

**COPING WITH THE CITY: TACTICS OF THE KURDISH
ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN ISTANBUL**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis analyzes the coping methods implemented by the Kurdish adolescent girls, who live in Dolapdere neighborhood in Istanbul, which is predominantly populated by displaced Kurds. Through using their own narratives and theoretical conceptualizations of Henri Lefebvre and Michel De Certeau, I scrutinize the tactics of the Kurdish adolescent girls to appropriate the urban public space. I argue that there is a spatial variation between the space of Dolapdere and the urban public space outside Dolapdere in terms of the dominant nationalist discourses that oppress the daily lives of these women. In line with these discourses, they apply various tactics that create cleavages and breaks in the dominant ideologies and that enable them to develop sense of comfort and belonging to the urban public space of Istanbul. This research opens up a space to interrogate the way second generation migrants of the Kurdish community, Kurdish adolescent girls, construct their subjectivities in the discriminatory environment of the city.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis is about the appropriation of the city of Istanbul by the unmarried adolescent Kurdish women who live in Dolapdere, a neighborhood inhabited by displaced Kurds. By focusing on their everyday practices in urban space, I will explore the coping mechanisms concealed in the daily routines of these women. As second generation members of Turkey's internal displacement process, the Kurdish adolescent women in Istanbul seek to become a part of the city. Most of them were born in Istanbul, or have at least been living in the city since they were very young. Unlike their parents, they prefer to stay in Istanbul rather than return to their home towns (Yükseker, 2008). They are different from older generations in that their demands are constructed at the urban level, which reflects a macro-level transformation in the Kurdish movement in Turkey.

In this thesis, I will utilize the conceptualization of the city and everyday life of Henri Lefebvre and Michel de Certeau as my theoretical framework. These scholars base their analysis upon the everyday practices of the ordinary inhabitants in urban public space. According to Lefebvre, urban space and everyday life is under the domination of a capitalist mode of production that excludes the working class from *being part of the city* (Lefebvre,

1996: 179). He proposes the concept of *right to the city* as a remedy for this inequality and as a means of mobilizing discriminated segments to participate in the urban public space. This concept implies the right of every inhabitant both to participate in decision-making processes and to appropriate the urban space in equal manners, meaning to use and to feel sense of attachment, belonging, comfort and safety in it (Lefebvre, 1996: 180). He takes the daily lives of the inhabitants as a ground for transformation that would enable equal access to the urban public space. In this he agrees with Michel de Certeau whose own major contribution has been the conceptualization of dominant *strategies* - institutionalized structures that are embedded in, and control and regulate, people's lives. However, according to De Certeau, people develop *tactics* in line with these strategies that enable them to manoeuvre within the space of strategies and mobilize resistance against their domination (De Certeau, 1984: 54). In this way of thinking, the urban public space, which according to Lefebvre is contested by the dominant ideologies, is pressured and conquered by the tactics of ordinary inhabitants that enable them to acquire their right to the city. This thesis investigates the tactics of Kurdish adolescent women to achieve a sense of belonging, comfort, safety and attachment in the urban public space.

In the 1990s, as a result of the war between the Turkish army and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) - a guerilla organisation - many Kurdish people were evacuated from their villages in the East and Southeastern regions of Turkey. The estimated number of people who were displaced during this process varies from 2 million to 4.5 million.¹ Forced migration shifted the space of Kurdish settlement to the Western provinces of Turkey. Along with these spatial changes, the ideological focus of the Kurdish movement also changed from the foundation of a Kurdish nation-state to rights-based arguments within a framework of

¹ 1995 Edition of Human Rights Watch Report: <http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1995/Turkey.htm>

human-rights and democratization. As part of this process, urban space started to emerge as the basis of the claims of Kurdish people.

As a large metropolis, Istanbul is a preferred destination for the migrants, not least because established neighborhoods of former Kurdish migrants can provide supportive kinship relations to subsequent arrivals. Dolapdere is one of these neighborhoods. Situated near Taksim Square in the centre of Istanbul, its location presents an ironic contrast to the exclusionary distance practiced towards the Kurdish migrants in the city. In the face of this exclusion migrants hold on to their community relations in Dolapdere to cope with the social, economic, political and discursive exclusion to which they are subjected. However, the level of attachment to the neighborhood varies between different generations of the migrant community. The second-generation members of these families, with whom I have conducted interviews, have more access to the urban public space. Because of their access to Turkish, level of education and growing role in the family livelihood, they are more engaged in urban life than their parents (Yükseker, 2008).

For this research, I have conducted twenty in-depth interviews with unmarried adolescent Kurdish women who live in Dolapdere. The respondents vary from high school students to university students and to women who work in textile workshops, though it should be noted that these are interpenetrating categories that often involve respondents who both attend the school and work in a part-time job. I have been in touch with some of these interviewees from Dolapdere since May 2010 and have therefore had a chance to conduct participatory observation in the neighborhood throughout this time. In addition to the narratives, my interpretations of these observations are also used as a contribution to this study. The analysis of tactics requires not only description of interviewees' behaviour, but also the values and meanings attributed to them by the respondents to these attitudes. In line

with the arguments of James Scott in the methodological perspective of his own study, I have utilized the intentions, values and meanings ascribed by the respondents to their own actions in my fieldwork analysis (Scott, 1985).

In the first chapter I will present the theoretical framework of this thesis which is constructed using Lefebvre's conceptualization of the *right to the city*, along with the *tactics* and *strategies* propounded by De Certeau. Lefebvre is a prominent scholar of the application of the Marxist point of view to urban analysis. He begins by emphasizing the role of industrialization in commodifying the city and changing it into a product that can be bought and sold in the market (Lefebvre, 1996: 70). As a result of this process, urban space is evaluated by its exchange-value, rather than its use-value. This results in the exclusion of the working class from the city and the inhabitation of the city center by the classes who own the means of production. In order to challenge this hegemonic domination, Lefebvre introduces the *right to the city*, meaning the equal participation in decision-making procedures and appropriation of the urban space by every inhabitant (Lefebvre, 1996: 179). He addresses the everyday life of city-dwellers as the arena where this right can be accomplished. As a Marxist philosopher, Lefebvre believes in the necessity of a revolution of the working class to overthrow the hegemony of the bourgeoisie. However, he contends that this revolution can be achieved through gradual transformation of the daily lives of ordinary inhabitants (Lefebvre, 2007: 40).

In focusing on the everyday lives of ordinary inhabitants the theories of De Certeau, agree with Lefebvre on this point, although De Certeau deals with the dominant power relations in the urban space without defining them as the capitalist mode of production .. Their main point of analysis is the domination of the daily lives of the city-dwellers (Highmore, 2002: 149). De Certeau terms the dominant power relations *strategies* and the resistance brought by the

people *tactics*. He argues that strategies dominate the current urban public space, whereas the tactics of inhabitants can provide manoeuvres for these people against their domination (DeCerteau, 1984: 53-54).

In the second chapter, I will scrutinize the research that emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s, which reflects the transformation in urban theory resulting from the processes of globalization and neoliberalism. This literature acknowledges the ideas of Henri Lefebvre in terms of the role of urban space in stimulating resistance. However, his theory is extended by expanding the emphasis on the working class to other excluded segments of the society. As a consequence of globalization and neoliberalism, dissolution of boundaries, decline of the nation-state, the strengthening of identity politics and the emergence of urban space as a political arena, many other discriminated groups - in addition to the working class – begin to voice their claims. The focus of the literature that revised the theory of Lefebvre is to consider and emphasize the claims of these different ethnic, racial, religious or gender groups in the city. I will present a detailed analysis of this literature by classifying the suggested coping mechanisms referred to in these researches. In every case study from different cities of the world, the authors provide different kinds of appropriation mechanisms that are resorted to by the inhabitants. These studies involve various race, ethnicity, gender or age based groups who apply different methods in order to prove their existence in the urban space. As part of the analytical framework of my thesis, I classify these practises according to three titles: explicit manifestation, avoidance and anonymity and resistance by existence. I base my categorization on the commonalities through which people construct themselves in the urban public space. This is not a mutually exclusive classification; instead they are contextual and implemented by the city-dwellers in different circumstances and will therefore provide valuable assistance in the analysis of my fieldwork.

In the third chapter I will make a brief review of the Kurdish issue, underlining the significant turns that have taken place in the issue and their results for the Kurds living in Turkey. In the light of this review I will elucidate my reasons for choosing unmarried adolescent Kurdish women as my unit of analysis. I argue that as second generation members of migrant families these adolescent women, unlike their parents, have more access to the public space of Istanbul (Kurban, Yüksek, Çelik, Ünal, & Aker, 2008). However, it is necessary to consider not only the dimension of age and ethnicity, but also the dimension of gender. The role of patriarchy in Kurdish society cannot be neglected. Therefore, I will also examine the category of 'unmarried adolescent Kurdish women' through perspectives of ethnicity, age and gender and how they relate to the Kurdish issue and Kurdish society .

The fourth and fifth chapters of this study comprise the analysis of my fieldwork in light of the theoretical framework analyzed in the first two chapters. These chapters reflect the spatial variation of the dominant ideologies and survival mechanisms implemented by young Kurdish women in the urban space. While the fourth chapter focuses on the appropriation methods resorted to by respondents in the Dolapdere neighborhood, the fifth chapter concentrates on the tactics implemented in the urban public space outside Dolapdere. Drawing on the narratives of the respondents, I reflect the split between their different experiences in Dolapdere and in other public spaces of the city in my thesis.

In the fourth chapter it is argued that young Kurdish women hold on to Dolapdere and develop a sense of attachment to it in order to cope with the discriminatory strategies exerted over the urban public space. The existence of the Kurdish community in Dolapdere provides them with a sense of belonging that agrees with the researches that are analyzed in the section on avoidance and anonymity (Erder, 1996: 246; Simonsen & Vaiou, 1996: 452; Stack, 1974: 33; Çelik, 2005: 144). In addition to the existence of Kurdish relatives and friends, the

traditional ceremonies that are performed in Dolapdere help these women survive in Istanbul. As a contribution to the current research that I term ‘explicit manifestation’, this thesis reveals the role played by the performances of traditional ceremonies in the achievement of a sense of belonging (Petropoulou, 2010: 222; Boudreau, Boucher, & Liguori, 2009: 338; Wedel, 2001: 123; Carpio, Irazabal, & Pulido, 2011: 18-19; Vargas, 2006: 50-51; Skelton & Valentine, 2003: 120; Çelik, 2005: 151-152; Wedel, 2001: 94; Erder, 1997: 122). On the other hand, the kinship relations in Dolapdere also have an oppressive effect on the daily lives of Kurdish women. The Kurdish community requires the performance of an “ideal Kurdish adolescent women” that involves particular idealized performances of Kurdish identity (Goffman, 2009: 33-38). It operates over the inhabitants of the neighborhood as a strategy of the dominant discourse, in De Certeau’s terms (DeCerteau, 1984: 53-54). I contend that the women prefer to perform this role in their everyday routine as it enables them to appropriate the neighborhood space. By conforming to the dress codes of the community or being careful about speaking in Kurdish in the neighborhood space, even though their Turkish is better than their Kurdish, they perform the role ascribed by the community in Dolapdere (Fenster, 2005: 226; Secor, 2002: 13; Secor, 2004: 359; Fine & Weis, 1998: 87). These practices become their coping mechanisms in order to be able to appropriate the space of the neighborhood.

Outside Dolapdere, urban public space is under the domination of Turkish nationalist discourse. In the fifth chapter, within the framework of performance literature, I will suggest the concept of “passing” propounded by Sara Ahmed, through which she underscores the attempts of colonized subjects to become invisible in urban public space by imitating colonials (Ahmed, 1999: 97-98). I argue that the respondents who attend school display a common performance of passing in school, work and other public spaces of the city that provides them with ordinariness and invisibility in the space outside Dolapdere. They choose

to remain silent and not to highlight their “Kurdishness” through the way they speak or dress. They cling to their education or job to survive in Istanbul (Erman, 2001; Padilla, 1993). However, because their commitment to their Kurdish identity still persists, cracks and ruptures emerge in this performance. In these moments, they choose to highlight their ethnic identity in order to be able to survive in the urban public space. They participate in demonstrations and wear clothes or use accessories that reveal their Kurdishness or speak solely in Kurdish. Their attempt to become a component of the dominant order therefore does not exclude their ethnic consciousness. Identity formation is not a clear-cut process that can be put into concrete categories. However, the concerns of these girls to assimilate themselves into the system and their liberation ideals are both influential in their lives. In conformity with the research that analyzes the attempts of discriminated segments simultaneously to take part in the system and struggle to transform it inside by not giving up their commitment to their identity, the Kurdish women try to be part of the dominant system but do not leave their commitment to Kurdishness (Yousef, 2011).

On the other hand, the women who work in permanent full-time jobs in the textile workshops have different experiences in public space to the women who go to school. They usually work in workshops located in Dolapdere that are mostly owned by their relatives. Even though they work with their friends and relatives from Dolapdere, they sometimes have to face discriminatory attitudes in their bosses – when they work in workshops outside the neighborhood – or co-workers. Whereas within the neighbourhood they respond to these attitudes by emphasizing their ethnic identity, not by hiding it, (Secor, 2004; Fine & Weis, 1998; Skelton & Valentine, 2003), outside Dolapdere, in the urban public space of Istanbul, they feel alienated and uncomfortable. Their attachment to neighborhood is greater than that

of the women who go to school which isolates them from the urban public space (Çelik, 2005: 144; Erder, 1997: 70).

METHODOLOGY

The fieldwork of this thesis was conducted in Dolapdere, a neighborhood in Istanbul populated predominantly by Kurdish and Roma people. It is based on in-depth interviews with twenty unmarried adolescent Kurdish women between the ages fifteen and twenty-five. I conducted two interviews with every respondent, making a total of forty interviews during my fieldwork. Among the interviewees there were both high school and university students and full-time and part-time workers, though these were not always mutually exclusive categories. Each group had its own *sui generis* experiences of urban public space that provided a diverse array of material for analysis.

My first meetings with the girls from Dolapdere took place in May 2010. Since then I have established and developed new relationships with the inhabitants of the neighborhood. Throughout this time, I wandered around the neighborhood, met with many different Kurdish women from Dolapdere and their parents and stayed in their houses. Our meetings were not limited to Dolapdere and we also met in Taksim, where the girls spend most of their free time. Not all our meetings were organized to form interviews and we also met casually to hang out together, participating in protests and conferences together, and enjoyed concerts by Kurdish singers. I have supported my in-depth interviews with my observations from the field.

I have decided to utilize the method of in-depth interview because of the space it opens up for the respondent to narrate herself. I asked open-ended questions to the interviewees that did not direct their narration. I am aware that this method has a drawback of long pages of

transcriptions for the researcher that may lead to confusion in the analysis, especially if it is considered that I conducted at least two interviews with each respondent. However, this method is indispensable for my study because of my theoretical implications. From the very beginning of this research, my purpose has been to prevent any pre-deterministic approach that limits the voice of the respondents. I therefore adopted this method to allow self-description of the interviewees.

I have chosen the respondents with the method of snow-ball sampling. Through an existing friend of mine, I met a woman from Dolapdere. Initially, despite the mediator role played by my friend, it was hard to assure them about my research. However, through time, thanks to the friendly relations we established, they began to feel safer and more comfortable during the interviews. I always tried to set them at their ease during the interviews and let speak about whatever they wanted.

The respondents belong to families who were displaced from their hometowns because of the conflicts between the Turkish Army and PKK movement and its political, social and economic consequences. There are some girls whose villages have been burned and destroyed, whereas others' villages survived until now but have limited population. While some of them experienced step migration, a migration process that involves more than one stage, the parents of others took Istanbul as their first choice and they migrated there directly. There is a variation in the experiences of the city among these girls that will be discussed in the main chapters of this thesis.

The respondents can be divided into two categories. The first is of women who are high school or university students and who also work in part-time jobs in their holidays. Almost all of them work in service sector jobs as cashiers or saleswomen. This group is very much involved in city life through their daily activities. The second category comprises girls

who have full-time jobs in the textile workshops around neighborhood. None of them have ever attended a school, and a number are illiterate or have only recently learned reading and writing. They are compelled by their parents to work in their relatives' workshops. Household relations prevent them from claiming their rights in the workspace and they are not able to react against the exploitative conditions in these workshops. As a result of their lack of education, they do not have other options that would enable them to construct a different way of life, which leads to a very different experience of the city to the students.

During all of my interviews and meetings, I was situated as an outsider as a consequence of my "Turkish" identity, which did not change in spite of the friendly relations we established. I think this condition has both advantages and disadvantages for an analysis. I was treated as part of the Turkish audience, which limited the way in which they spoke about the Kurdish issue. In the majority of my interviews, I was asked whether I was in conflict with the particular symbols of the movement such as *Apo* – its leader. On a number of occasions it was necessary to explain myself as an independent researcher who did not collect data for any kind of state institution in order to make the interviewees feel comfortable speaking about some subjects. On the other hand, the position of outsider also benefitted my research, because the respondents did not omit any detail when they were explaining themselves, seeing me as a person who did not have any information about their lives.

The existence of a "Turkish girl" in their own neighborhood, asking them questions, spending time with them and enjoying these moments caused my respondents some confusion in terms of my situation as an outsider. In most of these meetings, I was aware of my position as a role model for these girls. Because of this position, they mostly preferred to spend time with me outside Dolapdere, in Taksim or Kadıköy and were curious about my life, my friends

and my school. I strived to benefit from these confusions as much as possible and attempt to change their prejudices towards me and my research.

CHAPTER 1

THE RIGHT TO THE CITY: TACTICS VERSUS STRATEGIES

Henri Lefebvre, 20th century French Marxist philosopher, is known for his role in the May 1968 movement in Paris with his theorization of the city and everyday life. He wrote his book, named *La Droite A La Ville*, in 1967, before the riots in May 1968 and the book played a revolutionary role in the advance of these riots in Paris. Even the title of the book was used as a slogan in the protests (Lefebvre, 1996: 6). Michel de Certeau is also a philosopher who was inspired by the events in May 1968. Ten years after Lefebvre, he published a book on the everyday practices of ordinary people in the city, named *The Practice of Everyday Life*. In this chapter, I will concentrate on the Lefebvrian notion of the *right to the city* by scrutinizing his theory through the concepts developed by Michel De Certeau. I will situate my research in the framework of a literature that emerged in the 1980s, as a response to globalisation and neoliberalism, that is based on the validity and the extension of the ideas of Lefebvre to

different identity groups such as gender, race, age, religion and ethnicity. Therefore, this chapter will also evaluate the neoliberal transformations, along with the globalization process.

LEFEBVRE AND THE RIGHT TO THE CITY

In May 1968, during the protests that were aimed to fight against the capitalist system, the urban space emerged as the context through which the claims are voiced by the protestors. With the slogan of *right to the city* – that emerged with the title of Lefebvre’s book – the fight against capitalism was claimed through equal existence and participation in the urban space. Therefore, the city became an arena of the revolution.

In order to understand Lefebvre’s analysis of the city, it is necessary to begin with his reference to the transformation of the city in the history. Lefebvre named the cities before the industrial era as traditional and medieval cities which only had a use-value. It was open to the access and usage for its own sake, which is identified as *the city as an oeuvre* by Lefebvre. In his words, this expression means: “The eminent use of the city of its streets and squares. It is the consumption for joy and pleasure, unproductive consumption.” (Lefebvre, 1996: 66). However, as a turning point, industrialization attributes an exchange value to the city. It becomes a product that can be bought and sold in the market. Lefebvre describes this process by referring to attacks of the industrialization to the each and every dimensions of the old type of city. Industrial production penetrates into the city and transforms it for its own purposes (Lefebvre, 1996: 70). He is inspired by the Situationist movement in his writings that should be taken into consideration to illuminate his theory. Guy Debord, one of the most important actors in Situationist movement, in his famous book *The Society of the Spectacle*, defines urbanism as: “The mode of appropriation of the natural and human environment by capitalism.” (Debord, 2004: 121). According to the Situationist understanding, the city is

designed in line with the needs of the capitalist system, which is mainly the consumption. The consumption patterns of capitalism design our environment in line with its interests, which leads to the self destruction of that environment (Debord, 2004: 125).

Lefebvre refers to the destruction of the urban, with an inspiration from the Situationist movement, but does not limit his analysis to this point. He also refers to the extension of the urban. He identifies the concept *urban fabric* by which he means the extension of the urban territory and urban life to the countryside. As a result of this process, the city centers become consumption areas and the inhabitants are forced to move to the peripheries of the city. Urbanization extends in a way that leads to the end of peasantry and the peasants become the inhabitants of the peripheries of the city space. Therefore, Lefebvre explains the historical process of the transformation of the city by focusing on the emergence of the capitalist mode of production and the reciprocal relation between urbanization and capitalism.

However, I think two important questions remain to be asked to understand the way he considers the city: Why does he focus on the city? In what way does he use the city in his analysis? Lefebvre considers the city as an arena that reflects society, so that he focuses on the city as a beginning point to achieve transformation in the society. He argues that: “The city is situated at an interface, halfway between what is called *near order* (the relations of individuals in groups of variable size, more or less organized and structured and the relations of these groups among themselves) and the *far order*, that of society, regulated by large and powerful institutions (Church and State), by a legal code formalized or not, by a ‘culture’ and significant ensembles endowed with powers, by which the *far order* projects itself at this ‘higher’ level and imposes itself.” (Lefebvre, 1996: 101). He argues that the far order which is the large institutions of society executes its power and authority through its impositions on the

near order. Therefore, he argues that a social analysis involves not only the institutions and the structures of the society but it is also vital to scrutinize the near order, which is the relationship between individuals and groups. Because of this understanding, he is criticized by some other Marxist urban sociologists, such as Manuel Castells. Castells criticizes him for ignoring the institutions and the structures while making an analysis (Castells, 1977: 90). However, he does not refer to a one-way influence, rather underlines the mediations. According to him, at both the individual and the structural levels there are mediations that have an influence on the transformations of the city. Therefore, he emphasizes the mediations in the relations between the individuals and among individuals, groups and institutions proving his statement: “The city is mediation among mediations.” (Lefebvre, 1996: 101).

Therefore, the city is a social phenomenon for Lefebvre. It is produced and reproduced by social relations that are relations between individuals, relations between groups and relations between institutions. It is a social being which involves mobility in itself, not as a solid and constant object. It is open to a change that results from the transformations of the people and the institutions. The interaction between people and the institutions shapes and reshapes the city, reveals it as an active organism which is not passive to these interactions. So, he refers to this active interaction process and the sociality of the city when he argues that the city should be seen as an oeuvre, as a work of art. He identifies the city with its use-value, rather than the exchange value that the market applies to an object. Like a work of art, the city gains different meanings by the involvement of different recipients.

The concept of the right to the city is based on Lefebvre’s idea that the city is a social phenomenon which is produced and reproduced by the participation of the every inhabitant. This concept underscores the right of every city dweller to become a part of the production process (Lefebvre, 1996: 179). Therefore, Lefebvre puts emphasis on *being part of the city*.

His main concern is to be part of the city, to be involved in the center of the city and have an interaction with the city. These concerns are identified under two titles: the right to participation and the right to appropriation. The first is defined as being part of the decision making process in the city. By this right, Lefebvre refers to the political participation of every inhabitant to the administration of the city, whereas the latter is more related to the everyday lives of the inhabitants. The term appropriation means to be part of the urban society, not to be excluded from the center and places of encounter. In the light of the description of the *city as an oeuvre*, appropriation means the usage of the city, the consumption of the city in a non-productive manner. The inhabitants are expected to be part of the reproduction process of the city in equal ways. Without any kind of segregation, Lefebvre points to the equal existence within the city space in everyday life and to be part of the interactive process between the city and the inhabitants that recreates the city every time in different ways. He indicates the quotidian of the ordinary city-dwellers to illustrate the right of every inhabitant to appropriate the urban space.

Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas, in their analysis of Lefebvre's theory, underline his emphasis on the everyday life, as an arena through which the inhabitants achieve their right to the city and enable the transformation of society towards equality. They claim that, Lefebvre is different from many other Marxist philosophers with his focus on everyday life. As a contribution to Marxist understanding, he extends his analysis to the daily lives and practices of the people, which is also applied to his analysis of the city (Lefebvre, 2007: 40). Therefore, he does not limit his analysis to the structures and institutions above the people, he also considers the individual relations within everyday lives. He mentions the daily life as a tool of the capitalist mode of production and consumer society within which the people are made passive to exploitation (Lefebvre, 2007: 72). Michael Gardiner contributes to the

analysis of Kofman and Lebas by emphasizing that for Lefebvre the quotidian is designed and regulated according to needs and the interests of the capitalist class. Because of the monotony of everyday life, people seek leisure time which is also commodified (Gardiner, 2000: 84). However, this idea does not prevent him from considering daily life as the place of transformation. On the contrary, he thinks that daily life should be attacked and reformed in order to achieve transformation. For him, revolution cannot be the result of an instantaneous change. Gradual transformation will be done through the daily lives of the inhabitants; the dissatisfaction of their everyday lives will create the necessary context for the revolution. By discarding the inhabitants from the capitalist point of view, which keeps them away from the city center and the appropriation of the city, revolution becomes inevitable. For this purpose, he stresses the role of a rupture within our everyday lives that terminates the monotony of daily life. By focusing on not only the institutions but also the daily lives of ordinary people, and by arguing that it is a reflection of the society as a whole, he conceptualizes the quotidian as the level to achieve urban society where everyone has their right to the city (Lefebvre, 2007: 212).

TACTICS VERSUS STRATEGIES

Michel De Certeau constructs his analysis on the everyday lives of ordinary individuals. In an agreement with Lefebvre, De Certeau rejects the idea of a spontaneous transformation that leads to the revolution. Rather, he argues for the manipulation of the system in itself through every day practices.

However, in De Certeau's theory the role given to the subjective agency is different from Lefebvre's analysis. According to De Certeau, the dominant ideologies and structures are not separate from the ordinary individuals; they are produced by the choices, decisions and actions of these individuals. However, the role he gives to the subjects' actions open up a

space for the resistance again in these actions of ordinary individuals. By arguing against the idea of an instantaneous revolution, De Certeau emphasizes the tricky nature of daily life and how it opens up a space for the users for intricate actions (DeCerteau, 1984: 11). From his point of view, resistance is embedded in each and every action of the ordinary people in everyday life, contrary to the analysis of Lefebvre in which he conceptualizes ordinary individuals as victims of false-consciousness who should be enlightened about the exploitation and domination of the capitalist ideology. While for Lefebvre, quotidian is under the domination of capitalist ideology that distracts attention of the people from exploitation, De Certeau contends that everyday ordinary practices of individuals involve both the domination and resistance at the same time. Through their actions, people produce the hegemonic structures along with the resistance mechanisms simultaneously.

For De Certeau, there are multiple ways of resistance. The term *heterology* is developed by him to elucidate the plurality of resistance. Michael Gardiner defines this concept as: “A plurality of meaning-constitutive practices, as against the official practice of historiography and sociological analysis, is intended to highlight and preserve the irreducible multiplicity of human social and cultural forms.” (Gardiner, 2000: 162). According to this perspective, a person may act in compliance with the dominant ideology with an opposite logic in her/his mind that reserve resistance in itself. Claire Colebrook explains this term as follows: “... Rather than returning the logic to some ground, it thinks the logic from a different point of view.” (Colebrook, 2001: 547). Therefore, according to De Certeau, resistance is not a singular way of action; rather it is produced by each and every individual in a different manner.

De Certeau’s perspective in terms of the subjective nature of resistance is based on his conceptualization of the term *production*. Production, for De Certeau, is not understood just

as material production; rather it involves the production of the relations, values and things that is based on the active engagement of both sides. Ordinary individuals take an active role within the production process and each and every interaction leads to a new product. De Certeau names this process as *secondary production* but not as reproduction, because of the role he gives to the subjective agency of the people in the production of resistance. However, this kind of a production is not visible. It is realized in a subtle manner by ordinary individuals. It does not have a systematic and hegemonic structure; rather it is without a limited space (DeCerteau, 1984: 11). It leaks through the system without being noticed which leads to the question: Since it is invisible and it does not have a limited space for itself, how can we detect it?

Michel de Certeau answers this question by referring to the *ways of operating* (DeCerteau, 1984: 14). The consumer does not have an opportunity to destroy the structures; therefore, she/he plays with the hegemony by using its own rules. People find a tricky way to overcome its dominance by obeying its rules, but keeping their otherness within its boundaries. He explains this process by referring to the Indians who were the colonies of Spain and argues that the colonized Indians utilized the assimilative culture imposed by the Spanish people, but not in the way that the colonizers planned (DeCerteau, 1984: 14). This is similar to speaking the language of the colonizer through a local accent, which keeps the person external to that language without rejecting that language completely. The user does not go against the dominant structure but uses it in his/her manner that develops a kind of resistance against the hegemony. Therefore, these minor resistances need to be investigated within the ways users operate the dominant structures.

He divides the operations as strategies and tactics. The main separation between these two concepts is the existence of a limited and well-defined area for the operation of a strategy.

The tactic has no space for itself. Because the tactic lacks a proper place for its operation, it uses the place defined by the strategy (Gardiner, 2000: 168). Therefore, it has to be quick, smart and successful in manipulating the existing strategies for itself. The ownership of its own place also brings some other qualifications to the strategies: The domination over time, to have a panoptical point of view and the power over knowledge (DeCerteau, 1984: 53). However, the tactic is identified as: "...It is a maneuver 'within the enemy's field of vision,' as von Billow put it, and within enemy territory." (DeCerteau, 1984: 54). In sum, while the strategies are the tools of the dominant institutions and structures used in order to define a space in which they will execute their power, the tactics are the maneuvers developed by weak to develop a kind of resistance. By keeping themselves a bit far away from the domination of the strategies, they protect their otherness towards that domination. Without totally rejecting it, they gain an opportunity to play with the rules to be able to protect themselves.

De Certeau presents a theoretical framework of resistance. However, in order to apply his theory to a fieldwork, it is necessary to amplify this framework with its practical reflections in daily life. James Scott's work, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (1985) can be read as an implementation of De Certeau's theory to the everyday struggles of ordinary peasants. In line with the arguments of De Certeau, he studies the daily routine practices of the peasants, their informal, unorganized and immediate actions against authority, from the perspective of tactic mechanisms. Through his analysis he not only focuses on the actions and behaviors of the peasants, but also considers the values, intentions and meanings attributed by the peasants to their daily routine practices (Scott, 1985: 38). In an agreement with the concept of heterology propounded by De Certeau, Scott considers the plurality of logics behind an action. In order to notice their intentions while they are doing

their job, Scott scrutinizes the narratives of his respondents where they explain their feelings and intentions about these moments. He does not decide upon the values and meanings attributed by the peasants to their daily life to be able to analyze their tactic mechanisms; instead he voices their claims about their own feelings and intentions while they continue to do their job without a rupture (Scott, 1985: 290). He propounds the concept *hidden transcript* which is also valuable for this research. By this term, Scott makes a separation between private and public transcript, through which he aims to underscore the performative differentiations within a person's life that involves implicit struggle mechanisms against the dominant structures (Scott, 1990). His research is necessary for this thesis to be able to illustrate the theoretical perspective of De Certeau through his fieldwork analysis. The examples of tactic mechanisms he presents in his study encourage the questions and analysis of my fieldwork. Using Scott's approach, in this study I will not only analyze the behaviors of Kurdish adolescent girls in their daily practices, but also focus on their own interpretations about their own actions which leads me to understand the meaning applied to a behavior or the intention of the subject.

