

HIP-HOP IN THE NEOLIBERAL ERA:
TURKISH RAP MUSIC COMMUNITY IN TURKEY

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IN TURKEY**

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ABSTRACT

HIP-HOP IN THE NEOLIBERAL ERA: TURKISH RAP MUSIC COMMUNITY IN TURKEY

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Hip-hop, which spread from the American ghettos to the whole world and entered our daily lives, aroused an echo in Turkey with its popularity in Germany. The main emphasis of this study is on hip-hop's subjects, the hip-hop community. Hip-hop enables its community, young people, to express themselves in various ways, participate in political and social life, show anti-order attitudes, and form an alternative identity for their own. In this context, the relations of hip-hop with the youth, the city, and the instruments of resistance will be examined theoretically. Then the field research data from the young people in Ankara, İzmir, and İstanbul will be shared. The primary aim of the thesis is to comprehend the hip-hop community deeply and compare such examples of America, Germany, and Turkey between themselves. In light of the testimonies from the fieldwork, examining the ruptures and continuities in the journey of hip-hop in Turkey formed the focus of the thesis.

Keywords: hip-hop, rap music, community

ÖZ

NEOLİBERAL DÖNEMDE HİP-HOP: TÜRKİYE'DEKİ TÜRKÇE RAP MÜZİK KOMÜNİTESİ

DEMİREL, Sinem

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Amerikan gettolarından tüm dünyaya yayılmış ve neredeyse herkesin gündelik hayatına tesir etmiş olan hip-hop, Almanya'daki popülaritesiyle birlikte Türkiye'de de yankı uyandırmıştır. Gençlerin kendilerini çeşitli yollarla ifade etmelerine, siyasi ve sosyal hayata katılmalarına, düzen karşıtı tutum sergilemelerine ve kendilerine has alternatif bir kimlik oluşturmalarını sağlayan hip-hop'ın özneleri olan gençler, yani hip-hop komünitesi, bu çalışmanın ana odağını oluşturmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, hip-hop'ın gençlerle, kentle ve direniş mekanizmalarıyla olan bağları önce teorik düzlemde incelenecek olup, sonrasında Ankara, İzmir ve İstanbul'daki gençlerle saha araştırmasının verileri paylaşılacaktır. Tezin ana amacı, Amerika, Almanya ve Türkiye'deki hip-hop komünitelerini derinlemesine anlamak ve birbirleriyle karşılaştırmaktır. Saha çalışmasındaki tanıklıkların ışığında, Türkiye'deki hip-hop serüvenindeki kopuş ve süreklilikleri incelemek, tezin arka planındaki odağı oluşturmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: hip-hop, rap müzik, komünite

To my family and young people struggling with mental issues while trying to continue their daily lives.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Hip-hop, which emerged in the middle of gang wars, deep poverty, capitalist urban planning, and rising racism in the American ghettos of the 1970s, has been the focus of various academic studies until today. Hip-hop, which enables poor black young people to have a say by opening a space for themselves in the existing world, has succeeded in being the voice of young people not only in the world but in every country it reached.

Hip-hop, born in the Bronx and reached various parts of the world thanks to the developments in communication technologies, is a phenomenon that has touched the lives of almost everyone today. This situation, of course, was not limited to a single touch, but over time, it became a way of life that entered most of our daily lives. Hip-hop carried a piece of itself wherever it went but added a piece also to itself wherever it went. Therefore, it also acted as a bridge between the global and the local. Thanks to hip-hop, young people can open up to the world who cannot even communicate with their local people in their everyday lives.

Hip-hop culture, besides its being a lifestyle, is also a subculture with artistic branches. Hip-hop, which has branches such as breakdance, graffiti, rap music, and DJing, has not only been a thriving subculture in being the voice of the youth but also has hosted elements of resistance with the return of being a subculture. It would not be wrong to say that the studies claiming hip-hop is a tool of resistance (Rose, 1994; Scott, 1990; Lüküslü, 2011) are at the very center of hip-hop studies. Indeed, hip-hop can be counted as a tool by which black American youth living in harsh conditions struggle with the racism, poverty, and state-police violence they experience daily. Thanks to hip-hop's indirectly disruptive nature, young people could express their opinions openly and

participate in political and social life. For example, in the years when racism was at its peak and propaganda against blacks was seen in all media channels, the group called NWA in the mainstream media released a song with lyrics of "a young ni** got it bad 'cause I'm brown/ And not the other color so police think/ they have the authority to kill a minority." Such lyrics prove the power of hip-hop that reaches the masses. Thanks to this power, young people demanded social and political change (Soysal, 2011).

Hip-hop, which has a structure that offers and strengthens youth an identity, has strengthened the youth individually and in a collective sense (Çağlar, 1998; Solomon, 2009). Before hip-hop, almost all teenagers belonged to gangs because it was the only way to survive. You were either outside the circle or in it. The fact that hip-hop brought them together under the name Zulu Nation made them a strong and unshakable community. Such young people used to be a mass deprived of the means of change and rebellion before becoming more vigorous. In addition, young people who typically engage in illegal activities and gang wars have taken up a new occupation with hip-hop, socialized with each other, and had a different daily life routine (Kaya, 2002).

This community of young people who are hip-hop subjects has been explored in the thesis you are reading. The dynamic relationships between hip-hop culture and community are examined, and how these relationships differ in different countries is compared. For example, a destination of hip-hop, which opened up to the world from the American ghettos, was Germany. Migrant workers, who were placed in Germany's ghettos with the demand of guest workers from various countries in the 1960s, lived in Kreuzberg. While Kreuzberg is similar in structure to the Bronx, the daily life of the people living in it was also identical. Children of migrant guest workers who played in the same parks were born in the same hospitals and went to the same schools. With the fall of the Berlin Wall and the 2 Berlins united, Kreuzberg began to attract attention as a makeshift right in the city's heart. Young people came together to protect their neighborhoods when the xenophobic and racist protests against immigrants living in Kreuzberg

became violent. Immigrant youth, who went to meet the American soldiers in the country and have fun in the same places, met hip-hop after a while and put hip-hop at the center of their lives. Migrant youth, previously defined as belligerent, violent, and mischievous, have now started to introduce themselves through hip-hop culture.

Most migrant families living in Kreuzberg are workers who have migrated from Turkey. Therefore, the hip-hop community in Kreuzberg was of primary Turkish origin. Şimşekler (Lightning) and 36 Boys were among the most famous gangs. Young people from Kreuzberg, who were now acquainted with hip-hop, started to rap verbally in Turkish, and it was inevitable that these Turkish songs would resonate in Turkey. The young people of Kreuzberg, who shook Turkey with the Cartel project, have now introduced hip-hop to Turkey.

Although the story of hip-hop in Turkey started with Cartel and became very popular in the 2000s, it would not be wrong to say that hip-hop remained underground in Turkey for many years. Hip-hop, which has generally emerged as a life practice for the youth from the ghettos, has started to emerge from the underground to the surface, with the Turkish rap music taking place in the mainstream media around 2015. With interest in Turkish rap music, interest in hip-hop decreased. Not long after, hip-hop in Turkey began to be understood as Turkish rap music performed by young people whose clothing, speech, and lifestyle fit hip-hop culture.

As mentioned before, the main protagonists of the hip-hop story that started in America and spread to Germany and Turkey constitute the main subject of this thesis. This thesis, which examines the hip-hop community in Turkey, consists of five chapters. The first chapter, the part you are reading now, was written because of the need for an opening before moving on to the detailed part of the thesis. It also shows the significance of the study. The second part of the thesis contains the necessary theoretical information to make a study on hip-hop. Such theoretical information is about music and culture in general. In the third part of

the thesis, hip-hop's story was introduced concerning historical details. Such data started in Amerika until Germany, where Turkish rap music developed. At the end of the chapter, a hip-hop community definition was made after understanding and embracing the hip-hop story in America and Germany. This definition of community has been defined faithfully to the American example, that is, to the original, and has been compared with the community in Germany. In the fourth part of the thesis, the example of Turkey has been reached. After understanding the historical information and comments about hip-hop in America and Germany, information about hip-hop that came to Turkey is given. In light of the information obtained from the field research, the current hip-hop situation in Turkey has been explained and analyzed. As a result, the hip-hop community in Turkey was put to the test with the example of the hip-hop community defined in the third section. In the fifth chapter, which is the last chapter, a conclusion part is written instead of the result analysis on the hip-hop community. It outlines the study's findings and can be considered a summary of the pairing theory and practice.

The theoretical framework used in the second chapter is a practical summary of cultural studies and examines the relationship between hip-hop and cultural studies. For example, the Frankfurt School, the source of thought for some of the criticisms directed at hip-hop, is mentioned. The concept of the culture industry, developed by Adorno and Horkheimer, representatives of the Frankfurt School, was used as a tool to explain the historical process of hip-hop. According to them, a product in the culture industry loses its artistic value by being industrialized and does not contain any element of resistance and reproduces the existing order. Studies that adopt this approach generally argue that as hip-hop becomes widespread, it loses its essence by industrialization and evolves into a different genre (Kadioğlu & Sözeri-Özdal, 2020). Evidence shows factors such as standardized songs and less critical lyrics. The Birmingham School, which has a more moderate and different understanding, says that subcultures have a dual nature. According to them, popular culture is both resistive and submissive. In other words, hip-hop can and does produce anti-establishment discourses while

simultaneously in the culture industry (Rose, 1994). Among the different studies on hip-hop are the relationship between hip-hop and space (Miş, 2018; Solomon, 2005) and the relationship between hip-hop and diasporic societies (Kaya, 2002).

On the other hand, studies on hip-hop are generally based on its changing rebellious nature. In the grip of the capitalist culture industry, hip-hop has lost its criticality and its anti-establishment nature. Alternatively, hip-hop, a subculture, still retains its rebellious qualities because popular culture has a dual nature. Although hip-hop is now seen as a way of making money, it still serves as a means of existence and self-expression for young people. As a result, studies on hip-hop, in general, have always progressed within the same framework, even if they seem to have different understandings. However, making a critical study of hip-hop's subjects, namely the hip-hop community, is essential for hip-hop studies in Turkey. Although there are studies enriched with field work interviewing young people in the hip-hop community, these interviews are far from any compared discussion. They have been considered in the Turkish context only.

In addition to the fieldwork, some necessary academic discussions to understand hip-hop dynamics in Turkey were given in the fourth chapter. The theories underlying these discussions are explained in detail in the second part, and studies where these theories meet with practice, are included in the fourth part. Such studies can be categorized into three: hip-hop as youth culture, hip-hop as a way of resistance, and hip-hop as urban culture. In other words, before going into the details of the field study, the hip-hop literature in Turkey and the bases of this literature are given. The importance and existence of the three themes mentioned are not unpredictable because hip-hop subjects are already young people; urban places are where hip-hop is made; hip-hop is inherently rebellious. In the light of these debates, I will attempt to find answers to the following questions; what makes a hip-hop community a hip-hop community?; is there a

shift concerning the hip-hop community in Turkey?; how and why has hip-hop in Turkey changed its shape over time?

In addressing these questions, I argue in this thesis that Turkey's so-called hip-hop community is quite different from the hip-hop communities in America and Germany. In fact, there has never been a hip-hop community in Turkey, but only enthusiastic young people benefit from hip-hop throughout their daily lives. Nevertheless, this thesis does not neglect the importance of hip-hop to young people living in Turkey with respect to creating identities (Kaya, 2000), engaging in political life (Buhari-Gülmez, 2017; Librado, 2010), rehabilitating (Hakvoort, 2015; Elligan, 2004), reflecting reality (Smitherman, 2000), and expressing themselves (Rose, 1994).

The research method used while concluding the thesis you are reading is the Grounded Theory, a qualitative research method developed by Strauss and Glaser in 1967. Since there are many studies on hip-hop, the gap in the literature has been determined using the field. As a result of in-depth interviews and observation of the researcher, the focus of the thesis changed throughout the research process. First, data is collected and analyzed for a repeatedly long time. Next, a theory emerged from the collected information, and an analysis was presented. In other words, data determined the approach.

Interviews were held with 16 people, fourteen men and two women, devoted to hip-hop. The interviews were generally held in a studio, bar, or cafe to make the interviewee feel more comfortable. 2 of them were held in Istanbul, 5 in Ankara, 2 in İzmir, and 5 online. The names of the interviewees will be given anonymously to be able to speak freely and comfortably. Although the in-depth interviews were officially a total of 16, my observations throughout the hip-hop scene were also quite helpful for this study. As new ideas came in with observations, I continued with non-formal organic small talks with people in the hip-hop scene. In this situation, where there are continuous data and analysis processes dynamically, it is aimed to “return to the field and reveal the buried”

(Çelik & Ekşi, 2017). The information gathered from these observations and interviews enabled me to walk in their shoes, get to the point, and understand the real problems in hip-hop life.

While conducting the interviews, I always recorded my feelings during the interview. For example, I tried to understand a person's feelings and tried to make sense of the place we were in, then wrote them down. In this respect, it can be said that I did autoethnography for a part of my thesis. I also recorded my own experience and determined the direction of my thesis, and "I connected this situation with cultural, political and social meanings" (Maréchal, 2010; Carolyn, 2004).

CHAPTER 2

CULTURE

2.1. The Power of Music

There are various reasons why music is the focus of academic studies, and one of these reasons is the curiosity about the socio-political meaning of cultural elements such as music. Music not only has a socio-political meaning but also produces new meanings and adds meaning to people. In this part of the thesis, music as a cultural element will be discussed. Then, hip-hop as a musical subculture will be the focus of further discussions throughout the chapter.

According to Martiniello and Lafleur, one of the most critical interpretations of music is that it is a source of power (2008). This power source can be used by the elite as well as by ordinary people. In other words, music has a structure that both restores and disrupts the order.

For example, according to Nietzsche, music is a form of art that has the potential to disrupt order (Love, 1979). Nietzsche distinguishes music from other art forms and attributes some actions to music. Music can make us happy, sad, praised, or vilified, but “its principal task is to lead our thoughts to higher things, to elevate, even to make us tremble” (Young, 2010). According to him, music speaks in such a way that it is a more effective means of penetration than poetry; it touches the very depths of our hearts. According to Nietzsche, music can lead people to the good and the right; that makes people do something.

Indeed, there is an aspect of music that activates people. The most ancient call-to-war rituals and national anthems can be examples of this. Thus, such an aspect of music was used not only by ordinary people but also by the state and the

powerful. As Gramsci also explains the related subject, music can be used both to establish order and to disrupt it (1978). While music can also be the triggering symbol of public revolt, it can also be a tool used by those in power to justify their own order. For example, music can be included in government policies; it can be a campaign tool; that is, it can be used as a way of communication. As the Chinese writer Lü Buwei said, “it is a general rule that music is affected both by government and by custom. As regimes and customs establish themselves, music adapts to serve them”. Alternatively, music may be a symbol of whispered resistance in a Third World Country (Mason, 1997; Ferro, 1997). So music does not just serve one side. It does not have a single meaning and can produce different meanings. It may belong to popular culture as well as high culture, but whatever it is, it always awakens something in one’s mind.

Just as music awakens something in people, music can arise from what is already awakened in people. Because music is a part of our daily life, it is an inseparable element of people’s culture. For example, black youth, who have to deal with problems such as deep poverty, racism, and state-police violence every day in the 1970s Bronx, have invented the hip-hop culture thanks to the current order they live in – and despite that order.

2.2. Friend or Foe: Hip-Hop in Popular Culture

Hip-hop, born in the back streets of New York and started as local youth culture, has proven itself all over the world, overflowed from America, and reached the whole world (Osumare, 2001). As hip-hop began to expand from the American ghettos to the world, predictably, it became something everyone was talking about. Hip-hop, which was initially underground, is now becoming mainstream because in less than two decades (for example), rap music has evolved from local performance practice to a multi-million dollar industry that appeals to more people (Walser, 1995). Hip-hop changed places and influenced people. Therefore, it also affected the social sciences. Hip-hop, accepted as a method of

expression in the literature, has been central to many fields such as ethnomusicology, sociology, and cultural studies (Arıcan, 2011: 104).

As a result, handling hip-hop will enable us to understand a sub-culture and reveal that period's historical, social, political, and economic conditions. Because hip-hop, like music, is included in the dynamic relations between music and society, and music and politics. Such inclusion has brought its debate, and to understand that debate, it is necessary to understand the concepts of cultural theories along with real-life practices.

Culture is a phenomenon that has always been in our lives and is almost as old as human history. Therefore, numerous studies on culture have been made, and many definitions have been proposed. Raymond Williams (1983) evaluates these definitions of culture in three different categories:

1. The anthropological approach, in which people live together with nature, accepts that culture is an ancient phenomenon.
2. The sociological approach covers a narrower area while defining culture, saying that culture is about any people, group, or period.
3. The approach to literature considers culture as the whole of artistic and intellectual works.

The common feature of these three approaches is that they talk about things with a literary, philosophical, and creative character when it comes to culture, but "the concept of today's culture, which has a broader context, includes all kinds of production and activity in social life" (Kaya, 2000: 20). In Kaya's words, the concept of new culture encompasses the high culture of the elite, as well as popular culture, which is the culture of the majority left behind (p. 21). Throughout the thesis, our focus will be on the culture of the left behind.

The culture has just been referred to as the culture of the left behind in popular culture. Nevertheless, this state of being left behind does not always necessarily

show restless victimization. For example, popular culture, that is, the culture that is not adopted by the elite and accepted by the majority, is the mainstream. Everything that belongs to the mainstream does not necessarily cause oppression or resistance arising from this oppression. In short, popular culture has a complex structure in itself.

Stuart Hall, one of the Birmingham School's representatives, also examined in this chapter, went further on this topic and examined the interpretations directed to popular culture. Hall, an immigrant born in Jamaica in 1932 and later came to England, mentioned two approaches to popular culture in his article written in 1981. The first definition claims that for the popular to qualify as "popular," it must be consumed in large quantities. In other words, popular is something that is bought, listened to, and watched by the masses. While this approach to the popular is market-based, according to Hall, it fails to grasp the nature of cultural processes. In fact, it cannot even comprehend the masses living the culture; According to Hall, this approach sees the masses as "cultural idiots." The second definition is more romantic than the first one. The second definition considers the field of popular culture as an uncontaminated, untouched miracle potential. It explains it as the "true working class" culture due to its high nature filled with resistance elements. According to Hall, this approach is overly descriptive and it is unrealistic. The phrase "Deconstructing the Popular" in the work's title also explains why the second definition is unrealistic. The dominant ideology always tends to reproduce itself. Therefore, the dominant culture constantly disrupts and rebuilds popular culture. In this rebuilding process, it follows a path that works for the dominant ideology itself. In other words, popular culture cannot have a resistant anti-system structure – all the time.

