

SUBCULTURE FORMATION OF PRECARIOUS WORKING CLASS YOUTH  
IN TURKEY: A FIELD RESEARCH ON THE CASE OF 'APACHES' IN  
ANKARA

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## ABSTRACT

### SUBCULTURE FORMATION OF PRECARIOUS WORKING CLASS YOUTH IN TURKEY: A FIELD RESEARCH ON THE CASE OF ‘APACHES’ IN ANKARA

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During the recent years in Turkey, the word “apache” had taken its place in Turkish popular culture as a pejorative word that is used to label a group of slum-dweller, working class youth. Those young people are distinguished through their visual styles, music consumption, and everyday activities that form a subculture. This thesis, firstly, is an attempt to understand the material, social and cultural circumstances which produce this subculture. Secondly, the thesis seeks to analyze the cultural reflections of these circumstances into the subculture that is emerging. As an attempt to understand that process, a four months media survey and a ten months field research with in-depth interviews and participant observation was conducted with the members of this subculture in Ankara-Turkey. As a result of the media survey and the field research it was observed that the most dominant factor that leads to/produces this subculture is the precarious working conditions that these

youths are embedded. The members of that subculture are composed of the young members of the working class who enter into labor market under the 'internalized' conditions of precarity. They consistently, experience employment under the precarious working conditions and unemployment. Therefore, they occupy a liminal and marginalized position in which they neither articulate to their class position nor depart from it. Their ambiguous position in the relations of production redounds on their cultural practices. They create a subculture both through the mediation of their socio-economically obscure position and as a cultural response to it. They seek to construct a new position through the survival strategies and daily tactics in the realm of cultural practices; through a subculture in which they can define and situate themselves within the bounds of possibilities of their material conditions. However, this subculture also constitutes a continuum with their material conditions and consolidates their liminality. They are labeled as Apaches in that subculture and experience a similar kind of a marginalization with their counterpart precarious youth in all around the world. This thesis examines that subculture in which the cultural reflections of young people to precarity became concrete.

**Keywords:** Subculture, Working Class, Precarity, Youth

## ÖZ

### TÜRKİYE’DEKİ GÜVENCESİZ İŞÇİ SINIFI GENÇLİĞİNİN ALTKÜLTÜREL OLUŞUMU: ANKARA’DAKİ ‘APAÇİLER’ ÖRNEĞİ ÜZERİNE ALAN ARAŞTIRMASI

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Son yıllarda, işçi sınıfına mensup, gecekonuda yaşayan gençleri tanımlamak için kullanılan ‘Apaçi’ kelimesi pejoratif bir kelime olarak Türkiye popüler kültüründe yerini almıştır. Apaçi olarak adlandırılan gençler, bir alt kültürün öğelerini oluşturan, dış görünüşleri, müzik zevkleri ve mekansal kullanımlarıyla toplumda ayrılmaktadırlar. Bu tez, ilk olarak bu alt kültürün içinde olduğu maddi, sosyal ve kültürel koşulları, ikinci olarak da bu koşulların oluşmakta olan bu alt kültüre yansımalarını anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu süreci anlamak adına, ilkin dört aylık bir medya araştırması, daha sonrasında Ankara-Türkiye’de, bu alt kültüre mensup gençlerle yapılan derinlemesine mülakatalara ve katılımcı gözleme dayalı bir alan araştırması yürütülmüştür. Bu medya araştırmasının ve alan çalışmasının sonucu olarak gözlemlenmiştir ki, bu alt kültürü oluşturan etmenlerden en öne çıkanı bu

gençlerin içinde buldukları güvencesiz çalışma koşullarıdır. Bu alt kültürün üyeleri emek piyasasına güvencesizleşmenin verili koşulları altında giren işçi sınıfının genç üyeleridirler. Devamlı olarak, güvencesiz koşullar altında çalışmayı ve işsizliği deneyimlemektedirler. Bu nedenle, ne sınıf pozisyonlarına eklenemedikleri ne de ondan kopabildikleri eşikte ve marjinal bir konum işgal etmektedirler. Üretim ilişkileri içindeki bu muğlak pozisyonları, gençlerin kültürel pratiklerine de yansımaktadır. Gençler, bu belirsiz sosyo-ekonomik koşulları dolayısıyla, ve aynı zamanda bu koşullara karşı bir tepki olarak bir alt kültür oluşturmaktadırlar. Gençler, kültürel pratikler alanı dahilinde işleyen, hayatta kalma stratejileri, gündelik taktikler ve maddi koşullarının olanakları dahilinde kendilerini içinde tanımlayabilecekleri ve konumlanabilecekleri bir alt kültür aracılığıyla yeni bir pozisyon kurma arayışı içindedirler. Fakat, bu alt kültür de maddi koşullarıyla bir devamlılık içindedir ve bu eşiklik hallerini pekiştirmektedir. Gençler, bu alt kültür içinde Apaçi olarak etiketlenmekte ve dünyadaki diğer emsalleriyle birlikte, benzer bir ötekileştirmeye maruz kalmaktadırlar. Bu tez, gençlerin güvenceleşmeye verdikleri kültürel tepkilerinin somutlaştığı bu alt kültürü incelemektedir.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Altkültür, İşçi Sınıfı, Güvencesizleşme, Gençlik

*To My Brother Ulař*  
*And All Young Members Of Our Class*



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM .....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ÖZ .....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	xi
CHAPTERS	
1 INTRODUCTION .....	1
2 THEORETHICAL FRAMEWORK.....	10
2.1 ‘Outsiders’ and Stigmatization .....	10
2.2 Evaluation of Subcultural Theory.....	12
2.3 Culture, Class and Subculture.....	13
3 MOMENTS OF STIGMATIZATION IN TURKEY.....	19
3.1 Tracking the Word “Apache” .....	20
3.2 Socio-Economic Transformation in 1930s in Turkey.....	22
3.3 The Late 1940s and Class Encounters .....	24
3.4 Gecekondu and Arabesque Culture in 1960s and 1970s .....	25
3.5 Neo-Liberal Transformation in the 1980s and Its Reflection to the Arabesque Culture .....	27
3.6 The 1990s and the “New” Dimensions of Stigmatization.....	29
3.7 Precarisation of Labor and Urban Transformation in the 2000s .....	35
3.8 Stigmatization of Apaches in Social Media.....	40

3.8.1	What is Funny in Apache Photos: The Contradiction Between Body and Space .....	41
3.8.2	Invasion of the City Centers .....	43
3.9	Stigmatization of Apaches in Mass Media .....	45
3.9.1	From ‘Harmless Buffoons’ to Dangerous Members of Working Class .....	45
4	ANALYSIS OF THE APACHE SUBCULTURE .....	50
4.1	Report of the Field Research Experience .....	50
4.1.1	Determination of the Field.....	50
4.1.2	Brief Information on the City Center Kızılay.....	52
4.1.3	In-Depth Interviews .....	53
4.1.4	Negative Impacts of the Media Stigmatization to the Field Research .....	54
4.1.5	Experience of Participant Observation .....	55
4.2	Material Conditions .....	56
4.2.1	Precarious Working Conditions.....	58
4.2.1.1	Low Wages.....	59
4.2.1.2	Irregular or/and long working hours.....	61
4.2.1.3	Unsecured Jobs.....	63
4.2.2	Obscure Space of Internalized Precarity.....	65
4.2.3	Survival Tactics under the Conditions of Precarity.....	70
4.2.3.1	Apathy.....	70
4.2.3.2	Personal Relations between Female and Male Members of the Subculture Depends on Financial Support.....	72
4.2.3.2.1	Kızılay Boys (Kızılay Bebeleri) vs. Kızılay Girl (Kızılay Kızı) .....	76
4.2.3.2.2	Reflection of Neoliberal Ideology to the Perception.....	79
4.3	Subculture Formation .....	82
4.3.1	Visual Style.....	83
4.3.1.1	Visual Departure from Cultural Practices of Class.....	84
4.3.1.2	Formation of the ‘Apache Style’.....	86
4.3.1.3	“Making do” .....	87
4.3.2	Music Consumption and Production.....	90

4.3.2.1	Departure from Arabesque Music.....	91
4.3.2.2	The Role of Tecktonik Music.....	92
4.3.2.3	Arabesque Rap-subculture.....	95
4.3.3	Spatial Departure .....	98
4.3.3.1	Spatial Departure from the Neighborhood.....	98
4.3.3.2	Liminality in the City Center Kızılay.....	101
4.3.3.3	Occupation of a Space through Public Visibility.....	104
CONCLUSION.. .....		106
REFERENCES .....		116
APPENDIX.....		126

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

During the recent years in Turkey, as many other countries, we witness a new cultural formation which can be considered as a unique subculture whose members are being labeled as *Apaches* by the society. The fundamental aim of the thesis is trying to understand the place of this formation in the social integrity through the material conditions, cultural practices, social roots, aspirations and daily routines of the members of that subculture. Due to the fact that this formation emerged in Turkey in the last periods of the 2000s, there has not been a comprehensive research on this subject yet, and this research aims to provide a beginner level support to the future studies on this subculture within the extent of the thesis. Furthermore, trying to explain this subcultural formation that emerged in Turkey's indigenous conditions aims to provide a little yet authentic contribution to the researches on the similar subcultural formations around the world. While trying to understand this formation, subculture theories that observe the subculture formations in the world and the historical development of the cultural life of Turkey will be referred to. But basically, the main resource of this thesis is the field research that was conducted with the young members of this recently developing subculture.

This study was commenced upon questioning the reasons why a specific group of young people (mainly males) labeled as Apaches and evoked hatred-amusement based wonder initially on social media then found coverage as a ludicrous and funny topic on other fields of mass media. This very first question was pointing to the endeavor of understanding the process of this labeling, but not directly pointing to understand 'worlds of meaning', cultural practices, meaning formation or everyday life experiences of those young people. However, when I conducted surveys on

social and mass media for finding answers to this first specific question, I found out that this labeling and stigmatization process does not flow on individual discourse and refers to a class-based emphasis. Later on, I was going to witness my prediction to be accurate through the change of attitude of the mass media towards Apaches with a direct emphasis on their class positions. Furthermore, I noticed that, that process also has been operating conspicuously similar enough in that timeframe not only in Turkey but also in other parts of the world. *Chavs* in England, *Partille Jhonnys* in Sweden, and though holding ethnic roots initially, *Guidos* in the USA have been labeled in a similar manner of Apaches in Turkey. Similar youth formations and similar stigmatization, labeling processes, and reaction mechanisms were observed in other parts of the world, which were not entirely examined within the limitations of the research context. As in Turkey, despite reactions shown to those people at first glance seen more about judging, making fun and not approving their appearance, music taste and lifestyle, it was actually more attention drawing to observe that reactions were pointing to the emphasis of their class position in the society. Moreover, common point of the ones labeled in Turkey and in the other parts of the world was being young members of the working class. Based on that, more than social reactions, question of the common ground between those youth formations, emerging within the same period and across geographies, under the gaze of similar social reactions and the linkage between those youth formations and their class position became more and more curiosity evoking. Therefore, an effort of understanding social positions and ‘worlds of meanings’ of those young people in Turkey called as Apaches, gained significance in order to understand at least a part of that framework. As a result of that process started based on a personal curiosity, this research has come forward.

The main concern of the study is the subculture formation of the young people who are labeled as Apaches through their material conditions and cultural practices within their position in the society. In order to examine the apache subculture, an ethnographic field research was conducted in the city center of Ankara, Turkey, during 10 months between 15.05.2011 and 09.03.2012. Turkey's capital Ankara is

the second largest city in Turkey with a population more than 4 and a half million people by 2012. And it provides us a solid basis to observe this youth subculture in detail. Furthermore, the city center of this second largest city of Turkey provides an opportunity to observe the class encounters and data that help us to understand the position of this formation in the social structure. In-depth interviews were conducted with 20 young people within this formation and also participant observation method was used to understand this subculture within this ethnographic field research.

Before defining the space for the field research and determining the interview questions, a four-month social and mass media survey was conducted. With this media survey, I had the chance to observe the labeling process that was developed by the society towards the members of this subcultural formation. This labeling process gives us the opportunity to study the cultural structure of today's society, therefore helping us to understand the conditions within which this subculture was developed. Furthermore, their stigmatization in the society is worth to observe due to its important role on the mindset and cultural practices of this youth.

Briefly, according to the media survey and field research, those young people who are called Apaches, are distinguished through their visual images, music taste and spatial positioning. Their visual image is characterized with Mohican like hair style<sup>1</sup>, colorful shirts and shalwar trousers, sport shoes and accessories which are the imitations of the famous brands which carry some elements of *Tectonic* culture emerged in France in 2001. Their music taste can be defined as an intertwined fusion of *Tecktonik*, *Arabesque*<sup>2</sup> and *Arabesque Rap*<sup>3</sup> music genres. They live in lower class – mostly *gecekondü* (slum) – neighborhoods and spend their leisure time in parks, on the footbridges and the streets corners of the city centers. Also,

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<sup>1</sup> This hairstyle can be considered similar to the hairstyle called “Mohawk” in Western Europe and North America.

<sup>2</sup> Arabesque is a music genre which has a significant place in cultural life of Turkey.

<sup>3</sup> Arabesque Rap is a nascent music genre which is an interfusion of Arabesque and Rap genres.



according to the data gathered in the field research, it was observed that parents of those young people are the members of working class who migrated 20- 30 years ago to find a job from small cities of Central Anatolia to suburban districts of the Ankara. The other half, especially the females, come from the lower-middle class districts. Vast majority of them are the students, graduates, or dropouts of vocational and regular high schools. Nearly half of them work in low waged, insecure jobs with irregular and/or long working hours. The ones who were unemployed during the field research had also worked in several jobs under the same working conditions. The working history of all of them involves many unemployed months and job switching stories. They both experience underemployment and unemployment permanently.

It is evident from the social science literature that such subcultures and deviant behaviors in the society are popular subjects, thus a great number of studies on this scope has been produced. It is possible to argue that the theories of subculture have emerged out of different approaches inspired by these studies. Although they did not necessarily look into subcultures, the focus of Chicago School during the early 1920s and 1930s on marginal groups, criminals and street gangs in American society can be considered as a starting point for subculture theories (Gelder & Thornton, 1997; Williams, 2011). Later, during the 1970s, Birmingham University's Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies' (CCCS) class-based analysis derived from a Marxist perspective, has paved an alternative way in studying subcultures – especially working class youth subcultures – emerged after the World War II. After 1980s, subculture theories which are called post-subcultural theories analyzed subcultures by their engagement to the neo-liberal ideology and discussed them mainly as a part of consumer culture (Williams, 2011).

However, all these subcultural theories examined these subcultural formations within the timeframes in which they exist. The subculture that we are examining contains the authenticities of its material conditions as of the time it had emerged. The 2000s are the times where precarized working conditions in Turkey were

deeply experienced by larger populations more and more, just like the rest of the world. It was also seen in the field research that these material conditions have deep impacts on the mindsets and subculture formations of the aforementioned youth.

Therefore, in this study, theory was used not as a strict framework but as a tentative guidance, as an 'instrument'. As far as the nature of the social sciences and social theory go, it would indeed be a methodological mistake to try to find a theoretical framework to fit the search results. Knowing that, I entered into the field as open as possible to any possibilities that would reveal during the fieldwork. Moreover, considering this subculture quite new and original, the outcome of the study could direct me to a part of lumpen proletariat, an engagement to the global consumer culture, the members of the working class, a process of an adolescent formation. As one of the first studies on this group, so many answers were indeed possible. However, the only expectation that I had was to find something meaningful that may explain the emergence and similarities between different youth subcultures around the world. In that sense, it is possible to say that the field has necessitated its own theory.

Building on this, as it was observed during the media survey as well as the field study, there was a linkage between the formation of that subculture and the class positions of its members. Therefore, theoretical framework of that study was based not only on the subcultural theories which consider the linkage between class and subcultures but also on theories on precarity. Fundamentally, theoretical framework of Birmingham University's Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies' (CCCS) cultural theory which conceptualize culture within the Gramscian understanding of hegemony and subcultural theory which derived from a class-based analysis of subcultures was utilized.

As it was stated above, Apaches are used as a material of laughter in social as well as in mainstream media in Turkey. They are approached as layabouts, outcast, new generation *kıros* who come from slums and occupy city centers with their imitation

clothes and extravagant hairstyles, dances in the public spheres.<sup>4</sup> Although their usage as an amusement material in the social and the mass media had been losing its acceleration, this subculture continues its existence since the material conditions of its *raison d'être* had not disappeared. Moreover, the social marginalization and the labeling towards those people are still extant and the word *apache* had taken its place among and articulates in the pejorative words that are attributed to the working class in the Turkish popular culture. At the present time, 'Apache' is a popular word that is being used instead of the pejorative words such as *kıro*, *varoş*, *amele*<sup>5</sup> etc. in order to define the individuals who are consubstantiated with the undesirable situations that are related with the lower class.

Therefore, in order to understand the similarities and differences between Apaches and old generation of 'outsiders' and the evaluation of the material processes that make them outsiders became significant. For that purpose, in this thesis, a historical review is done by tracking the moments of emergence of the labels in Turkish society within the context of material, social, political and cultural conditions of those time periods. Also, such kind of a literature review enables us to examine the cultural roots of the Apache subculture and understand its relation with the working class culture.

Besides, the connotations of the word Apache on its own, is worth an emphasis on development of its usage. Therefore, before entering into the Turkish case, within the understanding endeavor, tracks of the historical usage of the word *apache* in stigmatization of outsiders, vagabonds, castaways of the societies is traced from Apache clans in the USA to the underclass street gangs of "*Les Apaches*" in France, afterwards the translation of the word to Turkish from 1930s.

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<sup>4</sup> "It should be noted that scapegoating and other types of hostility are more likely to occur in situations of maximum ambiguity." (Cohen, 1997: 162).

<sup>5</sup> Those labels will be explained in the third chapter of the study.

A class-based relation was observed amongst those who are exposed to all these usages of the word apache and today's Apaches of Turkey. Along with the mentioned historical stages, labeling processes on the working class of Turkey is tried to be understood within the context of class encounters and formations in conjunction with modernization, industrialization, and capitalist transformation in Turkey. Although a wider research is needed in order to achieve a complete analysis, the 1930s of Turkey is taken as a starting point *intra vires* of the thesis. For it is the historical period that the word 'apaş' was first observed and class divisions and working class formation become more visible in cultural and everyday life of Turkey.

Afterwards, labels towards working classes in the late 1940s and 1950s are related with the rural-urban migration derived by the industrialization and dispossession of the working class and are discussed as a result of class encounters in urban life. Beginning from that period, construction of *gecekondu* neighborhoods in the big cities and formation of arabesque culture in the late 1960s and 1970s are analyzed as a transpiring class distinction in big cities both spatially and culturally. Formation of Arabesque culture has a partial significance both as a way of cultural response of working class living in *gecekondu* neighborhoods to those distinctions (Özbek, 2008) and as a clue to understand the cultural bonds of Apaches with their class. Following, the 1980s are discussed within the context of neoliberal turn in Turkey and its effects on social and cultural life and construction of public spaces. Especially the studies on transformation of the structure of arabesque music parallel to the transformation in the society during 1980s within the neoliberal discourse and understanding let us observe the ideological reflections of music taste and consumption of the youths who are called Apaches. Later on, the 1990s is discussed within the effects of the neoliberal transformation and intensive migration of the Kurdish people to the cities, through the representation of working class neighborhoods in mass media and in relation with the formation of the stigmatizations of *kıro*, *varoş*, *maganda*, *zonta* in Turkish society. Finally, socio-economic conditions of the 2000s in which the subjects of that study grew in is tried

to be examined in the context of precarization of labor and urban transformation policies and their effects on cultural formation of Turkey.

Following these discussions, the data collected in social and media research on labeling process of Apaches is used in order to explain the recent cultural atmosphere in Turkey. The labeling process in social media is discussed by the analysis of the comments under ‘apache dance’ videos which were shot on the footbridges of the city center of Ankara and uploaded in YouTube by those young people, ‘apache photos’ in Facebook and contents about ‘Apaches’ in popular website *Ekşi Sözlük* and *Her Güne Yeni Bir Apaçi*. Also, representations of Apaches in mass media were discussed through the news reports about Apaches in newspapers and television programs and their representation in entertainment programs.

In the fourth chapter of this study, this subculture was analyzed through its relationship with the material conditions of working class and dominant ideology through the data gathered during the ethnographic field research. This chapter is formed into three parts. In the first part of this chapter, a brief report of the field was given in order to express the research experience and provide a comprehensive explanation of the methodology used. In the second part, the material conditions and relations with the dominant ideology that shape the experiences, aspirations, perceptions, everyday life and cultural formations of the members of apache subculture tried to be analyzed. As I have mentioned, during the field research, the impact of the working conditions of this youth to their mindset was standing out. Therefore, the working conditions of the youth which can be summarized under the terms of low wages, irregular and/or long working hours and precarization, and also the ways they are experiencing these conditions were tried to be analyzed.

In addition to this, unemployment and its impacts that they experience continuously were observed, as a result of the precarized nature of their working conditions. The ways that the youth experience the material conditions and their relationship with

the dominant ideology were tried to be understood according to their daily routines. For the material conditions of the youth go back and forth between the aforementioned conditions and becoming unemployed makes them stuck in a liminal position. Finally, in first part of this chapter, the tactics which are generated by those youth towards those conditions and are included in subcultural practices were tried to be understood in their perceptions and personal relationships.

In the third part of this chapter, their subcultural practices both shaped by those material conditions and emerged as ‘tactics’ of survival from those material conditions were analyzed under three subtitles: visual image, music taste and spatial dimensions. These cultural routines that form this subculture emerge from their mindsets that are being shaped by the material conditions of the youth. Both three of the characteristics of this subculture are tried to be understood within the context of their liminal positions in the mode of production. Basically, the cultural routines that form this subculture are paralleled with the obscure position of the youth's material conditions and they also present an obscure and fragmented structure. Although these cultural routines were shaped within this structure, they also show the signs of solution seeking within the opportunities of this structure.

## CHAPTER 2

### THEORETHICAL FRAMEWORK

As it was stated above, the fundamental source of this thesis on this emerging subculture is the field research conducted with its members. Theory will only be used as a tool to support this study and explain the multifaceted dimensions of the case. In order to achieve a comprehensive analysis of the formation of this subculture, an eclectic theoretical presentation will be tried to be made in order to use in the analysis of its several dimensions. However, as a fundamental theoretical axis of the study, Cultural Marxism will be given in the background. So the theoretical framework of this chapter is constructed through a kind of presentation of the concepts that are used throughout the study. In this part of the study, the labeling process on Apaches will be understood by the theoretical discussion of Becker on 'outsiders'. And then, brief information on the evaluation of the subcultural theories will be given in order to support the preference of the subcultural theory of Birmingham University's Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS). In order to analyze this subculture within its own material conditions, a brief discussion on the precarity will be done. As an attempt to understand the formation of the subculture within the everyday practices of the youth, we will benefit from Lefebvre and De Certeau.