To put it in a nutshell, Lefebvre's theory and his concept of the *right to the city* provides the theoretical framework for this thesis, along with the conceptualization of resistance through *tactics* and *strategies* by De Certeau. By underlining daily lives of ordinary inhabitants of the city as a potential for resistance, these scholars inspire this research to study everyday tactics of Kurdish adolescent girls that they implement to claim their right to the city.

TRANSFORMATION OF THE URBAN SPACE: Neoliberalism and Globalization

Lefebvre, as a Marxist scholar, constructs his theory upon a criticism of capitalist ideology. Right to the city reflects his concern about the exclusion of working class from both urban space and decision-making processes by bourgeoisie. Beginning with the 1980s, this analysis based on class dimension is contributed by different perspectives such as ethnicity, race and religion, and gender dimension. As a consequence of the transformations based on neoliberalism and globalization, claims of different identity groups have begun to be voiced and emphasized. In this section, I will present a brief review of these changes that calls for an expansion in the theory of Lefebvre that focuses solely on class analysis.

Neoliberalism, as a recent version of capitalism, operates within the economic sphere, in the first place. Until the confrontation with the Oil Crisis in 1973, Keynesian policies had been executed in economic terms. This crisis and its results for the Western countries in the world led to the encouragement of economic programs developed by Milton Friedman and the group named *Chicago Boys*, who were academicians at the University of Chicago and creators of neoliberal policies. In these economic programs the essential point was the emphasis on the termination of state intervention and the decrease in government spending. Their main purpose was transformation of the role of the state from interventionist to a regulatory position. The state was expected to provide the security of market operations and not interfere in any other areas. Oil crisis in 1973 emerged as a turning point in the implementation of these policies (Harvey, 2007: 27). The case of Chile – coup d'état by Pinochet – provided a suitable arena for the application of these policies. Naomi Klein in *The Shock Doctrine* explains this process in a detailed manner. Klein claims the overthrow of the elected leader Salvador Allende by a coup d'état became the victory of the Chicago Boys (Klein, 2007: 95). They started to implement their economic program that keeps the state away from the market and this trend spread to other Latin American countries such as Brazil,

Uruguay and Argentina (Klein, 2007: 106). However, it was not limited to Latin America, but also spread to Europe and other countries in the world (Klein, 2007: 172).

David Harvey defines the concept of neoliberalism by referring to four elements: privatization, financialization, management and manipulation of crisis and state redistributions. According to him, through these four elements, the neoliberal turn occurred throughout the world, which restores class privileges, favors the dominant classes and takes the sources of the subordinate classes and gives them to the dominant ones. Many countries could not escape from the regulations led by institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank. The supranational institutions as the IMF and the World Bank emerged as figures above the nation-states that went beyond them and put them under their influence. National boundaries were put into question. The power of the ruling class globalised through neoliberalism. It is a class project across national boundaries (Harvey, 2007: 22).

The term globalization began to be referred to in this process. Zygmunt Bauman focuses on this term and analyzes its history, meaning and references. His main emphasis is on the withdrawal of the nation-state and the growing power of capital and financial flows. He underlines the growing influence of the capital over nation-state, by going beyond its boundaries that makes it insignificant. He argues that: “Globalization is idea of indeterminate, unruly and self-propelled character of world affairs, the absence of a centre, of a controlling desk, of board of directors, of managerial office.” (Bauman, 1998: 59). Therefore, he identifies this new world order as *The New World Disorder* by referring to the words of Kenneth Jowitt, in which there is not a main centre but the circulation of capital and finance determines the way this “disorder” operates (Bauman, 1998: 59). In line with the arguments of Bauman, Neil Smith underlines the variation of the executive committees in this new era. According to him, neoliberalism is about a class restructuring in the executive committee

itself, it is a transformation from industrial to financial system (Smith, 2011). However, it is not only the capital that is in flow; but also the people who are circulating in this global era. Along with the process towards the erosion of the nation-state and the improvement of the transportation technologies, people are in mobility. Although it is commonly argued that this new order enables everyone to travel from one place to another in quicker and easier way, Bauman makes a critical analysis on this argument and argues that the mobility of the people in globalization is just a myth that involves only the class that has capital, which is defined by him as tourists. By the term tourist, he means the privileged class that has an ability to mobilize related to their favors and choices. On the other hand, the mobility within the global world also involves the vagabonds, by which he refers to the people that are constrained by invisible boundaries and forced to mobilize because of financial obligations. For the vagabonds, migration within or across the countries is a result of the concern for providing their livelihood (Bauman, 1998: 86). The significance of this distinction is the emphasis made upon the migrants all around the world who seek for a security in economic, social or political terms.

As Anthony Giddens mentions in his book, one of the main arguments of neoliberal system is “individual choice alone” (Hutton & Giddens, 2000: 217). By these words, he means that in neoliberal system, the people are left on their own; whatever they gain or lose is determined by their self-capacity and they have to deal with the problems by themselves. Therefore, under the pressure of the neoliberal system and unequal character of globalization, the people are left alone to solve their own problems of livelihood. They become the vagabonds who search for a livelihood. This tendency leads to the idea of “blaming the victim”, “to preach the gospel of self-help” in Bourdieu’s words (Bourdieu, 1998: 7).

The growing discussion about the significance of the concept of nation-state in a globalized world arena results in the beginning of a process towards the dissolution of national boundaries and national identities. Along with the national belongings, as a result of migration, the local belongings dissolve and transform into new local belongings that are constructed in the cities, which are the new destinations of migrant communities. As a result of the strengthening of neoliberal ideology together with globalization, the already excluded segments of the capitalist system come out of this transformation in a much more disadvantageous position. Proving the arguments of Lefebvre, they constitute the peripheries of the city and remain with no access to the urban space and decision-making processes. Therefore, the city again becomes an arena of struggle. Considering the dissolution of national boundaries together with the migration to the city, the urban context emerges as a performance area for resistance of the discriminated groups who are left alone to their destiny by the neoliberal ideology.

On the other hand, globalization and neoliberalism also result in the strengthening of identity politics. (Calhoun, 1994) With the dissolution of national identities, other different identity groups are began to be heard and discussed. Therefore, the struggle in the urban space is not conceptualized as a conflict between workers and capitalist class anymore. Lefebvre's theory is limited and necessary to be expanded in line with these different ethnic, racial, sexual or religious identity groups.

In the next chapter, I will scrutinize these two remarks about the influence of neoliberalism and globalization on the theory of Lefebvre and the right to the city. The first section will discuss the literature on the emergence of the urban context as the new arena of struggle between dominant groups and excluded segments of the society, as a result of the neoliberal transformations and globalization. In the second section, the influence of identity

politics at the urban level will be analyzed and the literature that argue for the expansion of the theory of Lefebvre to the other discriminated identity groups will be scrutinized.

CHAPTER 2

GOING BACK TO LEFEBVRE: RECALLING THE RIGHT TO THE CITY

This chapter scrutinizes the influence of globalization and neoliberalism on the theory of Lefebvre in terms of the role of the urban space in the struggle of the excluded segments of the society. There are two prominent dimensions that should be underlined: The appearance of the city as the arena of resistance for the highly excluded segments of the neoliberal order and the alteration of the class based analysis of discrimination and exclusion of these segments to an emphasis on the racial, ethnic, religious or sexual identities. In light of these two-sided impacts of globalization and neoliberalism, the urban space re-emerges as the space of struggle for different disadvantageous groups of the society. Therefore, *the right to the city* remains as a valid and valuable slogan for these segments to prolong the resistance against dominant discourse.

URBAN RESISTANCE AGAINST GLOBAL INEQUALITY

The dissolution of national identities and the sense of belonging towards the nation-state result in the emergence of new localities that engender new belongings for the people. “Globalization of biography” is a name given to this process, by Ulrich Beck (Beck, 2000: 168). Beck explains this concept as the erosion of the tie between place and identity in a person’s life. Because of the migration processes in this new global era, people feel obliged to adjust to the new conditions which lead to the creation of new types of local identities in the city. In addition to the relation between identity and space, the sense of belonging and loyalty to the job is also in decline. Richard Sennett contributes to the arguments of Beck with an analysis of the weakening of the tie between identity and work. He focuses on late capitalism and the new task-based economy that does not let long-term employment (Sennett, 1999: 14-15). According to him, within this system, people seek a comfortable and secure area and he suggests the city as a new arena where people are able to develop sense of belonging and generate revolutionary attempts (Sennett, 2000: 176).

The search for the achievement of sense of belonging and comfort in the urban space leads to different social movements that utilize the urban space as the battleground of the struggle. Anti-globalization movements can be considered a paragon of the role of the city in the struggle of discriminated segments of the society against the late-capitalist discourse. In her articles *Reclaiming the Common* and *Reclaiming the Street*, Naomi Klein focuses on these movements through some examples. *Reclaiming the Streets* is one of these movements where people argue against the privatization of urban space that prevents them from appropriating the city in equal manners. Through these different cases around the world, Klein presents the relation between anti-globalization movements and urban space which reflects a more globalized concern about the neoliberal economic policies (Klein, 2000: 316). Confirming the arguments of Klein, in her analysis of the social movements in the urban space beginning with

the 1960s, Margit Mayer asserts that starting with the 1990s, the claims of oppositional groups have been drawn by a criticism against dominant neoliberal policies in the context of urban space. Therefore, Mayer suggests the Lefebvrian notion of right to the city as a valid framework to develop a resistance against the global neoliberal order (Mayer, 2009: 363-367). Similar to the concerns of Mayer, Eduardo Mendieta argues for the validity of the arguments of Lefebvre at the end of the 20th century by referring to the life conditions of vagabonds, in Bauman's words, who have to migrate from rural areas to the peripheries of the city. He seeks for a solution in the Lefebvrian understanding of claiming the urban space in equal manners for all groups in the society (Mendieta, 2008: 151).

Therefore, as a result of the globalization and neo-liberalism processes, the excluded segments of the dominant order have found themselves in a much more disadvantageous position, in the slums of the city. The dissolution of belonging to the nation-state has resulted in the seek for new types of belongings in the city. The ideological framework of these resistance movements is drawn in line with the transformation of the class-based analysis to the identity politics. In the section below, I will focus on the literature that scrutinizes the resistance methods of different identity groups to claim the urban space all around the world.

REFLECTION OF IDENTITY POLITICS TO THE URBAN SPACE

Beginning with the 1980s, in line with the globalization processes, the loyalty to the nation-states and national belongings have begun to be dissolved, which have led to a search for new belongings. As a result of the dissolution of national identities, racial, ethnic, religious or sexual identities have been underlined while making politics at every level. The claims have not been within the nation-state discourse anymore; they are voiced at the local

level. The resistance is constructed within the framework of identity politics, by underlining their racial, ethnic, religious or sexual identities; and the battleground is transformed into the urban space. (Calhoun, 1994)

In this section, I will present the literature on these resistance movements developed at the urban level by different identity groups. This literature is constituted by the studies that make analysis from the perspective of Lefebvre and his concept of the right to the city. As it is mentioned in the first chapter, the right to the city is defined through two types of claims: right to participate in the decision-making processes and right to appropriate the urban space. This literature reflects this variation in terms of the conceptualization of the right to the city; while some authors study from the perspective of policy making and taking a role in local politics, some others are concerned about the appropriation of the city by different identity groups. In this study, my concern is to investigate the tactics applied by the Kurdish adolescent women in order to appropriate the urban space, therefore I will limit my analysis to the works on the appropriation mechanisms of the urban space by various identity groups.

My purpose is to benefit from the appropriation mechanisms - mechanisms developed to acquire a sense of belonging, comfort and commitment in the city and to use the urban space in equal manners with other city-dwellers - referred in these works, as examples for my own study. I have found out similarities in the survival tactics mentioned in these researches. Based on a review of these works, I classified three categories of survival mechanisms implemented by the excluded segments of society to appropriate the urban public space. In this section, I will present these categories, by scrutinizing the actors of these methods and the particular circumstances through which they are implemented.

Explicit Manifestation

The first category involves explicit ways of expressing identity through different coping mechanisms. Those who resort to these mechanisms choose not to abstain from urban space; contrarily insist on participating in it. From protests to other relatively inconspicuous ways of expressing identity, like using a particular space deliberately - even though it is forbidden to use it, this category involves tactics of the excluded inhabitants of the city. Based on hitherto studies on this particular issue, local activism appears to be a way of appropriating the city. In this line of thinking, we can categorize local activism in two tendencies which are demonstrations and political associations and institutions.

Demonstrations emanate from fierce antagonisms. The common purpose behind this choice of the dwellers is to utter claims loudly, contrary to other subtle ways of claiming the city. It is utilized to voice the urgent and vital demands by the disadvantaged groups, even by the ones who attempt to remain invisible and stay away from the urban public space (Petropoulou, 2010; Boudreau, Boucher, & Liguori, 2009; Wedel, 2001; Carpio, Irazabal, & Pulido, 2011; Vargas, 2006; Skelton & Valentine, 2003).

In December 2008, protest, as a survival mechanism, is implemented by the youth groups in Athens, as a reaction to the murder of a young boy by the Greek police. Christina Petropoulou, in her analysis of these protests, gives the background of these events as the neo-liberal processes of privatization of the urban space in Athens. The youth was expelled from the squares and streets of the city, where they hang out together with their friends. This ongoing process was provoked by the murder of Alexandros Grigoropoulos by the police and it is transformed into demonstrations of the youth groups to claim their right to use the urban public space of Athens (Petropoulou, 2010: 222). Another example to this form of resistance is from Los Angeles, done by the immigrant women as a reaction to the immigration reform,

which aims to increase the amount of the fines for illegal immigration and consider the immigrants and who help them as guilty before the law. Similar to the case in Athens, it was crucial for these women to be heard by the authorities to be able to sustain their lives in Los Angeles. The new immigrant reform was threatening their existence in the city and therefore, even the women who usually abstain from political events had to get out of their houses, participated in the protests and voiced their claims loudly (Boudreau, Boucher, & Liguori, 2009: 338). Heidi Wedel contributes to this literature with a study on the migrant women in two shanty towns of Istanbul. These women, who were illiterate and could not speak Turkish, organized protests to prevent the destruction of their houses. At the moment of destruction of a house or prohibition of an access to the basic services – water or electricity – by the municipality, the women were left with no choice but organizing demonstrations that enable them to voice their claims aloud (Wedel, 2001: 123).

In another case from Maywood- Los Angeles, against the discriminatory practices by the municipality and the suburbanites, to cope with the implicit discrimination and criminalization practices against the immigrants in the urban space, Latino community reacted through demonstrations. They attempted to achieve a self-governance system in the suburb and became successful in electing an immigrant person for the decision-making process. The subtle life-threatening strategies of the authorities and majority of the population were defeated through activism of the immigrant community (Carpio, Irazabal, & Pulido, 2011: 18-19). Another ghetto movement was achieved in Rio de Janeiro, where the Afro-Brazilian activists organized a protest against the criminalization of the ghetto community by the police, which created a tremendous impression. Different from the other cases in the literature, this is not a typical protest of marching in the streets. The inhabitants of that neighborhood were being disturbed by the twenty-four hours surveillance of the police through cameras. They

reacted by putting cameras at the boundaries of the neighborhood, through which they can watch the actions of the police around. Through this protest, they reversed the discourse of gated-community that considers the Afro-Brazilians as dangerous criminals and drug-dealers, so that the ones outside the ghetto were put into accusations. With this attempt, they attracted the attention of the media and had a chance to utter their everyday experiences of segregation that restricts their lives (Vargas, 2006: 50-51). Similar to the other disadvantaged groups in society such as ethnic minorities, women and young people, disabled people are left voiceless in the city by the public discourse and the majority of the population. A deaf community was referred to by Skelton and Valentine who chose to organize demonstrations to be perceived by the majority in the city. They resorted to this coping mechanism to gain their rights in the city in order to appropriate the city space in equal terms (Skelton & Valentine, 2003: 120).

Demonstration is not the only way of claiming the right to the city through displaying the identity. There are also various kinds of associations that help people voice their demands. In the literature, activism through associations is often used by migrant women of older generations, because they are more often uneducated, illiterate and in some cases their mother tongue is different from the official language. Therefore, their interaction with public institutions is very weak. They cannot apply to official institutions for their problems. Merely through associations they are able to present their demands and have a chance to gain their rights. While demonstrations are the last resorts of the people to express themselves in cases of not being noticed by the authorities, this coping mechanism involves long-term, official and permanent solutions for the problems (Erder, 1997; Wedel, 2001; Çelik, 2005). Ayşe Betül Çelik refers to this method in her research about Kurdish migrant women in Istanbul, where she analyzes the hometown and Kurdish associations as necessary mechanisms for the people to solve their socio-economic problems. Çelik focuses on the discursive transformation

within these associations as a result of the internal displacement of Kurds and the changing problems and demands of the migrant community in Istanbul. According to her research, recently established Kurdish associations address to the concerns of the Kurdish migrant community and become the mediator between the community and the official authorities. Especially, because Kurdish migrant women mostly cannot speak Turkish, they need these associations to interact with the municipality or other official authorities (Çelik, 2005: 151-152). Similar to the arguments of Çelik, Heidi Wedel refers to different mediators in the urban space as the spokesman of the migrants' problems. According to her study, mostly *muhtar* – an elected local authority – is utilized to cope with the difficulties in the city life (Wedel, 2001: 94). Likewise, Sema Erder emphasizes the hometown associations and *muhtars* as formal organizations that mediate between the inhabitants of the neighborhood and the municipal authorities. Erder has a point of view different from Wedel in terms of the role given to the *muhtars* and these associations in the problem solving process. According to Erder, these mechanisms not only operate according to the demands of the inhabitants, they also become active assigners of the problems together with the local people (Erder, 1997: 122).

Participation to demonstrations and activism through associations are coping mechanisms that involve explicit manifestation of the identity in the urban space. However, there are also subtle and inconspicuous ways of demonstration of an identity through daily life. An example to these tactics is the usage of a space on purpose, even sometimes despite the fact that it is forbidden or closed to any particular identity group. Using Michel de Certeau's theory, Tovi Fenster argues that appropriation of a space is achieved by being able to walk in a particular space. It is a way of developing sense of belonging and comfort to that space. Through repetitive walking performances, people are able to feel safe and comfortable

in urban space (Fenster, 2005: 223). Therefore, the usage of urban space by inhabitants emerges as an appropriation mechanism, which is utilized mostly by gender and youth groups.

Tovi Fenster investigates the appropriation of urban space by women inhabitants, by focusing on the private spaces of her respondents, their homes, which is a contested space for the women that restrict their lives. According to her study, urban public space emerges as a coping mechanism against the patriarchal and cultural domination in their houses. They run out of their houses to the streets of the city, where they feel more liberated and comfortable (Fenster, 2005: 220-221). Anna Secor also refers to similar circumstances through narrations of her respondents. Some of the Kurdish migrant women in her research refer to Taksim – centre of Istanbul Istanbul – as the space of freedom. They narrate Taksim as “an arena of unassimilated difference where all kinds of people coexist, interact, and fruitfully broaden each other’s horizons” (Secor, 2004: 358). Therefore, they choose to utilize this space in order to get rid of the boundaries of patriarchy around them. The cosmopolitan nature of urban public space enables them to express themselves as the way they are. It is implemented as a tactic to resist the power relations in the urban space.

In agreement with the arguments of Petropoulou about the demonstrations in Athens, the youth groups in the city are prevented from using the urban public space. Privatization of the urban space results in the expulsion of young people who are either students or recent employees and who are in a disadvantaged economic position. However, there are various ways to challenge this domination, in addition to the method of participating to protests explained by Petropoulou. Kallio and Hakli contribute with a study based on the “non-participatory” or “voiceless” politics of a youth community in the city of Oulu in Finland. According to this study, as a reaction to the legal decision about the closure of the city park because of the “inappropriate usage of the park by the youth”, the youth community reacts by

ignoring the decision in terms of the closure of the park and continues to gather in that park as usual. This is named as a “voiceless resistance” by the authors, which underlines the active reactionary dimension involved in the passive and silent movement (Kallio & Hakli, 2011: 70). Similar to the case of Kallio and Hakli, Sabin Bieri provides another case study that identifies the usage of a particular space as a resistance mechanism in Berne, Switzerland. In this case, the youth community of Berne squat particular houses as a reaction to the limited affordable living space (Bieri, 2002: 207-212). In Turkish context, in Ankara, there is a similar silent movement generated by the youth groups. Similar to the case in Oulu, there is a struggle between the residents of the *Tunali Hilmi* district and the young people who occupy the streets of the neighborhood at nights as a leisure activity. In spite of the complaints of the residents, these young people do not leave the streets where they can drink and hang out with their friends. They react through insisting upon their existence in that space (Altay, 2007: 63-64).

The way a person presents her/his identity in urban public space is also underlined as a coping method of the explicit demonstration of identity. According to these studies, through subtle practices in daily routine, the inhabitants display their identity and attempt to open up a space for themselves. Gender is the distinctive factor in these analyses. The researches done on this issue claim a more consistent way of identity performance for men in a society; whereas women have to negotiate with the system and they are not able to express their identity in each and every context, as a coping mechanism (Secor, 2004; Fine & Weis, 1998).

Anna Secor focuses on the gender dimension in her analysis, where she claims that, Kurdish migrant women feel comfortable in their neighborhoods and do not need to hide their Kurdish identity. They are able to display their “Kurdishness” through their daily performances in the neighborhood, such as speaking Kurdish or dressing in a traditional

manner. However, these women's attitudes are transformed when they quit the neighborhood space. They have to maneuver between displaying their Kurdish identity and behaving anonymously in the urban space, in order to escape from the discriminatory strategies of the Turkish majority (Secor, 2004: 359). On the other hand, in the cases of Puerto Rican and Latino men in USA, Michelle Fine and Lois Weis argue that they are able to convey consistent performances of their identity. According to this research, the Puerto Rican men hold on to the concept of "cultural citizenship." They do not accept any kind of transformation in their cultural norms and life-styles. Latinos are similar to the Puerto Ricans in terms of holding on to their cultural norms and they are also able to display their identity in the urban space. However, in another section of their book, Fine and Weis focus on the resistance mechanisms of the Puerto Rican women who are same as the Kurdish women in terms of the negotiations they have to conduct with the dominant order (Fine & Weis, 1998). Therefore, explicit display of identity and anonymous ways of existence in the urban environment are two coping mechanisms used by different gender categories. While women have to negotiate with the dominant power relations and regulate their performances in line with it, the men are able to appropriate the city by demonstrating their identities.

In addition to the gender groups, the disabled communities are also referred in the literature, in terms of the expression of identity through daily practices in the urban space as an appropriation mechanism. Skelton and Valentine discuss the ways through which the deaf community displays their existence in the city. According to this research, usage of the sign language in public space is applied by the deaf community to become visible in the urban space (Skelton & Valentine, 2003: 119).

Avoidance and Anonymity

Explicit display of identity through different performances is not the only way to acquire sense of belonging in the urban space. Contrary to the explicit demonstration of the self in the public space, there are other coping mechanisms that I bring together under the title of concealing from the urban space. In this group, I focused on the examples around the world that refer to the inhabitants who abstain from the urban public space and choose to become anonymous when they have to go out of their neighborhoods. This coping mechanism is approached mainly from perspective of gender, but also expanded to the other excluded segments of society, ethnic minorities to older generations (Fenster, 1999; Fenster, 2005; Secor, 2004; Madge, 1997).

Usually, women resort to this coping mechanism to become invisible in the city. The senses of threat and estrangement are some of the feelings that keep women's distance to a particular area. Tovi Fenster and Clare Madge refer to public parks as an example. Fenster argues that women do not choose to go to public parks or pass through them because they feel threatened in it. Those spaces of city are not appropriated by women. They are excluded from these areas (Fenster, 2005: 225). Clare Madge focuses on the same dimension of fear in the circumstances of estrangement. She identifies the term "geography of fear" in order to describe the confining structural power relations that regulate the existence of women in different spaces of the city. She bases her analysis on the public parks in Leicester city in Britain. Her analysis moves beyond women and includes other disadvantaged segments of society - such as the elderly or Asian and African-Caribbean people - who do not prefer to go to the parks of the city because they fear from bodily, sexual or racial attack, mugging or any other types of violent actions against them (Madge, 1997: 245).

In addition to the sense of fear, the sense of exclusion keeps women away from the public space of the city. Anna Secor focuses on this dimension by referring to the Kurdish

migrant women in Istanbul. In her research, a Kurdish-Alevi woman refers to Sultanbeyli – a conservative neighborhood in Istanbul – as a space that she chooses to stay away. Sunni – a sect of Islam different from Alevism – conservative majority in this neighborhood make this woman feel excluded (Secor, 2004: 357). Similar to this example, some other respondents in the research give the example of expensive neighborhoods in Istanbul as particular districts that they avoid to enter, because of the sense of discrimination they will feel in those places (Secor, 2004: 358). In their research, Oren Shlomo and Tovi Fenster discuss the influence of sense of discrimination in the case of East Jerusalem. Different from the analysis of Fenster, Madge and Secor who focuses on the gender perspective, in their work about the Arab community in Jerusalem, Shlomo and Fenster expand their claims to the ethnic minority groups. Jerusalem is separated into East and West sides by a wall that also divides the Arab community in the city. Along this wall, there are checkpoints established by the Israeli government to control the crossing of the people from both sides. Sometimes, Arab people have to spend many hours at these checkpoints and they are exposed to humiliating attitudes of the Israeli soldiers. Shlomo and Fenster argue that, because of these practices, the people who live in East Jerusalem - under the government of Israel - do not choose to go to West Jerusalem. They avoid from these discriminatory practices at the checkpoints. Therefore, sense of exclusion leads to abstinence from urban public space by different segments of the society. The excluded segments choose to avoid from these places and regulate their everyday practices according to this choice which relieves them and enable them to survive in the city.

Abstinence from the urban public space is sometimes replaced by anonymous appearance as a coping method with the exclusionary dimensions. Under these circumstances, in order to be seen as anonymous and ordinary, mostly the women wear clothes in compliance with the dominant dress codes of a community (Secor, 2002; Fenster, 2005). Anna Secor

discusses this issue by focusing on the spatial veiling practices. She makes an analysis of different veiling and dressing practices of the women and concludes that these practices are used for the purpose of negotiation by the women. According to this research, while for some neighborhoods women think that veiling is necessary because it presents a sense of security for them, for other spaces of the city, they conceptualize veiling as an uncomfortable practice that make them feel excluded from that particular space (Secor, 2002: 13). However, the urban space is also constituted by the gendered exclusions, as Tovi Fenster argues. She emphasizes the “rules of clothing” in particular spaces of the city that limits the access of the women. The mobilization of women within the city is very much bounded to these rules and norms, according to Fenster. She gives the example of Mea Shearim neighborhood in Palestine, which is identified as “ultraorthodox” by the respondents, where there are signs on the streets that regulate the way women dress, if they want to use that space (Fenster, 2005: 226). These signs are very explicit in terms of defining the outsider/insider dichotomy in that neighborhood; whereas in other different neighborhoods, these rules and norms are mostly applied in a more implicit manner. Therefore, whether it is explicitly announced or implicitly implemented, women have to maneuver according to these norms and they have to use the dressing codes as a coping mechanism in the urban space to be able to feel comfortable and safe.

As a result of the migration process, any subsequent groups who have arrived at the city settle down in the neighborhoods where it is already inhabited by the previous wave of migrants. The initial confrontation with the social and economic difficulties is overcome with the help of the older migrants who already live in that particular district. These neighborhoods become the places of attachment for the discriminated segments of the society, especially for the migrant women, who are more often illiterate, uneducated and cannot speak the official language. In the literature, these solidarity relations are also emphasized and identified in the

name of “neighborhood attachment” which helps the excluded people survive in the city (Stack, 1974; Erder, 1996; Çelik, 2005; Simonsen & Vaiou, 1996; Rodriguez, 1993; Padilla, 1993).

Carol Stack presents a study on this subject and focuses on the solidarity relations and neighborhood attachment in a black community by utilizing the term “swapping”. She explains the importance of the kinship relations through this concept: “As people swap, the limited supply of finished material goods in the community is perpetually redistributed among networks of kinsmen and throughout the community.” (Stack, 1974: 33). According to Stack, survival can only be achieved through these relations in the urban space (Stack, 1974: 125). The people in these neighborhoods avoid from the urban public space, they continue to their lives in these spaces. Sema Erder analyzes neighborhood attachment through the same perspective in her research about Umraniye – a neighborhood where different migrant communities who are excluded from the city live together. Erder underlines the transformation of the relations within communities, through migration process. New kinship relations are generated by the migrants different from the relations in their hometowns. The similar experiences of exclusion create a commonality between them. According to Erder, this solidarity can sometimes be vital to sustain their lives materially and spiritually (Erder, 1996: 246). Through these relations between the neighbors, people sustain their livelihood and continue to avoid from the urban public space. Erder suggests *kahvehane* as spaces where men come together and they can discuss both political events, the problems of the neighborhood or even their personal private experiences with other men. A similar solidarity relation is practiced by the women in daytime gatherings. Therefore, they cling to their neighborhood and their social relations limited to that space in order to achieve their survival in the city. (Erder, 1996: 248-249) Ayşe Betül Çelik also gives reference to the importance of

the neighborhood in the lives of the migrants, because it relieves the trauma of leaving the hometown and getting used to a new environment (Çelik, 2005: 144).

Simonsen and Vaiou make a similar point in terms of the pivotal role of the relations in the neighborhood for the survival of the migrant community by specifically focusing on the gender dimension. In their research, they give voice to two women from Copenhagen and Athens, who both underline the importance of their neighborhood in their lives that they do not want to leave that space because of the relieving elements involved in those neighborhoods (Simonsen & Vaiou, 1996: 452). Therefore, “the mutual care and assistance relations” in these networks are essential for the lives of the migrant women (Simonsen & Vaiou, 1996: 454).

However, Ayse Betul Çelik and Sema Erder underline another important aspect of these neighborhoods, which is the isolation it brings to the lives of the women. Because of the linguistic difficulties the older women experience in the city, they choose to limit their relations and lock themselves up in this isolation of the neighborhood (Çelik, 2005: 144; Erder, 1997: 70). Nestor P. Rodriguez refers to the same isolating role of these neighborhoods in his study, where he expands his argument to all gender groups in the Latino community. He focuses on Houston and underlines the “concentration of the Latinos” in certain neighborhoods of the city that provides a social relief for them to cope with the city (Rodriguez, 1993: 124). However, this sense of relief brings along a social isolation. Rodriguez diverges from Çelik and Erder by saying that: “Initial social isolation is a means to immigrant survival and eventual immigrant community development.” (Rodriguez, 1993: 125). Therefore, Rodriguez provides an alternative point of view that underlines the achievement of survival in the city through the isolative processes of neighborhood attachment. Felix M. Padilla agrees with Rodriguez about the role of the isolation for the

survival of migrants in the city and gives an example of the case of Puerto Ricans in Chicago. According to Padilla, Puerto Rican migrant community established a network which led to the development of their own organizations as a response to their own needs. Education, housing or employment opportunities are presented through this network (Padilla, 1993: 141). Therefore, Padilla supports the arguments of Rodriguez in terms of the role of the local relations in the survival of the migrant communities in the city.

Resistance by Existence²

The third way of claiming the right to the city is a method of application to particular tools such as employment, education or language to claim the urban public space. The tactics that are brought together under this title involve the maneuvers of excluded segments in order to become a part of the majority group and carry out resistance within the current system itself. This coping mechanism is utilized by the youth mostly, especially by the second generation members of the migrant communities who develop closer relations with the dominant power relations in the urban public space – relative to their parents. They seek for an equal existence in the urban space.