According to Hall, both the understandings mentioned above are true to some degree, but neither is entirely accurate. Influenced by what Voloshinov said on the sign, Hall defends this for cultural forms. Hall's proposed approach is to take popular culture as a dynamic field of struggle. According to him, popular culture "is one of the sites where this struggle for and against a culture of the powerful is

engaged: it is also the stake to be won or lost in that struggle. It is the arena of consent and resistance. It is partly where hegemony arises, and where it is secured (2018: 239)." Since popular culture has a dynamic structure, the mentioned struggle never has a winner; there are only strategic positions to be captured and lost (Özçetin, 2018: 188). Such understanding stressed or suggested by Hall is also in line with the comments and criticisms directed at hip-hop. The such resemblance will be discussed in the following pages.

At this point, it would be helpful to articulate more about different concepts of culture. The culture that overlaps with the values and judgments of the strongest in society and is adopted by the masses is the mainstream culture. The culture that is not adopted by the majority of society has different judgments from the mainstream culture and is kept alive by the minorities is the subculture. Subcultures are not always expected to oppose mainstream culture openly, but when there is an active opposition, it is called the counterculture. For example, 1960s America was home to many countercultures such as hippies, beatniks, anti-war protests, and women's liberation movements. Hip-hop, born in the 1970s and adopted by the poor black youth in the American ghettos, would later be referred to as a subculture. Whether a subculture is also a counterculture is a matter of debate. Although not included in the mainstream culture, people of the subculture do not show any concrete opposition to the mainstream culture either. On the other hand, according to Stuart Hall and Tony Jefferson, who study youth and their subcultures in post-war England, subcultures exhibit acts of resistance to cultural change through their rituals (1976).

Hip-hop, a subculture, also has rituals of resistance that it exhibits both within itself and in the outside world. For example, in previous studies on the subject, hip-hop has an activating and liberating meaning due to its ability to organize the masses, critical lyrics, or anti-system graffiti. On the other hand, some studies sometimes overemphasized hip-hop and presented hip-hop as the only solution for young people. In addition, it is possible to encounter resistance elements within hip-hop. For example, a breakdancer challenging another dancer on the

street is called a battle, and there is a fight over who is the best. Subcultures can empower ordinary people in their daily lives. This power can sometimes be achieved with a sense of togetherness and sometimes with individual self-confidence (Murdock, 1973). Hip-hop not only gives young people self-confidence and respect through such rituals but also becomes a source for their identity formation. Subcultures give the person a degree of commitment, a sense of identity, and relative autonomy (Hodkinson, 2002).

Creating identity through culture is a phenomenon seen everywhere in the world. For example, the children of guest workers who immigrated to Germany clung to each other with hip-hop and started to define themselves through this culture (Kaya, 2000). Black youths at the other end of the ocean used hip-hop as a cultural capital to communicate with themselves and others (Clay, 2003); by integrating hip-hop into their clothing, facial expressions, and language, they defined their identity through hip-hop. The use of hip-hop as cultural capital also drew boundaries as to what was and was not popular, who was respected or not, and who was black or not, Clay observed (2003: 1356).

To sum up, subcultures and, therefore, hip-hop can empower individuals. Examples of its practical counterparts in the literature are given briefly earlier in this chapter. However, to understand the dynamic relationships mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, it is necessary to return to the discussion of culture. The primary source of studies that give culture the importance and value it deserves is the Birmingham School of Cultural Studies.

The Birmingham Cultural Studies School emerged in England in the second half of the twentieth century. It is also known as British Cultural Studies. The Birmingham School feeds from the works of Gramsci, Althusser, and Laclau, and they emphasize the study of popular culture as well as high culture. They usually work in subcultures, youth movements, and resistance (Slattery, 2003) which all fit with this thesis' focus. In addition to these fields, they also study the

reproduction of existing power relations and ideology by mass media, everyday life practices, and political ideologies (such as Thatcherism and nationalism).

Cultural Studies is the criticism directed at the capitalist order (Dağtaş, 1999) by a Marxist critique of society. According to Storey's (1996) analysis, there are two main aspects in which Marxism influenced Cultural Studies: The first is the idea that culture and history cannot be separated from each other, and the study of social and historical structure to use it in the interpretation of culture as a result of this thought. The second is the division of society after industrialization. Divided societies (such as race, class, and gender) will create new cultures and make new areas of struggle while living their own lives.

The Bronx in the 1970s was also a place that suffered from the division mentioned. The people of the neighborhood, who are already struggling with poverty, also had to face racism. There was no way for young people to have a say in social and political life, who were fighting against the deepening poverty, gang wars, racism, and futurelessness every day. Therefore, they needed a different culture from the current culture. Young people in the Bronx, perhaps consciously or unconsciously, have developed a new subculture with their outlet: hip-hop. Culture served as a bridge for young people who indirectly participated in social and black life thanks to hip-hop (Buhari-Gülmez, 2017). In fact, the teachings of the Birmingham School confirm these real-life practices. This is why the cultural field is not an area to be despised; on the contrary, since it is an area where power relations are established and reproduced, it must be scrutinized. Furthermore, the cultural field should be studied to avoid any reductionism. For instance, the cultural area cannot be reduced to economic relations of production, nor can it be explained by simple dichotomies like high or (low) popular culture.

Similarly, it would not be correct to say that popular culture has any clear stance or position. For example, Hall and Jefferson (1976) considered subcultures (in this study: hip-hop culture) as a community that can both resist and be

subordinated, are conscious and unconscious: they may not be aware of their opposition or be conscious of reproducing the existing order while in opposition (as cited in Jenks, 2007: 158). However, without completely denying that subcultural practices evolve with the changing world and confirm the dominant structure, We should also pay attention to how subjects make sense of practices in their own way. As James Scott (1990) declared, "So long as a structure of domination is viewed as inevitable and irreversible, then all 'rational' opposition will take the form of infrapolitics: resistance that avoids any open declaration of its intentions."

Scott highlights the concept of open declaration of the hidden script. The form of infrapolitics discussed in this thesis is rap music; and the open declaration of the hidden is the lyrics. For example, in the detailed study by Tricia Rose (1994), rap songs were analyzed using such understanding suggested by Scott. This is significant because hip-hop, a popular subculture, offers space for the oppressed. In this space, the oppressed can express their feelings on various topics and even form a collective identity (Gal, 1995). As a result of this collectivity, it is possible to achieve changes in cultural life.

A subculture can act as a catalyst for cultural change if it becomes widespread enough to gain support from the mainstream. The rapid rise of pop culture elements is not new or unexpected. The sudden acceleration of popular culture was due to factors such as globalization, industrialization, urbanization, migration, and social mobility (Kaya, 2000: 21). Indeed, one of the biggest reasons for the rapid and easy spread of hip-hop was the developments in communication technology, i.e., streaming. However, such popularization can take away the spirit of the related culture. It is required to comprehend this issue in depth by the teachings of the Frankfurt School.

The Frankfurt School, like the Birmingham School, deals with culture and is one of the most consulted sources in popular culture studies. The Frankfurt School critically approaches popular culture debates from a Marxist perspective. The

Frankfurt School, also known as the Institute for Social Research, was founded in 1923 by the efforts of a group of intellectuals and aimed to abandon the dominant scientific paradigm of the time, positivism, and offer an alternative understanding in its place. As Horkheimer (2006) clearly stated:

Contemporary social philosophy, as we have seen, is in the main polemically disposed toward positivism. If the latter sees only the particular, in the realm of society, it sees only the individual and the relations between individuals; for positivism, everything is exhausted in mere facts [Tatsächlichkeiten]. These facts, demonstrable with the means of analytical science, are not questioned by philosophy.

In other words, the representatives of the Frankfurt School deal with the phenomenon of culture so much because they know that the social sphere cannot be explained only by individuals and the relations between them. This was no different in Birmingham School. As Özçetin demonstrates the understanding of Horkheimer, what is wrong with positivism is that "if we reduce social relations to relations between individuals, the relations of social domination behind relations that seem to be between individuals cannot be seen" (2018: 165). For example, the community studied in the thesis you are reading cannot be adequately analyzed without the elements that create and affect hip-hop culture (for example, urbanization). To understand the community, it is necessary to examine what those people are exposed to daily. For this reason, the Frankfurt School's critique of positivism is relevant.

The most fundamental contribution of the Frankfurt School to the literature is a critique of enlightenment. According to them, what enlightenment promised people (the expansion of human freedom through scientific and rational developments) has never ensued. Enlightenment violated its promise by taking away the freedom and capacity of human beings to be mature. At the core of these criticisms toward enlightenment, there lies Kant's understanding of enlightenment:

Enlightenment is man's release from his self-incurred tutelage. Tutelage is man's inability to make use of his understanding without direction from another. Self-incurred is this tutelage when its cause lies not in lack of reason but in lack of resolution and courage to use it without direction from another. Sapere Aude! 'Have the courage to use your own reason!' (1996).

Kant hoped that people would use their minds and argue when one has to decide on anything. Such a decision can be whether to do something or not. Ironically, despite Kant's optimistic perspective toward the age, we still do not live in an enlightened age. He also agrees by saying that we live in an age of enlightenment rather than an enlightened age. However, a century later, things were still not as Kant assumed. Adorno and Horkheimer, representatives of the Frankfurt School, tracked this irony: How did the enlightenment fail?

Since Adorno and Horkheimer were Jewish, they had to escape Nazi Germany during World War 2. They ended up in Los Angeles, where they got to observe the culture industry, a concept that Frankfurt School representatives offered. In their understanding, the culture industry is not something created by itself but emerged parallel with society; they both affect and feed one another (Adıgüzel, 2001).

Before defining the culture industry, it may be helpful to mention Adorno's other work concerning astrology which he likens to the culture industry. In his study called *The Stars Down to Earth* (1994), Adorno examined the 1-year astrology page of the Los Angeles Times newspaper. In the study, Adorno likens astrology and its promises to the products of the culture industry. Astrology's promise of short-lived solutions and false hope is akin to the deception of the culture industry. As a result, the astrology reader becomes addicted to this phenomenon, making life's complexity more understandable and manageable.

This deception and false hope can also be seen in hip-hop. The state of hope constantly expressed in rap lyrics and the promise that the artist will work until he reaches a better future for himself overlaps with the logic of the culture industry. Because famous rappers are already quite rich and have everything,

they want. However, such a situation does not exist in the lives of young people who listen to those songs. Young people listening to rap songs in the grip of the culture industry become addicted to this easy relief, with the relief of knowing that there are other people with whom they can share their anger about life. Moreover, the question of "Why don't people rebel?", which Adorno and Horkheimer tried to answer, can also be justified with this reasoning.

Nevertheless, the culture industry is not limited to astrology or hip-hop. Adorno and Horkheimer argue that the culture industry is highly concrete and visible everywhere. It is the "automobiles, bombs, and films" simply because they "hold the totality together" (1979: 100). While they control the totality together, along with ourselves. It affects our ability to decide, as in Kantian understanding. Adorno further explains:

Whoever wishes to experience the truth of immediate life must investigate its alienated form, the objective powers, which determine the individual existence into its innermost recesses. To speak immediately of what is immediate is to behave no differently from that novelist, who adorns their marionettes with the imitations of the passions of yesteryear like cheap jewelry, and who sets persons in motion, who are nothing other than inventory-pieces of machinery as if they could still act as subjects, and as if something really depended on their actions. The gaze at life has passed over into ideology, concealing that it no longer exists.

Although the culture industry, which Adorno defines as an ideology, comes to mind as a sublime and endless machine that constantly produces new things, the situation is actually the opposite. The culture industry may seem glamorous with its exceptional offerings, but according to Adorno and Horkheimer, it is not producing anything different. With the rise of modernity, the production and distribution of art and culture are now entirely dependent on financial and industrial capital (Gardiner, 2016). Art started to be produced and distributed accordingly, not for art but to earn more profit. They explain such factory-like production as follows:

Culture today is infecting everything with sameness. Film, radio, and magazines form a system. Each branch of culture is unanimous within itself, and all are

unanimous together. Even the aesthetic manifestations of political opposites proclaim the same inflexible rhythm (Adorno, 1991).

Of course, hip-hop has also taken its share of these circumstances. Popularized hip-hop has reached mainstream media from the underground. Hip-hop, which used to be performed for enjoyment, to fulfill the need for explanation, or as a condition of existence, has now started to be produced only to survive in the culture industry. Because hip-hop, which industrialized as it became popular, has evolved into a means of making money. Young people, who understood that they could make money from hip-hop, which they usually do in their disadvantaged neighborhoods, saw hip-hop as a way to get rid of those neighborhoods (Mişe, 2020). Therefore, artists began to perform and produce products that only market. Almost everyone in the hip-hop market also adopted the genres or subjects that are sure to sell, and after a while, all the songs became the same.

Adorno, who defines standardized cultural products as “pre-digested cheap commercial entertainment” (1941), states that the listeners of such products “are distracted from the demands of reality by entertainment which does not demand attention either” (as cited in Storey, 2009: 70). Under culture industry, even entertainment has become something that benefits capitalism (Adorno, 1991). The culture industry captures our free time. After a long day of wage labor, we seek anything resting that makes us passive consumers against active producers. Thus, we do nothing. Marx (2007) explains such passivity as follows:

Just as in religion, the spontaneous activity of the human imagination, the human brain, and the human heart detaches itself from the individual and reappears as the alien activity of a god or a devil, so the worker’s activity is not his own spontaneous activity. It belongs to another, it is a loss of himself.

The result is that man (the worker) feels that he is acting freely only in his animal functions -- eating, drinking, and procreating, or at most in his dwelling and adornment -- while in his human functions, he is nothing more than animal. It is true that eating, drinking, and procreating, etc., are also genuine human functions. However, when abstracted from other aspects of human activity, and turned into final and exclusive ends, they are animal.

The culture, industrialized for sales purposes and thus standardized, also standardizes the society and renders it passive. Such passivation of society made it almost impossible for individuals to resist the dominant ideology. As Michael Gardiner highlights, this process of solidification of obedience, which Leo Lowenthal called "a reverse psychoanalysis," was carried out by the media's fake offer of magical entertainment (2016: 219). It is called 'fake' because, according to the Frankfurt School, ordinary people are trying to keep busy with the media industry only to escape the harsh reality of life. On the other hand, the culture industry does not save us from our miserable lives. It preoccupies us and hides our misery. For example, when we take a sip of a soda called Sprite, we do not suddenly have an extraordinary life as promised in advertisements (Çakmur, 1998), or if we own a Harley Davidson, we will not suddenly become a free and mindful person. As Adorno puts it: "The customer is not king, as the culture industry would have us believe, not its subject but its object" (1991: 85). In short, mass culture offers a false escape from the drudgery of everyday life.

It is worth noting that the analysis of the culture industry is not a theory of culture but rather an industry theory. The culture industry relies on ready-made stereotypes. It is predictable because it has been encountered before. The main goal is not art but profit; therefore, commercializing everyday life, including culture, is a big problem for Adorno and Horkheimer (Jameson, 2007). That is, it is not mass and cultural products that the representatives of the Frankfurt School spew so much hatred; it is a system that transforms masses into objects (Özçetin, 2018: 179).

However, such unconsciousness is not entirely accurate nor the case. People are not acting as zombies, or they are not objects entirely. People are discontent with the status quo, and the status quo knows it. This is why the system gives us "small victories" (De Certeau, 2018) against itself – so that we continue not doing anything solid regarding revolting. We feel like we are actively participating in our lives. As Terry Eagleton (2016) puts it: "Nothing is more generously inclusive than the commodity, which in its disdain for distinctions of

rank, class, race, and gender will nestle up to anyone at all, provided they have the wherewithal to buy it" (p. 32).

Similarly, hip-hop has been included in various rehabilitation and therapy programs as a participatory subculture that empowers people, makes them feel good, and gains confidence (Travis Jr., 2012). Of course, the good intentions of these professional works cannot be denied, but the fact that anger is a phenomenon that must be constantly digested should be an open subject for discussion because one of the issues that this thesis advocate is that hip-hop's rehabilitative feature is neither completely good nor completely bad for this very reason. On the one hand, it benefits young people individually; on the other hand, it makes them passive socially.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORY AND THE COMMUNITY

3.1. It Was the Worst of Times, It Was the Best of Times: Hip-Hop Emerging in the Bronx

People wore their most beautiful dresses when disco peaked in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Fur coats, New York, Money, and luxurious watches were the things back then.

At the same time, in the same state, the Bronx was burning to a point where 12,300 fires took place in one year! According to the New York Post, seven different census tracts in The Bronx lost more than 97% of their buildings to fire and abandonment between 1970 and 1980 (Flood, 2010).

In fact, the main reason for these fires was the new face of America, which changed after World War II. Many homeowners, who wanted the insurance cost expected to be paid after the war, started to demolish their demolished or dilapidated buildings (Kenneth, 1995).

Meanwhile, the New York City elite was having ball parties and drinking champagne in Discos; Southern Bronx looked like they were under attack during a world war. Buildings were ruined; some even compared the Bronx at that time with Beirut. In other words, hip-hop is a cultural movement used by black youth who live in neighborhoods that are almost like a war zone and try to express the problems they face in their daily lives (Kitwana, 2002). The Hip-Hop legacy left to us by African-American youth trying to hold on to life in suburban neighborhoods adorned with "discriminatory city planning practices" (Sobutay, 2013: 95) like the Bronx in the 1970s. Dyson (2010) defines this culture,

practiced by young people born between 1960 and 1980, as a "social critique." Similarly, Gilroy (1993) argues that music made by black people in America and Europe is a critique of modernization and modernism coming from the West.

It was the youth who shaped hip-hop, and it was hip-hop that shaped the lives of young people after a while (Aldridge and Stewart, 2005). So understanding hip-hop and its link with the black youth is also a door that allows us to understand the lives of those young people.

The relationship between the artistic creation and its background shows us "the lifestyle of the people, the area of self-expression, daily life practices, language, that this culture belongs to human life and points to a social necessity" (Öğüç, 2015). Similarly, as Smitherman (2000) emphasizes, hip-hop is a response to everyday life issues such as poverty and violence experienced in a specific area. It's an action-reaction thing. Thus, the Bronx, the environment in which that cultural product is formed, is vital to understanding Hip-Hop.

Grand Wizard Theodore, a hip-hop DJ, still living in the Bronx, tells the story of the poor living in the Bronx. As we grasp from what he said during an interview, the people were impoverished in the Bronx: Single parents were trying to survive, those who were locked up in jail, murders, extortions, and gang wars which usually end up with a killing of a young person.

Back in time, you need permission from the Gang to do anything. Thus, the first Hip-Hop party was permitted even though some may think it was against its nature. Kool Herc, the legend who threw the first Hip-Hop party, went to a street gang and had them listen to what he was playing. The rest is history: The gang liked what Herc played and gave permission. Kool Herc's party is known as the first Hip-Hop party because of the tracks he chooses and how he plays. In every track he plays, there is a breakdown played by the drummer – which is a break. Herc started to prolong this break and made a rhythm from the break. They named 'breakdancers' to people who danced during the long break. If you are the

best among your dance crew, you are the A1. Anyway, so the DJs, the breakdancers, and the crowd started to mingle with each other and started to create something.

