experiences that situate the complexities of gender and sexuality within a historical and social context. This situatedness would not only reflect on the imbued meanings of that current context but at the same time, it would also provide the web of social and spatial interactions through which it emerges. With this approach I will be adopting in this thesis, that the lived experiences of LGBTI+s in Istanbul would indicate a unique way of producing space and resistance mechanisms, I expect that it will in return provide new paths for looking and seeing the production of urban spaces and resistances that take place in those.

To wrap up what I discussed in terms of my positionality that I adopted in this thesis; I believe the examination of the relationship between LGBTI+s and their resistances against oppressiveness in everyday urban spaces, which is mostly developed upon the visibility while mostly missing out on other aspects of lived experiences as well as not taking the agency of the individual as a powerful source of resistance mechanism into account, and the under-studied experiences of LGBTI+s in non-Western geographies, especially in Turkey needs to be reformulated.

Thus to do this, what I have in mind is: to pay attention to resistances stemming from affordable in-visibility in addition to the perceptible resistances, to discuss, along with the discernable spatial claims, the micro-spatial productions and their impacts on LGBTI+s' everyday lives, to examine the individual agency and resistances that stem from it along with the collective's input to it and to adopt a situated perspective where the socio-cultural background is anchored to a non-Western geographical setting: Istanbul, Turkey. With this research, I take the initiative to pursue these propositions with a deeper inspection aimed at LGBTI+s' complex lives because my fieldwork results showed me that the complexity of LGBTI+s' resistances to attain their right to the city necessitates a more fluid, flexible, and progressive perspective.

1.3. Contextual Framework

To understand LGBTI+s' spatiality and resistances through the discussions of socio-cultural formations, which I discuss in the analysis section of my thesis (in Chapters 4-7), I considered it essential to understand and situate the context of the gender and sexuality dynamics and its spatial repercussions in Turkey. Here, I will first be presenting Turkey's cultural setting on gender dynamics, and then I will portray the existing literature on LGBTI+s' entanglement with space after an overview of historical developments regarding the relationship between LGBTI+s and Turkish society. This research context will include discussions on gender and sexuality, public occurrences, important political events, socio-cultural changes, and the organizational history of LGBTI+ resistance mechanisms in Turkey.

1.3.1. Gender and Sexuality in The Turkish Context

State-imposed normality makes permanent transgression inevitable (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.23).

In the context of this thesis, I wanted to understand how the current place of LGBTI+s in Turkish society emerged, to begin with. Why are things the way they are in terms of gender and sexuality dynamics in Turkey? And where does it stem from? To make a thorough assessment in the analysis section, I thought I should go back to its establishment years and see what kinds of traces I will be able to find between the current situation in Turkey and the past gender and sexuality dynamics.

Turkey is represented as a struggling geographical territory, a bridge or even a limbo between many dualities: impacted by the Eastern and Western traditions along with being situated in European and Middle Eastern settings, in-between secularity and religiosity, authoritarianism and democracy can be cited among some of these contrasting features (Hasan, 2012). This is also a country where capitalism and the establishment of the nation-state took place at a later period than the countries in the Western world (Savran, 2002, p.257).

Modern Turkey's history dates back to 1923. The foundation of current mechanisms used in the institutional system was cultivated during the 1920s and 1930s with

Western influence. The aim was to “reach the level of contemporary civilization” (*muassır medeniyet seviyesine erişmek*) (Göle, 1997, p.84). During that period, differences based on ethnic, religious, and economic bases were considered obstacles that needed to be overcome in order to achieve a homogenized and unified whole (Göle, 1997, p.83). While establishing its foundational roots, not only institutions but also cultural codes, and social norms were designed from scratch in such a way that gender roles were devised in a compartmentalized way within this modernization package (Özbay, 1999). In fact, according to Bereket and Adam, the transition towards the modern capitalist world system played an important role in socio-cultural formation of LGBTI+ identities in Turkey (Bereket & Adam, 2006, p.134). While equality between men and women was sought after, in the public realm this equality could only be attained by the denial of the difference between the two, whereas in the private realm, the hierarchy was still salient (Arat, 1997, p.99). Patriarchal and masculinity-oriented social order turned out to be considered one of the building blocks of Turkish society, and as a result, those who did not fit into these norms became marginalized and outcasted.

The developments following Turkey’s foundation process in 1923 can be considered profound and fundamental changes to contemporary history, which for the most part, undoubtedly concentrated on the public sphere. Some changes, including the shift in calendars and other changes directly aiming at altering religious ways of ruling, dressing, teaching, and even ‘existing’ in the new ‘modern’ and ‘civilized’ society, came along with changes impacting the way of presenting oneself in the newly constructed and designed social space. The reforms made after 1923 aiming at the public realm necessitated certain drastic appearance, behavior, and comportment changes both in public and private spheres and these developments were introduced as a part of the “Westernization” and “Europeanization” projects for which “women” started carrying an emblematic importance (Göle, 1997, p.84).

During that period, the discourse of “civilization” as well as many other political initiatives, was critically important in supporting all of these reforms. As I stated above, a critical element of modernization’s success was the ‘liberation of women’. In fact, as put by Kandiyoti (1991), “the ‘new woman’ of the Kemalist era became an explicit symbol of the break with the past” (p.41). As a result, women’s liberation

became a measurement tool for the degree of civilization the country was able to attain (Çakır, 2011, p.511). In fact, familial relations and gender identities were considered signifiers of both modernity and nationalist discourses in Turkey (Özbay, 1999, p.555).

One of the most significant achievements of the new system that aimed to create a modern woman was women's election rights, civil dress code, elevated participation in educational establishments and to the workforce, and more importantly the sharing of public and private spaces with men (Özbay, 1999, p.560). The aim of that period was to abolish the boundaries between public and private spheres and for this, the goal was to attain equality between men and women in both spheres (Çakır, 2011, p.511). The changes brought upon women's socialization during the establishment of the new system were rooted in the "nation-building and secularization" project (Kandiyoti, 1991, p.43). However, during the establishment period of the Republic, these changes had their own gender dimensions and dynamics embedded in their historicity (Kandiyoti, 1991). Although there were developments aiming at changes for women's place in the public sphere, women were mostly expected to take part in the transformative projects of the private sphere and the structure of these projects focused on assigning certain duties to women within the realm of the private sphere (Göle, 1997, p.84). As put by Özbay (1999) "women's place was seen as at the heart of the house" (p.559).

It is argued that being able to go out in the public sphere became the criterion of liberation (Savran, 2002). But, as Özbay (1999) argues, this separation between public and private spheres, which was brought with the transition to a more industrial and urban lifestyle, did not essentially liberate women (p.564). While the trend towards modernization was considered a signal of change from the existing system limiting women's presence in the public sphere, the projects effectuated during this period fortified the conventional gender-based distribution of labor and space which resulted in the continuance of the passivation of women's role in civil society (İlkkaracan, 2001, p.5). In fact, Turkish feminists indicated that these reforms did not liberate women since men were still perceived as the head of the family in "modernized" Turkey and that type of prescribed heterosexual and monogamous nuclear family type became the basic unit of the Turkish society (Kandiyoti, 1987). As a result, the family

was redefined as the primary place for the conveyance of traditions, habits, and customs (Çakır, 2011, p.511).

Women's sexuality has been under restrictive and coercive limitations that took the form of political and social control mechanisms (İlkkaracan, 2001, p.1). While women have long been engaged in struggles to claim their rights in the public sphere, state-level controlling mechanisms interrupted these attempts in diverse ways. It is argued that the modern social structures that were introduced during this period of time such as the nuclear family and the place of women within that family structure did not attain their initial aim, which was to transform the traditional social system anchored at patriarchal oppressiveness. Instead, they reproduced them, this time with different versions and forms of it. Kandiyoti points out "a process of subordination of the family to the state and state intervention" during that period of time which aimed to homogenize and unify the socialization practices of the citizens in Turkey as in other country examples (Kandiyoti, 1991, p.9). This interference was drastically affecting the private realm of the family household in Turkey and with the rise of the republic and the changes brought during that period, the issues circling around women "became one of the pawns in the Kemalist struggle to liquidate the theocratic remnants of the Ottoman state" (Kandiyoti, 1991, pp.36-38).

Feminist scholars also wrote how women in Turkey, usually "trapped" at home, in the private sphere, were not only the "passive victims" of their destinies. Feminist writers argue that following the establishment years of the republic, women formed empowering webs of solidarity in private and household spaces and developed many survival tactics in the face of the oppression they were facing (Savran, 2002, p.258). These tactics were seen as bargains and negotiations with the patriarchal regime (Kandiyoti, 1988)

State-level regulations on sexuality have required obligatory heterosexuality both in the development periods of the Republic and in the current days of Turkey (Savcı, 2011, p.70). As a result, many of the laws or alleged emancipations developed in heteronormative and patriarchal contexts were applied to families, individuals, social activities, and to marriage (Savcı, 2011). The state authorities' interference in the field of morality by the legislative regulation at multiple levels of governmentality was yet

another important dynamic affecting the current situation of ‘non-normative’ sexualities. Moreover, mandatory military service appeared as one of the most crucial elements of this governmental intervention which boosted the ‘honor’ of manhood and rendered the man “the commander” of the nuclear family (Biricik, 2009).

Although sexuality has been a field that can irrefutably be internalized as an ‘identity’ by those who experience it, it also served as a discursive arena that arranges existing power dynamics and oppressive necessities for the purpose of homogeneity in a given society. As a result, it determined the inclusion and marginalization of individuals into national and/or relational domains, and attributes misconduct and/or mental illness to bodies and/or moral value.

Now, I will be examining initially the state-level and then the socio-culturally grounded directives set upon LGBTI+s in Turkey.

1.3.2. “Who Would Have Thought?” (*Nerdeen Nereye*)¹⁰

Because “the history of space should not be distanced in any way from the history of time” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.117), I would like to look into the socio-political developments that took place in Turkey in the context of LGBTI+s starting from the years of 1970s. When we examine the developments in terms of LGBTI+s’ organizational¹¹ capacities and possibilities in Turkey, we see that historical occurrences in Turkish political turmoil, discrimination and oppression aimed at LGBTI+ identified individuals have been one of the driving forces for gathering and

¹⁰ “Nerdeen nereye” was the name of the art exhibition, which was held within the scope of the Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride Week that celebrated its 22nd anniversary in 2014. ‘Nerdeen nereye’ is translated as ‘Who Would Have Thought?’ in English. This exhibition was organized to create a space for the discussion about how the LGBTI+ movement has transformed in the past 22 years, and where it came from. I wanted to put the name of this section by referring to this art exhibition to ‘situate’ this study’s importance. More information can be attained at: <https://lgbtnewsturkey.com/tag/metin-akdemir/>, <https://m.bianet.org/bianet/lgbti/156762-lgbti-hareketi-nerdeen-nereye> (Retrieved November 26, 2020)

¹¹ The Turkish Civil Code Article 56 defines the establishment of an organization like this: “An association is defined as a society formed by unity of at least seven real persons or legal entities for realization of a common object other than sharing of profit by collecting information and performing studies for such purpose.” (The second part of the law indicates that “No association may be formed for an object contrary to the laws and ethics”) (Retrieved November 16, 2018, from https://www.tusev.org.tr/usrfiles/files/Turkish_Civil_Code.pdf). In my thesis, I do not only focus on the legally defined framework of organizational capacities, but I address this issue from a broader social perspective. I try to portray a narrative of ‘*örgütlülük*’ (being organized) of LGBTI+s.

forming a strong movement that would stand up for its own rights to life, and right to the city. Verbal exclusion, visual bans, and physical exclusion of LGBTI+s restrained individuals from formulating strong organizations for a long period of time that translated into a compelling emergence of a strong movement later on.

As I discussed above, in Turkey gender and sexuality dynamics are founded on patriarchal values and they are defined in a strict way. During the 1970s, binary gender categories of men and women and also attributions to these concepts were reevaluated and reestablished to ensure ‘equality’ between the two, by reinforcing women’s participation in society (Çetin, 2015). State regulations on gender were operationalized through different platforms: from the assignment of gender at birth to obligatory military service requirements, and to governmental authorities’ declarations concerning women’s place in society. The Turkish Republic authorities tried from the outset to Europeanize all aspects of the society, with the general goal of creating a “cutting edge” Turkish society (Çetin, 2015). While doing so, LGBTI+ identities were not rendered illegal, instead, they gave no consideration to LGBTI+s up until the 1960s (Çetin, 2015). LGBTI+ artists kept their visibility on different media channels during the “restricted political atmosphere of the 1970s” (Selen, 2012, p.738) and then the secular nation-state in Turkey started being more and more oppressive towards those with ‘non-normative’ sexual orientation and gender identity. Towards the end of the 1970s, because of the police’s repressive actions, some groups within the LGBTI+ community in Turkey gained a more political character. LGBTI+s started battling for their spatial emancipation and their liberation in different parts of the country, mostly in big cities (Çetin, 2015).

In the 1980s, the intimidation attempts were not limited to preventing people who wanted to find and support each other from doing so but also, the limitations brought the ban of Bülent Ersoy¹² had critical outcomes on the lives of women with trans experience (Çetin, 2015; Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2012b; Zengin, 2014). In those years,

¹² Bülent Ersoy, a popular singer back in the 1970s, publicly identified herself as a heterosexual woman after several years of presence in the art scene as a man (Zengin, 2014, p.160). She entered into a legal battle with the state which eventually granted her the right to convert her national identification papers to ‘female’ (replacing the blue card with the pink one). “Transsexuality” was exempt from Turkish legislation until 1988, when Bülent Ersoy won her case in court. She has gained a significant amount of attention from the media given the fact that she was already country-wide famous for her musical and cinematic performances.

exiles, forceful physical banishment, employment discrimination, and bans aimed at women with trans experience resulted in compulsory sex work and hunger strikes (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2012a, p.144; 2012b). A clear message of intolerance has been voiced during that period. The 1980 military coup ended any attempts to create an organized movement (Partog, 2012, p.169). In the period following this military coup, the army instituted measures that restricted the actions of various organizations (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2012b).

LGBTI+s became a target of military suppression in 1980. The rise of LGBTI+ rights' voices and advocacy started taking place in the late 80 military coup period in Turkey, during which former Prime Minister Turgut Özal welcomed the expanding capitalist liberal system and greatly promoted it (Partog, 2012, p.169). The main changes to this modern socio-economic system included the exposure of the formerly exclusively regulated domestic economy to international investment and its participation in the worldwide capitalist system along with its exposure to cultural changes. The coup d'état that took place on September 12th, 1980, is still shown as the reason for the depoliticization of the society (especially of youth) in today's Turkey (Gümüş, 2017, p.4). The adjustments brought following the post-coup period implicated an increasingly liberal understanding of ethnic minority groups, access to cultural exports from foreign countries, and other social and economic changes that were deemed as drastic (Partog, 2012).

The unspoken nature of sexuality in Turkey, the derision of any kind of gender identity or sexual orientation that falls outside of the circle determined by the state (the sole existence under the gender dichotomy and heterosexuality) have affected both the government's and society's view on LGBTI+s. In 1981, approximately 60 trans sex workers were "cleared" from different parts of Istanbul towards the peripheries and furthermore, law enforcement officers detained trans sex workers and arbitrarily confined them for a period of time during which severe mental and physical torment was applied (Çetin, 2015; Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2012a, 2013). The media, by depicting stories that vilified LGBTI+ community, the state representatives by sanctioning gender transition processes and by openly attributing the "LGBTI+" with suspicious and anti-social behavior, the police, by taking advantage of their roles and tyrannizing LGBTI+s have all contributed to LGBTI+s' spacelessness (Çetin, 2015; Partog, 2012;

Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2012a, 2013). Later on, in 1987, the rampant police violence gave rise to collective protests which in the following years of the 1990s resulted in the institutionalization of the movement (Çetin, 2015).

It was not until the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s with the modernization and emergence of the nation-state that ‘LGBT’ movement began being outspoken (Partog, 2012, p.170; Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2012a, p.17). Therefore, Turkey had not recently met with LGBTI+ and queer politics, on the contrary, these issues have been voiced almost 30 years ago. After the coup d’état of 1980, this politicization found its roots in the attempt of the foundation of the Radical Democrat Green Party (ILGA, 2004, Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2012a, pp.17, 144). Ibrahim Eren, although a disputed character (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013, p.335) was the founder who tried to establish this political party in Turkey (İnce, 2015; Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2012a, pp.17, 144). Bereket and Adam highlight that the development of the LGBTI+ organizations in the 1990s took place through the development of the feminist movement and also through “changing social conditions and visions of gender” in Turkey (Bereket & Adam, 2006, p.135). Lambda Istanbul was the first organization established in 1993, while Kaos GL was established in Ankara in 1994 (Lambda Istanbul, 2013).¹³

The emergence of *Gacı Dergisi* (*Gacı Magazine*) in 1996-7 which operated as a communication platform project for trans sex workers was initiated by Kadın Kapısı (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013, p.148). This has become one of the important milestones of the trans movement in Turkey (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013, p.107). In that period, a group of people started discussing the problems of feminism, ecology, antimilitarism, socialism, and LGBTI+ on the same ground (İnceoğlu & Eryılmaz, 2019, p.273; Partog, 2012, p.170; Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013, p.152). However, the efforts to gather all these new “social movements” under the same roof have not been fruitful (Partog, 2012).

In a way, the 1990s were the permanent signal that LGBTI+s and the movement itself were going to publicly exist both as an institutional entity and as a grassroots group (Partog, 2012). At that time, the social movement took an irreversible turn that will

¹³ Currently, there are numerous LGBTI+ organizations, associations and groups throughout Turkey that focus to decrease violence, to promote trans-rights, to prevent HIV / AIDS, to conduct military reform and also to raise awareness of society in general about gender and sexuality-oriented topics.

have had an enduring effect on the lives of those who were looking for support and solidarity. With the establishment of ‘*Gökkuşığı Topluluğu*’ (Rainbow Community or Rainbow 92) in 1992 (Çetin, 2015; İnce, 2015; Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013, p.333), the movement took the first step for organizing the first pride march in the country. At that time, being public for LGBTI+s has been achieved mostly through literary instruments. In that sense, along with the attempt to the organization of the first Pride Parade in Istanbul, the established organizations such as Kaos GL and Lambda Istanbul not only became public reclamations but at the same time they became the appropriated public space of the LGBTI+ community in Turkey during the 1990s (İnce, 2015).

During this decade, organizations, associations, and support groups popped out like flowers. LGBTI+s started to gather and form support groups, politically oriented groups, and awareness-raising groups everywhere around Turkey. Venüs’ün Kızkardeşleri (*Venus’ Sisters*) was formed as a solidarity group for lesbian and bisexual women in Istanbul and Sappho’nun Kızları (*Sappho’s Girls*) was respectively formed in Ankara (Çetin, 2015; Kaos GL, 2006; Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013, p.13). There were also groups formed in universities, student groups that aimed to gather LGBTI+ students together in order to support and protect each other. For instance, LeGaTo, which flourished at Middle East Technical University and later on continued its existence at Boğaziçi University (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013, p.13; Yıldız, 2007) and “Gay Ankara”¹⁴ which was founded in the following period of LeGaTo’s abolishment, were some of the major organizational conglomerations that thrived at the beginning of the decade (İnce, 2015).

It was at the beginning of the millennium 2000 that Istanbul Social Ecology Platform (Istanbul Toplumsal Ekoloji Platformu) started operating as a reunion of five different organizations: Amargi Kadın Kooperatifi ve Dayanışma Sendikası (*Amargi Women Cooperative and Support Syndicate*), Gökkuşığı Kadın Derneği (Rainbow Women Association), Lambda Istanbul and Toplumsal Ekoloji Kooperatifi Girişimi (*Social Ecology Cooperative Initiative*) (Gilat EU, 2016). Through this initiative, formulated

¹⁴ Venus’ Sisters, Gacı Magazine, and Gay Ankara, later on, abolished themselves and donated all their accumulations to Kaos GL prior to 1998 (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013, p.14).

by different voices, the platform aimed to fight against “racism, gender-based discrimination, homophobia, nationalism, class exploitation, anthropocentrism and militarism as a whole.”¹⁵

Another turning point in Turkish history, which started during the 1990s and still continues today, has been Turkey’s inclination to gain access to the European Union which resulted in a situation where Copenhagen requirements made the government more liable in case of human rights violations in the country (Çetin, 2015). The AKP (Party for Justice and Development, the current ruling political party in Turkey for the past 20 years as of 2022), came to power with the promises of contributing to a priority on multiculturalist policies and human rights (especially racial, cultural and social), and of allowing the requests of racial and religious rights of minorities (including in the rights of LGBTI+s) to be expressed more vigorously than ever before (Savcı, 2011, p.78).

The LGBTI+ movement has developed in parallel with multiple social and political movements since the early 2000s. The movement, which was taking small steps towards gaining political visibility, this time started to be visible out in the streets (with May 1st demonstrations in 2001) (Bereket & Adam, 2006, p.135, Partog, 2012, p.172). During the 2000s, the collective movement grew by leaps and bounds (Yıldız, 2007). Official and unofficial groups, organizations, and associations increased rapidly in number and they expanded and spread their existence all over Turkey, in different Anatolian and Mediterranean and Aegean cities: Antalya with Gökkuşuğu Eşcinsel Kültür ve Yaşam Grubu (*Rainbow Gay Culture and Life Group*), İzmir Eşcinsel Kültür Grubu (*İzmir Gay Culture Group*) (Yıldız, 2007), Pembe Hayat LGBT (Pink Life LGBT) specifically focusing on trans and sex workers’ issues in Ankara), MorEl in Eskişehir were some of the biggest groups and organizations that were founded during this decade. In a way, the movement started to establish and polish its presence even more and started addressing the public. In 2016, when I was about to complete my fieldwork process, groups in universities, in local neighborhoods were still being

¹⁵ Original text: “Çatışırken dönüşülen, dayanışırken aynılaşılmayan bir toplumsal model için, geleceği bugünden yaratmak için yola çıkmıştı. Her adımda birbirini kolluyordu. Irkçılığa, cinsiyetçiliğe, karşıcinsencilığe, milliyetçiliğe, sınıf sömürüsüne, insan merkezçiliğe ve militarizme karşı hep birlikte mücadele ediyordu. Hep birlikte özgürlüğü arıyordu” (Retrieved February 3, 2016, from <http://gilat.eu/2016/01/26/turkiye-glict-hareketinin-tarihinden-satir-baslari/>)

formulated and operating as activist and support groups that fought for the rights of LGBTI+s and provided a safe(r) environment for them, primarily in metropolitan but also in small cities of Turkey.

When I examined the years of the 2000s, I saw that the LGBTI+ movement was considered ‘shameless’, and ‘impudent’ and pondered almost as a threat to Turkish morality norms and customs of the society. The claims of LGBTI+ organizations, even though they have been receiving more support in recent years, were subject to severe attacks and accusations for promoting immorality and indecency and for not fitting into Turkish family norms¹⁶. It is argued that it was the consideration of being “a fruit of the Western culture” and being assessed as the moral disruptor of Turkish cultural norms and codes that became a dominant perspective in stigmatizing LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey.¹⁷

By the mid and towards the end of the 2000s, being open about non-heterosexual, non-conformist, and non-gender-binary was socially disapproved and had further brutal violence and oppression-oriented consequences in Turkey. Activists from Lambda made an effort to enter into the constitutional writing process and they started a decisive struggle for constitutional recognition and citizenship rights (Depeli, 2013, p.41). The idea that AKP seemed to understand the marginalized aspects of the country such as the “headscarf” and “ethnic discrimination against Kurds”, as well as the “unrecognized position of the Armenian genocide” offered LGBTI+s the expectation of being issued a chance to their own as another “oppressed and marginalized group” and gain rights on this basis (Yalçın & Yılmaz, 2013). Despite numerous harassment cases, brutal attacks, and murders, governmental bodies declined to introduce the terms of ‘sexual orientation’ and ‘gender identity’ into the Turkish Constitution (Yalçın & Yılmaz, 2013). LGBTI+s’ rampant persistence towards the government to

¹⁶ For more information please see: <http://bianet.org/bianet/toplumsal-cinsiyet/117787-genel-ahlakcilar-simdi-de-siyah-pembe-ucgeni-kapatmak-istiyor> and <http://kaosgl.org/sayfa.php?id=18819> (Retrieved April 13, 2020)

¹⁷ Moreover, the 2000s were the years during which LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey began to be institutionalized. Even though activists gather around meetings or magazines as discussed above, neither Lambda Istanbul nor Kaos GL did have formal, legal, registered structures between the years of 1993 and 2005, although they were actually an organization operating for the rights of LGBTI+s (Şenel, 2014, p.36).

express a formal dialogue has not led the Turkish Government to act accordingly, especially in an era when there were massive legal reforms to satisfy EU human rights demands. The responses from the Turkish state were dismissive and oppressive towards LGBTI+s.

Since the years of 2010, the collective LGBTI+ movement's voice made clear that it stands out against oppression, nationalism, ethnic discrimination, militarism, exploitation, and sexism, and that it stands with the poor, the marginalized, and the 'others' in general. This process had caused the LGBTI+ movement to become more visible¹⁸ and to gain strength by reaching out to different marginalized groups. Especially the support wave gained through Pride Weeks and Pride Marches was inspiring for the LGBTI+ collective movement to create its own agenda (Partog, 2012).

'Public morality' is socially regulated, furthermore protected by laws (especially by the Law of Misdemeanors (No. 5326) targeting trans sex workers)¹⁹ and reinforced by law enforcement officers on numerous occasions²⁰. My previous research shows

¹⁸ I think that the claim that LGBTI+ movement has become more visible starting in the beginning of the 2010s needs to be carefully understood in light of the country's political turmoil's impact. First of all, the start of governmental bans on Pride Marches started taking place in 2015. And although I will be briefly discussing in the next pages what has been going on since 2016 when there has been a coup attempt in Turkey which resulted in the shrinking of the space, and further harsh decision-making of state authorities; I would like to state here despite the visibility developments that are worth mentioning, there has also been a spatial retreat of the movement's actors, as self-protective measures.

¹⁹ More information on Law of Misdemeanors, no.5326 in the Turkish Criminal Code can be retrieved from <http://www.masak.gov.tr/userfiles/file/MisdemeanoursLawNo5326.pdf> (Retrieved July 29, 2019)

²⁰ There have been critical debates in the past 15 years following the announcement and introduction of the Law of Misdemeanors in 2005. Since the implementation of the Act of Misdemeanors (No 5326) in March 2005, the problem has deteriorated, allowing police to arrest and/or punish Turkish people on a multitude of counts, none of which are openly specified by the act. Article 32 currently imposes a fine of 581 TRY (about 30 USD and 30 EUR) "to protect public security, public order, or commonwealth" (back in 2011, this amount was around 100 lira). Articles 36 and 37 imposed a fine for those who "make noise with a purpose of discomforting or breaking the peace of others" or for "disturbing others to sell goods and services." (Retrieved November 19, 2018, from <https://outrightinternational.org/content/turkey-change-law-misdemeanors-end-abuse-trans-people>)

What I revealed during my research for my master's thesis project was that with the implementation of the law enforcement bonus scheme, the marginalization of women with trans experience in Istanbul had worsened and became particularly pernicious. While women with trans experience have been describing the harassment of the authorities for decades, the new regime had significantly boosted this harassment. They were charged in the middle of the day on busy streets, with the presumption of sex work, when running errands or doing regular purchases. Even in these situations, women with trans experience faced punishment, arrest, coercion, eviction from their residences, and received abusive behavior from the authorities under the Law of the Misdemeanors.

incidents where the ‘public morality’ card is being played by governmental officers in order to suppress the LGBTI+ community, especially the trans community (Zerey, 2011). The 2005 Law of Misdemeanors, which aimed at curbing unethical acts, provided police officers with great freedom to determine what behavior is acceptable to Turkish moral codes and which ones must be penalized under this rule. The discretion was provided because the legislation did not deliver the requisite definition of ‘morality’. The acts of police officers tend overall to be an administrative and legally controlled problem, as they say, the regular penalties are written under the law of misdemeanors for impudent behavior of disturbing Turkish customs and practices. The urban presence of LGBTI+s (and especially of trans community) become heavily related to misconduct or sexually implicit behavior and they are regulated under this law.²¹ As a result, this situation creates an ambiguity since it enforces restrictions that are embedded into the everyday life. These constraints are presented “as both natural (or normal) or technical requirements” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.338) that heavily rely on public morality norms which transform the urban space they operate on into a dominated urban space.

As a result of all this information, I argue that starting from the 1980s, the developments in the cases of LGBTI+s have been indicative of major changes in the political transition of the country. Having said this, it is also important to point out that these changes have particularly received a boost through the rising power of the police. Even with the emergence of registered organizations, LGBTI+s could not immediately win their own space. As I mentioned in an earlier footnote, only in 2005 that Kaos GL (primarily established in 1994) opened a cultural center and regained its place, Lambda Istanbul (primarily established in 1993) was able to open an office²² (Şenel, 2014,

²¹ Here, I argue that the social control is whipped by morality norms that are intrinsic to a produced Turkishness (with multiple components such as religion, sect, nationality, masculine gender superiority, and patriarchal priority). Secondly, this control also takes the form of elimination of certain expressions of sexualities (the accepted forms are heterosexual relations, with certain conditions (vanilla sex, within monogamous marriage, are socially acceptable norms deemed as natural by the ruling power). This elimination is both on a discursive and a physical level: jabbed towards the peripheries or neighborhoods of urban spaces, LGBTI+s find themselves physically left off and ostracized. Bodies are thus governed through institutionalized powers: inducement, strict regulations, and oppressive directives can be considered among its methods.

²² A critical case regarding the office of Lambda Istanbul will be mentioned later in the thesis at the crossroads of unwanted visibility of LGBTI+s and the concept of ‘home’ and family.

p.36) and SPoD was founded in 2011 with an office located in Istanbul. With these and many more initiatives, LGBTI+ organized movement started to create its own spaces on a collective level.

1.3.3. Literature Review on LGBTI+s in Turkey

“The science of the city requires a historical period to make itself and to orient social practice” (Lefebvre, 1996, p.153). Academic studies focusing on the construction of LGBTI+ identities in Turkey are not numerous, but there has been an increasing trend in research conducted on this topic. To evaluate master’s and doctoral theses, I used the database provided by the Council of Higher Education (*Yüksek Öğretim Kurumu*)²³ by entering the term ‘LGBT’, and I noticed that the results that came when typing ‘LGBTI’ and ‘LGBTI+’ were already included in the first one. I did not use quotation marks as I wanted to reach out to all the results that were associated with the term ‘LGBT’. I also made other searches for the terms ‘eşcinsel’, ‘lezbiyen’, ‘biseksüel’, ‘transseksüel’, ‘transgender’ on the same webpage and gathered all the results together. I eliminated all the studies that were duplicated. The website offers information on the year, thesis type, and subject of the study. Here I will only be providing information on the studies that were conducted in the field of sociology and anthropology. I found 127 theses that contained one of these concepts in it. Now, I would like to present a short summary of the outcomes.

The first thesis that discussed one of these issues was written in the year 2000. The increasing number of research on these issues gained haste after the year 2013, which marks the Gezi Park Protests (Figure 1). The year 2019 has so far been the most fruitful year in terms of the number of theses written in these two particular fields with a specific focus on ‘LGBT’, ‘eşcinsel’, ‘lezbiyen’, ‘biseksüel’, ‘transeksüel’, ‘transgender’ issues. The numbers have tripled in one year, after a relative decline in the year of 2018.

²³ The Thesis Center of the Council of Higher Education can be accessed at: <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/> (Retrieved October 8, 2020).

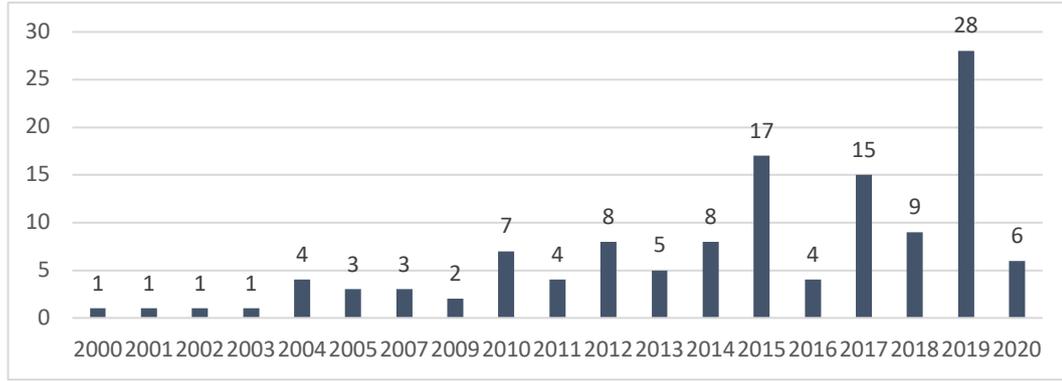


Figure 1. Number of Theses Written in the Field of Sociology and Anthropology by Years (Figure Prepared by the Author)

As I indicated above, another piece of information that I was able to gather from YÖK's website was the thesis type (Doctorate or master's degree). I noticed that masters-level theses are 10 times more than doctorate-level theses. It is possible to discern that the number of theses written in the first 10 years of the 2000s has grown almost five times between the years 2010-2020. The number of master's level theses seems to have followed the same path as the general trend. Although the number of doctorate theses in the fields of anthropology and sociology seems low (10 in total) in number, there is an increase, relatively smaller in comparison between the two decades.

Table 2. Theses Written in the Field of Sociology and Anthropology by Decades and Type (Table Prepared by the Author)

	Doctorate	Master's degree	Total
2000-2010	3	20	23
2011-2020	7	97	104
Total	10	117	127

In addition to these theses, LGBTI+s and the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey have been subject to various other academic writing so far in a variety of contexts. The range of these studies included but was not limited to the examination of the discrimination of LGBTI+s (Göçmen & Yılmaz, 2017, Yılmaz & Göçmen, 2016), on the class distinction among different LGBTI+s and the identity construction of LGBTI+s (Ural & Beşpınar, 2017) and the place of sexual others in the Turkish nation (Savcı, 2011).

There are other studies that focus on the position of LGBTI+s in Turkey and these studies show that this relationship, mostly governed by oppressive and hegemonic power mechanisms, has been blustery and confrontational (Birdal, 2013; Yıldız, 2014).

I would like to elaborate on some of the important studies that I found to be useful in the context of my thesis. I realized that Bakacak and Öktem's study (2014) is related to my thesis subject. They primarily provide an overview of attitudes towards LGBTI+s' in Turkey and then they deliver insightful knowledge on how LGBTI+s deal with these hostile attitudes (Bakacak & Öktem, 2014, pp.819-20). Referring to a survey²⁴ conducted in 2006 by an LGBTI+ organization (Lambda Istanbul) with 399 LGB people and two other studies, authors define four areas of inspection (Bakacak & Öktem, 2014, p.827). Bakacak and Öktem's study is based on a qualitative study they conducted with 15 university students who identified themselves as gay/bisexual and in their semi-structured interviews, they try to understand the problems and also the tactics they employed to deflect hostile instances (of homophobia and biphobia) they encounter in their everyday lives, which is also one of the main issues I tackle in this thesis. The outcomes indicate different patterns of behavior that gay and bisexual university students come up with during 4 different stages: the self-acceptance stage; facing sexual stigma and prejudice stage; the coming-out process and finally the stage of expressing their sexual identities. There were some tactics that were related to the outcome of my fieldwork results. Just to provide a hint on the similarities, I would like to give further information on Bakacak and Öktem's research. In their article, the two authors are trying to answer two main questions "What are the main forms of sexual stigma and prejudice caused by heterosexism that are experienced by young homosexuals in Turkey?" and "What are the ways in which homosexual individuals in Turkey manage heterosexism?" (p.817). In the part where they discuss the "strategies for managing stigma and prejudices" (p.833) and "strategies when openly expressing sexual identity" (p.839) they provide the accounts for a variety of everyday life tactics that I myself was able to observe and document in my thesis. Some of the common tactics that I was able to gather from my fieldwork are also in tandem with

²⁴ The results and the analysis of the surveys are retrieved February 20, 2021, from <http://www.lambdaistanbul.org/s/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/ne-yanlis-ne-de-yalniziz.pdf>

their identifications of ‘disguise’, ‘avoidance’, ‘political posture’, and ‘activism’. While Bakacak and Öktem are analyzing these tactics from a more linear timeline perspective of the coming out process, for my thesis, I investigated them through the lens of in-visibility, a key terminology that I will develop shortly after this section, and according to their differentiating features (micro and macro resistances) and then made further comments on these resistances’ ability to contribute to the production of space and appropriation of different urban spatial layers in Istanbul. In this sense, I find this study an important showcase that indicates the contextual framework and the actors of that structure that leads LGBTI+s to come up with similar tactics in the first place.

As I indicated in the previous sections, LGBTI+s’ daily social life experiences became a bit more open and visible to the eye in the 2000s. As Özbay (2015) points out, the social transformation and relative increase in public visibility via the rampant presence of LGBTI+ oriented issues and places rendered the issues of sexuality, gender identity, and sexual experiences more discussable. I would like to continue to give a more detailed account of the studies that I found inspiring and exemplary while writing my thesis. Pınar Selek’s study (2001) on Ülker Street has been one of the masterpieces I took inspiration from with its analysis of neighborhoods through the perspective of power dynamics in the given platform. Alp Biricik (2013a), who precisely focused on the intersection of places of ‘others’ and expressions of gender and sexuality in his brief study “Öteki’nin ürettiği Mekânlar ve Toplumsal Cinsiyet Kurguları” (*Places Produced by Others and Fictions of Gender/Sexuality*) offered a historical reflection of queer spaces in Beyoğlu based on qualitative interviewing methods. Biricik’s other study (2013b) “Kamusal Alanda Mahrem Taktikler” (*Private Tactics in Public Space*) is composed of narratives of LGBTI+s about how they came to know the first ‘gay places’ that they have been to. In addition to these, the master thesis of Furkan Hancıoğlu (2015), which concentrated on the example of Cihangir-Istanbul to examine the relationship between socio-economic class and the neighborhood; Nazlı Cabadağ’s master’s thesis (2015) focused on LGBTI’s spatial relations that are neatened around the neighborhood of Kurtuluş in Istanbul, Ezgi Yılmaz’s master’s thesis (2019) investigating the queer spatial production of Maçka Demokrasi Parkı in Istanbul from an architectural perspective can be considered the latest examples of this genre that I found inspirational.

Cabadağ's (2015) study provides critical information on LGBTI+s' positioning within one of the critical residential areas in Istanbul (Kurtuluş) and henceforth discusses the issues of boundaries and spatial negotiations with a focus on 'visibility', which I also took into account during my own study. Cabadağ's thesis focuses on a neighborhood called Kurtuluş²⁵ in Istanbul where a sizeable amount of LGBTI+s started to live starting from the mid-2010s. It discusses the "negotiations" and resistances of LGBTI+s with other residents of Kurtuluş and also it addresses "the politics of sexuality and spatiality based on the interactions of LGBTI residents" (Cabadağ, 2015, p.113). Both these issues were also important in my own study.

Considered semi-academic works, the results of the collection of oral history narratives gathered by NGOs and the narratives of LGBTI+s are also among the examples that flourish in this field. Two compilations, '80'lerde Lubunya Olmak' (*Being a Lubunya in the 80s*) and '90'larda Lubunya Olmak' (*Being a Lubunya in the 90s*) should be uttered among the list of examinations of gender & sexuality and space dynamics rooted in in-depth interviews. '80'lerde Lubunya Olmak' (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2012a), a series of interviews conducted with trans-identified individuals, reflect their experiences and life histories following the military regime (junta) period of the 1980s. '90'larda Lubunya Olmak' (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013) is furthermore explicating the developments in the 1990s, the violent behavior, the forced transformation of neighborhoods for the sake of and under the pretext of 'landscaping'. There are a few other studies focusing on the intricate power relations of sexuality in Turkey that guided me wisely while writing my thesis (Atalay & Doan, 2020; Çakırlar & Delice, 2012a; Özbay, 2015; Özyeğin, 2012). And there are other studies focusing specifically on the entanglement of LGBTI+s with Beyoğlu and Taksim districts²⁶ of Istanbul in the aftermath of the Gezi Park Protests (Çetin, 2015; Erol, 2017; Özbay & Savcı, 2018) that contributed greatly to my knowledge.

Aslı Zengin's discussion on the entanglements between the state and women with trans experience in Turkey has been another good contribution to the understanding of

²⁵ Kurtuluş is also one of the discussion topics in one of the analysis sections (in 7.3.2) and I reflect on Cabadağ's thesis discussions in that section to explore better my fieldwork findings.

²⁶ There will be a wider discussion on the relationship between LGBTI+s and Beyoğlu, Taksim districts in the following pages and also in other parts of the thesis.

spatial segregation experienced by LGBTI+s (especially trans community) in Istanbul (Zengin, 2014). Oppressive and heteronormative layers of space in Istanbul are documented along with the relatively more liberating case of Beyoğlu. In her study, Zengin points out the exclusionist nature of the state power that puts trans sex workers out of Beyoğlu to other districts while gentrifying different areas located in Taksim²⁷. Zengin's study (2014), on the other hand, is important for providing the necessary background to understanding state-oriented oppressiveness.

Şenel's master thesis (2014) which focuses on the everyday life representations of discrimination based on gender and sexuality in the lives of lesbian and bisexual women living in Ankara was of particular importance to me. I realized that some of the tools we made use of in our methodological (qualitative and feminist) and theoretical frameworks (De Certeau, Scott) were overlapping with each other. Similar to my study, Şenel too discussed the resistances this time of lesbian and bisexual women through her qualitative fieldwork results. Moreover, the impact of invisibility and its operationalization as a resistance tactic was also present in her study. I find it important to highlight again that Nazlı Cabadağ's master thesis (2015) was also focusing on the public visibility of LGBTI+s in Kurtuluş and from there I realized that the issue of visibility is indeed a key factor in the overview of LGBTI+s' relations with the Turkish society as a whole. Şenel's analysis of resistances was operated through individual and collective forms of resistances which was of both inspirational and corroborative nature for my own formulation positing upon micro and macro resistances. While her analysis was more circling around identity-oriented discussions, my aim was to reflect upon their spatial impacts. Throughout my whole analysis sections, I tried to highlight the existing similarities in our studies and these similarities actually made me confident of the widespread nature of this thesis' perspective, analysis, and the argumentation that I adopted.

Moreover, Güney & Ayhan Selçuk (2016) focus on the reasons why LGBTI+s as a social group find themselves secluded and confined in urban spaces and they conduct

²⁷ Beyoğlu is on the European side of Istanbul, and it represents a more Westernized, or "European," part of the European continent. It holds numerous recreational spaces and activities and yet there is also numerous residential parts to it. Taksim Square is one of the central locations in Istanbul offering a multitude of possibilities for all kinds of passersby and residents. Beyoğlu, the official name of the neighborhood where Taksim Square is located, is a touristic area as well as a frequented place for the locals. Most importantly, it is historically known to host different types of 'otherness'.

their quantitative study in the urban public sphere of İzmir, Turkey with 155 LGBTI+ identified individuals in 2012. The authors initially make connections with the acknowledgment of ethnic differences in Turkey and accordingly they address a critical question that I found deeply important: “If public spaces, parks, streets and shopping centres are not safe for one minority group, how can we assume that these places are safe for other minorities?” (Güney & Ayhan Selçuk, 2016, p.1395). They furthermore argue that nowadays the only safe spaces for LGBTI+s are bars and cyberspaces.

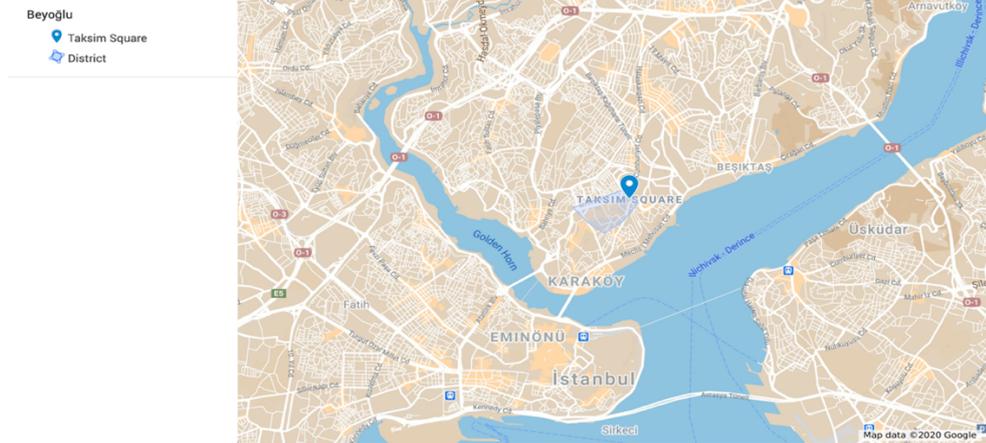
All these studies address critical gaps by focusing on a non-Western context, and the geographical setting of Turkey, and they contribute greatly to the study of gender, sexuality, and space in different parts of Turkey. The urban space in Istanbul, as in other city/country examples, is both the place that LGBTI+s shape and where they were shaped by. Yearly published reports, and EU bodies’ warnings indicate that discrimination and violence, as well as abuse and oppression against LGBTI+s are all in an increasing trend in Turkey (HRW, 2008; Kaos GL, 2016, 2019; Öz, 2020). There is little to no recognition or legal protective mechanisms in effect and as a result, LGBTI+s remain in a deeply vulnerable position (Öz, 2020; Yılmaz & Göçmen, 2016).

The Pew Research Center’s survey results of 2019 show that homosexuality is widely disapproved in Turkish society (75%). While the disapproval levels showed a rampant conservatism from the year of 2002 (78%) to 2013 (91%) which resulted in the form of violence, oppression and discrimination against LGBTI+s in Turkey on social levels, there seems to be a positive change between the years of 2013 and 2019 where the approval rate of homosexuality seemed to increase from 9% to 25% (Poushter & Kent, 2020). Moreover, one of the latest surveys conducted with the general public by Kadir Has University shows that more than half of the population (53.8%) would not want to be neighbors with gays, which appears as the group of people that received the highest rate among others (immigrants 45.8%, couples living together out of wedlock 39.8%) (Aydın et al., 2018, p.105)

There are multiple stories of displacement, forced evictions from Istanbul to other cities, within other cities and within different neighborhoods of Istanbul especially in the cases of women with trans experience (Selek, 2001; Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2012a,

2013; Zengin, 2014). Problems with landlords, the inhabitants of the district, and social attitudes were the reasons why so many LGBTIs+, especially women with trans experience, were moving from one home to the other during the 1990s and 2000s, especially in different parts of Beyoğlu-Taksim district²⁸.

Beyoğlu



Map 1. Beyoğlu District (Map Prepared by the Author on Google Maps)

Beyoğlu in the 1990s was marked with systematic police violence which peaked with Ülker Street occurrences in 1996 despite the fact that this district has been a central point of existence and visibility for LGBTI+ lives in Turkey (Selek, 2001; Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013; Zengin, 2014). Police brutality targeting trans sex workers was orchestrated to clean the streets from the ‘unaccepted’ and thus the marginalized residents. This brutal sweeping targeted transvestites, drug dealers, street kids, and street animals in the cause of amplifying the ‘beauties’ and hiding the ‘ugliness’ during the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) organized in Istanbul (Selek, 2001; Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013; Zengin, 2014).²⁹ Briefly put,

²⁸ Although I will be discussing in great detail in Chapter 7.3 of this dissertation, I would like to give a piece of information about the specificity of Beyoğlu and Taksim districts, more importantly of Ülker Street. Ülker Street located nearby the district of Cihangir in Beyoğlu became home to trans people and trans sex workers, same was valid for Bayram Street, located right at the heart of Istiklal Street. Both streets became memorable and known places and both of them witnessed publicly documented discrimination and exclusion. I will be discussing Ülker Street and its place in LGBTI+s’ perception of urban space in the following chapters. For more information on Bayram Street please see Zengin, 2014.

²⁹ This is the exact point that Lefebvre criticizes in the Production of Space when he discusses how the city and spaces located in its prominence were labeled with descriptions such as “ailing neighborhoods” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.99). He argues that such descriptions promote uncanny misconceptions about the

political, and cultural contexts in Turkey resulted in spatial shrinkages for LGBTI+s.³⁰ Shrunken space resulted in the attempt of (re)production of (new) spaces in the urban contexts of major cities in Turkey as an outcome of resilience mechanisms. As a result of these governmental bans and social oppression towards those who do not fit into the existing norms of gender and sexuality, as I discussed in the previous sub-section, LGBTI+s started to organize and create closed groups and communities by the 1990s and 2000s.

In some of the neighborhoods of Istanbul, the social order depended on its inhabitants, transgressing its limits, Istanbul city dwellers lived in an intertwined order. Istanbul, with its multi-layered and conflictual spatial dimensions, included struggle and transgression simultaneously; Ülker Street in Cihangir, the first trans ghetto of İstanbul, was one of the most concrete examples of it (Selek, 2001; Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2012a, 2013; Zengin, 2014). Ülker Street had a long story of revolt, queerness, disobedience, and liberation. It has been the spatial enclave for women with trans experience who have carved this space in the middle of the city on their own. To support each other, the trans population has chosen to live together, in nearby houses and streets for years. On Ülker Street, during the 1990s almost 100 people from the trans community were living together (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013, p.62). This reserved street (Ülker Street) provided a living space relatively freed from the transphobic, homophobic atmosphere filling the city.

In previous academic discussions on the nature of these street ghettos, not being excluded from a spatial entity, not being invisible, as they try to make themselves in the rest of the city, and feeling safe were the highlights shed upon the characteristics of these urban spatialities (Zengin, 2014). Living in a commune nonetheless helped create a language, *lubunca*³¹, that they could use against the existing normative system

very production of the city, which, in reality, is based on the neoliberal system but rather is thought to be the outcome of a “putative ‘sickness’ of society.”

³⁰ Having said this, I would like to emphasize that I find it very important to revisit how gender and sexuality norms and codes in Turkey operate in shaping the geographical setting of LGBTI+s, how these codes affect everyday life practices, their understandings and meaning-making processes of space, place and the urban life in general.

³¹ Lubunca is slang created by the trans community back in the 1980 and 1990s. Lubunca is also one of the resistance mechanisms that I analyze in Chapter 5.

(Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013, p.314). Considered as an organic arena to develop solidarity ties between inhabitants of the quarter, the ghettoization process, as discussed by Selek, has also been a concrete reflection on the limitations of the living spaces of women with trans experience (Selek, 2001). The “nature” of the street had transformed with both outsiders’ intrusion that will be discussed below and also by the newcomers’ transformation of the street from a residential area into a “prostitution site” (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013, p.253).

Following the events that took place in 1996, the neighborhood and that particular street have become a reflection and a source of inspiration for resistance to the future of the LGBTI+ community. Ülker Street was the place where trans sex workers started to live after being chased from Abanoz Street, Pürtelaş, and Sormagir streets (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2012a). Cihangir, as described by Demet Demir (Turan, 2011), was considered a “trans empire” at the time. A source of inspiration, these streets were the place where LGBTI+s could be as they wanted to be, inspired by other trans residents who moved there long before they did.

Habitat II (The 2nd United Nations Conference on Human Settlements) event that was going to take place in Istanbul in 1996 was the material reason for the Ülker Street incidents (Zengin, 2014). Right after its reclamation, police officers were ordered to clean the streets as a step towards gentrification³² of the area and later on all the streets were swiped off. Ülker Street was one of the ‘dirty streets’ that needed to be cleaned. Because, for that time being, transsexuals and transgenders were considered unsightly and had a bad reputation just like glue-sniffers and street dogs were, governmental bodies wanted them to disappear from the streets for the sake of good street “makeup” during the international event, Habitat II (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013, p.242). At the time being, there were a lot of trans sex workers who were both living and working in Cihangir and Beyoğlu areas. These areas, in parallel with the gentrification process around these neighborhoods, started to be valued over the odds. However, the price of the houses located on Ülker Street, because of the constant occupation of these houses by women with trans experience who were living in those houses, remained the same. Monetary interest mixed with visual concern for the international crowd who were

³² The exact word used for this term in Turkish is: *Soylulaştırma*

going to face the heart of Beyoğlu, and nationalism, religion, and morality boosted feelings used against the presence of women with trans experience led to a brutal and bloody campaign in the area. Police officers, under the helm of police chief “Süleyman the Hose”³³ started raiding the houses and making it almost impossible to live in these designated areas (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013; Zengin, 2014, p.121).

There are a lot of interviews conducted with woman activists with trans experience and former trans sex workers who used to live there during those times (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013). The campaign run against women with trans experience living in the neighborhood found support through nationalist and fascist Turkish youth and through Cihangir Güzelleştirme Derneği (*Beautification Association for Cihangir*) (Turan, 2011; Zengin, 2014, p.105). There have been a lot of home raids at different hours of the day, entrance doors were broken down and many of them were thrown out of their houses. Since these incidents were backed by the police, the continuance of these brutal attacks was not unexpected. In addition to physical exclusion, local markets were not allowed to sell anything to their usual trans customers (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013, p.244). Demet Demir narrates that phase as a complete process of police brutality accompanied by public stigmatization and outcasting (Turan, 2011). As it was mentioned above, there were other official organizations supporting these decisions and in addition to those, the mayor was also backing up the plans of ‘beautification’. The spatial power relations that were embedded during this period of time remind me of what Lefebvre was pointing out to describe the “shattering of the space” that spaces were unnaturally reduced to a scarcity had they been near the center in order to upsurge their values (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.334). According to him, it was through this shattering that spatial segregation was taking place in the urban space as it did so in the Cihangir district of Istanbul.

³³ Süleyman the Hose (Hortum Süleyman) became the pseudonym for Süleyman Ulusoy, who was the Istanbul chief police officer until 1997. It was said that he used hoses to torture the “culprits”, including women with trans experience, street kids, and other groups that were deemed to be corrected at the Beyoğlu Police Department (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013; Zengin, 2014, pp.124-125). According to the narrative of Belgin Çelik, an LGBTI+ and trans rights activist, Hortum Süleyman had colorful hoses which he used to beat up the ones brought to the station (Retrieved February 21, 2021, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJD_XDFrjCU&t=108s).

These streets located at the intersections of Beyoğlu and Cihangir areas did not remain as the only example of trans ghettos (Turan, 2011) in Turkey. Eryaman in Ankara with almost 30 trans residents, and Alsancak in İzmir are/were also hosting numerous trans residents. Similar attacks in the following years took place in Eryaman³⁴ in Ankara, in Alsancak in İzmir, and most recently in Merter Meis Sitesi in İstanbul again in 2012, and in Bayram Street in 2013.

LGBTI+s' experiences in the contemporary era of Istanbul point out a prominent state and a state surrounded by in-visibility in the urban space. Their powerful and yet overlooked resistance mechanisms that challenge prevailing meanings are deeply attached to urban spaces. I personally chose to investigate the attributions, practices, and projections of these urban spaces to shed light on affordable and yet transformative contentious acts of LGBTI+s.

While writing this thesis, revolutionary communal movements for the right to the city had already taken place in different parts of the world including Turkey with the Gezi Park Protests in 2013.³⁵ These collective demands for the public space gained strength and they contributed to the empowerment of groups that were being pushed to the corners and fringes by existing oppressive socio-cultural, spatial, political and economic mechanisms. Gezi Park Protests in 2013 became a touchstone for Istanbul city dwellers and at the same time, it also became an emblem for the continuation of different urban revolts. The series of protests created an atmosphere of solidarity

³⁴ Eryaman, a district of Ankara, has been the scene of numerous brutal attacks against women with trans experience in 2006. They were systematically attacked by citizens on a daily basis for 5 days in a row. The attacks took place on the street while they were working as sex workers. Assaults continued in residential areas as well: homes of women with trans experience were raided during the daytime too. The reasons for these attacks were shown as the scorned nature of sex work and the reaction it received from conservative parts of society. LGBTI+ organizations' internal reports indicate that these attacks were organized by a nationalist group. This group insistently called themselves 'morality guards' and they were told to be connected to the radical nationalist group Alperenler (Depeli, 2015, p.132). For a detailed account of the events that took place in Eryaman please see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6EQnUrUkTRQ> (Retrieved February 19, 2021).

³⁵ Gezi Park Protests was marked by Istanbul citizens' cry out for their rights to live humanely and safely in a secure and healthy urban environment (Altnay, 2013). The protests that started in Istanbul went nationwide in the following days of its start. Deprived of their basic rights, the people gathered together and demanded justice. The public assertion aimed at the people's right to freedom and to human dignity and also it intended to reestablish their civil and urban rights. Political parties, urban movements, trade unions, trade associations, activist groups, and rights-based and political organizations who joined this uprising wanted to put an end to urban injustices stemming from the power holders' governance strategies (Birdal, 2015). Gezi Uprising contemplated a democratic city that belonged to all people regardless of their ethnicity, religion, gender/sexual identity, or class.

between different types of social groups. As Altınay (2013) points out, the variety in groups was mainly due to their realization that ‘becoming the other’ was in fact very probable for every group. This realization erased existing mechanisms of “othering” within the groups that were taking place in the Gezi uprising in the end.³⁶ LGBTI+s at that period of time gained confidence and saw a window of opportunity to further change the existing power relations in urban settings of Istanbul.

In three weeks since its beginning, the demonstrations of Gezi Park have been joined by more than 3.5 million people in many cities in Turkey.³⁷ Birdal’s (2013) study explains the background where my study got developed: it explains how ruling power portrays LGBTI+s as a threat to the nation which in return fuels a hostile and homophobic societal order that is boosting conservatism within society at the same time. In addition to this argument, Birdal also shows how LGBTI+ activists operate in a conservative and nationalist system that persistently ignores and marginalizes them. Birdal, in another article (Birdal, 2015), focuses on LGBTI+s’ place during the Gezi Park protests. In tandem with his argumentation in the first study, Birdal this time argues that LGBTI+s’ participation in Gezi Park protests dislodged existing cooperation blocks by constructing new bridges with the actors that were readily

³⁶ Altınay gives a reference to the statement released by a famous football fanbase in Turkey (Beşiktaş Football Club – Çarşı Group) which shows how different social groups became unified while resisting during Gezi Protests and how awareness of this social group arose during that period of time of resistances. The statement of the Football Fanclub goes like this (Altınay, 2013):

“We cause great discrimination with our abusive slogans. In our honorable resistance, we insult half of the people who opened their doors to us during the inhuman attacks with *tomas*, with batons and that is our women comrades, and we discriminate against them. Where we fight for dignity shoulder to shoulder, we act in companionship for barricades with them. For days, women are resisting in Gezi Park, in Izmir, everywhere in Turkey. Gays, transvestites, LGBT individuals are resisting. We humiliate and discriminate against all these comrades with abusive and male-dominated slogans... Let’s not curse, let’s not discriminate and resist altogether.”

This is my own translation from the original Turkish version which is: “*küfürlü sloganlarımızla büyük bir ayrımcılığa yol açıyoruz. Onurlu direnişimizde omuz omuza haysiyet mücadelesi verdiğimiz, barikat yoldaşlığı yaptığımız, Tomalı, coplu ve 'eli sopalı'ların insanlık dışı saldırılarında bizlere evlerinin kapılarını açan halkın yarısını, yani kadın yoldaşlarımızı aşağılıyor ve onlara yönelik cinsiyet ayrımcılığı yapmış oluyoruz. Günlerdir Gezi Parkı'nda, İzmir'de ve Türkiye'nin her yerinde kadınlar direniyor. Eşcinseller, travestiler yani LGBT bireyler direniyor. Atılan küfürlü ve erkek egemen sloganlar ile tüm bu yoldaşlarımızı aşağılıyor, onlara ayrımcılık yapıyoruz... Küfretmeyelim, ayrımcılık yapmayalım ve hep birlikte direnelim.*”

³⁷ In the following years, the commemoration of those who lost their lives during the Gezi Park Protests (Berkin Elvan, Ali İsmail Korkmaz) was joined by numerous people. Hundreds of people met in Taksim again this time for Hande Kader, a politically active woman with trans experience who was brutally murdered in Istanbul in 2016 (Karakas, 2019), whose picture was taken during the Pride of 2015, where water cannons and tear gas bombs were used against Pride-goers (Retrieved February 19, 2021, from <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/08/hundreds-protest-murder-trans-woman-istanbul-160821192103933.html>, <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-37151265>)

putting up a resistance against oppressive mechanisms in the society. Similar to Altınay's argument (2013), Birdal points out that "soccer fans, feminists, ecologists, secularist-nationalists, Kurds, Armenians, anticapitalist Muslims, LGBT groups, communists, anarchists, liberals, libertarians, artists, students, white-collar middle classes, and some worker unions" (Birdal, 2015, p.130) joined together while protesting, which in the end resulted in their new collaborationist entanglements with other groups in the resistance during Gezi Park protests.³⁸ Their tendency to shift existing ways of protesting is actually one of this thesis' main points in showing how LGBTI+s in the urban space of Istanbul perform and resist in their own ways throughout their everyday lives by affordable in-visibility acts and impromptu resistance tactics along with their collective resistances. It is this uniqueness in their performances, just like their localized versions of protesting, that I focused on analyzing my respondents' resistance practices in Chapters 5 and 6.

Moreover, Yıldız's article (2014) also focuses on LGBTI+ protesters during Gezi Park Protests. Yıldız comments on LGBTI+ activists' achievements on existing cultural and nationalistic terms. In tandem with some of the issues I discussed while I was explaining the positioning of my study above (in Chapter 1.2), where I stressed the necessity to analyze issues from a situated perspective, Yıldız highlights how the very existence of Hevi (a Kurdish queer LGBTI+ organization) shifts existing explanatory frameworks simply because the local and national discourses do not work with the same structures and it misses the critical essence of it.

By the time I was already in the mid-period of my fieldwork, I started to work professionally at an LGBTI+ organization (SPoD) located in Istanbul as a project coordinator. I was in the middle of the project I was conducting for the SPoD in 2016, when there has been a coup attempt in Turkey which resulted in the declaration of a state of emergency that lasted over two years and also in the sweeping of various

³⁸ Birdal gives examples of the shared slogans by these groups. For instance, #direnayol (which he provides the translation as #resistayol) and "where are you my love? Here I am" (Nerdesin aşkım? Burdayım aşkım!). The second one ends with a repetitive "Ay! Ay! Ay! Ay!" Exclamations were used by numerous groups during the protests (Birdal, 2015, p.137). "Ayol" and "ay!" are expressions that are usually associated with feminine gay men and femininity in general. The adoption of such expressions shows how the public perception towards 'the others', in this case, LGBTI+s, has changed throughout the course of the Gezi Park events and became adopted by larger audiences.

governmental and non-governmental entities in Turkey.³⁹ As a direct result of this coup attempt, hundreds of NGOs were shut down based on their alleged liaison to the Gülenist movement⁴⁰, the alleged organizer of the July 15th, 2016 coup. The massive number of shutdowns became a frightening issue for LGBTI+ organizations and activist groups because these shutdowns immediately turned into a tool to sweep off anything that was not in good accordance with the government. Space was shrinking, again, and the atmosphere became somber with each passing month.⁴¹ All counter voices were being shut down by the authorities and this resulted in extreme security measures among activists and also a very tense atmosphere of perturbation among LGBTI+s in general.

To sum up this contextual framework chapter, I would like to recapitulate the discussions I held in this chapter. First, I tried to give an overview of gender and sexuality dynamics in Turkey with a specific focus on the intersection of urban spatialities, resistances and LGBTI+s. First, I explained the development phase of gender and sexuality dynamics in Turkey starting from the foundation period in 1923. Then, I have dived into the historical path LGBTI+s in Turkey followed starting from the 1970s. In this final section, I tried to give an overview of existing studies on LGBTI+s in Turkey by elaborating on the historicity of the urban context that I am planning to explore in the analysis sections of this dissertation.

Now I will provide a glimpse of the scale, methods and methodology I applied in the research, which I will elaborate in detail in Chapter 2.

³⁹ More information on the coup attempt can be found at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/12/turkey-failed-coup-attempt-161217032345594.html> (Retrieved November 18, 2018)

⁴⁰ 1412 organizations were shut down following the coup attempt of the Gülenist movement (IHOP, 2018). The majority of the organizations were shut down due to their close relations with the Gülenist movement, there were also some who were only affected by these executive orders for their opponent positioning against the government (such as Çağdaş Hukukçular Derneği (*Contemporary Lawyers' Association*) (which worked on the cases of Soma mine disaster in Turkey and hydroelectric centrals in Artvin, Turkey), Gündem Çocuk Derneği (and NGO operating to protect children's right in Turkey).

⁴¹ In a short interview conducted by Heinrich Böll Stiftung Derneği (Heinrich Böll Stiftung Association), Mehmet Akın and I tried to explain what was happening during that period of time and we mentioned that LGBTI+s were running out of space to breathe because of the rising oppression, especially towards NGOs. To see the full version of the short interview please see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8i71NA1Yt7o> (Retrieved February 20, 2021).

1.4. Scale, Methods and Methodology of the Research

Although I will provide the methodological premises of my study in Chapter 2, I would like to briefly frame my study's and my fieldwork's scale and methodological foundations. My argument relies on the outcomes of the ethnographic study I conducted in the years of 2015-2016, during which I made 20 semi-structured formal interviews with participants that I contacted in Istanbul and another 5 semi-structured formal interviews with participants from Ankara. I reached out to my respondents via purposive and snowball sampling methods, and they were from different age groups, socio-economic status, political stances, and activist involvement.⁴² In addition to the formal interviews that I conducted in the course of the fieldwork, I spent many of hours of fieldwork with LGBTI+ identified individuals living in Istanbul thanks to my involvement with the movement. These interactions took place on different occasions: academic events organized by the LGBTI+ organizations, Pride Week preparation meetings, movie screenings and even some events I organized myself when I was volunteering for SPoD. For my thesis, I only made use of the interviews I conducted with respondents residing in Istanbul and I did not include the interviews I conducted in Ankara, however, I am planning to further my studies in another project by combining the outcomes of my dissertation with the interviews I conducted in Ankara.

This thesis blends multiple tools in order to comprehend LGBTI+s' relationship with and within the urban space in Turkey. First of all, I took into account the studies that I found crucial in the existing literature on the discussion of this topic. Furthermore, and more importantly, I built my analysis on the data gathered through qualitative research methods (in-depth interviews, informal discussions with different respondents, and ethnographic fieldwork results).⁴³ I adopted an ethnographic approach and an

⁴² As I explained at the beginning of this chapter, with the increase in my active participation and involvement in the LGBTI+ movement, I started being engaged with a broader LGBTI+ community in my social life. LGBTI+ activists I encountered became my friends and I noticed that there were differences as well as similarities in the way these two groups (those who defined themselves as activists and those who did not) reacted towards oppression in the course of the everyday life. Therefore, I paid attention to include individuals who identified themselves both as activists and also those who did not do so.

⁴³ The last item on my method's list was the mental mapping technique that I applied during my in-depth interviews. However, although I have applied all the above-mentioned tools to access the complex and interconnected situation of LGBTI+s, in order to hold the discussion of this thesis in line, I will not be including the mental mapping data in my thesis, and I will only make use of data I obtained via

interpretive paradigm throughout my analysis sections, which I will be elaborating in the next chapter (Chapter 2.1). Lastly, the theoretical framework that I adopted has become the backbone of this thesis and also my pathfinder during this entire time.

The key conceptual and theoretical framework of this thesis draws on the work of Lefebvre who is known as a Marxist geographer and who transformed the general theoretical scaffold into “a “spatial” Marxist humanism” demanding “bread and freedom, ethics and aesthetics, praxis and poesis” (Merrifield, 2002, p.81). His theory on the production of space, and his writings on the right to the city have been the guiding tools of my thesis. I thought that a feminist approach to Lefebvre’s work was essential for addressing the study question in this dissertation because I realized that it would be only by means of feminist perspectives that I could attain encompassing knowledge (Kipfer et al., 2012, p.121).

Departing from this idea, I adopted a feminist voice in my thesis while inspecting LGBTI+s’ struggles, resistances, and spatial productions in Istanbul through the lens of in-visibility. I did so, particularly for three reasons: First, this helped me understand and as a result portray the differences amongst LGBTI+s that space generates and that produce the space itself. In the Lefebvrian interpretation of spatial production, reproduction, and appropriation to reckon with LGBTI+s’ resistances, a feminist perspective gave me the ability to see the web of power relations that shapes urban life and social space itself. This brings me to my second point which is in direct relation to the first one: social space, despite being abstract, is very much real since it has real consequences (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.27). “Social space contains - and assigns (more or less) appropriate places to - (1) the social relations of reproduction” says Lefebvre (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.32). Accordingly, Lefebvre notes that social space allows individuals to recognize themselves and that it is also modifiable by its users (p.35). Departing from there, I realize that social space requires ‘recognition’, as it will be explored in Chapter 3. Because of that, I argue that it should be considered relational and that relation includes gender and sexuality dynamics embedded in it. Thirdly, I thought the continuous reproduction of injustices and resistances may be examined in

qualitative research methods that I employed during the fieldwork. The mental mapping data will be utilized in future academic publications.

a more comprehensive way if I were to distance myself from even remotely essentialist rhetoric and instead adopt a feminist one (Kipfer et al., 2012, p.124).

As a result, I adopted the feminist perspective while applying this critical urban theory model of the “right to the city” and “production of space”. I decided to analyze the outcomes of my fieldwork from such a perspective to contribute to the relatively less numerous works on urban theory that entail a gendered/feminist perspective (Beebeejaun, 2017; Fenster, 2005; Kipfer et al., 2012; Simonsen, 2005). The feminist critique brought upon the critical urban theory showed me that urban spaces, especially cities are constructed as gendered and heterosexist environments. This perspective, therefore, provides an intersectional ground where the discussion on the complexity of gender and sexuality dynamics and their consequential differences throughout the urban spaces are held.

For my thesis, I read a rich variety of topics covering the vast geographical space, adopting different analytic/theoretical/methodological lenses some of them circling around the issue of “LGBTI+” and around the notions of ‘the right to the city’ and ‘production of space’. These readings were eye-opening and inspirational because they made me realize that the production of space and the right to the city concepts could be utilized from diverse lenses and there could be different aspects when looking into similar and yet variational fields. My readings encompassed the analysis of diverse cases and settings in different parts of the world both on small and big scale analyses. Among the academic research that I covered in the context of the literature review of my thesis, there were studies taking place in Skopje (Nikolovska, 2016), Brasilia (Grangeiro Ferreira, 2018), Glasgow (McCartan, 2017), New York (Giesecking, 2013), Istanbul (Altın, 2016; Ergin, 2014) and Ankara (Yoltay, 2016). There were other studies that I took into account ranging in a variety of topics: the inspection of hip-hop musicians’ effect on society and the art of graffiti making and young graffiti makers’ criminal relations to authorities (Araya López, 2014), socio-spatial relations in the field of education (Alzeer, 2015; Sullivan, 2012) and sports (Marfell, 2016), the examination of contested public spaces (namely squares, parks, Olympic parks) (Nkooe, 2015; Waters, 2016), the impact of surveillance in everyday life (Geesin, 2012), the intersection of law, spatiality and urban space (de Villiers, 2017), Romani LGBTIQs’ experiences (Fremlova, 2017) can be listed among those studies that I

considered to be exemplary and inspirational for my research. These researches offered multiple grounds of analysis and numerous options for methodological and theoretical tools used in reading the “production of space” and “right to the city”. These were the outcomes of fieldworks, theoretical studies, conceptualizations, Ph.D. and master level thesis and articles and all of them provided me with more than basic tools for my analysis.

I came to the understanding that a comprehension that would go beyond institutional places, workplaces, or schools in a non-Western setting, allowing me to include “the home” as one of the urban spatial layers into my analysis in addition to urban public spatial layers, a comprehension that focuses on micro-level narratives of resistances together with macro-level resistances and on the power of individual agency along with a discussion on in-visibility of LGBTI+s would contribute to the existing knowledge.

In the scope of my analysis, I focused on my narrators’ experiences and their meaning-attributions to different layers of spatialities in the urban setting as well as on their daily acts of resistances’ spatial reflections along with the collective resistances. While conducting this research, participants’ own spatio-temporal, economic and socio-political contexts were considered layers of effective power clouds that influence their shunting urban resistances. As will be deeply explored in the analysis sections, their motives, and their downplayed gestures were documented to possess a subversive impact on spatial production processes.

Through my fieldwork findings, I argue that LGBTI+s’ experiences and their resistances in the urban spaces of Istanbul take multiple forms: blending-in and anonymity, bodily visibility and confrontation, organized visibility and individual in-visibility, verbal resistances, identity-centered claims, artifact usage are some of the items of a long list. As a result of these “micro and macro resistances”, one of the most striking outcomes has been the emergence of “*cocoons*”⁴⁴, which subsists LGBTI+s as unities and yet rub shoulders and serving them to remain connected with each other through a web of the socio-spatial realm. This web (or ensemble) offers a path to a

⁴⁴ An introductory explanation of the concept of the cocoon has already been provided in an earlier footnote. Further conceptual framing will be established later on in this chapter

protective and yet contentious presence for LGBTI+s who operate from similar channels of resistance mechanisms against existing oppressive and hetero-patriarchal socio-cultural systems on a daily basis. These cocoons are visible as much as one can afford so, but they offer invisibility and anonymity to their dweller as well. They operate on a micro level and yet linger in their existence on a macro level via wafer-thin silk threads that provide their continuity in time and place rather than being instantaneous. It is through these cocoons that the production and appropriation of urban spaces occur, and it is from these cocoons that LGBTI+s' pursuit of their right to the city takes place as well.

Now, I would like to provide a vocabulary index for all the key terminology I will be making use of in my thesis. This index also encloses a small indication of the theoretical frameworks within which the key terminology of my thesis was built upon.

1.5. Lexicon and Theoretical Premises

In this sub-chapter, I will provide an explanation and exploration of 12 key terms/concepts, all of which are entwined with one another and all of which are essential to make sense of my analysis and argumentation. Some of the 12 key terms collide and get tangled with one another. While exploring them, I either suggested considering a theoretical framework or consulted previous studies focusing on similar topics through which I was able to express the meaning of the concept according to their usage in my thesis. This section is only a foretaste of the theoretical chapter that is coming ahead (Chapter 3) and yet it covers the foundational ground for it.

Before moving further with the lexicon section, I would like to recapitulate my thesis argument and give a glimpse of the key concepts of my thesis. As I stated above, this study examines LGBTI+s' path towards the right to the city by looking into their experiences, the problems they encounter, and the resistance practices they come up with to tackle these obstacles. I portray LGBTI+s' ways to resist towards what is oppressing them, the resistances they come up with to overcome all that has been cornering them into an urban "spacelessness". Most importantly, I discuss how they contribute to the production of space in Istanbul and while doing that I also address the meaning-making processes and collectively accumulated designations they attach

to different types of urban spatialities. I focus on the cases of their spatial productions and appropriations that I think are born out of their micro and macro resistance practices which result in ‘cocoon’. I argue that their pursuit of the right to the city is ingrained in their resistances and their spatial appropriations. In this context, in-visibility, resistances, urban space, cities and other dimensions of urban space, public and private space differentiation and production of space constitute key cornerstones of my study. Moreover, the differentiation between space and place, everyday life and everyday spaces, and the discourse on the right to the city and right to difference occupy a considerable amount of space in my analysis and more importantly they constitute my own web of thoughts and consideration while examining this topic. In addition to these key terms, I found it important to portray the concept of “*LGBTI+*”, as it is widely used throughout the thesis, the concept of affordability and the body to explain better my main points (Figure 2).⁴⁵



Figure 2. Conceptual Mapping of the Emerging Terms (Figure Prepared by the Author with the background photo taken by Noor Sethi on Unsplash)

⁴⁵ This Figure 2 is my own way to represent the conceptual mapping of the emerging terms/concepts from the fieldwork. The figure contains 12 concepts that I grasped from the fieldwork which helped me comprehend and then articulate my findings.

1.5.1. “LGBTI+”

The meaning of “LGBTI+”, and the description of the umbrella term were critical in accessing respondents’ narratives of resistances and their contributions to the production of space in the context of Istanbul. I consider that the acronym of LGBTI+ in Turkey stands for a political, economic and socio-cultural stance of resistance. This acronym is a symbol of a concurrence of atomized individuals who suffer from similar grievances in their daily life practices. For me, the term as well as understandings and perceptions of it are strongly shaped by and bounded by its constituents’ (thus individuals’) expressions, self-identifications, and interactions. Therefore, throughout the thesis, the term ‘LGBTI+’ was intended to be used as the product and the producer of this resistance that is based on the expression of difference, self-identification, and interaction processes of the respondents.

I would like to situate the concept of ‘LGBTI+’ in the Turkish context with its constituent letters. Cenk Özbay (2015) briefly documents the history of same-sex sexualities in Turkey and shows how the visibility of gay men became prominent after the 1980s and during the 1990s and how the liberating political atmosphere at the time led to an adoption of ‘Euro-American style’ gayness as opposed to a feminized understanding of the male same-sex desire. The self-definitions of lesbian and gay (used as *lezbiyen* and *gey* in Turkish) started to appear at the time in the mundane jargon. Moreover, Ural and Beşpınar point out that there are different meanings attached to the word ‘gey’ in the Turkish language (Ural & Beşpınar, 2017) and they state that while Özyeğin attaches a “middle-class” meaning to the word ‘gey’, while Bereket and Adam’s study shows that ‘gey’ identity has been used as “an escape from the femininity associated with same-sex preference, devoid of pejorative terms, such as *ibne* (faggot), that lower-class gay men sometimes use” (Ural & Beşpınar, 2017, p.246). The meanings that were attached to the letter of T and the wording of *trans* included transgender, transsexual (*transseksüel*) and transvestite (*travesti*). Zengin (2014) discusses in her thesis that the words that started being used to self-describe in Turkey were phonetically borrowed from English but simulated enough to fit the Turkish language. In Turkish terminology, the “I” and “+” in “LGBTI+” were introduced in mid-2015. The ‘I’ stands for the ‘intersex’ and ‘+’ aims to include queer,

asexual, pansexual, gender fluid, non-binary people, and all those who did not identify themselves with either of the existing “letters”.

Having said that, I also would like to point out that the existing knowledge regarding the identification processes of LGBTI+ identities in Turkey shows great diversity in terms of this terminology (Çakırlar & Delice, 2012a; Özbay, 2015; Özyeğin, 2012; Ural & Beşpınar, 2017). Together with this diversity comes the notion of ‘fluidity’ instead of ‘fixity’ on existing terms (Özbay, 2015) which furthermore opens up the way for discussions of queerness⁴⁶, and queer theory. In relation to this, the Turkish case shows that rather than approaching concepts of identification and self-identifying processes as static and caducous, this issue is handled as something that is constructed, produced, and embraced.

At the time when I was conducting my fieldwork in the years of 2015-2016, the dominant version for this abbreviation was “LGBTI”. The questionnaire that I prepared⁴⁷ included this term and throughout the in-depth interviews I conducted, unless instructed otherwise by the participant, I referred to this group as LGBTI, without the “+” in the end. As I stated at the very beginning of this chapter, in this dissertation, I employed the term *LGBTI+* to indicate to lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer and trans people that I interacted with because the narrators of this study used self-identifications such as *lezbiyen*, *gey*, *biseksüel*, *kuir*, and *trans* with the term *LGBTI+* which were later on used also to refer to the community, the political movement and also to everyone that identified themselves as one of these letters, ‘to people like them’. Starting from mid-2015, the usage of *LGBTI+s* (or *LGBTI+lar* in Turkish) translated into the expression of similar experiences of oppression and performances of resistances. Throughout this thesis, my narrators used this term to describe emotionally charged notions in their lives that extended on spatial layers of their usual urban everyday lives, resistance, and most importantly on their self-expressions and self-

⁴⁶ I insisted on focusing more on the terminology of ‘LGBTI+’ because the outcomes of my fieldwork guided me towards this direction in which the mentioning of the ‘LGBTI’ was prioritized by the respondents. There will be a sub-section in Chapter 5 called Resisting through Queerness where I will briefly discuss ‘queer’ as a concept in the light of the respondents’ narrative. And yet considering both the self-identifications of my respondents and the impact of this identification upon their entanglement with the space, I utilized the terminology of *LGBTI+* throughout this dissertation.

⁴⁷ The questionnaire can be found in the Appendices section.

identifications. The self-identification terms that were employed by the narrators of my thesis aimed to incorporate not only their gender-sexual identity but also the impact of this identification on spatial levels. This spatial implication indirectly brought social, and/or political connotations too. Therefore, in my usage of the word LGBTI+ I intentionally refer to a “struggle” and to the existence of resistance and solidarity which furthermore result in the production of space in Istanbul.

“LGBTI+” is mostly used as a term that encloses a performative and expressive platform going beyond the individual act, and yet it also faces the loss of its meaning depending on spatio-temporal contexts. The way it addresses a wide cluster of other notions is through its relation to concepts of community, cumulative performance, daily experience, resistance mechanisms and life-stories. The meanings attached to this concept and to its description as an umbrella term along with the challenges brought upon it and its disappearance from time to time were critical for me while making sense of the resistance and spatial production narratives of my respondents. Because it helped me reveal their perception of visibility, individual agency, space, resistances, and spatiality of the existing systems of oppressive power relations in the urban spaces of Istanbul. It showed that the results of this identification and its expressions fluctuate contingent from one place to the other or from one-time sequence to the next.

I specifically focus on “LGBTI+ identity” and the meanings of it is in Chapter 6.1 but it is also a very embedded and intertwined notion in the remaining parts of my thesis.

1.5.2. The Body

In the consideration of the body, Lefebvre’s focalization of the body as a site of resistance and revolt (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.201) has been instrumental for me on multiple levels, especially while trying to make a connection between the body and the space. According to him, while the body is at the center of the social practice with its sensory elements, thus located at the core of the perceived realm, it also carries an importance in the conceived realm via its representations stemming from “the

accumulated scientific knowledge” (p.40).⁴⁸ Moreover, the body and its relation to space have always been a critical issue since the time human beings made sense of space according to the measurements of their body parts (p.110). I consider the body to possess a material reality and I agree with Lefebvre’s indication that “it is by means of the body that space is perceived, lived – and produced” (p.162).

Lefebvre’s indications about the body’s relationship with the space have been eye-opening to the point that they showed the ongoing fluctuation of power dynamics between the two parties and gave room for discussion of resistances. His claim was that the body with the forces that are available to it is able to produce its own space while at the same time it is also being subject to the domination of the same space that it is producing (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.170).

As a result, instead of considering the body as an unfilled remnant, I considered the body as the source and the tool for the manifestation of desires, activities, identity expressions, and resistances. Accordingly, I tried to incorporate the way my respondents positioned and placed themselves in different spatial domains in their everyday lives. To do this, I tried to get to the core of the way they position their bodies in those spaces and how this positioning further affects their ability to mobilize or anchor themselves at those spatial layers. I tried to do so while answering how safe they feel, and how their bodies respond to the everyday spaces they get into.

The body is the focus of social control; it becomes disciplined, exploited, oppressed shaped, and transformed via oppression and domineering power relations. As Göle argues too, the effectuated body politics become the means through which one grasps “a distinct sense of self and society” which then translates into the control of sexuality (Göle, 1997, p.85). Moreover, De Certeau also indicates, “bodies can be distinguished only where the “contacts” (“touches”) of amorous or hostile struggles are inscribed on them” (De Certeau, 1984, p.127). From a geographical point of view, it can be claimed that dominant speeches are integrated into spaces and as a result, it is expected that there are particular anticipations and reactions related to these spatialities. These

⁴⁸ Lefebvre gives the example of ‘the heart’ and ‘sexual organs’ to discuss the perceived, conceived, and lived aspects of the body and he says that all of these three aspects are different from and yet interrelated to each other. He highlights that they have the power to alter the way in which the body (and the parts of it) is experienced by individuals (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.40).

anticipations help both to support and restrict activities in those spatialities so that they regulate and control the bodies.

I specifically analyze the body in Chapter 5 where I discuss the negotiations over sexed and gendered bodies but at the same time, the body is also a very central topic to my exploration of in-visibility, resistances and the production of space.

1.5.3. In-Visibilities

As I already discussed in an earlier section (1.1.1), visibility is a problematic and disputed concept when it comes to the issue of LGBTI+s. In my study, “in-visibility” is the lens that I am wearing to reveal and analyze the resistances that contribute to the production of space of the respondents (Figure 3). For this, I refer to Hollander and Einwohner (2004) who say that “visibility, of course is a necessary prerequisite for the recognition of resistance” (p.540). However, although I agree with this articulation, I rather look at the liminal space of in-visibility for my analysis of resistances.

The terms I make use of to explain my narrators’ resistance practices circle around the concept of ‘*in-visibility*’: visible, invisible, hyper-visible, affordable visibility, affordable invisibility, desired invisibility, anonymity, hiding, to be out in the open, being recognized, recognition, acceptance, tolerance, boundaries can be cited among other terms that are intertwined with this concept. Even though these terms indicate the presence of binary entanglements, throughout my dissertation I tried to stay away from reproducing such dichotomies had it not been suggested by my narrators and instead I portrayed visibilities in flux, like a curtain that enters and exits through a balcony window with the wind blowing constantly in a to-and-fro movement (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.98).

Taking into account the gender and sexuality discussion in the Turkish context (1.3.1), I took visibility into account via bodily existence in different urban spatial domains through a feminist perspective and I discuss it in Chapter 4 reserved to understand and to analyze respondents’ in-visibility. As it will become apparent from the discussions held in Chapter 4, the visibility issue becomes an important denominator in LGBTI+s’ entanglement with their urban spatial milieu which consist of both public and private spaces.

1.5.4. The City and Other Dimensions of Urban Space

Cities are considered sites of “unbounded places”, of controversy, diversity, and struggle where identities, and discussions on belonging clash with each other (Fenster, 2005; Hubbard et al., 2015). Critical urban theorists focus on how urban environments could be considered potential grounds for expressing collective demands and protests stemming from certain rights that people were deprived of. In fact, I consider these protests taking place in the urban space as the manifestation of the oppressed groups upon the hegemonic power holders who used to be “mastering what is at once their product and the tool of their mastery, namely space” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.63).

The city provides the potential to sustain higher living standards for certain groups whereas other groups are deprived of it. This creates tension over the space (Hubbard et al., 2015). These standards are described as keys for access to the resources of the city. Cities are thus considered as complex and contentious spatial entities that offer possibilities and that also create conflicts simultaneously. It is in the city that sexual emancipation and social possibilities arise. In this sense, the city (or at least some parts of it) can become the spatial platform where sexual identities can be embodied and become visible.

Sexuality is experienced and lived differently in different parts of Istanbul. The city, in the Turkish case, has prominent value in defining one’s existence and in asking for recognition from the heterosexual majority of the city. Living in fear of being exposed to the maleficent behavior of ‘morality guardians’ (Zerey, 2011) becomes an important dynamic in individuals’ daily experiences and pushes them to move to certain parts of the city, to a neighborhood for instance, where ‘they are not the most marginal one’.

The city and dimensions of the urban space is an overarching concept that is integral to my study on LGBTI+s and it is discussed throughout the analysis section (Chapters 4-7).

1.5.5. “Space” and “Place”

As space carries critical importance for my thesis, I would like to clarify here in which contexts I make use of this terminology. In this research, when I discuss space, I point

out a spatial environment and its perception by individuals (thus its occupiers) and also its production process and its offerings. Space, in this dissertation, is understood as a bounded concept with its material and relational reality.

The space, according to Lefebvre, incorporates issues relating to the urban and to the everyday (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.89). In my discussions, the space will be considered with “its lived practices and the symbolic meaning and significance of particular spaces and spatializations” (Massey, 1994, p.251). My research aims to introduce a discussion on Lefebvre’s spatial triad and its implementation into the existing everyday urban settings of Istanbul. If (social) space consists of (social) relationships, as Henri Lefebvre points out (1991b, p.26), discussing the intersections of social differences that produce, regulate and annihilate the space (e.g. sexual orientation, gender identities) will show how perceptions and regulations that consider sexuality as “private”, LGBTI+s’ sexuality as “forbidden”, “undesirable”, “ignored” interact and overlap with each other.

The “place” has connotations too. Space and place are diverging and converging complexly (Massey, 1994). The place is considered a restricted space, that is formed of a set of streams. There are numerous definitions of space in social science that are shown to be greatly intertwined with the concept of place (Massey, 1994). The terms space and place are often used synonymously in daily use to refer to something like environment venue, zone, territory, and other loose geographical significances. I consider that despite the presence of a deep entanglement between space and place, the space represents a more abstract and imagined entity whereas the place represents more of a spot.

According to Hubbard, in Lefebvre’s understanding, the place is “a particular form of space, one that is created through acts of naming as well as through the distinctive activities and imaginings associated with particular social spaces” (Hubbard, 2005, p.42). Additionally, the distinction between space and place is also present in De Certeau’s study where he defines the place as the “instantaneous configurations of positions” pointing out its stability and the space as “intersections of mobile elements” signaling its mobility (De Certeau, 1984, p.117). I consider places to be fragmentary, which means that they are “accumulated times that can be unfolded but like stories

held in reserve, remaining in an enigmatic state, symbolizations encysted in the pain or pleasure of the body” (De Certeau, 1984, p.108).

Thus, the notions of space and place are typical of geographical study (Massey, 1994), and in this thesis, while accepting the difference between space and place I aim to look into both of them as a study area.

1.5.6. “Space” and “Production of Space”

Could space be nothing more than the passive locus of social relations, the milieu in which their combination takes on body, or the aggregate of the procedures employed in their removal? The answer must be no (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.11).

Space and its production will be analyzed through Lefebvre’s triad on space and its production of space theory (Lefebvre, 1991b). Referring to Lefebvre (1991b), in this thesis, I will be considering the space not to be fixed as a container but rather as a component that is produced. Accordingly, space is where social power relations exist and where they operate as a living platform that provides the necessary ground for the emergence of identities through resistances. I think that the examination of conceived and lived spaces would help me make the connections between the abstract, the experienced, and the pre-existing material spaces. I will be specifically emphasizing the lived spaces as their productions and reproductions are highly interrelated with the resistance mechanisms of LGBTI+s in the pre-existing urban settings. I used the word space and pondered upon the spaces I put under the scope of analysis to be generated and reproduced concurrently through multiple “currents” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.110). For this, I considered that the resistance mechanisms are embedded in the production and reproduction processes of space.

Production of space is a term I apply with reference to Lefebvre. In his work ‘The Production of Space’ (1991b), Lefebvre’s hypothesis indicates a space embraced in a system of three (perceived space, conceived space, and representational space). In this regard, I will take the standpoint that the space is not a “neutral kind, designed simply to receive whatever is poured into it” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.94) and that “(social) space is a (social) product” (p.26) along with the fact that “(social) space is (socially) produced” (p.143).

The theory on the production of space will be explored in greater detail in Chapter 3 that is reserved for theoretical discussions and throughout the analysis sections, I will be referring to it on necessary occasions.

1.5.7. Public / Private Spaces

Public spaces are usually deemed as heterosexual spaces: the street, the shopping malls, and the parks are all marked through the heterosexual benchmark. This identification for public space encloses the idea that heterosexual couples are allowed, naturally, to hold hands, kiss each other, show affectionate behavior towards each other in public spaces of the Western world. This heterosexual feature of the public space somehow complicates the same behavior taking place between non-heterosexual couples (Ghaziani, 2015b, Stanko & Curry, 1997). This scattered perception brings in the usage of this frequently referred word: “*safety*” (Stanko & Curry, 1997).

The public space is perceived as a “discursive and material” space where opposition and resistance against domineering power relations can take place, as opposed to the private space (Duncan, 1996, p.130). I believe the discussions on public and private space dichotomy are important for this thesis because they open a field for a rethinking and reconceptualization for both of them, but especially for the private space, which I aim to address in my thesis as a site of resistance of LGBTI+s, and as a site where the seeking for the right to the city starts. With these discussions, I aim to develop a tactical answer to the conventional spatial understanding that “fragments space and cuts it up into pieces” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.89). I plan is to portray how these fragments are dependent to one another and how they are constituted in an intermingling fluctuating relationship with each other.

In Chapters 5 and 6, I will be portraying respondents’ resistances in both public and private spaces, and I will then discuss how both of these sites cannot be understood as stable dimensions because of their continuously fluctuating borders, pouring into one another with my analyses in Chapter 7.

1.5.8. Right to Difference, Right to the City

Throughout the thesis, I also employ a theoretical framework constructed upon the notions of ‘*right to the city*’ and ‘*right to difference*’ (Lefebvre, 1991b, 1996). Here I will briefly mention their general features.

The concept of ‘right’ is considered “as an aspect of social relatedness rather than as an inherent and natural property of individuals” (Holston & Appadurai, 1996 as cited in Dikeç, 2001, p.1791). I adopt Lefebvrian reflections on the *right to the city*, *the right to difference* to the point of describing these *rights* as cultivated and constructed norms “through lived experience and social relationships” (Dikeç, 2001, p.1791). Throughout this thesis, these concepts will represent the right to participate in society through the exercise of resistances. The right to the city includes the right to access all areas of the urban dimensions rather than being scattered or trapped in certain parts of the city or in distinct neighborhoods. The right to the city necessitates the participation of every member of society in the urban spatial realms (Mathivet, 2010). In my research, I assert that these rights can be obtained through social relationships, and affordable micro resistance mechanisms circling around in-visibility in cooperation with macro resistance mechanisms.

I stand with Lefebvre’s idea that this ‘difference’ is not rooted in individuals’ originality or particularity but rather it thrives from the struggles they get into and resistance mechanisms they employ in different settings of time and space (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.172). In this sense, the ‘right to difference’ signifies a challenge against the order of things (Dikeç, 2002). And although “the order of things” is set by the dominant discourse, with the claim for the right to the difference and all the resistances that come along with it “the order is tricked by an art” (De Certeau, 1984, p.26).

With this framework, I intend to provide an adequate ground that would carry my understanding on the relationship between LGBTI+s and different layers of everyday urban spaces to the next level where I will then be able to discuss the contribution of micro and macro resistance tactics to LGBTI+s’ quest for their “right to the city”. Detailed theoretical exploration on right to the city can be found in Chapter 3.3 of this dissertation and further inspections will be made throughout the analysis sections.

1.5.9. Everyday Life and Everyday Spaces

Lefebvre points out that “the most extraordinary things are also the most every day; the strangest things are often the most trivial” (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.13) and he adds that “we need to think about what is happening around us, within us, each and every day” (p.14). He furthermore warns us about the comprehension of it that the “everyday life ... must be defined as a totality” p.97). I take ‘the everyday life’ into account as a concept through Lefebvre’s own description of it: “everyday life is profoundly related to all activities and encompasses them with all their differences and their conflicts; it is their meeting place, their bond, their common ground.” (p.97). I put the ‘everyday’ as one of the important terms of analysis and I try to make sense of the way the narrators of this thesis interpret the everyday spaces and how their interpretations and the meanings they attach to the everyday spaces are fluctuant and dependent of their resistances and I furthermore think that “every story is a travel story—a spatial practice. For this reason, spatial practices concern everyday tactics” (De Certeau, 1984, p.115). The everyday is also where the public meets the private. Moreover, it also reflects the concepts that shape the crossroads between the perceived space and lived space (Lefebvre, 1991b). The everyday, accompanied by its routine, brings along creativity of and to the everyday people.

Henri Lefebvre’s writings possess an expressive purpose of altering the ‘everyday’. His attempt was not only to define the manifestation of power relations in their mundane and repetitive occurrences but also to develop new ways focusing on how to combat existing hegemonic power relations embedded in those. His vision for the conceptualization of everyday life was inspiring for me to explain LGBTI+s’ everyday life practices in the urban setting of Istanbul. As is for this theory, resistance henceforth carries a critical importance to make sense of the concept of agency, power, and oppression embedded in the course of everyday life.

As Merrifield wrote, Lefebvre “wanted everyday life to be “reclaimed for itself” and this “involved some feat of collective and individual resistance” (Merrifield, 2002, p.84). Because the everyday life offers possibilities due to its emergence as a site of resistance and struggle, I argue that LGBTI+s’ everyday struggles and resistances possess a spatial dimension and an altering characteristic of a different dimension of

the urban space. Lefebvre's understanding of space pointed to its constructed nature as a site of struggle too (Lefebvre, 1991b). This site holds multiple layers of power confrontations in public (and private) domains, as well as through consumption and leisure practices (Lefebvre, 1991a). The focus on the relation between time-space-rhythms and his trilogy serves as a critical tool to make sense of power and resistance mechanisms to make use of these ideas to scrutinize LGBTI+s' micro and macro resistances.

I consider the everyday life as "the sum total of relations which make the human- and every human being - a whole takes its shape and its form" (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.97). Lefebvre's aim in his critique of the everyday life was to make a further request of "what is possible" within its rhythm and mundaneness (Leavitt & Yonder, 2013, p.202). In this perspective, I aimed to shed light on the ways mundane characteristics of the everyday instances and experiences would then be entangled with their potential to transform the existing power relations along with the instances taking place in out-of-ordinary moments.

I also take a similar position with de Certeau (1984) and Scott (1989) who point out the destabilizing and contesting power of individuals' everyday life practices in redefining the existing power relations within a social environment. Discussions on everyday life support the case of my thesis which resides on the power of individual agency, on the impact of *affordable* resistance tactics. I consider that it is during the process of transformation of daily life that individuals reproduce themselves, spaces, places, and the everyday life itself (De Certeau, 1984; Lefebvre, 1991a; Lefebvre, 1991b; Scott, 1989) and this thesis is also an attempt for findings ways of the "rehabilitation of the everyday life" (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.127) in its totality.