Employment in a permanent paid job is one of the tools implemented in order to claim right to the city. In the literature, this mechanism is described as a tool applied by young women migrants both because of financial contribution and the social integration it brings for women (Simonsen & Vaiou, 1996; Erman, 2001; Secor, 2004). Simonsen and Vaiou explain the role of a paid job in the women's lives by their research in the cities Copenhagen and Athens. According to this research, the migrant women place importance on their jobs for

² The concept is propounded by Omar Yousef in his article: "Jerusalem: Palestinian space, Behaviors and Attitudes" (2011).

identifying themselves. While the housewives are attached to their neighborhoods and try to survive in the city by isolating themselves in these neighborhoods, for the women who have a full-time permanent job, there are more opportunities to socialize within the city. Through these social relations, the women in the article gain access to the city, exceed the boundaries of their kinship relations and have a chance to experience the urban space equally (Simonsen & Vaiou, 1996: 454-455). In line with the arguments of Simonsen and Vaiou, Anna Secor emphasizes the role of working practices in the achievement of belonging to the city. She is interested in the working experiences of the women in Istanbul and makes the similar emphasis made by Simonsen and Vaiou in terms of the participation of the women in everyday life through working practices (Secor, 2003: 2216-2217). According to Secor, to get involved in the city enables the inhabitants to claim their rights and access to the urban space (Secor, 2003: 2221). Tahire Erman presents a parallel argument by studying the relations between the patriarchal order and the migrant women in Ankara. Different from the arguments of Simonsen & Vaiou and Secor in terms of the reinforcement of social interaction as a result of the practice of work, Erman only focuses on the financial contribution of a paid work on women's lives.

In addition to paid job, education is also a tool applied by the inhabitants to claim the urban space. By having an education, the disadvantaged groups gain access to the city. Through speaking the official language, they achieve to be heard by the official authorities. This mechanism is practiced by the young women in the city - who belong to an ethnic minority - as a way of defeating the restrictions of the patriarchal order and also by the ethnic minority groups to open up a space for them in the dominant system. Tahire Erman focuses on this coping mechanism in her study, from the perspective of age and gender. She emphasizes the role given to the education in Alevi families by the younger generations of women, who

use this opportunity to resist against the patriarchal relations that keep the girls away from the urban space (Erman, 2001: 130). Felix Padilla focuses on the dimension of ethnicity and underlines the importance given to the education of the youth in Latino communities of Chicago. According to Padilla, in this community, there is an emphasis on education because of its role in the employment procedures; so that they have established associations that have an alternative school program for the youth (Padilla, 1993: 142-143).

Different from the researches mentioned above, Omar Yousef has a study where he scrutinizes the lives of second generation Arab community in Jerusalem, after the construction of the wall, in terms of the usage of the urban space. Yousef's work splits from other studies in the literature because of his emphasis on the dimension of resistance as a component of the daily lives of Arab youth in Jerusalem. In the works that are already reviewed above, the distinction between assimilation and resistance is not underlined as clear as it is in the work by Yousef. He develops a term "resistance by existence" in order to describe the perceptions of Arab youth. According to his analysis, youth community in Jerusalem concern about improving their conditions through speaking Hebrew, learning the working procedures of Israeli government or participating in the decision making processes for the local problems. They try to become a member of that community and fight for the Palestinian conflict at the urban level. He underlines the transformation of the resistance mechanisms "from resisting normalization to normalization of resistance" (Yousef, 2011: 50). With the term "normalization of resistance" he refers to the diffusion of the resistance discourse to the daily routine of the city inhabitants. These young generations voice their claims at the local level. For instance, they demand equality in terms of the social services of Israeli municipality, which is conceptualized as a gain for the long-term exploitation of Arabs in Jerusalem. They continue to stay in Jerusalem and demand their rights from the municipality; so that aim to

reform the discriminatory structure by being part of it (Yousef, 2011: 52). Therefore, Yousef's argument about the concealed struggle within the existence of the Arab youth in the urban space of Jerusalem enable a new awareness for my own study to not overlook the resistance practices embedded within the daily routine of Kurdish adolescent women.

This category implies the attempts of discriminated groups to take part in the dominant institutions and structures of the system. Different from the first category named "Explicit Manifestation", the people who implement this method do not express their identity to resist the power relations in the urban public space. However, contrary to the methods involved in the second category named "Avoidance and Anonymity", they do not stay away from the urban public space and choose to become anonymous. Their attempts to be a part of the dominant authority involves a prolonged commitment to their ethnic, religious, racial or sexual identity, which reveals itself in their demands for equality in the urban public space. Recalling the arguments of De Certeau in terms of the distance put between the self and the dominant discourse while practising its rules and norms, there can be achieved an alienation towards the current hegemonic ideology without totally rejecting it (DeCerteau, 1984: 14).

CONCLUSION

Along with globalization and neoliberalism processes, urban space provides new sense of belongings for the people who have lost their commitment to either their hometowns or their jobs and nation-states (Beck, 2000; Sennett, 2000). It appears as an arena where people from different segments of the society mobilize to voice their claims (Klein, 2000; Mayer, 2009; Mendieta, 2008; Berner, 1997). In the light of the dissolution of the boundaries of nation-state and the emergence of identity politics at global level, as a contribution to

Lefebvre's theory on appropriation of the city by the working class, there is a new literature that scrutinizes the methods of different identity groups that they resort to achieve their right to the city. As a result of the review of these studies, it is classified three categories of coping mechanisms that are mentioned in the literature. These are brought together under titles of explicit manifestation, avoidance and anonymity and resistance by existence.

In the first category, explicit manifestation, I scrutinized the tactics that involve explicit display of one's identity through demonstrations, associations or through much more subtle ways such as usage of a space on purpose or applying to the characteristic attitudes of an identity. In the second category, I present the methods implemented by the excluded inhabitants to hide their identity from the dominant majority. For this purpose, abstinence from the urban public space or, if it is necessary to use it, the attempt to be seen as an anonymous ordinary person who belong to majority are two practices utilized by the discriminated people. As a result of this distance from the urban public space, I emphasized the emergence of the neighborhood attachment as another way of coping with the city. The last category I developed in the light of the literature is achieving existence in the urban space through different tools, such as a paid job or education. With this method, discriminated segments of the society attempt to involve in the current order and conduct resistance within the frameworks of this order.

In the light of the review of these works, I will situate my analysis within this theoretical framework. I will examine the narratives of the respondents, through the perspective of these three categories of coping mechanisms.

CHAPTER 3

INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT AND RESETTLEMENT IN DOLAPDERE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF KURDISH ISSUE

The official ideology of Turkish Republic underline the Islamic elements and Turkishness as the constitutive element of Turkish nation. Regarding the legacy of dispersed Ottoman Empire over the establishment process of Turkish nation-state, the constituent ideology of Turkey – Kemalism – is based upon this homogenized understanding of a nation. Any group other than Turks has been considered as a threat for the integrity and power of the Turkish state (Gunter, 1997:4-5; Barkey & Fuller, 1998:10-11; Yeğen, 1999: 17).

Kurds are one of these ethnic communities whose existence has been rejected and who have been considered as Turks (Houston, 2001: 100; Bruinessen, 1992: 197-337; Gunter, 1997: 6; Barkey & Fuller, 1998:12). This denial based ideology has been attempted to be strengthened by various academic works³ (Houston, 2001: 99). Kurdish community has been

³ For examples of these works see Türkdoğan, 1997; Halaçoğlu, 2009.

identified through different labels by the official ideology. Mesut Yeğen summarizes these labels implemented towards the Kurds in Turkey in the history as “supporters of caliphate, non-modern communities living in tribes, tools used by the foreign enemies of the Turkish state or economically underdeveloped region of Turkey” (Yeğen, 1999: 21). As Yeğen argues in his book, this issue is perceived and constructed through these identifications by the official discourse in Turkey. It cannot be said that the Turkish state deliberately misinformed its citizens regarding this problem, while it knows what the reality is; rather, it is construed by the state through this argument (Yeğen, 1999: 23).

The discursive war against the Kurdish population is repeated constantly through laws, history textbooks, main stream media and official education system. Kurdish language, as a different language from Turkish, is denied and rejected by the official authorities and it is prohibited to speak in Kurdish and even to give children Kurdish names (Houston, 2001:99; Bruinessen, 1992:197; Bruinessen, 1992:337; Gunter, 1997:6-7; Barkey & Fuller, 1998:12). Kurdish newspapers were banned and their founders were criminalized (Gunter, 1997: 6). At school, all the students were forced to learn Turkish and speak in Turkish (Bruinessen, 1992:353). The main stream media supported this discriminatory perception (Barkey & Fuller, 1998:12). Also, the state implemented laws that imply the migration of Kurds from Eastern and Southeastern provinces to the Western regions where predominantly Turkish population live (Barkey & Fuller, 1998: 12; Gunter, 1997:6; Babuş, 2006: 71). Therefore, there has been put a limitation over the recognition of Kurds in Turkey through extensive use of brute force, censorship and other forms of systematic intimidation techniques. From the beginning of the Turkish Republic, because of the emphasis put on the Turkish and Muslim identities by the official discourse, Kurds and other minority groups in Turkey have been exposed to systematic discrimination and assimilation policies.

On the other hand, this official discourse is challenged through various ways. Kurds in Turkey are the main actors of the struggle conducted against the hegemonic Turkish nationalist discourse. As a reaction to the systematic discrimination towards non-Turkish population, Kurdish society has resorted to various rebellions. Shaykh Said (1925), 1930 Ağrı and 1937 Dersim Rebellions are three important examples to the challenge brought by the Kurdish people to the official national discourse.⁴

The emergence of Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in 1978 marks a turning point in terms of the struggle of Kurdish population in the history of Turkish Republic. This guerilla organization was established with an aim to start a war against the Turkish state and to found a free Kurdish state by Kurdish people (Marcus, 2007: 26, Bruinessen, 1992: 199; Barkey & Fuller, 1998: 23). The purpose of the organization in terms of the establishment of a free Kurdistan was transformed through time, from an ideal of a Kurdish nation-state to demands for democratic rights.⁵ However, actions of organisation brought the issue on the front pages of the mainstream media and enabled the beginning of a discussion about the existence of Kurds and their demands for freedom (Barkey & Fuller, 1998: 21-29). The first assault by PKK was in August 1984; but beginning with 1989, the support of the Kurdish people for PKK became much more visible (Yeğen, 2006: 39). Because of the unexpected military success of PKK and the civilian support for the organization, the 1990s reflected a more violent battle between the official authorities and Kurdish freedom movement. The recognition of Kurds and Kurdish language by the state authorities brought together new

⁴ The Shaykh Said Rebellion (1925) was the first rebellion against the recently founded Turkish State. The movement involved religious and nationalistic character. It was severely suppressed by the state authorities. The leaders of this rebellion were executed in order to prevent future attempts. However, it is prolonged by Ağrı (1930) and Dersim (1937) rebellions. See more in Bruinessen, 1992:197; Gunter, 1997:6; Barkey & Fuller, 1998:10-11

⁵ For more information about the discursive transformation of PKK and the discussion about the reasons of this transformation see Yeğen, 2006: 43-44; Barkey & Fuller, 1998: 25.

policies and practices implied against Kurdish population. One of them was the construction of a new armed group by the state, named as *korucu*.⁶ The state imposed a new law that implies the village guards in the Kurdish region much more salary and guns, if they accept to fight against PKK in the name of Turkish army (Marcus, 2007: 137). Therefore, with the application of this law, some Kurdish village guards were recruited, trained and paid to fight against PKK guerillas.

In addition to these sanctions, Turkish state imposed a settlement law that aims the displacement of the Kurdish population from East and Southeast provinces of Turkey. In 1983, the Law of State of Emergency was accepted by the parliament and in 1987, the State of Emergency, that comprises eight cities of Turkey, was declared. By this law, a governorship was founded for these cities and it was assigned with the authority to evacuate the villages and displace the people from their hometowns (Kurban, Yüksek, Çelik, Ünal, & Aker, 2008: 21). The State of Emergency was exemplified as a side effect of the war in the region and it was justified as an effort to protect the local people. However, through a critical analysis of the politics of space, Joost Jongerden argues that: “The objective, it is argued, was not merely retaliation, and nor was it a negative side-effect of the war or collateral damage. It was not even a temporary clearance of the countryside in order to break the guerilla. Rather, the settlement program constituted a concerted attempt by the Turkish military to bring about a conclusive transformation of the regional settlement structure.... The immediate aim of the Turkish Armed Forces was to solve this problem by changing the spatial ground of the war.” (Jongerden, 2007: 44). Jongerden analyzes the settlement practices as the tools of nation-state to control and regulate the population. By referring to the words of Henri Lefebvre in terms of the production of space, Jongerden makes a relation between the organization of the space and

⁶ *Korucu* means village guards who are responsible for the security of the village.

the way it produces the subjects. In that sense, he analyzes the internal displacement as a way of transforming the Kurdish movement into a new phenomenon that can be controlled by the state (Jongerden, 2007: 13). Through this process, PKK guerillas would be isolated from the social and economic support of the Kurdish community and the Kurdish people would create new social relations with their new environment that keeps them away from the movement (Jongerden, 2007: 78). In this process the estimated number of displaced people varies from 2 million to 4-4.5 million according to the reports of the human rights NGOs in Turkey.⁷ They were forced to move to other regions in Turkey, either to the big cities in the Eastern provinces or to the towns and cities in other regions of Turkey.

It is vital to mention the neoliberal perspective while considering both Kurdish movement and the policies of the Turkish state, in the 1990s. The displacement of Kurdish population was not an inexperienced phenomenon and not unique to the 1990s⁸. However, the method was very much different from the historical examples of the case. Different from the settlement policies of the Turkish state in 1934, in 1990s the displacement procedure did not involve scheduled regulatory policies. The destination of migration was not determined. The target of the Turkish state was to make Kurds leave their villages, to fight against PKK guerillas and cut down the civil support of the Kurdish community for the PKK movement. Contrary to the previous experiences, in line with the transformation caused by neoliberal era, which is discussed in the previous section of this thesis, these people were left to their own destiny and had to find solutions with their own resources (Hutton & Giddens, 2000: 217).

⁷ 1995 Edition of Human Rights Watch Report: <http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1995/Turkey.htm>

⁸ In 1934, Turkish state implemented a Settlement Law to suppress the rebellions of the Kurdish tribes living in the Eastern and Southeastern regions of Turkey. Through this law, the country is divided into four regions based on the level of “Turkish culture” involved in these regions. According to this regulation, the people who live in the regions where there is low level of “Turkishness” are resettled in the Western regions of country, where the level of “Turkish culture” is higher. The Ministry of Internal Affairs was nominated as the head of this process. See more in Babuş, 2006; Gunter, 1997.

In this process, the urban space became the new “homeland” for migrants. They were set apart from their villages and needed to belong to the city and to feel comfortable in it (Beck, 2000: 168; Sennett, 1999: 14-15). As a result of the spatial changes, the Kurdish movement itself transformed into a new phenomenon. The dismissal of the Kurdish people from their villages did not lead to a ceasure of the Kurdish movement; contrarily Kurds reshaped their demands in line with the spatial changes. As it is analyzed in the first chapter of this study, neoliberalism, along with globalization, reduces the role given to the nation-state, and the local or transnational politics replace the nation-state based ideologies. Therefore, as a result of this transformation, the ideology of Kurdish movement also mutates in terms of its demands and targets.

I believe that the arguments of Cihan Tuğal, with a reference to Gramsci, in terms of the internalization and normalization of neoliberalism by the Islamic communities in Turkey, can give us a clue for the analysis of the transformation of the Kurdish movement (Tuğal, 2009) (Gramsci, 1971). Tuğal makes a research about the Islamic community living in Sultanbeyli neighborhood in Istanbul, through a cross-time analysis between 2001 and 2007. In a nutshell, he contends that Islamic community in this neighborhood internalize neoliberalism and Westernization processes in Turkey so as to open up a space for themselves within this hegemonic structure. While in the 1990s, the Islamic movement in Turkey challenge the market system, democratization or party politics that are conceptualized as tools of the Westernization and described as “evil”, in the 2000s there emerges a discursive transformation in terms of its relation with the concepts of modernization and Westernization. In line with the changes at discursive level, the concepts of “modern” and “Westernized” have become a component of the Islamist’s policy making processes. Therefore, political Islam in Turkey takes place in the hegemonic discourse (Tuğal, 2009: 236-250).

Similar to the analysis of Tuğal, the Kurdish movement in Turkey is transformed in light of the neoliberalism and globalization processes. The Kurdish population normalize and internalize these processes and take part in it. Kurdish movement is not only composed of the radical armed militancy anymore. For an analysis of the discursive transformation of Kurdish movement, the concept “war of positions” implemented by Tuğal, with a reference to Gramsci, in order to describe the abstinence from violent confrontations implied in the new hegemonic discourse, is necessary to be underlined. The diminishing belief towards the military struggle by the Kurds themselves, can be understood with a reference to the analysis of Tuğal about war of positions. The avoidance of the Kurdish people from violent struggles and their preference of the normative political struggle mechanisms – associations, civil society organizations - reflects a similar tendency of becoming a component of the system and achieving transformation through internal mechanisms.

As a result of the displacement process, there are more Kurds who live in the urban areas, rather than the rural regions, relative to the beginning of the 1990s. This part of the population have begun to develop their claims at urban level, contrary to the nation-state based discourse of the older generations. The economic difficulties in the city lead to an alteration in the household relations (Kurban, Yüksek, Çelik, Ünal, & Aker, 2008: 21). The fathers are not the only provider of families anymore, instead each and every member is responsible for his/her own livelihood. The self-help mechanism, as a feature of the neoliberal system, is implemented by these families. Even though they are from same villages, within the exclusionary atmosphere of the city, in a confined district, they develop original relations with the people who have already known each other. The city creates new types of relations, whereas reciprocally the city itself is recreated by these relations. None of these sides remain the same, both the city and the Kurdish community influence each other.

Mesut Yeğen defines the changing dynamics of Kurdish movement as an “issue of a post-war process.” He thinks that there is not a geographical limit around the Kurdish issue anymore, because a considerable amount of Kurdish people live in the Western provinces of Turkey now. Therefore, Kurdish movement recreates itself in the urban context (Yeğen, 2006: 43-44). Because of the multiplicity of daily struggles, regarding social and economic dimensions, the people who are left alone in the urban space are concerned with their livelihood and survival in the city. The Kurdish movement is transformed into a claim for the urban space by the Kurdish inhabitants of the city, whereas at the same time the military struggle continues in the mountains of Kurdish region. There is not a single way towards transformation; however the subject of this thesis is limited to analyze the dynamics of the urbanized Kurdish movement.

DOLAPDERE

As a result of the internal displacement process, Istanbul - because of the abundance of employment and settlement opportunities - has become the destination point for the Kurdish migrants in the 1990s. Although since 1950s there had been various waves of migration to Istanbul from different provinces of Turkey, the conditions in Istanbul in 1990s were different from the previous migration processes. The cities have been transformed in line with the globalization and neoliberal processes in 1980s. Istanbul is a metropolis which has been influenced at most, among other cities in Turkey, and reconstructed by these economic and social transformations. The coalescence with the transnational market sharpened the inequality level between different segments of the society. The geography of the city is reconstructed in line with the demands of the dominant classes of this era. The center of the city is gentrified for the new elites through construction of luxurious cafes, residences or

offices whereas the inhabitants of these areas are evacuated and left to their own destiny. Therefore, both the spatial and ideological segregation between different segments of the society escalated (Keyder, 2005: 124-125).

The simultaneous displacement of Kurds in the 1990s put these migrant communities in worse conditions than the previous migrant communities. Both the increasing level of social exclusion in Istanbul and the sudden evacuation from their hometowns without any preparation led to a harder experience for the Kurdish migrants in 1990s. The low level of income along with the exclusionary social and political atmosphere in the urban space complicated the situation for the Kurdish migrant population. In order to handle this situation, mostly they settled down in the already established neighborhoods by the older generation migrants, who were their relatives or friends. The first and the hardest years of the migration process were tried to be overcome with the support of these people.

Dolapdere is one of these neighborhoods inhabited by the migrant communities. It is situated at the center of Istanbul, nearby Taksim and Istiklal Avenue – the center of the city – also surrounded by Şişli and Okmeydanı. From an historical perspective, the neighborhood had been inhabited by the non-Muslim communities in the first place. However, as a result of the displacement of these communities through different discriminatory tools, such as Capital Tax Law, attacks towards non-Muslim community in 6-7 September and many other attempts, these communities were displaced from this neighborhood. In the beginning of 1980s, through urban transformation policies, Dolapdere and Tarlabaşı are sheared from Taksim Square and marginalized. As a result of this deprivation process, the neighborhood has become a cheap opportunity to settle down, for the new migrant communities. Besides, because it is situated at the center of the city, close to the job opportunities, Dolapdere has become a new “home” for the migrants.

Not only the Kurds, but also the Roma community lives in Dolapdere. Spatially, the neighborhood is divided into two parts, even though it is not a clear-cut division; Kurdish community inhabits the space nearby Kasımpaşa and Taksim, whereas Roma community lives at the borders of Okmeydanı. They do not get along well with each other and choose to stay away while using the same space of the neighborhood. The conflict between two communities may sometimes result in even a gun battle. In addition to the Kurdish and Roma community, Iranian, Moldovian and African immigrants live and work in Dolapdere. All these groups use the same space of the neighborhood and socialize in the same area called as *Hacı Ahmet Square*, however by preserving their boundaries.

The Kurdish people in Dolapdere are usually *hemşehri* – which refers to the people who are born in the same village or town. They choose this neighborhood as their destination, because of the help and support they get from their *hemşehri*. They live in the apartments that are very close to each other where they come together in celebrations or tragedies to provide support to the members of the community. They lend and borrow money in financial deficits or help each other to find a job. A new community network, different from the one in their hometown, is established within the community in order to survive in the hard conditions of the city.

KURDISH ADOLESCENT WOMEN

In this thesis, my concern is to focus on Kurdish unmarried adolescent girls in Dolapdere as the actors of the appropriation procedures in the urban space. In light of my theoretical framework developed by Henri Lefebvre and Michel de Certeau, I will focus on the adolescent women as the agents of their own everyday practices that enable them to

appropriate the city. In this section, my purpose is to conceptualize what is meant by the concept of Kurdish unmarried adolescent women.

The youth literature is based on the discussion over the conceptualization of childhood and youth in the history. Briefly, this discussion starts with the claims of Philippe Aries who argues that childhood as a category did not exist before the 17th century. Aries contends that, back then, the children were perceived as “little adults” in the society. In the 17th century, along with industrialization and modernization processes, childhood is recognized as a different category from adulthood (Aries, 1962). In opposition to the claims of Aries, Linda Pollock stresses the existence of the category of childhood before the industrialization era. According to Pollock, before 17th century, children were conceived as different from the adults, but not the same as our modern understanding of childhood (Pollock, 1983). This wave confirms the influence of modernization period on the conceptualization of childhood, but argues that it is not a breaking point in the history; rather it can be analyzed as a transformation of the definition. Hugh Cunningham provides a complementary analysis and he argues that there is both continuity and change in the conceptualization of childhood and youth in the history. According to him, there has always been a category of “childhood”; therefore, there is continuity in terms of this conceptualization. On the other hand, modernization and its influence on the understanding of childhood and youth should not be ignored and it should be underlined explicitly (Cunningham, 1995).

In line with the arguments of Cunningham, Jean and John Comaroff presents a study on the influence of the modernization over the conceptualization of youth. The writers argue that along with the modernization process, the childhood and youth are described as innocent periods of life in which people are not the actors of their own actions, but they are directed by other forces. Nation-state and capitalist ideology are two main forces that create the youth as

an object of the dominant power relations. In this way of thinking, the adolescence is described as a state of becoming, rather than being. Therefore the youth is constructed as the object of a purpose defined by the adults of the society (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2005).

In order to conceive the reflections of this understanding to the Turkish case, I think it is beneficial to ask the question Leyla Neyzi asks in her article: “Object or Subject?” Neyzi makes a review of the history of Turkish State – by dividing into three periods – in terms of the conceptualization of the youth. According to her, youth is conceived as object of various ideologies as “the guards of the regime” in the first twenty five years of Turkish Republic and then, as “the rebels” from 1950s to 1980s. On the other hand, she contends that beginning with the 1980s, in line with the improvements towards democratization in Turkish politics, youth has become actors of change in society, through various movements from Islamic groups to Kurdish resistance. She celebrates all these transformations towards the subjectification of the youth in Turkey (Neyzi, 2001). Ferhat Kentel also makes a similar point and argues that the main challenge is the objectification of youth. He argues that the youth is positioned sometimes as the protector of the nation, revolution or any kind of regime in Turkey. This perspective leaves no space for the youth to express themselves (Kentel, 2005).

As a contribution to this discussion, my method of analysis of the youth in this study is to give a subjective role to the youth. My purpose is to reflect the self-narratives, not to analyze them as the objects of any ideology. In this study, childhood and youth are identified as socially constructed concepts that vary in each and every society, which cannot be defined in terms of any kind of age range. The purpose is to emphasize the variations of the childhoods in line with class, gender, ethnicity or religion. The purpose is to make these

adolescent women narrate themselves, rather than a pre-deterministic approach of their lives in the city.

Besides the methodological concerns, it is necessary to identify the significance of the youth as the subject of this study. The struggle of the Kurdish migrants in urban environment can be analyzed from the perspectives of different generations. Every generation has its sui generis experience within the city, which is also heterogeneous in itself in terms of the dimensions of gender, class, religion and other factors. The reason behind my choice of the adolescence lies in the prominence of second-generation in the migration process. Several studies on internal displacement indicate that a majority of the parents, who are the first generation of the migrant community, have a desire to return to their villages and want to continue their lives in their hometowns (Kurban, Yüksek, Çelik, Ünal, & Aker, 2008: 153). On the other hand, their children, the second generation of the migration process - who were born in the Western provinces or who were one or two years old when they had left their hometowns - are less inclined to return to hometown (Kurban, Yüksek, Çelik, Ünal, & Aker, 2008: 153). This generation was grown up with the stories about their hometowns or migration procedure, but they did not have any personal experiences. Because they were too young when they had left their hometowns and were raised in urban environment, they had more access to Turkish language. Contrary to their parents, they found a chance to attend to school. Even if they were not able to go to school - because of economic deficiency a majority of them had to work - they were involved in the urban public space. As the Turkish speakers of the families, they play an important role in any kind of official procedure - paying the bills, examination by the doctors, any kind of legal process. As the researches indicate, along with the migration process, the father figures of these families dissolve in this new urban environment, they lose their power and authority. In contrast to their parents, the younger

generation gain strength within the society and therefore, within their families (Çelik, 2005; Kandiyoti, 1996).

The empowerment of the younger generation results in the reluctance of the second-generation migrants to return to their villages. They try to create opportunities for themselves in the city, through university education or a paid job. They are involved in the city, contrary to their parents who remain at the edges of the city. Therefore, there emerges a new generation of Kurdish people who permanently set up their lives in the Western provinces of Turkey. This study aims to focus on this generation because of their differences from their parents in terms of the involvement in the city life. As the figures that have interaction with the society in their daily lives, through education, job or other activities, this generation has a prominent role in the urban space.

The experiences of the second-generation migrants are different from their parents, but this does not lead this study to a generalization in the analysis. The experiences of the city by the Kurdish youth can be analyzed by considering many different categories. These people vary in themselves in terms of their class, gender, religion, etc. Each and every categorization has different experiences. However, in this study, I will make an investigation from the perspective of gender. In this research, my concern is to develop an analysis based on the experiences of unmarried adolescent girls.

In the patriarchal Kurdish community, migration leads to the dissolution of the patriarchal relations in the city, relative to the life in hometown. Deniz Yüksek focuses on this phenomenon in her study about the lives of people who were displaced to Diyarbakır. According to her interviews with the women migrants, she makes a conclusion that the city life destructs the power of the patriarchy within the household relations. In the city, women

begin to work, like the men in the family. Therefore, the gender roles in the family are shattered; the women start to provide the sustenance for their families (Kurban, Yüксеker, Çelik, Ünalın, & Aker, 2008: 161). Deniz Kandiyoti also attributes the worsening of the economic conditions of a family to the concussion of the old patriarchal order. She argues that: “The necessity of every household members’ contribution to survival turns men’s economic protection of women into a myth.” (Kandiyoti, 1996: 282). As a result of this transformation, according to Kandiyoti, younger generations find an opportunity to escape from the authority of the older members of family. She underlines the emancipatory environment brought by the erosion of patriarchy in the family. By indicating the divergence between the experiences of men and women, the attempts of women to escape from authority of the men is named as *bargain*, by Kandiyoti. According to her, women are forced to develop strategies and bargaining mechanisms in order to cope with the patriarchal order. She describes this concept as: “Different forms of patriarchy present women with ‘rules of the game’ and call for different strategies to maximize security and optimize life options with potential for active-passive resistance.” (Kandiyoti, 1996). These mechanisms are women’s attempts to find a crack and escape from the authority.

The separation made between the conceptualization of married and unmarried girls in this study is based on the analysis of Kandiyoti’s bargaining processes. According to Kandiyoti, marriage has an essential role for women in patriarchal societies. It is a stage that should be passed to be able to gain power and status within society. The unmarried women are under the authority of their fathers and brothers. Until they get married, they do not have a voice in any kind of decision. Kimberly Hart has a study that refers to this distinction where she makes a research with the women who work in a carpet weaving cooperation. According to her study, the unmarried girls who work in that cooperation do not have any material gain

from this job. Their labor is not counted as valid by the society. In light of this information, Hart refers to the separation made in patriarchal societies between married and unmarried women (Hart, 2009: 26). She also refers to Kandiyoti's words and indicates that the marriage is used by these women in order to gain status. They play according to the rules of patriarchal society in order to empower themselves (Hart, 2009: 38). Handan Çağlayan examines this issue in the context of Kurdish society and affirms the role of marriage in the status of the women in this society. She refers to a hierarchic order that regulate the status of the women according to their age, marriage status or how they join to the family. Therefore, the perceptions and experiences of the unmarried women differentiate from the experiences of the married women in Kurdish society.

In light of this distinction, in this study, I will investigate the appropriation mechanisms developed by Kurdish unmarried adolescent girls in Dolapdere through their everyday lives in the urban space.

CHAPTER 4

APPROPRIATION OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

In this chapter, I will focus on the tactics implemented by Kurdish adolescent women to appropriate the space of Dolapdere. In line with the theoretical framework of Lefebvre and De Certeau, their coping mechanisms will be described with reference to the categories of explicit manifestation, avoidance and anonymity and resistance by existence that I mentioned above.

First of all, I will argue that, confirming the research underlying “avoidance and anonymity” and neighborhood attachment as a survival mechanism for the excluded segments of the society, adolescent Kurdish women consider Dolapdere a space where they feel safe, comfortable, liberated and belonging. They feel attachment to their neighborhood and hold on to it in order to survive in Istanbul. However, to contribute to the studies classified as explicit manifestation, my fieldwork reveals that the practice of traditional ceremonies, such as weddings or the celebration of Newroz, is also a coping mechanism that enables the

inhabitants to appropriate the space of Dolapdere, which is not mentioned in other research on explicit manifestation.