Coke la Rock, an old-school rapper, tells us that you can find any person at parties: Murderers, thieves, dancers, ordinary people. Coke la Rock is the first MC in history. He says that he only shouted (holla) the names of his mates, such as Easy A1 and Reggie Reg. And such holla made the crowd go wild. The crowd started to get excited whenever Coke la Rock had the microphone. These holla sentences generally consist of excited and appealing short speeches (Hebdige, 2004). The purpose of adding conversations is mainly to entertain the audience.

Those people in Herc's parties were more than breakdancers, just like the legendary Africa Bambaataa, known as a local hero in the Bronx. Africa Bambaataa listens to Herc in the West, then reproduces the style on the East side of Bronx. However, the reason why people call him a local hero is not entirely because of his musical abilities. He was also gifted in organizing people. During the worst times of gang wars, he persuaded Black Spade, the biggest gang in the Bronx, to organize something more significant and newer: Zulu Nation, which later became a place where different gang members could hang out together in the Bronx. The Zulu Nation is an organization where young people try to change their lives, and music was the first thing to come into mind. Young people, a lot of them were gang members, started to do graffiti, DJing, and rapping (MC). In Zulu Nation, everyone united as a cultural element, later named Hip-Hop.

Then the Zulu Nation organized a big party in the Bronx River. It would not be wrong to say that Kool Herc laid the foundations of Hip-Hop and Africa Bambaataa created a community around it.

Grandmaster Flash, another Hip-Hop legend who will be introduced on this page, says that he always had an interest in electrical mechanisms. He was a curious kid who constantly tried to do experimental things, such as disassembling a

turntable. He says that as soon as he understood how the voice came out from a turntable, he looked for other pieces to make a brand new one. He collected speakers from abandoned cars and amplifiers from backyards. Then, he mixed all of such different items to make a whole – just like Hip-Hop.

To perfectly mix a song, Grandmaster Flash invented a technique to abolish the old habit of slowing down the ending of a song and mixing it with the beginning of the next song. Unlike the other DJs, Flash took one song's drum solo and extended it, but to put the needle in the same spot more than once was nearly impossible, so he laid his fingers into the record. He later took a crayon to mark the place where he wanted to return later during the performance.

Thus, Grandmaster Flash, Kool Herc, and Afrika Bambaataa, known as the Holy Trinity, created the foundations of Hip-Hop for people to dance by playing mid-rhythms. Thus, it was more about the rhythms back then. But later, rapping came to the show, and the rise of MCs resulted in the beginning of an important historical line. The crowd's response was wild to the MCs, but doing two things simultaneously for a DJ was not very easy all the time. So, Grandmaster Flash put the microphone on the opposite side of the table and encouraged people to say things during the parties. The Furious Five, which has 4 MCS and 1 DJ (Grandmaster Flash), is rooted in this act.

Since the Furious Five took over the streets, nearly all young people have wanted to join the hip-hop movement. However, to do so, you need to have equipment like speakers, mixers, and microphones, which are extremely expensive. In 1977, a blackout happened in New York City, and the whole city went dark. Thousands of people living in the Bronx started looting shops, especially electronic shops. On that night which authorities described as a terror night, many young people could be able to get themselves what they needed to make music. For example, Grandmaster Flash later said that he stole a Clubman Two Mixer during the blackout. As a result of the young people who had the necessary equipment, many new DJs and MCs began to appear on the streets. Then the challenge

shifted from finding equipment to finding the number one crew. Back then, the Furious Five was on tour. When they returned, they joined a battle against the Cold Crush Brothers at the Harlem World, winning. The winner took 1000 American Dollars. Even though the Cold Crush Brothers lost the battle, their popularity increased daily. The band's cassette tapes started selling tremendously, and their fame began to spread throughout the country.

It is challenging to say rap music's origin precisely because the early rappers didn't make any records – just like the early jazz. All they cared about was the party itself and not recording. However, it can be traced back to the time of Gil Scott-Heron and the Last Poets. According to a famous saying, old African oral traditions are the birth of rap music. However, to clarify, the first example of recorded modern rap music is the Sugarhill Gang's Rapper's Delight piece in 1979 (Neal & Forman, 2004). The most politically considered rap song of the early 1980s was Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five: the Message. Like a window opening into the underground of the city, this song made the voices of those who had not been heard on the radio or in public before; It reflected uncensored underground life, which included sadness, anger, and claustrophobia (Vincent, 2004). In other words, Flash and his crew became the voice of a forgotten social layer, giving back their voices to the silent.

As hip-hop grew in popularity, many wanted to come to listen to these artists and attend parties, but the Bronx was not seen as a friendly neighborhood. Along with hip-hop crews that started playing in punk rock clubs, hip-hop emerged from the Bronx and continued its expansionist movement.

Hip-hop was indeed a movement, but after the early 1980s, it was also an economic sector. Big labels like Adidas were seeing hip-hop's potential to sell. For example, a famous hip-hop group Run D.M.C recorded a song called My Adidas, and they gathered thousands of young people with their Adidas sneakers to their concert. Thus, hip-hop history, which was majorly about poverty and neglect, is now shifting to something more significant: success and fame.

However, such success did not remove rap's anger and rebellion. The powerful lyrics of Public Enemy are an excellent example of it: "Elvis was never a hero of mine."

Unlike the East Coast, the West Coast was more laidback. While the East Coast was all about poverty and government pressure, the West Coast was all about parties. It wouldn't be wrong to claim that the West Coasters had nothing to be mad about. Thus their hip-hop was not so angry compared to their East Coasters. However, the game changed for everyone living on the West Coast after the arrival and crack (cocaine) rise. The Street gangs started selling drugs for higher prices, gaining more power and money, and armed themselves. There were nearly 600 street gangs in Los Angeles during that time. Almost everyone was a part of a gang. You were either in or out at that time. The streets were like a warzone. For example, even stopping with your car for gas was a deadly gamble. You had to stop at the neutral areas for even smoking a cigarette. You had no idea whether you would live for the dinner or not. The streets were not free and fun anymore, as did the West Coast music. Rap music made in the 1980s had much harsher imagery (Martinez, 1997). Songs on these subjects also progressed parallel with life and became popular in the 1980s and 1990s (Rose, 1991).

The streets of Los Angeles were no longer safe. The locals were always uptight and nervous. So, hip-hop needed to reflect those feelings: Local DJs like Dr. Dre, Arabian Prince, and DJ Yella gathered around and merged their potential with a local hustler and two great song lyricists. Now, they were the N.W.A., known as the Niggers With Attitudes. They were the raw reflection of the pressure felt in South Center Los Angeles. They told the truth about the streets and how they live: Police brutality, poverty, and killings of young people.

The N.W.A gained huge success, and they reached out to the White suburbs. The parents of the white kids started to protest gangsta rap due to its violent lyrics. They burned down the albums of N.W.A and gave speeches on the topic. As a result, the Parental Advisory - Explicit Content label came to the table.

According to Michael Eric Dyson (1993), rap music was once highly despised and thought of as something temporary. The song topics (and lyrics) have also not helped rap music's reputation much. Hip-hop is defined in Dyson's work as another neglected black culture like the Blues.

On the other hand, it is one of the few arts that reflects the lives of black people in such an authentic way. For this reason, it is essential even when neglected. According to Dyson, hip-hop is a cultural resistance where black youth living in ghettos, where poverty, state repression, racism, and police violence are considered normal, reclaim their lives.

3.2. The Hip-Hop Community

Reminding that the hip-hop culture emerged in the 1970s against the racism, poverty, and police violence in the American ghettos of the 1960s (Sullivan, 2003; Stevens, 2009; Kaya, 2000). Among all the bad things that have been experienced, the memorable incident that sparked the hip-hop culture we mentioned was the urban renewal project in New York (Rose, 1994). This urban transformation, which will ultimately affect the residents of New York, not only gave birth to hip-hop but also strengthened the community spirit of the people living in the ghettos (Formal and Neal, 2004). In other words, they had no choice but to come together against the threat of urban transformation. As Rose says, hip-hop has given the ghetto back its old social consciousness. This consciousness was used as a form of expression through hip-hop, and things such as poverty, state oppression, and gang wars were described in rap songs (Mişe, 2020).

3.2.1. The Ideal Type

Britannica defines hip-hop as a cultural movement. Like every movement, hip-hop has its subjects that make up the hip-hop community. Hip-hop culture, which emerged and was experienced by black youth living in American ghettos,

appears as a vivid example of community-based practices (Dimitriadis, 1996). In this part of the thesis, mentioned community and its practices will be clarified jointly with defining the framework of the hip-hop community.

Hip-hop emerged in the 1970s and represented poor, disadvantaged, minority youth, primarily in the Bronx. Over time, such representation reached America's different East and West sides and then spread to other continents. Hip-hop took pieces of itself to the places it went and evolved in the places it went. Consequently, the hip-hop community was also affected by this change. It is crucial to note that the potential change in hip-hop and its community is not a positive or a negative case but simply a matter of evolving hip-hop's essence. Therefore, it is necessary to define the community after such evolution. Thus, this study needs to draw lines between the hip-hop community to compare it through time and place (Hip-Hop on East Coast, West Coast, Germany, Turkey).

As observed in America, hip-hop united the youth under a common umbrella, for example, the Zulu Nation. It is possible to say that all of the young people here have a common desire for the future because the missing things in their current time are also common. Therefore, young people who share today also have a common future and hopes for the future. It is incorrect to say hip-hop is just an art form for these young people. For these young people, hip-hop is a way of life. From their clothes to the words they use, from their friends to the places they stay, hip-hop is at the center of their lives. For this reason, the sharpest distinction when defining the hip-hop community is that hip-hop is a way of life rather than being understood as an art. Subjects of the hip-hop community have similar everyday lives every day, and likely have similar futures.

The original hip-hop was born in the Bronx, where the neighborhood was impoverished and neglected, with its people trying to survive daily without any proper hope for the future. Although these people living in the same place were members of different street gangs, most shared the same fate. In a world where poverty is inherited, it is not easy to break this chain of fate. They did not have

the same race or religion, but what they had in common was their destiny. The reaction of young people with the same destiny to such a chain of fate through hip-hop makes them a community. As you can see, even the members of different street gangs were gathering in common neutral areas and doing things related to hip-hop culture, for instance, breakdance, graffiti, and rap. So hip-hop had the power to eliminate even the most significant difference, gang separation.

Born in the Bronx, hip-hop also served as a tool of resistance to black youth, giving them hope. So, hip-hop in America was also a tool of resistance and had aspects disturbing the system. This disturbing feature of hip-hop, which makes people in the suburbs appear on (Mişe, 2020: 20) and forces state officials to make a television statement on the subject (Rose, 1994: 126), is precisely because it has an identity.

As a result, factors such as poverty, state/system opposition, racism, shared fate, resistance, and living at the edge of life need to be considered while determining the ideal type of hip-hop community. As in the Bronx or Harlem, it is the places where police brutality, poverty, and the thought of whether I will survive the night, initially gave birth and nurtured hip-hop. Therefore, to stay true to the essence of hip-hop, it is necessary to define its limits.

3.3. Hip-Hop in Germany

In this part of the thesis you are reading, some relevant literature about hip-hop that crossed the ocean and reached Europe will be included. Then, information about hip-hop in Germany will be given, and how hip-hop performed in Germany was adopted and used by immigrants will be discussed. To better understand this state of adoption, information will be shared about the lives of Turkish migrant workers and their place of residence, Kreuzberg.

3.3.1. Hip-Hop Crossed the Ocean

The rapid rise of hip-hop was not limited to America. Hip-hop, which managed to reach many countries after America, faced various prejudices and interpretations, just like in America. Rap music, which represents the African-American culture, has been studied with many approaches, for instance, identity, feelings, and space.

To put it more generally, in parallel with globalization, the bond of music that reaches a different destination from its local location with social identities has deepened (Feld, 2001). As a result of this situation, the identities formed and developed around music became more visible (Mert, 2003).

The reason why these identities are more visible is, on the one hand, music, but on the other hand, the fact that those identities used to be relatively obscure. In other words, music has offered people the opportunity to be a subject. This situation can be observed more clearly in people in the diaspora—for example, immigrants in Germany.

What Gilroy (1993) describes as "double consciousness" results from the music of people in the diaspora. It was born with the understanding of people who are in limbo about identity. Those who are neither fully assimilated nor able to break away from their roots interpret and experience the cultures they encounter accordingly. Reynold says, "diasporic peoples unavoidably transform the cultures they pass through; they unsettle wherever they settle" (2000).

According to Buhari-Gülmez (2017), the two most prominent approaches to the globalization of hip-hop music are globalization and glocalization. To put it briefly, according to the globalization approach, there is an imperialistic mission behind rap music; It has been popularized to spread western culture (Ritzer, 2003). For example, due to the large number of English words used in German rap music, hip-hop has been described by various intellectuals as a "cultural

imperialism" that would corrupt the local culture (Brown, 1997). On the other hand, the glocalization approach argues that global elements give rise to new indigenous identities and feed new cultural movements (Robertson, 1995).

According to "cultural reterritorialization," a concept put forward by Lull (2000), local cultures produce new meanings by filtering the cultural products they come across. Thus, such countries have substantial differences between American rap and rap. On the other hand, similar to America, hip-hop in Germany (more specifically rap music) started underground; it did not even enter the mainstream until the early 1990s (Brown, 1997). German hip-hop has made its way into the mainstream media with bands such as Die Fantastischen Vier and the Rödelheim. Although most elements of hip-hop were dominant in Germany initially, other aspects of hip-hop, such as graffiti and breakdance, lost their popularity over time (Heimberger, 1996).

If we put aside technological developments such as the rise of streaming (which resulted in the globalization of music), one of the fundamental reasons why hip-hop spread so easily and quickly to the world is that what hip-hop tells is somewhat shared around the world at the racial, gender, and socio-economic levels (Arıcan, 2011). These similar feelings have a significant impact on hip-hop in Germany.

Again, similar to America, hip-hop in Germany first entered the radar of immigrants who lived in poor neighborhoods. In fact, as Dietmar Elflein (1998) said, "Hip-hop was the first West German youth culture of Afro-American origin which right from the beginning, involved numerous male immigrant youngsters." Hip-hop, which has influenced many immigrant groups, did not pass without affecting the children of Turkish migrant workers who came to Germany as guest workers. Thus began the story of hip-hop and the children of Turkish migrant workers living in the Kreuzberg ghetto, which was immigrants' home for a long time.

3.3.2. The Story of Kreuzberg and its Auslanders

The term ghetto describes specific local areas where immigrants settle and live together. Berlin's Kreuzberg is an example of a ghetto where Turkish and Southern Europeans live. However, Kreuzberg was always known as the home of auslanders. Kreuzberg has a history of immigrants for almost 300 years. The very first migration to Kreuzberg was in the 18th Century made by Evangelique French people. Then the Polish and Italian workers arrived at the Kreuzberg. Some did gardening, and some worked at the factories. Thus it would not be wrong to say that the demographic environment of Kreuzberg was always mixed with working-class and migrants. The ghetto was a center for leftist groups and labor organizations. The very first workers' revolt in 1848 was gathered in Kreuzberg with more than 20.000 participants.

Other than the political identity of Kreuzberg, it was also a cultural capital for Germany with the openings of new clubs, theaters, journals, and publishers. By the 1920s, Kreuzberg had become a meeting point for marginalized groups living on the fringes of life.

By the 1930s and the rise of Nazism, Kreuzberg immediately became an unwanted area due to the high population of migrants and marginalized groups such as leftists and LGBTI+ people. Shops and synagogues of Jewish people were arsoned by racist radicals. Only 400 of 6000 Jewish people could survive after the war. 1 out of 3 Kreuzberg residents lost their lives. The streets and buildings utterly vanished from the maps.

After World War 2, Germany was a total wreck due to the lost battles. The country was divided into two with thousands of ruins. With the help of the Marshall Funds, Germany immediately started to rebuild the country in terms of new buildings. With the recent shift caused by the Marshall Funds, the whole of Germany, especially Berlin, jumped into a new consumerist lifestyle, which is American. Such consumerism caused the need for labor. Thus, Southern

Europeans and many Turks came to Berlin to rebuild the ruined city. They were settled in Kreuzberg with no surprise. The guest workers from Turkey were literally “guests” with a contract of strict two years. The workers were also eager to leave Germany as soon as they collected enough money to live in their hometowns back in Turkey.

The location of Kreuzberg is unique because of its closeness to the Berlin Wall, which makes Kreuzberg a neighborhood with three edges surrounded by the Wall. There used to be a life away from Berlin itself. Thus, the new residents of Kreuzberg created a whole new life solely for themselves.

After the tremendous ruins left by World War 2, Germany started to import foreign guest workers from Spain, Italy, Yugoslavia, and Greece. Both parties agreed upon the return of such workers – as soon as they rebuilt Germany. On the day of 30th October 1961, the first guest workers from Turkey came to Germany, and this transaction lasted until 1974. The agreement ended due to global news like the Arab – Israeli war resulting in the petrol crisis. This caused an economic recession and started prejudice against Islam and the Middle East in the West. Nevertheless, Germany stopped the recruitment, but the migration did not end but only increased. Now, the third generation of people from Turkey lives in Germany.

Ayhan Kaya, in his brilliant work concerning young people in Germany, takes the literature concerning workers from Turkey to Germany in three different steps (Kaya, 2000): Studies in the first phase were more concerned with the economic aspects of migration because guest workers lived among themselves and went to work and were not very involved in the public sphere. After all, they would work and return to their country. On the other hand, the second phase started with the cessation of recruitment in 1973. Families returning from Turkey realized they could no longer return to their homes, and families began to unite. According to Kaya, studies at this stage were more about individual and social integration. The third and final stage covers the period in which different

approaches were exhibited in the 1990s. Here, the cultural relations between the social structure and the individual and the cultural production processes are emphasized.

Turkish workers, who were sure they would not return to Turkey, became one of the first names that came to mind when Kreuzberg is mentioned in the 1980s. The unique multicultural nature of the neighborhood has received both good and bad reviews. A city guide published at the time described Kreuzberg as "The proletariat, the Turks and the freaks live intensely together in Kreuzberg" (Güney, 2015: 14). Kreuzberg residents trying to live on the edge of life at the foot of the Berlin Wall can be compared to a haunted ghetto like New York's Harlem (2015: 15).

With the fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1984, Kreuzberg, tucked away in a remote corner of the city, is now located in the heart of Berlin. Thus, a neighborhood in Berlin without Berliner aspects started to stand out immediately – but with a bad reputation. The economic concerns that emerged with the unification of East and West Germany grew and turned into racism blended with nationalism. The general opinion in Germany was that the Turks disturbed German society's peace and internal order.

A major political event, such as the unification of East and West Germany, was reflected in daily life. With the collapse of the wall and the merger of the people of the two states, many people could already predict the growing and approaching wave of racism. Since the main subjects of hip-hop performed in Germany are immigrants, Racism will be the central theme of 1990s rap music (Elflein, 1998).