In this context, although rhythms and "rhythm analysis" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.205; Lefebvre, 1996) has not been a tool I directly made use of to reflect on the relations of space and time and their structure, problems of variations and repetitions; it has been an intellectual source for me to review my analysis as a whole. This entails capturing patterns, frequencies, and comparisons of the bodies (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.405). In Lefebvre's theory, rhythm analysis is about the lived experience. Moreover, Lefebvre suggests taking space and time as a duo rather than considering them as two separate

entities, because they constitute the core of the everyday life. This concept always focuses on the living human body.

I considered Lefebvre's *Critique of Everyday Life* (1991a) and De Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984) as pathfinders in the analysis sections of my thesis (Chapters 4-7).

1.5.10. Resistances, Tactics

In this study, resistance is considered as the concept that enables the transformation of everyday life. Moreover, resistance is a kind of a struggle to liberate oneself from oppressiveness. The concept of resistance embraced and applied throughout this thesis implies the emergence of creative behaviors that question, challenge and negotiate with the dominant pressures.

While discussing LGBTI+s' acts of resistances, I considered them as 'currents' that form the basis of the production of space (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.110). I consider that these resistances are in possession of energy that provides the necessary tactical power for spatial appropriation (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.179). These resistances take the form of tactics (and not strategies) (De Certeau, 1984). This is a conscious decision: De Certeau differentiates between tactics and strategies in the context of their pervasiveness and ascendancy (De Certeau, 1984, p.xix).⁴⁹ Strategies are power-exercising practices that can take place either in active or reactive ways; but with a certain claim of a "power of knowledge" over a space (p.xix-36). These are usually employed by institutions that are able to dominate different spatial layers. Whereas tactics, also described as practices of power exercise, are mainly targeting existing

⁴⁹ I would like to add here that Lefebvre does not make a clear definitional distinction between strategies and tactics. But, in the *Production of Space* (1991b) he describes 'strategies' with a number of remarkable social events all of which circle around the notion of power (which is attributed with a connotation of violence (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.358) and with those who make use of such dominating and governing power tools (pp.84, 94, 98). He mentions that "power" in its absolute sense of the word, thus the political power, "has only strategies" (p.162). He also comments that a "strategy based on space" could be precarious since it would be endangering both the future and the present times simultaneously (p.336). He furthermore defines the aim of the strategy as the interception and seizure of a space by the use of power (p.366).

Taking all these into account and based on the examples he gave for strategies (p.84) and his indication that it is via strategies that the development of a new concept of 'absolute' space is rendered feasible (p.105), it would not be wrong to assume that Lefebvre was assigning a similar role to strategies as De Certeau (1984) did in his own study.

“strategies”. Tactics are defined as the ‘art of weak’ (p.37) and this weakness is due to their fragmentary, ephemeral, and passing nature, as opposed to strategies. I argue that through the employment of these tactics one can manage to reclaim the city while operationalizing its resisting mechanisms.

Henri Lefebvre considers rights as “ethical and political projects” and according to him, the right to difference offers the possibility of resistance “against marginalization” (Gilbert & Dikeç, 2008, p.259). Thus, resistances appear as a challenge to the existing system. Highlighting that the challenging activity of individuals or groups is very important for the transformation of everyday life, Lefebvre indicated that this method could combat oppression and everyday forms of it because the challenge brings together all the scattered elements in everyday life and enables a collective life to be built. In this way, the resistance pulls out the banality that takes place in the course of everyday life; as a result, the banality is replaced by the *festival*⁵⁰ (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.251).

In this thesis, I argue that LGBTI+s’ resistances taking place on different layers of spatiality reflect a process of transgression and negotiation. As I will be elaborating in the theoretical chapter, I considered the resistances to be constituted in micro and macro forms. I will discuss this concept in the Theoretical Chapter (3.5) with reference to Lefebvre (1991b), de Certeau (1984), Scott (1989), Hollander and Einwohner

⁵⁰ Lefebvre wrote that “Mystics and metaphysicians used to acknowledge that everything in life revolved around exceptional moments. In their view, life found expression and was concentrated in them. These moments were festivals: festivals of the mind or heart, public or intimate festivals. Up until now the principle of Festival has stood for a divorce from life. . . Is this life’s fate?” (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.250 as cited in Grindon, 2013, p.209). When he mentioned the festivals, he proposed a detailed re-conception of the institutional modes of political positioning and collective engagement of the social movements (Grindon, 2013, p.209). In the end, what he suggested was that “the revolution would be a festival itself... in the remaking of urban labour-identities (pp.213-215). While saying that, Lefebvre also wrote that “festivals differed from everyday life” but, “they were not separate from it” (Lefebvre, 1991a, pp.202, 207).

The curious case of the festivals and the carnivalesque mode was also present in Scott’s theorization of everyday forms of resistances, which I will be discussing in the theory section in greater detail. Scott points out the role of the disguises worn during the times of festivity as an enabler for the ‘lower classes’ “in order to speak bitter truths to their superiors” (Scott, 1989, p.54).

Combining these two ideas, it would be possible to argue that the ‘festival’ – out-of-the-ordinary (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.385) means resistance, anonymity and a step towards revolutionary action and that it is not separate from the everyday life itself, bringing me to one of the core arguments that I make in this thesis that the micro resistances are embedded in and contribute to the macro resistances which may take the form of out-of-the-ordinary too.

(2004). Then, throughout the analysis sections (Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7) I will be implementing and discussing it through the outcomes of my fieldwork results.

1.5.11. Affordability

Affordability is a term that I made use of in relation to resistances, tactics, and invisibilities. Affordability can be characterized as an understanding of the behaviors and possibilities of actions provided by the spatio-temporal setting one is located at. The term is illustrated to discuss, how an individual perceives a situation as suitable for them to be visible or not. This term could bring along the question and discussion on the presence of an agency based on rational evaluation, which would eventually put forward the debate in the social movements' literature between rational/self-interested action and the culturalists' emphasis on meaning. Instead, I will merely be using the term with its implications brought by the respondents and with my interpretations of these implications and I will not be elaborating on its scholarly definitions.⁵¹

Affordable invisibility defines an act of resistance for which individuals determine that invisibility would be a better choice in order to ensure their continuing existence in that space. Affordable invisibility is rooted in the empowering nature of remaining invisible, as a tactical move that I came across in my fieldwork findings. Whereas the affordable visibility tactics that I will be touching upon in the analysis sections refer to cases where respondents were able to *afford* being visible in order to appropriate the spatial milieu that they were located at.

In Chapter 5, there will be a section called "Affordable Micro Resistances" where I will be elaborating more on this key concept and its constituents.

1.5.12. Cocoons

The 'cocoon' is a concept that I was able to coin as a result of many years of involvement and experience with the field that I was working on. The ethnographic

⁵¹ For a debate on these question and discussions please see Emirbayer & Goldberg, 2005.

fieldwork process enabled me to reach this imaginary⁵² visualization that I make use of to describe LGBTI+s' resistances, their resistance-oriented spatial productions, their spatial appropriations, and continuance of their resistances. I argue that inside the cocoon, which has a lot to do with a community (Korpela & Dervin, 2013) and also with the idea of a cell, an autonomous entity settled in a total like bubbles in a foam, the inclusion and spatial appropriation take place. Cocoons offer (relative) liberation, freedom, acumen and while providing the opportunity to resist the exclusion executed by governing power in conceived space and exclusion by other dwellers within the lived space.

My respondents' understanding and experiences of the everyday urban spaces and their ways of reproducing it on an everyday basis, via cracks they open up on its surface⁵³, helped me revisit and reinterpret their productions of space through the web of interactions circling around being visible and invisible at different times. Consequently, I decided to name the times and spaces where these resistances took place and how they resulted in spatial terms as 'cocoons' because I agree with Lefebvre who said that "it is not sufficient simply to describe the facts. To obtain an analysis of

⁵² Here I would like to underline the meaning I attach to the 'imaginary' in order to forestall a possible translation of the concept. The 'imaginary' does not entail evasiveness. But rather, I employ it in the sense that Lefebvre makes use of it: based on respondents' narratives, I try to convey an 'imaginary' that "invests itself -in appropriation (of time, space, physiological life and desire)" (Lefebvre, 1996, p.155). Therefore, with this concept, I envision a phenomenon that "include the way of living in the city and the development of the urban on this basis" (Lefebvre, 1996, p.155).

⁵³ The "crack" analogy that will be mentioned numerous times throughout the dissertation is an inspiration I got from three sources. The first one is an online feminist platform "Çatlak Zemin" (Cracked Ground). They describe their aim like this: "We now have a new ground for putting forward the feminist perspective, discussing with each other and getting stronger together. We believe that coming together on cracked ground can be as efficient as it is difficult in today's conditions. Not only the agenda and current feminist politics but everything in life and feminism is the subject of Çatlak Zemin".

This is my own translation from the original Turkish version which is: "*Feminist bakışı ortaya koymak, birbirimizle tartışmak ve birlikte güçlenmek için artık yeni bir zeminimiz var. Günümüz koşullarında çatlak bir zeminde bir araya gelmenin zor olduğu kadar verimli de olabileceğine inanıyoruz. Yalnızca gündem ve güncel feminist politika değil, hayatın ve feminizmin içinde her şey Çatlak Zemin'in konusu.*" (Retrieved August 10, 2020, from <https://www.catlakzemin.com/sevgili-feminist-kadinlar/>)

Second, the 'crack' analogy was also used by De Certeau when he discusses the tactics' operating features (De Certeau, 1984). He says that tactics "must vigilantly make use of the cracks that particular conjunctions open in the surveillance of the proprietary powers. It poaches in them. It creates surprises in them. It can be where it is least expected. It is a guileful ruse" (p.37).

The final source of inspiration has been Lefebvre's Production of Space where he discusses the homogenous and monolithic character of the abstract space which is shattered and fragmented by the lived experiences that vary depending on the "division of needs and functions" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.355).

content, we need a conceptual apparatus to supplement description” (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.36).

Cocoons provide cover and privacy. They shelter the inside occupant with a semi-transparent cover that helps protect from the outside world in the process of the occupant’s presence in it. Thus, it functions as a shield for its occupant. When I first coined the term ‘cocoon’ to explain the outcome of the resistances in urban spaces, I was also satisfied with its metaphorical representation of visibilities. Even though the cocoon is present in physical form, what is inside is merely visible to the gazing eye (Picture 1, Picture 2).



Picture 1. A Singular Cocoon⁵⁴



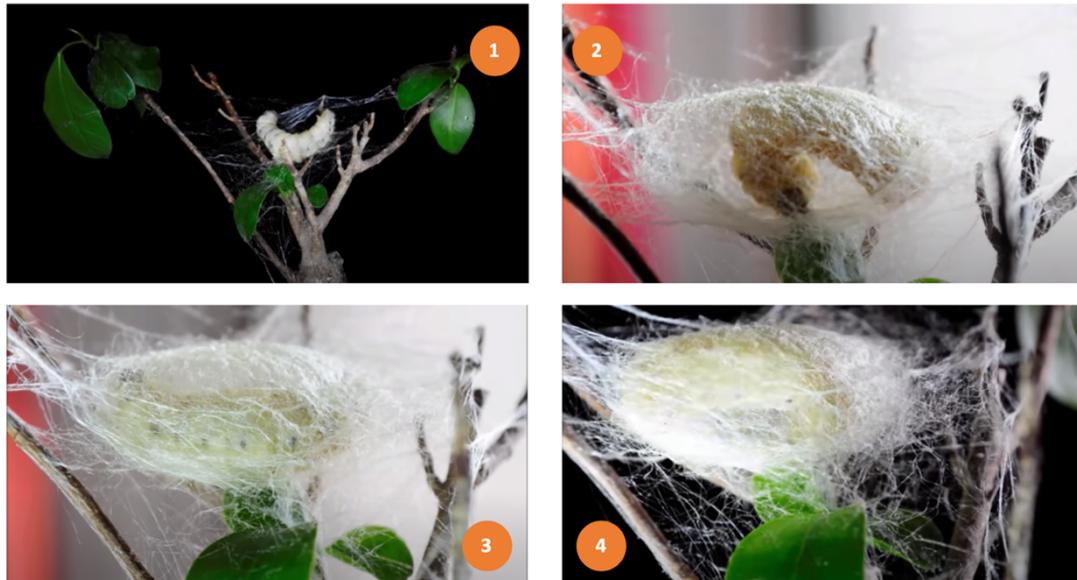
Picture 2. Ensemble of Cocoons⁵⁵

The “cocoon” is thus a metaphor that I make use of while analyzing the process and the results of the resistances of LGBTI+s along with a reference to the view that power operates through a web of power relations. The reason why I chose this conceptualization is that I felt the need for another vocabulary that would help me address this particular extent of spatial thriving other than more “classical” sociological concepts such as “community”, “group” or other spatial concepts such as “enclave”, “hubs” or “spots” because I think that this concept, cocoon, does not only entail a spatial connotation but it also has temporal and metaphorical implications in it (Picture 3). The cocoon is something that is evolving, emerging, and growing. It indicates a spatio-temporal process. The cover becomes thick with time and yet it is

⁵⁴ The picture is a snapshot I took from a YouTube video that can be accessed from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VC0OgY8_eqk (Retrieved May 10, 2019)

⁵⁵ The picture is retrieved on May 10, 2019, from <https://www.agefotostock.com/age/en/Stock-Images/Royalty-Free/IBK-1234801>

also expected to open at some point. In my conceptualization, the cocoon forms itself numerous times, in every attempt to declare the being, the body, the identity, and the desire, and yet the cocoon is also a temporary field of operation.



Picture 3. Formulation Process of a Cocoon of a Silkworm (Picture created by the author by cropping a video⁵⁶)

I made use of this concept that I entitled “cocoon” to discuss both the outcome (product) and the process (the production phase) of LGBTI+s’ urban resistance mechanisms by adding the temporal and metaphoric dimensions into consideration. The usage of ‘cocoon’ as a metaphor offers an opportunity for a holistic narrative while exploring LGBTI+s’ maneuvering via their micro resistances (Chapter 5), but also while looking into their macro resistance attempts through the lens of in-visibility (Chapter 6). Cocoons indicate social and differential spaces (Chapter 7); in the simplest term, they are a collection of connections that result in a “social reality” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.116) permitting resistances to emerge and to flourish while antagonizing existing oppression (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.73).

A cocoon is usually identified with a place that is agreeable, protective, harbor-like, and fulfilling whilst its protective cover can be torn open and disposed of when it

⁵⁶ The video that I used to crop these images is accessible through this YouTube link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VC0OgY8_eqk (Retrieved May 10, 2019)

serves its purposes. In this way, it is effectively connected with the “temporary space” in the transition rites theory of Van Gennep (Van Gennep, 1960 as cited in Korpela & Dervin, 2013, p.28). ‘Cocoons’ as a concept taking various forms, embodied in multiple existences, considered in numerous temporalities and spatialities is my lexical way of showing that LGBTI+s’ micro and macro resistances, their production of space, spatial claims and occupation and tactical urban resistances are interdependent components for both the individual’s and collectivity’s continuance to everyday life and for the persistency in their demand for the right to the city. In fact, with this spatial metaphor, I reveal that “the existence of mundane or non-dramatic resistance shows that resistance could be understood as a *continuum* between public confrontations and hidden subversion” (Vinthagen & Johansson, 2013, p.3).

The “cocoon” is this figurative recapitulation, a final concept that I reached after uncovering the process and the impact of LGBTI+s’ struggles against socio-spatial oppression mechanisms. By making use of Lefebvre’s production of space theory, his right to the city discourse, the feminist critique, and spatial and resistance-oriented theoretical frameworks that focus on the resistances and production of space, the case that I am trying to make here can be translated as this: LGBTI+s’ resistance practices, their (affordable) micro resistance tactics circling around in-visibility together with macro resistances are snarling with one another through a web of social and solidarity relations and they take the form of cocoons.⁵⁷ The ensemble of cocoons operates as socializing, sheltering and but more importantly as resistance areas that pave the way towards the right to the city. LGBTI+s’ bodies, their present and hidden practices and expressions, the slang (*Lubunca*⁵⁸) that they occasionally make use of, the visible artifacts, and other forms of maneuverings become the very tools of their ordinary life rhythms engendering the basis of continuous resistance practices. Put in a nutshell, the “cocoon” is a concept that I hope to provide a greater understanding of the ways LGBTI+s challenge the existing system and its oppressiveness through their micro

⁵⁷ The resistances start in the cocoon and start forming the cocoon by the attempt of producing space. This start takes place in a singularity, but then it continues in the surroundings of other cocoons, like themselves. The cocoon represents the stage of being in-between visibility and invisibility, it also represents the acts of remaining hidden at times and showing oneself to others. The cocoon is thus a summarizing conceptual suggestion that I make about LGBTI+s’ resistances and their production of ‘differential’ and ‘safe’ spaces for themselves.

⁵⁸ *Lubunca*, the queer slang that LGBTI+s make use of in Turkey, will be discussed in Chapter 5.4.

resistances and individual agencies without leaving the macro resistances and collective perspective outside of my scope of analysis. It is also my aim to open up new theoretical rooms to discuss “spaces of resistance” and “right to the city” in the context of LGBTI+s in non-Western geographies.

While I was trying to have a clear image of my fieldwork results, I was initially inspired by the study of Giesecking (2013), where they discuss lesbian and queer women’s urban spatial productions in New York taking the form of ‘*constellations*’. Giesecking describes the interconnectedness of lesbian and queer women in New York with a metaphor that they call as “stars in the sky” (Giesecking, 2013, p.204). Giesecking highlights how lesbians and queer women are bound with one another through fractured interactions and the accumulation of stories spanning over generations. However, my fieldwork results indicated something different than constellations expanded throughout the city because of the socio-cultural background of Turkey, the spatial conditions of Istanbul, and the relatively diminished level of freedom resulting from it. For this reason, I recognized the need to coin a conceptual term like “constellations” that fit the specific dynamics, experiences, and patterns of LGBTI+s’ resistances in Istanbul.

After having the visual image of “a cocoon” in my head while I was making sense of my fieldwork results, I tried to see how this concept has been used in previous studies. I came across the book called “Cocoon Communities Togetherness in 21st century” (Korpela & Dervin, 2013) and I reviewed some of the existing sociological investigations circling around the notion of “cocoon”. Then, during my research process, I came across Alzeer’s study focusing on understanding spatio-educational experiences in the United Arab Emirates where Alzeer draws on social theories on space, particularly on the production of space of Lefebvre, to explore Emirati female learners’ entanglement with educational spaces where they are located (Alzeer, 2015). Alzeer (2015) makes use of the metaphor of “cocoon” in her studies to explore Emirati students’ spatial relations with the university, she configures those as “little niches” (p.1) and “secluded spots” (p.210) carrying the meaning of “safe spaces” (p.13) that corresponds to female learners’ need for “a room of her own” (p.214). The cocoon in Alzeer’s formulation is located within the university campus it is considered as a part of the public space that is being treated as a private space (p.135) and she refers to

actual places to describe them; in fact, she portrays some of these cocoons with the photographs she took around the campus (pp.139, 344). While I found similarities in both of our formulations (such as the need for a “shelter” and the spatial appropriation via artifacts (p.140)), in my own formulation, I do not always necessarily point out an actual location in the spatial realm, but instead, I use it merely as a spatio-mental metaphor to point out to the outcome and continuation of LGBTI+s’ resistances and their quest for the right to the city. Therefore, even though the cocoon offers relative comfort, as I argue here, in my formulation it represents a transitional space of resistance and a space of difference.

I believe that Giesecking’s, Alzeer’s and Korpela & Dervin’s conceptualizations and perspectives have been very inspirational for my study and also very instructive: by showing a potential application of a visual metaphor for an examination of ethnographic fieldwork, I became more confident in making use of the concept that I coined. As I mentioned above, as a differentiating point from these existing studies, in my thesis, the cocoons are not the final destination that one seeks to or is satisfied to attain, but rather it represents in fact a transitional socio-temporal phase for attaining the right to the city, which also includes the “home”.

This concept will be utilized and discussed throughout the analysis chapters and at the end of Chapter 7 as a concluding section to the third part of my analysis.

1.6. Contribution of This Study

I believe this thesis contributes to the field of sociology and to the scholarships on LGBTI+s, resistances, spatial production, and the right to the city discourse from a non-Western geographical setting, Istanbul, Turkey. Moreover, I also aim to contribute to methodological discussions in social sciences, by highlighting the importance of the “in-visibility”, “ethnographic approach”, “self-reflexivity”, and “situatedness”.

With this dissertation focusing on the resistances and spatial productions of LGBTI+s in Istanbul, I try to put an emphasis on the in-visibility lens and highlight the powerful effect that the resistance mechanisms impose over different urban spatial layers of urban life. I portray LGBTI+s’ experiences of oppression and their resistances by making use of qualitative research methods embedded in critical urban theory

discussions developed with a feminist methodological and theoretical lens. The resistances held under the microscope are herein utilized as a tool of analysis to document how “space” is reinterpreted, reproduced, and transformed. This thesis can thus be considered as a contribution to the existing knowledge on sociology, LGBTI+ studies, critical urban theory, and on the examination of agency within resistance acts in different layers of everyday urban spaces.

As I pointed out in 1.2, in the Western world research focusing on the relationship between the concepts of ‘LGBTI+’ and the ‘space’ is generally bounded by the examination of compartmentalized places with a clear emphasis on the need for visibility. Given the low number of studies conducted in the Turkish context on LGBTI+s despite the increasing interest in the past years as I discussed at the beginning of the literature review sub-section, this thesis is providing an ethnographic account of LGBTI+s’ livelihood in Istanbul by including in and yet not be limited to the compartmentalized places with a lens of in-visibility. Thus, I aim to contribute from a non-Western geographical setting with the aim of enabling a discussion on ‘situated knowledges’. The ethnographic data I gathered covers multiple spaces in one city and multiple moments in the lives of the respondents, going in and out through the permeable walls of diverse spatial domains of the city. These add up to the existing academic and non-academic studies focusing on the livelihood of LGBTI+s in Turkey’s urban setting.

Turkey, a country known for the violent suppression of protests and unsolved murders of LGBTI+s⁵⁹, is also home to an emerging and strengthening resistance of LGBTI+s. However, Turkey’s geographical compound remains relatively invisible to a global readership. This thesis aims to connect the narratives of LGBTI+s and their resistances with larger audiences while highlighting the importance of individual agency with the aim of shedding light upon the unseen, overlooked, and neglected resistances and at the same time by conjoining in the macro and collective resistance mechanisms to those.

⁵⁹ Kaos GL’s yearly published reports on LGBTI+s’ human rights are a good source to keep track of the hate crimes that occur in Turkey. For a complete overview of the reports from the past 13 years please see <https://kaosgl.org/haber/turkiye-de-lgbti-haklarinin-13-yili> (Retrieved November 25, 2020)

This study putting emphasis on individual agency provides insight into the ways in which individuals react and resist spatial constraints. As it will be apparent from the analysis sections, LGBTI+s do produce space by their everyday maneuverings sometimes in congested and other times in isolated situations. While doing that, I was mainly concerned with and interested in the paths that LGBTI+s take to ‘make do’ in different urban settings of Istanbul.

This thesis makes use of major theoretical premises. Constructing itself around multiple dimensions of the ‘LGBTI+’ topic, it tries to fulfill a thorough spatial understanding of the issue by comprehending and interpreting the narratives of the respondents. In this sense, the narrative analysis based on the ethnographic research and the interviews conducted with the respondents pave the path for the examination of the tangible lives of LGBTI+s in Istanbul through the words of individuals themselves. Their in-visibility and bodies, desires, resistances, actions, and expressions construct a vital body of knowledge on the topic of gender and sexuality dynamics in Turkey which aims at contributing to the field of sociology of gender, sexuality, space, and resistances.

Throughout my analysis, I abandon the conservative view of space as a static entity with reference to Lefebvre’s spatial trilogy that was briefly mentioned above, and which will be greatly explored in Chapter 3. I attempt to bring an inclusive and interlacing understanding of space as a representational space. The active agent in the production of space will be LGBTI+s themselves.

My aim is also to portray the relationship between micro and macro resistance tactics and LGBTI+s’ demand for their right to the city in relation to the in-visibility and to the theory on the production of space. At the very intersection of space and resistances, emphasizing LGBTI+s’ in-visibility, I introduce Lefebvre’s right to the city concept with his spatial formulations. My hope is to contribute to the discourse of “the right to the city” by shedding light upon the resistance practices of LGBTI+s in their everyday lives, on micro and macro levels; an issue that remained in the shadows and under-researched given the relatively low number of researches conducted in Turkey (please see Figure 1, Table 2). I will be investigating their resistance practices without limiting myself to public spaces thus I will also be discussing the resistance mechanisms that

take place in private spaces as well. This will enable me to include the private space in my analysis of the production of space and the right to the city discussions.

I also aim to subsidize the literature on sexuality and space by narrating the story of those who make themselves heard, seen through their resistances “in school, at work, in the parliament”⁶⁰, at home, out in the street, basically everywhere. And while doing that I also aim to contribute to the existing studies’ results and further them with a concept that I aim to introduce ‘cocoon’. It is my belief that the concept ‘cocoon’ may additionally be used as a tool to comprehend the nuanced and resisting connections of LGBTI+s to different urban spatial layers. In this sense, cocoons could reflect upon a new perspective to theorize on space and on the production of space. It, therefore, subsumes “a retrospective as well as a prospective import” in itself (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.91).

1.7. Thesis Structure

The thesis structure will be as followed:

Chapter 2: Here I focus on the details of methods, methodology, and fieldwork process. First, I discuss the foundational grounds that are formed of ethnographic, feminist approaches, and interpretive paradigm. Then I move towards the exploration of the fieldwork and post-fieldwork process where I portray my sampling methods, the qualitative research methods that I employed, and finally the post-fieldwork process that covered the analysis of the data I gathered from the fieldwork. The 2nd chapter concludes with a section I named “Researcher’s Ultimate Objective” that includes discussions on the researchers’ positionality dilemma and issues on self-reflexivity and situatedness.

Chapter 3: This chapter is reserved for theoretical discussions about my thesis topic and it is an expanded and detailed version of the lexicon section that I portrayed in the fifth section of the introduction chapter. In this chapter, I initially discussed theories

⁶⁰ “In school, at work, in the parliament, LGBTI+s are everywhere” (the original Turkish version is: “Okulda, işte, mecliste LGBTI Her Yerde!”) has been the motto of the political campaign run in 2015 by SPoD. As a thorough examination of all organizational efforts would fall outside of the topic of my study, I will not be providing a detailed substance for it. For more information about the campaign please see: <https://meclistelgbti.wordpress.com/kampanya/turkce/> (Retrieved April 13, 2018)

on space. Then I explored Lefebvre's theory of the production of space. And then I moved to his discourse of right to the city and right to difference and I tried to explain how these two concepts mattered in the context of this dissertation. Then, I provided a discussion of feminist critique on urban space and right to the city. Lastly, I expanded on theories on resistances.

After Chapter 3, the analysis sections start. The analysis section is divided into 3 major parts. The first part consists of Chapter 4, it is named "The Lens of In-Visibilities". The second part consists of Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, and I named it "LGBTI+s' Micro and Macro Resistances". The final part of the analysis section is called "LGBTI+s' Spatial Productions and Appropriations'" and it includes the discussions of Chapter 7.

Chapter 4: First of all, I would like to state once again that the issue I have examined in my thesis takes place in the axis of spatial production, right to the city and resistances and I operationalize this inquiry through the lens of in-visibility. Therefore, Chapter 4 serves as a contributor to the contextual background of this thesis' narrators' realms. In Part 1 called "The Lens of In-visibility", at first, I start by looking into the visibility issue in the lives of LGBTI+s and make an assessment of the visibility-invisibility situations experienced by LGBTI+ in the course of the mundane rhythms. In order to do that, I focus on the relation between coming-out and spatialities through the lens of in-visibility as respondents pointed out so. In the next steps of my analysis, I dive into their in-visibility at home and then I focus on the in-visibility in their romantic and erotic relationship explorations outside of the home, an issue that I detected in many of the interviews. Furthermore, I also discuss the issue of subjectivity and relativity via the lens of in-visibility, namely bisexual and lesbian women's invisibilities and then the hypervisibilities of gay men and of women with trans experience. I end this chapter with a discussion on the reasons behind these in-visibility which was shown as the "hypocritical" social stance adopted by the majority of the society.

As I stated above, the second section of my analysis section consists of two chapters (Chapters 5 and 6) where I look into LGBTI+s' micro and macro resistance practices respectively in each chapter. The division I employ in this section is inspired by

Lefebvre's and Scott's theoretical discussions on resistances (Lefebvre, 1991b; Scott, 1989).

Chapter 5: This chapter is about micro resistance tactics my respondents pointed out during our interviews. In this section, I examine the attitudes and perceptions of the respondents regarding the problems they face in their daily lives. Therefore, this section includes a review of not only the “ordinary” resistance mechanisms but also the situations that caused them to occur.

In this chapter, I start by mentioning the resistances they make through affordable invisibilities. I then discuss the problems that LGBTI+s encounter in their relationship with their bodies and how their sexed and gendered bodies have turned into a resistance element over time. In this context, I examine the effect of gender and sexuality understanding and experiences on LGBTI+ bodies and I touch upon the situations that emerged at the intersection of desires and bodies, and I focus on the experienced problems and the resistance mechanisms developed as a response to these problems. Next, I proceed with the concept of ‘queerness’ that was put forward with the goal of breaking down identities. I focus on how ‘queer’ works as a micro resistance mechanism and where it falls for my respondents, at the discursive level. The chapter moves forward with the discussion of verbal resistances namely, humor, and sarcasm in their daily conversations, and the usage of *Lubunca*, which is slang that has been used for many years in the community.

Chapter 6: The second chapter of Part 2 consists of the analysis of macro resistance practices, where I provide information about the discussions of LGBTI+ identity, LGBTI+ activist movement, the collectivity of women with the LGBTI+ movement, and in other spatial realms. These three are closely related to one another and they also bear the stamps of micro resistance mechanisms. This part is designed to be the exploration of collective and “out-of-the-ordinary” resistance practices I was able to detect in my interviews. This section encloses feminist discussions too.

After the examination of micro and macro resistances, I move towards the examination of resistances’ spatial implications. In this third part, I directed my analysis towards the production and appropriation of everyday urban spaces that I found to be important in the lives of LGBTI+s.

Chapter 7: As I indicated at the beginning, I focus on the spatial dimension of LGBTI+s lives. My perspective in analyzing the spatial production of urban spaces required me to look deep into the ways in which spatial reproductions took place. Up until Chapter 7, I first discuss the lens of in-visibility that affect the resistances that are being effectuated. And then, I provide the ways in which the resistances were employed by my respondents. With this chapter (Chapter 7), I aim to portray a focused narrative on their spatial results. This chapter is about the production of space and LGBTI+s' demands for the "right to the city", I took into account 4 different spatial domains, which I was able to reveal from the interviews, as the most affected ones by these resistance practices that I discuss in chapters preceding this one. I initially focus on home, its transformation, and LGBTI+s' seeking for other 'home-places'. Then I move my focus towards leisure places, cafés, and bars. After completing these two spatial domains, I move my investigation towards specific neighborhoods of Istanbul. First, I discuss 80s and 90s popular neighborhood of Cihangir and then provide a discussion on a more contemporary neighborhood, Kurtuluş. This examination is critical for my dissertation to the point of explaining my thesis' relation to the 'right to the city' understanding. To make my statement even more clear, I lastly give place to LGBTI+'s attempt to take back the streets and whole parts of the city by focusing on Pride Marches and other protests, their emergences, and their results in the life of my respondents. At the end of this chapter, I openly carry out my conceptual contribution, cocoon, to compound and make a wholeness out of all the discussions I maintained throughout my thesis.

It may seem that the discussions on space, which is one of the main focus points of this thesis, come at a very late stage in the analysis sections. But it does not. In fact, the whole analysis section chapters swirl around "space". The space that is conceived, lived, and perceived; that space that is taken away, negotiated, produced, and reproduced, subject to struggle and resistance and appropriated. Starting from Chapter 4, the topics discussed until Chapter 7 are braided to one another upon the ground of the discussions of "space". Because "it is the ordinary purposive orientation of the body as a whole toward things and its environment which initially defines the relation of a subject to its world" (Young, 1980, p.140), I first try to define the conditions which position LGBTI+s in a spatial context and I also reflect upon the features of the spatial context subject to my discussions. The common denominator in those determinative

conditions shows themselves as in-visibility; in-visibility that appear in different forms and manners at their homes, outside of their homes, during their coming-out periods, some of them experiencing overexposure and while others being obscured in the urban spatial layers of Istanbul (Chapter 4). I then discuss the ways in which LGBTI+s, with an ultimate transformative and reconstructive desire in themselves, are resisting this siege of spacelessness. These in-visibility, the common denominator in LGBTI+s' everyday life experiences, operate also as remarkable traits of their spatial resistances, both on micro and macro levels (Chapters 5-6). Therefore, the road to the chapter on LGBTI+s' spatial productions and appropriations is kneaded with spatial discussions, by looking into its grounds, its enclosing circumstances, and its contributing currents.

Chapter 8: This is the concluding Chapter where I summarize and recapitulate each chapter's discussion and finalize my thesis.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY, METHODS, AND FIELDWORK PROCESS

Knowledge must envisage a considerable number of methods to grasp this object, and cannot fasten itself onto a particular approach (Lefebvre, 1996, p.153).

This chapter is reserved to portray my methodological choices along with the research methods I made use of to explore spatial productions and appropriations of LGBTI+s, their seeking of the right to the city, and their resistances that pave the way to those. I wanted to show my data collection tools, and the way I conducted the fieldwork process and I contacted my respondents, and some basic information about them. Moreover, I will also be explaining how I analyzed my data and the importance of my positionality as a researcher.

As I introduced briefly in Chapter 1.4, my thesis draws upon the ethnographic study I conducted in the years of 2015-2016, during which I made 20 formal ethnographic in-depth interviews with participants who identified themselves as LGBTI+s coming from different age groups, socio-economic status, political stance, and activist involvement status. I applied qualitative research methods (in-depth interviews combined with participant-observation) with a grid of ethnographic and feminist approaches. During my fieldwork period, I interacted with over 50 LGBTI+ identified individuals living in Istanbul apart from the interviews conducted for the thesis. Although these interactions were not intended to collect data and were mostly social, they became very important for me in making complete sense of the entanglement between their gender and sexual identity expressions and embodiments, different urban spatial layers, and in-visibility-oriented resistance practices. As I indicated in the introduction chapter of my thesis, I decided to limit my study to the analysis of the interviews I conducted in Istanbul and left the interviews I conducted in Ankara for a future academic study that I hope to construct based on my thesis. Along with the in-

depth interviews, I also made use of the mental mapping technique to reflect on LGBTI+s' resistances, their reproduction of spaces, and to explore their mundane rhythms in urban spaces. However, I could not include the results of mental mapping exercise in order to hold the discussion of this thesis in line. I aim to use them in another future academic study following my dissertation. As will be seen in the analysis section, I made connections between theoretical frameworks, existing perspectives and studies and the interviews I conducted, which in the end offered a clear understanding of my fieldwork results.

Below, I will be providing showing these in three steps: the foundational grounds, the fieldwork and post-fieldwork process, and the researcher's ultimate objective. In the section called "Foundational Grounds", I evaluate and examine my preference for the approaches that encompass my inclination for these specific methods of analysis. "The Fieldwork and Post-Fieldwork Process" portrays my data collection period, tools, and techniques. In this same sub-chapter, I also portray the important features of my fieldwork and analysis process. In the section entitled "Researcher's Ultimate Objective" I discuss my positionality in the field as a researcher and try to give a self-reflexivity account, which I believed was critical for my study given that the represented community and experiences resonated very much with my own life experiences on many levels and my active participation in the field had an unhindered impact (a positive one) to my research process.

I would like to touch on a critical issue regarding my position as a researcher in the fieldwork. As an LGBTI+ activist conducting sociological research on the relationship between LGBTI+s' resistances and the urban space, I had difficulties and convenience simultaneously. Activists are dedicated to changing the material conditions of oppression and invisibilities, to pave the way for sheltered spaces to breathe and maintain these for long periods of time by enlarging existing appropriated spaces. Thus, activists' aim in life is to contribute to the improvement of LGBTI+s' everyday lives by resisting and eliminating patriarchal, heteronormative, gender binary and cis-normative understanding of sex, gender and sexualities and this brings a sense of responsibility, and I aimed to reflect upon it while deploying my fieldwork results.

In the first section, I investigate and portray the lengths of the methodologies I was inspired by. These grounds were utilized as a web of knowledge during the execution phase of the fieldwork and also in the analysis stage of the data I gathered for this research.

2.1. The Foundational Grounds

My methodological choices aimed to tackle the critical questions and problematic situations that I raised in 1.2 where I positioned my research perspective. In that sub-chapter, I pointed out that my thesis deals with the problematic issue of the dominance of visibility, the lack of combination of micro and macro resistances, the hidden importance of agency of the individual narratives, and that it also provides an important ground to revisit the matter of situatedness in sociological research. With this aim, while trying to capture and then shed light on the lives of LGBTI+s and their affordable micro resistances and macro resistance tactics circling around different forms of in-visibility, I wanted my respondents and other LGBTI+s to relate to my thesis' portrayals thinking about the consequences and empowerment of their own resistances against oppressiveness in different spatial urban layers. As a result, I applied a constructed set of methodologies that pursued to cover and reflect on individuals' experiences and understandings directly through their own narratives since I needed my respondents to have their own voices heard. In this sense, this thesis has become my own attempt to contribute to the production of space of LGBTI+s by procuring an academic and a narrative domain to reach out to the outer world by adopting ethnographic, feminist, and critical urban theory foundations as a compass. Moreover, while making sense of the data I collected during the fieldwork, I also made use of the interpretive paradigm that helped me instigate the whole thesis.

In my own research, I experienced and tried to portray how critical and difficult it was to render the invisible visible, unseen seen, the disregarded important. As I explained in Chapter 1.1, I came up with a way to capture the "in-visible" and the neglected experiences, the unseen struggles, and resistances, and the hidden tactics of LGBTI+s by highlighting and bringing their daily life practices and urban spatial experiences to the fore without leaving their visible resistances outside of my scope. This has become my catering to the need to address existing power relations' impact on LGBTI+s lives

and also as a way to discard the possibility of only focusing on the explicit one. In this sense, I thought it was crucial to treat individuals as sites of information. And for these reasons, I adopted an ethnographic approach for my dissertation.

Secondly, I made use of the feminist approach as a philosophical background to my study. This approach concentrates more strongly on the interrelationship of expressions, sexualities, regulatory regimes and the body. As it was suggested by Devault (1990, p.96), feminist academicians could find themselves in oxymoron positions because, while making use of different methods from traditional disciplines, they actually aim at changing those conventional tools that shadow women's (and other oppressed groups') space in the society. In tandem with Devault's argumentation, I argue that to comprehend to the fullest the lives of LGBTI+s, fresh perspectives of thoughts about their life and everyday performances could be developed without completely abandoning traditional sociological perspectives.

Thirdly, during my investigation, I wanted to disentangle all the multifaceted layers of my respondents' spatial realities. With the appropriated theoretical framework of Lefebvre's production of space and right to the city concept, I tried to determine the spaces that were available for LGBTI+s and furthermore, I tried to see in which ways these spaces were sufficient or not with regards to respondents' needs and desires. For this, I adopted an interpretive paradigm. I am convinced that researching the everyday urban experiences is about investigating, narrating and interpreting respondents' experiences within its spatial milieu and I truly believe that it is also very important to grasp the meanings that people invest in their spatial encounters. As the interpretive approach considers the understanding of the human experience as a central matter (Bryman, 2012, p.28), I decided to adopt this approach for my thesis as well.

This thesis, with its concentration on analyzing LGBTI+s' production and appropriation of the urban space via their resistance mechanisms orbiting around invisibilities, benefited from many analytical opportunities/moments because I used a mix of methodologies that enabled LGBTI+s to speak in their own words. It is thanks to this multitude that I was able to detect the implicit notions about their individual agencies and their individual narratives and their contribution to the production of space in Istanbul.

Now, first of all, I will discuss the ethnographic approach I adopted for my thesis, then I will examine the impact of the feminist approach to my dissertation, and; then I will also portray the impact of the adoption of these approaches on Lefebvre's theoretical framework. This section will end with a discussion of the interpretive paradigm that I found appropriate for my thesis.

2.1.1. An Ethnographic Approach

Stories thus carry out a labor that constantly transforms places into spaces or spaces into places (De Certeau, 1984, p.118).

When Hammersley and Atkinson define ethnography, they primarily discuss the process of data collection during fieldwork (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). They say that as far as data collection is concerned, the application of an ethnography as an approach means the participation of the researcher in the everyday life of the participants of the study (p.3). According to them, in this approach, the researcher is expected to be all ears about the everyday occurrences in the lives of the participants while probing them with certain questions, gathering materials, and collecting all details possible for shedding light on the problems involved (p.3).

Ethnographies are capable of offering resourceful insights into the lives of subjects and since the fieldwork I conducted for my master's thesis (Zerey, 2011), I find it particularly interesting how this perspective can challenge existing power relations of story-telling by not only having the control on what is written but also by formulating what needs to be reconsidered in the research agenda and what needs to be revisited in terms of understanding and comprehension of the researched topic.

The ethnographic approach has been used by sociologists and anthropologists to explore a variety of topics in different geographies (Fremlova, 2017; Marfell, 2016; Newton, 2012; Nkoe, 2015; Strano, 2016; Wallace, 2018). In my research, while challenging existing structures of resistances, urban spatial domains, and production of space, I decided to position my study on ethnographic methods which helped me achieve two distinct goals: first of all, it helped me create the necessary bonds between LGBTI+s' experiences and their rhythms and furthermore connect their urban traces of resistance practices with spatial productions and their pursuit of the right to the city

by considering how they “view the situations they face, how they regard one another, and also how they see themselves” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p.3). The ethnographic material that was being produced helped me render their overlooked or even hidden experiences visible, discussable and recognizable while allowing me to understand the issue through the meanings that respondents attached to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2007, p.3).

Ethnography provides the opportunity to see the world through the eyes of its actors and this, in particular, can be considered as the short-cut access to the meanings that respondents give to the objects, events, and people in their active lives and experiences (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Viewing the world through the eyes of the actors necessitates observation and communication to them: observing the daily ‘streaming’ and flux, communicating with the respondents, and understanding the meanings they attach to whatever they see around enriches the ethnographic process. In this sense, ethnography is an approach enabling the researcher to understand participants’ experiences, lives and, minds and the way they perceive and characterize their social environment.

Ethnographic methods produce qualitative data (sub-chapter 2.2 of this chapter is reserved for the discussion of qualitative research tools I applied in my fieldwork process). This method, where the researcher is embedded in the researched field, is the most likely method to reveal the incidences. The ethnographic approach, because of its need to place the researcher in the same spatial domain with the researched topic, requires face-to-face and straightforward interaction between the two parties (Bryman, 2012, p.432). This approach, therefore, offers descriptive, personal, and qualitative data to the researcher. In the end, it helps to discuss the circumstances and discrepancies through the voice of the respondents. Since the ethnographic approach is related to space and to our own conceptions of spatialities, these conceptions were put under the scope and discussed thoroughly during the interviews. I believe this approach also helped me develop further Lefebvre’s conceptualized term of ‘space’, and his theory of the ‘production of space’.

As I will explore in the 2.2 Fieldwork and Post-Fieldwork Process section, the empirical phase of the ethnography was based on the fieldwork that I conducted in

Istanbul. Being in my hometown where I have been doing LGBTI+ activism offered me an exclusive positionality. This position enabled me to become more of an insider while yet protecting my outsider position as a researcher (further discussions on self-reflexivity and the position of the researcher will be provided in section 2.3) furthermore, I was able to make use of the ethnographic techniques as a self-reflexive channel to find and locate my voice in this thesis.

During my ethnographic fieldwork, I was deeply immersed in the domain where my fieldwork was taking place. I tried to grasp multiple aspects of my respondents' lives to describe the various layers of the urban space and all of resistances that occur at different spatial sites of it, including in the leisure places, the neighborhoods, and the streets. This is not to say that I focused on every spatial layer in detail, but it rather means that I tried to understand the most important spatialities in the lives of LGBTI+s and their connections established between different spatial layers. My study showed how porous the borders between different everyday spatial layers are, and it also indicated that the private and the public space are confluent with one another and that resistance takes place in every possible opportunity.⁶¹

2.1.2. A Feminist Approach

It is the use, the politics of the researcher and the context in which interpretation takes place, that defines what sort of ethnography we have (Skeggs, 2001, p.426).

As an attempt to include the interconnectedness and differences between individual experiences, I conferred to the feminist methodology to attain a sound analysis which would reflect upon oppressed individuals, and in my case LGBTI+s' multiple "material reality" (Stanley & Wise, 2013, p.22). This standpoint was born out of those who were skeptical of patriarchal arguments pointing to dominant discourses' quasi-universal truths and so-called unbiased information. With this new framework, feminist discourse has outlined and questioned the relations and the forms between specific methods of study, empirical theoretical frameworks, epistemology, and

⁶¹ While this study tries to encompass multiple domains of the everyday life, there were practical limitations to it. For instance, I could not make many observations at their parental homes, and I relied on the interviews for it and yet I was able to grasp a glimpse of their everyday public lives thanks to my observations.

ontology. According to Wolf (1996), it started questioning existing standpoints and approaches (p.13), insider and outsider dilemmas (p.15), participatory research methods (p.26), and self and positionality (p.34) all of which are key issues I tried to cover in this methodology chapter.

The feminist methodology is based on the values of openness, mutual exchange, and mutual sharing (Güçlü, 2012, p.118). It aims to eliminate existing hierarchies on intersecting platforms by bringing qualitative methods and techniques to the fore (Güçlü, 2012, p.119). In the article titled “Feminist Ethnography”, Skeggs (2001) explains why feminism and ethnography are compatible with one another (pp.426-437). Skeggs says that both are based on experience, participation, descriptions, interpretations, and sometimes subjectivity as a focal point, and both have a context-sensitive insight. According to Skeggs, feminist ethnography also looks for ways to transform these recorded experiences into knowledge. According to her, “‘giving voice’ was a mantra that was frequently evoked, and ethnography was perfectly poised to provide the mechanism for doing so.” (p.431). For these reasons and since I wanted to understand how “the everyday contributes to the maintenance of power in molecular and temporal ways” (p.434), I took Skeggs’ understanding as an important methodological premise.

In order to develop the feminist approach to my thesis, I also took Haraway’s reflection into account, which supports retaining a selective tactic that is appropriate to the position that the researcher holds as well as to the prospect of other views (Haraway, 1988). The dissertation aims thus to achieve the “situated knowledges” rather than providing an objective truth. This dissertation seeks to maintain these situated knowledges as a potential bridge between the meaning-making processes and the subjectivities through a feminist gridlock.

The way I handled my thesis topic with this approach can be described as an attempt to examine and expose integrated power relations (Skeggs, 2001) and the transformative influence of individuals upon the production of different spatial domains in the urban space. Enmeshed with my activist goal, I wanted to portray and challenge at the same time the existing inequalities with all their intersecting points (Naples, 2003, p.13). By adopting a feminist methodological perspective, my analysis

and writings show my attempt to provide a space for LGBTI+s' bodies, voices, and stories of mundane occurrences and furthermore to share information on their understanding and experiences of different layers of spatialities and affordable resistances orbiting around in-visibility against existing oppressive mechanisms. This is in tandem with feminist ethnographers' aim in general which is to "emphasize the significance of locating and analyzing particular standpoints in differing contexts to explicate relations of domination embedded in communities" (Naples, 2003, p.21).

I believe the struggles and affordable resistances of LGBTI+s in different spatial domains of the urban space are very relevant to the discussions of feminist politics, both in terms of LGBTI+s' participation in urban life and their appropriation of urban spaces and also in terms of how LGBTI+s negotiate with the urban space while existing socio-cultural oppression imposes limits to their bodies and their beings. I considered this process as a call (or a cry out) for a close feminist reading of all the material I gathered from the field which, as result, provided the necessary number of elements for the examination of how LGBTI+s contested existing subjugation practices in the everyday urban life in Istanbul.

2.1.2.1.A Feminist Approach to Lefebvre's Spatial Understanding

There is no getting away from the fact that the social is inexorably also spatial (Massey, 1994, p.265).

Space is gendered both in action and in context and it is automatically portrayed in a bodily movement and furthermore is experienced by a gendered character (Massey, 1994). In addition to adopting a feminist approach, I also made use of it for the interpretation of Henri Lefebvre's spatial theory which was deemed to fall short in recognizing the gender perspective in the production of space and in right to the city discussions.

Lefebvre's spatial triad describes the space to have three components that work together to produce in the end a social space from the absolute space. The space comes into existence via a web of social relations that Lefebvre described as a triad (Lefebvre, 1991b). My primary aim in applying the spatial triad perspective was to reveal information on the perceived, lived, and representational spatial experiences of

LGBTI+s living in Istanbul and then to focus on the crossroads of the disappearing borders between public and private spaces. This tripartite strategy offered an integrated and strong scaffold for examining the resistance practices in the urban space of Istanbul. Moreover, it also helped me to contextualize the bodies in that particular spatiality, an issue that was also central to Lefebvre's production of space theory.

For Lefebvre, the social space was described via descriptions stemming from the "everyday discourse" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.16). Although Lefebvre openly wrote that the "social space will be revealed in its particularity to the extent that it ceases to be indistinguishable from mental space ... on the one hand, and physical space ... on the other" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.27), he did not make a clear connection between the social space and the sexualized body. His dichotomic view of sexes were limited with only male-female sex (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.187). As a result, his articulations could not (and were not) considered as feminist (Simonsen, 2005, p.10). As I briefly mentioned in the introduction chapter, because space is gendered and sexualized, emphasizing the uneven relationships of gender and sexuality that produce space and that are produced by space contributes to diminishing existing inequalities. I think that since Lefebvre's analysis of space and the exploration of resistances could in the end allow for gender and sexuality-based analysis of urban inequalities, bringing in a feminist lens to it would enhance the portrayal of the fieldwork results.

Following Lefebvre's views on the production of space, with the feminist approach I adopted I was able to notice current spatial relationships circling around a very constrained and controlled) sexuality, socially defined and bordered form of masculinity and femininity, heterosexism, and patriarchy. As it will be discussed in detail in the theoretical chapter (sub-chapter 3.2), the social space is not static and in fact it is relational (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.26; Massey, 1994, p.261). Social space, despite its abstraction in concrete terms; is in fact very much real because it causes real implications to the ones located in it. Lefebvre was also curious about the ways in which the space was embodying the social relationships and the kind of social relationships it was embodying (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.27). In relation to Lefebvre's particular questions, the feminist approach helped me answer them by creating the necessary context and definition of existing power relations.

2.1.3. The Interpretive Paradigm

We are all interpretive bricoleurs stuck in the present working against the past as we move into a politically charged and challenging future (Denzin & Lincoln, 2007, preface p.xv).

My views were totally informed and affected by the viewpoint of the respondents on the subject that I was researching. Therefore, while I was constructing and recreating the narrative, I focused primarily on my participants' views and then on my own interpretations of it. In fact, I would like to further this argument and indicate that what is gathered as the written result of ethnographic analysis is the researcher's own interpretation and construction based on "other people's constructions" (Geertz, 2008, p.34). By adopting an interpretive paradigm, I was able to merge both parties' (my own and my respondents') views and interpretations of the field while reflecting on the participants' spatial experiences circling around in-visibility and resistances.

According to Devault (1990), this interpretive process operates in such a way that the researcher places themselves in the respondents' place while "referring to an implied context for the story that is told" (p.104). In this sense, the interpretive paradigm works in good coordination with the ethnographic and feminist approach that I adopted for my thesis because the situated reality and subjective perception (on gender and sexuality dynamics and on spatial experiences) are collectively construed through this framework. My research focus was on a group sharing mostly similar and yet sometimes nuanced experiences when it comes to oppression and resistances, and their subjectivity and situatedness were of critical importance in determining and understanding the nuances within the group itself (Haraway, 1988). These similar yet nuanced experiences carry a heavy impact on the way I made sense of the urban spatial milieu. Based on this perspective, I was also able to realize that the resistances embedded in the production of space, my respondents' understanding of in-visibility, and their interpretation of all these components were rooted in a social context that was surrounding them on an everyday basis and that needed to be interpreted by the researcher.

This research became predominantly narrative and interpretative. In the analysis chapters, I tried to narrate the reality of LGBTI+s' narratives that were disclosed to me during the fieldwork process. During the interviews, I started with basic questions,

I used several qualitative techniques to collect data and then made use of the interpretive attributes of qualitative research while unraveling my respondents' resistances, their spatial productions and appropriations, and their pursuit for the right to the city by making use of the relevant theoretical frameworks.

Now I will move to the exploration of my fieldwork and post-fieldwork process.

2.2. The Fieldwork and Post-Fieldwork Process

As I said in the introduction chapter, before my fieldwork I was already taking part in the LGBTI+ movement and I, myself, was a party in the resistances taking place in different spatial settings of Istanbul. In 2015, I started little by little reaching out to some of my old acquaintances to ask if they would like to talk to me about their experiences in urban, metropolitan life. This was a helpful way for me to set up some topics and headings that I might want to investigate for my Ph.D. thesis with other LGBTI+s living and experimenting urban life in Istanbul. And at the beginning of the autumn of 2015, after one pilot interview that I conducted in September, I started my fieldwork process.

As I will explore in this sub-section, I blended multiple tools in order to comprehend LGBTI+s' relationship with Istanbul's spatial domains. I conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews, I held informal, causal but organic discussions with LGBTI+s I met throughout my fieldwork process and I was able to make observations.

Before moving to my fieldwork methods and the data collection tools that I employed, I would like to talk more about my fieldwork process. Below I will first discuss my recruitment methods and the way I reached out to the respondents of this thesis then I will be explaining the fieldwork steps and I will provide some delicate information about my fieldwork process as a researcher.

2.2.1. Methods Used to Reach out to Respondents and Characteristics of Respondents

I used purposive and snowball methods to reach out to my respondents (Bryman, 2012, p.418). The snowball sampling method is usually applied when the targeted audience

is not easily located or achieved and thus necessitates a gatekeeper, usually known as someone enabling access to those who are difficult to attain. In my case, even though I was familiar with the field, I needed to find other ways to meet new people. “Snowball” refers to the process of accumulation as each located subject suggests other subjects” says Babbie (2010, p.208); similarly, my application of snowball sampling involved primary communication with the participants and then identification of other possible respondents. With the snowball method, I basically aimed to obtain further names and suggestions from previous respondents of the thesis and the suggestion process continued in parallel with the fieldwork. The approach provided more participant exposure through others, which enabled me to have contact with participants who are difficult to access (Bryman, 2012, p.202). For me, participants whom I thought would be difficult to access were the ‘ordinary’ LGBTI+s who were not taking an activist role, nor taking part in the activities organized by the collective movement. Thanks to this method, connections were made easier, and the process was preserved as the interviews advanced in the field. This method indirectly assigns two roles to the participant of the in-depth interview: first, they become the respondent of the research, and then, after being asked by the researcher to introduce further potential respondents, they become the gatekeepers of the fieldwork.

Moreover, while selecting my interview participants, I was also aware that there would be differences in the experiences of each “letter” of the LGBTI+, therefore, in addition to the snowball sampling as a research design tool, I also applied purposive sampling which enabled me to hear as many voices as possible. I did not include any intersex⁶² respondents, I included lesbians, gays, bisexuals, queers, and women and men with trans experience in my sample.

According to Bryman, purposive sampling aims to strategically sample respondents who would be ‘relevant’ to the study’s research focus (Bryman, 2012, p.418). It is known that the researchers conduct systematic or purposeful sampling in qualitative research rather than random sampling. Participants are chosen from certain fields

⁶² There are discussions within the movement in Turkey regarding the inclusion of I (of intersex people) into this umbrella term. I witnessed heated debates on how “sex characteristics” (including genitals, gonads, and chromosome patterns) should not be included in this acronym since that condition could not be considered as an identity or as an expression of the individual agency like the rest of the letters do so. I will not elaborate on this debate, because it remained outside of this thesis’ discussions and my respondents’ narratives.

based on their significance to the study through this form of sampling. The purposive sampling method is described as the method to reach groups of people who have certain commonalities, and in my case, I reached out to “LGBTI+s” aged between 20-45 who were living in Istanbul for more than 3 years and who were willing to share their experiences about the city. My ‘purpose’ for this research was to include individuals who were identifying themselves as LGBTI+s who were living in different parts of the city and who were either actively participating or who were reluctant to participate to LGBTI+ activism.

While looking for respondents and while trying to reach a potential crowd of respondents, I tried to get in touch with as many people as possible in order to represent a general sense of LGBTI+s’ everyday lives and their relationship with the city. My wish in reaching out to those I have not known before was, first of all, to eliminate to the fullest any kind of researcher’s bias that might have an effect on my interpretation of their answers study (Table 3).

As I mentioned above, before starting my fieldwork, I needed to test my interview guide. Therefore, in September 2015, I made one pilot interview in my hometown, Istanbul. After all, the pilot interview was successful because it showed that the questions were not boring and the interview guide’s flow was also working properly, the topics were naturally linked, and the guide meticulously questioned the respondent on their spatial relations and the dynamics knitted around it. The official interview’s length was similar to one another (approximately 110-130 minutes each).

Below in Table 3, I give a full report on the people I formally interviewed. Overall, I interviewed 20 LGBTI+s in Istanbul, 8 of them identified themselves as activists and the remaining 10 did not. 2 of them were reluctant in defining themselves as either one of them. Their self-definitions were not dependent on whether they were officially associated (as a member, a volunteer, etc.) with any of the registered organizations in Turkey but rather it was about whether they considered themselves as an activist (be it an independent activist⁶³ or an activist associated with one of the organizations) or

⁶³ Here I would like to add an annotation about the roles of independent activism/activists and registered organizations within the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey. I think that independent activists are a ‘*sine qua non*’ of resistance, especially in the case of LGBTI+s. Independent activists tend to afford visibility in their actions. The visibility, along with resistance, is embedded in activism and in activists. They operate to break down the power mechanisms of the conceived space, the space that has been designed

not. Moreover, thanks to the informal conversations I was able to grasp a broader perspective of visibility oriented collective activism.

I would like to state a note on the terms that I applied for the identifications provided in the table below. First of all, as I indicated in the introduction chapter, all respondents of this study were assigned a pseudonym. Therefore, the names that are used in the thesis and in the table below were assigned by me and they are not my respondents' real names. The gender identification column and the sexual orientations column represent respondents' own descriptions which I gathered at the beginning of the interview with a small introduction part just to get the general specs of the participants. I would like to add another small note about my usage of pronouns for those who identified their genders as "queer" or "gender queer". In the Turkish language, there are no gendered pronouns for singular usage of the third person and when I was portraying the stance of those who defined their gender identities as *Kuir* and *Gender Queer*, I preferred using the pronoun "they" in my thesis. In the table below, I thought it would be meaningful to show which respondents were identifying themselves as activists and who did not, thus, I also made a column to track the respondents' self-definitions of being an activist or not. I added one column to define respondents' age groups and the last two columns are there to show the date and place of the interview.

and molded by power holders. However, LGBTI+ organizations are operating by nature in the conceived space; therefore, they are tangible with existing relations of power. They may be confrontational, but this can be sometimes operated subtly. The affordability of their visibility can be time and context-dependent. In fact, while I was working at SPoD as a project coordinator, there were times when the board of directors found themselves in a dilemma while trying to decide whether SPoD should become a signatory party of various political declarations or not considering the political turmoil and the impact that it would bring upon the organization itself.

I personally believe in the transformative power of independent activism, and I consider myself an independent activist, and I feel empowered by it. Having said this, in this chapter, I will not be focusing on the specificities of independent activism nor will I be making any particular arguments and differentiation circling around this notion.

Table 3. Who, When, Where? of the Official Interviews (Table prepared by the author)

	Pseudonym	Gender Identification ⁶⁴	Sexual Orientation	Define oneself as activist?	Age Group	Date	Place
1	Mustafa	M	Gay	N	Early 30s	02.10.2015	Istanbul
2	Batu	M	Gay	Y	Late 20s	13.10.2015	Istanbul
3	Defne	W-GQ	Bisexual	Y	Late 20s	15.10.2015	Istanbul
4	Ada	W	Bisexual	N/Y	Late 20s	22.10.2015	Istanbul
5	Ali	<i>Kuir</i>	Gay	N	Early 30s	26.10.2015	Istanbul
6	Can	M	Gay	N	Early 30s	03.11.2015	Istanbul
7	Deniz	WwTE	Queer	Y	Early 40s	17.11.2015	Istanbul
8	Umut	GQ	Lesbian	N/Y	Late 20s	19.11.2015	Istanbul
9	Gökçe	M	Gay	N	Late 20s	25.11.2015	Istanbul
10	Yelda	WwTE	Heterosexual	N	Late 30s	04.12.2015	Istanbul
11	Eser	W	Lesbian	Y	Early 30s	05.01.2016	Istanbul
12	Arda	MwTE	Heterosexual	Y	Late 20s	28.01.2016	Istanbul
13	Murat	MwTE	Heterosexual	N	Late 20s	29.01.2016	Istanbul
14	Uğur	M- <i>Kuir</i>	Gay	Y	Late 20s	06.02.2016	Istanbul
15	Ekrem	M	Gay	Y	Late 20s	07.10.2015	Istanbul
16	Ece	W	Queer	N	Late 20s	08.10.2015	Istanbul
17	Kerem	M	Gay	Y	Early 30s	16-17.10.2015	Istanbul
18	Aslı	WwTE	Heterosexual	N	Early 30s	11.02.2016	Istanbul
19	Hasan	M	Gay	N	Late 30s	23.04.2016	Istanbul
20	Şevda	W	Lesbian	N	Early 30s	12.11.2015	Istanbul

⁶⁴ I would like to provide the meanings of the abbreviations listed in this column. M: man, W: woman, WwTE: woman with trans experience, MwTE: Man with trans experience, GQ: Gender queer, Kuir: Queer.

At the beginning of my fieldwork process, I got in contact with two organizations in Istanbul (SPoD, Lambda Istanbul) and they were kind enough to disperse my ‘call for respondents’ to their networks. I received 2 calls through the organization’s web of communication and the rest, I reached them either personally or they were introduced to me by the respondents who had already participated in my study, thus through the ‘snowball’ method. Thus, I initially operated as my own gatekeeper. I started inviting those with whom I was able to get in contact on different occasions to participate in my study. When an acquaintance of another respondent was introduced to me to join this study, I was usually lucky because they were kind and often passionate enough to acknowledge and accept my invitation. Each time right after my initial invitations and first-time communication with people I did not know before, I was able to perform the anticipated interview swiftly.

During the interviews, I tried to be as comforting and soothing as possible with my respondents. In each in-depth interview, before starting the whole process, I presented myself and my professional and academic background, and then I told them about the roots of this project indicating that this was not my first encounter with the academic side of the story. I tried to reflect myself as much as I could during the interviews, by sharing some of my personal disclosure with the participants. I also realized that my genuine participation in the interviews had a positive impact on the respondents as they felt more and more comfortable during the interviews. This part, I believe, increased the level of sincerity between us and made them feel more at ease even in the presence of a voice recorder.

Providing in-depth information regarding the research is crucially important, therefore, right before starting my voice recorder, I informed all of the respondents regarding the context and the aim of the study and I also took their oral consent in order to ensure their participation in this study with their permission. Three of the respondents did not want to be recorded by the voice recorder, during their interviews I took notes in my notebook. The in-depth interviews were held in Turkish, and so were the informal talks. During the writing process, I first placed them in Turkish and then translated them into English. Interviews approximately lasted 110-140 minutes. During the interviews I tried to take some notes in my notebook, adding up to my memory the answers they gave to particular questions.

While conducting the fieldwork, I started to think about the contents and tried to understand the field from a more structured perspective. I started to address some of my initial ideas to my respondents after the interviews. While it was a long and hard duty, it was highly rewarding not only on an academic level but also on a personal level because it allowed me to create an intimate and close relationship with most of the respondents, as the feminist methodological approach would suggest so.

The interviews mostly took place in outdoor places. Some meetings took place on the Anatolian side and others on the European side of Istanbul. The places were diverse; the interviews took place in cafés and other outdoor places. Only three of my interviews were conducted at the house of the respondents. In the first one, the respondent was at the time staying with her parents the other two were sharing a house together (both men with trans experience⁶⁵). In most of these interview sessions I conducted in cafés, I realized that both the respondents and I somehow checked the place out a bit before raising our voices while choosing our words before we started the interviews. Our behavior was rooted in the fact that we did not feel safe or secure enough while discussing the topic that entailed ‘LGBTI+’ in it and I believe it was some sort of an auto-censorship. Even this realization was an indicator of the intricate and oppressive relationship circling around in-visibility between the everyday urban places and LGBTI+s in particular and that the topic needed further investigation.

Now I would like to present the qualitative research methods and tools I made use of during my fieldwork process.

2.2.2. Qualitative Research Methods

As I pointed out in the previous part, the ethnographic method I chose to apply for my thesis allowed me to grasp the lived experience. My respondents’ narratives of their lived experiences provided the necessary ground to discuss the ways in which LGBTI+s’ multilayered and unique experiences, identities, and negotiation tactics are

⁶⁵ Although I included men with trans experience in my sample, I realized that their experiences vary drastically from the remaining respondent profiles. As a result, as will be seen from the analysis sections, I did not include their narratives in my study, and this is one of the shortcomings that I experienced during my fieldwork analysis period. I aim to close this gap by focusing more on the narratives of men with trans experience in future studies that I am planning to conduct.

shaped and how they operate as the transformative power of existing socio-spatial realm and oppressive power relations that are circling around heteronormativity, cis-normativity, and patriarchy pushing them into spacelessness. With qualitative research methods, I was able to band together intermingling information that was already around me and that circulated in different discursive forms and shapes. I believe that the results of the qualitative research methods together with the interpretive paradigm brought a perspective that enabled me to access and then portray the flow of knowledge mixture on the topics circling around LGBTI+s and the space.

During the fieldwork process, I aimed to make sense of LGBTI+s' lived urban experiences and tried to understand how negotiations around socio-spatial norms impact and shape their experiences. I started from their personal experiences and then moved towards their primary spatial domains and then, by piercing the invisible walls of *space*, I proceeded towards other parts of the urban space, and explored their urban experiences.

For the analysis that will be portrayed in the upcoming chapters focusing on LGBTI+s' production and appropriation of urban spatial layers via different resistance practices, I conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews with 20 participants, I benefited from my participant observations, and I held informal and casual chats with numerous individuals who were identifying themselves as LGBTI+s throughout the fieldwork period. I was able to glean a considerable amount of data on LGBTI+s' lived experiences by collecting information using qualitative research techniques. I will be discussing the details of my methods in these three sub-sections below: the first one is the in-depth interviews, the second one is the informal discussions with different LGBTI+s, and the third one is the participant observation part, that is to say, the data gathered in the period of my fieldwork.

2.2.2.1. Semi-Structured In-Depth Interviews Based on Respondents' Narratives of Different Spatialities

The in-depth interviews were the primary tool for my fieldwork's data collection process. By using semi-structured in-depth interviews, I wanted to elicit their everyday

lives and integrate spatial rhythms. The in-depth interviews I conducted became the verbal representation of lived experiences of LGBTI+'s conflicts in urban spaces.

In-depth interviews, as a part of other qualitative approaches, are indispensable in order to obtain insight into subjective beliefs and perceptions, their implications, and the dynamic processes of human experience. The in-depth interview is formulated as a conversation, a nice chat between a respondent and the researcher who, in this case, me, has particular questions written on a paper, the interview guide already prepared for this usage. Through this method, the researcher seeks to gain a piece of knowledge about the respondents, as well as their interactions, attitudes and assessments, and social environments.

The discovery of the personal stories of participants directs the researcher to detailed coverage of the topic. These types of individual interviews, therefore, allow access to how people use the terms and make sense of existing concepts. Via these individual in-depth interviews, I became exposed to their narratives and their facts which showed me how the urban space was understood, experienced, and interpreted and how they were then transformed within respondents' descriptions and stories. Interviewing and revealing the spatial struggles, diving deep into the firsthand narratives of LGBTI+s living in urban spaces of Istanbul in a face-to-face and one-to-one setting was maybe one of the most sincere and intimate forms for gathering data along with the informal discussions on multiple occasions, which I discuss later in this sub-section. Now, I would like to explain the data collection tool I made use of for this particular method.

2.2.2.2.Semi-Structured In-Depth Interview Guides

Interviews provide a good way to understand the perspectives of the subjects from their point of view and at the same time, they convey the personal perspectives of people in their particular story (Bryman, 2012). In tandem with my methodological foundation, as I wanted to dig deeper into the lives of LGBTI+s and as I wanted to focus on individuals' understanding, opinions, perceptions, feelings, and relationships, on significant characteristics of 'situatedness', I realized that using semi-structured interviews would lead me towards my goal.

In this type of interviewing, questions are usually ready within the interview guide. Framing of the questions may vary during the process. All these questions are usually addressed to respondents in an open-ended fashion. Moreover, by choosing this type of interviewing instead of structured and/or unstructured interviews, I was able to create a platform that would enable participants to convey complicated ideas and versions of their own spatial explorations and resistance practices as well as their own understanding of different layers of spatialities while offering a foundation to me for comparing and interpreting the outcomes of my fieldwork in the analysis step. The main advantage of this approach was flexibility compared to a fully structured format that uses standardized and very specific questions (Bryman, 2012).

These semi-structured in-depth interview guides were formulated by the accumulation of my previous field experiences, my professional background as a social and market researcher, my own involvement in the LGBTI+ movement, and also a reflection of all the questions to my personal spatial struggles and conflicts. The literature readings I have been doing had already created tentative guidelines and question marks regarding the spatial dynamics and the geography that I was situated at; there were some conceptualizations that made sense to me and there were others that I could not fully comprehend. Trying to create a whole out of the multiple parts necessitated gathering these parts in a meaningful order in order to grasp the spatial struggles and resistances of LGBTI+s in Istanbul have been going through.

I made use of open-ended questions combining contextual, structural and comparison questions⁶⁶. The beginning of the interviews did not include any questioning specifically focusing on space; and yet their spatial journey discussions remained attached to them. When our interviews were advanced, our discussion topics increasingly became more space and resistance oriented, the LGBTI+-centered issues started being discussed through the spatial themes/dimensions. The interview guide contained 10 parts:

1. The warm-up part: getting to know the respondent

⁶⁶ The full version of the interview guide can be found in the Appendices part.

2. LGBTI+ Perception and Descriptions of the Concepts: the meanings attached to certain concepts such as LGBTI+, country examples, perception towards ‘LGBTI+’, the ‘body’, and the effect of this perception in the life of LGBTI+s.

In this section, my respondents discussed their gender/sexuality identity formation and the importance of space and spatial resistance they have encountered throughout their everyday lives. During this part, the conversations included their coming out stories and how that affected and continue to affect their everyday lives. I also addressed questions about the meanings of resistance and struggle in their lives. This issue was, later on, dug deeper.

3. The Body: The experiences with their bodies, the place their body held in their daily lives, daily practices, and struggle can be summarized as the questions in this part.

The next three headings of the semi-structured interview guides aimed to understand respondents’ perceptions of different layers of the urban space. I decided to interrogate it starting from the most proximate spatiality, their home.

4. Home: General physical conditions at their home, and their position in their homes were put under scope. I separated this part into two parts: the first one was addressed to the ones who were living with their parents, and the other part was reserved for those who were not living with their families. In this section, the problems that respondents discussed were going in and out from the borders of home, which later on made me question the limits of this spatial domain. In this part, respondents also discussed their coming out stories and how that affected and continue to affect their relations with the home and its members.

5. Neighborhood Perception: the concept of neighborhood holds significant importance in the analysis of space and LGBTI+. Therefore, for this part, I probed about their relationship to the neighborhood, and the perception of their neighborhood.

6. City Perception: This part included a variety of questions, descriptions, and personification activities. I thought that the descriptions they would make regarding the city would not only lead to a clear articulation of their experiences, but it would also reflect the actual perception of the city. It was in this section that respondents

tended to discuss their urban public space related problems. The section ended with ‘who should take the responsibility to solve the problem?’ question.

7. LGBTI+ Movement: Following the last question, I started questioning their awareness of LGBTI+ movement and current discourses and discussions that were taking place at that time. I asked about their views on the organizations that they were aware of or that they were connected to were framing these discussions.

8. Gender Asymmetry: This part was a small one and it aimed to grasp whether there were some asymmetrical and hierarchical relations within the LGBTI+ community itself and if so, I aimed to understand how it emerged.

9. Pride Marches and Protests: The most visible and vivid public representation of LGBTI+ is the Pride marches, I wanted to learn about my respondent’s thoughts about it. As a continuation of this section, I also asked them about their participation to different protests in the city.

10. Closing: Their final thoughts on what we have discussed, and their final comments in regard to the whole interview.

Although it was embedded in the interview guides, it was after grasping a full image of the interviews that I came to interpret that our discussions were circling around certain dimensions and these dimensions became the key terms/concepts of my study that I mentioned in the Lexicon section (1.5) of the Introduction Chapter.

After each interview, starting from the insights that I received from the pilot stage, I have consistently reflected and generated inquiries, concentrating on my respondents’ everyday narratives in order to enable them to articulate their unique stances and voices. In line with this, both my interview guide and these key discussion terms helped me systematize the analysis phase. It facilitated both deconstructing and then reconstructing the commonsense explications and information that I had gathered prior to and during the fieldwork and also narrating it in a coherent manner.

My data collection tools were not limited to these official interviews I conducted but there were also informal and casual conversations as I stated before. Now I would like to portray how I managed to conduct those.

2.2.2.3. Informal and Casual Conversations

As a party in a variety of organizational activities and other public events organized by LGBTI+s, I was able to meet with a lot of new people who could be potential informants for this study. I informally chatted with many people during these interactions, and I was also able to observe and experience first-hand the everyday resistance tactics circling around in-visibility. These casual conversations included talks that occurred spontaneously and that took place in an unstructured way evolving from the everyday conversations and interactions that I was able to get into. Although my intention in getting into these informal chats was not to collect data, these chats that developed organically offered me a very much needed perspective.

As I mentioned earlier, my getting immersed in LGBTI+ activism was part of my personal journey, my effort to find my own voice which in return, with my thesis, was transformed into an attempt of giving voice to other LGBTI+s. While I got more and more involved in it, my entanglement allowed me to observe the relationship between LGBTI+s and the space, their appropriations of spaces, and urban experiences beyond the meetings and events that I was attending. In that regard, my organically developed engagement with LGBTI+ activism and LGBTI+ oriented events constituted a major part of my ethnographic fieldwork experience.

2.2.2.4. Participant Observation

My voluntary participation in the activist field granted me experiencing, sensing, and understanding this thesis' respondents' and other LGBTI+s' experiences in the urban space, their endurance, their frustrations, their ways of thinking about different layers of space, and their resistances. In this way, I tried to discover and scrutinize the roots of their current life flows, regular hanging outs, and daily socializing events not only as a sole researcher who happened to be in the field that day but rather as someone who was truly engaged in the ongoing events and embraced similar feelings and experiences.

During my fieldwork period, I spent time mainly with LGBTI+ activists but also with those who were trying to get to know the movement and also those who were dragged

by their friends that day to that event, about which they had not been informed enough. My spontaneous interactions took place at the organization meetings, at different academic events organized by SPoD and Lambda, during Pride Week events, and the Pride March. As I became employed at SPoD during the time of my fieldwork, being present at an LGBTI+ organization and experiencing the everyday occurrences from the very center of it has enabled my ability to observe and understand the everyday realities of other LGBTI+s.

Summarily, my involvement with the movement, my voluntary participation in the organization of Istanbul Pride, and the people I met throughout this process allowed me to comprehend my respondents' stories and enabled me to portray them in a narrative for this dissertation. While I was swinging by different organizations and different events, I was meeting with new people and I realized that I was simultaneously continuing my fieldwork: the participant observation part never actually ceased. In fact, it was at the time of my fieldwork that I realized I was receiving meaningful information for a much longer period because of my involvement with the movement. This gave me a way to make sense, and furthermore, explore the senses my respondents kept on describing while they were telling about their own experiences of the everyday life.

My presence in the field was in line with Lefebvre's perception of how to analyze a space to the point that the space should not only be inspected by "the eyes" and "the intellect" but rather the spatial inspection should be effectuated by immersing all the sensations, "with the total body" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.391). Lefebvre believed that a researcher would be able to inspect and detect all nuances within the researched field only by being in the interim of the clashing layers of existing power relations. In short, participating in the everyday rhythm by witnessing and experiencing mundane occurrences contributed a lot to the writing process of my thesis.

Now I will be portraying the post-fieldwork and the analysis process.

2.2.3. Post-Fieldwork Process

As I said earlier, I paid a great deal to the anonymity of my respondents, all names were changed in the original files; all affiliations that could lead to their identities were

switched by other names. The only remaining traits of their identities have been the data gathered at the beginning of the interviews where I addressed personal and informational questions regarding gender expression, sexual orientation, and economic status.

After the completion of the fieldwork, all recordings were shared with and then transcribed by a professional team of transcription and then controlled two times by reading the transcription and listening simultaneously to the voice records both by the team and by me, the researcher. Just to make sure that everything would go by the book, I also prepared confidentiality agreements and asked the firm to sign these agreements before I shared the first part of my interviews. The confidentiality agreement⁶⁷ put clear boundaries about the discretion of the transcription team: it aimed to stop them from mentioning, discussing, or communicating the content of any of the interviews they became aware of. In the nametag of the mp3 files I shared with the transcription team I used the city names, and the date of the interviews and in order to be able to track my respondents, I decided to give each one of them a code.

The transcription of an interview has particular importance in the analysis part because every laugh, every pause, or even every satirical word could change the meaning attached to the sentence. It was for this reason that I gave specific guidelines to be followed by the transcription team⁶⁸, rules that would reassure that even though I will not be the one typing the transcription, I would be able to experience again the feeling that was dominant during the interview when I would reread them. These rules were followed by all transcribers but as I wanted to make sure that the process went smoothly and correctly, after gathering the first round of transcribed word documents, I started listening to the records and read the transcription simultaneously. I added a few words here, and another there. Transcriptions lasted 40 to 50 pages approximately depending on the length of the interviews.

⁶⁷ The confidentiality agreement can be found in the Appendices part.

⁶⁸ The list of rules to be followed by the transcription team can be found in the Appendices part.

2.2.3.1. The Analysis

As I said above, I benefited a lot from the semi-structured interview guide I prepared during the interviews. During the interviews where I tried to remain connected to the semi-structured interview guide as much as possible. The concepts and discussions arising from the previous interviews, which I took as notes in my notebook, served as a pathfinder in the fieldwork and analysis processes.

First of all, I got acquainted with the transcripts and what they were telling me. Then, I decided to prepare a word file to help me understand the results. While I was reading each interview, I started placing the answers given to particular questions under the matching headings that I decided to include in my thesis. After completing the placement of the transcriptions, I started reading the particular answers given to one particular heading one after the other by adding my interpretations and relevant literature and personal notes, and theoretical discussions below them. This enabled me to understand the answers given by my respondents' unique stances in that particular discussion and how I could connect them with a broader discussion idea. In the end, I gathered a narrative as a result of my own interpretation of the fieldwork results. This was based on a narrative in which their micro and macro resistances, production, and appropriation of different spaces through these resistances and their pursuit for the right to the city were portrayed through the lens of in-visibility.

While doing this, I utilized the interpretive and narrative approaches to explore my respondents' answers. This approach helped me formulate a non-linear narrative based on the data I gathered from LGBTI+s' interviews and also other facets of their daily experiences. I wanted to present the outcomes in a way that allowed me to share their experiences, struggles, resistances, togetherness, desires, pleasures, reflections and imaginations.

Because my study was based on qualitative research methods, I felt strictly bound by the narratives and verbatim of my respondents. With a style of writing that can be identified as 'narrative', I made use of various quotes that I gathered during the in-depth interviews I conducted. I wanted to reflect on the way my participants communicated in those instances with their own words. I thought this would pave the way to better comprehend the participants' own way of creating their spatial spaces

through resistances, which would in return help the reader to form their perception and comprehension of respondents' experiences and their spatial implications. Often the decisions around the citations that I included in this study were focused on the terms/concepts that I found to be critical, as I discussed in the introductory chapter. I tried to focus on what I got from the interviews, what the participants said, how they expressed them, and how my interpretations of these were realized in this process.

Throughout the whole process, I continued the literature readings that helped me greatly in my assessment of this delicate topic. I went back to my theoretical scaffold multiple times and in the end, the data collected on LGBTI+s' life experiences, their production of space and the framework for resistances, as explored in the upcoming chapters, have helped me to contextualize and theorize further the analytical outputs focusing on resistances, the production of space and right to the city concept of my research.

While interpreting my respondents' articulations based on the transcripts, I tried to restore the significance of their sentences by focusing on what was said and what I observed during the fieldwork. I considered the participants of this research as owners of their own worlds and realities. I considered myself as a medium to explain and enhance this information. Therefore, I made use of the interviews as the primary source of information and my acquirements from the field observations served as mental gap fillers during my writing process in order to attain a better articulation of the arc of the story of my respondents. This is related to researchers' self-reflexivity and situatedness since it deeply impacts the interpretation and comprehension of the findings of the fieldwork.

Now I would like to explain my positionality in the fieldwork, and I would like to elaborate more on the self-reflexivity and my own 'situatedness' in the field.

2.3. Researcher's Ultimate Objective

In a variety of cross-disciplinary studies, the ethnographic approach is employed to get better answers from the field. Questions of if or when the researcher should discuss their own gender/sexual identity during the fieldwork; how the researcher's own positionality and sexuality can be discussed, or where to place the researcher's

personal involvement with the field have been voiced (Savcı, 2011; Williams, 1996). These inquiries were present in my head while I was conducting the interviews and also while writing this dissertation.

During the fieldwork process and also while writing, I had long pauses and monologues when I was trying to position myself as the researcher of this thesis and while reviewing the past few years and all that has happened during and after the fieldwork process. As I indicated above, my involvement with the LGBTI+ movement was my attempt to find my own voice, to find myself a place where I could feel comfortable and safe. Throughout the process, my social environment changed drastically, and looking back at the time when I started this fieldwork and when I compare it to where I am right now, I see a lot of differences in me, in the people that I met along the way. It is these differences that make me want to discuss further my insider-outsider dilemma, my self-reflexive account, and my situatedness in the field.

2.3.1. The Researcher's Positionality Dilemma

I knew that my capacity for data collection depended on my role as a researcher and therefore, I had to ask myself whether my perspective, my questions, and my interpretations could have been considered adequate or impartial enough to conduct and portray this ethnographic study (England, 1994). During the whole fieldwork, I was cognizant that my personal involvement in the movement granted me an exclusive position to experience and discuss LGBTI+ related issues as an activist, and a field worker.

The researcher's self-positioning to the research material is critical. Being positioned as an insider or/and as an outsider to the researched individual, group, and social community or to the event can be a game-changer in handling the study area (McCartan, 2017; Taylor, 2011). There are good/bad sides to each positioning. And during the whole fieldwork, I experienced some of these impacts and I also had self-questioning moments for being positioned mostly as an insider to the fieldwork. I welcomed and embraced the positive impacts, and I tried my best to tackle all the obstacles that I met along the way (Table 4). As an insider, I had prior information about the fieldwork, and having already conducted a master's thesis project in a related

but different issue was giving me confidence about the field. On the other hand, I was also cognizant of the fact that I might overlook some aspects of the fieldwork and participants' unique experiences. Therefore, during the interviews, I tried to remain as impartial as I could since I did not want to be suggestive in using certain concepts and thus wanted my respondents to fill in the components. Even though some issues appeared natural to me while I was listening to my respondents, I wanted them explicitly to tell me what they meant by that, and this also helped me to overcome another obstacle of being an outsider (an outsider to my own experience).

Table 4. Being an Insider and/or Outsider to the Story (Table prepared by the author)

	Facilitating effects	Obstacles
Insider	Thorough knowledge on the researched topic Extensive information regarding the background that could have been missed	Possibility to overlook and then miss certain points revealed in the research Not going deep into certain points because they appear natural to the researcher
Outsider	Ability to pose analytical and intriguing questions because of the lack of previous knowledge	Difficulty to penetrate into the group Remaining distant therefore falling behind in understanding delicate details of the researched group

Throughout the period that I was conducting this research on this issue focusing on the lives of LGBTI+s, I tried to understand how my positioning as a subject and an active agent of this group could affect the way I formulated my questions, I interpreted the answers and the path I used to reflect the outcome to the readers of this thesis.

Working and volunteering in one of the LGBTI+ NGOs in Turkey, identifying myself as an activist for the LGBTI+ movement, taking part in the organizing committee of Istanbul Pride Week and Pride March (for the years 2016-2017), they all created a strong connection that positioned me at a very resourceful place to understand the field and its dynamics. As a researcher, my personal and professional background signaled me two important things: that first of all, I had to be conscious of that fine line between me being an insider and a rather privileged researcher, and also me being an insider attempting to formulate 'my own cocoon' while trying to find my own voice and path in life in many aspects. I wanted to act as myself, as someone engaged in LGBTI+ advocacy and activism-driven study. This particular position meant that I would

conduct my fieldwork and the process afterward through “a reflexive implication” allowing me to be interwoven into my own discussions.

I consciously conducted this research as both an insider and an outsider because I was not aware of some of the dynamics that respondents pointed out during the interviews. Therefore, I remained both simultaneously because I knew that every position had its own uniqueness. In my experience, establishing a relationship with the realm of a particular study and taking part in that community/organization became an invaluable advantage in retrieving the meanings attached to different situations, and spatialities and also in making sense of the symbols that created an effect for the people involved. Moreover, this reflection was also fruitful for my discernment of reflexivity and situatedness. Now, I would like to open the discussions on the account of self-reflexivity in the context of my thesis.

2.3.2. Self-Reflexivity and Situatedness

According to Denzin and Lincoln, qualitative research locates the researcher in the world of the researched while paving the way for gathering a collection of revealing and substantive information that illuminates the material reality of the researched subjects (Denzin & Lincoln, 2007, p.3). In tandem with the methods employed in this thesis, I would like to point out that participation in the field allows and reinforces “situatedness” (Haraway, 1988). What this means is that when a researcher, acting upon a feminist gridlock, gets themselves involved in the field of research, they would not only experience the obstructions, and difficulties along with happy and hopeful moments from the field; but at the same time, their involvement in the field would allow them to experience all the resistances and negotiations within existing power dynamics and thus to reveal the effects of “individual agency” (as discussed in Chapter 1.2.3).

‘Situated knowledges’ (Haraway, 1988) has become a concept that I took into consideration to understand the researcher’s positionality, specifically my own position as a researcher and the limits of my own ‘knowing’. Donna Haraway’s (1988) concept of ‘situated knowledges’ has brought a critical thinking perspective to the existing lines of research. The myth that the researcher’s own features do not matter

was challenged and disproven with this same feminist perspective (England, 1994, p.85).

The way I constructed my interview guide, aiming to learn more about the quotidian life of LGBTI+s, was focused on understanding their concepts, their wordings, and the blocks of knowledges through which they read and interpret the world surrounding them. This understandably helped to continue my interviews and the rest of the fieldwork by constantly questioning what they meant when they articulated a certain relationship they were having in their homes, with their bodies, in the neighborhood they were living at, or in any part of the city where they were spending their everyday lives in. During this period, I aimed to create a meaningful whole in itself through a self-reflexive account. Moreover, I also wanted to provide a platform that would enable LGBTI+s' to reflect their own voices, their experiences, and their understandings/meanings at the urban spaces of Istanbul through this feminist self-reflexive perspective that I willingly adopted. LGBTI+s' views and interactions enhanced and reinforced my understanding and more importantly, they made me question my own perception and knowledge.

Taking part in an LGBTI+ organization, continuing my activism in the field of LGBTI+ rights, carrying out interviews with LGBTI+s and evaluating current studies were all part of a helpful bucket of methods since they all boosted my ability to comprehend and reflect upon visibility issues, resistance practices and production of space of LGBTI+s. This approach made me put my subjectivity into consideration and also guided me to build on fresh perspectives that would contribute to an understanding of LGBTI+s' resistances in the urban space of Istanbul.

Feminist-oriented ideas on reflexivity necessitating the researcher to gaze into oneself and also to be self-aware in the fieldwork (England, 1994, p.82) remained at the methodological center of my study while I tried to explore LGBTI+s' resistance practices and show their tactics within their own production and appropriation of the urban space. Using qualitative methods greatly helped me to ease my positioning within the reality of my respondents; it facilitated my understanding of the different ways of meaning production processes adopted by informants.

2.3.3. Ethics and Privacy

In every step of my fieldwork and post-fieldwork processes, I relentlessly considered the way this research was performed. As I briefly indicated above, at the beginning of the interviews, all aspects of the research that could reasonably influence their participation in the research were recomunicated to participants. All the information gathered during the fieldwork was safely saved on the USB-stick with a password. Unless the respondent in one of the interviews came as a referral from another respondent, participants were not cognizant of other participants' names or other details. There have been instances in two different parties organized by SPoD where I met with a couple of my respondents. While we were hanging out at the party and when both my participants and I were standing together, I was addressed a question by one of my respondents about the thesis process. Having heard this, my other respondent realized that she was not the only participant in the room, and she wanted to know what answers the other participant gave to my questions, which later on transformed into a group chat between us. The two participants were not liverish about this fact, in fact, they realized how small and entangled the LGBTI+ community was.

I will now be discussing the theoretical framework of my thesis.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

This research topic was born out of my personal interest and involvement with the LGBTI+ movement and LGBTI+ activism. While doing that, I wanted this exploration to become a meaningful and useful articulation and production for LGBTI+s, hence my wish to contribute to the existing accumulation of knowledge on this issue has emerged. Studying this topic through a sociological perspective increased my awareness and knowledge of space, and most importantly of gender and sexuality-oriented resistances operating in different urban territories. It also helped me capture and better portray the role of the resistances, the numerous ways I comprehend and relate to through different spatial layers of the mundane occurrences, and the role of individual agency in the quests for the ‘right to the city’.

In this research, I utilized Lefebvre’s production of space (1991b) and his right to the city concept (1996) as a general theoretical scaffold. Moreover, while my thesis was heavily influenced by Lefebvre’s research, particularly his spatial conceptualization, de Certeau’s (1984) and Scott’s (1989) approaches to resistances carried a critical role in my analysis. I also relied on feminist critique while making sense of my fieldwork results through Lefebvre’s theoretical frameworks (Beebeejaun, 2017; Fenster, 2005; Kipfer et al., 2012; Simonsen, 2005;).

Throughout the analysis process of my results, I tried to merge the data I collected from the fieldwork with various theoretical approaches that tackled the problematic issues I discussed in Chapter 1. I focus on the entanglement of the resistance mechanisms of those who do not fit into existing and dominant gender and sexuality norms and their spatial productions through the lens of in-visibility. I did this while shedding light on LGBTI+s’ spatial entanglements in relation to their spatial experiences.

Before comprehending how Lefebvre theorized the “production of space”, I was not able to express the transformative power of resistance practices that my respondents were engaged in onto different layers of urban space through the sociological discourse. I acquired a theoretical framework in my head prior to my fieldwork with Lefebvre’s right to the city concept. But it was only after the exploration of resistances and after comprehending their impacts on different dimensions of urban spaces and with the adoption of a feminist perspective that I was able to narrate how their resistances were contributing to LGBTI+s’ quest for their right to the city and how this contribution was transforming the everyday spaces into “cocoon”. This chapter thus aims to show the theoretical pathway I adopted to interpret and portray the results of my fieldwork through Lefebvre’s theoretical scaffold with a feminist direction that was inspired by the previous studies of other academics (Beebeejaun, 2017; Fenster, 2005; Kipfer et al., 2012; Simonsen, 2005). The portrayal of findings (in Chapters 4 to 7) will often include additional insights since they apply to interconnected topics and broader theoretical frameworks.

The frameworks that are discussed below have briefly been mentioned in earlier sections. But I find it critical to thoroughly portray the implications these theoretical frameworks entail because of two reasons. The first one is that, in the analysis sections, I go back and forth between the theory and the fieldwork findings to anchor the ideas that I am discussing. In order to do that I, as the researcher, find it necessary to show the “map” of my mental path and the theoretical part constitutes some of the “legends” of this “map”. The second reason why I lengthily discuss these theories below is that I thought it was essential to ensure a solid ground for the concept of “cocoon” which emerges as my own visualization as the result of the ethnographic fieldwork I conducted. As a result, I will first portray the discussions on theoretical frameworks about the urban space and its numerous dimensions as they are the setting of my study which is centered around the mechanisms of resistances and spatial appropriations and reproductions of LGBTI+s. I will do so because I thought it was crucial that I understand and explore the meanings, interpretations, characteristics, and theoretical underpinnings of the (urban) space as a research field. This part will consist of a short introduction to the theories on space, and then I will discuss Lefebvre’s production of space theory, and from there I will explore his right to the city and right to difference

theories. As mentioned above, I will then be bringing a feminist critique to it. Lastly, I will be discussing the theoretical framework of resistances.

3.1. Theories on Space

The classical philosophical thinking considers space as a “space in ‘itself’) (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.169). This thesis, highly posited upon Lefebvre’s theory of space, considers the space to be produced rather than being assigned a substantial feature to it. Lefebvre was inspired by Leibniz’s arguments, who thought that the space was “indiscernible” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.169); and in order to render it discernible and detectible, it needed to be understood as relative and relational and that it needed to be defined by a body (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.170). Lefebvre stresses that, while theorists have taken the space and ratios and quantities as given, Leibniz’s perspective was preferable (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.170).

Space was considered almost as an echo in different fields (e.g. in literature, architecture, and mathematics), and has never been classified as an independent field (Lefebvre, 1991b). Space has persisted to be seen as a still and motionless environment. The work of Lefebvre (1991b) suggested that space is not a fixed entity; rather, it was argued that space was constructed of and established by social relations. Historically speaking, because space remains connected to different disciplines, its signifiers were clarified by different conceptual backgrounds that influence the manner in which space is viewed and defined. As an answer to these debates, I would like to quote Massey who asserted that “it is not that the interrelations between objects occur *in* space and time; it is these relationships themselves which *create/define* space and time” (Massey, 1994, p.263). Massey emphasized that space, like identities, should be understood through a contextual perspective that is to say that we should understand the relational situation of the production of space on different levels. Thus, in direct relation to Lefebvre’s understanding, space was no longer considered a passive environment, but it was a social product.

In this regard, Massey argues that space needs to be designed based on the collections of interrelations between the social interrelationships and experiences that occur at all scales (Massey, 1994). Therefore, Massey argues that when thinking about spaces, it

is important to consider their complexity, fluidity and contradictory features and that space is generated through considerable dynamics and complexities of the interlocking and unmounting web of power relations.

Space has an actual, material shape, albeit created and replicated through discursive processes. Space can be both public and private, constantly negotiated and re-contextualized. Space extends the boundaries and reaches beyond the physical sense of it (Lefebvre, 1991b). Put in a nutshell, space represents a dynamic and flowing concept rather than a fixed one. Below, with reference to Henri Lefebvre (1991b), I will be exploring the theory on the Production of Space which helped me conceptualize space not only as a single social concept but as an articulation and formulation of different components.

3.2. Production of Space and the Spatial Triad

For space 'is' whole and broken, global and fractured, at one and the same time. Just as it is at once conceived, perceived, and directly lived (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.356).

“Our knowledge of the material world is based on concepts defined in terms of the broadest generality and the greatest scientific abstraction” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.12). As a result, the relationship between space's existence and the way we experience and think about it is symbiotic. This symbiosis that exists between bodies, spatial layers, and social relations is put at the center of my theoretical formulation.

Lefebvre's approach to space (1991b) and to everyday urban life (1991a) proved to be a good scaffold to tackle the goals of my project to the point that it enabled me to discuss LGBTI+'s life experiences in Istanbul's urban areas. In his manuscript focusing on the mechanisms of spatial production (1991b), Henri Lefebvre gives priority to individuals' lived experiences and urban politics surrounding them due to their oppressed and dominated nature.

According to him, the social production of space cannot be considered as the outcome of a singular moment, but rather it is the result of a process during which society's acts are spreading over time while getting to know the intricate corners of that space they are located in (Lefebvre, 1991b). When looking at the connection with everyday

experience in space, it should be noted that experts such as city planners and engineers treat space as a technical planning unit. But space is also a unit that encompasses the entirety of social relations and struggles which are holding an essentially important “entry point” to comprehend Lefebvre’s arguments on the production of urban space (Kipfer et al., 2012, p.121).

In the *Production of Space*, Lefebvre (1991b) provides a comprehensive and holistic concept of space. This theory is composed of a “Spatial Triad” which consists of three elements that continuously influence each other and cannot be viewed independently from one another (p.33).

- The first constituent is called the ‘perceived space’, also known as the ‘spatial practices’. This element is used to indicate the physical forms of space and how this space can be generated and used by the various “members of a given society (p.33) – “users” and “inhabitants”⁶⁹. In this thesis, the spatial practices are put under my scope of examination throughout the analysis of LGBTI+s’ resistances as currents that produce space.
- The second constituent is the ‘conceived space’, also known as the ‘representations of space’. This is the space that policy makers, and urban planners have in mind (and on paper). This is also the most dominant form of space. This element is playing an important role in the literal production of space since this element consists of the implementation process and imbues existing policies and “order” in itself (p.33). In this study, as the conceived space corresponds to the representations of mental constructs and to abstract spatial knowledge, it converts into descriptions, along with the reinterpreted narratives used to describe different urban spatial layers in Istanbul, including in the private space. It also involves spatial depictions that contribute to the cognitive creation and expressions of LGBTI+s living in different urban spatial spaces in Istanbul.