Although the neighborhood provides a sense of comfort, safety and belonging for its inhabitants, it is also considered to be a space dominated by the strategies of the Kurdish community. In difference to the works that I mentioned in connection with avoidance and anonymity, neighborhood attachment also involves an oppressive discourse of the migrant community. In this chapter, I will focus on this discourse and how it operates, utilizing the concept of *performance* that I believe will be illustrative when describing the daily interactions of these women in Dolapdere and in the public space of Istanbul in the next chapter of this study. This concept will be utilized to elaborate the way Kurdishness and Kurdish identity operate as hegemonic discourses in the daily lives of adolescent Kurdish women. I will argue that these women utilize different tactics to cope with this hegemonic discourse. As studies of avoidance and anonymity point out, women usually choose to negotiate with the dominant authority, rather than challenging it. Obedience to the dress code of the community is an example of this negotiation in practice. However, there are other tactics implemented by the adolescent Kurdish women which are not mentioned in the literature. One of them is speaking the language of the dominant discourse – Kurdish, in this case – in order to remain anonymous in the neighborhood. Another tactic is to appear to act in harmony with the patriarchal discourse, such as by using alternative gsm cards to hide information about their boyfriends or choosing districts that are far away from Dolapdere for their dates. I will underline these methods throughout this chapter,.

ATTACHMENT TO DOLAPDERE

As a spatial background, Dolapdere forms an important element in the construction of the Kurdish identity of its inhabitants. In Dolapdere, people from hometowns that are close to each other live together and create new community relations. The dissolved ethnic belongings and identities, as a result of the internal displacement, are reconstructed in this new environment. Situated within the invisible boundaries that divide the neighborhood from the remaining parts of the city, Dolapdere becomes a home for its Kurdish migrants. They attempt to establish a landscape similar to their hometowns and search for an attachment to, and a sense of community in, this new area. A majority of them belong to different branches of a single family or have known each other for a couple of generations, which keeps them together. Thus, migration from village to Istanbul does not dissolve community relations completely, although it creates a rupture in people's lives.

The neighborhood is usually identified as a comfortable environment for the migrant communities who attempt to establish themselves in the city and deal with the harsh living conditions, especially in the early years of the migration (Stack, 1974; Erder, 1997; Çelik, 2005; Simonsen&Vaiou, 1996). In my study, almost every respondent referred to the relieving influence of the Kurdish community in Dolapdere, in economic, social or political terms. Most of them told me that they had moved into the house of one of their relatives when they first arrived in Istanbul, or that their relatives had helped them to find a place and settle down. Almost all of them emphasize that the people within the community lend money to each other when it is necessary. In addition to these economic dimensions, relations within the neighborhood also help the migrants get used to Istanbul in social terms. The existence of relatives or friends that they can speak with in Kurdish or talk about their problems brings relief in an otherwise often unwelcoming urban space.

Dilan is a twenty-five year old woman who migrated from Mardin, Sumer when she was nine years old. The political pressure upon Dilan's family caused them to migrate to

Dolapdere where her aunts were already living. She describes the early years of migration as hard years in which she and her family had to go through many difficulties. She could not go to school but instead had to begin working when she was nine years old. Although she mostly emphasizes the suffering her family had to go through in Istanbul, especially in economic terms, she narrates Dolapdere as a relieving environment.

*Dilan: "I do not feel like a stranger in this neighborhood. Even in the case of an unimportant threat, everybody comes to help. I can stay alone here and do not fear anything because if anything happens, when I look through the window, the grocer knows me. The owner of the grocery opposite our house is from the same village as my mother and the other one is from the same village of my father. The owner of the internet cafe is also from my village. Our neighbors are from our village. We all know each other. It is enough for me to shout, and everybody comes to help."*⁹

Diyar, a distant relative of Dilan, also emphasizes her sense of belonging in Dolapdere. Diyar's parents first migrated from Mardin, Dargeçit to Düzce, Akçakoca when she was too young to remember. Düzce is situated in northwest of Turkey, close to Istanbul, a very small province with a low level of population. Akçakoca is a town in Düzce, populated predominantly by self-identified Turks, where there were only three Kurdish families, according to Diyar's description. Her family lived in Akçakoca until Diyar was thirteen years old, when her father got a job opportunity and they moved to Istanbul, settling near their relatives in Dolapdere. Currently, she is a student at Bilgi University, a private institution which is located in Dolapdere and which comprises mostly the children of upper middle class Turkish parents. Given the gulf in class between typical Bilgi University students and

⁹ Dilan. Yabancılık çekmıyoruz. Burada mesela en ufak bir şey olunca herkes birbirine koşuyor. Burada mesela yalnız da kalabilirm hiç korkmam. Çünkü en ufak bir şey olduğu zaman kafamı camdan çıkarttığım zaman bakkal tanıdık. Karşiki bakkal bizim köylü, öbürü annemin köylüsü. İnternet kafe bizim köylü. Mesela üsttekiler bizim köylü, onun bir üstü bizim köylü. Hepsi tanıdık. Bak hepsi tanıdık. Sadece sesimi çıkarmam yeterli hepsi gelir.

inhabitants of Dolapdere, Diyar underlines the sense of comfort she feels in Dolapdere, compared to discomfort she feels at school.

Diyar: It is a great feeling, make no mistake. It is a place where you live as majority. Really, sometimes you say that you will go far away by yourself, but it is a lie! You can't go anywhere! Especially me. I don't believe that I can go anywhere away from my family and this neighborhood anymore. For instance, I am a student in Bilgi University. If you ask someone in my university, they are either from Ataköy or from Nişantaşı. They ask me where I live and I respond 'Here, Dolapdere.' I tell them that I live in Dolapdere and Dolapdere is great! But believe me, I have been experiencing this insulting attitude for two years. 'Do you live in Dolapdere?' And you know about the profile of students at Bilgi University.

E.: I can imagine the pejorative tone in her voice. (together we laugh by imitating the way upper middle class girls speak)

D.: For instance, she paused and asked me whether it is a dangerous place. How it can be a bad place when all my relatives live there, I said to her! How can it be a bad place! She paused and asked me whether I was serious. I responded 'Yes! Do you know how uncomfortable I feel here?' When I go to Dolapdere I feel that nothing bad will ever happen to me. Of course! You have Kurdish friends and relatives. You learn how to become cousins. Really! Because you don't know anything about your cousins until you come to Istanbul. I did not know anything about my aunt until I came to Istanbul. For example, a women comes over and hugs me. I am 22 and I have been living in Istanbul since I was 8 or 9, and it is still the same. For instance when we went to the farmers market ,a women hugged me and said 'my dear niece', even though I diidn't know her. I asked her who she was and she began to talk about my father and I understood that she was my aunt but I hadn't known anything about her until that moment. ”¹⁰

¹⁰ Diyar: Emin ol bu çok güzel bir his. Çoğunlukta olduğun yer hakkaten bazen diyosun ya kendimi alıp gidicem falan hikaye gidemezsin ki, yalan. Hele ben bu saatten sonra hiçbir yere gideceğimi sanmıyorum. Ailemden bu çevreden. Mesela Bilgi Üniversitesi'nde okuyorum. Birine sorsan Ataköy'de biri Nişantaşı'nda. Nerede oturuyosun, a işte burda. Ya ben Dolapdere'de oturuyorum baba ya süper falan yapıyorum. Ama var ya iki senedir bunu yaşıyorum. Ay Dolapdere'de mi yaşıyosun! Bi de biliyosun Bilgi Üniversitesi profili başka bi yer.

E. Sesin tonununu ben bile hayal edebiliyorum. (taklidini yaparak gülüyoruz)

Diyar: İşte durdu durdu mesela dedi orası ne biliyim kötü bir yer değil mi dedi. Ne kötüsü be dedim tüm sülale orada ne kötüsü dedim. Durdu durdu ciddi misin dedi. Evet dedim ben burada kendimi ne kadar rahatsız hissediyorum biliyor musun dedim. Dolapdere'ye gideyim sanki böyle güvenli hiçbir şey başıma gelmeyecek gibi. Tabii arkadaşlarım Kürt, akrabalarım var. Kuzen kavramını öğreniyorsun. Gerçekten çünkü o ana kadar ne kuzen biliyorsun, halamı tanımyordum ya İstanbul'a gelmeden önce ben. Kadın geliyo sarılıyo mesela hala öyle. 22 yaşındayım 8-9 senedir İstanbul'dayım,

The narratives of Dilan and Diyar reflect the category I refer to as avoidance and anonymity, in my analysis of the literature. In this section I mentioned the coping mechanisms that are implemented in order to abstain from the urban public space by the discriminated segments of the society. Neighborhood attachment is one of these coping mechanisms that emerges from the solidarity between migrants, especially in the early years of migration (Erder, 1996: 246; Simonsen & Vaiou, 1996: 452; Stack, 1974: 33; Çelik, 2005: 144). The respondents' descriptions of closerelations and a sense of comfort and belonging in Dolapdere refers to the same coping mechanism. As with other cases from different parts of the world, Kurdish adolescent women inhabit Dolapdere with a sense of comfort, belonging and attachment. One point worth noting, however, is that this attachment is more emphasized in cases of step migration than others, which is not referred in the literature as a distinctive dimension. In Dolapdere there are many families similar to Diyar's, who first moved to the biggest city near their villages or some other town or city far away from the Kurdish region. After staying for several years in this place, they move to Istanbul.

There also emerges a difference between the experiences of alienation and discrimination by respondents who moved to a city or a town in the Kurdish regions of Turkey and those who moved to places dominated by the Turkish majority. As a part of the minority group among Turkish populations in small towns or a cities, they did not always experience explicit exclusion or attitudes against them. On the contrary, these girls narrate their lives in these small towns as happy and peaceful. However, when I ask them to make a comparison between their lives in this first step and Istanbul, Dolapdere is identified as a

mesela pazara gidiyoruz kadının teki 'ayy canım yavrum işte yeğenim' diye sarılıyor. Ya diyorum teyze sen kimsin allah aşkına! Senin baban bu bu değil mi falan onu öğreniyorum. O ana kadar ne teyze biliyorum ne bir şey.

more comfortable environment. Although they did not encounter an explicitly discriminatory reaction and claim that they were very happy in their first step, they describe Dolapdere as having a free and safe atmosphere where they feel comfortable and liberated. Meryem, who experienced step migration through Konya, Sarayönü – a town located in the middle of the Anatolia populated predominantly by a conservative Turkish majority – to Istanbul is one of these respondents. Meryem and her family migrated from Mardin to Sarayönü, because their village was burned and destroyed. Her father had found a job in a construction area in Sarayönü, so that they decided to move to this town. Similar to the experiences of Diyar, Meryem's family was one of the few Kurdish families in the town, which is mainly populated by self-identified Turks. Because her brothers had been working in Istanbul and staying by themselves, Meryem's family then decided to move to Istanbul to keep their family together. Meryem was one of the most successful students in Sarayönü. She was loved by her teachers, and she claims that she felt unhappy about their migration to Istanbul. However, when I asked her to compare her feelings about Sarayönü and Dolapdere, she stated that she felt more connected to Dolapdere.

Meryem: Actually, I did not expect this kind of a place. I found it very interesting, at first. Then, after I begin to talk to people, half of this place is full of Kurds, mostly the Kurds and Gypsies live here. I did not find anything strange here. I did not have any problems getting used to this neighborhood...

E: I was going to ask about it, was it a relief for you?

Meryem: It was not hard for me to get used to it. In fact not at all. I was surprised because of the fact that there were almost 15-20 Kurdish students in classes. In Konya, there were none. It was only me and my brother and two sisters, no one else.

E: Do you find that living in Istanbul is a relief for your life, or would you prefer to live in Konya or Mardin?

Meryem: When I first came to Istanbul, how can I say, the friendships in Istanbul are based upon lies. Honestly, there is a relationship based on self-interest. When you

consider your friend's words, you cannot be sure whether it is a lie or the truth. In Konya there was sincerity. I don't think that it is same in Dolapdere. However, in terms of comfort, it is more liberated here than in Konya. You feel more comfortable here.

E: Why?

Meryem: There are many Kurdish people around you. In Konya, it is hard to claim your Kurdish identity. There was not much reaction but during our first years in Konya, the total votes for Kurdish party were only one or two, which were by my parents. However, after my father migrated to that town, in two or three years the votes have begun to increase. The last time total votes were almost thirty.¹¹

In addition to the sense of comfort and freedom, the neighborhood is a space where the nationalist ceremonies of the migrant community are practiced. In the literature on explicit manifestation that I presented above, protests and activism through associations are described as conspicuous methods that enable a person to display her/his identity in order to appropriate the urban space (Petropoulou, 2010: 222; Boudreau, Boucher, & Liguori, 2009: 338; Wedel,

¹¹ Meryem. Açıkçası böyle bi ortamla karşılaşacağımı sanmıyordum. Baya ilginçime gitti ilk önce. Sonra konuşmaya başlayınca yarısı Kürt zaten buranın çevresi genelde Kürtler ve Çingeneler olduğu için. Hiç yadırgamadım aslında geldiğim yeri. Yani uyum sağlamam zor olmadı hiç...

E. Onu soracaktım, bu senin için rahatlatıcı bir şey miydi?

M. Yani uyum sağlamam zor olmadı hiç. Hiç olmadı hatta. Şaşırdım yani sınıfların hepsinde nerdeyse 15-20 tane Kürt vardı. Konya'da bi tane bile yoktu. Bi abimle ben vardık bi de kızkardeşlerim, başka yok.

E. Sence İstanbul'da olmak seni mutlu eden bir şey mi yoksa Konya ya da Mardin'de olsak der miydin yani?

M. İstanbul'da şimdi ilk Konya'dan buraya geldiğimde yani İstanbul'daki arkadaşlık biraz yalan üzerine mi desem. Çıkar ilişkileri var açıkçası. Arkadaşına şöyle bi baktığın zaman doğru mu yalan mı çıkartamıyorsun. Konya'da öyle yok mesela, herkes içtendir. Konya'da daha içten samimiyet var. Burada öyle bir şey olduğunu sanmıyorum açıkçası. Ama rahatlık bakımından tabi burası daha özgür. Burada daha rahatsın.

E. Neden?

M.. Çevrende bi sürü Kürt var. Konya gibi bi yerde Kürdüm demek biraz cesaret işi. Pek tepki olmadı ama mesela ilk Konya'ya gittiğim zaman seçimlerde falan çıkan oy hani oylama yapıyorlar ya sandıktan çıkan bir iki oydu, babamların o da. Babam oraya gittikten sonra mesela iki üç sene sonra oylar baya bi yükselmeye başladı. İki den üçten beşe ona yirmiye kadar çıktığı oldu, en son otuzdu.

2001: 123; Carpio, Irazabal, & Pulido, 2011: 18-19; Vargas, 2006: 50-51; Skelton & Valentine, 2003: 120; Çelik, 2005: 151-152; Wedel, 2001: 94; Erder, 1997: 122). However, in addition to these methods,, the practices of customs in Dolapdere also emerged during my research as coping mechanism used by the adolescent Kurdish women to appropriate that space. As a contribution to this literature, these narratives reveal that the practice of these traditions is a major factor in the achievement of sense of belonging and comfort in both the space of Dolapdere and in wider Istanbul.

Unlike their parents, a majority of my respondents do not remember daily life in their hometowns. They had not experienced the national ceremonies of the Kurdish community, such as weddings or the celebration of Newroz, before they arrived in Istanbul. The community relations that welcome to these girls in Dolapdere also present these “invented traditions” and customs to them (Hobsbawm, 1983). It provides them with the opportunity to learn these customs and participate in them. Anne Fortier, in her article on identity performance (1999), makes a similar point about the performance of group identity and its influence on the development of sense of belonging to a place. According to Fortier, the collective practices of an ethnic community allows them to put their imprint on that space. That space incorporates the traces of that particular community, which makes them belong to that space and feel comfortable in it. However, Fortier also makes a very important point in warning us to be careful about the relation between these ceremonies and the construction of a group identity in a city. Although it seems as if the communal activities are the results of group identity, it is in fact these definitional ceremonies that construct that ethnic identity, and their performance that leads to the embracement of it by younger generations (Fortier, 1999: 41- 43). The girls in my fieldwork prove Fortier’s arguments in the sense that they narrate these ceremonies, for instance weddings, as the constituent elements of Kurdish identity and

emphasize the role these ceremonies play in their sense of belonging to Istanbul. Diyar expressed resentment because she had not known anything about a “Kurdish wedding” until she came to Istanbul.

E: Didn't you use to go in Mardin?

Diyar: Never. You see, I had never gone to a Kurdish wedding so I had never seen any Kurdish bride. I had absolutely no idea. I still feel resentment about it. People ask me whether I am from Mardin and ask me whether I know the traditions. But you don't know! You feel resentment about it. It is a really bad thing. You can't say anything to your family. Your parents just go to Mardin for funerals.¹²

Raziye is a close friend of Dilan. She is also from Mardin, Sümer and she is a permanent full-time worker in a textile workshop in Dolapdere. She is the youngest member of her family and therefore does not have any personal memories of her village as her parents migrated to Istanbul when she was very young. She has been working in the workshop since she was seven or eight years old and did not have a chance to go to school. She also underlines the weddings in Dolapdere as symbols of Kurdish nationalist consciousness and describes an example case to me that reflects her perspective in terms of “Kurdish weddings”.

Raziye: We went to a wedding on Friday. My friends were throwing a flag, you know our flag. They were dancing around. The relatives of bride were telling them not to throw the flags. Even though they are Kurdish people, you see they try to prevent them throwing our flag. We told them are you insane! Aren't you Kurdish! How can you tell us not to throw our flag! One of the girls was again telling us not to throw the flag. You see there are Kurdish people like that. They see themselves as Turkish not Kurdish. Do not throw that flag! My friend said: 'We will throw the flag. It is our flag. We are Kurdish not Turkish!'¹³

¹² E. Siz hiç Mardin'e falan gitmiyor muydunuz?

L. Hiç gitmedik. Düşün bi Kürt düğünü görmemişim, Kürt gelini nasıl oluyor bilmiyorum. Yani kesinlikle hiç bi fikrim yoktu. Hala daha da zoruma gider mesela aa Mardinli misin orada böyle böyle bişey var, bilmiyorsun. O o kadar ukte oluyor ki sana. Çok fena bişi oluyor. Ailene de bişey diyemiyorsun. Anne-baba cenazeden cenazeye gidip geliyor.

¹³ Raziye: Cuma günü kınaya gittik ya. Bizim kızlar işte bayrak sallıyorlardı hani bizim bayrağımızı. İşte ortada oynuyolardı falan. Kızın tarafı şey yapıyor, sallamayın o bayrağı! Bak düşün Kürt oldukları

In another meeting, where I met with Diyar, Dilan and Raziye, I learnt about the concerts or festivals organized by the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP)¹⁴ or an association named *Dar-Der*, in which people from Dargeçit come together. These organizations were also emphasized by the girls as symbols of their Kurdishness, which can be revealed in Dolapdere's space.

Diyar: You know there are people who play kemanche, we call them mitirp. It is hard to translate this word into Turkish. If you translate it, it becomes something like Gypsy, but it does not have the same meaning. For example, have you ever seen one at weddings? Have you ever been to a Kurdish wedding?

E: Not yet.

Dilan: For example, there is a wedding tonight, we will go there. We will go because it is part of our culture too.

Diyar: People say things like 'it is always the same', 'you always play the same music'. Actually, there are other things to play but...

Dilan: We are used to them, we are used to playing those songs. Tamaşa for instance.

Raziye: Yesterday they played tamaşa but no one danced to it. I was itching to stand up and dance to it.

E: Why didn't you stand up and dance?

Raziye: I don't know. I thought that in an event like this, no one dances. Nobody asked me for a dance, so I could not dance. But you should have heard how they were playing the kemanche. If it was a wedding, I would have stood up and danced with the

halde böyle yapıyorlar, sallamayın o bayrağı! Dedik siz deli misiniz ya, siz Kürt değil misiniz nasıl dersiniz sallamayın. Kız böyle yok yok sallamayın. Yani öyle Kürtler de var. Yani düşün kendi kendilerini Kürt gibi değil de Türk gibi görüyorlar. Sallamayın o bayrağı, sallamayın. Kız dedi ki sallanız bayrak bizim bayrağımız biz Kürdüz biz Türk değiliz.

¹⁴ The political party of Kurdish movement in Turkey.

other girls, I wouldn't wait for anybody to call me. But there was no one on dance floor.

E: Was not it a wedding?

Raziye: No, it was an event organized by a neighborhood association.¹⁵

In addition to weddings, there are also other defining ceremonies such as Newroz, the 8th of March (International Women's Day) and the 4th of April (the anniversary of Abdullah Öcalan, leader of PKK). These events are also performances that construct the group identity and that provide for the appropriation of the neighborhood's space. By performing these activities every year in Hacı Ahmet Square, the neighborhood's main public space which is permanently under surveillance of police cameras, these girls claim the space of the neighborhood and develop a sense of belonging to it. Starting from a couple of weeks before the celebrations of Newroz, they reflect upon the dresses they will wear on that day. Days before the activities start they prepare their accessories, such as yellow, red and green scarfs – the colors of the Kurdish movement. The day before Newroz they participate in celebrations in Hacı Ahmet that can last until midnight, dancing traditional dances together for many

¹⁵ Diyar. Kemeñçe çalanlar var ya biz onlara mıtırp diyoruz. O Türkçe biraz zor oluyor, çeviremiyosun, çevirsen de Çingene oluyo ama aynı anlam çıkmıyo. Mesela düğünlerde falan hiç gördün mü bilmiyorum ama hiç izledin mi Kürt düğünü?

Elif. Yok, henüz değil.

Dilan. Mesela bu akşam var gidicez. Gidicez o da bizim kültürümüzdür.

Diyar. Millet şey diyo abi ya hep aynı şey başka bir şey yok mu var aslında ama yani.

Dilan. Ona alışmışız onunla oynuyoruz. Tamaşa mesela.

Raziye. Ay dün çaldılar kimse gitmedi oynamaya benim içim gitti. (gülüyoruz)

E. Neden gitmedin?

Raziye. Ay ne biliyim bu gecede kimse oynamaz gibisinden beni çağırmadı kimse gel oyna diye kimse oynamıyor. Ay bi de kemeñçeyi öyle bi çalıyor öyle bi çalıyor ayyy! Düğün olsaydı giderdim. Kimse sormadan. Ooo düğündür oynarım. Kimse kıpırdamıyor.

Elif. Dünkü dediğin düğün değil miydi?

Dilan. Hayır yok derneğin gecesiydi.

hours. As Diyar narrates, even the women take a break from their daily routines and housework and participate in the celebrations.

Diyar: During Newroz celebrations it is full of people here. You should come here in Newroz.

E: Of course, I will.

Diyar: Nobody even washes a glass. Everyone gets up in the morning and tries to decide on their accessories. Not even a glass is washed that day, women give up all their housework. They do not care about what their husbands will eat for dinner.¹⁶

Zilan is one of the sisters of Meryem who also experienced step migration from Konya to Istanbul. She is an eighteen year old high school student living in Dolapdere. In difference to her sister Meryem, Zilan is more political in her comments about the rights and liberties of the Kurdish population and the discriminatory policies of the Turkish state towards the Kurdish population. Her main goal for the future is to study sociology in university and develop her political involvement in the Kurdish movement. She is not part of a particular political organization, but does not miss any protest, demonstration, conference or other activity concerning Kurds and the Kurdish movement.

In line with this, while we were talking in one of our meetings in a cafe in Taksim about the celebrations of Newroz in Dolapdere two months previously, she was full of enthusiasm when telling me that she had danced for five hours non-stop. She narrated the celebrations with heartfelt emotions and feelings that could be seen in her actions. A couple of

¹⁶ Diyar. Newrozlarda böyle ful. Newroz'da buraya gelmen lazım. Elif. Gelcem zaten.

Diyar. Kimse bir bardak yıkamıyo ya. Sabah kalkıyo herkes hangisini takçam falan oluyo yani. Bardak bile yıkanmaz iş güç bırakılır o gün. Koca aç mı bana ne, yesin yani.

times, she reminded me about the police cameras located in the middle of Hacı Ahmet Square, in the center of the neighborhood. Bearing in mind her emphasis on the police department's surveillance of Dolapdere space, for Zilan, each and every performance of *halay* – a style of dance that is attributed a political meaning by the Kurdish community and the Kurdish movement – emerges as a reappropriation of that space. In each performance she repeatedly claims that space for herself. It becomes a coping mechanism that maintains her hold on the city. In Zilan's narratives Dolapdere, in contrast to her experiences in the first step in the migration process, appears as the place where she can practice her traditions. In Dolapdere, she opens up a space for herself where she can perform her existence by confronting the surveillance of police cameras. This resembles Diyar's concerns during the primary step in the migration process where she could not perform her existence in the way she wished either.

Therefore, in line with the works of Stack, Çelik, Erder and Simonsen & Vaiou, which refer to neighborhood attachment as one of the survival mechanisms of migrants, Dolapdere is narrated as the place where these girls feel liberated. Because it is full of people that they know and who help each other, it becomes easier for them to relate to Istanbul. On the other hand, these works that analyze the survival mechanisms of disadvantaged groups in urban space lack a focus on the performance of traditions. As I explained when discussing the first category of coping mechanisms – explicit manifestation – there are different forms of the exhibition of identity in the urban space that work as modes of appropriation. However, performances of group identity through traditional activities are not underlined in the literature. In my research, I found that these traditional ceremonies are also practiced by the excluded segments of society as a way of appropriating the urban space.

DOLAPDERE AS A CONTESTED SPACE

Dolapdere is not only depicted as having a relieving atmosphere by these girls. While the survival of community relations in the neighborhood is a comforting factor for the girls and enables them to cope with the city, the community in Dolapdere also makes them feel dominated. In light of the focus on the limited space of the neighborhood in respondents' narratives, Kurdishness operates as a strategic action in De Certeau's terms. The neighborhood is conceptualized as the space where community relations and traditions are practiced. However, this does not only provide an attachment for its dwellers but is also narrated as a space under the domination of the hegemonic discourse of "Kurdish identity" that requires the performance of "Kurdishness" in everyday life.

In Lefebvre's theory, everyday life is seen as a "performance area" where people develop performances that help them acquire a sense of belonging to the city. In that sense, the concept of performance can be elaborated in light of a discussion between Erving Goffman, Judith Butler and Vikki Bell. Performance is described by Goffman as an action for the "*gaze of the others*"; it is done in order to present the self to other people. It is self-regulation of actions to regulate the views of others (Goffman, 2009: 21). According to these theoreticians, repetitiveness and citationality are the constituent elements of the performance. Through repetitive action that cites from the norms of a community, the people are able to develop belonging to a particular space. The consistency of performance in each repetition verifies the authenticity of that action. Therefore, people are expected to perform their role without any ruptures (Bell, 1999: 3; Butler, 1999: 191).

Goffman further identifies the concept of 'display' as the expression a person presents even if he/she stops performing, such as through their gender, ethnicity, race or age. He makes

a distinction between display and performance when analyzing consistency in performative action. According to him, what is expected is the consistency of the display and the performances of a person, which are termed *idealized performances* in a collective sphere (Goffman, 2009: 33-38). Ideally, the people who belong to a specific group have to perform the characteristics of that group. As Judith Butler argues, this is a process of becoming that can never be fulfilled by the actors. In each and every encounter, “you have to perform this role that you promise with your appearance.” It is an institutionalized performative action that dominates through implementation of a category with particular characteristics and roles (Butler, 1999: 179). It becomes obligatory to perform the roles and norms of this category. The strategies of the dominant discourse operate through creation of particular categories that involve specified idealized performances (Butler, 1999: 177). These performances involve particular rules and norms that penetrate people’s lives, from ways of talking to dressing or to walking. As Judith Butler argues, entitlement is an institutionalized practice of domination that involves particular actions, conversations and images in itself (Butler, 1999: 147). Existence within that space becomes impossible if one is not a member of this category. “Kurdishness” or the “Kurdish identity” that operates over the adolescent Kurdish women in Dolapdere is applied in the form of a categorized “ideal adolescent Kurdish girl.” Confirming Butler’s analysis of the relation between categorization and domination, a particular idealized performance is demanded from adolescent Kurdish women who live in Dolapdere. They have to conform with this ideal in order to survive in the neighborhood space and be able to develop a sense of attachment and belonging to it.

I noticed this silent operation of discourse by comparing the way my respondents dressed in Dolapdere and in the Istiklal Avenue. Through inconspicuous actions such as

fastening the top button of a t-shirt while going back from the Istiklal Avenue in Taksim to Dolapdere, the operation of this “ideal Kurdish girl” categorization becomes visible.

Kevser is one of these girls who never forgets to make this adjustment in her clothes. She is a university student in the department of preschool education. Kevser’s parents migrated from Mardin, Dargeçit to Istanbul when she was seven or eight years old. She remembers the migration process and especially the financial conditions of her family in the first years of migration. Along with her older brothers and sisters, she starts to work in order to support her family. However, unlike her brothers and sisters, who worked in textile workshops, she began to work in the streets, selling water and various other products. However, after a couple of years, her family’s financial situation improved and Kevser began to go to school. She was so successful that she passed two grades in one year and is now a university student. Her university is located in Nişantaşı, an upper class neighborhood of Istanbul. Because of the location of her university, we usually met Kevser in Taksim, then sometimes went together to Dolapdere. When I referred to this minor adjustment of their dress between Taksim and Dolapdere, Kevser told me that the comments of the people in Dolapdere compel her to make this change.

Kevser: “For instance, I went to a place the other day and a woman told me by referring to the name of my mother, that they (Kevser’s parents) do not seem as if they are Kurdish people. She told me that I dressed in a very different manner. She told me that if any other person looked at us, he/she would think that we were not Kurdish.”¹⁷

I think the main point in Kevser’s narrative that should be emphasized is the accusation brought against her family of not being as Kurdish because they condoned the way

¹⁷ Kevser. Mesela geçen gün bi yere gittim kadın şey dedi benim annemin adını söyledi sanki böyle Kürt değilmiş gibi dedi. Hani.. Hani çok farklı giyiniyorsunuz falan dedi. Ben değil de başkası görse der bunlar Kürt değil der dedi.

Kevser was dressing. Because Kevser's clothing style contradicted the image of an idealized "adolescent Kurdish girl", a member of the Kurdish community in Dolapdere declared her and her family of not being real Kurds.

Eyşe is a close friend of Kevser, and is also her cousin. She is a high school student in the department of fine arts. Like the parents of Kevser, Eyşe's family moved to Istanbul when she was almost seven years old. Similarly, Eyşe also worked for a couple of years to make financial contributions before going to school. Because she is a very talented artist, she was accepted by a private high school in Kadıköy. When I asked Eyşe her opinions about the alterations in dress that Kurdish girls make when they enter Dolapdere's space, she also confirmed the categorical image expected of her by members of the Kurdish community in their neighborhood.

*Eyşe: "The relatives do not recognize me. They are surprised when they meet me and say to me 'Are you the daughter of Ayşe!'"*¹⁸

Eyşe refers in this statement to the silent domination over her and her friends that is voiced with a question that interrogates the authority of her parents over Eyşe's style. Like the accusation brought against Kevser's parents, these adolescent girls are blamed for not conforming to the main characteristics of Kurdishness in their dressing styles. Diyar underlines the transformation in the attitudes of her parents after migration from Düzce to Istanbul, which reveals the hegemonic exercise of Kurdishness in Dolapdere.