The children of the diaspora generation, also called the second generation, were starting to be born in German hospitals. These children become the children of Germany, who do not know much about Turkey. However, that is not the case. We can say that these children who were born and raised in Germany and who

only travel to Turkey during the holidays with a 3-day car journey and stay there as strangers experience a kind of limbo. These children, who live a diasporic Turkish life in their neighborhood, do not know German very well either. This situation causes a severe separation after they start school. Students who first need to know German to follow the regular school curriculum are educated in separate classes from their peers. For example, they receive German lessons in standard courses with the children of Italian, Yugoslav, Arab, and Greek immigrant families (2015: 30). Among the children studying in these classes, which are likened to isolation classes, some students did not make friends with German peers until the 6th grade. With this discrimination, which they first met at school, as the children of migrant workers grew up, they began to seek new ways and tactics for themselves.

Except for those who are hard-working or have good grades and speak German better than others, the rest of the children bonded with each other and started to lay the foundations of 36 Boys. After all, they were always together and had no one but each other. They had families just fine but worked very long hours and double shifts. Besides a street gang, they were also each other's families.

The diasporic youth's daily life was rough due to numerous racist and discriminatory incidents. There was no escape from the "Auslander raus" writings on the wall, even if they defied their pejorative nicknames. Along with these, there was a constant hate campaign in the media using xenophobia in politics (Griese, 2002). The fascists, who also gained strength from the media and politicians, increased their neo-Nazi protests in the 80s. The German police forces did not do much about events such as the racist actions by radical right-wing activists who were getting stronger (Heuer, 1998). Many foreigners lost their lives in 1992 and 1993 due to the arson of immigrants' homes. In other words, everything turned into a matter of life and death for immigrant youth. As Safiye Genç explains, "constant exclusion has a devastating effect on the identity development of young people. In this cycle, the strength of struggle weakens or increases. The German society, which did not see much opposition from the first

generation in Germany, encountered resistance in the second and early third generations." (2015: 813).

Although this resistance was sometimes in violent ways, sometimes it appeared cunning. For instance, Turkish youth, who defined themselves as blacks of Europe, started using derogatory nicknames, just like black people in America (Ickstadt, 1999: 572). This purpose was to make those words and symbols lose their meaning. For example, Turks called each other "Kanake," just as blacks called each other "nigga".

Moreover, they had to protect themselves before they realized they had to attack. Before 36, there was the *Şimşekler*. They watched the neighborhood from the racist gang *Skinheads* (Dazlaklar) and inspired the children of 36. The youngsters, who will be members of 36 in the future, watched their brothers, who are members of the *Şimşekler*, and tried to learn something from them. 36 came after the *Şimşekler*. Those a few years younger than 36 were referred to as 36 Boys. Of course, these were not the only gangs. Many gangs began to form in the neighborhood. Everyone defended their territory and punished those who violated the border - that is, beating them.

The 36 Boys members were the same age, born in the same hospital, studied in the same schools, and played on the same vacant lots. Their lives and destinies were shared. While the first generation, the workers who came to Germany, tried to express and solve their problems in a more isolated way, the second generation, their children, developed a different method of expression (Çakmur, 2017). Being friends with the soldiers of the US Army serving in Kreuzberg, 36 Boys went to the entertainment venues where the soldiers hung out and met hip-hop there. This music reached different continents from America to Germany and was not foreign to 36 Boys. Same discrimination, same police brutality, similar fates. They interpreted hip-hop according to themselves, and their hip-hop started to develop in parallel with this.

Hip-hop offered space for the diasporic youth. This space even served as a 'distance' from time to time. For example, with the localization of power, a distance has emerged between state institutions (the police, the education system, the media) and the youth (Kaya, 2002: 44). The critical point here is that the young people mentioned were already excluded and kept at a certain distance, but with hip-hop, this distance became their own decision; So a border has been drawn. But this border did not imprison diasporic youth; it gave them mobility. Hip-hop allowed them to go beyond the limits of their pre-existing "ethnic enclave" life. As Kaya said, "Roaming around the city, trying to discover the outskirts of the urban landscape, painting, and tagging (signing) graffiti, attending break-dance competitions and parties, and fighting against rival youths, they try to produce their own social, cultural and political space."

Diasporic groups, who are constantly excluded and alienated by the system, do not produce localities of their own after a while; Since there are no new things, they cling to the old stuff and adopt them more firmly (Clifford, 1988)—feeling nostalgia again and putting reflective elements in daily life lead to different purposes. First, displaying nostalgia is a way of criticizing the present without being too radical. Second, the clinging to the past by those who cannot own the present (and possibly the future) gives a sense of ownership out of nowhere (Ganguly, 1992). Migrant Turkish youth in Germany both looked to the past with nostalgic feelings and touched on the present by "transcending the exclusionist policies of the German nation-state by exhibiting a transnational articulation of culture" (Kaya, 2002: 44).

The songs of young people living in a different country, where they are neither foreigners nor subjects, reflected the problems they face everyday. It not only allowed young people to express themselves in the diaspora but also helped them to oppose discrimination against them. Thus, a new genre emerged, consisting of their identities. They reshaped hip-hop with the national and religious elements they took from themselves. Among the most significant examples are rap groups such as Cartel, Islamic Force, and Sert Müslümanlar.

All in all, the children of migrant workers in Kreuzberg embraced hip-hop, putting it at the center of their daily lives. This was because American hip-hop from across the ocean was not so foreign to young people in Germany. Immigrants initially accepted themselves as temporary and did not try to integrate into that country, and this state of alienation continued. But the immigrants, who realized they could no longer return to their homeland, had to fight in a state of alienation, stuck in limbo. The children of families from Turkey, who were brought up with the concepts of honor and prestige since their childhood, did not seem like a stranger to hip-hop. In Germany, where there are constant gang wars and bloodshed on the streets, there had to be another way to gain respectability: hip-hop. For example, because breakdance includes ritualized combat movements, winning a breakdancing battle was perceived as a gain of prestige (Tertilt, 1996). Similarly, according to Ali, MC of Da Crime Posse, "breakdance can be seen as a chance 'to compete with the brother without bloodshed and animosity' (Zaimoglu 1995, p. 27).

3.3.3. Ideal-Type Test

The ideal type of hip-hop community defined in the previous sections of this chapter (see chapter 3.2.1.), also fits the ideal type in the case of Germany. It has been determined that the scenario in which the example of America is taken as the ideal type with its justifications and the young people dealing with hip-hop in Germany show profound parallels. Even young people in Germany expressed this situation firsthand and compared themselves to their peers in America (Young, 2015).

Diasporic youth in Germany, like the youth in America, were exposed to racism and discrimination. Thus, they saw hip-hop as a way of life and salvation. He has exposed the problems of their daily lives to everyone with hip-hop and forced a field for themselves. Hip-hop has served as a lifeline and a bridge for young people in both countries.

Overall, it can be said that the hip-hop culture adopted in Germany and the Turkish rap music performed have similar points to those in America. Therefore, it is indisputable that the community spirit also exists in Germany's Turkish hip-hop scene. The hip-hop community in America and the communities formed by young people from Turkey in Germany are similar. According to this understanding, the ideal type determined in the first chapter remains valid in Germany.

CHAPTER 4

HIP-HOP IN TURKEY

In this part of the thesis, the development of Turkish rap music and hip-hop culture in Turkey, which opened up to the world from America and came to life in Germany, and its transformation there were examined. In this section, which also includes personal interviews made during the thesis process, historical and theoretical information is given as well as field research. The theoretical part, enriched by studies on hip-hop culture in Turkey, was initially given under three main headings: Youth work, resistance, and urbanization. The reason why these three subjects are discussed is that they are directly related to hip-hop culture. Young people are the leading and most important subjects of hip-hop culture. Resistance is a claim associated with hip-hop and is the subject of debate. And finally, hip-hop is an urban culture and directly related to urbanization.

4.1. Hip-Hop as a Youth Culture

Hip-hop culture, which is always in the focus of the Cultural Studies school because it is a sub-culture, is also a youth culture and is at the center of the youth studies field. Since young people are both producers, carriers, and actors of these subcultures, this issue has also been one of the main themes of youth sociology (Lüküslü, 2011: 203). Hip-hop culture is often used as a decisive tool among young people to perform such resistance. It extensively affects the construction of meanings that young people attach to socio-economic, personal, and even existential matters.

Bryan Brown (2010), when he was reviewing Christopher Edmin's work on hip-hop concerning urban context, agrees with Edmin that hip-hop is not solely a music genre for young people but rather a bridge to connect with the world. To

Edmin, “urban youth see themselves as hip-hop” and the “living embodiment of the culture” (2000: p.12).

As seen in the previous section, hip-hop has an essential place in the lives of diasporic youth in Germany. As Kaya (2002) argues, hip-hop as a youth culture provides a space and opportunity for young people in the diaspora to reconstruct their identities. While creating this identity, they benefit from both the global elements they have just met in the diaspora and the natural elements within themselves. This identity formation is a response to the racism, exclusion, poverty, and violence that young people are exposed to. Young people, who now have a concrete identity, have also become subjects in the world. Similarly, as Librado (2010) argues, for disadvantaged groups to have their voices heard, rap music opens up a space that enables young people to criticize current political, social, and economic situations.

It would not be correct to say that most young people in Turkey participated in gang wars, were exposed to racism, or suffered from deep poverty. However, the situation mentioned above is similar in some respects for the hip-hop culture and youth in Turkey. An example of this similarity is the young people's struggle to become a subject in Turkey. This state of being a subject is meticulously explained in Leyla Neyzi's (2001) study, in which she examines the discourses towards youth throughout the history of the Republic of Turkey.

She divides modern Turkish history into three periods: 1923- 50; 1950- 80; and the post-1980 period. As she points out, young people living in the first period were seen as the embodiment of the new nation, while those in the second were seen as rebels (2001: 426). However, such changes in the public discourse didn't end the identification of young people with the “mission of building a new nation in the name of ‘the people’” (2001: 426). On the other hand, the post-1980 period offers a different way of understanding young people in Turkey. Neyzi argues that there is a serious rupture, which also happens to be the first, with the common modernist constructions of youth in Turkey (2001: 412). While in the

first and second periods, public discourse on youth was mainly surrounded by the idea of the given mission to young people with the aim of building and shaping the nation, in the third period, relevant discourse on youth was on the contrary: “modern youth as apolitical consumers” (2001: 412). To take Neyzi's work one step further, in all three periods Neyzi mentioned, the subjectivity that the youth deserved and possessed was not handed over to them. In the first and second periods, young people have an innate mission to move the newly established state forward. In the third period, he is referred to as a consumer who does not have his consciousness and is lost in the modern world. That is, young people have either become a tool or become non-rational people exposed to something higher. This arrogant and reductionist attitude towards young people in Turkey is not different from their peers living in the hip-hop culture in America and Germany.

Similarly, Demet Lüküslü (2013), in her study where she analyzes the post-1980 generation, creates the concept of “necessary conformism” to explain the tactic adopted by the young generation in Turkey. According to Lüküslü, such a tactic is young people in Turkey’s art of living, thus must be carefully analyzed to understand the young people’s mindset. As Lüküslü explains, the military coup of 1980 and the rise of neoliberal policies adopted by Prime Minister Turgut Özal signaled a severance between Turkish political life and youth (2013). As a result of such factors, previous generations started to accuse the post-coup age as apathetic, egotistical, and incapable of forming a movement. In other words, the post-1980 generation has been charged with being obedient, silent, and depoliticized. Lüküslü claims that this is not the case by analyzing her in-depth study where she meets with many young participants living in Turkey.

Lüküslü tries to understand young people in Turkey by providing an up-to-date perspective, which she calls the concept of “necessary conformism.” She uses the inspiration that she got from the previous studies on ordinary individuals and combines them with the work of Michel de Certeau, Timur Kuran, and François Dubet (2013: 85). According to her, if young people in Turkey were analyzed

within a such collaboration of ideas, we can come to a conclusion where “an apathetic attitude (of young people) may mask powerful discontent and suffering that cannot be expressed through conventional politics or open and declared resistance” (2013: 85). What the concept of “necessary conformism” states is young people think that fighting with the system, a powerful adversary, is impossible or too risky, so that they avoid facing with a recognizable antagonist (2013: 88). The reason why they choose to hide their discontent is that the participants, apparently, believed that such problems are not because of individuals but due to the weak economic and bureaucratic systems (2013: 88).

She, however, highlights that young people in Turkey don't believe in society's rules even though they act as they believe in them, also “destroy them by inventing ‘tactics’ rather than directly rebelling” (2013: 91). According to this understanding, hip-hop culture can also be considered as a tactic among young people, due its characteristics of undirect anti-system provocation.

4.2. Hip-Hop as Resistance

Many works are written on the spirit of hip-hop culture that left the American ghettos and reached Europe and Turkey. Hip-hop has, as is often claimed, a rebellious spirit and movements in line with that spirit. Another view argues that hip-hop does not have a contrary side. The primary source of these two basic views consists of discussions about culture (see: Frankfurt School and British Cultural Studies). While one side argues that hip-hop has a liberating aspect, the other side emphasizes that hip-hop has entered the market too much and, therefore, has no anti-system element. These discussions will be included in the part of the thesis you are reading.

Some of the debated comments suggest that even if hip-hop has a rebellious attitude, this rebellion is not very realistic. Because any blow that is not directly struck against the system is considered fake. According to Foucault, “where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance

is never in a position of exteriority concerning power” (1978: 95). We can observe traces of resistance in our daily lives. The reason why everyday life resistance’s political capacity tends to be ignored comes from the inadequate understanding of (in Gramscian terms) hegemony’s establishment (Özmakaş, 2019: 659). James C. Scott’s proposal on understanding political life suggests that taking political life only through the “command performances of consent or open rebellion” is not enough to grasp the subject entirely (1990). Scott distinguishes, in his study of *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*, between the open and disguised resistance to highlight the opposition of subordinate groups, which has been ignored due to the strict identification of what is political (Scott, 1990).

Studies of hip-hop as a form of rebellion generally have a similar understanding. Defined as a way for marginalized youth in poor neighborhoods to express themselves and criticize the existing order, hip-hop has indeed served this purpose from time to time. For example, rap music, which is not directly an outright rebellion, is a background discourse developed by enslaved Black people who feared whites (Scott, 1990). In modern times, hip-hop has become an alternative space for young people to participate in the current political and social dialogue (Buhari-Gülmez, 2017: 205). In enabling this participation, young people not only involve themselves in the conversation. They also reflect reality blended with a cultural rebellion through hip-hop (Librado, 2010).

The weak bond established by the diasporic youth in Germany with the place has been strengthened by hip-hop, allowing the youth to make sense of it (Solomon, 2013: 876). In other words, hip-hop first led them to become individuals, then made them make sense of what was going on around them, and finally, the young people who they empowered were entitled to demand change (Soysal, 2001).

Hip-hop culture, like in America, has a collective understanding by nature, and therefore it can bind people in different places and cause an anti-system

organization (Rose, 1994). This bond will strengthen the person at both the individual and community levels. Rap music has empowered young people individually and communally, allowing them to explain and identify themselves (Çağlar, 1998; Solomon, 2009).

The opposing view says that hip-hop culture does not have a rebellious side or that there is no longer any trace of rebellion. Hip-hop, which increased its popularity over time and spread to large masses, has now become a market product that has been wholly integrated into the system. In other words, globalization, which contributed to the development and spread of hip-hop, may have caused hip-hop to lose its essence after a while.

Academics have conveyed the disappearance of hip-hop's rebellious attitude from various aspects. For example, rap music has entered the market and reduced the critical mindset and discomfort in the lyrics over time (Lusane, 1993). One reason for this may be the political atmosphere in the country in which it is located. While rap music performed underground typically only appeals to a specific audience, the larger the reach, the greater the potential for public opinion, and thus the more significant the threat to the state. Artists' refrain from this situation can be given as an example, which we will see in the section on the interviews in the next section. Another reason for the disappearance of the critical aura in the lyrics is that the artists now look at hip-hop as a marketing method. As this marketing effort increases, the artist's art also becomes a product (Mişe, 2018: 110).

In the study that Kadıroğlu and Özdal brought to the literature, the transformation of Turkish rap music into a commodity and the effect of this transformation on the production, distribution, and consumption of music are explained (Kadıoğlu and Özdal, 2021). After this transformation, the lyrics also underwent a severe change; Similarly, according to Gürbüz (2021), due to the more commercial and mainstreaming of rap music, the songs are primarily about financial success and consumer happiness, and sexual desires. It is inevitable that

art, which has begun to be produced with a consumer-oriented approach, takes shape according to the market logic.

To recall the culture industry logic, according to Adorno and Horkheimer, the crucial point here is not entirely concerning the art itself. They argue that the culture industry also works as a mechanism of psychological control over taste and opinion. It is vital to remember Immanuel Kant's immaturity concept of taste and opinion. Thus, the culture industry takes away people's potential to be mature by controlling their decision-making:

In contrast to the Kantian, the categorical imperative of the culture industry no longer has anything in common with freedom. It proclaims: you shall conform, without instruction as to what; conform to that which exists anyway as a reflex of its power and omnipresence. The power of the culture industry's ideology is that conformity has replaced consciousness.

According to this approach mentioned below, art is nothing more than a money-making machine for the media and media owners. Thus, such cultures cannot contain any critical or liberating power. The culture, industrialized for sale and therefore standardized, also uniformizes the society subject to it, making it passive.

4.3. Hip-Hop as Urban Culture

Cultures shaped within the dominant cultural structure, such as shared habits, ideals, traditions, and identities in the society (Aral, 2021), constantly interact with some socio-economic conditions (Fine, 1979: 735-737). As a result of this interaction, many subcultural fields, and new groups emerge; "Group cultures that play a kind of mediator role between environment and action and have their own knowledge" (Aral, 2021: 218) also create new "folk knowledge" (Dundes, 1998: 144). Therefore, examining the hip-hop culture as an urban culture will give us information not only about itself but also about the people who live it, the place where it is lived, and the social, political, and economic levels of the

living environment. As Peter Burke (2017: 9-13) argues, it is a way that “makes it possible to read the thought and descriptive structures of a certain period.”

It has been stated throughout the thesis that hip-hop is urban culture. In the next part of this thesis, how the city in which hip-hop is located affects hip-hop is examined in the light of interviews with hip-hop artists residing in Turkey. Therefore, the concepts of the city and the right to the city should be understood before going deeper into the interview analysis.

The concept of the Right to the City, which was introduced in the late 1960s with the inspiration of 1968, is described as an outcry and a demand for a better life, according to Lefebvre. He examined the trend from a period when the countryside began to dissolve into urban society (Kaymaz, 2021). It is explained to create a definition of citizenship at the urban scale by rearranging the socio-spatial relations and defining the rights of the citizens according to this definition. To explain briefly and clearly: It is the right to change ourselves by changing the city. The reason for wanting to change the city stems from the necessity of an act of inversion. According to Lefebvre (1991), the state dominates space (especially in urban centers) in order to maintain its domination. This domination aims at the control or homogenization of the space. In other words, the state expels those who remain outside the subjects it deems appropriate and creates a new meaning on its own. This meaning will be independent of the citizens' own feelings and experiences. Therefore, space is divided as a commodity, divided into parcels, and fragmented (Gardiner, 2016: 130).