⁶⁹ Both the terms ‘user’ and ‘inhabitant’ were deemed to be “clumsy and pejorative” by Lefebvre who thought that this created even further marginalization extending its sphere of influence upon language as well (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.362).

- The third constituent is the ‘lived space’, also called the representational spaces. This is the users’ or inhabitants’ interpretation of the space. This gives space a social and symbolic meaning, and this third element, in particular, revolves around associations and experiences the users have upon a certain spatiality (p.33). Even though I try to shed light upon the mediations between the three spatial spheres throughout the dissertation, the focus of this study has mostly been on the lived space since I tried to reflect on the formation of social space. In my analysis, I try to establish a connection between the outside material space with its perception and interpretation from the inside throughout their reproduction processes via resistances of LGBTI+s. Since space is the product of a temporary collision of social relations (Lefebvre, 1991b), I considered it fundamentally meaningful not to leave out spatial causal factors, the social construction of space, and the entanglement between the three components of space from my analysis of the LGBTI+s resistances. The lived space, located at the focal point of my interest, became the “appropriated” spatial dimension.

Space, according to Lefebvre (1991b), is a social construct, molded by the emergences and interactions within a society while it transforms those at the same time. Space, just like the conceptual framework that I aim to contribute with my thesis ‘the cocoon’⁷⁰, is paradoxical since it operates both as the producer and the produced entity of social relations (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.142). In fact, Lefebvre questions himself and he admits that “to speak of ‘producing space’ sounds bizarre” and this oddness is probed with these inquiries “what spaces? and what does it mean to speak of ‘producing space?’” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.15).

According to Lefebvre, a social space is constructed by relations and perceptions of different individuals and social groups. It is the interaction between these individuals and social groups that determines the actual use of space. Space thus becomes a relational construct (a product) developed by the presence, actions, and reactions of

⁷⁰ I initially discussed the concept of cocoon in the introduction chapter, under the Lexicon Section (p.67). Following this chapter, the concept will be mentioned numerous times during the thesis.

individuals and the ongoing connection in-between the three components of space as mentioned in Lefebvre’s theory (Table 5).

Table 5. Lefebvre’s Theoretical Concept of the *Production of Space* (Table prepared by the author)

n°	Answers in Lefebvre’s theoretical conception	Conceptual Names	Spatial Aspects
1	Spatial Practice	Perceived Space	Physical aspect
2	Representations of Space	Conceived Space	Mental / Abstract aspect
3	Representational Spaces	Lived Space	Social aspect

As it is shown in the table above, Lefebvre’s theory consisted of three elements that continuously influence each other and together produce the ‘space’. With these components, space can be looked at in three ways. The “**physical**” space, referring to the realm of nature and the universe, can be defined in terms of realistic sensory experience and the interpretation of materiality. Whereas the “**mental**” space comprises conceptual constructs and “**social**” space is construed upon social interactions.⁷¹

3.3. Right to the City and Right to Difference

... [T]he right to the city is like a cry and a demand... It can only be formulated as a transformed and renewed right to urban life as long as the urban place of encounter, priority of use value, inscription in a space of a time promoted to the rank of a supreme resource among all resources (Lefebvre, 1996, p.158).

The right to the city is for those without power; those with power already have the rights, and often use them to deny the same rights to others (Marcuse, 2010, p.94).

Lefebvre’s concept of the ‘right to the city’ scrutinizes how individuals and social groups should be in constant demand for their right to be in possession of their life in everyday urban spaces, in order not to be excluded from those and not to be cornered to the urban fringes and to private spheres (Lefebvre, 1996). Not being confined to ghettos (“ghetto in space and ghetto in time” (Lefebvre, 1996, p.144)) within cities due to marginalization by the general public (and also by the hands of city planners

⁷¹ More discussion on the theory of the Production of Space can be found in the Appendices part.

and their ‘zoning’⁷² practices (Lefebvre, 1996, p.144) constitutes an important element of this theoretical articulation. Lefebvre suggests that the existing neoliberal political climate disempowers city inhabitants and that is where the notion of the right to the city needs to be built (Ronneberger, 2008). According to Lefebvre, the right to the city is “a political slogan” that is meant to expand the spectrum of demands that are necessary for the essential change in socio-spatial realm (Marcuse, 2010, p.87).

Lefebvre’s approach towards space is framed with reference to restoring the “right to the city” by pointing out the social construction of space and its relationships with its surrounding milieu and the social relations that are embedded into it. To Lefebvre (1996), the right to the city is a political construct aimed at organizing disadvantaged and oppressed people who remain in marginalized positions and parts of the city. This demand is addressed at those who marginalize and alienate them, at policy-making, and other associated policy structures impacting their inclusion within the representational space. The right to the city, therefore, promotes the right of people to engage and contribute to the decision-making processes and also highlights their right to appropriate at an individual and communal level the “conceived” urban spaces.

His main point was that the city’s physical space was a public one since it hosted a multitude of social exchanges. This diversity in social exchanges, on the other hand, was the signal of the distinct nature of existences and beings (identities) in society, thus pointing out its heterogeneous nature, as opposed to the homogeneity requirement of the conceived space. This variety of identities, and the differences amongst them, in return, paved the way for an environment of struggle and resistance since all outcasted and oppressed groups were demanding their right to the city which was being taken away from them with the requirement of homogeneity. Lefebvre’s right to the city is a mobilizing power and political aim for the multiple demands and the democratic rights of urbanized space. It is a resistance for survival and collective self-formation and a cycle of transformation by struggle within the everyday life itself.

⁷² Zoning has been defined by Lefebvre as a logical ability to differentiate in the guise of a “bureaucratically decreed unit” which results in alienation, segregation, and isolation (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.317).

I find it necessary to focus on how Lefebvre understands the “difference”. There are two kinds of differences in the understanding of Lefebvre (1991b) that the cities host and reveal. The first is based on minor (minimal) differences arising from the rhythm of everyday life (p.372). Such differences do not have the potential to create epic transformation in society. There are also big (maximal) differences. These differences are the disparities experienced by social groups and communities that have the potential to come together socio-politically and thus have the potential to make the historical and qualitative transformation (p.372). In this context, For Lefebvre, the class struggle is “inscribed in space” (p.55). He furthermore believes that the only capable struggle that would carry on the change in the production of space is the class struggle, which nowadays “are now far more varied than formerly” (p.55), including in the struggle of minorities as well. Although Lefebvre wrote that “only the working class can become the agent, the social carrier or support of this realization” (Lefebvre, 1996, p.158), in this thesis, as I asserted from the very beginning, I consider LGBTI+s as a social group and their resistance attempts capable of carrying the mentioned revolutionary act.

The right to difference is inextricably linked to the right to the city and it entails resisting and struggling by questioning “the order of things” (Dikeç, 2002, p.96). In this perspective, the right to difference and the right to the city become mutually exclusive. While struggling for the right to the city, it is vital that the right to difference is ingrained in the process, otherwise, the idea of diversity and difference becomes stagnant (De Villiers, 2017). The right to difference can be attained through action, resistance that is rooted in the differences (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.396). The struggling, resisting, and fighting characteristics are embedded in its seeking. “This is a ‘right’ whose only justification lies in its content” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.396).

Massey’s views on the intricate relationship between space, place, and gender explain up to what point gender awareness is important in making sense of the “spatial differences” in numerous urban spatial layers (I would suggest home, streets, leisure places, etc.) (Massey, 1994, p.13). I also strongly believe in this claim and my study is also an exploration of how the right to the city, accompanied by the right to difference, actually reinforces going beyond the public space that is heavily influenced by the hetero-patriarchal exclusion towards the private space by including a gender

and sexual identity-aware perspective to it. This research discusses how LGBTI+s are being forced behind four walls of private space and how they are simultaneously being removed from the heteropatriarchal private space by the prejudices of their families and society. It is this removal from the private space that makes the private overflow towards the public and it is this same exclusion that expands their seeking for the right to the city towards all spatial domains of the everyday urban life, including in the conceived spaces of “homes”.

The *differential space* (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.52), as a response to monolithic and homogenous abstract space, would, first of all, reject homogeneity and division driving from the abstract space, and it furthermore emphasizes appropriation rather than dominance, thereby assuming a central role for the individual and to its body (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.165). Moreover, the occupation of space takes place by social and political processes oriented to autogestion. Therefore, the right to difference is associated with the right to differentiate, oppose, and question what is happening around us. It is “another type of human right, that of the right to the city” (Harvey, 2008, p.23).

I would like to elaborate more on Harvey’s understanding and exploration of the right to the city (Harvey, 2008). For Harvey, the right to the city encloses the “right to change ourselves by changing the city” (p.23). According to him, the social, economic, and political situation brought a radical transformation to everyday life that resulted in social unrest wanting to “create a movement to build another kind of world—including a different kind of urban experience” (p.28). He finishes his arguments by indicating to the unification of the oppressed as the remedy of existing systems of exploitation, inequality, and dispossession (p.40).⁷³

As I discussed in the methodology chapter, Lefebvre’s framework primarily appeared inspiring and challenging because his spatial triad and his right to the city concept did not provide a clear understanding that takes into account the idea of gendered and sexualized spatialities (Beebeejaun, 2017; Fenster, 2005; Kipfer et al., 2012; Simonsen, 2005). Only at one point in the production of space, he asks himself the prevalent usage of the wording of ‘men’ when discussing issues circling around human

⁷³ More discussion on the theory of the Right to the City can be found in the Appendices part.

beings (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.132). With my study, I aim to close these gaps and reflect upon a more holistic and feminist account that manages to include non-Western and non-European geography into these discussions by focusing on LGBTI+s' right to the city struggles taking place in Istanbul. Now, I would like to explain the next part of my theoretical scaffold, the feminist critique.

3.4. The Feminist Critique

The personal is political (Hanisch, 1969).

Podmore and Brown provide a timeline while they explore 'spatial "histories" of sexualities' and they present in chronological order the academic discussions that emerged starting with the translation of Foucault's *History of Sexuality* book (Podmore & Brown, 2015). The understanding of Foucault with regard to power dynamics has contributed greatly to the historical investigation of oppression aiming at sexuality and its spatial reflections (Podmore & Brown, 2015, p.6). His views were used widely as a platform to discuss cultural and political conflicts while theorizing on "the body" in the context of understanding how the movement of the body could be transformed into a resistance site throughout the production of power relations. But, Foucault's works did not provide sufficient room to discuss space in a holistic manner (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.4). Accordingly, in the following period, feminist scholars and researchers of gender studies have concentrated on the critical analysis of the ways in which 'non-normative' gender and sexual identities are acting in the face of the prevailing discourses and hierarchical structures of gender and sexuality (Podmore & Brown, 2015, p.6). In this second phase, there has been a tendency to understand the cases circling around sexual "difference" in current urban layers and how, especially gay men, started transforming urban public places. The impact of Michel de Certeau's and Lefebvre's work, according to Podmore and Brown (2015), comes in the third phase of this academic inquiry (p.6).

There is a need for an awareness of how different, evolving and conflicting discourses affect the way in which individuals respond to the outside world. And because a spatial theory by itself cannot clarify the ways in which LGBTI+s understand and experience their sexual and gender subjectivities in multiple urban spatial layers, I believe it is crucially important to embed a feminist theoretical framework to "develop an

embodied notion of the human being as a social agent and of the functions of the body in social space” (Featherstone & Turner, 1995 as cited in Simonsen, 2005, p.1).

The city, despite its offering of freedom and mobility, has not been completely deemed as an emancipating space for marginalized groups for its limited provision of liberation and anonymity (Beebeejaun, 2017, p.326). But it was usually considered a source of attraction and vivid life. Reflecting upon how everyday urban spaces are constructed and perceived in and through gender-based and sexuality-oriented performativity and expression raises questions about the connection between materiality, gender and sexuality expression, and urban spaces.

As I already discussed in the methodological chapter of my thesis, I relied on feminist methodology and I adopted a feminist perspective for my thesis. From this standpoint, I wanted to comprehend my respondents’ individual and subjective experiences, resistances, and struggles while they reproduced their lived everyday urban spaces by resisting and fighting for their right to the city in Istanbul. I thought that this transformative idea of space needed to be applied to a non-western geographical domain by including the ‘home’ as a starting spatial point of resistance. I thought that this way would create a refreshed understanding of the spatial experiencing and interactions between space and LGBTI+s living in the urban layers of Istanbul.

Feminist academics discussed how women are often forced to conduct their everyday lives in their own private areas due to the heteropatriarchal understanding, norms, and values they are exposed to. According to Savran, because of the association of private space with women, the daily activities of women started to be associated heavily with the concept of housework (Savran, 2002, p.300). As a result, women were prevented from making active participation in the everyday life in the same way as men do. However, as Fenster argues, women’s use of private space is also being restricted (Fenster, 2005, p.220). Although the cases of LGBTI+s and women entail differences, they both share a similar realm of heteropatriarchal oppression and restriction which brings me to the point that the case of LGBTI+s is similar to women’s situation (Grangeiro Ferreira, 2018). For LGBTI+s, in addition to the fact that space is socially produced, space also operates as “a means of control, and hence of domination, of power” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.26).

Lefebvre suggests that the only path for a holistic space theory is to talk about whether a body can produce space (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.170). Even though his theory does not provide a clear theoretical structure of the body itself, he particularly stresses the potential of the involvement of the body in the spatial production processes (Simonsen, 2005, p.9). At the same time, Lefebvre perceives human life as a whole and this in return annihilates the possibility to consider gender and sexuality as a “structuring dimension of peoples’ identities” (Beebeejaun, 2017, p.325). He was therefore criticized for having overlooked the different experiences of gendered practices and for having considered everyday life from a heteronormative perspective (Kipfer et al., 2012, p.124). Furthermore, there were also other criticisms towards him for having incarcerated the discussions on the ‘right to the city’ concept into the public space, by neglecting the importance of private space in the lives of women (Fenster, 2005, p.221).

The attempt of the oppressive patriarchal and heterosexist rule is to assign limits to how LGBTI+s can act as everyday resistant agents. Lefebvre’s right to the city concept was criticized from a feminist perspective for running short in providing the necessary focus on patriarchal oppression mechanisms (Fenster, 2005, p.217). From this perspective towards the right to the city, it is argued that although many successes have been attained against inequalities and injustices occurring on the basis of gender and sexuality, discrimination against (women and) LGBTI+s still exists in the course of the everyday urban life (Beebeejaun, 2017, p.330).

As I will show in Chapter 4, LGBTI+s are being forced behind four walls of the private space, and simultaneously, they are being removed from the heteropatriarchal private space and they find themselves spaceless. This spacelessness ignites them towards creating their own “cocoon”. It is this removal that forces them towards the public space and towards looking for other ‘homes’ and other ‘intimate places’ and other spaces to continue their organizing and their quest for the right to the city. Accordingly, following Fenster, I argue that the right to the city actually starts at home (Fenster, 2005, p.220).

The feminist iteration is not concerned with a fixed location of the body, but rather looks for different nodes in a variety of fields, seeking influences within the material

and semiotic fields that posit an impact on meaning differences (Haraway, 1988; Massey, 1994). The feminist critique targeting the existing power structures of gender and sexuality which lead to the unequal use of resources and of space in particular has brought upon other discussions on the subject to be investigated as well.

In short, the feminist critique on space, subjectivity, gender, and sexuality together with Lefebvre's right to the city concept, his production of space theory, and his views on everyday life along with de Certeau's, Scott's, and Lefebvre's understanding (as will be discussed below) of resistances aims to offer critical insights while looking into how LGBTI+s understand, engage with, produce and transform different everyday urban spaces and places. In this sense, this theoretical framework will hopefully be a valuable contribution to the collection of critical lenses to investigate the social production of space and to grasp the conceived and lived aspects of space.

Lastly, I would like to explore theories on resistances.

3.5. Theories on Resistances

The topic of "resistance" has been a critical issue for my thesis, and this was due to numerous reasons. First, I thought that conceptualizing the resistances and finding the right theoretical framework that would enable me to discuss the outputs of my fieldwork results had been challenging. Second, since what I called resistances were embedded into respondents' mundane flows, it was not easy for me to distinguish and also to group them in a coherent manner. In this sub-chapter, I would like to discuss the core thinkers I consulted and how I formulated a final result for this topic.

From Henri Lefebvre's point of view, resistance is seen as a kind of challenge or as one of the expressions of 'difference' (Lefebvre, 1991b, pp.49-50, 373). These resistances come from those who struggle with the existing hegemonic, (heteronormative and patriarchal, I would like to add) system and who are excluded from it (pp.50, 373). He explains this by looking into the development of a child. He says that starting from adolescence, individuals find themselves in the midst of predetermined concepts and they realize that they are bounded by the limits of those. The only way for them to find "a world of differences" is to "revolt" (p.50). Lefebvre says that this method can combat power and everyday forms created by it (pp.349,

382). The challenge brings together all the scattered elements in everyday life and enables a collective life to be built (p.382).

The concept of resistance in Lefebvre's writings arises when individuals are attempting to assert their own revolts towards the prescribed systems of power. The struggle between the two parties, meaning between the self and the other, is in fact a form of power exemption, and the resistance of individuals is smothered when the course of 'the other' is imposed for good. He also points out that the struggle of the oppressed can be guided both through visible ("in the day light") and subtle ways ("underground") (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.23). Moreover, Lefebvre, while discussing forms of alienation, he wrote that "it is in contradiction and painful division, in the struggle against nature and against his own self, that man becomes what he can become" (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.180) pointing out the reproductive feature of the struggle for the individual in the sense that he thinks it is through resisting that one can realize themselves.

Lefebvre makes a distinction in terms of gestures, and he divides them into two groups "the everyday gestures" and "the gestures associated with feasts" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.215). He furthermore develops these two groups under the headings of 'microgestural' and 'macrogestural' realms (p.215). This particular division has been instrumental for me when I analyzed the resistance practices of LGBTI+s and I decided to implement this distinction into my own thesis project as will be apparent in Chapters 5 and 6.

Moreover, according to Hollander and Einwohner, resistance is an objection to existing power relations, so it is an oppositional action (Hollander & Einwohner, 2004, pp.538-539). They state that resistance usually takes physical forms but also "symbolic behavior" may accompany those (p.536). They analyze this concept based on different attributes: according to its scale, direction, or goals (p.536) and source (p.537). Another important feature of the resistance is that it occurs in continuous flow. They say that "resistance and domination have a cyclical relationship, domination leads to resistance, which leads to the further exercise of power, provoking further resistance" (p.548). The resistance can be organized at an individual or collective level; while some forms of resistance exist in public, some prefer to remain secret, disguised, and

implicit. In this case, the identity of the resisting parties remains blurry and unidentified (p.540). The visibility emphasis on Hollander and Einwohner's exploration of the concept of resistance is what attracted my attention given that the concept that I suggest, "in-visibility", aims to operate as a lens in this study while analyzing LGBTI+s' micro and macro resistances' impact on the reproduction of space and on their quest for their right to the city.

In the *Practice of Everyday Life*, De Certeau is highlighting a ring of word string that I thought is a good fit to explain some of the findings of my thesis: "ways of operating", "modes of operation", "schemata of action" (De Certeau, 1984, p.xi), "victories of the "weak" over the strong", "clever tricks", "knowing how to get away with things", "maneuvers" (p.xix), "art of the weak" (p.37) can be cited among them. He says that "these 'ways of operating' constitute the innumerable practices by means of which users reappropriate the space organized by techniques of sociocultural production" (p.xiv). He furthermore gives a very descriptive and relatable example to describe these modes of actions by turning his attention to nature, just like I did with the 'cocoon' metaphor, and he writes about the "insects that disguise or transform themselves in order to survive" (p.xi) and the "simulations, tricks, and disguises that certain fishes or plants execute with extraordinary virtuosity" (p.40).⁷⁴

Starting from "the depths of the oceans to the streets of our great cities" (De Certeau, 1984, p.40) De Certeau suggests looking into the everyday life and the practices that take place within it so as to shed light upon the "obscure background of social activity" in order to communicate them in a better way (p.40). De Certeau's aim is to enlighten the discrete and detached practices operated by the hands of those who are oppressed in a given social structure, those who are "already caught in the nets of "discipline" (p.xi). These actions' common feature is that they serve to create a disorganization in the course of the everyday life by "deflecting their functioning by means of a multitude of "tactics" articulated in the details of everyday life" (p.xiv).

⁷⁴ Merrifield (2002) highlights the presence of a similar perspective in Lefebvre's writings with the metaphor of a seashell. He says that "the relationship between the animal and the shell is, therefore, crucial for understanding both the shell and the animal" (pp.81-82). The point that I aim to make here is similar to what Lefebvre was aiming for which was to portray under which circumstances the cocoon develops and to what purposes it serves in terms of the occupants' needs and demands from the environment in which it is located at.

As I wrote above in the introduction chapter, my analysis is built upon the actions of those “who are not ... makers” of the system, hence of LGBTI+s in the context of this study. De Certeau (1984), by pointing out this distinction aims to guide our attention towards revealing the “difference or similarity” of the intended and actualized usage of ‘representations’ (p.xiii). I find this indication particularly important because Lefebvre, with his tripartite division of space, named the conceived space, the most dominant one among the three, as the “representations of space” and he pointed out a constant struggle between the lived and the conceived space (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.38). As a result, my understanding of what de Certeau is indicating with the wording of ‘representations’ and the difference between ‘its makers’ and ‘its users’ actually concatenated with Lefebvre’s understanding of the conceived space and lived space descriptions and operationalizations.

One of the criticisms brought to de Certeau indicates that he takes all possible ways of using the maneuvering tactics into consideration when he discusses the resistances even if these maneuverings do not in the end have a substantial impact upon existing oppressive power dynamics (Vinthagen & Johansson, 2013, p.16). I think that this commentary’s critical point lies in the definition of ‘impact’ that one expects to see upon existing power relations. I consider that LGBTI+s’ every tactic and maneuvering, thus their “acts” to continue ‘being’ and ‘living’ has an impact on existing power relations and on urban spatial organization. Moreover, I also think that “what matters is how people are acting” (Vinthagen & Johansson, 2013, p.21) and also how they find ways and ‘tactics’ to transform spaces and to open up cracks in the existing homogenized surface for themselves.

The analysis part of my dissertation will carry a lot of examples to describe such ‘tactical’ moves LGBTI+s are operating on where they take “advantage of “opportunities” and “build up [their] own position, and plan raids” (De Certeau, 1984, p.37). Moreover, I also relied on De Certeau’s explanations of different spatio-temporalities during the analysis part of this dissertation as I pointed out many relevant points in my fieldwork findings as well.

Even though De Certeau’s indications were very helpful and explanatory in the course of my analysis, I was not able to capture and portray all the resistance dynamics that I

revealed in my fieldwork in a complete manner. This guided me towards the inclusion of another perspective into my analysis of resistances: that of Scott's (1989). Now I would like to explain Scott's particular view on resistances.

Scott's theoretical articulation of resistances is interrogating this issue through a similar perspective to that of De Certeau, who deals with resistance in its individualistic forms (Scott, 1989). Developing an interconnected approach with De Certeau's conceptualizations, Scott is interested in seeing the ways in which the individual organizes the resistance in the axis of the micro powers in the course of everyday life. To do this, Scott is trying to answer a very critical question when he initially addresses this issue, one that I also was curious about at the beginning of my analysis phase: "What counts as resistance?" (Scott, 1989, p.50).

In order to answer this question, Scott starts by challenging the existing understanding of what a 'political action' is and what constitutes the resistances within a political demand too (Scott, 1989, p.33). I thought that this would be a good perspective to adopt in order to analyze the resistances of LGBTI+s. My reasoning for this was ingrained in the particular methodological and theoretical framework that I implemented into my analysis, namely the feminist methodology and the feminist critique that I apply to Lefebvre's understanding of spatial production and right to the city discourses in the framework of LGBTI+s' right to the city quests. And this is because I think that LGBTI+s' resistances taking place on the micro level, or the "everyday forms of resistances" as Scott would call them, are political ones, with reference to the feminist motto "the personal is political" (Hanisch, 1969). In this sense, Scott's perspective was useful to tackle two of the problematic issues that I pointed out in Chapter 1.2, the shadowed agency of the individual (1.2.3) and the overlooked nature of different types of resistances (1.2.2). I would like to explain more of Scott's theory of everyday forms of resistance and how it related to my thesis topic.

Scott says that a big majority of resistances are habitually ignored as a 'political action' because they are not considered in the sphere of conventional 'politics' and he also indicates that these resistances are overlooked because they do not reflect the conventional understanding of 'collective action' (Scott, 1989, p.33). To challenge this perspective, he compares two types of resistances, both of them targeting a political

aim, one being ‘quieter’ and the other one being more ‘open’ (p.34). This particular differentiation directly relates to another topic that I tackle in my dissertation: the issue of in-visibility. For him, the impact “everyday forms of resistance has much to do with the small scale of the action” (p.35).

I would like to discuss further the concept of “everyday forms of resistances”. The concept of “everyday resistance” was introduced by James Scott (Vinthagen & Johansson, 2013, p.4) and it was considered a different form of resistance from the political, organized, and collective forms of resistance. Everyday resistance, according to Scott, is the act of protecting the individual’s own daily life against material domination practices. He defines these acts as “minute advantages and opportunities which can have little effect on overall relationships of power”, however, when these resistances accumulate, they may reach “critical thresholds” (Scott, 1989, p.42). (p.42).

Scott thinks that those who only take into account the organized resistances forget about the critical function of limited and constrained forms of resistances (Scott, 1989, p.51). In fact, he criticizes the claims that are made against considering these small-scale actions as resistances by pointing out an implicit distinction made between “real resistances” and “the rest”; the rest that is comprised of “unorganized, opportunistic” actions “with no revolutionary consequences” while “accommodating the structure of the domination” (p.51). I agree with Scott’s criticism here and I aim to challenge this same conventional perspective with my thesis.

Similar to the concept of tactics in de Certeau’s work, everyday resistances operate through hidden and secretive ways that require the creation of physical spaces and active executors. Thus, everyday resistance is seen as “a matter of the less visible” (Vinthagen & Johansson, 2013, p.17). This secretiveness disguises when it is *affordable* and these actions are usually anonymous (Scott, 1989, p.49). The identity of the perpetrators remains blurry and unidentified, and these forms of resistances open doors to all kinds of cunning and games. Scott indicates that the lack of visibility, structuredness, and collectivity in everyday forms of resistances is compensated by their ongoing continuance and the advantage of invisibility endowed to their doers (p.54). For Scott, among the characteristics of everyday resistances, the “pervasive use

of disguise”, and “concealment of anonymity” are very distinguishable (p.54).⁷⁵ The important thing is that while the resisting party is willing to act for a change, this party

⁷⁵ I would like to make a comment on Scott’s characterization of the everyday resistance. Scott says that “the personal (not the class) identity of the protesters” remains hidden (Scott, 1989, p.54). Although I support this suggestion, I do not fully agree with this characteristic of the everyday resistance since I think that the resistance emerges from a personal experience of oppression and gets shaped according to that individual’s calculations of risks. Therefore, even though the personal identity can remain blurry, one resistance is manifested and comes to light, the group that one belongs to, being the LGBTI+s in general, can easily become identifiable and visible to the eye, furthering the marginalization of that group or the person as well. Although this is not what determines the affordability of the action, since it is tightly related to individualistic calculations, it impacts the social group in the long run.

Here I would like come to back to Asef Bayat, a scholar that I mentioned in a previous footnote, whose terminology of “quiet encroachment”, which is described in his own words as “a silent, patient, protracted, and pervasive advancement of ordinary people on the propertied and powerful in order to survive hardships and better their lives” (Bayat, 1997, p.57) shows parallelism with De Certeau’s notion of ‘tactics’ and as mentioned earlier, with Scott’s theory of “everyday resistances”. The actors of resistances in Bayat’s (1997) conceptualization are described as the urban poor in the Third World (p.56) and the “largely ‘floating’ social clusters” (p.58) who are revolting in a sneaky and yet offensive way (which in return transform their action into a collective one). Bayat, in his conceptualization of quiet encroachment, mentions that the doers do not intentionally challenge the political authority (p.58). And the same doers, the actors, thus the resisters become engaged in collective action “only when confronted by those who threaten their gains” (p.58). But the important thing is that in Bayat’s description, the results of quiet encroachment turn out to be “always collective and audible” (p.58).

One of the reasons why I did not want to position my analysis on Bayat’s argument is in relation to this resulting point of a ‘collective action’. This is one of the critical questions that I address later in my thesis, could micro resistances transform into something more? Into a collective action? for instance. Although my answer is affirmative, I do not follow the same path as Bayat when describing this culmination process. In my formulation, as posited above, the micro resistances open up cracks upon the monolithic surface, they open up rooms to breathe, cocoons to exist, and to connect with one another. As I explain later the collective action becomes viable in the long run, not simply because these micro resistances directly lead the way towards it, but because these micro resistances allow the resisters to go on with their everyday lives, and because these micro resistances give the resisters their right to leisure, their right to enjoyment. And then the pursuit for the right to the city takes place.

There is another reason for not following Bayat’s argumentation. The reality is that the doers of these micro resistances are not always taking part in collective action. Among the respondents, there were some who identified themselves as activists, and there were others who did not. And this choice did not depend on the lack of an “institutional mechanism through which they can collectively express their grievances and resolve their problems” as Bayat suggested (p.58). But it was rather a personal choice. Macro resistances do require collectivity, but do not necessarily require the participation of all micro resistance doers, because not every LGBTI+ considers themselves an activist. Regardless of their activism status, I considered all their micro resistances as “political” ones, because I asserted the idea that “the personal is political” and the politics had already floated into the streets, overflowed to their homes, not leaving their sides even for a minute. As opposed to what Bayat is suggesting, LGBTI+s’ resistances do not earn their political “label” when they become collective; their very existence on an everyday basis is a political proclamation in itself.

Another reason why I chose not to follow Bayat’s footsteps is due to his questioning and reductive reasoning on “when does the state enter the arena?” (p.62). According to him, the state opposition takes place as a result of the growing power of the unrest of the resisters. However, as I argue, the conceived space is already governed (and in fact produced) by the power holders, thus the state, state-mandated views and ideologies, and also the replicators and followers of these ‘imaginary’ realities and construct ‘truths’. The “state”, thus the governing power, its reflections, and echoes are always there, menacing all the differences’ existence; it is always trying to sweep them away to keep the homogeneity intact. My disagreement with Bayat is mostly rooted in my views and explorations’ harmony with Lefebvre’s theory of the production of space, and De Certeau and Scott’s views on resistances. LGBTI+s do not take advantage of the “undermined state power at time of crisis” (Bayat, 1997, p.62) but rather, they wait for their own momentum, they take minute advantages and opportunities (Scott, 1989, p.42) because “successful resistance builds its own momentum” (Scott, 1989, p.41).

is also ready to pay for it, thus to *afford* it (Scott, 1989, p.48). Thus, the everyday form of resistance appears as a different form of act and relationship that takes place between power holders and resisting parties.

As it will be apparent from some of the analysis sections (starting with Chapter 5), I particularly stress the fact that “the personal is political” (Hanisch, 1969) and that the everyday forms of resistances, or micro resistance as I call them, operate upon a political ground that contributes directly and indirectly to the advancement and flourishing of collective action, along with the incessant seeking for the right to the city. In that regard, Scott’s theoretical framework was very useful for my portrayal of the different resistance tactics LGBTI+s operate on.

This brief theoretical inspection of resistances was very helpful for me in discerning and classifying the outcomes of my fieldwork results. They facilitated mapping and categorizing the resistances into two distinct groups, namely “micro resistances” and “macro resistances”, a terminology that I coined following Lefebvre’s, de Certeau’s, and Scott’s footsteps. This grouping has not only been beneficial in explaining LGBTI+s’ resistances in greater detail but it also helped me to reconfigure their spatial implications, which consists of the main discussion of my thesis.

ANALYSIS SECTIONS

Starting with this chapter, this part of the study is based on the ethnographic fieldwork I conducted in Istanbul. The ethnographic fieldwork included semi-structured interviews with 20 LGBTI+ identified individuals, informal discussions with numerous LGBTI+s, and participant observations that I was able to accomplish during the fieldwork period. In the next chapters (4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters) I will be analyzing how the LGBTI+s operationalized their resistances through the lens of invisibilities and how their resistances transformed and reproduced the space driven by the cry out for their right to the city.

During the analysis sections, I present and analyze the evolving concepts and discussions of my respondents' narratives. Throughout the writing process, the more I analyzed my results, the more relevant topics and concepts have arisen and the more alternative ways of examining them have come to the surface. All these themes overlapped and interlinked with each other continuously; they melted and penetrated into each other's ground. I was directed by my methodological guidelines in coping with this intricacy, which recognizes that there are situated realities and knowledges and therefore there are numerous ways of analyzing the results. At the same time, my methodology also guided me towards offering the views of the participants, reflecting their voices as a central focus point and acknowledging my reflexive and situated account. A second guide was the theoretical framework that informed me on the production of space, resistances, and finally the right to the city concept from a feminist perspective upon them. All this led me to analyze and portray the findings of my thesis with a narrative and interpretive approach that explores the ways in which LGBTI+s' spatial production takes place in different urban spatial layers of Istanbul. I realized that in order to explain this production of space, I needed first to understand and portray under which circumstances this spatial production was taking place. This directed my attention towards the portrayal of the problems they encountered and the resistances they developed accordingly. To analyze these struggles and resistances, I

used the lens of in-visibility, a critical feature in the everyday lives of LGBTI+s from the moment they come out to themselves.

As I stated at the beginning, I consider visibility as a complex issue that needs to be examined and reevaluated because I realized that “visibility does not ... imply decipherability of the inherent social relations” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.83). Following the presentation of in-visibility, I focused my analysis on their resistances, and then I turned my attention towards respondents’ contributions to the production and appropriation of space in the urban everyday life of Istanbul. These discussions paved the way towards my deliberations on LGBTI+s’ demand for the ‘right to the city’ (Figure 3).

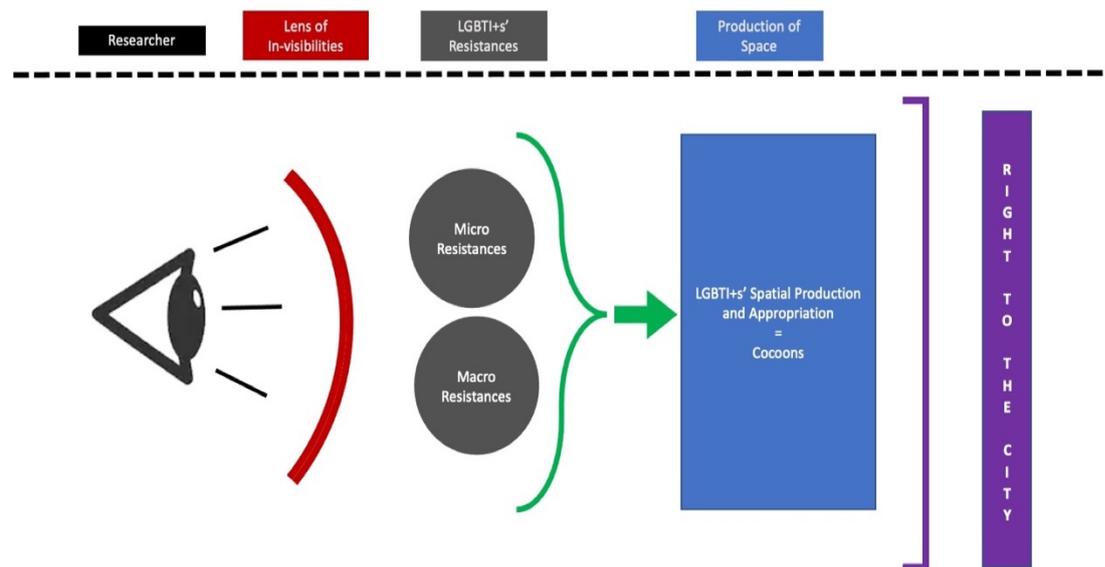


Figure 3. Reading through Emerging Themes from the Fieldwork (Figure prepared by the author)

PART 1: THE LENS OF IN-VISIBILITIES

In this part, “under the lens of in-visibility”, I initially dive deep into LGBTI+s’ experiences and narratives of in-visibility. While telling their stories, the respondents pointed out significant experiences in the course of their lives where the dynamics of unwanted and/or affordable in-visibility came into play. It was these experiences that informed how their micro and macro resistances were shaped. It was again through these narratives that I came to understand how their spatial perceptions and awareness got developed over the years, which led to the particular spatial production process that I entitled ‘*cocoons*’.

In this first analysis chapter, I initially focus on the impact of in-visibility. This part serves as a tool to contextualize the core discussions of the thesis into narrators’ subjective realities, and I consider this part to be a detailed extension of the contextual framework that I presented in Chapter 1.3. In this section, I portray the moments where they felt the effects of in-visibility the most by looking into their initial conversancy with the concept, by inspecting their in-visibility experiences at home, and then by shedding light upon the impact of in-visibility on their romantic and erotic entanglements outside of the home. Later in this chapter, I probe the subjective and relative forms of in-visibility that I was able to grasp from my interviews and observations. The 4.2 section of the 4th chapter is reserved for the consideration of bisexual and lesbian women’s in-visibility, hyper-visibility of gay men, and women with trans experience. Lastly, I discuss the social construction of in-visibility through the narratives of my respondents.

CHAPTER 4

UNDERSTANDING IN-VISIBILITIES

Brighenti suggests that visibility and the systems encircling it are actually a visual representation of social relations that are fundamentally grounded on existing power relations and social territories of relations of ‘perception’ (Brighenti, 2007, p.324). The visible representation of oppressed groups and their problems is also given precedence by political actions to build a vital surge of political influence and social reform. This approach is often paired with an invasive strategy where marginalized communities are inevitably conquered by the powerful groups’ discourses and privileges, which in return renders the visibility of individuals as essential step for recognition (Brighenti, 2007). While the emphasis on visibility points out its prerequisite feature for feminist and “LGBT” movements to contest discrimination (Ghaziani, Taylor, & Stone, 2016), as a purpose or as a strategic tool for social movements in general (Tremblay & Paternotte, 2015), I will be studying it merely as an analysis lens so that it would pave me the way to understand the LGBTI+s’ relationship to urban spaces, their ongoing resistances and their production of space that translates into their pursuit of the right to the city.

I consider visibility as an important feature first because it insinuates an existence in communal life, acknowledgment, and recognition of presence, even though it is not developed in a “linear and straightforward way” (Brighenti, 2007, p.329). And second, because it provides the results for acknowledgment and/or embracement (or thereof lack) of ‘difference’ - in the Lefebvrian sense, and third because it is hard for everyone to render sexuality visible, to present it in a visible manner and to even talk about it, especially in public spaces in Turkey, is a very challenging situation to deal with, as it will be apparent from the narratives of my respondents too.

The problems circling around visibilities take place in a variety of spatial settings, such as homes, schools, shared households, work life, streets, neighborhoods, and city centers, in short, in all areas surrounding the everyday urban life. During the interviews and during the fieldwork period, I noticed that the bodies are sometimes obscured and disguised from being viewed and then I also saw their resurrections from their invisibilities (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.196) via different tactics. In this section, my main aim is to portray the weightiness of in-visibility in respondents' lives and more importantly in their resistances. The section opens up with respondents' narratives on their self-realization and self-coming out processes. My aim in sharing these narratives is to contextualize how visibility operates in their lives and why it matters to analyze the resistances (Chapters 5-6) through the lens of in-visibility.

As I said earlier in the introduction chapter, I firmly believe that detecting the points where in-visibility is rooted and how they evolved throughout the everyday life, along with focusing on LGBTI+s' experiences and their own interpretations of what is surrounding them would eventually open new platforms to combat invisibilities and I consider this chapter as an opportunity for it before moving into the discussion on resistances.

4.1. In-Visibilities in the Lives of LGBTI+s

I agree with the idea that it is through identifying or self-identifying processes that LGBTI+s find the possibility to employ the power of their individual agency (Giesecking, 2013). According to my respondents, the first step in the life of LGBTI+s is the process of understanding and interpreting their sexual and gender identities and expressions, and then in some cases realizing the relationship established with the body and finally reconciling with the identity of being LGBTI+. Even if the big majority of the LGBTI+s that I interviewed and that I interacted with had already come to a peaceful understanding of their sexual orientations and gender identities, the hostile approaches towards them in society and the labeling they have been exposed to, due to the strictly established normative gender and sexuality norms, had accompanied them through different misconceptions about homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality and trans identities and moreover it pushed their relationship with the urban space into an abyss and into unwanted invisibilities and sometimes hyper-visibility.

Being ‘closeted’, ‘remaining behind ‘closed’ doors’, ‘separated and away from the realm of others’, ‘not being able to come out’, or ‘coming out but experiencing heavy difficulties’ were mentioned in almost every interview I conducted. Respondents narrated visibility-related incidents from the time they initially came out to themselves and started experiencing their identities. All of my respondents were pointing out different reasons for all the discrimination and oppression that has been going on and to diverse ways their “beings” resulted in a variety of in-visibilitys. They also had a collection of narratives impacting the course of the everyday life from their own surroundings.

During the interview, I realized that respondents’ initial contact with in-visibilitys came around the time they were realizing their gender/sexual identities. Therefore, I thought the portrayal of that period would be a good reflection in order to situate the resistances that take place around in-visibilitys in the course of their lives. Now I would like to continue my discussion by investigating the position of visibility during their initial coming-out period both as an empowerment and as a threat with an attempt to show how in-visibilitys have been carrying an important role in defining their resistances and how the same in-visibilitys were shaping the relationship they had with different layers of the urban space surrounding them.

4.1.1. The Visibility of Coming-Out: Empowering for Some, Threatening for Others

How did “we” come to believe that others like ourselves existed? Even more puzzling, what led us to conjecture that those “like” others were to be found in urban centers? (Weston, 1995, p.258)

“To come out of the closet” means unveiling a ‘non-normative’, romantic and sexual identity shielded due to socio-cultural setting of gender and sexuality dynamics in a given spatial context. ‘The closet’ has been discussed as a symbolic term representing LGBTI+ and queer identities and perceptions (Brown, 2000, pp.1-24), and the coming out phase has accordingly been an act of transformation aiming for wholesome sexual and gender expression and experience along with a wholesome sexual and gender identity.

According to Blasius, “the condition of existence for community is coming out” (Blasius, 1992, p.654). Blasius who described coming out as an act of rebellion and a political act highlighted how the invisible and socially suppressed LGBTI+s could, by coming out of the closet, contribute to the recognition of sexuality by starting to recognize their own sexuality, to begin with (p.655). Blasius further developed this idea and said that because there is an oppressive heterosexist system in certain societies, coming out is actually a step forward to reject this system and thus break this system apart (p.655). In this perspective, coming out as LGBTI+ is attributed with rebellious features: the remaking of the self, recognition of the self that does not fit the existing system of gender and sexuality, and banishing the compulsory heterosexuality are some of the aspects of this process.

I would like to discuss my respondents’ narratives on this complex nature of coming out. Coming out, according to my respondents, was considered as their first official step to be themselves ‘in themselves’ and then to be themselves ‘out in public’ with their freed gender and sexuality expressions and identities. In their narratives, visibility played a critical role. Along with the fact that being undetectable during and after the coming out process was used as one of the tools of LGBTI+s to make room for themselves, some of my respondents’ desire to remain undetected continued for a long time in their lives. In this sense, even though some of them came to the understanding of their sexuality and gender identity and what it entailed for them by communicating this process to themselves and to other people at times of identifiability and coherence, there were also others who had believed that coming out to the outer world would bring “nothing but trouble” and it would eventually prevent them from exploring their own identities. For my respondents, accepting whom they are interested in and who they are was not an easy thing to process. On the day of the interviews, some of them still felt anxious only for having remembered what they had gone through at that period of their life, despite the fact that their life was now relatively better than the moment they came out for the first time. This relative comfort has since then been under the attack of the outside world.

Even before they came out to the outside world, most of them had already witnessed their immediate family and social circles shaming and marginalizing “non-normative”

gender and sexuality identities and orientations. Their surroundings' ideas were shaped around the existing pejorative and obscure notions about "being LGBTI+".

So, [they thought] I will never be happy, for example, nobody will accept me as before, I will never have a lover, I will never bear my biological child with the partner I love. If I ever come out at work, when I start acting like myself, people will despise me, insult me, maybe beat me or even kill me, and so on (Batu, Istanbul).

While these problems persisted at the beginning of their journey for self-discovery and exploration, they were eager to open up and experience life. Meeting new people like themselves, sharing their stories with them, and the idea of belonging to a collective and a community made them feel good and even optimistic about themselves.

Marginalized groups are under constant control while expressing themselves in the course of life and accordingly many elements, such as what they wear and how they talk, are constantly being questioned by different social actors. A normative regulation regarding sexuality and gender determines the spectrum of practical and realistic sexualities that are fit for the heteronormative and gender binary social contexts. Eser, a 31 years-old lesbian woman, was 23 years old when she "discovered herself" (in her own words). She was in a relationship with a man for 4 years and she started questioning herself as some things felt "weird" and "off" in terms of her romantic relationship with a man. The same oddness persisted when she compared herself to her other woman friends at the time. She simply did not 'see' what she saw in other women, nor she was able to see what her back-then boyfriend was seeing in her. Her self-reflection about her own visibility was ambiguous.

I discovered myself at the age of 23, when I had heterosexual relationships. At that time, I had a four-year relationship. I questioned that I do not feel like my other female friends, but there are men who love me like a woman, I cannot see the femininity that they see in me. The question of why I am LGBTI is actually something I have experienced myself. There are many people living this, who do not accept it, who cannot open it to themselves, to their family, to friends, and who have serious problems with it (Eser, Istanbul).

As I said above, coming-out was perceived both as an empowering tool and as a threatening act by the respondents. Now I would like to discuss this binary position in order to portray the link to their ongoing resistances.

4.1.1.1. Empowering Feature of Visibly Coming Out

A group of respondents mentioned how their coming-out process became an empowerment tool for them in liberating themselves by becoming as visible as they wanted to be. Some of my respondents described this move as a “bold” one, and they said that they were keen to take the risks in order to be able to live their identities openly, without having to think twice about every step they take in their everyday rhythms. Coming out, according to this group of respondents, had not only affected their worldview, but also the way they comprehended everyday spaces and their implications in their everyday lives. Coming out and embracing the LGBTI+ identity, along with being considered a political action has also become a way to find people like them, to take one step ahead entering a community that later on felt like ‘home’ and ‘chosen family’ to some of my respondents. The acknowledgment of others occurs mainly, but not entirely through verbal expression, meaning that it takes place by communicating the identity facets during which subjects are reshaped by means of their own expressiveness to others (Butler, 1997).

What I observed in terms of my respondents’ initial coming out processes was that they wanted to meet with people like them, they wanted to have spaces where they would not feel anxious about their identities. For those who were able to come out, this also gave them the opportunity for another reality, for a community and a group of people who understood them and who were not judgmental of them or harmful towards them. These encounters and the web of social relations constructed over time between LGBTI+s, have transformed their ‘difference’ into their empowerment. While these tools helped them overcome their insecurities, and social anxieties, they also served as a safe socialization web. I was able to reveal this particular stance in Şenel’s study as well; she also made a point about how for lesbian and bisexual women, meeting with other LGBTI+s and establishing relations with people who were experiencing similar issues was considered as facilitation of their everyday lives (Şenel, 2014, p.91).

I think the most effective thing is to share it with other bisexuals, it feels good. We know we understand each other’s trouble (Defne, Istanbul).

I realized that some of my respondents took an “activist” role when they were discussing the socio-political aspects of their coming-out, presence, and visibility in everyday life. They wanted to emphasize their presence by accentuating their identities and their visibilities on different occasions. For some, embracing an offensive verbal connotation of their identity (such as *ibne*) has become another instance of their ‘coming-out process’. For them, this was considered the renewal of the pact they made with themselves. Showing their identity to others became an empowerment in itself. This was also one of the points that Şenel made in her thesis where she discussed how her respondents mentioned that although the impact of invisibility (and I evaluate this as ‘coming out’ in the context of my analysis) could save them from a lot of troubles in their everyday lives, the same invisibility could actually damage the creation of any possible platform to combat the same invisibility (Şenel, 2014, p.82). Kerem is one of the LGBTI+ activists who kept his visibility at high levels for the sake of showing people who LGBTI+s “really” are. Embracing one’s identity openly and fearlessly has given emancipation and the thrive to keep resisting for him:

Struggling while coming out is a tough one. The struggle does not end, in any field. Keeping in mind how I will correct the things that they know wrongly and how I can be as constructive as possible while talking to everyone. The other day, I had an argument with a person who made a castration joke with me at the workplace. So, I caught him in the elevator the next day and I asked him ‘what castration are you talking about? Do you mean I am gay?’ and he says ‘no, dear estağfurullah’ and I say ‘no, I am asking because I’m a fag (ibne)’. He got scared but he got what he deserved (Kerem, Istanbul).

It seemed that those, who were empowered by their coming-out processes regardless of how difficult it was to surmount, were able to *afford* to act this way. This process came into existence as a result of their internal negotiations about and whether they could afford to do so, whether they could bear the consequences of this action. For them, this process became a tool to make their voices heard and to share their own experiences to empower the individual and collective agencies at the expense of all the things that they could afford. They gained the purpose of disrupting existing oppressiveness in mind and acting upon their political consciousness.⁷⁶ Their aim was also to shed light on intersectional facets of discrimination.

⁷⁶ Although the discussion on this particular terminology of ‘consciousness’ falls outside the scope of my analysis, I would like to add a small note about it about Lefebvre’s writings (1991a). According to

4.1.1.2. Threatening Feature of Visibly Coming Out

While there were some respondents who embraced their coming-out process as a liberationist and empowering political stance and who started encouraging others to come out as well, I noticed that the visibility that came with coming-out process was considered a burden for others. This visibility was perceived as an obstacle between them and their possibility to live in a more open way, to increase their chance to access the urban everyday spaces as they would like to do so. Umut, who had been struggling with their sexual identity till the moment they discovered it and till the moment they were exposed to their parents against their wishes, points out a shrinkage in spatial terms when they discuss the possible results of coming out:

At first, there is the situation of coming out and not coming out. If the person comes out, there is a possibility that they stay in a very little circle and they find it unavoidable to leave that little circle. They might also experience troubles in terms of economic and social rights. The right to life of a person is much lesser if s/he does not come out, that is for sure (Umut, Istanbul).

In line with the existing literature, it was already a well-known fact among my respondents that coming out stories may not have pleasant ends (in a lot of cases) (Valentine et al., 2003). Some of the respondents believe that there might be the possibility that the communicated party's reaction may psychologically or even physically harm them in an irreversible way. In this sense, coming out has been criticized by some of the respondents for being "too much of an issue" without giving a clear thought about its implication or without taking into account the negotiations an individual has to make in order to make that happen. According to Umut, telling

him, consciousness "cannot free itself from existing illusions" (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.181) meaning that it is either bound to reflect the existing forms of it or it is bound to transform the existing social structures. Consciousness is also something to attain, that requires effort and struggle, according to Lefebvre (p.151). In this sense, it can be argued that the ongoing resistance in the lives of LGBTI+s, the impact of their everyday life narratives, and the transformation of their 'personal' into a 'political' one via their resistances is what reinforces this 'consciousness'.

Moreover, because consciousness reflects a particular relation between the 'self' and the 'other', which are related to one another through means of competition, according to him, it "joins forces with the need for other people which is determined by the situation the individual is in" (p.93). In my understanding of Lefebvre's explanation, there is indeed a dialectical relationship within the consciousness that "transform needs into desires, decisions into actions" (p.93).

I would like to add that consciousness is also a term that needs to be discussed in the context of individuals' understanding, comprehension, and experience of the "space" to the point that the tri-partite formulation of space implicates both the consciousness and unconsciousness of its producers and users simultaneously (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.46).

someone about their identity, to come out to everyone publicly was almost equal to tell someone to remove their headscarves in spite of their conservative families.

... But I would not say that in front of everyone because the consequences can be very bad. I can't also say to a person to remove their headscarf if they're going to cut her head afterwards (Umut, Istanbul).

Accordingly, a group of respondents claimed that coming out was not the most crucial and necessary act to make a strong statement to the world. In parallel to the implications in the literature, coming out surely did have, according to many respondents, material impacts on the way everyday life is operated: expectations from life changes in terms of socializing habits, employment opportunities, and family relations (Valentine et al., 2003).

This person may not have wanted to deal with everyday problems as much as anyone who lives open to the public. They may have preferred to remain not open, to live in a humbler way. Or it might be that those who don't come out are the ones who chose to struggle with other things instead of coming out and having trouble with their neighborhood and landlords (Deniz, Istanbul).

In light of these narratives and discussions, I think that it is important to read the coming out process of LGBTI+s in the context of visibility in different dimensions of the urban space as a rebellious reclamation towards the existing heterosexist system and emancipation in itself. However, it is, in my opinion, equally important to recognize the choice of LGBTI+s who do not come out to their families and friends and coworkers and classmates as a tactical act and a transient empowerment move that provides them some room to breathe and to continue their self-discoveries that take a life-long journey because coming out cannot be compressed to a singular moment in life (Blasius, 1992, p.660), just like "the resistance" as a concept expands itself over time and space in a continuous manner (Hollander & Einwohner, 2004)

Rather than considering the "hiding" process as a sacrifice, I think it would be more beneficial to consider it as an *affordable invisibility* move where the invisibility is no longer disempowering the individual but rather it serves as a tool for the production of a safe and comfortable environment for a period of time; thus as a resistance in itself, as I will be discussing in the 5.1 chapter of this dissertation. It will be apparent from the narratives below that this process is not simple nor easily comprehensible.

I will now focus on the complicated situation at their homes. The process of coming out to the outside world begins as the first step when they can declare their identity to their surroundings, or this process continues by not being able to come out and thus by living behind a shadow during the everyday life. The struggles they mostly engage at home results in LGBTI+s' experiencing their sexual identities, desires, and bodies in the judgmental and oppressing shadows of existing values and norms.

4.1.2. Invisibilities at “Home” with their Families

“When considering the strong presence of the patriarchal family structure in our society, the blessing attributed to the concept of family, to the ties between relatives, religion and tradition, considering the fact that the number of men and women with different sexual orientation in question is very low and the fact that the scarcity of such demands began to be expressed corresponded to a very short period of time, and that they have emerged only in metropolitan cities rather than the rural areas of our country, this organization may be considered to possess characteristics that are not appreciated by almost all parts of the society and that are considered as acts offending good morals.”⁷⁷ (Opinion of Beyoğlu 3rd Civil Court, numbered 2007/190 and Decision no: 2008/236)

⁷⁷ I would like to explain how this quote was developed in its historical contextuality. In 2009, Lambda, one of the oldest LGBTI+ organizations in Turkey faced a shutdown following legal issues that started in 2006 (Özcan, 2008). The claim was that Lambda Istanbul stood by norms that were in contradiction with the 41st article of the Constitution regarding the place of the family in Turkish society. The above cited quote is a part of the court's decision text in 2008 regarding the annulment of Lambda organization. The lawsuit was accepted, and the local judge decided on the annulment of the organization. The decision was later overruled by the Supreme Court (Court of Cassation) and since then the organization remained open. The reason why I put the court's decision at the beginning of this sub-chapter is to show the state-level perception of the link between the Turkish family home structure and “non-normative” gender and sexual identity expressions.

I thought that this particular excerpt was worth being mentioned in this part of the thesis for two reasons. First, I believe it provides an important context to portray the power dynamics in Turkish society in the context of familial relations. I believe that the emphasis placed on “all parts of the society” in the above-mentioned quote points to what the people, who are holding the social power want; the norm that creates and imposes the very standard all individuals are being subject to, which brings me to my second point. I think the perspective reflected in this court's decision can be identified as ‘reductionist’ (Lefebvre, 1991b),. Lefebvre defines reductionism as a “scientific procedure designed to deal with the complexity and chaos of brute observations” (pp.105-106). Here, the complex situation consists of sexuality, sexual identities, and representations of those in society. Since the very aim of this court decision aimed to shut down Lambda and thus to erase it from the urban space and remove its existence from the social space; the reductionist stance once again attempted to reduce the social space to a “mental space by means of a ‘scientific’ procedure whose scientific status is really nothing but a veil for ideology” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.106). In this sense, the court, by showing that LGBTI+s have “only emerged in metropolitan cities” and yet that “all parts of the society” do not appreciate nor accept their presence and aims to reduce this contradiction by simply leaving it spaceless and in the end, it aims to attain a homogenous society where differences are eliminated from it. In a way, the lived experience of LGBTI+s and LGBTI+ collective action are both pushed to the borders of invisibility and disappearance due to this reductionist stance of power holders (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.134). The reductionist ideology this time dictates the spacelessness through the means of “family” and “familial relations”.

The family home and the ties surrounding it carry an important role in the everyday lives of individuals in Turkey. Although I will be discussing the spatial implications of the home and home-spaces in Chapter 7 in detail, here, I would like to give an account of respondents' experiences at home in a to-and-fro movement of visibility.

LGBTI+s become the object of constant control and of the actions of the governing familial regime at their parental homes. Restriction and prohibition appear to be the dominating force here (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.319). They become subject to control and supervision starting from their bodies. Deniz was discussing how traditional family values were considered divine and sacred and all other identities and behaviors were deemed unfavorable. In that regard, De Certeau indicated that “the inflation of the latter is controlled, if not shut off, by criticism of the places of authority in which facts are converted into truths.” (De Certeau, 1984, p.11). Here, I consider the place of authority as the parental home where the fictitious norms of gender and sexuality are transformed into so-called ‘truths’ and the criticisms of these places are what respondents have been pointing out during our interviews.⁷⁸ This is directly related to what Lefebvre was indicating when he mentioned the prevalent strain of the ‘common sense’ through which, I argue that, the individual bodies are rendered as mere abstractions that can be controlled by the customary reductionist stance (Lefebvre, 1991b, pp.105, 298).

I think that the pillars of the society are also rooted in a traditional family. I think the family is the smallest part of the society. States also have to maintain this traditional family format and curse everything else (Deniz, Istanbul).

The family is where sexuality and gender roles are defined, produced, and reproduced according to existing traditional norms in Turkey. It operates as the main place where

Original text of the cited quote is: “*Toplumumuzda ataerkil aile yapısının güçlü bir şekilde mevcut olması, Aile mefhumuna atfedilen kutsiyet, akraba bağları, din ve görgü kuralları, söz konusu farklı cinsel yönelim sahibi erkek ve kadınların azlığı ve bu tür taleplerin dillendirilmeye başlanması olgusunun çok kısa bir döneme tekabül etmesi ve hatta ülkemizin kırsal kesiminden ziyade sadece metropol şehirlerde ortaya çıkmış bulunması hususları hep bir arada değerlendirildiğinde, toplumumuzun aşağı yukarı tamamına yakın bir kesimi tarafından tasvip edilmeyen, ahlaka ve edebe aykırılık olarak kabul edilen ve nitelendirilen bir yapı arz ettiği söylenebilir.*” Retrieved January 12, 2016, from <https://bianet.org/bianet/toplumsal-cinsiyet/114196-lambdaistanbul-a-karsi-kapatma-davasi-kronolojisi>

⁷⁸ Lefebvre too discussed a similar issue when he pointed out the fictitious characteristic of a certain knowledge embedded into the understanding of our ‘normalcy’. This knowledge applied to everyday life result in the formation of “an ‘average’ stock of knowledge” (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.193). He comments on this transformation of individuals’ everyday consciousness through “‘vulgarization’ of science” to be a basilar for strongly settled misconceived ideas and attitudes (p.193).

gender roles are learned and transmitted, and it is also where children acquire what to do and what their responsibilities are in the future. Because of this, some become subject to violence when they were just a little kid for the way they behaved around their parents. Therefore, the family, as opposed to being inclusive and encompassing, operates as an exclusionist entity that controls and silences the children especially by disregarding and banning children's sexuality (Somay, 2012, p.119). In my interview with Batu, he narrated one particular memory at his family home, and I realized that he was only one of the people showing that the remnant from childhood is built upon these "bits and fragments" of repression and oppression that was still present in respondents' experience of today (De Certeau, 1984, p.88). Because, as De Certeau indicates, "the childhood experience that determines spatial practices later develops its effects, proliferates, floods private and public spaces, undoes their readable surfaces" (De Certeau, 1984, p.110). What I also realized was that Batu's family's reaction, as described below, left him in an abyss, a spatial obscurity where Batu felt like he is a "strange entity" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.53). I argue that it is this very strangeness and the spatial abyss that pushes him towards producing his own space, his protective and yet resisting cocoon.

We see that engaging in feminine behavior results in a very clear statement. There are limits you should know in this society and family structure. I had the first experience of this when I was scolded when I was 6 years old at a family celebration because I was dancing to oriental music in a coquettish manner. I remember how much I was surprised, so I was asking "my God, why I was scolded for that?" what have I done?" Because for me I was just dancing just as my aunt was dancing. "What have I done wrong? Why am I scolded?". "You're a man and men don't dance like that," they said. It was not something I was able to perceive very much, but it became something I was afraid to do again because I was embarrassed back then. Then I overcame it, it took me a long time, and it became a reservation element for me (Batu, Istanbul).

Eser shared some of her opinions on the place of in-visibility at home and she pointed out that the individuality of the child is not accepted in the relationship between the family and the child. She also underlined the determination of the family and home order to ensure the raising of a child who will be accepted and recognized by the society.

Because ninety percent of Turkey do not see their own child as an individual. They see it as an extension, and they can't get rid of it. Having a different sexual orientation affects their child. But they see it as their own fault, and they end up

pressuring them. On the one hand, they think about ‘what the people would say’ and ‘what others would say’, then they start saying ‘you will be exposed to something really bad in this society’. Let’s say that none of these happened, and the family recognized their children’s sexual identity, this time they would say ‘he will be surely suppressed by the society, I should go and help him get treatment for this’ (Eser, Istanbul).

Somay says that the family “is essentially the place of paternal domination (Somay, 2012, p.116). Moreover, according to Somay, the family is also built upon the legitimization of sexuality, and furthermore on the concealment of extramarital affairs, and the ban of a child’s sexuality too (p.118), which altogether creates a conflictual situation, to begin with. At home, sex is swapped with its own strictly defined representation which results in the depreciation of sexuality as a whole (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.309). Lefebvre addresses particularly relatable questions when he discusses the right to the city concept, and he asks himself “What is important? Who thinks? Who acts? Who still speaks and for whom?” (Lefebvre, 1996, p.149). Here the accent is put upon the disappearance of the ‘subject’ and I interpret it as the desertion and the vanishing of the very components that make human beings what they are through oppression. He continues his line of questions by indicating that “if the capacities of the ‘human being’ ... or their absence, are erected as autonomous powers, and that reflective thought is satisfied with this assessment, the absence of a ‘subject’, what to reply? What to do?” (Lefebvre, 1996, p.150). In cases where individuals resist or revolt against those norms and values, control mechanisms come into play. In fact, sexuality at home is being reduced to a decipherable system where binary relations persist “between desire and anxiety, between need and frustration” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.310). As Can points out in the quote below, these control mechanisms push individuals to extreme limits: running away, cessation of all contact, harmful behavior from the family, and self-harm are among the possibilities of this combative entanglement.

There are many cases that result in suicide. Not because his family learned, but because he could not cope with his family’s fear of learning (Can, Istanbul).

Some of my respondents wanted to keep a distance from their families at home and they did not want to get into ‘messy close relationships’ with them after coming out to themselves initially. This was one of the findings that were mentioned in Şenel’s study and she also pointed out how her respondents “built a wall of invisibility” towards their families in order to protect themselves from possible harm and discrimination

that could be engendered by their parents (Şenel, 2014, p.79). This emotional and physical closeness and openness is something that one might want to keep away from in order to protect the safe environment they had created around them. This imaginary safety zone emerges by allowing some people to know about their identities whereas leaving others, those whom they had trust issues with outside of the scope of knowledge; the individual builds *safe spaces* on their own by deciding the people they would want to come out to and the persons whom they would refrain from sharing their intimate story with. This is again related to what and how one can *afford* to act upon, and I consider these periods of privacy and clandestineness as *affordable invisibility tactics* that allow them to breathe and just to ‘be’, without suffering from its consequences, because visibility is simply unaffordable for them.

I noticed that the number of respondents who were in good and continuous relationships with their families was very limited, and the rest were either living an estranged way from their parents or had very little contact with them in their everyday rhythms. One of the reasons for this situation was that they were living in different cities or in different neighborhoods of Istanbul. Only for a very small group, this conflict was ended or at least soothed after coming out to the family members whereas some of my respondents found more peace by leaving their home, their first “battlefield” behind and starting a new life, with a new home where they were relatively away from oppression. Batu was one of the ‘lucky’ ones: even though he experienced a traumatic event in his childhood as I discussed above, he was unconditionally accepted by her mother after coming out to her as gay, and he felt secure and safe being home.

I don’t think I’m fighting at the moment at my home. It’s almost like my harbor right now. After coming out, my mother’s perception was really positive and supportive, my private space became a haven for me. (Batu, Istanbul)

Most of the time, respondents found it really hard to keep their gender and sexual identities hidden at home; but on the other hand, coming out and opening up to them at the family house has hardly been a feasible and attainable option. “I cannot imagine coming out to my parents, maybe it is unfair for them, maybe if they know they are going to be the most acceptant parents in the world, but I just cannot picture myself doing it” says Mustafa. I found a similar example to Mustafa’s specific reprimand in

Şenel's study as well where Şenel portrayed one of her respondents' not-coming-out to their parents with a similar stance to Mustafa which made me realize that this resentment may be a common issue among LGBTI+s in Turkey (Şenel, 2014, p.80).

Mustafa's boyfriend also did not come out to his own parents and has been forced to get married to a woman at the earliest convenience. Because the sharp lines of gender and sexuality were drawn throughout the heteronormative and patriarchal rule, whose focus is on but is not limited to "the reproductive function of species", and on limiting the gender and sexuality spectrum into a binary norm, in some of the households, respondents were considered as individuals who need to be intervened and corrected by their families, without having a clear discussion on these matters. In this sense, the home became the space where their bodies were fragmented and "pulverized", and their desires were put under constraints (Lefebvre, 1991b, pp.309-310). These rules intercede into their everyday lives leading them to find the 'right path'. Mustafa described the difficulties his boyfriend has been going through because he had not come out to his family yet. The pressure that he receives from his family shows how strong reproductive heterosexuality is dominating their lives. Family members implementing these heteronormative patterns have similar expectations that are shaped accordingly.

When we say LGBTI+ in Turkey, I have a thousand kinds of loads coming to my mind, I imagine molds on the back of a person. For example, my boyfriend is 35 years old, when you say LGBTI+ in Turkey, it makes me think of the pressure he gets from his family. His mother and his five sisters insist that he finds someone and that he meets a woman to get married to. Everyday. They call him and ask him these questions (Mustafa, Istanbul).

I would like to emphasize that 'home' carries a critical role in their 'coming out' stories. There were multiple aspects to this entanglement: coming out to oneself and thus being true to oneself; coming out to the family and being open about one's identity to the ones that surround them in the place that was considered as the 'safe heaven' and all possible contradictions related to it were all entangled with one another. These dynamics made them self-question and negotiate internally. Coming out in the family house can be a problematic issue in other studies conducted on this topic as well (Valentine et al., 2003). The struggle starts as an internal battle and then continues at the parental house.

Similar to Mustafa's narrative above (please see p.155), other respondents too talked about the possibility of disappointing their parents and they pointed out the suspicion they created in them or the moments that confused them. They also talked about how they had to think about or experienced from the first hand their parents' anger. Visibility was not considered a feasible action for a long period of time. They spent a lot of time thinking about losing their parents' emotional and economic support because they wanted to be honest about how they wanted to live in this world, and whom they wanted to love. Their family homes become a battlefield during the time they were discovering themselves for the first time. With these thoughts in their mind, they felt threatened, they had to act in secretive ways and they always felt the need to be prepared for the worst-case scenario. They felt entrapped and frightened in that 'sacred' place where they had initially been looking for protection and peace.

Can's parents were curious, so they chose to snoop through his personal items in his room when he was 16 years old and Ali's parents' family friend took the initiative to let them know about Ali's sexuality. Both of their coming-out stories did not take place as a voluntary act: one of them did not have any other choice but to come out for having been 'caught' and in the other case, although Ali did not give this information voluntarily rather their family's friend informed their parents on this issue, in the end, he simply could not deny it. Thus, their in-visibility was laid bare and one of their resistance tools was hence confiscated from them after that moment of forced discovery.

I didn't come out to them. When I turned 16, they noticed something about me. They read all of my Internet correspondence afterwards. Back then, we had ICQ to communicate with our friends. As the program kept past conversations in its memory, and as my door was always locked when I was inside, they noticed some stuff. It was a time when I noticed things about myself and they noticed the same things about me. So that happened much like that. After that, I was kept away from the computer for a while. They did not like what they saw in there (Can, Istanbul).

I did not come out to them, a friend of our family reported that I was gay, and he knew it somehow. And then my family came and asked me if that was true, I said if it will come to an end, let it be, I did not care after that point (Ali, Istanbul).

Defne wanted to have a more independent and free life after coming out to herself. She wanted to explore and share her experiences with others, people who would not judge

them for the way she is. But in the end, the pressure was too much so she could not afford to come out to her parents.

It was last year I came out to someone. It was at a time when I just opened up to myself. I was having problems with my family. My mother was too much involved in my social life, she was trying to control it, we were having a conflict at the time because she was always acting as if she was questioning me. My identity began to raise some questions in her mind. I could see it. Then I started going to Lambda too much and I started having a lot of LGBTI friends. Initially, she thought I was just defending “their” rights but then she started asking “are you also one of them?” “are you going to allow them to transform you into something like them?” She was annoyed by all this. I also started an internship there, I felt under pressure because I was not being honest with her. I felt too much pressure, I said maybe if I came out, I would feel better, that I could maybe relax. But I could not (Defne, Istanbul).

By the time Defne and some other respondents continued exploring themselves, the weak boundaries that were holding their privacy to themselves started disappearing at home, and there started the resistance which later on expanded its presence to all parts of their everyday lives. These narratives tell me that the contention continues after admitting and accepting oneself internally because now the struggle and negotiations expand their limits, towards the outside world. Ekrem was one of the respondents who highlighted how difficult it was to continue living in the family home where the parents would not accept their children as who they are. He said that one of the most difficult parts of the idea of ‘coming out’ was to be visible and then experience its impact on one’s parents.

The biggest struggle begins when you start trying to change your family. It’s a big deal. Most of the time you try to change other people without changing the family as I do. [Home] It’s a place where you feel like you belong, starting from a very young age. It is an important place on the one hand, and also a place where you cannot feel you are belonging to. In this respect, you have to fight, you have to resist (Ekrem, Istanbul).

I have also heard narratives in which parents absolutely refused to communicate any issues to their kids along with narratives in which parents wanted to intervene in this situation when they realized that “there is something that is not going well” with their children. In the first case, parents who find it difficult to talk to their children about sexuality or gender identity, or who are reluctant to talk about it, are secretly invading their children’s private space. This situation emerges out of their curiosity about their kids’ sexual identity and they furthermore aim to prevent the possibility of their

children's 'non-normative' sexual orientation and gender identity to develop even further. The inability to discuss sexuality in parental homes is very common in Turkey regardless of 'non-normative' gender and sexual identities. In fact, Somay points out that the family becomes the site where there are numerous unsolvable contradictions, especially within the nuclear family understanding where sexuality, despite its present but subtle existence, is being systematically and consistently ignored and denied when it comes to children's sexuality (Somay, 2012, p.118). Moreover, it is argued that in traditional families in Turkey, the discussion of non-heterosexuality is usually operated through "indirect messages" (Oksal, 2008, p.515). Can's narrative below is about his inability to bring any 'sex' related topic or atmosphere into his home. Can's mom is one of these parents who are trying to "solve the problem" and to bring a "solution to the situation" without making it obvious.

I have never invited anyone gay in my life for a stay-over as my boyfriend. My brother, who is not gay, didn't get to do that in our home either [with girls]. "You can only have people over to stay at your place when you live alone." They say. That's how it is in our home. One time, a gay friend of mine came for dinner. We were going to go to a bar after dinner. Since my mother knew this, she put so much onion into the salad that we could not kiss at the bar (He giggles) (Can, Istanbul).

Some parents remain persistent in their strong opinions about "LGBTI+s" regardless of whether their child is trying to explain what it might entail. This avoidance and neglect of non-heterosexual relationship types and all gender expressions that fall outside the norms of binary gender norms stem from the hierarchical mechanism that the society imposes upon individuals through families. Defne told me about her attempts to introduce the concept of 'LGBTI+' to her mom with the hope of changing her mind about the marginalization level of LGBTI+s in her mom's perception. This particular effort to inform the parents about the concept of LGBTI+ was also present in Şenel's findings where she gave an example from one of her respondents who consciously decided to inform her mother by coming out to her and by explaining to her all the processes she has been to (Şenel, 2014, p.96). Although the narrative in Şenel's study has a positive ending, in the case of Defne, I realized that she has failed in her endeavor to do so.

Sometimes I try to say something to my mom in our conversations, I even tried to suggest something like "I have read a book, and you would love it very much"

but she does not accept it at all. Even when I started to mention this topic more, she said, "I want to be content with what I know. I don't want to learn anything more" (Defne, Istanbul).

Defne is not the only example out there. Kerem too appears to be suffering from a similar issue. Despite being open to his parents about his sexuality, Kerem is still having problems with his 'public' visibility. This time, his family is not trying to castigate and reprimand his sexuality but rather they want this to be "a private matter" rather than "a social one". In these cases, activists like Kerem feel a sense of paralysis in terms of what he wishes to accomplish for LGBTI+ rights and what he is capable of doing without causing 'bad blood' with their family. Şenel too encountered a similar issue in her own fieldwork where the family members of one of her respondents advised her to 'hide' whenever she saw a camera during the events organized by Kaos-GL (Şenel, 2014, p.123). Although Kerem did not mention this particular parental advice from his own parents, his sense of paralysis was rooted in the fact that his own parents would not want to see him on TV while defending the rights of LGBTI+s with his gay identity out in the open.

Neither my father hit me, nor did my mother hit me. I am thirty years old; I gained economic freedom. I don't have a problem with my environment. I want to be more visible to the local authorities. Maybe we will go to the news channel and do something. Now, my family is preventing this from happening. In fact, they are not even authoritarian figures at all. But as this is very immanent to the concept of family, it is not something that we can immediately overcome (Kerem, Istanbul).

Although few, there were also brutal cases where families acted in a very harsh manner once they discovered their children's sexuality. Ali tells their story by giving a background about where they are coming from and the kind of family that they were born into. Ali is from a very rich and tribal family whose members are living in the eastern part of Turkey. Ali says, "I wanted to hide my sexuality for a long time because I was afraid that they would kill me if they heard it". "But when he [the father] found out that I was gay", he continues, "my father refused me from his inheritance. He deprived me of everything. I fought alone. I slept in the park for eighteen days. Then I went to cleaning jobs. During that month, I worked in this kind of work". The ones that are deemed and perceived as the "other" are those who fall outside the "general norms" of gender and sexuality. As a result, they are assumed to be a threat against the built social 'truth' therefore they are often considered "a mismatch" with the society.

Most of the time, just like in Ali's case, these marginalized identities are tried to be excluded from the society and controlled in different ways. As I explained a few pages earlier (please see p.157) Can's parents found out about his sexuality when he was 16. Although they did so by snooping through his things, their reaction was neither an accepting nor a punisher tone. They avoided their children's sexuality but at the same, time they also did not ban him from the home nor from their lives as Ali's father did. Can believes that the reason why he is able to feel confident in himself today is that his parents did not harm him during this 'forced' coming-out process.

There is always a little bit of fear that one's own family will learn about the situation, the fear of being deciphered comes to the fore. When that is gone, there is not much to lose. For this reason, I have the confidence when someone says "fag" on the bus I can easily go and confront him. Because I know, "what can you do? Will you tell my family?" "It happened 14 years ago too late for that". Apart from physical violence, there is no harm you can do to me (Can, Istanbul).

Can's relationship with his family and their reaction to his coming-out 14 years ago (he was 30 years old at the time of our interview) is an approval of Deniz's below-quoted statement in a conference she attended as a speaker. Deniz points out the critical role families at home can adopt in their child's sexual development. As an LGBTI+ activist, Deniz was invited to speak at a conference in Europe that intended to give information to the parents of LGBTI+s. Her opinion is that the family always plays a critical role in LGBTI+s' everyday lives and how their lives are shaped. She argues that the ways in which individuals relate to their own gender and sexuality identities and the way they establish their personal relationships with the outside world mostly depend on their experiences with their families. Therefore, she points out that children's mental health depends on their parents' attitudes towards them. In fact, I think that what she suggests is also in line with what Lefebvre is suggesting as a part of the right to the city concept where he says that "We thus must make the effort to reach out towards a new humanism, a new praxis... that of urban society" (Lefebvre, 1996, p.150).

We cannot decide whether our children will be gay or trans. That is not within our capabilities. But what we can do is, we can make them go crazy or not go crazy. You can create a child who is beneficial to the nation, who is strong at

work, or you can also drive them crazy. These are your options⁷⁹ (Deniz, Istanbul).

According to Deniz, all social problems are linked with the institution of family, therefore with the parental home. Consequently, throughout the whole interview, Deniz has been very critical of this structure since it definitely leads to oppressive power mechanisms that try to create a normative standard upon individuals. She also believes that the very core of this marginalization is rooted in the concept of the “nuclear family” itself. While parental homes appear to be founded upon unity, social cohesion, and harmony in society, according to Deniz, what it really does is create disparities in society by starting with the labeling of the neighbor as the ‘other’.

This is the only form of life that is regarded as alienation or traditional family structure. The nuclear family structure also affects this. A psychologist explained that everything starts in the nuclear family. When you build a nuclear family, the neighbor is now the ‘other’, with its own rules, its own dynamics, and differences. Othering is sown in the family as a tiny child (Deniz, Istanbul).

As I already discussed in the earlier pages of this section, in most of the experiences, by the time families start becoming suspicious about their children’s sexuality at home, they either started invading their children’s personal items at home and/or they completely ignored it and started to exhibit negative attitudes, or they refused to be informed about such issues. In either of these cases, LGBTI+s who are positioned outside of this heteronormative system were perceived as a threat that could shake both the social order and the integrity and continuity of the parental home located in the center of this order.

One of the critical things I noticed during our interviews was that the sphere of influence of this understanding and implementation of the rules of the ‘parental home’ and ‘family values’ were much more widespread across the whole society and that it could be detected in other spatial domains as well. Ali told me about their one-time experience during which they were looking for an apartment with another gay friend

⁷⁹ Deniz’s words resonated very much with the documentary called “My Child” (Benim Çocuğum), shot by Can Candan, a documentary filmmaker and an academician at Boğaziçi University. The documentary is about “a very courageous and inspiring group of mothers and fathers in Turkey, who are parents of LGBT individuals” as cited in the documentary website (Retrieved February 20, 2021, from <http://www.mychilddocumentary.com/film.aspx>). The documentary can be seen online through this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZ-3mScG8yE> (Retrieved February 20, 2021).

of theirs whose appearance was found “problematic” by all potential homeowners. Ali says:

He was gay, that’s how he defined himself at least. We went to 1000 homes maybe. They all said, “No, we are not giving a home to people like you. We are a moral and honest family, and this is a family building (aile apartmanı).” We ended up looking for a house street by street for a month (Ali, Istanbul).

The concept of ‘family’, ‘family home’, and the norms associated with it outstrips its sphere of influence since it is primarily located at the center of the understanding of the ‘nation-state’ that aims to protect the ‘family’ structure on both abstract and concrete levels by equipping all individuals with national values that need to be transmitted to the new members of this society and by limiting the physical space as Ali described in the example above. Since the value of the family as an institution lies in its capacity to ensure the physiological production of the population and provide basic socialization, this also brings discrimination in the housing process as it became apparent in the above narrative of Ali against LGBTI+s based on the same ‘family values’. Lefebvre discusses and criticizes the housing issue, and he points out that although housing appears as a right within “social consciousness”, it is not treated as such (Lefebvre, 1996, p.78). Based on the findings of my fieldwork I also agree with his commentary that housing is “not formally or practically acknowledged except as an appendix to the right of man” (Lefebvre, 1996, p.78), and this time, the operating oppressive element in this scenario is the family institution largely depending on a larger structure, that of society. In this sense, the homogenizing power of the dominant voice in Turkish society places itself in control of the concept of family and therefore of “the home” itself (which becomes an example of the abstract space – as I will be explaining later in the thesis), they also make use of it as a tool of oppression in a multitude of ways (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.314).

Family homes are not the only problematic field where LGBTI+s start experiencing problems that lead to their in-visibility. Now I would like to continue with the exploration of respondents’ experiences outside of their family homes, within the realm of everyday urban spaces with their romantic and erotic entanglements.

4.1.3. Romantic and Erotic Invisibilities “Outside of Home”

LGBTI+s experience one of the biggest contradictions and spatial restrictions in terms of their visibilities when they get into an intimate and romantic relationship with another person. One of my respondents, Ali, said they felt tired of the struggle they had to give each and every day with the idea of being romantically involved with another man and of being visible about it. They said that they accepted the deuce and said, *‘I would not kiss a man if I am in public, I gave up on that’* (Ali, Istanbul). Romantic relationship, intimacy, and their experiences of showing affection to their partners have been a common problematic issue that respondents tackled while they were explaining their everyday lives in different urban settings. As it will be apparent from the narratives below too, Ali, a queer gay respondent, was not the only one who was suffering from the invisibility aspect of their romantic relationship. In fact, I was also able to coin a similar issue in Şenel’s study conducted with lesbian and bisexual women who were pointing out a similar grievance in their own lives (Şenel, 2014, pp.93-94). In my study, sharing romantic moments in everyday urban spaces, feeling able to be holding hands and kissing the loved one on the cheek or on the lips, and communicating the feelings through intimate gestures around people surrounding them have transformed into mediums allowing them to interpret the city and the spatial restrictions and injustices they have been subject to.

Because heterosexuality is the taken-for-granted and inscribed form of relationships, anything that transgresses its limits is rendered virtually invisible (Ghaziani, 2015b). Thus, exclusion not only from the spatial dimension but from cultural settings too reproduces the same oppressive norms of gender and sexuality. Taking these into account, it would not be wrong to state the relationships LGBTI+s are holding with everyday spaces are the reflections of how the ruling heteronormative system, SOGIE-based phobias, normative and oppressive power relations in a given system of gender and sexuality codes are built. Ghaziani says that “a basic, intimate act like holding your partner’s hand or sharing a sweet kiss on the street without fear is profoundly political, if for no other reason than because doing so is not always possible beyond the sacred streets of the gayborhood” (Ghaziani, 2015b, p.19). Blidon (2011), in her work focusing on spatial struggles and recognition of LGBTI+s (gays and lesbians specifically), gives examples of discourses, and articulations from another part of the

world (from France). She discusses the difficulties that they encounter in terms of visibility and spatial possibilities. Her argument is that being allowed to show affection and hold hands or kiss in public, for instance, requires certain visibility and acceptance standards unless which there is a clear threat or even risk of being physically attacked (Blidon, 2011, p.4). I believe these two concepts formulate the basis of my outputs too. My respondents' narratives indicated that, had the couple been heterosexual, an event, as simple as a date, would have had very occasional visibility and reasonable outcomes. But because they were a same-sex couple, the level of their visibility suddenly rises, and accordingly suspicions arise, which in the end cause them trouble.

If you're a lonely fagot, there's no trouble, but if you're with your partner, there's trouble. That's what I call being "LGBTI friendly". Coffee chains do not care about anyone in that sense (Gökçe, Istanbul).

I would like to refer to Lefebvre's brief views on romantic relationships within the course of everyday life where he pointed out couples' "tendency ... to enter everyday life; to allow their presence to impregnate the other human relations (social activities, thought, etc.), which henceforth will be accomplished through them, but not without them" (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.157). It is this tendency that respondents were describing to be missing from their lives; the possibility to 'be' together with the loved one, an accomplishment that can only be with them and that cannot be 'without them'. In this respect, many of my respondents experienced not being able to show any intimacy towards their loved ones in outdoor spaces. They talked about feeling insecure because of what surrounding people (neighbors, roommates, parents, friends, etc.) might think of them, and they ended up visibly censoring themselves and hence felt powerless in these very intimate moments of their everyday lives. For example, the action of holding hands brings awareness to most of my respondents about where they are: their locations, surroundings, circumstances, and the people around them all are taken under consideration when they realize they are about to break the 'norms' by holding hands with their partners. The question they ask themselves revolves around: "Can I afford to do so?". Also, it makes them think about possible reactions; and thus, about further spatial moves that they might have to do (leave the place where they are, start resisting where they are and claim recognition, run away from that place, etc). Consequently, their relationship with public urban spaces may change in such a way that pushes them

away from the struggle because it makes them feel trapped and have self-doubts about themselves, about their need for affection.

I don't know if I had the desire to hold hands with my lover, I would suppress it. For example, I am not a person who touches my lover, but I don't know, I think it is because I am an LGBTI individual. I don't know, I am ashamed of it somehow (Mustafa, Istanbul).

While describing their everyday social experiences through their relationships with their partners and lovers, the highlight was put on the lack of intimacy and affection they were expecting to receive, and yet they could not. This resentment and discontent take place not only in public spaces but in their own home too: some of the respondents feel threatened even in their own households (away from their parents), because the walls are not “soundproof” enough that would hide their relationship from other neighbors. It is possible to read this situation as a reminder of the instability and fictitiousness of the public/private distinction and the permeability and porousness of borders in between. Calling their partners from one room by shouting ‘my love’ (*aşkim*)’ becomes unthinkable for some. In a way, this shows that “the privacy of a place is not therefore necessarily the same as having privacy in a place” (Johnston & Valentine, 1995, p.89). In order to avoid struggle, whether at home or out in the streets, they refrain from showing affection to their loved ones and thus they end up rendering their love invisible in order to keep the ordinary everyday life streaming going.

I don't like being open in places where I don't feel comfortable. But of course, I would want to be, who wouldn't? I'm just avoiding the struggle a little bit. I don't like saying “This is how you'll accept me, or I am not going to be there”. Or what I call the social environment in terms of visibility, I feel like there is a strain there. They don't accept you the way that you are. You cannot walk holding hands with your partner (Ada, Istanbul).

The lack of intimacy and the impossibility to show affection to loved ones have been triggering issues for many of the respondents. These experiences shaped the ways in which they related to urban spaces. The restrictions brought upon their beings and upon the ways in which they wanted to express themselves appear to be one of the strongest factors that make LGBTI+s feel like they are swinging around in-visibility. Now I would like to open up the discussion on my respondents' subjective and relative in-visibility experiences in the course of their everyday lives.

4.2. Subjective and Relative In-Visibilities

When something becomes more visible or less visible than before, we should ask ourselves who is acting on and reacting to the properties of the field, and which specific relationships are being shaped (Brighenti, 2007, p.326).

I would like to start by briefly stating here that LGBTI+s face numerous problems in relation to the visibility issues at the crossroads between sexuality, gender, morality, religion, family, nationalism, politics, and the state. The ongoing marginalization of LGBTI+ identities; the limited availability of “LGBTI+ friendly” places; the compelling nature of the binary gender system, heteropatriarchal society norms, and extreme social exclusion on multiple levels can be listed as some of these struggles LGBTI+s encounter on everyday basis in Istanbul.

The oppression and discrimination are manifested in numerous ways. The struggle starts in the family home, then moves to school and/or work life, and then becomes noticeable in the social environment more and more. What I argue here is that the everyday life of LGBTI+s is framed by the issue of visibility/invisibility that later on reinforces resistance practices to emerge. The interviews I conducted confirmed that the issue of visibility had been one of the most impactful factors in LGBTI+s’ relation to urban spaces. In everyday life, although social spaces appear to be functioning in an effortless, transparent, and immediate manner, in reality, they do not. As Lefebvre indicates, social spaces carry a multitude of features in themselves, they are simultaneously “abstract and practical, immediate and mediated” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.266). The duality that takes place between simultaneously being in-visible is a very critical everyday life reality and one of the most recurring precarity in the mundane lives of LGBTI+s in Istanbul.

The questioning of socio-spatial complexities is essential because our spatial perceptions rely on “our experiences” as De Certeau indicates (1984, p.118). My respondents’ experiences and their narratives of their everyday lives were shaped and molded according to their in-visibility (whether invisibilities or hyper-visibility) in the course of their lives. These discussions were also circling around the homophobic, biphobic and transphobic slurs and incidents (that they might have been subject to or they might have been the witness of) that unpreventably intervened and changed their

interactive relationship with the spatial milieu and accordingly with the society one is located in.

Finding oneself in constant struggle becomes an intrinsic and integrated part of LGBTI+s everyday life. Accordingly, respondents' narratives indicated that identifying oneself as LGBTI+ meant accepting the visibility struggle that came along with it. Some of my respondents defined themselves as powerful and relentless and others felt tired and drained because of all kinds of battles they had to give on a daily basis regarding their in-visibility. For most of them, the struggle and other socially conflictual situations were inseparable from their daily routines which required them to be in-visible on different occasions. At the same time, the way they depicted this continuous conflictual rhythm in their life was so normalized that I had the impression the struggle became something almost invisible to their eyes and it has already been immersed in their everyday life rhythms. Deniz, an LGBTI+ activist woman with trans experience points out how surrounded LGBTI+s' everyday lives are in terms of oppressive mechanisms' evasiveness.

There are too many pressure mechanisms. Family pressure, peer pressure, environmental pressure, and neighborhood pressure, people may not be able to break down the system all the time. (Deniz, Istanbul)

Throughout my analysis phase, I realized that there were particular ways visibility played an important, struggling, and revolving role in LGBTI+s' everyday lives and as a result, I tried to grasp visibility's subjective and relative impact on my respondents' everyday urban experiences, which I realized was bounded with a gendered perspective. As a result, I realized that either hyper-visibility or reinforced invisibility had played a critical role in their everyday life.

Now I would like to start by exploring bisexual and lesbian women's invisibility experiences and then I will be continuing this sub-chapter with the hypervisibility experiences of gay men and women with trans experience.

4.2.1. Bisexual and Lesbian Women's Invisibilities

Invisibility usually indicates situations and incidents where LGBTI+s cannot express themselves and cannot find a secure place in the social space, hence they remain

invisible. It is suggested by some respondents that the invisibility situation might also lead them to think that they are lying or living a double life if this invisibility does not occur voluntarily. Accordingly, bisexual and lesbian respondents' sexual orientations, especially bisexual women's, heavily increased their unwanted invisibilities. Şenel also points out a very similar issue in her master's thesis and she highlights that lesbian and bisexual women may take shelter in being invisible despite all the effort that they give against being invisible (Şenel, 2014, p.65).

According to my respondents, bisexuality remains unnoticed, overlooked, and an incomprehensible state of sexuality in the eyes of the majority of people. A second notion that was mentioned is that bisexuality, once it is heard, known, or understood by the general public, is considered as something 'creepy', 'unwanted', and especially 'deviant'. Bisexual women that I interviewed remain and prefer to remain discreet and unnoticed by their surroundings and by the new people they meet throughout their everyday lives thinking they would not be understood correctly, and that the nature of bisexual relationships would be a question mark in everyone's minds. This was also one of the issues that Şenel raised to the point that her analysis showed how bisexuality has been a form of sexuality that "could not be seated in the minds of others" (Şenel, 2014, p.76).

When I talk about such issues, there is a wince, I feel I need a barrier, some sort of protection. Women, when they become aware of this thing, are not usually afraid that I'm interested in them. They are afraid to talk about these things and they somehow think it would be reflected in them. When I say a woman is very nice looking, sometimes there is a creepy situation that can be caught in between gazes (Ada, Istanbul).

The fact that love between women is rendered invisible does not always have negative consequences. It is observed that the lives of bisexual women who are rendered invisible in their everyday lives (and those who manage to "pass") are facilitated to a certain amount (Lingel, 2009, p.393). Just like the journey of a transparent body out in the streets, the fact that the relationship between two women is not regarded as 'sexuality' gives women an opportunity to discover their sexualities behind closed doors. Whenever the neighbors see two women entering the apartment instead of a woman and a man together, they feel relieved, because "two women can only be friends" in their imagination. Thus, it is actually emphasized "through performance

utility”, as put by Lingel (2009, p.395) and it is also an “empowering display of liberation from the confines of binary power structures” (p.396). It is the same case with the unaware parents who hear their daughter’s voice on the phone and the voice of another person, a woman, which puts their minds at rest since they do not even imagine that it could be a ‘romantic relationship’; whereas ‘hearing a boy’s name’ can become a question mark in their heads regarding their daughter’s active sexual life.

Neighbors don’t understand if your female partner comes home. They think a normal friend is coming. They start to wonder about the person if they hear the same man’s name all the time. When they [my parents] hear a women’s name, they can’t think of it like that, ‘okay’, they say ‘I kiss you both’ when we hang up the phone. The neighbors are also relaxed. When it is a man, they shouldn’t see him through the window. Even direct physical contact with women does not raise doubts or create in any way nuisance (Ada, Istanbul).

People around me are so non-perceptive that they don’t understand it. It’s unthinkable to them. If I went to my grandmother and said that the woman in front of me looks really nice, she wouldn’t think of it at all like that. Even in the daily life that I live, they don’t get my signals even if I am open on a daily basis. I’m seeing the people that I want to see. Again, in sum, the whole thing does not change much, considering that people are only perceptible to some degree in our society (Defne, Istanbul).

Narratives of bisexual women indicate that their invisibilities also persist at the very core of LGBTI+ community. What they have been going through has been described as almost an “othering within”. Various reasons were cited to this disparagement. That ‘gay men are the dominant voice’, ‘lesbians are the only women considered being attracted to the same sex’, and ‘bisexuals are confused’ were cited among these reasonings. According to them, when it came to bisexuals the most widespread view was formulated upon this stance: ‘they are considered to create this confusion about sexuality: being attracted to both men and women’. They said that they were found ‘creepy’ and ‘abnormal’ and even some were connoting it as a ‘sexual deviance’.

I think the most basic struggle happens during the LGBTI struggle itself, bisexuals are frequently forgotten, and it is necessary to constantly remind this, remind the biphobic words that are said without noticing and correct those. For example, there is a coexistence called “lesbian bisexual feminists”.⁸⁰ The number of lesbians is high, but bisexuals are forgotten. You know, "wait a minute, but we have bisexuals too and let’s add something about it." I have to struggle the most in that area (Defne, Istanbul).

⁸⁰ I will be mentioning the issue of Lesbian-Bisexual Feminists in Chapter 6.3 in greater detail.

I realized that Şenel's fieldwork results were of similar to what Defne has been telling me about regarding the overlooked nature of bisexuals among LGBTI+s (Şenel, 2014, p.184). When Şenel discussed her results about how lesbian women would not want to be in a relationship with a bisexual woman (p.77), she commented that lesbian women who were leaning towards biphobia do so because they are situated in an environment where they are fighting against heterosexism and they consider bisexuals as an obstacle hence they end up othering or neglecting them completely. Although I did not reveal a prevalent biphobic stance coming from lesbians, I encountered one incident of biphobia during the interviews I conducted. I would like to briefly mention the stance of Yelda on this particular topic. Yelda is a woman with trans experience who did not want to be entangled with LGBTI+ identity in general. She was reluctant to any possible interaction with LGBTI+s and did not want her trans identity to be a part of her social representation. Her ideas about bisexuality were also different from the rest of the respondents because she believed that existing gender categories were already implicating the presence of lesbians and gay men and yet since bisexuals were fitting in neither of the categories, "there must be an anomaly in their cases" she said. Yelda's reluctance in embracing the LGBTI+ identity was mostly related to her views on bisexuality. Even though Yelda was the only one making a such distinction between lesbians-gays and bisexuals, her ideas might be considered as a reflection of a general criticism brought upon bisexuality in society. For all bisexual women participating in my study, such comments coming from their very own 'community' was mostly deemed as sorrowful.

I don't see bisexuals as one of the LGBTI concept. Maybe I am discriminating too, but it feels a little perverse to me. People have certain orientations, if you are a woman, you are a woman, you are lesbian, you are a man, you are gay, you are gay. I do not see that a relationship can be experienced with both men and women (Yelda, Istanbul).

As opposed to the invisibility of lesbians and bisexual women, gay men and women with trans experience were suffering from being hyper-visible in society. Now I would like to explore a bit the other part of the in-visibility medallion through the narratives I gathered during the fieldwork.

4.2.2. Hyper-Visibilities of Gay Men and of Women with Trans Experience

In Turkey, the public space, shaped by the perception of gender, has different manifestations upon individuals. Uğur's description showed me that there is a dichotomy in this context. Although the streets are perceived to be more easily accessible for men, the assessment made on the axis of visibility indicates that this comfort has its limitations. Though the first assessment made within the framework of social visibility proceeds over the existing binary gender system (of men and women), in a deeper assessment, I was able to see that sexual orientation and gender identities that do not comply with the binary gender system and heterosexuality are important factors in the struggle of LGBTI+s in terms of their visibility.

The public sphere is a place where we come into contact with people we don't know much. A space where people are in contact. When we discuss the public space, "men's space" comes to my mind. The area where the man can make himself more comfortable. When I say man, I mean heterosexual man. It's not trans or gay men (Uğur, Istanbul).

Kerem, a gay LGBTI+ rights activist points out that even though being gay in Turkey is not a criminal situation, "*it is socially prohibited*". He continues by giving examples from his life and how gay men are having a hard time holding hands in public places because it makes them hyper-visible and thus open to threats and problems. Kerem points out that although it is generally unacceptable to experience any type of homosexuality in a visible and detectable manner in society, this situation does not apply to lesbian and bisexual women simply because the love between two women is not considered sexuality, to begin with.