Diyar: In the first years I felt obliged to adjust to the Kurds here. For instance, I was used to wearing miniskirts in Duzce. In the summers I used to wear sundresses. But now, you come to Istanbul and my mother starts telling me it is a shame to wear this or that. I told my mother that I had always worn these kinds of dresses, why was it shameful now? And also, when I first moved to Istanbul, it was the beginning of my

¹⁸ Eyşe. Akralar beni tanımyor. Aaa sen Ayşe'nin kızı mısın diyolar bana.

adolescence, my menstruation and becoming a girl in the complete sense. Of course, I was persistent about wearing those dresses. Every time, my mother implemented a sanction to punish me. She was also persistent about prohibition. But you know the student profile of Bilgi University. It is perceived as shameful to sit like this when I am with my uncle. People begin to gossip about me. Today, I am very sure that there is gossip about me and Meryem. They think that we will not marry a boy from Dolapdere in the future. They believe that we are arrogant and we don't like the boys in Dolapdere. However, in my family, there is a strong emphasis on marrying a boy from our community. Only one of my sisters married a boy from a family that had migrated from Bulgaria.¹⁹

This categorization of “Kurdishness” and the “ideal adolescent Kurdish girl” operates through these sentences in the everyday lives of these girls. These statements all refer to the fulfilment of an idealized Kurdish girl’s appearance. They have to confront this discourse in their everyday lives and in each and every encounter with a relative or a friend of their parents in Dolapdere.

Therefore, the fastening of the top button of a t-shirt by Kevser in Dolapdere, while unfastening it on the way to Taksim, emerges as a coping mechanism implemented to escape from the strategy of “Kurdishness” that is exerted upon them in the neighborhood. In line with the works of Secor and Fenster mentioned in the section on avoidance and anonymity, the women choose to negotiate with the dominant structures, to become invisible and be seen as

¹⁹ Diyar. Ben ilk zamanlar Kürtlere ayak uydurma zorunluluğunu hissetmişim. Mesela Düzce’de mini eteklere şortlara alışmışım. Yazın ortasında askılılarla dolaş falan alışmışım şimdi İstanbul’a geliyorsun annem bana diyor ki bunu giyme ayıp! Onu giyme ayıp! Anne diyorum hani ben hep giyiyorum niye ayıp olsun. Bir de İstanbul’a ilk geldiğim dönem tam genç kızlık dönemim, hastalanmam, tam anlamıyla bi kız olmam. Tabi ben de artık kendim inadına giyinmek istiyorum. Annem bana her seferinde bir yaptırım uyguluyor. Giyemezsin falan diye. Bilgi Üniversitesi’nin de bi profili var. Ayıp mesela şu ayıp bizde böyle oturmak. Dayımların yanında falan. Dedikodu olur. Şu an şu vardır kesin Diyarla Meryem Bilgi Üniversitesi’ne gidiyorlar kesin oradan birini bulurlar. Bizim gibilere bakmazlar. Halbuki bizde hep aile içidir evlilik, ablalarımdan biri bir tek dışardan evlendi, bir Bulgar göçmeniyle.

ordinary by obeying the hegemonic dress codes(Fenster, 2005: 226; Secor, 2002: 13). Diyar narrates this negotiation with a reference to the pullover covering her neck that she wears during the interview.

*Diyar: I wear this pullover in this neighborhood. When I come here, my aunt interferes with my dress, when I go to home, my mother interferes with my dress, I meet my boyfriend and he also interferes with my dress.*²⁰

On the other hand, when she goes out of Dolapdere, she prefers to wear blouses that reveal from her neck to her breasts. Therefore, wearing a pullover is a tactic used by Diyar to prevent any kind of exclusion that would make her feel uncomfortable in the neighborhood. Through conforming to the dress code of the Kurdish community in Dolapdere, Diyar, Kevser, Elif and all of my other respondents try to live up to the idealized categorization of an “adolescent Kurdish girl” that enables them to feel belonging and comfort in Dolapdere’s space.

However, the daily experiences of the girls who have a full-time permanent job are different from those who go to school. They work in textile workshops in Dolapdere and either are, or until recently were, illiterate. They work six days a week from nine a.m. to nine or ten p.m. Only on Sundays do they find an opportunity to rest and they usually spend the day in their homes. They have their friends from the neighborhood. Therefore, unlike the girls who go to school, they stay away from the urban space and spend most of their time working or staying at home with their parents. In line with the arguments of Çelik and Erder about the isolation caused by neighborhood attachment, these girls live in a more isolated way than the

²⁰ Diyar. Bu çevrede giyiyorum bu kazağı. Ben buraya gelirim yengem uğraşır, eve giderim annem uğraşır. Sevgilimin yanına giderim sevgilim uğraşır.

girls who go to school, although not as isolated as their mothers' lives (Çelik, 2005; Erder, 1997). Because they are limited to Dolapdere, they usually adopt the role of their mothers in upholding the categorization of an "ideal adolescent Kurdish girl." At the same time though, they are also more independent than their mothers in their everyday lives. As the second generation of migrant families, they also question these strategies. Their position in the community can be identified through their clothes. Unlike the girls who go to school, they do not usually wear jeans or t-shirts, but they do not wear *şalvar* – the traditional trousers worn by their mothers – either. They are mostly veiled and choose to wear trousers and shirts that covers their décolleté, rather than jeans and blouses..

Behiye is the older sister of Kevser, who has been working in a textile workshop since she was a child. Because of the financial difficulties of her parents, although her younger sisters were able to go to school after a couple of years, she had to work and so did not have a chance to go to school. Because of the tough working conditions in textile workshops, she does not have any time to spend on herself. She spends her limited free time at home with her parents, because her Turkish is worse than her Kurdish and she is illiterate. She has two sisters, one of them, Gülizar, attends a high school and the other, Kevser, is a university student. Behiye describes her sisters by using the phrase of "*as if they were not born in this family.*"²¹ During our interviews, she scolds her younger sisters because of the way they serve the guests or the way they dress. Dilan is also a women who has a full-time job in a textile workshop and has similar conflicts with her younger sister, Hilal, who attends university. She gets angry with her because her boyfriend is Turkish and Dilan thinks that it is impossible for them – as Kurdish girls - to marry a Turkish men.

²¹ Sanki bu evde doğmamışlar gibi.

Therefore, the girls who work in the manufacturing workshops sometimes become part of the strategic domination of the Kurdish identity over the girls who go to school. They exhibit similar performances to their mothers towards their sisters and support the categorization of an “idealized Kurdish girl” in various ways. However, at the same time, they also feel dominated by this strategy. Dilan, while telling me about the reason behind her veiling, refers to this restrictive dimension of neighborhood life by emphasizing the cultural norms of the community.

Dilan: “For instance, I have been veiled for two years. Until then, my father told me not to veil, he told me to dress in the way I wanted to. But the neighborhood exerted pressure. They say that it is shameful and that you should veil. They do not say that it is sin, they say that it is shameful. They tell me not to wear trousers and to put on a veil. So I had to veil because of the neighborhood pressure.”²²

Therefore, similar to the girls who go to school, Dilan changed her dressing style and now wears the veil, thereby accepting the norms of the community and opening up a space for herself in the neighborhood. Otherwise, it would become very hard for her to continue her life in that space. However, by continuing to wear trousers as a reaction to the norms of the community that compel her to wear *şalvar* whilst veiling at the same time, she appropriates the space of the neighborhood.

In addition to dress codes, the idealized performances that are constructed around “an ideal Kurdish girl” require speaking Kurdish. All of my respondents speak Kurdish in their homes and when they are with their parents. The ones who work in a full-time job speak Kurdish better than Turkish because they have not gone to school. Whilst the girls who go to

²² Dilan. Mesela ben iki senedir kapandım. O seneye kadar babam diyordu kapanma diyordu. Nasıl istiyosan öyle ol diyordu. Ama çevre baskısı. İşte ayıptır, başını ört. Günah demiyorlar. Ayıptır diyolar. Ne pantolon giyiyorsun! Başını ört! Nedir çevre baskısından dolayı kapanmak zorunda kaldım.

school are better at Turkish than Kurdish they are prohibited from speaking Turkish when they are with their parents, not least because their mothers usually cannot speak it. The girls do not oppose this rule, because they want their Kurdish to be as good as their Turkish. However, whilst they are usually careful about speaking Kurdish in the neighborhood, they speak Turkish with each other. Sometimes though, this rule can be broken, especially when they have problems with their parents. In moments of crisis, a rupture occurs in the performance of an “ideal Kurdish girl” who is compliant to the norms of the community. Kevser says that she speaks in Turkish when she gets angry at her mother. Likewise, Saide, another interviewee who is a high school student and who lives with his father, told me that sometimes she does not speak in Kurdish at home as a challenge to her father. They also make fun of the way their parents speak in Turkish. They told me about some particular words that their parents mispronounce in Turkish and how they laugh at them later when they are with their friends. Although these girls usually attempt not to challenge the rules and norms in Dolapdere in order to become anonymous and invisible as a coping mechanism, these few moments of rupture represent cracks in the strategic domination of the “Kurdishness” around them. My fieldwork, by underlining language as a coping mechanism for the Kurdish adolescent women in Dolapdere, thus contributes to the work of Secor (2002) and Fenster (2005), which considers obedience to dress codes a way of achieving anonymity for women. These girls are careful to speak in Kurdish when they are in Dolapdere, to avoid any type of exclusion by the community. However, through speaking Turkish to their parents or secretly joking about the way their parents speak in Turkish, they make manoeuvres and create gaps in the hegemony of “Kurdishness” that operates over each and every moment of their lives.

Another strategic action of the migrant community in Dolapdere is the restrictions on dating practices. The girls who work in a permanent job did not mention any kind of sexual

relationship in their lives and they did not want to respond to my questions about whether they had any boyfriend or not. However, the girls who attend high school and university were outspoken in terms of their boyfriends and their relationships. Although they spoke to me relaxedly about these issues, their mutual concern is not to be caught by their parents or the people from neighborhood when they are with their boyfriends.

E: What do you do at the weekends?

Kevser: I am always at home. I don't have any boyfriend.

E: But you wander around when you have a boyfriend.

Kevser: Of course I do, when I have a boyfriend.

E: Where do you spend your time?

Kevser: We ususally meet around school. Because my family live here, we cannot meet around here. He walks behind me when we come to Dolapdere.

E: I can understand that feeling. Denizli is also a small city. We were also spending our time far away from my neighborhood.

Kevser: But everywhere is full of acquaintances, you know. Even if you don't know them, they know you. It is better that you know them, at least then you have a chance of being able to take precautions.

E: Was you boyfriend Turkish? Does it matter to you?

*Kevser: No, never.*²³

²³ E. Haftasonları falan napıyosun peki?

Kevser. Ben hep evdeyim. Manitam da yok. (gülüyoruz)

E. Manitan olunca gidiyorsun ama bir yerlere?

Kevser. Olduğu zaman tabi ki gidiyorum.

E. Nerelere gidiyosun bir anlat bakıyım?

Kevser. Genellikle okul civarlarında falan buluşuyoruz. Benim ailem buralarda olduğu için bu civarlarda olmuyor. Ben önden o arkadan gidiyor buralarda.

E. Biliyorum onu ya. Denizli de çok küçük bi yer biz de hep alakasız yerlerine giderdik Denizli'nin.

Kevser. Ama her yerde tanıdık var yemin ediyorum sen tanımasan bile o seni tanıyor sen tanısan daha iyi önlemini almış olursun en azından.

E. Peki mesela senin sevgilin Türk müydü? Bu senin için önemli bişey mi?

Kevser. Yo yo hiç.

Their parents know nothing about their dates and they are all sure that they would literally kill them or imprison them in their houses and would not let them to go out for a long time if they were to find out. So, they do not to meet in Dolapdere, Tarlabası, Taksim or even Eminönü, because of the possibility of being caught. This leads to the discovery of other quarters in Istanbul. From Sarıyer to Kadıköy or to Adalar, they use many different districts in Istanbul as meeting places with their boyfriends, despite the fact that their boyfriends live in Dolapdere too. As Kevser tells me, when they arrive at Dolapdere, they separate from each other and start to walk like ordinary strangersto the neighborhood. In addition, they buy alternative gsm cards to escape the intensive pressure of their parents while they are communicating with their friends and boyfriends.

Facebook is also very much referred by these girls as an area of freedom,. In order to escape from the hegemonic discourse within Dolapdere, they choose to communicate with their friends or dates through Facebook. After we met, almost all of them added me as their friend on Facebook. They sometimes use their names, but also often use nicknames in their Facebook profiles to escape from the relatives who try to control them through Facebook. They are typically active users, frequently uploading photos, changing their relationship status in line with their dating lives and commenting on each other's photos and generally use it as a medium for finding new boyfriends without their parents knowing. This virtual environment becomes an arena where they feel liberated from the dominant ideology of the neighborhood, where they can write whatever they want, experience love explicitly and construct their lives in the manner they wish.

The narratives reveal that the patriarchal community in the neighborhood strictly forbids the girls from dating. The prevailing discourses impose this restriction through

community relations in Dolapdere. The girls have to conform to this rule to be able to exist in the neighborhood. As with obedience to the dress codes of the community and speaking in Kurdish, in their dating practices they choose to remain anonymous when they are in Dolapdere as an appropriation mechanism. By hiding their activities from their parents through different tools, they exhibit the performance of “ an ideal Kurdish girl” that allows them to remain members of this community and which both restricts and relieves them in urban space.

The urban literature on the performance of identity and anonymity reveals a difference based on gender. As discussed in the first chapter, Anna Secor refers to the negotiation of women with society in their daily lives as being between exhibition of their identity and behaving anonymously (Secor, 2004: 359). As the literature contends, while men are able to display their ideas or feelings through their behavior, women have to negotiate with the system and carry out manoeuvres to prevent discrimination (Secor, 2004: 359; Fine & Weis, 1998: 87). In the case of appropriating the space of Dolapdere, being anonymous can only be achieved by displaying Kurdish identity. All these girls develop their habits so as to fulfil the required performance of Kurdish identity in their daily lives, such as through their dresses, language or other mechanisms. Their dating practices are restricted by discourses that do not operate in the same way for the men. While the girls are heavily constrained by their parents in their dating, their brothers are even encouraged to date girls. The most important point is that, while the girls are never permitted to date Turkish boys, parents do not at all limit the boys in this way. I think this point is key to considering the gender differences inherent in idealized performances. Dilan confirms this rigid attitude of the Kurdish community in Dolapdere and tells me that even she herself cannot approve her sister Hilal’s dating of a Turkish boy. However, when I meet with Hilal alone, she tells me that her brother dates

Turkish girls and her sister Dilan and her mother do not object and even support him getting married to a Turkish girl. Diyar also confirms this unequal treatment whilst telling me about her sister, revealing Diyar's contradictory position within her community. While she agrees with her parents about the "costs" of getting married to a Turkish man for a Kurdish women, she also claims that her boyfriend is a Turkish man, that she loves him and that she plans to marry him in the future.

Diyar: We always marry people from our community except one of my sisters who married a boy from a family which had migrated from Bulgaria.

E. How do your parents perceive this? What do they think about this marriage?

Diyar. It has been five years, but we still cannot admit it. In the first years of her marriage, I told her that it would cost her too much. My sister got married, but now my mother always tells me that it is not possible for me to get married to a Turkish boy. But now, the person I am in love with is a Turkish person. My boyfriend proposed to me but I can't do anything. I can't wear the ring. I can't even talk about him. For instance, my brother Hasan is a Kurdish nationalist, an extreme nationalist, and he does not even speak to my sister. It has been five years and they do not speak each other.²⁴

The girls are constrained by the dominant discourse of being "an ideal Kurdish girl" in the community, whereas the boys do not have to fulfill the same constructed requirements of

²⁴ Diyar. Bizde hep aile içidir evlilik, ablalarımın biri bir tek dışardan evlendi. Bir Bulgar göçmeniyle.

E. Mesela o nasıl bir şey sizin ailede?

Diyar. Beş yıl oldu hala sindiremediğimiz bir olay. İlk evlendiği dönemde ben diyordum bunun zahmetleri çok var diyordum. Ablam evlendi ama annem şimdi benim yüzüme sürekli bunu diyor kesinlikle Türk biriyle evlenemezsin ve benim aşık olduğum insan Türk yani. Mesela sevgilim bana evlenme teklif etti ama yüzüğünü takamıyorum, hiçbir şey yapamıyorum. Ondan bahsedemiyorum bile. Mesela Hüseyin abim milliyetçidir benim, aşırı milliyetçidir, ablamla konuşmuyor. 5 yıl oldu hala konuşmuyorlar.

“Kurdishness” as the girls. Therefore, as the literature predicts, a clear difference emerges in the coping mechanisms of different genders (Fine & Weis, 1998).

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the methods used by adolescent Kurdish women cope in the space of Dolapdere have been elaborated. The first point that should be underlined is the sense of attachment developed by these women to Dolapdere. They hold on to their neighborhood in order to survive urban life in Istanbul. This neighborhood is narrated as having a relieving atmosphere as a result of the Kurdish inhabitants there who help to create a sense of home in Istanbul. Performances of traditional ceremonies in Dolapdere’s space also form another important dimension in the production of a sense of comfort and liberation in this urban space. By describing these ceremonies as survival methods that enable their performers to develop a sense of belonging to the city this research has contributed to the existing body of work on ways in which explicit manifestations of identity function as coping mechanisms.

On the other hand, Dolapdere is also dominated by the discourse of Kurdish identity that restricts adolescent Kurdish women in their daily lives. From their mode of dress to their speaking manners, they are constantly under the surveillance of the Kurdish community in Dolapdere. They have to cope with this hegemonic discourse in order to be able to appropriate Dolapdere’s space. This research revealed that they choose not to challenge this discourse and regulate their daily performances in line with these rules and norms. Through minor changes in their dresses, speaking Kurdish in Dolapdere, having alternative gsm cards that they hide from their parents and being silent about their boyfriends they negotiate with the dominant ideology in Dolapdere and cope with it by abstaining from being visible. This is a

bargaining process that involves a conscious choices by these women to seem to be obedient figures although they are all aware of the transformation in their lives, unlike their parents.

I want to conclude the section with the words of Kevser about the dilemma these women go through in their daily performances as she discusses her response to a woman who told her that she did not seem Kurdish:

*Kevser: She told me that if any other person looked at us, he/she would think that we were not Kurdish. She said so. I both like it and dislike it. How can she say that I do not seem like a Kurdish person! It is like we have lost ourselves or something. But I like it too. You know they say 'nothing is permanent except change.'*²⁵

²⁵ Kevser. Öyle dedi yani. Benim hem hoşuma gitti hem gitmedi yani, nasıl yani Kürt değilmiş gibi bilmem ne! Hani kendimizi kaybetmiş gibi falan. Bir yandan da hoşuma gitti yani ne biliyim hani şey diyor ya değişmeyen tek şey değişim.

CHAPTER 5

APPROPRIATION OF THE SPACE OUTSIDE DOLAPDERE

De Certeau conceptualizes tactics as manoeuvres that are determined in accordance with dominant strategies. In the previous chapter, the tactics of Kurdish adolescent women in Dolapdere were examined in line with the dominant strategies there,. The purpose of this chapter is to scrutinize the tactics of adolescent Kurdish women in the urban public space outside Dolapdere. Coping within this urban public space, which is under the domination of the Turkish nationalist discourse, requires significantly different manoeuvres to life in Dolapdere . In this chapter, I will make a distinction between three main areas where these women spend their time in Istanbul; school space, work space and urban public space other than these areas that are utilized in daily routine. Even though official nationalist discourse is dominant in all of these areas, the actors and operators of this discourse vary in each space. Therefore, the analysis will be based on a spatial diversification of experiences.

It is argued in this chapter that the adolescent Kurdish women who attend school choose to resist and appropriate the urban public space through particular tools, in accordance

with one of the categories discussed in the second chapter of this thesis. They try to become a part of the dominant system through paid-jobs, education and other tools that enable them to become involved in the urban public space. Rather than avoiding the public space, they choose to take part in it and wander around Istanbul with their friends. However, these tools are not part of the assimilation process of these women. The narratives reveal that simultaneous feelings of belonging and estrangement go hand in hand during their experiences of the urban public space. They feel relief and attachment towards the public space, but emphasized in the interviews that at the same time there is a sense of uneasiness. There are moments of rupture in their lives that prove that their commitment to their ethnic identity is still preserved. This occasional sense of irritation and anxiety felt refers to an ongoing resistance embedded in the participation of these women in the urban public space. In these moments of breaks and splits that emerge during their engagement with the urban public space, they implement the coping method of emphasizing their ethnic identity. For this purpose they participate in demonstrations, use specific dress codes and accessories that reflect their Kurdish identity and speak Kurdish in public space.

On the other hand, the girls who work in the manufacturing workshops choose to stay away from the urban public space. Because they work six days in a week, they have not any free time. On Sundays they prefer to hang out in Dolapdere with their friends. They feel excluded and alienated in public space, so that they choose to remain anonymous when they are there. However, in the workspace, when they are faced with the discriminatory attitudes of other people around, they mostly do not remain silent and get into fierce discussions. They do not hold back from revealing their Kurdish identity.

“PASSING”

The concept of “passing” is put forward by Sara Ahmed (1999), with reference to Nella Larsen, to describe transition attempts between race categories. Ahmed defines this as a performative action that is purposefully designed to be seen by the people around. It is identification through the relation between the self and the other. A person tries to construct an identity and create an image for himself/herself by seeing things through the eyes of the other. Performance of passing creates an image that helps the subject constitute itself.

Ahmed illustrates the concept in her article using the passing of a black woman to a white woman. She underscores the invisibility and anonymity attained by a black woman in a white community through passing performance. She defines the concept as an attempt “to become like the other” and theorizes it on the basis of “imitation” and “mimicry” (Ahmed, 1999: 97-98). In line with the arguments of De Certeau, with a reference to Homi Bhabha, she argues that the colonized subject imitates the colonizer to introduce a space for resistance within the “the space of the strategy” (Ahmed, 1999: 97; DeCerteau, 1984: 54). However, at the same time, despite the invisibility it provides, passing brings with it the fear of being noticed by others and the threat of revelation of the “truth”, “the crisis of knowledge” in Ahmed’s conceptualization, (Ahmed, 1999: 94). The subject has constantly to pay attention to the way she/he acts, the way she/he dresses, the way she/he talks and even stands. She/he has to preserve the same image. As with the theories of Goffman and Butler about performance that were mentioned in the previous chapter, the performance of passing requires a consistent performance without any ruptures in each and every daily encounter. These performances construct and attempt to fulfil this image of the subject.

According to Ahmed, the crisis of knowledge constitutes the moment of a rupture in the performance of passing, which brings a possibility of resistance. In another study, she

elucidates her theory by condemning the dualism of assimilation and transgression (Ahmed, 2004). What she means by this dualism is the clear-cut separation made between adherence to social rules and norms versus violation of them. She claims that these two sides are not so separated from each other. Passing is a term used to explain this conjunction between the colonized's assimilation and its resistance against the dominant authority. Therefore, she does not see the attempts of a black woman to be seen "as if she is white" as a further step towards assimilation; instead it is the effort of a black woman to become a part of the majority and become invisible, which can never be accomplished. This sense of deficiency and not fitting the category is the moment of rupture and resistance that is capable of making a change in the dominant order, according to Ahmed.

In this chapter, I will focus on the role played by passing in the development of a sense of belonging to the urban public space. Because the exclusionary strategies of the public space require one to become ordinary, anonymous and invisible to be able to exist in it, passing to the white, in Sara Ahmed's terms, enables Kurdish inhabitants to claim the public space of the city. In this section, I will scrutinize the tactics of adolescent Kurdish women against the dominant discourse in different areas of the public space.

SCHOOL SPACE

Even after so many years the first days at school in Istanbul are enthusiastically narrated as unforgettable experiences,, especially by those who experienced step migration and the sense of being in a minority group at school. In Istanbul, to their surprise, they encountered Kurdish class-mates, which considerably aided their adjustment process.

E: Then, you came to Istanbul...

Zilan: Then we came to Istanbul. When we moved here, I began to go to Piri Reis Elementary School. My cousin was also in that school. Also, in our class there were only five or six Turkish students. The others were all Kurdish. They were from Diyarbakır or Batman, so we were always speaking in Kurdish with each other after classes. My Turkish was very good when I was there (she means Konya). But in Dolapdere we were always speaking Kurdish - even the teachers had got used to it. They were even saying 'Ça wayi?' (meaning 'How are you?' in Kurdish) to us instead of saying 'Nasılsın?' (meaning 'how are you?' in Turkish). We taught them how to speak Kurdish.²⁶

E: After the death of your sister, you moved to Istanbul...

Diyar. Yes, we came here. My sister Hatice told the school manager that I was very bright but that I was very much affected by the death of my sister. She asked if he could register me in a high class, because I was very successful in Düzce. But I found myself in the naughtiest classroom in the school. Really, the class was full of the naughtiest students of school. When I entered the classroom, one row of desks was full of Roma students that we call Gypsies. The other rows of desks, four I think, were all of Kurdish students. It was like a heaven for me, at first glance. But then you look around and you see Gypsies speaking in their language and Kurds speaking in Kurdish and you don't understand anything. You understand Kurdish of course, but you are so surprised that you can't understand what is going on. The teacher came to class and made me sit at the front desk, in front of the teacher and put my books on my desk. But what I was still wandering about was whether the students would like me. I still had the sense of fear from previous exclusion. Then a boy came over and asked me where my mother was from. I did not know the Turkish names of places and I told him that she was from Şibebi. He told me that his mother was from Şibebi too.

E: Even same villages.

Diyar: It is not enough to say that you are from Mardin. If you are from Mardin, you ask the name of the village or family in Kurdish. It makes you feel closer to him,

²⁶ E. Sonra İstanbul'a geldiniz...

Zilan. Sonra İstanbul'a geldik. Buaraya geldiğimiz zaman ben Piri Reis'te okula başladım. Orada zaten benim kuzenim vardı. Bir de sınıfta sadece beş altı kişi Türk vardı. Diğerlerinin hepsi Kürt. Diyarbakır'dan Batman'dan, dolayısıyla biz ders dışlarında hep Kürtçe konuşurduk. Benim Türkçem oraya gittiğim zaman çok çok iyiydi. Burada sürekli Kürtçe konuşa konuşa artık, derslerde bile öğretmenler alışmıştı bizim Kürtçe konuşmamıza. Onlar bile artık nasılsın yerine ça wayi derlerdi. Onlara da öğretmiştik biz.

especially when you talk about the girls taken and given between these two families as brides. Because really there are many marriages like that. And I told him that my mother was from Şibebi too. It was Idris who came nearby and told me that they were from Şibebi too. And I realized that we were all relatives. The classroom was full of my relatives.

E: The story that you told me about you and Meryem was very funny too.

Diyar: Meryem was in the eighth grade. We had friends called Emine and Özlem. I was in the seventh grade but I was hanging out with the people in eighth grade, I was dating boys in eighth grade. I didn't have any relations with the students in seventh grade. Emine and Özlem came and we met them. We met with my uncle Huseyin, who is Meryem's brother. Then we discovered that we were relatives, cousins in fact. When you are in the same class and speak in Kurdish you feel very comfortable. Be sure, it is a great feeling.²⁷

However, although it is situated in Dolapdere, the school is an official institution and a transmitter of official ideology through the syllabus, the rules and the attitudes of the

²⁷ E. Ablanın ölümünden sonra İstanbul'a geldiniz...

Diyar. İşte buraya geldik. Ortanca ablam Hatice Ablam müdüre Leyla çok başarılı ama bu olaydan bizden hepimizden daha çok etkilendi dedi. Onun farklı bir yere koysanız, başarılı bir öğrenci, başarısını devam ettirsin istiyoruz falan filan. Ben düşe düşe okulun en yaramaz sınıfına düştüm. Gerçekten okulun en yaramaz sınıfına düştüm! Sınıfa girdim bi sıra Çingene dediğimiz Roman arkadaşlar, biz, kaç sıra vardı dört sıra vardı, diğer üç sıra ful Kürt. Cennete düşmüş gibi hissettim önce kendimi ama baktım biri orda Kürtçe konuşuyo, biri orda çingenece bir şeyler diyo, hiç bir şey anlamıyorsun. Yani tamam Kürtçe anlıyorsun ama bunlar napıyo falan oluyosun. Hoca da geldi en öne oturttu falan, kitaplarımı önüme koydu falan. Ama yani aklım fikrim çocuklar beni sevecek mi. Hani eski psikoloji var. Ondan sonra işte baktım annen nereli senin dedi çocuğun teki ben dedim Kürtçe isimleri biliyorum Türkçeleri bilmiyorum Şibebi'li dedim benim annem de Şibebi'li böyle yapıyo falan.

E. Direk köyüne kadar aynı.

L. Mardinliyim demen yeterli bişey değil. Mardinliysen mesela ikimiz Mardinliyiz, Kürtçe Şibebili, nerelisin hangi köydensin hangi sülaledensin bu seni her zaman daha çok yakınlaştırır hele bir de indikçe biz ordan kız almıştık falan muhabbeti başlar biliyor musun. Hakikaten böyle içiçe evlilikler çok çünkü. O vermiş o vermiş köylerden. Ya dedi benim de annem Şibebili falan. İdris geldi zaten biz de Şibebi'liyiz yapıyo, Ş'leri söyleyemiyö. Bi de baktım akrabayız. Ful akrabam sınıf.

E. Sizin olay da çok komikti.

Diyar. Rojda sekize gidiyodu. Emine ve Özlem diye arkadaşlar var da. Ben yediye gidiyorum ama sekizlerle takılıyorum. Çıkıyorum faln. Gerçekten yedilerle alakam yok, makara yapıyorum sınıfta ama sekizlerle takılıyorum. Emine geldi Özlem geldi neyse biz tanıştık falan. Dayımla işte Hüseyin abisi onunla tanıştık falan. Neyse baktık biz akrabayız, teyze çocukları. Aynı sınıfta olurp Kürtçe konuşunca kendini daha rahat hissediyosun. Emin ol bu çok güzel bi his.

administrative staff - even students can be the representatives of the official nationalist discourse. Compared with the comforting atmosphere of the neighborhood, the school has a hegemonic character that puts pressure on the students. Starting from the first days of every year the teachers publicised students' identities to the administration of the school and to their class mates by being asked questions about their hometowns. Although these questions initially seemed innocent and well-intentioned , the girls believe that they had an implicit tendency to categorize the students according to their ethnic identities. Zilan is one of the girls who complained about the implicit tensions embedded in her school space. She is labeled by her ethnic identity by her teachers and class-mates and her accessories are examined by her class-mates everyday to see whether she uses the colors of Kurdish movement – yellow, green and red.

Zilan: They even checked the color of my hairclip. One of the kids, the fascist one in our class, looked at me and my clothes from head to foot every single day.. There was a Computer Sciences teacher who was very similar to our teacher of National Security course in terms of his discriminatory attitude. He told us that he was actually an engineer but was now a teacher. He was from Aydın, you know Aydın (known for its nationalist atmosphere), and he spoke carelessly and impolitely. His accent was also very rude, he emphasized the letter 'r' while he was speaking. I never spoke in his class. The other day, he came over to me and said that I seemed disinterested in his course. I answered by saying that there was not much to say, because he was already talking on our behalf. Then he asked me which university department I was planning to studyin . I told him that my plan was to study sociology. Then, suddenly he changed his unpleasant manner and began to say things to me like 'I hope you pass the exam sister, I hope you will be very successful sister.' He was calling me 'you' (second person plural) because I had already put a distance between us. The reason for my hatred of him was his pejorative words about Dargeçit, Mardin, in the first week, when I was not at school.

E: Why did he talk about Dargeçit? How is that subject related to his class?