#### 2.1 'Outsiders' and Stigmatization

Firstly, before examining the subcultural theories, the term 'outsider' and the description of 'labeling' process coined in *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance* by Howard Becker, who is mostly addressed as one of the theorists of Second Generation Chicago School will be highly beneficial in many points to

explain marginalization and stigmatization of subcultures and the labeling process of the case of Apaches in this study.

Becker (1963: 10) explains deviance “as the product of a transaction that takes place between some social group and one who view by that group as a rule-breaker.” The process of labeling and stigmatization of an act or behavior as deviant is a matter of relations and response of others. According to Becker “[d]eviance is not a quality that lies in behavior itself, but in the interaction between the person who commits an act and those who respond to it...” (ibid.:14) Becker explains that process as follows:

...once a rule has come into existence, it must be applied to particular people before the abstract class of outsiders created by the rule can be peopled. Offenders must be discovered, identified, apprehended and convicted(or noted as “different” and stigmatized for their nonconformity, as in the case of legal deviant groups such as dance musicians)this job ordinarily falls to the lots of professional enforcers who, by enforcing already existing rules, create the particular deviants society views as outsiders. (ibid.: 163).

As Becker states, outsiders are the people “who are judged by others to be deviant and thus to stand outside the circle of “normal” members of the group.” (Ibid: 15) The process of labeling of an act as deviant or transformation of the people to the ‘outsiders’, necessitates predefined sets of rules. “Social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance, and by applying those rules to particular people and labeling them as outsiders” (ibid.: 9). Modern societies differentiate along social class lines, ethnic lines, occupational lines and cultural lines, and conflicts and contradictions emerge between those lines. Rule makers are the ones who possess ‘political and economic power’ along those lines and whose “social position gives them weapons and power to enforce their rules” (ibid: 18).

In short, based on the analysis of Becker, being labeled or defined as ‘outsider’ for a person or for a group of people, primarily, is a matter of being in a subordinate position in a society of which social rules are set by the powerful groups. In this



study, the concept of labeling was used through such kind of a framework within the support of the results of the field research and literature review.

## **2.2 Evaluation of Subcultural Theory**

The subcultural formation has been discussed from several perspectives. The very first contribution of the Chicago School to the subculture theory was their analysis of ‘marginal’, criminal groups, ‘gangs’ and deviants of American society in the 1920s and 1930s. Although the studies of the Chicago School did not directly engage in subculture, they fostered the later delinquent subculture theories (Gelder & Thornton, 1997; Williams, 2011).

Later, in the 1970s, the analysis of Birmingham University’s Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS), which was derived from Marxist class-based analysis, focused on post-war working class youth subcultures which had been shaped around style, music and leisure time. Birmingham School discussed these subcultures as a way of resistance and meaning production. Their analyses gained a really fundamental space in the area and continued to be the most influential theoretical framework on the studies to come. Till the late 1980s, subcultural theory was shaped around its relations to the class culture – especially working class.

After the 1980s, though, subculture theories which were named as post-subcultural theories were under the influence of post-structuralism and postmodernism (Williams, 2011). Unlike the prior discussions on subcultures on social divisions and inequalities, in this period an approach which distinguishes subcultures from mass culture instead of a class-based analysis became dominant in subcultural theory (Sildrick&MacDonald, 2006; Williams, 2011). “Almost unanimously, post-subcultural studies reject the previously pivotal significance of class based subcultures, as theorized by the CCCS, in their attempts to explain new forms of youth cultural identity.” (Sildrick & MacDonald, 2006: 125).

Post-subcultural theory focuses on ‘neo-tribes’ (Maffesoli, 1996), ‘individual identity or style’ (Muggleton, 2005), or ‘unstable and shifting cultural affiliations which characterize late modern consumer-based societies’ (Bennett, 1999). Miles explains this shift in subcultural theories in parallel with the shift among the youth which has been in progress since the 1980s: “...young people have to some extent been subsumed within dominant power structures... [They] are barely rebellious at all...but in fact are willing to go along with dominant ways of life if that means they can construct their own meanings around that way of life, if and when they see fit” (Miles, 2000: 88).

Although post-subcultural theories provide us with keys to understand relations of subcultures with consumer culture; they fall short in exploring the class aspect of subcultures. They melt class culture (in this study working class culture) into mass culture while analyzing the relations between the subcultures and the dominant class, thus fail to present an integral analysis point. For this reason, this chapter concentrates on not post-subcultural theories which basically study the subcultures in relation to the dominant culture but the class-based subcultural theories particularly theories derived from CCCS approach, which also make up the theoretical background of this study that analyzes the subcultures in relation to the dominant culture as well as the class they belong to.

### **2.3 Culture, Class and Subculture**

As a starting point of discussions on culture, Williams recommends the necessity of taking the ‘fact’ of “culture is ordinary in every society and in every mind” (1958/1989: 4). In such kind of a presupposition, culture is not an imposition of a dominant ideology but ‘a whole way of life’ of the ordinary people that is constructed through their experiences and practices as well as their material conditions. People are not the passive receptors of dominant ideology; they play an active role with their productive practices and experiences in cultural processes. Although there is an interaction between mode of production and culture, it is not an over determination. Because, such kind of a relation contradicts with the active

nature of culture and annihilates the possibility of change. Therefore, productive practices of 'ordinary' people are as significant as material base in formation of culture (ibid). Culture is not independent of material production for the reason that material production itself - the satisfaction of human needs through the interchange with nature - is at the same time a set of interhuman relations. "The satisfaction of human desire is only possible when mediated by the labor and desire of another" (Lacan quoted in Brenkman, 1983:22)

Subcultural theory of CCCS is derived from such conceptualization of culture as 'a distinctive way of life' in which 'material and social organization of life expresses itself' (Clarke et al., 1975) within a Gramscian understanding on hegemony (Clarke, 2007). In such an understanding of culture and hegemony, culture is "a site of struggle of conflict, of negotiations which constantly redefine (and usually reproduce in a new form) the existing relations of domination and subordination in the society" (Jones, 2007: 181). While "the exercise of social and cultural hegemony, is a necessary condition for the continuing exercise of power" (Hall, 2007: 382) for the ruling class, "[g]roups or classes which do not stand at the apex of power, nevertheless find ways of expressing and realizing in their culture their subordinate position and experiences (Clarke et al., 1975: 12).

Cultural theory of CCCS is stated in that way in the fundamental work of *Resistance Through Rituals*;

"We must move at once to the determining relationships of domination and subordination in which these configurations stand; to the processes of incorporation and resistance which define the cultural dialectic between them; and to the institutions which transmit and reproduce 'the culture' (i.e. the dominant culture) in its dominant or 'hegemonic' form. In modern societies, the most fundamental groups are the social classes, and the major cultural configurations will be, in a fundamental though often mediated way, 'class cultures'." (Ibid: 13)

As it was stated above, CCCS's theoretical framework on subcultures derives from a class based analysis. Subcultures, within this understanding are considered as

localized and differentiated “sub-sets” of a larger cultural formation of class. And subcultures have to be seen in terms of their relation to class cultural networks from which they become distinct (Clarke et al., 1975: 13).

A sub-culture, though differing in important ways—in its ‘focal concerns’, its peculiar shapes and activities—from the culture from which it derives, will also share some things in common with that ‘parent’ culture... Sub-cultures, then, must first be related to the ‘parent cultures’ of which they are a sub-set. But, sub-cultures must also be analyzed in terms of their relation to the dominant culture—the overall disposition of cultural power in the society as a whole (ibid.:13).

Subcultures share the same determining life-experiences as their parent culture, through visual style and leisure time activities they form solutions to the problems driven from their class positions. However, ‘the membership of subculture cannot protect them from the determining matrix of experiences and conditions which shape the life of their class as a whole’ (ibid: 15) .Therefore, subcultural response to their real life problems remain as ‘imaginary’ solutions. However, those imaginary solutions and their divergent experiences articulate to the experience of struggles for hegemony and to ‘win space’ in cultural realm.

Clarke and Jefferson (2007) use a typology of working class consciousness developed by Parkin in *Class Inequality and Political Order* in order to analyze working class youth subculture consciousness – dominant, negotiated and oppositional.

Firstly, dominant form of working class response is one of the aspects of “dominant consciousness” and is defined in two types – the ‘deferential’ and ‘aspirational’. While the first type accepts her/his own subordinate position within hierarchy, second type also accept the social order as it is but not her/his place within it and aspires to transcendent from ‘us’ to ‘them’. Secondly, negotiated consciousness conflicts with the dominant ideology in certain points. While accepting the dominant ideology in public space, in private practices show an opposite tendency. In that manner, it is not able to resist the social formation and challenge its

legitimacy. Finally, oppositional consciousness challenges the legitimacy of the social formation and produce resistance to transform the social formation (ibid).

In such a categorization of working class response to dominant ideology, deviant youth cultures are identified under the ‘negotiated’ consciousness because of the fact that, on the one hand they “assert a ‘moment’ of originality in the formation of such a style but on the other hand they operate in only the leisure area of life” (Clarke and Jefferson, 2007). According to Clarke and Jefferson;

These styles, though deviant, remain ‘negotiated’ and not ‘oppositional’ because they operate in only one area of life: the leisure area. Since they are not oppositional in all areas of the social formation they cannot hope to transform it. Nevertheless we do feel that these styles offer a symbolic critique of the established order and, in so doing, represent a latent form of ‘non-ideological politics’ (ibid.: 208).

However, as it was stated in the first chapter and it is going to be stated in the following chapters in detail, aforesaid subculture of Apaches do not contain an original and creative production of style. Although the theorization of the negotiated structure of the subculture within the context of working class consciousness offers a framework in the analysis of the tendencies in Apache subculture, it is unable to provide a comprehensive explanation of it.

In that sense, the Subcultural theory of Cohen may be helpful to fill in the gaps in the analysis of Apache subculture. Considering subculture as a problem solving device is another approach in the subculture theories. Cohen’s (1955) Subculture theory, which had a major influence on many subcultural theories after him, focuses on the relations between working class male youth and delinquent subcultures. According to Cohen, subcultures are ‘problem solving’ devices for lower class male youth who are incapable of getting through status in a society arranged with middle-class ideals, due to their blocked opportunities. In such a situation, they replace middle class values with delinquent activities valued in their own group of

subculture. In those subcultural formations “culture is continually being created, re-created and modified” (ibid.: 65). As Cohen states;

One solution is for individuals who share such problems to gravitate towards one another and jointly to establish new norms, new criteria of status which define as meritorious the characteristics they do possess, the kinds of conduct of which they are capable. It is clearly necessary for each participant, if the innovation is to solve his status problem, that these new criteria be shared with others, that the solution be a group and not a private solution...Such new status criteria would represent new subcultural values different from or even antithetical to those of the larger social system (Cohen, 1955: 66).

According to Cohen, the real big problems cause feelings of frustration, guilt, anxiety and hopelessness. These feelings and inadequacy of the solutions are the results of ‘the frame of reference’ through the solutions are contemplated. A really satisfying solution needs some change in that frame of references. That change operates in that way;

The actor may give up pursuit of same goal which seems unattainable, but it is not a “solution” unless he can first persuade himself that the goal is, after all, not worth pursuing; in short, his values must change. He may resolve a problem of conflicting loyalties by persuading himself that the greater obligation attaches to one rather than the other, but this too involves a change in his frame of reference: a commitment to some standards for adjudicating the claims of different loyalties. ‘Failure’ can be transformed into something less humiliating by imputing to others fraud, malevolence or corruption, but this means adopting new perspectives for looking at others and oneself (Cohen, 1955: 54).

Although, Cohen’s theory on subcultures takes us closer to understand the fundamental dynamics of the Apache subculture, it should be indicated that his approach evoked many criticisms mainly from the CCCS. Main criticism of CCCS to that analysis is that it is “envisioning the individual youth’s class position as one rung on a single status ladder, leading inexorably to middle-class values and goals...underlying consensual view of society based on a belief in the American Dream of success” (Clarke et al., 1975: 28). As a result, even though the main problem of working class youth that Cohen indicates is seen problematic, his

designation of problem solving function of subcultures as a reason of their occurrence serves a proper base in the examining of Apache subculture.

As we return to the theoretical framework of CCCS, cultural realm as well as material resources is a terrain of class conflict and the symbolism of working class subcultures with their ability ‘to resist, to win and create cultural spaces, to negotiate and borrow spaces and gaps within the hegemony are significant dimensions in the struggle for cultural hegemony (Clarke et al.,1975; Clarke and Jefferson, 2007).

In that sense, According to Hebdige,

...the tension between dominant and subordinate groups can be found reflected in the surface of subculture-in the styles made up mundane objects which have a double meaning. On the one hand, they warn the ‘straight’ world in advance of a sinister presence of difference-and draw sown upon themselves vague suspicious, uneasy laughter, ‘white and dump ragesé. On the other hand, for those who erect them into icons, who use them as words or as curses, these objects become signs of forbidden identity, sources of value (2003: 3).

Therefore, Hebdige theorizes subcultures as “insubordination”, “at the same time... also a confirmation of the fact of powerlessness, a celebration of impotence both a play for attention and a refusal...” (2003: 35). In that approach, in the working class subcultures which tend to show the characteristics of a negotiated consciousness within their realm of practices as leisure time, the symbolic critique of the social order crystallizes in the style.

However, these theories above, discuss the subcultural formations in relation to their material conditions. As an attempt to achieve a comprehensive understanding of Apache subculture, a discussion on the material and cultural conditions in the given time frame it has emerged is needed.

## CHAPTER 3

### MOMENTS OF STIGMATIZATION IN TURKEY

“For a Marxian approach, cultural forms always emerge in specific historical situations, serving particular socio-economic interests and carrying out important social functions”(Kellner,2004). Based upon this quotation, in this chapter, beginning from the usage of the word “Apache” a short history of the labeling in Turkish popular culture with its connotations in socio-economical context will be examined. Throughout the path of the historical moments of the emergence of those labels, the material, political, social and cultural transformations in Turkish society till the emergence of Apaches subculture; and the cultural roots of that subculture and its stigmatization will tried to be understood.

“Denomination is designating the subject of a sentence. In other words, denomination is not to say something but to call the person which will be talked about or new information will be given about with familiar characteristics” (Gürbilek, 1992: 48). The answer of the question under what conditions such a youth subculture emerged in a certain period of time is directly related to the question why these young people are defined and labeled. It is a significant point to consider who these ‘outsiders’ as the labels state are, and under which material and cultural conditions they are defined and labeled as ‘outsiders’ in the society. I believe that the history would provide us the answer of these questions while looking into similar labels that have emerged and commonly used in a certain period of time. These moments in history would provide us the key points which shape the present, ongoing process of the emergence of Apaches as well as the tool to understand the *kinship* relation between *the labeling* ones and the *labeled* ones. Keeping this significant role of labeling in history in mind, it is possible to argue



that the social marginalization and the labeling towards those people still extent and the word apache, had took its place among and articulates in the pejorative words that are attributed to the working class in the Turkish popular culture. Therefore, in order to understand the similarities and differences between Apaches and previously labeled ‘outsiders’, the processes that make them outsiders became significant.

### **3.1 Tracking the Word “Apache”**

The word Apache with its wide range of usage in different spaces and times, directs us to a wide history of class encounters. As it is known, originally the word Apache is a well-known term for several groups of Native Americans in the United States. By the spread of the American Western movies and comic strips all around the world, the word Apache has started to represent a general image for the Native Americans. Pejorative transformation of the usage of the word Apache in USA, is stated in the *‘The Color of Words’* in this way;

“Because of the strong Apache resistance-under such Chiricahua Apache guerrilla leaders as Cochise, Geronimo, Mangas, Coloradas, Victorio, and Juh- to white encroachment on their territory in the nineteenth century, the Apache acquired a reputation for fierceness and relentlessness. This found expression in such pejorative phrases as wild Apache or savage as an Apache...The term has often been used to allude to the primitiveness of urban life and its street “warriors” and rowdies” (Herbst, 1997: 14).

Consequent to this process, the word apache began to be used in order to define the members of 'dangerous classes' in USA’s popular culture. For instance, we come across with a book named “The Apaches of New York” written by Henry Lewis in 1912, which tells the stories of the New York gangs and lower classes, “...this dozen of tales about men and women as ungoverned of impulse and as ferocious of nature as the Apaches from whom they have taken their sobriquet.” (*NewYork Times*, May 12, 1912).

It is indeed not a coincidence that the dominant ideology labels Apaches who have been known as one of the strongest warrior tribe of the Native Americans and been dispossessed, displaced and identified as dangerous, barbaric and savage by the settlers. It is also not a coincidence that in different geographies, in different times, different subordinate subjects have been labeled with similar attributions by the same dominant ideology.

The stories about American ‘Indians’ in comic strips, Western movies etc. spread the image of dangerous Apaches and conduce such kind of a pejorative usage of the word in other parts of the world. A similar usage of the word is observed in France at the beginnings of the 1900s. The word was translated into French as “*les Apaches*.”<sup>6</sup> In a local newspaper in Montreal district of Paris, the word was used in order to report a street fight as such; “*The fury of a riotous incident between two men and a woman rose the ferocity of savage Apache Indians in battle*” (Baxter, 2011: 227). After that time, the word *les Apaches* was widely used in order to describe the street gangs, sex workers, thieves and vagabonds in France at the beginnings of the 1900s. *Les Apaches* had a specific visual image composed of “striped jersey, tight jacket, and flat peaked cap, titled low over his eyes, a red wool sash served as a scarf in cold weather and doubled as a mask” (ibid.) In addition, *Les Apaches* of France created their own dance style which is called the “*apache dance*”. That was an aggressive dance based on imitating a fight with the similar figures of tango. In the same sources on *Les Apaches*, the evolution of the *apache dance* is stated like that;

“While “Slumming” became popular to the upper classes during this time, the upper classes enjoyed watching and even participating that dance by giving money to the *les Apaches*. Some of the ladies who danced the Apache had died during their performance of broken backs, necks etcetera, due to the inexperience by some attempting to cash in on its fame or make a name for themselves.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Meaning attributed to the word “*les Apaches*” is significant in order to understand the Turkish case.

<sup>7</sup> Apache Dance. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.streetswing.com/histmain/z3aposh.htm>

*Les Apaches* were also seen as a physical threat that they were mentioned in the books and articles written on defense techniques. Some street defense techniques were given in the book *La Defense Dans La Rue* with those words “I don't see why the use of them is left to the Apaches” (Renaud, 1912, 97).

### 3.2 Socio-Economic Transformation in 1930s in Turkey

The French word *Les Apaches* was translated into Turkish directly as “*apaş*”, as it is pronounced. Beside the information given in the Great Dictionary of Turkish Language Institution on the French origin of the word *apaş*, Cantek also states that the word *apaş* was translated into Turkish by the French speaking intellectuals in Turkey during that time (Cantek, 2008).<sup>8</sup> The lexical meaning of *apaş* is given as hobo (*hayta*) in the Great Turkish Dictionary with a similar connotation to *Les Apaches* and the example for the word *apaş* is given like that “hi-jack of a tram by *apaşs* in Paris.” In the same dictionary, the meaning of hobo also is given as; idle, rolling stone, *apaş*, and runagate. We encounter with the usage of the word *apaş* evoking *Les Apaches*, in the 1930s of Turkey, where the intellectual life was under the influence of France at that time. In Turkish etiquette (*adab-ı muaşeret*) books, the necessity to distinguish “*apaş dances*” from the “serious dances” and staying away from them was cautioned in that time (Sedat, 1932: 50, quoted in Ural, 2005: 260). The transfer of the French word *Les Apaches* as *apaş* to Turkish in that period was not a coincidence.

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<sup>8</sup> I have to state that; I came across the word *apaş* in some articles written in the 17th century Ottoman Empire. In only two sources, I was able to note the word. Thus, I do not have the proof on whether this word was used commonly or its usage was author’s personal choice. However, etymologically, the possibility that the word refers to Native Americans in 17<sup>th</sup> century Ottomans was near to none. The word *apaş* was used in these sources as such: “Orphans aged between 11 and 15 were accepted with an exam in a hamam’s boiler room called “*Apaş lodge*” by their superiors called “*destebasi*”. For this, a ceremony was held. After the food cooked with the stocks collected by the *kulhanbeyi* candidate was eaten in a ceremony, there was another ceremony called ‘brotherdoooh ceremony’, two (of the orphans) were donned as brothers, and ceremony was closed with prayers” (quoted by Demirtaş(2006:114) from Göktaş(1994: 164), translated by me.)

The 1930s were the beginning years of socio-economic transformation of the new Republic of Turkey. Economically, Boratav (2003: 70) states that, “the years between 1930 and 1939, should be noted as the beginning of first critical steps in the direction of industrialization in Turkey.” Although the amount of rural-urban immigration was not in large extent compared to the 1950s, a temporary migration from rural to urban in Turkey is observed in those years. Makal uses the term “villager-worker” for the subjects of the rural-urban migration in the 1930s and 1940s in Turkey. According to Makal (2002: 10), those laborers are the ones “after working in industrial sectors at certain intervals of the year for a temporary time and saving money, prefer to return to their villages.”

In that period of time, in addition to the political and economic transformation, Republican elites intensively endeavored for a cultural transformation depending on a life style determined by the newly stated rules of *adab-ı muaşeret*, which were shaped within an understanding of Westernization. Avcı (2001: 33) defines that period as a *social schizophrenia* which corresponds to a split in cultural life of Turkey. On the one side, the state which tries to form a national identity depend on exported cultural symbols from the West and on the other side ‘the other Turkey’ which at least tries to preserve its own cultural symbols which were forbidden in the newly formed cultural order.

In spatial terms, Ankara, the new capital of Turkish Republic, was also seen as the capital of that cultural transformation. However, spatially and culturally, as Mahir (2005: 18) states,

“The effort to build up a “New Ankara” remained limited in scope and it did not reach the lower classes in the old and traditional districts of the city...and the districts of internal immigration. “Âdâb-ı Muâşeret” in this context served in drawing boundaries between the ordinary people and the Republican elite. These two groups developed different life-styles and remained estranged. Therefore, etiquette not only cut the ties with the Ottoman traditions, but also isolated the elites from the people they sought to command.”

### 3.3 The Late 1940s and Class Encounters

In the late 1940s, next to the labels of *herif* and *külhanbeyi*, the word *apaş* was used in order to define 'impolite' and 'dangerous' men who were not aware of the etiquette in the city centers. As Cantek (2008: 246) conveys "An episode was published named as "From Paris *Apaşs* to İstanbul RapsCALLIONS" in the newspaper of Son Saat in 1948."