Maybe women hold hands more than we do, but this is because the lesbian form of love is already rendered invisible in society. It is perceived by the mainstream population like this: 'this is not sexuality' (Kerem, Istanbul).

This brings another aspect to visibility related problems in the everyday lives of LGBTI+s: hyper-visibility. What I call as hyper-visibility is the ensemble of situations where people find themselves to be more visible in a social environment either because of their outfits, looks, hairstyle (thus because of the label that society is putting on them as 'misfits') or because of the person they are accompanied with, in that particular social environment. The responses I gathered from my interviews indicated that in the course of everyday life, togetherness between two gay men was rendered

more visible and open to intervention than the togetherness of lesbian and bisexual women.

As long as you don't tell them that you are a fagot⁸¹ (*ibne*), it is OK. You can have all the sex you want behind closed doors. But when you get out, they would not stop bragging about being macho. You won't say "I'm gay", you will live by their rules (Gökçe, Istanbul).

Who you are with is way more important than who you are as a person. Holding hands is unacceptable out in the streets [with the same sex]. You may as well be wearing tights as a man, but when you hold hands, the danger is greater. I want to wear tights and hold my boy's hand. But it can't. It is so irritating (Uğur, Istanbul).

Women with trans experience usually experience this sort of hyper-visibility problem that becomes an issue leading to discomfort and an interruption in their everyday life cycles. Deniz said that she chose to be less visible to prevent problems. She describes this as a 'hiding-out' and she interprets it as an 'assimilation'. She stated that she had to 'sacrifice' herself to get the life that she has at the moment.

I'm an assimilated trans. I sacrificed myself because I wanted the freedom to move around the city. I'm not someone dressed the way society wants, but I also know how not to get caught on the radar of straight men when I go out. I just dropped that side of me. I'm not opening my boobs, even though they are amazing. I haven't worn a spaghetti strap blouse for more than 20 years (Deniz, Istanbul).

I will now continue my analysis with the reason behind this in-visibility oriented problems prevailing in almost every corner of the social reality: hypocrisy.

4.3. LGBTI+s Shadowed by Society's Hypocrisy on Visibilities

The relationship of visibility is controlled not by the one who looks, but by the one who is looked at (Brighenti, 2007, p.331).

The discriminations stemming from in-visibility appear as a cumulative output of the attempt and execution of erasure of the 'difference' from the society, which, according to Lefebvre, can be described as a "space of ... concepts, forms and laws whose

⁸¹ On a discursive level, LGBTI+s use pejorative slang to revalorize and restructure it. "*İbne*" (fag), a word once used by homophobes is now internalized and adopted by LGBTI+s. This is an issue that I will be coming back to in Chapter 5, with the discussion on the adoption of "queer" and the usage of humor and *lubunca* in the course of the everyday life.

abstract truth is imposed on the reality of the senses, of bodies, of wishes and desires” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.139). What I mean by this is that the driving force behind all types of different visibility-oriented problems lies in the desire of power holders to keep all differences away from the public eye and away from public knowledge. This domination is directly related to the sovereign’s principle of homogeneity and “unification” which later on exercises its powers upon “legislation, culture, knowledge, education” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.281). As Brighenti points out, “what is not seen is not thematized as an object in the domain of action” (Brighenti, 2007, p.328). The Turkish saying ‘*gözden uzak gönülden uzak olur*’ (‘out of sight out of mind’), is very suitable to summarize the motive behind this attitude towards ‘difference’.

The girl who dyes her hair in pink, and the girl wearing torn leather tights, would both draw the same reaction. Marginality is taboo in Turkey. They do not tolerate the way how people want to express themselves. These are always taking the form of political action (Gökçe, Istanbul).

As I already discussed above, since sexuality is an unspoken issue on its own in Turkey, other issues around sexuality are also ignored. Moreover, the general perception of sexuality takes place over the discourse of “a separation ... made between the reproductive function and sexual pleasure” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.167), and this is also valid in Turkish society. According to my respondents, various factors feed this closed-loop system of gender and sexuality in Turkey: general morality codes, traditional norms and values of the society and the construction of family institutions (as the primary center of the society and as the main foundation of ‘knowledge’) appear as primary sources of this. Moreover, religious and nationalist codes blended with patriarchal society understanding are listed as some of the reasons causing invisibilities-oriented problems for my respondents.

While Eser believes that this attitude towards sexuality is more religious and culturally based; Deniz is pointing to the historical burdens and problems that occurred during the modernization process of Turkey. Eser believes that the whole reluctance in accepting LGBTI+ identities is rooted in its cultural tradition and Deniz thinks that Turkish society is far away from adopting the necessary standards to treat individuals as they are ought to do so like in any modern society thus by accepting the differences since there is a great demand for homogeneity and unification in the society. Both of

them are considering society's attitude towards 'difference' to be backward and bigoted opinionated.

I think the first perception of it as a sin comes from the fact that here is a Muslim country. The second is driven by the fact that we are the Ottoman's grandchild, thus it stems from a nationalist ground. The third is the presence of big families with very intricate relationships and nested relatives (Eser, Istanbul).

We have not yet been able to digest this multiculturalism, gender-positive discrimination, and being 'ethnic positive'. Therefore, everyone is willing to live in a society with a single heterosexist class, to live in a society of heterosexuals. And everybody is just keen to keep up with this demand (Deniz, Istanbul).

Respondents think, in line with the literature, that discrimination based on gender and sexuality is an interlacing system of overshadowing power relations that operates through various platforms: legal discourses, political controlling attempts, and health-oriented viewpoints were among the cited components of the dominant cultural discourse. For instance, the widespread rhetoric on gender and sexuality according to some of the respondents stems from the biological perspective reigning the society. They think that because the reproductive cycle matters the most to the majority of people, anything that does not result in reproduction is considered unacceptable. It is through this way that the naturalization of heterosexuality occurs by reinforcing gender and desire together with bodily coherence that is focused on reproduction. This mechanism established within the framework of bodily features becomes the "appropriate" and hence the accepted sexual orientation attributed to them. In a way, through the use of rationality, this time the rationality of reproduction of species emerges the "rationality of unification", of a homogenized society, which is later on used to justify the violence (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.282).

Can points out the educational system's input into this understanding which reminded me of Lefebvre's critical highlight on the way the oppressive power holders are executing their claims through an unquestionable "scientific nature" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.61). 'Knowledge' and 'power' walk hand-in-hand in this system and it is through this 'knowledge' that power (violence) is furthermore endorsed upon the space (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.358). It is this system that erases the lived and perceived aspects of space and forces them into an 'absolute space', the space of the hegemonic power holders (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.61). This "impregnable fortress of knowledge" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.60) is what is shaping, dictating, and simultaneously receiving resistance

from the ones who are seeing, experiencing and revolting against it. The feedback loop that is being reinforced through the use of “science” embodies itself in space where it multiplies and is furthermore strengthened (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.282).

We start taking biology lessons in middle school and when the basic features of living things are listed, nutrition, excretion, digestion, etc., these are the basic features of living things. And reproduction. We are talking about a “creature” that cannot reproduce. As a result, the perception of society starts to take shape in secondary school. You are alive, there is breeding among your basic needs and you cannot breed. But when you don’t want to have a child as a woman, it is relatively natural, but when you say “I can’t have a child because I am LGBTI”, it is out of nature, it is unnatural. This is something embedded in your life, there is a clear message on this: if you’re alive, you have to reproduce and bring offspring to the world. And anything that cannot reproduce is considered abnormal, and unnatural. It causes so much distress to society (Can, Istanbul).

The construed social system shapes LGBTI+s’ experiences and it causes the struggling nature of their relationship in the urban spatial setting. My respondents gave insightful feedback regarding their perception of society. ‘Hypocrisy’ appeared as the term that was repeated numerous times to depict the society that we live in. “Saying one way and acting the other” is said to be very widespread and it is often portrayed as the element that serves to the marginalization and the reinforcement of in-visibility of “non-normative” sexual and gender identities. As a result of this, LGBTI+s become excluded from the visible, common, public and private spaces which renders them even more marginalized and open to threats or they become highly perceptible to the public eye, which also turns into a big disadvantage in their experiences of everyday spaces. In short, these spaces where the fictitious norms and expectations are forced upon LGBTI+s carry traces of deceptiveness and fraudulency (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.310).

The reason for living that “other face” is society itself. Starting from the family, I think everything that happens behind closed doors leads to what generally constitutes Turkey's perception today. Many people, even nine out of ten, are embarrassed by the femininity of women, these are the women whom they grew up with and who were harassed. The fact that homosexuals are seen as invalid and diseased is also a result of the social structure. This is a society that seems to be interdependent on the one hand, and associated with hospitality on the other, but it has a lot of gossips, too. In my opinion, as a society, we do not have such good features. We are not individualists; we are a part of society; this is the worst part (Eser, Istanbul).

Kerem discusses the way society is operating as an oppressive mechanism, and he points out that society ...

wants us to do everything undercover. So, let's not be around very much. Let's not stand out too much. We are bad examples for children, we cannot raise children. If such a character appears on TV, there are arguments like people's morality is being disrupted (Kerem, Istanbul).

Kerem furthermore thinks that this duality creates anxiety, self-doubt, and awkwardness and continues his sentence with these words:

We are in a culture that says if you are going to do it, you have to do it between four walls anyway. Military service is the same as home. If there is no problem on the outside, if you are not feminine, do whatever you want inside the house (Kerem, Istanbul).

Ada, too, shared similar opinions to Kerem in the sense that she believed:

Their way of dealing with their fears is by ignoring us. They ignore the obvious ones because there is an approach like "I won't let my child see these". Those who are not obvious are conditionally accepted and they say to them "we will let you join us, but only if you act as we want it to be". This goes on to say, "Let's not accept the others amongst us, they should not be visible to us, they should be away (Ada, Istanbul).

Society's insincerity and hypocrisy easily transform into situations where LGBTI+s feel constantly the urge to control their behavior and feel controlled by others and thus end up living in an abyss and spacelessness. This, in return, transforms into anxiousness, self-doubt, low self-esteem, decreased self-love, and anger issues (and into resistances too). Suppressed and dispirited, LGBTI+s cry out for not being able to hold their partner's/lover's hand, not being able to kiss in public spaces, and even behaving as if they were 'friends'. I was able to read similar narratives in Şenel's study to the point that they too were suffering from portraying one image to the outside world and living another reality in themselves (Şenel, 2014, p.81). In this sense, I think that their experience and understanding of the urban space is surrounded by a conflicting feature, it possesses obstacles that need to be overcome, hindrances that are soaked into "rules prohibiting any attempt at such modification" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.57).

For example, I have the most classic experience of my relationship which almost made me go through almost a split personality experience and this still makes me feel like I'm in pain here (showing his heart area). I am so fed up with the experience of being treated as just a friend at a park and becoming lovers again

at the moment we are behind closed doors. Feeling oneself in a position where the one person that you love the most treats you like a completely different person is very horrible and hypocritical. It makes me feel uncomfortable, I'm very tired of this, and frankly, this came up to here for me (showing his neck area) (Batu, Istanbul).

This hypocritical stance they attached to society had also its traces at home, in their families, and in familial relations. The families were described to have two different types. The first type is described to be more honest where acceptance or rejection of LGBTI+ identities is already established, and families seem persistent about their stances. Whereas the second one operates with a hidden agenda: while seeming more tolerant about LGBTI+ identities (for a variety of reasons, this might also be because of political correctness, or pretending to be more modern to the outside world), this second type of families displays accepting behavior towards LGBTI+s only for a certain amount of time, and only at certain circumstances. In this second group, families' reactions towards coming out change depending on the person that comes out. What I mean is that among this second type of family, some seem to be more accommodating and accepting towards LGBTI+s but it is bounded with a condition: the person has to be from "outside of their households". If the person who comes out as LGBTI+ is someone from their homes, thus from their own families, then the same acceptance and accommodating stance vanishes, and the idea of having a member of their family coming out as LGBTI+ resides somewhere unthinkable and unacceptable for them. A widely used motto in North American culture articulating "Not in my backyard" (NIMBY)⁸² (Duncan & Lambert, 2004, p.388; Hubbard et al., 2015, p.289) can be used as a similar example to this hypocritical approach of Turkish families.

If you say 'my friend is gay', it would be appropriate. If you say 'I am gay', they would start asking 'why did my child become like this?'. On the one hand, of course, there is also the type who says, 'You will never meet anyone', but there is also a person who acts as a lecturer. If a girl's friend is a male gay, they would say 'it is good', if that kid is a boy they would say 'leave that friend' (Eser, Istanbul).

⁸² According to this trend, homeownership is explained in this way: the residents of the neighborhood who are supporting the NIMBY motto try to protect their asset values and they vote for politicians that enforce restrictive planning policies. In countries where homeownership is fairly high, the planning systems appear to lead to inflexible mechanisms of restrictions. Here supporters of the NIMBY motto are limiting the heterogeneity in society at the expense of conserving their traditional values.

Almost all of my respondents thought that people living in Turkish society, regardless of socio-economic class and educational status of people, had been suffering greatly from hypocrisy. As I indicated above in the section entitled “Invisibilities at “Home”, sexuality is not an easy topic to discuss especially in public in Turkey. The society is narrated as being disingenuous about all the issues concerning sexuality and sex in general and this feature had also spatial reflections that influenced the everyday lives of LGBTI+s. In fact, discussions on sexuality are treated in such a way that they are masked or rejected rather than being openly put out on the table (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.311). Respondents felt disturbed and uneasy about the way gender and sexuality dynamics in Turkey were constructed upon. Sometimes visible and at times forcefully absorbed oppressive relations appeared to guide the existing gender and sexuality grid, which in the end resulted in spatial restrictions, unjust constrictions, and outmaneuvering of LGBTI+s.

Some respondents believed that invisibility-oriented problems were rooted in a broader misconceptualization of sexuality. Ekrem thinks that the limits that were drawn to sexuality operated upon all members of society. Therefore, it was not only gay men, lesbian and bisexual women, or women with trans experience who were suffering from sexuality-related issues, but everyone was suffering from it. The string of regulations brought upon sexuality is what defines who gets to be accepted and included and who does not. In return, a complete denial of sexuality is used as a method to deal with it all. He continues his thought by saying:

Sexuality-related issues are not discussed in Turkey. Even if it is about heterosexuality, it is not discussed. So, when we say that we want to come out with gay identity, it means talking about a sexual issue. We don't talk about femininity either, simply because it's a sexual thing. In this respect, I think people have a moral point of view. Morally, all topics leading to sexuality are either seen as a subject that should not be talked about or as taboo matters (Ekrem, Istanbul).

Lastly, Ece, one of the queer women that I interviewed, told me that she believed this inability to discuss sexuality could only be broken apart by redefining the ‘intimate’ and the ‘private’. She thinks that it is only through the discussion of sexuality itself that emancipation of LGBTI+s can be attained, and the spaces can be reproduced in a way that allows differences and heterogeneity in general:

If we break what has been described as ‘intimate’, what we call ‘intimate’ then can become more open spaces where sexuality can be experienced more easily, many people can enter and exit, and can live collectively. A lot of open transparent areas can be created outside the closed area on all four sides (Ece, Istanbul).

4.4. In Lieu of a Conclusion of Part 1

At the beginning of this chapter, I wrote that visibility was a central issue because it implied an existence in a shared life and recognition of an individual’s presence. I also stated that this has implications for the approval or the rejection of differences. So far, I showed that visibility was a critical factor in respondents’ everyday life narratives, and I would like to add that “mere recognition of the existence of something does not empower it” (Massey, 1994, p.214). This argument was also present in the respondents’ narratives.

Respect me but respect me by seeing me, by recognizing who I am; Not by considering me like someone hetero, or as if I’m a normal person; see the ‘fagot’ in me and respect my trans identity. Respect me not by ignoring my gender expression. At this point, they have to take steps. They say “S/he is also from us”. No! You should respect me even though I am not “one of you” (Deniz, Istanbul).

I would like to remind how Hollander and Einwohner (2004) conceptualized visibility by pointing out that “visibility, of course is a necessary prerequisite for the recognition of resistance” (p.540). Deniz’s above-quoted words about being recognized and being accepted after being recognized are important for two reasons: as I discussed in this chapter, the primary problem arises because of the lack of acceptance and recognition and the second one occurs when the acceptance is temporal or conditional as Deniz described during our interview. Deniz’s shout-out for recognition results in a variety of resistance tactics at different aspects of her everyday life, as I will be discussing in the next chapters of my thesis.

In another interview I held with Mustafa, he too was pointing out a similar issue when he was telling me about the city’s features in terms of livability, and acceptance of urban residents towards LGBTI+s and he said that

We think that we are free here. The reason for the alleged freedom here is because of individualism (Mustafa, Istanbul).

He said that the freedom they think they had in certain parts of Istanbul was an illusion and this freedom was actually happening simply because of the individualization of the people day by day in those particular spatial domains. He continued his words by saying that

But elsewhere [in the world], the grocery store owner says ‘Hello Mrs. Ayşe’ to the trans woman passing by, that is what real freedom is. Being aware of the fact that everyone is living together and respecting each other by knowing each other (Mustafa, Istanbul).

Mustafa said a very similar thing to what Deniz had said in the above quote. Both complained about the situations where LGBTI+s’ acceptance in everyday life depended on circumstantial and conditional situations and both stated that they needed the unconditional acceptance and simultaneous recognition of LGBTI+s to become an established doctrine. Their argumentation was rooted in the fact that the society was “reduced to an endless parade of systems and subsystems” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.311) which in this case was built upon hetero-patriarchal power relations and on the elimination of the ‘difference’ from the targeted homogenized society structure.

The initial part of the argument was that society’s inability to accept the visibility of LGBTI+ identities (and thus of the difference) translated into spatial oppression along with the social one and LGBTI+s kept on resisting these mechanisms starting from the moment they realize their sexual and gender identities. I then argued that LGBTI+s were executing resistances to change the course of the ongoing oppression and to appropriate some parts of the urban space. As a result, the oppression that was expanding to spatial layers very easily while creating shortness, congestion, cumulations, and segregations all over the space is being refuted by LGBTI+s’ resistances. This chapter was meant to provide a glimpse of the contextual backgrounds of respondents’ everyday urban lives circling around in-visibility-oriented struggles. I consider this portrayal as the phase during which they start producing their cocoons: the unitary cells that they are forming to protect themselves from the outer world by reproducing the existing social relations surrounding them which necessitates “the dissolution of old relations on the one hand and the generation of new relations on the other” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.52). In this context, I saw that the resistance started inside the person and then it gradually turned outward.

I believe that the main driving force behind LGBTI+s' everyday resistances is very much entangled with the issue of acceptance of difference and spatial appropriation (by which I mean the ability to live and to make use of the city without being subject to any discrimination and to live without being forced to or forced out from certain parts of the everyday urban spaces as Lefebvre pointed out in his theory of the right to the city (Lefebvre, 1996)). What 'appropriation' means here is the transformation of a space to "serve the needs and possibilities of a group" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.165), that group being LGBTI+s in this case.

When I realized the mutual problems circling around in-visibility, I was able to catch an alternative way of looking into struggles, resistances, and tactics. It is alternative because it offers a portrayal of the struggles and tactics of everyday life practices not by creating causal links between actions and their reactions but rather by interpreting the whole process in a prolonged temporality of bounded events. This allowed me to see both activity and inactivity, visibility and invisibility at different times, which in return opened a path to discuss them as resistances that contribute to the appropriation of spatial layers. In fact, what I noticed was that the pseudo-inactive positioning, usually overlooked in the analysis of resistance, everyday life, and urban rights, is spanning the ongoing discrimination and oppression.

To recap the crucial point that I aimed to make in this chapter, I would like to ask and answer one question: Why is visibility this critical in the lives of LGBTI+s? As it can be observed from the narratives I posited above, visibility operates as a denominator in the relation LGBTI+s establish with their spatial milieus. The issue of visibility also becomes an indicative factor in the resistances that one can afford to act upon. I consider visibility as the building block for the consideration of the production of space to the point that being in-visible in one spatial setting depends on the visibility of resistances that produce that spatiality. The visibility thus operates over a forced social contract that targets to eliminate differences in society to attain a homogenous reality, which does not exist.

Lefebvre is critical of the precedence given to visibility in a spatial perspective and he indicates, with reference to Nietzsche, that visibility has become more powerful than other sensory elements (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.139). When intersecting these arguments

with a spatial aspect to it, what I notice is that the space is also bounded with a necessity of visibility and that it depends on its “increasingly pronounced visual character” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.75). Therefore, visibility is not only an issue for individuals who occupy the space, but the space itself is defined via being made visible in its occupants’ minds and lives. Per Lefebvre’s criticism, I argue that visibility cannot always be considered as the prerequisite of either the presence (because of the affordable invisibilities which promote the continuance of the presence of LGBTI+s in social space) nor the production of space (because of the cocoons that emerge in the fine lines of in-visibility).

In the next Analysis Part 2, I continue my thesis with an examination of a variety of resistance practices that transform the lives of LGBTI+. To do so, I simultaneously explore the problems LGBTI+s encounter in their everyday lives and the solutions they bring to these issues. The solutions/resistances my respondents come up with thus become the tools they make use of to carve out safe spaces for themselves – the cocoons, in the course of everyday life.

I noticed numerous resistance tactics result in the subversion of the oppressive system and appropriation of everyday spaces, which, as I argue from the very beginning of this thesis, are not limited to public spaces but they also include private spaces in the conventional sense of the word.

PART 2: LGBTI+S' MICRO AND MACRO RESISTANCES

For us, resistance is about portraying our own gender performances and subjectivities. For us, resistance means to stand against the reproductive heterosexual marriages as well as society's 'unique' building block, the family, with the motto 'Love is Solidarity'. For us, resistance is not to bow before 'biological sex' and the oppressive compulsory heterosexual matrix which is imposed on us since we are little 'children' and whose oppressive and repressive effects intensify as we are forced to become 'students' and 'employees'. For us, our bedrooms, fantasies and loves constitute resistance. For us, resistance is the long hours we spend in front of houses bereft of justice, in solidarity with those defenders of rights who are taken into custody one by one by the authorities who take no precautions whatsoever and who enforce no legal sanctions against the murderers of trans and LGBT individuals (From the Theme of 21st Pride Week of Istanbul).⁸³

This thesis draws mainly on the spatial theories of Lefebvre and his discussions of the right to the city. Following Lefebvre's argument that "every social space is the outcome of a process with many aspects and many contributing currents" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.110), I suggest looking into these 'currents' to analyze the production of space. 'The current' in Lefebvre's theory takes the form of mobile energy which creates the body's need for stable apparatuses to seize it (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.179). In this thesis, these currents take the form of 'resistances'. I argue that these resistances take place on micro and macro levels. The micro level consists of everyday and individual resistances whereas the macro level consists of collective and out-of-the-ordinary resistances. This is a terminology that I came up with by merging two of the theoretical frameworks I discussed in the theoretical chapter. The first one belongs to Lefebvre who distinguished between "everyday gestures" and "gestures associated with feasts" (or out-of-the-ordinary) and coined a two-sided terminology to describe the realms in which they were taking place, namely the microgestural and macrogestural realms (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.215). The second inspiration came from Scott (1989) who paid attention to the nature of "everyday forms of resistances" which

⁸³ This paragraph is from the Pride Theme of the year of 2013. Information on the 21st Pride Week of Istanbul in the year of 2013 can be accessed at <https://prideistanbul.tumblr.com/post/53672177943/theme-of-the-21st-pride-week-resistance> (Retrieved October 5, 2019)

were deemed to be distinctly different from more collective forms of it and yet were reckoned to possess political characteristics in themselves.

These resistances are rooted in the “differences” that emerge and withstand upon the homogenized spatial surface. The ‘difference’ that is put in question encompasses what is “excluded” from the “homogenized realm” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.373). The resistances that I will be explaining below can be considered as a part of the “spatial practice”. I argue, following Lefebvre’s footsteps that these spatial practices that are of resisting nature help redefine places (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.288). They appear as answers given to the hegemonic and oppressive power relations reigning in the society which are forcing all its constituents to homogeneity; they are, thus, the actualization of the differences (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.418).

In this dissertation, I consider all these resistances that I will be describing below “as a systematic pattern of reappropriation” (Scott, 1989, p.39) and this reappropriation takes place on different layers of the urban space, including in the home. There are numerous examples of appropriated spaces, but as Lefebvre points out “it is not always easy to decide in what respect, how, by whom and for whom they have been appropriated” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.165) and I aim to bring clarity to this.

These resistances, whether occurring on micro or macro levels, they contribute to the formulation of cocoons, through which further resistances emerge and the right to the city is sought after.

CHAPTER 5

MICRO RESISTANCES

[Social needs] Opposed and complimentary, they include the need for security and opening, the need for certainty and adventure, that of organization of work and of play, the needs for the predictable and the unpredictable, of similarity and difference, of isolation and encounter, exchange and investments, of independence (even solitude) and communication, of immediate and long-term prospects (Lefebvre, 1996, p.147).

Innumerable ways of playing and foiling the other's game (*jouer/dejouer le jeu de l'autre*), that is, the space instituted by others, characterize the subtle, stubborn, resistant activity of groups which, since they lack their own space, have to get along in a network of already established forces and representations (De Certeau, 1984, p.18).

Lefebvre (1991a), by recognizing the constant and active interaction between ordinary and unexpected modes of experience and practice, tries to convey both the meaning and puzzlement of everyday life. He says that he now sees "the humble events of everyday life as having two sides: a little, individual, chance event – and at the same time an infinitely complex social event, richer than the many 'essences' it contains within itself" (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.57). In his theory, everyday life is considered a concept that developed with the modern period, different from daily life, which is a structure that has been going on with all the social, economic, and cultural dynamics that human beings have had since its existence. Everyday life is seen as the life of ordinary people and considered private life, it emerges as a dull, ambiguous, and inextricable structure.

According to Lefebvre, "everyday life is ... a primal site for meaningful social resistance" (Merrifield, 2002, p.79). Resisting all the dynamics of alienation that are rooted in daily life can only be made possible by eager actors who can demonstrate their capacity for creative action. And as a result, the idea that "by changing the everyday life, you can change the world" (Merrifield, 2002, p.79) is rendered possible.

What these actors have to do is create ‘festive’ moments that will regain what they have lost in everyday life, and make the created festivity the existential core of the everyday life. Therefore, everyday life becomes the field of human’s creative resistance action. Many factors such as individuals, individuals’ representations, and the use of space influence the course of daily resistance.

Everyday life reveals itself as an inevitable space of oppression and domination. How individuals organize this resistance, which emerges against the means of everyday oppression that surrounds them on different platforms, constitutes the main focal point of this section. A micro resistance is an individual, sometimes explicit but also implicit form of resistance that take places in the course of the everyday rhythm. As it will be apparent from the narratives below, its implicit feature may render it more ‘affordable’ for its doers. This particular form of resistance is the outcome of individual initiatives and not organizations or collective action mechanisms. It is the very act of protecting the individual’s own everyday life against material domination practices.

However, according to Scott, these micro resistances “rarely make headlines” (Scott, 1989, p.49), and “for everyday resisters ... successful resistance builds its own momentum” (p.41). As Ali suggests below, the resistance and struggle in the everyday life of an LGBTI+ starts in the morning and continues till night and they seek the right moments to express these resisting acts to subvert the existing system in which we all live. As it will become apparent from the narratives throughout this chapter, although the resisters, in my case LGBTI+s, do not openly intend to make a revolution via their micro resistances, they depend on them to make room for themselves. These actions give birth to cocoons where existing power arrangements are openly challenged and the road to revolution is sought after. This is also in tandem with what Lefebvre is suggesting for a possibility of a revolution too. He says that “the revolutionary solution to economic and social contradictions will only become possible when the human masses are no longer able or willing to live as before” (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.182).

If a revolutionary socialist is struggling once a month, an LGBTI individual opens their eyes in the morning and continues [to struggle and to resist] until they go to bed at the night (Ali, Istanbul).

As it will be apparent from the sections below, these resistances carry the characteristics of being titled ‘tactics’ as they are made of wise techniques aimed at

escaping from difficult situations (De Certeau, 1984, xix). “Sly as a fox and twice as quick: there are countless ways of “making do”” says de Certeau (1984, p.28) and I was able to detect these ways through the narratives of my respondents. What I was also able to identify was that these ways of “making do” were mostly connected to one another because they are nourished from the same dynamic of in-visibility that I explored in the previous chapter (Chapter 4). Based on my observations and the interviews I conducted I was able to reveal that “trickery is possible for the weak, and often it is [their] only possibility” (De Certeau, 1984, p.37). And yet, as it will be discussed in the next chapter, the eventual collectivity is also rendered possible in the case of LGBTI+s and it takes a more complex form than being simply the sum of individuals’ resisting acts. It carries traces of these micro resistances in itself and yet it communicates through channels and ways that are more rooted in visibility, regardless of their affordability. My fieldwork results indicate that macro resistances aim for a holistic liberation; for that road to be pursued; micro resistances are a must.

LGBTI+s, who manage and constantly negotiate with the urban space through a variety of micro resistance mechanisms, have developed different forms of oppositions positioned at the axis of *in-visibility* to subvert and negotiate with existing everyday social dynamics, which are deemed to render the everyday life in general as a field of deprivation and conviction. At this point, I agree with Lefebvre who argues that negotiation itself is an indicator of spatial appropriation (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.217). As a result, it can be claimed that being in situations that force individuals to show resistance on an everyday level and continuing this action create a fundamental breakthrough in the everyday life of LGBTI+s and this furthermore results in the transformation of the everyday spaces.

So far, I discussed how in-visibility came to emergence within the existing and oppressive system, now I will try to interpret how LGBTI+s, whose daily lives are inflated with oppression, violence, and discrimination, manage and cope with oppressive mechanisms with a variety of resistance tools circling around in-visibility. For this, I will focus on different mediums and ways LGBTI+s are making use of, to create “cracks” in the existing socio-spatial domain while overcoming the difficulties encountered on an everyday basis. A similar approach of analysis was also present in Şenel’s study where Şenel, following her analysis of discrimination and oppression of

lesbian and bisexual women, also focused on these women's ways of countering those via individual and collective resistance mechanisms (Şenel, 2014, p.147). As will be seen from the sub-chapters below, there have also been many instances where I was able to track similar resistance practices in her findings which she analyzed in the form of tactics.

5.1. Affordable Micro Resistances Circling Around In-Visibilities

Power does not rest univocally with seeing or with being seen. Rather, it is the style in which seeing and being seen take place that carries the most important consequences. The exercise of power is always an exercise in activating selective in/visibilities (Brighenti, 2007, p.339).

LGBTI+s are making calculations and decisions about where, when, and how to be invisible and visible in the course of their everyday lives. This becomes particularly factual in a variety of dimensions of urban spaces (streets, public places, homes, etc.). Their state of constant evaluation made me ask questions about the binary definitions of public and private spaces and the conventional ways used to interpret them because they appear to be of a more complex nature.

In this section, I will focus on how LGBTI+s evaluate certain spaces and how they make decisions about the affordability of their in-visible resistances. I will try to explain how LGBTI+s decide about a certain space as it would not afford their visibility and then I will be giving examples of their corresponding actions. I will call these actions '*affordable invisibilities and visibilities as resistances*'. Together with visibility-oriented problems, I will portray different forms of tactical moves that circle around the notion of in-visibility. As one of the highlights of my thesis, I consider "affordable in-visibility" as an inquiring tool to research LGBTI+s' agency in reproducing the space and I reflex on existing socio-spatial contexts by blending them with the narratives of everyday life practices of my respondents.

The research findings indicate that because invisibility and hyper-visibility indicate discrimination and violence against LGBTI+s, being open about one's sexuality on any level (whether discursively or physically) can pave the way for LGBTI+s to be discriminated against in different platforms and suffer at different levels. Practices that allow individuals to seek and build liberated spaces in the course of everyday life can

be strong articulations of resistances that influence the coercive processes around the expressions and identities of gender and sexuality. I find it critically important to go beyond classical understandings of resistance that are mainly operating on a visibility axis, from a class perspective and/or from an economic perspective and I see this opportunity to focus on micro “affordable” tactics that my respondents came up with in their narratives. With reference to Scott (1989) who said that “those who employ everyday forms of resistance avoid calling attention to themselves” (p.35), what I argue here is that in-visibility (remaining invisible, opting more subtle visibility, being in a to-and-fro movement about visibility) can, in fact, be considered as a resistance in itself given the fact that “the mortal risks involved in an open confrontation may virtually preclude many forms of resistance” (Scott, 1989, p.51).

Not everyone has to be that strong. I feel strong and I have a fighting personality. But I can't expect everyone to be like myself, I would not want them to be. An LGBTI should not always have to be too strong to survive (Deniz, Istanbul).

Respondents indicated that they are facing many homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic attitudes and actions regarding their sexual orientation and gender identities in almost every corner of their lives; these actions include but are not limited to bias, labeling, exclusion, and harassment. As I cited the examples in the previous chapter, LGBTI+s find themselves mostly forced to live a double life circling around in-visibility. One of these lives is what they truly are and how they truly want to be and the other one is only serving to satisfy the oppressive power mechanisms' endless demands. In both of these scenarios, as I will explain below, LGBTI+s' persistence in reproducing the space and the conditions that are surrounding them takes different forms. Although there are sharp boundaries in the lives of LGBTI+s regarding how they should 'be' and how they should 'live', respondents seemed to be in an active and transformative position, rather than being in an inherently passive or submissive one, although they may seem to have accepted these orders, practices and at times obeyed them in the course of their everyday lives.

As I explored in 4.1.1, while invisibility and being unspotted and 'undetected' may be considered an indicator of violence and oppression, being open about one's sexuality can also pave the way for discrimination in different areas. There are cases where this feature of not being 'detectable' occurs as a direct and involuntary outcome of existing

social conditions. However, in this form of invisibility that I call ‘affordable invisibility’, the situation emerges as a result of their decision and hence takes the form of a tactical move. As I briefly mentioned above, this heuristic perspective was also present in Şenel’s study (2014) where she discussed the invisibility of lesbian and bisexual women living in Ankara as an individual’s solution to existing discrimination practices (p.78). Şenel observes that her respondents took refuge in invisibility, and they made use of it as a tactic in their everyday lives, the same way that my respondents did, to avoid possible violence and discrimination occurrences (p.153).

The more the fear about what they would lose increases had they become visible in any environment, the more “affordable invisibility” becomes viable and implementable. The ‘expectations of others’ play a tremendous role in the way individuals reveal or keep their identities and sexual desires hidden, which is a process sometimes outside one’s control. For some of my respondents, the affordable invisibility tactic was to stay hidden, and the resistances engendered around staying ‘hidden’ served as a protector: “because they are veiled, ... they do not offer the authorities a clear-cut occasion for retaliation” (Scott, 1989, p.55).

Defne was one of the respondents who was still struggling with the idea of coming-out to all her family about her sexuality. She insisted that her way of remaining invisible was intrinsic to herself, that she did not want to share her personal life with other people outside of her trusted circle, especially with her family, but at the same time, she could not stop repeating her anxiousness about the whole coming-out process ahead of her and the impact it might have on her parents’ wellbeing. Thus, being invisible served as a neutralizer: while permitting her to explore her sexuality without being interrupted, it also allowed her to stay away from any possible anxieties that might harm her relationships with her family.

I don’t feel the need to come out at the moment to all my family. When I came out to myself, I was upset that I could not come out to my family while being in the psychology of going through that period. If I come out, our relationship will not take us to a much better point anyway. I noticed that I should not rush coming out to my parents since it does not go anywhere, but I know that I will eventually have to do it (Defne, Istanbul).

Defne did not want to get into any trouble with her parents, because she knew this would lead up to even more uncomfortable conversations with them and restrictive

behavior from her family members. She was afraid that they might want to intervene even further in her life and the best choice here was to remain closeted until the moment she would finally be in total control of her own life. She utilized invisibility (remaining hidden from her parents) as an affordable resistance mechanism. What she describes in the below quote is of proving Scott's argument that "not openly contesting the dominant norms ... leaves the dominant in command of the public stage" (Scott, 1989, p.57). She says:

When I am with my family, I see that I am very uncomfortable with them, but I do not see the possibility of struggle there. I avoid getting into that struggle with my family (Defne, Istanbul).

Among the respondents who criticized the society and their families for being hypocritical on LGBTI+ identities for different reasons, some pointed out their families' level of daringness, and how they pushed them towards being invisible. This push led them to operate in certain private spaces, "behind closed doors", in-between cracks that they were able to open on the "monolithic" surface.⁸⁴ LGBTI+s have been exploring, restructuring, and reinterpreting the borders between different grades of exposure that delineate the difference and homogeneity, which can be stepped in or stepped out based on how one evaluates the social situation in which one identifies and/or moves through spaces of invisibility.

The narratives of my respondents translated into constructs that differ from the existing knowledge on territorial subsistence of LGBTI+s in general and as a result, I realized that they operated in the relational matrix of mobile and stable placements, in the flux of blurry boundaries between public and private spaces, while chasing the possibility of taking part in some places and abstaining from others, via their affordable invisibility oriented tactics. While "not coming out" has been used as a tactic to handle the coming out process and to establish a healthy relationship with their surroundings, to begin with, it has emerged as a very good opportunity for the individual to pass their

⁸⁴ I would like to remark on my wording of "monolithic surface" here. As I suggested from the beginning, I consider the space to be constituted of social relationships and I emphasize its socially produced nature. Having argued that, I suggest that the space cannot be considered a static entity, but it is rather debouched, changeable, and moving. As Massey (1994) argued, "space is not a 'flat' surface in that sense because the social relations which create it are themselves dynamic by their very nature" (p.265). Here, when I make use of the wording "the monolithic surface of the space", I try to point out the attempt of power holders of making it static, stripping it from its socially produced nature.

own opinions and value judgments about the new world they were exploring to their families too. Ada, who utilizes her invisibility as a process of discovering herself, is also benefiting from it as an opportunity to change the thoughts of her family and to show possible alternatives.

We are a very large family, but I am not open to them. I am not open at all, but I am discussing these issues in any environment I get into. I carry wherever I go an LGBTI+ bag [meaning a bag with an LGBTI+ item on it]. Why? because I want 'that' to be visible, I want 'it' to be known. I want them to hear. Even though they don't know my situation at the moment. We argue sometimes, and at that point, my strategies are different, I am communicating with some of them saying "you are right, but...", as if I am on their side, I make my moves with small steps. Whereas with some of them, our discussions are much harsher. Although I am not open to them, I engage in such dialogues a lot (Ada, Istanbul).

One of the areas where this tactic based on being invisible and undetectable was employed was concerning the housing issue. LGBTI+s become subject to discrimination while looking for housing in the city of Istanbul, as Ali described during the interview (please see p.163). Hiding out with the fear of not being considered as an eligible tenant for the desired apartment, the inability to look for apartments in certain districts of the city due to the dominant phobic discourse in that particular area even though it would be much easier to afford a house there, hearing homophobic or transphobic stories coming from the landlords and pretending that none of those apply to them are some of the incidents that LGBTI+s told me about their house-hunting experiences. The affordable invisibility, in those cases, even though takes a resentful tone, this time transforms into a housing opportunity in an environment where, under current circumstances, they would not be able to live. Turning a deaf ear, being negligent about what is being said by the potential landlords and/or neighbors aims at preventing others to enter their apartments via their discourses. In these cases, I realize that "it is more convenient to evade it ... rather than to change it" (Scott, 1989, p.57). In Ekrem's and Uğur's narratives, this secretive operation has been successful in attaining their goals.

For example, I live in Kurtuluş. Both my real estate agent and my landlord stated very homophobic transphobic words when I was looking for this apartment, for example, I had to shut up and accept all the bad words they were saying. They think I'm not gay. I did not say anything to oppose this idea. I didn't object to their homophobic and transphobic thoughts to avoid problems because I wanted to rent that house. So, I accepted the humiliation (Ekrem, Istanbul).

My friend's landlord said, "be careful my son, watch out for estranged types around you. I trust you, but I don't trust them" or something like that. My friend is gay, and the landlord is actually talking about my friend's other gay friends. The ones that come in and out are always known by everyone. Neighbors are actually going into your bedroom without your permission. They tell you to pull the curtain and yet want to get involved. This discourse is produced depending on the situation (Uğur, Istanbul).

This operation reminds me of the resistance practices of Indians in De Certeau's (1984) writings. De Certeau discusses how Indians were transforming the representations that were forced on them by making use of them in a way that was not intended to do so. "They made it [*the system*] function in another register" says de Certeau (1984, p.32). Not being able to leave the existing scheme, just like in the case of LGBTI+s who were looking for an apartment to live in and who could just not afford to leave the existing conditions housing system in Istanbul, they deterrered the existing conditions of 'being'. De Certeau points out the "procedures of consumption" (De Certeau, 1984, p.32) as a signifier element of the 'difference' upon the spatial realm organized by the authorities, thus upon the conceived space (Lefebvre, 1991b); this time, in the case of LGBTI+s, these procedures, which signify the 'difference' belong to the acts of residing and inhabiting.

Some of my respondents thought that the most vulnerable group in this whole hypocrisy facet of Turkish society has been LGBTI+s in general but especially gay men and women with trans experience. According to them, this situation stems from their openness and visibility about their sexual identities. Especially in the case of gay men, they thought that as long as the person is silent about his sexuality, he can continue his 'operations'. The hyper-visibility of gay men in society created some social visibility problems that needed to be solved. Some of my respondents portrayed the attitude of their landlords, neighbors, and of people who live on the same street and/or in the same neighborhood as highly intrusive, as this is also shown in the quote of Uğur above. On some occasions, they felt like they were being watched and monitored constantly. They thought that this was only because of their own hyper-visibility and the neighbors' curiosity and willingness to intrusion. The two of them mixing transformed into an invasion practice of LGBTI+s' everyday life and their private affairs as well. In one particular example narrated below, Ali was able to tackle this problem with a creative solution they came up with. They were able to trick their

neighbors by shifting the hours of the entrance to their apartment to avoid being monitored by their neighbors.

People meet with each other if they want to go to bed together or just talk on apps these days. And then, one party invites the other party to his home. But here comes the problem: you cannot take them inside because the elderly women in the neighborhood haunt you with their never-asleep satellites about who comes in and who goes out of homes. You can only take someone home after 2:00 am, it is when they sleep. So that's what I do as well (Ali, Istanbul).

This small tactic, although it is “beneath notice” of the power holders as Scott would have argued so, which would probably leave it outside of the realm of resistances in their conventional formulation and understanding, is intended to be this way and this is what gives its resistance feature to it (Scott, 1989, p.35). The invisibility as resistance itself and the consideration of letting lovers inside the house after a certain hour may therefore be considered as an unusual form of resistance. However, the act of remaining hidden to undertake according to one's plan despite the oppressive power dynamics and the agency of taking that affordable invisibility risk is what I consider as resistance here. In this case, similar to other examples I portray in this chapter, what I notice is that while these tactics are dependent on the existing conditions, they do not follow the rules suggested by the given space-time circumstances (Scott, 1989, p.29). This also reminds me of what de Certeau wrote to describe the differences between tactics and strategies:

The weak must continually turn to their own ends forces alien to them. This is achieved in the propitious moments when they are able to combine heterogeneous elements... the intellectual synthesis of these given elements takes the form, however, not of a discourse, but of the decision itself, the act and manner in which the opportunity is “seized”. (De Certeau, 1984, p.xix)

Anonymity operates through the city's own resources too when it comes to invisibility tactics. The city is used through its crowdedness. Here again, LGBTI+s manage to transform one of the qualities of their spatial milieu into an advantage and utilize it to make room for themselves and their existence in diverse public urban settings. An increasing geography of spatialization is articulated daily in city life during which constant interaction modes are formed among other urban residents. This nonetheless creates a duality of wanted/unwanted visibility: the city can sometimes stop providing anonymity to urban residents as they would expect so. It is the spatial behaviors of different groups participating in urban spaces that contribute to the production of space

(Lefebvre, 1991b). Istanbul has been described in this sense as a place that allows people to be who they are in their own sheaths. Ekrem seems to think that this is because of Istanbul's crowdedness and heterogeneity in general and that individuals, like themselves, find the opportunity 'to find and to lose themselves' there.⁸⁵ The presence of numerous people at one place, the crowdedness has a normalizing effect according to Ekrem and whereas for Eser, this is almost like a cinematic power given to the city: the city itself appears to have an agency in her description. Thus, in their description of the city, the city "does not present itself in the same way as a flower, ignorant of its own beauty" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.74).

Because it is a crowded and multicultural place, LGBTI+s are more accepted than in other cities. From this point of view, there is more room for marginalized identities. To a point, it normalizes you. You can get lost in this crowd and not go unobtrusive (Ekrem, Istanbul).

I think Istanbul allows it. I, too, was not in the mind of "let me live secretly" as a character. Istanbul allows me to live like this. I would force myself to live like who I am, but something would have or might have happened to me. I would hit the wall somehow again. It allows me to live my sexual identity comfortably. I can go see LGBT or queer movies here, maybe if I were somewhere else in Turkey, I would have to wait till it appears on the internet. Istanbul allows you to 'be', but of course in certain parts of it (Eser, Istanbul).

Another affordable invisibility tactic that was narrated was based on individuals' appearances and displays in social environments in terms of clothing, accessories, hairstyles. This time, the invisibility takes the form of "*blending-in*" or "*passing*" which occurs at the cost of making concessions from oneself and from the way that the persons desire to reflect themselves in the public (Bakacak & Öktem, 2014; Lingel, 2009; Şenel, 2014). Most of the time, this renunciation is made to have stability and comfort in their everyday life. "Passing" is described as an attempt by an individual to alter the way others perceive them (Lingel, 2009, p.391). Passing includes everyday and even maybe instantaneous performance of a socially accepted form of identity to eliminate possible obstacles (Lingel, 2009, p.383). Batu is one of these individuals

⁸⁵ I would like to make a brief connection between what my respondents described in terms of anonymity and Simmel's 'Stranger' ([1908] 1971). Simmel's Stranger reflects the idea that an individual can be part of a group spatially and remain outside of that group socially. Respondents' narratives were indicating a similar way of taking part in the crowded areas of Istanbul, by physically locating themselves there but remaining unconnected to it in terms of sociality. In a way, I was able to detect my respondents' simultaneous distancing and familiarity and their connection and disconnectedness to the crowds they were located at.

who feel obliged to make certain changes in the way he appears and performs in the outside world. He chooses to act this way because it is the affordable mechanism for him to continue the everyday life as it is.

In any environment where they might understand that I am LGBT, I try to act with a more masculine attitude and tone, and I pay attention to my choice of words. But of course, I feel free when I act without masking myself or forcing and even masquerading myself (Batu, Istanbul)

This scene was described almost like a barter, a negotiation, an exchange the individual makes with the spatial surrounding one is located at to get what they want, just like in the case of those who were looking for an apartment to live in (please see p.193). Other respondents were saying that while trying to stay under the radar of society and trying not to get too much attention, so that they could act as they desire, they preferred being invisible with their clothes, their make-up, etc. These respondents stated that, if they were to highlight ‘womanhood’ and ‘femininity’ via their clothing or their behavior (which was the case for lesbian, bisexual, and women with trans experience and some of the gay men that I interviewed), they would eventually start getting looks from other people and this would end up bothering them.⁸⁶ This in return pushed them towards remaining undetectable, not so visible to the eye and keeping who they are to themselves.

I don’t want to get attention. I’m not wearing a dress, skirt, or makeup. I don’t want my appearance to stand out. I think it is about being a woman in general in this society and this society is conservative. I don’t want anyone to get any signal from me. So that I can actually live the way that I am (Ada, Istanbul).

Kerem thinks that the documentary called *Hala* (Aunt)⁸⁷ is a great representation of this situation where a woman with trans experience is assimilated into the social space

⁸⁶ For further discussions, see Young’s article focusing on the phenomenology of feminine body compartment motility and spatiality (Young, 1980)

⁸⁷ Directed by Veysel Akşahin in 2012, the documentary entitled ‘*Hala*’ (Aunt) is about ‘İhsan Hala’'s (Aunt İhsan’s) experiences in a village in Akhisar Manisa (located in the Aegean Region of Turkey). İhsan Hala is a woman with trans experience, and she had been living in the same village for many years. In the documentary, İhsan Hala narrates how the villagers did not accept her at the beginning and then later on realized (and actually were convinced by Aunt İhsan) that Aunt İhsan was one of “them” and that she should be accepted as who she is to the community. But the documentary also shows that this acceptance is conditional; İhsan Hala is following the ‘general morality’ norms of the village by keeping her headscarf at all times, and by not getting into any intimate and romantic relationship with anyone from the village or from outside the village. This “invisibility” ensures İhsan Hala’s stay in their village while bringing strict restrictions.

they are located in. Kerem shows the severity of the situation since the person in the documentary is already giving a lot of herself and actually becomes invisible as a woman with trans experience and visible as a true member of the village she lives in, in order to survive.

There is a movie that comes out when you type ‘Hala’. Villagers know the trans individual and love her. For example, she has no sexual life in that documentary. It is obvious what she gave up and what she did in the context of waiving her rights away. The more we have difficulty in the cultural context, the more we sacrifice. She says I have to be a great person so that my trans identity would be ruled out and I would not be marginalized in this society (Kerem, Istanbul).

Invisibility and blending-in have a seemingly inimical connection to spatial appropriation. These operate as resistance mechanisms that allow abandoning the power of visibility in urban space for LGBTI+s. The self-acceptance phase that they have gone through, most of the time on their own, and if lucky surrounded by loved ones who accept them, and then the coming out process to the ones surrounding them, families, friends, schoolmates, and colleagues had a tremendous impact on their everyday life struggles, and on the way that they perceived their everyday life in general. LGBTI+s that I interacted with and interviewed in the context of my thesis were trying to take shelter, hide on different occasions who they are, and alter how others would perceive them. Their attempts aimed at keeping in the dark whom they are dating or who they are attracted to, to create a breathing room and to provide themselves the space that they needed. In this sense, LGBTI+s were able to perform what de Certeau describes as managing the other through tactics’ defensive and opportunistic nature. LGBTI+s’ affordable invisibility tactics operate in limited ways and are captured temporarily in urban spaces. They were able to perform the art of “managing” the other by, as called by De Certeau (1984), “an art of being in between” and by drawing “unexpected results from [their] situation” (p.30). “People have to make do with what they have” (De Certeau, 1984, p.18), and “everyday forms of resistance are a matter of nibbling” in this path (Scott, 1989, p.42).

While affordable invisibility played a tactical role in the lives of LGBTI+s, some of them found ways to employ affordable visibility tactics as well. For instance, Ada operates with her own tactics at her parental home by making some things visible but keeping her own self utterly invisible to her family. She says that even though she has

a rainbow flag in her room, she refrains herself from communicating her own sexuality openly to them. This way, she feels like they meet halfway with her family in terms of her expressionism about her 'being' and about the unspoken issue of 'sexuality'. Whereas for Gökçe, even though he does not want to shout out to the outside world about his sexuality, he thinks he is upfront about himself because he carries a rainbow badge on top of his bag. This sort of usage of small symbolic artifacts delivers a glimpse into their owners' lives and perceptions and both Ada's and Gökçe's cases are no different. I interpret their relationship with these artifacts like this: both of them are weighing the level of visibility they can afford in their everyday lives and their decision of carrying these material artifacts indicate the degree of affordability they think they are capable of given the social circumstances surrounding them. Moreover, I also realize that this way of resisting is considered to be safer for them while at the same time providing them some material and imaginary gains too, as Scott (1989) would agree too in the context of "everyday forms of resistances" (p.35). Carrying a badge on top of their bags or having a rainbow flag inside their rooms are the elements that help create their 'cocoon' for them; it is via these objects that they are able to produce it, which I believe is of affirming nature of Lefebvre's suggestion that "a space is not a thing but rather a set of relations between things" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.83). In fact, as Young (2005) rightfully suggests, this "identity-supporting material" operates as tools and symbols of resistance (p.140). In this sense, the symbol that is attached to an everyday worn item, or the sign inside the room of a house is soaked in a sentimental and emblematic value and that it carries a power in itself (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.141).

I know from my own family, there is a rainbow flag in the room, they think of some things, that I am supporting all kinds of minorities, and I am in a lot of protests as much as possible (Ada, Istanbul).

I carry the rainbow symbol a lot. I have a badge in my bag. The individual who knows the meaning of the rainbow is already approaching me. I don't aim to show myself off to anyone, I just like it a lot (Gökçe, Istanbul).

Although there is acknowledgement of invisibility and the problems arising from it (Giesecking, 2013; Şenel, 2014) there is still a great need for theorizing on the power of affordable invisibilities and also on invisibility itself. What I named as affordable in-visibility has come forward as one of the tactics that LGBTI+s I have interviewed adopted in different periods of their lives to combat different kinds of discrimination

practices they had faced. As can be seen from the examples above, LGBTI+s, positioned against the heteropatriarchal relations and all oppressiveness that reigns in the society as individuals who are trying to prevent the control and correction mechanisms applied on them, do not only passively accept the destiny drawn to them; on the contrary, with different tricks, they become the players in this game. In the light of the cases discussed above, these affordable in-visibilitys, 'remaining unknown', 'blending in', 'not making it obvious to the eyes of others', and 'hiding in plain sight' turn out to be invisible resistance mechanisms. Affordable in-visibility in the life of LGBTI+s is one of the tactics that Scott describes as "evasive forms" (Scott, 1989, p.52) of the scattered creativity of the individuals who are oppressed under the scope of surveillance and control. Invisibilitys, related to wanting to be sheltered and not being open about one's SOGIE, are being used in a disruptive way to contradict and subvert the prevailing heteropatriarchal stance indirectly and subtly. In this case, tactical homogeneity falls into an enduring position that helps to create difference without being noticed.

Based on the narratives I discussed atop, I also realize that the concepts of visibility and invisibility are temporal and relative concepts when considering them through the perspective of resistances: what is deemed as invisible to the eye can very much turn out to be the powerful resistance tool at necessary times. As Scott (1989) wisely notices too "if the resistance succeeds at all, it of course confers a material benefit on the resister" (p.36); here the gain appears as the 'cocoon' that they start producing on their own. I argue that it is in the fine lines of in-visibilitys that LGBTI+s start forming their cocoons and continuing their struggle for 'being', 'living', and 'existing'. In other words, the affordable in-visibility offers room to breathe, to compose oneself, and to protect from outside harm.

Now I would like to continue the discussion of the resistances employed in the course of the everyday life with LGBTI+s' positioning of their own sexed and gendered bodies in visible manners.

5.2. Negotiations over Sexed and Gendered Bodies

One can already say that in matters concerning space, this delinquency begins with the inscription of the body in the order's text (De Certeau, 1984, p.130).

Can the body, with its capacity of action, and its various energies, be said to create space? Assuredly, but not in the sense that occupation might be said to ‘manufacture’ spatiality; rather, there is an immediate relationship between the body and its space, between the body’s deployment in space and its occupation of space (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.170).

Understanding the body as both a part of the space and as space itself (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.170) constitutes one of the most important denominators of this section. Following Lefebvre’s philosophical suggestions, I thought it would be a good step to develop a focus on the body and the body’s place in space before moving into the analysis of spatial production of LGBTI+s. In this sub-chapter, I discuss LGBTI+s’ resistance practices that can be considered as a part of ‘affordable visibility tactics’ circling around respondents’ sexed and gendered bodies, which I consider serving “both as point of departure and as destination” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.194) for the analysis of spatial production. As I indicated in the introduction chapter, the body, according to Lefebvre, is a site of resistance and revolt (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.201). Even though Lefebvre does not openly consider the revolt of the bodies as a political one nor as an alternative for revolution and seeking of liberation, I argue that the resistances circling around the bodies do carry political meanings and they constitute a crucial part of LGBTI+s’ seeking for their right to the city, thus they possess a revolutionary goal in themselves.

Although affordable invisibility stands out in the cases described above as a liberator for some, others described it as a barrier because it eroded the possibilities to produce a space that would enable combatting pervasive violence and discrimination. Their thoughts were following Lefebvre’s (1991b) implications that spaces are “produced by forces ... deployed within a spatial practice” (p.171) and this source of this practice was considered to be their own bodies. In this context, LGBTI+s pointed out situations where they were able to come up with different tactics operating through the visibility of their bodies, this time in a perceptible manner, allowing them to make room for themselves. According to Lefebvre, the differentiation between the ‘I’ and ‘the other’ carries a critical role in this dynamic because it defines the presence and the space that one is located in. How so? According to him, the ‘other’ “is impenetrable save through violence, or love, as the object of expenditures of energy, of aggression or desire” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.174).

It was argued that “[the body] marks a boundary between the self and other, both in a literal physiological sense but also in a social sense” (Johnston & Longhurst, 2010a, p.21). We make sense of the world, the space that is surrounding us, and the places we are located by our bodily senses. Indeed, “the individual situates his body in its own space and apprehends the space around the body” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.213). Our expressions, representations, self-motivations, protection, and reclamations take material forms through our bodies. Individuals experience the world, the space they are in, the places, and the everyday activities in general as they conduct their own performances and the practices they posit through their bodies.

As a result of this, the body becomes also the focus of social control; it becomes disciplined, exploited, and oppressed (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.166). The control, which works through the body and tries to fix the identity formed on the body, is also trying to manage that body in different places on various occasions. The body becomes the matter of exclusion, the very subject of segregation and discrimination. In this sense, even though the social space develops through the body, the same space is also limiting, restricting, changing, and transforming the bodies by its oppressive means and tools (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.405).

Throughout the fieldwork, I realized that the way my respondents have portrayed their relationship with the space surrounding them has been the exploration of the spatiality through the lens of their own outcasted in-visible bodies. This thesis showing how individuals produce urban space brings along the discussion of how sexualized bodies are constructed, represented, and reverberated in urban spaces and how their bodies become tools of resistance at different spatio-temporal instances. For this, I considered Lefebvre’s indication that “bodies - deployments of energy - produce space and produce themselves” as a bearing in my mind (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.171).

The body in this sense, as described by Lefebvre (1991b), is a material reality and contributes to the production of space, because “it is by means of the body that space is perceived, lived – and produced” (p.162). The body is the entry point from individual selves towards the outer world, it is the door opening through which we perceive and interact with others; it is the tool that we use to communicate with individuals. It is a “place of transition” and a “threshold between hiding place and

discovery” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.283). Bodily expressions, the placement of the body in space, and the terminology and conceptualizations are used to understand the relational dynamics in space. The outlooks, physical and gestural display of the body has thus been one of the most referenced affordable visibility tools my respondents mentioned.

The body, by becoming a tactical tool befalls as the mere element of negotiation, of struggle and resistance, of means for visibility and recognition in the lives of LGBTI+s. This is also in tandem with what De Certeau (1984) was indicating when he discussed bodily behaviors and actions surrounding the individual bodies. He says that whenever people are putting or removing additional items to their bodies (such as a haircut, or putting on mascara), this action is operated in accordance with a social code that is of a limiting and disciplining nature (p.147). He says that “clothes themselves can be regarded as instruments through which a social law maintains its hold on bodies and its members, regulates them and exercises them through changes in fashion” (p.147) and I agree with this statement.

The fact is that from the moment they started to discover themselves, LGBTI+s who were oppressed from the outside and sometimes subjected to humiliation and mockery initially start making sense of what is causing this. They realize that their bodies are subject to the domination of overwhelming forces that highly emphasize the visibility aspect of it (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.166). According to Lefebvre, this process results in the disappropriation of the body.

As I will be portraying in this sub-section and the next one, this process of revealing what is happening around them and acting upon it accordingly are contributing to the creation of the ‘cocoon’. As they gradually reveal and discover their bodies and identities, they start to wonder about their reflections on the outside world, and in fact, they start to get to meet with themselves and also interact with those who are like them. When I examine the reflections of this situation, I think that many forms of bodily expression, that of the individual’s (self-)communication, can be interpreted as a move aimed at conforming or rejecting the standards of the outside world, (thus of societal fictitious standards). The rejection takes place by revolting against the rules imposed

on them in the existing hierarchical order, or by keeping it hidden for a while and it stands out as a resistance practice, according to my interpretation.

The cocoon, albeit formulated as a spatial and metaphorical concept In this thesis, has also a lot to do with the body and its features too. When Lefebvre (1991b) was discussing the position of the body in space and its possibility to produce space via the forces that were at its disposition (p.170), he described the body with permeable membranes and punctured pores (p.176). He added that there was an ongoing circulation from and to the body which brought its social characteristic (p.176). I consider the cocoon to possess similar features in itself since it fosters an ongoing “interaction between inside and outside” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.176), increasing the possibility of connection and communication with other cocoons along with cultivating resistances against whatever is left outside of its entity. The cocoon, just like the body becomes a place of transition, a hiding place, and a place of discovery simultaneously (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.283). LGBTI+s are reformulating the everyday life and reproducing the social dynamics via their resistances. They do so while they explore themselves and different layers of the everyday urban spaces from inside *the cocoons* they form along the way, and it is during this period that they are reproducing themselves in the urban space where they live in. In a nutshell, it can be said that they create a new daily life.

According to my respondents, there is a homogeneous understanding of the conventional sexed and gendered body in a society that keeps insisting on its own rules throughout the whole process during which LGBTI+s kept on discovering themselves and their bodies. In their narratives, how gender, sexuality, and identities were formulated and the dynamics that were affecting them are being put under the scope during this whole process. The dynamic that cornered LGBTI+s into spacelessness has been operating through the oppression posited upon their bodies, appearances, self-identifications, and romantic relationships. Their general argument was that binary gender norms and heteropatriarchal hegemony operate through regulated production and reproduction of restrictive norms and strict association of bodily features with respective gender and sexuality categories. These categories are reinforced through mandatory performances, performances that none of them chose to, but were forced to compromise. As Lefebvre (1991b) rightfully indicates too, starting from family homes

to the urban public spaces that are surrounding us, some codes serve to fix the existing paradigms; codes that dictate not only bodily limits but also spatial limits (p.47). This situation is putting a mental and a physical limit on individuals because these prescribed norms become “means of living in that space, of understanding it, and of producing it” (pp.47-48).

When I analyzed respondents’ coming out processes, I realized that they were surrounded with multiple questions about themselves and their bodies too. During that period, one of the questions that they kept asking themselves was “how am I going to be” and “what should I look like in my everyday life?”. Gökçe, a gay male respondent, told me about his own processes of bodily understanding and portrayal with these words:

Gökçe: Of course, I used to think when I was a younger person that I was trans because of the lack of information. Later when I saw that I was gay there was no problem with my body, that thing changed. The way I express myself changed, when I was at the university, for instance, I wore my hair long, like up to my shoulders. I would put mascara on my eyelashes. In those years there was proof of showing myself. I opened at the university. I was gay before, but I wasn’t aware, or I didn’t know. I was lacking information about who I was. I went through the process when individual starts self-expressing themselves. I am short-haired now and I love my short-haired version. It was like a fad in fashion. I still wear earrings and colorful wristbands. I have no problem with my gayness. So, I’m comfortable. But I would not want to show it off, I would not pay a lot of attention to shut it down.

Neyir: You said I am not holding myself back, which tools do you use to state this somehow?

G: I think I’m a feminine gay. My friends say “nonsense you’re not a feminine gay”. The concept of the feminine is also controversial. Are you feminine when you wear make-up, remove your hair, and put on a lot of evening dresses, or is it related to body language? Yes, it is a sociological issue. I see myself as feminine.

After hearing Gökçe’s perception reflected above, we discussed further his initial confusion. During our interview, I noticed that the idea that because “he was interested in men, he should then have been a trans” was what made him question his own gender identity, letting alone his sexuality. And he started having doubts about himself while he questions his own gender expression. The questioning process that goes hand-in-hand with the self-discovery steps points to a quite difficult period that LGBTI+s experience. Gökçe’s own internal feud caused an inside questioning. His testimony is

telling me that by the time he started exploring, trying, and experimenting after his coming-out to himself, he became aware that he does not want to be a woman, and he also started having discussions with himself about the values that determined his relationship with his body. By the time he started getting more information and had the chance to think about topics such as the body, sexual orientation, gender identity, femininity, and masculinity with others to whom he had come out, he also had the opportunity to comprehend and clarify these questions. I realized that the same internal inquiries were also present among lesbian and bisexual women who participated in Şenel's study (2014) and their self-investigations led them to ask similar questions to themselves. In fact, some of her own respondents dove into the same self-questioning moments of whether they should identify themselves as 'trans' (p.101). Şenel notes that while women are struggling to fit into the heteronormative norms, they find themselves in situations where they reproduce the same norms and they end up in a stuck position because of this (pp.85, 98). My study is of proving nature that these internal inquiries are not limited to women and that men too can go through the same self-questioning periods while establishing themselves because of the oppressive nature of established gender and sexuality norms in Turkey.

Deniz, an LGBTI+ activist woman with trans experience, reveals that the perception of gender and sexuality identities and expressions that are developed upon the patriarchal heteronormative and binary gender system hegemony is internalized and reinforced in different contexts of the everyday life in a variety of social conditions. In addition to Gökçe who narrated his own confusion about his gender identity, Deniz told me about the period before her transition process.

My makeup started when I looked like a boy in my early teenage years. I was in the gay community, men were the opposite sex for me, and the girls were my friends. I had such a perception at that age. I finally started living with a friend. She told me that change can help my transition (Deniz, Istanbul).

She continues narrating her story by pointing out an "image of the ideal woman" that was posited to her by society but more specifically by the people surrounding her. According to her, this image does not actually exist and yet it forces all individuals to become subject to this sort of normative understanding to internalize it. Based on her experiences, she discussed how she was able to rip apart this makeshift understanding of a woman's body by subverting the image itself. Her resistance towards the existing

system transpired by rejecting to satisfy the visual bodily necessities constructed upon strict gender performances.

At first, there is a very cartoony woman image in people's heads. But there is no such reality, no such person. This is something between you and your own body. When you start to be presentable, when you start to socialize with this image, you hit the Ottoman buoy on the face of society. Because this society is built on the dick. We are a society worshipping dicks; women, men, cats, dogs all of them are worshipping it. Being a man is the most exalted system in this society (Deniz, Istanbul).

When I examine Deniz's and Gökçe's narratives, I notice two things. The first one is that the body, sexuality, and the relationships established with all of these are not actually given and fixed elements, on the contrary, we internalize and reinforce with repetitions of the normative description of these identities, and therefore we are embodied in social conditions that deeply affect our own bodies and how we see others' bodies. Secondly, I reveal that there is something less social and more personal to 'bodies' that gives the opportunity for a unique expression, that may or may not fit the "social standards". What this means is that the bodies appear to have socio-cultural meanings that are shaped through connotations attached to sex, gender, sexuality, gender identity, and expression, and sexuality expression, which make them powerful resistance tools that can be applied over the space. In this sense, the classical categories of "men" and "women" are besieged by many cultural, political and social factors through a regulatory system and practices embedded in them, which make these categories salient and consistent. This regulatory system is a "cruel spiral" that in return transforms into an auto-regulation tool spanning over the whole of the society that is expected to receive and admit to its adverse effects (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.359). This process goes hand in hand with the creation of the binary female-male categories and the assumption of masculinity and femininity in their own 'reproductive' capacities.

Eser, a lesbian respondent, narrated her relation to her own body. She described her bodily self-image and how she perceived it. I realized that this sort of questioning is widespread among LGBTI+s and it is the result of strict bodily assignments to certain gender norms in Turkish society. This questioning paves the way for their ongoing resistances as well; it is through revolting and rejecting existing appearances,

standards, and norms that LGBTI+s realize themselves in the course of the everyday life.

I am at peace with my body. I'm at peace with my breasts. I'm at peace with my vagina. I wouldn't want to have a penis instead of my vagina. I wouldn't want my body to be without my breasts. It's not like I don't like it, but if they were a bit smaller, I could then dress in a more genderless manner (Eser, Istanbul).

Eser was being very selective about her own bodily comportment. In addition to the 'gestures', which are deemed to have a particular aim or a goal according to Lefebvre (1991b, p.174), her clothing choices and her style were all determinants of her body image, they were a part of her micro resistances (located in the microgestural realm) (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.215). As I discussed in the previous chapter (please see p.146), when she came out to herself for the first time, she was in a long-term relationship with a man. She felt that something did not feel right, not only about the way she felt around her boyfriend but also about the way she was in general, compared to her other woman friends: the things she wanted to wear, the way she wanted her hair to look like did not match with theirs at all and the 'feminine overtones' was completely lacking from her. She realized that she really needed to find an expression and she saw her bodily appearance as an expression tool of herself to the outer world. At the time of our interview, Eser had a specific understanding of clothes and hairstyles. She even described her own clothing and hairstyle as a part of the "lesbianism package", a thing that she makes use of to claim that 'I am a lesbian'. I considered this way of expressing herself by positioning her body and other visible bodily attributes as a resistance in itself because it was her way of revolting against the existing "order of things" (Dikeç, 2002, p.96), her way of contributing to the ongoing demands for liberation. In fact, as De Certeau also indicated the order of things was transformed into what "tactics turn to their own ends" (De Certeau, 1984, p.26).

I never wear body-like things, and the things that reveal my body lines, it feels feminine to me, I don't want to do myself that much feminine. I also like a short haircut, as you can see ☺ The most important reason for me to have my haircut like this is that, before that, it was just so very uncomfortable. In fact, when I had my hair cut, a woman looked at me and I felt nice. It's like a lesbianism item to me (Eser, Istanbul).

De Certeau (1984) explains the position of the resistances as "battles or games between the strong and the weak" (p.34), and he indicates that it is the actions of the weak that

count during the struggle. During the interviews, some respondents pointed out other gender dynamics and bodily expressions that were developed accordingly. These narratives showed me how the visibility established over bodily attributes was taking political forms in this geographical setting where the patriarchal rule has been a domineering oppressive force over the bodies. The visibility of LGBTI+ bodies in society, and especially of women and femininity in general, was considered as a political stance. This form of visibility was considered a powerful statement to make in public spaces. Although these resistances might remain unnoticed because they would potentially not be considered a resistance in the conventional understanding, which was also criticized by Scott (1989); the context in which they are taking place renders them so.

When a trans woman smiles on the street in Istiklal, it is a political act for me. It is a political act to shop at the market and even to make lentils at home. It's a political act when she laughs with her red lipstick and her friend next to her. This may not be the case in Germany, but it is a political action in this land [Turkey]. I think that there is a political side to such existence and visibility in a society where women are subjected to such violence and discrimination and LGBTIs are ignored so much (Deniz, Istanbul).

The point that Deniz is making in the above-cited quote indicates that laughing in public, and wearing red lipstick can all become instruments of visibility, proof of presence, appropriation of the urban space, and thus acts of micro-resistances in Istanbul because of their contextuality. The context that she mentions here dates back to the year 2014. In 2014, the Deputy Prime Minister of that period Bülent Arınç said that “women should not laugh in public”. He added that “[women] will not be inviting in her attitudes and will protect her chasteness” as a moral compass that needs to be followed by women living in Turkey (Hurriyetdailynews.com, 2014). As a result of this, there have been numerous social media campaigns with hashtags #direnkahkaha (#resistlaughter) and #direnkadin (#resistwomen). Those hashtags were used to amass pictures of women laughing on different occasions, at different parts of everyday life as resistance and subversion of the dictated rules by the power holders (Brownstone, 2014). What I try to highlight here is the comparativeness and relativeness of this situation: in an urban public space where red lipstick is worn or where women are laughing in public in Istanbul, one would be able to discuss the presence of resistance in this contextuality I explained. This shows a similar case to what Scott (1989) was

discussing in relation to the tithe system where he said that “unless one compared..., the resistance itself would remain publicly invisible” (p.40). The comparison that one should be making is with regards to the time when authorities’ sanctions towards women in public places took place: now that it has been deemed as unchastity, breaking down this ban automatically transforms into resistance in itself. In this sense, I can prove Lefebvre’s point that the body is able to produce its own space while at the same time being subject to the domineering forces reigning on top of the same space (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.170).

Underscoring one’s gender and playing within gender fluidity, highlighting gender and sexual identity, trying to create confusing images, and abolishing oppressive rules via bodily images have been among the utilized bodily negotiation tactics. These tactics are of resisting nature because they deteriorate the tools that are “making bodies conform” (De Certeau, 1984, p.149) to a set norm and that are obliging bodies to appear as ‘acceptable’ according to the fictitious bodily appearance standards. It is possible to summarize the attitude of the respondents I have quoted so far like this: LGBTI+s apply micro resistance tactics by revolting against the existing standards and norms through their bodies in a way that I can describe as “subverting”, “destabilizing”, “confusing” and “blurring”. Throughout their ongoing inquiries about their sexual orientation and gender identities, LGBTI+s I interviewed told me that they had a challenging relationship with themselves about how they were going to be in their everyday life in Istanbul where sexuality as a topic was regulated based on gender-binary, heteronormative and patriarchal standards. Their pursuit of an answer to this question has not been an easy one. LGBTI+s who had problems with their bodies, because they were not acting according to their assigned gender, have been subjected to different sorts of harassment (either physical, verbal, or psychological) in their everyday lives because they look “manlier” instead of having a “feminine attitude” or they looked “more like a woman” when they were supposed to be manlier, in the eyes of the ones surrounding them according to the heteropatriarchal standards.

To sum up, I see that there are bodily mechanisms such as makeup, hair, and wearing clothes that are thought to make them stand out, which appear as primarily body-oriented expression tools that LGBTI+s make use of as resistance mechanisms. The context in which these mechanisms are being developed is important. Just to remind

one of the examples I discussed above, In Turkey where women's laughing out loud in public was deemed as immoral (Brownstone, 2014), the presence of a woman's laughter in public space is transformed into a resistance practice. While sexed and gendered bodies are being manifested continually in all dimensions of the urban space, including in the private spaces, these resistances in the form of bodily expressions contribute to the production of cocoons which, in a metaphorical sense, "absorbs heat, performs respiration, nourishes itself" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.176). Wearing clothes that are perceived to be unsuitable with the assumed gender identity of the person, and having a hairstyle that can be deemed as "unfit" according to society's unrealistic and homogenizing standards are therefore not only tools of self-expression to their doers, but they are also spatial claims of their doers who say that "I am here and I am not going anywhere" and who accordingly appropriate the space that they are located in.

5.2.1. Resisting Through Salient Bodies

The way one appears and wants to be seen reflects not only the self but all the attributions to the identity made by the individual. Refraining oneself from wearing ostentatious clothes that would shed light on their appearance in public spaces or on the contrary wearing such clothes that no one would keep their eyes off of them reveal statements, tactics LGBTI+s adopt in their relationship with the city. The city, a "space which is fashioned, shaped and invested by social activities during a finite historical period" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.73), reflects rules and norms and at the same time it becomes a space of transgression; the salient feature of the body and clothes become means of existence, of protest and declaration.

"The mediation of bodily gestures" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.214) carries a very critical role in LGBTI+s' negotiations with the outside world because these gestures are organized according to certain social codes and rules. The interviews outrightly indicated how socially attributed notions to the binary gender system components (such as family maker / bread-winner genders, certain clothing fit for one of the genders and not for the other one in this set binary gender system, the gestures that are okayed for one gender and embargoed for the other) operate as powerful dynamics that control and oppress individuals. My fieldwork results also show that these are the same dynamics that are utilized as a platform where LGBTI+s make efforts to resist these pre-existing

norms while carving out “cocoon” for themselves to continue ‘being’. The way that one makes use of their hands and gestures, of their voice tone, of the way one utilizes their body and appearance, all transform into an operating micro resistance tactic to show and broadcast their visibility in public spaces.

I would like to give two examples of the presence of salient bodies. Ali, while suffering from the attention they get whenever they go out with a fancier look than usual, uses their fashion sense and their guise as an expression tool to destroy, in their capacity, the rules of ‘masculinity’ and ‘maleness’ and also to send a message to the out outside world, to the gazers. Can, a 30 years-old pharmacist, describes his own way of being and how his way of expressing himself is an empowering tool for him because it allows him to be detected and also to detect others via the reaction he receives from the other party:

I care about my clothing. Even when I go to the market, I go out like ‘Fancy Pakize’ (‘Süslü Pakize’). When I get dressed, I feel that people look at me, people gaze at me, and then I started asking myself "What’s wrong with me? I am wearing normal clothes." I realized that I caught people’s attention. I dress well and sometimes I dress really well. This time it would be very uncomfortable. "What is it to you about my clothing?!" I ask them. They would even say, "look at his clothes, this is a definite gay, wearing a long sweater. This is a definite gay wearing a vest. He has an earring, 100% gay". After some point, you don’t care anymore and you say “well yeah, I am gay and it is good you noticed that” (Ali, Istanbul).

My speech is mostly enough (to claim my gayness). In my opinion, 99 percent of LGBTI individuals have a breaking point. Some of them have hand gestures, some have very remarkable eye contact tactics... Apart from that, I think my breaking point is my speech. I am aware that not only my tone of voice but also the way I speak, is showing who I am. Society is far from the way I am speaking because it is far away from what is normally defined as male speech (Can, Istanbul).

Kerem narrates his own version of this detectability, and he thinks he cannot be detected by others but only by those who have this “gay radar” in themselves. This is of proving nature that this realization between subjects is a critical point in the spatial production of the urban space.

It is not clear that I am a fagot when I am walking. Those who would recognize me are the ones that have a gay radar in themselves (Kerem, Istanbul).

Cheryl Nicholas (2004) points out the “gaydar” analogy, derived from the words “gay” and “radar”, which are widely used in Western gay cultures. This term is used to indicate signs and bodily gestures of gayness that can almost be detected anywhere. This realization process, which is based on seeing, decoding, and understanding signs, is an important step both in forming the sexual identity of the person and in understanding the spatial relationships with other subjects in this process. Here, what is described as ‘the signs’ that enter into the radar of gays carry a critical meaning. These signs consist of bodily expressions and performances, and artifactual materials all of which are rooted within the individual, whether they perform or carry it. I argue that the sign in this equation has the power of change and transformation because it has the power of resistance (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.135). It is these very signs, the bodily postures and trackable movements of the human body transform the space around itself and “construct a new world different from ... [the] initial one” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.135). I would like to remind that in Turkey, the signs belonging to LGBTI+ culture are rather limited in the public space, and “non-normative” sexual identities are deemed as a secretive issue and as “*an alien life form*” (Can, Istanbul) compared to the heterosexual and gender-binary lifestyle offered by the family and the majority of the society itself. When this is the case, I propose to consider the radar issue that Kerem is talking about as an “intersubjective bodily micro resistance mechanism” developed to access these secretive and forbidden worlds and desires.

Since homoerotic contact between LGBTI+s is told to be experienced in and out-of-home places, the public space transforms into an intimate one, whereas the private space is interpreted in a different way, as a sterile environment where sexuality does just not exist. These encounters, the way that people are looking at each other and the way that they are able to detect each other in the outside world, in public places, prove the transformation of liberated urban spatial layers where they can actually start experiencing their sexual desires. In Istanbul, according to the narratives of my respondents, sexual desires are non-existing in private spaces of the parental houses, not just only LGBTI+s but for everyone in general. The attempts to explore sexuality and intimacy flow in an unhindered way over to public spaces, away from home. And

these attempts depend on decoding the secretive codes embedded in LGBTI+s' salient bodies.⁸⁸

Wearing what one wants to wear, at an affordable cost, appears as one of the strongest tools that respondents are vested with. Because salient and flamboyant clothes are the foreshadows of possible interest and harassment, wearing them in public space is like making a statement about one's presence and affordable visibility, too.

I had a day when I chose to dress up a little pretentious, I remember people on the street were looking at me, when I was on the street or I also remember, I drew attention during my periods of long hair when I was outside. When my hair is short and I am not pretentiously dressed, everything is fine. What I describe as pretentious clothing is almost like any piece of clothing I would buy from any women's section by the way☺ (Batu, Istanbul)

According to the respondents who were making use of their visibility in a resisting manner, visibility is believed to allow the often-conventional ideas and "stigmatized" concepts of sexual and gender identities to be re-formulated and re-interpreted by them by integrating differences in a specific space, period and materiality. Public presence and openness, public affirmations and urban visibility, and of course physical affirmation of their bodies were among the recurring factors mentioned in the context of LGBTI+s' self-representation and spatial appropriation processes. The body, clothes, gestures, looks, eyes, and accessories were considered as means to express oneself to the outer world, as tools to communicate oneself fearlessly and to resist, as much as they could *afford* to do so. Deniz, a woman with trans experience in her 40s, while she was telling me about the first period when she started her transition process, she narrated this one occasion she put on very daring clothes which shocked the entire population who saw her.

I went to Istiklal one day when I was 18 or 19 years old, I have a 30 cm long skirt and a bustier on me. Istiklal [street] became like the Red Sea, I cut the street into two. It was a lot of fun (Deniz, Istanbul).

Bodily comportment is considered a resistance tool and a way to detect others like themselves, these ways of self-expressiveness create certain stereotypes among LGBTI+s, which I also consider as a resistance mechanism that acts to produce the

⁸⁸ Based on this situation, I noticed how the distinction between the public-private spaces, which I will deal with in the next section, disappears, and how private and public spaces become interchangeable (meaning-wise) with one another.

space one is located in the way that serves their purpose. These stereotypes are actually carving out alternative ways of being and catalyzing possible interactions between them while creating disparities and hierarchical positioning amongst them as well.

5.2.2. Gay Men's Stereotypes and Fitting in

In space needs and desires can reappear as such, informing both the act of producing and its products. (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.348)

It is argued that the subjectivities of gay men in Turkey are shaped by local, national, international, and global discourses and images of LGBTI+ and queer cultures (Bereket & Adam, 2006; Özyeğin, 2012; Ural & Beşpınar, 2017). The discussions on the usage of in-visibility and resistances have also focused on the economic dexterity of this issue and the consumption practices of LGBTI+s in the Western world. Most gay-identifying male respondents claimed that they did not find it strictly imperative to follow a 'shopping list' for clothes or their display through their social and 'fashionable' appearance. On the other hand, some indicated that there were certain dominant body types, clothing figures, and bodily expressions that were deemed as more 'hip' and 'desirable' among the community members. There were fashionable trends that appeared and then shortly after disappeared in a very small amount of time. These body types, as I will be displaying below serve as "the tools and products taken from a language of social operations to... arrange them, inert, on the margins of a system that itself remains intact" (De Certeau, 1984, p.26). This system, in the case that I will explain below, is constructed upon 'bodies' and their perception within the socio-spatial realms where one is located. Some of the respondents, like Can, gave a specific description of these forms, types, stereotypes, and body figures:

Actually, this is the trend issue. There is always a trend topic clinging like a stock market model. A figure is determined, and people around that figure begin to turn themselves into that figure. Think of it as all gays spending this summer showing their ankles with their knee pants (Can, Istanbul).

These created types, stereotypes as he called it, are sometimes considered as soap bubbles: even though there are LGBTI+s around them who believe that looking good, wearing cool jeans and blouses, and having fabulous hair are items associated with 'gayness'; the majority of male gay respondents reject such reflections and they do not find them binding. My conversation with Can took an interesting turn when he started

describing the body types and the names that are used to describe those in the gay community. He explained to me the differences between the types and what he thought of these identifications himself.

Can: We also have names according to our body types separated in ourselves. There is a twig, there is a bear [ay1]. There is a lion cub [aslan yavrusu], an otter [su samuru]. There is such a shaping, but the most popular one is the triangle body.

Neyir: Is the name triangular body?

C: It is not a triangular body. I prefer to call it a triangle. "Six packs bodies" (baklavalı) (six packs), the ones who are never leaving the gym, and who have to wear suits. We are at a time when they are in vogue.

N: What is an otter?

C: Those who have no problems with their weight and own a belly. He does not try to build a body in the gym, and he is at peace with his body hair.

N: Bear?

C: It is a little older person and a fuller version of an otter.

N: What is the lion cub like?

C: A little hairier than "Twig". Twig is a bit like high school level. Young and beardless. You can choose to skip the rank. Having your beard shaved is also a matter of "twig". Being thin is also a thing that you can do. There is also a term called Daddy. For those who are older.

N: So, which one are you?

C: I'm an otter (he laughs)

Despite their superficial nature, the presence and articulation of these created stereotypes have an effect on social life (thus on the social space where they are observed and enunciated). While they may uplift or wrongfully create certain expectations about 'being an LGBTI+' amongst gay men in Istanbul, they also serve as a carrier of a message amongst them. I considered these body types and their naming among the gay community as a resistance in itself because these are unknown to the rest of the society, and they serve to send a message in-between cocoons, which reinforce the omnipresent connection amongst them upon the space that was deemed to be "homogenous" and "unified".

Some of the respondents claimed that their identity formation processes had been flourishing in their locality, without being influenced by the trends. They said that they found themselves quite frequently questioning the ‘normative’ appearances of a man/woman with trans experience, of a gay man or a lesbian woman and a bisexual woman. In this sense, instead of serving pre-defined and limited identity definitions and formations, some of the respondents said that they made an effort to define their bodily expressions and thus their visibilities in their unique ways. While doing that, I noticed that they were attaching their meanings, blending in their own subjectivities into the socio-political milieus where they were located at. Having said that, for some of them, the small itch to fit the standards remained there in terms of their bodily expressions in urban spaces. However, for others, the effort to reach the ideal type, and the cosmetics, the purchase of shirts and blouses, the gym sessions entered at some point into their lives. As all of this shows, under these conditions where the limits of gender and sexuality are drawn, it is observable that individuals are part of a process in which they become subject to self-control.

There is a stereotype perception that affects our daily lives. For example, there is a hair type that my friend mocks as “the official gay people’s hair”. Or there’s a sense of paying attention to your clothes, making a combination or something. There is a perception that if you’re gay here, you must have a stylish fashion taste or something. Actually, my friends aren’t dressed up at all, and neither I am. But I might try I don’t know... (Batu, Istanbul).

Masculinities performed through stylized bodies, movements, and discourses, enable gay men to pass on sexual information to the other person and use the everyday urban space, which is a geography of desire.⁸⁹ This perception serves for instance as an enabler for people to perform their partner search practices effectively. Based on the testimonies of my respondents I notice that there are different types of masculinities performed through the body and the movements. These pave the way for the

⁸⁹ I would like to elaborate on this with a snippet from Urbach’s article (1996). Urbach, while focusing on the meaning of closets in the North American world by discussing it through both literary and architectural senses, gives an example of a widespread practice from the 1970s about gay men displaying colored handkerchiefs from the rear pockets of their jeans. Urbach creates a parallelism between this act of “making oneself remarkable” via highlighting one’s gay identity and the “reinvention”, and reappropriation of once pejorative words of “queer”, and “fag”. Urbach’s examples to explain the topics circling around “the closet” are also present in my analysis of micro-resistances (with this sub-chapter’s examples and also the examples that are going to be discussed in 5.4). But I do not interpret those necessarily as an act of coming out of the closet, but instead as actions of resistances that are meticulously knitting cocoons that would further up the resistances.

production of spaces of desire in different dimensions of everyday urban spaces. Therefore, I interpret these bodily expressions and appearances as practices of resistance concerning existing expectations and standards that were being set. These bodily expressions serve to produce cocoons, transform everyday urban spaces and contribute to the resistances in the long run.

The body is not the only tool in this game. Identity-oriented and verbal tools are also very much at stake. Now, I will first discuss the ‘queerness’ as a form of resisting expression and as a line of thought that was narrated in various interviews. Then, I will explore the usage of humor and ‘lubunca’, the queer slang, and its instrumentalization among LGBTI+s.

5.3. Resisting Through Queerness

As I indicated in the introduction chapter, I chose to use the concept of ‘LGBTI+’ throughout the thesis mainly because it was the term that was preferred by the majority of my respondents and also because I thought it was the most appropriate way to denominate the resisting group of respondents that I interacted with over the course of my fieldwork process. According to my respondents, the concept of ‘LGBTI+’, which will be discussed in 6.1, has implications of a political, economic, and socio-cultural stance of urban resistance in it. Whereas the term ‘queer’, as will be seen in the lines below, had a less obvious definition for the respondents and created confusion for some of them.

I would like to clarify what queer and queerness are. The word ‘queer’ was once used in English to humiliate and marginalize gays. In the broadest sense, it meant strange, and weird and in slang, it meant “fag” (Çakırlar & Delice, 2012b; Şenel, 2014, p.156). Individuals with ‘non-normative’ sexualities embraced this term as a reaction and began to define themselves despite the word’s negative meanings. In light of this initial reflection, now I would like to continue by exploring more how and why this term was used by giving short references to an earlier passage (1.5) in the introduction chapter. Then, I would like to discuss what the concept of ‘queer’ meant to my respondents. Here, the term ‘queer’ is considered a concept that questions the constructions of “I”

and “the other” through sarcastic, provocative, theatrical performances.⁹⁰ I would like to quote Çakırlar and Delice’s writings from the book focusing on queer culture and opposition in Turkey to describe queer in the Turkish context.

In a way, being queer means fighting an endless war on all these issues. The logic of the heteronormative sexual order is so entangled in the institutions that the queer struggle cannot be contented with merely demanding tolerance and equal status, but also has to make a fundamental radical critique of institutions (Çakırlar & Delice, 2012b, p.17).⁹¹

In Turkey, when LGBTI+s were introduced to the concept of ‘queer’ for the first time, the inquiries were circling around “identity or queer?” questions and discussions (Partog, 2012, p.175). The identities, which have just constructed themselves and started to gain new visibility, have inevitably taken a conservative position when they first encountered a radical queer critique that undermined the newly construed identity. Partog explains this period for Turkey as the following:

In a way, when the LGBTTT struggle started to get strengthened and started to rise, the start of queer discussions disturbed the LGBTTT activists. Although there were solidarity practices carried out together against the background of the rise of the LGBTTT struggle, the policy understanding based on identity difference at the end of the day stumbled against the challenging thesis that identity is a fiction⁹² (Partog, 2012, p.176).

‘Queer’ (*kuir*) has been a disputed terminology among my respondents and the discussions were touching upon Partog’s description of the encounter between ‘LGBTTT’ activists and queer philosophy. Defne was one of the respondents who stated that she identified herself as a woman, a genderqueer person (genderkuir), and she also

⁹⁰ Moreover, queerness rejects any forms of activism that favor one particular group’s interests and yet disregards others within the same dispossessed group. It also opposes actions of visibility formed in the light of normativities by avoiding any criticism of the existing oppressive systems of power (Çakırlar & Delice, 2012b, 16).

⁹¹ This is my own translation from the original Turkish version which is: “*Bir bakıma, queer olmak demek bütün bu meseleler üzerine bitmeyen bir savaş vermek demektir. Heteronormatif cinsel düzenin mantığı kurumlan öylesine sanıp sarmalamıştır ki queer mücadele salt bir hoşgörü ve eşit statü talebiyle yetinemez, aynı zamanda kurumlara yönelik esaslı bir radikal eleştiri yapmak mecburiyetindedir.*”

⁹² This is my own translation from the original Turkish version which is: “*Bir bakıma LGBTTT mücadelesinin güçlenmeye, yükselişe geçmeye başladığı bir dönemde queer tartışmalarının başlaması LGBTTT aktivistleri tedirgin etmiştir. Her ne kadar LGBTTT mücadelesinin yükselişe geçmesinin arka planında birlikte yürütülen dayanışma pratikleri olsa da, günün sonunda kimlik farklılığına dayanan politika anlayışı kimliğin bir kurgu olduğu yönündeki meydan okuyucu tez karşısında tökezlemiştir.*”

identified herself as a bisexual woman at different moments of our interview. When I asked her about how she expressed herself in her everyday life, she answered by saying

In terms of my expression, I define it independently from my body. Sometimes I feel more feminine and sometimes more masculine. These rates are changing but I think that I cannot feel as a hundred percent female or a hundred percent male. I think I reflect it in my body language and clothing. Some days I wear very feminine clothes and some days very masculine (Defne, Istanbul).

In a way, 'queer' and 'queering' for her served as "an ambiguous message ... delivered by clearly identified messenger" instead of "a clear message delivered by a disguised messenger" (Scott, 1989, pp.54-55). However, in a split second, she looks at me again and says:

So, this actually means that I'm applying something I learned over the years. This is a little bit against queer politics. When I feel masculine, I unconsciously choose from the closet what society attributes to men's clothing. It is something that has been learned automatically. I realized that I am very bad at queer politics right now (Defne, Istanbul).

Defne's instant realization made me see that 'queer' was not an identity for her but rather a communication channel, an expression tool that aims to subvert existing gender and sexuality politics for her. She stated that she was confused about whether her adoption of queer identity was in line with what queer theory was suggesting, to begin with. Her confusion also revealed that there are certain "laws" applied to bodies and the ways that they appear in public. According to De Certeau (1984), this imperative posited upon bodies is "“incarnated” in physical practices” (p.148) and that “it can accredit itself and make people believe that it speaks in the name of the “real”” (p.148). What is conceived by the authorities and the general public, what is considered to be 'fit' for a particular category of gender falls into the description of 'real', in De Certeau's terminology, who points out that “this “reality” is assigned to a discourse by a belief that gives it a body inscribed by the law” (p.148). “The “real” is what, in a given place, reference to another place, makes people believe in” says De Certeau (p.188) to better articulate the characteristics of the norms that are being posited upon. In the context that I describe here, what 'queerness' is trying to establish is precisely to deter and to deconstruct this 'law' and of this fictitious 'reality' in De Certeau's words, and to break apart the fabricated accumulation of “corporeal capital” (p.188).

It was only a rather small group of respondents who refuted binary gender identity categories and sexualities and expressed their identities with the term “queer”, tearing apart existing systems of thought. To this end, these respondents thought that they were able to refrain from identifying with one of the existing genders and sexual identities. As can be observed in the narrative of Umut below, the period following their coming-out brought many questions about their gender identity, because they felt stuck within the existing concepts of gender categories. The internal process of Umut has taken another shift throughout the years. The binary gender identity definitions were refuted for them, and they started identifying themselves as “queer”. They thought this term was tearing apart the existing systems of thought and thus refraining from being like ‘one of the existing sexual identities’ where there are strictly drawn borders and limits. The way that they explained themselves made me realize that for them, queer was the result of their enduring desire and enduring sense of self that did not comport well with the one that was being mandated by society. They thought it was the normative concepts, which try to keep individuals in closed boxes and to prescribe in advance how people are supposed to live and how they should ‘be’ to avoid oppression, that needed to be revised and to be called into question to liberate themselves.

I was able to define myself as queer after a certain point. Before I felt like... no, actually... I heard that I looked like an “Erkek Fatma”⁹³. I felt the urge to define myself as a woman or a man up until two years ago. Then I started thinking that I cannot fit in it, I wanted to be more feminine, and womanlier and I wanted to explore that part of me. And then I wanted to explore something else. This definition [queer] was in a way my liberty ticket; it opened up a space of expression for me (Umut, Istanbul).

The term queer was used to demystify exclusionary discourses, to demonstrate that excluding difference is inherent in its immanence and that the hegemonic performances, including sexism, can be disrupted by queer performativity, and precisely because of the impossibility of essentialist categorical identities. Eser⁹⁴ was

⁹³ “*Erkek Fatma*” is a colloquial expression used to define individuals who are assumed to have the female gender identity (to be attributed as female at birth) but who, nonetheless, act in a manly fashion in terms of behavior, speech, actions, clothing, hairstyle, etc. The term is widely criticized for creating stereotypes in a gender-binary system based on appearances and for applying this stereotypical order to derogate, discriminate or make that person uncomfortable with who they are.

⁹⁴ Eser’s comments on ‘queer’ are not limited to the quote provided above but it continues in the next chapter where I will be discussing the emergence of a collectivity of women within the LGBTI+

one of the respondents who felt the need for this deconstruction and transformed it into a resistance tool in her everyday life for a limited period. The term ‘queer’ for her represented something intrinsic to human beings regardless of the binary gender codes. According to her, the way she behaved and the way she expressed herself were not depending on the already-set binary gender categories, but it was her own, unique way of expression.

My female identity is mine. The strange thing is that I define myself as a woman, but even though I am physically and biologically a woman, I do not feel like a woman, nor do I feel like a man. It was the reason I called myself ‘queer’. Many of the behaviors that I see in myself are not a mixture of femininity and masculinity but are completely unique to me. Things that cannot be explained with my gender, but rather with my lesbian identity, in other words, my female identity... my sexual identity is more accurate (Eser, Istanbul).

The political meaning of understanding that gender is produced with everyday life performances like other social bodies and that is constantly reproduced, implies that it is possible for individuals to execute a different performance, to get rid of existing social bodies, and to create new social forms. Those who embraced the notion of ‘queer’ in my study claimed that they were against any norms, identifications, or binary systems and that they did not want to reproduce these same constructs while fighting for the rights of LGBTI+ within their affordable capacities. The way they used their bodies, and the meanings they attached to their bodies were fluid and it was used as a statement towards the public.

Lastly, I would like to point out what Ekrem highlighted in terms of furthering the ‘tactical’ aspects of adopting a queer perspective and how this would reenact itself as a definitive subversion of the existing systems of power reigning in the society, resulting in the revolution of the complete system.

For example, when thinking about social and economic rights, if one day we can transform the constitution in our favor, should we one day add something like sexual identity or sexual orientation to the constitution? Or can we think of a queer constitution? For example, I am thinking from the perspective of this: ‘if one day we will be discussing the marriage law, shall we then discuss it from a viewpoint of fully eliminating the institution of marriage in Turkey?’ I force

collective in greater detail. Section 6.3 aims to open up new discussions on in-visibility, recognition, and spatial claims through the adoption of the gender category of “woman” even by those who chose to identify themselves as queer for some time in their lives.

myself to think of a way that would help us to do activism with a queerer perspective rather than being focused on identity politics (Ekrem, Istanbul).