Zilan: In the first week they ask the hometowns' of students, as you know. When my friends told him that they were from Dargeçit, he said that he did not like Dargeçit. ²⁸

They usually have Kurdish names that are different from those written on their official identity cards. This discrepancy emerged because of the prohibitive practices of the Turkish state that did not let parents give Kurdish names to their children. In order to protect themselves, to become invisible and to avoid discrimination by their professors, these girls intentionally use their Turkish names and do not want to be called their Kurdish names at school. Through this practice, they try to avoid the discriminatory practices of teachers, students or the administration. Their main concern is to be able to continue their education and have the resources to build their own lives in the future. Any destructive action that could prevent them achieving this goal is avoided. In that sense, not attracting the attention of their teachers or administrative staff at the school is vital for them.

At school, each and every course has the potential to become a discussion arena in which the professors impose their ideas about current political affairs. However, the main tool of ideological imposition is the national security course. In Turkey, there is a national security course which is taught by a Turkish army officer. The syllabus of this course involves current

²⁸ Zilan. Valla benim tokamın rengine bakıyorlar. Çocuk her gün beni süzüyo bu ne yapmış ne giymiş falan diye. Bizim sınıftaki faşo. Bilgisayar dersine giriyoruz mesela, bizim Milli Güvenlikçinin yerine bilgisayarçı tutmuşlar cins biri. Aslında mühendismiş de işte öğretmenlik yapıyormuş falan. İşte ondan sonra, zaten Aydınlıymış bir langur lungur konuşuyo adam ne dediği belli değil. Adam lan diyo napiosun sen diyo bu r'leri de bastıra bastıra söylüyo. Olayları anlatıyo, diyo yolda giderim abi napiyon sen falan dedim diyo. Ben adamın dersinde hiç konuşmuyorum geçen yanıma geldi. Küçük hanım sizin dersle pek alakanız yok heralde dedi. Ben de yok hocam dedim söyleyecek bişey yok zaten siz konuşuyosunuz dedim. Sonra işte o da dedi ki, siz dedi ne okumak istiyosunuz dedi. Ben de sosyoloji düşünüyorum dedim. Sonra bi baktım küçük hanım gitti inşallah kazanırsın kardeşim, senin için en iyisi olur kardeşim... İlk günden mesafeyi koyarım ki sonra başıma bela olmasın. Zaten benim gitmediğim ilk hafta adam şey demiş ben Mardin Dargeçit'i falan hiç sevmem falan demiş.

E. Ne alaka konu oraya gelmiş ki?

Zilan. İlk hani nerelisin falan diye soruyorlar ya. Şurayı burayı sevmem diyor.

and historical foreign and domestic affairs of the Turkish state and presents the official discourse to the students. Especially in a class predominantly comprised of Kurdish students, the tension grows immediately. A majority of these girls complain about this tension and how they feel disturbed during these classes. The implicit pressure on the girls in these classes is reflected in a prominent experience of Diyar:

E: Then, your relationship with your teachers at high school was not as bad as at your primary school?

Diyar: Yes, except for the national security course. There was an officer who had served in Eastern Anatolia and fought against the PKK for a long time. And you know my surname connotes the surname of a famous PKK guerilla. The guy was obsessed with my surname. He was calling everyone in my class by their names but he was calling me by my surname. I was a prominent person in the high school, I had really good relations with my teachers. I don't like silent courses, I always want to talk with the teachers or my friends. I get bored by silent courses or silent teachers. This officer was particularly obsessed with me.

E: It is very weird that he called you by your surname.

Diyar: I had a friend named Sultan who was sitting next to me. He was calling her by her name but he was calling me by my surname. There was another Kurdish boy in my class. He was from Erzincan but he was not accepting that he was Kurdish. He would only accept it when we were alone. One day he asked me 'Who are you?' I told him that I was a human. It was the first thing that came to my mind. Sultan began to giggle. Sultan and I were really close friends. She began to giggle. She was swearing at the officer. Then, I began to laugh. The officer began to shout at me and he sent me to disciplinary board. I asked him the reason, I didn't understand what I had done. My teachers called Celal and Ali İhsan were all aware of the reason for the officer's decision. They were very lovely people. Ali İhsan said to him: 'Diyar likes laughing.' But I was still laughing there. The guy was about to expel me from school, but I was still laughing. I took out my phone to call my brother. I explained to him what had happened at school, but he was already accustomed to these kinds of events. He told me that it was not necessary for him to come to school, advised me not to fear and said nothing bad would ever happen. I lied to the teachers and told them that he was on his way to school. The officer was still continuing with his insults. He was saying things like: 'You see the Kurds! They are very large people!' But he was constantly saying 'Kurds'. The school manager realized the reason for the attitude of the officer. He sent me home without any punishment. But I was still laughing. While I was going out of the room, the officer was shouting at me and threatening me with failing his class. Another teacher came up and began to shout at the officer. She told him that he could

not do anything about my grades. I was still... I did not say anything at all. Then I went to the class and began to cry. Why did I cry? It was like being Kurdish was a crime.

E: Maybe you were afraid.

Diyar: I did not cry in front of him. I did not want to flatter him.²⁹

For Diyar, this was an unforgettable experience that still causes irritation in her voice when telling me about it.

In addition to national security course, the ceremonies of the national oath and national anthem are the places where the girls should perform the image of an “ordinary student who belongs to the dominant majority.” They are all aware of the constant surveillance that they

²⁹ E. O zaman ilişkilerin hocalarınla falan ilkokuldaki gibi kötü değildi?

Diyar. Milli güvenlik dersi hariç evet. Milli Güvenlik hariç ama. Yarbay vardı bi tane, Doğuda görev yapmış uzun süre. Benim soyadım da sabıkalı bi soyad. Adam benim soyadıma takmış vaziyette herkese ismiyle hitap ediyor bana soyadımla hitap ediyor. Ben biraz geniştim largetım hani böyle hocalarla aram iyidir. Sus pus geçen bi dersi hiç sevmem, sıkılıyorum abi. Hocalar boğuyor bi yerden sonra. Hele bu yarbay takmıştı. Gidiyor geliyor Korkmaz kalk.

E. Bi kere soyadınla hitap etmesi bile çok garip.

Diyar. Yanımda Sultan oturuyo, ona Sultan diyo. Geliyo bana takıyo yani. Bi de sınıfta Erzincanlı Kürt ama çocuk Kürdüm demiyodu. Kendi aramızda konuşurken diyo ama.. Bana bir gün dedi ki sen nesin dedi. İnsanım dedim. Aklıma bu geldi yani. Sultan başladı kikir kikir gülmeye. Sultanla ben çok yakın arkadaşlık. Başladık kikir kikir gülmeye. Küfür ediyor adama, ben koptum. Çık dışarı çabuk disipline gidiceksin dedi. Dedim ben naptım şimdi. Naptığımın bile farkında değilim. Celal Hoca falan farkına vardı, Ali İhsan Hoca vardı ya. O bitaneydi. Neyin ne olduğunu bilen bi adamdı. Baktım işte Ali İhsan Hoca demiş Leyla biraz gülmeyi sever demiş. Ben hala gülüyorum ama orada. Adam beni kovacak, Hüseyin Abimi arıyorum o ara, telefonumu çıkarttım. Abimi aradım böyle böyle bişey var dedim, çok alışıkta bu tip şeylere, salak dedi birazdan bırakırlar dedi. Ben gayet rahat ama, geliyor mu abin dediler, ha hocam geliyormuş yolda trafik varmış dedim. Tabir diyor Kürtler diyor rahat diyor adam. Ama hep Kürtler diyor. Müdür de anladı bunun derdini. Ben hala çıkarken bile gülüyorum ama iyice sinirim.. Ben sana göstericem falan yaptı. Bu dersten geçemiceksin falan yaptı. ...Hoca kalktı ordan bu kızın notları düzgün olduğu sürece hiçbir şey yapamazsınız dedi. Ben hala... Hiçbir şey demedim zaten. Artık sinirlerim gevşedi benim zaten. Sonra sınıfa gittim ağladım. Niye ağladım.. Kürtlük suçmuş gibi geldi.

E. Korkmuşundur belki.

Diyar. Onun karşısında ağlamadım. Onun gururunu okşamak istemedim.

are under. Diyar underlines these practices in her narratives by referring to the experiences of her sister in the past.

Diyar: My sisters and I had many troubles at school. Sometimes, by coincidence, you can be ill on the day that the national anthem is sung at school. And sometimes you can be so ill that you do not have energy even for talking. One day, my sister was very sick and could not sing the national anthem. The school director perceived this as a provocative act and she was given a lot of punishments as a result.³⁰

Under this surveillance, they are expected to sing the anthem or repeat the oath even louder than their Turkish counterparts. Saide is a sixteen-year old girl from Batman. Her parents moved to Istanbul when she was a baby, because her father could not find a job in Batman as a result of the military tensions in the region. Her mother, who was the second wife of her father, died while she was giving birth to her. Now she lives in Istanbul with her father in the house of her older step sister. Saide is not at all politically engaged in the Kurdish movement. But even though she abstains from any kind of political discussions, she is exposed to the same discriminatory discourse at school.

Saide: “They were asking me like ‘why are you singing the national anthem in a murmuring manner?’”³¹

The reaction to this domination varies between the girls. One type of reaction is to keep silent, unless labelled by her Kurdish identity. This should not be seen as a passive

³⁰ Diyar. Ablalarım, ben okulda çok çektik. Tesadüfen İstiklal Marşı okunuyor ve sen hastasın. Bazen şey bazen insanın takati kalmıyor ya konuşacak. Benim ablam bir gün İstiklal Marşı söyleyemiyor ve müdür bunu provakatör veya bakşa bir şey olarak algılıyor ve ben ablamın bu nedenden dolayı birçok kez disipline gidip geldiğini biliyorum yani.

³¹ Saide. Bana şey diyorlardı: ‘Niye İstiklal Marşı’ni içinden okuyosun?’

attitude. On the contrary, it involves a conscious choice to keep from being excluded by their professors and by their friends. They choose to be anonymous in order to avoid discrimination at school and to maintain their educational opportunities. Diyar is one of these girls who is particularly afraid of such exclusion as a result of her experiences in Düzce - a town nearby Istanbul - where she was living before her family migrated to Istanbul. Because of this fear, even though she is a politically engaged person, she consciously chooses not to discuss these issues when she is spending time with her Turkish friends at school. Similar to Diyar, Meryem is a member of a student club in Bilgi University called the Culture and Thought Club which was founded by Kurdish students and where conferences, protests and concerts by Kurdish singers are organized. However, when pressure is put on her at school by her professors or her friends in her daily routine, because most of her friends are Turkish nationalists, she thinks that she should keep silent.

Meryem: When you do not draw attention to it nobody knows whether you are Turkish or Kurdish. But when they asked, we were saying that we were Kurdish. Even after you say this, it is very much determined by your friendship. If you do not say that you are Turkish and so on, and if she/he does not say that you are Kurdish and things like that, I believe that there would be no problem.³²

From the theoretical perspective of Sara Ahmed and De Certeau, these roles played by them in their everyday lives are “conformist” performances that prevent these girls from having any kind of conflict with their class-mates, teachers or the administrative authorities at school. This is a role that requires obedient performance at every level of their lives in order to achieve a sense of belonging and comfort in the space of the school. It is performed each

³² Meryem. Hani çok şey yapmadığın sürece ben Kürdüm böyle böyle demediğin sürece zaten birisi senin Türk mü Kürt mü olduğunu pek anlamaz. Ha sordukları zaman da Kürdüz diyoduk ama yani. Onu dedikten sonra bile hani bilmiyorum ya arkadaşlık ilişkilerine bağlı biraz da. Nasıl ilişki içindeysen arkadaşlarınla, hani sen Türksün böylesin demedikten sonra, o sen Kürtsün böylesin demedikten sonra bir sorun çıkacağını ben sanmıyorum.

and every day at school when they are with their friends or professors. These girls implement the mechanism of resistance by existence in their daily performances, in line with the literature that I mentioned above on resistance by existence (Yousef, 2011: 50). They hold on to their education as a coping mechanism (Erman, 2001: 130; Padilla, 1993: 142-143). I believe that this is not an assimilation process. It rather involves a combative attitude in light of the narrations of these girls. Zilan tells me that behind her silence towards these attacks by her teachers or class-mates, she intends to have good relations with the professors. According to her, it is necessary to get along well with the administration and professors and, through this performance of “an ordinary student”, she accomplishes her goal.

Notwithstanding the distance kept between “conformist” attitude and the subjective being, the commitment to Kurdish identity that is constantly underscored by these girls verifies the active and resistant character of their silent attitude at school that I highlight in my analysis’. Meryem is a university-student who is politically engaged with the Kurdish movement through a student club at school, but who at the same time avoids any argument with her class-mates or professors. Even though she thinks that it is not necessary to get into a fight with people by insisting on her identity, she insists that she would not deny her “Kurdishness.”

Meryem: “How you behave towards people determines the way they behave towards you. If I had behaved towards them in a bad manner, they would have behaved in the same way. It depends on you... As I told you, unless you insist that I am Kurdish and this is the Kurdish issue, no one can even understand whether you are Turkish or Kurdish. But when they ask, we say that we are Kurdish... Then it depends on whether you are able to be calm and not react fiercely.”³³

³³ Meryem. Var ya insanlara sen nasıl yaklaşırısan onlardan da öyle bir tepki gelir. Kötü yaklaşıyaydım onlar da bana kötü yaklaşırdı diye düşünüyorum. Bir de sana bağlı biraz... Dediğim gibi hani çok şey yapmadığın sürece ben Kürdüm böyle böyle demediğin sürece zaten birisi senin Türk mü Kürt mü

Speaking Kurdish is unhesitatingly emphasized as being an indispensable part of their identity in their interactions at school. The commitment to their ethnic group is not abandoned in these moments and they do not hide the fact that they know how to speak in Kurdish. However, they choose to not speak in Kurdish with each other at school because they do not want to stand out. The fear of exclusion is not the only reason behind this choice, they mostly speak in Turkish better than Kurdish, but it is still an important underlying concern.

The fear of being excluded is not the only motivation behind the coping mechanism of silence employed by these girls. They also mentioned a reluctance to explain their views to people who support a discourse that discriminates against them. It is a meaningless effort to defend the Kurdish identity and also it threatens their education lives. Instead they choose to remain silent. Zilan gave me an example of this tendency by describing her experiences with the instructor of the national security course, who is an officer in armed forces.

Zilan: “For instance, we have a national security teacher. He is a very strong nationalist. In his course, I never talk. I do not care what he says. I just respond to him when he looks at and refers to me specifically. He already knows that I am Kurdish and emphasizes particular things about the Kurdish issue by specifically looking at my face.

E. How do you feel in those moments?

Zilan. I laugh at him. He gets very angry and asks me why I laugh and I respond ‘nothing’.

E. But how do you actually feel? Do you feel sad?

olduğunu pek anlamaz. Ha sordukları zaman da Kürdüz diyoruz ama yani... Sert tepki vermemen gerekiyor yani sakin olman gerekiyor.

Zilan. Actually I do not get angry with him. I want to answer his implicit insults. But when the teachers find a loophole in school regulations, they expel you from school.³⁴

Therefore, Zilan chooses to stay silent in the face of any kind of claim about the Kurdish movement. She responds to any kind of implicit reference against her identity with an active silence.

However, using silence and anonymity to escape exclusion is not the only tactic developed by these girls at school. Sometimes, the label “Kurdishness” is attached to them and a Kurdish identity is constructed which requires a particular reactive performance by its subjects. When a girl is defined by the others as a “Kurd”, it implies a counteraction that is to be implemented against the others. Therefore, when they are attacked by their professors or friends at school with this label, it becomes impossible to remain silent as a rupture emerges in their passing performance. Kurdishness then emerges as a coping mechanism within the daily practices of the women. As predicted in the literature on explicit demonstration mentioned above, the girls hold on to their Kurdish identity as a survival mechanism in the school space (Secor, 2004; Fine & Weis, 1998). However, contrary to these studies that consider gender as a distinctive dimension and claim that women usually avoid from displaying their identity, Kurdish adolescent women do resort to their ethnic identity as a coping mechanism in the moments of crises.

³⁴ Zilan. Mesela bizim bir tane Milli Güvenlikçimiz var. Sağolsun çok milliyetçi bir insandır. Onun dersinde hiç konuşmam. Ne derse desin hiç aldırış da etmem yani. Bana bakıp ima etmeye çalıştığı zaman cevap veririm sadece o kadar. Zaten o bildiği için Kürt olduğumu bildiği için bazı şeyleri özellikle üzerine basa basa bana bakarak söylediği oluyor.

E. Kendini nasıl hissediyorsun öyle anlarda?

Zilan. Gülüyorum. Çok kızıyor, sen niye gülüyorsun diye. Ben de yok bir şey hocam diyorum. Onu sinir etmek için gülüyorum

E. Aslında kendi içinde ne hissediyorsun? Üzülüyor musun?

Zilan. Yani cevap vermek istiyorum sinirlenmekten daha çok. Fakat öğretmenler de sürekli disiplin yönetmeliğinde ucu açık bir kural buldukları zaman okuldan uzaklaştırıyorlar, atıyorlar.

Saide identifies herself as Kurdish and can speak Kurdish but she is very much unengaged with political dynamics. However, when the label “Kurd” is imposed upon her, she has no choice but to present performance demanded by the label.

*Saide: The other day I quarrelled with a boy from class. He was calling me a Kurd and inciting the others against me. They were cursing Abdullah Öcalan, you know, Apo. I told them ‘Why are you so arrogant! Do I not speak with you because you are Turkish?’ They asked me whether we participated in the protests. They said that we killed soldiers. The other day they told me something like that! I was speechless!*³⁵

Although she is an ordinary performer in the school space who seeks invisibility a belonging to that space, in this moment she is detached from her performance and begins to perform the role of “Kurdishness” towards the others as a coping mechanism to support her claim of that space. My other respondents showed a similar tendency at these moments of rupture. Diyar, who has been in conflict with the professor of the national security course, can say to him that if she has a chance, she will be involved in politics through *DEHAP* – the name of the political party of the Kurdish movement in Turkey which has been closed down by the judiciary. She usually tries to get along well with other people. However, in response to the discriminatory attitude towards her of the officer, she does not hesitate to react by performing her Kurdish identity.

Diyar: At the last moment, I do something to relax the tension, like say ‘Okay, you are right!’ But I could not do it in my relation with the officer who was teacher of the national security class. In the last days of school I told him that the PKK is under surveillance, that they record their activities and broadcast them on Roj TV. You know where they are and where they live. Let’s drop a bomb and kill them all! Why don’t you do that! He said: ‘It is not so easy. It can’t be done that way.’ I answered: ‘Then it can’t be done by the way you suggest either. There are a lot of people who have

³⁵ Saide. Geçen kavga ettim sınıftaki çocukla. O Kürt falan diyordu kışkırtıyordu diğerlerini bana karşı. Hani şu Abdullah Öcalan falan var ya, Apo, ona küfür falan ediyorlardı. Tartıştım dedim niye böyle kendinizi yükseklerde görüyorsunuz. Ben siz Türksünüz diye sizinle konuşamazlık ediyor muyum! Şey diyorlar eylemlere katılıyo musunuz? Yok işte siz hep askerleri öldürüyorsunuz. Ay geçen gün bana öyle söylediler kaldım öyle!

*acquired things through this war, aren't there?' Then he turned and said to me: 'What do you think of becoming a politician in the future?' I replied as: 'No, never! I can't lie! If I become a politician, I will participate in DEHAP. He wasn't expecting anything different. He wasn't surprised when I said this.'*³⁶

As a result, there are moments of rupture in their lives at school in which they apply use the tactic of displaying their ethnic identity as a survival mechanism (Secor, 2004; Fine & Weis, 1998). However, they do not usually give up on performing the actions of the role of an “ordinary adolescent girl” developed for the gaze of the other people at school. They are careful not to speak in Kurdish at school with their other Kurdish friends. As is clear in the narrations of Zilan in the beginning of this section, they even have to be careful about their hairclips. They have to be consistent in their performances in order to achieve anonymity and be able to appropriate the urban space (Bell, 1999; Butler, 1999; Goffman, 2009). On the other hand, they do not stand apart from the school space in order to protect themselves, although abstaining from a space is a resistance mechanism mentioned in the category of “avoidance and anonymity” (Madge, 1997; Fenster & Shlomo, 2011; Secor, 2004; Fenster, 2005). On the contrary, they utilize that space and claim their existence. They all want to have a job in the future and think that the school is a necessary tool to do this, as Erman and Padilla point out (Erman, 2001; Padilla, 1993). As in the case of Omar Youssef, they insist on appropriating that space and develop a sense of belonging by creating little cracks and changes

³⁶ Diyar. En son bir an bende de şeytan tüyü vardır son anda bir piçlik yaparım. Ortalık toplanır falan böyle. Tamam abi ya sen haklısın falan gibisinden. Ama Yarbayla hiç toplayamadım. En son ben ona sadece bişey dedim, siz bu kadar karşısınız bütün gün bu adamlar kameraya çekiliyor, gizli kamerlar var, Roj TV dediğimiz adamlar bunları çekiyo muhabbet ediyor dedim, röportaj yapıyor dedim adamlar albüm yapıp satıyor. Siz bunların nerede olduğunu nerede yaşadığını biliyorsunuz atın bir bomba parçalansınlar o zaman, niye atmıyorsunuz dedim. O dedi işte öyle kolay değil dedi. Öyle senin dediğin gibi olmaz dedi ben de dedim işte hocam sizin dediğiniz gibi de olmaz dedim. Bunun sırtından kazanan çok değil mi hocam dedim. Ondan sonra döndü arkasını bana böyle yaptı politikacı olmaya ne dersin dedi. Ben de böyle yaptım asla dedim, yalan söylemek harcımdan değil olamaz dedim. Olursam da dedim DEHAP'lı olurum dedi. Direkt böyle DEHAP'lı olurum dedim. Farklı bişey beklemiyordu ki zaten söyleyince de şaşırmadı.

in the rules and norms. Resistance of the dominant order is achieved through the existence of these girls in that space. The Kurdish issue transforms itself from radical militancy to normalization and implementation of resistance in everyday relations through the urban space (Yousef, 2011). The girls manoeuvre between different coping mechanisms in order to appropriate that space and develop a sense of belonging and comfort in it.

WORK SPACE

Almost all the women in Dolapdere have work experiences in textile workshops, from full-time jobs to part-time jobs in summer terms and holidays. Textile manufacturing is the main job opportunity in Dolapdere. The workshops are situated in and around the neighborhood and are owned mostly by the inhabitants of Dolapdere. Since the Kurdish population in Dolapdere has strong kinship relations, the parents of these girls trust the workshop owners and they prefer their daughters to work in these workshops. However, these kinship relations do not lead to better working conditions. On the contrary, the girls are employed for little wages relative to their working hours. They work six days a week, for twelve hours in the week days and for nine hours on Saturdays. These harsh conditions come with little wages from the employers and workers are even sometimes employed for free, because their brothers own the workshop and claim to provide the livelihood of the family. As mentioned in the previous chapter on Dolapdere, there is a discursive constraint around these girls that prevents them from opposing their employers over low wages or long working hours. It is claimed to be shameful for a girl to resist this system and work for any other workshop. Therefore the girls are forced to work in these workshop irrespective of circumstances.

In spite of the hard conditions, the girls see these jobs as providing a financial contribution to their expenses. In line with the literature that analyzes paid work as a coping mechanism for the women in the city, these girls hold on to their jobs because of the financial returns it brings them (Erman, 2001: 125). However, at the same time, the permanent full-time workers also dream of quitting their jobs. They have been working since they were nine or ten years old under the same tough conditions. They have never attended school and are often not even literate or have learned rudimentary reading and writing. They feel upset about not having been educated and express resentment of this in their narratives. They claim that they will not be able to build a different life to their mother's in the future because they are not educated. Because of the community relations in the neighborhood, they are not even able to work other workshops where they might be able to claim a fair wage relative to the working hours. Such demands are prohibited by the families. It is seen as shameful to work with strangers in the neighborhood, which is only possible if working together there with some other members of the family. Therefore, the literature that argues for the social emancipation of these girls through paid work is deficient as it fails to account for the patriarchal relations that operate in these workspaces (Secor, 2003; Erman, 2001; Simonsen & Vaiou, 1996). While Secor, Erman and Simonsen & Vaiou see the paid job as an escape mechanism that allows girls to become emancipated from the patriarchal relations of the neighborhood, they ignore its authority over the workspace. Although paid work does provide some financial emancipation for women, they are not able to escape from patriarchal power relations.

Although there are many Kurdish employees in the workplaces in Dolapdere, there are also many other workers who are not Kurdish. Consequently, the most disturbing attitudes towards these girls emerge when they speak in Kurdish. Because it causes disturbance in the workshop they have to be very careful not to speak Kurdish with each other there. Raziye has

been working in textile workshops because she has to sustain her mother and herself. She frequently complains about working in manufacturing because of the hard working conditions and long hours. Her expressions of discontent with her job peak when describing the reactions of her co-workers and the boss when she starts to speak Kurdish with her Kurdish associates in the workspace.

Raziye: For instance, we were speaking Kurdish to each other. They (her associates) were saying to us: 'You are communicating in that second channel again. Why are you using the second channel? Do not speak! You have passed to the second channel. Do not speak in Kurdish!' They were saying things like that.³⁷

Dilan also has also worked in the manufacturing business since she was almost seven years old. She has similar concerns to Raziye, especially about the difficulties of dealing with the Turkish nationalist discourse imposed on them in the workspace. However, she believes that this discourse is more dominant and hegemonic than Raziye implied. She tells an anecdote about a workshop in Osmanbey, where the employer is not from Dolapdere but where she was working with her relatives from the neighborhood.

Dilan: They were doing things right in front of us that disturbed us,, whilst looking at us. I quarrelled with one of them too. For instance, (she pauses) we support Apo. (At this point she paused to assess my views about Abdullah Öcalan. Without speaking, I nodded my head, then she continued.) They were cursing him whilst looking right into my eyes. We had a fight in which they were cursing. I took the jug and threw it at his head. They were always doing things like this. We had fights whenever they did such things.

E: And you don't keep quiet when these kinds of things happen?

³⁷ Raziye. Biz mesela aramızda Kürtçe konuşurduk, bize derlerdi gene ikinci kanala geçtiniz derlerdi. Niye ikinci kanala geçiyosunuz, konuşmayın derlerdi. İkinci kanala geçtiniz konuşmayın Kürtçe, derlerdi öyle.

Dilan: Of course, I don't keep quiet! The guy said these things to me and I stepped up on to the table with a jug in my hand. Back then I was delivering water in the workshop. After he said that, I took the jug, it was made of like a plastic or glass or something. I hit him with the jug.

E: What happened after that? Were you fired from that job?

Dilan: No, I wasn't. He wasn't the boss, he was an employee. He was from Central Anatolia. But I don't remember. I hit his head with the jug. He passed out. I was telling the others to leave me and that I would kill him. Everyone was saying Dilan stop! Dilan stop! I will kill him! Who do you think you are! How can you swear like this!

E: What did the boss say?

Dilan: He didn't say anything. He said Dilan shut up! Dilan shut up! I was saying 'why he is swearing, I will not shut up'. There were things like that. We were as supportive as we could be. Sometimes it was brute force... we were resorting to... as we did when I broke his head.

E: For instance, do you speak in Kurdish to each other at work?

Dilan: I speak it everywhere. And I intentionally raise the tone of my voice. I do not abstain from it, I speak proudly, to make them understand that I am Kurdish. I am never afraid. I am not afraid of any of them. How can they deny that I am Kurdish! I was born Kurdish and I will die Kurdish!³⁸

³⁸ Dilan. Ama onlar biraz daha böyle şey yaparlardı. Bi de bizim gözümüzün önünde mesela bi tanesi... Ben onunla çok kavga da etmiştim. Mesela biz Apo'yu savunuyoruz. (Benden onay bekliyor, benim bu konudaki görüşümü sorgulayarak bakıyor. Başımı sallayıp onayladıktan sonra devam ediyor.) Apocuyuz biz. Benim gözümün önünde ona küfrederlerdi. Küfrettikleri zaman biz kavga etmiştik. Ben almıştım sürahiyi adamın kafasına fırlatmıştım. Yani öyle yaptıkları zaman oluyordu, biz kavga ederdik.

Elif. Sen de susmuyorsun.

Dilan. Hayır canım ne susması! Adam bunu söyledi ben çıktım masanın üzerine elimde sürahi. O zaman su dağıtıyordum. Adamın öyle söylemesiyle aldım sürahiyi plastikti ama cama benzer plastikti. Kafasına indirmiştim.

E. Noldu sonra çıktın mı işten?

Dilan. Yok çıkmadık, ne çıkıcaz. Patron değildi orada çalışandı. İç Anadolu'dan bi yerliydi ama hatırlamıyorum. Kafasına vurmuştum. Adam bayıldı. Ben bırakın öldüreceğim lan onu diyorum. Herkes Dilan dur Dilan dur! Ben öldüreceğim onu! Şerefsiz! Sen kimsin de küfrediyorsun diye..

E. Patron ne dedi?

In this case, an explicit attack by co-workers i-was responded to with an explicit display of Kurdish identity in the workspace by Dilan. It was met with a fierce reaction, which could even have lead to Dilan becoming unemployed. However, this performance was punished by the boss. Her employer did not fire her and even kept her from beating the men and tried to make her calm.

In another meeting Dilan and Diyar told me about their Newroz experiences:

Dilan: For instance, Newroz is often on a weekday, or sometimes it is on Saturday but we work on Saturdays. I escape from work and go to the celebrations of Newroz. They told us: 'Don't go! We have to work!' But I responded that I did not care. Or on May 1st, I escaped and went to the protests.

Diyar: When we were working with my uncle, Newroz was on Friday. It was when I had graduated from high school. My uncle told us that it was Newroz, he hired a car and we set out to Newroz. We were half way to the celebrations the woman, who controlled production called us and asked where we were. My uncle said: 'We are on our way to the Newroz celebrations. If you want, you can come too.' Then he hung up the phone. Of course he was worried about his job, but at the same time we will go to Newroz, we will absolutely go to Newroz. We believe that otherwise the whole year will be bad.

Dilan. There can't be no Newroz!³⁹

Dilan. Patron bir şey demedi. Dilan sus dedi Dilan sus dedi. Ne susması diyorum, adam niye küfrediyor ki diyordum. Bir şeyler vardı da, gücümüz yettiğince savunuyorduk. Yani.. Kaba şiddete de bazen yani bu adamın kafasını kırdığım gibi gücüm yettiği kadar şey yapıyorduk.

E. Kürtçe falan konuşuyo musunuz mesela...

Dilan. Her yerde konuşurum. Bi de ben sesimi de yükseltiyorum böyle. Ben işte şey yapmıyorum gururla da konuşuyorum, sesimi de yükseltiyorum. Kürt olduğumu anlaşılar diye. Hiç de korkmuyorum, hiçbirinden de korkmuyorum. İnkâr edebilirler mi işte Kürdüm, Kürt doğdum, Kürt ölücem.

³⁹ Dilan. Ben mesela bir çok zaman Newroz'da haftaiçine gelmiştir mesela ya da Cumartesi günü de çalıştığımız için ben kaçmışım gitmişimdir. Gitmeyin demişlerdir işte iş var çalışın, bana ne derdim kaçardım giderdim. Veya 1 Mayıs'ta falan kaçmışımdır gitmişimdir. Hatta bugün de vardı.

Workshops are spaces of production. Here, workers' social performances are not praised by the employer. Instead, the value of the labor is identified by the amount of production. Therefore, as Dilan's anecdote about the fight between her and one of associates shows, they are not fired from their jobs because of explicit performances of their Kurdish identity in the workspace. It is possible for these girls to manifest their identity and appropriate the workspace as a coping mechanism (Secor, 2004; Çelik, 2005; Skelton & Valentine, 2003).