The usage of the word *apaş* and other labels was not a coincidence at that time, it also signals a new wave of class encounters in the big city of Istanbul, resulting from the changes in material conditions. As Makal (2001: 105) states, in the course of time, villager-worker type which depends on temporary occupation left its place to permanent worker immigration. That transformation process "politically, characterized by the end of the single-party period which continued since the beginning of the republic. Economically, starting from 1946, it was a new era that economically protective policies were replaced with the liberalization of importation, augment of foreign aids, external credits, and movements of foreign capital." As a result of this, migration of the dispossessed "rural people who aim temporary settlement and thence join in with urban profile to the industrial centers accompanied to the migration of seasonal agricultural workers." (İçduygu et.al, .n.d.: 208).

During the late 1940s, there were so many articles in the newspapers about "those new comers in the cities". As Cantek quotes from these articles, 'those new people' were defined as "quite different crowd who are encountered at every place... mess the wall bottoms and corners... make obscene propositions to women" (quoted from Atay in Cantek, 2008: 248). "If they are in trouble, they beg for money, they make portorage, they earn money for bread and chicken feed. They survive till that money run out; their tatters do not interest them as much as their hunger." (quoted from Atay in Cantek, 2008: 250). It is remarkable to notice the similarities and differences in the reproaches about the new comer workers of the 1940s with the Apaches of the present day. The comments in the newspapers on new comer

workers claiming that “They are everywhere and they approach women with an immoral attitude” are used almost exactly for the Apaches today. On the other hand, the expression on how the new comer workers do not care their clothing, style and appearance shows a structural difference from the Apaches in that, the comments mostly claim that the Apaches do not care their poverty as much as how they look, dress or appear.

According to those articles, the fundamental reason of the anxiety expressed by the media representatives seemed to be the pestering visibility of those outsiders in the public space. According to Cantek;

“In 1940s, rural people who migrated to cities were filling the boulevards and watching the glittering dynamism that they have never seen in their neighborhoods or cities they live. Attractive areas of the city were meeting with approval by ordinary people and wide masses were strolling the avenues and streets all day long. It can be understood from their articles full of complaints that they were uncomfortable with these masses” (ibid.: 23f).

At that time period, while the changing economic dimensions were leading to a rural-urban migration of workers to the big cities, especially Istanbul, the reflections of those class encounters were able to be observed in the newspapers of that time.

### **3.4 *Gecekondu* and Arabesque Culture in 1960s and 1970s**

In a similar vein, the industrialization in Turkey between the years 1945 and 1960s was a period, which “was characterized by massive rural-to-urban labour migration...and a consequent increase in the number of *gecekondu* dwellings in the big cities.” (Duyar-Kienast, 2005: 35). At the same time 1960s and 70s were the years when class conflicts and struggles were dominating the life in Turkey.

In the late 1960s, a music genre emerged named as *Arabesque*. It was identified with *gecekondu* people whose rural bounds were waning but also who were not able to integrate into the city life. In terms of its emergence, its musical formation and

changes in its narrative, the *arabesque* music in Turkey is a significant reference point to understand the case of Apaches.

Gürbilek (1992: 33) defines *Arabesque* as the music of the outsider, the strangers of the city and the people who came to the city and do not have an opportunity to return to their villages. She defines those outsiders as neither city-dwellers nor villagers. According to Gürbilek, *Arabesque* listeners did not listen to a music that belongs themselves. It was a music genre that is not only alien to them but also does not belong to others.

As Belge (1997: 350) argues, *Arabesque* music and culture was addressing a more general sensibility rather than a particular youth culture. Belge states that;

“As Timur Selçuk states, while Gencebay appeals to people migrate from Urfa to gecekondu of İstanbul, Tayfur was telling something to the person who is miserable enough to take his chance as a clandestine worker in Germany. His songs were full of a raw longing and jeremiad of the people who struggle in order to survive and do not have any traditional values to hold on.” (ibid.: 350f).<sup>9</sup>

Özbek (1991: 25) also defines arabesque music as the first mass cultural movement that processes bottom-up of Turkey as a public reaction of vast majority of people by consuming musical products instead of voting. According to her, *Arabesque* was both a response to the modernization process of 1960s and a cultural formation that form that modernization process.

As Markoff (1994: 225) attributes, the reason of the success of Arabesque music from the late 1960s to the late 1970s is “its lyrics with their themes of alienation, separation, unrequited love, and resignation to fate which appeal to acculturating urban migrants. For these estranged individuals, overcome by a sense of fatalism because of their inability to control their own destinies, the world of the songs

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<sup>9</sup> Gencebay and Tayfur are popular Arabesque singers in Turkey.

echoed the experience of exile (*gurbet*) an alienation/adaptation, instead of invoking home.”

Starting from the late 1960s and 1970s, Turkey witnessed class struggles with strikes, boycotts, custodies and worker-police conflicts parallel to the other parts of the world. The cultural atmosphere of Turkey in the 1970s is defined by Gürbilek (1992: 22) as a polarized structure. She defines the 1970s of Turkey as; on the one hand, class struggles; on the other hand a show business depending on women sexuality. Although it does not promise a direct political action, *Arabesque* music was well-articulated in relation to the political atmosphere of the era. Especially, the songs of the most popular Arabesque artist of that time Orhan Gencebay such as; “*Shall This World Fall Apart*” in 1975 and “*Our Misery Will End*” on an orchestration reminding revolutionary anthems in 1978, exemplifies that articulation.

### **3.5 Neo-Liberal Transformation in the 1980s and Its Reflection to the Arabesque Culture**

During the 1980s, while the 1980 military coup d'état was depoliticizing the society with its oppressive and brutal implementations, neo-liberal financial policies and escalatory consumption culture was shaping the meaning world of the people. Class divisions became more visible, under the transparent layer of consumerism that covers the society. At that time, the importance that was attached to money, the effort to strike it rich (*köşeyi dönmek*), the effort to access the social mobility; on the one hand was compatible with the neoliberal wind that is globally followed, on the other hand signaled a social breaking point (Lüküslü, 2009: 125).

In the 1980s, next to the material and cultural transformation of Turkey, spatial changes were also in effect and the class differences became visible in terms of space as well as the usage of the public spaces. As Gürbilek (1992: 67) argues, the places that brought people from different classes together disappeared. Ever after,



not only the neighborhoods but also the shopping centers, entertainment venues and working circles of rich and poor were divided.

At that time, Turgut Özal's party ANAP (Motherland Party) utilized the opportunity of the voting potential of the consumers of *Arabesque* culture and articulated that culture into its political discourse through a manner of 'spectacle'. Accordingly, in the 1980s, *Arabesque* music and discourse was also going through a transformation. Discursively, it was engaging to the neoliberal spirit of the time. As Belge (1997: 350) states, "The most emphasized characteristic of *Kibariye* was that she started from scratch and she is uneducated. The legend of İbrahim Tatlıses was his construction worker background. It made a perfect sense to the "strike it rich" tendency of the time"<sup>10</sup>. In this period, in Arabesque music, İbrahim Tatlıses, whose most popular song of time was "I Want It, Too", emerged and became extensively popular in place of Orhan Gencebay, who said "Shall This World Fall Apart". Özbek (2008: 102) explains that transformation as such;

"The arabesque after 1970 - especially between 1983-1987-...lost its character of a contradictory totality and transformed into a base of contrast that anguished words are placed on the lilt rhythm. The point that Murat Belge states as affectation should be [about] this."

Özbek explains the change in the structure of the Arabesque songs and the Arabesque culture and the loss of emotional-resistance in Arabesque songs with the reflection of material and cultural changes in the society to the 'worlds of meaning' of the people. According to Özbek (2008: 69):

"If radical potential that emotional-resistant response of Orhan Gencebay's arabesque to the Turkish modernization carries transformed into (...) an emotional-pragmatic response in arabesque after 1983, this is closely related with the economic, political and ideological transformation started in the late 1970s (...) when the "emotionality" that lost its criticism became succumbed to everyone who stop its cry, it identify with a pragmatism that content with the possibility of "feather

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<sup>10</sup> Kibariye and Tatlıses are the names of famous arabesque singers in Turkey.

one's nest easily" as a matter of the necessity of being hopeful for the future and survive."

At the same time, in the 1980s, Arabesque became not only the name of a music culture stranger to the cities but also the name of illiberalness in the society (Gürbilek, 1992: 69). In that manner, it may be said that, Arabesque music was articulated to the following pejorative labels following the 1980s.

### **3.6 The 1990s and the "New" Dimensions of Stigmatization**

People who became visible were mostly defined under different labels and thus, stigmatized as *kıro*, *maganda*, *zonta*, *amele*, *black Turks* etc. in Turkish popular history, especially in the following years. Those labels comprise similar meanings defining new comers to the metropolitan cities who are seen as uncivilized, rustic, 'Eastern' people-especially men. The word "*amele*" which means 'worker' in Turkish language and generally used for the construction workers is the most direct label among them, which indicates a class position.

After the late 1980s, especially during the 1990s, *kıro* was dominantly used as a pejorative word in order to define lower class people migrated from rural parts of Anatolia to big cities. The word includes the meaning of uneducated, uncivilized, Eastern, rustic etc. Apart from its pejorative meaning, *kıro* literally means "boy" in Kurdish language. The wide usage of the word in 1990s again can be understood within its historical and socio-economic context. Since 1984, armed conflagrations have been happening between *PKK (Kurdish Workers Party)* and Turkish military in Eastern and South Eastern regions of Turkey. After that time, the Turkish government forced up to 3 million 'dissidents' to migrate to the cities. As a result, an intense Kurdish migration occurred from Southeastern rural to Western cities of Turkey in the late 1980s and 1990s. As Keyder (2005: 131) states that,

"The migrants of the last decade, who arrived in a city with diminished opportunities, are different from the previous waves: Kurds from Eastern and Southeastern provinces re-dominate in the 1990s'

migration. This particular change in the regional distribution of the places of emigration since the second half of the 1980s is accompanied by a parallel change in the motives behind the decision to emigrate.”

In such kind of an atmosphere, “Forced migration left all of those people to the mercy of the market forces in the cities they migrated: they were obliged to work for cash income and fulfill their basic needs (food, housing) in market economy” (Yükseker, 2005: 41). The forced-migrant Kurdish population in the cities has immediately become part of the proletariat in the cities which signifies a really important effect in the process of neoliberal transformation in Turkey by providing the necessary workforce in this transformation. As Yörük (2009) states, “Kurdish people who were sent to the cities by forced migration, increased the amount of incapable of bargaining power, ready to work in every job, dispossessed laborer supply, that flexible capital accumulation needs.”

Such kind of ethnic labor immigration has been shaping the class encounters in the big cities since that period of time. In his study on middle-class perception on Kurdish migrants in İzmir, the third biggest city of Turkey, Saraçoğlu (2010: 248) states that “Kurdish migrants who have worked in informal sectors from the early 1990s onward, still are characterized as benefit scroungers’...and the ones who ‘disrupt urban life in the big city.’”

Moreover, the 1990s were the years that still carry the heavy burden of the 1980s’ coup d’etat and neoliberal transformation, besides accumulating the experience of permanent violence in the social memory. Gürbilek (1992: 46f) explains the cultural climate of the late 1990s as such;

“These are the days that misery is perceived as nothing to empathize but to be scared of; poverty is seen not as a scene of a merciless fate but palpable personal inaptitude. Because of that popular imagery of today which source its fundamental materials not from the harrowing stories but from the third page news that direct the whole of the big newspapers and from the “reality shows” that dominate the newscasts. Because, those are talking about the moment that suffering poor transume into a

dangerous mass and victimhood transforms to rancor and pain turns into crime.”

In such a material and cultural atmosphere, people living in *gecekondu*s were seen as the “invaders of the cities”, just like the Apache image of the comic strips of the USA, and Apaches of recent Turkey. At the time of increasing anxiety about the working classes of the cities, a new label emerged for the *gecekondu* dwellers; *varoş*.

“Especially after the second half of the 1990s the word *varoş*, began to be used synonymously with *gecekondu* in a stigmatizing way that reflects this transformation (...). As a consequence of this renaming process, *varoşlu*<sup>11</sup> became used in defining the people who are from low income neighborhoods, totally marginal to city life, and carrying a great potential to become involved in illegal and violent incidents.” (Erman,2007.: 96).

While Demirtaş and Şen (2007) relate the rise of the label of *varoş* and *varoşlu* and their articulation of the invasion of the city to the increasing visibility of the *gecekondu* children in the city centers, Etöz (2000) sees this stigmatization as a result of the politization of *gecekondu* districts and how they are seen as a political threat. Two main events were given as a fundamental turning point of that stigmatization: first one is *Gazi* neighborhood events occurred on 12 May 1995 and 1 May 1996 demonstrations. Demirtaş and Şen (2007: 97), narrate those two days and their representation in the mass media like that;

“The new label *varoş*, is used in reports on the *Gazi* affair to point out that the ‘have nots’ of the periphery may threaten the country in the near future. However, the term *varoş*, would be used in a more pejorative and denigratory sense in defining ‘the people living in the *varoş*’ a year later on 1 May 1996, when International Labour Day turned into a series of violent events in Istanbul’s city center. On 1 May 1996 thousands of workers from *gecekondu* neighborhoods alongside with many leftist organizations and militants from some illegal organizations initiated a march to Kadıköy, a prominent middle class district in Istanbul, in order to celebrate Workers’ Day.”

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<sup>11</sup> person living in *gecekondu*.

In concert with these historical events which developed under the material conditions of the era, it is possible to observe the emergence of the processes of the labeling as a result of the anger and fear towards a class.

Moreover, the pejorative words *maganda* and *zonta* were created in the humor magazines and have been adopted in popular culture since the 1990s and used with a similar meaning with *kıro*. All those labels have been used in order to define a grotesquely drawn man image. Yumul (2000: 44) defines that image in these words:

“[...] portly, hairy, inevitably moustached, leave first three-four shirt buttons unbuttoned, spit on street floors and make pass at to women with his bad Turkish. The ones who have a little money probably wear a medallion on their chest, rings on their fingers and wristlet.”

Öncü (1999: 113) explains that period in the 1990s as entrance of sexuality in the realm of visibility, became recognizable in the realm of public objectivity and hence open to renegotiation. According to her, “The *maganda* typification is thus the product of a new generation of youth culture in the process of discovering, through the gaze, the aesthetics of practice and the cultural codes of permissiveness.”

Şimşek (2005: 91) claims that a transformed gaze relation is the core breaking point for the 1990s in Turkey. According to him, “little people” of the previous decades (the 1970s and 1980s) who were looking or made look at the world, especially at the products of popular culture, became the ones who are looked at with an extra exclusionary gaze during the 1990s. It was a period that common people were transformed from being the subjects of the gazes and humor to being the objects of them. He further defines the new owners of the judging social gaze as the new middle class youth who were also the children of those little men (Şimşek, 2005: 91). However, it is known that, in that time period, columnists of the best-selling newspapers that were known as representatives of upper-classes wrote vigorous articles on those issues by directly using those labels within the codes they express.

In the late 1990s and 2000s a “new” discussion started in Turkish popular culture which articulates to the discussions and labels above. At that time, not only the anti-thesis of the modern and civilized body was labeled but also it was compared with an ideal, civilized figure. That discussion depends on the division between “White-Turks” or “Euro-Turks” and “Black Turks”. The label of *Black Turks* which also includes a racial connotation shows that the division and fragmentation between lower and upper classes were reached even to a racial division which depends on the characteristics that can be gained or lost inborn.

Mine Kırıkkanat, a columnist who is the best-known representative writer of the elitist views, wrote following sentences for the subjects of those labels in 1997:

“Yes, my racism is completely awakening in İstanbul. I want to sit on the control device of a huge scoop and exile some inhabitants out of the city. However, recently this idea of huge exile is replaced with a more modest madness. Because during this time, that population has extremely increased. It has become impossible to cope with it. So now, I am dreaming of rescuing one neighborhood. For example, Beyoğlu and its surroundings. I wish it has been given to us, I wish to surround it with new İstanbul city walls and definitely not to take some inhabitants in...Also friends, dispersed all around and crouched down to tiny corners for not to coincide with those inhabitants would come too. How nice, how happy we shall be together. My racism is not based on religion, colour or class. I differentiate good people as polite and bad people as rude. There is no other definition for politeness. However there are many for rudeness...there are a lot of maganda, zonta, angut, animals, sewers, and lumbers...It is clear that some inhabitants in İstanbul do not care about anybody except themselves. Thus they do not thank to and apologise from anybody. Because they are blind... I want to send this inattentive race from Beyoğlu and its surroundings...I am very racist for two days that I spent in İstanbul. As well as people coming in spite of the inscription ‘city dwellers only’, I also want to chuck out those who left this city doorless.” (Kırıkkanat, 1997, quoted in Sumer, 2003: 60)

Although Kırıkkanat states that her racism is independent from color or class, the relation of class encounters with her perception on the issue can be observed in the following article;

...I also get angry when I watch people who had seized the state area and fuck up to our, your drinking water with their sewerage system, struggling desperately on the floor when their illegal electric wires were cut. It is not our duty to clean their dirt, to pay the electricity of the televole program they are watching, to feed their children, which they made for 'government to look after them' and left to the streets. But this state forced them to migrate. And this democracy gave them the right to vote, to choose the politician of the cities where they settled without permission and the areas they had seized. They chose these politicians and they protected them and we the citizens who are respectful to the laws were defeated. They are the products of this democracy, this democracy is theirs. Unfortunately, we share the bitter end (Kırıkkanat, 1997, quoted in Sumer, 2003: 48f).

The ones that Kırıkkanat accused of polluting the water and using illegal electricity are gecekondu-dwellers, namely varoş. The people who were labeled as *kıro*, *maganda*, *zonta*, *amele*, *varoş* were the subjects of the hatred of the media elites which melted them in the same pot through a class position. Etöz (2000: 50) explains that perception in that manner;

“When the articles of media intelligentsia who are fellows and representatives of a consumption aesthete in regard to a shared life style and values are examined...“the outsiders” are defined as the ones who are not able to consume and share the consumption aesthetics.”

She defines that incapability of consumption not only in terms of the consumption of commodities but also consumption of a language, an ethnic origin, a culture, a set of values, namely a life style (Ibid).

Another point uttered by the media elites throughout this process of labeling of the lower classes was the invasion and occupation of the cities by these people. As it was also stated in the article of Kırıkkanat, at that time, the columnists were announcing their tendency to run away from the city centers to the suburbs just like the other 'native and original owners of the city'. These statements expressed by the upper-class members of the city are significant as these statements was going to be put in practice in the following years and carry the class encounters in the city to an utterly different spatial extent.

### 3.7 Precarisation of Labor and Urban Transformation in the 2000s

In 2002, Islamist party AKP became the ruling party that declared its political perception as conservative democrat with a great support from both center-right liberal voters and *gecekondu* districts, which were protected by the governments they choose according to Kırıkkanat. In spite of the emphasis of the party leaders on urban poverty and the party discourse embracing the people living in the peripheries of the cities, they continue to carry neoliberal market-base policies that also include regulations providing flexibility of workplace (Coşar&Özman, 2004: 63) and precarization of the labor market and opening of *gecekondu* districts to private capitalist interests within the urban transformation projects. In the conservative neo-liberal atmosphere of 2000s, Islamist bourgeoisie rapidly grew and consumer culture also rapidly dominated the society. Even, Islamist discourse that had been changing its motto of “just enough to keep body and soul together”(*bir lokma bir hurka*) to “why don’t we as believers also utilize the possessions of the world?” (Navaro-Yaşın, 2002: 249) since 1990s, have been engaging into the consumer culture during the last decade rapidly.

The reproach about the invasion of the city centers by the uncivilized lower classes and the necessity of moving to the suburbs of the cities that was expressed by the media elites intensively practiced by the upper classes during 1990s. Gated communities were built in suburban parts of the big cities. In 2000s, those sites were started to be built in old *gecekondu* neighborhoods behind tall walls and with security cameras. However, those precautions were not enough in order to prevent class encounters so an urban transformation was needed. Late 2000s and 2010s are the years of rapid urban transformation in Turkey that depend on displacement of the *gecekondu* people to farther parts of the cities. Those upper class suburbs of the cities now have their own centers with shopping malls, cafes, pubs and stores as a continuation of the regulations of public space that prevent the encounter of different classes started in the 1980s as Gürbilek stated. During the 2010s, the discontent of class encounters expressed in the articles moved from the public space



to private spaces; from the people encountered in the streets to the house cleaners, nannies working in their houses. Erdoğan (2000) points out the attention of the media intellectuals on their relation with the people working in their houses.

According to Erdoğan (2000), for 'lower' classes, one of the legitimate ways of entering into the walled, secured, luxurious building complexes is working there as live-in or daily houseworkers. In that sense, private spaces of the upper classes are not able to be exclusion areas of class encounters.

That change, also in itself shows the class-based nature of discontent about the outsiders expressed under the notions of civilization, taste, and life style. This is the main reason that in recent years there is not as much reproaches about the outsiders in the newspapers as the 1990s.<sup>12</sup> In such an atmosphere, it is not surprising that there are not articles of media intellectuals on newspapers in the 2010s directly about Apaches that include resentment, judgments, hatred towards the new generation of invaders of the city centers. Moreover, in the 2010s, the direct stigmatization of Apaches is operated not by the upper class media representatives who do not have to encounter with them but the middle class youths who share not only streets but also the social media with Apaches. It is for sure that we cannot be certain about the class positions of the members by only looking at their nicknames used in the social media. However, there are two reasons for this statement: First, the media elites who revealed their run-away-from-city-centers plan in the 90s and put this plan in practice in the 2000s thus did not have to face the Apaches in their everyday life do not produce comments about the Apaches. Second reason is embedded in the messages itself. As I will mention in the following chapters, the Apaches do not leave their lower class neighborhoods to go to higher class city centers with public spaces such as cafes, restaurant or high end shops or to the high class suburbs where public transportation is scarce but to the middle class centers of

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<sup>12</sup> Here, next to the prevention of the class encounters in private and public spaces, the effect of the raise of Islamic bourgeoisie which turned the relation constructed between İslam and lower classes upside down by the election of Islamic party AKP of which chairman also emphasizes that he was also one of dwellers of a gecekondu neighborhood Kasımpaşa in his childhood should be examined.

the city where they can spend their day without spending money. In the case of Ankara, this center is Kızılay. Thus, it is understood that the narratives of “these centers are invaded” or “we can no longer go there” in the social media are produced by the middle class subjects who used to go to the middle class city centers.

The 2000s is the era in which the financial capital has changed hands, Islamic bourgeoisie has risen, and the ideology of the power mechanisms has been produced and reproduced by the conservative media representatives. Although *varoş* perception towards *gecekondu* districts that consists of violence and criminality is not so obviously articulated, the continuity of it can be observed in the discourse that supports urban transformation projects in this era, too. In the article of one of the conservative Islamist newspapers known as a supporter of the ruling party, *Zaman*, the urban transformation stated in those words in 2008;

In big cities, while the public housing projects that are constructed through urban transformation projects end irregular urbanization, they also destroy the spaces that provide shelter for criminal and terrorist organizations [...] TOKİ [Mass Housing Administration] and the municipalities realize numerous projects of mass housing in order to bring about a regular city look and to meet the demand for housing. (Zaman, 2008, quoted in Candan&Kolluoğlu, 2008: 18).