Space is not just a place; It is also a socially restructured phenomenon (Lefebvre, 2016). In other words, just as capitalism can bend space according to its own interests, it is a desire for people living in the city to oppose it with their own power and to direct the course of their own lives.

This is no different from hip-hop. To remind hip-hop in America and Germany, hip-hop had grown through the demand of people there to subject and to be heard. In Turkey, this was not much different. Even the name of the Turkish rap documentary called *Aparkat*, made by Devrim Lüküslü, will clarify the subject: A blow struck from the bottom up. In other words, the right to the city contains similar demands with hip-hop, which is urban culture. For example, in the years when Lefebvre introduced the concept of the Right to the City, namely in the 1960s, graffiti and street art became widespread on the walls of New York neighborhoods and trains as a way for citizens who did not have equal access to the right to the city to say "I am here".

The relation of the right to the city and urbanization with our topic, hip-hop, intersects with capitalism. At this point, it is necessary to talk about how the daily life practices in the cities, which are in the grip of capitalism, are alienated. The concept of the right to the city is precisely a reaction and demand against this alienation. The occupation of the urban space by the powerful and its use as an instrument for their own interests affects almost every part of our daily life. As an example of the main reasons for this occupation; Of course, it can be given to disperse the proletariat, to allocate it to specific (and to be controlled, observed) places, to organize (space) with rules by predetermined flows, and to govern society by preserving capitalist production relations (Hess, 2014).

As mentioned before, according to Lefebvre, the city and the streets are transformed to benefit capitalist interests. Examples of things that can satisfy these interests are streets with plenty of stores and colorful and sparkling streets that lead to constant consumption. Something that could be seen on the street to the detriment of capitalism could be rappers whispering protest words into people's ears or graffiti artists painting messages on the walls.

4.4. Hip-Hop in Turkey: Its Story and Witnesses

It was inevitable that Turkish rap music and hip-hop culture performed in Germany would eventually attract attention in Turkey as well. In this section, while the historical hip-hop equivalent in Turkey is examined, first-hand testimonies from the field research are included.

In the mid-1990s, hip-hop and rap music came to Turkey with the Cartel¹ project. The group became so famous that it performed the most spectator concert after Michael Jackson at the İnönü Stadium. Unfortunately, after Cartel's debut album, a serious disagreement arose between the band. At the end of this almost fatal agreement, Cartel members were banned from performing together, and some members were imprisoned.

Towards the end of the 1990s, two important events took place in the history of Turkish hip-hop. In 1996, Turkey's first rap music group, Hedef 12, released an album. In 1999, under the leadership of graffiti artist Turbo, the album *Yeraltı Operasyonu* was released with the participation of three rappers (Sagopa Kajmer, then known as Unarmed Force; Punishment; Dr. Fuchs). In the 2000s, rapper Bilgin Özçalkan's (Penalty) legendary album *Rapstar* took its place in the market. Undoubtedly, with the album of Ceza, the echoes of Turkish rap music started in Turkey.

¹ Addressing the difficulties experienced by Turkish people in Germany from a nationalist and diasporic perspective, Cartel was greeted at the airport with bozkurt signs by an idealist group when it came to Turkey. On the other hand, it is not quite right to call Cartel racist. It would be correct to remember the group's origin story in Germany and sing songs against racism against Turks. Cartel is a project launched to oppose racism (Kaya, 2000). In fact, according to Cartel's understanding, being a Turk is not essentially an ethnic identity; According to them, this is to belong to a discriminated, alien, and oppressed community and to give a voice to this community (Çınar, 2001). In other words, the event can be interpreted as the battle of being the subject of the invisible. To take a step further, Stuart Hall studies the signification mechanism in communication and examines different elements such as ideology, language, and representation (1973). Analyzing this mechanism will also explain how the rap group Cartel, mentioned in the previous section, portrayed a different image in Germany and a different one in Turkey.

Some of the people I spoke to said that hip-hop's golden age had just begun in Turkey (after 2015), while some interviewees noted that hip-hop in the early 2000s was more sane and robust. According to the interviewee:

There used to be such a thing as a nerd. People used to wonder. So both the listener and the player were together. Hip-hop wasn't just rap music back then. It's almost as if hip-hop, which has become commercialized these days, is just rap. This is not just for the listeners. I mean, nerdism has disappeared, but this is also evident in artists. For example, when I listen to a song, I can understand whether the person who made that song has ever watched a hip-hop battle in his life. Now they all look alike... Obviously, they've never watched it in their lives. They don't know what a hip-hop battle is. Style is the message, so your style determines who you are. For example, there is Flow. The flow of the speech, the flow of the spray, the flow of the DJ, the flow of the dance. They're going after what's selling. But that's against the spirit of hip-hop. You have to sell your style! You mustn't do whatever that sells! If you want to sell, don't rap, do pop.²

According to the interviewee, the popularization of hip-hop brought with it its commercialization. Now, only rap music started to come to mind when hip-hop is mentioned, not other branches such as graffiti and breakdance. Another person I interviewed explains this situation as follows:

This is not so surprising, actually. That's how it happened in America. It's normal for something with lyrics to be more popular. It spreads more easily, reaches people more easily... Well, after a while, everybody turned to rap because of the money.³

² "Eskiden nerd'lük diye bir şey vardı. İnsanlar merak ederdi araştırırdı. Hem dinleyicisi hem dinleteni bir aradaydı yani. Hip-hop sadece rap müzik de değildi o zamanlar. Bugünlerde artık ticarileşen hip-hop sanki sadece rap'ten ibaret gibi. Bu durum sadece dinleyenlerde belli olmuyor. Yani nerd'lük yok oldu diyorum ama bu durum sanatçılarda da bariz. Mesela ben bir şarkı dinlediğimde, o şarkıyı yapan kişinin hayatında bir kez olsun hip-hop battle izleyip izlemediğini anlayabiliyorum. Artık hepsi birbirine benziyor... Belli yani hiç izlememişler hayatlarında. Hip-hop battle nedir bilmiyorlar. Style is the message yani senin stilin senin kim olduğunu belirler. Flow vardır mesela. Konuşmanın flowu, spreyin flowu, Djliğin flowu, dansın flowu.... Sanırım artık insanlar bunları hem bilmiyorlar hem de umursamıyorlar. Satan şeyin peşinden gidiyorlar. Ama işte bu hip-hop'ın ruhuna aykırı. Sen kendi stilini sattırmalısın! Satanı yapmamalısın! Eğer satma gayen varsa rap yapma, pop yap." (Ali ile görüşme, Aralık 2021)

³ "Yani bu durum çok da şaşırtıcı değil aslında. Amerika'da da böyle oldu. Sözleri olan bir şeyin daha popüler olması normal. Daha kolay yayılıyor, daha kolay ulaşıyor insanlara... E bir yerden sonra da para ondan kazanıldığı için herkes rap'e yöneldi zaten" (Serkan ile görüşme, Ocak 2022).

The fact that rap music is more easily consumed due to its verbal nature has quickly separated it from other hip-hop elements and placed it at the top. As the interviewee confirmed, the fact that rap music is easier to sell has led hip-hop people to turn to it.

Anyway, after the release of Criminal's Rapstar album, his personal career started to climb to the top. Having performed in Rock'n Coke, Ceza has now introduced hip-hop to large audiences in Turkey. Therefore, hip-hop and hip-hopers have now become mainstream media's focus. With Ceza's acting in a lollipop commercial, a lot of criticism came from both the audience and some artists, for example, Sagopa Kajmer and Kolera. The criticized rationale for Ceza was that a hip-hop artist should not play for money in a commercial. While hip-hop was supposed to be anti-system due to its stance, Ceza's behavior angered hip-hop listeners and artists. On the other hand, the penetration of hip-hop into the heart of popular culture neither started with Ceza nor would it end with Ceza. Rap music and hip-hop culture, which rose in the 2000s, grew and fell fast. For many years, rap music was not often seen on Turkey's mainstream media channels and remained underground for a long time. On the other hand, even though hip-hop was not covered much in the mainstream media, hip-hop continued to be in the middle of the lives of young people. What was described as the underground was the daily lives of those young people, and they had battles to resolve within their own lives. The most common feeling I observed among the people I interviewed was the emotional bond people established with hip-hop. This emotional bond was used as a tool to control one's own emotions. Generally speaking, hip-hop, or music more broadly, has a healing and calming effect. Studies on the rehabilitative impact of hip-hop are therefore widespread. For example, we know that young people in America and Germany, who try to stay away from drugs and gang wars, turn to hip-hop. It is even known that doctors use hip-hop, especially rap music. According to a study by Hakvoort (2015), new types of therapy are being developed for the lyrical part of rap music. According to Elligan (2004), using rap lyrics in psychotherapy enables

clients to express themselves better, hope for the future, and reduce their pain. In an interview in Ankara, a rap artist over 40 said:

I wish the government would open something like an internet cafe. If he puts 2-3 computers there, puts a voice recorder. If that were the case, I swear to you, there would be no children left in the street. Nobody smokes or sells drugs. I owe everything to music. I found myself after 33 years old and satisfied.⁴

In another meeting I had in Istanbul, I received the following answer:

It is necessary to say, 'I am the best in all branches of hip-hop. A person who does not claim to be the best cannot be a hip-hopper. So there is a war, which is actually a war used to end other wars'⁵.

In conclusion, the healing effect of hip-hop on young people cannot be denied. This situation is observed similarly in almost all countries. The healing power of music is universal. It can be described as a tragic situation that people who are described as troublemakers, ostracized and vagrants go through such rehabilitation for themselves.

Moreover, the time has come for hip-hop to rise again. Kadıroğlu and Özdal liken Ezhel's Müptezhel album, released in 2017, to Rapper's Delight, which took America by storm at the time. According to them, the success of rap star Ezhel's Müptezhel album is directly related to the rise of streaming in Turkey. In the past, this music, which was listened to by young people living in the periphery and generally poor compared to the center-periphery understanding, reached the middle-upper class and white collars with the rise of streaming. Simply put, concerts have started to yield benefits for artists and organizers because ticket prices and alcohol sales during the show have increased.

⁴ "Valla devlet keşke internet kafe gibi bir şey açsa. Ne bileyim 2-3 bilgisayar, ses kayıt cihazı falan koysa. Olay böyle olsa sana yemin ederim ki sokakta çocuk kalmaz. Kimse torba tutmaz. Ben müziğe borçluyum. Kendimi 33 yaşımdan sonra gerçekleştirdim" (Barış ile görüşme, Ekim 2021).

⁵ "Hip-hop'ta en iyisi benim demek gerekir. Her dallarında 'ben en iyisiyim' diye bağırarak lazım. Zaten en iyisi olduğunu iddia etmeyen biri hip-hop'çı olamaz. Yani ortada bir savaş var. Bu savaş, diğer savaşları bitirmek için kullanılıyor." (Niyazi ile görüşme, Mayıs 2021)

As Kadıroğlu and Özdal emphasized, Turkish rap music, which could still be considered underground after this album, suddenly came to the surface (from the underground to the mainstream). Hip-hop culture has now become the focus of the mainstream media in Turkey, and hip-hop elements has begun to be used almost everywhere. For example, shoe brands started to collaborate with rappers (Kinetix x Gazapizm), and the songs of Gazapizm and Eypio began to play in TV serials such as *Çukur* and *Ufak Tefek Cinayetler*, which were major TV series at that time.

Increasingly popular hip-hop has become an industry. Young people living this culture underground also focused on how to find money and worked for this. This is one of the reasons why rap music stands out from other branches of hip-hop. Rap music was seen as a source of money. As the cultural industry is explained in the second part of the thesis, art has lost its artistry; replaced by commercial concerns.

Among the people I interviewed, there were those who found these commercial concerns unjustified and those who empathized. For instance, an artist said:

The only thing that matters now is economical concerns. Things like permanence, originality, and culture in rap music no longer seem too important. The only concern is whether a song brings money or not. Believe me when I say it: I feel like I am listening to the same singer and the same song all the time (especially on Spotify's commercial rap playlists, such as NKVT⁶)! The current condition of existence is to be the same.⁷

⁶ NKVT is a streaming platform's biggest and most popular Turkish rap playlist on Spotify. The impartiality of this playlist, which is prepared directly by Spotify and not by anyone, and is constantly updated, is a matter of debate. The song list, subjected to intense criticism, is not respected by Turkish rap listeners who have been in the hip-hop community for a long time. "How much is an NKVT cover?" is a common joke on Twitter. On the other hand, the fact that these criticisms come from rap artists rather than listeners should be a different topic of discussion. Is the purpose of making rap music to be on the NKVT list on Spotify and gain a rapid rise and fame? Or is it to announce demand and become a subject in an underground way, as claimed in the past? I am eagerly awaiting the thesis of my department friend Tahsin Mert Saygın, who is currently writing his master's thesis on Spotify.

⁷ "Artık ticari kaygı tek önemli olan şey. Kalıcılıkmış, özgünlükmüş, kültülmüş... Bunlar önemli değil. Adamlar satıp satmadığına bakıyor sadece. Ben dinlediğim tüm şarkıları aynı kişi söylüyor sanıyorum. Hatta bazen aynı şarkı sandığım oluyor. Şu anki var olma koşulu aynı olmak" (Hayri ile görüşme, Ekim 2021).

As the interviewee mentioned, industrialized hip-hop now seems to produce songs of the same genre. Here, it would be appropriate to give a piece of theoretical information on the subject, which is not given in the second part, but in parallel with them. Walter Benjamin, who happened to be Adorno's mentor, analyzed a similar problem of art in his work. Benjamin (2008) concluded that art objects no longer have their aura, which is the aesthetic intimacy with the artist. Aura was what made the art special, but it no longer exists. As the art created by the artist is copied more than once, the aura gradually disappears. The basis of this copying is the view of culture as a commodity and the desire to make money from it. On the other hand, capitalism and the culture industry will, of course, cover this ugly image with make-up. The culture industry gives an appearance of novelty and originality to perpetuate the false aura. This is called pseudo-individuation by Adorno (1998). This deceptive situation can be compared to an elusive type of concealment. According to Adorno, the popular music and culture industry has outgrown itself so much that listeners have forgotten that they have heard (or pre-digested) the same song before (1998: 203).

Nevertheless, in an interview with the person who lived in deep poverty in his youth and is now one of the most famous artists in Turkey, the artist expressed that he understands young rappers who are always interested in making the same popular songs. Emphasizing that art cannot be made on an empty stomach, the artist said:

People are hungry, and now they want to get rid of this miserable life. Rap is used to get out of this desperate life. People want to get out of their neighborhoods as quickly as possible. They want to save their families and friends. There is no conscious or collective action here. Everything is individual. That's why it's normal for them to talk about expensive brands like Rolex, Nike, Gucci, and Prada in their songs. They use things that they couldn't reach before. After they get famous and earn money, they celebrate it. It's a celebration. The most important thing is what they will do after this celebration.⁸

⁸ "İnsanlar aç. Haliyle de bu sefil hayattan kurtulmak istiyorlar. Rap de bu hayattan kurtulmak için kullanılıyor. Adamlar mahallelerinden hemen kaçmak istiyor, kurtulmak istiyor. E ailelerini, arkadaşlarını kurtarmak istiyorlar. Yani ortada kolektif bir bilinç veya komünite yok. Her şey bireysel. Bu yüzden onların Rolex, Nike, Gucci, efendime söyleyeyim Prada gibi pahalı

In relation to that, the findings obtained as a result of Miş'e's fieldwork show us that young people use rap music as a way to get out of the ghetto. It is considered less risky to make songs of the same genre that have been liked and sold before so that an easy exit is possible. As a result, a kind of homogenization, that is, standardization, which is stated in the culture industry, emerges.

Understandably, artists trying to survive and make a living through rap music are caught between their desires and the logic of the market. For example, there is a big difference between the songs that some artists, like Ezhel, published on YouTube before they became famous and their songs after they became famous. Ezhel's love songs with afro tunes in the last two prints can be given as an example. Even the names of the two songs are the same: "Where are you? (Nerdesin)" and "Find Me (Bul Beni)." As mentioned in the second chapter, this similarity can be explained by the culture industry's logic: The capitalist system reinforces itself by reproducing the same mechanical art objects. The main goal is not the art itself but only to make money through riskless products.

On the other hand, it is not true to say that the essence of hip-hop changed as rap became popular. What has changed is not rap and hip-hop itself but the way it is performed in Turkey. Of course, the community as well has changed with the change in this way of performing.

According to Lusane (1993), as a result of the efforts of rap artists to worry about money, the critical approach and rebellion inherent in rap music decreased. If we go back to Umut Miş'e's work, Miş'e dealt with global rap music at a more local level in his work (2018). His analysis is through the urban transformation in Sulukule and Bağcılar, two districts in Istanbul. Miş'e, unlike Lusane, discovered an interesting contrast. This is not the case in Bağcılar, as it is usually

markalardan bahsetmeleri gayet normal. Önceden ulaşamadıkları şeyleri şarkılarına koyuyorlar çünkü artık ünlüler, paraları var. Bunu kutluyorlar. Ortada bir kutlama var yani. Asıl önemli olan, bu kutlamadan sonra ne yapacakları" (Doğukan ile görüşme, Ağustos 2022).

expected that the popularized will be less rebellious, or the unpopular and uncensored will be more rebellious and critical.

According to Mişe, there are three reasons for this situation. Firstly, although rappers from Sulukule, such as Tahribad-ı İsyân, signed with a professional company and became very popular, this does not change the fact that Sulukule was destroyed. The state's destruction of their neighborhoods, namely their houses, inevitably brought a critical side to the group and its inhabitants. For this reason, the band's songs have preserved their rebellious spirit. Secondly, it was stated that the Romani citizens living in Sulukule are already organized and raise the youth accordingly. Mişe attributes this situation to spatial embeddedness because while an artist represents the place they came from while performing their art, they reproduce the space there.

But of course, it wasn't just the economic concerns of the artists that caused hip-hop to change. Because hip-hop is a culture that changes its environment and is also changed by the environment, it is in. At this point, we should listen to what the interviewees have to say about the places they live.