On the other hand, the girls who work in the service sector, as cashiers or as saleswomen, have different experiences of the workspace to the girls who work in manufacturing workshops. Unlike the full-time workers, the girls who go to school and have part-time jobs in the service sector are released from the hegemonic community relations of the neighborhood that impose the workshop as the only employment choice for girls. Along with financial recompense, the paid job brings social emancipation for the girls, at least from the patriarchy within the neighborhood, that enables them to have their own space outside the community. The girls gain an opportunity to utilize the public space of Istanbul, escape from the Kurdish patriarchy in Dolapdere and penetrate the wider urban space (Secor, 2004; Erman, 2001; Simonsen & Vaiou, 1996).

Additionally, in contrast to the textile workshops, the service sector values labor according to the social performances of employees. All the girls who work in the service

Diyar. Biz dayımların yanında çalışırken cuma günüydü. O zaman liseyi bitirdiğim dönem. Dayım dedi ki Newroz dedi araba tuttu işte. Newroz'a gideceğiz. Yolu yarılalımız. Baya bir de geçmiş. Bizi şey arıyor işte o şeyleri kontrol etmeye gelen kadın, iş var neredesiniz siz falan. Dayım dedi biz Newroz'a gidiyoruz hadi sen de gel. Dayım telefonu kapattı. Yolu yarılalımız. Ha bir yandan da endişelenmiyor mu dayım ama bi yandan da gideceğiz mutlaka gideceğiz. Gitmezsek bütün bir senemiz ters gidicekmiş gibi.

Dilan. Newrozsuz olmaz yani!

sector were aware of this and they stressed that they had to be very careful of their attitudes in the workspace.

Diyar has work experience in a domestic appliances store where she began to work as a cashier before being swiftly promoted to buying manager because work ethic and good relationship with her boss. However, she referred to one of the managers there store who always makes nationalist comments about the Kurdish issue to provoke her. She told me that she has been very careful not to get into any discussions with this guy as it could cause problems in the workspace and ruin her good relationship with her boss.

Diyar: Since I couldn't pass one of my courses in high school, I couldn't study in Van University, even though I passed the university entrance exam. Then, one of my friends told me that there was a job opportunity, and asked me whether I wanted to work. I began as a cashier and then moved to the department of data processing. I was keeping record of the goods that were bought for the company.

E: Where was your office? Was it around Dolapdere?

Diyar: It was in Kurtuluş. Sometimes I was going in the mornings, and sometimes I was going in the afternoons.

E: Did you know the boss?

Diyar: No, the boss was from Kars. I had a friend who was working there. There were also managers. It was a corporate grocery. The regional director was a Kurdish guy. My boss was from Kars, - he was calling me hemşehrim, whenever he saw me.

E: Then he was protecting you? There were no problems at work.

Diyar: My manager was very bad. For example, there were problems at the office. It was bad for me that my boss was Kurdish. In the kitchen or other spaces he was pro-Atatürk, Kemalist guy. Back then there was a military operation against the PKK. They were talking about it. I never participated, just in case.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Diyar. O alttan dersim olduğu zaman Van'ı kazanmıştım. Ders olduğundan Van'a gidemeyince ben hani kendimi farklı bir yönde geliştireyim dedim. Ondan sonra bir arkadaşım şey dedi işte dedi iş var

Diyar also talked about the concerns of her sister, who was working at Çırağan Palace Kempinski – a well known luxury hotel in Turkey. When her mother came to her workplace she wore a white scarf, symbolizing the Kurdish movement. She says her sister demanded that her mother not veil herself, in order to prevent her having to face any kind of disturbance in her workplace.

Diyar: For example, my mother came to my school – Bilgi University – wearing her white scarf. My friends came and said to me: ‘Your mother is a real Kurdish woman!’ I responded ‘Of course!’ It is our mark. For instance, all my mother’s handiwork is colored yellow, green and red. All of them are the same.

Dilan: Sometimes my mother wears a shawl, but I tell her to put on her white scarf.

Diyar: My sister was very disturbed by the white scarf. She was working in Çırağan Palace and she was begging our mother not to wear it. But I do not have any problems like that.⁴¹

gelecek misin. Bir gel sen başla kasiyerlikten falan dedi. Kasiyerlikten başladım sonra bilgi işleme geçtim. Malları kabul ediyordum, envanter sayımı, bilgilerin geçirilmesi siparişler falan.

E. İş nerdeydi bu civarda mı?

Diyar. Kurtuluş’ta. Bazen öğlen gidiyordum bazen sabahtan gidiyordum.

E. Patronu mu tanıyodun yoka?

Diyar. Yok patron Karşlıydı. Arkadaşım çalışıyordu orda ama müdürler vardı, kurumsallaşmış bi market artık. Bölge müdürüm Erzurum’lu Kürttü. Patronum Karşlıydı gidip gelip hemşo diyordu bana zaten.

E. Seni çok kollayan biri yani. İşyerinde bi sıkıntı yoktu yani.

Diyar. Müdürüm kötüydü. Mesela işyerlerinde çok sorun oluyordu. Patronumun Kürt olması biraz benim dezavantajıma. Mutfağın içinde falan, Atatürkçü falandı, o zaman mesela şey vardı sınır ötesi operasyon şeyi vardı. Onu konuşuyorlardı. Ben hiç gerçekten de işyerinde konuşmuyordum işyerinde nolur olmaz diye.

⁴¹ Diyar. Mesela benim annem okula taksitleri yatırmaya geliyor beyaz eşarbını takıyor. Arkadaşlarım lan diyor annen tam Kürt ha diyor. Heralde oğlum diyorum. O bi kere bizim nişanımız, o takılır.

Mesela benim annemin işlemeleri hep şey kırmızı yeşil sarı, hepsinde ama eksiksiz yani öyle birşey.

Dilan. Bazen annem şal takıyo ben diyorum şal takma beyaz örtünü tak.

Diyar. Ablam çok rahatsız olurdu ablam Çırağan Sarayı’nda çalışıyordu, anne takma ne olur ne olmaz falan diyor. Ama benim hiç öyle bi derdim yok. Öyle bir şey yani.

These girls check their clothes, and even the clothes of their visitors in the workspace, in order to avoid any kind of exclusion. By dressing in the manner that is expected of you by the hegemonic strategy, you are able to achieve an existence in that space and can continue in your job (Secor, 2002; Fenster, 1999).

Hilal is another respondent who has worked in different temporary jobs in the service sector for periods throughout her life. She is Dilan's sister, but unlike Dilan she is a university student who has had a chance to go to school. Similar to the others, Hilal emphasizes the emancipatory positives of employment, in terms of getting out of the house and the neighborhood. She says that otherwise her family does not let her go out with her friends. Similar to Diyar and the other girls who work in the service sector, Hilal also emphasizes the need to keep silent in the face of insults aimed at her Kurdish identity. She thinks that it is a basic rule of working simply not to hear these kinds of reactions. She has had similar experiences to Diyar where her boss has made the sort of insulting comments about the Kurds typical of the daily agenda in Turkey. She says that she has remained silent in response to these comments of her boss. According to her, work is a place where you have to keep quiet and act as if you are an ordinary adolescent girl who works in a job for the money (Secor, 2004; Erman, 2001; Simonsen & Vaiou, 1996).

The contrast between the girls who work in workshops and those who work in shops emerges from the differences between the production sector and the service sector. While in the production sector the significant factor is the productive efficiency of a worker, in the service sector the social relations and performance of the staff are more important because they are key to the selling process. The girls who work in the service sector have to present compliant performances. Their job becomes part of their daily performance of passing. They regulate their attitudes in line with the dominant ideology and pretend they are

members of the majority. They cannot create any kind of disturbance by responding to the words of the boss or the customers. They have to perform their role consistently to be successful in this. This is a way of coping with the city and surviving in the urban space. In contrast to when they are in their school space, they do not use methods that emphasize their ethnic identity. The girls who work in the manufacturing workshops, on the other hand, do not feel obliged to hide their identity. On the contrary, they use it as a means of resistance against the discriminatory practices in the workplace. Their attitudes do not usually lead to an argument with their bosses. Therefore are able to develop a more explicit survival mechanism than the girls who work in the service sector.

Conversely, the girls who work in the service sector are able to escape from the boundaries and strategies of the neighborhood in the workspace, which provides an opportunity to take part in other spaces of the city and interact with people outside Dolapdere. They hold on to their jobs to appropriate the city. The paid job becomes a tool in their lives that enables their performance of passing to the majority (Erman, 2001; Secor, 2004; Simonsen & Vaiou, 1996). In the space of work, they are under the strategies of the Turkish majority. They attempt to become members of this community. Although they do not give up their ideas about the Kurdish movement, they choose to conceal them and claim their existence in urban space.

URBAN PUBLIC SPACE

The main purpose of this section, following on from the previous sections that focused on the daily practices of the girls at school and work, is to scrutinize the everyday interactions of the girls in other spaces of the city. I will present my analysis in the form of a comparison between the appropriation mechanisms of the girls who work in permanent full-time jobs and

the girls who go to school. The reason for this division is the difference in the experiences of these two groups. While the girls who go to school are participant much more in the urban public space, are better at Turkish, have more free time and spend more their time outside Dolapdere, the girls who work in textile workshops spend six days a week working and are mostly illiterate, causing them keep their distance from the urban public space. Therefore, because their experiences are different, I analyze their coping methods separately.

Students

For the girls who go to school, the weekends provide the opportunity to escape the routine of house and school, get out of the neighborhood and wander around the city with their friends. Their favorite activities are eating in fast-food restaurants and window-shopping. Dolapdere is located near to the Istiklal Avenue, the center of the city. By walking for ten-minutes up slope through Tarlabası – another neighborhood largely populated by Kurdish and Roma communities - you reach the avenue, where the atmosphere is completely different from that of Dolapdere. This is the space used the most by the adolescent Kurdish girls of Dolapdere. On weekends or after school they go and stroll along the Istiklal avenue from beginning to the end, hang out with their friends in the cafes and go to cinema or window-shop. Because the avenue is very close to Dolapdere and transportation does not cost any money, they very often choose to spend their leisure time here. They are not limited to the Istiklal Avenue, however, and also sometimes choose to go to other districts close to Dolapdere where there are a lot of stores and shopping malls such as Sisli, Eminonu or Beyazit . They even cross the Bosphorus and go to the Asian side of the city sometimes.

In Dolapdere the girl's lifestyle's are restricted by the surveillance of parents and relatives. Therefore getting out of the neighborhood can be seen as bringing considerable

relief.. However, at the same time, they have to confront the Turkish nationalist discourse when they leave the neighborhood. They have unending encounters with this discourse in the shops they go, the restaurants they eat at and with the people around them when they are wandering in those spaces. Whilst escaping from the strategies of the Kurdish community in Dolapdere, they find themselves under the hegemonic power of Turkish nationalism in the other spaces of the city. They do not stay away from these places though. On the contrary, they insist on using them and, by developing tactics to appropriate these quarters as they do in Dolapdere, manage to feel safe and comfortable in these spaces.

These girls try to seem “as if they are not different” and “as if they are the same as the other adolescent girls using that space.” They regulate the way they dress, talk and behave in order to achieve this goal. As Butler argues, this is an ongoing process that does not have an end(Butler, 1990). Each encounter in everyday life prompts these girls to verify this image, as in the case of Gülizar, who asks me the same question every time we meet: *“I think I speak in Turkish fluently, don’t I? What do you think, do I not speak fluently?”*⁴²

Gülizar is a seventeen-year old girl from Mardin and the sister of Kevser. She was a baby when her family migrated to Istanbul. She was one of the most sociable girls that I met but she feels very oppressed in Dolapdere and spends most of her time outside the neighborhood in different districts of Istanbul. Gülizar’s main concern is to be able to speak Turkish in such a way that she is ‘misrecognized’ as being Turkish and she feels obliged to check with me, a Turkish person and whose mother tongue is Turkish. There is always the threat of being noticed by the others, the threat of the “real identity” being revealed, to use Ahmed’s theory (Ahmed, 1999). In line with this thinking, Gülizar and Saide, who are class-

⁴² Gülizar. Ben güzel konuştuğumu da düşünüyorum öyle değil mi abla güzel konuşmuyom muyum?

mates in high school, talked about the moment of crisis in their lives when their Kurdishness unconsciously bursts out: their pronunciation of the letter of “K”.

*Gülizar: They understand by the way I speak! We pronounce the letter K very strongly.*⁴³

There is not much analysis in the literature of the use of speaking manner as an appropriation mechanism. However, my research indicates that Kurdish adolescent girls who live in Dolapdere pay great attention to the way they speak Turkish in the public space in order to appropriate these spaces.

In addition to manner of speech, dress codes are also important in these girls’ the appropriation of the city space (Secor, 2002; Fenster, 1999). All my respondents dressed in the same style as the general Turkish youth. Unlike their mothers and older sisters, these girls do not wear *şalvar* or put on a veil. This results in their being constantly scolded by the older generations of their families they told me that their mothers get very angry about the way they dress. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, , they try to escape from the complaints of their mothers in Dolapdere by making minor changes in their outfit. Similarly, when they leave Dolapdere, the dress code also transforms. Most of the time we met in Dolapdere before going to the İstiklal Avenue to hang out in the cafes or shops. During those meetings, I noticed that these girls think that their clothes are not suitable for the İstiklal Avenue and they want to change into ones they think are more trendy. Diyar stresses the importance of dressing style.. Although she is a political person, she says that she does not wear *poşu* – the traditional veil and a symbol of Kurdish resistance – when wandering around the city as it is a symbol of the Kurdish movement. She is afraid of being excluded by her friends and society.

⁴³ Gülizar. Abla konuşmamdan anlıyorlar. K’ları çok kalın söylüyoruz.

Diyar: I can talk everywhere. But, can I express my identity? No. For instance, different from the way I express my Kurdishness in Dolapdere and Taksim, I cannot express my identity in Düzce. I cannot wear a hagal and wander around. Hagal is poşu⁴⁴, you cannot wear poşu and wander around Düzce or some districts of Istanbul. You know, there is an elite community in Nisantası, you have to dress in a similar way to them.⁴⁵

Like Diyar, Meryem is also a politically engaged women. However, she agreed with Diyar in emphasizing the significance of the context and the people around you in terms of the way you dress and talk about certain issues. She regulates the way she dresses and talks when she hangs out with her friends from university. She tries to present an image of herself as similar to them so as to be able to make new friends.

Meryem: If you go to Newroz celebrations with a Turkish friend, you may end up having a fight with her. Or if you go to the cinema with your Turkish friend, there can be an argument over the choice of film. Actually, the choice is important here.⁴⁶

Meryem asserts the need to separate friends and activities and she plans her life in the light of this belief. When she is hanging out with her class mates from Bilgi University in Taksim or Sisli, in the cafes or shopping malls, “Kurdishness” is something that should not be manifested in her conversations or in her clothes or accessories. She chooses to perform an image similar to the other girls in her class. She displays this performance in each and every

⁴⁴ Symbol of Kurdish resistance movement.

⁴⁵ Diyar. Ben her yerde konuşabiliyorum ama her yerde kendimi belli edebiliyor muyum, hayır. Dolapdere’de Taksim’de kendimi Kürtlüğümü belli edebildiğim kadar mesela bi hagal takıp da Düzce’de dolaşamazsın. Hagal, poşu işte. Poşu takıp da Düzce’de dolaşamazsın. İstanbul’un bazı semtlerinde de dolaşamazsın. Ama ne biliyim işte Nişantaşı’nın belli bi elit kesimi var onlar gibi giyinip gitmek zorundasın.

⁴⁶ Meryem. Gidip de Newroz’a bi Türk arkadaşınla gittiğinde kavga edersin de ya da gidip de hani bir Türk filminde ben buna gidicem ben buna gidicem ayrımı olursa heralde yani, pek böyle konular olmuyor. Seçim önemli burada aslında.

encounter with her friends. On the other hand, when she is with Diyar - her relative and friend from neighborhood –they go to demonstrations, conferences about the Kurdish movement and concerts of Kurdish singers together.

Kevser and Eyşe are also close friends and relatives, like Diyar and Meryem. Although they attend different schools where they both have other friends, they usually spend their free time together near Dolapdere, in the Istiklal Avenue, Eminonu and Sisli. Their schools are in the upper-middle class districts of Nisantasi and Kadıköy, respectively, where they claim they feel comfortable. However, they display a noticeable reluctance to hang out with their classmates in those neighborhoods. Kevser describes Nişantaşı as a posh area where there are very few people in the streets and everybody is calm and quiet. On the other hand, she says, the Istiklal Avenue, Dolapdere and Eminonu are spaces full of people from different backgrounds where it is crowded and loud.

Eyşe: I like the ghetto neighborhoods. In that place – Kadıköy - there are few people, it's too quiet. I don't like those places. The ghettos are crowded until midnight and there are a lot of people in the streets. The buildings are close to each other. But on that side of Istanbul, there aren't any people in the streets at night.⁴⁷

Eyşe, Kevser, Meryem, Diyar and all the other girls who go to school enjoy the space and feel free outside Dolapdere. They appropriate the urban public space and develop a sense of belonging in particular districts. By performing the image of an “anonymous adolescent Turkish girl”, they participate in the urban public space and appropriate it for their own

⁴⁷ Eyşe. Varoş mahallesini seviyorum ya ben. Orada çok az insan var, çok sessiz, ben öyle yerleri sevmiyorum. Varoş çok kalabalık oluyor gece geç saatlere kadar bir sürü insan oluyo sokakta. Apartmanlar birbirine çok yakın. Oysa karşıda belli bir saatten sonra kimse olmuyor sokakta.

purposes. However, it is also important not to ignore the sense of uneasiness felt by these girls outside Dolapdere. The words of Elif about the deserted and silent character of some neighborhood reveals this sense of discomfort. They enjoy going to these places, and also utilize them since their schools are there. However, attached to this enjoyment, there is also a sense of irritation that reflects the ideas of Sara Ahmed about the unaccomplished performance of being part of the majority that bursts out each time they leave Dolapdere (Ahmed, 1999).

This impression is confirmed by Rojbin and Selma's claim that they choose to go to Kadıköy or other more distant, high society spaces such as Sarıyer or Levent in order to meet their boyfriends. They usually date Turkish boys and do not consider it a problem, unlike their parents. Going on dates in Dolapdere is impossible as a result of their parents' constant surveillance. Taksim and even Eminonu are also risky for them so they choose other places to meet and hang out with their boyfriends. They sit in the cafes or parks in these places, walk through the neighborhoods and before it gets dark they go back to their neighborhood, where they and their boyfriends walk apart like strangers. They use those districts to escape from the oppression of community surveillance in Dolapdere. They do not feel that they completely belong in these neighborhoods but, as it gives them an opportunity to hang out in the manner they wish, they can be seen as appropriating these spaces.

Hilal, though, provides a different perspective to my other respondents. She has very few Kurdish friends and almost all of her friends are Turkish, including her boyfriend. Except for the celebration of Newroz, she does not participate in any political activities in the neighborhood and is very much engaged in life outside Dolapdere, spending most of her time in the Istiklal Avenue and Eminonu with her friends. Like the other girls, though, she has concerns about being excluded by their friends. Hilal agrees with the other girls that any kind

of discussion about “Kurdishness” can lead to problems and she similarly does her best to avoid any kind of conversation on this issue. On the other hand, in contrast to the other girls, Hilal really does not have any friends in Dolapdere. The pressure to conform to Kurdish identity and traditions there also oppresses Hilal more than the other girls. She isolates herself from the neighborhood completely. Like the women referred to in the articles of Secor and Fenster who use the urban space as a resistance mechanism towards the strategies of the neighborhood, Hilal feels alive only when she utilizes the urban public space as an ordinary figure (Secor, 2004; Fenster, 2005).

As mentioned in the sections above that focus on the experiences of Kurdish adolescent women in school and the workplace, there are moments of rupture that occur in these girls’ performances of anonymity and passing. Although they regulate their everyday performances to create an image of an “ordinary Turkish girl”, their commitment to the Kurdish movement in Turkey and the Kurdish community in Dolapdere remains alive as many of these girls show by attending demonstrations, conferences and panels where they feel comfortable displaying their “Kurdishness.”

As the literature suggests, protests and demonstrations are also coping mechanisms implemented by excluded segments of the society which are often marked by fierce antagonism (Petropoulou, 2010; Boudreau, Boucher, & Liguori, 2009; Wedel, 2001; Carpio, Irazabal, & Pulido, 2011; Vargas, 2006; Skelton & Valentine, 2003). For instance, in June 2011, the election process in Turkey was interrupted by the decision of Election Council to ban from candidacy twelve Kurdish parliamentarian candidates with prior convictions. This decision led to protests all over Turkey. In Istanbul, people came together in Taksim and Aksaray to protests. The girls from Dolapdere also participated in protests in Taksim Square and the Istiklal Avenue in defense of their democratic rights for the forthcoming election.

Months before this event, in 23 March 2011, a movement of civil disobedience had been declared by the leaders of the Kurdish political party, the *BDP or Peace and Democracy Party*, and they established “civil disobedience tents” in the Kurdish region and also in Istanbul to articulate their grievances over restricted rights and freedoms. The girls from Dolapdere went to this tent in Taksim Square with their parents many times. They were performing their traditional dances like the *halay* and hanging out with other young people. Although the police destroyed the tent in Taksim, another tent was established by the political party in Aksaray and the girls were also present there to further protest against the violent actions of the Turkish state against the Kurdish population. The fight over the construction of the tent developed into a claiming the right to the city by the Kurdish population of Istanbul. By attending these protests, the girls assert their existence in the urban space through an explicit demonstration of their ethnic identity. They voice their claims and appropriate the space of Istanbul through these demonstrations.

E: When there is a protest or demonstration, do you attend?

Meryem. I attend Newroz. There are other protests every day, Women’s Day for instance, that I attend if I have time.

E: Do you go to these demonstrations with your brothers?

Meryem: No, I go to them with my friends, though my friends are also mostly my relatives.

E: Okay, so they also want to attend. Where do these events occur?

Meryem: Some of the are in here, in Dolapdere. I don’t usually attend the protests where people fight. We go to the ones that are free, the ones that I believe that I can enjoy. Not, if it is full of fighting. I go if it is reasonable.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ E. Hiç öyle protesto bişey olduğunda katılıyor musun?

Meryem. Newroza gidiyorum. Kadın günleri oluyor mesela, günlük protestolar olduğunda katılabildiğime katılıyorum.

E. Oralara hep abinlerle falan mı gidiyorsunuz yoksa?

Meryem. Yok arkadaşlarımla da gidiyorum. Zaten arkadaşlarım akraba olduğu için genelde..

*Zilan: In our family it is like this; we are all interested but we are not completely into it. We do not participate in these events, but we attend Newroz, the 8th March protests and so on. For instance, when there is activism concerning the Kurdish language, when there is a lesson, we support it.*⁴⁹

Newroz is also another performance through which adolescent Kurdish girls develop a sense of belonging to the city by displaying their identity. In the urban literature, commemorations are underlined by Marie-Anne Fortier as performances that construct group identity and provide for the appropriation of the neighborhood (Fortier, 1999: 60). However, Fortier's analysis is deficient in its consideration of the urban public space. As I mentioned in the fourth chapter the celebrations of Newroz are an essential performance that enable the girls to feel attachment to their neighborhood. On the other hand, the celebrations are not limited to the space of the neighborhood, they are also held in other districts in Istanbul such as Okmeydani and Zeytinburnu.. Every year, on the 21st of March, Kurdish people living in Istanbul come together in these places to celebrate Newroz. Almost all of the Kurdish adolescent women from Dolapdere attend this festival, joining in the celebrations and dance to their traditional songs. The celebration of Newroz provides a sense of attachment and belonging to the urban space for these girls.

E. Zaten onlar da gitmek istiyorlar, beraber gitmiş oluyorsunuz. Ne civarlarda oluyor bu tür eylemler? Meryem. Burada da olan var. (Dolapdere'yi kastediyor) Pek kavga dövüş eylemlerine katılmıyorum tabii ama öyle serbest olanlara gidiyoruz. Eğlenebileceğimi düşündüklerime bişeyleri gerçekten yapabileceğime inandıklarına gidiyorum. Uygun bir şeye yoksa öyle kavga dövüş yok.

⁴⁹ Zilan. Şimdi hani bizim ailede şöyle bir şey var, hepimiz ilgileniriz ama tam olarak içinde de değiliz. Hani olaylara falan karışmayız ama newroz, 8 mart, mitinglere falan gideriz yani. Mesela hani Kürtçeyle ilgili bir aktivite olur bir ders olur falan onu destekleriz.

Diyar explains her feelings about activities in the urban public space of Istanbul by making a comparison between her life in Düzce and Istanbul. While in Düzce, she and her family were under the domination of the nationalist majority, whereas in Istanbul they begin to feel relieved and free to attend different activities.

Diyar: It was horrible when my brother was caught by the police in 1994, when the police came and searched our house. Can you imagine how a five-year old child is trembling when she sees the police walk into her house with their guns and start taking things out of the closets? Your underwear is messed up. They shout at you ask you where your son is. You don't understand anything.

E: Was your brother involved in the Kurdish movement?

Diyar: No, absolutely not. How can I say to you, it was enough just to be a Kurdish person. To be a Kurd is itself a movement.

E: Then they weren't searching for him for any reason?

D: Back then there was some disorder in Düzce, Adapazari. They were looking for a victim to make responsible. Honestly, my brother was a naughty boy. But we were definitely not actively involved in politics. Of course the politics was in our family, but we were not active members of it. Everyone was in their houses. We did not participate in the protests or support anyone. At least that's the version I know.

E: But it was natural to do that.

Diyar. Do we support it now? Yes we do. Whenever there is an activity about the Kurds, a conference or a protest, or Newroz celebrations, I never miss it, even my mother participates. I feel bad when I don't go to them. You know, you feel tired at the end of Newroz, it is cold, your face feels it. In those moments I always say to myself that I won't go again. But next year, when Newroz is approaching, I again begin to think about the dresses and accessories that I will wear on that day. I am almost twenty two now, but I feel the same excitement every year. I would really have preferred to live in Istanbul until I was 13-14 because of this Kurdishness issue. Because here, at least, we are a majority.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Diyar. 94'te abim yakalandığı zaman polislerin gelip bizim evimizi aradığı zaman çok korkunçtu. Beş yaşındaki bir çocuğun nasıl titrediğini düşünsene evde ellerinde kocaman tüfekler birileri seni arıyo düşün yani dolaplar falan indiriliyor. Senin affedersin iç çamaşırın karıştırılıyor. Bağırılıyor çağırılıyor, biliyo musunuz nerede diye bağırılıyor. Hiçbir şey anlamıyorsun. E. Abin hareketin içinde falan mıydı?

In addition to the urban literature's emphasis on dress code as a survival mechanism of anonymity, my fieldwork also underlines it as a way of performing an identity that challenges the dominant order. While Secor and Fenster contend that women choose their dresses according to the rules and norms of that particular neighborhood so as to feel comfortable in that space, my research has shown that dress codes are also utilized by the girls as a mechanism of reaction against the dominant order. Even a scarf colored in yellow, green and red can be a tool of the resistance developed by these girls.⁵¹

Zilan: When I get up, I can go out without washing my face, right! But even if I don't go out, I still wouldn't do it! Nobody else can have a say in it! I mean, people do these things, no one should mess with other people's thoughts, but they do all the time. You know, there is something called human rights but it doesn't exist in Turkey! The other day, while I was trying to cross the street in Dolapdere, the police almost ran me over, man! They just don't stop. And I started to shout curses behind them! This sort of thing. They go so fast, even though they aren't trying to catch anyone or get anywhere. They don't even pay for food. There is no democracy! No freedom of thought! I tell you, when I go to school, they look at the color of my hairpin! They say, what is the meaning of yellow, red and green coming together, what does it imply? There is this

Diyar. Yoo kesinlikle hareketin içinde değildi yani nasıl anlatsam orada Kürt olmak zaten başlı başına bir harekettir.

E. Bir şeyden dolayı aramıyorlar?

Diyar. Yok, bir olaylar olmuştu o dönem Düzce Adapazarı civarında, birinin başına patlaması gerekiyordu. Abim de biraz yaramaz bir insandı açıkçası. Ama kesinlikle siyaset, yani tabii ki vardı ailemizin içinde hep siyaset vardı, ama kesinlikle aktif olarak değil. Herkesin evinde olduğu kadardı. Kalkıp da hani bir eyleme gitmek, birilerine destek olmak amaçlı hiç olmadı bizim, heralde, benim bildiğim kadarıyla.

E. Zaten bunun olması da doğal.

Diyar. Şu an destek veriyor muyuz evet veriyoruz. Bir eyleme ya da bir konferans olduğunda Kürtlerle ilgili aktivite olduğunda annem olsun, newroz kutlamaları olsun hiç aksattığımı hatırlamıyorum. Kesinlikle gitmezsem kendimi o yıl sakat hissediyorum, benim bir yanım eksik kalmış. Ve hani o şeye doğru newrozun sonuna doğru bi yorgunluk oluyor, hava soğuk, çarpıyor insanı ya niye geldim bi daha gelmeyeceğim diyorum ama bi dahaki sene newroz gelecek acaba ne giysen ne taksam ne yapsam, hangi rengi nereme taksam falan oluyor. O heyecan 21 bitiyo 22 yaşındayım neredeyse hani hala o heyecanı duyuyorsun. 13-14 yaşına kadar Düzce'de değil de İstanbul'da yaşamak bu Kürtlük olayı yüzünden çok isterdim. Çünkü burda çoğunluk var en azından.

kind of perception. Therefore, I do not want to live in Turkey. When I asked a group of girls in my secondary school why they were talking about someone behind their back, the girl said it was because (s)he didn't like Atatürk. Who the hell are you and what is that to you whether she likes him or not! One of these girls, who's Kurdish, told a Christian girl that she couldn't believe in God. She shouted at the girl. It's none of your business, you cannot judge other people's ideas. I gave her a piece of my mind. I cannot tolerate it when they try to interfere with what I think! No one can do that. For example, I speak Kurdish intentionally when I am in some particular places.