Here, it can be clearly observed that, although the subjects of ruling class have changed, the social codes attributed to the lower classes and labeling processes carry on their existence. It can also be observed in that period of time that the adjectives of dangerous and criminal that are attributed to the working classes are used by the dominant ideology instrumentally in order to legitimize social, economic and political regulations.

Besides urban transformation, the most striking economic regulations among the neoliberal politics which took a strike during the 2000s were in the realm of working conditions. In that period of time, a rapid precarization of work become dominant in the material life of Turkey. The regulations in labor law

after the economic crisis of 2001 can be observed as an abstraction of that transformation.

As Kutlu (2012) states, the financial crises, occurred periodically in 1994, 1998-1999, 2001 and 2008 in Turkey, concluded with the extension of flexibility regulations, and flexible working conditions became general, systemized and became a united set of relations rather than exceptions. “Flexibility, had radicated as a manner of reaction, an act, besides them as an ideology and idea of capitalists to the society and the labor market, after the bends of economic crisis (ibid, 69). When the crisis periods that spread in the recent 20 years of Turkish economy and the relation between structure and the institutions of the labor market are examined, it is observed that every crisis period is responded with flexibility and precarization. “The employer in Turkey in this present decade has much in common with the employers of flexible workplaces dominant all over the world.” (Özdemir & Yucesan-Özdemir, 2006: 312). As Özuğurlu (2012: 160) states “...precarisation of labour means that life as a whole became deprived of security.” And the 2000s have become the period that this precarization spread to large populations and to their lives quickly.

Various worker organizations and oppositions against legal regulations that intend the precarization of labour were seen in the 2000s. In 2009, demonstrations had been held against the legal regulation 50/d which abolishes the job securities of university research assistants, and Tekel workers started a resistance against legal regulations that intend to cut the one third of the worker wages and making them work for 10 months with contracts without any renewal guarantees and with 2 months of unpaid leave. During the Tekel resistance, workers from other sectors that were subjected to precarization came to Ankara and made themselves heard.

Tekel workers from 21 different cities of Turkey, who are a part of the mostly liquidated traditional production industry labour, syndicated against precarization that was materialized with the 4/c law and they held a demonstration in capital

Ankara. But then the demonstration went beyond the union will and turned into a 78-day long resistance in which the workers stayed in tents from December 15<sup>th</sup> 2009 to March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2010. This movement showed the signs of the indolence of the traditional production industry workers, their tendency to make decisions after long debates, their dependence on organizational hierarchy and their disciplined nature. But the fact that each worker was acting as both the spokesman and the activist of this resistance, which was started by the dynamism of the unionization, and therefore deciding very fast according to the base initiative, made it possible to observe the new aspects inside the traditionalism in this resistance (Özüğurlu, 2011: 181).

In order to understand the situation of labor market and the neoliberal regulations and perceptions of the time, the declarations in the website named “invest in Turkey” built in 2012 by the Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry Investment Support and Promotion Agency constituted in 2006 would be summarized. In that government website, third item of the ten reasons to invest in Turkey was named as “*Qualified and Competitive Labor Force*”. The qualities of that labor force are itemized in those words;

Over 26 million young, well-educated and motivated professionals; increasing labor productivity; the longest working hours, and the lowest sick day leaves per employee in Europe with 52.9 hours worked per week and annual average of 4.6 sick days per employee; Approximately 500,000 students graduate annually from over 170 universities; more than 700,000 high school graduates with around half from vocational and technical high schools.<sup>13</sup>

Those young people, both the labeled and the labeling, in recent days are the ones who grew into those political, economic, and cultural conditions transformed rapidly in the 2000s. When the profiles of both parties are examined, while labeled apache youth are the members of 700,000 graduates of vocational and technical high schools, labeling youth also take their places in the statistics given above in 500,000

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<sup>13</sup> Retrieved from <http://www.invest.gov.tr/en-US/investmentguide/Pages/10Reasons.aspx>

university graduates as a part of precarious young labor force and the reserve army of unemployed.

### 3.8 Stigmatization of Apaches in Social Media

In the second half of the 2010s, after the emergence of “apache” subculture in Turkey, the word apache started to be widely used in Turkish popular culture and articulated to the labels mentioned above. In the social media, a visual image; such as a photo or video is being shared by the Apaches were collected and commented by the people who have an access to those images. The main purpose is to ridicule the ones who are viewed by the others and make fun of them. Photos uploaded by Apaches to the social network sites especially Facebook has a significant effect on the labeling process. Their photos were collected in a Facebook group named as “*Everyday a new Apache*” and users commented under those photos. After that lots of groups and websites were constructed under the same name. Not only the photos but also their dance videos uploaded in YouTube had a wide range of similar comments. Also a popular website *ekşisözlük*, which is a social dictionary whose content is created by its users<sup>14</sup>, has hundreds of comments about Apaches. In both social media sites comments, Apaches are defined as dirty and poor *varoş* people who invade city centers and try to imitate a life style, which does not belong to them. In social media Apaches are defined in those sentences;

Apaches are living creatures who are born in the districts that we call them *varoş* but hang out in the places where civilization is in its highest level (*Everyday a new apache, 2011*).

The last adjective [attributed to them], the ones who are created by God unnecessarily and waste of oxygen. Before, we called them *kıro*, *maganda*, ox, bear, now we tend to more lumpen words, we call them apache (*iskocyali papaz, ekşi sözlük, 2011*).

New versions of *kıros* evaluated and are adapted unisex to the present conditions. Scary and weird creation. now, they listen to not only

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<sup>14</sup> For a similar example from the US would be [www.urbandictionary.com](http://www.urbandictionary.com)

arabesque music, but weird hip&hop and r&b songs... (ekimkedisi, ekşi sözlük, 2009).

The significant point is that labeling process started not in the mass media but in the social media created by ‘common people’. Synonymity of the comments with the previous labels can also be clearly observed. Those show that a wider social segment internalized the cultural boundaries that had been expressed by the upper classes throughout the republic history.

### **3.8.1 What is Funny in Apache Photos: The Contradiction Between Body and Space**

In the social media, it can be observed that apache photos and dancing videos are being used for a kind of cynical entertainment that depends on ridiculing the ones in those images. Therefore, the first question is what is found funny in those images. Fundamentally, at the first sight the main criticism in the comments can be seen as making fun of their exaggerated and eccentric visual images and dances. However, when the comments are analyzed, main emphasis on a class position hidden behind the cultural boundaries can be observed.

The sharpest criticism on Apaches is about their visual images that are not proper to a lower class outlook and does not match with their socio-economic position. The most discussed issue about Apaches is their clothes which are the imitations of well-known brands. Main theme is about their 'pretensions'. According to the comments, they are the ones who behave, masquerade, and act impersonating or feigning. The ones who were accused of not acting proper to a life style in the previous years are now accused of trying to imitate that the life style which does not belong to their classes. In addition, the emphasis on imitation clothes as an amusement objects states the amount of engagement of consumer culture. Criticisms that reach to an alarming degree of hatred on Apaches are not only about their visual appearances that are found unaesthetic but also they indicate to a class division that also includes those aesthetic tastes.

We had discussed the process of division of the public and private spaces of different classes in time in Turkish society. However, social media gives the opportunity to unite those spaces in a virtual manner. In most of the photos of Apaches, the effect of that reunion can be observed. The contradiction between the poser and his/her living space seen as background image forms the most significant part of the amusements. It is a well-known photo pose that a young person taking her/his own photo especially in front of a mirror and spread that image through the internet. In this kind of photos, the main characteristic of the photo takers is the sense of self-confidence to their own visual images. Apaches too are not free from this kind of an attitude. However, the difference in apache case is that the ones, who want to attract the people by throwing a glance in the camera behind their sunglasses or showing their muscles in front of a mirror, are standing in a space of a slum house. The background image of those houses shows itself by its small rooms, which are full of old, and old-fashioned furniture. In those images, the contradiction between the home of the poor and the body of the poor become concrete.

It is also important to note here that self-representation of Apaches is also significant as a way of observing a departure from class habits. The ‘bodily’ spectacles of Apaches in their private spaces in social media, reflects a contradictory to ordinary state of representation of subordinate classes. In his article on ‘house of the poor’ on the results of the study of *Yoksulluk Halleri* that depends on numerous in-depth interviews with people in subordinate positions, Ocak (2002) states that there is no such relation between subordinate and upper classes that require upper class people enter into or think about the inside of the houses of poor. Therefore, the conditions inside the house remain unknown. Also, the conditions of the house, the lack of furniture and clothes became an embarrassment and dishonor for the poor that needs to be concealed.

According to the narration of Ocak, we encounter with the ones who do not want to enter into the private sphere of the poor and the ones who do not want to show their

poverty that crystallize in their private sphere. However, in the case of Apaches, an increase in the data about private spheres and lives of the people of every segment of society by the help of social media can be observed and also the house of the poor is not free from this relationship. Under these conditions, the representation of Apaches in their own photos taken in their private sphere of their houses shows that the poverty that crystalize in the house and the poverty excluded from the body are represented at the same time. This kind of a dual representation gives the clues of their lack of engagement with their house, family, neighborhood and class position. According to the comments of those photos in social media; the ones who are renewing their bodies with clothes, jewelries, and hairstyles seem to be unaware of their real socio-economic conditions.

### **3.8.2 Invasion of the City Centers**

However, there are high amount of photos, which are taken outside of their house or neighborhood. The photos are taken either in front of an expensive car, a shopping center in the city center or in front of a scene etc. Sometimes, Apaches place themselves in front of those places by the help of Photoshop. Same critiques on the contradiction between the space and subject are done for those kinds of photos as well. However, the objects of the criticism are not only the photos of Apaches in the internet but also *in propria persona* their visual image in everyday life of the city centers.

Moreover, as it was stated before, there are several videos of dancing Apaches on the footbridges and streets in the city centers uploaded on Youtube. Some of them are also the ones that are uploaded by interviewees of this study on the footbridges and parks of Kızılay. Comments under those videos unite under the perception of an 'invasion'. "Varoş people or kiros invade Kızılay now we cannot go there" is the most stated sentence among those comments. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Kızılay is the middle class city center of Ankara. Besides Kızılay, in Ankara there are higher class suburban neighborhoods away from the city to which public transportation is rare and which has created its own city/neighborhood centers as



well as higher class centers whose spatial usage is almost limited to the cafes, pubs, restaurants and stores such as Tunalı and Bahçeli. However, the city center mentioned in relation to an invasion is Kızılay. Thus, it is possible to reach a result that the people who complains about this invasion are middle class people who regularly spend time in Kızılay. In her research, İlkay (2009: 18) also mentions that the citizens in higher income groups (especially the ones with an income more than 5000 TL) living in the southern west of Ankara, do not prefer to go Kızılay Square; they may go once, twice or three times in a year.

Furthermore, the synonymity of the statements with the labeling process declared by the media elites in 1990s with nearly the same words, both indicates the relationship of Apaches with the previously labeled ones through a class position and also, reflects the transformation of class encounters and expansion of class based hatred in the society.

When, the comments under those dance videos are examined, next to the invasion of the city center Kızılay, an emphasis on class position of the Apaches can be observed just like the comments on photos uploaded in Facebook:

“-Poor bastards deal with this kind of staff.”(wiwander)

-@wiwander son of a bitch is it shameful to be poor, inglorious what are rich bastards doing are they dancing with their poops, talk like a man everybody has an honor and pride, the ones like you even don't have a pride inglorious (Kosavalisamed)

-@Kosavalisamed fuck your pride with your mom, your mouth smells, poor bastard keep back :D (wiwander)

Just like in this short dialogue, emphasis on their poorness is widely used as a way of humiliation and entertainment. As Erdoğan (2012) states the comments about Apaches in social media is an effort to put the ones who are acting contrary to expected and using not the same signs but the same codes with others, in their place.

### **3.9 Stigmatization of Apaches in Mass Media**

By the increasing visibility of the youths who are called apache in the streets and the increasing attention in social media to them, those young people are appeared in the television news in Turkey, during the 2010s. Nearly, in all of the television programs the question of “who are those Apaches?” was ‘amusingly’ asked by the reporters and dancing Apaches in the streets used as background videos of those news.

“Dear audiences, in the recent days, there is a dance rapidly spreading especially on the internet; apache dance. Even though it is not so related with its name, it draws intense attention in streets, discos and especially in the cyber world. Well then, what is the logic of apache dance and how did it emerge?” ...It is so hard to find someone who says him/herself apache because when the word apache is mentioned a sarcastic smile appears on the citizens’ face. However, just like its close friend music, this dance is universal, namely it does not differentiate class, does not differentiate caste; it can be skillfully performed by everyone” (atv haber, *translated by me*)

The news reports which discussed the issue as an amusement object did not contain a final definition about Apaches. Their contents were about their visual images and dance styles. Same attitude was observed in the entertainment programs, popular comedy soap operas and even advertisements. Apache dance and visual image of Apaches were used as a comedy element on TV during the 2010s.

#### **3.9.1 From ‘Harmless Buffoons’ to Dangerous Members of Working Class**

As Hebdige (1979: 2) states, subjects of the subcultures of subordinate groups “are treated at different times as threats to public order or/and as harmless buffoons.” For the first time in mass media, Apaches were defined directly on the 2th of January in 2011. The newspaper Hürriyet which has the third highest circulation in Turkey, captioned a headline in the first page of the newspaper about the molestation events in the New Year celebration of 2011. The headline of the news was “33 Apaches are Under Surveillance”. According to the headline, the Apaches were defined directly as the performers of the molestation. The word apache was used as the equivalent of

the word molester in the report. It is the first time that the Apaches are defined as the molesters in the mass media. The rest of the news goes on like that:

“The citizens who preferred to celebrate the New Year in Nişantaşı [upperclass district of İstanbul] because of the molestation acts in previous celebrations in Taksim [middleclass city center of İstanbul], confronted with the Apaches who have not desisted from molestation for years. The ones who wanted to have fun under the artificial snow, reacted against the “Apaches” who created uproar.” (Hürriyet, 02.01.2011, *translated by me*)

The content of the news report was constructed on the dichotomy of citizens vs. Apaches. It is a well-known attitude in Turkish media that the reports on the ‘misbehavior’ of a group of people, the word ‘citizen’ is used to describe the aggrieved party. In the language of the news’ the ‘citizen’ is the party that is defended by the report. Apacheness was constructed as an absolute otherness in the report.

There were two points in the news report that explain the articulation of the word apache to the previously mentioned labels. The first one was that as it was obviously examined in the photograph taken during the internment, none of the internees had a specific visual style and image that is related with the Apaches. Another point in the news report is the sentences that “...“Apaches” who have not desisted from molestation for years”. As it is known that, the word apache had been popular approximately for one year in Turkey. As it is observed in the report, the definition of apache was articulated to a wider and general stigmatization occurred in previous years, such as; *apaş, kiro, maganda, zonta* etc.

The report continued by the comparison of the attitude of the police departments of Nişantaşı and Taksim, and cited the precautions of the Taksim police. The report ends with those sentences:

“In order not to have problems in New Year celebrations, thinner-addicts in Beyoğlu were taken to the Taksim Police Station. To the

thinner-addicts, who were remanded in the police station all night long, cakes were cut and fruit juice was served.”

As the progress in the report is taken into consideration, it is observed that Apaches associated not only with the molesters but also with the thinner-addicts who are the children living in the streets and a well-known part of social panic emerged in the 1990s towards lower classes.

On the following day, another newspaper, HaberTürk, wrote about the 13 arrested molesters. Although, the word apache was not used in the news, it is also articulated to the previous report of Hürriyet. HaberTürk approached the event from a more spectacular angle and the news was reported in those sentences;

“HaberTürk built up the socio-economic profile of the molesters. According to this, the great amount of the suspects who are accused of molestation, have low level of education or are workers or unemployed...The most of the women who are the victims of the molestation, are college graduates and have a good job.” (HaberTürk, 03.01.2011, *translated by me*)

Emphasis of the report on the socio-economic profile of the molesters attributes an unacceptable act such as molestation as a character of a working class position and Apaches were articulated to a class position that is related with the dangerousness throughout the labeling history of Turkey.

After that, the usage of the word and visual image of the Apaches transformed from being objects of amusement to dangerous outsiders. For example, in a soap opera in a national broadcast, Show TV, the word apache was used in that way; while an upper class female was feeding the puppies in front of her house in an upper class district at night, three lower class males who have not an apache style disturbed her in the street and she yelled at them “go away dirty Apaches!”. In such a short scene, transformation in the meaning construction around the word apache and its articulation to the “folk devils” of the society can be observed.

To sum up, in this part of the study, I tried to track down the reasons behind the labeling of working class, especially apache subculture, as well as the actors in these labeling processes while navigating through the different labeling processes in the history of Turkey in order to show the development of the material and cultural conditions from which the Apaches emerged. Labeling processes on the “others” of the Turkish society was tried to be understood within the context of class divisions and formations in conjunction with modernization, industrialization, and capitalist transformation in Turkey. First of all, in terms of examining the meaning of the word apache itself, starting from how the word stemmed and transformed in terms of the usage of the word apache in the USA and how it spread on the basis of its pejorative meaning to the other parts of the world through the cultural products at the beginning of the 1900s, a historical background was tried to be constructed for the case of Apaches in Turkey. Although a wider research is needed in order to achieve a complete analysis, the 1930s in which class divisions and working class formation become more visible in cultural and everyday life of modern Turkey, was chosen as a starting point in the context of Turkey *intra vires* of the thesis.

In addition, labeling process in the late 1940s and 1950s was related with the rural-urban migration derived by the industrialization and dispossession of the working class. Beginning from that period, construction of gecekondu neighborhoods in the big cities and formation of arabesque culture in the late 1960s and 1970s were analyzed. The 1980s was scrutinized in the context of neoliberal transformation of Turkey and its effects on cultural life-especially arabesque culture- and construction of public spaces. The 1990s within the neoliberal transformation and intensive migration of the Kurdish people to the cities had an important and wider place in labeling process of Turkey and in that study. Socio-economic conditions of the 2000s in which the subject of that study grew in was tried to be examined in the context of precarisation and urban transformation policies.

In her article in which she examined the image of *maganda* of the 1990s, Öncü quotes a column from a newspaper written on the same issue; “They [people who

are called as maganda] do not have a lengthy history.”<sup>15</sup> Actually, when the following labels are examined in different times for different people cluster, they form a lengthy and united history for their subjects. However, because of the fact that, that history and those descriptions are written through the language of the dominant classes, that history has never been embraced by the people exposed to labeling. Under these circumstances, every new labeling indicates a new and incomprehensible “other”. However, the synonymity with the labeling processes occurred in different times and even spaces can be observed.

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<sup>15</sup> From a column in *Hürriyet* newspaper. Exact reference is not provided in the article.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **ANALYSIS OF THE APACHE SUBCULTURE**

#### **4.1 Report of the Field Research Experience**

As it was stated before, this study emerged through both a four months long media survey and ten months long ethnographic field research. Although the preliminary media survey was helpful to draw the main points and see the scopes of the subject matter, those points were not taken as ascribed facts. That being said, it is possible to argue that the primary source of this study is consisted of the data collected during the ethnographic field research. Fundamentally, this research is based on the data gathered by the ethnographic field research generated between 15.05.2011 and 09.03.2012 in Ankara. Starting from the first interview, the experience gained in the field research on its own, gave me some clues about the subject matter and shaped the methods used in the field research. Therefore, in that part of the study, I would like to touch upon certain moments of real experiences in the field that provided me as a researcher a level of prediction on the subject, determined the scopes of the study and shaped the methods used in the field.

##### **4.1.1 Determination of the Field**

As it was stated above, according to social and mass media survey, the Apaches were mainly considered as 'invaders' of the city centers, who come from slum neighborhoods. As far as being apache means becoming visible in the public sphere and leaving his/her own neighborhood, it was crucial to observe that visibility process and the city center serves as a proper space to observe those encounters. Moreover, mostly spoken apache dance videos that were uploaded to the internet

were shot on the footbridges and in the central park Güvenpark, Kızılay. So as a result of the media survey, Kızılay, the city center of Ankara, was an appropriate place for the field research. However, before determining the field of research as Kızılay, in order to avoid initial misconceptions, two interviews were conducted in Kızılay and three interviews were conducted with different interviewees in their own neighborhoods through personal networks.

As it was observed during three interviews conducted in their own neighborhoods, those young people were also spending some of their time in Kızılay yet show tendency to reject that part of their life which engages in Kızılay while they were around or in their own neighborhoods. Those interviewees found it hard to speak out their thoughts. It became even harder when they saw acquaintances around. However, the interviewees in Kızılay were open to communication out of their own neighborhoods about being an ‘apache’. By the help of the comparison between the interviews conducted in different locations, it was observed that, they act differently in their own neighborhoods and in the margins of the city center. That subculture comes into being, outside of its subjects' own living spaces and Kızılay is the place where they express themselves by performing the practices that are defined as ‘apacheness’. Moreover, during those interviews and the following ones, it was understood that those young people come into existence out of their own neighborhoods and maintain a kind of a dual life that they constitute themselves out of their own neighborhood both spatially and culturally. Therefore, reasonably the city center Kızılay was an appropriate place in order to observe those cultural practices and their encounters with other people and; for practical reason; in other words because of the fact that they were open to communication in there in comparison to their own neighborhoods, it was easier to interview with them personally in there. After that observation, the field of study was determined as Kızılay.



#### 4.1.2 Brief Information on the City Center Kızılay

Kızılay, with its central position to means of transportation is the most accessible urban space of Ankara. Besides the upper-class centers such as *Bahçeli* and *Tunalı*, Kızılay is a place where upper classes do not prefer to visit frequently.(İlkay,2009:18) Although it is a crowded center with its cafes, bars, stores and cinemas etc. Kızılay is not a pedestrianized place but arranged according to facilitating traffic flow. Recently, there are 17<sup>16</sup> overpasses that are not arranged efficiently for pedestrians. (Öncü, 2009:12) There is a central park named Güvenpark at the center of Kızılay. Those not frequently used overpasses and Güvenpark is the main places where those young people come together. While Güvenpark, is an interstitial place that people meet each other, have a short rest or came and go; however, for the aforesaid young people, it is a place that they situate. Güvenpark is the beaten path of Kızılay with its central position between *dolmuş* and bus stops and metro stations. It has a structure that allows them to interact with other people. The big statute in the center of the park is a location they dance by being watched by the other people. Beton benches that are constructed as small amphitheaters that allow 10-15 people stay at the same time allow them to have fun by themselves and drink the alcohol bought from the markets. They use the children park for their special conversations, which is generally not used and a quiet part of the park in comparison to other areas. Playground in Güvenpark is generally not used.