In this sense queerness has been instrumentalized as a way to revolt against all existing norms: compulsory gender and sexuality codes are all considered components of the oppressive system mechanism. The political demands that require tolerance and recognition are therefore rejected by queer understanding and a revolutionary way to express oneself is chosen. As Butler (1993) posits, queer is not an identification for individuals. It is in fact unrelated to sexuality or gender identity. Queer is rather connected to practices that disrupt oppression and existing power relations by denying any stable and lasting identity formation. Butler's vision for the liberation of the queer self, which involves rebellious and resistance activities towards existing systems of control and oppression, carries the initial markers and traces about the reproduction of spaces through resistances and the production of cocoons. In this perspective, the queer self becomes the site of rebellious and resisting enactment, by denying the permanent and fixed categories of gender and sexualities, appropriating the space in its own capacity (Butler, 1993).

In my fieldwork, I revealed that the adoption of the concept of "queer" (kuir), which is thought to have historically been used to humiliate LGBTI+s in the western world, along with the wording of "fag" (ibne) by some of my respondents as I will be showing below, has been one of the critical examples of this situation. In addition to that, I think that the new value assigned to the concept of "queer" and "ibne", along with the adoption of the slang "lubunca" as I will be discussing below, brings disruption through verbal tools and the discourses formulated around it by derailing it and attaching new meanings to it, which in return transforms the space where these concepts are articulated.

Now, I will focus more on this aspect and provide some information on verbal resistances namely the humorous tone, sarcasm and "lubunca", a slang used by LGBTI+s in Turkey, and how these operate as micro resistance mechanisms for LGBTI+s.

5.4. Verbal Resistances⁹⁵: Humor, Sarcasm and *Lubunca*

In an environment where everything that happens is consumed by a word that controls or aestheticizes, there is something that needs to be tried in order to demonstrate that language is not just that: Since it is not possible to return experiences to the date they were torn off, then to return the history they were broken into experiences. To be able to name this order, which makes the named order of speech seem neutral to us, and to establish its history (Gürbilek, 1992, as cited in Biricik, 2013b, p.200).⁹⁶

In my fieldwork, I found out that some of the respondents were making use of humor and sarcasm as a micro resistance tactic. All of them are utilized to reinforce the physical presence they are positing in everyday urban spaces via verbal tools. The humorous way of looking and commenting at things thus becomes also a part of the resistance equilibrium. Kerem explains himself with these words:

You are trying to find a channel where you cannot **not** say anything in the face of pressure, and oppression. When someone calls another person “a fag” (ibne) and says it as a swearing thing at work, I say, “Here, I am here! I am here, you are looking for me! (Kerem, Istanbul)

In an earlier section (4.1.1.1), I mentioned the adoption of pejorative words as a part of the ongoing coming out period. In this example, Kerem adopts this connotation of ‘ibne’, and while he embraces this identity, the word is emptied of its insulting

⁹⁵ When thinking about and deciding on the title of this sub-chapter, I also wanted to include “Güllüm”. Güllüm is used in *Lubunca* slang to describe the act of having fun and making jokes. Belgin Çelik, one of many contributors to the oral history project conducted by Siyah Pembe Üçgen (2012a), says that “We used to laugh and make *güllüm* when we were beaten to bastinado [at the police station] so we could forget it hurts, we would make a whoopee” (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2012a, p.63).

In addition to this written account, in a recent video released by Pembe Hayat as a part of an oral history project (Retrieved February 20, 2021, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJD_XDFrjCU), Çelik criticizes the current usages of the wording of *güllüm* in everyday slang of LGBTI+s because it does not convey, according to her, the true meaning and the contextuality of the word. Although I encountered the many adapted usages of this wording in the everyday slang of LGBTI+s in Istanbul during and after my fieldwork process, I chose to take Çelik’s criticism into account and I refrained from using this term. Even though I think that “language is a living thing” (Jespersen, 1954), the problematic issue that I find here is with regard to power relations between ‘trans’ and ‘non-trans’ identities and the current usage and adaptation of this language. But as this discussion falls outside of my main focus, I will not be elaborating on it any further.

The stated quote in this footnote is my own translation from the original Turkish version which is: “*Falakada dayak yediğimiz zaman güllüm yapardık ki, acıyı unutalım şamataya vuralım.*”

⁹⁶ This is my own translation from the original Turkish version which is: “*Yaşanan her şeyin, denetleyen ya da estetize eden bir söz tarafından tüketildiği, dilsizliğe ya da dil dışına itildiğimiz bir ortamda, dilin bundan ibaret olmadığını ortaya koyabilmek için denenmesi gereken bir şey var: Yaşantıları koparıldıkları tarihe iade etmek mümkün olmadığına göre, yaşantılara koparıldıkları tarihi iade etmek. Adlandırılan söz düzeninin kendisini bize yansıtmış gibi gösteren bu düzenin adını koyabilmek, tarihini kurabilmek.*”

meaning. This same finding was also present in Şenel's study where she discussed her respondent's own adoption of the terminology of 'ibne' as a subversive tactic to refute and disprove the pejorative meanings attached to it (Şenel, 2014, p.156). I think this semantical adoption can be considered as a widespread attitude of LGBTI+s since the examples listed in her work were very much resonating with my own findings and observations. In this sense, the humorous tone that LGBTI+s adopt while communicating themselves to the outer world helps them both to embrace and to posit upon the space that is surrounding them and all the contents within it, including "the unspoken and the forbidden" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.136). What I consider "the unspoken" is the very presence, actions, and manifestations of LGBTI+s who are at risk of being erased from space as a result of a reductionist stance by the majority of society. The "unspoken" therefore befall at the very heart of the "meaning of the lived experience" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.136)).

Opting for this humorous and challenging perspective in this sense serves as a tool to make room for 'difference' in the spatial milieu one is located. Kerem furthermore points out the usage of humor and *lubunca* as a resistance tactic and says that:

There is a reversing state that reveals itself. The words "queer" and "fag" (ibne) are transformed into that humorous state. In fact, both sarcasm and sarcasm-related discourses are embedded in LGBTI culture. I am not saying that we are [necessarily] successful [at it] as the LGBTI movement, but it is also valid in other civil disobedience actions (Kerem, Istanbul).

Kerem continued his words by pointing out the widespread usage of sarcasm and humor and how this embodiment is purposefully helping LGBTI+s make room for themselves to breathe and to continue their way of being in their everyday lives. "LGBTI+s have a lot of sarcasm," says Kerem, "in order to create resistance areas in particular spaces, when we are subjected to pressure, we have developed a way to cope with it, and other movements also create reversal when they are subjected to pressure." De Certeau (1984) points out a similar issue in his writings where he discusses the case of the speakers who implement certain words from their native language and who speak with a distinguishable accent (p.xxi). Although he does not make any distinctive argument on the adoption of a humorous or sarcastic tone, I believe it would not be wrong to implement this usage of sarcasm and humor as a micro tactical resistance practice employed by the "weak". De Certeau writes that "we are subject to, but not

identified with, ordinary language.” (p.11). I would like to argue, following Lefebvre’s footsteps too, that language and its expressions are positioned in space because they are produced from a space (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.132). The language emerging through the space can in fact adopt secretive codes and articulation if the conditions surrounding it necessitate it so.

Lubunca is one concrete example I revealed from the fieldwork that seems to suit both Lefebvre’s and de Certeau’s implications. In fact, Şenel too referred to the usage of Lubunca as a resistance tactic among lesbian and bisexual women living in Ankara (Şenel, 2014, p.159). In my fieldwork, I discovered that this language is used as an ensemble of linguistic tactics that LGBTI+s make use of when they are not willing to be open with what they are saying if it would be deemed as “out of the norm” but also when they are surrounded with friends who ‘speak’ the same language as them just to have a good time with them.

From my fieldwork, I revealed that Lubunca is a slang, jargon, or LGBTI+s’ street language that was mostly used by women with trans experience and gay men, who happened to be more involved with the collective LGBTI+ movement and the “LGBTI+ scene” in general. Lubunca has been among the micro resistance that facilitated LGBTI+s to communicate in the public space, especially in environments where they cannot be open about either their identities or the things that they want to articulate in public settings. Lubunca, a language created as a defense mechanism in the everyday lives of LGBTI+s, is described to perform micro tactical resistances in spaces that would require discreetness and protection. This is in tandem with De Certeau’s descriptions (1984) since this language allows its users to break the inured relation one is expected to make with the widely spoken (and even forcefully adopted) Turkish language in Istanbul.

Similar to Şenel (2014, p.160), when I was exploring the importance of Lubunca for LGBTI+s in Turkey, Nicholas Kontovas’ inputs, which I was able to gather over the years through different channels (podcast⁹⁷ and presentation at a SPoD meeting), were very helpful. Kontovas points out that the words used in Lubunca are mostly

⁹⁷ The podcast focusing on the historical development of Lubunca in Istanbul is retrieved on November 22, 2019, from <http://www.ottomanhistorypodcast.com/2013/12/istanbul-slang.html>

describing gender and sexual identities, but they are not limited to this usage. In this podcast, he mentions that Lubunca has also quotidian usage and moreover, incriminating affairs of LGBTI+s are also being masked by the usage of Lubunca words. Words about insults, money, body, and bodily figures are also listed among this multi-focal slang of LGBTI+s.

While Deniz was telling me about her activist past, she told me about the time when she was living in Ülker Street during which the trans community started using this language as a protective element for the whole community.⁹⁸ Opening up new spaces in areas of resistance appeared as one of the main reasons why such language started to exist in the first place. Kontovas, in his podcast, was pointing out a similar spatial effect this slang has to the point that it is used on a “social space” rather than being used on the “conceived space”.

I never trusted the police. That’s why we are developing the language that we call Lubunca among us so that we can create a resistance area in some places. “Let’s stand strong in the face of power”. That is why in such resistance areas we always need areas where we breathe and chat with each other (Deniz, Istanbul).

The slang itself ensures a structure that forms its field within the oppressive socio-spatial realm. During my observations, I noticed that there are different terms applied on an everyday basis. Some of these terms describe events and situations that require individuals to speak comfortably and talk without fear. In my fieldwork, this usage of these words provides the privacy and tacitness required in crowded environments and also in times of danger.

For LGBTI+s, Lubunca acts as a secretive code construed for protection and shielding, and for this reason, it should be emphasized that utilizing the words of this language is producing ‘cocoon’ at that particular space that one is located while canceling other people’s understanding. This is deeply related to the lens of visibility that I adopted to portray the conditions under which the everyday life of LGBTI+s occurs. The invisibility that Lubunca procures operates as a facilitator for the emergence and the

⁹⁸ Although I was able to gather numerous examples of Lubunca words from the fieldwork, I decided not to include them here to remain faithful to the original aim of this language: which is to create a secretive communication channel within the *lubunya* community.

preservation of cocoons in which individuals can communicate by evading obvious risks, cocoons that are tied to one another with the codes of this shared language.

De Certeau was pointing out an important feature of the language that is being used. He says that speaking functions as a tool of appropriation and reappropriation by the means of creating a rapport with a spatio-temporality. He further adds that speaking “posits a contract with the other (the interlocutor) in a network of places and relations” (De Certeau, 1984, p.xiii). In the context of the examination of Lubunca, I realize that the usage of any Lubunca words in the context of everyday life posits two forms of contracts: the first one indicates a contract between the speaker and the ones outside of the designated cocoon, thus the ‘power holders’ and another contract among the ones that are utilizing this language, which in return reinforces the fine threads of the cocoons that are surrounding them.

What does this tell us? It shows that the space where this language is spoken forms its own space. In Lefebvre’s terms (1991b), Lubunca becomes “spoken and written in a mental time and space” (p.414). Therefore, the space where this language fills cannot be formed separately from it (p.136). The space where Lubunca is articulated becomes the carrier of Lubunca words; it is reproduced by the power of this language and the agency of those who speak it. That space becomes filled with “signs and meanings” of this language, which makes it resemble the language that is spoken there: a differential space – a cocoon. In fact, the spatial realm where this language is spoken encloses the bodies that are in that particular space and it furthermore fosters itself by the traces that it leaves behind (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.403).

Affordable invisibility and visibility tactics, negotiations carried out upon sexed and gendered bodies, adoption of queerness and queer identity, and finally the implementation of a humorous and sarcastic verbal tone and the articulation of Lubunca words, whenever it was needed, consisted of the micro resistances that I was able to gather from the fieldwork results. Here one might ask the question of whether there is a potential for these micro resistance mechanisms to turn into macro resistances or to describe such an eventual collectivity as the sum of micro resistance acts. What I was able to gather from the fieldwork was that these micro resistances take place semi-autonomously because they occur as a result of self-protection

mechanisms; some of them are temporary and fashionable, some develop over time and take a more established form despite their origins developed over tactical instantaneity, but I consider them as contributing to the political resistance acts at the end of the day. They contribute to the production of ‘cocoons’ where further resistances are emerging for the pursuit of the right to the city. Scott mentions the “cumulative impact” everyday resistances may carry (Scott, 1989, p.42); the case of LGBTI+s is no different. Individuals who seek opportunities for everyday resistances carve out their own spaces little by little, step by step. These micro resistance mechanisms are important because they pave the way for engendering more extensive, encompassing, and macro resistances by opening up rooms to breathe and by producing cocoons to shelter in. It is these instantaneous making-dos and creative ‘ways of operating’ (de Certeau, 1984, xix) that cultivate bigger resistances that have been going on. Having said this, I also think that “the revolutionary actions might well have been prefigured in their practices of resistance and in their off-stage discourses” (Scott, 1989, p.59).

Now, I will continue with an analysis of macro resistance tactics, and I will summarize both chapters at the end of Part 2, after Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 6

MACRO RESISTANCES

The conditions of the possible can only be realized in the course of a radical metamorphosis (Lefebvre, 1996, p.156).

If everyday resistance represents disguised forms of struggle over appropriation, then revolutionary exhumations represent public, open forms of confrontation over the symbols of dominant discourse (Scott, 1989, p.57).

As it was pointed out, this study is a documentation of how LGBTIs+ destabilize and renegotiate the way spaces are produced by compulsory patriarchal heterosexuality norms of gender and sexuality. In their daily lives, LGBTIs+ narrated how they resist the prevalence of heterosexist, patriarchal and oppressive spaces through their own experiences of being sexual/gender non-conformists. Performing acts of subversion and tactics that aimed to renegotiate the (hetero)sexuality and binary-gender characteristic of everyday spaces constituted the micro tactics I mentioned in the previous chapter.

When I examined LGBTIs+' struggle through the lens of in-visibility in Turkey, I realized that for some, the periods of identity constructions and the moments of self-expression carried political meanings in which respondents built, interpreted, appropriated, or subverted gender and sexuality categories. As I mentioned in the introduction chapter, I intended to emphasize on micro resistances to show how "cocoon" were being formed, becoming tied to one another and how these cocoons and the fine threads amongst them were giving room to LGBTIs+ to continue their struggle in the course of the mundane rhythms. However, as I also indicated, my findings could not be limited to the investigation of these micro resistances. With this chapter, I also include macro resistance mechanisms that are at play to show how the discourse of the right to the city becomes embedded in the demands of LGBTIs+ and how these resistance mechanisms contribute to the reproduction of space in Istanbul.

With the discussions that I am going to be having in the next pages, I also aim to show that the actions within the macro resistance mechanisms cannot be considered separate from “the material preconditions of individual and collective activity” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.71). This proves my initial argument posited upon the creation of cocoons in the fine lines of in-visibility and spacelessness, which represents the general state of all respondents of this thesis.

Based on the differentiation of realms and resistances posited by Lefebvre (1991b) and Scott (1989), while micro resistances indicate an individual’s actions during everyday life, these macro resistances refer to a collectively built stance that expands its presence onto the everyday but also the out-of-the-ordinary rhythm. I was able to detect a similar analysis approach in Şenel’s (2014) study where, after discussing individual tactics, she also focused on “collective solutions”, as she called them (p.180), to discuss lesbian and bisexual women’s organized attempts to overcome existing discrimination and oppression. Although our understanding of this separation is different, there were instances when I was able to relate my fieldwork findings with hers.

Before diving deep into macro resistance mechanisms, I would like to remind a critical point regarding my respondents’ profiles. As I indicated in the introductory chapter and Chapter 2 reserved for the discussions on the methodology, not all of my respondents identified themselves as activists, nor have they engaged actively with the LGBTI+ activist movement on a regular basis. And yet, resistances and struggles were present in their everyday lives; it was present within their discourses, in their minds and thoughts. As I stated above, here with the analysis of macro resistances, I want to underscore a more collective version of these resistances. And for this, I focus on the adoption of LGBTI+ identity as an umbrella term, I highlight the actors of LGBTI+ activist movement in Istanbul and lastly, I look into the emergence of women’s collectivity within the LGBTI+ activist movement as a resistance move flourishing within the existing resistance.

6.1. LGBTI+ Identity and the Meaning of “Belonging”

We came to learn how to liberate our bodies imprisoned in the binary gender regime by listening to each other’s experiences. We loved each other’s

homosexual, bisexual, trans, and intersex existences on our own accord (Kılıçkaya, 2017, p.7).⁹⁹

I prepared an interview guide that would bring in as many semantical tools as possible to grasp the meanings attached via reflexive and intertextual readings. The guide addressed the meaning of the acronym ‘LGBTI+’ that all of us were using so deliberately and sometimes before even profoundly thinking about the wording itself. I wondered what LGBTI+ meant to my respondents before learning about their spatial struggles. I wanted to understand what “LGBTI+” meant for them as a concept and what LGBTI+ stood for in Turkish society. Participants generally tended to reflect upon the whole umbrella term and to give a holistic definition instead of focusing on every component of it. What my respondents say about the acronym led the direction of the conversation towards the discussion of gender and sexuality norms’ construction and the possibility of resistance that arose from there.

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, one of the micro resistance mechanisms employed for ‘opening’ new spaces in their everyday lives was to make use of the LGBTI+ identity by carrying it as a symbol, or by revealing it in public spaces or by reinforcing it on a discursive level. As for its meanings, for the majority of my respondents, the ‘LGBTI+’ identity was linked with the “togetherness” of all those who were subject to the same kind of oppression, and who stood up for themselves in similar ways with one another. At times this was linked with ‘Lubunca’s usage in public spaces and at other times it was accomplished with the reclamation of ‘salient bodies’ in the course of everyday life. I consider the LGBTI+ identity to be linked directly with the collective LGBTI+ movement that will be explored in the next subsection.

During the interviews, I realized that there were differences in their descriptions of ‘LGBTI+’ as a term. More than half of them claimed that this concept stood up for a collective and a solidarity group (although with some hierarchies in itself, as it will be explored in Chapter 6.3 focusing on women’s collectivity within in LGBTI+ collective movement), a safety net that they trusted in their best and their worst days. My

⁹⁹ This is my own translation from the original Turkish version which is: “*İkili cinsiyet rejimine hapis olmuş bedenlerimizi nasıl özgürleştireceğimizi birbirimizin deneyimlerini dinleyerek öğrene geldik. Birbirimizin eşcinsel, biseksüel, trans, interseks olma hallerimizi kendiliğimizden sevdik.*”

fieldwork shows that for the majority of respondents, LGBTI+ acronym represents a collective identity of resistance and at the same time it meant a sense of belonging and safety embedded in it. It meant unity and resistance. In this sense, the “identity” that was mentioned here was truly considered “an articulation of social relations” (Massey, 1994, p.179). Both Ada and Deniz pointed out the ‘resisting’ and ‘struggling’ nature behind the acronym with these words:

“It is some sort of a struggle and struggling against something. It is “that way” of resisting¹⁰⁰. It is also the formulation of a group that I love struggling and resisting with. It is a field of solidarity. It is a group that I have not felt strongly attached to before, but I want to be a part of it more and more.” Ada, Istanbul

“LGBTI turned into a political definition because these people were discriminated against because of their gender identity and sexual orientation. It was turned into a political movement. An identity movement for resisting.” Deniz, Istanbul

Some of the respondents mentioned the importance of togetherness and being a part of a collective identity. Togetherness is what provides them with strength and a sense of security, and it makes them experience the feeling of ‘safety’. The sense of security that one is actively looking for is directly linked to their marginalized position in society. Sharing similar feelings, becoming part of this identity/community/group not only made them feel secure but also, made them feel like they were not alone in this world, that they are accepted. I realized that these conceptual attachments were not limited to low-incidence events such as pride marches, but it was more about the discursive and continuous micro resistances as well. Ekrem and Ali think of it as a collective fight, where the members of the collective identity operate together for freedom and liberation which I believe is of proving characteristic of what Lefebvre says that “there can be no concrete freedom for the individual without social, economic and political freedoms” (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.172).

It is not only the fight for one identity. But it is a structure that is formed of all individuals with different identities coming together and struggling together. That for me is a coming together of people who are seeking sexual and bodily

¹⁰⁰ There is a Turkish saying ‘*o biçim olma*’ (funkiness) which implies some eccentricity and an abnormality in itself. The sentence itself was articulated in Turkish as: ‘*Direnişin o biçimi*’ implicating that the feature of this resistance is also coming from those who are not fitting in the ‘standards’ or the ‘norms’ and thus, who are ‘funky’.

freedom and liberation asking for their rights, struggling and resisting together (Ekrem, Istanbul).

When you ask me this, the only image I have is a group of individuals who were oppressed, otherized, and excluded from society. It is at the same time the group of people who are fighting for their own freedoms, a group of strong people who would never stop struggling to get their own rights (Ali, Istanbul).

The interviews enabled me to better understand why most of my respondents prefer this togetherness over individuality. What they pointed out during the interview was that resisting and struggling for the liberation of LGBTI+s (thus for LGBTI+s' 'right to the city') is not only about asserting the LGBTI+ identity. When 'LGBTI+' identity is asserted, it is done so because that identity has been disparaged and individuals suffer from a lack of freedom and a lack of equality and they are actively searching for liberation, equality, and recognition. As a result, I realized that there was a great need to name the identities as 'LGBTI+' to achieve the liberation and equality that one was seeking for.

One of the macro resistance tactics construed upon changing the dominant stance against LGBTI+s through demonstrations, marches, and visibility endeavors aiming to alter the way the society is positioned towards LGBTI+ lives, identities, and expressions have been guided through the development and deployment of the 'positive LGBTI+ identity examples'. LGBTI+s in successful and powerful positions are believed to help carve a potent image in society.

As much as I see examples, trans woman neurosurgery specialists, gay lawyers, LGBTI+ deputies in parliamentary representation, what we have here will also break apart. That's what happened in the West. We're just waiting for our time here (Deniz, Istanbul).

However, not all of the respondents considered the deployment of the LGBTI+ identity as a reinforceable macro resistance mechanism. Some of them mentioned concerns circling around the LGBTI+ identity's visibility facet. They indicated that one of their biggest concerns was "to become even more marginalized" in society than they already were because this umbrella term could identify and define them all together as one example, despite the presence of clear heterogeneity among them. For this rather small group of respondents, the term 'LGBTI+' was defined as a concept that was calling back discrimination rather than appearing as an empowering collective identity. Among this group, some did not identify themselves as activists or as habitual

participants of the events organized by the collective movement and some have been in the collective movement for a very long period and ended up questioning the very meaning of this umbrella term to the point of criticizing it, restructuring and reframing it. This second group did not want to attach as powerful meanings as the first group did, because they did not take this term as a reflection of a group/community connotation; instead, they referred to it as distinct individual characteristics of gender identity and sexual orientation and expression or even a limitation in their everyday lives and their potential resistance practices.

The reason that this group suggested not attaching that much of a significance to this concept was because of two distinct motives: The first one shows the case where respondents thought that this imposition rendered LGBTI+s even more distant from the rest of society. Although I will include the comments of the respondents on the spatial dimension of this issue in the next section, I would like to open up a bit more of Umut's comments below on the topic of embracing the 'LGBTI+ identity'. I saw that Umut's past entanglements with the movement are related to being convinced that there have been and will always be some barriers in front of them. Similar to the rest of the respondents' stories, these barriers were primarily related to their gender and sexual identity. Their reaction to being associated with one collective group felt restraining to them since they had already been trying to break free from existing gender and sexuality norms, to begin with.

In the past, I wanted something, I don't know, "let me be broader", "let's not close ourselves", "let's not restrict ourselves", steady and stabilizing any kind of subcultures seemed restrictive to me. It sounded detached from society. It sounded like something that interfered with other struggles that I might get into in other parts of my life (Umut, Istanbul).

What I revealed as a second motive came from those who have been actively present in the activist movement. Deniz, after all the years she took part in different activist movements where she always fought for LGBTI+ rights, deduced that she wanted this term to be just like any other connotation of human beings. Although her previous comments indicated that LGBTI+ identity carried a resistance in itself (please see p.233), she wanted it to become normalized and intrinsic to everyday rhythm, instead of making it even more marginalized than it already is. I realized that the respondents who are in this group are in a different place than Umut. Even though respondents who

have been involved in activism for many years were still experiencing the empowering effect of expressing themselves over the collective LGBTI+ identity; it is the concept of ‘LGBTI+’ itself that posited a problematic stance to it. I believe that it would be meaningful to understand this leaning as a ‘not attaching any particular meanings’ stance, in the context of the adoption of this umbrella identity. Since the discrimination takes place literally based on gender identities and sexual orientations, Deniz says that “knowing someone’s sexual orientation would tell us nothing but the people they are attracted to” for instance. Thus, since it is this exact understanding that needs to be abolished, according to her, the concept should not carry its present overrated value, because it entails even more marginalization.

I don’t want to attribute anything to it. I feel like you are describing a person with blue eyes, blonde, etc. when you say that this woman is LGBTI+ or a lesbian, this does not tell us anything about a person actually other than she is sexually attracted to other women. We cannot make up political references, we should not (Deniz, Istanbul).

6.2. LGBTI+ Activist Movement and Its Resisting Actors

Isn’t it time to get rid of the places that have condemned us to narrow areas? As we organize, we will have hope and our faith will grow stronger. As we make our voices heard and as we continue to rebel, we will become liberated and freer as we organize (Varol, 2012).¹⁰¹

Some of the respondents I interviewed and communicated with over the years of my fieldwork, especially those who were engaged with the activist movement in one way or the other, pointed out the importance of being ‘organized’ and collective action in their lives. Taking part in the LGBTI+ movement by participating in the Pride Organizing committee, by being part of an organized association like Lambda (Istanbul), SPoD (Istanbul), Kaos GL (Ankara), Kırmızı Şemsiye (Ankara) or Pembe Hayat (Ankara), Siyah Pembe Üçgen (İzmir), or in university-based groups (BULGBTI+ (for Boğaziçi University LGBTI+ group), ODTU LGBTI+ (for Middle East Technical University LGBTI+)) has its roots in participants’ seeking for equality and liberation as a collective. These generally appear as important social connectors

¹⁰¹ This is my own translation from the original Turkish version which is: “Artık bizi daracak alanlara mahkûm etmiş mekânlardan kurtulma zamanı gelmedi mi? Bizler örgütlendikçe, umudumuz olacak, inancımız kuvvetlenecek. Bizler sesimizi çıkardıkça ve isyan ettikçe, örgütlendikçe daha özgür olacağız.”

and coiler practices for them. Although individuality and micro resistances are still very much valued and practiced as I discussed in the previous chapter, I realized that some of the respondents were taking part in the collective LGBTI+ movement for furthering the ongoing spatial resistances.

In the theoretical framework I provided in Chapter 3, I suggested a discussion based on the structure of actions offered by De Certeau (1984), Scott (1989), and Lefebvre (1991b). In that particular context, I discussed the capacity of the actors who insist on weakening the oppressive power by constantly developing tactics and achieving their own goals. In terms of the LGBTI+ movement's doings, I interpreted what respondents have narrated as "macro resistances" against the strategies implemented by the state which operated on a macro level. Taking this into account, I would like to develop on respondents' viewpoints on the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey.

The political and social turmoil the country has been going through affected how the LGBTI+ movement's dynamics were shaped while emerging over the years. Traditional norms of gender and sexuality had a tremendous impact on the way collective action was developed. In the last 15 years, the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey gained serious visibility through the emergence of associations and formations, non-governmental organizations, university groups, and most importantly through the activist initiatives that take place on the street. Today, the LGBTI+ movement as a social group is not content to only ask for visibility, but it is a movement that fights against patriarchy, homophobia, transphobia, biphobia, heterosexism, and heteronormativity. There is a stronger LGBTI+ movement, one that is also involved in the discourse and the in-street movement, especially in the context of political and urban rights debates (Partog, 2012).

According to the narratives of my respondents, the LGBTI+ movement and its actors (particularly the registered organizations but also grass-roots initiatives) primarily aim to open up a space for LGBTI+s by reappropriating the public spaces and by empowering the individuals to reappropriate their private spaces as well. Since LGBTI+s feel insecure, threatened and at unease because of reinforced heterosexism, patriarchal rule, and traditional gender and sexuality codes and norms, the movement and its constituents are accordingly working towards increasing and ameliorating

living conditions of LGBTI+s by encouraging them to claim their rights and to posit appropriation upon urban space, upon the political arena, at school, at work and in every area of everyday life through different projects and by establishing safe spaces. Ekrem describes the role of LGBTI+ organizations like this:

Creating space for LGBTIs in the community. As I said, there is very little space for LGBTs for social problems related to education, housing, and employment. How can we achieve better education? What are better accommodation opportunities? You try to change society in these matters (Ekrem, Istanbul).

LGBTI+ activist movement in Turkey makes claims towards multiple strategic actors: state organs, numerous public institutions, and public officers are among those. The movement does so by using different platforms and organs such as grass-roots initiatives, NGOs, collectives, the international community, supra-national organizations, academics, and public figures. Not only it addresses multiple actors but at the same time, the movement instrumentalizes different tactics: visibility actions as an outcome of recognition politics, awareness rising statements, organizations, and educative, informative events and panels are key elements applied by the actors of the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey.

LGBTI+s and the movement are emphasizing the idea that “the personal is political” (Hanisch, 1969). What I want to accentuate is that when the experiences that occur in the private space are evaluated by the feminist critique, these narratives become situated upon a more holistic system of social domination (Savran, 2002, p.294). While doing that, the movement focuses on the unique experiences of individuals. Meanwhile, it is blending different techniques of mobilization: organizations of rallies, public demonstrations to reach out to the crowds while also showing candidates at local elections, participating in the local government through different sub-groupings to establish equality, and trying to make a visible stance in the parliament can be cited among its prevalent actions. By supporting the feminist motto, the movement is directly aiming to reach out to the existing power structures that render one group dominant and others submissive to its dominance in different areas of the everyday realm. Moreover, this motto, ‘the personal is political’, becomes also the key element to evaluate the movement based on spatial politics and the influences it has upon space in general. This political setting becomes an important determinant for LGBTI+ collective movement.

Macro resistance tactics aimed at state organs are believed to be prominently important to alter the lives of LGBTI+s. Because there are no domestic laws¹⁰² protecting the lives of LGBTI+s, and because there are no state-level precautions taken to prevent any further harassment in social life, during employment processes, and also to stop the murders of women with trans experience, respondents believe that LGBTI+s as a whole continue to suffer from the conservative, hostile and assailant attitude of the society and the movement is trying to break them free from it (Öz, 2020). The motto of ‘We need a law’¹⁰³, carrying this motto on the placards during İstanbul Pride and İstanbul Trans Pride, shouting out loud in different public performances, these actions are all aiming to make this demand more visible in the eyes of the public and the state. Eser is highlighting the steps of this equality, protection, and liberation-seeking processes by pointing out the solidarity and support aspect of the collective movement.

It also gives struggles on the legal ground, and it tries to defend people who are discriminated against by finding some ways to do so. It is trying to change something by fighting in the academic field in the legal and political fields, too. In exchange for the violence one has suffered, they ensure that the person doing this is punished. We said ‘we need a law’ as a response to people being so comfortable with what trans individuals are subjected to. The reason why there

¹⁰² Having said that, I would like to highlight Istanbul Convention’s (Law no. 6251) importance to this matter. Istanbul Convention has been “the first European treaty specifically targeting violence against women and domestic, gender-based violence” (Amnesty International, 2020). There are 45 states and the EU who have signed the treaty but the number of signatories who have ratified the contract so far is 34 (BBC, 2020a). The treaty, which Turkey was a signatory of, is a meticulously written and legally enforceable reaction to violence against women and gender-based violence. Istanbul convention recognizes “violence against women and gender-based violence as a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination” (COE, 2018). Sexual orientation and gender identity are mentioned among the unacceptable factors of discrimination (COE, 2018). The convention makes it clear that the non-discrimination clause includes “categories of individuals such as transgender or transsexual persons, cross-dressers, transvestites and other groups of persons that do not correspond to what society has established as belonging to ‘male’ or ‘female’ categories” (COE, 2018).

Turkey’s signatory status to Istanbul Convention has been put into question following President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s statement on June 1, 2019, that the convention could not be considered a “measure for us” (Satıl, 2020). Erdogan’s claims indicated that the convention damaged the “Turkish family structure” and that it “normalized non-heterosexual relationships” because of the wording of “gender identity” and “sexual orientation” in the treaty (Satıl, 2020; BBC, 2020a). In 2020, there has been statements coming from state authorities that Turkey could stop being a signatory of the treaty which received a strong resistance from different non-governmental organizations and especially feminist groups and women’s organizations. There has been a hashtag campaign with the statement #İstanbulSözleşmesiYaşatır (#IstanbulConventionKeepsAlive) (BBC, 2020a).

Following these developments, on March 19, 2021, a presidential decision was published in the Official Gazette regarding the Istanbul Convention, which was announced to be annulled with the signature of the AKP Chairman and President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The decision for the expiration date was announced as July 1st, 2021 (Atila, 2022),

¹⁰³ The original Turkish version of this sentence is “*Bize bir yasa lazım*”. This motto became a symbolic act for the trans movement in Turkey. For more information please visit: <http://yasa.transxturkiye.com/>

is so much bullying on the Internet, at school, and out in the street is that we do not have a law (Eser, Istanbul).

The acts cited above reside at the critical junction of reaching public opinion through justice-seeking, affordable (and sometimes daring) visibilities, and resistance practices. By reaching out to the public and by representing LGBTI+s in the political arena, these representatives, the people who are in the LGBTI+ activist movement, actually manage to touch the public and attempt to alter it through political addressing. Thus, the strategies aimed at public organs are blended with affordable visibility and resistance tactics which later on transform into changing public opinion. The change in public opinion is later on expected to translate into spatial liberation according to some of the respondents.

Visibility is something you need, to be recognized I mean... It doesn't matter whether it's positive or negative. Entering politics is also very important. It is one of the most powerful places in Turkey and the State is very powerful in Turkey. It's very important for us to get into this (Uğur, Istanbul).

The way the actors of the collective movement in Turkey are handling local struggles and the components of these struggles is primarily based on refuting existing oppressing by opening up space for LGBTI+s, creating solidarity and support groups (legal, health-related, psychology-oriented) and mechanisms. Deniz mentions the positive impacts of the organizations that are located within the movement as active actors with these descriptions:

It is doing everything it can, honestly. It conducts training and provides guidance to public officers and law enforcement in the fields of health and law. It is trying to show that in this same society, there are also LGBTIs (Deniz, Istanbul).

These organizations offer a safe platform for LGBTI+s who are trying to come out and find safe harbors. Defne highlights the support she received while coming out and she says that she felt **protected** by the politics the organizations stand for, and the mottos these organizations are known for.¹⁰⁴ The feeling of being protected in a way comes

¹⁰⁴ One of the mottos mentioned during the interview was: '*ne yanlış ne de yalnızsınız*' which can be translated as "you are neither wrong nor alone". This motto has also been used in the name of the book rooted in the surveys conducted with 393 homosexuals and bisexuals in Turkey published by Lambda. The book was retrieved on February 21, 2021, from <http://www.lambdaistanbul.org/s/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/ne-yanlis-ne-de-yalniziz.pdf>.

in tandem with the efforts the organizations are making to change the existing system, to enhance the living standards of LGBTI+s.

It was important for me to have Lambda with me in this respect. Apart from that, it empowers to maintain a certain identity politics. It gives strength in terms of standing upright. From here, we see that participating in the protest action has become a form of existence that gives the power to oppose the existing system by removing the person from the victim's psychology (Defne, Istanbul).

Some respondents defined the social movement as the core source of encouragement and self-assurance for themselves. Their lives, the relationships they had with people surrounding them, families, friends, and lovers were in a way shaped according to the relation they had with the collective movement, not to mention that their spatial usage within the city, the negotiations they personally made swerved and evolved depending on their involvement in the movement. Because of their close ties to the movement, this group of respondents claimed that they were able to feel their right to appropriate the space. For Umut, being part of a collective movement brought social confidence and Defne's social environment became more LGBTI+ oriented thanks to the people she met at the different events, parties, and gatherings organized by different constituents (NGOs, Istanbul Pride Week Committee, sub-groups) of the collective movement.

I feel better while walking outside, I go without escaping. There would be an escape in me. Yes, it's a bit about 'being organized' (örgütlülük) (Umut, Istanbul).

It was shaped by the time I spent at Lambda. The experience of activism teaches a lot. I have been constantly reading and seeing something [interesting] over the past time. My circle of friends is now filled with LGBTI friends, from there, I learn a lot from that experience and the chats that we have (Defne, Istanbul).

As I explored in the first part of my analysis (Part 1), my respondents emphasized their need to find people 'like themselves' during the initial phases of their self-coming out processes. This need can be framed both as a necessity to feel comfortable and also as a way to demonstrate to oneself that they are not doing anything wrong by being themselves and by expressing their sexual identity. Accordingly, the movement's particular constituents were also considered hubs for socializing during the events and the parties they were holding on different occasions for LGBTI+s and with LGBTI+s

and their allies. This translates as the spatial appropriation and production of cocoons by the means of this macro resistance tactic of collectivity and organization.

There are many periodic things happening during Pride for example and there are also other events organized by the collective movement, there is a good socializing environment, and you can meet people. So, it's easy if you're interested in the political aspect of it a little more. [Socializing] is easy if you are a member of Lambda for instance or a part of activism in general. All the people I met so far were either at a Pride party or an event or conference of an organization here in Istanbul (Ada, Istanbul).

During the fieldwork process, I was able to notice that the movement's actors (grassroots organizations, registered organizations, associations, initiatives, high-school and university level student groups, local level platforms) that operate for the rights of LGBTI+s in Turkey discuss topics circling around trans-inclusive feminism, anti-fascism, anti-militarism, recognition of non-binary gender identities, expressions, the inclusion of disabled LGBTI+s to the social life, improvement of living conditions of LGBTI+ migrants too. In addition to these, the topics of the rights of sex workers and workers per se, social rights and access to socio-economic capital, gentrification, and dispossession were among topics that the movement rises its voice upon. LGBTI+ movement has shown me indications that all social relations are tangled and the quest for the rights of all the oppressed groups is the road to follow to achieve 'the right to the city'. The discourse adopted by the collective movement, as a whole, aims to bring up a change in the political arena, to alter the existing conditions within the society for all the people that experience dispossession, marginalization, and oppression, which made me reflect on it as a macro resistance mechanism. From a similar perspective, Ekrem pointed out that the movement was discussing current problems that Turkey had been experiencing at the time of our interview.

It is a movement where LGBTIs talk about everything. So, every rights-area is in the scope of its discourse. They are talking about the war now. They talk about what war and peace are. We were talking about the elections. They were discussing LGBT rights in all of them, but in fact, we are talking about the agenda in Turkey or trying to change the agenda (Ekrem, Istanbul).

According to Kerem, this takes place thanks to (because of) the solidarity network established between different social groups composed of the oppressed groups of the society.

Thankfully all of the social movements in Turkey work with each other in solidarity. Environmental organizations, feminists, urban organizations, etc. That's why we are in close contact with the city wars. There are a lot of things going on, and it is not only about "gay rights" (Kerem, Istanbul).

As was discussed in the previous part, especially in the discussions held in 1.3.2, it is argued that the LGBTI+ movement is here for the rights of the oppressed and they are here to fight any kind of discrimination that operates not only on gender and sexuality basis but also on ethnic, religious and other nationalistic based ones, too. For Kerem, the movement is "basically doing something against the binary system and the heterosexist order. In general, we are together with all segments that are discriminated against. Including the animals." Thus, the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey aims to address the problems of the oppressed altogether by reaching out to different platforms. All the oppressed groups are described as constituents of the whole, ingredients melting in the same pot. Deniz discusses this through the 'intersectionality' perspective and says that:

Being an LGBTI doesn't mean you don't see other issues around the world. We are also an environmentalist movement, a movement supporting the Kurdish freedom movement, we are already in the feminist movement. We are anti-militarists etc. (Deniz, Istanbul).

I would like to elaborate on Deniz's opinions by relating them to the concept of the right to the city. Marcuse (2010) pinpoints important features of Lefebvre's right to the city concept. He states that "each of these rights is integrally linked to each of the other rights... In that tension, we see this call for rights in the city to be on behalf of those now deprived of those rights." (Marcuse, 2010, p.97). This statement is reflecting what the respondents described as important features of LGBTI+s' collective action in Turkey. The togetherness, just like the singular usage of 'right to the city' in Lefebvre's writing (Lefebvre, 1996), is expected to pave the way for oppressed individuals and groups to reach their liberation and equal rights in the urban space.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, in Harvey's understanding of Lefebvre's right to the city concept, I also see other traces of what the respondents have described. Harvey says that "the

¹⁰⁵ I would like to make a small note to say that I agree with Lefebvre's view on collective action which is described to take place "through the prism of spatial relations, notably the hierarchical relations between central and peripheral spaces at various scales". He is mainly interested in seeing how the existing heterogeneity can be "brought into a process of mutual transformation" (Kipfer et al., 2012, p.121).

democratization of that right, and the construction of a broad social movement to enforce its will is imperative if the dispossessed are to take back the control which they have for so long been denied” (Harvey, 2008, p.40), as I indicated so in the theoretical chapter (please see p.127). Following Ergin and Rittersberger-Tılıç’s arguments (2014), I argue that for any discussion on the right to the city, one should be taking into account the need for “alliances of struggles” (p.54) because the urban resistance should be established by multiple parties to oppose existing oppressive (neoliberal) politics (p.56). What Kerem, Ekrem, and Deniz were describing above fits this understanding of collectivizing and conducting radical change through a unified voice. This realization is the reason behind my understanding of the LGBTI+ movement as an urban resistance movement that touches upon many vulnerabilities, and inequalities and respectively addresses its actions and discourses in line with a multitude of demands that would not only liberate LGBTI+s but also other oppressed and marginalized groups living in the Turkish society.

6.3. Women’s Resistance within the LGBTI+ Movement and in Other Spatial Realms

As I discussed in Chapter 4.2.1, respondents with lesbian and bisexual identifications pointed out a similar situation when they were discussing their experiences through the lens of in-visibility. In light of these discussions, I believe it is necessary to take a closer look at gender-based narratives of macro resistance practices.

The LGBTI+ struggle starting from the years of 1990s, along with its relationship with other social movements, has entered into identity discussions arising from the confrontation and unification of different identities (Partog, 2012). The movement was then tried to be made multi-voiced with the strong efforts of lesbians and lesbian visibility within the movement (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013, p.205). There has been a transition from male-dominated meetings towards an equally represented one. It was thus with these efforts that the issues of femininity, masculinity, and fluidity have become concrete issues in the movement (Partog, 2012, p.175).

My study showed that identifying oneself as a woman had also become a macro resistance mechanism among lesbian, and bisexual women and women with trans

experience. The part of the conversations that I portray below shows that this intentional accent on their gender identities was a reaction towards the existing and ongoing situation in Turkey and also within the movement itself, which was described to posit a problematic issue for women in terms of their visibilities and presence in everyday urban spaces. Eser was one of the respondents who identified herself as ‘queer’ for a while (please see p.221) but at the time of our interview, she said she adopted the identification terminology of “woman” for her self-identification.

Neyir: How do you define yourself in terms of your gender identity?

Eser: So much has happened lately... Like ‘let’s not pursue queer politics’, ‘let’s make lesbian politics’. Anyway, I define myself as a woman for a while.”

Apart from Eser, there were also others who once identified themselves as queer but who now rather embraced the identity of ‘woman’ and accentuated their lesbian or bisexual identities because of the political turmoil and their decision in partaking more in feminist politics as well. In line with the reasoning behind Audre Lorde’s (1948), I consider self-description, naming one-self and self-identifying as a resistance mechanism (a macro one), as a persistent way to articulate what is not wanted to be heard, what is pushed towards the unwanted realm. Because respondents were fighting for an identity to become more visible and because they needed this identity to be heard and to be visible even more than it was before, when they were asked to identify themselves, they put a small note on their narrative saying that they were communicating their sexual expression as ‘queer’ back then, but with this new endeavor, they had to prioritize and hence ended up following the “rules of the game”: ‘if you want to be recognized, you need to be heard and seen first’. This intentional change in their self-identification aimed to emphasize on the visibility of “women” in Turkish society, because of the level of discrimination and invisibility the group has been subject to during the course of everyday life. Claiming oneself as “a woman with trans experience”, “a lesbian woman” or “a bisexual woman” in that sense became discursive tools to resist a macro perspective against the oppressive genderism and sexism by subverting the heteronormativity and patriarchy along with it.

I defined myself as a queer person for a very long period. Then, I found myself in a lesbian movement where we prioritize our demands and we said, ‘let’s make them accept lesbianism first, let’s make them articulate this word!’ So, therefore, I have been defining myself as a lesbian since then. But I will go back to

identifying myself as queer in the near future, I hope. Once our struggle is over, we are done with our tackling. The struggle is not over yet (Eser, Istanbul).

During the interviews, I realized that the position of women within society was not the only reason behind the embracement of lesbian and bisexual women's identities. In this regard, the LGBTI+ movement has also been criticized for not giving enough space and voice to lesbian and bisexual women in general. Some of my respondents narrated how lesbian, and bisexual women's presence was absent and not sufficiently embraced and included in the LGBTI+ movement. As a response to this situation, respondents pointed out the emergence of a sub-group within the LGBTI+ movement itself: Lez-bi-fem¹⁰⁶ (*Lesbian-Bisexual Feminists*). Lez-bi-fem was gathered around the idea of becoming more visible and making public claims in the city, making appearances in the protests and organizing protests themselves to claim that "lesbians and bisexuals do exist!". This new establishment was seen as an expansive space of expression and I considered it as one of the constituents of macro resistances due to its collective feature.

According to Defne, Umut, and Eser, who were either aware or taking part in this sub-organization (or get-togetherness) was a reaction to all oppressive mechanisms that were preserved not only in the society but also within the LGBTI+ movement itself. Although the history of the feminist movement has been much older, and although lesbians and bisexual women have existed in these two movements along with other areas of resistances for many years, the realization that women cannot overcome the problem of visibility and the comprehension of the lack of safe spaces and possible platforms where they can discuss their particular and unique experiences/issues brought lesbian and bisexual feminist women together to establish this organization.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Lez-bi-fem stands for an abbreviation of three words coming together: *lezbiyen-biseksüel-feministler* (lesbian bisexual feminists)

¹⁰⁷ A dossier published by Kaos GL in 2018 provides this information on Lez-bi-fem: "We named our group as Lesbian Bisexual Feminists; There were some among us who found this name too direct, and those who said it was as if we had forgotten to name the group ... We discussed whether we would find a more creative name, but on the other hand, we wanted to shout out without defrauding that we are lesbian, bisexual" (Kaos GL, 2018). This is my own translation from the original Turkish version which is: "*Grubumuzun ismini Lezbiyen Biseksüel Feministler koyduk; aramızda bu ismi fazla doğrudan bulanlar da oldu, grubun ismini koymayı unutmamız gibi olmuş diyenler de... Daha yaratıcı bir isim mi bulsak diye tartıştık ama bir yandan da lezbiyen, biseksüel olduğumuzu lafı dolandırmadan bas bas bağırarak istiyorduk*"

Lez-bi-fem is currently not in an active position according to their Facebook post published on May 1st 2019 (Retrieved February 26, 2021, from <https://www.facebook.com/lbfem/posts/1354781201347800>).

This sub-grouping aimed to create “an environment that does not limit sexuality to identities, does not impose a uniform and trans-exclusive feminism, does not require experience to speak and organize around sexuality” (Kaos GL, 2018). When Umut started telling me how they became aware of this organization, they indicated that the path they took in their own ‘organized’¹⁰⁸ and activist life brought them to an offside place in order to be heard, to be seen, and to have their own problems addressed sufficiently. This translated into their need to adopt a more focused field of activism:

In the beginning, I had a relationship with socialist groups. The LGBTI struggle was recognized there, but it was not in the foreground. I was associated with the feminist struggle. There were socialist feminists and in general lesbianism and bisexuality were recognized there, but it was not paid attention to that much. At last, the group was formed as lesbian bisexual feminists. I have started taking part in it more and more often, and I decided to narrow down my resistance domain a bit (Umut, Istanbul).

What I notice in this narrative, in relation to what I discussed in the theoretical chapter, is that individuals’ ability to produce their lives as an *oeuvre*¹⁰⁹ (Lefebvre, 1996, p.117) and their continuous resistances towards heteropatriarchal oppressive power relations in the course of the everyday life to ‘exist’ are bounded with one another. Although women are actors that exist in every part of everyday life, they are historically considered to be related to home and housework (Şanlı, 2020). This is related to the assumption that the public sphere is attributed to men, whereas the private sphere is treated as the women’s place (Göle, 1997). I consider the attempt of creating this group as a subversion of the given set of spatial norms and as an attempt to open up more space for those whose voices are not being heard.

In Turkey, as well as in different places around the world, the industrial revolution brought a sharper distinction to the modern foundation of public and private dichotomy. As I discussed in 1.3.1, the male associated with the public and the female associated with the family-household-private sphere distinction has formed the

¹⁰⁸ The Turkish saying ‘*örgütülük*’ (that stands for the term ‘organized’) has a deeper meaning. It symbolizes “the state of belonging to a bigger whole, to act with it, to be one body with” (Deniz, Istanbul). Therefore, it is not only about being a member of an entity, or an organization but it also calls for belonging, solidarity, and resistance to it.

¹⁰⁹ In fact, Lefebvre writes that “if there is production of the city, and social relations in the city, it is a production and reproduction of human beings by human beings, rather than a production of objects” (Lefebvre, 1996, p.101) pointing to not only constructed nature of the city but also to its interpersonally produced feature.

essence of this differentiation. However, as I discussed, this idealized image, and “women’s liberation” did not actually bring freedom from the strictly attached traditional roles. Socio-cultural norms required women to be ‘wives and mothers’ who should remain at home (Şahin, 2018). In line with this, Öz states that:

Since the restructuring of the society was tried to be carried out by an elite layer of soldiers, the dress realigned to the society could not escape from being masculine-militarist-elite...In this new project, the patriarchal and militarist view is limited to the patterns of motherhood, which raises children who are devoted to freedom, patriarchy, and militarism and who are always ready to die for their sake (Öz, 2008, p.199).¹¹⁰

The feminist movement that emerged in the 70s and 80s in Turkey was influenced by the “second wave” women’s movements in the world and the second wave of feminism pointed out the presence of a relationship of interest, therefore of power between men and women, therefore it was different from its precedent (Çakır, 2011, p.505). Feminist academics have developed a definition of ‘women’s rights’ that aimed to prevent discrimination arising from being a woman by questioning why women were excluded from the exercise of their violated rights. Feminist academics also illustrated how the public-private separation was based on traditional rules that describe what the feminine and the masculine are (Durgun & Kalaycıoğlu, 2014, p.78; Savran, 2002;). It was during this period of feminist thought that the link between the issue of invisibility and the patriarchal system became established and strengthened (Çakır, 2011, p.505). As a result, women were being removed from the public space and were becoming more associated with the private space because it was deemed as “feminine” (Durgun & Kalaycıoğlu, 2014, p.78). However, this situation becomes even more problematic for LGBTI+s whose sexual and gender identities become unwanted by their family members and who, as a result, are being pushed outside the borders of their “private space”, their home, where their existence is not accepted.

Yasemin Öz points out (2012) that lesbian and bisexual women had to establish solidarity networks for their security in “their own rooms” while they are under threat of isolation from society. However, she indicates that these rooms are not enough; just

¹¹⁰ This is my own translation from the original Turkish version which is: “*Toplumun yeniden yapılandırılışı ağırlıkta asker elit bir tabaka tarafından gerçekleştirilmeye çalışıldığı için, topluma yeniden biçilen elbise de eril-militarist-elit olmaktan kurtulamamıştır. Bu yeni projede ataerkil ve militarist bakış kadınlara özgürlük, ataerki ve militarizme ölesiye sadık, vatana, uğruna ölmeye her an hazır iyi evlatlar yetiştiren annelik kalıplarıyla sınırlıdır.*”

like the cocoons are essential but not sufficient for the achievement of total liberation for LGBTI+s. Öz writes these sentences:

Homosexual and bisexual women, like the majority of other women, can exist in the public space during the day and lead a home-indexed, family and community-controlled life... By empowering lesbians and bisexual women in all areas of life, with our “rooms of our own” established with solidarity, we may have only taken one step forward in establishing a free world in all areas of life (Öz, 2012).¹¹¹

The answers that were given to understand the features of the city and neighborhood they were living in, provided me with information on the issue of discrimination that took place at the intersection of “being a woman”, “appearing like a woman or feminine” and “being an LGBTI+”. Even though some quarters and neighborhoods of the city were found to be more LGBTI+ friendly, the city as a whole, including its private spaces, failed to be considered as welcoming and inclusive. According to Eser, it is not the city per se that does not allow LGBTI+s and women, in particular, to act as free as they want to be, but it is rather the patriarchal rule that determines this feature of the society.

It is the masculine mindset that restricts women’s freedom. "You are a woman; you cannot do it". Istanbul says "no she can do it, she can have more fun, I am chirping all around". The woman is free there, but men say, "You are a woman, you are forbidden after that time". Let’s say there is a father, even though he is an open-minded father, he can say "no, little one, you don’t do it" but on the other hand, he can say "we are a very modern family (Eser, Istanbul).

In some of the interviews, the concept of ‘woman-friendliness’ was associated with going out at night, it meant the presence of streetlights and thus a sense of security even in the darkness of the day; for others, woman-friendliness meant their ability to put on whatever clothes they wanted to wear, to have a revealing low-cut or a mini-skirt if they wanted to wear so. But the most important thing that respondents mentioned during the interviews was that the concept of ‘woman-friendliness’ was really important amongst the city attributes because they believed it is what defined their own abilities to be present in certain parts of the city whereas avoiding others.

¹¹¹ This is my own translation from the original Turkish version which is: “*Eşcinsel ve biseksüel kadınlar, tıpkı diğer kadınların çoğunluğu gibi, kamusal alanda gündüz saatlerinde var olabiliyor ve eve endeksli, aile ve toplum denetimine tabi bir yaşam sürüyorlar... Lezbiyenleri ve biseksüel kadınları yaşamın her alanında güçlendirerek, dayanışma ile kurulacak “kendimize ait odalarımızla”, yaşamın her alanında özgür bir dünyayı kurmak için ancak bir adım atmış olabiliriz.*”

Therefore, “womanhood” was already embedded into the purposes engendering their cry out for the right to the city. I would like to share Ada’s narrative as a bisexual woman who was criticizing the general situation of women in society.

As a woman, we should look at different instances. To the amount of verbal abuse for instance. Whom you came home with and at what time? It’s all about when I will get married, even at work. “It is better to have children before you are certain age” and “it is also important to remain beautiful”, too. I am being told how good being a mother is all the time. It is an irritating thing for a woman especially if you are not looking forward to giving birth (Ada, Istanbul).

The attributions made to ‘being a woman’ in this particular society are all determinant factors to better investigate and make sense of respondents’ experiences in public spaces. In relation to being a lesbian, bisexual woman, or a woman with trans experience, respondents claimed that their urban experience was not only shaped based on their sexual orientation (whichever it was) but rather based on their gender identity (as perceived by the society, not as they define it themselves). Consequently, the way society saw, and perceived womanhood was considered the problematic element of the everyday life practices of my respondents. Defne’s complaints are more about the constructed nature of gender in society and how her usage and appropriation of the urban space become problematic because of her gender.

There are places where I feel uncomfortable because of my identity as a woman, not because of my LGBTI identity. But it is because of visibility issues. I don’t have problems because my LGBTI identity, since it is not comprehensible or detectable from the outside (Defne, Istanbul).

Being open and subject to harassment has been deemed as a direct outcome of being “visibly feminine”. Respondents’ experiences in their daily activities clearly show that this is a critical factor when it comes to determining how limited their comfort is in public spaces or how threatened they feel in some quarters and how they instinctively refrain from certain neighborhoods and districts.

Being harassed is like an automatic output of being a woman in Turkey. I’m open to harassment because I appear in a female body. It is easier for women to be harassed, of course, it is possible that men are being harassed, but when we compare, we see less. There is such a perception that women are easy to harass. Many people can get in harassing behavior without even realizing that what they do is harassment. The harassment conducted with the eyes, with words even only... It’s all about the woman’s place in society. If I am wearing a very

remarkable and striking outfit, it means that I want to get attention which may result in harassment (Ece, Istanbul).

The right to the city is seen as a struggle, a demand for a fair, equal, and democratic sharing of the common and public spaces of the city and the recognition of the differences of the communities living in the city, rather than a basic or “additional human right” (Mathivet, 2010) such as housing, freedom of expression and freedom of the press. In various urban rights studies, a gendered perspective is usually missing from the discussions of the right to the city (Beebeejaun, 2017, p.325). With the emphasis on feminist studies that observed and theorized these developments, gendered relations, which were mentioned in a limited fashion in Lefebvre’s theoretical frameworks (Fenster, 2005; Simonsen, 2005), became integrated into the investigations on right to the city concept. LGBTI+s, despite positing differences and social contradictions, are usually not considered indispensable to the category of social subjects that holds the potential to create substantial socio-spatial transformation. This group was considered to be able to make small rather than great changes in society.

With the narratives of lesbian and bisexual women (and the accounts of women with trans experience at different instances (please see p.209), I wanted to highlight the fact that women carry the potential to make a difference in the everyday life in terms of paving the way to access to the right to the city. These small differences add up with one another and carry the potential to bring a bigger change at the end of the day. In this sense, I thought the emergence of Lez-bi-fem against existing vulnerabilities called for attention and implementation of a gendered perspective on the right to the city discourse. Because this macro resistance help carve out cocoons through which their seeking for liberation and spatial appropriation takes place.

6.4. In Lieu of Conclusion of Part 2

I would like to recapitulate some of the main discussions that I tried to portray in these two previous chapters focusing on the resistances developed in the fine lines of LGBTI+s’ in-visibility.

I preferred explaining the resistances of my respondents under two main headings: micro and macro resistances. This formulation was based on both Lefebvre’s (1991b)

and Scott's (1989) theoretical formulations of resistances. While micro resistances were focused on individualistic attempts to subvert the everyday rhythm, macro resistances operated on a bigger scale, they were executed by a collectivity, and they were targeting a change both on an everyday and out-of-the-ordinary rhythm.

Throughout the 5th Chapter, I talked about the resistances and maneuvers operated by LGBTI+s by positioning themselves in the fine lines of in-visibility and I focused on how these mechanisms help them to compose themselves while creating rooms to breathe, and cocoons to exist. As I showed, there are resistances where visibility was deemed as unaffordable, which led individuals towards subtle resistances made of "affordable invisibilities". As a result, some resistances were more elusive. They were the results of my respondents' reconsideration of the affordability of certain actions. De Certeau's "ways of operating", in this sense, "the means of which users reappropriate the space" (De Certeau, 1984, p.xiv) took various forms such as welcoming guests to the households after a certain hour of the night, "passing", attempts of convincing families on different occasions, hiding out were some of the items on the list.

Some of the traits in my respondents' resistances were in line with de Certeau's suggestions to the point that the tactics were constantly in an alert mode, and they were indeed capturing the possibilities to be used in their executors' (LGBTI+s) interests such as the bodily appearance, the usage of *Lubunca*, the invisibilities and blending in. Moreover, as the tactics use only the space of the 'other' as an operation area (as de Certeau suggests so) these tactics were bound to establish their own game in an area that has been imposed and produced by a foreign force. In his theory, he claimed that what is important in tactics was not the space as it was in strategies, it was 'time' that mattered. In this perspective, when I rethink the formation of the 'cocoons' that require a temporality, I realize that LGBTI+s' tactics satisfy both the spatial aim and the temporality condition suggested by de Certeau, as my fieldwork findings showed. Here, with this analysis and interpretation that I posit, what I see is that the micro resistances that occur in the course of the everyday life are "coextensive with, and utterly transformed by, a theatricality... a sort of ... mise-en-scene" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.74).

For de Certeau, most regular activities by individuals can be described as tactical because they are associated with this lack of power and they occur in cases of opportunities, and they create surprises (De Certeau, 1984, p.37). Again, in line with de Certeau's views on resistances, tactics' lack of space gave mobility to them and it helped produce new spaces or reproduce the existing ones, blurring the existing borders between private and public spaces. These traits were also present in the resistance tactics that I discussed in Chapter 5.

In addition to these, as I showed in Chapter 6, LGBTI+s' resistances were not only stemming from micro sources or individual actions but they were also stemming from macro sources, meaning that a collectivity of individuals may become the actor of its practice and these resistances can take place in macro settings as well. Resistances that I explored in Chapter 6 were entitled as macro resistances because they were taking place in the macrogestural realm (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.215). In that chapter, I explored collective embracement and action towards existing oppressiveness with the analysis of the adoption of LGBTI+ identity, the participation in LGBTI+ collective movement, and the collectivity of women within the LGBTI+ movement. As a result, I realized that tactics do operate as channels through which LGBTI+s provide themselves with necessary space and places for everyday life, and also these tactics pave the way for long-term and substantive transformation of the everyday life.

LGBTI+s, with their bodies, languages, desires, and oppositions, which are an integral part of their everyday life practices, act upon micro resistances, which I consider to be as political as the macro-ones. On the other hand, there are also macro resistances organized around a collective identity or a collective movement surrounded by organized action, which LGBTI+ activists have arranged for the past nearly 30 years. In this context, it is possible to state that the resistance that LGBTI+s are constantly engaged in includes elements of both micro and macro resistances. I suggest that all of LGBTI+s' resistances that I tried to cover in the previous chapters, regardless of their execution time and executor groups, are to be considered as political ones because I consider that "the personal is political" and I also believe that the micro resistances pave the way for macro resistances, even though their sum does not equate to it. Departing from there, it can be argued that political action has become a component of LGBTI+s' everyday life which shows that the micro resistances are qualitatively

accumulating and multiplying. In fact, “it is in life - and in the light of previous knowledge and experience – that forms of organization and effective ideas are to be found” (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.183). It is also where the boundary between the ‘political’ and ‘personal’ becomes ambiguous and unnoticeable just like the boundaries between the private and the public spheres are.

LGBTI+s, who made resistance a permanent element of their everyday life, first reproduced themselves as individuals, to reproduce the spatial realm where they are located, and then the society and they aim to rebuild social relations in liberationist ways. They try their presence to be accepted against the attempts of power holders’ controlling practices and the social order that had endeavored to erase and destroy them in this production process.

LGBTI+s, who are trying to transform their everyday lives starting from their homes, also added to the structure they are in; that is, they have also played a transformative role within the system as a whole by simply addressing one of its critical elements: the family. In this context, it is possible to evaluate the efforts of LGBTI+s to resist the homogenization practices of the power holders as an important step towards reorganizing and reproducing the everyday life and its everyday spaces. This should also be understood as a step towards resisting all oppressive, objectification, and ignoring practices directed towards them. LGBTI+s challenge, negotiate with and disrupt the traditions, patriarchal practices, habits, family practices, and all social hierarchies that surround their everyday lives; in this way, they initiate a process of reconstructing their identities and their everyday living spaces.

LGBTI+s, to protect their everyday lives and defend their right to the city, are kneaded with actionable forms of resistances (either visible or invisible ones taking place both on micro and macro levels). These are located at the center of their everyday lives inside of their parental houses, then at school, at work, in shopping malls, on streets and in the city in general. In this resistance process, LGBTI+s are both transforming their everyday lives and building one of the most important connecting points of the LGBTI+s’ relationship with the city by resisting the oppressiveness towards ‘difference’ with their ‘difference’. Thus, what is constantly being used to exclude them- the ‘difference’, becomes the very medium of resistance. In this context,

LGBTI+s' micro resistance practices are to be considered as activism in which political aspects of their vulnerabilities and struggle coexist inseparably from one another.

Lefebvre conducts his analysis of space through the body, and he explains the body as a constitutional item on the basis of an individual's desire and need to be recognized and thus to make themselves known and accepted by others. In this sense, the body is not only the subject of historical abstraction, but it is also a part of social action. The body is composed in creative, versatile, and complex ways just like in the examples I provided in previous chapters. Bodies can be in disguise, bodies can be rendered visible and salient with a piece of clothing, red lips appear in public spaces, laughs raise everywhere, eyes intersect with one another while walking down the street and body types are noticed from far away with a gaze clenched by desire. The body produced by space and producing the space itself becomes the subject of the determination of this space.

As my fieldwork results also show, the body produces the intensity of everyday life by opening itself up to desires, sexuality, needs, and resistances. Sexuality, affordability, social roles, spatial borders, and dimension are revealed in the complex structure of the body by their own rhythms. As I pointed out in the theoretical chapter, I agree with Lefebvre who said that "each living body is space and has its space: it produces itself in space and it also produces that space" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.170). The body is thus taking part in the everyday life as a medium of expression, of resistance and revolt. These experiences are confined to the mechanisms of signs and abstractions, but it has not been completely eliminated in any of them (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.195). Accordingly, what my fieldwork also showed is that space is as close to individuals as their bodies, as Lefebvre indicated in his theory of the production of space.

What I have shown so far was that respondents used different tactics to sometimes make themselves heard and seen in public, and sometimes to stay hidden and invisible to avoid harm and to continue 'being'. These deployments, emphasizing gender and sexual identity with symbols, bodily expressions, usage of slang and humor and sarcasm in everyday conversations, and even sometimes carefully shaped or not-so-

much-paid-attention body forms appeared as instruments to reach out to and to transform the urban space that is surrounding them. That space which allows only certain activities, by deciding which activity to be performed and which activity to be refrained from, limits the bodies inscribed onto that space (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.143). The space, with its rules and guidelines directed at attaining order in it, is challenged by the activities which were initially prohibited by the same rules.

Resistances and revolting actions, as it is lived, experienced, and performed through in-visibility occur incessantly in unexpected ways, at unanticipated moments, and in usually overlooked forms. Among the micro resistances, decisions of self-protection, of visibility and invisibility, disruption of existing identities, the usage of humor and slang language were listed as some of the primary actions taken against socio-spatial oppression. In the course of everyday life, LGBTI+s, as sole individuals, regardless of their involvement in the organized movement, are revolting against inequalities and withstanding injustices, this time on a personal level via their micro-managed tactics and actions. Thus, the repelling actions take place whether its executors are involved in the organized movement or not; the very existence of the individual and their lived moments of the mundane life, do matter and indeed contribute to the resistance mechanisms.

I furthermore argue, by looking at respondents' narratives, that these resistances accumulate qualitatively and pave the way to the empowerment of the individual and the collective activism and contribute to the quest for the 'right to the city' in the long run. As I indicated in the introduction chapter (1.3.2), in the history of LGBTI+ movement in the Turkish context, I see how LGBTI+s' resistance tactics gained a different turn that transformed its scattered nature into a consolidated and organized one. This transformation led to an extant urban tradition of public visibility and attempts at social awareness through different public events and actions, which are considered LGBTI+s' collective way to demand their rights in the most visible manner.

With these narratives of problematic issues and resistances developed to defeat them, I realize once again that "the visual-spatial realm ... has a vast *reductive* power at its disposal" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.312). The reduction mentioned here refers to both

quantitatively and qualitatively diminished nature of spaces that can be deemed as freed from oppression (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.313). While this reduction is taking place, the urban appears also as the ensemble of spaces where the resistance and struggle for the realization of life itself take place; therefore, I argue that all spatial relations construed upon resisting the regimenting and unifying effect of the abstract space and its reductionist perspective are political and carry revolutionary characteristics in themselves. The space is, therefore, key to understanding existing power dynamics because it is the place where there is always a description of an order; and where there is order there is disorder. It is the space that governs the bodies by “prescribing or proscribing” certain actions, and it is “its *raison d’etre*” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.143).

Now I move on to the final analysis chapter where I will discuss how different urban spaces are produced and appropriated through the means of various micro and macro resistances.

PART 3: LGBTI+S' SPATIAL PRODUCTIONS AND APPROPRIATIONS

One can define as an urban society the social reality which arises around us (Lefebvre, 1996, p.65).

So far, I have discussed the micro and macro resistance practices of my respondents and I tried to portray them through the lens of in-visibility. Now, I will focus on resistances' spatial reflections. I will show how everyday urban spaces are negotiated and how social spaces of resistances against oppressive and hegemonic power dynamics come to an emergence, how urban spaces are being produced and appropriated, and how the pursuit for the right to the city is being sought after in light of these actions.

In this chapter, I will try to make a “‘reading’ of spaces” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.142) that are important for LGBTI+s. Reading a space is described to have an intricate feature in itself for two reasons: reading the space implies revealing the codes and patterns embedded in that space, which is deemed possible if the reader can ‘decipher’ the code entrenched into it; however, the reading of a space is not the same as the reading of a page with written words on it, therefore I argue that it requires the reader’s interpretation of it (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.142).

Because “the theory of space describes and analyses textures” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.132), in this chapter of my thesis I will be describing the spaces that were produced by my respondents and by other LGBTI+s, and I will try to show how they came to emergence via the reproductive power relations embedded in them, namely the resistances. These resistances (or ‘currents’ as Lefebvre would call them (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.110) carry meanings and symbols in them, just like the textures do (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.132). The meanings embedded in the textures reveal and ignite something for the ones located in that space, may it be an individual body or a collective group.

As my analysis showed, these resistances are not always of a ‘visible’ nature; they may also take an invisible, unnoticeable form and thus rendering the reproduction of space

sometimes merely on a metaphorical level (in the form of ‘cocoons’ for instance that position itself upon various layers of the urban realm). As I mentioned before, I called the spaces that were being re-produced whether through their micro or macro resistances “cocoons”. These cocoons, unlike the web that the spider is building, is indeed a social and differential space occupied by LGBTI+s. This is because disparate from the spider in Lefebvre’s contemplation (1991b), LGBTI+s are located in “the space of analytic intellection, the space of discourse” (p.173) and they are able to shape it through their desires, articulations, revolts, and insurrections as I portrayed in the past two chapters.

CHAPTER 7

REPRODUCTION OF EVERYDAY SPACES

As De Certeau points out (1984), power also means the management of a place that cannot be considered independent of ideological, social, and political processes, along with the body (p.38). As I stated at the beginning of my thesis, given that the sexual identity roles are shaped by the dominant gender and sexuality regime; space and sexuality appear as two directly related concepts that are mutually structured, reinforced, and reproduced. In fact, I argue that there are instructions written onto the space, which are guiding individuals towards certain directions, some of which are restricting their behaviors while others are allowing them (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.142). In this thesis, these rulings and guidelines are circling around the norms of gender and sexuality imbued into the scripture of society. These consist of ‘do’s’ and ‘don’ts’ that have been set and asserted onto the space by the rule of the oppressive power.

Lefebvre (1991b) explains that abstract spaces tend to erase differences to attain a homogenous and a monolithic feature (p.355). However, he continues, due to the versatile needs and demands of its occupiers (inhabitants and users), this monolithic surface shatters and starts having cracks on it. As a result, the abstract space becomes the space where contradictions take place too (p.363). The groups who resist the transformation of everyday life into an object of exploitation are supposed to primarily reach out to their living spaces. They can then develop a resistance against the oppressive power mechanisms in that particular space. This objection can be made by using the different layers of the urban space as an execution space. What I argue here is that it is through the resisting attempts of the users that the inherent violent characteristic of the abstract space can be challenged and shaken if not abolished.

Lefebvre expresses the process in which everyday life becomes unsustainable and a new everyday life is structured by the cultural revolution (1991a). The center of such

a cultural revolution can only be the city since it is the only place where there is hope for a revival. And the actor of such revolution can only be the ordinary people; in fact, as Scott (1989) indicates “revolutionary action ... is typically undertaken by rank- and-file actors who do not have revolutionary aims” (p.51).

To discuss the urban space, Lefebvre sets a framework for it with the notion of ‘center’ and ‘centrality’ that is deemed to be of dialectical character (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.101). Centrality in Lefebvre’s study (1991b) indicates elimination, removal of the “peripheral elements with a violence that is inherent in space itself” (p.332). In this sense, the city appears a complex area, incorporating housing, regulatory cultural, political, and business sites and the synthesis of these different aspects produces a complicated urban system. This system is regulated by state authorities operating at different levels, governed by authorized policies and rules of conduct, and by all effective nationwide laws.

According to Lefebvre’s production of space theory, the everyday space should be seen as an entity formed by physical, mental, and social forms. Accordingly, the physical form refers to the space that actually exists, that is produced and used by its occupants. This social form, on the other hand, describes a space that exists in reality and is also imagined by others (Table 5, p.124). Here, the center of everyday life actually lies in the social form. The place contains everyday symbols and signs; at the same time, it exists as a social unit in which daily relationships are experienced. In this context, space is not a static mass; on the contrary, it is a form that is reproduced according to ongoing everyday social and political relations that are imbued within power relations.

The urban space has multiple dimensions, and it is the platform where the web of power implementation through gender and sexuality can be monitored. The feminist approach effused within the general tone of the research helps understand sexuality, sexual expression, and identities as integrated dimensions of space as opposed to taking it as an isolated item that concerns individuals. As I explored in the previous chapters, exclusion, discrimination, and domination receive solidarity, struggle, and resistance as direct responses. My study on urban spaces is thus not only considering the portrayal of places where LGBTI+s complete their everyday routines, but it is an

exploration of how LGBTI+s transform the everyday life in those spaces, whether during their school, work, home, leisure-related activities, on the street, in the neighborhoods, practically in every layer of urban spaces.

In line with Lefebvre who stresses the collective construction of space by its users (1991b), the space-making activities of LGBTI+s are an embodiment of this new construction, which promotes participation and vigorous appropriation and as a result, cocoons – the spaces of resistances are born. The various forms in which LGBTI+s appropriated and seized spaces to build their own spaces have become a focus of analysis for my study. In fact, I realized that the way LGBTI+s interact with the urban space is mostly based on how LGBTI+s' wish to display their sexual and gender identities, therefore, it is channeled by the evaluation of individuals whether they can afford to be visible or not with their own sexualized and gendered bodies and it is routed via their micro and macro resistances accordingly.

In Chapter 6.3, I discussed women's need for a place for themselves, I highlighted that creating a 'room for her own' was seen as a first step to further appropriate other spaces (Öz, 2012). That need is very much valid for the majority of LGBTI+s I have spoken to for my thesis. For LGBTI+s, being able to appropriate the space gives them the necessary fuel to bypass the mechanisms of dominance, to get away from the general oppression of the everyday life, and especially away from its psychological and physiological constraints, even if for just a limited amount of time. Respondents expressed their need to experience a private moment, to share the space with their social encounters, to enlarge their social networks, to live and to breathe without much thinking about the consequences of it.

In this chapter's discussions, I narrate the reproduction of important places in my respondents' everyday lives and their spatial production phases. I focus on the homes, organization offices, leisure places, neighborhood formations, and street activities. I analyze these spaces by implementing the concept of "*cocoons*". The composition of these cocoons corresponds to a spatio-temporal production process because they comprise a temporality in themselves (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.164). Moreover, they are the products and also producers of resistances. I argue that these cocoons and the ensemble they produce are the spatialities that offer some kind of liberation and

protection and they are nourishing the resistance that lies at the heart of their beings. LGBTI+s’ quest for liberated, safe, accepting, non-discriminating spaces transforms into their cry out for their ‘right to the city’ from inside these cocoons.

Fenster says that the right to the city is attained when the right to difference is embraced by everyone who in the end shares and uses the same urban spaces (Fenster, 2005a, p.225). I incorporated the idea that the pursuit for the right to the city overflows from the public space where discrimination towards LGBTI+s visually takes place towards the private space, where detection of the discrimination usually remains “out of side, out of mind” (De Certeau, 1984, p.19). Moreover, I considered LGBTI+s, the subjects of this study to be situated in a “series of enveloping [spatial] levels each of which implies the others, and the sequence of which accounts for social practice” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.294). Following this perspective, I decided to analyze these ‘enveloping’ spaces in a similar order: starting from “the home”, I moved towards “the leisure places”, then I progressed towards “the neighborhoods” and finally, I ended up out in the streets (Figure 4).

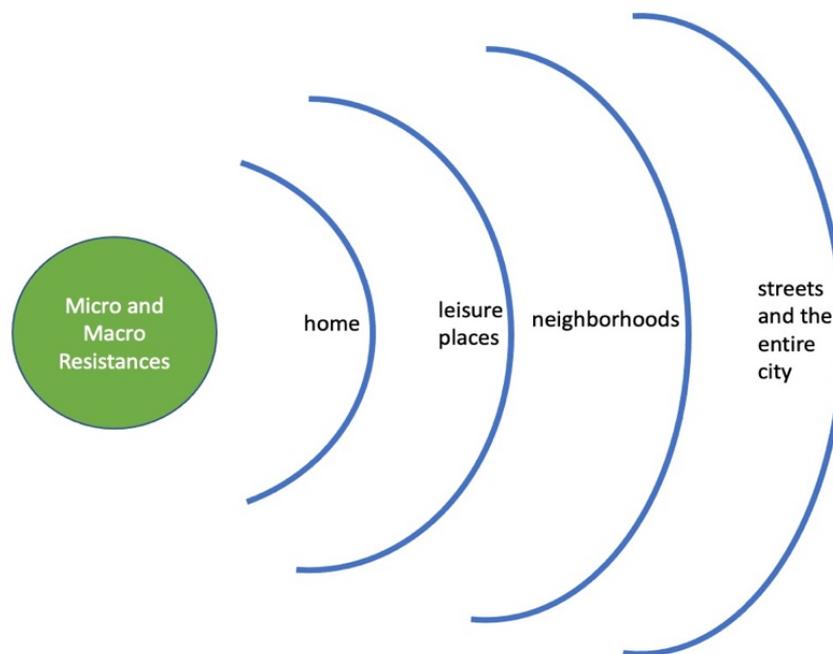


Figure 4. Layers of Analysis of LGBTI+s’ Spatial Production and Appropriation (Figure prepared by the author)

Below, as the first section of this chapter, I focus on how LGBTI+s are operating at home (thus in spaces that are conventionally defined as private spaces) and how they are moving and flowing towards the public space because they are being excluded from the hetero-patriarchal private space through household members' prejudices and oppressive actions.

7.1. Home is Where the Heart is

The home is not only a site of gendered power struggle and intergenerational conflicts, it has also been traditionally been thought of as heterosexual space (Duncan & Lambert, 2004, p.387).

As a matter of fact, 'boundaries' is too weak a word here, and it obscures the essential point; it would be more accurate to speak of fracture lines revealing the true – invisible yet highly irregular – contours of 'real' social space lying beneath its homogenous surface (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.317).

In today's everyday urban spaces, the conditions of the private space are expected to provide a field of stability against the uncertainties of the outside world. Home has been the place where one is 'themselves'. It has been considered a shelter for those who feel insecure economically, physically, and politically; it has been the comforting space that allows a short escape from the 'everyday struggle' of the world. The home is supposed to give a sight of freedom in the sense that individuals feel freed from the leashes of everyday life rush, boundaries, and rules. Private space has long been considered a domain of security against the insecure world. There is a strict differentiation between 'home' and 'the rest' because home is supposed to be the place that provides comfort that stays out of politics. Johnston and Valentine discuss this from a similar perspective by saying:

Home is a word that positively drips with associations-according to various academic literatures it's a private, secure location, a sanctuary, a locus of identity and a place where inhabitants can escape the disciplinary practices that regulate our bodies in everyday life. (Johnston & Valentine 1995, p.88)

Studies on this particular topic from different parts of the world offer portrayals, personal experiences, and narratives and they focus on what private space, home, and family could mean to all those who identify themselves as LGBTI+ (Gorman-Murray, 2006a; Gorman-Murray, 2006b; Johnston & Valentine, 1995; Johnston & Longhurst, 2010b; Valentine et al., 2003). Existing research also dwells on the negative effects of

heterosexual postulation, especially upon young LGBs who continue their lives in secrecy as a survival tactic in the homes where they live (Johnston & Valentine, 1995; Valentine et al., 2003), similar to what I have discussed in section 4.1.

As my study shows, this expectation of peace and security is far from being met in households where LGBTI+s are confronted with the hetero-patriarchal rule. For my respondents, the home had not always carried such comforting and relaxing characteristics. The rhetoric on home's protective and stability-bearing nature has been falsified by the majority of respondents' documentation of their personal experiences. The common experience among my respondents has been that the home is not "free from struggle or contention" and that all their "personal" experiences and spaces are transformed into "political" ones (Hanisch, 1969)¹¹². This was what directed me to include "the private space" in my study focusing on the right to the city and the production of space.

In the experiences of LGBTI+s, especially the parental home is also no longer defined as a private and safe space anymore because it has long been regulated by institutionalized hetero-patriarchal norms and values and because it is yet another space of control over the bodies and desires. This is in tandem with Lefebvre's view that the home is an environment where "bodily 'functions' ... are thrust out of sight" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.315). While the meaning of public spaces convinces the majority of people on the sharp lines of "the limits of privacy", for the majority of LGBTI+s, the home operates as a field of struggle and resistance. As a result, the private space is longer considered a space that aims the compensation for the losses against the risks of new conditions that are difficult to control outside of the home.

Although Lefebvre mentions that the weight of social control becomes heavier upon those "who fail to reject the familiarity of everyday life" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.233), thus, upon those who do not realize that the home is also a part of the absolute space, he does not consider "the home" as a part of spaces of resistance nor does he consider

¹¹² I would like to posit a small note about the definition of the 'political' here. What I understand from and attribute to the concept of 'political' has very much to do with the actions taking place in the course of everyday life. I found a similar definition elsewhere in Gümüş's article focusing on young people's participation in the Gezi Park protests (Gümüş, 2017). Thus, I argue that the transformation of the "personal" into a "political" site is what gives the micro resistances their political characteristics and I consider that "the political is, therefore, far from being limited to any space or institution, but is in everything, everywhere" (Gümüş, 2017, p.13).

that the private space, the home, is being governed by and is a part of the absolute space (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.241). In that regard, Lefebvre (1991b) thinks that although the private space is distinctly different from the public space, the two are deeply interrelated with each other (p.166). This situation, in his mind, is based on a relation of domination and appropriation: while the space outside of the private space is dominated, the private space appears to be appropriated according to him (p.166). I disagree with this and in fact, I argue that the private space is also a space of domination, a space governed under the absolute space directed with homogenizing ideologies. I consider the home as a space where resistances take place; because the order that is expected to be present inside the private space brings along the disorder with itself. In this sense, the absolute space has both mental and social aspects to itself: while it is an imaginary space, it has also a social existence. It operates in reality (at home), while at the same time continue executing its oppressiveness on a mental level (by its rules and omnipresence). As a result, the ‘mental’ aspect gains its ‘social’ aspect through a series of social activities (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.251).

In this sense, I consider the home as a “dominated space” which means that it has been transformed by means of practice and ideology. This dominance has its historical and political origins which “coincide with those of political power itself” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.164). The dominated space is where restrictions, limitations, and violence take place and are imbued into each other (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.358). The homogenizing impact of the political power and the reductionist strategies applied to the space render ‘homes’ as sites of negotiations and resistances. These negotiations and resistances are of contrasting and opposing nature against the oppressive power. As a result, the domination or the dominated space is challenged with the ‘reappropriation’ of these spaces by LGBTI+s in this case (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.165).

The most recurring idea (in the form of wishful thinking) in respondents’ understanding of private space been “ease and comfort” which they have mentioned in the category of a need and not a possession. Young (2005) discusses the ambiguity of the notion of “home” in a very compassing manner. According to Young, the home “displays the things among which a person lives, that support his or her life activities and reflect in matter the events and values of his or her life” (Young, 2005, p.130). But Young does not limit this description merely to “things” but adds layers of

disposition of these things, all of which catch a certain rhythm in time and space (pp.130-131) while operating as a “material anchor for a sense of agency and a shifting and fluid identity (p.140). With reference to Casey, Young (2005) dives into the deep layers of the home as “an extension of and mirror for the living body in its everyday activity (p.140) and also as an “affirmation of personal and cultural identity” (p.137). Not following the rules set by society and by their families appeared as the most well-expressed shortcut to their descriptions of their expectations from the private space. In fact, Young too defines home in a very similar way by stating that “home is a concept and desire that expresses a bounded and secure identity. Home is where a person can be “herself”; one is “at home” when she feels that she is with others who understand her in her particularity” (Young, 2005, p.138). Defne, who has been living with her cousins, shares her own experience at the place where she calls ‘home’, and she describes its overwhelming and restrictive nature.

I cannot call out too many friends because we cannot gather in the living room as many people. I only call one or two friends and we usually sit in my room. There is this thing in general, but it is related to being LGBTI. If we gather with my friends from Lambda and sit in the living room, I have to participate in that conversation as if I was a hetero, because my cousin is around. Or mostly I’m bringing a couple of friends home, but I’m being secret in my conversation with them because, again, my cousin is at home (Defne, Istanbul).

The understanding of the concept of private space can be deemed as restrictive and narrow as well. It creates boundaries and then it corners the individual into spacelessness. According to my respondents, the private space is sometimes described as the room where one sleeps, sometimes only the bed, and sometimes the person experiences the feeling of ‘private space’ only in their own bodies. This can be interpreted in two ways: one of them is that the person does not need predefined physical spaces to experience privacy, intimacy, and comfort at times, and by that, s/he/they are able to abolish any kind of understanding indicating a concrete space; and secondly, it also means that the person is actually unable to find any particular *functional space* (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.52) that could bear the privacy and sense of ‘comfort and safety’ that one is looking for. Considering my respondents’ current housing conditions, I concluded that living with one or more people (especially with first- and second-degree relatives) in the house who are not aware of their gender and sexual identities is a strong barrier that prevents them from feeling as free, safe, and

comfortable as they want to be. As a result, the ‘home’, which has traditionally been considered a private space, is no longer described as one because of the level of hetero-patriarchal intrusion that is not limited to the commonly shared areas of the house but reigns in all of its corners.

The private space is the one where I can live as free as I want, free from the most common societal rules that are connected to the social contract. What does a community contract require of you? Conventions of living together. The rules of coexistence arise from those practices. But do I have it? Not really... I try, but it is what it is (Defne, Istanbul).

What I would expect would be for me to feel very comfortable. I would be able to do anything I want between four walls. You can express yourself; you are completely free. I live with my boyfriend, now I have a home. But before, no. It was just the place where I slept and woke up (Yelda, Istanbul).

The definition of intimacy and privacy, being able to experience intimate moments, feeling the possibility and the freedom to experience sexuality at home has been one of the most problematic issues for my respondents, given that some were still living with their parent/parents, and some, even though they considered them as roommates, were living with their cousins, and those who were sharing the house with other people (housemates) whom “*they did not trust a lot with these delicate topics*” felt exposed, judged and restricted with their own behaviors, actions, and romances in their own ‘homes’. In a way “Eros disappears ... into this two-tiered interior of reception rooms and private rooms” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.315).

Because that house isn’t my house, it’s our house. My family’s private space, but not my private space individually. If there’s no one in the house, then it may become one but otherwise, no (Can, Istanbul).

There is a bifurcation in the meaning-making processes of my respondents when it comes to discussing their usage of common areas in the house. The common space may be much trickier for some due to the limitations of the people they can invite, of the behavior and chats they should be having in the gaze of others who live there, as Defne described in the above-cited quote (please see p.267). Some of my respondents did not feel as free as they wanted to be when using the common space. It is indeed interesting to see how even in the most protected space that ought to be considered as a shelter, respondents have second thoughts before bringing a friend; some think that behind closed doors there are rumors about them.

I wonder what the people [my sister and her boyfriend] think in the next room because it always feels like they are talking in there [about me]. [Actually] There are no barriers between us, I feel annoyed that I think they are not open about it. At first, I also feel urged to be stressed about it and to feel anxious about it by pushing the limits on the one hand and then waiting to win that right on the other. At the first step, I feel like I have a strange thing, no matter how open they are to me, but I don't know if they're that open though... I don't want to blame them for not being open-minded either (Ada, Istanbul).

For those who were still living with their parents, inviting their friends to a house visit remains an issue to fight about. Having an active sexual life in their own homes/rooms is a taboo topic. As I discussed in detail in previous chapters, there is an unspoken nature of sexuality at home. In fact, homes are filled with “cold abstractions” and with “the absence of pleasure” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.309). Some of them said they were not expecting to receive any kind of acceptance from their parents regarding their open exploration of sexuality therefore they did not even try to ‘fight this fight’. Therefore, whether LGBTI+-identified or not, children at home are considered sexually inactive beings by their parents. In short, as I stated at the beginning of this chapter, home has never been free from the struggle for LGBTI+s. Starting from parents, then roommates, friends and extended families have posited control over them, and regulated their desire according to the existing system right outside the door. In fact, the home has become a source of contention against heteronormative systems of existence where the systems of power infiltrate into the private space (Johnston & Longhurst, 2010b). The home where “strategies are applied” receives resistances through the tactics of its insurgent members and it furthermore becomes “the locus of all the agitations and disputations” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.309)

In my analysis, I noticed that gendered and sexualized practices at home are indeed restricted primarily because of the institutionalized nature of hetero-patriarchal norms and values and also because of the widespread understanding of sexuality as a taboo topic. In this sense, I consider “the home” as an abstract space despite its all concreteness (its walls, living spaces, bedrooms, and kitchens) namely for two reasons: first, it carries political significance because it is a space that is located under the rule of the dominant heteropatriarchal regime which operates through nuclear family structure; and second, it aims to be a homogenous space that aims to erase all the differences that come to its way (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.285). This abstract space carries imageries, marks, and representations. According to Lefebvre (1991b), it is providing

a certain vicinity to the ones located in it while simultaneously being drenched with “distances and limits” (p. 288). And as Lefebvre also indicates, since abstract space needs a concrete space to be built upon (p.306), the home appears as a suitable example of it. The home thus operates as a “mirror” to reflect upon society’s strictly built reality where the control of ‘non-normativity’ is expected to be attained and even guaranteed (p.309). Moreover, I also realized that the home can also be identified as an instrumental space, positing upon the existing rules, whose primacy is built upon an ‘abstract unity’ (p.355).

Tovi Fenster (2005) points out that when Lefebvre defines the right to the city, he does not include the home and the private space as urban spaces in his theoretical framework. Fenster’s research revealed that women do not feel “at home” when they are not involved in the organization and decisions of the house. However, when we look at the places where young women who are at the lowest level of the hetero-patriarchal hierarchy feel free we see public spaces and not homes. Following Lefebvre’s argument that abstract spaces tend to reflect upon the prevalent inclination of homogeneity within the society (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.307), which results in the elimination of the ‘difference’, I argue that LGBTI+s’ participation and the right to use “the home” should not remain untouched and unproblematized, because “the space that homogenizes ... has nothing homogeneous about it” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.308), and I wanted to shed light on this. I furthermore argue, following Young’s arguments that the presence of personalized items, the appropriation of the home in a sense, procures “the personal sense of identity” which then in return, “enables political agency” (Young, 2005, p.141).

I noticed that the resistances in the private space cause change not only in the private space itself but also in certain parts of the public space that are being transformed by the overflowing of social interactions, desires, and expressions too. This furthermore paves the way for the reproduction of both private and public spaces. The resistance mechanisms to confront the hetero-patriarchal oppression within the private space, especially in unique cases of youth-in-transition cause the re-production of the private and public spaces simultaneously through verbal and sometimes non-verbal agreements with other household members, sometimes with artifacts they hold in their own rooms and sometimes by the attempts to find other ‘homes’ outside of the pre-

defined physical domains of the private space. In this perspective, with these artifacts and symbols that they position inside their homes, their private spaces indicate an “emotional investment, an affective charge (fear, attraction, etc.)” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.141).

Therefore, I argue that the struggles and the resistances aim at changing not only the street but also the home. And the home exists as an area of struggle and resistance, where LGBTI+s continue to tussle for their rights. With reference to Young, these rights entail but are not limited to “safety”, “individuation” that translates as the necessity of a spatial extension for a person to conduct their most basic activities, “privacy” (Young, 2005, pp. 142-143). Moreover, as I stated above, the restrictions brought to the private space cause social relations to overflow towards the public space. I have seen that all of my respondents try to go out of their houses, and their family homes, they go into the urban space, they come together with their friends, and acquaintances and they meet new people, they find each other in those public spaces. The private space and its contents pour onto the public space and blur all existing limits inbetween them.

Now I will look into LGBTI+s’ production of alternative home-places where they seek peace and comfort.

7.1.1. Production of Alternative “Homes”

In my study, Lefebvre’s production of space theory (1991b) is carried out by LGBTI+s who contribute to its production via their ‘currents’ (resistances). This production results in the “lived space” in Lefebvre’s tripartite scheme, and the sense of the “lived” derives from the practical and symbolic connections they make with their ‘difference’ and the meaning of belonging as I explored in 6.1. One of the places that were deemed as ‘home’ has been the organization offices. Now, I would like to focus on how LGBTI+s contribute to the construction of a new space, the collective’s space, beyond spatial positionality and physical relation and how the feeling of ‘home’ becomes ingrained in these spaces.

According to the respondents, this space includes all its people, allows for cooperation and support, and extends its reach naturally outside its content’s boundaries. I believe

it is challenging to define strict and defined borders to a space, since it is not rigid but rather it is dynamic, concurrent, in a continuous stream while LGBTI+s are changing and redefining its intended functions. Especially for the respondents who had closer ties with the movement, particularly those who identified themselves as activists, considered the offices of the NGOs, grassroots organizations, and the meeting offices for different events as ‘homes’ that they have been longing for a long time.

The organization [Lambda] was in Taksim back then. When in Taksim, I felt like I was at my home then, I met a lot of people there (Kerem, Istanbul)

During my fieldwork, I was able to detect the LGBTI+ movement’s agents’ (registered ones but also grass-roots organizations, for instance, Pride Week organization committee’s meetings taking place at a feminist organization’s office in Taksim) positive impact and influence over LGBTI+s who embraced them. I saw that these organizations and especially organization offices were able to offer the very much-needed space for them while providing a sense of security and homeliness. Just like Seçin Varol writes in the Urban dossier prepared by Kaos GL,

If Kaos GL did not enter my life today, I would not be able to learn what a safe area is. I felt really peaceful when I discovered our association where I could express myself, talk comfortably, do not have to say my identity. I feel even safer than at home (Varol, 2012).¹¹³

These offices start carrying more importance and more meaning than they carried initially for LGBTI+s who establish a relationship with the collective movement. The organizations become socializing places for LGBTI+s. Fulfilling one of the primal needs, meeting new people, and being able to share the experiences, and the life struggles one goes through are all made possible at the organizations’ offices and during the events organized by different actors of the activist movement. These organizations in this sense, help create new spaces, carving out new spatial and social opportunities for LGBTI+s. By opening their doors, in a way, the organizations help create new modular safe spaces; hence they operate as an ensemble of cocoons.

There is an environment where I can just drop in and talk about being LGBTI. I mean Lambda. To know that there are associations, and activities, and there is

¹¹³ This is my own translation from the original Turkish version which is: “*Hayatıma bugün Kaos GL girmeseydi, güvenli bir alanın ne olduğunu öğrenemeyecektim. Kendimi ifade edebildiğim, rahatça konuşabildiğim, kimliğimi söylemek zorunda bırakılmadığım derneğimizi keşfettiğim zaman kendimi gerçeğe huzurlu hissettim. Evimden bile daha güvenli hissedirim kendimi.*”

this place where I can ask for help, where I know that there is a constant information exchange, and this soothes me. The places where I will go are also filled with the people that I see at those associations. I meet new friends there. To be in the association actually gives a starting point as it would be more difficult to meet anywhere outside (Umut, Istanbul).

I would say that where Lambda is, there is a safe place for me. I see it as a safe zone, I see it like home (Defne, Istanbul).

But these places outside of their homes are not the only places that LGBTI+s feel secure and safe and they are not the only places that have been deemed as ‘homes’ to them. There are also other places, places of leisure where they enjoy spending time with their friends such as cafés and bars, but this time with a conditional acceptance to it.

7.2. Leisure Places and Exploitation

The relation between leisure and the everyday is not a simple one: the two words are at one and the same time united and contradictory. (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.29)

I would like to start by answering a question that Lefebvre addresses in the production of space, which is “Do the spaces formed by practico-social activity, whether landscapes, monuments or buildings, have meaning?” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.131) with an affirmative answer of YES. For Lefebvre, “leisure is a remarkable example of a new social need” (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.32). Accordingly, the intricate relationship individuals have with leisure time and leisure-oriented activities renders these places even more complicated. Lefebvre points out the importance that leisure activities carry in our lives, and he says that “we achieve a leap from necessity into freedom, from enslavement of the individual into whatever will permit his self-development” (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.37). According to him, the space where sexuality and leisure intersect is usually the place that is designed for this purpose (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.310). He furthermore argues that these specific places “become eroticized” because they are filled with the “illusion of festivity” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.310). Marcuse too is interested in this topic, and he mentions the right to production of the city along with the right to ‘enjoy it’ (Marcuse, 2012, p.36). I also believe that the two are entangled with one another since the issue is not only about what is being produced but it is also about how it is being produced and “enjoyed” in urban settings.

Urban leisure places have a critical significance as they reveal multiple social and cultural appearances that enable or deprive the individual of their everyday practices based on their differences of gender and sexuality. Aktaş says that “Restaurants, cafés and patisseries, concert areas with entertainment places, ... parks and gardens..., cinema, theaters, where social events are held, are at the same time liberating ... to a certain extent, while they limit them [*women*] to a certain extent.” (Aktaş, 2017, p.138). This restriction is not limited with women but LGBTI+s suffer from this greatly. In this chapter, I focus on my respondents’ experiences in particular urban spatial domains: leisure places. Among these places, my respondents mentioned cafés and bars and described their own ways of appropriating these spaces and the barriers they encountered while doing so.