It has already been mentioned throughout the thesis that hip-hop is urban culture. The main reason for this was that hip-hopers used to meet and spend time on the street. In other words, the streets described in the songs were not a dream but a reflection of the lives of young people. A rapper I interviewed online described the relationship between rap music and the city:

I believe that the city we live in has an impact not only on rap music but also on many branches of art. In fact, there is no doubt that city life has an impact not only on art but also on people and human relations. In this context, we can think of art, city, and people as a pillar. The city nurtures and nurtures rap music. You can see every element of hip-hop culture in any corner of the city. Hip-hop is not a living room culture, it is a city culture, it is the reflection of concepts such as fight, chaos, inequality, and justice in the city, into dance, lines and words. Whatever is in the city, hip-hop culture has it. In fact, I can describe them as two very good friends who influence each other and are under the influence of each other. You know, friends can affect their friends both positively and negatively; although these two friends sometimes affect each other positively and

sometimes negatively, they have not been offended for years, even they do not get along badly.⁹

Similarly, a hip-hop critic I interviewed noted about hip-hop and the city:

Hip-hop is definitely an urban culture. Undoubtedly, we have seen and will see exceptions in this regard, as rap music begins to reach incredible scale globally and thus hip-hop technology becomes more accessible. For example, there is rap in the villages. But it has to be dosed. For example, we shouldn't be confined to houses because there is technology in our rooms. You should not go out on the street. Maybe it's hard in the city now but it should be in other places. This should not be lost in the cities. Hip-hop is a huge Noah's ark. It is polyphonic and multicultural by nature. I don't know where else we can catch this.¹⁰

The interviewee's concern that hip-hop will be lost is directly related to the city. The urbanization observed in recent years also affects hip-hop, a culture lived in the city. Concepts such as the street, the state of being on the street, the outside world, and real life are indispensable conditions for hip-hop. In fact, the basic values and claims of hip-hop consist of these concepts. Most of the people I interviewed (who are not very young) said that they met hip-hop by chance on the street. For example, an interviewer who is not currently involved in any branch of hip-hop but defines himself as a hip-hop lover,

⁹ “Yaşanılan şehrin sadece rap müziğe değil birçok sanat dalına etkisinin var olduğuna inanırdım. Hatta kuşkusuz şehir hayatının sadece sanata değil insanlara, insan ilişkilerine bile etkisi vardır. Bu bağlamda sanat, şehir ve insanı bir sac ayak olarak düşünebiliriz. Şehir, rap müziği besler ve büyütür. Hiphop kültürünün her elementini şehrin herhangi bir köşesinde görebilirsiniz. Hiphop bir salon kültürü değil bir şehir kültürü, şehirdeki kavga, kaos, eşitsizlik ve adalet gibi kavramların dansa, çizgilere ve sözcüklere yansması hiphop. Şehirde ne varsa hiphop kültüründe de o var, şehirde kavga varsa, hiphop ta kavga, kaos varsa kaos aşk varsa aşk var. Aslında birbirini etkileyen, birbirinin etkisi altında kalan çok iyi iki arkadaş diye tanımlayabilirim. Bilirsin, arkadaşlar arkadaşları olumlu da olumsuz da etkileyebilir, bu iki arkadaş birbirlerini zaman zaman olumlu zaman zaman olumsuz etkilese de senelerdir hiç küsmediler birbirlerine, hatta hiç fena anlaşmıyorlar” (Murat ile online görüşme, Temmuz 2021).

¹⁰ “Hip-hop kesinlikle bir şehir kültürü. Şüphesiz, rap müzik global olarak inanılmaz bir ölçüde ulaşmaya ve dolayısıyla hip-hop teknolojisi de daha ulaşılır olmaya başlayınca, bu bağlamda istisnalar gördük, göreceğiz. Köylerde de rap oluyor mesela. Ama bunun dozunu ayarlamak lazım. Mesela evlere kapanmamak lazım teknoloji var odalarımızda diye. Sokaktan çıkmamak lazım. Belki kentte artık zor ama diğer yerlerde olmalı. Kentlerde de bunu kaybetmemek lazım. Hip-hop kocaman bir Nuh'un gemisi. Doğası gereği çok sesli ve çok kültürlü. Bunu bir daha başka neyde yakalayabiliriz bilmiyorum.” (Mustafa ile online görüşme, Temmuz 2021).

We met everyone on the street. Someone would throw thick cardboard on the floor and dance in the street. Someone would beatbox and rap in the corner. Someone would turn on music. Someone would just sit and watch. We would always meet on the street. I didn't even know the names of some of them¹¹.

They used to spend time together on the street. Being a group and a community was more intense at that time. People who met on the street became friends and always traveled with the same audience. Another significant emphasis here is that hip-hop is not only associated with rap music. For example, a famous rap artist I interviewed tried graffiti, DJing, and breakdancing before rapping, but he was horrible in all of them. Similarly, one interviewee describes her own life and that of her friends as follows:

I used to have the biggest archive in Izmir. People used to beg me to check the archive. Back then, we used to listen to rap from morning to night. We used to sit down and write something. I mean, we used to hang out all the time. Total strangers would come and meet with us. Generally, the only thing we had in common was hip-hop, so we didn't really care who it was. Let's just enjoy the same thing as one. That would be enough¹².

In contrast, a person I interviewed emphasized the following:

Well, my friend circle is not made up of such (hip-hop) people. My friends listen to the songs I make and share them; thanks. But that's all. Rap is like drawing for me. It's like therapy. I can be friends with other rappers, but I don't think we have anything in common other than rap music. It's not that important – to be honest. Everyone lives their lives separately.¹³

¹¹ “Biz herkesle sokakta tanıştık. Biri yere kalın karton atardı dans ederdi sokakta. Biri köşede beatbox yapıp rap yapardı. Biri müzik açardı. Biri öylece otururdu izlerdi. Hep sokakta buluşurduk. Bazılarının isimlerini bile bilmiyordum” (Çağrı ile görüşme, Nisan 2022).

¹² “İzmir'deki en büyük arşiv bendeydi eskiden. İnsanlar peşimden koşardı. Sabahtan akşama kadar şarkı dinlerdik. Oturup bir şeyler yazardık. Takılırdık yani. Tanıdık tanımadık insanlar gelirdi, tanışırdık. Genelde tek ortak noktamız hip-hop'tu yani öyle kim olduğunu pek önemsemezdik. Aynı şeyden zevk alalım yeter” (Nihat ile görüşme, Nisan 2022).

¹³ “Valla benim çevrem hiç böyle insanlardan oluşmuyor. Yaptığım şarkıları dinleyip paylaşıyorlar sağ olsunlar. Ama maksimum bu yani. Rap benim için resim çizmek gibi. Terapi gibi yani. Rap yapan diğer insanlarla arkadaş olabilirim ama rap müzikten başka ortak bir yönümüz olduğunu düşünmüyorum. Öyle büyük bir olay yok yani. Herkes kendine” (Simge ile görüşme, Kasım 2022)

To return to the aforementioned concerns, although those who believe that hip-hop is negatively affected do not directly attribute this to urbanization policies, it is possible to say that urbanization is directly related, in line with what they say. Most of the interviewees remembered the past. We can describe how hip-hop in Turkey used to be and how it is now from some points. For example, one interviewee said this about the streets:

The streets used to be ours. We used to rap in the street while people were dancing and doing graffiti. We were pretty comfortable. For example, you used to live on X street, you know the street there (it was said for the thesis owner). We didn't hurt anyone anyway. Now even if we don't have a beer¹⁴ or something, bekçiler (guards) or the police come and bother us. No, you can't sit here, they say. They are trying to displace us.¹⁵

The existence of the hip-hop community on the street is in danger due to the increasing control mechanisms in the streets, and the empty places where hip-hopers usually hang out are now under construction. Similarly, a musician I interviewed noted:

In the past, we used to hang out at the intersection of Kennedy and Bestekar. We used to sit near the gas station there. There were stairs. Hmm.. The stairs were not exactly like stairs. Anyway. There was a place for us sit right in the avenue. Then they planted thorns there so that we wouldn't sit. We couldn't hang out on the street like that. All of our spaces were occupied. It wasn't like this 10 years ago.¹⁶

¹⁴ According to Article 35 of the Misdemeanor Law, although it is not forbidden to consume alcohol in public in Turkey, it is considered a crime to get drunk and disturb other people. On the other hand, this level of drunkenness and annoyance often bothers people who drink alcohol, even if they are not reported by police or guards.

¹⁵ "Bu sokaklar bizimdi. Sokakta rap yapardık. Bir tarafta da duvara graffiti yapanlar olurdu. Rahattık baya. Sen eskiden X sokakta oturuyormuşsun mesela, oradaki sokağı bilirsin (Tez sahibine yönelik söylenmiştir). Kimseye de zararımız yoktu zaten. Sokakta takılırdık hep beraber. Şimdi elimizde bira falan bile olmasa, bekçiler geliyor polisler geliyor, rahatsız ediyorlar. Yok burada oturamazsın, falan diyorlar. Bizim yerimizden etmeye çalışıyorlar." (Umut ile yapılan görüşme, Şubat 2021)

¹⁶ "Eskiden Kennedy ve Bestekar'ın kesiştiği noktada takılırdık. Oradaki benzinin merdivenlerine otururduk. Merdivenler de öyle tam merdiven değil yani. Neyse. Sonra oraya dikenler diktiler biz oturmayalım diye. Böyle böyle sokakta hiç takılamaz olduk. Her alanımız işgal edildi. 10 sene önce böyle değildi". (Berk ile yapılan görüşme, Ağustos, 2022).

To sum up, the common thing interviewees say is that hip-hop in Turkey is not the same as in the past. The change in people's daily lives has also changed hip-hop; Likewise, the change in hip-hop has changed everyday life.

4.4.1. Hip-Hop is Dead

As a result of the interviews, we can attribute one of the reasons for the death of hip-hop or the death of the hip-hop community in Turkey to capitalist urbanization. But to put it another way, we know that hip-hop has a fundamentally rebellious and anti-system spirit. In America and Germany, hip-hop gangs clashed with the police, caused scenes, and protected themselves – and these were not so ancient. The fact that the hip-hop community in Turkey is now disturbed by the presence of police or guards, or is quickly separated from each other by unsurprising capitalist urbanization models, shows us how fragile the existing ties are. An artist I interviewed confirms my argument on this matter. He says that (although his songs are extremely rebellious and have the street's underground spirit), it would be wrong to talk about a community in Turkey in the first place! *"There is nothing communal in Turkey. In fact, it never happened. Everything is individual,"*¹⁷ he says.

As a result, together with the capitalist urbanization and control mechanisms, the young people, who could not find the opportunity to meet each other spontaneously, started to hang out more individually. This, of course, affected the hip-hop community. The state of a community and its ideal type in the third chapter does not meet this standard in Turkey. On the other hand, a rap artist from Istanbul, whom I interviewed, said:

For my part, I feel better every day. It's hard, though. I don't want to say we're done with everything, frankly, because I am standing in a certain vein in that area. That's why (the community) exists and has to come together. Individually, everyone thinks about this unity, but unfortunately, there is no movement.

¹⁷ "Komünel bir şey yok ya komün diye bir şey yok ortada. Hiç olmadı Türkiye'de. Her şey bireysel". (Doğukan ile görüşme, Ağustos 2022).

Everyone is drawn into their own circle. I can't make sense of it sometimes, but there is: we are here.¹⁸

In other words, it is still possible to talk about a group of enthusiasts, although it is not as concrete and on the street as it used to be. According to a person I interviewed, there used to be a community, but it's no longer visible. Although this argument is not in line with my thesis, its reason still needs to be examined. Perhaps if we changed the definition of community to people who enjoy hip-hop, of course, there would be a community. But as in America and Germany, it can no longer be said that there are people who sleep with hip-hop and get up with hip-hop. On the other hand, it can be said that the community has changed shape. For example, now when a rap singer says "für die familie sadece aile" in songs, they are talking about the record company, not the artist's gang or artist's real family. This upside-down change has come to the point where, for example, Uzi has M.O.B. (record label) tattoo. In addition, in an environment where rap music has become so widespread and other elements of hip-hop are so neglected, the robustness of hip-hop can now be questioned. There used to be hip-hop parties in Istanbul. Until a certain hour, the wall was painted, then danced, while the MCs were rapping. Kadıköy Emergency can be given as an example for those who still continue this party example, but this is a consolation to hold on to life.

4.4.2. Limits of Resistance

Art allows people to experience many emotions, including revenge and freedom. For example, the movie Joker is about an outcast who does not fit into society and wants to tear apart society and the system itself. But when a person watches the movie Joker, they immediately feel a sudden purge in the end of the movie. The feeling itself is enough for the audience. According to the Frankfurt School thinkers, such illusions are dangerous. They claim that the culture tricks people

¹⁸ "Kendi açımdan her geçen gün daha da iyi hissediyorum. Zor ama. Her şeye de yok, bittik demek de istemiyorum açıkçası çünkü belli bir damar var ki ben de o civarda duruyorum. O yüzden var ve bir araya gelmek durumunda. Tekil olarak herkes bu birliği düşünüyor ama hareket yok maalesef. Herkes kendi çemberi içerisine çekiliyor. Anlam veremiyorum bazen ama var; biz buradayız" (Damla ile yapılan görüşme, Şubat 2022).

into that they can achieve something good in their lives, but in fact, they are unable to move beyond the limits of the culture:

The culture industry perpetually cheats its consumers of what it perpetually promises. The promissory note, which, with its plots and staging, it draws on pleasure, is endlessly prolonged; the promise, which is all the spectacle consists of, is illusory: all it confirms is that the real point will never be reached, that the diner must be satisfied with the menu.

In my thesis, although hip-hop is very good at keeping young people out of bad habits, hip-hop's "pain-reducing" aspect keeps them out of active combat and soothes them. This short-term relief, caused by the small victories De Certeau mentioned, will not give the person a safe life in the long run. On the contrary, these short-term reliefs are one of the only obstacles to resistance.

As mentioned in the interviews, anger and nervousness decrease as the person does hip-hop (rap music). Since the person has discharged all his rage about life in the studio, no irritation is left to shape. So the more hip-hop, the more bearable life becomes. However, if popular culture is a field of resistance as described, one should not have lessened their rage in that area of resistance, but they should have taken that anger and turned it into something different. This anger, which popular culture subtracts from hip-hop artists, thus benefits the capitalist order, which is not directly confronted with a rebellion, rather than the society or the individual.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This thesis aims to analyze the hip-hop community in Turkey. For this purpose, in-depth interviews were conducted in Ankara, Izmir, Istanbul, and virtual environments. The background that allows this fieldwork to be examined correctly has been tried to be formed historically, theoretically, and practically.

The second part of the thesis mentions approaches to music and cultural theories. The selected cultural theories are in the thesis because of the academic or non-academic studies on hip-hop that we come across in the following sections. The theories of the Birmingham School, which are the primary source of the approaches that consider hip-hop culture as a subculture and argue that this subculture has a rebellious nature, are included. In addition to the Birmingham School, Frankfurt School theories, which are the source of studies that say that hip-hop fell under the grip of the culture industry as it became popular and that hip-hop's revolting side was gradually decreasing, were mentioned.

Cultural theories are necessary to understand hip-hop as popular culture. Although emerging as an underground culture and therefore having a natural rebellious side, hip-hop has become increasingly famous over time and has become an entire industry of its own. As mentioned in the second chapter, industrialized culture lost its artistic and rebellious qualities, according to the representatives of the Frankfurt School.

Culture, which has become a commodity, now only engages in economic concerns, and its only function is to reproduce the system. According to the culture industry understanding, industrialized cultural products are standardized, do not promise anything new, and are deceptive. Frankfurt School theorists hold

no hope for culture. On the other hand, Birmingham School theorists argue that popular culture is not all evil. As Birmingham School representatives argue, there are dualities in popular culture. Thus, there are elements of both resistance and submission in hip-hop. For this reason, studies that adopt the theories of the Birmingham School while examining hip-hop culture approach hip-hop more calmly than the ones adapt to the Frankfurt School. The real-life practical examples of the theories in the second chapter are exemplified in the third and fourth chapters.

The third part of the thesis explains the birth of hip-hop culture in America, its spread to Europe, and the process of coming to Turkey. The historical facts, which form the main frame of the third chapter, enabled the creation of a framework for the community, which is the main subject of the thesis. This thesis acknowledges that the original form of the hip-hop community is as in America. The cornerstone of the hip-hop community is the situation where young people, who struggle daily with deep poverty, police-state violence, racism, and discrimination, have a form of non-violent rebellion that will empower them. In addition to these situations, to be a community, the daily lives of the mentioned young people should be shared, along with their potential future. In other words, the hip-hop community accepted by this thesis goes beyond defining a group of people who enjoy the same culture but have the same lifestyle.

After noting the adventure of hip-hop in America and defining the ideal type, the third part continues with Germany. With globalization and technological developments, hip-hop was examined concerning the Turkish youth in Germany. While the hip-hop community born in the Bronx was defined as the ideal type, Germany was subjected to this ideal type test. According to the definition of the designated community, it is possible to talk about the existence of the hip-hop community in Kreuzberg since Germany also has characteristics close to the ideal type. It has been determined that diasporic youth, who have a very similar life to black youth in America, are suitable for the ideal type. The main reason is

that young people in both countries have a shared destiny, as seen in both America and Germany. For example, nearly all black youth in the Bronx had the same daily life. Even though they were members of different gangs, they all did the same things every day. It was the same for the youth in Kreuzberg. They were all born in the same hospitals, grew up in houses next to each other, and went to the same schools. They fought together and stayed together. For this reason, a strong community spirit is observed in both countries. Young people in America and Germany defined themselves through hip-hop and re-created.

The fourth part of the thesis includes academic literature, practical examples, and field research on hip-hop culture in Turkey. To say at the beginning what will be displayed at the end, it is impossible to promise the existence of the community defined in the previous section in Turkey.

Of course, hip-hop in Turkey impacts young people, which has good aspects, but everything is on an individual level. Moreover, there is neither state violence nor racism faced by people interested in hip-hop in Turkey. Also, they do not organize with each other to protect their rights, i.e., their territory. Furthermore, while the youth in America and Germany give concrete answers to state-police abuse, the situation in Turkey is much weaker. As concluded from the interviews, there has been no organized response even to the bekçi and capitalist urbanization policies, which are the first barriers faced by young people meeting on the street and spending time with each other. All in all, what appears to be a community is usually just people enjoying the same culture and spending time with each other. This thesis concludes that hip-hop is an art rather than a lifestyle in Turkey.

It cannot be said that hip-hop culture in Turkey, especially rap music, is about life-death situations like in America and Germany. As Elbir noted, it is difficult to say that rap music emerged as ghetto music in Turkey (Elbir, 2021). On the other hand, this does not mean there is no discrimination and violence in Turkey as in America and Germany. It can hardly be said that the struggle for survival,

as in America and Germany, is only seen in hip-hop in Turkey. Still, it is inaccurate to see this situation all in black or white. In Turkey, many hip-hop artists still perform rap music underground, despite various difficulties. Although Turkey has failed the community test, it hosts youth groups related to hip-hop. However, their individual efforts are not enough for the community test concerned in this thesis.

Therefore, it cannot be said that the hip-hop community in Turkey has changed over time because there is no hip-hop community suitable for the ideal type in Turkey. On the other hand, hip-hop has changed over time, as in other countries. Hip-hop, which started as an underground, has taken its place in the mainstream media over time.

Another change that hip-hop in Turkey has undergone over time is how hip-hop is experienced daily. With the rising capitalist urbanization policies and state control, hip-hop enthusiasts who used to meet, dance, graffiti, beatbox, and perform in hip-hop battles on the street in the past have left the street and are stuck in private spaces such as homes or studios.