In cold weather, they stay on the benches close to metro entrances in order to descend to the underground metro stations when they feel cold. Security guards in the stations never let them to remain stable, they tell them to walk and mingle in the crowd without taking attention. During the participant observation, the first time when we entered in to the metro station because of the cold weather, I resent to that reaction of the security guard. However, those young people did not respond to it. They grew accustomed to such kind of a reaction and to blend in the crowd.

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<sup>16</sup> As of today, according to data given by TMMOB, the number of overpasses increased to 19.

### 4.1.3 In-Depth Interviews

In-depth interviews and participant observation constitute the primary source of my field research. 20 in-depth interviews were conducted with 12 male and 8 female interviewees. Although the image of the 'apache' has been overidentified with a male image- just like *maganda*, *kıro*, *amele* etc. stereotypes of Turkey-; a research that lacks the participation of the females in that subculture would have only cause to see one-sided and unconsummated part of the picture. Also, most of the recent, fundamental subculture studies had mostly been criticized by the invisibility of females in the subculture literature. For example, the fundamental works on subcultures was criticized as “being remained consistently on male youth cultural forms” and deficiency of exploring sexual divisions and masculinities in the subcultures (McRobbie, 1980: 39)<sup>17</sup>. In this study the aim is to do a whole and correlative research which does not eliminate the participation of the females and the effects of gender relations to the subculture. Moreover, in the process of field research experience, gender differences and its effects on the engagement processes to the subculture is observed. For example, females were more wary towards a stranger so initially I always met them through some intermediary. Furthermore, I observed that females' relation to the subculture is constructed via the males. Moreover, in the streets or in Güvenpark, females do not have a distinct visual image; they are usually noticed in the bars or discos. Such kind of an engagement and the in-depth interviews conducted with the females revealed the patriarchal structure of the relations among this youth subculture.

As Neuman states that “Entering a field site requires having a flexible strategy or plan of action, negotiating access and relations with members, and deciding how much to disclose about the research to field members or gatekeepers.” (Neuman, 2006: 282). Practically, it was not hard to enter into the field and get into contact

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<sup>17</sup> Since McRobbie's feminist critique(1980), subcultural studies has focused on analysing gender and sexuality issues in subcultural sites and cultural production(Piano,2004:257). See Roman(1988), McRobbie(1991), Gottlieb and Wald (1994), Miles(1997),Leonard(1998),Comstock(2001), Nguyen(2001).

with those youths. That easiness supported the argument that being apache reflects the interactive part of their life, becoming visible and performing in the city center forms a part of their lives that is open to reciprocal influence. By dancing or even only standing on the footbridges, they reflect and introduce themselves to the people of the city and try to occupy a space in the city life.

It is a well-known and accepted fact of qualitative research that “Subjects must agree voluntarily to participate...Their agreement must be based on full and open information.” (Christians, 2000: 138). However, because of the fact that the word apache on its own is a pejorative slur word which is used for labeling, at the first step, the aim of the research was introduced to youths without using the word 'apache' as a research on cultural practices of young people in order to prevent an offensive rejection and not to limit the dimensions of the communication. However, interviewees were so aware of the labeling process and the impression of their visual image that they themselves focused the core of the communication to the issue of apache from the very beginning.

#### **4.1.4 Negative Impacts of the Media Stigmatization to the Field Research**

Despite the easiness of getting into contact or concentrating on the topic openly, after those two steps an obstacle was observed during the field research which gives the first clue about the reception by those youths of the labeling process in the mass and social media. At the beginning of each interview, the first obstacle was to use the voice recorder. Because as it is previously mentioned, by the increasing visibility of Apaches in the streets and the increasing attention in the social media to them, those aforesaid youth appeared as a source of amusement in the social media, television news and newspapers in Turkey, during 2010. They were described pejoratively under the name of apache stereotype. Some of the interviewees were also the ones who are shown on local TV channels and newspapers. At the beginning of almost every interview, they were nervous about being shot by a camera and to be shown on TV again or in a newspaper by the labeling of apache. They were even suspicious about the voice recorder. In order to start the interviews,

it had to be proved that the recorder does not have a hidden camera on it. Beginning from that first steps, the field research practically showed that, those young people do not want to be defined by others but they want to tell something about themselves. As Fine and Weis, remind us that “In whose voice do we write? Well, of course, our own” (Fine & Weis, 1998: 27). So, it is impossible to be fully respectful to that wish in such kind of a research intrinsically. However, at least as an ethical attitude, the photograph or video tools were not used in that research.

#### **4.1.5 Experience of Participant Observation**

Besides the in-depth interviews, *participant observation* method was used during the field research. Due to a recorder malfunction, audio recordings of two initial interviews were lost during the field research. Subsequently, re-interviews were conducted with the two participants after two months and field notes written following initial interviews were used in order to track the process. The necessity to repeat the interviews that had appeared to be a misfortune became very fruitful in order to observe the two months period of their life. The amount of change in the interviewees’ lives was so dramatic that articulation in to the field and using the participant observation method beside the in-depth interviews were decided. Participant observation allowed observing the process and seizing some covert elements in the interviews. In fact, it is possible to argue that thanks to participant observation, I was able to answer certain questions that were left unanswered by the participants due to the reasons I mentioned above.

I used the opportunity to be familiar because of the initial in-depth interviews during the participant observation. I started to spent time with them. At first, I was in the field as an outsider researcher. Most of the times, I used to be invisible and take notes about their conversations without joining them. We had some borders. For example, I was out of the drug uses, economic problems, family issues or problems in their relationships. However, after some period of time, instead of me, those borders have become invisible. At the beginning, no one was willing to mention that they were using drugs, having problems with their families, stealing, or “signaling”

(a slang word used to describe asking for money from other people in the streets). In those situations, I tried to give examples from my own life experiences and state the similarities of our common class background in order to establish confidence with them.

However, over time, I realized that I started to be seen as a mentor especially for the female participants. They wanted me to intervene into their problems with their families or in their relationships. I was drifted into the situations that required more than my capabilities; I started to take phone calls or messages for several requests. Within the process, although I became an insider enough to intervene in such issues and tried to be an insider with my cloths, my language and attitudes, I always remained as a university graduate and the one who has a 'permanent' job, thus, who is 'superior' in terms of economic and cultural capital, who is actually an outsider. However, I was also conducting this research under the precarious working conditions, which may be called an irony in some other context, and tried to articulate to the youths in terms of a class position by thinking that they are the young members of my class, after all this time, when I look back on, I realize that an equal relationship was never established from their standpoint.

## **4.2 Material Conditions**

As it was stated in the previous chapter, subcultures are the sub-sets of parent cultures.(Clarke et al.;1973-2003) The subculture that is analyzed in this study is a working class youth subculture as well as the young members of the working class. During the field research of this study too, it was evident that one of the most significant determinants that directly affect the youth's world of meaning and thus creates this subculture is their material conditions and the emotional state that their financial situation has caused. For all these reasons, in this part of the study, the material conditions regarding the working conditions and their effects on the youths' perception of the work and life will be examined. I will look into first the working conditions which the precarity dominates and second the ways in

experiences of repetitious unemployment. Through these two aspects, I will analyze how these processes result in the youth's worlds of meaning and daily practices.

According to data gathered in the field research, the interviewees have common grounds in terms of their material conditions; such as their family background, neighborhoods, schools, jobs and working conditions. Except one of the interviewees, Hüseyin, who resides in his work place, all of the interviewees live in their parents or a family member's house. Their parents are the members of working class who migrated 20- 30 years ago to find a job from small cities of Central Anatolia to the districts in the edges of the Ankara. Those young people are the second or third generation of worker migrants. 11 of the interviewees live in slum houses in slum neighborhoods in *Mamak, Çamlıca, Abidinpaşa, Etlik, Ufuktepe* and *Türközü*. The other half, especially the females, come from the lower-middle class districts like *Sincan, Demetevler, Cevizlidere* and *Batıkent*. Seven of the interviewees who currently live in flats mentioned that they used to live in slum neighborhoods in the previous years (from 1 to 7 years ago).

18 of the interviewees are students, graduates, or dropouts of vocational and regular high schools. 5 of them are still studying, 3 of them were graduated from and 10 of the interviewees were drop-outs of those schools. In Turkish education system, which depends on track education, a high school placement examination is conducted. Vocational and regular high schools are the ones to which "unsuccessful" children who are unable to attend private preparation courses enter. Vocational schools are the ones "lower income families favor the system for their children quickly to acquire marketable skills". (Hakan, 2007: 43). According to the data given by Turkish statistical institute, the unemployment ratio of graduates of regular high schools' is %18 and vocational schools are %13 at the moment.

During the interviews, 7 of the interviewees were employed and 13 of them were unemployed. The working history of interviewees involves many unemployed months and job switching stories. They are observed to have similar stories

regarding 2-3 months of different working places and branches. Hairdresser, furnishing repairmen, typographer, textile worker, bellboy, construction worker and car mechanic are some of the common working areas.

Among the ones who had a job during the interview, 3 of them had insurance. Among the ones who were unemployed during the interviews, 8 of them never had an insured job. 18 of the interviewees worked at least three uninsured jobs. Income range differs between around 400-1000 TL per month. When their previous jobs are considered too, they work mostly for the minimum wage (As of 2012, 610 TL. for the employees under 16 and 701 TL. for the employees who are above 16.)

According to research findings, it can be stated that they are the members of precarious working class which occupy the obscure space of working in unsecured, temporary jobs with low-wages and irregular working hours and without insurance; and being unemployed.

#### **4.2.1 Precarious Working Conditions**

In this part, I will explain the characteristics of the working conditions such as low wages, irregular and/or long working hours and insecurity and will look into how these conditions affect the world of meaning of these youth, which, I believe, has a really significant part in their daily life and subculture formations.

Precarity of the working conditions also transforms the relations from being essential connections to perpetually open to temporary and contingent relations. In that sense precarity is more than being the structure of the labour market practices. It also effects the positions, moods and conditions within them. (Neilson and Rossiter: 2005). While the uncertainty and low waged jobs leads to uncertainty in individuals' lives, make them unable to predict their own fate and achieve the control over their own lives (ibid). While the characteristic of the precarity such as insecurity and flexibility 'put the workers in permanent danger of losing their jobs, as Bourdieu states, casualization makes the all future uncertain and prevents a

rational anticipation and basic belief and hope in the future that are needed to resist against the existing conditions. (Bourdieu, 2004: 84) For the time being, instead of the distinction between work-time and leisure-time which is formalized with Fordism, working hours are flexible that ‘worker is expected permanently available for the work’ (Mitropoulos:2005) In that sense, in such a regulation of labour, the distinction between work, labor and play disappears. (Standing, 2011). As a result, permanent boredom becomes inevitable, the obscure space of precarity is internalized and the apathy<sup>18</sup> is constructed as a defense mechanism by those young people.

The precarious structure of the working conditions causes them to be unable to hold a job permanently and engage to their working class position. On the other hand, to be seen as a marginalized ‘mass without status’ which is incapable of holding a job and taking responsibility to work by society and their own class-even by their families and neighbors. As a result of both processes aforesaid, young people internalize both their obscure positions and the marginalizing gaze that is managed to them. Therefore, they form an identity on the given drifting position. This is a process that constructs and reconstructs each other in a vicious cycle.

#### **4.2.1.1 Low Wages**

In the jobs they were occupied both during the interviews and prior to the interviews, the interviewees are employed in low waged jobs which cause daily basis survival and austerity. In this routine of daily basis survival, it is not a surprise that they cannot nourish hope. Their material conditions causes hopelessness and anxiety.

They share almost half of the earned money with their families. The rest is mostly spent on cigarette, alcohol, and clothes, which are explained as basic needs. The

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<sup>18</sup> “In fact, today's youth does not fit into either of the terms of Hirschman ‘loyalty’, ‘voice’, ‘exit’. Guy Bajoit adds another term to Hirschman’s terminology which seems more fitting to today’s youth: apathy... they are neither loyal enough to the group, nor organized enough to protest, or brave enough to “exit”.”(Lüküslü, 2009: 190).



interviewees' answer to the question regarding the adequacy of the earned money is usually like "*as much as it suffices*" or "*we are used to live like this*" or "*better than nothing*". Low-wages causes adequacy to fewer salaries and a monthly basis of subsistence. Their economy operates as an austerity and survival pattern until the next payroll. In daily wage jobs, this survival pattern operates in a daily basis.

For example Coşkun who works in an internet café for 400TL. per month and lives with his family declares that;

"-I earn 400 [TL.], it is better than to be idle...

-How do you spend it?

-I economize, I had never took money from my family, I give half of it to them and buy clothes for me, not so expensive, from Maltepe bazaar, fake converse".

Another example, Hüseyin whose family lives in another city, lives in the bagel shop that he works for 850 TL. per month. He also states the same words;

"I mean, although it is not enough, we spend as much as it suffice, we don't spend too much

-how do you spend?

-I mean more than half of it goes to the family, the rest is food & beverage and shoes."<sup>19</sup>

Such kind of an economy that depends on short-run survival, create an uncontrolled and endless routine makes them to be exposed to its fluency, feel stuck in daily basis of survival and prevents them to form future expectations. The anxiety, boredom and hopelessness are the main emphases of the interviewees towards low

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<sup>19</sup> The expense list of Hüseyin that contains basic needs and shoes is worth thinking on it. He is buying shoes in order to dance well. He is committed to dance passionately. Dance is a very significant and the only part of his life that he feels himself successful in life. That issue will be examined in the following chapters.

wages. Boredom, in here, is not “the dream bird that hatches the egg of experience” (1936), as Benjamin states but the result of the isolated experience of permanent anxiety.

For example, Cahit carries flour sacks for an acquaintance who works in a flour plant. They distribute flour sacks every day to different bakeries and he earns daily-wage. During the interview his main emphasis was the boredom of that routine lack of money that prevents him from being hopeful toward the future and makes him feel stuck in that routine. He says that;

“I earn 25 TL a day. I give 15 to home and buy 2 packets of cigarettes with the rest. I earn the same amount the day after. Every day is the same. I am a very bored (*sikintili*) person.

-why are you bored?

-I am bored because every day is the same, nothing changes. I get up in the morning it is the same, I sleep at night just the same. I am going to carry flours tomorrow again. I mean mine [my boredom] is a very different thing<sup>20</sup>. I get bored so much”

The characteristic of low waged jobs based on daily survival do not allow the youth even worry about their future thus force them to live on daily survival strategies without a plan or imagination for future. This, as mentioned in the interviews above, creates hopelessness and anxiety.

#### **4.2.1.2 Irregular or/and long working hours**

Flexible, long or/and irregular structure of the working hours is another characteristic of their jobs which cause a loss of control not only over the working time but also the leisure time. And it creates such kind of an uncertain and inclusive routine that is stated above. In the flow of that routine, the only emotional state expressed by those youth are depression and anxiety.

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<sup>20</sup> Also Cahit’s emphasize on the uniqueness of his boredom, per se gives a clue about the individualized structure of the work itself.

Mostly, average working times of the interviewees in their current and previous jobs vary between 10 to 12 hours a day. They usually work 6 days a week. The free day is chosen to be in weekdays due to the workload of service sector at the weekends. The employer decides the free day flexibly at the beginning of the week and can even cancel for busy weeks. In that context, division between work, labor and play disappears. They experience the time in an indivisible manner (Standing, 2011). Highly irregular working hours create an atmosphere of uncertainty on labor time. Such regulation of working time, annihilate the control of the employees over time not only in the work place but also in their leisure times. Indefiniteness and the length of the time create a loop that repeat every day until an uncertain time and it causes a strong feeling of boredom and drabness too.

Ufuk who was working in a construction job before he was fired, indicates a link between the long working hours and limited social life as a reason for depression.

“In the morning, I was starting the job around 8 o’clock and ending it around 6 in the evening. However, in most of the days, I had overtimes till 11-12 o’clock at night or 4-5 o’clock towards morning. Ha, they were giving breaks for the other day but, how can I hang around with the haggardness of 6 hours of sleep and two days of working? You work 24 hours in 7 days. Compulsorily I go to house and sleep, wake up at night and stay awake for 1 hour and then sleep again. You wake up the other day and go to work, in the blinking of an eye you have no time, no social life...you can’t do anything, you can’t talk to your friends, you can’t hang around, you can’t dance. After a while the person falls into the depression. Nowadays all young people are in depression because of that.”

As he states that, the regulation of the working hours on his the leisure time, engenders a kind of isolation for him.

Tuğba works as a cashier at a supermarket and studies one and a half day a week at a female vocational school. She defines her work schedule and then expresses her desperation regarding the nature of working conditions that leaves no individual space as follows;

“Because, how much hours do I sleep? For example, I don’t eat, I don’t eat square. There is no sleep. I mean my life is like that, I mean, I have no hope for something is going to happen...the person suffocates, always the same thing. I wake up in the morning, I came to work, I turn back home at night, I again go back to work, at night I again turn back to home.”

As it is observed from Tuğba’s statements, this is not only about timelessness, but the depression and hopelessness created by that uncontrolled routine of the working hours.

#### **4.2.1.3 Unsecured Jobs**

The most fundamental characteristics of the jobs taken by those young people are their unsecured and temporary; namely precarious structure. The unsecured, casual jobs effect the perception of work, relations with co-workers, perception of life and character structure in many different aspects.

Most of them do not have any insurance or social security. Most of them also have a history of being fired after working without any kind of insurance or social security. “The traditional norm of spending an entire life with one employer becomes at once unappealing and highly unlikely as the job market become increasingly unstable and fluid.” (Winlow & Hall, 2006: 24). Under these circumstances, “The sense of mutual interests and common fate that permeated traditional work cultures became palpably absent” (ibid.; 28) The insecurity at work is also consolidated with the attitude of the employer and the mood of the employee that is shaped through the precarious nature of the jobs. Under these circumstances, they always carry the feeling that they could be fired any time and hence, they build no intimacy towards the work. Due to this inconsistency, employers usually do not promise any insurance within the first two months. Without any contracts and insurance, interviewees are observed to resign within the first two months. However, aside from this attitude, it is also mentioned that even after longer times of regular employment, the employers

usually avoid legal contracts and insurance payment. This is also one of the reasons cause them leave the works on their own.

That precarious structure of the work also prevents a solidaristic relation with the co-workers. “During a period of mass unemployment, in which work has become atomized and more precarious, insecurity has become the condition of too many.”(Charlesworth, 2005: 5). However, although all of them work under nearly the same conditions, precarity and insecurity cause them to become atomized and make each individual believe that those conditions are experienced by only her/his own. Fundementaly, that structure of the work makes them believe that workmates are also temporary and develop an individualistic attitude. The answers to the question regarding their relationships and amount of solidarity within the co-workers indicate that they internalize that volatility. When it is asked to the interviewees if they feel a commitment to their co-workers, their answers are negative. They state that “*workmates are temporary*”. Just like the jobs. In order to examine that situation, several questions were asked with the examples from everyday life. One of these questions is that “Would you show an act when your boss does not pay your co-worker’s salary?”

Hüseyin who had been working in a bagel shop for one year, answers that question like that;

“If it were a fight I would definitely get involved. Of course it is better that they can settle by talking, but this is between the two, if they are not fighting and if he is not paying his salary, I wouldn’t get involved. It is between them, if he likes, he works, if not he leaves.”

Tuğba, who had been working in a supermarket as a cashier for one and a half year, does not state her potential attitude but gives the answer of that question indirectly by explaining the potential attitudes of her co-workers.

“Believe me; nobody helps me because I am nice. Being nice does not make a difference. Honestly, I didn’t like any of my cashier co-workers here...They are all yes-sirs (patron yalakası)”

In contrast to these two interviews, Mesut claims that he would act if a problem occurs between the boss and a co-worker. His intervention style and the underlying reasoning actually present not a reflection of the solidarity towards co-workers but the competition among them.

“If it is someone I like, I would intervene. My friends know that I can communicate well and try to resolve the problem. If it is not resolved, I say it is ok, we will handle it. If it takes to fight we fight, or any way else, I would handle and get his money. I don’t want anyone to be in debt to anyone. If I can pay the amount, I wouldn’t bother the boss and pay myself. Hence I get a better place in the eye of the boss.”

Under these circumstances, causality creates individualization and prevents a collective response to low working conditions. The only observable attitude among interviewees towards the working conditions is individually quitting the jobs. For example, according to their statements in the interviews, Cahit had quitted his car repair job in Ostim<sup>21</sup>, because of the unpaid salaries, Cedrik who was working in a drywall company in Mamak, had quitted his job because of the long and irregular working hours and being uninsured. Hüseyin who had been working in the cafeteria of a shopping mall, had quitted his job not because of the dismissals of his co-workers but because of the overtimes that occurred by previous dismissals.

#### **4.2.2 Obscure Space of Internalized Precarity**

According to the observations accumulated during the interviews and many months spent with them sharing their everyday lives, how this precarity leaves them in-between is the most important factor which shapes their world of meaning.

Low wages, long/irregular working hours and uninsured jobs are the fundamental

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<sup>21</sup> Ankara organized industrial zone.

characteristics of the work almost every member of the working class encounters. However, what makes their position special is that they both experience underemployment and unemployment permanently. Unemployment is not just a permanent threat for them. They permanently experience it. As a result of these material conditions, they became the temporary members of proletariat and the lumpenproletariat alternately. While, they carry the burden of both positions, they cannot situate in any of them. That repetitious experience makes "...the world they inhabit...fractured, no longer supported by a steady stream of habitual associations, and their personal, affective world...chaotic: absurd...so this is an absurdity that cannot know itself because it cannot experience the ontological security and social grounds upon which self-justification might be realized" (Charlesworth, 2000: 6). This situation leaves them in an obscure position, which in fact is the source of ambiguity. The results of the field research show that this ambiguity and liminality created by the precarity has an utmost effect on the youth's world of meaning and subculture formation.

In order to examine that process and its effects on their perceptions, the case of Ufuk, which stands as a concrete example of the ambiguous precarious position of Apaches, that rolls between being a member of the working class and lumpen proletariat and its reflection to his character is going to be a good starting point.