“LGBTI+ friendly places” are seen as “myriad battles fought over the social, political, and cultural meanings attributed to the existence of individuals interested in same-sex relationships” (Nash, 2006, p.2). Consequently, these places not only question the existing norms and standards of heterosexuality and heteronormativity but of sexuality and the existing spatial borders too. Furthermore, I also think that the destabilization of the existing borders renders in the end the boundaries of the space fluid as well.

In the narratives of my respondents, “LGBTI+ friendly” leisure places (mainly cafés, bars, and clubs) were initially described as spaces where one can go and easily socialize with others. Feeling at ease and in comfort, not being threatened by the outsiders and the people surrounding them were among the key factors that allowed them to say that ‘this place is my home’ or ‘I feel at home when I am at this particular place’. I noticed that there was a shift in the assigned meanings. Indeed, leisure places create a bond between traditional and monolithic urban spaces and the potential for enjoyment (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.385). I consider the change of attributions and meanings in respondents’ narratives and also the change in the status of these places as elements that constitute the reasons why we cannot talk about a clear division or a border between public and private spaces.

I cannot draw such a clear border actually. I go to a café bar that I call “home”. I don’t draw a definite wall between them (Defne, Istanbul).

Respondents told me that their knowledge about these cafés and bars was disseminated through two channels. The first one was “word-of-mouth” (WoM or *viva voce*). The chats among their friends or the information they gathered during the events organized by the grassroots organizations or registered associations were helpful for those who were looking for new places to go. The dissemination of such knowledge through word of mouth reminds me of the relation between “the art of speaking” and the “arts of operating” (De Certeau, 1984, p.78) to the point that what is being discussed amongst LGBTI+s reflects itself on the spatial realm and contribute to the reproduction and appropriation of these spaces by bigger groups. The second channel was mainly useful to those who were not going to events organized by these LGBTI+ organizations and initiatives. I revealed that they were paying attention to the front windows of the cafés so that they would see a sign of LGBTI+ allyship, such as a flag or a sticker hanging or glued to the front part/window of the place. De Certeau’s indication that “every “proper” place is altered by the mark others have left on it” (De Certeau, 1984, p.44) becomes actualized by LGBTI+s’ browsings. In this sense, the mark that was left on that particular space serves as a sign that enables LGBTI+s to appropriate that space, in such a way that “space becomes readable ... to society as a whole” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.144). In my study, I noticed that the use of small artifacts such as flags or stickers in these places was considered an indicator of the acceptance of LGBTI+ identity and/or its allyship in a social and spatial context. In fact, these artifacts, or traces as Lefebvre would call them, exemplify the values assigned to these places.

While in Lefebvre’s theory (1991b), these values may consist of “danger, safety, waiting, promise” (p.118) and in this particular case these marks signify a system of allyship, acceptance and ‘difference’ (p.141). I observed through my respondents’ attachments to and communication over these artifacts that the way they understood and utilized the rainbow colors in general (whether a flag or a backpack badge or a sticker) was to appropriate that space and to create a ‘difference’ in the unitary ground of the everyday life in order to create a crack to breathe and a ‘cocoon’ to exist. Based on the case that Gökçe has been telling me about – in the below cited quote, what I understand is that when the space is marked with a physical object, an artifact, that physicality carries also a symbolic meaning in itself. Therefore, the space is not only marked ‘physically’ but is also marked ‘abstractly’. In this way, the “space ... acquires symbolic value” which transforms the space into another via the sign that represents a

meaning not only for the one who deposited it but for everyone else who encounters it (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.141).

The other day a friend of mine came and told me “I saw a rainbow flag on this street, but I’m not sure,” he said. I said why wouldn’t you enter and ask. He said, “I did not enter, because it was not on the main street, it is on the side street,” he said. Then, we met two or three days later near the place and at first, we passed by it just to be sure that there is a flag inside. We saw the flag. The street was a well-known street, the street with leftists and communists. But we were unaware of the street. I got in. I said ‘Excuse me’, I said ‘who is responsible of this place?’. A boy has arrived. He said, “yes how I can help you?” I said, “we saw the rainbow flag”. ‘Well’, he said. I asked ‘you know the meaning of the rainbow?’.’ He said ‘yes, we took the flag from LGBTIs at the time of Gezi and then hung it. We are also open to LGBTIs’. ‘But the flag is ours now’ he added. This puffed our chests up. ‘Come on, sit down’, he said. We go there and guide people to that particular café. It’s a sign to have that flag. The other day we were going through the alleys in Nişantaşı. I saw a tiny rainbow flag jammed into the shelf. Now that place is on my mind, that is going to be our next stop ☺ (Gökçe, Istanbul).

Almost all of my respondents were struggling to earn a living; the majority of those who were employed in a white-collar job was complaining about the low salaries, and the students were tired of asking for money from their parents who were already reluctant to give pocket money to their children whom they suspected of being “LGBTI+”. Freelancers were unhappy about the economic instabilities which determined their monthly earnings’ continuity and sustainability. There were very few among them who were feeling gratitude for where they were in life at that moment. Even for those who were more or less in a good place financially, the unpredictability of the economy and increasing prices in basic amenities were making it hard for them to have a continuous ‘going out’ routine. In a very limited selection of these places, some of the respondents said that the existing ones were pricey. This situation in return created a gap between them and these cafés and bars. They felt deprived of one of the very few venues where they got to meet with more people “like themselves”, to feel desire for someone and to be felt desired. These leisure places that are deemed LGBTI+ friendly were unattainable for those with no or little economic means. The attendance to LGBTI+ parties or frequency of my respondents of going to these known bars, cafés, and clubs were depending on their economic means. In fact, what I noticed was that “leisure” has turned into an industry where its spatial extensions operated as agents of exploitation (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.384).

As a result, while describing these places, ‘expensive’ was a common word that the respondents made use of. There was a blind alley in their situation: they were feeling safe in these places because they knew they would not be harassed by anyone if they were going to show affection to their partner or if they were going to flirt with anyone they felt attracted to; and yet, it was really hard for them to go to these places on a continuous basis because it was redundantly expensive.

You can be yourself like if you were to hold your boyfriend’s hand while you are dancing a bit it is OK to do so. I don’t have to check if anyone is looking at me all the time. But, that’s the thing, first I have to find a lover for this to happen and for that, I need to go outside to meet new people. And I can’t. I just can’t ask for more money from my mom (Gökçe, Istanbul).

For instance, [it is okay] if you were to get too intimate with your girlfriend, that there is something more than friendship and sisterhood in-between. But just the ability to do it is costing all of us a lot of money (Eser, Istanbul).

Most of my respondents found it hard to afford an every-weekend going out routine thus they were giving themselves 2 nights out per month. Both Gökçe and Uğur were suspicious about these prices and they were not convinced about any justifiable expensiveness. Gökçe thought that bar owners were actually making a profit out of the ‘placelessness of LGBTI+s thinking that “every LGBTI+ is doomed to come here” since there are no other options for them. As a result, I saw that LGBTI+s start negotiating their identities, orientations, and desires with their economic powers which generate a constant struggle. Uğur, who was also complaining about the prices, went to talk to the manager of the bar they were frequently going but they got no results.

Gay places keep prices exorbitant just because we can only go there (Gökçe, Istanbul).

Amazingly expensive when you think about it. When people go to the bar, they have to leave all their salary. It doesn’t matter who owns the bar. I was talking to the owner of the bar. They say, it is mandatory to be able to pay the rent, but I don’t buy it (Uğur, Istanbul).

In this context, I agree with Lefebvre who says that leisure-oriented activities become “easy to exploit ... commercially” (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.32). According to my respondents, because LGBTI+s’ social attachment to the ‘LGBTI+ scene’ requires them to actually go to these places, it automatically requires them to spend money there. However, because the number of places where one can feel safe enough is

limited, and because these places had over-priced tariffs/menus; these leisure places were accused of getting advantaged of LGBTI+s despair for a safe space. I realized that these places are expected by their owners to bring an extra surplus to them since they satisfy a need that is not met by the majority of leisure places in Istanbul: the enjoyment of LGBTI+s. As a result, not only do these places' isolated characteristic of bringing solely enjoyment to LGBTI+s falls into an abyss but at the same time, the regular surplus is not considered sufficient for the owners (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.360). As a result, "Eros ... became at once consumer and consumed" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.310).

For this reason, some of my respondents said that they could not establish a particular attachment or bond to LGBTI+ bars or clubs primarily because of this expensiveness. But, that was not the only reason they gave for their reluctance in visiting these places. LGBTI+ bars and clubs deemed to be cool, socializable, and fun places could also be sometimes discriminatory places. These places brought constraints by levying their own rules for gestures, behaviors, and appearances (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.384). This group of respondents was critical of existing dress codes, and rules on how to 'behave' depending on the gender identity and the sexual orientation of the person. Therefore, the entrance to some of these places depended not only on the economic capital but also on gender identity, the amount of 'suitability' and 'eligibility' to the existing norms on 'sociality'.

Very expensive, twenty, twenty-five liras for a drink?? And there is no limit to the number of those entering and leaving the place. They're already making a lot of money from the 'fag theme'. And yes, it serves to socialize and make people communicate with each other. And no, I never feel a political stance from those places. They are always OK with some people's presence because of rent. They don't take trans people, and they don't take those who wear a shalwar, not the trendy shalwar, but the Kurdish shalwar, of course. Why is there such discrimination? While we struggle together this hard, how could you do that? (Kerem, Istanbul)

I would like to discuss Kerem's narrative with a comparison to a similar study I came across. Ural (2017) in his study where he analyzes how certain groups of individuals are marginalized through the reinforcement of certain discourses in the nightlife of Beyoğlu, the district that Kerem was mentioning above, gives a detailed account on 'spaces of affiliation' and 'spaces of marginalization' (Ural, 2017, p.4). In the case

Kerem described above, the exclusion that the group of people in Kerem's description is going through puts them in a 'marginal position' which is deemed to have the opposite features of 'desirability', 'safety', 'conviviality', 'glamour' and 'attractiveness' (Ural, 2017, p.4). The gay club's decision to exclude women with trans experience and people with a particular type of shalwar while allowing the 'ordinary LGBTI+' people can be interpreted as their attempt to conform to yet another normative understanding; this time a normative existence of "LGBTI+".

As I discussed in the "Resisting through Salient Bodies" (5.2.1) and "Stereotypes and Fitting in" (5.2.2) sections, LGBTI+s' bodies, gestures, and clothes matter a lot in being present, noticeable, and 'appealing' to the gaze of others. However, this visibility does not always result in positive reactions, especially in public spaces. In this sense, while these spaces can be very much liberating, they may as well be oppressive in the lives of LGBTI+s. Gender identity and sexuality need to be conveyed to others and sometimes this portrayal can be difficult (Grangeiro Ferreira, 2018). There may be questions about how others might view the expressions and identities, and this might result in the avoidance of these social spaces as well because the social space is where the "materialization of social being" takes place (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.102). As it is apparent in the narrative of Kerem, above, the once LGBTI+ ally places can also turn into areas of discrimination and therefore struggle and resistance.

Some of my respondents felt, despite the liberating and comforting feeling that LGBTI+ friendly cafés and bars offered, that being invisibly forced to go to either this or that place, being only able to select between a short range of choices is actually operating as a restriction for their full access to the city. Stuck in certain corners of the city, going to certain quarters, and not being able to take a step-in in another place were mentioned among their primary concerns about their socializing habits.

Defne: There are aspects of the city that I do not like as an LGBTI. Although we say how comfortable we are in the city, we actually close ourselves to certain places. Or we close in certain ways. We always go somewhere called "queer places", "LGBTI-friendly" places.

Neyir: How do you comment on this? This is something I want to address. Going to certain places, perceiving these places as more LGBTI places... What are your thoughts on this?

D: I don't like it very much; this is something that the LGBTI community does a little bit. We are excluded, we are pushed, we are isolated, and we are doing this to ourselves after some point. But what do you got to do?

N: What do you need to do?

D: Sometimes it is necessary to feel that 'this is our environment' and 'this is our place'. Then we end up with 'let's go to a "queer" place then'. But it is too much for me to make this a habit, just go to these places and enter a culture entirely. 'Let's not go to the hetero bar, let's go to the queer bar, let's dance in the gay bar', this seems a little unnecessary to me, I don't want to do that. 'We should appropriate certain places' they say, OK let's do that, but let's also go to other places. I want it. I need it. I say I want to do it. But I don't do it either. It is just not comfortable.

Defne continued explaining herself about the entrapment she felt going only to these limited place options and she said that even though this started as an extrinsic limitation because "the patriarchal-heteronormativity makes LGBTI+s feel like they were in an 'away game all the time'" (Defne), it became quickly and vastly internalized by those who were exposed to it and thus it became an unchallenged fact of the city. On the other hand, being always the one that attracts attention, being always alerted by the idea that someone might actually say something that would interrupt their going-out routines and that would ruin the time they were having in a leisure place is described as the reason why there is still a necessity for these "LGBTI+ friendly" leisure-centered cocoons, namely LGBTI+ bars and cafés, and this is also the reason why there is still the need to produce new ones or to appropriate the existing ones.

There was a very sweet café, a regular one, and I went there with a woman I was in a relationship with. There was an old lady there, and judging from her body language, I understood that she was annoyed because she was constantly looking at us. She was a very sweet lady who was doing actually nothing to bother us or towards us and yet her looks were enough for limiting us. It was so frustrating. We kept looking into each other's eyes, instead of kissing... (Ada, Istanbul)

In terms of leisure places, my examination has shown, if nothing else, that these places, deemed as "LGBTI+ friendly" or "queer places" may operate, similar to what is shown in the literature, as liberating spatial agents in the lives of LGBTI+s along with their restrictive features. As discussed in section 5.2.1 I observed that desires, relationships, and subjects that do not comply with heteronormative patterns and are located outside the dichotomic gender understanding, usually share labeling, harassment, and all kinds of violence in public places. I also noticed that it was actually quite common to feel

uncomfortable from the gaze of a person who looks harmless at the beginning and also to encounter situations that push them to leave the place immediately. So, the relations and interactions between LGBTI+s seem to be trapped from time to time, in these closed and sheltered places, into their meticulously composed cocoons.

In this section, I tried to show that leisure places operate as the field where relations of domination formed based on gender identities, sexual orientation, and economic means are experienced. I believe that an essential factor to understand the construction of social identities lies in the examination of the representations of the connections between various deprivation and dominance relations in space. Attempts to appropriate these leisure places against hetero-patriarchal violence oppose the multiple domination dynamics involved in the use of space. The discussion wraps up with LGBTI+s' demands to be able to live in the urban spaces at all times and under every condition, thus it comes to their demands for their right to the city, a city that needs to be transformed. This means eliminating all control and hegemonic mechanisms over LGBTI+s and everyday urban spaces as well.

Even though, LGBTI+ friendly cafés-bars can open LGBTI+s breathing spaces and give them relative freedom, being stuck in these places and to a life isolated from the remaining outside world would not create absolute liberation. Thus, I argue that the first step to establishing a liberated urban space can be operated through these meticulously knitted “cocoons”. But cocoons are not enough, cocoons are temporary (and arbitrary too in these examples). Cocoons mean more demand for struggle and resistance. Cocoons mean unrest and perturbation as opposed to what all my respondents wanted, an equal, calm, harm-free, and liberated ‘everyday’ life.

Now, I would like to move towards the examination of ‘LGBTI+s’ neighborhoods’ to further portray the disappearing borders between public and private spaces, to present once more the simultaneous liberation and entrapment of LGBTI+s inside their ‘cocoons’ which are formed as the outcome of their resistances towards hetero-patriarchal systems of power.

7.3. LGBTI+s' Neighborhoods in Istanbul

One can measure the importance of these signifying practices (to tell oneself legends) as practices that invent spaces (De Certeau, 1984, p.107).

Space contains more than what experienced and lived moments bring to us. As a result, it cannot only be attributed to concrete and substantial characteristics. It contains the abstract and intangible in itself, which in the end makes it subject to social analysis (Lefebvre, 1991b). According to Lefebvre (1991b), the urban space is imbued with encounters which also brings along the assembly of the things that are in that space (p.101). That assemblage may also indicate to a congregation and a concentration at a particular location or around that location as well; the neighborhood is a vivid example of it (p.101).

I would like to continue by answering another question that Lefebvre (1991b) addresses in the production of space, which is “Can the space occupied by a social group or several such groups be treated as a message?” (p.131) with an affirmative answer: YES, even though Lefebvre seems to be reluctant to give a definitive confirmation to it. I believe Lefebvre’s reluctance derives from his argument that the space is already separated into areas that are forbidden for certain groups (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.319). However, my affirmative answer is rooted in the idea that although space is divided up, the groups that are located there or chose to be located there, bear in mind the significance of their presence in that particular location. The quotidian life is transferred onto these spaces and they carry the self-protection role for its occupiers (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.373). I consider that these spaces of assemblages are where spatial appropriation takes place as well.

I think that the interactions and experiences of individuals within different urban spatial layers are the most influential tools in making sense of the mechanisms underpinning the construction of their attached meanings. Even though several studies have observed the value of preceding experience and spatial engagement as a powerful indicator to examine individuals’ connections to different spatial layers, this link is loosely associated with individual and communal meaning-making processes (Kyle & Chick, 2007).

The Western literature on the intersection of sexuality and space is full of different usages of “the neighborhood” concept. There is a pile of research making use of the notions of ‘gay village’ and ‘gay enclave’ (Bell & Binnie, 2004; Doan & Higgins, 2011; Ghaziani, 2015a; Nash, 2006), ‘gay ghetto’, (Sibalis, 2004), ‘gay neighborhood’ (Greene, 2014), ‘queer friendly neighborhood’ (Gorman-Murray & Waitt, 2009); ‘gayborhood’ (Brown, 2014; Christensen & Caldwell, 2006; Ghaziani, 2015b; Lee, 2014), LGBT neighborhood (Doan & Higgins, 2011; Ghaziani, 2015a; Nash & Gorman-Murray, 2014) and ‘queer neighborhood’ (Doan & Higgins, 2011; Nash, 2013). These studies show how much these widely applied terms have a vital place in understanding the relationship between LGBTI+s and urban residential spaces especially in Western and specifically in North-American territories. According to the existing literature on this topic, I realized that this term reflected an everyday experience of a specific group of people located in a specific geographical setting in the world: that it was mostly a Western (specifically located in Europe, the UK, Australia, and North America) experience. Its historical formation, geographical setting, demographic composition, individual concentrations, and individuals’ daily experiences became important points of interest in hitherto research. The Global North hosts numerous gay villages and neighborhoods; they are imagined to have an organic relationship with the cities’ ‘tolerant’ facet that accepts (or tolerates) the ‘difference’. A ‘gay neighborhood’ or a ‘queer neighborhood’ may possess cafés, bars, and bookstores and at the same time, it also encloses institutions that serve practicing everyday interactions.

Historically speaking, the concept of ‘gay village’ does not suddenly appear in the 1990s or 2000s; it has a history dating way back to 1940s in the Western world and this specific phase is described as a “nationwide ‘coming out’” era (Ghaziani, 2015c, p.308). The preliminary work on this term reflected a descriptive framework that portrays these neighborhoods and the reason why ‘visible’ gays and lesbians would want to live in such neighborhoods. An opportunity to discover who they are; a sanctuary protected from the very horrors of the remaining parts of the judgmental city, for some, this particular urban domain became a protected urban space. There are numerous examples of ‘gay villages’, which later on became true tourist attractions, where peace and liberation-seeking LGBTI+s move individually or collectively and recreate the landscape: the *Castro* in San Francisco, *Boys Town* in Chicago, *Chelsea*

in New York are cited among these (Doan & Higgins, 2011, p.6). Moving to these safe havens is considered both as an eventual action of getting away from the phobic environment and also maybe as an act of struggle and resistance.

In the context of Turkey, Zengin in their study explains the implication of producing a space in the Turkish context by taking part in its production through a shared identity. I agree with Zengin's indication that this shared identity becomes a savior in times of need for shelter (Zengin, 2014). Moreover, I also agree with Erdi-Lelandais who argues that "resistance is, therefore, connected to identity and to space that plays a crucial role for mobilising social resources and solidarity, reinforced by the memory of the neighbourhood" (Erdi-Lelandais, 2014, p.76). Departing from there, I furthermore claim that these particular neighborhoods, in the Turkish context, are actually places of continuous resistance where representations of fluid identities take place and where memories of solidarity are built together. This particular situation is attained because these neighborhoods and its streets that are memorable to LGBTI+s are more detached from "the places they were supposed to define" and they "serve as imaginary meeting-points" (De Certeau, 1984, p.104).

Lefebvre says that "the *urban* remains in a state of dispersed and alienated actuality, as kernel and virtuality" (Lefebvre, 1996, p.148). According to Mustafa, Istanbul gives the opportunity to create clusters in the city, to stick to the ones that people feel connected to. Thus, the representations of space (the conceived aspect of streets, neighborhoods, districts, and particular parts of the city) and the representational space (the transgressive nature of the experiences, the resistances hidden under the most unexpected situations and revolts via wearing of the red lipstick for instance (please see p.209)) "are mutually reinforcing" one another (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.74).

There may be bigger problems in small cities. LGBTI+'s are still excluded in Istanbul. All discrimination continues, but because it is the big sea, they can hold on to people like themselves. Small ghettos are being formed (Mustafa, Istanbul).

Finding a safe harbor, and providing oneself a living space where one can feel secure, at ease, and be their own is among the basic needs of LGBTI+s. The majority of respondents, who were not living with their parents or one of their first and second-degree relatives anymore, had to change homes a couple of times before they started

living in their current homes. These narratives portray “the relation between the itinerary (a discursive series of operations) and the map (a plane projection totalizing observations)” (De Certeau, 1984, p.119). They started selecting certain neighborhoods or streets when they were looking for a place to live and shelter. This selection process evaluates the space through an imaginary and verbal coding mechanism, and consequently results in separating the entity into regions that can be considered as ‘livable’ and ‘not livable’, as if there are green and red flags all over the urban map (thus on the conceived space).

Well, for me there are certain neighborhoods in every city. In Istanbul it may be Kadıköy, if your economic situation allows you, it may be Kurtuluş, Beşiktaş, Yeldeğirmeni, Üsküdar. I’m coding those as liberated areas. I have to look at whether I can live there or not in terms of surviving socially in a way that will satisfy me. I try to see if I can find a space to express myself, let’s say places I did not have to hide. I select them mentally wherever I go (Umut, Istanbul).

In order to start living in one of the neighborhoods that were spotted with a ‘green flag’, LGBTI+s start looking for an apartment or a room where they would not be subject to any form of harm. I noticed that along with sexuality and gender that play a tremendous role in their lived experiences, socio-economic status pervades with all its features and plays a key part in determining the very access to the city. By being able to live in that particular neighborhood, the individual contributes to the production and reproduction of that particular space but more importantly to its appropriation. They continue the production of the ensemble of cocoons, this time by making connections among the if their economic status allows them to do so.

I think we feel safer in certain neighborhoods. For example, we are safer in Tarlabası. But I can’t say it’s a great ghetto. I think if you are from a slightly upper-middle class, you would feel safe on the side of Kurtuluş, Nişantaşı (Ekrem, Istanbul).

I would like to continue my discussion with the inspection of different neighborhoods that were mentioned during our interviews and in which ways LGBTI+s transformed these spaces throughout time. I will start by looking into the Cihangir/ Beyoğlu districts¹¹⁴ and then I will continue with the discussion of the contemporary version of

¹¹⁴ Although, I explained the historical story of the first group in Chapter 1.3.2, below I will also introduce an ex-resident’s narrative of Ülker Street and how the initial neighborhood concept for LGBTI+s has been formed and what it meant to them.

Cihangir/Beyoğlu neighborhoods: Kurtuluş. Some of the respondents were already residents of Kurtuluş at the time of our interviews, and there were also others who were considering moving to that neighborhood. There were two sides to these spatialities just like the thin membrane between public and private space is being lifted, and just like the worm in the cocoon is visible and yet not present at the same time; these two sides were intermingling, getting entangled in the narratives of my respondents.

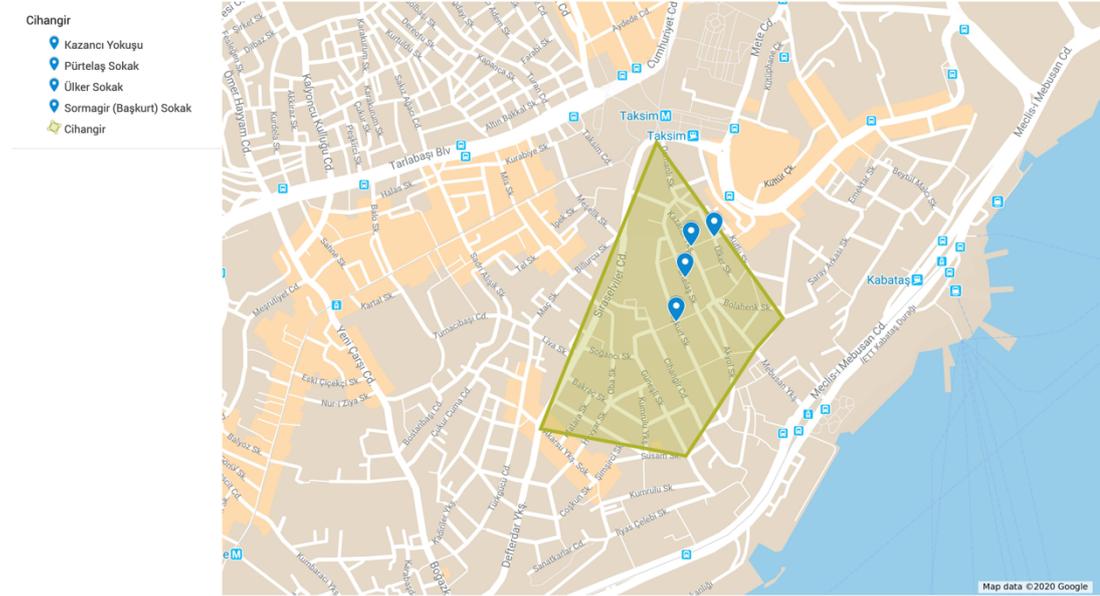
7.3.1. Cihangir and Beyoğlu

Any activity developed over (historical) time engenders (produces) a space, and can only attain practical ‘reality’ or concrete existence within that space (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.115).

Istanbul, a city subject to growth and expansion since the 1960s, has been the research field of multiple sociological and urban studies. The city is the source of endlessly rich material to observe and comment on. Since the beginning of the expansionist strategy, Istanbul turned into a city that separates people based on ethnicity, sect, and social class (Eraydın, 2008) and it fosters spatial segregation towards LGBTI+s based on SOGIE. With the rapid industrialization that started in the 1960s, Istanbul received a high number of migrants from eastern cities, the Black Sea, and the central Anatolian cities of Turkey. This economic appeal became an invitation for other social groups as well. Trans community and Roma people started living in the back and surrounding streets of Beyoğlu by the end of the 1960s. While the city lacks regions to host LGBTI+s in general, starting from the 1970s, Beyoğlu, similar to a micro representation in Ülker Street that was a known street in Cihangir for trans sex workers, became home to socially marginalized communities (Selek, 2001; Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2012b; Zengin, 2014).

In Istanbul, there were quarters (Cihangir and other parts of Beyoğlu for instance) with a dense LGBTI+ population (especially women with trans experience) and these neighborhoods were coded with ‘green flags’ to live and socialize since the 1980s. Ülker Sokak (Ülker Street), Pürtelaş Sokak (Pürtelaş Street), Sormagir Sokak

(Sormagir Street),¹¹⁵ and Kazancı Yokuşu (Kazancı Slope) are all located in Beyoğlu district of Istanbul.



Map 2. Cihangir with Ülker, Pürtelaş, Sormagir Streets and Kazancı Slope (Map prepared by the author on Google Maps)

There is a clearly nostalgic feeling attached to these particular urban spaces. Their significance for LGBTI+s grows even bigger with rampant spacelessness, oppression, and discrimination within society. Nowadays, the history of Ülker Street, Pürtelaş Street, and Kazancı Slope carry a multi-dimensional meaning that goes beyond the nostalgia of ‘community’, and it transforms into a vivid narrative of spatial resistance practice. I noticed that when my respondents, who were aware of what happened back in 1996 during Habitat II Meeting, were discussing these trans ghettos, there was also the visible presence of a collective memory embedded in it. In fact, what this ongoing sentimental and spatial attachment to this particular location shows is that “no space disappears completely or is utterly abolished in the course of the process of social development” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.403).

¹¹⁵ Sormagir street is located in the district of Cihangir. The name of the street translates as “Don’t ask, enter” in English.

De Certeau also distinguishes some particular issues about memory, and he says that “the memory comes from somewhere else, it is outside of itself, it moves things about. The tactics of its art are related to what it is, and to its disquieting familiarity” (De Certeau, 1984, p.87). (Collective) memory is construed on historical recollection and it is easy for someone to feel a lively connection with a memory that operates as a collective identity cement, so to say, without even having experienced the event itself. If the person undergoes similar conditions to that group who experienced an event, whose stimulus triggers a memory that is of such binding nature, a similar connection is easily established between the person and the collective group too (Giesecking, 2013, p.49). Kerem was telling about the history of Ülker Street and why it mattered back then to establish such a neighborhood. For him, this solidarity in Cihangir among women with trans experience, even though he was not a part of it back in the 1990s, had a powerful meaning and this was one of the things that made him believe in LGBTI+ identity and the solidarity that came along with it.

We heard that ghettos were scattered back then. Ülker Street and the surrounding areas. There was a solidarity network of trans people. They worked together in the same streets. It is a problem when there are other neighbors around the places where they were living. Therefore, it is better to have each other side by side. Solidarity against the police and the people who raided their homes and those who exacted tributes from them, saved their lives (Kerem, Istanbul).

One of my respondents, Deniz, who used to live in Ülker Street back in the 1990s, discussed the history of this former trans neighborhood and defined it as a ‘ghetto’. She pointed out that it was the only space in Istanbul where the rule belonged to the “marginalized”, indicating its autogestion characteristic. By the time the trans population was settled in the neighborhood and their number could not be underestimated, these streets became safer and there were limited incidents against the trans community, but the neighborhood was also a disconnected and separate part of the city where residents of the street were living a different everyday life setting (thus in a different spatio-temporality) compared to other residents and parts of the city.

Ülker Street was a ghetto. There was only one ghetto in the world, that was it. Ghettos have good and bad sides. The good part: it’s very safe. We have never seen hate murder there. We did not see any attacks either; even if we encountered them, we were the ones who mashed the person down afterwards and it only happened once a year. Nobody wants to get hurt in the street where there are so many trans. (She laughed). But the ghetto at that time was not a preferred one, it

was a forced ghetto. Whether we wanted it or not, there was a situation for us of being stuck there. City life at that time did not allow you to live that way in other districts. And we were exempt from integrating into society to social life we were deprived of the knowledge that there is another space and another life outside of our place. You start to transform yourself according to the place. At 9 in the morning, you go to the grocery store wearing stage makeup. There was a huge gap between us and society. We did not care about the social norms more than ever, and at least we did not care to try to understand the society at the time (Deniz, Istanbul).

Following the descriptions that I received from Deniz, I interpreted the occurrences in this specific part of the city as a reference point, a benchmark to understand the spatial struggles of LGBTI+ community in Turkey for three different reasons: Firstly, because this spatial conglomeration was considered as the first ghetto for the LGBTI+ community and trans community particularly, and this place was a haven from the oppression that was happening right around the corner. Second, this spatial formation was not a voluntary one. It was forced on trans residents of the neighborhood; they had no other option but to stick together in order to create a safe solidarity net. The neighborhood was an ensemble of “cocoons” for the trans community back in the 1990s (starting from the end of 1980s (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2012a, p.215). Third, this ghetto had a unique form of social relations which allowed the spatial reproduction in this particular neighborhood (Cihangir) and on particular streets. With the description brought by the former resident of this street (Deniz), the necessities of a conglomeration of cocoons were met because the production of a cocoon, as I argue in this thesis, implicates an appropriation process, which implies a temporal, symbolic, and practical feature to it (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.356). Indeed, the appropriation took place over time, on a particular spatial location and this formation of the cocoon could not be “understood apart from the rhythms of time and of life” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.166).

This appropriated spatial field, albeit protective and comforting at certain times, was not free from resistance. In fact, it was both the result and the continuance of resistances that were producing it in mostly visible ways this time, just like the cocoons are. These areas were embedded into the individual and communal resisting behavior with cocoons laying one next to the other. This is a particular way of appropriating the space; in addition to the individual narratives that one would be able to collect; what I was able to understand was that the neighborhood and the streets that were embedded

in it fostered multi-layered resistance mechanisms towards existing social, economic and political systems. The conglomeration of cocoons was visible at that time, and it was recognized by others too.

This part of the city had the capacity to defy and juxtapose multiple spaces on different platforms. This place (imaginarily) closed to the outside world and ruling its own rules made itself a publicly isolated area. Operating on its own rules, this particular part of the city was not like any other public place. The street has thus become a space of illusion, disconnectedness from real life but at the same time, it was the realm of its inhabitants. Its existence was limited to an amount of time and was damped out due to social anxieties. The street was open to newcomers, there were rules that needed to be followed since there were also a lot of daily visitors to the neighborhood coming to visit trans sex workers.

As I said earlier, this particular urban domain carries contemporary importance in the lives of LGBTI+s because of its memory. As De Certeau indicates,

...the verbal relics of which the story is composed, being tied to lost stories and opaque acts, are juxtaposed in a collage where their relations are not thought, and for this reason they form a symbolic whole (De Certeau, 1984, p.107).

Memory is probable when there is a group carrying it over to the next generations. Those who experience the memories of that particular space know in an everlasting way what they have gone through in that location and they share this memory with others. The memory of a space is formed through collectively narrated, experienced, and lived spaces and it carries the traces of collective representation of that particular space through ties of “mnemonic socialization” which then transform into “mnemonic communities” (Zerubavel, 1996, pp.286-9). In fact, as Lefebvre points out any social event leaves its marks in space and with it, it actually inscribes “its script, the result and product of social activities” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.110).

I would like to recall back to Kerem’s remembrance of Ülker Street (please see p.288) and how he was aware of the fact that solidarity kept the trans community living in that neighborhood safe. For Kerem, the collective memory of the trans community’s displacement, even though he was not part of the experience itself, is an indicator for similar future events which translates into LGBTI+s’ *‘cry out’* for the right to the city’

and their (and his) demand for the whole city and not only the ghettos. In this sense, the memory of Ülker Street experiences and events represents the sensation of resistance, pride, and the spatial struggle for Kerem who had not joined the trans community back then but who had been feeling as a part of the community after the events took place (Zerubavel, 1996, p.290).

There is always someone who comes to sweep them. In Avcılar, they take people who have their own homes from their homes. In a sense, it is a good ghetto, but on the other hand, you are actually exposed to violence, you are pushed away, swept. “It will be gentrified there”. “Sex work cannot be done, there can be no trans people, because tourists will come”, they say. They say, “The prices of that place have increased”, “it will no longer be the home of transgender people; it will be the home of others”. But there is the slogan of Kaos GL, “We want the whole city, not the ghettos”¹¹⁶. That is why we want the areas where we will exist in the whole city (Kerem, Istanbul).

Back in the 1990s, after Cihangir was terrorized by law enforcement officers and became susceptible to LGBTI+s, it became habitable for those with higher monthly incomes, but it was no longer perceived as an attainable safe place for LGBTI+s. According to Uğur, with the moving in of niche, artistic and richer people into the neighborhood, the place started to change again and became highly wanted but not attainable by LGBTI+s.

Some of my closest friends used to live in Cihangir, and now a couple of my friends are still living there. There were trans people in particular before the 2000s, but now that place is usually habited by the ones with middle and high socio-economic statuses. You have to have a certain amount of income to live there at this particular time. It is a relatively good place I guess (Uğur, Istanbul).

As discussed in the introduction chapter, the historicity of Taksim, the back streets of Cihangir and the transformation of these quarters offer a one-of-a-kind inspection (Hancıoğlu, 2015; Selek, 2001; Zengin, 2014). These districts were transformed into spaces of economic relations that were not socially greeted by the majority of society (Selek, 2001; Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2012a, 2013). Social discrimination forces LGBTI+s towards secluded areas but they continue to suffer with this violent reality on an occasional frequency coming through different channels and sources. All sorts of non-conforming identities especially those intersecting with a lower socio-economic status resist this oppression and try to form a liberating space even if

¹¹⁶ A banner of this motto prepared by Kaos GL can be found in the Appendices part.

temporarily. According to Deniz, there is now more than one ghetto in the city, not because it is easier to carve out new spatial layers that are free from oppression and discrimination but because the state does not allow conglomerations that are as big as Cihangir streets were in the 1980s and 1990s and this results in relatively small-scale spatial formations. This is in tandem with what Lefebvre argues that political power operates as a controlling mechanism over the accumulation of the masses upon different urban spatial layers (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.388).

There is no such ghetto, nowadays but now there are many tiny ghettos. Everyone scattered to one side. But the state does not allow such a gathering either (Deniz, Istanbul).

Now, I would like to focus on one of these neighborhoods that were mentioned multiple times by my respondents, Kurtuluş.

7.3.2. Kurtuluş

Subordinate groups have attempted, when possible, to assert their resistance on the safer terrain of undeclared appropriation. (Scott, 1989, p.54)

Kurtuluş offers a platform for connection between the residents: foreign immigrants, religious minorities (Armenians, Jews, and Greeks), its first migrants from Anatolia, and with LGBTI+s altogether. This means that the district offers a space to reevaluate and reproduce agreements, negotiations, feasible blocs, and the “minority overlap” among these groups. This particular neighborhood was diversified, it carried opposing characteristics to the rest of the city. According to Lefebvre, such places could be characterized with a framework based on ‘topias’ and furthermore, they could also be identified as “analogous places, contrasting places” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.163). In this thesis, I applied the concept of “cocoon” to categorize these particular neighborhoods to indicate both their production phase and also their other features consisting of protection, safety, communication, and resistance.

Kurtuluş, ‘salvation’ in its exact translation to English, has been considered one of the safest locations to get sheltered in by the respondents, even though the place is not completely free from heteropatriarchal oppression stemming within the urban spaces. It is also described to represent the “ghetto soul” (*getto ruhu*) as put by some of my

respondents: it is a socially mixed district with a wide diversity of people from different social groups.

In our building, there are gays besides us, there are two Armenian families, our neighbor is black, and there are people possibly from the Turkic Republics. Last year, my father and my mother came to visit me, and they stayed for a week, my father was shocked when he came back home the first day, he told me ‘blacks have their own coffeeshop here’ (Eser, Istanbul).

LGBTI+s were able to create a more ‘inclusive queer space’ in Kurtuluş compared to the streets in the Cihangir neighborhood. Some described Kurtuluş as a gay ghetto (*gay getto*) whereas some preferred using the term queer neighborhood (*kuir mahalle*), queer space (*kuir mekan*), fag city (*ibne kenti*), fag district (*ibne semti*). But the one thing they all agreed upon was the fact that LGBTI+s felt more at ease and comfortable in this neighborhood. It is an identity-conforming place where LGBTI+s are surrounded by people like themselves, an embracing community that provides not only nascent sexual identities, expressions, and orientations but also a sense of belonging fostered by the presence of (relatively) welcoming neighbors.

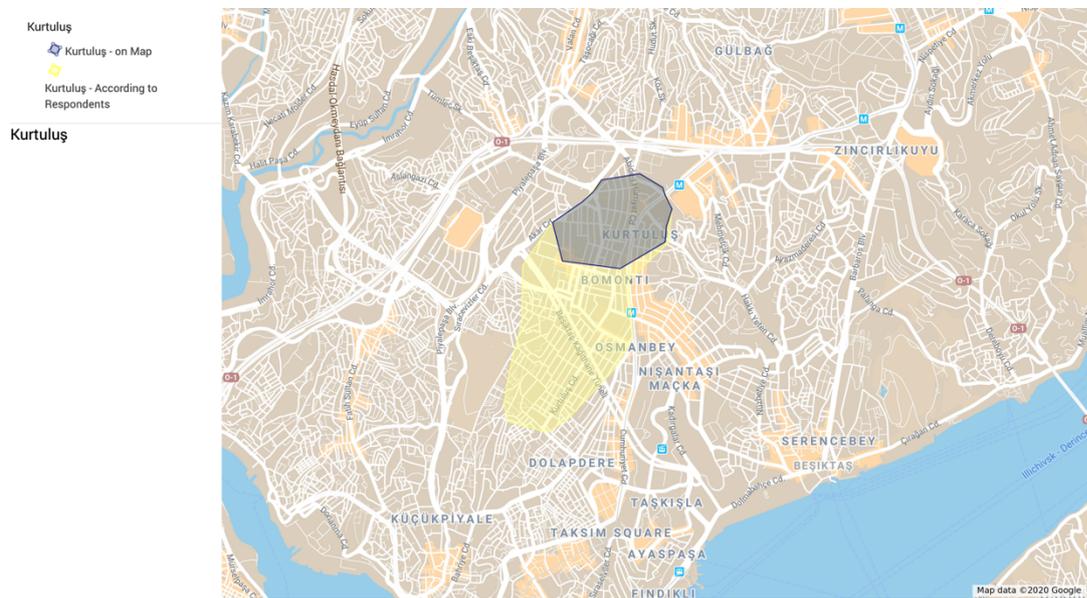
There are certain differentiations in the narratives of Kurtuluş and the famous Cihangir districts mostly specifically Ülker Street and Kazancı Slope and around Sormagir Street (please see Map 2). Nowadays, Kurtuluş is not as walled¹¹⁷ and separated from the rest of the city as Ülker Street, based on its descriptions, but rather it is seen as a crossway between Taksim and Şişli (the official name of the district Kurtuluş is located at), a nice passage from ‘the residential (relative) comfort zone’ (Şişli) to a place where there are numerous bars and cafés where one may feel safer (Taksim), compared to other leisure places located in the other parts of the city. This passage is basically between the entertainment venue (Taksim) and one of the condensed business places of İstanbul (Şişli).

¹¹⁷ The walls surrounding a particular space (the city for example) carry a critical implication. As it was suggested by Lefebvre, the walls surrounding the cities (especially in ancient times) signaled both a material and symbolic separation from the rest of the space (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.163). In the example that I suggest in this section, the Cihangir area was described to be separated from the realm of the city, despite the lack of actual walls. However, the lived aspect of that particular urban spatial field indicated an experienceable, thus ‘readable’ separation.

It is very free, like a gay district. The name of the area should be “fag district”, or it should be “fag city”. mostly because it is close to the entertainment center, and the city center (Ali, Istanbul).

Beyoğlu is a utopian place where everyone can go to. Şişli is both in Beyoğlu and not in Beyoğlu at the same time; it is a separate place. If I continued to work in Levent, Şişli would be the place I would consider living in. I don’t want Beyoğlu to lose its magic. And when I want to get access there, it is very easy to go to Beyoğlu (Can, Istanbul).

Kurtuluş neighborhood, located in the Şişli district, covers a small place according to its ‘officially conceived’ borders compared to what it was described by my respondents (Map 3). According to them, the neighborhood border reaches towards Feriköy and Dolapdere’s borders starting from Osmanbey Metro Station. The borders drawn by the authorities constitute a code signaling the limits of the spatial field. However, as this map with its two distinct sets of markers (one belonging to the conceived – the grey area and the other one belonging to the lived aspect of the space – the yellow area) also shows, the unmatching character of these borders with the narratives of the respondents clearly indicate to a deception, “for they are at one more remove from reality” (Lefebvre, 1991, p.91).



Map 3. Kurtuluş with its ‘official’ borders and Kurtuluş with the borders set by the respondents (Map prepared by the author on Google Maps)

Neighborhood, “mahalle”, is the unit of residency that is frequently used to describe the place of habitation. According to Savran, *mahalle* can be both depicted as a private

and public space. Its private characteristic necessitates it being protected and surveilled by the inhabitants whereas its publicness appears as an opportunity, especially for women, in the Turkish context (Savran, 2002, p.273). This twofold characteristic serves to diminish the sharp distinction between public-private space differentiation and I agree with this statement. Similarly, Mills describes the neighborhood concept as a space “which extends the interior space of the family to the residential street; it is a space of belonging and collectivity” (Mills, 2007, p.336).

According to my findings, there are multiple meanings attached to this spatial unit: solidarity, commonality of “difference” among inhabitants, and connection between residents can be listed among them.

Kurtuluş, how can I say, it is like the Brooklyn of America; there is also a lot of neighborhood culture. It is a place where you go to the grocery store and say “I don’t have money on my card” and they would say “you’ll give it tomorrow, then”. It is also a place where an LGBT individual lives (Eser, Istanbul).

Kurtuluş is described by my respondents who were already living there as the ‘old-but-new’, ‘accessible’, and ‘affordable’ place to live. Some of them were making these comments as former Cihangir residents after the overpricing of rents in the Cihangir neighborhood and others were making calculations based on other neighborhoods and what these other neighborhoods had to offer them. By the time I was conducting the interviews, my respondents informed me that there was already a somewhat big group of LGBTI+s who had already moved to the neighborhood, which in return, was generating new LGBTI+ residents to move to Kurtuluş. This was a direct effect of word-of-mouth circulation; the positive impression of the neighborhood upon LGBTI+s was spreading through the narratives of the LGBTI+ residents themselves. The area was becoming an even more popular place to live in mainly because it offered the feeling of togetherness and acceptance of the commonality of ‘difference’.

Many of my friends have moved. They are already living there. They are quite happy about it. They feel like it is a big camp area there. More sharing, more togetherness... I see why it is catching their attention and stealing their hearts (Deniz, Istanbul).

The sense of community impacts LGBTI+s’ perceptions of neighborhoods in terms of cohesion and protection. Especially but not necessarily for those who are associated with LGBTI+ activism, the neighborhood carries a critical and political role. Now, I

would like to explore respondents' narratives of Kurtuluş based on two distinct aspects of it: the liberatory feature of the neighborhood and the entrapping feature of it.

7.3.2.1. "Kurtuluş is Our Salvation" ¹¹⁸

The creation of new localities and spatialities has also been deemed as the result of the recuperation of safety. As I portrayed above, the literature suggests that queer neighborhoods offered LGBTI+s people a sense of safety, and feeling 'at home', surrounded by people that understand and do not judge them. Kurtuluş was not only considered safe for LGBTI+s, but it was also a liberating space for women, regardless of their sexual orientation. Eser voiced her perception of the neighborhood and what her friends had told her once when she started doubting her decision to start living in the Kurtuluş area. What strikes me the most in her narrative was her friend's reassurance of this special urban spatiality: knowing that there are people who would run to help them out in case of an emergency is considered a sufficient reason to live in Kurtuluş.

It feels safe. For example, when I first moved from Cihangir, I said to myself "Cihangir was much better in terms of location, why did I move?" When I think of something like that, they told me; let's say something happens to me on the street and I scream, I am sure that either a friend of mine or a trans woman would open the window and start shouting with me and alert others and would eventually help to save me from whatever I am afraid of. It is reassuring that many of my friends and many of friends of other friends live close to each other (Eser, Istanbul).

As I explored in the previous discussion, for most of the respondents, getting to know people 'like themselves' and being surrounded by them appears as a very important social connector and a coiler practice. In the city, this is spatially represented by the neighborhoods where some LGBTI+s' homes are densely located at. The spatial closeness brings a sense of community and vicinity with itself. This vicinity includes layers of different social groups. Their entanglement can be in the form of groups of intimate close friends, more like social groups, or more specifically in the form of an ensemble of cocoons as I like to call them. The result is that they feel constantly

¹¹⁸ This was articulated during my interview with Ada. The original Turkish version is "*Kurtuluş bizim kurtuluşumuzdur!*" There is a wordplay in Ada's connotation; the neighborhood's name being Kurtuluş (Salvation in its direct translation) has been appropriated by Ada in the way that it represented the true sense of 'salvation' to live there.

connected by living in the same neighborhood. For those who cherish living in the same neighborhood, the “neighborhood is togetherness” and as a result, they are more often together than alone. In that sense, LGBTI+s are among “the innumerable groups ... [who] have sought to invent a ‘new life’ – usually a communal one” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.379). This communal living in the neighborhood is called vicinage or neighborliness (*komşuculuk*) by some of my respondents. Defne, quoted below, is one of these respondents who was inspired by this ambiance of “togetherness”.

Kurtuluş is like that, for example. I think people like to live in that culture of coexistence not only in the places they go to, but to live with such a twenty-four hour of togetherness. A friend of mine who lived there told us that the neighborhood gives a true sense of ‘a neighborhood’. Living together, communal life is always about caring for each other and eating together. They are playing a type of ‘komşuculuk’ (neighborliness) (Defne, Istanbul).

I would like to elaborate on Defne’s narrative. I realize that this vicinity has also an economic feature implanted in it. I consider the example of the relationship they have with each other, the sharing and a more communal way of living as a resistance practice in itself, following De Certeau’s point about the ‘potlatch’ (De Certeau, 1984, p.27). The potlatch, as defined by De Certeau (1984) signifies “an interplay of voluntary allowances that counts on reciprocity” (p.27). According to him, in current market economy conditions, these acts of reciprocity are usually bounded by financial settings and more specifically by “the code of generalized equivalence constituted by money” (p.27). Considering the sharing and caring between them and also taking into account what Eser was telling about the small shop owners’ attitude towards the residents of the neighborhood as I pointed out above (please see p.295), this whole participative attitude of collectivity is actually a sign of persistence towards the dominant economic rule outside of the borders of this particular neighborhood. I consider these relationships serving as fine threads swathing these cocoons as a challenge to what De Certeau was saying that “there are no longer any ghosts who can remind the living of reciprocity” (De Certeau, 1984, p.27), because there exist, even though in a limited fashion, these forms of relationships between LGBTI+s. It is through these entanglements that cocoons are becoming connected to one another (Picture 2, p.73) and the resistance keeps on persisting. This togetherness is an indicator in their recital of the narratives of their everyday lives. These stories are personal, reified, and determinative of themselves and their surroundings, too. Thus,

in the case of LGBTI+s in general, the *neighborhood* is the location where *komşuculuk* takes place while empowering the residents for resisting oppression and cherishing everyday life.

Creating a safe zone in that way is something people need. So, I find LGBTI+'s need to live together understandable and logical. It becomes a purposeful lifestyle (Ekrem, Istanbul).

Eser indicated a similar feature in this neighborhood in terms of togetherness and safety as well. She said, “in the last 8 or 10 months, Kurtuluş has started to feel like we’re all here, so it feels good”. Her girlfriend’s house was only 2 streets away from hers and they deeply enjoyed meeting on a Sunday morning at the first junction nearby their apartment buildings to buy bread and other pastry goods from the bakery, then go and enjoy their brunch time accompanied by other friends living around the neighborhood. Her own description of the neighborhood has sunshine and clear blue sky, and it almost has a nostalgic “neighborhood (mahalle)” understanding where people helped each other out, shared their food and other goods together, where there were real friendships and closeness. When I asked her why she felt that way about Kurtuluş in particular, she explained herself by pointing out her deep yearning for a collective and harm-free life:

The perception of this neighborhood [Kurtuluş] in my mind is that the neighbors have tight connections with one another and the grocery store in the neighborhood brings us bread. The ability to experience ‘komşuculuk’ without going far away [from the city] feels good. It feels good to have my friends there. It is a good thing that we all live nearby each other, three or four steps away from each other and no one is harassed there (Eser, Istanbul).

The way environments are perceived and arranged has a lot to do with patriarchal heteronormativity that determines how individuals with non-conforming desires and identities and non-binary expressions are perceived and furthermore treated. In my study, I revealed that in addition to the formation of the safety net, the emergence of this sheltered neighborhood, an ensemble of cocoons made of numerous unitary cocoons in the middle of the city, is also serving to change the general atmosphere of that spatiality. Eser indicates that the more their neighbors at the windows or on the streets and the small store (*bakkal*) owners around their streets are exposed to LGBTI+ ‘bodies’ (individuals) and the more they experience LGBTI+s’ continuous presence in their everyday life, the more likely they are becoming accustomed to living together

in harmony and as a result, they tear apart the marginalized image of the “others” in their imagination. In fact, “the street tears from obscurity what is hidden and publishes what happens elsewhere, in secret; it deforms it, but inserts it into the social text” (Blanchot, 1993, p.242). Eser told me about the change she was able to detect back when she was living in Cihangir before she moved to Kurtuluş.

I was in Cihangir two years ago. There was no neighborhood in Kurtuluş back then. There too, the perception of the neighbors was changing. This is also related to increasing visibility. In Kurtuluş, people become neighbors and look at their neighbors, and the ‘diseased perception’ changes because they see that their neighbors are just like them. I like it, I like to be together, and it feels like it serves to change the places where we are located (Eser, Istanbul).

Eser’s critical point made me think about the possibilities one might get out of this situation and I started asking myself the ways in which the everyday life of LGBTI+s would be affected when the perception of the residents living in the same neighborhood changes, even if little by little. Ada, who was living in another neighborhood of Istanbul (in Hisarüstü near the university where she graduated, Boğaziçi University) helped me understand better the situation by highlighting one simple and crucial result that came out of this social change: it regains the tenacity of individuals to continue resisting in other parts of their life because the neighborhood starts offering a more heterogenous and peaceful environment where one does not need to struggle anymore, as much as they do in other parts of the city. The neighborhood by offering a relatively comforting and calm environment helps the individual to continue their struggle in other areas, meaning that the cocoon expands its sphere of influence thanks to the thin protective membrane and threads around itself.

[In other neighborhoods] there are people, on the one hand, you waste your time, but you can open them and touch upon them up to a point, then you become tired at some point. In the other one, [in Kurtuluş] you can deal with different things without that effort. You can also struggle with something else. I feel that way because I feel very tired now. I have a very basic request: I don’t want people to be concerned about who enters my house, or about whatever I wear. But these are the things that I don’t have now, so I could have preferred [Kurtuluş] (Ada, Istanbul).

Moreover, in the minds of LGBTI+s, carving out a safe spatial domain in the fierce urban space has been deemed as an important factor that empowers the individual which in return empowers the movement and the collective LGBTI+ community in general. This is in relation to the inquiry I addressed concerning the relation between

micro and macro resistance practices (please see p.228) to the point that, here, I suggest that micro empowerments gained as a result of the micro resistances pave the path for macro-level empowerment too. Defne defined this impact as an empowering process between the individual and the collectivity and she said:

It strengthens the individual. Isn't it like that? Basically, what strengthens the individual strengthens the movement. I think it is a very nice thing for an individual to find a safe zone for themselves, to have their own environment, in which they feel a strong sense of belonging. If they do not have such a togetherness, they will only feel unprotected in their neighborhood (Defne, Istanbul).

This particular neighborhood in Istanbul is a mixed one, there is a diversity of people: religious minorities (*Rums*, Jews, Armenians), LGBTI+s, other ethnic minorities, families, singles, and students are all located in one neighborhood. From an overall perspective, respondents claim that those who live there feel **safe** and they feel **at home** even when on the street. They feel welcomed and they do not pretend to be someone else. Both the feeling of making things as a commune and the presence of neighborliness are listed among the attractive traits of this neighborhood. As a result, Istanbul, a city that is described as a detractive space, becomes a harbor in this particular quarter, with a nostalgic sense of 'helping each other out in the neighborhood'.

This research shows that even though the existence of other social groups serves to a certain point as a dynamic that eases the district's '*rahatlık*' (comfort) for LGBTI+, it is actually the connections that are made among them that provide the real sense of 'being at home'. These ties pave the way for the formation of a conglomeration of cocoons. In this sense, Kurtuluş can be interpreted as a small-scale urban space that provides a basis for contradictory distinctions of morality, sexuality, and space, and which also allows LGBTI+s to construct themselves by navigating through the physical and normative borders. LGBTI+s continue their individual struggles and resistances, through the cocoon and the cocoon network they are attached to.

However, the Kurtuluş neighborhood is not only described with its positive features; it has its downfalls, too. Now, I would like to explore the barriers that this neighborhood posits to its LGBTI+ residents.

7.3.2.2. Ghettoization and Entrapment in Kurtuluş

San Francisco is a refugee camp for homosexuals. We have fled here from every part of the nation, and like refugees elsewhere, we came not because it is so great here, but because it was so bad there...we have formed a ghetto, out of self-protection. It is a ghetto rather than a free territory because it is still theirs... (Wittman, 1970).

Regardless of whether they were living in Kurtuluş or not, according to my respondents, this ‘neighborhood culture’ that was actively being cherished in Kurtuluş had not only have positive impacts but also negative influences on LGBTI+s both individually and collectively. Some of the respondents mentioned that there were a few elements that could shadow the sense of comfort, relief, safety, and solidarity in the neighborhood.

One of the most critical and perhaps the most essential of these issues was the fact that these areas where LGBTI+s could coexist communally resulted in the confinement of individuals into the borders of that particular neighborhood and as a result social groups become even more disconnected from the rest of the city and further marginalized. According to the narratives of some of the respondents, while the collective living experience offers psychological, social, and everyday life support and as a result, LGBTI+s feel more at ease and trusting and almost depend on each other living in one neighborhood; it was pointed out that although living together in one neighborhood provides protection, it does not change the reality of being stuck in one place.¹¹⁹

Even though the practice of living in that particular neighborhood brings a power of unity, the situation that was put forward was that it usually meant staying in a closed area, which would bring further isolation from the city. Defne, who was critical about the domination of LGBTI+ or queer places in LGBTI+s’ socializing, and residential practices and habits thought that while complaining about being trapped in designated areas of the city, LGBTI+s, including herself, were usually finding themselves going to the same places over and over again. This, according to her, created even further segregation. She said:

¹¹⁹ This was the situation happening in the Cihangir district before it was eliminated by law enforcement forces as I explored above.

I wish it would be a nice, pleasant life. But it is not right for me to exclude myself a hundred percent from the heterosexual society, from life. But I could have thought of living in Kurtuluş, I wish. Neighborhood culture is beautiful for an LGBTI person, although we say how comfortable we are in the city, we actually close ourselves to certain places. Thus, we close ourselves in certain ways (Defne, Istanbul).

As can be seen from her narrative, Defne was eager to experience the neighborhood life in Kurtuluş and she was wanting to explore LGBTI+ places and LGBTI+ social circles a bit more. Most of her friends had already moved there and she had been hearing pleasant communal life stories. But more importantly, what was alluring for her was the feeling of belonging to somewhere and yet she was also scared of losing her possibility to leave that neighborhood for good: “It is nice to embrace a place and feel like belonging there, but it may be that you can no longer leave that place” (Defne, Istanbul).

Deniz, a former resident of Ülker Street who experienced the “ghetto life” during the 1990s firsthand, discussed the same issue and what she narrated was a detailed description of ‘ghettoization’. For her, being in a ghetto meant limited access to the city. It meant forced clustering and accumulation to a certain part of the city. It also meant that people who live in that particular neighborhood find themselves obliged to live there because there are no other options, and she stands against this in the long run. She thinks even though the neighborhood culture is an empowerment instrument for all those who live there, it should not be the aim, but it should rather be a tool to step further away from the circles, from the cocoons that are being knitted in the course of everyday life.

It is like to be in a ghetto, to feel free only in certain streets and to just be stuck in certain bars, to sit in certain neighborhoods, to feel safe in certain neighborhood networks. So, there are many examples of this. There is a worldwide concept called the gay village. This is a Jewish ghetto, and there is a private neighborhood where Gypsy people are located, every neighborhood already has a label, and “this neighborhood is a white collar one”, “gypsies are living in this neighborhood”, and there are many labels like “Kurds live in this neighborhood”. And I think that this has to be resolved, I am not saying that Kurds should not live in one particular neighborhood, what I am saying is that they should not be forced to live there, it should not be their only and best option. Everywhere should be equal and heterogeneous. If one cannot find a place elsewhere, and one cannot exist the way that one is, then it is a ghettoization (Deniz, Istanbul).

Another issue that led my respondents to criticize life in Kurtuluş was the LGBTI+ residents' profile in Kurtuluş. According to some of my respondents, today's ghetto remains almost reserved for "white Turks"¹²⁰: this attachment is more or less similar to the ghettos described in the Western world that I discussed at the beginning of this chapter. According to Deniz for instance, the class perspective cleanses the district and creates a sterile environment, lacking the presence of multiplicity and variety in the neighborhood among LGBTI+s. In addition to not being able to afford the place; the neighborhood creates its eco-system by leaving the essence of some perspectives (seemingly more leftist, pro-Kurdish presence) outside of its borders. This is deemed problematic because the neighborhood is rendered only accessible to some groups, with the necessary economic means, whereas they remain 'a dream' to others, which consequently promotes segregation within the whole. This selective nature of Kurtuluş thus fosters alienation and disparity among LGBTI+s as well.

I blame them a little bit for being "white". For example, they are in the Kurdish movement too, but they do not have Kurdish friends. I think this is a problem (Deniz, Istanbul).

Another negative characteristic of this neighborhood was the "other residents" of Kurtuluş and their stance towards LGBTI+s. As I explored in the previous section, LGBTI+s defined Kurtuluş as a center of possibilities in which they were relatively freed from patriarchal, religious, and nationalist norms that regulate their bodies and their everyday lives. As a result, in Kurtuluş, LGBTI+s feel freer to express themselves, their bodies, and their desires. There, LGBTI+s feel less controlled and regulated by social and cultural norms. However, as respondents indicated their claims over power and urban space as a whole remain fragile and limited to a spatio-temporality. Even though most of the respondents think that, while they express their sexual identities, selves and desires more freely in Kurtuluş, they also realize that the other residents of Kurtuluş, especially households with traditional family structures, may sometimes be persistent about existing socio-cultural values and norms circling around a homogenized understanding of gender and sexuality, this time in a more

¹²⁰ The description brought to the "white Turks" (*Beyaz Türkler*) concept resulted in the incarnation of an individual with certain socio-economical traits. The whiteness brings individuals from middle-class, mostly working in white-collar jobs, earning a decent amount of monthly income that would allow them to go out on the weekends and to dine outside, to go to galleries and movies if they want to, and also to take a week away vacation abroad.

subtle way. Respondents had the impression that the “other residents” (non-Muslim family households) in Kurtuluş are conservative about the issues of family structure, gender, patriarchy, and heterosexuality, even though they represent a minority within the society itself. Some respondents indicated that it was rather the awareness of being the ‘other’ and ‘otherness’ that were guiding the relationship between the old inhabitants (non-Muslims) and the relative newcomers (LGBTI+s) and not the awareness of and resistance to existing gender and sexuality norms. Eser describes the general profile of residents in Kurtuluş like this:

There are children and families, and there is an Armenian population here. We are a marginal group here. Like several singles who live like in a student house. On the one hand, Kurtuluş offers good things, that everyone is different and that we can live in neighborhood culture and all of that. But they are Armenian ‘families’, you know... they are a normal family with a traditional mind like my mother and my father (Eser, Istanbul).

What Eser meant here was that the usual family structure and all the notions and values attached to it, which entraps LGBTI+s into spacelessness and keeps them inbetween in-visibilitys, are detectable among non-Muslim families as well. Eser also points out that heteropatriarchal rule is widespread even in a neighborhood that is considered safe, and home-like for LGBTI+s.

I would like to mention another study conducted in Kurtuluş to explore the depths of this issue. Nazlı Cabadağ (2015), in her master’s thesis focusing on the experiences of LGBTI+ residents in Kurtuluş, points out an interesting and relatable finding from her fieldwork results. Cabadağ states that “Kurtuluş also appears as one of those available neighborhoods with its *öteki*¹²¹ residents, however it is much more challenging to be categorized merely as a welcoming area for all the groups of *öteki*, as if there is no negotiations and tension between its residents to construct the practices of living together” (Cabadağ, 2015, p.27) “that is to say, the district provides a site to reconsider the negotiations, possible alliances and the ‘clash of minorities’ with all these groups of residents.” (p.114). Cabadağ has an optimistic projection for the future, given that more people are keen to live in Kurtuluş. Cabadağ thinks that “the tension and the negotiations over the spatiality of the sexuality and queerness will become a more overt issue in the district as the time passes” (p.27). I agree with Cabadağ on the

¹²¹ *Öteki* means “the other”, and “the farther” and it signals an alterity.

description and projection of Kurtuluş. This is also because I agree with Lefebvre's understanding that differences accumulate, and produce collections of differences creating a potential for collective action. In fact, I find it necessary that collaboration between different groups occurs for the reproduction of space and its appropriation (Lefebvre, 1991b, pp.380-81). What I see in the narratives of my respondents is that Kurtuluş is perceived not as a final destination that signals an achievement. For some of them, it is a continuation of their experiences, for others, it is a start of their spatial resistances, and the future is yet to come.

I would like to continue this discussion with another related aspect of the neighborhood. Eser a current resident in Kurtuluş, despite her own good neighborhood experience, was critical about the neighborhood formation for another reason too. She made a distinction between the impact upon the "individual" and the impact upon the "whole" of this particular neighborhood. For Eser, the demand for the whole city is a collective, continuous, and political one and it is a necessity to feel reassured, to feel safe, and "to own back" the city. It emerges as a necessity for the community, and yet it does not cover the people who do not have the possibility to live in Kurtuluş. According to Eser, even though she has a pleasant experience in Kurtuluş, her experience does not translate into 'the liberation for all', but only to liberation for 'herself', and for 'those like her', those who can actually cover the expenses of living in Kurtuluş. She says the utter goal should be the liberation of all and it is about gaining 'rights' all around the city even though the whole city is not attractive to her.

On the one hand, we say 'We do not want ghettos, we want the whole city'; this is the case politically speaking. Frankly, I am not personally interested in the whole city, I am not going to wander around the city. But it is not about that. It is the demand for the whole city that matters. Not only in here [Kurtuluş], but we also want people in other neighborhoods to feel safe too. I want those people to feel safe and good too. This is not something that will happen when we settle there [in Kurtuluş] with our expansionism. For a gay or lesbian person living in Eserler, it doesn't matter if we move there with thirty other people. But it is a start. It starts in Kurtuluş, the liberation (Eser, Istanbul).

Eser was one of the respondents who pointed out that urbanization cannot be addressed independently from all the social processes. It becomes clear that at some point, urbanization turns into a tool used to design a society that includes all those who fit the norm and excludes those who cannot fit into those designated borders of

‘normalcy’. According to Lefebvre “only groups, social classes and class fractions capable of revolutionary initiative can take over and realize to fruition solutions to urban problems” (Lefebvre, 1996, p.154). Accordingly, here I argue that LGBTI+s in Turkey by trying to produce a response to this, take part among these groups who can indeed take the initiative to bring a new perspective to current solutions.

I would like to give reference to Lefebvre’s two distinct points to discuss further this issue. In the Critique of Everyday life, when Lefebvre was discussing the property possession status of individuals, he directed his attention towards a spatial layer (the mountain) and he stated that “the important thing is not that I should become the owner of a little plot of land in the mountains, but that the mountains be open to me ... In this way and in this way alone the world becomes mine” (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.158). And in the Production of Space, he stated that “a revolution that does not produce a new space has not realized its full potential...A social transformation, to be truly revolutionary in character, must manifest a creative capacity in its effects on daily life...” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.54). Eser’s words bring these two Lefebvrian implications to my mind and I realize that the current appropriation of Kurtuluş is not sufficient and that the end goal is the urban revolution itself where all parts of the city are as accessible, as safe, and livable as Kurtuluş was to Eser. Departing from Eser’s comments, what I understand is that there is a persistent need and demand to transform space and society in a revolutionary way. As a result, I consider all resistances (operating on micro and macro levels) that aim to transform the space to be operational tools working to annihilate the enthrallment of the everyday by the norms and rules of the abstract space (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.59).

In this sense, although my study shows that, Kurtuluş as a borough, with its complex mixture of heterogeneous life conditions and settings, turns into a platform for the emergence of social channels by rebuilding their spatial activities, I also revealed that it can only offer relative, limited and almost a privileged easiness and comfort. This is because it is a place that entails a possibility for a deviation from existing norms and freedom but also it entails surveillance, control, traditional gender and sexuality norms, and regulation, and more importantly it requires a certain economic capital from its residents. One of the issues that I explored in the in-visibility section where I discussed my respondents’ tactics developed upon being invisible (please see p.143)

can be considered to be concerning this issue. Kerem complains about this limitedness, and he says he is missing a lot of things that are happening outside of the existing ‘cocoon’ (this time, the neighborhood). Kerem’s complaint has its basis in LGBTI+s’ need for a “protective umbrella” (Savran, 2002, p.277), even for their usual activities, which takes the form of a neighborhood in this particular narrative.

I want to meet people and have sex in Akçakoca¹²². I don’t want to need applications for this. For this, I don’t want to flirt with any straight guy and hear them say, “No, I don’t like men.” Therefore, I want to be in safe areas where I will come together in social environments, where I will not be exposed to discrimination. When I am in the ghettos, I only feel good in terms of security, and on the other hand, I feel I am missing a lot of things (Kerem, Istanbul).

According to the narratives of my respondents, I realize that Kurtuluş is the hale and hearty example that neighborhoods, districts, and cities are changing and living entities. Kurtuluş is also the embodiment that the differentiation between public and private is simply a passé issue and private and public realms meet with each other on more than one occasion and their intersection can no longer be considered an infrequent occurrence. It is also an exclusive space of inclusivity where the accepting facets of society towards differences emerge, even though bounded by a fragile spatio-temporality. Despite the strict gender and sexuality normativities, the demand for a liberated spatial entity where differences are accepted challenges the rules of the heteropatriarchal system that is set to surveil and oppress habitants. But the negotiations in-between different groups are still ongoing.

This particular neighborhood of Istanbul, transformed into a more ‘appropriated’ space, is where resistance eases in the course of everyday life, but it continues to persist on different occasions by different tactics, it also gives room for resistances in other parts of their everyday lives. These neighborhoods and streets can be considered as spatial cores for LGBTI+s where their demands for their right to the city and their right to difference, “the right not to be classified forcibly into categories which have been determined by the necessarily homogenizing powers” (Lefebvre, 1976 as cited in Dikeç, 2001, p.1790) persist and even grow bigger. But, these spaces are not enough. How can one take back the entire city? What does this demand tell us? It tells me about

¹²² Akçakoca is a town located in Düzce Province which is located nearly 200 km east of Istanbul.

respondents' cry out for their right to the city and one of the instances this request collectively takes place is through Pride marches.

Pride is the same for me and the world, it says “we are here and we are not going anywhere”. I wish it was important on “every day”, not “one day”. The importance of Pride is something that even appears in mainstream media. Even Akit¹²³ is reporting that ten thousand people of Lut walked, and the people who read it say, “They are crowded.” It is the most crowded way for us to say “we are here, and we are not going anywhere”. It is our way to say we want the whole city! (Eser, Istanbul)

7.4. Pride Marches and Protests: Taking Back the Whole City

Taksim¹²⁴ is a heterogeneous, complex place that attracts a lot of attention; people from different groups come and visit here. It is very important to be wherever you can make your voice heard. Taksim is a very important place in Istanbul in terms of LGBTIs making their voices heard (Ece, Istanbul).

Harvey stresses how we think of a common force that can influence the urbanization cycle by saying that the change starts by and through the individual (Harvey, 2008, p.23). The urban public place entails a collection of different spatialities where LGBTI+s can exist and be present, especially thinking that they are facing prejudice at home. The city is the place to explore gender and sexual identities, it is the place to “be”. I decided to start this chapter with a quote from one of my respondents because I thought what Ece articulated was referential to the understanding of the resistance practices and of space simultaneously in the context of Istanbul and concerning my fieldwork findings. As can be seen from the quote above, the produced space of Taksim, the acts, movements, and resistances reproduce the meanings of that particular spatial field (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.144). The urban space of Istanbul causes repression and oppression upon its dwellers and its all-repressive character is being disrupted by the acts of the resisters, this time during the Pride March organized in Taksim.

¹²³ Akit or Yeni Akit with its official name (which can be translated as ‘New Agreement’ to English), is an Islamic and conservative Turkish daily newspaper. It is known for featuring hateful and opposite opinions towards many minority groups including in LGBTI+s.

¹²⁴ Taksim district (Taksim Square) is considered one of the main socializing hubs and popular destinations both for tourists and residents of Istanbul. Istiklal Street (*İstiklal Caddesi*) starts right at Taksim Square and continues to Tünel, which takes its name from the famous subway line founded near the end of the 1800s. Taksim Square is the location where Istanbul Pride participants gather before marching the entire Istiklal Street to Tünel.

People who do not have *strategic* powers to impose pressure demonstrate themselves on the street in such a way that the power holders would not want to. This is also in tandem with the continuation of micro resistances to the point that “a practical act of resistance is thus often accompanied by a public discursive affirmation of the very arrangements being resisted - the better to undermine them in practice” (Scott, 1989, p.56). The interaction between LGBTI+s and the street indicates that the streets become a vital scene for voicing dissatisfaction for those who lack strategic and organizational power and control (Şanlı, 2020, p.53). The streets of Taksim open up a space where individuals and groups can exhibit their collective activism. The collectivity and thus the “macro” perspective of their resistance brings “discursive negations of the existing symbolic order” (Scott, 1989, p.57).

With the organization of Pride marches, LGBTI+s express their discontent and resist the ongoing victimization and spacelessness by occupying the streets for a certain period. Time becomes interrupted (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.267) by the Pride March celebrated in one of the busiest urban spaces of Istanbul, Taksim on the last Sunday of every June. The streets emerge as a liberation space where many different actors, especially LGBTI+s, can manifest themselves. I believe it is particularly important for groups that are marginalized because of their ‘difference’ since this provides new visibility forms to the streets based on their creative action capacities, to make their resistance visible and to gather public support. In this way, the urban spaces become visibly politicized; in other words, the streets become the main place of visibility-oriented activism. From this point of view, it is possible to evaluate the urban space as if it is self-owned by marginalized individuals and groups during visibility-oriented actions.

The street has instructive, symbolic, and playful functions (Lefebvre, 2003). The street is primarily considered a meeting place. When the streets are removed, the entire urban life and accordingly everyday life is damped. The street is where both the power and the groups that resist it, construct themselves concretely. Accordingly, if the street becomes the privileged area of power and its oppression, it will not be possible to transform everyday life. For this reason, the reappropriation of the street by the actors of everyday life represents a basic goal for the radical transformation of everyday life (Lefebvre, 1991a, pp.24-25). Similar to Lefebvre, Blanchot points out that the street is

the center of the practical organization of everyday life (Blanchot, 1993). According to him, the street represents everyday life that exists in social life. Everyday activities on the street become public (Blanchot, 1993, p.242). Therefore, the construction of another everyday life emerges when individuals are (and therefore actually can be) out on the street. Lefebvre considers the street as an urban space where different collective subjects have the opportunity to present themselves (visibly). Accordingly, these social subjects act in different places and give them a continuous form. The swinging rhythm between the groups, in different power positions in that urban space, shapes the street in a continuous flow. In the end, certain streets and areas become dominated by certain groups in the process of struggle and end up being identified by them (Lefebvre, 2003, p.22). In my example, it can be said that this identification was established between LGBTI+s and the Taksim region primarily.

Lefebvre says that “in the life of every ‘being’ - species, individual or group - there are moments when the energy available is so abundant that it tends to be explosively discharged” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.180). I consider the Pride marches to be one of these moments in the lives of LGBTI+s. Pride marches are considered one the most visible and powerful actions of LGBTI+s and the movement. LGBTI+s concretely demonstrate the act of integrating the street and the public space into social action as an urban space via its Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride marches. Every year the Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride march is meant to start at the beginning of Istiklal Street, and it is organized by independent activists, joined and cherished by all other pride goers. The overall claim of these pride marches is that “LGBTI+s exist” in Turkey and that this existence has been solidified by a concrete liaison to a public space¹²⁵. Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride March is identified with Taksim, Taksim Square, and Istiklal Street and the long history of struggle has enabled this space to be exposed as a place of resistance

¹²⁵ Here I would like to refer to Colombo & Schindel (2014, p.7) about how “space contains and accumulates several layers of memories proceeding from different historical times” and also to Zerubavel (1996) who points out the production of “social sites of memory” (Zerubavel, 1996, p.291). What I notice here is that the impact that Pride Marches and the protest are carrying transforms the space while at the same time they are also in need of the space to take place. While participants are collectively engaged with that particular space, they also accumulate memories of that space. This accumulation reclaims itself through the “collective memory of mnemonic community” (Zerubavel, 1996, p.293), that being of LGBTI+s’ collective memory.

and visibility. This in return caused this specific public space to become an urban area where ‘difference’ is put forward and it is furthermore negotiated.

The active political struggle out on the street makes it possible to display tactics against the ruling power in urban spaces. Taksim Square, located at the beginning of Istiklal Street in Beyoğlu, is situated in a very central part of Istanbul. Istiklal Street, which includes both public buildings and consumption areas such as shopping malls, is an ideal choice for reaching the national and international crowds as it is a place used by citizens and tourists intensively. Pride marches are considered important events because they allow LGBTI+s to reach out to the public as a united voice in a very crowded area of Istanbul. LGBTI+ movement’s organizational capacities are fully demonstrated on this day to voice LGBTI+s’ basic demands for their right to difference and their right to the city. Deniz compares the situation of Turkey with that in European countries and highlights the differences in the demands of LGBTI+s in these two distinct examples.

It’s important. We are not like Italy or Norway. Our demands are direct requests and demands for life. “Please don’t kill us,” for example. Even if this is a demand, it is an issue that one needs to feel ashamed of (Deniz, Istanbul).

As I said in the introduction chapter, revolutionary communal movements for the right to the city had already taken place in different parts of the world including Turkey with Gezi Park Protests¹²⁶ while I was writing this thesis. The past 7-8 years in Turkey, the period following the Gezi protests introduced some concepts/words to the daily language of people who were marginalized, outcasted, and who were revolting and resisting oppression mechanisms in the society. “*Mücadele (struggle), kent savunması (city defense), kent hakkı (right to the city), direniş (resistance), alan (field), mekan (space), kamusal alan (public space)*” can be listed among the words that became more

¹²⁶ I would like to remind briefly what Gezi Protests were about even though a more extensive explanation of Gezi Protests will be delivered in other footnotes in the upcoming pages. Gezi protests were constituted of a collective demand for public space and also for a fair share of the city. The protests in 2013 taking place in Istanbul became a cornerstone for the collective continuation of urban revolts. While these revolts were occurring, an atmosphere of solidarity between different social groups became established. LGBTI+s in Istanbul formed LGBT Blok and they have been among the most visible constituents of the resistance” (Okçuoğlu, 2013). LGBTI+s were only one of the groups that participated in the protests as a joint force. In her work, Altınay points out that it was ‘being the other’ (Altınay, 2013) that became the cement among these groups. I agree with Altınay in her words and I believe it was this ‘otherness’ (the ‘difference’) that in the end joined them for one goal, the pursuit of the right to the city.

integrated to the daily life of those who have relentlessly been contesting existing domineering power mechanisms¹²⁷. I think that with the Gezi Park protests, protesters in Istanbul and other cities started to realize the absence of primal urban conditions in terms of residents' urban rights, during the demonstrations, assemblies, and protests that they took part in, and they started joining one another not despite but thanks to their 'differences'. As Rittersberger-Tılıç argues, “despite the differences, the right to the city has become a common force for these groups, thanks to the fact that deprived and alienated groups create alternatives and show how cities should be used” (Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2015, p.86). Moreover, “appropriation of the space” has indeed shown its “potential to transform into communities that participate in solidarity actions and organize against the injustices experienced” (Rittersberger-Tılıç, 2015, p.87).

As an outcome of my fieldwork results, I realized that following the period the Gezi Park protests took place, the expressiveness of LGBTI+s' demands implicated that the residents deserved a better city and that they needed a better quality of life. According to my respondents and based on my observations, the increasing presence and the expansion of the LGBTI+ realm towards the general public created a growing confidence and also multiplied the level of visibility of 'LGBTI+s' and 'rainbow flags' and 'any type of rainbow – LGBTI+ related items'¹²⁸ in different parts of everyday life as I discussed in the previous subchapters. The streets were also influenced by this wave of public visibility and just like I pointed out in the previous section, in the context of the neighborhoods, Pride marches were considered groundbreaking social events that served as a visibility tool to habituate the society to the idea, existence, and presence of 'LGBTI+s'.

[The Pride March] provides visibility. And [the participants are] not few people, [there are] so many people. I would say if only a hundred people were walking down Istiklal, it would not have the same effect. But now, they have to notice it because all the Istiklal is full [of LGBTI+s]. I can see that some of them are at

¹²⁷ Here, my impression is that following Gezi Park protests both the awareness and usage of wordings circling around 'right to the city' had increased because it started being more vocalized, more discussed, and written about.

¹²⁸ In December 2020, the advertisement board within the Ministry of Commerce in Turkey decided that LGBTI+ and rainbow-themed products should be presented with a “+18” phrasal on e-commerce sites. It was stated that this decision was the result of a large number of consumers applying to the ministry that these products would affect children's development adversely (BBC, 2020b).

first afraid but [with these marches] I think it becomes more and more normalized gradually (Ada, Istanbul).

LGBTI+s' demands are usually read out in public spaces, especially before the commencement of Pride marches, which are customarily organized on the last Sunday of the month of June in various cities of Turkey¹²⁹. The whole event serves as the exhibition of LGBTI+s' presence in the urban space and just like the impact of the neighborhood I discussed above, this event too serves almost as an acclimatization of the society to LGBTI+, non-heterosexual and non-binary bodies and identities. Ada discussed the same impact on society, and she emphasized how influential Pride marches and all public demonstrations are when it comes to changing the existing perspective of the rest of the people in Turkish society.

Time is effective in this, about getting used to it. In the process during which the struggle continues, people are changing and developing. Instead of saying "let's just drop it", everything done during this period after Gezi Protests, the Pride Parades especially improved people's perception positively (Ada, Istanbul).

I would like to come back to the right to the city concept and how it relates to my study in the context of these Pride Marches. Being from somewhere (and being urban) is only possible by the feeling of belonging there. In this respect, there is a close relationship between urbanity and the right to the city because urbanism refers to belonging to a place. Henri Lefebvre defined the right to the city through the right to use and appropriate the city and the right to take part in the production of urban space (Purcell, 2003). The right to use the city is at the same time a compound right that is directly linked to the right to recognize 'difference'. The most important difference between these is that the right to the city is not a right that an individual possesses, but it is defined as the recognition of the 'difference' of the groups that are out of the norm, from the groups that constitute the norm and the basis for this difference (Caruso,

¹²⁹ Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride Week Committee organizes a series of events that last for a whole week (the last week of June) and this Pride Week, later on, ends with Pride March traditionally held in Taksim, one of the central points of the city of Istanbul. However, Pride marches are not only organized in the city of Istanbul. Just to give an example: LGBTI+ activists have been holding the Pride march in İzmir since 2012 and in Mersin since 2014. Following the Gezi Park protests, Pride Marches took a critical turn in terms of the reactions coming from both society and the authorities. Starting from 2015, governmental bans, excessive force usage by the police, and threats from ultra-nationalistic and ultra-religious groups have been trying to stop the Pride March. The march that attracted tens of thousands of participants was interrupted by police's tear gas and water cannons. The attempts of the governorship of Istanbul to ban the march resulted in severe confrontations which later on turned into detentions and even arrests in the years of 2015-2018.

2010). With this concept of the right to the city, Lefebvre is trying to provide an answer to the question of ‘what is a good life?’ by trying to reinvent “the terms of good living” (Sugranyes & Mathivet, 2010, p.14). The good life does not entail a competitive nature in it, it needs to possess goodness in itself by nature (Sugranyes & Mathivet, 2010). Thus, the aim is not to be “better than oneself” or to be “better from others” but rather, it is simply to attain a “good living” (Sugranyes & Mathivet, 2010, p.14).¹³⁰ In this sense, the right to the city differs from individual rights because its primary aim is to make people who are members of different social groups equal participants of society. This participation is strictly bounded with the reclamation of these rights to the point that the ‘users’ of the city are expected to speak for themselves, otherwise, “who can speak in their name or in their place?” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.365).

We remind you! This city belongs to everyone, this city also belongs to the oppressed. This city belongs to women, children, and disabled people. This city belongs to the retired, the teachers, the workers, and the prostitutes. And this city also belongs to gay and trans people who have been struggling for their lives and identities since the day they were born... And today we cry out to all of Istanbul! We do not want the ghettos deemed proper for us! We want the whole city! We want all of Istanbul (Boysan & Şevval on behalf of Istanbul-based LGBTI+ organizations, 2013)^{131, 132}

¹³⁰ Although Lefebvre does not directly address the question of “what is a good life”, in the *Critique of Everyday Life*, he adopts a similar perspective to what I discuss here while explaining the issue of the relationship between the object and the individual. He says that the important thing, in the relationship between the object and the individual, is the ability to enjoy, “to have the most complex, the ‘richest’ relationships of joy or happiness with the ‘object’ - which can be a thing or a living being or a human being or a social reality” (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.156). And then few pages later, he also comments on the “art of living” and what this entails for individuals (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.199). He says that this way of living necessitates the individual to live the everyday life in itself and not as “a means towards ‘another’ end” (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.199). What he means here is that the quotidian life should be where the individual finds happiness and joy, simply by living it.

¹³¹ This text was read in the name of Istanbul-based LGBT organizations during City Demonstration. The video of the declaration can be accessed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o0wQ5z_EAdY (Retrieved February 28, 2020). The full version of the text both in Turkish and English languages can be found in the Appendices part. Moreover, the banner call prepared by LGBTI organizations can also be found in the Appendices part. More information will be provided in the following footnotes.

¹³² In 1996, Kaos GL approached this issue with a similar perspective and made a campaign with the “we do not want gay ghettos, but we want the whole city” motto. “*Eşcinsel gettolar değil, “kentin” tamamını istiyoruz*” cover photo was published in 1996. At the end of this thesis, in the Appendices part, there is an image dating back to Kaos GL’s 1996 magazine. I find it possible to argue that in this part of the public addressing, the collective memory of LGBTI+s was remobilized by the repetition of the same demand 17 years apart each other.

In the sequel of the Gezi Uprising¹³³ in Istanbul, there were multiple rallies and city demonstrations that were organized, and these sentences were voiced out during one of these urban rallies, Istanbul Kent Mitingi (Istanbul City Rally)¹³⁴. The entire text was written by and for LGBTI+s, and the text operated as an articulation of LGBTI+s' constant demands to access the city freely and not to be cornered to or excluded from it. The voices of two activists¹³⁵ echoing on a cold afternoon in December 2013 function as a portrayal of a collective stance against existing oppressive and discriminatory urban and identity politics in Turkey. This concise reflection on the history of LGBTI+'s spatial struggles is an expression of LGBTI+'s present and there at demands and their continuous rebellion that takes place on a mundane basis against

¹³³ As I mentioned in an earlier footnote, a privatization plan aimed at removing Gezi Park started to be opposed initially by a small group in Istanbul in May 2013 at Taksim Square adjacent to Gezi Park. The protests aimed at challenging the central government's implementation of this plan without public involvement. The suggested reestablishment inspired residents to demonstrate in the city, to fight for their right to exist in the interest of protecting their own urban space, their right to free movement and to protect their social and infrastructure spaces against any form of exploitation and authoritarian regime. Among participants, different groups were participating in the protests (Birdal, 2015, p.130). Following the brutal police oppression, demonstrations dispersed around the country as thousands of people flooded the streets and other urban areas in more than 70 cities. Protesters demonstrated against a variety of issues, namely the lack of public input on urban reform, privatization of public areas and companies, the inadequacy of social infrastructure, police brutality, inequality, exclusion of social groups, and restrictions on freedom of speech.

¹³⁴ This event was among the popular public actions, after the Pride marches, that boosted LGBTI+s' visibility to the public eye in Istanbul. The English translation of the rally theme is Istanbul City Meetings and more information can be accessed from <http://everywheretaksim.net/istanbul-kent-mitingi-call-for-mass-rally-on-december-22-to-reclaim-istanbul/> (Retrieved December 1, 2015). I would like to digress slightly on this topic here. This meeting, listed among many other rallies, was organized by different social groups following the Gezi Uprising events that lasted almost for 20 days in May-June 2013. The main purpose of the following rallies was to protect urban rights and to reinstitute evanished rights to its 'true' owners: the public.

¹³⁵ One of the activists whose voice was echoing on that day was Boysan Yakar. Boysan was an LGBTI+ activist and a candidate nominee for the Republican People's Party (CHP). Yakar then became advisor to Şişli Municipality mayor. In one of his interviews, he insisted on LGBTI+s' daily presence in everyday urban life in Istanbul. His words were: "we walk the city during the day as we need to. We live in this country but as a direct target of various discriminations and hateful actions. Our organized effort for equal rights has been continuing for more than 20 years and we expect our legal rights to be granted and our demands to be taken seriously. I think the politicians should just trust us. We are sure we will handle government duties and municipal duties at least as well as we do everything else we put our minds to!" Boysan Yakar lost his life in a tragic car accident in 2015 (retrieved June 16, 2017, from <https://lgbtinewsturkey.com/2015/09/13/we-have-lost-lgbti-activists-boysan-yakar-and-zelis-deniz/>). The other activist who was on stage that day was Şevval Kılıç. Şevval witnessed the transformation of Beyoğlu in the 1990s and participated in one of the first organized resistances taking place in Ülker Street (Siyah Pembe Üçgen, 2013). Şevval took a great part in advancing trans activism in Turkey. At the time when this text was being read, Şevval Kılıç was nominated for the HDP (Halkların Demokratik Partisi) (*People's Democratic Party*) for Şişli municipality in Istanbul (retrieved June 16, 2017, from <https://lgbtinewsturkey.com/2013/12/24/lgbti-statement-at-22-november-2013-demonstration-for-equality/>)

the oppression and forced marginalization in Istanbul. Recalling De Certeau's writings on the revolution that it "represents the scriptural project ... seeking to constitute itself as a blank page with respect to the past, to write itself by itself ... and to produce a new history ... on the model of what it fabricates" (De Certeau, 1984, p.135), I consider that LGBTI+s' request for the whole city and the streets embedded in it as a right is a revolutionary and reconstructive desire in itself; because this is the demand that aims to tackle the functioning of everyday life too (Lefebvre, 1991a).

Here I notice indications of dualities such as violence-resistance, submission-and oppression I also see that these duos have been walking always hand in hand in the everyday life of LGBTI+s. The brief documentation of grievance, social exclusion, and urban segregation is in the end an overarching summary of LGBTI+s' spatial entanglements and urban goings-on and their both atomized and collective answers to these urban conflicts. In this short version of their public statement that I placed in the above quote, the important thing to notice is that the demand is not limited to certain parts of the city but rather is aimed at the whole city. This public statement and the actions taking place in the space appear thus as reflections of existing socio-political contradictions (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.365). In fact, it is the spatial aspect of the existing vulnerabilities that render the existing conflicts expressible (Lefebvre, 1991b)

As I indicated from the beginning, safety, solidarity, struggle, and resistance are important notions on the relationship between urbanity and LGBTI+s: these investigations provide the narrative of the transformations in social and intimate sexuality expressions. Özen (2015, p.12) makes use of the concept of "city square movements" (*meydan hareketleri*) for movements where/when the demonstration takes place in a particular urban space, especially in an urban square. City square movements are successful in mobilizing heterogeneous masses and conveying multiple demands to society. The square movements, based on the occupation of certain squares, are active in building deep-rooted socio-political resistances while opening up a platform that allows people to establish networks among each other. These resistance movements, which bring together people from different classes and cultural affiliations, show a solidarity practice where the right to difference in this sense is aimed (Özen, 2015). Özen writes that "Square movements, just like the new social movements, were formed by the mobilization of social groups with different

class, sexual, ethnic and spatial belongings, and therefore, they have been movements that assume various economic, political and cultural social problems and demands.”¹³⁶ (Özen, 2015, p.18). Özen gives reference to numerous city square movement examples in different countries where she examines participants’ profiles and the demands that were behind the emergence of these movements. Her examination shows that there are always more than one social, economic, or political problems that are pointed out as the reason originating the presence of the movement itself (Özen, 2015, pp.18-19). The multitude of the demands behind the square movements, according to Özen, separates them from new social movements, which are described as particular struggles that are organized around particular demands (such as the “feminist movement” or “gay/lesbian movement” (Özen, 2015, p.18). I believe LGBTI+s’ attempt to “take the streets back” and “to get access to the entire city”, the very presence and voice of the activists during and following Gezi Park uprising and Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride Marches show how intersectional LGBTI+s’ demands are and how gender and sexuality dynamics and the liberation of all oppressed groups are deeply interconnected with the social, economic and political web of power relations that are surrounding them.

At this point I would like to come back to the attachment one is making with the space of resistances. Schindel and Colombo (2014) underline the importance of space’s connection with social and collective memory. Stating that memory has become a living phenomenon through space, Schindel and Colombo indicate that space can establish a two-way relationship with memory. According to this, space, and especially the street can be a tool that transfers this violence from generation to generation and strengthens the functioning of the power in terms of being in the place where the violence repertoire is applied (Schindel & Colombo, 2014). On the other hand, those who resist; that is, LGBTI+s, can turn a physical abstract space into a living social space and put it into the service of memory. LGBTI+s, who transform the function/use of the space just like in Lefebvre’s suggestion, through the imaginative and social use of space, are enabling the attachment of new meanings and the creation of new values

¹³⁶ This is my own translation from the original version which is: “*Meydan hareketleri, tıpkı yeni toplumsal hareketler gibi, farklı sınıfsal, cinsel, etnik, mekânsal aidiyetlere sahip toplumsal grupların harekete geçmesiyle oluşmuş ve bu nedenle çeşitli ekonomik, siyasi ve kültürel toplumsal sıkıntı ve talepleri üstlenen hareketler olmuşlardır.*”

attached to these spaces (Lefebvre, 1991b). “The form of social space”, means indeed, “encounter, assembly, simultaneity” and what is assembled is “everything that is produced ... either through their co-operation or through their conflicts” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.101). This form, as I indicated in an earlier part of the thesis, is accompanied by the notions of “difference, recurrence, reciprocity” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.149). LGBTI+s make the spaces a memory space and they act to keep the resistance’s past alive. If the space does not relate to memory in this way, the spaces remain only physical spaces that ensure that past practices remain a threat to the public and that this fear becomes established in society (Schindel & Colombo, 2014).

Pride marches and other street protests organized by LGBTI+s are concrete and vocalized portrayals of LGBTI+s’ collective demands that are incessantly present in visible and subtle ways in the course of their everyday life. The accent on this continuous demand for the whole of the city can be the summary of my fieldwork results: LGBTI+s, even though they were able to transform some parts of the city with their micro and macro resistances and tactics that are embedded in those, and even though they were able to compose themselves inside their cocoons and reach out to one another through the fine ties among these cocoons; they are still unable to reach out to all parts of the everyday urban spaces and feel restricted from what other ‘common’ people with no ‘difference’ are able to attain naturally. Their resistance is persistent and continuous; it accumulates over time. Its manifestation is rigorous; it asserts itself over time and space sometimes in salient and at other times in subtle ways.

7.5. In Lieu of a Conclusion of Part 3: Cocoons

Each project of urban reform questions the structures, the immediate (individual) and daily relations of existing society, but also those that one purports to impose by the coercive and institutional means of what remains of urban reality (Lefebvre, 1996, p.154).

During this chapter, I tried to portray how LGBTI+s’ micro and macro resistances resonate upon different urban spatial layers. My aim was to point out the presence of continuous negotiation and struggle between LGBTI+s and the spatial milieus they are located at. My findings indicate that LGBTI+s are constantly negotiating with different spatial layers of the urban space, including in their homes. As I have been mentioning

from the beginning of my thesis, I decided to call the organic entanglement of and between LGBTI+s, their spatial productions, and appropriations through their resistances, their way of experiencing everyday life, and their way of reproducing the everyday urban spaces as ‘cocoons’. I felt the need for this new vocabulary because I thought it would help me to better address this particular extent of spatial thriving compared to classical sociological concepts such as community or group firstly. After all, this new concept does not only have spatial connotations but also temporal implications and also because, while they insinuate a unitary space, they also address a collective existence with all cocoons lying next to one another. As I indicated in the introduction chapter, cocoons are protective and although they are visible on the outside, they offer invisibility and anonymity to their dweller. This concept, “cocoon”, helped me to reveal both the outcome (product) and the process (the production phase) of LGBTI+s’ micro and macro resistance mechanisms with the realization that cocoons do not only exist on a spatial dimension, but they also exist in the temporal dimension. The spatial protectiveness of the cocoon is temporal, as its cover can be torn open and disposed of when it serves its purposes.

According to Lefebvre (1991b), representations suggest abstraction, therefore in the conceived space, there are always representations of ideology and power. Amid this domination, the course of everyday life extends in time and LGBTI+s find themselves heavily relying on these spatio-temporally and mentally constructed cocoons to feel secure, to feel strong enough to resist, for the acceptance and recognition of others. These cocoons serve to recharge themselves for future resistances by which they would reach ahead of their cocoons.

The spatiality of LGBTI+s is very nuanced as is evident from the analyses above. I found that this intricacy is not only confined to the interactions between the multifaceted spatial layers of everyday urban life (starting from their home, moving towards the leisure places, the neighborhoods, and lastly to the streets) (Figure 4) and their interchangeable meanings. But it also involves the interdisciplinary complexity of my research and the fusion between space, gender, sexuality, desire, and resistance; all of which intertwine and overlap to convey the various spatial dimensions of my respondents’ everyday lives. The urban space and its appropriation by its users carry a very crucial role in LGBTI+s’ everyday lives in the sense that these contribute to

individuals' continuation of resistance. These areas, which overcome the strict surveillance of the domineering power, remain a bit more isolated thanks to the resisting efforts of LGBTI+s. They remain enclosed and protected from oppression, these are the same places that allow LGBTI+s to come together, to hug each other.