Another result we comprehended from the field research is that hip-hop in Turkey is now exclusively limited to Turkish rap music. This situation is not limited to Turkey. Since hip-hop, which has become popular, has started to be made with economic motives, it has become a culture where, so to speak, what it sells is followed. As the participants who participated in the field research have determined, there is no community in Turkey, but even if there were, these communities would consist of Rap Music Labels. This situation has reached such a level that artists have tattooed their label brands on their bodies. Also, artists only endorse and share others artists on social media only if they are also affiliated with their label. That is, there is no spirit of solidarity and no communal elements. There are only commercial concerns. These examples prove that Turkish rap music is in the grip of the culture industry. That is, there is no

spirit of solidarity and no communal elements. There are only commercial concerns.

As mentioned in the interviews, rap music was seen as a source of fame and money. Thus, it was a way out for young people living in the ghettos. They aimed to escape their neighborhoods as quickly as possible and save their family and friends. Based on the interviews, it is clear that there is nothing vile about this desire. On the other hand, according to the culture industry described in the second chapter, hip-hop, which is now entirely under the control of the capital, should not be romanticized. In other words, hip-hop may have a critical attitude in Turkey at first, but as it has transformed over time, it is not in a situation to be romanticized. It has lost its rebellious elements. It is not possible to say that it even remains neutral. Rap songs constantly talk about capitalist elements and encourage listeners to do so.

Another conclusion drawn from the interviews is that while hip-hop put into action is expected to show active resistance movement, the opposite is valid in the real world. Particularly in the interviews with Turkish rappers, they stated that the feelings of the participants when recording a song in the studio or writing a song at home were quite intense. Nevertheless, this intensity of emotion disappeared after the act of recording or writing songs was finished. The participants are trapped in a kind of passivity after they have achieved their small victories.

This thesis, which sought to examine the hip-hop community in Turkey, presented a humble analysis within its means. Together with the cultural theories blended with the information and testimonies gathered in the field research, it can be said that the main implication of this thesis is that there is no hip-hop community in Turkey like in the USA and Germany. As examples of the other results obtained throughout the research, such examples can be considered: the understanding of hip-hop in Turkey as Turkish rap, such rap songs losing their former activism, hip-hop being experienced as a branch of art rather than a

lifestyle, and the claimed elements of the resistance are not being entirely anti-order.

Nevertheless, this thesis emphasizes that the experiences of young people who have hip-hop in their daily lives are still vital. Future studies on the hip-hop community in Turkey may examine digital communities because most of the accumulated intellectual information about hip-hop consists of online forums.

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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

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13 EYLÜL 2022

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Barış ÇAKMUR

Danışmanlığını yürüttüğünüz Sinem DEMİREL'in "**Neoliberal Dönemde Hip-Hop: Türkiye'deki Türkçe Rap Müzik Komünitesi**" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay **0495-ODTÜİAEK-2022** protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Prof. Dr. Mine MİSİRLİSOY
Başkan

Doç. Dr. İsmail AKÇOMAK
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Müge GÜNDÜZ
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Şerife SEVİNÇ
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Murat Perit ÇAKIR
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Süreyya ÖZCAN KABASAKAL
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi A. Emre TURGUT
Üye

B. LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Ali was born in 1988 in Izmir. Initially a teacher, he recently resigned to pay more attention to hip-hop. He is a signed rapper with a record label. I reached out to him through a mutual friend.

Serkan was born in Eskişehir in 1995. He earns his living by rapping. He lives in Kadıköy. Despite staying underground for a long time, he has signed up with a record company and is in preparation for an album. I reached out to him through a mutual friend.

Barış was born in Ankara in 1981. According to what he said, he could not keep up with any job; he only felt happy when making rap music. Although he currently works a daily job to cover his living expenses, he is still involved in rap music underground. He still lives in Ankara. I reached out to him through a mutual friend.

Muhammet was born in Ankara in 1989 and still lives in Ankara. He currently does not work in any job because he was fired recently. He says he is better off that way because he does not want to obey anyone, under no circumstances – even for a paycheck. I reached out to him through a mutual friend.

Simge was born in 1996 in Istanbul. Having studied contemporary dance at a state conservatory in Istanbul, Simge started making music after spending time in a village in Muğla. She is currently making music and traveling between Ankara and Istanbul. She is a friend of mine from the Ankara hip-hop scene.

Niyazi was born in Ankara in 1988. Niyazi, one of the people I interviewed, who contributed the most to Ankara's hip-hop life, currently earns his living as a producer. He lives in Ankara, where he owns a studio. He is a friend of mine from the Ankara hip-hop scene.

Umut was born in 1993 in a ghetto in Ankara. Umut, who has been rapping underground for many years, continues his song production underground. He has been a university student for many years because his primary focus was always rap music. He is my former flatmate.

Damla was born in Bursa in 1995. Stating that every moment of her life is intertwined with hip-hop (mostly rap music), Damla has not yet released a rap song. She describes himself as a "rap veteran." I reached out to her through a mutual friend.

Murat is someone who was born and grew up in the back streets of Istanbul. He also says that he never left the streets, which can be traced in his songs. He still lives in Istanbul and is in preparation for his new EP. He is an acquaintance of mine from the Istanbul hip-hop scene.

Kerem is a hip-hop critic. He has his website and a podcast channel where he invites hip-hop lovers to talk on the subject. He says that he adores the digital hip-hop community in Turkey. He points out that the digital community is more intellectual than the ones in the streets. He is a friend of mine from the visual hip-hop community on social media channels.

Mustafa was born in 1999 in Istanbul. He has a hip-hop website where he writes columns regularly and records podcasts when appropriate. He is a college student majoring in economics. I reached out to him through a mutual relative.

Doğukan was born in a city in Turkey's Eastern Anatolia Region. Since he is the most famous and visible person among the people I interviewed, his identity will remain completely anonymous, taking into account the transparency and flow of the conversation. He has been a rapper for more than ten years, and I reached out to him through a mutual friend.

Hayri was born in 1995 in Elazig. He currently lives in İzmir. According to him, he cannot even imagine himself doing anything other than graffiti. It is like the paint spray is his third hand. Unfortunately, he has to do different jobs because he cannot earn enough income from graffiti. He is generally insecure and works in day-to-day jobs. I reached out to him through a mutual friend.

Çağrı was born in 1987 in Germany. He came to Izmir at a young age. He says he cannot leave this way of life even if he wants to because of his connections with several famous rap artists. As a software engineer, Çağrı describes himself as an outcast in business life. He is a friend of mine.

Nihat was born in Izmir in 1983. He still lives in Izmir and is one of the most popular rap artists from İzmir. He asked me if I would write his profession, then asked me to write a simitçi- bagel maker. Simit making is entirely legal, says Nihat. I reached out to him through a mutual friend.

Berk was born in 1993 in Istanbul. He now lives in Ankara, where he earns his living as a musician. Berk, who defines himself as a real Angaran, said that nothing could make him give up on this (musician) life no matter what. He is a friend of mine.

C. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Müziğin akademik çalışmaların odak noktası olmasının çeşitli nedenleri vardır ve bu nedenlerden biri de müzik gibi kültürel unsurların sosyo-politik anlamının merak edilmesidir. Müzik sadece sosyo-politik bir anlama sahip olmakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda yeni anlamlar üretir ve insanlara anlam katar.

Martiniello ve Lafleur'a göre müziğe yöneltilmiş en kritik yorumlardan biri, müziğin bir güç kaynağı olmasıdır (2008). Bu güç kaynağı hem seçkinler hem de sıradan insanlar tarafından kullanılabilir. Yani müziğin düzeni hem onaran hem de bozan bir yapısı vardır.

Örneğin Nietzsche'ye göre müzik, düzeni bozma potansiyeline sahip bir sanat biçimidir (Love, 1979). Nietzsche müziği diğer sanat formlarından ayırır ve müziğe atfettiği bazı eylemler vardır. Müzik bizi mutlu edebilir, üzebilir, övebilir ya da aşağılayabilir, ancak “asıl görevi düşüncelerimizi daha yüksek şeylere yönlendirmek, yükseltmek, hatta bizi sarsmaktır” (Young, 2010). Ona göre müzik öyle konuşur ki şiiirden daha etkili bir nüfuz etme aracıdır, kalbimizin en derinlerine dokunur. Nietzsche'ye göre müzik insanları iyiye ve doğruya götürebilir; bu da müziğin insanlara bir şeyler yaptırma, eylemsellik özelliğini kanıtlar niteliktedir.

Gerçekten de müziğin insanı harekete geçiren bir yönü vardır. Eski zamanlarda savaşa çağrı ritüelleri ve milli marşlar buna örnek olabilir. Müziğin insanları harekete geçirme özelliği, yalnızca sıradan insanlar tarafından değil, muktedirler tarafından da kullanılmıştır. Gramsci'nin de ilgili konuyu açıkladığı gibi, müzik hem düzeni kurmak hem de bozmak için kullanılabilir (1978). Müzik aynı zamanda halk isyanının tetikleyici sembolü olabileceği gibi, muktedirlerin kendi düzenlerini haklı çıkarmak için kullandıkları bir araç da olabilir. Örneğin, müzik hükümet politikalarına dahil edilebilir; bir kampanya aracı olabilir; yani, bir iletişim yolu olarak kullanılabilir. Çinli yazar Lü Buwei'nin dediği gibi, “müziğin

hem devletten hem de gelenekten etkilenmesi genel bir kuraldır. Rejimler ve gelenekler kendilerini kurarken, müzik onlara hizmet etmek için uyum sağlar”. Alternatif olarak, müzik herhangi bir üçüncü dünya ülkesinde fısıldanan direnişin sembolü olabilir (Mason, 1997; Ferro, 1997). Yani müzik sadece bir tarafa hizmet etmez. Tek bir anlamı yoktur ve farklı anlamlar üretebilir. Popüler kültüre ait olabileceği gibi yüksek kültüre de ait olabilir ama ne olursa olsun her zaman insanın zihninde bir şeyler uyandırır.

Müziğin insanlarda bir şeyleri uyandırması gibi, müzik de insanlarda zaten uyanmış olandan doğabilir. Müzik günlük hayatımızın bir parçası olduğu için insanların kültürünün ayrılmaz bir parçasıdır. Örneğin 1970'lerin Bronx'unda her gün derin yoksulluk, ırkçılık, devlet-polis şiddeti gibi sorunlarla uğraşmak zorunda kalan siyahi gençler, içinde buldukları mevcut düzen sayesinde ve buna rağmen hip-hop kültürünü oluşturup geliştirdi.

New York'un arka sokaklarında doğan ve yerel gençlik kültürü olarak başlayan hip-hop, tüm dünyada kendini kanıtlamış, Amerika'dan taşmış ve tüm dünyaya ulaşmıştır (Osumare, 2001). Hip-hop, Amerikan gettolarından dünyaya yayılmaya başladığında, tahmin edilebileceği gibi, herkesin konuştuğu bir şey haline geldi. Başlangıçta yeraltında olan hip-hop şimdi ana akım haline geliyor çünkü (örneğin) yirmi yıldan daha kısa bir süre içinde rap müziği yerel performans pratiğinden daha fazla insana hitap eden milyonlarca dolarlık bir endüstriye dönüştü (Walser, 1995). Hip-hop yerleri değiştirdi ve insanları etkiledi. Dolayısıyla sosyal bilimleri de etkilemiştir. Literatürde bir anlatım yöntemi olarak kabul edilen hip-hop, etnomüzikoloji, sosyoloji, kültürel çalışmalar gibi birçok alanın merkezinde yer almıştır (Arıcan, 2011: 104).

Sonuç olarak hip-hop'u ele almak, bir alt kültürü anlamamızı ve o dönemin tarihsel, sosyal, politik ve ekonomik koşullarını ortaya çıkarmamızı sağlayacaktır. Çünkü hip-hop da müzik gibi müzik ve toplum, müzik ve siyaset arasındaki dinamik ilişkilerin içinde yer alır. Bu tür bir katılım, tartışmasını da

beraberinde getirmiştir ve bu tartışmayı anlamak için, gerçek yaşam pratikleriyle birlikte kültürel teorilerin kavramlarını da anlamak gerekir.

1970'li yılların Amerikan gettolarında çete savaşları, derin yoksulluk, kapitalist şehir planlamaları ve yükselen ırkçılığın ortasında bir cevap niteliği taşıyarak ortaya çıkan hip-hop, günümüze kadar çeşitli akademik çalışmaların odağında olmuştur. Yoksul siyahi gençlerin kendilerine var olan dünyada bir alan açarak söz sahibi olmasını sağlayan hip-hop, yalnızca dünyada değil, gittiği her ülkede gençlerin sesi olmayı başarmıştır.

Hip-hop'ın doğduğu topraklar olan Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nde o dönem Bronx yangınları konuşulmaktaydı. Bronx'ta o sene bir yılda tam 12.300 yangın çıkmıştı. İnsanlar ciddi anlamda bir sefalet içinde olmalarına rağmen sağlam, yerinde ve etkili politikalar üretilmemekteydi. Dolayısıyla Bronxlular yalnız kalmıştır. New York Post'a göre, Bronx'taki yedi farklı nüfus sayımı bölgesi, 1970 ve 1980 yılları arasında binalarının %97'sinden fazlasını yangın ve terk edilme nedeniyle kaybetti (Flood, 2010). Aslında bu yangınların bir başka sebebi de Amerika'nın 2. Dünya Savaşı'ndan sonra değişen yeni yüzüydü. Savaşın sonra ödenmesi beklenen sigorta bedelini isteyen birçok ev sahibi, yıkılan veya harap olan binalarını yıkmaya başlamıştı (Kenneth, 1995). Yani Bronxlu insanların kendi çözüm yollarını aramaya hip-hop ile başladığı söylenemez.

Bu sırada, New York City seçkinleri Diskolarda balo partileri veriyor ve şampanya içerken; Güney Bronx, bir dünya savaşı sırasında saldırıya uğramış gibi görünüyordu. Binalar harap oldu; hatta kimi insanlar o zamanki Bronx'u Beyrut ile karşılaştırmış. Başka bir deyişle hip-hop, adeta bir savaş alanı gibi olan mahallelerde yaşayan ve günlük yaşamlarında karşılaştıkları sorunları ifade etmeye çalışan siyahi gençlerin kullandığı kültürel bir harekettir (Kitwana, 2002). Dyson (2010), 1960 ile 1980 yılları arasında doğan gençlerin uyguladığı bu kültürü “toplumsal eleştiri” olarak tanımlamaktadır. Benzer şekilde, Gilroy (1993) Amerika ve Avrupa'da siyahlar tarafından yapılan müziğin Batı'dan gelen modernleşme ve modernizm eleştirisi olduğunu savunmaktadır.

Hip-hop'u şekillendiren gençlikti ve bir süre sonra gençlerin hayatını şekillendiren de hip-hop oldu (Alridge ve Stewart, 2005). Yani hip-hop'u ve onun siyahi gençlikle olan bağlantısını anlamak, aynı zamanda bu gençlerin hayatlarını anlamamıza da olanak sağlayan bir kapı görevi görmektedir.

Sanatsal yaratım ve bu yaratım sürecinin arka planı arasındaki ilişki bize “insanların yaşam tarzını, kendini ifade etme alanını, günlük yaşam pratiklerini, dili, bu kültürün insan yaşamına ait olduğunu ve toplumsal bir gerekliliğe işaret ettiğini” göstermektedir (Öğüç, 2015). Benzer şekilde, Smitherman'ın (2000) vurguladığı gibi hip-hop, belirli bir alanda yaşanan yoksulluk ve şiddet gibi gündelik yaşam sorunlarına verilen bir yanıttır. Bunu bir nevi etki-tepki meselesi olarak tanımlamak yanlış olmaz. Bu nedenle, bu kültürel ürünün oluştuğu ortam olan Bronx, Hip-Hop'u anlamak için hayati önem taşımaktadır.

Bronx'ta ortaya çıkıp iletişim teknolojilerindeki gelişmeler sayesinde dünyanın çeşitli bölgelerine ulaşmış hip-hop, bugün neredeyse herkesin hayatına temas edebilmiş bir olgudur. Bu durum ise elbette bir temasla sınırlı kalmamış, zaman içinde gündelik hayatımızın çoğunluğuna girerek bir yaşam biçimi haline gelmiştir. Hip-hop, gittiği her yere kendinden bir parça götürmüş ve gittiği her yerden de kendine bir parça katmıştır. Dolayısıyla küresel ve yerel olan arasında bir köprü görevi de üstlenmiştir. Normal hayatlarında kendi yerelleriyle bile iletişim kuramayan gençlerin, dünyaya açılabilmesi, hip-hop sayesinde.

Hip-hop kültürü, bir yaşam biçimi olmanın yanında, aynı zamanda sanatsal dalları olan bir altkültürdür. Breakdance, graffiti, rap müzik, DJ'lik gibi dalları olan hip-hop, gençlerin sesi olmakta başarılı bir altkültür olmakla kalmamış, aynı zamanda bir altkültür olmasının getirisiyle de direniş elementlerine ev sahipliği yapmıştır. Hip-hop'ın bir direniş aracı olduğunu iddia eden çalışmaların (Rose, 1994; Scott, 1990; Lüküslü, 2011), hip-hop çalışmalarının tam merkezinde yer aldığını söylemek yanlış olmaz. Gerçekten de çok zor koşullarda yaşayan Amerikalı siyahi gençlerin gündelik hayatlarında deneyimledikleri ırkçılık, yoksulluk ve devlet-polis şiddetiyle mücadele ettikleri bir araç olarak hip-hop

sayılabilir. Hip-hop'ın dolaylı yoldan düzen bozucu yapısı sayesinde gençler hem fikirlerini açıkça dile getirebilmiş hem de siyasi ve sosyal hayata katılım sağlayabilmişlerdir. Örneğin ırkçılığın artık zirveyi gördüğü, medya kanallarının hepsinde siyahilere karşı propagandanın görüldüğü yıllarda NWA adlı grubun anaakım medyada "a young ni** got it bad 'cause I'm brown/ And not the other color so police think/ they have the authority to kill a minority" gibi sözleri içeren bir şarkı yayınlaması, hip-hop'ın kitlelere ulaşma gücünü kanıtlar niteliktedir. Bu güç sayesinde gençler, değişim talep etmiştir (Soysal, 2011).

Gençlere bir kimlik sunan ve güçlendiren bir yapısı olan hip-hop, gençleri yalnızca bireysel anlamda değil, aynı zamanda komünel anlamda da güçlendirmiştir (Çağlar, 1998; Solomon, 2009). Hip-hop komünitesinin varlığı da bu ortak güçlenmeden gelmektedir. Çünkü ortak bir şekilde paralel zamanda güçlenen gençler, güçlenmeden önce aynı kader ve gündelik hayata sahip, değişim ve isyan araçlarındna mahrum bir kitleydi.