As it was stated above, due to a recorder malfunction, I lost the audio recordings of two initial interviews. Subsequently, I re-interviewed the two participants after two months and used field notes taken during and following our initial interviews in order to track the process. Ufuk was one of them. In the first interview, Ufuk was fired from his construction job five months ago by the excuse of the recession in the business because of the winter season. According to the field notes he was still so angry that his anger could be read physically on his face, while stating following sentences;

“All of us have something; have a wound<sup>22</sup> (*yara*), sister. We are living in a slum house. It is not even ours, we are tenants, when I was a kid, I remember, we were living in a place like a hennery. Its earthen parquets flake off, its roof drips, a poky place. Ok, now our condition have got better since 5 years, my elder brother is working, I am working, we bought new furniture, the place where we live looks like a house now. But, for example, my father is a retired cook; he is still working, cooking. Why does this man still work? He is retired, he has to stay at home but he can't. I have a skill for a job, I am electrical technician, I worked in the constructions for 6 years, I learned the job by being beaten... Anyhow I was earning 250 lira per month, and they even didn't pay for travel allowances. I learned the job by working for peanuts (*karın tokluğuna*) just to have my bread in my hands (to learn the job), I worked for 6 years, they kicked me to the curb after 6 years, because there is no job, they said that we will hire you back when there is work to do, now I see they are taking jobs but they don't call me. I have been hanging around unemployed for 5 months, well do I idle? No! I went and enrolled to an agency. They called me 5 times from Behzat Ç. [a popular TV series that is shot in Ankara], I acted in figuration. I always carry my daybook in my pocket in case they call me.”

In our second interview we talked about that two months period between the interviews. During that two months period, he had searched for several jobs and worked in different temporary short-dated jobs. Two weeks before our second interview, Ufuk found a job in which he had been distributing fliers for a beauty parlor in Kızılay. After eight days he left that job due to the aggressive attitudes of his head worker. He stated that,

“I was working in Selanik Street, we were distributing flyers. I had to leave the job. It was a beauty parlour, we were distributing fliers to the ladies and then give information about the services, laser epilation etc. We had to send 7-8 tables per a day [table is used as a term for the consumers who are induced to get into the beauty parlour and decide to buy the services].He started to tell us to send 10 tables, 11 tables, 12 tables, he was increasing the numbers per minute, If you don't send 10 tables I will decrease your daily wage, won't give your daily wage etc. We had an argument, I quit the job... Everything was in his hands, to fire me, to kick me out”

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<sup>22</sup> – The word injury was not chosen as I was concerned that it brought in my own meaning-making with a reference to Sennett.



The day when Ufuk left his job, coincidentally his girlfriend eloped from her parent's house because of a family argument and took refuge in Ufuk's parent's house, which is in a slum neighborhood of Ankara; Solfasol. After that his father who got angry at him, kicked Ufuk out from his house.

“My girlfriend eloped from her parent's house, not for me, she had an argument with her parents. I quitted my job on the top of it. I get her to my house. At first my parents didn't say anything. After I told them that I quit the job. They said that how will you take care of her? Go and get a job. I said that if there had been a job I would work. My profession is already construction electrician. And it can't be done due to the winter, I will wait till the summer, they said that go and find another job, And then I said that you know, I can't work in other jobs. We had an argument. My father cursed me and he said me to go out. I am at the outside [on streets] since that day.”

During the second interview, Ufuk had been living on the streets of Kızılay for twelve days. For three days he slept in each of his friends' houses, the other days when he could not find a house to sleep, he spent nights in underground metro stations and in the emergency services of the hospitals in order to survive the winter.<sup>23</sup>

The changes that led him from a working life to a life in streets could easily be observed in his character, words and behaviors. Two months ago, his agenda was mainly filled with anger due to the “unexpected” expel from his job, and a motivation towards finding a new job. In the second interview his narrations concentrated on his experience of living in the streets, the stories of homeless children, thinner addicts and their life. At the end of the 7 month process of unemployment and working in temporary jobs that ends in living in the streets, he seemed to internalize his position. He says that;

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<sup>23</sup> The state of unemployment is experienced differently among the females and the males. The females are financially supported by the families in the case of unemployment. This protective attitude toward the females emerges due to the patriarchal structure of the families. A few of the males has received support from the elderly sister or brother; however, generally they are not supported by their families.

“They get angry at me. I am too young. Since I haven’t done my military service I don’t feel responsible for anything. Nobody feels different at my age”

During our second interview, Ufuk repetitiously mentioned that he did not like to work and he is too young to take responsibilities, his relaxed body language also was supporting his words. In that interview, it was observed that his previous anger left to a kind of internalized indifference. The change in his material conditions that he has encountered stems from his unsecured position, found such kind of a reflection in his perception. A similar attitude was observed during the other interviews too.

For example, Merve worked in three different jobs previously as a waitress, secretary and coiffeur apprentice. She never had an insurance and earned minimum wage in both jobs in which she had been working in 6 days of the week with long working hours. Currently she has been working in a textile mill for one month, explains the reason of her rotation between different jobs like that,

“I will say like that, I can’t stay in a job easily. I stay maximum one month, I got bored easily. Anyway, I am used to stay outside. I don’t think that working is suitable for me.”

Cedrik who is 21 years old, had just completed his military service during our interview. He had worked in coiffeurs, typographer and construction and drywall jobs under the same conditions and currently unemployed explains the reason of his rotation between different jobs like that;

“In such a way, I find a job, enter it, I earn my pocket money and then I pop off.”

As well as changing jobs frequently is the most common ground for these youth, they come together in the attitude of apathy to their experiences of changing jobs frequently. This attitude also affects their view on life and

themselves and articulates in their world of meaning which creates their subculture.

### **4.2.3 Survival Tactics under the Conditions of Precarity**

Those young people develop some survival tactics in order to transcend the burden of their precarity. De Certeau explains those tactics as ‘art of being in between’ and art of ‘making do’ that creates solutions within the possibilities of the power relationships that define and delimit the circumstances they can profit.(1984:34). However, because of the fact that those tactics are shaped through the precarious structure of the labour in itself, they also consolidate their precarious and ambiguous position. In consideration of the in-depth interviews and observations during the field research, those young people, firstly, develop a sentiment of apathy towards working and secondly, they construct their emotional and personal relationship in accordance to a financial support.

#### **4.2.3.1 Apathy**

In consideration of the in-depth interviews and observations during the field research, the mood of apathy developed by those youth under the influence of their material conditions has two functions. First of all, apathy provides them a kind of self-control on their lives dominated by the uncontrolled routine of their low-wages, flexible and precarious working conditions. Secondly, it operates as a survival tactic under those conditions.

When the reason of changing the jobs is asked specifically for each job, interviewees give concrete reasons. Such as; being fired or quitting them because of the hard working conditions. However, when the same question is generalized and they are asked “why are they always changing jobs?” they respond to that question in such an internalized apathy towards working. However, according to the field notes taken during the participant observation, which let us to observe that process, it can be explained as an apathy that is constructed as an emotional and strategic defense mechanism rather than a total internalization.

Just like Ufuk's father, the families of the other interviewees complain about the youth's ambiguous position. Such kind of a marginalizing perception is similar to the general approach of the society that includes "castigating them as lazy, directionless, undeserving, socially irresponsible or worse" (Standing, 2011: 16). "If society is powerful enough to wound people at a very deep emotional level which is where the wounds inflicted on dignity are-the power to shut society out would have to be a transcendental, almost miraculous one." (Sennett&Cobb, 1996: 192). In that sense, failure is transformed in to something less humiliating (Cohen, 1955) Under these circumstances while they internalize both their material conditions and the gaze that marginalize them, they also develop a sense of apathy that leaves a space for self-control on their fates. In this way, instead of feeling suffers of their socio-economic position, they construct an identity as the operator of that position. This cannot be considered as ignoring or omitting but is a solution mechanism, a survival tactic which stems from their material conditions. On the other hand, it is important to note that this solution mechanism provides not a solution but an intensification of their problems.

The apathy towards working is developed strategically as a survival tactic. The structure of the working conditions makes not only them but also the jobs dispensable and makes it easy to be replaced with those tactics. The temporary structure of the work itself leaves them a space that they can employ hit-and-run tactics. Working for one month and leaving the job after receiving the salary becomes the patterns of survival. That tactic is blended with the ones developed in unemployment. Also, repetitiously experienced unemployment, make them develop survival tactics that is created in unemployment; such as signaling (a slang word for asking for a small amount of money from the people on the street), pick pocketing, or generally receiving financial support from their friends.-especially for the males, it is a general attitude to receive financial support from their girlfriends-. At that moment, their survival tactics, which are shaped through the material conditions, consolidate their obscure positions.

#### **4.2.3.2 Personal Relations between Female and Male Members of the Subculture Depends on Financial Support**

As it was previously stated, those young people permanently experience employment and unemployment repetitively. Under these circumstances, they create survival tactics under the conditions of permanently experienced unemployment. Receiving financial support from the girlfriends is one of the main ways of survival. A mutual financial relationship shapes also the personal relationships. In that part of the study, the financial relationship that occurs between males and the females in that subculture will be examined. Moreover, in the course of this examination, also, the observed reflections of the dominant ideology such as patriarchy and neo-liberalism will be stated.

As it was mentioned in the previous chapters, subcultures are shaped not only through the class practices but also through the dominant culture. In their relationship two main effects of the dominant ideology can be observed; patriarchal structure of the society and cultural indications of neoliberal ideology.

Pikaçu, who has been unemployed for one and a half month states that he receive financial support from the females;

“-I had troubles with my boss, I wanted him to make our insurance, but he didn’t, he also wasn’t giving our all wage, I quitted the job, looking for a job now.

-How do you make your living now?

-I make it by the help of the friends. Also there are girls, money is coming from them.

-How?

-Ya... how can I explain it, our tikies<sup>24</sup> mentality is all the same, we met a girl, eat her money nicely (live at her expense), and then let her go...

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<sup>24</sup> Those young poeple who are called Apaches, call themselves tikky.

Kaan also indicates similar arguments for the time he spends unemployed;

“My money is my money, her money is my money. I won’t tell lie, my financial situation is not ok. I try to do as much as I can. But it’s not enough. For example, I tell her to get me cigarettes. And she says ok and gets me a packet of cigarette. I exploit and impose on her nicely. If she smokes cigarettes I don’t let her to smoke in order to take her share too...If I am hungry, I make her to pay for a treat for me. I say let’s eat something I owe you, she says there is no debt I am your girlfriend. But in summer time, the things are not like that, in the summer when I have a job, I have money.”

Sezar also describes the same situation;

“We came to Kızılay, met with the girls, you want money from them”

-How do you want it?

“I want normally. I learned it in here. Before I was so ashamed [of it]. But ever since I hang out in Kızılay, there is no shame. I ask for carfare. They give you 5 liras. You ask for 10 liras. No problem. They give you the money” (Sezar)

Most of the male interviewees states that when they are unemployed, they “live at girls’ expense”. At first sight, this case can indicate that the classical thought of “I don’t get money from a woman” is violated and the relatively patriarchal understanding was broken. However, when the personal relations between males and females closely examined in the field, the reconstruction of the patriarchal structure can be observed.

Females experience the same problems shaped by educational status, neighborhood structure, and working conditions with the males. However, being a female in that subculture has an extra burden that arises from their secondary position. “They (females) may be marginal to the sub-cultures, not simply because girls are pushed by the dominance of males to the margin of each social activity, but because they are centrally into a different, necessarily subordinate set or range of activities. Such an analysis would depend, not on their marginality but on their structured

secondariness.”(McRobbie, Garber,1975;209) This secondary position of girls in the subculture gives them a financially supporting role.

On the females’ side, that financial relation has two reasons firstly, they try to become distant from the patriarchal and oppressive structure of their families and engagement to the subculture through their boyfriends is a way of achieving this. Secondly, when they enter into that subculture, they face with the same kind of an oppressive social network. In that network, being defined in a distinctive subculture, spending most of their times in an undefined place apart from their parent’s house has a negative meaning both in society and in that subculture. So they try to gain recognition and respect through having a permanent boyfriend. However, temporary material conditions make the youths perceive the life as an uncanny, undefined and temporary whole of relations. In that sense personal relations are not free from that perception. Also, an instrumentalist approach affects the personal relationships.

Tuğba expresses that she is stuck between the oppressive attitudes of her parents- especially father- and the heavy conditions of her job. Her boyfriend and spending her time by articulating to that subculture through her boyfriend is the only way of enjoying her life.

“He [her boyfriend] just finished his military service. He doesn’t have a job. But he will find one. Now he has no money, he has no carfare, no money for cigarettes. For example I have 10 liras per day, 5 is for me, 5 is for him. He says that when I start to work, I will pay back to you. I say that don’t pay to me, I don’t want. It is enough for me when he is with me. I became very happy when I talk to him. Even I like fighting with him, because he stands with me. We lived many things with him; I was eloping from home and going to him. We did lots of thing may be more than a couple should do. For example, we were not able to see each other today; yesterday also we couldn’t see each other. I said [him to] come. He said darling I don’t have money for carfare; I don’t want to be a burden for you. But he is not a burden for me. He also helped me a lot; not financially but emotionally. [She starts to cry] I got beat up for several times at home. I was beaten till that age, There is so much to tell about parents...There is nobody around me except him...no body...may be it will sound ridiculous to the people who are hearing this talk but my boyfriend is the most and only important thing in my life. When I go

home, I sit down to a corner. I eat nothing, neither at home nor at work. Tea and cigarettes, tea and cigarettes...May be a bite of bread or a spoon of soup, nothing more”

Here Tuğba says that she provides for her boyfriend with financial aid and makes it clear that it is in fact a mutual solidarity. She expresses that while she gives money to her boyfriend, her boyfriend provides for the emotional support she needs because of the oppressive structure of her family. She also argues that she cannot make a connection with anyone neither from workplace nor from her family except her boyfriend. What I observed during the interview, other than her boyfriend, she seems to have a level of communication and friendship with other members of the subculture. Sümeyye also declares same kind of an approach towards her boyfriend. She consistently lends his boyfriend money. She normalizes this relationship by saying; “He is a man, he always needs money, I can handle without money.”

“Being with him makes me happy. I...I made too many mistakes...my family is not on my side. I said that I can't be happy and abandoned to lots of people. They hurt me a lot. I wish my family was with me. But now, I don't have such kind of a problem...I...I...sometimes tell myself...I am getting apprehensive. He doesn't love me. I will turn back to past. But friends say that no he loves you. I live in this life because he is with me. I, last year, in 2011, did something in 22th of August, committed suicide...He makes me happy. I go wherever he goes. I do whatever he wants.”

Like Tuğba, Sumeyye argues that she escaped from a similar feeling of lonesome thanks to his boyfriend and she is happy with her boyfriend in this subculture. It is not only my conclusion that female members of this subculture connects with the other members of the subculture in a way that they cannot find either in their families or their workplaces in return of their financial aid to their boyfriends. The female participants made this connection clear to me by answering the questions regarding financial situations or their financial help to their boyfriends by telling about the oppressive structure of their families, or their feelings of loneliness in every part of life.



Besides, as in other interviews with female participants, it is possible to trace through the between-lines of Tuğba and Sumeyye's interviews about their perception on sexuality level of their personal relations. During the interviews or participant observations, female participants mention their sexual experiences covertly or as mistakes.

Keeping pre-marital sexuality is still considered a taboo in Turkish society in mind, although a relatively sexual freedom is being lived between the youth, conservative social perception for the females still remains. Females live their sexuality as a way of sacrifice and as a burden or mistake.

#### **4.2.3.2.1 Kızılay Boys (*Kızılay Bebeleri*) vs. Kızılay Girl (*Kızılay Kızı*)**

Another factor that affects this relationship between boys and girls that is based on financial support is that patriarchal relations are not limited to the youth's families but embedded in their subculture, too. This is observed not only in examining this financial support mechanism but also how these youth define themselves in this subculture.

The youth in Ankara mostly define each other, and themselves, in accordance with their neighborhoods or districts. These definitions also carry along certain codes regarding those neighborhood or districts, which mostly underlines the economic structure of these places. Some examples may be Sincan boys, or Cankaya kids. However, because of the fact that, the members of this subculture consider themselves as the inhabitants of the city center, they identify themselves as Kızılay boys (*Kızılay bebeleri*).<sup>25</sup>

While males describe themselves as "Kızılay kids" (*Kızılay bebesi*), for females, being called as "Kızılay girl" has a negative reputation. While, 'Kızılay bebeleri' define themselves with their existence and visibility in the city center, they do not

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<sup>25</sup> This point will be furthered in the following parts of this study.

approve the female members of the subculture who became visible and spent their times in the city center as much as the male members; and call them as ‘Kızılay kızı’. However, not only the males but also the female members of the subculture use the same word in order to define other female members of the subculture. While the phrase of ‘Kızılay boys’ (*Kızılay bebeleri*) is a plural definition, the definition of the ‘Kızılay girl’ (*Kızılay kızı*) refers to a singularity. Male interviewees enounce that they do not respect to the females who have the same life style with them. The words of Suat explain this perception;

“We must have a difference, we are here, we should be called as Kızılay kids(*Kızılay bebesi*)...We are all tikies, boys style is called tiki, from visual style to talking it is all tiki...for the girls when they wear skinny leg jeans, make their hair strait and if they have money in their pockets, they are also tiki, but we call them call girls(*tele kız*)”

Pikaçu also covertly mention sexuality just like his female counterparts and makes a connection between his disrespect for the Kızılay girls and their being not virgins;

“I would never marry one of them. God forbid! When they will marry, they will have so many troubles”

While males are thinking in this way, also the same perception is prevalent for the females. In the interviews none of the females called themselves as “Kızılay kids or Kızılay girls”. Moreover, they used that description in a negative manner for the other females and highlight that they are not like the *others*. Zeliha states her thoughts about the other females in that subculture;

“The only thing that Kızılay girls, think to have a boyfriend, they do whatever the boys want, they toady to boys, I am not such a girl.”

What Zeliha mentions here as “they do whatever the boys want” refers to the financial support as well as the sexual intercourse. She points other females as

responsible for this type of relationship that she clearly does not approve. Merve also shows a similar attitude;

“Ya...it is upto she-wolf to lure the wolf (dişi kurt kuyruk sallamazsa erkek gitmez) Most of the girls in Kızılay, it is so obvious, they are used and thrown away. I know it. I can protect myself; I want to experience such things with the man whom I will marry. I protect myself”(Merve-pikaçu).

Here, what it means to be used and thrown away is not to get married with the person they had sex prior to the marriage. In that sense, Merve too makes herself distinct to other female counterparts of the subculture and points other females who have premarital sex responsible and irrespective.

Under these circumstances, as both males and females express that females in that subculture in order not to be called as “Kızılay girl”, try to have a boyfriend who will ‘appropriate’ and ‘protect’ her. In that way they try to gain a recognition and respect. Merve explains that perspective in those words;

“-Only once, I disobeyed him...Only once. I was almost losing him. I went to him. I cried and apologized. He said that I have nothing to lose but you have so many things to lose. Since that day I have not disobeyed him.

-What do you have to lose?

-If I separate from him, I became the subject of gossips. They would say that, look at them, they separated while they were engaged. They would say, she is idle now, she is not owned, I can make a pass at her, and I can behave unctuously towards her. Then my name will fall into disrepute. He meant that.”

In that manner, females try to fulfill males all expectations. Giving money is the most significant way of holding their boyfriends. In conclusion, when the oppressive and financially supportive patriarchal structure of the family combines with the similar patriarchal perceptions of the youth, it creates a mutual relationship depends on financial support and reconstruction of patriarchal relations.

#### 4.2.3.2.2 Reflection of Neoliberal Ideology to the Perception

Derived from the observations of the female and male relations based on financial support which is an inevitable part of their daily life, the personal relations of these youth are also shaped by consumerism, temporality and instrumentalism.

Apart from the reconstruction of the patriarchal structure, the male interviewees' 'comfortable' attitude on this financial relation is worth examining. Those young people, who confront the anxiety, uncertainty, and exclusion of capitalism, are not free from its seductions. Beyond the patriarchal perceptions, the perceptions of the youth shaped by neoliberal ideology can be observed not necessarily in the financial relationship between males and the females but in the statements of males on that relationship. The effects of the fundamental characteristics of neo-capitalism such as; consumerism, temporality and instrumentalism can be observed in their statements. "Just as the market is driven by the need of discover, purchase and then discard (Bauman, 1998 cited in Winlow & Hall) some forms of human relationship appear to be drifting towards a perpetual cycle of momentary absorption, followed quickly by disappointment, loss of interest..." (Winlow & Hall 2006; 42)

Firstly, in one of the notes that is taken during the participant observation, one of the males stated a sentence towards a female who is living troubles with her boyfriend "My Girl (*kızım*), *there isn't short supply of you outside; there isn't short supply of him outside either.*"<sup>26</sup> By those sentences he means that there are more people outside just like her and her boyfriend. She is not unique, she is just one of the members of the mass and if she does not want to be with him, her boyfriend can find another person just like her and she can either. The perception behind that sentence is fed by the existence of a unemployed and underemployed mass. Being a part of 'unnecessary mass', make all of them internalize the feeling of being dispensable not only in the job market but also in the personal relations. As much as everybody

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<sup>26</sup> "Kızım dışarıda ne senden az, ne de ondan az"

is the same and equipollent of each other, in the faces, which are not different from each other, every look can be lived repeatedly. So that it can be said that also “love at last sight”<sup>27</sup> peters out.<sup>28</sup>

Secondly, “One specific result of the determining forces of neo-capitalist culture—namely the inculcation of instrumentality as a common value and practice in youth identities and relationships—is a wider significance.”(Winlow and Hall,2006;52). A kind of instrumentalist approach can be observed in the “loss of embarrassment” of Sezar, in sentences of “I eat her money nicely” of Pikaçu, in the chosen word of “exploitation” in the sentences of Kaan and in the duality that he constructs on “my money is my money, her money is my money”. We encounter with such kind of an emphasis on the word ‘exploitation’, in the biographical fiction, “Bir Apaçi Masalı” (An Apache Fairytale) published in 2011 in Turkey. The book consists of a life story of a member of *eksisozluz* that is first shared in this website which was described in the previous section discussing about the stigmatization of Apaches in social media. The reason I touch upon the usage of the word *apache* in this book is that as the title is self-definitive, the author tells his life story as a story of *apache*. In the life history of this author, it is possible to observe a great number of parallel thoughts and arguments with the interviews I conducted. For instance, the author, too, is born and raised in a working class family and in a *gecekondü* neighborhood. He tells how his life view has changed as such: “The life is not limited to just poverty. We have a life ahead to live, to consume and to enjoy...I was going to spend this life (even if it means) forcefully (2011; 117).

Briefly, two different stories of Merve and Sümeyye will be explanatory in order to define all those characteristics of the personal relationships. Merve has been in the

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<sup>27</sup> “The delight of the city-dweller is not so much love at first sight as love at last sight.” Benjamin, *Illuminations* (New York: Knopf, 1969), p. 169.

<sup>28</sup> Such kind of a comparison gives the clues of the structure of the city-dwelling also. And state a difference between their conditions than the *fleneur*.

group for a month. She is a member of an upper-middle class family who lives in upper-middle class neighborhood. She studies in a private university. She is the wealthiest one in the group. In the following two weeks of their relationship, her boyfriend proposed her and they got engaged without the consent of the families. Merve argued that she can take care of her boyfriend until she graduates from the university and then they can get married.