'Conceived' space, the most dominant one among the constituents of the spatial triad of (Lefebvre, 1991b) is a mental, imaginary, discursive, and conceptual construction. It is used as a "tool of domination" suffocating all that is envisaged and conceived in it (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.370). Therefore, LGBTI+s' conceived spaces include the imagined and abstract constitution of the urban space molded by power holders. It is where differences are excluded or attempted to be erased from the surface to homogenize their abstraction. As an important contribution of this thesis, I considered the home as part of the abstract space, along with all the other layers of the urban spaces that were included in my analysis.

On the other hand, the lived (social) space (representational space) covers everyday life experiences and resistances that include symbols, artifacts, newly assigned meanings, and occupants' assigned significance to space altogether (Lefebvre, 1991b). The lived space is based on the imagination and creativity that is embedded in the everyday life. Lefebvre, by focusing on the tactical importance of the lived space tried to annihilate and rule out the dichotomic nature of the material and imagined spaces. In my analysis, and also in the theory of Lefebvre (1991b), the lived space includes, surrounds, and incorporates the perceived and the conceived without getting the risk of being condensed into the latter two.

I realized that the conceived space receives incessant resistance and is not accepted as it is designed by the respondents. There is resistance to it coming from different angles through multiple layers of the lived space: LGBTI+s, adopting invisibilities as a resistance mechanism (although sometimes suffocating) (5.1), by using their bodies as expression tools and as means to revolt against the discipline and exploitation and by expressing their desires through their bodies and gestures (5.2), by breaking apart the binary gender system through queerness (5.3), and with the usage of a queer slang *Lubunca* and the humorous tone in their conversations (5.4) create micro resistances. Moreover, with the assertion of LGBTI+ identity (6.1) (although disputed), the

empowerment received from the collective movement of LGBTI+s (although hierarchical) (6.2), and the women collectivity within the LGBTI+ movement (6.3), LGBTI+s challenge the conceived space through macro resistance mechanisms as well. All these resistances are reflected upon different layers of urban spatiality, as this chapter tried to show so.

As it is apparent from the discussions I portrayed above, my focus has mostly been on the lived aspect of the urban space of LGBTI+s while extending their critique towards the homogenizing feature of the conceived spaces. This space covers collective areas including different parts of the city and districts. It covers the cocoons that are being formed and appropriated by LGBTI+s. Their micro and macro resistances, their attempts at self-protection and togetherness, the sharing of the collective life, parties, dances, desires, and resistances are all associated with and contribute to the production of these lived cocoon-like spaces.

When I am talking about the production of space here, I want to point out a place that is engendered and reproduced which is based on the acceptance and embodiment of the difference (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.258). Born to and raised in the heterosexist and patriarchal culture, which is deemed to suffer from hypocrisy according to my respondents, LGBTI+s are relentlessly trying to render the places as their ‘own’ domains in the course of everyday life via their resistances. This became particularly visible when they narrated how they appropriated different spaces by employing a resistance and/or by claiming these spaces (the organization offices, the leisure places (the cafés and bars), the streets, and the neighborhoods) as ‘their own spaces’ belonging to them and their private part of their everyday lives as well.

Respondents seemed to prefer togetherness over individualism and they wanted to have a safety net around them to be able to create their own spaces and areas (as I discussed in section 7.3). It was at those moments when they were surrounded by those like them, either physically accompanied by them or simply by the knowledge of having their friends nearby, that they were able to fully enjoy their everyday lives. I also realized that togetherness, sharing, and living collectively help to gather the narratives together.

In spatial terms, the cocoon can be identified as a differential space where the restricted norms are challenged by the resisters. These norms are the very tools that the oppressive system makes use of to “shatter the integrity of the individual body, the social body, the corpus of human needs” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.52). It is the space where individuals’ bodies can act by “breaking out of the temporal and spatial shell” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.384). The cocoon thus is this metaphorical naming I applied to name the spatial results of these resistances.

Cocoons, just like spaces, are paradoxical. The cocoon is the production of resistance but at the same time, it is the place for the preparation of new resistances. Cocoons are the results of micro and macro resistances and yet they provide the necessary space for furthering them and expanding their sphere of influence as well. The communication and connection between LGBTI+s, the stories that are shared in the collectivity, the signs, and the meanings attached to their bodies and actions constitute the fine membrane and the fine threads circling around and through the cocoon. Spatio-temporality is hidden underneath its production phase. Just like space is, the cocoon is “result and cause, product and the producer” (Lefebvre, 1991b, pp.142-143). The cocoon is thus the center where negotiations, barter, and struggles occur; it is the space of “wagers which are articulated, if never completely” (Lefebvre, 1991b, pp.142-143).

In general, LGBTI+s build a sense of belonging, community, and unity not simply by living in space but through the presence and the secure atmosphere within these appropriated spatial boundaries. LGBTI+s produce, traverse and handle urban spaces not only to survive but also to resist, cherish everyday life and alter the social order. The concept of the cocoon is henceforth helping to understand not only how they narrate everyday life struggles but also the common ways and tools they continuously make use of while contributing to the production of different urban spatial layers in Istanbul and resisting the existing oppressive systems.

As a spatio-metaphorical metaphor, cocoons are associated with resisting and liberating spaces where some spatial transformation is taking place. LGBTI+s by operating through the cracks, carving out their own spaces, and making connections with each other form an inter-connected web (ensemble) of cocoons. These cocoons

become a differential space via different resistance tools lurking in-between invisibilities, tools that are “in a continual to-and-fro movement” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.98). Thus, as I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter (Chapter 7), the cocoons become sacred spaces and their reappropriation shows the production of new spaces (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.167). In this scenario, even “a kitchen table becomes a publishing house and a door-way becomes a meeting place” (Ahmed, 2018).

The public and private spaces and the blurring borders between the two are critical in making sense of LGBTI+s’ spatial productions and appropriations. The meaning of public space takes different forms and versions according to my respondents’ past experiences and they accordingly provide particular definitions in their narratives. Public spaces encompass in-visibility, bodies, control, power dynamics, contention, struggle, resistance, rules that require adaptation, threats, and insecurity, the inability to express oneself and to make them exist in the realm of others, too, whereas the private space can be as small as one’s bodily limits.

I tackled the perception of private space as a safe harbor, a protected space from societal oppression and I argued that “the private is political” (Hanisch, 1969), a site of resistance and struggle. Here I suggest following Duncan’s footsteps that “fluid geographies would construct and in turn be constructed by fluid identities” (Duncan, 1996, p.142). Umut Güner, an LGBTI+ activist and one of the contributors to Kaos-GL’s web blog wrote these sentences to express his experiences and thoughts.

When the bedrooms started to not be enough for us, we started to find each other on the street. In the experience of gay men in Turkey, hammams¹³⁷, parks, cinemas, and bars had been the places where we could be together. The processing of gay rituals in the parks may not be known much since it usually happens after sunset; that is, the parks were the lounges of the heterosexuals during the day and of “lubunya”s¹³⁸ at night. Cinemas were shared in two spaces

¹³⁷ Although Lefebvre does not mention the specific hammam example, he mentioned the position of baths in the Western context which I thought would be worth mentioning to better portray the specificity of the hammam. He says that the baths did not only have one purpose in civilian life, but rather they were ‘multifunctional’ (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.273). This multifunctionality derived from the fact that apart from satisfying the private needs of the people living in that town; the baths were also considered as meeting places where individuals’ ‘social needs’ were also met (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.273). In this particular excerpt of Güner, the hammams were also not only places where people used to go to take a bath, but they were considered as meeting places for same-sex sexuality. Thus, apart from their functional use, they also carried a social aspect in themselves.

¹³⁸ According to Savcı, the term refers to a “continuum that ranges between gay men and transwomen” (Savcı, 2011, p.223).

divided in the same period of time: the back of the hall is for the ones who love the lubnyas and those who enjoy it; the front part of the hall was reserved for heterosexuals (Güner, 2011).¹³⁹

There is a specific spatial aspect that cut across the existing spatial dichotomies. In both public and private spaces, heteropatriarchal norms and values are widespread, they are putative and well-integrated. What is promoted as the general norm “imposes itself as the stable centre - definitively - of ... societies and spaces” and it furthermore “neutralizes whatever resists it by castration or crushing” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.23). These are the norms and values that leave LGBTI+s spaceless. The conceived urban space is the site to contention and violence (taking the forms of both symbolic and physical violence and taking place in both private and public domains). The urban space transforms into a site for resistance and struggles through the actions taking place in the lived space. The spatial management of the oppressing power receives a counter-reaction which in return transforms the pre-established borders and it challenges the existing spatial management.

According to my findings, the portrayal of the private space as the opposite of the public space and the positioning of the street as opposed to the home reveals nothing but that the boundaries between public and private spaces are artificially differentiated and that this differentiation is based on a socially constructed basis. This should also be considered as a reproduction of space: it is not only the public space that changes its characteristics but also, the private space by overflowing towards the public, as it is apparent in the narrative of Güner and my respondents above, finds new spaces of expression and presence. According to the narratives of my respondents, another paradox appears here; while the private starts finding meaning in the realm of the public, the public and its oppressive strict rules are furthermore included in the realm of the private too.

¹³⁹ This is my own translation from the original Turkish version which is: “*Yatak odaları bize yetmemeye başladığında birbirimizi sokakta bulmaya başladık. Erkek eşcinsellerin Türkiye’deki deneyiminde hamamlar, parklar, sinemalar ve barlar bir arada durabildiğimiz yerler olageldi. Parklardaki eşcinsel ritüellerin işlenişi, genellikle gün batımı sonrasında yaşandığından pek bilinmeyebilirdi; yani parklar gündüzleri heteroseksüellerin geceleri ise lubnyalarındı. Sinemalar, aynı zaman diliminde ikiye bölünmüş mekânlar şeklinde paylaşıldı: salonun arkaları lubnyaların ve lubunya sevenlerin; salonun ön kısmı ise su katılmamış heteroseksüellerindi.*”

In light of this, throughout this chapter, I tried to answer two particular questions: Where are these new spaces where privacy, togetherness, leisure, and desires take place? Where does the communication network between LGBTI+s, the fine threads between the cocoons they had produced take place? They are in the neighborhoods, the cafés, bars, and the streets; it is located outside of the common places of their parental homes because the home is now found elsewhere. It is in these spatial communities that they establish a relation to one another, it is in the individually and communally constructed cocoons that one finds themselves liberated and protected for a moment or two. The individual takes an active role in reproducing these spaces while they resist for their liberation and ‘right to the city’ for all. These become such spaces that allow further connections and communications between their occupants. This in return extends the impact of the space beyond its existing and preset borders.

In relation to Lefebvre’s argument that the right to the city means the establishment of a spatial domain over time, of a gathering instead of a shattering (Lefebvre, 1996, p.195), these cocoons utter LGBTI+s’ desire for liberation, they become shelters, places that they appropriate, and that they relate to. Being in a liberated, judgment-free space, exploring the intimacy they need, the desires they have even if in a ‘public space’ is met to some extent by the cocoons and the threads among them, and also realizing their identities individually and collectively are rendered possible inside these cocoons. The cocoons, just like the right to the city, incorporate the production of space (Lefebvre, 1996, p.196). But as I said earlier, these cocoons are not enough. They are merely the cracks opened up on a monolithic surface via LGBTI+s’ micro and macro resistances. They are temporary and spatially limited. Thus, the right to the city is not completely achieved by these cocoons, but it is the place where the resistance and demand for “the right to the city” for all emerges and continues.

I hope this chapter sheds light on the fact that resistances that pave the way towards the right to the city may start at home, even in invisible ways. It occurs on micro (individual and everyday) levels; it then continues on macro (collective and out-of-the-ordinary) levels. Respondents’ resistances dancing in the fine lines of invisibilities transpire relentlessly because I think respondents of this thesis were convinced that “if our urban world has been imagined and made then it can be re-imagined and re-made” (Harvey, 2003, p.941) simply because “if space is a product,

our knowledge of it must be expected to reproduce and expound the process of production” (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.36).

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS

With this chapter, I aim to conclude by articulating and connecting the previous chapters' findings with the concept of "cocoon". While doing so, I will be summarizing and highlighting my key findings starting with a brief recapitulation of my research's aims, the problematic issues I addressed at the beginning of my dissertation, and my research questions along with my methodological and theoretical approaches. And then I will be summarizing my findings discussed in chapters 4-7. Finally, I will be closing with an overall discussion and commentary and furthermore with my plans for future research.

In view of the historical framework when the fieldwork was conducted, there are some elements that need to be emphasized before diving into the concluding remarks. This thesis is the product of a turbulent political and social time period in Turkey consisting of an urban uprising (Gezi Park protests in 2013), governmental bans on Pride Marches (starting two years after Gezi Park protests, 2015- ongoing), a coup attempt (on July 15, 2016), the declaration of the state of emergency in Turkey that lasted for nearly two years (July 21, 2016 – July 19, 2018) during which there has been severe oppression towards all counter voices and extreme measures were taken as a precaution, which created a very unstable environment for LGBTI+s and finally the heated discussions (2019-2021) followed by the presidential decision (March 19, 2021) annulling the participation of Turkey to the Istanbul Convention (effective by July 1st, 2021) despite resistances and protests conducted by women and LGBTI+s in Turkey.

As an outcome of my continuous LGBTI+ activism and also of my previous academic focus, I became more involved with and socially surrounded by LGBTI+s, LGBTI+ activism, and activists throughout the years. I witnessed how LGBTI+s' everyday life

in Istanbul is shaped around resistances and continuous struggle. I was able to notice the commonalities and differences in their everyday lives and how they mainly operated through the lens of in-visibility, as I discussed in Chapter 4. What I also noticed was that they were always coming up with one tactic or another to defeat the oppression they were being subjected to. There were only certain parts of the city, one or two neighborhoods or districts, and some famous places of leisure where one would feel safe and secure enough to express themselves.

After grasping some pre-fieldwork observations, the research started to get shaped accordingly. The research project then turned into an orderly sociological study that aimed to comprehend the relationship between LGBTI+s' resistances in different layers of urban spaces of Istanbul to untie the multifaceted social constructions that were shaping LGBTI+s' everyday lives and spatial experiences. In that regard, I targeted to go beyond the existing limits of my knowledge by adding different categories and dimensions, and by including the aspect of the production of space and its intricate relationship with LGBTI+'s resistances and their pursuit for the right to the city. The utter aim was to trace LGBTI+s' efforts for the construction of an inclusive and non-discriminatory life for themselves and then for the society as a whole, by taking in-visibility as a lens while looking into their micro and macro resistances, by highlighting their potential to produce spaces for furthering their resistance practices.

I realized that there were some 'slippery grounds' to conduct this research and 4 main issues were identified (Table 1, p.9). These 4 slippery grounds were: 1- fixation on visibility in the existing research on LGBTI+ narratives, 2- overlooked nature of different types of resistances, 3- the lack of individual agency in the analysis of resistances, 4- the lack of examples from non-Western contexts in LGBTI+s' socio-spatial entanglements. As a solution to avoid these slippery grounds, a series of propositions was suggested: to pay attention to resistances stemming from affordable in-visibility in addition to the perceptible and salient resistances, to discuss, along with the discernable spatial claims, the micro-spatial productions and their impacts on LGBTI+s' everyday lives, to examine the individual agency and resistances that stem from it along with collective ones and to adopt a situated perspective where the socio-

cultural background is anchored in a non-Western geographical setting: Istanbul, Turkey.

In this study, I tried to answer how LGBTI+s were coping with oppression in their everyday lives. The aim was to document when and how LGBTI+s start searching for sheltered areas for themselves. What kinds of resistances they are able to come up with during this search? How did they create the sheltered living spaces they needed for themselves? What was the extent of freedom and liberation these spaces were able to provide them compared to what they have been wanting to achieve and to what they have dreamt of? The analysis went furthermore, in an attempt to conceptualize the ways in which LGBTI+s took part in the production of space, from their urban struggles and resistances to their slaloming between being visible, invisible, or in-between. Everyday life activities, despite their seemingly boring, repetitive, and unattractive nature, transformed at the end into something more. These practices and respondents' articulations became the very proof of how LGBTI+s' micro resistances contributed incessantly to the production of space through the newly formed 'cocoon' and how the path to the right to the city was being chased after through these fragmented, semi-transparent and semi-visible, uncoordinated togetherness and 'differential spaces'.

The "cocoon" was developed as a conceptual model as the result of the ethnographic fieldwork conducted. It is a concept formulated to explain how LGBTI+s contribute to the production of space via different resistance tactics. The concept also addressed my argument that collectivity among LGBTI+s is established via fine threads that keep them connected while demanding their right to the city. "Cocoon", as a concept, incorporates spatial appropriation and temporality in itself. Cocoon is paradoxical as well; they are both the products and the producers of resistance practices by allowing their occupants to continue their struggle till they attain complete liberation. In line with this definition, I argued that cocoon offers relative freedom, liberation, privacy, and protection to their occupants and that they do not operate as the final destination to be attained; they are temporary shelters for LGBTI+s while they continue their resistances to attain the whole city.

While initially presenting the concept in the introduction chapter, I provided the *Oxford Dictionary's* description of a cocoon and of cocooning. In this thesis, the term cocoon does not rely on this encyclopedic identification referring to comfort and unitary representation, but it signifies a space that is linked with resistance and the sense of community along with individuality in itself.

I would like to mention again the inspirational sources of this concept. Giesecking's conceptualization of "constellations" (2013) in their study focusing on lesbian and queer women's urban spatial productions in New York has been the primary inspiration for me to come up with a visual concept to formulate the results of my fieldwork. Korpela and Dervin's (2013) book called "Cocoon Communities Togetherness in 21st century" got me thinking about the possible conceptualizations around "cocoon". Finally, Alzeer's research (2015) on Emirati female students' spatial relations with their university and her implementation of the concept of a cocoon in that particular context has been very inspirational.

In the introduction chapter, twelve (12) factors were highlighted: "LGBTI+", the body, in-visibility, cities and other dimensions of urban space, space and place, production of space, public/private spaces, right to the city and right to difference, everyday life and everyday spaces, resistances and tactics, affordability and finally 'cocoons'. Among these concepts, there were some that helped me connect with the theoretical framework. I concentrated on Lefebvre's production of space theory (1991b) and his right to the city (1996) concept, and implemented a feminist critique of it (Beebejaun, 2017; Fenster, 2005; Kipfer et al., 2012; Simonsen, 2005). I used Lefebvre's (1991b), de Certeau's (1984), and Scott's (1989) theories on resistances in my thesis. I was inspired by Lefebvre's and Scott's points on different forms of resistances, and I analyzed the resistances that I revealed from the fieldwork by separating them into two distinct groups: micro and macro resistances. Moreover, I considered the space to be more than a fixed container and rather took it as a constructed component (Lefebvre, 1991b). In accordance with the structure based on the notions of the 'right to city', 'production of space', and 'resistances'; the main theoretical framework was based on critical urban theory addressing questions of spatial oppression. In the analysis, LGBTI+s' prosaic activities turned into unprecedented spatial maneuvering and tactics that serve producing space. These maneuverings showed me how LGBTI+s interpret

urban entanglements they get into and how their perceptions and reactions were being shaped. My suggestion in this thesis was that whilst playing a part in social change, LGBTI+s are in fact able to carve their own spaces through their micro and macro resistances. These tactics pave the way for furthering the attempts of both individual and collective action in attaining the right to the city. While investigating the fieldwork results, I realized that adding a situated and gendered perspective to Lefebvre's theory of "production of space" and to his notion of "right to the city", which fall short in including heteropatriarchal power relations' overall impact and in highlighting its direct impact onto LGBTI+s, would help me decode and explore this topic in a better way. Therefore, I aimed to contribute to the theoretical discussions adopting this feminist perspective (Beebeejaun, 2017; Fenster, 2005; Simonsen, 2005).

I conducted my fieldwork in the city of Istanbul, Turkey and gathered my data through three channels: I conducted 20 semi-structured in-depth interviews, I held informal and casual conversations with over 50 LGBTI+s and met in the course of my fieldwork, and I was able to make observations during the two years of fieldwork period. I wanted to make sure that the narratives of the respondents would represent a more general sense of the lives of LGBTI+s, for which I decided to include individuals who identified themselves as activists (8 individuals) and also those who did not (10 individuals). The remaining 2 respondents were reluctant in defining themselves as either one of these positions. This conscious decision in the selection of respondents contributed a lot to my understanding and my interpretation of these interviews.

These information collection tools enabled me to make critical connections between my dissertation's numerous inquiries I cited above and to achieve a better understanding of the importance of LGBTI+s' micro and macro resistance practices in Istanbul. I was in a particular position during my fieldwork; I was researching a field in which I was already taking part and doing activism. Because of my position, I struggled between being an insider and an outsider to the fieldwork simultaneously. The ideational and practical impacts of being an activist and a researcher in the field had productive and counterproductive results, which have shown themselves both during the fieldwork and while positing the research outcomes in a meaningful manner. The familiarity with the field, the voices of this thesis (those of the respondents), and the overall aim I had when I first thought of this topic, which was

very entangled with my activism aims (to contribute in one way or the other to the improvement of the everyday life of LGBTI+s) had kept me going while pushing me to be the best achievable academic researcher version of myself. But I experienced many times of self-questioning and fallbacks on unnumerable topics circling around the fieldwork, the outcomes of the fieldwork, the reflections I had upon the fieldwork, my presence during the fieldwork, the implications of my writings. During these turbulent times, I tried my best to keep all the ethical considerations preeminent throughout the whole research process. From the very beginning, I was open about my involvement with LGBTI+ activism in Turkey and I have been open to my respondents with whom I conducted interviews about the aims and the context of the research.

For the fieldwork, I adopted an ethnographic and feminist approach and interpretive paradigm. These helped me reveal that the situated reality and subjective perception are collectively built. The ethnographic and feminist approaches guided me towards utilizing Lefebvre's spatial understanding from a new perspective, by integrating into it the spatial realms that were not embedded in it before the same way that I did. The interpretive paradigm affected the analysis process and guided me towards coming up with a non-linear narrative positioned on top of the factors defined at the beginning of the dissertation while rooting it on the ethnographic data gathered from the fieldwork.

Interdisciplinary perspectives and feminist scholarship have added a lot to the understanding of fluidity and multiplicity of identities, sexualities as well as performances. Feminist readings helped understand the subjective ways individuals comprehend, interpret and experience the urban space and as a result, the way these multitudes are represented, imagined, and deciphered varies constantly. Accordingly, this dissertation aimed to demonstrate how individual agency, material and imagined webs of solidarity, and micro and macro levels maneuvering tactics play critical roles in subverting existing systems of oppression.

In the context of this research, situatedness and the intersectional perspective helped to address the intricate relationship between different dimensions, facets, and difficulties of LGBTI+s' unique and yet commonly wounded everyday lives and spatialities. This helped me nestle the analysis chapters and their sub-chapters by showing how there are numerous layers that are deeply attached to one another. For

instance, I looked into the adoption of ‘queerness’ as self-expression and self-identification, which has been a disputed topic among the respondents (p.218). While self-identification as ‘queer’ was prevalent among some LGBTI+s, with the rampant need for women’s visibility in public spaces, some of the lesbian and bisexual respondents indicated they had stopped using this term for self-identification purposes and embraced the ‘woman’ identity for the time being and furthermore established a women-oriented organization within the LGBTI+ collective movement (p.244).

Moreover, these approaches also helped first to understand and then to portray how seemingly uncoordinated and dispersed resistances create spatial cracks in the monolithic and homogenized socio-spatial realm. The analysis showed that these spaces carry traces of collective memory and get mingled into each other, taking an inclusive and protective form while paving the way to the ‘right to the city’, just like in the case of a neighborhood formation in Cihangir in the 1980s and 1990s (p.286) and in Kurtuluş in late 2010s (p.292).

As stated above, the fieldwork took place in Istanbul, Turkey. In order to better reveal the contextual framework, in the introduction chapter I tried to portray a general overview of pre-existing dynamics of gender and sexuality in Turkey. I started with the academic discussions on gender in Turkey and then highlighted the unspoken nature of sexuality, the compulsory natures of heterosexuality, and binary gender identities in society. I discussed how in Turkey, a struggling geographical territory, gender, and sexuality operated as fields of oppression upon which the determination of exclusion and marginalization of ‘non-normative’ bodies, desires, identities, and expressions was effectuated and then focused on how these resulted in the dichotomic understanding of private and public spaces which later on translated into the spacelessness of LGBTI+s and from the development of the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey was discussed. In this framework, LGBTI+s’ past in Turkey starting from the years of 1970s till the late 2010s was explored. In the literature review part focusing on LGBTI+s in Turkey, I tried to present a summary of the literature relevant to the thesis discussion. I noticed that although the number of academic studies conducted in this field was increasing, there were still very few of them. and realized that this study would also contribute to the studies focusing on LGBTI+s in non-Western geographical settings.

After seeing the storyline and the arc of each respondent's narrative, I decided to explain my findings in three parts: Part 1 "The Lens of In-visibility", Part 2 "LGBTI+s' Micro and Macro Resistances" and Part 3 "LGBTI+s' Spatial Productions and Appropriations" and altogether these parts were formed of 4 different chapters. While writing this thesis, I realized that in order to answer the initial research questions and furthermore to explain the production of space, I needed first to understand by what means and under which circumstances this spatial production was taking place. Following Lefebvre's argument that the social spaces are the outcomes of a process with many 'currents' contributing to it (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.110), I suggested looking into these 'currents' which took the form of 'resistances' in my analysis. To comprehend under which circumstances these resistances were taking place, I realized that I had to use the lens of 'in-visibility' (Figure 3, p.140) since I revealed that it was a common denominator for all of them. As a result, the first part of my analysis section was reserved for the investigation of in-visibility. The main drive behind this chapter was rooted in the idea that since it was hard for everyone to render (or to even discuss) sexuality in a visible manner, portraying the difficulties of visibility would shed light on what is happening in the lives of LGBTI+s.

Accordingly, the Chapter 4 was focused on LGBTI+s' experiences and narratives of in-visibility. To do that, first I explored the intricacy of the visibility during their coming-out periods as it was one of the major findings of the interviews. Although some of the respondents saw it as empowerment, it became clear through the findings of that this was not the case for all of them and that being visible in the eyes of the people they know, especially when it comes to their families, was a complicated and problematic situation. For example, according to Kerem, coming out, being open about one's sexuality, and being visible in all dimensions of the urban space has an empowering effect upon individuals and they also help appropriate the space, not being erased from it. He believes that "he can correct the things that they know wrongly" (p.148) by coming out. However, for Umut, coming out could lead to spatial suffocation because "if the person comes out, there is a possibility that they stay in a very little circle and they find it unavoidable to leave that little circle" (p.149). Umut's perspective was not the only reason for the consideration of coming-out as a threatening issue. Deniz indicated that individuals reserved the right to not want to

deal with the struggle of coming-out to the outer world because “those who don’t come out are the ones who chose to struggle with other things instead of coming out” (p.150).

Respondents’ in-visibility at home and outside of the home were complex and multifarious. Some of them did come out to their families at home, some were forced to do it. Ali was among those who were forced to come out, and as a result of this, his father refused him his inheritance, and he was kicked out of the family home (p.160). Whereas Can, after being exposed to his family about his sexuality and not receiving a bad reaction afterwards, became much more confident outside of his home about his sexual orientation because he thought he had nothing to lose now that his parents were aware of it (p.161). One of the areas this intricacy was detected was in relation to the spatial limitations of their romantic and erotic desires. For instance, Mustafa’s inability to hold hands with his partner in public places was a burden for him, and he felt ashamed of it (p.166). And Batu said he was experiencing a split personality whenever he was entangled in a romantic relationship with a man because he was being treated differently in public and private spaces by them: just a friend at a park and lovers behind closed doors (p.177).

What was encouraging for them was the knowledge that there were others out there, just like them, struggling in being visible, wanting to explore and experience life and their identities as they felt like it. The possibility of meeting with people whom they could talk to about their experiences and sharing their everyday lives without feeling any remorse or uneasiness gave hope to them greatly in their personal journeys. For example, in the case of Defne, it was particularly important for her to meet with other bisexuals because “the most effective thing is to share it with other bisexuals, it feels good” (p.147), she said.

After establishing this, I turned my attention to the subjective and relative in-visibility experiences among LGBTI+s (p.167) and noticed that there were commonalities and differences in their experiences in the course of their everyday lives where the dynamics of unwanted and/or *affordable* in-visibility came into play. This part was analyzed under two distinct sub-sections: bisexual and lesbian women’s invisibilities and hyper-visibility of gay men and of women with trans experience. In the case of bisexual and lesbian women’s invisibilities, I was told that this invisibility went in

their favor in certain situations for example when they had their romantic partners over their homes, they were not suspected by their curious neighbors (p.170). But at the same time, this invisibility turned against them as an oppressive power mechanism since they were being ignored and remaining unrecognized. This was also happening from within the LGBTI+ community by being discarded or being subject to bi-phobic slurs for instance (p.170). Whereas for the hyper-visibility cases, Kerem compared gay men's visibility to lesbians' and bisexuals', and he commented that "the lesbian form of love is already rendered invisible in the society" (p.172), confirming the existing literature's suggestion. There were also others like Uğur who highlighted that two men holding hands would attract too much attention out in the street (p.173), pointing to an unwanted and unaffordable form of visibility, that I called hyper-visibility.

Lastly in this chapter, the roots of the driving force behind all types of different visibility-oriented problems was discussed and I concluded that these dynamics lie in the desire of power holders to keep all differences away from the public eye and away from the public knowledge, which was formulated as the 'hypocrisy' of the society by the respondents of this thesis (p.173). 'Hypocrisy' appeared as the most recurring term to depict Turkish society too. "Saying one way and acting the other" as was highlighted by numerous respondents is said to be very widespread and it is often portrayed as the element that serves the marginalization of "marginalized" sexual behaviors and gender identities (p.176). Accordingly, one of the key findings of this chapter was that the main fuel of LGBTI+s' resistances was very much entangled with the issue of acceptance/rejection of 'difference' without bringing any conditions to it and LGBTI+s' inability of spatial appropriation due to being arbitrarily discarded from different spatial realms.

With the examination of these findings in the first analysis part (Chapter 4), I aimed to formulate a strong background story upon which my respondents' resistance practices were shaped. As a result of this chapter, I concluded that visibility implied an existence in a shared life and, that being in the thin borders of in-visibility was a critical factor in respondents' everyday life narratives. I realized that visibility was chosen as a resistance path only in affordable situations, and also noticed that the concepts of visibility and invisibility were temporal and relative concepts when considering them through the perspective of resistances.

In Part 2 (Chapters 5-6), I tried to portray my respondents' micro and macro resistances in different spatial dimensions of Istanbul. In this framework, under the second analysis chapter "Micro Resistances" I primarily discussed *affordable* micro resistances circling around in-visibility (5.1), and then moved to how LGBTI+s' sexed and gendered bodies were becoming subject to negotiation in the course of their everyday lives (5.2). In this sub-section, the focus was on how bodies were being used as a tool, the meanings attached to these forms was analyzed. The next micro resistance tactic was the self-identification of my respondents over 'queerness' which had the promise for the elimination of securely created identities (5.3). Lastly, the usage of *Lubunca* as slang and humor as a conversational tone was explored (5.4) Then, in the next section under the heading of Macro Resistances, the components and the effects of LGBTI+ identity (6.1) and LGBTI+ activist movement (6.2) were discussed. The final sub-section of this chapter was reserved for the analysis of women's resistance within the LGBTI+ movement and in other spatial realms (6.3).

Respondents' micro resistances were usually functional and resourceful. For instance, for Gökçe, carrying a rainbow symbol in the form of a badge on his backpack is his way of 'not shouting out to the outside world' his sexuality but still keeping it open and visible for those who are able to see it (p.199). As for Batu, adopting a more 'masculine attitude and tone' and him being careful about 'the choice of words' in different public places give him room for not being noticed as gay, thus he was making use of the tactic of "passing" in environments where he did not feel safe enough (p.197). As the examples of Batu and Gökçe show, these ongoing micro resistances are not always highlighting the visibility, and that invisibility could also be used as a tool.

Among the affordable micro resistances circling around in-visibility, I detected Ali's way of letting their lovers inside the house after the neighbors, who are usually watching the street through their windows, go to sleep after certain hours at night (p.195). Ada on the other hand careful about her clothes not to attract so much attention. She says "I don't want anyone to get any signal from me. So that I can actually live the way that I am" (p.197). The ways of hiding oneself, and being extra careful about expressiveness albeit can be considered as disempowerment; however, as it became apparent from my interpretation of the narratives, these were cunning

and maneuverings that respondents were applying in their everyday lives to open up space for themselves, to carve their own cocoons on an everyday basis to continue living and resisting in other fields

The examples of acting in a certain resisting and defying manner in urban spaces were not limited to these examples. As discussed in the following pages of Chapter 5, the adoption of queer identity and being vocal about it has also been deemed as a micro resistance practice towards existing oppressiveness and heteropatriarchal rule. For instance, Umut considers their adoption of queer identity as their “liberty ticket” that “opened up a space of expression” for them, since they felt suffocated with the existing gender categories that identified them as “erkek fatma”, a colloquial term used to define individuals with female gender but who are acting in a manly fashion in terms of behavior, speech, and clothing (p.221).

Some of these micro resistances were deceitful and some completely wrapped the individual under the thin membrane of the cocoon. While the usage of humor as a conversational tone aimed to repel the oppressiveness by “trying to find a channel where you cannot **not** say anything in the face of pressure” as it was put by Kerem (p.224), the usage of the queer slang, *lubunca*, aimed to create a protective space by masking the words that were being articulated in a menacing spatial environment. The very usage of the words in that slang “created a resistance area in some places” as it was put by Deniz. It was a way, according to her, to say “Let’s stand strong in the face of power. That is why in such resistance areas, we always need the areas where we breathe and chat with each other” (p.227). I considered the spatial milieu where Lubunca words were expressed as the carriers of this resistance-oriented slang (p.228). As a result, I argued that the space, by becoming occupied by the signs and meanings of this particular language, resembled the language itself, a differential space, a cocoon.

Building solidarity networks and supporting each other through the presence of a collectivity among LGBTI+s were shown as impactful tools of macro resistances. In Chapter 6, focusing on these macro resistance tactics, the embracement of ‘LGBTI+ identity’ was shown as a source of macro resistance mechanism, as put by Ada (p.233). This collective identity definition carried political meanings for those who embraced

it. According to Ekrem, the reclamation of LGBTI+ identity does not only reflect “the fight of one identity. But it is a structure that is formed of all individuals with different identities coming together and struggling together” (p.233). Among the sources of macro resistance mechanisms, the LGBTI+ collective movement and its agents’ impact was discussed. Respondents indicated collective attempts of the actors of the movement altogether (e.g. of NGOs, grass-roots organizations, committees, and university groups) varying from changing the public opinion with different protests to ‘being there in a supportive manner’ while individuals are in the process of their coming-outs. Deniz pointed out the institutional trainings organized by the NGOs to prevent further discrimination and violence (p.240). As for Defne for instance, Lambda, one of the organizations operating in Istanbul “gives strength in terms of standing upright ... [with] the power to oppose the existing system by removing the person from the victim psychology” (p.241). Some of the respondents pointed out that the LGBTI+ movement was also interested in topics that were circling around different types of vulnerabilities and problems stemming from other forms of oppressiveness reigning in society. With reference to what Marcuse indicated (2010), I commented on this by taking the right to the city into account and I noted that all groups subject to oppression one way or the other should ask for their right to the city and that this demand can eventually be acquired completely once the right to the city becomes a reality for all the oppressed groups (Marcuse, 2010, p.97). I found confirmation of this interpretation in the interview conducted with Deniz who highlighted that “being an LGBTI doesn’t mean you don’t see other issues around the world. We are also an environmentalist movement, a movement supporting the Kurdish freedom movement, we are already in the feminist movement” (p.243) meaning that the movement was also establishing relations and ties with other movements tackling other forms of oppression and discrimination in the society. This issue was later on mentioned in the thesis while discussing the neighborhood formations in Istanbul (p.305).

One of the interesting findings of this chapter was the establishment of *Lez-bi-fem*, a lesbian and bisexual feminist organization emerging as a resisting act against being oppressed in the everyday life and within the LGBTI+ movement itself (p.246). Respondents who were aware or taking part in this group discussed how they needed to be more visible and to be making public claims in the city to claim that “lesbians and bisexuals do exist!”. It was also pointed out that the lack of safe spaces and

possible platforms where lesbian and bisexual women can discuss their specific experiences/issues brought them together to establish this sub-organization.

In both parts of the analysis section focusing on micro and macro resistances, I showed that LGBTI+s' visibilities, mobilities and the spaces where they could feel safe enough to be expressive about their identities were limited and controlled. Indeed, many of the respondents did not even feel safe enough to hold their lover's hand or to wear whatever clothes they wanted to wear just because they knew it would cause them trouble. But this did not stop them to come up with ways to overcome the general oppressiveness reigning in the society. They sometimes took refuge in invisibility, they also got empowered by visibility attempts through artifacts, by emphasizing the visibility of their bodies and meanings attached to their bodies, through conversational tone, humor, and usage of queer slang as I explored in the 5th chapter. Embracing the LGBTI+ identity (although disputed), the impact of the actors of the LGBTI+ movement and the establishment of sub-organizations to combat the prevalent invisibility of women were among the macro resistances that I considered as building threads of the "cocoon".

In the final analysis part (Part 3 (Chapter 7)), I looked into the ways in which LGBTI+s were appropriating and producing the urban spaces in their capacities. I tried to portray how their resistances were contributing to the production of space and how these newly produced spaces, called "cocoon", were not only the 'breathing rooms' of LGBTI+s but they were also the rooms to engender further resistances (both on micro and macro levels). By reading the space through Lefebvre's production of space theory and by linking the whole discussion to the right to the city concept, I wanted to show how LGBTI+s' micro and macro resistances were reverberating upon different spatial realms as "currents" that constituted the driving force behind the spatial production and appropriation (p.184).

The fieldwork showed that LGBTI+s were reproducing new spaces in different contexts, on different occasions. Their spatial appropriation through different levels of the urban space was accordingly analyzed (Figure 4, p.263). In the narratives of the respondents, I saw how homes, leisure places (namely cafés, bars, and clubs), neighborhoods, and streets were being appropriated and also how LGBTI+s were

struggling for their right to desire, and leisure as a part of their right to the city quests. Therefore, I concluded that the appropriation of a leisure place for instance, or of a neighborhood, finding a new home, and thus creating new “cocoon” were all political acts and that they were the affirmations for the continuation of the struggle until the right to the city was attained. For instance, organization offices (7.1) as it was mentioned by Kerem (p.272), and some of the cafés that LGBTI+s were frequently going to (7.2) as mentioned by Defne (p.274) were considered as places that substituted the longing feeling of safe homes. However, the socialization bonds with these “LGBTI+ friendly” or “queer” leisure places were not cost-free. Respondents indicated how these places were taking advantage of their “unique” position by offering this safety-procuring social environment to LGBTI+s with higher-priced tariffs (p.278).

The proximity of apartments located near one another in the neighborhood of Kurtuluş, as it became apparent from Eser’s narrative (p.274), paved the way for a more communal and ‘queer’ life thanks to its relatively liberating nature in the middle of an oppressing city (7.3). However, respondents, by indicating the prerequisites of this way of living close to one another, showed me how Kurtuluş could become a choice for only a small group of LGBTI+s who were able to afford living there economically (p.303). The risk of entrapment (p.301) and the heteropatriarchal rule that was still dominant among non-Muslim families living in Kurtuluş, as it was pointed out by Eser (p.304), showed that there are still tensions and negotiations taking place among different social groups living in that particular neighborhood. The projected outcome from these discussions was that the differences would accumulate producing collections of differences and creating a potential for collective action. Lastly, in the section called “Pride Marches and Protests: Taking back the Whole City”, the visibility actions, especially following the Gezi Park protests were discussed. These resistance-oriented actions were considered important touchstones to attain unconditional access to the different layers of urban spaces.

For Lefebvre the social production of space cannot be considered as the outcome of a singular moment, but rather it is the result of a process (Lefebvre, 1991b). It requires a temporality just like the cocoon does for its formulation. Appropriating spaces, continuing the struggle and resistances are all parts of this temporality. With their

resistances, and with new memories they constructed together in those spaces by building on the existing ones, LGBTI+ keep on producing cocoons.

The cocoons in which the respondents' micro and macro resistances take place became both the medium and the outcome of these resistances. Thus, the conceived space was refuted by the practices and lived experiences of the respondents which was resulting in the production of "lived space". The highlight put on the difference in the 'currents' producing the social space showed that these cocoons were differential spaces. The spatial triad of Lefebvre together combined with this implementation served as a tool to understand LGBTI+s' numerous struggles in representations of (urban) spaces while constructing their own representational and differential spaces by participating in everyday life's production processes. As a result, I managed to uncover respondents' spatial activity via the discovery of their spatial surroundings, their meaning-making processes, their lived experiences, and the actual space itself.

The cocoons were, thus, considered as the producer and the product of LGBTI+s' resisting manifestation for the right to the city. I noted that they are temporary but useful for the continuation of both micro and macro resistances, until 'everyone' achieves this right to the city. I argued that it is in these cocoons that LGBTI+s find the possibility to breathe, to "exist", and it is in these same places that they find the power to organize and to continue the resistance against existing heteropatriarchal and hypocritical oppressiveness.

Having focused on these issues, I questioned more and more where private and public spaces started and where they ended, since they seemed to cross paths with one another too often when discussing LGBTI+s' meaning-making and spatial reproduction processes. As Lefebvre indicated in his theory of the production of space, it is the interaction between these individuals and groups that determines the actual use of public space. To that matter, the street, leisure places, neighborhoods, and the home showed great prominence as essential places where their resistances took place. LGBTI+s' appropriation of the street, the home, cafés, bars, and the neighborhoods altogether (thus both public and private spaces) can be considered as achievements in their pursuit for the right to the city, and that these spatial productions are embedded in a revolutionary and reconstructive desire in itself; because this is a demand that

would transform the functioning of everyday life and because this demand's sphere of influence encompasses almost all oppressed social groups.

This study discussed how LGBTI+s were being forced behind 'four walls' and simultaneously being removed from the same heteropatriarchal private space by the hands of the power holders. I examined how LGBTI+s found themselves 'spaceless' for some periods over the course of forming their own 'cocoon' in the fine lines of in-visibility. Indeed, it was this very spacelessness that ignited them towards creating their own "cocoon" and it was the removal from any given urban space that forced them towards resisting and towards looking for other 'homes' and other 'private places' and other public spaces to continue their everyday life while also to keep on organizing and repeating their demand for the right to the city. This whole examination made me realize that the road to the right to the city is a brutal and lengthy one. The lived aspect of the urban space displays the "right to the city" when LGBTI+s appropriate an area that is contrary to the ideal sketched image of the conceived space (Lefebvre, 1991b). All the resistances discussed in the analysis chapters contributed to this understanding of LGBTI+s' everyday urban experiences and their spatial reproductions.

Having summarized this study's results, I would like to portray along with the anticipated contributions of it, the limitations of the research. Some of these limitations were mentioned when the occasion arose throughout the discussions, therefore, but I wanted to display them as a whole in this concluding part. The first limitation is about the location where the study was conducted: while this study's geographical focus is on a non-Western geographical setting, Turkey, the data used in the analysis part is limited to the realities of Istanbul, a city with a population of nearly 16 million people living (TURKSTAT Corporate, 2022). Therefore, the study is not reflecting on the small cities or rural areas of Turkey. On top of this, the neighborhoods discussed in one of the sub-chapters of this thesis, namely Beyoğlu/Cihangir and Kurtuluş neighborhoods, cannot be considered exact representations of the totality of Istanbul either. One of the respondents of this thesis, Eser, points out, rightfully so, the possible different realities and narratives of LGBTI+s living in different parts of Istanbul by mentioning "...a gay or lesbian person living in Esenler". Because as populated as it is, Istanbul's neighborhoods are also greatly different from one another. Another

limitation is with regards to the representation of all the “letters” of LGBTI+s in the discussions. As I mentioned, I did not interview any intersex individuals. Moreover, despite interviewing men with trans experience, I was not able to introduce their narratives within the analysis of the rest of the interviews, and the data I gathered from their interviews remained obscure in the thesis. Finally, as this thesis is mostly concerned with the space in Istanbul, I did not examine the impact digital spaces carry upon the production of cocoons. As I mentioned in the first analysis section, the way I aimed to portray everyday life resistances was built upon not creating causal links between the actions and reactions; instead, I wanted to bring an interpretation to the whole process in a temporality of interrelated events. Here one might question the impact of digital networks and apps on spatial production and spatial appropriation. Since these applications are instrumental in establishing romantic/sexual/friendship bonds while making it possible to manage visibility, would it be possible to assume that these apps and digital networks create cocoons? Since the outline of my study did not include the discussion of digital networks, I find it hard to determine the kind of ‘resistances’ that are taking place, the kind of “making-do”s that are happening, and the kind of spaces that are being produced and appropriated via these apps. I consider this as one of the limitations of my study, in addition to the different layers of urban space, I believe the analysis of apps that are providing the possibility for precise geolocations would be an interesting perspective to adopt for further research. It would help to look into whether LGBTI+s’ appropriation of any particular neighborhood is nowadays enabled or facilitated by these apps, and if so, without falling into the causality trap, it would then be possible to ask questions on the production of a digital space that could be working as a tactical medium of digital resistances.

One question that may arise, considering both these above-mentioned limitations, and also the intended contributions of the thesis as a whole and particularly taking into account the “cocoon” model suggested as a concept in this thesis, would be about the level of resonance and positioning of these findings. The results that were discussed here may apply to the situation of LGBTI+s living in certain geographical settings, especially in countries where political and social turmoil is incessant and where there are constant suppression attempts against LGBTI+s. The reason why I think this way is because of the cyclical relationship the resistance and domination have with one another. While oppression paves the way to resistance, power holders use further

strategies to minimize the resistances to homogenize the social environment. But these strategies are not left unanswered: further resistances emerge, and different tactics are applied on an ongoing basis. Cocoons, as a concept that is directly linked with resistance practices in my formulation, may be applied to describe the spatial productions and appropriations of LGBTI+s, especially in geographical settings where the rule of patriarchy, heterosexism, oppressiveness, the compelling nature of binary gender system and the hardship to discuss matters circling around sexuality are among the dominant social norms. On the other hand, this concept can also be challenged with different spatial production and appropriation examples, even within Turkey itself. Given the geographical limitations of the study, for instance, the concept of cocoons may or may not be applied to LGBTI+s living in smaller cities or more rural areas of Turkey.

In sum, my findings indicated that social interactions exchanged inside and in between these cocoons were influential for my respondents. In the final chapter where I explored the reproduced and transformed spaces in the urban space, I portrayed LGBTI+s' appropriations of space, with rainbow flags on the window or the tables of a café (7.2), a word of mouth about a particular place (7.2), the whispers about the formation of a new safe neighborhood (7.3). Their bodies and gestures (5.1, 5.2.1), their queer expressions (5.3), their clothing, and their humor and *lubunca* slang (5.4) were used to create their own safe worlds through these cocoons in their everyday lives.

Final Words

People are pushed to emulate certain behaviors and are raised under the heteropatriarchal and binary gender system. They are expected to act according to these norms in the course of everyday life which should “involve[s] a critique of all politics” (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.89). This situation also brings along a set of norms all of which are material facts. The heteropatriarchal order counts on everyone to be heterosexual, but only a certain part of the population can be heterosexual. The gender binary system within the heteropatriarchal order demands the adoption of a certain appearance/existence, but only some members of society are able to do so. In fact, every norm brings along the abnormal. Although it is the existence of those who do

not fit the system, that is considered as inconsistency or ‘dysfunction’ (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.359), I argue that the existence and presence of those who do not fit into the norm, thus the presence of ‘difference’ is proof that it is, in fact, the system that is fictional and dysfunctional and not the other way around. The bodies are subordinated to and oppressed by the heteropatriarchal sexual and gender rules and fictional measures, they are de-skilled and even pushed to live in similar spatial dimensions.

This thesis explored LGBTI+s’ conflictual life processes and their relationship to the urban space in Istanbul through the articulation of their own experiences and witnessing, imaginations, and conceptions of urban life and urban spaces. I tried to understand the socio-spatial processes of LGBTI+s’ identity constructions, bodily expressions, tactical resilience moves, spatial meaning-makings, spatial reproductions and appropriations, and urban routes of micro and macro resistance. Joining these dots together shed light on resilience and countering mechanisms both on the very ordinary occurrences to the flamboyant ones and it helped make sense of the production of safe spaces: cocoons.

With this research, I focused on LGBTI+’s actions of visibility and invisibility and examined their micro resistances along with the macro-ones while exploring their spatial reverberations. I concluded that LGBTI+s create their own cocoons through different resistances. Cocoons serve as a protective and safe space that relieves the exhaustion of everyday oppressions and they also operate as spaces where togetherness, social relations, and new resistances are bubbling. However, I also determined that these cocoons are not enough, the whole city awaits all those “inhabitants” who are deprived of it one way or the other. Most importantly, I showed that the very fact of ‘resisting’, whether in visible or in invisible ways, is the path to the right to the city. As Ahmed wrote:

We create our own support systems, queer handles; how we hold on; how a life can go on, when we are shattered, because we are shattered. No wonder then: the stories of the exhaustion of inhabiting worlds that do not accommodate us, the stories of the weary and the worn, the teary and the torn, are the same stories as the stories of inventiveness, of creating something, of making something (Ahmed, 2018).

From an overall perspective, my Ph.D. journey has been a long and very nourishing one filled with both exhaustion and empowerment at multiple dimensions of my own

life. In the future, I aim to continue by integrating the mental mapping exercises that I was able to gather from the fieldwork. Moreover, I also consider scrutinizing Lefebvre's rhythm analysis' role as a methodological tool in future research in which I plan to expand the researched space towards cyberspaces as well. As I indicated, one of the shortcomings of my thesis was the lacking voice of men with trans experience. Even though I conducted 2 in-depth interviews, and I was able to communicate informally with more men with trans experience during the fieldwork period, I was not able to include their narratives in the general structure that I posited here. This is still a curious case for me, and it makes me question the place of men with trans experience within the LGBTI+ community and their way of resisting in the course of everyday life. Therefore, I aim to conduct a study focusing solely on their experiences in the future.

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APPENDICES

A. MORE INFORMATION ON THE THEORETICAL DISCUSSIONS OF THE THESIS

More on Lefebvre's Theory on the Production of Space

Perceived Space, Spatial Practice: Physical Aspect

The first constituent mentioned by the Spatial Triad is the Perceived Space. This is also known as the space of practices and it reflects on the observed space. In the perceived space, the spatial descriptions appear to be very basic and the daily routine activities of the individuals also belong to this component of space. Here, Lefebvre draws attention to the way societies produce their spatial layers via society's activities, thus via its spatial practices. He says that "spatial practice regulates life - it does not create it" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.358). He furthermore argues that it is only through the intersection with a social practice that space, as a concept, is able to gain its meaning as a whole (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.137). The synthesis of lived space and conceived space on their own is not probable due to their dialectical relationship. Despite this, their convergence is rendered possible through spatial practice. The spatial practice operates as catalysis of social life; the spatial practice fuels its production (Lefebvre, 1991b).

Conceived Space, Representations of Space: Mental Aspect

The conceived space constitutes the second constituent of the Spatial Triad and is also known as the "representations of space". It is discursively constructed by the power holders. Thus, the examination of conceived space suggests taking a closer look at policy implementation and spatial power relationships on different social groups in different spatial layers by investigating the lived space activities and restrictions to it.

In the representations of space, the space is considered as the designed outcome, mental constructions, and abstract conceptualizations of space. In Lefebvre's terms, it is "the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.38). Social oppression's spatial reflection usually takes place through the production of conceived space which is guided by the application of city plans, urban maps, and social policies affecting the flow of individuals' everyday life. In this perspective, Lefebvre points out the dominant power of the representations of space over representational (lived) spaces because of their oppressive execution on numerous everyday life items (such as signs, shapes, symbols, and codes) (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.38). The conceived space retains influential institutional power and material impact on socio-spatial layers.

Lefebvre points out a critical feature of the abstract space that despite its rejection of sensuality and sexuality, its bare existence relies heavily on the continuance and reproduction of existing sensuality and sexuality notions, namely the family, biological reproduction (fertility) (Lefebvre, 1991b, pp.49-50). This shows that the abstract space carries certain prerequisites such as the reproduction of hetero-patriarchal relations in itself which results in its identification as "the space of reductions, of force and repression, of manipulation and co-optation, the destroyer of nature and of the body" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.354).

The mental space was considered to be the most powerful one among the three fields (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.49) and it was deemed to be "extra-ideological" (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.6). This was because of the established tradition of viewing space as a theoretical domain of technocrats and power holders (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.38-39), thus of dominant classes (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.6). The shift in the suggested hegemony of mental space serves to incorporate and encompass the physical and the social fields, which in return bring the social nature of space to the fore (Lefebvre, 1991b, pp.5-6).

However, the conceived space does not continually possess or preserve a holistic power, a strong control, or even an influence across all space despite the presence of written and physical restrictions and prohibitions. The conceived space receives resistance and struggles from the lived space. Space no longer functions as the physical

passive object from which society sprouts but rather it has become a weapon of struggle and resistance.

Lived Space, Representational Spaces: Social Aspect

‘Where there is space, there is being’. (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.22)

The third constituent of the triad is the lived space, also known as representational space. This is the space that urban dwellers experience directly. The lived space can be seen as an aspect on top of the physical forms of the perceived space. Bodily practices, everyday life occurrences, oppression, domination, and difference are elements that rule in the lived space. Lefebvre says that it is everyday life that forms representational spaces (Lefebvre, 1991b, p.116). It is an essential space for studying firstly because it is subject to domination and oppression, and secondly because it is the platform whereby the manifestation of individual agency takes place and therefore renders its occupants and creators as ‘spatial beings’.

Urban inhabitants produce representational spaces as a product of their own experiences (Lefebvre, 1991b, pp.37-38). The inhabitants of the urban space construct a field grounded on their awareness which is based on their physical and social presence in the representational space. It is through the lived space that an area acquires its social and symbolic meanings. The spaces are thus considered to be ‘social outcomes’ and mental inventions of our everyday lives, which envisage new meanings or possibilities of spatial activities.

Lived space incorporates all sorts of social differences and intra-personal connections. The lived space is categorically different from conceived space since it always tries to alter and adjust its physical and social activities. Whereas the conceived space always tries to limit potential and current existences and homogenize them within the representations of space (Lefebvre, 1991b). Lived space, therefore, lies between the dual ends containing both the imagined and the realized and which determines space to be more than an inactive emplacement for social relations.

More on Lefebvre's Theory on the Right to the City

I would like to point out an important feature in Lefebvre's conceptualization of "the right to the city" in terms of word structure. Marcuse indicates that both of the words, 'right' and 'city', are used in singular form (Marcuse, 2010, p.87). The singular usage in the right signifies a unified and integrated set of rights that are in relation to the current urban settings that include but is not limited to proper housing, transportation, employment, education, and leisure. Lefebvre's usage of the words in their singular forms indicates a collision and fusion of these demands all of which help sustain one another (Marcuse, 2010, p.88). As Marcuse argues furthermore, the singular usage also "pushes the analysis to an understanding of the system as a whole" (Marcuse, 2010, p.89).

Purcell (2003) argued that the right to the city pointed out a critical alteration in the understanding of whose rights were being mentioned by clearing out that the concept of 'inhabitant' had actually replaced the concept of 'citizen' in Lefebvre's writings. In the *Critique of Everyday Life*, Lefebvre briefly makes this distinction as well and he says that "the citizen, in so far as he is separate from the private man and the productive man" (Lefebvre, 1991a, p.89). Lefebvre tallied on from the traditional concepts of 'citizen' towards another paradigm, urban dwellers / *citadins*, which recognizes social, religious, economic, gender (and sexuality based, I would add) and ethnic differences and inequalities in urban society and which creates its spaces through the resistance and struggle mechanisms that are essential for representation. He came up with the term "inhabitant", which encompassed every human being who resides and/or is an occupant in the area, regardless of their nationality, legal status, gender (and sexual) orientation in that urban space. In light of this new conceptualization, Lefebvre's words to describe the right to the city were as follows:

The right to the city, complemented by the right to difference and the right to information, should modify, concretize and make more practical the rights of the citizen as an urban dweller (citadin) and user of multiple services. It would affirm, on the one hand, the right of users to make known their ideas on the space and time of their activities in the urban area; it would also cover the right to the use of the centre, a privileged place, instead of being dispersed and stuck into ghettos (translated in Kofman & Lebas, 1996, p.34).

I believe that residence is to be considered the denominator that renders the reproduction of the city and everyday urban life possible. Thinking about the concepts of “residents” and “inhabitants” and “dwellers” often helped me to better include marginalized city users, LGBTI+s in this case, into the existing discussions while keeping in mind all those who are not considered as “citizens” who find themselves in an alienated and deprived position. The inhabitant, this time, is expected to play an active role in determining the city’s today and tomorrow via the appropriation of the conceived material spaces.

Dikeç (2001) and Purcell (2003) point to the participation of the *citadin* in all processes of urban space development as effective residents, as well as to their partaking as active agents in debates and struggles to delineate and reappropriate urban spaces. This principle has its base on the right to the city, the right to difference, and the right to resist, beginning from everyday life experiences to the resistances against the eradication of residents from the streets of the city.

As Duncan argues “the street serves here as a metaphor for sites of resistance” (Duncan, 1996, p.129). The streets and neighborhoods of the oppressed individuals and groups carry an important role in this, just like in this example of LGBTI+s’ struggle taking place on different spatial layers of Istanbul as this thesis aims to portray so. I would like to give a quote from Lefebvre (2003) about the importance of the street: “The street is where movement takes place, the interaction without which urban life would not exist, leaving only separation, a forced and fixed segregation. And there are consequences to eliminating the street: ... the extinction of life, the reduction of the city to a dormitory, the aberrant functionalization of existence.” (Lefebvre, 2003, p.18). As I discussed in the analysis chapters, the street is one of the spatial domains where both micro and macro resistances of LGBTI+s take place and it is one of the spatial realms that await being appropriated. The right to the city has also a utopian dimension; it is the attempt to re-imagining and re-making the existing urban systems, homes, streets, neighborhoods, and all other spaces that we have (Harvey, 2003, p.941). Thus, it possesses revolutionary and collective features in itself.

More on Theories on Resistances

As I indicated in the Lexicon part of the introduction section, De Certeau (1984) makes a clear distinction between strategies and tactics, and my adoption of the wording of tactic throughout the thesis is rooted in this specific distinction he is making amongst them. De Certeau defines the actions implemented by the authority for creating and then maintaining uniformity and stabilization as a “strategy”. He explains the concept of strategy as the game or reckoning (or manipulation) in which power relations are only realized and finalized when the object of the desire can attain their wish in isolation (De Certeau, 1984, p.36). He identifies and describes “tactics” as actions full of cunning and evasive behavior developed by ordinary people to make room for themselves (De Certeau, 1984, p.xix). He says that the tactic “is determined by the absence of power just as a strategy is organized by the postulation of power” (De Certeau, 1984, p.38). The differentiation is not only based on the actors/operators of these actions but also on the spatial milieu that this action is taking place (De Certeau, 1984, p.36). For a strategy to exist and be implemented, it is necessary that it has a defined and outlined area/space. This space operates as a base through which it can guide the relationship it has established with the ones outside of it. For instance, if we were to consider the city, people who are involved in macro planning activities, such as city planners or bureaucrats, are the ones who define and primarily shape the space and draw the green and red lines about its use. These are the people who have the power to develop strategies, and as a result, the space that they produce is called “conceived space” in Lefebvre’s tri-partite spatial understanding (Lefebvre, 1991b). Whereas tactics operate on the lived space, creating continuous struggle and turbulence between the two. Tactics on the other hand use only the space of the ‘other’ as an operation area; in this respect, tactics are bound to establish their own game in an area that has been imposed and produced by a foreign (and dominant) force. In that regard, De Certeau writes: “the place of a tactic belongs to the other” (De Certeau, 1984, pp.xix-37). As a result, what is important in tactics is not the space, as it is in strategies, it is ‘time’ (De Certeau, 1984). The ‘game’ is based on expert use of time and emerging opportunities.

‘The place’ appears as one of the primary classifying factors in discerning tactics from strategies. Strategies were built to develop their own position and also to establish

a relation to power. They preserve the status quo and employ other forms of power for this aim. Whereas tactics' lack of space actually gives mobility to them. They find the possibility to hide between the 'cracks' they open within the earshot of the power holders; these cracks are places where they poach (De Certeau, 1984, p.37). They occur at the most unexpected moments. For de Certeau, most regular activities by individuals can be described as tactical because they are associated with this lack of power they occur in cases of opportunities, and they create surprises (De Certeau, 1984, p.xix).

B. THE INTERVIEW GUIDE USED DURING THE FIELDWORK TO CONDUCT IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS (TURKISH)

ISINMA

- Projenin anlatılması
- Bağımsız bir araştırmacı olarak projenin sürdürüldüğünün açıklanması
- Ses kaydı izninin alınması
-’da yaşayan bir LGBTI birey olarak kentle olan deneyimlerinizden bahsedeceğiz. Bu nedenle bugün ilk başta LGBTI birey olmanın ne demek olduğu konusunda sizin değerlendirmelerinizi almak isteyeceğim. Yaşadığımız şehirde LGBTI birey olmanın etkilerinden ve şehirle & şehir halkı? Esnaf? Resmi kurumlar? Polis? Belediye? olan genel ilişkinizden bahsedeceğiz.
- **Tabi bu aşamada derneğin yaşantınıza kattıklarına da değineceğiz.**
- Sizi biraz tanıyabilir miyim? Gününüz nasıl geçiyor neler yapıyorsunuz?

LGBTI ALGISI

- LGBTI birey olmak dediğimde aklınıza ne geliyor? Bu kavram size ne gibi çağrışımlar yapıyor?
- Türkiye’deki deneyimlerden bahsetmeden önce eğer bilginiz dahilindeyse 2 farklı coğrafyada LGBTI birey algısı konusundaki fikirlerinizi almak istiyorum
 - Sizce Avrupa kentlerindeki LGBTI bireyler algısı nasıl? Ne yönde şekillenmiş? (*kısaca*)
 - *Avrupa’nın da kendi içinde ayrıldığını düşünüyor musunuz?*
 - Peki Müslümanların çoğunlukta olduğu ülkelerde LGBTI birey algısı ne yönde şekillenmiş? (*kısaca*)
- Sizin takip ettiğiniz ve LGBTI bireylere yönelik uygulamalarını beğendiğiniz bir ülke örneği var mı?
 - Neden özellikle bu ülke pratiklerini beğeniyorsunuz? (*kısaca*)
 - Bu ülkedeki LGBTI bireylerin kentle olan deneyimlerinde bir değişiklik oluyor mudur sizce? (*kısaca*)
- Peki, Türkiye’de LGBTI birey olmak dediğimde aklınıza ne geliyor? (*kısaca*)
 - Sizin demin yaptığınız tanımlamalardan farklılaşan yönleri var mı? (*kısaca*)
- Türkiye’deki LGBTI birey algısı sizce ne yönde şekillenmiş? Neden bu şekilde bir algı var sizce (*kısaca, homofobi ve transfobi hakkındaki görüşleri irdelenebilir*)
- Bu algı LGBTI bireylerin yaşamını ne derece etkiliyor? (*kısaca*) *eğitim, iş, konut / ev bulma, gündelik hayat gibi aile ilişkileri?*
- Peki LGBTI bireyler XXXX şehrinde (*görüşmenin gerçekleştirildiği şehir referans verilerek*) nasıl bir deneyim sahibi oluyor?
İlerleyen bölümlerde derinlemesine irdeleneceğini belirterek sorulacak
 - Ayrımcılığa uğruyorlar mı? (*Kısaca*)
 - Kendileri güvende veya tehlike hissettikleri yerler var mı? (*Kısaca*)

- Eğlence mekanları var mı? (kısaca)

VÜCUT/BEDEN

- Deneyiminizden bağımsız olarak, vücudunuzun cinsel yöneliminiz ve cinsiyet kimliğinizle olan ilişkisini nasıl açıklarsınız?
 - Vücudunuzu bir ifade aracı olarak kullanıyor musunuz? Neden?
 - Cinsiyet kimliğiniz açısından vücudunuz önemli bir yer tutuyor mu? Neden?
 - Bu vücutsal ifadeleme sizin hayatınızda çok belirleyici bir yer tutuyor mu? Neden (*Örneğin: aktivizm açısından önemli bir ifade yöntemi olarak görülebilir, ya da yaşanan ayrımcılıklara sebep olması açısından vücut önemli bir yer tutuyor olabilir*)
- Diğer LGBTI bireyleri düşündüğünüzde bedeninizle kurduğunuz bu ilişkinin deneyim açısından benzer olduğunu düşündüğünüz kişiler var mı?
 - Neden böyle düşünüyorsunuz?

Sizin biraz hikayenizi öğrenmek istiyorum. LGBTI birey olarak kendinizi ifade ettiğiniz ilk andan bugüne kadar olan süreci düşündüğünüzde

- LGBTI birey olarak günelik yaşam deneyimleriniz dediğim zaman aklınıza ilk gelen nedir?
 - Bu deneyimler daha çok olumlu olarak nitelendirebileceğimiz olaylar ekseninde mi yoksa olumsuz olaylar ekseninde mi toplanıyor?
 - Neden bu deneyiminiz özellikle aklınıza geliyor?
 - Bu deneyimlerinizi vücudunuzla ilişkilendirecek olursanız, vücudunuzun bu durumdan nasıl etkilendiğini düşünürdünüz?
 - Ve aynı şekilde sizce, vücudunuz (*fiziksel görünüme ek olarak, davranış, kyafet, ifade şekli (yani aslında gender identity irdelenecek)*) bu deneyimlere etkisi olmuş mudur? Ne açılardan bu tip etkiler edildiğini düşünüyorsunuz
- Geçmişte yaşadıklarınız arasında en çarpıcı olan olay neydi?
- Yetişkin yaşantınızda LGBTI birey olarak deneyimlediğiniz en çarpıcı olay hangisiydi?
- Mücadele dediğimde aklınıza ne geliyor?
 - LGBTI birey olmak ve mücadele etmek arasında nasıl bir bağ kuruyorsunuz?
 - Mücadele sizin yaşamınızın neresinde yer alıyor?

EV

- Şu anda XXXX'de yaşadığınızı söylemişsiniz.
- Kimlerle birlikte yaşıyorsunuz (*anket teyidini al*)

Evde ailesiyle birlikte yaşayanlara özel sorular

- Ailenizle yaşamanızın en önemli sebepleri nedir?
- Ne kadar zamandır ailenizle yaşıyorsunuz?
- Ailenizin yanından ayrılıp kendi başınıza, arkadaşlarınızla veya partnerinizle yaşamayı düşünüyor musunuz? Evetse/hayırsa neden?
- Aileniz LGBTI birey olduğunuzdan haberdar mı?

Haberdarsa,

- LGBTI birey olduğunuzu ilk ne zaman sesli olarak söylediniz?

- Tepkileri ne oldu?
- Ailenizle olan ilişkinizde belirgin bir rol oynadı mı? Ne açılardan belirleyici olduğunu belirtirsiniz?
- Özel hayatınızı dilediğiniz açıklıkta yaşayabiliyor musunuz?

Haberdar değilse,

- Ailenize söylememenizin özel bir nedeni var mı? Nedir?
- Söylememiş olmanız hayatınızı nasıl etkiliyor?
- Arkadaşlarınızla olan hayatınız bu durumdan etkileniyor mu? Evetse/hayırna neden?
- Özel hayatınızı partnerlerinizle ve sevgililerinizle olan hayatınızı bu açıdan değerlendirecek olursanız neler derdiniz?

Ailesinden ayrı yaşayanlara özel sorular

- Birlikte yaşadığınız kişi/kişiler LGBTI birey olduğunuzu biliyorlar mı?

Evet yanıtını verenlere

- LGBTI birey olduğunuzu öğrenme süreci nasıl gelişti? Bana biraz o dönemi anlatabilir misiniz?
- Birlikte yaşadığınız kişiler arasında başka LGBTI birey olan kimse var mı?

LGBTI birey olduğunuzu bilen var mı sorusuna “Hayır” yanıtını verenlere

- LGBTI birey olduğunuzu söylememenizin özel bir sebebi var mı?
- Söylemeyi düşünüyor musunuz? Neden?
- Bu durum sizin hayatınızı ne şekilde etkiliyor?

MAHALLE / KENT

Mahalle algısı

Şu anda XXXX semtinde/mahallesinde yaşadığınızı belirtmiştiniz (*kapalı uçlu sorulardan alınan yanıtlara göre ilerlenecek*)

- Bu semtte ne kadar zamandır yaşıyorsunuz?

Herkese sorulacak

- Bu yaşadığı yeri nasıl tanımlıyorsunuz? (*yönlendirme yapmadan, kimi sıfatlarla anlatması istenebilir, temiz, ferah, insan dostu, muhafazakar, yoksul, zengin, gibi sıfatlar kullanabileceği söylenebilir*)
- Yaşadığınız bu semtte LGBTI başka tanıdıklarınız da yaşıyor mu? Onlarla olan iletişiminiz nasıl?
- Yaşadığınız bu semtteki diğer gruplarla olan iletişiminiz nasıl? Neden böyle bir ilişkiniz olduğunu düşünüyorsunuz? İlişkinizin iyi/kötü olmasındaki en önemli sebepler neler?
- Mahallenizde yaşanan diğer grupların ortak bir özelliği var mı? Bu grubu nasıl nitelersiniz?

Doğduğundan beri ya da çocukluğundan beri bu semtte mahallede yaşadığını söyleyenlere sorulmayacak.

- Bu semte taşınmanıza en büyük etken neydi? Neden bu semti tercih ettiniz? Kimlere başvurduunuz/danıştınız?
- Buraya taşınmadan önce nerede yaşıyordunuz?
- Bu yaşadığınız yeri nasıl tanımlıyorsunuz? Yaşadığınız mahalle/semt nasıldı? (*yönlendirme yapmadan kimi sıfatlarla anlatması istenebilir, temiz, ferah,*

insan dostu, muhafazakar, yoksul, zengin, gibi sıfatlar kullanabileceği söylenebilir)

- Mahallede yaşayan diğer sakinler nasıl kişilerdi? Aklınıza gelen ve özellikle anlatılması gereken bir özellik olsa, bu mahalle hakkında ne derdiniz?
- Daha önce oturduğunuz bu mahalleden gitme sebepleriniz neydi?

Herkese sorulacak

- Hem şu an yaşadığınız hem de daha önce yaşadığınız (eğer varsa) semtleri mahalleleri düşünecek olursanız sizce buralar:
 - Aile dostu bir semt/mahalle mi? Neden?
 - Kadın dostu bir semt/mahalle mi? Neden?
 - LGBTI dostu bir semt/mahalle mi? Neden?
 - Demokrat / aydın/?
- Yaşadığınız mahallede kendinizi nasıl hissediyorsunuz? (*Özgür, ferah, rahat, kapana kısılmış, kendim değilim gibi ifadeler kullanılıyor mu? İrdelenecek*)
- Yaşadığınız yer sizin için ne ifade ediyor?
- Kamusal alan ne demek? Sizin için ne ifade ediyor?
- Özel alan ne demek? Sizin için ne ifade ediyor?
- Özel ve kamusal alan arasında farklılaşma var mı? Varsa ne gibi farklar var? Ev ne demek?
- Mücadele konusuna geri gelecek olursak, eviniz ve mücadele arasında ve kamusal alan ve mücadele arasında nasıl bir ilişki var?
 - Evinizde de mücadele var mı? Ne açıdan?
 - Bu “ev” algınızı ne yönde etkiliyor?
 - Kamusal alan olarak tanımladığınız yerlerde mücadele var mı? Ne yönde?

Kent algısı

- İstanbul’u bir kent olarak nasıl tanımlarsınız?
- İstanbul bir insan olsaydı nasıl biri olurdu? Hem fiziksel hem de kişilik özelliklerinden bahsedebilirsiniz. Neden bu şekilde bir tanımlama yapıyorsunuz?
- İstanbul sizce
 - Aile dostu bir kent mi? Neden?
 - Kadın dostu bir kent mi? Neden?
 - LGBTI dostu bir kent mi? Neden?
 - Demokrat /aydın?

Şimdi de sizin bu kentte yaşadığınız deneyimlerinizi öğrenmek istiyorum.

- Bu kentin özellikle sevdiğiniz yanları neler? Neden?
- Özellikle sevmediğiniz yanları neler? Neden?
- Hayatınızı kolaylaştırdığını düşündüğünüz tarafları var mı bu kentin? Neden?
- Hayatınızı zorlaştırdığını düşündüğünüz yanları var mı? Neden?

Bir LGBTI birey olarak değerlendirecek olursanız

- Bu kentte yaşamının LGBTI bireylere ne gibi etkileri oluyor? Neden?
- Yaşadığınız bu kentte LGBTI bireylerin bir arada yaşaması gibi bir durum söz konusu mu?

- Siz diğer LGBTI bireylerle bir arada yaşamayı tercih ediyormusunuz? Aynı ev- mahalle/semte gibi?

Evitse:

- Nerede yaşamayı tercih ediyorlar? Siz nerede yaşamayı tercih ediyorsunuz?
- Neden birlikte yaşamayı tercih ediyorlar? Siz neden böyle bir tercihte bulunuyorsunuz?
- Birlikte yaşanan bu alanların sizin için ayrı bir önemi/anlamı var mı?

Hayırsa

- Neden birlikte yaşamayı tercih etmiyorlar? (*irdeleme noktaları: Herkes kendi derdinde, kent çok büyük herkes evine/işine yakın olan yerde yaşamayı tercih ediyor..*)

Şu başlıkları düşünecek olursanız, bu kenti LGBTI bireyler açısından nasıl değerlendirirdiniz? Siz birebirde bu başlıklarda sorun yaşıyor musunuz?

- **Barınma hakkı:** *Ev bulma, bulunan evlerin istenen semtlerde olması, yaşamak istenen semtlerdeki ev kiralarının ya da fiyatlarının LGBTI birey tarafından karşılanabilmesi, ev sahiplerinin evlerini LGBTI bireylere kiraya vermeyi kabul etmeleri, vb,*
 - Bu konuda sorun yaşanması durumlarında bu durumun ne kadar zaman önce olduğunun ve bu durum karşısında ne gibi önlemler alınabileceğinin tartışılması
- **Okul/egitim hayatı:** *LGBTI birey olarak devam edilen ya da tamamlanmış okullarda karşılaşılan tavır, okul hayatının kentin kendi dinamiğinden etkilenip etkilenmemesinin, vb*
 - Bu konuda sorun yaşanması durumlarında bu durumun ne kadar zaman önce olduğunun ve bu durum karşısında ne gibi önlemler alınabileceğinin tartışılması
- **İstihdam imkanları;** *LGBTI birey olarak şehirde iş bulabilme imkanları. İş yerinde LGBTI birey olduğunun açık olması durumlarında iş veren, çalışma arkadaşlarının tepkileri, vb*
 - Bu konuda sorun yaşanması durumlarında bu durumun ne kadar zaman önce olduğunun ve bu durum karşısında ne gibi önlemler alınabileceğinin tartışılması
- **Sosyalleşme imkanları:** *LGBTI birey olarak gidilebilecek kafe, restoranların varlığı. Sosyalleşmeye imkân tanıyacak, yeni arkadaşlıklar kurma veya yeni partnerlerle tanışmak için gidilebilecek sosyal mekanların varlığının sorgulanması. Ayrı mekanları istiyor mu? vb*
 - Bu konuda sorun yaşanması durumlarında bu durumun ne kadar zaman önce olduğunun ve bu durum karşısında ne gibi önlemler alınabileceğinin tartışılması
- **Alışveriş:** *LGBTI birey olarak alışveriş yapılabilen yerlerin sorgulanması, vb..*
 - Buzdolabı alışverişi: Mahallede büyük bir market olmaması durumunda, yerel market veya satıcıların tepkilerinin irdelenmesi
 - Kıyafet alışverişi: Büyük mağazalarda uğranan ayrımcılığın varlığının tespit edilmesi

- Bu konuda sorun yaşanması durumlarında bu durumun ne kadar zaman önce olduğunun ve bu durum karşısında ne gibi önlemler alınabileceğinin tartışılması
- **Sağlık konuları:** Hastanelerde hizmet görme konusunun irdelenmesi.
 - Bu konuda sorun yaşanması durumlarında bu durumun ne kadar zaman önce olduğunun ve bu durum karşısında ne gibi önlemler alınabileceğinin tartışılması

XXX konularında sorun yaşadığınızı belirttiniz. Yaşamış olduğunuz bu sorunlarla ilgili olarak

- Bu durumdan kimin sorumlu olduğunu düşünüyorsunuz?
- Bunları düzenleme konusunda kim sorumlu olmalı?
- Sizce böyle bir durumu düzeltmek için, yani uğradığınız sorunların/ayrımcılık durumlarının sonlanması için ne gibi bir önlem alınmalı? Neler yapılmalı?
- Mevcut sistemde bu konular hakkında (LGBTI bireylerin anayasal düzlemdeki güvencesinden bahsedilecek) hukuksal düzenlemenin olmaması hayatınızı nasıl etkiliyor? Hukuksal anayasal bir güvence olsaydı yaşamınız nasıl olurdu? Neden?
- Size başka bir kentte yaşama imkânı verileceği söylense, nereyi seçerdiniz? Neden bu kenti tercih ederdiniz?

SOSYAL HAREKETİN ETKİLERİNİN İRDELENMESİ

- Kentinizde yer alan LGBTI derneğini/derneklerini duydunuz mu/haberdar mısınız?
- Bu dernek/ler hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?

Bu derneklerden herhangi biriyle bir ilişkisi olanlara

- Neden üye oldunuz? Neden üye değilsiniz? Derneğin en temel LGBTI politikasını ve söylemini nasıl tanımlarsınız?
 - Derneğin bu söylemi/ (ve eğer bahsedilirse diğer söylemleri hakkında) ne gibi bilgileriniz var?
- Bu söylemler konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz? Katıldığınız-katılmadığınız söylemler var mı?
- Derneğin kente yönelik politikaları var mı? Yaşam alanları, kamusal ve özel yaşamı düzenlenmesinde yardımcı olacağını düşündüğünüz politikalar üretiliyor mu? Siz bu politikalara ihtiyaç duyuyor musunuz? Neden?
- Derneğin söylemlerinin politik tarafları olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz? Eğer öyleyse ne yöne doğru evriliyor sizce bu söylemler (sağ-sol tandanslar sorulacak)
- Bu derneklerin sizin hayatınız ne gibi bir yeri var? Neden?
- İstanbul'da yaşadığınızı göz önünde bulundurduğunuzda, derneğin yaşantınızı ne yönde etkilediğini düşünüyorsunuz?
 - İyi yönde etkiliyor: ne açıdan?
 - Etkilemiyor: Neden böyle? Etkilemesini bekler miydiniz?
 - Kötü yönde etkiliyor: neden?
- Derneğin size neler kattığını söylersiniz?
- Derneğin olmaması durumunda hayatınızda ne gibi değişiklikler olurdu sizce?

- Dernek sayesinde diğer LGBTİ'lerle olan ilişkinizde bir değişiklik oluyor mu?
- Dernek sayesinde bilgi sahibi olmak istediğiniz konularda bilgilenebiliyor musunuz?

Kent ve dernek arasındaki ilişkinin irdelenmesi

Kent hakkındaki değerlendirmenizi alırken xxx konularında olumlu/olumsuz değerlendirmeleriniz olmuştur.

- Bu fikrinizin değişmesi için derneğin sunduğu olanaklar var mı? Varsa bunlar neler?
- Bu yönde yaptığınız değerlendirmelerin değişmesinde bu derneğin bir etkisi var mı sizce? Neden?
- *Ailenizle birlikte yaşadığınızı belirtmişsiniz*, LGBTİ birey olarak ailenizle birlikte yaşamınızda derneğin size yardımcı olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz? Neden?
- *Ailenizle yaşamadığınızı söylemişsiniz*. Şu an yaşadığınız yerdeki ilişkileriniz üzerinde bu derneğin bir etkisi olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz? Neden?

GENDER ASSYMETRY

- Peki derneğin etkileri sizce LGBTİ bireyler üzerinde benzer mi?
 - Neden böyle düşünüyorsunuz?
- Ne gibi bir farklılık olduğunu düşünüyorsunuz?

ONUR YÜRÜYÜŞLERİ

- Onur yürüyüşleri hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz? Ulusal uluslararası?
 - Olumlu veya olumsuz olarak değerlendirme yapacak olursanız ne gibi konular geliyor aklınıza?
 - Olumlu düşünmenizin arkasındaki gerekçeler neler?
 - Olumsuz düşünmenizin arkasındaki gerekçeler neler?
- Onur yürüyüşlerinin hayatınızı ne yönde etkiliyor?
 - Bu yönde etkilemesinin gerekçeleri neler?
- Onur yürüyüşlerinin sizin diğer LGBTİ bireylerle aranızdaki ilişkiyi etkilediğini düşünüyor musunuz? Eğer öyleyse ne yönde etki ettiğini düşünüyorsunuz?
- Onur yürüyüşleri ve Türkiye'deki LGBTİ hakları arasındaki ilişki hakkında neler söylersiniz?
- LGBTİ derneğini/derneklerini düşündüğünüzde, derneklerin söylemleri ve onur yürüyüşleri arasında nasıl bir ilişki kuruyorsunuz?
- Onur yürüyüşlerinin sağladığı özgürlük alanı hakkındaki görüşünüz nedir?

EYLEME/PROTESTOYA KATILMA DURUMU

- Kente gerçekleşen protestolara katılıyor musunuz?

Evet diyenlere sorulacak

- Hangilerine katılıyorsunuz? (LGBTİ hareketi kapsamındaki eylemlere katılıp kalmadığı sorgulanacak)
- Katılmanızdaki en büyük amaç nedir?
- Sizce bu protestoların amacı nedir?
- Bu protestoların amaçlarına ulaştığını düşünüyor musunuz? Neden?
- Siz de bu eylemlere katılırken amaçlarını olduğunu söylemişsiniz.
 - Bu amaçlara ulaşmakta protestolar/eylemler başarılı oluyorlar mı? Hangi anlamda ve neden?

“MENTAL MAPPING” EGZERSIZI

Harita üzerinden kent değerlendirilmesinin alınması. Kent haritasında birlikte gezelim...

- 1- Nerelerde eğlendiği
- 2- Eğitim ve iş?
- 3- Nerelerde alışveriş yaptığını
- 4- Nerelerde yemek yemeği tercih ettiğini
- 5- Nerelerde kendini daha rahat ve güvende hissettiğini
- 6- Nereleri tehlikeli gördüğünü ve kendini güvende hissetmediğini
- 7- Nereleri kendi evi olarak gördüğünü
- 8- Nerelerde sıklıkla vakit geçirdiğini (iş sebebiyle vs)
- 9- Nerelere gitmekten hiç hoşlanmadığını
- 10- Nerelere gitmeyi çok istese de farklı sebeplerden dolayı gidemediğini
- 11- Nerelerde kendini en çok özgür hissettiğini ve kendi olabildiğini düşündüğü yerler

Buralara dair yerler göstermesi istenecek. Bu yerlere yönelik olarak değerlendirmesini günün aydınlık/karanlık vakitlerinde nasıl deneyimlediğini anlatması istenecek.

KAPANIŞ

LGBTI derneklerinin politikalarının kente ilişkin girişimleri olmalı mı? Ne açıdan?

LGBTI derneklerinin üretecekleri politikalar ne yönde evrilmeli? Neden?

Benim sorularım bu kadardı. Eklemek istediğiniz bir şey var mı?

Teşekkürler.

C. THE INTERVIEW GUIDE USED DURING THE FIELDWORK TO CONDUCT IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS (ENGLISH)

WARMING UP

- Description of the project
- Announcing that the project is continuing as an independent research
- Getting permission to record audio
- As an LGBTI individual living in, we will talk about your experiences with the city. For this reason, today I will first want to get your evaluations about what it means to be an LGBTI individual. The effects of being an LGBTI individual in the city you live in and on the city & people of the city? Craftsmen? Government agencies? Police? Municipality? We will talk about your general relationship.
- Of course, at this stage, we will also mention the contributions of the social movement and the organizations to your life.
- Can I get to know you a little bit? What is the usual day for you? What is an “everyday” for you?

LGBTI PERCEPTION

- What comes to your mind when I say being an LGBTI individual? What connotations does this concept have for you?
- Before talking about your experience in Turkey, I would like to get your ideas on the perception of LGBT individuals in different geographies, if you are aware of them
 - How do you think the perception of LGBTI individuals in European cities is shaped? In what direction is it shaped? (briefly)
 - Do you think Europe is separated within itself?
 - How has the perception of LGBTI individuals shaped in countries with a majority of the Muslim population? (briefly)
- Is there an example of a country that you follow and that you like its practices for LGBTI individuals?
 - Why do you especially like the practices of this country? (briefly)
 - Do you think there is a change in LGBTIs’ experiences with the city in this country? (briefly)
- So, what comes to your mind when I say LGBTI individuals in Turkey? (briefly)
 - Are there aspects that differ from the definitions you just made? (briefly)
- How do you think the perception towards LGBTIs is shaped in Turkey? Why do you think there is such a perception (briefly examine opinions on homophobia and transphobia)?

- To what extent does this perception affect the lives of LGBTI individuals? (Briefly examine family relationships such as education, employment, housing, everyday life?)
- So, what kind of experience LGBTI individuals have in XXXX city (with reference to the city where the interview was held)?

It will be asked, stating that it will be examined in depth in the following sections.

- Are they discriminated against? (Briefly)
- Are there places where they feel safe or in danger? (Briefly)
- Are there entertainment venues? (briefly)

BODY

- How would you explain your body's relationship to your sexual orientation and gender identity, regardless of your experience?
 - Do you use your body as a means of expression? Why is that?
 - Does your body have an important place in terms of your gender identity? Why is that?
 - Does this bodily expression occupy a very decisive place in your life? Why? (For example it can be seen as an important expression method in terms of activism, or the body may have an important place in causing discrimination)
- When you think of other LGBTIs, are there any people you think their relationship with their body is similar to yours?
 - Why do you think so?

I would like to learn more about your story. When you think about the process from the first time you expressed yourself as an LGBTI;

- When I say "your everyday life experiences" as an LGBTI individual, what comes to your mind first?
 - Are these experiences gathered in the axis of events that we can describe as more positive or in the axis of negative events?
 - Why does this experience come to your mind specifically?
 - If you were to associate these experiences with your body, how would you think your body was affected by this situation?
 - And likewise, do you think your body (in addition to physical appearance, behavior, clothing, and expression (*gender identity will actually be addressed here*)) influenced these experiences? In what ways do you think these kinds of effects were affected?
- What was the most striking event in your past?
- What was the most striking event you experienced as an LGBTI in your adult life?
- What comes to your mind when I say struggle?
 - What kind of connection do you make between being an LGBTI individual and 'struggling'?
 - Where does the struggle take place in your life?

HOME

- You said that you are currently living at XXXX.

- Whom do you live with (*confirmation*)

Special questions for those living at home with their family

- What are the most important reasons for living with your family?
- How long have you been living with your family?
- Are you planning to leave your family home and live on your own, with friends or partners? If yes/not, why?
- Does your family know that you identify as LGBTI?

If informed,

- When did you first say out loud that you were an LGBTI?
- What were their reactions?
- Has this played a significant role in your relationship with your family? In what ways would you state that it was impactful?
- Can you live your private life in the openness that you wish?

If not informed,

- Is there a specific reason for not telling your family? What is that?
- How does this ‘not saying’ affect your life?
- Is your life with your friends affected by this situation? If yes/no why?
- If you would evaluate your private life with your partners and lovers from this perspective, what would you say?

Special questions for those living apart from their family

- Does the person (s) you live with know that you are an LGBTI?

To those who answer yes

- How has the process of becoming aware that you are an LGBTI individual developed? Could you tell me a little bit about that period?
- Is there any other LGBTI person among the people you live with?

For those who answered “No” to the question of whether anyone knows that they are an LGBTI individual.

- Is there a specific reason for not saying you are an LGBTI person?
- Are you thinking about telling them? Why is that?
- How does this affect your life?

NEIGHBORHOOD / CITY

Neighborhood perception

You mentioned that you currently live in the XXXX neighborhood

- For how long have you lived in this neighborhood?

To be asked to everyone

- How would you describe this place of residence? (*to describe with some adjectives without giving an explicit direction towards any of them, such as clean, spacious, human friendly, conservative, poor, rich, etc.*)
- Do you know if any other LGBTI acquaintances live in the district where you live? How is your communication with them?

- How is your communication with other groups in the neighborhood where you live? Why do you think you have such a relationship? What are the most important reasons why your relationship is good/bad?
- Do other groups living in your neighborhood have a common feature? How would you characterize this group?

*Those who say they have lived in this neighborhood since they were born or since childhood **will not be** asked these questions.*

- What was the biggest factor for your moving to this district? Why did you choose this district? Whom did you consult?
- Where did you live before you moved here?
- How would you describe this where you live? How was your neighborhood/district? *(to describe with some adjectives without giving an explicit direction towards any of them, such as clean, spacious, human friendly, conservative, poor, rich, etc.)*
- Who were the other residents living in the neighborhood? What would you say about this neighborhood if there was a feature that comes to mind and especially needs to be explained?
- What were your reasons for leaving this neighborhood where you lived before?

To be asked to everyone

- When you think of the neighborhoods you live in now and the districts you have lived in (if any), would you say that these neighborhoods are:
 - family-friendly neighborhood? Why is that?
 - women-friendly neighborhood? Why is that?
 - LGBTI-friendly neighborhood? Why is that?
 - Democrat/intellectual?
- How do you feel in the neighborhood where you live? (Pay attention whether expressions such as free, spacious, comfortable, trapped, not myself? Are being mentioned)

- What does the place where you live mean to you?
- What does public space mean? What does it mean to you?
- What does a private space mean? What does it mean to you?
- Is there any differentiation between private and public spaces? If so, what are the differences? What does ‘home’ mean to you?
- Going back to the issue of struggle, what is the relationship between your home and struggle, and between public space and struggle?
 - Is there a struggle in your house? In what way?
 - How does this affect your perception of “home”?
 - Is there a struggle in the places you define as public spaces? In what way?

City Perception

- How would you describe the city of Istanbul?
- What would the city of Istanbul be like if it were a person? You can talk about both physical and personality traits. Why are you making such a definition?
- Do you think Istanbul

- Is it a family-friendly city? Why is that?
- Is it a woman-friendly city? Why is that?
- Is it an LGBTI-friendly city? Why is that?
- Democrat/intellectual?

Now I want to learn about your experiences in this city.

- What do you particularly like about this city? Why is that?
- What do you particularly dislike? Why is that?
- Is there any part of this city that you think makes your life easier? Why is that?
- Are there any aspects that you think make your life difficult? Why is that?

When you consider the city through your experiences as an LGBTI individual...

- What are the effects of living in this city on LGBTI individuals? Why is that?
- Is there a case where we can say that LGBTI people are living together in this city?
- Do you prefer to live with other LGBTI individuals? Meaning, in the same home - neighborhood/district?

If yes:

- Where do they prefer to live? Where do you prefer to live?
- Why do they choose to live together? Why do you make such a choice?
- Do these areas where they live together have a special significance/meaning for you?

If no:

- Why don't they choose to live together? (*possible points to dig into: Everyone has their own problems, the city is very big, everyone prefers to live close to their home / work ...*)

When you consider these topics that I will say right now, how would you evaluate this city in terms of LGBTI individuals? Do you have any problems with these headings?

- **The right to shelter:** *The issues of finding a house, having the houses found in the desired districts, the lease or prices of the houses in the desired districts being covered by LGBTI individuals, the acceptance of the homeowners to rent their houses to LGBTI individuals, etc.*
 - In case they experienced such an event, discuss how long ago this situation happened and what measures can be taken in the face of this situation.
- **School/education life:** The attitude faced in schools that are attended or completed as an LGBTI individual, examining whether school life is affected by the city's own dynamics
 - In case they experienced such an event, discuss how long ago this situation happened and what measures can be taken in the face of this situation.
- **Employment opportunities;** *Opportunities to find employment in the city as an LGBTI individual. Reactions of employers and colleagues when it is clear that there is an LGBTI individual at work, etc.*

- In case they experienced such an event, discuss how long ago this situation happened and what measures can be taken in the face of this situation.
- **Socializing opportunities:** Presence of cafés and restaurants where LGBTI individuals can go. Questioning the existence of social places to socialize, make new friends or meet new partners. Do they want separate venues?
 - In case they experienced such an event, discuss how long ago this situation happened and what measures can be taken in the face of this situation.
- **Shopping:** Questioning the places where LGBTI individuals can go shopping.
 - Grocery shopping: *If there is no big market in the neighborhood, examining the reactions of local markets or vendors*
 - Clothes shopping: *Detecting the existence of discrimination in big stores*
 - In case they experienced such an event, discussing how long ago this situation happened and what measures can be taken in the face of this situation.
- **Health issues:** *Examining the issue of health services in hospitals.*
 - In case they experienced such event, discussing how long ago this situation happened and what measures can be taken in the face of this situation.

You stated that you had a problem with XXX issues. Regarding these problems you have experienced

- Who do you think is responsible for this situation?
- Who should be responsible for managing these?
- In your opinion, what kind of action should be taken to deal with such situations, that is, how to end the problems/discrimination occurrences you encountered? What should be done?
- In the current system, how does the lack of legal regulation about these issues (the lack of legal protection for LGBTI individuals at the constitutional level) affect your life? What would your life be like if there was a legal constitutional guarantee? Why?
- If you were told that you would be given the opportunity to live in another city, where would you choose? Why would you choose this city?

EXAMINING THE IMPACTS OF THE SOCIAL MOVEMENT

- Have you heard/did you know about the LGBTI association(s) in your city?
- What do you think about this association/s?

To those who are associated with any of these associations.

- Why did you become a member? Why are you not a member? How would you describe the association's most basic LGBTI policy and discourse?
- What information do you have about this discourse / (and other statements, if mentioned) of the association?
- What do you think about these statements? Are there statements that you agree or disagree with?

- Does the association have policies regarding the city? Are there policies that you think will help in regulating living spaces, and public and private life? Do you need these policies? Why is that?
- Do you think that the statements of the association have political sides? If so, in what direction do you think these discourses are evolving (right or left)
- What kind of place do these associations occupy in your life? Why is that?
- Considering that you live in Istanbul, how do you think the association affected your life?
 - It has a good effect: in what way?
 - It does not affect me at all: Why is that? Would you expect it to have an impact?
 - It adversely affects: why?
- What would you say the association contributed to you?
- What kind of changes would happen in your life if there was no association?
- Is there any change in your relationship with other LGBTI thanks to the association?
- Do you get informed about the subjects that you want to be informed about via the association?

Examining the relationship between the city and the association

You had positive/negative comments on xxx issues while you were taking your assessment of the city.

- Are there any possibilities offered by the association to change your opinion? If so, what are these?
- Do you think this association affects changing your evaluations in this direction? Why is that?
- *You mentioned that you live with your family.* Do you think the association helps you to live with your family as an LGBTI individual? Why is that?
- *You said that you do not live with your family.* Do you think this association has an impact on your relationships where you currently live? Why is that?

GENDER ASYMMETRY

- Do you think the effects of the association are similar for LGBTI individuals?
 - Why do you think so?
- What kind of difference do you think there is?

PRIDE MARCHES

- What do you think about pride marches? National international?
 - If you evaluate positively and negatively, what kind of issues come to your mind?
 - What are the reasons behind your positive thinking?
 - What are the reasons behind your negative thinking?
- How do pride marches affect your life?
 - What are the reasons for this effect?
- Do you think pride marches affect your relationship with other LGBTI individuals? If so, in what direction do you think it affects you?

- What can you say about the relationship between pride marches and LGBT rights in Turkey?
- When you think about the LGBTI association(s), what kind of a relationship do you establish between the discourses of the associations and the pride marches?
- What is your opinion on the level of freedom provided by pride marches?

STATUS OF PARTICIPATION IN PROTESTS

- Do you participate in the protests taking place in the city?

To be asked those who say yes

- Which of them do you participate in? (Whether they participated in protests within the scope of the LGBTI movement)
- What is the biggest goal of your participation?
- What do you think is the purpose of these protests?
- Do you think these protests have achieved their goals? Why is that?
- You said that these protests had goals while participating in these actions.
- Do the protests succeed in achieving these goals? In what sense and why?

MENTAL MAPPING EXERCISE

Taking the urban evaluation on the map. Let's walk on this city map together...

1. Where do you have fun?
2. Education and work?
3. Where do you shop?
4. Where do you prefer to eat?
5. Where do you feel more comfortable and safer?
6. Where do you consider to be more dangerous and not feel safe?
7. Where do you see as your home?
8. Where do you spend your time frequently (for work etc.)
9. Where do you not like going to?
10. Where do you want to go and cannot go due to different reasons?
11. Where do you feel most liberated and where do you think you can be "yourself"?

The respondent will be asked to show these areas. They will be asked to explain how they experience these places during the daylight and at night during the day.

CLOSING

Should LGBTI associations have initiatives regarding the city? In what way?

How should the policies of LGBTI associations evolve? Why is that?

These were all my questions. Is there anything you want to add?

Thank you.

D. GETTOLARI DEĞİL ŞEHRİN TAMAMINI İSTİYORUZ (WE DON'T WANT THE GHETTOS, WE WANT THE FULL CITY)” (ORIGINAL TURKISH VERSION)

Merhaba İstanbul

Selam olsun yoldaşlar!