Okuduğunuz tezin ana odağında ise hip-hop'ın öznelere olan gençler, yani hip-hop komünitesi keşfedilmiştir. Bunun için, hip-hop kültürü ve komünitesi arasındaki dinamik ilişki incelenmiş ve bu ilişkilerin farklı ülkelerde nasıl değiştiği karşılaştırılmıştır. Örneğin, Amerikan gettolarında doğup tüm dünyaya yayılmış olan hip-hop'ın bir durağı da Almanya olmuştur. 1960'larda Almanya'nın misafir işçi talebiyle Almanya'ya gelmiş çok sayıda farklı ülkenin göçmen işçileri Kreuzberg'de yaşamıştır. Kreuzberg, yapı ve lojistik bakımından Bronx'a benzemekle kalmamış, içinde yaşayan gençlerin gündelik hayatları da benzer özellikler taşımıştır. Göçmen işçilerin çocukları aynı parklarda oynamış, aynı hastanede doğmuş ve aynı okullara gitmiştir. Berlin Duvarı'nın yıkılması ve Doğu-Batı Berlinlerin birleşmesiyle, Kreuzberg şehrin tam kalbinde yer alarak tüm dikkati üstüne çekmiştir. Sonrasında yükselen yabancı düşmanlığı ve ırkçı saldırıların şiddetli olmasıyla beraber, gençler bir bütün halinde mahallelerini savunmaya başlamıştır. Almanya'daki Amerikan askerlerinin eğlenmek için gittiği mekanlara gitmeye başlayan göçmen gençler, burada hip-hop ile tanışmıştır ve kısa süre içinde, hip-hop'ı hayatlarının merkezine almıştır.

Önceden kavgacı, şiddet yanlısı ve serseri olarak tanımlanan göçmen gençler, artık kendilerini hip-hop kültürü üzerinden farklı bir anlayışla tanıtmaya başladılar.

Kreuzberg'de yaşayan göçmen ailelerin büyük bir kısmı Türkiye'den göçmüştür. Dolayısıyla da Kreuzberg'deki hip-hop komünitesi çokça Türk orjine sahiptir. Şimşekler ve 36 Boys isimli iki çete, döneminin en ünlü iki çetesiydi. Artık hip-hop ile tanışan Kreuzbergli gençler sözlü olarak Türkçe rap yapmaya başladılar ve bu Türkçe seslendirilen rap parçalarının da Türkiye'de yankılanması kaçınılmaz hale geldi. Kartel projesiyle Türkiye'de büyük yankı uyandıran ve sarsan Kreuzbergli gençler, Türkiye'yi hip-hop ile tanıştırdı.

Hip-hop'ın Türkiye'deki serüveni her ne kadar Cartel ile başlamış olup 2000lerde büyük popülerite kazanmış olsa da hip-hop'ın uzun seneler boyunca underground kaldığını söylemek yanlış olmayacaktır. Genellikle gettolarda yaşayan gençlerin bir yaşam pratiği olarak ortaya çıkan hip-hop, 2015 yılı civarında Türkçe rap müziğinin ana akım medyada yer almasıyla birlikte yeraltından yüzeye çıkmaya başladı. Hip-hop'ın bir dalı olan Türkçe rap müziğe olan ilgi artarken, hip-hop'ın bütününe olan ilgi azaldı. Çok geçmeden Türkiye'de hip-hop; giyimi, konuşması ve yaşam tarzıyla hip-hop kültürüne uygun düşen gençlerin icra ettiği Türkçe rap müzik olarak anlaşılmaya başlandı.

Daha önce de belirtildiği gibi, Amerika'da başlayıp Almanya ve Türkiye'ye yayılan hip-hop hikayesinin baş kahramanları bu tezin ana konusunu oluşturmaktadır. Türkiye'deki hip-hop camiasını inceleyen bu tez toplamda beş bölümden oluşmaktadır. Birinci bölüm, tezin detaylı kısmına geçmeden önce bir açılış ihtiyacından dolayı yazılmıştır ve bu bölümde aynı zamanda çalışmanın önemi de gösterilmektedir. Tezin ikinci bölümü, hip-hop üzerine bir çalışma yapmak için gerekli teorik bilgileri içermektedir. Bu tür teorik bilgiler genel olarak müzik ve kültür hakkındadır. Tezin üçüncü bölümünde ise hip-hop'un hikayesi Amerika ve Almanya özelindeki tarihsel ayrıntılarla anlatılmıştır. Bölümün sonunda hip-hop komünitesine dair bir ideal tip tanımı yapılmıştır. Bu

komünite tanımını Amerikan örneğine, yani aslına sadık kalınarak tanımlanmış ve Almanya'daki komüniteyle karşılaştırılmıştır. Tezin dördüncü bölümünde ise Türkiye örneği incelenmiştir. Saha araştırmasında elde edilen verilerin ışığında Türkiye'deki hip-hop'ın mevcut durumu açıklanmış ve analiz edilmiştir. Sonuç olarak üçüncü bölümde tanımlanan hip-hop komünitesi örneği ile Türkiye'deki hip-hop komünitesi ideal tip testine tabi tutulmuştur. Son bölüm olan beşinci bölümde ise hip-hop komünitesi üzerine, sonuç yerini tutan bir analiz yazılmıştır. Sonuç kısmındaki bu analiz, çalışmanın bulgularını özetlemiş; teori ve pratik örneklerini birbiriyle eşlemiştir.

İkinci bölümde yararlanılan teorik çerçeve, kültürel çalışmaların pratik bir özetidir ve hip-hop ile kültürel çalışmalar arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektedir. Örneğin hip-hop'a yöneltilen bazı eleştirilerin düşünce kaynağı olan Frankfurt Okulu'ndan bahsedilmiştir. Frankfurt Okulu temsilcileri Adorno ve Horkheimer tarafından geliştirilmiş kültür endüstrisi kavramı, hip-hop'un tarihsel sürecini açıklamak için bir araç olarak kullanılmıştır. Onlara göre kültür endüstrisindeki bir ürün, endüstrileşerek sanatsal değerini kaybetmiş ve herhangi bir direniş unsuru içermemesinin yanı sıra, mevcut düzeni yeniden üretmiştir. Bu yaklaşımı benimseyen çalışmalar genellikle hip-hop'un yaygınlaştıkça endüstrileşerek özünü kaybettiğini ve farklı bir türe evrildiğini savunmaktadır (Kadıoğlu ve Sözeri-Özdal, 2020). Daha farklı bir anlayışa sahip olan Birmingham Okulu ise alt kültürlerin ikili bir yapıya sahip olduğunu söylemektedir. Onlara göre popüler kültür hem direnen hem de boyun eğendir. Başka bir deyişle hip-hop, kültür endüstrisinde eşzamanlı olarak düzen karşıtı söylemler üretirken, o düzeni yeniden üretmektedir (Rose, 1994). Hip-hop üzerine yapılan farklı çalışmalar arasında hip-hop ve mekân ilişkisi (Mişe, 2018; Solomon, 2005) ve hip-hop ile diasporik toplumlar arasındaki ilişki (Kaya, 2002) de bulunmaktadır.

Öte yandan, hip-hop üzerine yapılan çalışmalar genellikle hip-hop'un dinamik isyankâr doğasına dayanmaktadır. Kapitalist kültür endüstrisinin pençesindeki hip-hop, eleştireliliğini ve düzen karşıtı doğasını kaybetmiştir. Alternatif olarak, bir alt kültür olan hip-hop, popüler kültürün ikili bir doğası olduğu için hala asi

niteliklerini korumaktadır. Hip-hop artık bir para kazanma yolu olarak görülse de gençler için hala bir varoluş ve kendini ifade etme aracı olarak hizmet etmektedir. Sonuç olarak hip-hop üzerine yapılan çalışmalar genel olarak farklı anlayışlara sahip gibi görünse de genellikle benzer perspektif ve çerçevede irdelenmiştir. Ancak, Türkiye'deki hip-hop çalışmalarının bekası için hip-hop'un ana özneleri yani hip-hop komünitesi hakkında eleştirel bir çalışma yapmak esastır. Literatürde hip-hop camiasındaki gençlerle yapılan saha çalışmalarıyla zenginleştirilmiş akademik çalışmalar olsa da bu röportajlar herhangi bir karşılaştırmalı tartışma niteliğine sahip olmaktan oldukça uzaktır.

Başka bir deyişle, bir alt kültür olan hip-hop'un da hem kendi içinde hem de dış dünyada sergilediği direniş ritüelleri vardır. Örneğin konuyla ilgili daha önce yapılan çalışmalarda hip-hop, kitleleri organize etme, eleştirel şarkı sözleri ya da sistem karşıtı grafiti gibi özelliklerinden dolayı harekete geçirici ve özgürleştirici bir anlama sahiptir. Öte yandan, bazı çalışmalar bazen hip-hop'a aşırı önem atfetmiş ve hip-hop'u gençler için tek çözüm olarak sunmuştur. Ayrıca hip-hop içerisinde direnç unsurlarına da rastlamak mümkündür. Örneğin, sokakta başka bir dansçıya meydan okuyan bir breakdansçıya savaş denir ve kimin en iyi olduğu konusunda bir kavga olur. Alt kültürler sıradan insanları günlük yaşamlarında güçlendirebilir. Bu güç bazen bir birliktelik duygusuyla, bazen de bireysel özgüvenle elde edilebilir (Murdock, 1973). Hip-hop, bu tür ritüeller aracılığıyla gençlere sadece özgüven ve saygı kazandırmakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda kimlik oluşumuna da kaynaklık eder. Alt kültürler kişiye bir dereceye kadar bağlılık, kimlik duygusu ve görelî özerklik verir (Hodkinson, 2002).

Kültür yoluyla kimlik yaratmak dünyanın her yerinde görülen bir olgudur. Örneğin Almanya'ya göç eden misafir işçilerin çocukları hip-hop ile birbirlerine sarılarak kendilerini bu kültür üzerinden tanımlamaya başladılar (Kaya, 2000). Okyanusun diğer ucundaki siyah gençler, hip-hop'u kendileriyle ve başkalarıyla iletişim kurmak için kültürel bir sermaye olarak kullandılar (Clay, 2003); hip-hop'u kıyafetlerine, yüz ifadelerine ve dillerine entegre ederek kimliklerini hip-hop aracılığıyla tanımladılar. Clay, hip-hop'un kültürel sermaye olarak

kullanılmasının aynı zamanda neyin popüler olup olmadığı, kimin saygı görüp görmediği ve kimin siyah olup olmadığı konusunda da sınırlar çizdiğini gözlemledi (2003: 1356). Özetlemek gerekirse, alt kültürler ve dolayısıyla hip-hop bireyleri güçlendirebilir. Literatürdeki pratik karşılıklarının örnekleri bu bölümün başlarında kısaca verilmiştir.

Dördüncü bölümde saha çalışmasına ek olarak, Türkiye'deki hip-hop dinamiklerini anlamak için gerekli bazı akademik tartışmalara yer verilmiştir. Bu tartışmaların altında yatan teoriler ikinci bölümde ayrıntılı olarak açıklanmış ve bu teorilerin pratikle bulunduğu çalışmalara dördüncü bölümde yer verilmiştir. Bu tür çalışmalar üçe ayrılabilir: gençlik kültürü olarak hip-hop, bir direniş biçimi olarak hip-hop ve bir kent kültürü olarak hip-hop. Yani alan araştırmasının detaylarına geçmeden önce Türkiye'deki hip-hop literatürüne ve bu literatürün temellerine yer verilmiştir. Bahsedilen üç temanın önemi ve varlığı, elbette ki bu çalışma için tahmin edilemez değildir. Zira, hip-hop'ın öznelere zaten genç insanlardan oluşmaktadır; hip-hop bir kent kültürüdür ve hip-hop, doğası gereği isyankâr bir öze sahiptir. Bu tartışmalar ışığında aşağıdaki sorulara yanıt bulmaya çalışılmıştır:

- Bir hip-hop komünitesini hip-hop komünitesi yapan faktörler nelerdir?
- Türkiye'de hip-hop komünitesinde herhangi bir kopuş veya süreklilik var mıdır? Bunların örnekleri ve sebepleri nelerdir?
- Türkiye'de hip-hop zaman içinde nasıl ve neden şekil değiştirdi?

Bu sorular ele alırken, bu tezde Türkiye'nin sözde hip-hop komünitesinin Amerika ve Almanya'daki hip-hop komünitelerinden oldukça farklı olduğu savunulmuştur. Hatta, Türkiye'de herhangi bir hip-hop komünitesinin varlığı, tez boyunca tanımlanan ideal tipe uygun düşmediği için, eleştirel şekilde tartışılmıştır. Fakat bu tez, hip-hop'ın Türkiye'de yaşayan gençler için kimlik oluşturma (Kaya, 2000), siyasal yaşama katılma (Buhari-Gülmez, 2017; Librado, 2010), kişisel rehabilitasyon (Hakvoort, 2015; Elligan, 2004), gerçeği yansıtma

(Smitherman, 2000) ve kendini ifade etme (Rose, 1994) gibi etkilerini de görmezden gelmemektedir.

Okumakta olduğunuz tezde kullanılmış araştırma yöntemi, 1967 yılında Strauss ve Glaser tarafından geliştirilen nitel bir yöntem olan Gömülü Teori'dir. Bu yöntemin kullanılma sebebi, hip-hop ile ilgili çok sayıda çalışma olması ve literatürdeki boşluğun ancak bu yöntemle saptanabilecek olması iddiasıdır. Tezin saha araştırmasında hip-hop ile ilgili on dört erkek ve iki kadın olmak üzere toplamda 16 kişi ile röportaj yapılmıştır. Görüşülen kişilerin isimleri, özgürce ve rahat konuşabilmeleri için sahte isimlerle paylaşılmıştır.

Yapılan görüşmeler sonucunda Türkiye'de hip-hop'un ya da hip-hop camiasının yokluğu savunulmaktadır. Bu sonuca, tez boyunca iddia edilen ideal tip testi referansı ile varılmıştır. Bu durumun sebeplerinden birini kapitalist kentleşmeye bağlayabiliriz. Başka bir açıdan da bakarsak, hip-hop'un temelde isyankar ve sistem karşıtı bir ruha sahip olduğunu biliyoruz. İdeal tipe uygun olan yerler, örneğin Amerika ve Almanya'da hip-hop çetelerinin polisle mekan savaşları sebebiyle çatıştığını ve kendilerini koruduklarını da biliyoruz. Öte yandan, Türkiye'deki hip-hop camiasının hip-hop'ın varlığına olan tehditlerinin herhangi bir şekilde savrulmadığı da bilinmektedir. Çözümüne dair herhangi bir örgütlenme olmamış, hatta herkes bireysel olarak kamusal alanları terk edip stüdyo ve evlere geçmişlerdir.

Sonuç olarak kapitalist kentleşme ve denetim mekanizmalarıyla birlikte kendiliğinden fiziki hayatta tanışma fırsatı bulamayan gençler daha bireysel olarak takılmaya başladılar. Bu, elbette, hip-hop topluluğunu etkiledi. Belki de komünite tanımını hip-hop'tan zevk alan insanlar olarak değiştirseydik, elbette bir komüniteden söz etmek mümkün olurdu. Ama Amerika ve Almanya'da olduğu gibi artık gündelik hayatlarının tam ortasında, tabiri caizse, hip-hop ile uyuyup hip-hop ile uyananların olduğu söylenemez. Öte yandan komünitenin şekil değiştirdiği de söylenebilir. Örneğin artık bir rap şarkıcısı şarkılarda "für die familie sadece aile" derken, sanatçının bağlı olduğu komüniteden ya da

sanatçının gerçek ailesinden değil plak şirketinden bahsettiği gözlemleniyor. Ayrıca rap müziğin bu kadar yaygınlaştığı ve hip-hop'un diğer unsurlarının bu kadar ihmal edildiği bir ortamda, hip-hop'un varlığı artık sorgulanabilir.

Yapılan görüşmelerden anlaşılan bir başka olgu ise, rap müziğin bir şöhret ve para kaynağı olarak görülmesidir. Böylece gettolarda yaşayan gençler için bir çıkış yolu olarak sunulmuştur. Hip-hop, rap müzik özelinde, ile uğraşan gençler mahallelerinden olabildiğince çabuk şekilde uzaklaşıp ailelerini ve arkadaşlarını kurtarmayı amaçladılar. Röportajlara dayanarak, bu arzuda herhangi bir hor görülecek bir durum olmadığı aşıkardır. Öte yandan, ikinci bölümde anlatılan kültür endüstrisine göre, artık tamamen sermayenin kontrolünde olan hip-hop, romantikleştirilmemelidir. Yani hip-hop ilk başlarda Türkiye'de eleştirel bir tavır sergilemiş olabilir ama zaman içinde kendi içinde evrimleştiği için tümüyle romantize edilecek bir durumda değildir. Aksi bir durum, körlük olarak nitelendirilir; zira, hip-hop sağlam derecedeki isyankar unsurlarını kaybetmiştir. Hatta tarafsız kaldığını söylemek de mümkün değil. Rap şarkılar sürekli olarak kapitalist unsurlardan bahsetmekte ve dinleyicileri de bunlara teşvik etmektedir.

Görüşmelerden çıkarılan bir diğer sonuç ise, harekete geçirilen hip-hop'un aktif bir direniş hareketi göstermesi beklenirken, gerçek dünyada bunun tersinin geçerli olduğudur. Özellikle Türkiye'deki rapçilerle yapılan görüşmelerde, katılımcıların stüdyoda şarkı kaydederken ya da evde şarkı yazarken hissettiklerinin oldukça yoğun duygular içerdiğini belirtmişlerdir. Buna rağmen, katılımcıların anlattığı üzere, şarkı kaydetme veya yazma eylemi bittikten sonra bu duygu yoğunluğu ortadan kalkmaktadır. Katılımcılar, şahsi küçük zaferlerini elde ettikten sonra bir tür pasifliğin tuzağına düşerler.

Türkiye'deki hip-hop komünitesini incelemiş bu tez, imkânları ölçüsünde mütevazı bir analiz sunmuştur. Alan araştırmasında toplanan bilgi ve tanıklıklarla harmanlanan kültür teorileri ile birlikte, bu tezin temel çıkarımının Türkiye'de, ABD ve Almanya'daki gibi bir hip-hop komünitesinin olmadığı söylenebilir. Araştırma boyunca elde edilen diğer sonuçlara örnek olarak,

Türkiye'de hip-hop'un Türkçe rap olarak anlaşılması, rap şarkılarının eski aktivizmini kaybetmesi, hip-hop'un bir yaşam biçimi olarak değil de bir sanat dalı olarak anlaşılıp yaşanması gibi örnekler sayılabilir.

Bununla birlikte bu tez, günlük yaşamlarında hip-hop olan gençlerin deneyimlerinin hala hayati olduğunu da savunmaktadır. Türkiye'deki hip-hop komünitesi üzerine gelecekteki çalışmalar dijital toplulukları inceleyebilir çünkü hip-hop hakkında birikmiş entelektüel bilgilerin çoğu çevrimiçi forumlardan oluşmaktadır.

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