As a contrast to Merve, Sümeyye is the one who has the worst economic conditions among the females. After three weeks from our interview, Sümeyye told her boyfriend that she was raped by one of her workmate last year. After that, her boyfriend left her because of the fact that she is not a virgin. She explained the situation in those words *“He was sleeping with the other girls in order not to sacrifice me, but I ruined everything”*. After that her boyfriend started to date with another female. And quoting from Sümeyye’s sentences; he stated that he is testing both of the females. According to this one-week testing period the first one who will buy him the cellphone he wants, would be his permanent girlfriend. Sümeyye was repeatedly telling that *“I can’t lose him, the other girl’s financial situation is better than me, she can buy a phone whenever she wants, I have to find money before her”*. In her case, -beside the ‘irrational’ and ‘unacceptable’ structure of the whole process- she had no chance to find the money to buy the phone because she is living in a slum neighborhood and her father is a cleaning worker. She is not allowed to work and consumes her personal needs with the 150 TL orphan pension of her 14 years old brother. Even in her negative position, Sümeyye, during the one week period while trying to find money in order not to lose her boyfriend, she was also continue to seek for a respect and recognition. She was telling the other young people that *“I am the girlfriend of Murat, I am considered to be your brother’s wife”*. As a researcher in the field, I had nothing to do except talking to her. After all she anyway found the money and bought her boyfriend that cell phone.

Although it is a telling regarding male-female relations, these last two female stories I witnessed during participant observation shows the reflections of the dominant

ideology which can be traced through their daily lives and personal relation in this subculture and the inferior positions of female members of the subculture in tandem with patriarchal relations. However, it is important to note here that we cannot argue that these women are *helplessly* stuck in this web of relationships nor can we consider them as the victims of these relationships. Because, as McRobbie argues, “For many girls escaping from the family and its pressures to act like a ‘nice girl’, remains the first political experience” (2000:42). Considering the atmosphere of Turkey in which conservative tendencies grow more and more by ever day in Turkey, escape of thee women from their families and larger communities such as neighborhoods and realizing themselves as the members of this subculture can indeed be considered as a political experience if not an act.

To sum up, in that part of the study, the material conditions of those young people tried to be analyzed. In the consideration of in-depth interviews and the observations during the field research, their material conditions are dominated by being in an ambiguous position by working under the conditions of precarity and as a result of that experiencing unemployment permanently. Also, that mutual relationship depend on financial and emotional support and engorge itself with the meaning worlds shaped by cultural reflections of neoliberalism to everyday lives and patriarchal structure of the society, is a very significant part of the survival tactics developed under the permanently experiences unemployment.

### **4.3 Subculture Formation**

In the previous section, I mentioned the material conditions these youth bare within. While the material conditions these youth have been through carry them to a state of hopelessness and anxiety in which in a sense they are trapped, their view on other people, just like to their jobs, is shaped by the notion of temporality. Through their world of meaning which stems from their materil conditions, they develop a defense mechanism by internalizing these material conditions. Both these material conditions and their reactions from within and in opposition to these material conditions force them to a state of ambiguity within the social integrity. Therefore,

these youth find themselves in a marginal position in the eyes of not only the general public but also their class. As it was also stated their ambiguous and obscure position shaped by their precarious material conditions, reflects to their perception of the world and everyday life and cultural practices. It was observed that, they develop survival tactics although their perceptions are shaped through those conditions, they form In that part of the study the cultural practices that form this subculture will be understood under three titles, such as; visual style, musical tastes and spatial dimensions.

#### **4.3.1 Visual Style**

As it was stated above, visual image and style is one of the main determinants of apache subculture. Apaches have a distinctive visual style. They can be distinguished through their hair style (has already been called as apache hair- short at the front and sides, long at the back with a gelled-up Mohican on top) colorful, florescent and skinny shirts; shalwar trousers that goes skinny in their ankles with so many pockets on it, sport shoes which are the imitations of the brand Converse; accessories which are the imitations of famous brands. Such kind of clothes and accessories are sold mostly in Maltepe bazaar. As it was stated in previous chapters, the visual image of apache is one of the main objects of the labeling process. They are defined as people of lower class who are not dressing properly to their class position and trying to form a fake and imaginary appearance by wearing the merchandise marks of famous brands.

As De Certeau states “There is no law that is not inscribed on bodies” (De Certeau, 1984; 139) and also as Fiske states that “the body and its specific behavior is where the power system stop being abstract and become material” (Fiske, 1992; 162). In order to track the abstractions of those laws, in this part of the study, the visual image and the meaning constructed through their visual images and concentrated in the Apache style will be examined. The meaning formed in their subcultural practices can be understood in terms of their ambiguity in three points; first of all their loss of engagement to the material and cultural practices of class redound itself



in their visual appearances and they depart from the class practices; secondly they form a new position through their visual style and define themselves through it, and lastly, although this effort contemplates their marginality and ambiguity in the social integrity, it operates as if they they position themselves.

#### **4.3.1.1 Visual Departure from Cultural Practices of Class**

The loss of material engagement of the class redound itself in their visual appearances. Experience of such kind of a rejection in a given time period is not a coincidence. This situation is directly related with the process of becoming precarious which prevent them to construct a solidaristic relation with the working class and make them live in an uncertain and marginalized position. It is a both the result and reason of that rejection. They explain their previous outlook before the application of the apache style as suits and loafer shoes, and “*act like a big shot*”. Savaş explains their previous style in those words;

“Sister ,Previously, do you know what was the style, in the past we were wearing suits and loafer shoes...whoever says I didn’t dress like that tells lie”

As it was stated in the previous chapters, such kind of elements of dressing style when they are applied by lower class people became a part of the visual codes that are attributed to the *kiro* image. The departure from the visual cultural practices of their class happened through an internalization of those labeling codes and indicates as a consciousness that Dubious describes as “double consciousness...a peculiar sensation... this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness...” (1996: 9) Those young people who internalize that approach, define the other people living in their neighborhoods with that dressing style too. They not only define inhabitants of their neighborhood with that dressing style but also they label them as kiros too. Cedrik who is living in a slum neighborhood; Ufuktepe, says the following words for the inhabitants of his neighborhood;

“Already, If you say neighborhood it’s full of kiros, slum neighborhood.”

The other interviewees use the label of kiro that Cedrik uses for the people living in his slum neighborhood Ufuktepe, in order to define the people living in their neighborhoods too. They differentiate themselves from those dressing codes, as it is seen in the statements below;

After describing his style pikaçu differentiate it with his neighbor’s style;

“Apaches have their own way, kiros remain in a certain place, and they model and imitate someone and behave like them.”

His word on comparison of two styles indicates their mobilization and departure from the cultural practices. Sezar also, state that departure through their visual images like that;

“In any case, you can differentiate us from kiros towards our dress and appearances”

Cahit and Kaan who are living in Ege mahallesi state their thoughts in that way;

“There is no old solidarity in the neighborhood...I think ne solidarity remains any more, before everybody was protecting each other, everybody used to know each other. But now, new people are moving to the neighborhood. Nobody knows each other. There is no solidarity anymore.”(Cahit)

“[in the neighborhood] when there is a fight I wouldn’t engage, everybody is a different country. When I have a fight now, most of my firends wouldn’t help me.”<sup>29</sup> Kaan)

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<sup>29</sup> A rapid urban transformation process has been happening in Turkey, in recent years. Those statements of two interviewees emphasize on the effects of that transformation process. The transformation in slum neighborhoods is a significant dimension for the case of apache subculture. However, In order to define the borders of the thesis study, the main emphasize of the thesis study is the subculture that is created out of their neighbourhoods.

They describe the people living in their neighborhoods as *kıro*, distinguish themselves from *kıro* both visually and spatially, and call themselves as *tiki (preppy)* and *Kızılay Kids*, However they cannot escape from being the subjects of labeling.

#### **4.3.1.2 Formation of the ‘Apache Style’**

As it is stated in the previous parts, the material departure from the working class redound itself in the cultural practices. As a result of that material and cultural, departure they try to create a new position which express itself in the visual images. However, they cannot fulfill the material requirements of this departure. They are also labeled as Apaches there. They construct a linkage between their visual style and socio economic conditions.

For example, Tuğba states that relation as such:

“Rich people...I won’t say rich, the ones who get educated and earn very good money are the ones who do not give importance to the turnout. I saw with my own eyes, I witnessed once. The other ones whose salary is minimum and like to hang around, are interested to their apparels more, I don’t know why...but the others [rich people] are not like that, once I went to a wedding in İstanbul, there were only the doctors. I looked at every one of them, they were the people who earn at least 5 or 6 thousand liras, and it was a big wedding, all of them were wearing blue jeans, shirts. I saw it in here, Richs don’t give importance to appeals but the ones like us are the people who give very much importance to the appeal with chickenfeed salary (üç kuruş)”. (tuğba)

Suat describe the visual style through a distinction also;

“-Their [kids living in upper-class neighborhoods such as Ümitköy and Çayyolu] garments were simple, we were dressing colorful, you can also realize now that we are all still like that, we absolutely blend the color of our shoes with our hat or t-shirt or something else. If it does not fit in a proper way we shift our clothes or accessories with each other. For example, if cedrik is wearing a red jacket and it fits with my t-shirt, I

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For further studies, a detailed study on the transformation of the slum neighborhoods would be supplementary in order to examine that subculture.

take his jacket and give him mine. For example this jacket had travelled among at least ten people. I mean, anyway it did not remain for the eleventh person, it is torn to shreds. Any way they were not calling us Apaches, they were calling us tikkies, after that it turned in to the Apaches.(suat)

-what does the difference between apache and tikki, what does tikki means?

- the difference between apache and tikki is... the same... but... just some parvenu bears changed it! The real thing of tikki means be a wannabe to the rich but personally we never be wannabe to the rich, we become everything, we become emo, we became tikki, we become apache, they call us everything. (Suat)”

Ufuk states that with those words;

“Now, when you dress in another way, they call you kiro, when you dress like that they call you jonjon, when you dress in between normally, they call different things, I do not understand why they call like that...They call you apache, they say look at that hair, look at that apparel, they never look at their own appearances, their appearances also have no difference from us.”(Ufuk)

Also Cedrik explains this situation like that;

“-For example, I will explain from my angel, I like to wear ragged pants, rich people wear ragged pants as a fashion, but when our poors wear a ragged pant, they say “hey look at that poor, look at that almsman!”. See, this is the feeling that carries the appearances of the people to an exactly different dimension. It is difficult to explain it.”

-What kind of a dimension is it?

-They make discrimination between rich and poor.

“In any case, even If you had bought the original[brand], they would have called it imitation, for example If this nike[sport shoes] had been the original, they would have called it imitation again.”(kaan)

#### **4.3.1.3 “Making do”**

Their ambiguous material conditions state them in an obscure position. In that sense, their visual style operates way of ‘making do’ and a ‘tactic’ to situate in a position. Positioning emerges through the looks of the people on the streets. As Erdoğan

states “The narrations of poor/subalterns, indicate that social relations gradually became a gaze relation and even acquire a ocularcentric character”(Erdoğan,2007;52)

That gaze relation has ‘double nature’ that contains rejection and seeking for recognition. “In order to feel ourselves complete, another one should see us. However, on the other hand kingdom of eyes that surround us always reminds us we are always kept under surveillance. Here, the fact that people both need and be exposed to the gaze, the conflict that all of us either way find ourselves in it; turn the destiny of the subaltern completely to an injury.”(Gürbilek, 2008: 147). Those young people respond to that gaze relation in two ways through the formation of a subculture. Firstly, with an internalized departure from the previously constructed cultural practices and the labeling codes that are attributed to them in the society such as; visually the image of kiro, spatially the identity of varoş. Secondly, with a need to the recognition of the same gaze in order to construct a new position such as visually tiki, spatially Kızılay kids etc. Through such kind of a process, they try to construct an identity through a kind of disguise and illusion by the modification of their style. This departure which is tried to be realized through visual images, “imageries” and even “individualisation of commodity and reification of individual” can be considered as a continuum of neoliberal understanding and values which manifests itself as an internalized worldview in every realm of culture, daily life and humanly encounters. This worldview is not unique or specific to these youth but is a common worldview. This worldview makes itself visible in certain aspects of daily life, for instance, an advertisement on the billboards of a clothing company which says “Life changes as you change”. Although this slogan in the ad reminds us Bloch’s principle of hope by voicing the dire need of change in life, promising this change through an individual and imaginative way is disappointing, which cannot meet Bloch’s hope in any way.

During the interview, Ufuk who had been living on the streets for 12 days was wearing an exaggeratedly spiky hair which was groomed and meticulously

conditioned with hair gel, eligibly to the apache hair style which constituted a contradictory image with his position. However, that contradictory visual image is not an exception compared to other interviewees.

According to Mercer,

“...hair is never a straightforward biological fact, because it is almost always groomed, prepared, cut, concealed and generally worked upon human hands. Such practices socialize hair, making it the medium of significant statement about self and society and the codes of value that bind them, or do not. In this way hair is merely a raw material, constantly processed by cultural practices which thus invest it with meanings and value.”(Mercer,1987; 299)

As it was stated above, not only hair but also the style is one of the main determinants of the apache subculture. When Ufuk was asked that how and why he dressed his hair like that, he responded that he went to an acquainted coiffeur shop that he had been used to go when he had no money and he requested to wash and shape his hair in there. After he continued his words as such;

“In this way, although my body is not clear if my appearance is clean, I can feel myself clean. If your appearance is dirty, what does the person in front of you think? They say look at that, look at that weirdo, like a tinner-addict, like a bali-addict but when you appear like that the person in front of you cannot contain such kind of a thought.”

Ufuk who remains as an abstraction of the case of Apaches with his picture at the moment of the narration of his own story, shows how he tries to hold on to a position through his visual image. He compares and contrasts his apache style visual image with the visual image of a homeless thinner-addict. His statement presents a linkage between his ambiguous precarious position which oscillates between unsecured employment and living on the streets and the visual image of Apaches. As it is observed in the answer of him, style operates, a way of rejecting the image of his socio-economic position and as a tool to “making it”. “The ones who find themselves locked in to their social conditions shut out from access to 'illusion' of

'making it', this marginalized urban formation of...culture sponsored a sense of style which answered back against these conditions of existence.”(Mercer, 1987: 308)<sup>30</sup>

He rejects being a homeless, thinner-addict and tries to escape from this position. His explanation states an effort to transcend the position of a homeless thinner-addict by manipulating “the look” of the “other” people towards him through the modification of his visual image. His comparison describes a gaze relation that depends on pretending to be something and seen as if something by the other people. He tries to escape from the gaze that will recognize him as a homeless thinner-addict by changing his appearance. The significant point is that, although his living conditions -at that moment- that includes living in the streets and being dirty remains constant, he can feel himself as the person who he pretends to be by gaining recognition of the “other” people. Moreover, the relationship between socio-economic position and cultural codes on dirtiness and cleanness makes his emphasize on pretending to be clean more significant.

#### **4.3.2 Music Consumption and Production**

Next to a visual style, aforesaid young people are identified with a music and dance genre. In this part of the study not the genres but the meaning they constitute will be examined. They both listen to arabesque music and dance with tecktonik music. Arabesque music genre has been identified with lower class slum culture in Turkey since late 1960s. Tecktonik is a music genre emerges as a mixture of electronic and techno music in France in 2001. It is a global consumer-based culture that they integrate through the internet. Also, there is another music genre called ‘Arabesque Rap’ which is identified with this subculture and not only consumed but also

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<sup>30</sup>Kobena Mercer’s article is about the ‘conk’ hair style which is performed by African American youth by making their hair straight and sometimes dyeing it. Although, the styles and the subjects are different from each other, his statements are relevant for the case of Apaches.

produced by the members of the subculture. The dual character of their taste of music also reflects their perceptions.

#### **4.3.2.1 Departure from Arabesque Music**

At the first sight, it is considered that the members of this subculture have a complete indifference to the life and the world. However, once the cultural practices of this subculture are analyzed, as stated above, it is evident that this indifference is utilized as a means of defense mechanism against internalized hopelessness.

Their relation with the musical genres is one of the fields that express their ‘worlds of meanings’. As I mentioned in the previous parts, arabesque music has a strong and deeply rooted history in cultural and even political life in Turkey which also manifested itself in practices of the class these youths are also a part of.

Sinan listens, both arabesque and foreign pop and electronic music. He states that, arabesque reflects his real problems and ‘*the other one*’ makes him forget about his problems.

“-Arabesque songs are something like, they tell about real lived events, the others are something like, let up nuisances and get in the groove.”

-what kind of nuisances are they?

-At that moment, financial troubles are my problem. When you leave the house, you think every day, is it going to be like this way or that way. First and foremost there are financial problems, everybody have them. My parents have arguments with each other, also this makes me distress.”

Ufuk also states that;

“Arabesque music...sometimes you take some words in the songs to heart, just like you lived them, and it tells about you...but when I dance, for example, now my mother is in the hospital, you have arguments with friends, you fight, you got beaten, I go there I start to dance, in any case,



I forget all my nuisances when I start to dance, I abandon into it, when I try to make my moves better, when I devote myself to improve my moves, I forget all my nuisances there. But when I finish that dance and get out of it, the nuisance came back to my mind again.”(Ufuk)

Mesut also defines his music consumption as a mixture of arabesque and tecktonik music and he explains the difference between them according to the emotions that they relate like that;

“I listen to arabesque while I feel depressed, I have problems. So I abandon to dance in order to forget all about them. I am a hyperactive boy, I don't get tired while dancing, at the end when I go back home, I calm down. My grandmother also likes my cool mood. It makes the person calm. Step-by-step it deenergizes you. You feel like in another world, you strain away, you dance. Dance means tranquility, you get out of jam.

-What makes you depressed?

- People giving orders frequently such as my bosses, my family, people who think themselves superior.

-Who are those people?

-“I...I...fff... I am not a boy coming from a rich family, but there are some people, living in Çankaya or somewhere like that, live off their parents' money, glitzy people...they don't know us...They teach dancing with money...but they don't know...they don't know ours like this... we are dancing and laughing, they ape us, they say about us that they don't have money but why are they happy? They ape us, our people are fond of money.”

#### **4.3.2.2 The Role of Tecktonik Music**

Tecktonik originates in France in 2001 as Tecktonik music movement. Briefly, Tecktonik music was created in late-night parties under the name of "Tecktonik Killer" in a club in Paris. It became popular among French youth not only with the music and dance but also with some elements of style. The music and the dressing style spread by the help of the dance videos uploaded on YouTube and effected young people from all around the world. It is described by the company owners as a safe and commercial movement In 5 March 2009, in an article on BBC News the

style was described like this that; “A distinctive Tecktonik look grew up there as well[in Britain]. Skinny jeans, fluorescent T-shirts, and maybe a flashy accessory like day-glow gloves. And the haircut - short at the front and sides, long at the back with a gelled-up Mohican on top.” .The producers of the music have obtained the patent rights of the word 'Tecktonik' in 2002 after becoming aware of the strong market demands of the youths. They also formed and obtained the patent rights of the brand TCK under which they have been designing and selling the clothes that identified with those young people ever since. Nowadays, TCK is a profitable brand that makes product contracts with well-known brands such as, Reebok, Nintendo Wii and Sony Ericsson. Also, the company made an advertisement contract with the most famous advertisement company of France; namely, TF1 Licensing.

These youth consume certain elements of Tecktonik music but if we remember De Carteau: “The presence and the circulation of a presentation tell us nothing about what it is for its users. We must first analyze its manipulation by users who are not its makers.Only then we can analyze the secondary production hidden on the process of its utilization.”(De Carteau,1984; xiii)

Their music consumption with its contradictory dual character, reflects their ambiguous and in-between position. According to the field research, the combination of both genres show an effort to grow distance to their real pain and distress through switching from arabesque music which is more familiar to their pain to tectonic dance which symbolize “apathy”. However, this change in their audial taste is not an absolute translocation. It is an intertwined fusion of the cultural codes of their class and dominant culture, also some elements of tectonic culture which is an “outsider” culture that they integrate through the World Wide Web.

Listening to Arabesque music represents a timeframe that they stay alone and think about their real problems at home. It is the music of their own habitus. However, dancing with tecktonik music shows itself as a way of socialization in Kızılay. They share not the nuisances but the negation of them.

They make comparisons between two kinds of music through the feeling they create. While arabesque make them think about their real life problems, tecktonik occurs as a defense mechanism that procure to ignore their problems.

Hüseyin also constructs a linkage between music, dance and neglecting the problems. He says that;

“I forgot with dance the problems I have. For example, if there is a nuisance and I can’t get out of it, I abandon myself to dance.

-What are those problems?

-Nothing... girlfriend sometimes...I don’t have problems”

Hüseyin is one of the interviewees who do not want to talk about their problems so much. Although he explains his problematic material conditions during the interview, he avoids answering the direct questions on those problems. Such kind of a silence or circumlocution that talks for itself was observed during the some other interviews.

All of the interviewees declare that they try to ignore their problems with tectonic music. When the problems that they want to ignore is asked, they response to this question with various answers, such as; their problems with boy/girlfriends, families, financial problems, commands of their bosses and belittlement of rich people towards them. Their statements evince that they tend to ignore and neglect their problems arising from a class contradiction through their cultural practices. As a result of that tendency they develop not a total departure but a distance to the arabesque music which is identified with their own class culture and is a music genre that depends on expression of the problems. They “do not mount their solutions on the *real* terrain where the contradictions themselves arise” (Clarke, 1993; 189). Tecktonik music and dance is used as a means of pseudo solutions to those problems.

Next to the apathy, dance creates another mood. During the field research it was observed that, dance is the only field that they used the word “success”. Only while dancing, they feel themselves successful and think that they are achieving something. When it is asked that is there any field in their life that they feel successful or good in their life, they always responded negatively. Coşkun who define himself as a naturally gifted dancer says that;

-While dancing I feel successful

-Is there another field that makes you happy or successful?

-No, only dance(coşkun)

Such feeling of success towards dance is also observed in other interviews. This feeling comes from the challenge in dance in which it is to be learned and practiced well but more importantly for these youth, this feeling derives from being watched. Besides dance provides a mean in the conflict with “rich people” as Mesut mentioned earlier, as a tool of ignoring the rich people and as a floor for the youth to think they are superior to rich people, it also tells that dance has another function as much as their visual image. For them, dance is a way of “making do”, an act as if “they are happy and everything is ok”, but also a tool for spectacle. By making themselves open to spectacle, by being visible with their dance; they create a space for themselves in the city, on the bridges and in the parks in Kızılay, although this space is on the edge.