Bizler, lezbiyen, gey,biseksüel, trans ve interseks bireyler olarak,Kapı komşunuz, alt katınız, mahallenizden arkadaşlarınız olarak gezi parkında sizlerle kol kola direnen, çatışan, hakkını arayan yoldaşlarınız olarak Hepinizi selamlıyoruz!

Bugün size haksızlığı deşifre etmeye geldik. Çünkü bizler heteroseksist ve kapitalist sistem tarafından görmezden gelinen,yasal güvenceleri olmayan, istihdam edilmeyen, küfürlerin ve erkeklik şiddetinin, hükümetlerin ve kentsel dönüşüm projelerinin birincil mağdurları olarak yıllardır kentlerin dışına itiliyoruz. Dün yani 1996'da, Ülker Sokak'ta yüzlerce trans kadını evinden eden emniyet operasyonu neyse, bugün camlarına kurşunlar sıkılan, kundaklanan Avcılar Meis sitesindeki evlerimize de olan odur. Dün dozerlerle Tarlabası'nda yaşam alanlarımıza giren, bizi ekmeğimizden ve çorbamızdan eden neyse bugün 40 yıllık sokağımızdan yani Bayram Sokak'tan bizleri devlet ve kolluk kuvvetleriyle sürmeye çalışan da odur. Şişli'de Harbiye'de, bu şehrin her yerinde homofobik ve transfobik nefretin hedefi olan bizlere karşı yapılanlara 20 yıldır örgütlü olarak ses çıkarıyoruz, tarihin başladığı zamandan beridir zulme karşı baş kaldırıyoruz.

Çünkü Yaşam hakkı her şeyin üstündedir. Çünkü Varoluşumuzu cezalandıran, ölümlerimizi hiçe sayan, her türlü polis işkencesine ve şiddetine maruz bırakılanlar her daim mücadeleye devam edeceklerdir.

Hatırlatırız! Bu kent herkesindir, bu kent ezilmişlerin de kentidir. Bu kent kadınların da, çocukların da engellilerin de kentidir. Bu kent emeklinin de, öğretmenin de, işçinin de, fahişelerin de kentidir.

Ve bu kent canı uğruna, kimliği uğruna doğduğu günden itibaren mücadele veren hayatıyla direnen tüm eşcinsel ve transların da kentidir.

Şimdi haykırıyoruz!

Bizi tıktığımız bodrum katlarından, derme çatma evlerden, baba dayağından, patron derdinden, sırtımızdan küfürlerini esirgemeyen tüm erkek egemen dillerin içinden, okuyamadığımız üniversitelerden, çalışamadığımız-atıldığımız iş yerlerinden, nefret cinayetine kurban gittiğimiz evlerimizden, katili devlet eliyle gizlenmiş mahkemelerinizden, bizleri utanmadan meclis kürsülerinden hasta ilan eden kendini tüketmiş siyasetinizin içinden gurur ve onurumuzla haykırıyoruz.

Biz de vatandaşız ve biz de yaşıyoruz! Buradayız, alışın, gitmiyoruz!

Çıktığımız bu özgürlük yolculuğunda, uzun yıllar birlikte yapacağımız çok şey var.

Berber yaşadığımız mahallelerden paylaştığımız caddelere, birbirimize hasret giderdiğimiz parklardan devletin elini çekmesi gereken tüm kamusal alanlara kadar hakkımızı hem arayacak hem de alacağız. Sermayeyi bu şehirden def edene kadar dişimizi tırnağımıza takıp mücadeleye devam edeceğiz.

Ve bugün tüm İstanbul'a haykırıyoruz!

Bizlere reva görülen gettoları değil, bu şehrin, yani İstanbul'un tamamını istiyoruz.

Kurtuluş yok tek başına ya hep beraber ya hiçbirimiz!

**E. “WE DON’T WANT THE GHETTOS, WE WANT THE FULL CITY”
(ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY LGBTINEWSTURKEY.COM)¹⁴⁰**

Hello Istanbul! Hello comrades!

We salute all of you as lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans and intersex people; as your next door neighbors, your friends from your neighborhoods, as your comrades resisting, fighting alongside you and seeking our rights in Gezi Park! Today we are here to unveil injustices to you. Because we are the ones who have been pushed out of cities for years as the primary victims of governments and urban transformation projects, as the ones neglected by the heterosexist and capitalist system, living without legal guarantees or employment, as the ones facing insults and patriarchal violence.

What happened yesterday, on Ülker Street in 1996, where hundreds of trans women were displaced from their homes by police operations, is the same as what is happening today in the Avcılar-Meis Housing Complex where our windows are shot at and set on fire. What disrupted our living spaces in Tarlabaşı with bulldozers and deprived us of our bread and soup yesterday, is the same as what is pushing us out of Bayram Street today, which has been our home for 40 years. It is the state and the police forces.

In Şişli, in Harbiye and everywhere in this city for the last 20 years, we have been speaking out as an organized movement against how we are treated and how we are being made the targets of homophobic and transphobic violence. We have been rebelling against oppression since the beginning of history.

Because the right to life is above everything. Because the people who are subjected to all kinds of police torture and violence, whose existence is punished and whose murders are ignored, will always go on with the struggle. We remember!

¹⁴⁰ The English translation was retrieved February 28, 2020 from <https://lgbtnewsturkey.com/2013/12/24/lgbti-statement-at-22-november-2013-demonstration-for-equality/>

We remind you! This city belongs to everyone, this city also belongs to the oppressed. This city belongs to women, children and disabled people. This city belongs to the retired, the teachers, the workers and the prostitutes. And this city also belongs to gay and trans people who have been struggling for their lives and identities since the day they were born.

Now we cry out! We cry out with honor and pride from the basement apartments you put us in, the hovels, from the father's beating, from troubles with employers, from inside all the male-dominant languages that does not withhold insults, from universities we could not study at, from the jobs that did not let us work and fired us, from homes where we become victims of hate killings, from the courthouses where our murderers are concealed by the state, from the corrupt politics that has consumed itself where they disgracefully call us sick on the Assembly floor!

We are also citizens and we also live! We are here, get used to it and we are not leaving! [We are all here, get used to it, get used to it, we are not leaving!]

In this path that we have to set off on for freedom, we will do many things together. We will demand and win our rights in our neighborhoods and in the streets we have shared, in the parks where we fulfilled our longings and all public spaces where the state should no longer touch. We will work tooth and nail and struggle until we kick the capital economy out of this city.

And today we cry out to all of Istanbul! We do not want the ghettos deemed proper for us! We want the whole city! We want all of Istanbul!

There is no salvation and freedom when you fight alone! Freedom will be for all or for none of us!

F. “GETTOLARI DEĞİL ŞEHRİN TAMAMINI İSTİYORUZ” BANNER



G. KAOS GL'S 1996 CAMPAIGN – “EŞCİNSEL GETTOLAR DEĞİL
“KENT”İN TAMAMINI İSTİYORUZ” BANNER



H. TRANSCRIPTION RULES PROVIDED TO THE PROFESSIONAL TRANSCRIPTION TEAM (TURKISH)

Deşifre Yaparken Dikkat Edilmesi Gereken Hususlar

Bu tez toplumsal cinsiyet ve cinsellik üzerine kuruludur ve bu sebeple bazı kısaltmalar ve yabancı kelimeler kullanılmaktadır. Aşağıda görüşmelere geçmesi muhtemel kelimelerin bir listesini vereceğim. Umarım yardımcı olur.

- 1- Deşifrelerin harfiyen yapılması gerekiyor.
 - o Cümleler özetlenme amacıyla kısaltılmamalı, deşifre yapılırken kelime atlanmamalı veya görüşmede geçen bir kelimenin yerine başka bir kelime kullanılmaması gerekiyor.
- 2- Deşifreleri yaparken görüşmeyi yapan kişi, yani araştırmacının, yani soruları soran tarafın deşifrelerinin **kalın (bold)** kullanılarak yazılması gerekiyor. Görüşülen kişilerinin deşifrelerinin ise normal yazıyla yazılması gerekiyor.
- 3- Deşifre yaparken ses kaydında anlaşılmayan bir yer olduğu takdirde:
 - o Anlaşılmayan bölüm xxx (üç tane x ile işaretlenip) üzeri yanda olduğu gibi sarı renk ile highlight edilmeli.
 - o Ses kaydında anlaşılmayan bölüm ne kadar sürüyorsa, geri dönüp benim bakabilmem için saati, dakikası ve saniyesi yazılmalı.

Örnek:

Neden buraya geldiğimi xxx (01:22:32-45). Ancak bundan sonra... → burada anlaşılmayan bölüm ses kaydının 1.saatinin 22.dakikasının 32. Saniyesinde başlıyor ve 45. Saniyeye kadar devam ediyor demek oluyor.

- 4- Deşifre yaparken emin olmadığınız bir yer olursa bu bölümlerin de sarı ile highlight edilmesi gerekiyor ve gene yanına emin olunmayan bölümün saati, dakikası ve saniyesi yazılmalı

Örnek:

Aslında biliyorum neden böyle olduğunu bunlar hep toplumun gerçekleşmek istediği (00:12:44) → Burada gerçekleşmek istediği gibi duyduğunuz noktadan eğer tam emin değilseniz üzerini sarı ile highlight edip bu bölümün ses kaydının 12. Dakikası 44. Saniyesinde olduğunu belirtin.

- 5- Deşifre yapılırken, görüşmecinin gülmesi, iç çekmesi veya uzun bir sessizlik olduğunu duyduğunuz zaman *italik* kullanarak bu durumu belirtmeniz gerekiyor.

Örnek1:

Neden böyle oldu sence?

Yani aslında ben de bilmiyorum. Düşünüyorum acaba ben mi hata yaptım diye ama...

(uzun bir sessizlik oldu)

Örnek2:

**Bana yaşadığın şehri biraz tanımlar mısın? Nasıl bir şehir sence burası?
Bir insan
olsa nasıl olurdu?**

Nasıl yani bir insan olsa (*Güldü*) veya (*Kahkaha attı*)

6- Teslim edilen ses kayıtlarında, dosya adı olarak ne kullanılıyorsa, deşifrelerin yapıldığı word dosyalarında da aynı isimlerin kullanılması gerekiyor.

Ses Kaydında Duyulan	Yazılması Gereken Kelime (Büyük Harf Yazımlarına Dikkat!)
LE GE BE	LGB
TE	T
LE GE BE TE	LGBT
LE GE BE TE İ	LGBTİ
LE GE BE TE İ KU	LGBTIQ
KUİR	Kuir
Lezbiyen	Lezbiyen
Biseksüel	Biseksüel
Transcendir	Transgender
Transseksüel	Transseksüel
Getto	Getto
Gey neyburhud	Gey neyburhud
Kuir neyburhud	Kuir neyburhud

NOT: Duyduğunuz ancak anlayamadığımız başka kelimeler olursa ve bunların sıklıkla tekrar edildiğini düşünüyorsanız, XXXX koyup üzerini sarı ile çizmektense, benimle iletişime geçmenizi rica ediyorum. Anlayamadığımız ve sürekli tekrar eden kelimenin dakika ve saatini belirttiğinizde size yardımcı olacağım.

I. CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT SIGNED BY THE PROFESSIONAL TRANSCRIPTION TEAM (TURKISH)

Bir tarafta “ ” adresinde mukim “Neyir Zerey”, diğ er tarafta “ ” adreslerinde mukim “Eren Arařtırma” aralarında ařağ ıdaki kořullarda anlaşmıřlardır.

Sözleşmenin konusu Neyir Orta Doğ u Teknik Üniversitesi Sosyoloji Bölümü Doktora Tez Arařtırması kapsamında yürüttüğü çalışmalar ile ilgili olarak, kendisine Neyir Zerey tarafından verilen, açıklanan gizlilik iç erdiği açıkça belirtilen bilgi ve belgenin Neyir Zerey’in onayı alınmadıkça herhangi bir 3. gerçek ve/veya tüzel kişiye açıklanmamasını, verilmemesini veya sosyal medya, siber ve dijital ortamlarda bahsedilmemesini temin edecek olan gizliliğ in sınırlarının ve kořullarının belirlenmesidir.

1. Gizli bilginin Tanımı:

Gizli bilgi ifřa eden tarafın kendisi, birlikte çalıştığı firmanın çalışanları, acenteleri ya da işçilerine açıklanan her türlü fikir, buluş, iş, metot, ilerleme ve patent, telif hakkı, marka, ticari sır ya da diğ er yasal korumaya konu olan ya da olmayan her türlü yenilik ve tarafların arasındaki iş ilişkisi esnasında öğrenecekleri yazılı veya sözlü tüm ticari, mali, teknik bilgiler, taraflardan herhangi birinin diğ erine verdiği tüm teklif ve/veya talepler ve bunların içerikleri, nihai müşteri bilgileri, proje detayları, ses kayıtlarındaki bilgiler, kişilerin özel hayat hikâyeleri, derinlemesine görüşmenin tüm içeriğ i, proje raporu ve konuşma bilgileri sır olarak kabul edilir.

2. Gizli bilginin korunması:

Taraflar bu gizli bilgiyi; büyük bir gizlilik iç inde korumayı, işbu bilgiyi herhangi bir 3. kişiye hangi suretle olursa olsun vermemeyi, doğ rudan ya da dolaylı olarak sürdürdükleri proje amaçları dış ında kullanmamayı taahhüt ederler.

Taraflar, diğ er tarafın menfaati için yapılması planlanan işler çerçevesindeki işlemleri yerine getirirken, sadece mutlak olarak erişimleri zorunlu olan personeline, gizli bilgileri titizlikle ve yapacağı iş ile ilgili şekilde sınırlı olarak açıklayacaktır.

Bu bilgileri açıklarken personeline iş bu sözleşme kapsamındaki yükümlülükleri açıkça bildirecek, uyaracak ve söz konusu personel ile bu sözleşme hükümlerine uygun olarak mali hükümleri ile birlikte alt gizlilik sözleşmesi yapacaktır ve yapılan bu sözleşme her iki tarafta da imzalı bir şekilde bulunacaktır.

3. Alınması gereken önlemler:

Eğ er taraflardan biri diğ erinin gizli bilgisi hakkında yetkisiz bir ifřanın varlığına yol açtığından haberdar olursa karşı tarafı derhal ve yazılı olarak bu yetkisiz ifřa hakkında bilgilendirir ve karşı tarafın bu sebeple maruz kalacağı zararları azaltmak için elinden gelen tüm gayreti gösterir. Mağdur olan taraf gerek kendiliğ inden, gerekse karşı tarafın bildirimini üzerine bu ifřanın varlığını öğrenmesinden itibaren ve masrafları ifřa edene ait olmak kaydıyla kanunlarda belirtilen tüm yollara başvurabileceğ i gibi, yine kanunlarda belirtilen tüm yollarla maruz kaldığı her türlü zarar ve zıyanın tazminini

de talep edebilir. İfşa eden taraf karşı tarafın bu sebeple maruz kaldığı ve yasal yollardan ispat edilen tüm zarar ve ziyanı karşılamayı peşinen kabul ve taahhüt eder.

4. Gizli bilginin iadesi:

Tüm gizli bilgiler taraflar arasındaki ticari ilişkinin ya da sözleşmenin sona ermesi halinde ve karşı tarafın yazılı ihtarı üzerine derhal bu bilgilerin ait olduğu tarafa iade edilir. Elektronik veri ve bilgiler tekrar kullanılmayacak şekilde silinir, silinemeyen medya üzerinde saklanıyorsa, medya güvenli metotlarla imha edilir. Taraflar arasında bu hususta ileride doğacak iş ilişkileri müzakere edilip uygulanacak ayrı bir sözleşmenin konusunu oluşturur.

5. Gizli Bilgilerin Açıklanabilmesi

Taraflardan hiçbiri, kanunda açıkça belirtilen haller dışında bu bilgiyi herhangi bir şekilde ya da herhangi bir yolla dağıtamaz, basın yayın organları ve medya kuruluşları vasıtasıyla açıklayamaz, reklam amacıyla kullanamaz ve ifşa edemez. Ayrıca görsel ya da yazılı medya aracılığıyla karşı tarafı referans olarak gösteremez ya da reklam aracı olarak kullanamaz.

Yukarıda ifade edilen sır saklama yükümlülüklerinin tek istisnası karşı tarafın yazılı izni ile söz konusu bilgilerin açıklanmasıdır.

6. Süre ve Devir

İşbu sözleşme imza tarihinden itibaren yürürlüğe girer ve taraflarca müştereken sona erdirilmedikçe yürürlükte kalır. Taraflar arasındaki ticari ilişki sona erse dahi işbu sözleşmedeki gizlilik yükümlülükleri geçerli olmaya devam edecektir. Bu sözleşme ya da buradaki herhangi bir hak tamamen ya da kısmen devredilemez.

Taraflar konudaki tüm itiraz ve defilerden peşinen feragat kabul ve taahhüt etmiştir. Lehine tazminata hükmedilen taraf, sözleşmeyi kararın kesinleşmesi ile birlikte derhal feshetmek ve/veya iş ilişkisini-İlgili anlaşmayı sona erdirmek hakkı saklıdır.

7. Kopyalar:

İşbu sözleşme aslı Neyir Zerey'de ve Eren Araştırma'da kalmak üzere 2 orijinal kopya olarak düzenlenmiştir.

8. Sözleşme Değişikliği:

Bu sözleşme tarafların gerçek niyetlerini yansıtır, daha önce bu hususta yapılmış olan yazılı ve sözlü tüm anlaşmaların yerine geçer. Taraflarca yazılı olarak yapılmayan ve her iki tarafça da imzalanmayan hiçbir değişiklik hüküm ifade etmez.

9. Tebligat Hükümü ve Delil Sözleşmesi:

Bu sözleşme gereğince çekilen tüm ihtarlar işbu sözleşmede belirtilen taraf adreslerine teyitli faks, iadeli taahhütlü mektup yahut e-posta yoluyla yapılabilir. Tarafların bu ihtarları aldığı tarih, ihtarların yapıldığı tarih olarak kabul edilir.

Taraflar arasında kullanılacak e-posta adresleri şunlardır:

Neyir Zerey

Eren Araştırma (adına)

J. CURRICULUM VITAE

Personal Information

Surname, Name	Zerey Aydıntuğ, Neyir
Date and Place of Birth	03.04.1985, Beyoğlu
Nationality	Turkish
Email:	neyirzerey@gmail.com

Education

2009-2011	Master's Degree (MSc in Sociology) University of Amsterdam, Graduate School of Social Sciences Specialization in Gender, Sexuality and Society Honors: Examination in sociology passed Cum Laude (with distinction) Masters' Thesis: Officers of the Judicial System or Guardians of Morality Norms: <i>Examination of Police Brutality towards Trans Sex Workers in Istanbul</i> (supervised by François Bonnet and Gert Hekma)
2004- 2008	University Diploma (B.A.) Galatasaray University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Science Major: International Relations
1996-2004	High School Diploma Notre Dame de Sion, Istanbul

Professional Experience

Feb. 2020- Present	Freelance Researcher Coordination and management of multi-country market researches Projects and Customers: Qualitative research conducted for Evyap in New Jersey (Feb.-Mar. 2020), 3-months-long nethnography online community research for Tetra Pak in Pakistan (May-Aug. 2020), Digital Ethnography Research for Coca-Cola in Kazakhstan and Turkey (Oct-
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	Nov. 2021), Consumer Research for Mey İçki in Germany and the UK (February - June 2022)
Nov. 2017- Jan. 2020	<p>Research Director <i>Research Director, Habitus Research</i> Responsible for coordination and management of qualitative and quantitative market research and ethnographic research projects</p> <p>Projects and Customers: PRYSTINE (EU Project - Project Director), NewControl (EU Project – Project Director), Ford Otosan, Evyap, Sanofi</p>
Oct. 2016- Oct. 2017	<p>Project Coordinator <i>SPoD (Social Policy, Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Studies Association) (LGBTI+ NGO)</i></p> <p>Project: SPoD Municipal Equality Index Project ISBN: 978-605-67361-1-7</p>
Mar. 2016- Sept.2016	<p>Freelance Researcher <i>Habitus Research</i> Focus on qualitative research project management for various brands in Turkey</p> <p>Projects: Fiat Egea Customer Research</p>
Sept. 2013- Sept. 2015	<p>Project Executive <i>Social Research Institute // Ipsos Public Affairs</i> Focus on social projects conducted for ministries, academic groups, universities and NGOs Design, management, coordination, analysis of high scale qualitative and quantitative research</p> <p>Projects and Customers: “Reasons for Divorce in Turkey” conducted for the Ministry of Family and Social Policies (2015) – ISBN: 978-605-4628-80-3 “Impact Analysis of the Law no. 6284: Law to Protect Family and Prevent Violence against Women” conducted for the Ministry of Family and Social Policies (2014), “Family Structure in Turkey, Findings and Recommendations” conducted for the Ministry of Family and Social Policies (2013) – ISBN: 978-605-4628-55-1 “Family Structure in Turkey 2011” conducted for the Ministry of Family and Social Policies (2014) – ISBN: 978-605-4628-37-7 “Youth and Social Media” conducted for the Ministry of Youth and Sport (2013), ISBN: 978-605-4858-03-3 “Population Studies” for the Ministry of Family and Social Policies (2013)</p>
Apr. 2012- Sept. 2013	Project Assistant

	<p><i>Social Research Institute, Ipsos Public Affairs</i> Focus on social projects Analysis of qualitative and quantitative data</p> <p>Projects and Customers: “Evaluation of SODES” for the Ministry of Development (2012)- ISBN: 978-605-4667-34-5 “Impact analysis of Projects for Cultural Heritage Protection” for ÇEKÜL (2013)</p>
May 2006-June 2008	<p>Intern <i>TNS PIAR</i> Focus on market research, on the qualitative analysis Assisting in-depth interviews, assisting focus groups Assisting the analysis phase of the gathered data</p> <p>Projects and Customers: “Research Study on Child Abuse and Domestic Violence in Turkey” for UNICEF (2008)</p>

Publications

Zerey, N., & Akın, M. (2019). #dağılıyoruz: Medyanın Kuirleşmesi. In S. Coban & Y. Inceoglu (Eds.), *LGBTI Bireyler ve Medya* (pp. 222-234). Ayrıntı Yayınları.

Academic Conference & Congress & Seminar Presentations (Selection)

Aug. 2017	<p>“From LGBTI street activism towards a politicized social movement: LGBTI participating to urban local governance in Turkey”, Paper Presentation at Plenary Session <i>Urban Challenges in a complex World Digital cities and spatial justice 2017 IGU Urban Commission Annual Meeting</i> Salvador da Bahia, Brazil, August 6th-11th</p>
Nov. 2016	<p>“LGBTI+ Rights in Turkey: <i>Spectacular Pride Parades</i>”, Keynote Speech <i>Spectacular Now: Politics of the Contemporary Spectacle Conference</i>, organized by Institute of English and American Studies of Dortmund Technical University Dortmund/Germany, November 11th -12th</p>
Aug. 2016	<p>“Seeking for Solidarity and Security in Queer(ed) Circles in Istanbul” Paper Presentation 33rd International Geographical Congress</p>

	<p>organized by IGU, Beijing/Republic of China, August 21st – 25th</p> <p>“Spatial negotiations in Istanbul: LGBTIQs’ place in Urban Istanbul space”</p> <p>Paper presentation</p> <p>Proud in Europe? LGBTI Emancipation in Comparative Perspective organized by ARC-GS, Amsterdam/The Netherlands, August 4th-5th</p>
Aug. 2015	<p>Porous Borders: LGBTI’s Place on Urban Space</p> <p>Paper Presentation</p> <p>ESA (<i>European Sociological Association</i>) 12th Annual Conference “Differences, Inequalities and Sociological Imagination”, Oral Presentation, Prague/Czech Republic, August 25th-28th</p>
Aug. 2013	<p>“Explaining Police Violence towards Trans Sex Workers in Istanbul”</p> <p>Paper presentation at Regular Session with François Bonnet</p> <p>ASA (<i>American Sociological Association</i>) Annual Meeting,</p> <p>New York/USA, August 10th-13th</p>

Grants and Prizes

Aug. 2017	<p>Travel Grant – Salvador da Bahia/Brazil</p> <p><i>Urban Challenges in a complex World Digital cities and spatial justice</i> 2017 IGU Urban Commission Annual Meeting – (Awarded by <i>Open Society Foundation, Istanbul</i>)</p>
Aug. 2016	<p>LOC Cover-all Grant - 33rd International Geographical Congress- Beijing, China</p> <p>Travel, accommodation and conference participation grant</p>
Aug. 2016	<p>Travel Grant – Amsterdam/ The Netherlands</p> <p>Proud in Europe? LGBTI Emancipation in Comparative Perspective – (Awarded by <i>Open Society Foundation, Istanbul</i>)</p>
Aug. 2015	<p>Junior Scholar Grant – 12th Annual ESA Conference, “Differences, Inequalities and Sociological Imagination”, European Sociological Association</p>
Dec. 2011	<p>National ARC-GS Prize for best Social Science Master Thesis in Gender and Sexuality</p>

Skills

<i>Software</i>	Microsoft Office (<i>advanced</i>), SPSS (<i>intermediate</i>)
<i>Programming Skills</i>	Python (<i>beginner</i>)
<i>Design Programs</i>	In-design (<i>advanced</i>), Photoshop (<i>beginner</i>)

Languages

<i>Turkish</i>	native speaker
<i>English</i>	fluent speaking, reading and writing
<i>French</i>	fluent speaking, reading and writing

K. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKE ÖZET

İstanbul'da yürütölen saha çalışmasından elde edilen etnografik verilere dayanan bu tez, LGBTİ+'ların direniş pratiklerinin etkileşimi üzerinden muhalif mekân üretimi ve bu mekanların dönüşümü hakkındadır. Tezdeki tartışmalar LGBTİ+'ların açılma sürecinden başlayarak gündelik hayatlarının farklı zamansal parçalarına işaret etmektedir. Çalışma baştan sona görünür-görünmezliklere, direniş pratiklerine ve birbirine bağılı farklı ölçeklerdeki kentsel mekanlara odaklanmaktadır: sokaklar, semtler/mahalleler, LGBTİ+ dostu kafeler, barlar ve kulüpler, evler, örgütler/dernekler... tıpkı kamusal ve özel alanlar arasındaki sınırlarda da olduğı gibi, kamusal ve özel yaşam arasındaki sınırların da artık görülemediğı mekanlar, anlatılar ve yaşantılar mercek altına alınmıştır.

Batılı olmayan bir coğrafi ortam olan İstanbul'da muhalif cinselliklerin ve mekanların üretimi ve dönüşümüne dair bir akademik çalışma olarak bu tez, az araştırılmış bir alanda literatüre katkıda bulunmayı hedeflemektedir. Ayrıca, LGBTİ+'ların mekânsal üretim süreçleriyle ilgili görünür-görünmezlikleri ve direnişleri ve bunların Türkiye bağlamında genel baskıcı sistemi yıkmadaki rolü, heteronormativite ve heteropatriyarka varsayımları üzerine güncel tartışmalar ilerletmektedir. Son olarak, bu araştırma Türkiye bağlamında görünmezliklerin, direnişlerin ve gündelik mekânların birbirine dolanması ve birbiriyle iç içe geçmesi üzerinden kavramsal tartışmalara "koza" terimiyle katkıda bulunmayı amaçlamaktadır.

LGBTİ+'ların kendilerine ne zaman ve nasıl korunaklı alan aramaya başladıklarının belgelenmesi araştırma amaçları arasında yer almıştır. Bu arayış sırasında ne tür direniş yöntemleri bulabilmektedirler? Kendilerine ihtiyaç duydukları korunaklı yaşam alanlarını nasıl oluşturmaktadırlar? Elde etmek istediklerine ve hayal ettiklerine kıyasla bu alanların onlara sağlayabildiğı özgürlük ve özgürleşmenin boyutu nedir? sorularına yanıtlar bulmayı hedeflemiştir. Ayrıca çalışma, LGBTİ+'ların mekân üretiminde yer alma biçimlerini, kentsel mücadelelerine ve direnişlerine, görünür, görünmez veya arada olma arasındaki slalomlarına yönelik kavramsallaştırmaları da

içermektedir. Tartışmalar gündelik yaşam aktivitelerinin, görünüşte sıkıcı, tekrarlayan ve çekici olmayan doğasına rağmen, sonunda daha fazla bir şeye dönüştüğü üzerine odaklanmaktadır. Bu pratikler ve görüşmecilerin ifadeleri, LGBTİ+'ların mikro ve makro direnişlerinin yeni oluşan 'kozalar' aracılığıyla mekân üretimine nasıl durmaksızın katkıda bulunduğunun kanıtı olmuş ve de bu bölünmüş, yarı saydam ve yarı görünür, koordinasyonsuz birliktelikler ve 'farklı mekânlar' aracılığıyla 'kent hakkına' giden yolun nasıl perçinlendiğini de göstermiştir.

Saha çalışmasının yürütüldüğü tarihsel çerçeve göz önünde bulundurulduğunda vurgulanması gerektiği düşünülen bazı unsurlar bulunmaktadır. Bu tez, Türkiye'nin çalkantılı bir siyasi ve sosyal döneminin ürünüdür. Bu tez bir kentsel ayaklanmanın (2013'teki Gezi Parkı protestoları), Onur Yürüyüşlerine yönelik hükümet yasaklarının (Gezi Parkı protestolarından iki yıl sonra başlayarak 2015'ten itibaren getirilen yasaklar), 15 Temmuz 2016'da gerçekleşen darbe girişiminin, ve akabinde Türkiye'de yaklaşık iki yıl süren (21 Temmuz 2016 – 19 Temmuz 2018) olağanüstü hal ilanının ve bu süre zarfında herkese yönelik ağır baskıların uygulanmasının, bu süreçte karşıt seslerin susturulması amacıyla baskıcı bir biçimde alınan önlemlerin, ve bu gelişmelerin LGBTİ+'lar için yarattığı istikrarsız bir ortamın ve son olarak da 2019'da sözü edilmeye başlanan ve 19 Mart 2021'de Resmi Gazete'de yayınlanan bir karar ile, özellikle kadınlar ve LGBTİ+'lar tarafından yapılan tüm direniş ve protestolara rağmen, Türkiye'nin İstanbul Sözleşmesi'nden resmi olarak çıktığı bir zaman dilimi içerisinde yazılmıştır.

Araştırmacı, doktora eğitimi öncesi ve süresince ve buna ek olarak akademik odağının da bu yönde şekillenmesinin bir sonucu olarak, LGBTİ+ aktivizminin içerisinde yer almıştır. LGBTİ+'ların İstanbul'daki gündelik yaşamının direnişler ve sürekli mücadele etrafında şekillendiğine bizzat tanık olmuş ve deneyimlemiştir. Tez boyunca da tartışıldığı üzere, LGBTİ+'ların günlük yaşamlarındaki ortak noktaları ve farklılıkları kritik olduğu düşünülen 'görünür-görünmezlik merceği' üzerinden incelenmiştir. Bununla birlikte, LGBTİ+'ların maruz kaldıkları baskının üstesinden gelmek için her zaman şu ya da bu şekilde, farklı 'taktiklerle' hareket ettikleri kayıt altına alınmıştır.

Araştırmacı bazı saha öncesi gözlemleri edindikten sonra çalışmayı buna göre şekillendirmeye başlamıştır. Araştırma projesi daha sonra LGBTİ+'ların gündelik yaşamlarını ve mekânsal deneyimlerini biçimlendiren çok yönlü toplumsal yapıları çözmek için İstanbul'un kentsel mekânlarının farklı katmanlarıyla LGBTİ+'ların direnişleri arasındaki ilişkiyi anlamayı amaçlayan düzenli bir sosyolojik çalışmaya dönüşmüştür. Bu doğrultuda, farklı kategoriler ve boyutlar ekleyerek, mekân üretimi ve bunun LGBTİ+ direnişleriyle ve onların kent hakkı arayışlarıyla olan girift ilişkisini de dahil ederek, araştırmacı mevcut bilgi sınırlarının ötesine geçmeyi hedeflemiştir. Araştırma analizleri LGBTİ+'ların mikro ve makro direnişlerini incelerken gerek görünürlüklerini gerekse görünmezliklerini mercek altına alarak önce kendileri, sonra da toplum için kapsayıcı ve ayrımcı olmayan bir yaşam inşa etme çabalarının izini sürmek üzerinden şekillenmiştir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda gerçekleştirilen analizler ışığında LGBTİ+'ların direniş pratiklerini iletirmek adına gerçekleştirdikleri mekân üretme potansiyellerine de odaklanılmıştır.

Araştırmacı bu çalışmayı yürütürken mevcut çalışmalar incelendiğinde bazı 'kaygan zeminler' olduğunu fark etmiştir ve bu bağlamda üzerinde durulması gerektiğini düşündüğü 4 ana konu belirlemiştir. Bu 4 kaygan zemin şunlardır: 1- LGBTİ+ anlatılarına ilişkin mevcut araştırmalarda görünürlüklere takılıp kalma, 2- farklı direniş türlerinin gözden kaçması, 3- direnişlerin analizinde bireysel faillik eksikliği, 4- LGBTİ+'ların sosyo-mekânsal karmaşalarında Batı dışı bağlamlardan örneklerin olmaması ya da az olması durumu. Bu kaygan zeminlerden kurtulmanın bir yolu olarak, bir dizi öneride bulunulmuştur: 1- dikkat çeken, algılanabilir ve göze çarpan direnişlerin yanı sıra 'göze alınabilir' görünmezliklere, görünür ve görünmezlik eşiğinde bulunan direnişlere de dikkat etmeyi, 2- fark edilebilir mekânsal direnişler ve taleplerle birlikte mikro-mekânsal üretimleri ve gündelik yaşamın içerisinde vücut bulan mikro direnişleri tartışmayı ve bunların LGBTİ+'ların günlük yaşamları üzerindeki etkilerini dikkate almayı, 3- kolektif direnişlerle birlikte bireysel faillik üzerinden gelişen direnişleri incelemeyi ve 4- sosyo-kültürel arka planın Batılı olmayan bir coğrafi ortamda (İstanbul, Türkiye) demirlendiği bir bakış açısı benimsemeyi ileri sürmüştür.

Tez içerisinde gerek bu alanda gerekse bu çalışma alanının dışında yer alan ancak teorik yapıyla ilişkilendirilebilecek mevcut çalışmaların, uygulanan ve kullanılan teorik

çerçevelerin, geçmişte gerçekleştirilmiş yurtiçi ve yurtdışı saha araştırmalarının sunulduğu bölümler bulunmaktadır. Bu bölümde bağlamsal çerçeveyi daha iyi ortaya çıkarmak için çalışma içerisinde Türkiye’de önceden var olan toplumsal cinsiyet ve cinsellik dinamiklerine genel bir bakış açısı sunulmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu bölümde Türkiye’de toplumsal cinsiyet üzerine gerçekleştirilmiş akademik tartışmalara odaklanılmış ve ardından cinselliğin konuşulmayan doğası, heteroseksüelliğin zorunlu doğası ve toplumdaki ikili cinsiyet kimliklerinin üzerine gerçekleştirilen tartışmalara yer verilmiştir. Türkiye’de toplumsal cinsiyetin ve cinselliğin birer baskı alanı olarak işlediğine ve “normatif olmayan” bedenlerin, arzuların, kimliklerin ve ifadelerin dışlanma ve marjinalleştirilmesinin belirlenmesinin nasıl gerçekleştiğine değinilmiştir. Bunların daha sonra LGBTİ+’ların mekânsızlığına doğru giden yolda özel ve kamusal alan ikili anlayışına nasıl yol açtığına odaklanılmış ve oradan Türkiye’de LGBTİ+ hareketinin gelişimi tartışılmıştır. Bu çerçevede 70’li yıllardan 2010’ların sonlarına kadar LGBTİ+’ların Türkiye’deki geçmişi ele alınmıştır. Türkiye’deki LGBTİ+’lara odaklanan literatür taraması bölümünde, tez kapsamında ilgili olduğu düşünülen çalışmaların bir özeti sunulmuştur. Bu alanda yapılan akademik çalışmaların sayısı artsa da hala çok az sayıda olduğunun altının çizilmesinde yarar bulunmaktadır. Bu nedenle çalışmanın batı dışı coğrafyalarda LGBTİ+’lara odaklanan çalışmalara da katkı sağlayacağına mümkün olduğu düşünülmektedir.

Koza konsepti ilk olarak giriş bölümünde sunulurken, Oxford Sözlüğünün koza ve koza oluşturma tanımı belirtilmiştir. Ancak, bu tezdeki koza teriminin rahatlık ve üniter temsile dayanan bu ansiklopedik tanımlamaya dayanmadığı ve kendi içinde bireysellik ile birlikte topluluk duygusu ve direnişle bağlantılı bir alan ifade ettiği belirtilmiştir.

Bu kavramın ilham kaynaklarından bahsetmek gerekirse; Giesecking’in New York’taki lezbiyen ve kuir kadınların kentteki mekânsal üretimlerine odaklanan çalışmasında kullandığı “takımyıldızları” (2013) kavramsallaştırması, saha çalışmasının sonuçlarını formüle etmek için görsel bir konsept bulunması yönünde birincil ilham kaynağı olmuştur. Korpela ve Dervin’in kitabı (2013), “koza” etrafında olası kavramsallaştırmalar hakkında üzerine tekrardan düşünmeye itmiştir. Son olarak, Alzeer’in (2005) BAE’li kız öğrencilerin üniversiteleriyle mekânsal ilişkileri ve koza

kavramını bu özel bağlamda uygulaması üzerine araştırması (2015) çok ilham verici olmuştur.

Çalışmada dikkate alınmasının önemli bulunduğu 12 faktör ele alınmıştır. Bu kavramlar incelenirken ya kuramsal bir çerçeve dikkate alınmış ya da bu çalışmadaki kullanımlarına göre kavramın anlamını ifade edebildiği düşünülen benzer ya da farklı konulara odaklanan önceki çalışmalara başvurulmuştur. Bu 12 faktör: “LGBTİ+”, beden, görünür-görünmez(likler), kentler ve kentsel mekânın diğer boyutları, mekân ve alan, mekân üretimi, kamusal/özel mekânlar, kent hakkı ve farklılık hakkı (*right to the city* ve *right to difference*), gündelik yaşam ve gündelik mekânlar, direnişler ve taktikler, göze alınabilirlik ve nihayet ‘kozalar’ olarak şekillenmiştir.

Bu faktörler arasında kullanılan teorik çerçeve ile bağlantı kurulmasına yardımcı olan bazı kavramlar bulunmaktadır. Lefebvre’nin mekân üretimi teorisi (1991b) ve onun kent hakkı (1996) kavramları çalışmanın odağında bulunmaktadır ve bu kavramlara feminist bir eleştiri uygulanmıştır (Beebeejaun, 2017; Fenster, 2005; Kipfer, vd., 2012; Simonsen, 2005). Çalışmada direnişler konusunda Lefebvre’nin (1991b), de Certeau’nun (1984) ve Scott’ın (1989) teorilerine baş vurulmuştur. Lefebvre ve Scott’ın farklı direniş biçimlerine ilişkin tespitlerinden ilham alınmış ve saha çalışmasında ortaya çıkan direnişler mikro ve makro direnişler olarak iki ayrı gruba ayrılarak analiz edilmiştir. Ayrıca, mekân sabit bir kapsayıcıdan daha fazlası olarak değerlendirilmiş ve inşa edilmiş bir bileşen olarak dikkate alınmıştır (Lefebvre, 1991b). ‘Kent hakkı’, ‘mekân üretimi’ ve ‘direniş’ kavramlarına dayanan yapıya uygun olarak; ana teorik çerçeve, mekânsal baskı sorunlarını ele alan eleştirel kentsel teoriye dayanmaktadır. Gerçekleştirilen analizlere göre LGBTİ+’ların sıradan faaliyetleri, biricik mekânsal manevralara ve mekân üretmeye hizmet eden taktiklere dönüşmektedir. Bu manevralar LGBTİ+’ların içine düştükleri kentsel karmaşaları nasıl yorumladıklarını, algılarının ve tepkilerinin nasıl şekillendiğini göstermiştir.

Tezde ileri sürülen önermeler şu şekildedir: LGBTİ+’lar kendilerine “alan açmaya” çalışırken gündelik yaşamları görünürlük/görünmezlik ekseninde şekillenmektedir. Lefebvre’den hareketle, her sosyal mekânın çok yönlü ve katkıda bulunan birçok akımı olan bir sürecin sonucunda meydana geldiği ileri sürülmektedir ve bu akımlar bu tezde direniş biçimini almaktadır. Bu direnişler mikro ve makro seviyelerde

gerçekleşmektedir. Mikro ve makro direnişlerin bu tezdeki en çarpıcı sonuçlarından biri ise “koza”ların ortaya çıkması olmuştur. Kentsel mekanların üretimi ve sahiplenilmesi bu kozalar aracılığıyla gerçekleşir ve LGBTİ+’ların kent hakkını arayışları da gene bu kozaların içinden, bu kozalar üzerinden gerçekleşir. Bu tezde öne sürülen fikirleri bu önermelere göre özetlemek gerekirse: LGBTİ+’ların toplumsal değişimde rol oynarken mikro ve makro direnişleriyle kendi alanlarını ürettikleri, bu taktiklerin hem bireysel hem de kolektif düzeyde kent hakkını elde etme çabalarını ilerletmenin yolunu açtığı düşünülmektedir.

Gerçekleştirilen bu etnografik saha çalışması sonucunda “koza” kavramsal bir model olarak ileri sürülmüştür. Koza, LGBTİ+’ların farklı direniş taktikleriyle mekân üretimine nasıl katkı sağladığını anlatmak için formüle edilen bir kavram olarak şekillenmiştir. Bu konsept aynı zamanda LGBTİ+’lar arasındaki kolektifliğin, kent hakkına yönelik taleplerinde onları birbirine bağlı tutan ince iplerin varlığına dair geliştirilen argümanı da kapsamaktadır. Koza bir kavram olarak mekânsal benimseme ve sahiplenmeyi ve zamansallığı kendi içinde barındırır. Kozalar aynı zamanda paradoksaldır; içinde bulunanların tam özgürlüğe ulaşana kadar mücadelelerine devam etmelerine izin vererek direniş pratiklerinin hem ürünü hem de üreticisidirler. Bu tanım doğrultusunda, kozaların içinde bulunanlara görece özgürlük, kurtuluş, mahremiyet, koruma sunduğunu ve ulaşılması gereken nihai varış noktası olarak işlenmediğinin altı çizilmesi gerekmektedir; kozalar ‘tüm kente erişim’ için direnişlerini sürdürürken LGBTİ+’ların geçici sığınaklarıdır, direniş mekanları, aralarındaki ince iple sayesinde onları birbirine bağlayan yapılardır.

Proje başlangıcında saha araştırmasının iki şehirde (Ankara ve İstanbul) gerçekleştirilmesi planlanmış ve her iki şehirde de kendilerini LGBTİ+ olarak tanımlayan aktivist (yani sosyal hareketin içinde yer alan) ve aktivist olmayan (sosyal hareketle bir bağının olduğunu düşünmeyen) kişilerle (Ankara:5, İstanbul:20) derinlemesine görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiş olmasına rağmen tezin analiz süreci esnasında proje odağının İstanbul’da kalmasının ve Ankara’da gerçekleştirilen görüşmelerin daha sonra gerçekleştirilecek akademik çalışmalara konu olmasının daha sağlıklı olacağı kararına varılmış ve Ankara’da gerçekleştirilen görüşmeler analize dahil edilmemiştir. İstanbul’daki katılımcıların anlatılarının LGBTİ+’ların yaşamlarına dair daha genel bir algıyı temsil etmesini istendiğinden çalışmaya

kendilerini hem aktivist olarak tanımlayan (8 kişi) hem de tanımlamayan kişiler (10 kişi) dahil edilmiştir. Kalan 2 katılımcı kendilerini bu pozisyonlardan herhangi bir tanesinde tanımlama konusunda isteksiz kalmıştır. Katılımcıların seçimindeki bu bilinçli kararın bu görüşmelerin anlaşılması ve yorumlanmasına çok şey kattığı düşünülmektedir.

Doktora tez çalışmasının temel olarak sorguladığı konunun LGBTİ+'ların kentle olan ilişkileri olduğu düşünüldüğünde her ne kadar ilk başta LGBTİ+'ların kentle olan ilişkilerinin haritalanmasının somut bir çıktı olacağına kanaat getirilmiş olsa da gerek saha sürecinin getirileri gerekse analiz sürecinde iyice kemikleşen ve kendini ortaya koyan teorik çerçeve dikkate alındığında bu tür bir haritalamanın çalışmanın odağının dışında kalacağına karar verilmiş ve saha sürecinde gerçekleştirilen Mental Haritalama tekniğinin sonuçları tez bulgularına dahil edilmemiştir.

Sonuç olarak, analize dahil edilen saha çalışması İstanbul şehrinde gerçekleştirilen etnografik saha araştırmasına dayanmaktadır. Veriler üç kanaldan toplanmıştır: 20 adet yarı yapılandırılmış derinlemesine görüşme gerçekleştirilmiştir, saha çalışması esnasında araştırmacının tanıştığı ve iletişimde olduğu 50'nin üzerinde LGBTİ+ ile resmi olmayan ve gündelik sohbetler yapılmış ve iki yıl boyunca sahada kalarak gözlemler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu araçlar, tez çalışmasının sayısız sorgulaması arasında kritik bağlantılar kurulmasını ve LGBTİ+'ların İstanbul'daki mikro ve makro direniş pratiklerinin önemini daha iyi anlaşılmasını sağlamıştır.

Saha çalışması sırasında araştırmacı çok spesifik bir pozisyonda bulunmuştur; halihazırda içerisinde bulunduğu ve aktivizm yaptığı bir alanı araştırmanın zorluklarını birebir deneyimlemiş analiz esnasında birçok etik zorlukla karşılaşmıştır. Araştırmacının konumu gereği, saha çalışmasında aynı anda hem içeride hem de dışarıda olmak arasında mücadele etmiştir. Bu mesele tezin metodoloji bölümünde derinlemesine tartışılmaktadır.

Saha çalışması için etnografik ve feminist bir yaklaşım ve yorumlayıcı paradigma benimsenmiştir. Tez için benimsenen etnografik ve feminist yaklaşımlar, Lefebvre'nin mekân anlayışını yeni bir perspektiften ele almaya, daha önce içine dahil edilmemiş mekânsal alanları da (ev kavramını) içine entegre etmeye yönlendirmiştir. Yorumlayıcı paradigma çalışmanın analiz süreci üzerinde çokça etkili olmuştur:

Analizler saha çalışmasından elde edilen etnografik verilere ve tezin başında tanımlanan faktörlerin üzerine konumlanmışken, bu paradigma araştırmacıyı lineer olmayan bir anlatı ortaya koymasını konusunda yönlendirmiştir. Bunun da ötesinde, disiplinler arası bakış açıları ve feminist söylem, akışkanlık ve kimliklerin, cinselliklerin ve performansların çeşitliliği konusunda çok şey katmıştır. Feminist okumalar, bireylerin kentsel mekânı algılama, yorumlama ve deneyimleme biçimlerinin ve sonuç olarak bu çoklukların temsil edilme, hayal edilme, deşifre edilme biçimlerinin sürekli değiştiğinin anlaşılmasına yardımcı olmuştur. Buna göre, bu tez bireysel faillik, mevcut ve düşüncesele dayanışma ağlarının, mikro ve makro düzeyde manevra taktiklerinin mevcut baskı sistemlerini yıkmada nasıl kritik roller oynadığını göstermeyi amaçlamıştır.

Alan çalışması sonuçlarının incelenmesi esnasında da Lefebvre'nin heteropatriyarkal iktidar ilişkilerinin genel etkisini içermeye yetersiz kalan "mekân üretimi" teorisine ve "kent hakkı" kavramına konumlanmış (*situated*) ve cinsiyetlendirilmiş (*gendered*) bir bakış açısı eklemenin önemi fark edilmiştir. Bu çerçevenin mekân üretiminin LGBTİ+'lar üzerindeki doğrudan etkisinin daha iyi çözümlenmesine yardımcı olacağına karar verilmiştir. Dolayısıyla bu çalışma feminist bakış açısını benimseyen teorik tartışmalara katkıda bulunmayı bir gaye edinmiştir (Beebejaun, 2017; Fenster, 2005; Simonsen, 2005).

Bu yaklaşımlar aynı zamanda, görünüşte koordine olmayan ve dağınık olarak nitelendirilebilecek direnişlerin yekpare ve homojenleştirilmiş sosyo-mekânsal alanda ne tür uzamsal çatlaklar yarattığının anlaşılmasına ve tasvir edilmesine de yardımcı olmuştur. Tez çalışması çerçevesinde gerçekleştirilen analizler bu mekânların kolektif hafızanın izlerini taşıdığını ve birbirine karıştığını, tıpkı İstanbul'da Cihangir'de bir mahalle oluşumunda olduğu gibi 'kent hakkı'na giden yolu açarken kapsayıcı ve koruyucu bir hal aldığını göstermiştir, çünkü "geçmiş iz bırakmaktadır" ve "zamanın kendi senaryosu vardır" (Lefebvre, 1991b, s.37).

Anlatı akışının ve görüşmecilerin anlatılarının birbirleriyle kesiştiği noktaları ortaya çıkarttıktan sonra analiz bulguları üç kısım, dört bölüme ele alınmıştır: 1. Kısım "Görünür-Görünmezlik (*In-visibility*) Merceği", 2. Kısım "LGBTİ+'ların Mikro ve

Makro Direnişleri” ve 3. Kısım “LGBTİ+’ların Mekânsal Üretimleri ve Kendilemeleri (*Appropriation*).

Araştırma sorularına cevap verebilmek ve mekân üretimini açıklamak için öncelikle bu mekânsal üretimin hangi yollarla ve hangi koşullar altında gerçekleştiğinin anlaşılması gerektiği fark edilmiştir. Lefebvre’nin sosyal alanların, kendisine katkıda bulunan birçok ‘akımın’ sonuçları olduğu argümanını takiben (Lefebvre, 1991b, s.110), yukarıda da değinildiği üzere, çalışmanın analiz bölümünde ‘direnişler’ şeklini alan bu ‘akımların’ incelenmesi önerisinde bulunulmuştur. Bu direnişlerin hangi koşullarda gerçekleştiğini anlamak adına hepsinin ortak paydası olan “görünürlük-görünmezlik” (*in-visibility*) merceği kullanılmıştır. Sonuç olarak, analiz kısmının ilk bölümü görünür-görünmezlik tartışmalarına ayrılmıştır. Bu bölümün arkasındaki ana itici güç, herkes için cinselliği görünür hale getirmenin (hatta tartışmanın) zor olması nedeniyle, görünürlüğü zorluklarını tasvir etmenin LGBTİ+’ların hayatlarında neler olup bittiğine ışık tutacağı fikrine dayanmaktadır.

Bu doğrultuda analiz kısmının ilk bölümünde LGBTİ+’ların deneyimlerine ve görünürlük-görünmezlik anlatılarına odaklanılmıştır. Bunu yaparken, görüşmelerin ana bulgularından biri olduğu için, ilk olarak açılma dönemlerinde görünürlüğü karmaşıklığına ışık tutulmuştur. Görüşmecilerden bazıları bunu güçlenme süreci olarak görse de bu durumun herkes için geçerli olmadığı açıkça ortaya çıkmıştır. Tanıdıkları insanların, özellikle de aileleri söz konusu olduğunda onların gözünde görünür olmanın karmaşık ve sorunlu bir durum olduğuna değinilmiştir. Örneğin Kerem’e göre açılmak, cinselliği konusunda açık olmak ve kentsel mekânın tüm boyutlarında görünür olmak bireyler üzerinde güçlendirici bir etkiye sahiptir ve aynı zamanda mekândan silinmeyi engellediği gibi, mekânın sahiplenilmesine yardımcı olur. Kerem, açılarak başkalarının “yanlış bildiklerini düzeltebileceğine” inanmaktadır. Ancak Umut için açılmak mekânsal boğulmaya neden olabilecek niteliktedir çünkü “kişi açılırsa çok küçük bir çevre içinde kalabilir ve kişinin o küçük çevreyi terk etmemeyi kaçınılmaz bulma ihtimali vardır”. Açılmanın tehdit unsuru olarak görülmesinin tek nedeninin Umut’un bakış açısı olmadığı da ortaya çıkmıştır. Deniz, bireylerin dış dünyaya açılma mücadelesiyle uğraşmak istememe haklarını saklı tuttıklarını, çünkü “açılmayanların, açılmak yerine başka şeylerle mücadele etmeyi seçenler” olabileceğine işaret etmiştir.

Çalışmanın analiz kısmının ilk bölümünde katılımcıların evde ve ev dışında deneyimledikleri görünür-görünmezliklerinin karmaşık ve çeşitli olduğuna değinilmiştir. Bazıları evde ailelerine cinsel yönelim ve cinsiyet kimlikleri yönünde kendi istekleri doğrultusunda açılmışlarken, bazılarının da buna zorlandığı ortaya çıkmıştır. Görüşmecilerden Ali açılmaya zorlananlar arasındaydı ve bunun sonucunda babası onu mirasından mahrum etmiş ve aile evinden kovmuştu. Can ise cinselliği konusunda ailesinin sorgulamalarına ve irdellemelerine maruz kaldıktan ancak sonrasında onlardan kötü bir tepki almadığını gördükten sonra, ailesinin de artık cinsel yönelimini bildiği için ‘artık kaybedecek bir şeyi olmadığını’ düşünmeye başlamış ve kimliği konusunda evinin dışında kendine çok daha fazla güven duyarak kent yaşantısına devam etmekteydi. Bu karmaşıklığın tespit edildiği alanlardan biri de onların romantik ve erotik arzularının uzamsal sınırlamalarıyla ilgiliydi. Örneğin Mustafa’nın halka açık yerlerde sevgilisiyle el ele tutuşamaması ona yük oluyordu, bundan utanıyordu. Öte yandan Batu ne zaman bir erkekle romantik bir ilişkiye girse bölünmüş bir kişilik içerisine girdiğini, çünkü kamusal ve özel alanlarda onlar tarafından farklı muamele gördüğünü belirtmiştir.

Onları cesaretlendiren şey, tıpkı kendileri gibi, görünür olmak için mücadele eden, keşfetmek ve hayatı ve kimliklerini istedikleri gibi deneyimlemek isteyen başkalarının da olduğunu bilmektir. Kendi deneyimlerini konuşabilecekleri insanlarla tanışabilme ve günlük hayatlarını herhangi bir pişmanlık ve tedirginlik duymadan paylaşabilme imkânı, onlara kişisel yolculuklarında büyük umut veriyordu. Örneğin görüşmecilerden Defne için başka biseksüellerle tanışmak ayrıca bir önem taşıyordu çünkü ona göre “en etkili şey yaşadıklarımızı diğer biseksüellerle paylaşmak”tı ve “başkalarının da olduğunu bilmek iyi hissettiriyor” dedi.

Tez çalışmasının ilerleyen kısmında LGBTİ+’lar arasındaki öznel ve göreceli görünür-görünmezlik deneyimlerine odaklanılmıştır. Bu çerçevede, istenmeyen ve/veya göze alınabilir görünürlük-görünmezlik dinamiklerinin devreye girdiği gündelik yaşantı deneyimlerinde görüşmecilerin ortak noktaları ve farklılıkları olduğuna değinilmiştir. Bu bölüm iki ayrı alt bölümde incelenmiştir: biseksüel ve lezbiyen kadınların görünmezlikleri ve gey erkeklerin ve trans deneyimi olan kadınların aşırı görünürlükleri. Biseksüel ve lezbiyen kadınların görünmezliklerine gelince, bu görünmezliğin bazı durumlarda lehlerine olduğu söylenmiştir, örneğin sevgilileri

evlerine geldiklerinde, meraklı komşuların onlardan şüphelenmediğine işaret edilmiştir. Fakat aynı zamanda bu görünmezlik, görmezden gelindikleri ve tanınmadıkları için baskıcı bir iktidar mekanizması olarak onların aleyhine dönmüştür. Bu durum LGBTİ+ topluluğu içinde de vücut bulmakta olduğu örneğin biseksüellerin bifobik söylemlere maruz kaldığına değinilmiştir. Aşırı görünürlük (Hiper-görünürlük) durumlarında ise Kerem, gey erkeklerin görünürlüğünü lezbiyenler ve biseksüeller ile karşılaştırmış ve “lezbiyen aşk biçimi toplumda zaten görünmez kılınmıştır” yorumunu yaparak mevcut literatürün önermelerini doğrulamaktadır. Uğur gibi, el ele tutuşan iki erkeğin sokakta çok fazla dikkat çekeceğini vurgulayanlar olduğu gibi, bu kapsamda hiper-görünürlük adımı verdiğim istenmeyen ve göze alınamayan bir görünürlük biçimine işaret edilmiştir.

Görünürlük merkezli problemlerin arkasındaki itici gücün kökleri de bu bölüm içerisinde derinlemesine incelenmiş ve bu dinamiklerin, iktidar sahiplerinin tüm farklılıkları kamuoyunun gözünden ve kamuoyunun kendisinden uzak tutma arzusunda yattığı sonucuna varılmıştır. Görüşmeciler tarafından toplumun ‘ikiyüzlülüğü’ olarak formüle edilen bu durum Türkiye’deki toplumu tasvir etmek için en çok kullanılan terim olarak ortaya çıktı. Çok sayıda katılımcı tarafından vurgulandığı üzere “Bir şekilde söyleyip başka türlü hareket etmenin” çok yaygın olması hali sıklıkla “marjinalleştirilmiş” cinsel ve cinsiyet kimliklerin daha da ötekileştirilmesine hizmet eden bir unsur olarak gösterildi. Buna göre, bu bölümün kilit bulgularından biri, LGBTİ+’ların direnişlerinin arkasındaki temel meselenin, hiçbir koşul öne sürmeden “farklılığın” kabul/reddedilmesi meselesiyle fazlasıyla iç içe olduğuydu. Bir diğer önemli bulgu ise LGBTİ+’ların farklı mekânsal alanlardan keyfi olarak uzaklaştırılmaları nedeniyle mekânsal sahiplenmenin gerçekleşmemesi haliydi.

Birinci analiz bölümünde bu bulguların incelenmesiyle, görüşmecilerin direniş pratiklerinin şekillendiği güçlü bir arka plan hikayesi formüle edilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu bölümün sonucunda, görünürlüğün ortak bir yaşamda bir varoluşu ima ettiği ve görünmezliklerin ince sınırlarında olmanın, görüşmecilerin günlük yaşam anlatılarında kritik bir faktör olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Görünürlüğün bir direniş yolu olarak sadece uygun düşen durumlarda seçildiği de ortaya çıkan bulgular arasındadır

ve direniş perspektifinden bakıldığında görünürlük ve görünmezlik kavramlarının zamansal ve göreceli kavramlar olduğuna değinilmiştir.

Çalışmanın analiz bölümünün ikinci kısmında görüşmecilerin İstanbul'un farklı mekânsal boyutlarındaki mikro ve makro direnişlerinin resmedilmesi hedeflenmiştir. Bu bölüm 'gündelik yaşam' tartışmalarıyla başlamaktadır. Neden gündelik hayata eğilinmektedir? Çünkü gündelik hayat aslında toplumsal direniş için birincil bir alandır (Merrifield, 2002, s.79). Günlük hayatta kök salmış tüm yabancılaşma dinamiklerine karşı bir direniş ancak yaratıcı eylem kapasitesini gösterebilen ve bu tür bir değişikliğe istekli aktörler tarafından mümkün kılınabilir. Ve sonuç olarak, teorik olarak öne sürülen aslında döngüsel bir biçimde açıklanabilir: dünyayı değiştirmek gündelik hayatı değiştirmekten geçerken, gündelik hayatı değiştirmek dünyayı değiştirmenin de ilk adımındır. Dolayısıyla gündelik hayat, insanın yaratıcı direniş eyleminin alanı haline gelir. Bireyler, bireylerin temsilleri, mekân kullanımı gibi pek çok faktör gündelik direnişin seyrini etkiler.

Bununla birlikte gündelik hayat, kaçınılmaz bir baskı ve tahakküm alanı olarak kendini gösterir. Bireylerin kendilerini farklı platformlarda kuşatan gündelik baskı araçlarına karşı ortaya çıkan bu direnişi hayata geçirme biçimleri analiz bölümünün ikinci kısmının ana odak noktasını oluşturmaktadır. Bir mikro direnişler, bireysel, bazen açık ama aynı zamanda örtük bir biçimde kendilerini gösterirler ve gündelik yaşamın zamansal ritmi içerisinde gerçekleşirler. Ancak, bu mikro direnişler nadiren manşetlere çıkarlar (Scott, 1989, s.49) ve başarılı direnişler ancak kendi ivmelerini oluşturarak meydana gelirler.

Mikro direnişlerin meydana gelme biçimlerinin çoğunlukla birbiriyle bağlantılı olduğu ortaya çıkan sonuçlar arasında yer almaktadır, çünkü her biri aynı görünür-görünmezlik dinamiğinden beslenmektedirler. Ancak nihai kolektivite, LGBTİ+'lar örneğinde de mümkün kılınmakta ve sonuç bireylerin biricik direnme eylemlerinin toplamından daha büyük ve fazla bir hal almaktadır.

Bu çerçevede "Mikro Direnişler" altında öncelikle görünür-görünmezliklerin etrafında sarmalanmış 'göze alınabilen' mikro direnişleri incelenmiştir. Bu bölümde LGBTİ+'ların belli alanları nasıl değerlendirdiği ve görünen-görünmeyen direnişlerinin göze alınabilirliği konusunda nasıl karar verdikleri üzerinde

durulmuştur. Bu eylemler ‘göze alınabilir görünmezlikler ve görünürlükler olarak direnişler’ olarak adlandırılmıştır. Görünürlük odaklı problemlerle birlikte, görünmezlik kavramı etrafında dönen farklı taktik hareket biçimleri tasvir edilmiştir. Çalışmanın öne çıkan noktalarından biri olan, “göze alınabilen görünmezlikler”, LGBTİ+’ların mekânı yeniden üretme faillliğini araştırmak için bir sorgulama aracı olarak kabul edilmiş ve mevcut sosyo-mekansâl bağlamlar gündelik hayatın anlatılarıyla harmanlanarak yansıtılmıştır.

Ardından LGBTİ+’ların bedenlerinin bu süreçte ne tür müzakerelere konu olduğuna ışık tutulmuştur. Bu bölümde bedenlerin nasıl bir araç olarak kullanıldığına odaklanılmış ve bu formlara yüklenen anlamlar incelenmiştir. Bedeni hem mekânın bir parçası hem de mekânın kendisi olarak anlamak (Lefebvre, 1991b, s.170) bu bölümün en önemli düşünsel alt yapılarından birini oluşturmaktadır. Bu alt bölüm, LGBTİ+’ların mekânsal üretimlerinin analizine de hizmet ettiği düşünülen “göze alınabilir görünürlük taktikleri”nin bir parçası olarak değerlendirilebilecek direniş pratiklerini, katılımcıların bedenlerine odaklanarak tartışmaktadır. Bu bölüm görüşmecilerin kendilerini çevreleyen mekanlarla olan ilişkilerini tasvir etme biçimlerinin, kendi dışlanmış bedenlerinin merceğinden gerçekleştiğine de parmak basmaktadır. Kentsel mekânın farklı boyutlarının ve ölçeklerinin nasıl (yeniden) üretildiğine odaklanan bu çalışma, bedenlerin de kentsel mekanlarda nasıl inşa ve temsil edildiğine ve yankılandığına ve bedenlerinin farklı mekân-zamansal örneklerde nasıl direniş araçları haline geldiği tartışmalarını da bu bölüm esnasında beraberinde getirmektedir.

Analiz edilen bir sonraki mikro direniş taktiği, güvenli bir şekilde oluşturulmuş kimliklerin ortadan kaldırılması vaadi olan ‘kuirlik’ üzerinden yanıt verenlerin kendilerini tanımlamaları olmuştur. Kendisini görüşme esnasında gender-kuir ve biseksüel bir kadını olarak tanımlayan Defne ‘queer’ (kuir) ve ‘queering’ (kuir olma hali)nin kendisinde bir kafa karışıklığı yaratmış olduğunu görüşme esnasında fark etmişti. Aslında Defne'nin kafa karışıklığı, kendi başına bir yanlış anlaşılma değildi. Aksine daha toplumsal bir duruma işaret etmekteydi: bu karmaşa bedenlerin ve bu bedenlerin toplum içinde nasıl görüldükleri konusunda uygulanan belirli “yasalar” olduğuna işaret etmekteydi. Belirlenmiş, sınırları çizilmiş bir toplumsal cinsiyet kategorisine ‘uygun’ kabul edilen davranış, kıyafet ve biçimler De Certeau'nun

terminolojisindeki üretilmiş ‘gerçeklik’ tanımına girmektedir ve bir mikro direniş mekanizması olarak queer’liğin yapmaya çalıştığı şey de tam da bu hayali ‘gerçekliği’ caydırmak ve yapısökümüne uğratmak ve parçalamak olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Öte yandan başka görüşmeciler için ‘queer’lik terimi, ikili cinsiyet kodlarından bağımsız olarak insanlara özgü bir şeyi de temsil ediyordu.

Son olarak, LGBTİ+’ların birbirleriyle daha rahat iletişim kurmasını sağlayan bir dil olarak Lubunca’nın ve bir konuşma tonu olarak mizahın kullanımı incelenmiştir. Lubunca LGBTİ+’ların “norm dışı” olabileceğini ya da tehlike arz edebileceğini düşündükleri konular hakkında açık olmak istemediklerinde kullandıkları bir dil taktikleri bütünlüğü olarak ele alınabileceken; aynı zamanda, sırf bir aradayken, iyi vakit geçirirken ve aynı dili konuşan arkadaşlarıyla çevrili olduklarında da kullandıkları bir dil olarak tanımlanmıştır. Bu bağlamda Lubunca, LGBTİ+’ların kamusal alanda, özellikle de kimlikleri ve kamusal ortamlarda dile getirmek istedikleri şeyler konusunda açık olamadıkları ortamlarda iletişim kurmalarını kolaylaştıran bir mikro direnişler taktiği olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Lubunca, LGBTİ+’lar için bir koruma ve perdeleme amacı taşıyan gizli bir kod görevi görür ve bu nedenle bu dilin sözcüklerinin kullanımı da dilin konuşulduğu mekânda bir ‘koza’ üretir. Yani Lubunca’nın ifade bulduğu bir mekân, Lubunca kelimelerinin taşıyıcısı olur; bu dilin gücü ve onu konuşanların aracılığı ile o mekân yeniden üretilir. O mekân, bu dil ile dolar ve farklılaşır, bir koza halini alır. Bu dilin konuşulduğu mekânsal alan, o mekânda bulunan bedenleri de beraberinde kuşatır.

Öte yandan esprili ve meydan okuyan ifade biçiminin tercihi, içinde bulunulan mekânsal ortamda “farklılığa” yer açmanın bir aracı işlevi görmektedir. Görüşmecilerden Kerem mizahın yaygın kullanımına dikkat çekerek, bu yönde gerçekleşen bir iletişimin LGBTİ+’ların kendilerine nefes alacak alanlar açmaları ve günlük yaşamlarında var olma biçimlerini sürdürmeleri için bilinçli olarak tercih edildiğine işaret etmektedir. “LGBTİ+’ların alaycılığı çoktur” derken Kerem, “belirli yerlerde direniş alanları oluşturmanın, baskıya maruz kaldığımızda bununla başa çıkabilmenin ve maruz kaldığımız baskıyı tersine çevirmenin bir yolunu geliştirdik” diyerek mizahın LGBTİ+’ların hayatındaki yerini açıklamıştır.

Mikro direniş mekanizmalarının son bileşeninin incelenmesi akabinde bu mikro direniş mekanizmalarının makro direnişlere dönüşme potansiyeli olup olmadığı ve hatta makro direnişlerin mikro direnişlerin toplamına denk gelip gelmediği sorusuna değinilmiştir. Bu sorunun basit bir yanıtı bulunmamaktadır. Saha çalışmasının bulguları mikro direnişlerin yarı otonom bir biçimde, bireylerin kendilerini koruma mekanizmalarının bir sonucu olarak ortaya çıktığı yönünde olmuştur. Ancak en nihayetinde bu mikro direnişlerin kent hakkı arayışı için ihtiyaç duyulan ve de yeni direnişlerin de baş gösterdiği “koza” üretimini gerçekleştirmeleri sebebiyle siyasi ve makro direniş eylemlerine katkı sağladığı yönünde şekillenen bir düşünce savunulmuştur.

Ardından Makro Direnişler başlığı altındaki bir sonraki bölümde LGBTİ+ kimliği ve LGBTİ+ aktivist hareketinin bileşenleri ve etkileri incelenmiştir. Bu bölümün son alt bölümü LGBTİ+ hareketi ve diğer mekânsal alanlardaki kadın direnişinin analizine ayrılmıştır.

LGBTİ+ teriminin ne anlama geldiğini derinlemesine tartışabilmek adına gerçekleştirilen derinlemesine görüşmelerde kullanılan akışta bu kavramın anlamına yönelik sorular da yönlendirilmişti. Bu görüşme akışındaki sorular, bazen bilinçli olarak ve bazen de kelimenin kendisi hakkında derinlemesine düşünmeden önce kullanılan ‘LGBTİ+’ kısaltmasının katmanlarının neler olduğuna dair bir fikir sahibi olmayı hedeflemekteydi. Saha bulguları katılımcıların ‘LGBTİ+’ tanımlarında farklılıklar olduğuna işaret etmekteydi. Görüşmecilerin yarısından fazlası, bu kavramın (kendi içinde bazı hiyerarşiler olsa da) bir kolektif ve dayanışma grubu olduğunu, en iyi ve en kötü günlerinde güvendikleri bir güvenlik ağını temsil ettiğini iddia etmekteydi. Bu grupta yer alan görüşmeciler için ‘LGBTİ+’ birlik, güvende olma hissi ve direniş demektir. Bu anlamda burada sözü edilen “kimlik” gerçekten toplumsal ilişkilerin birbirine eklenmesi olarak değerlendirilmişti (Massey, 1994, s.179). Bununla birlikte ‘LGBTİ+’ kimliğinin öne sürülmesinin nedeninin, bu kimliğin aşağılanması ve bireylerin özgürlük ve eşitlik eksikliğinden mustarip olmaları ve aktif olarak özgürlük, eşitlik ve tanınma arayışı içinde olmaları olarak belirtilmekteydi. LGBTİ+ yaşantılarına, kimliklerine ve ifadelerine yönelik toplumun mevcut konumlanma biçimini değiştirmeyi amaçlayan gösteriler, yürüyüşler ve görünürlük çabalarıyla LGBTİ+’lara yönelik baskın duruşu değiştirmek üzerine kurgulanan

makro direniş taktiklerinden biri de olumlu LGBTİ+ örneklerinin öne çıkartılması olarak belirtildi. Bu sayede başarılı ve güçlü konumlardaki LGBTİ+'ların toplumda olumlu bir güçlü bir imaj oluşturmaya yardımcı olduğuna inanıldığına değinildi. Ancak, görüşmecilerin daha küçük bir kısmı LGBTİ+ kimliği üzerinden bir makro direniş mekanizmasına eleştirel yaklaştıklarını belirttiler. Bazı görüşmeciler LGBTİ+ kimliğinin görünürlük ekseninde konuşlanmasından ötürü su yüzüne çıkan endişelerini dile getirdiler. En büyük endişelerinden birinin toplumda olduğundan daha da fazla marjinalleşmek olduğundan, çünkü bu şemsiye terimin, herkesin bir örnek olarak tanımlanması ile sonuçlanabileceğinden bahsettiler. Görece daha küçük bir katılımcı grubu için, 'LGBTİ+' terimi, güçlendirici bir kolektif kimlik olarak görünmekten ziyade ayrımcılığı yeniden üreten bir kavram olma riski taşımaktaydı.

LGBTİ+ aktivist hareketi ve hareketin direniş içerisindeki aktörleri başlığı altında ise öncelikle saha çalışması boyunca görüşülen ve iletişim kurulan katılımcılardan bazılarının, özellikle de aktivist hareketle şu ya da bu şekilde ilgilenenlerin, hayatlarında 'örgütlü' olmanın ve kolektif eylemin önemine işaret ettiği sonucuna değinilmiştir. Hareketin önemli bir ögesi olan örgütler açılma sürecinde kendilerine güvenli limanlar bulmaya çalışan LGBTİ+'lar için de güvenli bir platform sağlamaktadır. Ortaya çıkan koruma halinin, bu örgütlerin mevcut sistemi değiştirmek, LGBTİ+'ların yaşam standartlarını yükseltmek için yaptıkları çalışmalarla bir anlamda örtüştüğüne de gene bu bölüm içerisinde yer verilmektedir. Bugün bir aktivist hareket olarak LGBTİ+ hareketi görünürlük istemekle yetinmeyerek ataerkilliğe, homofobiye, transfobiye, bifobiye, heteroseksizme, heteronormativiteye karşı mücadele eden bir harekettir. Özellikle siyasi ve kentsel haklar tartışmaları bağlamında, söylem ve sokak hareketine de dahil olan güçlü bir hareketi olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Ancak bunların da ötesinde saha çalışması sürecinde ortaya çıkan bir diğer bulgu, hareketin aktörlerinin trans kapsayıcı feminizm, anti-faşizm, anti-militarizm, ikili olmayan cinsiyet kimliklerinin ve ifadelerinin tanınması, sakat LGBTİ+'ların sosyal yaşama dahil edilmesi ve LGBTİ+ mültecilerin yaşam koşullarının da tartışma ekseninde olduğudur. Harvey, "eğer mülksüzleştirilmişler uzun süredir ellerinden alınan kontrolü geri alacaklarsa, bu hakkın demokratikleştirilmesi ve onun iradesini uygulayacak geniş bir toplumsal hareketin inşası zorunludur" diyor (Harvey, 2008, s.40). Bu çerçevede tezde savunulan bir diğer düşünce de Ergin ve Rittersberger-Tılıç'ın (2014) argümanlarını takiben, kent

hakkıyla ilgili herhangi bir tartışma için “mücadele ittifakları” ihtiyacının dikkate alınması gerektiği ve LGBTİ+ aktivist hareketinin bu yolda ilerlediği yönündedir. Görüşmecilerin bu kapsamda paylaştıkları bu kolektifleştirme ve köklü değişimi tek bir sesle yürütme anlayışına uymaktadır. Çalışmada LGBTİ+ hareketinin, pek çok eşitsizliğe değinen ve eylemlerini ve söylemlerini yalnızca LGBTİ+’ları değil, diğer ezilenleri de özgürleştirecek çok sayıda talep doğrultusunda ele alan bir kentsel direniş hareketi olarak tanımlanmasının nedeni de bu farkındalıkta yatmaktadır.

LGBTİ+ hareketi ve diğer mekânsal alanlardaki kadın direnişinin analizine ayrılan son makro direniş bölümünün altında yatan sebep ise saha bulgularının, kendini kadın olarak tanımlamanın, lezbiyen, biseksüel kadınlar ve trans deneyimli kadınlar arasında da bir makro direniş mekanizması haline gelmiş olmasıdır. Cinsiyet kimliğine yapılan bu kasıtlı vurgudan bahsederken, kadınlığın görünürlük açısından sorunlu bir konu olduğunun altının çizilmiş ve bu durumun hem Türkiye genelinde hem de hareketin kendi içerisinde mevcut ve süregelmekte olan bir durum olmasından bahsedilmiştir. Bu duruma yanıt olarak, katılımcılardan bazıları LGBTİ+ hareketi içinde bir alt grubun ortaya çıktığına dikkat çekmiştir: Lez-bi-fem (Lezbiyen-Biseksüel Feministler) “lezbiyenler ve biseksüellerin vardır” iddiasıyla yola çıkmış ve şehirde daha görünür olma ve kamusal hak iddia etme fikri etrafında toplanmıştır. Bu yeni yapılanma yeni bir ifade alanı olarak görülmüş ve kolektif özelliğinden dolayı da makro direnişlerin bileşenlerinden biri olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Öte yandan görüşmecilerin yaşadıkları şehrin ve mahallenin özelliklerini anlatmaya yönelik olarak verdikleri cevaplar “kadın olmak”, “kadın veya feminen görünmek” ve “kadın gibi görünmek” ifadelerinin kesişiminde yer alan bir ayrımcılık olduğuna işaret etmektedir. Kentin bazı semtleri ve mahalleleri daha LGBTİ+ dostu olarak değerlendirilse de özel alanlar da dahil olmak üzere kent bir bütün olarak kucaklayıcı ve kapsayıcı olarak değerlendirilmemektedir. Görüşmecilerden Eser’e göre LGBTİ+’ların ve özellikle kadınların istedikleri gibi özgürce hareket etmelerine izin vermeyen şehrin kendisi değil, toplumun bu özelliğini belirleyen ataerkil düzendir. Tacize maruz kalma olasılığının, “görünürde kadınsı” olmanın doğrudan bir sonucu olarak görüldüğüne işaret edilmektedir. Bazı mahallelerde kendilerini ne kadar tehdit altında hissettiklerini ve belirli mahalle ve semtlerden içgüdüsel olarak kendilerini nasıl uzak tuttuklarını belirten katılımcıların gündelik yaşam deneyimlerinin bu eksense şekillendiğini dile getirmiştir. Kent hakkına erişimin önünü açmak açısından kadınların gündelik

yaşamda fark yaratma potansiyeli taşıdığıının vurgulanması gerekmektedir. Bu anlamda var olan zafiyetler dikkate alınırken, kent hakkı söylemine yeni bir bakış açısıyla dikkat çekilmesi ve uygulanması gerekliliği ortaya çıkmaktadır. Çünkü bu makro direniş, özgürleşme ve mekânsal sahiplenme arayışlarının gerçekleştiği kozaların meydana gelmesine yardımcı olmaktadır.

Mikro ve makro direnişlere odaklanan analiz bölümünün her iki kısmında da LGBTİ+'ların görünürlüklerinin, görünmezliklerinin, hareketliliklerinin ve kimliklerini ifade edebilecek kadar güvende hissedebilecekleri alanların sınırlı ve kontrollü olduğuna kanaat getirilmiştir. Gerçekten de görüşmecilerin çoğu, kendilerini sevdiğilerinin elini tutacak veya giymek istedikleri kıyafetleri giyecek kadar güvende hissetmediklerini ifade etmiştir, çünkü bunun kendilerine sorun yaratacağını bildiklerinin altını çizmişlerdir. Ancak bu durumun, toplumda hüküm süren genel baskıcılığın üstesinden gelmenin yollarını bulmalarının önünde bir engel teşkil etmemekte olduğu sonucu da ortaya çıkmıştır. Zaman zaman görünmezliğe sığınarak, kimi zaman mizah ve Lubunca kullanımıyla, yeri geldiğinde bedenlerinin görünürlüğünü ve bedenlerine yükledikleri anlamları vurgulayarak güçlendiklerini ifade etmişlerdir. LGBTİ+ kimliğini (tartışmalı da olsa) benimsemek, LGBTİ+ hareketinin aktörlerinin etkisi ve kadınların toplumda yaygın olan görünmezlikle mücadele etmek için bir alt örgüt kurulmuş olması yukarıda da değinilen "kozalar"ın meydana gelmesine fırsat sağlayan makro direnişler arasında yer almıştır. Makro direnişlerin bütüncül bir özgürleşmeyi hedeflediği gözükse de izlenecek o yol için; mikro direnişlerin bir zorunluluk olduğu otaya çıkmaktadır.

Saha bulguları, gündelik yaşamlarını evlerinden başlayarak değiştirmeye çalışan LGBTİ+'ların, içinde buldukları baskıcı yapının kritik unsurlarından biri olan aile kavramını da ele alarak sistemi bir bütün olarak dönüştürme yolunda bir rol oynadıklarına işaret etmektedir. Bu bağlamda, iktidar sahiplerinin homojenleştirme ve tekdüzeleştirme pratiklerine karşı LGBTİ+'ların direniş çabalarını, gündelik hayatın ve gündelik mekanların yeniden örgütlenmesi ve yeniden üretilmesi yönünde önemli bir adım olarak değerlendirmek mümkündür. Bu aynı zamanda kendilerine yöneltilen tüm baskıcı, nesneleştirici ve yok sayıcı uygulamalara karşı bir adım olarak da değerlendirilebilir. LGBTİ+'lar, gündelik hayatlarını çevreleyen geleneklere, ataerkil pratiklere, alışkanlıklara, aile pratiklerine ve tüm sosyal hiyerarşilere meydan

okuyarak, müzakere etmektedirler; bu şekilde kimliklerini ve gündelik yaşam alanlarını yeniden inşa etme sürecini başlatmaktadırlar.

Son analiz bölümünde LGBTİ+'ların kentsel mekânları nasıl ürettikleri üzerinde durulmuştur. Direnişlerinin mekân üretimine nasıl katkı sağladığı ve "koza" olarak tanımlanan bu yeni üretilen mekânların LGBTİ+'ların sadece 'nefes odaları' olmadığına, aynı zamanda gerek onları gerekse direnişlerini daha da ileriye taşıyacak mekânlar olduğuna değinilmiştir. Bu bölümde mekânı Lefebvre'nin mekân üretimi teorisi üzerinden okuyarak ve tüm tartışmayı kent hakkı tartışmasına bağlayarak, LGBTİ+'ların mikro ve makro direnişlerinin nasıl farklı mekânsal yansımalar oluşturduğunun gösterilmesi hedeflenmiştir.

Saha çalışmasından, LGBTİ+'ların farklı durumlarda, farklı bağlamlarda yeni alanlar ürettiği sonucu ortaya çıkmıştır. Kentsel mekânın farklı ölçek ve seviyeleri üzerinden LGBTİ+'ların mekânsal kendilemeleri analiz edilmiştir. Çalışmaya katılanların anlatılarında evlerin, eğlence yerlerinin (kafeler, barlar ve kulüpler), mahallelerin ve sokakların nasıl yeniden üretildiği ve sahiplenildiği görülmüştür. Saha çalışması sırasında LGBTİ+'ların kent hakkı arayışlarının bir parçası olarak arzu etme, mekânlardan keyif alma hakları için mücadele ettikleri de ortaya çıkmıştır. Dolayısıyla, örneğin bir eğlence mekânı ya da bir mahallenin sahiplenilmesinin, yeni bir ev bulunmasının veya alternatif 'evler' üretilmesinin ve böylece yeni "kozalar" yaratılmasının siyasi eylemler olduğu ve bunların, kent hakkı tamamen kazanılana kadar mücadelenin devamının birer tasdiki olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır.

Bu son analiz bölümünün ilk durağı 'evler' olmuştur. Evin, bireylerin kendilerini gündelik hayatın koşuşturmacasından, sınırlardan ve kurallardan arınmış hissetmelerini, bir manada bir özgürlük alanı içerisindeymiş gibi hissetmelerini sağlaması gerekirken, bu çalışmanın bulguları LGBTİ+'ların, hetero-ataerkil düzenle karşı karşıya kaldığı aile evlerinde, bu rahatlık ve güvenlik beklentilerinin ve isteklerinin karşılanmaktan çok uzak olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır. Görüşmeciler arasındaki ortak deneyim, evin "mücadeleden ve çekişmeden" bağımsız olmadığı ve tüm "kişisel" deneyimlerinin ve alanlarının "politik" deneyimlere dönüştüğü yönünde olmuştur (Hanisch, 1969). Dolayısıyla ev, LGBTİ+'ların kendi hakları için mücadele etmeye devam ettiği bir mücadele ve direniş mekânı olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Ayrıca

geleneksel anlamda özel alan kabul edilen ‘eve’ getirilen kısıtlamalar toplumsal ilişkilerin kamusal alana taşmasına neden olmaktadır. Görüşmelerde bahsedilen dernek ofisleri, LGBTİ+’ların sıklıkla gittiği kafelerden bazıları güvenli yuva özlemini gideren mekânlar olarak ortaya çıkmıştır.

Bu bölümün ikinci durağı olan eğlence mekanları hakkında LGBTİ+’ların nasıl bilgi sahibi olduklarına değinilmiş ve bu mekanlardan bazılarının adeta bir ev sıcaklığında olduğuna işaret edilmiştir. Ancak, “LGBTİ+ dostu” veya “kuir” eğlence yerleriyle kurulan sosyalleşme bağlarının ücretsiz olmaması meselesinin de görüşmeciler tarafından altı çizilmiştir. Görüşmeciler, bu mekânların “benzersiz” konumlarından yararlanarak bu güvenli sosyal ortamı LGBTİ+’lara daha yüksek fiyatlara sunarak bu durumdan kendilerine bir tür faydalar sağladıklarını belirtmişlerdir.

Mekânsal üretime odaklanılan bu bölümün üçüncü başlığı mahalleler üzerine kuruludur. Öncelikle Cihangir ve Beyoğlu mahallelerinin tarihselliğinden ve bu mekanların LGBTİ+’ların kolektif belleğindeki yerinden bahsedilmiştir. Sonrasında bir başka mahalleye odaklanılmış ve öncelikle Kurtuluş mahallesinin LGBTİ+’lar için taşıdığı olumlu anlamlar tartışılmıştır. Bu mahallenin, yan yana bulunan apartmanların yakınlığının, baskıcı bir şehrin ortasında, görece özgürleştirici özelliği sayesinde daha komünal ve ‘kuir’ bir yaşamın yolunu açmış olduğuna değinilmiştir. Ancak görüşmeciler bu şekilde birbirine yakın yaşamının ön koşullarına işaret ederek, Kurtuluş’ta sadece ekonomik olarak orada yaşamayı karşılayabilecek küçük bir LGBTİ+ grubunun tercihi haline gelebileceğini göstermişlerdir. Bir mahalleye sıkışıp kalma riski ve Kurtuluş’ta yaşayan gayrimüslim aileler arasında hâlâ hâkim olan heteropatriyarkal düzen, o mahallede yaşayan farklı sosyal gruplar arasında hala gerilim ve müzakerelerin devam ettiğine değinmişlerdir. Bu tartışmalar ışığında, farklılıkların bir aradalıklarla birikeceği ve böylelikle farklılıklar koleksiyonlarının oluşacağı ve bu durumun kolektif eylem için bir potansiyel yaratacağı yönünde öne çıkan umut dolu bir sonuçtan bahsedilebilir.

“Onur Yürüyüşleri ve Protestolar: Bütün Şehri Geri Almak” adı verilen bölümde özellikle Gezi Parkı eylemlerinin ardından gelişen görünürlük eylemlerinin önemine değinilmiştir. Bu direniş odaklı eylemlerin, kentsel mekânların farklı katmanlarına

koşulsuz erişim sağlamak için önemli birer mihenk taşı olarak kabul edilebileceği sonucu çıkartılmıştır.

Teorik bölümde üzerinde etraflıca durulduğu üzere, Lefebvre için mekânın toplumsal üretimi tekil bir anın sonucu olarak düşünülemez, daha çok bir sürecin sonucudur (Lefebvre, 1991b). Tıpkı kozanın meydana gelmesi süreci gibi, mekânın üretimi de bir zamansallık gerektirir. Mekânları sahiplenmek, mücadeleyi sürdürmek ve direnişler bu zamansallığın parçalarıdır. LGBTİ+'lar direnişleriyle, o mekânlarda birlikte oluşturdukları yeni hatıraları var olanların üzerine yığarak kozalar üretmeye devam etmektedirler.

Görüşmecilerin mikro ve makro direnişlerinin yer aldığı kozalar, bu direnişlerin hem aracı hem de sonucu olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Böylece, tasavvur edilen mekân, görüşmecilerin pratikleri ve deneyimleri tarafından çürütülmekte ve bu da “yaşanan mekân” üretimiyle sonuçlanmaktadır. Sosyal alanı üreten ‘akımlar’daki farklılığın vurgulanması, bu kozaların ‘farklılık’ (differential) mekânları olduğu sonucunu da ortaya koymaktadır. Lefebvre’nin mekânsal üçlemesi, çalışmanın bulguları ile birleştiğinde, LGBTİ+'ların (kentsel) mekânların temsillerindeki sayısız mücadelelerini anlamak için bir araç olarak hizmet etmiş ve LGBTİ+'ların gündelik hayatın üretim süreçlerine katılarak, kendi temsili ve farklılık mekânlarını inşa etmelerinin bir kanıtı olmuştur.

Kozalar LGBTİ+'ların kent hakkı için direniş tezahürünün üreticisi ve ürünü olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Kozalar herkes kent hakkına kavuşana kadar varlıklarını sürdürecektir olan, dolayısıyla geçici ancak hem mikro hem de makro direnişlerin devamlılığını sağlayan ‘farklılık’ mekânlarıdır. Çalışmanın sonuçları LGBTİ+'ların nefes alma, “var olma” olanağını bu kozalarda bulduklarına, mevcut heteropatriyarkal ve ‘ikiyüzlü’ baskılara karşı direnişi örgütleme ve sürdürme gücünü de yine bu kozalarda kavuştuklarına işaret etmektedir.

Özel ve kamusal alanların nerede başlayıp nerede bittiği meselesi, LGBTİ+'ların anlamlandırma ve mekânsal yeniden üretim süreçleri ile yolları çok sık kesiştiği için çalışmanın sonlarında giderek daha fazla sorgulanmıştır. Lefebvre’nin mekân üretimi teorisinde belirttiği gibi, kamusal alanın fiili kullanımını belirleyen bireyler ve gruplar arasındaki etkileşimdir. Bu bakımdan sokak, eğlence yerleri, mahalleler ve ev,

direnişlerinin gerçekleştiği temel mekânlar olarak büyük önem göstermektedir. LGBTİ+'ların sokağı, evi, kafeleri, barları ve mahalleleri (dolayısıyla hem kamusal hem de özel alanları) bir arada sahiplenmelerini kent hakkı arayışlarında birer başarı olarak kabul etmek mümkündür. Bu mekânsal üretimlerin kendi içinde devrimci ve yeniden yapılandırıcı bir arzunun içine gömülü olduğu sonucu da ortaya çıkmaktadır. Çünkü bu durum, gündelik hayatın işleyişini değiştirecek bir taleptir ve bu talebin etki alanı hemen hemen tüm ezilen toplumsal grupları içine almaktadır.

Sonuç olarak, bu çalışma, LGBTİ+'ların nasıl 'dört duvar' arkasına sıkıştırılmaya çalışıldıklarına ve aynı anda iktidar sahipleri tarafından aynı heteropatriyarkal özel alandan nasıl uzaklaştırıldıklarına ışık tutmaktadır. Çalışma, LGBTİ+'ların görünmezliklerin ince çizgilerinde kendi "kozalarını" oluştururken bazı dönemlerde kendilerini nasıl "mekânsız" bulduklarına dikkat çekerken, aslında onları kendi "kozalarını" yaratmaya itenin de tam olarak bu mekânsızlık olduğuna işaret etmektedir. Onları direnmeye ve başka 'evler' ve diğer 'özel mekânlar' ve diğer kamusal alanlar aramaya ve üretmeye zorlayan tam olarak bu durumun kendisidir. LGBTİ+'lar bir yandan gündelik yaşamlarını sürdürürken bir yandan da kent hakkı taleplerini örgütlemeye ve yinelemeye devam etmektedirler. Bütün bu inceleme, kent hakkına giden yolun meşakkatli ve uzun olduğuna işaret etmektedir. LGBTİ+'lar, tasarlanan mekânın ideal imajına aykırı bir şekilde bir mekânı dönüştürdüklerinde, kentsel mekânın yaşanan yönünü ve "kent hakkını" ortaya koymaktadırlar (Lefebvre, 1991b). Analiz bölümlerinde tartışıldığı üzere tüm direnişler, LGBTİ+'ların gündelik kentsel deneyimlerine ve mekânsal yeniden üretimlerine dair bu anlayışa katkıda bulunmaktadır.

Bu çalışmanın sonuçlarını özetledikten sonra, son olarak araştırmanın sınırlılıklarının altının bir kere daha çizilmesinde fayda bulunmaktadır. Bu sınırlılıklardan bazılarını tartışmalar sırasında fırsat buldukça değinilmiştir. İlk sınırlılık, çalışmanın yürütüldüğü yerle ilgilidir: Bu çalışmanın coğrafi odağı, Batı dışı bir coğrafi konum olan Türkiye iken, analiz bölümünde kullanılan veriler, nüfusu yaklaşık 16 milyon olan İstanbul'dur (TÜİK Kurumsal, 2022). Bu nedenle, çalışma Türkiye'nin küçük şehirlerini veya kırsal alanlarını yansıtmamaktadır. Üstelik bu tezin alt bölümlerinden birinde ele alınan mahalleler, yani Beyoğlu/Cihangir ve Kurtuluş mahalleleri de İstanbul'un bir temsili sayılamaz. Bu tezin görüşmecilerinden Eser de haklı olarak,

“...Esenler’de yaşayan bir gey veya lezbiyen” diyerek, İstanbul’un farklı yerlerinde yaşayan LGBTİ+’ların olası farklı gerçekliklerine ve anlatılarına dikkat çekmiştir. Çünkü İstanbul’un mahalleleri birbirinden çok farklılık göstermektedir. Diğer bir sınırlılık ise LGBTİ+’ların tüm “harflerinin” tartışmalarda temsil edilmemesiyle ilgilidir. Herhangi bir interseks bireyle görüşme gerçekleştirilmemiştir. Ayrıca, trans deneyimi olan erkeklerle görüşme gerçekleştirilmiş olmasına rağmen, geri kalan görüşmelerin analizine entegre edilememiş ve toplanan bu veriler tezde kullanılamamıştır. Son olarak, bu tez daha çok İstanbul’daki mekanlarla ilgili olduğundan, dijital mekanların koza üretimi üzerindeki etkisi incelenmemiştir.

Hem yukarıda belirtilen sınırlılıklar hem de tezin bir bütün olarak amaçlanan katkıları ve özellikle bu tezde kavram olarak önerilen “koza” modeli dikkate alındığında ortaya çıkabilecek bir soru, bu tezin bulgularının rezonansı ve konumlandırılması üzerine olabilir. Burada tartışılan sonuçlar, belirli coğrafi ortamlarda, özellikle siyasi ve toplumsal çalkantıların sürekli olduğu ve LGBTİ+’lara yönelik sürekli baskı girişimlerinin olduğu ülkelerde yaşayan LGBTİ+’ların durumu için geçerli olabilir. Bu yönde düşünülmesinin nedeni, direniş ve tahakkümün birbiriyle olan döngüsel ilişkisidir. Baskılar direnişe giden yolu açarken, iktidar sahipleri toplumsal ortamı homojenleştirmek için direnişleri en aza indirmek için daha ileri stratejiler kullanırlar. Ancak bu stratejiler cevapsız kalmazlar: yeni direnişler ortaya çıkar ve sürekli olarak farklı taktikler uygulanır. Direniş pratikleriyle doğrudan bağlantılı bir kavram olarak ortaya konan koza kavramı, özellikle ataerkilliğin, heteroseksizmin, baskıcılığın, ikili cinsiyet sisteminin zorlayıcı doğasının hüküm sürdüğü ve cinsellik etrafında dönen konuları tartışmanın zor olduğu coğrafyalarda LGBTİ+’ların mekânsal üretimlerini ve sahiplenişlerini anlatmak için kullanılabilir. Öte yandan bu kavram, Türkiye’nin kendi içinde bile farklı mekânsal üretim örneklerine uygun düşmeyebilir. Örneğin, çalışmanın coğrafi sınırlılıkları göz önüne alındığında, koza kavramı Türkiye’nin daha küçük şehirlerinde veya daha kırsal kesimlerinde yaşayan LGBTİ+’lara uygulanabilir veya uygulanamayabilir.

Bu tez çalışması, LGBTİ+’ların çatışmalı, direniş ile bezenmiş gündelik yaşam süreçlerini ve İstanbul’daki kentsel mekânla ilişkilerini, kendi deneyimlerini ve tanıklıklarını, kentsel yaşam ve kentsel mekânlara ilişkin tasavvur ve kavrayışlarını araştırmayı hedeflemiştir. Esasen LGBTİ+’ların kimlik inşalarının, bedensel

ifadelerinin, taktiksel direniş hamlelerinin, mekânsal anlam oluřturmalarının, mekânsal yeniden üretim ve temellüklerinin, mikro ve makro direnişin kentsel rotalarının sosyo-mekânsal süreçlerinin üzerinde durmuřtur. Bu noktaların birleřtirilmesi hem çok sıradan olaylar hem de gösteriřli olanlar üzerinden direniş ve karřı koyma mekanizmalarına ışık tutmayı hedeflemiř, aynı zamanda güvenli alanların, yani kozaların üretiminin anlamlandırılmasına yardımcı olmuřtur.

Bu arařtırma ile LGBTİ+'ların görünürlük ve görünmezlik ekseninde gidip gelen eylemlerine ışık tutulmuřtur. Makro düzeyde gerçekteşen direnişlerle birlikte mikro direnişler de mercek altına alınmıř ve mekânsal yansımaları ortaya konmaya çalıřılmıřtır. Kozaların gündelik baskıların yorgunluęunu atmaya yarayan koruyucu ve güvenli bir alan olarak hizmet ettięi ve aynı zamanda birliktelięin, sosyal iliřkilerin ve yeni direnişlerin köpürdüęü, çoęaldıęı, cořtuęu mekânlar olarak da iřlev gördüęü tespit edilmiřtir. Ancak bu kozaların da yeterli olmadıęı, bir řekilde ondan mahrum kalan tüm "şehir sakinlerini" tüm şehrin bekledięinin de altı çizilmiřtir. En önemlisi de ister görünür ister görünmez olsun, "direniş" gerçekteşinin, kent hakkında doęru giden yol olduęu gösterilmiřtir.

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