E. Could you give an example of where?

Zilan. For instance, I like doing it when I'm passing by a police. I was once coming from the Newroz celebrations. I had a yellow, green and red colored scarf on my shoulders. My uncle was in front of me and I was walking behind him. Two policeman shouted from behind 'Hey you, come here!' I pretended I hadn't heard and waved my hand to indicate that I wasn't paying attention to them. They saw that, too. Then, my uncle was fifteen steps in front of me and the policemen were coming up behind me. They shouted 'Hey girl! Come here!' I was shouting to my uncle but I was frightened to death. Anyway, I made my uncle hear me and he came back. The guy asked him 'What is this thing on her shoulders!' I was sure that they would have done something bad to me if I had been alone. They came over very threateningly. They stopped when I called out to my uncle. I told my uncle that they were coming up behind me. My uncle told them that we were coming from Newroz. Then the policemen told him to make me take this scarf off. My uncle told them that we were coming from Newroz, that it was a calm day and I was a child. He asked me to take it off and I responded that I wouldn't. Then my uncle pressured me and made me take off the scarf.'⁵²

⁵² Zilan. Sabah kalksam yüzümü yıkamadan gidebilirim ben bir yere tamam mı! Gitmem de yani yaparım! Kimse karışamaz! Yani insanlar öyle bir şey yapmışlar ki insanların düşüncesine kimse karışamaz ki sürekli yaptıkları bir şey. Düşünce hakkı var ya, o yok Türkiye'de! Geçen gün ben Dolapdere'de karşıdan karşıya geçmeye çalışıyorum, herkes durmuş polis üstümden geçiyor arkadaş! Polis durmuyor yani. Arkasından bir küfür etmeye başladım ben var ya! Acayip şeyler! Yani böyle bir sürat yapıyorlar bir yere de yetiştigi falan yok ha devriye geziyor. Yemek yiyorlar para ödemiıyorlar. Demokrasi yok! Düşünce hakkı yok! İnan ben okula gittiğim zaman tokamın rengine bakıyorlar ya! Bu sarıyla kırmızıyla yeşil bi araya gelmiş ne ima ediy o diyorlar! Öyle bir düşünce var. İşte bu yüzden Türkiye'de yaşamayı istemiyor insan. Bi tane kız bana diyor ki, ben bir kere ortaokulda bir tane kızla kavga ettim konuşuyorlar böyle niye diyorum Atatürk'ü sevmiyormuş o yüzden diyorlar, sana ne kardeşim sen kimsin ya! Sever, sevmez! Bi tanesi şey diyor Hristiyan bir kız bir tanesi bunu söyleyen Kürt diyor ki kıza sen nasıl Allah'a inanmazsın diyor! Kızıyor bağırıyor kıza! Sana ne kızım dedim insanların düşüncelerini sen yargılayamazsın! Ağzının payını verdim ya! Benim buna şeyim yok, düşüncelerime karıştığı zaman! Hiç kimse karışamaz yani! Bazı yerlere gittiğim zaman özellikle Kürtçe konuştuğum oluyor mesela.

E. Nerede mesela?

Zilan clings to her scarf to perform her Kurdish identity and challenge the dress code of the majority in front of the policemen who symbolize the Turkish state in her eyes. Therefore, the dress code is not only utilized in order to become anonymous, but also to denounce the hegemonic power relations and to display an ethnic identity in the urban space.

In addition the dress code, language is also a tactic mechanism that has been developed by my respondents. As I mentioned above, part of the passing performance of these girls is that they all have a desire to speak Turkish fluently. It is a part of role that provides invisibility and anonymity in the city. On the other hand, as with the case of the deaf community discussed by Skelton and Valentine who choose to speak the sign language despite societies insults, Kurdish is also used by these girls as a reaction against the dominant order of the city and an appropriation mechanism(Skelton & Valentine, 2003). Zilan is one of the girls who chooses to demonstrate her identity explicitly in the public space. Although she chooses not to respond to any provocation at school, in public spaces she makes explicit demonstration of the symbols of her ethnic identity.

Zilan. Mesela polislerin önünden geçerken çok seviyorum bunu yapmayı. Tabii ben bir kere Newroz'dan geliyordum Biz Newroz'dan geliyorduk, benim üzerimde bir tane sarı kırmızı yeşil eşarp vardı, omzuma atmıştım. Amcam önümde gidiyor ben arkadan yürüyorum. Arkadan iki polis "Hişt sen gel buraya" diye bağırdılar arkamdan. Ben hiç duymamazlığa verdim yürü ya yaptım elimi de salladım onu da gördüler. Ondan sonra amcam benden on beş adım ileride polisler bu sefer de benim arkamdan gelmeye başladılar: "Hişt kız gel buraya" falan diye. Ben amca diye bağıryorum, korkudan sesim çıkmıyor. Neyse işte amcama sesimi duyurdum, amcam geldi. Adam dedi: "Bu ne bu kızın üstündeki!" Tek başıma olsaydım bana bir şey yapacaklardı onlar eminim baya ciddi geldiler benim üzerime. Amcamı çağırdığım zaman bir durdular öyle yerlerinde. Ondan sonra amcama dedim bunlar benim peşimden geliyorlar. Amcam dedi ki Newrozdan geliyoruz. Ondan sonra adamlar dedi ki bunu çıkartsın böyle olmaz dedi. Amcam dedi ki newrozdan geliyoruz sakın bir gün hani o yüzden çocuktur falan filan dedi. Çıkar dedi bana ben dedim ki çıkarmayacağım. Amcam beni baskı altına aldı, çıkar sonra yine takarsın falan filan.

They thus claim the urban public space with their trendy outfits, hair styles and Turkish friends and boyfriends, but also through protests, national celebrations, dress and language. The Kurdish freedom movement is transformed into an urban claim of the second migrant generation, as predicted by Omar Youssef. They attain a space through daily performances that are in line with the rules and norms of the Turkish majority. Almost all of them do not want to return to their hometown, but to stay in Istanbul. They plan to attend university and continue to lead their lives in Istanbul with permanent occupations such as artists, kindergarden teachers, journalists, teachers or nurses. And all of them plan to marry a boy they choose or even to not get married and share the a house with their boyfriends. All these dreams and plans for the future dramatically differ from the lives of their mothers. The girls unanimously emphasize this difference and the conflicts it creates with their parents. They are dedicated to constructing their lives in Istanbul, not in the same way as their parents, but with a different perspective and effort that Eyşe summarizes by saying:

“As a result, we will have a different life!”⁵³

Workers

In contrast to the girls who attend school, the girls who work in textile workshops in Dolapdere remain apart from the city. Because of the hard working conditions they endure and their illiteracy, these girls keep themselves away from the urban public space. They live within the protected environment of their neighborhood and do not seek to confront exclusionary practices. Therefore, the concept of passing is not appropriate for their case. These girls apply instead the method of not using and staying away from the city space and developing a sense of belonging to their own neighborhood. On the rare occasion that they do

⁵³ Eyşe. Başka bir hayatımız olacak sonuçta!

go out of the neighborhood, it is an uncomfortable experience for them. The sense of exclusion and discomfort they feel there keeps these women away from the city and leads the working adolescent girls to abstaining from the urban space, in line with the literature focusing tactics of concealment.. Even when they use the city, they seek to remain anonymous and not advertise their existence (Secor, 2004; Fenster & Shlomo, 2011; Çelik, 2005; Secor, 2002; Fenster, 1999).

For the girls who work in the textile workshops, Sunday is the only holiday in the week. During the rest of the week they work at least nine hours a day in the workshop and only on Sundays do they have a chance to wander and relax. Unlike their younger sisters or the girls who attend school, their domination by the patriarchal relations in the home space also compels them to help their mothers with the domestic labor. Therefore, they usually spend their time helping their mothers or resting at home on Sundays and have very little time to wander around Istanbul.

Raziye: We work so hard that we do not want to do anything when we come home. In addition, every weekend my mother asks me to wash the carpets and sweep the floor. I say to her 'I am very tired, you could at least tell me to rest and do nothing'. She says it would be great if I could remove the carpets and move to the roof. I complain but I do what she says.⁵⁴

Dilan: They say that on Saturdays we are supposedly able to get out at one p.m., but really it is always five or six p.m. Only Sundays are off. And Sundays are spent sleeping.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Raziye. O kadar çalışıyoruz ki artık böyle insan eve geldiği zaman hiçbir şey yapmak istemiyor. Bir de benim annem haftasonu oldu mu şu halıları kaldır kızım, şuraları sil. Ben diyorum ki insan bir der ki yoruluyorsun hiçbir şey yapma otur en azından. Şu halılar kalksaydı iyi olurdu, çatıya gitseydi iyi olurdu. Ayy var ya böyle.. Yapa yapa tabi söyleniyorum ama yine de yapıyorum.

⁵⁵ Dilan. Cumartesi günü güya bire kadar ama lafta olan bişeydir beş dört altı ancak o saatlerde çıkabiliyoruz. O gün zaten ölüyor. Bi Pazar günü. Pazar günü de zaten uyumakla geçiyο.

Limited time is not the only obstacle in front of these girls. They are mostly illiterate, so it is an uncomfortable experience for them to hang out alone. They always need for a person to help them reading signs or filling out certain forms. The dialogue between Raziye and Dilan exposes this feeling and its reasons.

Raziye: You get bored like me, for instance. I get bored when I go somewhere. It is not boredom so much as, I don't know, being like a loser. I feel more independent here (Dolapdere).

Dilan: More independent? Look, it stems from our illiteracy. For instance, recently I had to change something in a store. I went there and they wanted my address, but because I could not write... I could write but it wouldn't be fast or fluent. I felt like a bit of a loser because I wrote it badly. Fortunately the daughter of my cousin was with me. She is an educated girl, a university student. I told her 'Mizgin. Come here, write this down!'⁵⁶

As a result they rarely leave the neighborhood and go to other districts of the city. Eminonu is their favorite destination. They wander around Eminonu and Beyazıt, do window-shopping, buy new clothes for themselves, sit in the parks and return back to Dolapdere in the daytime. They choose to go to these districts because of their closeness to Dolapdere and their cosmopolitan population, where people from different ethnic, religious, gender and age backgrounds are all attracted by the cheap prices. Unlike the girls who attend school, they prefer to live in a conservative style and adhere to the dominant rules and norms of the

⁵⁶ Raziye. Tabii ki. İnsan bi yere gittiği zaman, şahsen bir yere gittiğim zaman sıkılıyorum. Sıkılmak değil de ne biliyim, böyle ezik. Yani... Burada daha bir kendimi özgür hissediyorum.
Dilan: Daha özgür? Nasıl ya bak o da şundan okumadığımızdan kaynaklanıyor. Mesela geçenlerde bir şey değiştirmek zorunda kaldım, bi mağaza. Gittim benden adres şunu bunu istediler e tabii yazamayınca... Yazabiliyorum ama hani çok hızlı ve çok düzgün... Ve birazcık da eksik yazdığım için biraz kendimi ezik hissettim. Allahtan ki kuzenimin kızı vardı yanımda. Okumuş, üniversiteli kız. Mizgin dedim gel çabuk bunu yaz dedim.

community. Consequently, these girls tend to stick to these parts of the city, even though they are rather confined there.

As a result of this, these girls are not able to develop a sense of belonging to the city. They feel uncomfortable and discontented in any space other than Dolapdere. If they have to go to these places, they try to be anonymous and invisible to the people around. These limited performances in the city alienate them from the urban space and keep them from utilising it. Contrary to the girls who attend to school, they do not aspire to appropriate any space other than that of Dolapdere and they relate to Istanbul only by developing a sense of attachment to their neighborhood.

CONCLUSION

The everyday lives of adolescent Kurdish women are not limited to Dolapdere - they also use urban public space. In this chapter, both the dominant strategies of public space and the coping methods used by adolescent Kurdish women in response have been assessed. This analysis has been based on a distinction between school, work and other public spaces of the city where both the strategies and the tactics change and lead to different experiences.

In the first section focusing on experiences in school space, I contended that adolescent Kurdish women cling to their education as a way of coping with the city. In confirmation of the studies in the third category of “resistance by existence” that I earlier examined, education is appealed to in order to appropriate the urban public space and to develop a sense of belonging and comfort in Istanbul. Their perceptions of the future are shaped by Istanbul and they do not want to return their hometowns. Through education, they believe that it will be possible for them to live in Istanbul in the future. For this reason, they

abstain from displaying their identity during the daily routine of school. They regulate their dress and accessories in light of this goal and are careful not to wear anything in the colors of Kurdish movement – yellow, green and red. They usually have both Kurdish and Turkish names but prefer to use their Turkish names at school so as to avoid discrimination and exclusion. In addition, they also participate in national ceremonies at school in the enthusiastic manner demanded of them by their class-mates, teachers and the administrative staff and avoid any discussion of current affairs and politics discussion during history and national-security classes.

On the other hand, there is a sense of anxiety and discomfort that sometimes emerges while these adolescent Kurdish women are using the urban public space.. Although they are attached to their education as a way of appropriation of the city and staying in Istanbul in the future, when they encounter derogatory comments or are referred to directly as “Kurds” in a discriminatory manner, their attempts to become an anonymous and invisible part of the majority in the urban space suddenly shatter. In these moments, they split from their performance of passing, in Sara Ahmed’s terms, and hold on to their Kurdish identity as a coping method.

The girls who attend school do not usually work in manufacturing workshops but prefer other part-time jobs in the service sector. In these workspaces, they try to conceal their identity and cling onto their jobs as a survival mechanism. As in the space of school, they avoid dress or accessories that reveal their Kurdish identity, speaking Kurdish and having political discussions with their associates and bosses, even when they make insulting and discriminatory comments about the Kurdish population. In difference to their behaviour in the school space they do not allow any discrepancy in their performance of an ordinary majority woman in the workplace. However, the women who work in textile workshops do not abstain

from revealing and emphasizing their Kurdishness. They use their ethnic identity to help them cope with the dominant discriminatory discourse.

The third section scrutinized the experiences of adolescent Kurdish women in the other public spaces of Istanbul, where they spend their weekends and free time, when they are not at school or work. For the girls who attend school, an analysis based on the concept of passing shows that they deliberately refrain from underlining their Kurdish identity in urban public space. They pay attention to the dress and accessories that they wear, the way they speak Turkish and are careful not to discuss the Kurdish issue with their friends. Nevertheless, this does not prevent them participating in protests, speaking Kurdish in public space or displaying their ethnic identity. Even though they feel relieved in the space outside Dolapdere, beyond the strategies of Kurdishness asserted by the community in their neighborhood, they claim that at the same time they do not feel as comfortable in Taksim, Kadıköy, or other the districts of Istanbul as they do in Dolapdere. Their commitment to the Kurdish issue is still an influential part of their lives, and through participation in demonstrations, celebrations like Newroz, wearing accessories that reflect Kurdishness or simply by speaking Kurdish, they display their identity and appropriate the urban public space of Istanbul.

On the other hand, the women who work in textile workshops generally do not choose to go outside Dolapdere and prefer to stay in the neighborhood with their friends and relatives. In accordance with the second category of “avoidance and anonymity”, they abstain from using the public space outside Dolapdere because they feel uncomfortable and excluded there.

To put it in a nutshell, I argue that Kurdish adolescent women who attend school are engaged in the space and the life of the city outside Dolapdere in spite of its domination by Turkish nationalist discourse. They are enthusiastic about being part of the society outside Dolapdere and through education, paid jobs, practising a particular style of dress and trying to

speaking Turkish as fluently as possible, they strive to survive in Istanbul rather than returning to their hometowns. In their everyday lives in the urban public space, they try to avoid catching anyone's eye and being in any way different from the majority. This fear of being seen by others is a reflection of their continuing commitment to Kurdish identity, which is confirmed by their ongoing participation in demonstrations and traditional celebrations and many other coping methods used by them. Therefore I argue that their existence in the urban public space manifests a resistance of the dominant power relations. For the women who work in the manufacturing workshops, on the other hand, it is from avoiding urban public space and the dominant nationalist discourse it contains that enables them to survive in Istanbul.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I analyzed the daily struggles of the unmarried Kurdish adolescent women in order to appropriate the city. I focused on the coping mechanisms developed by these women to feel safe, comfortable and belonging to the urban space of Istanbul. My concern was to investigate how they constructed their lives in the urban environment populated predominantly by the Turkish majority, as the second-generation members of the community who were much more involved in the city than their parents. I specified my research with the unmarried adolescent women because of the differentiation of the experiences among different gender groups, considering the patriarchal structure in the society.

I approached this subject with the theoretical framework provided by Henri Lefebvre and Michel De Certeau. Through the concept of the *right to the city* developed by Lefebvre, I examined the ways utilized by Kurdish adolescent women to appropriate the urban space. I conceptualized the coping mechanisms of the Kurdish adolescent women by referring to the idea of right to appropriate the city, involved in the concept of the right to the city propounded by Lefebvre. In order to identify these coping mechanisms, I resorted to the distinction of Michel De Certeau between tactics and strategies. De Certeau contends that everyday life is constituted by the strategies of the dominant hegemonic structures and the tactics of the ordinary people implemented to resist and to manoeuvre within these strategies. The urban

space is a contested area where different strategies reign over the people. I theorized the coping mechanisms developed by the Kurdish adolescent women as the tactics they applied to open up a space for themselves in the urban space.

This thesis is situated in the recent urban literature about the coping mechanisms of excluded segments of the society to appropriate the urban space, emerged in the 1980s and 1990s and generated by the transformations of the urban theory because of the neoliberal and globalization processes. This literature is based on the arguments of Henri Lefebvre in terms of the right to equal access to the city by each and every segments of the society. By futhering his theory, the theoreticians of this literature comprise all ethnic, religious, racial and gender groups in the society to their researches. While the theory of Lefebvre is limited to the working class the recent literature expands the arguments of Lefebvre to other discriminated segments of the city. By the same token, I expanded his theory to the Kurdish adolescent women living in Istanbul who are excluded from the urban space. Various struggle mechanisms mentioned in these researches have provided a framework for this study, which are both implemented and challenged throughout this study. In necessary points I was prompted to search for new concepts in order to describe the coping mechanisms in my case.

I constructed the analysis into two parts, in terms of the variation of their experiences in the neighborhood – Dolapdere – and in the public space of Istanbul. In the first part, I analyzed the tactics developed in the neighborhood space. Proving the coping mechanisms referred in the urban literature, neighborhood attachment is a tool applied by the Kurdish adolescent women (Stack, 1974; Erder, 1997; Çelik, 2005; Simonsen&Vaiou, 1996). They feel safe and comfortable in Dolapdere. In contrast to the threatening environment of the public space outside of Dolapdere, the neighborhood provides an atmosphere like home where the people they know live together. Because the neighborhood is populated by the people

from the same region, the inhabitants of this neighborhood are some kind of a relative of each other. The acquaintance lead them to feel belonging to that space. Particularly in the cases of step migration, this attachment reveals itself more apparently. Step migration is a process in which the migrants move to a town or a village in any regions of Turkey, before they move to Istanbul. Because they had to live in an environment where they were the only Kurdish family in their previous step of migration process, Dolapdere is a relieving atmosphere for them where they encounter other Kurdish people and feel free. In addition to the existence of their relatives, the implementation of the traditional customs play a role in the relieving environment of Dolapdere for these girls. As a contribution to the researches that consider neighborhood as a space that provide solidarity relations for the migrants, I find out that the neighborhood is also conceptualized as the space where the traditions and the customs of the Kurdish identity can be performed (Stack, 1974; Erder, 1997; Çelik, 2005; Simonsen&Vaiou, 1996). Therefore, they hold on to the neighborhood as a survival mechanism in the Turkish-populated environment of the city.

On the other hand, the conceptualization of the neighborhood as an arena of the performance of “Kurdishness” results in an implementation of a restrictive strategy of the Kurdish identity. The girls both cling to the communal relations, networks and traditions and they also feel oppressed by them. I conceptualized the practice of this strategy through the term idealized performances (Goffman, 2009). I contend that the strategies operate through specified categories that involve idealized performances in itself. In Dolapdere, there is an implemented category of an “ideal Kurdish adolescent girl”, constructed by the Kurdish community relations in the neighborhood. This category involves particular way of life for the adolescent women. Like every other strategy, it reigns over the whole community and regulates their actions and thoughts. However, as in the case of all other strategies of the

society, it is resisted by the tactics of the people. The Kurdish adolescent women do not internalize and absorb these strategies and apply them in the way they think or act, there is always a crack in the operation of Kurdish identity strategy where they are able to manoeuvre.

In my case, I find out that, the dress code is one of the tools of this strategy. There are particular norms of dress in Dolapdere. In line with the literature, the girls implement these codes in their dressing practices in order to escape from the sense of estrangement in the space of Dolapdere (Fenster, 2005; Secor, 2002). They choose not to wear any kind of décolleté dress in the neighborhood. At this point, it is necessary to indicate a differentiation in terms of the experience of this strategy among these girls. The women who work in textile workshops have a more isolated life than the ones who are students. Proving the literature, I contend that the neighborhood attachment leads to an isolating environment for these women, which leads to a more conservative perception among these women (Çelik, 2005; Erder, 1997). The women who work in manufacturing workshops play an intermediary role between their younger sisters who participate to the city and their mothers who are confined in the isolating atmosphere of the neighborhood. While they are contemptible by the older generations in the neighborhood because they do not fulfill the requirements of “Kurdishness” completely through their clothes and they complain about this pressure, they reflect the same discourse to their younger sisters or cousins who attend the school and attempt to dominate them.

A similar situation also occurs in the case of speaking Kurdish in the neighborhood. In addition to the dress code, the language is also implemented as a tool of the Kurdish identity strategy. I contend that the language emerges as a survival mechanism. These women choose to speak Kurdish when they are together with their parents, in order to escape from ill-treatments by the family members. The women who work in textile workshops become the

representative of this strategy, similar to the dress code. They normalize this understanding and implement this strategy over the girls who attend the school, who cope with this strategy by paying attention to speak in Kurdish in the neighborhood.

Another coping mechanism emerges in the dating practices of Kurdish adolescent women. In line with the previous discrepancy between the women who go to school and the women who work in textile workshops, the women who attend the school go on dates with the boys in secret, whereas the workers do not even want to talk about this subject, during interviews. The dominant community relations prohibit any kind of sexual interaction between the girls and the boys, especially the dates between the Kurdish girls and the Turkish boys. However, the Kurdish adolescent women in Dolapdere, particularly the women who attend the school, do not abstain from these relations; on the contrary, they find tricky ways to meet with their boyfriends covertly. They are careful about not meeting in Dolapdere and even near the district of Dolapdere, such as Taksim, Aksaray or Eminonu. Through regulating their dating practices according to the norms of the Kurdish community in the neighborhood, they avoid being excluded by the Kurdish community in Dolapdere that would restrain their sense of belonging and commitment to the neighborhood space.

In the second part of my analysis, I focused on the experiences of the Kurdish adolescent women in the public space of Istanbul. This chapter is constructed in three parts based on three different spaces of the public arena, according to the differentiating experiences and practices of these women. There emerges a variation between the narration of the space of school, work and other spaces of the city by the respondents. In this chapter, I administered the concept of *passing* developed by Sara Ahmed as a contribution for my analysis. Through the concept of passing, Ahmed underscores the attempt of the colonized subject to be seen as if he/she is a colonizer to achieve invisibility in the public space that

brings together sense of comfort, safety and belonging for its users. In the urban literature, there are coping mechanisms that imply the endeavors of the excluded segments to be a recognized city-dweller. This attempt involves the idea of becoming part of the majority and claiming the demands through the dominant language. “Resistance by Existence” is a concept developed by Omar Yousef that underlines this effort of the discriminated segments to take part in the urban claims through the dominant language. However, concept of passing expands the arguments of Yousef and implements the perspective of performance to describe the daily urban claims of the inhabitants. Through my fieldwork, I find out that there is a general tendency towards the application of third category of the coping mechanisms, named “Resistance by Existence” in the first chapter of this thesis. In the public space of Istanbul these women are required to perform specified performances that enable them to become ordinary and invisible. I analyzed these performances narrated by my respondents in light of the theory of Ahmed and Yousef, by relating to the theory of De Certeu in terms of the tactics produced by the colonized subject in the space of the colonizer.

The school space constitutes the first part of this chapter. The narratives reveal that the Kurdish adolescent women feel the pressure of the official ideology, through the actions of the teachers, administrative staff and even their class mates. Although the existence of other Kurdish friends at school leads to a relief for their adjustment process, they still feel the visible or invisible domination over them. From inconspicuous attitudes – asking the hometown of a student – to visible and concrete actions – disciplinary punishment because of not participating to the national anthem – they feel threatened in the school space. They develop a fear of being excluded by their friends. Their reaction to these oppressive practices is “passing as ordinary Turkish girl” at school. Neither they react fiercely against these attitudes nor do they stay away from the school. They choose to perform the “ordinary”

women in the school space. They choose to stay calm and quiet in response to the reactions that come from outside, in order to prevent any kind of exclusion. They hold on to their education as a tool to survive in Istanbul, be a recognized member of the dominant system, learn the dominant language and gain a space within this system (Erman, 2001; Padilla, 1993). However, this method is not the only way of coping with the strategies in the school space. When the Kurdishness is labeled upon them in a denunciatory way, there emerges a moment of rupture in the performance of passing. This interpellation of the subject lead them to perform this role. In these moments, they hold on to their “Kurdishness” and begin to defend themselves through an explicit display of their identity (Secor, 2004; Fine & Weis, 1998; Skelton & Valentine, 2003). Although there are ruptures in their performances of “ordinary”, these women claim their right in the public space by utilizing the school space and being part of the dominant system through keeping themselves silent against assaults. They plan a future in line with the education they have; they aim to attend to university and have their own job in the future. By imitating the dominant in the space of the strategy, they develop their coping method of appropriating that space and claim a space at school.

There is a similar tendency implemented by these women in the workspace. However, at this point, there emerges a difference between the women who work in textile workshops and the women who attend the school and work in part-time jobs in the service sector. Their experiences of the workspace differ from each other. The women work in the service sector work as cashiers or saleswoman in different type of stores where they are all expected to show a friendly performance. Therefore, as in the case of school space, in the work space these women have to display an ordinary image that does not challenge any kind of discourse that prevails in that environment. Their accent and their clothes are important parts of this image. They have a fear of being noticed by the others which lead them to the erasure of any kind of

indicator of Kurdishness in their image. They regulate their dresses and the way they speak Turkish in light of this idea. On the other hand, the textile workshops are the spaces of the conventional manufacturing sector. These are the spaces where the value of the labor is determined in terms of the amount of production. Therefore, the workers are not required to provide a convenient social performance by their bosses. Through the analysis of the narratives, I contend that there is a reflection of this division in the lives of my respondents. While the women who work in part-time jobs in the service sector strive to achieve passing in the workspace that erase all the divisions in terms of ethnic identity, the Kurdish adolescent women working in the textile workshops restore to display their ethnic identity to cope with the discriminatory environment of the workspace. In the cases of explicit assault by their co-workers, even they are able to fight with these people that does not lead to their expulsion.

As a common point, both types of women ascribe these paid-jobs as a financial contribution for them (Secor, 2003; Erman, 2001; Simonsen & Vaiou, 1996). However, as a challenge to the studies of Secor, Erman and Simonsen & Vaiou, this financial contribution does not have the same results in terms of the social emancipation of the women from the patriarchal relations. The women who work in the textile workshops are under the domination of the community relations and patriarchal order. They are even not allowed to work in a workshop owned by a stranger and they are exploited by the hard working conditions executed by their bosses who are at the same time their relatives or friends from Dolapdere. These relatives force them to work for at least fourteen hours and pay a little amount of money in proportion to the working conditions. Therefore, they are not able to escape from the patriarchal order through paid job. Contrarily, the women who work in the service sector find an opportunity to work outside Dolapdere that leads to the social emancipation of these girls in the other spaces of Istanbul.

In the third part of this chapter, I analyzed the experiences of the Kurdish adolescent women in the urban space other than the school and the workspaces. Similar to the first two parts, I examined the narratives through a comparative analysis between the women who attend to school and the women who have a full-time paid job. For the students, the performance of passing is again the most common way of appropriating the city. They do not abstain from the urban space, rather take part in it in their daily practices. However, as the space of the dominant strategy – that excludes the Kurdish people from the city – they feel threatened in the public space of Istanbul. They cope with this strategy by a performance of the “ordinary adolescent women” through their activities, dresses or language. The attempt of speaking Turkish fluently is one of these appropriation mechanisms developed by them. Besides the language, by changing their clothes in the neighborhood with their trendy costumes, they struggle to be like the other “ordinary” people in that space. The city space is divided into some kind of categories in their perception. While in particular districts they feel sense of belonging and comfort – the districts nearby Dolapdere and the cosmopolitan neighborhoods where people from different backgrounds come together – they use other districts for particular purposes. For instance, they go to school in the Anatolian side of Istanbul or they meet with their boyfriends in Sarıyer, where the Turkish majority is much more powerful and visible. Through these tools, they appropriate the different spaces of Istanbul. However, the districts nearby Dolapdere are utilized by them with a much more sense of comfort and belonging.

On the other hand, the coping mechanism is not limited to the passing performance, there are other circumstances where they restore to display their ethnic identity explicitly. The celebration of national festivals are examples to these circumstances. In addition to this, not the majority of the girls implement this method, but some of them choose to demonstrate her

“Kurdishness” through her dresses, accessories and speaking in Kurdish in the public space (Petropoulou, 2010; Boudreau, Boucher, & Liguori, 2009; Wedel, 2001; Carpio, Irazabal, & Pulido, 2011; Vargas, 2006; Skelton & Valentine, 2003).

Contrarily, for the women who work in textile workshops, the general pattern is to abstain from the urban space and choose to stay anonymous when they have to utilize it. Because they work in an exploitative job under the domination of the patriarchal relations of the community, they do not have any opportunity to go outside Dolapdere and utilize and appropriate the urban public space. In addition to this, because they are illiterate, they feel uncomfortable and unsafe when they go out of their neighborhood. They have limited experiences of the urban space that is spent to address their needs. Therefore, their choice is to stay away from the urban space outside Dolapdere and remain anonymous in the urban space.

In a nutshell, strategies and tactics are shifting categories that do not operate in a constant manner within already determined boundaries. They are perceived and experienced differently in distinctive contexts by divergent subjects. For instance, Kurdish identity proceeds as a strategic action that restricts the lives of these girls in the neighborhood, whereas it is put into use as a tactic towards the discriminatory arguments of a class-mate. Or, the dominant Turkish majority and its discursive implications against the Kurdish adolescent girls is experienced in a much more intensified way by the workers, relative to the students. However, the common point between these differentiations in terms of their relation between the hegemonic structure is their strive to open up a space for themselves by being part of it. Even the most isolated segment among Kurdish adolescent women in Dolapdere, full-time permanent workers in textile workshops, emphasize that they cannot return to their hometowns anymore, because they got used to the life in Istanbul and they want to become a part of it. When this commonality among these girls is interpreted along with the

transformation of the Kurdish movement's discourse, it refers to a particular point at macro-level. Kurdish Question does not reflect the purpose of the foundation of Kurdish nation-state anymore. The movement transformed itself in line with the emergence of democratisation and human rights perspectives. Together with the internal displacement and spatial transformation of the Kurdish population in Turkey, the movement is not isolated in the Kurdish regions of Turkey and not limited to the armed guerilla organisation. It has transformed into a demand to acquire an existence in the city with democratic rights and freedoms. All the interviewees mention the importance of state's granting democratic rights to the Kurds as an ethnic minority group in Turkey. Therefore, their attempt to become a part of the city cannot be exemplified as an approval of assimilation. They indicate their resistance by merely performing themselves in the public space, through their existence in that space. They get involved in the city; the Turkish majority encounter with them in schools, buses, cafes, shops, cinemas, parks or many other public spaces of the city. Therefore, the resistance continues through these daily interactions. The movement and resistance transforms itself to the fight for claiming the urban space in equal fashion with other inhabitants.

This thesis is written with the aim of reflecting the cracks, leakages, manoeuvres and new potentialities caused by the Kurdish adolescent women in the society they live in. Through the resistance mechanisms, which are analyzed in this study, they imagine a new area opened up for them in the urban public space, where they are able to construct new identities and belongings. All these struggles contain a potentiality for alteration in the discriminatory policies and practices. Through inconspicuous practices in the everyday life, these women become the actors of the transformation process. I confirm that the types of resistance that are dealt with in this study are conceived and envisaged within the limits of the system, which may even be argued as an obstacle in the process of a revolutionary

transformation of the society towards an utopianist understanding of completely free and equal environment. However, I think, these cracks against the dominant order offer the potential that the radical and revolutionary transformation requires. These minor spaces of freedom reached by various coping mechanisms provide a place where these people are able to feel the sense of freedom and equality that leads the way to new resistance mechanisms in the society.

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