#### **4.3.2.3 Arabesque Rap-subculture**

Although those young people in Turkey articulate in to the Tecktonik culture in means of visual style and music consumption, it is obviously observed that they do not totally depart from the Arabesque music and Arabesque culture. Next to, two separate consumptions of music genres, they consume a hybrid music genre called ‘Arabesque Rap’. By the developments in technology and the web 2.0, means of music production became widely accessible. Those young people not only consume

but also are able to produce music via cheap microphones and computers and publish them on internet. So Arabesque Rap has a furthermore significance due to being a direct cultural production of the young people who are called Apaches. Arabesque Rap, which is identified as “Apache music”, reflects such kind of a duality that is stated above. Instead of consuming contradictory emotions of two different types of music in different times and space, Arabesque rap combines both moods together. It emerges through a mixture of Arabesque, techno and rap music. Already, there is such kind of an instrumental song which contains some elements of both genres called “Apache March”. Arabesque Rap is a new music genre contains the rapturous rhythms of both genres and the words that we are used to hear through the Arabesque songs that express pain and hopelessness through the situation of being dump by the girl/boyfriend or being alone because of being poor.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> “Don’t love me girl  
I am a vagabond  
I smell like opium and smog  
I don’t know song  
I roll joint and bong  
You go to bars and discos  
I go out streets  
...  
While you sleep in your bed  
I stay in the street  
You wake up at ten  
I in the dawn  
You smell like perfume  
I opium  
...  
we are poor master (*usta*) nobody loved us”  
dj gencco

Nucleus of that contradictorily structured genre originates from the transformation in Arabesque culture in Turkey after 1980s. The transformation in the music reflects the effects of liberal ideology in the cultural sphere. As It is mentioned in the previous chapter the arabesque culture has shifted in relation to the political atmosphere of Turkey. While the 1970s showed a more protest tune in their songs, with the entry of neoliberal politics in Turkey in the 1990s the songs, and inevitably culture, shifted towards a more individualistic, pragmatist tendency.

Following the transformation through 1980s, we can observe the point arrived in the world of meanings of those young people. The contradiction between the pain and the ‘imitation of pain’ becomes more visible in the previously consumed and produced Arabesque Rap songs. Although the reason for the pain; not being loved because of being poor, or being invisible in the public still remains, the reflection of the pain loses its sedateness and persuasiveness. The structure of the songs that reflects the problems and expresses an anger and a resistance at the same time produces its own solution to them; a mood of apathy.

Reflections of the meaning constructed in music consumption and production can be observed in their visual representations. Their photos that are shared in social network sites is another field that their world of meaning that reflects to their music consumption can be observed. Those photos have a significant effect on the spread of the definition of apache and the labeling process in social media. By the examination of those photos, we find an opportunity to observe such kind of a contradictory structure.

Such a contradiction can be observed in the photos of the young person who is sitting on the balcony parapet with a gun in his hand and with lots of empty beer bottles around him, In the photo of the young person who took his photo with his webcam while crying, in the photos of the young people who pose by holding a toy gun on his head, put a knife on his throat or blade to his wrist with ketchup to imitate blood. In such photos, there occurs a contradiction between the “pain” and

the “imitation of pain”. As it is known that, losing hope, wish to die and such are the core concepts in arabesque culture. The image of the people who are giving harm to themselves in the concerts of well-known arabesque singers (Müslüm Baba) is a well-known image for the 70s of Turkey’s popular culture. However, in most of the photos of Apaches, there can be seen young people who are stating a gun to their heads, or a knife to their throats or even putting a knife on their wrist with some ketchup etc. Or some poses written familiar ‘arabesque’ quotes on it with Photoshop.

Concordantly, in arabesque and Teckno duality, in the genre of Arabesque Rap and in the visual images that the imitation of pain and resistance is displayed the present position of the transformation started in late 1970s can be observed.

### **4.3.3 Spatial Departure**

Under these circumstances stated above, departure from class through their cultural practices such as style and music, as a reflection of their liminal material conditions, becomes the reason of a spatial departure, too. Although a high amount of the members of the subcultures live in slum neighborhoods of the city, they both spend most of their time in Kızılay and define themselves as inhabitants of this city center. However, they also cannot integrate into there and being proper to their material position, occupy a liminal space in the edges through this subculture. In this part of the study those spatial dimensions of that subculture which contains a departure from the neighborhoods, an effort to integrate into the city center and the spatial operation of the subculture will be explained.

#### **4.3.3.1 Spatial Departure from the Neighborhood**

Almost half of the interviewees live in slum neighborhoods in Mamak, Çamlıca, Abidinpaşa, Etlük, Ufuktepe, Türközü. The other half come from the lower-middle class districts like Sincan, Demetevler, Cevizlidere, Batıkent. Seven of the interviewees who currently live in flats, mentioned that they used to live in slums in

the previous years. However, they do not feel any belonging towards their neighborhoods also the visual and musical practices of that subculture marginalize them in their neighborhoods and consolidate that feeling.

Kaan states that their visual departure is one of the reasons for spatial departure;

“We are dressing like this in there[Kızılay]. Our families and relatives don’t like it...in neighborhood it is also not liked...in some places you can’t dress like that...they say look at that weirdo...they don’t dress like that, they wear suits.” (kaan)

Tuğba who is living in an apartment in Sincan also mentions the similar thoughts;

"Screw the neighborhood! I can’t wear whatever I want in Sincan, there would be so much talks, if you were a men , there is no problem, they look at you directly when you wear a t-shirt with shoulder straps, you get a bad reputation(adın kötüye çıkıyor) I can’t dress in Sincan like that..."(tuğba)

Cedrik who is living in a slum neighborhood, states that;

“In Kızılay there is freedom, no body judges nobody but I, in the neighborhood, they talk about my appearance, but the people in our neighborhood when they come to Kızılay, they don’t say anything to anybody but when you do the same act in the neighborhood they censure you...The other day when I was walking in the neighborhood, friends came and say “boy are you a women or something, you are wearing a red trouser”. However, our world in here is colorful, just some people say don’t be deceived by being attracted to the colorful lights of the world but however, there is no such thing, If you see the colorful lights of the world, you also can look at to the life from a different angle.”  
Cedrik

Sümeyye also state same kind of a perception;

"I can’t hang out in the neighborhood...they say you have grown up, you are going to get married. For example, when I dress to go to Kızılay...They look at me and say that she is a sufferer (*mağdur*) but she doesn’t seem like a sufferer. She seems richer than us. I am a teenage



girl. I suffered a lot, I say to myself at least my appearance became beautiful” (Sümeyye)

As it was mentioned above, the visual style of the subculture operates as a way of making-do for the ones who are not able to engage to their class positions and depart from it and consolidates their liminality. Sümeyye’s statement emphasizes the perception of the Merve who is living a lower-middle class neighborhood, state similar thoughts;

"In there [Cevizlidere] how can I say, they are not like that...I tie my hairs and wear no make-up there. Also I have lots of relatives there. They would make gossip. All in all I have been living there for 17 years, with only one mistake I would be a gossip material."(Merve)

Ufuk who is living in a slum neighborhood Solfasol; states his departure from his neighborhood like that;

"There aren’t people dressing like me in Solfasol, at the first times, when I started to dress like that they were ostracizing me, There were times that elder ones bite me they asked what kind of a apparel is this. They were doing this for my favor but I said that I can’t change my style. Accept it or not. I can live like that I don’t need you. I can live without you too."(Ufuk)

Ufuk’s sentences of “I can live like that I don’t need you. I can live without you too” also emphasize the dimensions of that departure. Most of the interviewees state similar reasons for their departure from their neighborhoods. Under the conditions of employment, they state that they have no time to spend in their neighborhoods. Under the conditions of the unemployment, they state that there is nothing to do in the neighborhood. When it is asked that how do the interviewees spend their time in neighborhood while they are unemployed, a feeling of boredom and nothingness becomes visible. Kaan states that;

“When you have no job, you have nothing to do in the neighborhood, what can you do, nothing. Stay at the corner of the street from morning till night.

-What are you doing?

-Nothing...protecting the neighborhood.

-From who?

-Nobody, we are protecting it from ourselves”(kaan)

Cahit when it is asked that how does he spend his time in neighborhood when he has no job, states such kind of a feeling of boredom

“You barrow a car, you buy a little bit gas and then you ride, you ride and then you go and give back the car, your are still in the neighborhood.”

Cedrik also sates his reason of not spending his time in the neighborhood;

“I came to Kızılay for its environment. When I’m home, I will openly say, I feel like those walls are closing on me (cedrik)

None of the interviewees feel any belonging to their neighborhood. While, their liminal material position marginalizes them in society, their effort to find a position through construction of that subculture also marginalizes them in their own class. The conditions of both their departure and exclusion interlock with each other.

#### **4.3.3.2 Liminality in the City Center Kızılay**

As it was stated above a departure from the cultural practices of their class leads to a spatial departure. In that sense aforesaid young people rather than their neighborhoods spend most of their time in Kızılay where most of them also work in temporary jobs or seek for a job. And define themselves as inhabitants of this city center, and call themselves as Kızılay boys(*Kızılay bebeleri*).

As Gelner states, “Working-class youth thus seem to live out the break-up of their community. Far from being alienated by this, however, these young people ‘solve’

their problem when they leave their community precisely by becoming subcultural.”(Gelder, 2007: 23).

Kızılay with its central position in means of transportation is the most available and accessible urban space of Ankara. Also there are other reasons of that choice. Ulus which is one of the old centers of Ankara, is a places that is defined by the interviewees as “*you can’t hang out in there like that [with such a visual style]*” because of its conservative structure. The upper-class centers such as Bahçeli and Tunalı in which there are cafes and stores rather than public spaces, are defined as the “*places where rich people who hang out in definite places go*”.

Kaan defines the reason of not spending his time in those places like that;

“I don’t know how to say, for example I have a Doğan branded car, or for example let’s think about my cellphone before it was a new model, it was a good one but now my friend’s phone is better than mine. We are seen just like that, people are looking at us, getting a load of. While we are walking on the street we are thinking that people are looking us for two things. Either they like us or despise us. Ha, if I had gone to that place [Bahçeli, Tunalı] with my BMW car, they wouldn’t even look at us, because their cars also would be the same with ours. People are not interested with the ones who are looking the same. If someone is looking at you, you might be superior or inferior to him/her”

Kaan states that he does not prefer to go such places because of the felt class distinctions in the encountered gazes. Moreover, his example which depends on identifying his feelings through the relation of commodities is beyond being a metaphor reflects as an abstraction of individualization of commodities and reification of individuals.

Kızılay also with its ordered structure is a place that they do not have the material conditions of integration. In that sense, the city center with its cafes, bars, theatres or cinemas is a blocked place for them. They cannot integrate into the city life due to the lack of money and network As Cohen states that;

“For the working class adolescent only the town was left. And here-right from the drab cafes...to more sophisticated entertainment arenas...-ways has been blocked. These scenes provided few opportunities for excitement, autonomy and sense of action. Either nothing at all was offered or it was dull or mediocre. He did not have enough money to participate nor the talent, luck or personal contacts to really make it, so faced by leisure goals he could not reach, with little commitment or attachment to others, his situation contained an edge of desperation.”(Cohen, 1972;153).

As a result of the ordered structure of that place, they remain, in the footbridges, street corners and parks of Kızılay. As long as they do not have material conditions of integration, they experience liminality by “literally being on the threshold, in no man’s land”. First and second interviewees were met on a footbridge in Kızılay. A café in a bookstore in Kızılay, was chosen in order to conduct the first and second interviews. However, both of the interviewees showed an uncomfortable manner in that place. They stated their uncomfortable position with those sentences; “*we are not used to such kind of places*” or “*normally, we don’t come to cafes, we are hanging in the parks*”. After observing the uncomfortable manners of the interviewees places for the interviews were changed. They experience that place through their cultural practices and create their own spaces; by their visual style and dancing.

“The ‘street’ is one destination for those who deviate from the home... But the street is also a key aspect of organized urban planning, and it is heavily policed and patrolled, monitored, regularly cleaned, and so on. Legitimated notions of what is appropriate to the street, and what is not, structure the visible and public landscape of modern cities” (Gelder,2007;18).

Under these circumstances, the central park of Kızılay; Güvenpark is the main place they came together. While Güvenpark, is an interstitial place that people meet each other, have a short rest or came and go; however, for the aforesaid young people, it is a place that they situate. The overpass in Kızılay is also significant in terms of how the subjects of this study utilize them. Keeping the city planning from 1994 to today in mind, the city center Kızılay, as well as the boulevards and main streets on

and of Kızılay, have been designed on the principle of a smooth transportation and traffic but not pedestrian priority. The overpasses across these main streets for pedestrians built in this period increased the distance that pedestrians has to walk thus made city spaces unavailable to the pedestrians. In that sense, these overpasses are inefficient structures. (Öncü;2009,p.12). According to the data provided by TMMOB, especially 19 overpasses in Kızılay cannot be utilized by the pedestrians (Öncü:2009, Kaplan;2009,p.58). Therefore, overpasses are left mostly uninhabited or unused by the people who work or live in the city center so that they became a highly significant part of tactical usage of the space by the youth called *Apaches*.

#### **4.3.3.3 Occupation of a Space through Public Visibility**

Their cultural practices such as; style and dance, enable them to be visible in the public and occupy a space in the city center. All of the interviewees define the reason of their visual style as to become visible and to be defined in a position through taking attention of the people in the city center. During the participant observation in Kızılay, a group conversation occurred about their visual style.

-Why are you dressing colorfully?

-To be remarkable, spectacular, normally for example we gather as a group, when we stand in the statue of Güvenpark, all the people's looks are on us, the ones who have the same style with us admire us. Well, it is something like, we are in here! In the country everybody wants to spread something, whether the fashion or the things they are doing. The thing we are doing is different due to our turnout. People can say to us that are you ball (slur word for gay) or something? We don't give a shit. We get attention, sometimes to get attention gives pleasure to us. This turnout is called tikki (Suat)

-“The most important thing of us is that we must be the only eye catchers among one hundred people.”(Savaş)

-“Why do you have to get attention?

-“To abandon to the colorful lights of the life”(Cedrik)

- I am here (Savaş)

-“We should have a difference, we are here, well, we must be called as Kızılay kids”(Utku)

- But why?

-“Because most of the people are oppressed (ezilmiş), for example, they grow by being oppressed since their childhood and have to get attention”(Ufuk)

-“Now you just piffled!”(Suat)

They gain public visibility through their grotesque visual images. “Public visibility was a matter of being chronicled, performed and publicized by others... as well as a matter of self-expression.” (Gelder,1999; 21).In that way, the effort of becoming distinctive and visible; and integration to the city combines into the same visual style.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

In this thesis, a subculture that is formed by the young members of precarious working class who enter into labor market under the internalized conditions of precarity, in Turkey will be examined. This subculture is formed both through the mediation of their socio-economic *obscure* position and a response to it that is created in their everyday life. The members of that subculture are labeled as; “Apaches” whose name is not determined by the subjects of the subculture but given through a labeling process via a social marginalization after its emergence. They are approached as layabouts, outcast new generation *kiros* who come from slums and occupy city centers with their imitation clothes and extravagant hairstyles, dances in the public spheres. During the recent years, Apaches are used as an amusement material in social as well as in mainstream media in Turkey. Despite the social labeling, since therefore the material conditions of their *raison d'être* (*reason for being*) had not disappeared, they continue their existence. Although their usage as an amusement material in the social and the mass media had been losing its acceleration, the social marginalization and the labeling towards those people still extant and the word apache, had took its place among and articulates in the pejorative words that are attributed to the working class in the Turkish popular culture. At the present time, apache is a popular word that is being used instead of the pejorative words such as; *kiro*, *varoş*, *amele* etc. in order to define the individuals who are consubstantiated with the undesirable situations that are related with the working class.

The main concern of the study is not the labeling process but the subculture constructed by the young people who are labeled as apaches. Those young people

are visible in the big cities of all-around of Turkey. In the scope of this thesis, Ankara is determined as a field of study in order to examine apaches and their material conditions and cultural practices; mainly the construction of the subculture.

They are young members of precarious working class who works in temporary jobs depend on unsecured working under the conditions of flexible, undetermined long working hours and minimum wage. “They occupy the obscure space of being employed and unemployment (or the threat of unemployment)...As in the dawn of capitalism, they experience precarity as a so-called ‘useless’, ‘thug’, ‘dangerous’ mass without status.” (Bora, 2010) Such kind of an obscure and ambiguous position alienates and marginalizes them not only in the society but also in the working class. On the one hand the precarity produces an obscure position that prevent to engage in work and endangers loss of the feeling of solidarity on the other hand direct them a search for the lost ones. Their endeavor to be free from their obscure positions as well as the material and emotional burdens of these positions bring along the effort of an alternative social position through construction of and engagement to a subculture.

First of all, the precarious structure of the working conditions cause them on the one hand be unable to hold a job permanently and engage to their working class position on the other hand to be seen as a marginalized “mass without status” which is incapable of holding a job and taking responsibility to work by society and their own class-even by their families and neighbors. As a result of both processes aforesaid young people internalize both their obscure positions and the gaze that is managed to them. Therefore, they construct an identity on the given drifting position. This is a process that constructs and reconstructs each other in a vicious circle.

Secondly, their ambiguous position in the relations of production redounds on their cultural practices. However, although they internalize these obscure and marginalized positions, they aspire to change them and reject through such



internalization. They seek to construct a new position through survival strategies and daily tactics in the realm of cultural practices; through a subculture in which they can define and situate themselves within the bounds of possibilities of their material conditions.

As well as they neither define themselves with their working class position, slum neighborhoods and working class families and their cultural codes or fulfill the material requirements of rapturing from all of them and being articulated to the dominant culture, the subculture emerges as a mixture of all those cultural practices, mainly in two ways; first a disguise through modification of their visual images and second trying to grow distant to their real pain and distress through switching from *arabesque* music which is more familiar to their pain to *Tecktonic* dance which symbolize “apathy”. However, this change in their visual and audial taste is not an absolute translocation. It is an intertwined fusion of the cultural codes of their class and dominant culture, also some elements of tectonic culture which is an “outsider” culture that they integrate through the world wide web. The subculture that is constructed via those cultural practices also has spatial dimensions. They do not self-define through their neighborhoods or class they belong to but as “city center inhabitants”. However, they cannot fully blend in Kızılay due to their lack of material chances and network. In that sense, their cultural practices enable them to become “visible” again in an obscure space; on the footbridges, in the parks and streets of the city center Kızılay where most of them also work in temporary jobs or seek for a job. That subculture which enable them to occupy a space in the edges of the city life at the same time provide them a position to define, express and situate themselves and become visible.

However, this subculture also constitutes a continuum with their material conditions and forces them to build a “position without a position”, a third position in the edge and make them stuck there. They are labeled as apaches here and they remain to be involved in the cultural codes that they try to escape from. Instead of situating to a

position, they continue to stay in the margins. Their marginalized position is consolidated.

Theoretical framework of that study was conducted by the subcultural theories which consider that linkage between class and subcultures. Fundamentally, theoretical framework of Birmingham University's Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies' (CCCS) cultural theory which conceptualize culture within the Gramscian understanding of hegemony and subcultural theory which derived from a class-based analysis of subcultures was utilized. According to that approach, culture was conceptualized as a 'whole way of life' and totality of the experiences derived from material and social positions of its members. Culture is central to the understanding of domination, reproduction and change in social formation. It is a state of conflict between dominant and subordinate classes. Hegemony is not a permanent imposition of dominant ideology from above by a ruling class but a 'temporary balance of forces'. Subordinate class finds ways of expressing and realizing their subordinate position and experiences that are shaped by their position in material relations of production in their culture. Therefore, subordinate class forms a class culture through their experiences and 'worlds of meanings'.

Subcultures are sub-sets of those class cultures. In such a theoretical context working class subcultures are analyzed in terms of both their relations with the 'parent cultures', namely the working class culture that they derived from and their relations with the dominant culture. Experiencing the same problems of their class position with the parent culture, subcultures generate solutions to them by construction of visual image, leisure time activities. Moreover, they form a way of resistance through 'winning space' in cultural sphere. Because of the fact that their oppositions remain in leisure area, they remain as 'imaginary' solutions. In that sense, working class subcultures response to subordination is identified as a 'negotiated consciousness'.

A literature review was tried to be done by tracking the material and cultural conditions that formed stigmatizations in the Turkish society. It is also not a coincidence that in different times, subordinate subjects have been labeled with similar attributions by the dominant ideology. The usage of the labels was not emerge coincidentally in the society, they also signals a new wave of class encounters in the urban spaces, which emerge by the changing material conditions. These moments in history also provided us the key points which shape the present, ongoing process of the emergence of Apaches as well as the tool to understand the *kinship* relation between *the labeling* ones and the *labeled* ones. As a result of that literature review, the moments of stigmatizations emerged in the society indicates a turning point in the material conditions.

In the fourth chapter, the data gathered from the field research was tried to be analyzed. The people who are called Apaches are young people, at the age of 17-21, living with their working class families in slum neighborhoods of Ankara. They are students, graduates or drop-outs of vocational and regular high schools to which mostly working class children attend. They are young members of precarious working class who works in temporary jobs depend on unsecured working under the conditions of flexible, undetermined long working hours and minimum wage. They both experience underemployment and unemployment permanently. Those working conditions are the fundamental characteristics of the work almost every member of the working class encounters. However, what makes their position unique is that they are the young members of the working class who enter into the labor market under these circumstances which are recognized and experienced by these youth as given, unchanging and static thus make it impossible for them to imagine another world. “Not only is the prospect of redundancy in the middle of a working life, after more-or-less continuous full time employment, a different experience to the prospect of being an unemployed school leaver with the possibility of all but permanent unemployment, but in a contracting unskilled job market inexperienced youngsters fare badly as against more experienced older men.” (Clarke and

Jefferson;2007,211). Hence, they can only think from out of the strict frameworks of precarization.

Unemployment is not just a permanent threat for them. They permanently experience it. As a result of that processes, while, they carry the burden of both employment and unemployment positions, they cannot situate in any of them. That repetitious experience makes their experience of life and perceptions fractured. This situation leaves them in an obscure position between working class and lumpenproletariat, which in fact is the source of ambiguity. The results of my field research shows that this ambiguity and liminality created by the precarity has an utmost effect on the youth's world of meaning and subculture formation.

Firstly, under the working conditions of low-wages, irregular and/or long working hours and insecurity, an economy that depends on short-run survival, create an uncontrolled and endless routine makes them to be exposed to its fluency, feel stuck in daily basis of survival and prevents them to form future expectations. Boredom and hopelessness are the main emphases of the interviewees towards their working conditions. Also, it was observed that casualty of labor creates a sense of individualization and prevents a collective response to low working conditions among those young people. The only observable attitude towards the working conditions is individually quitting the jobs. Both being permanently fired from temporary jobs and quitting them as a response emerged from that structure of the jobs, consolidates their marginalized position. As a result of their material conditions, they construct an identity on the given drifting position. This is a process that constructs and reconstructs each other in a vicious circle.

They develop a kind of apathy towards working as an emotional and strategic defense mechanism rather than a total internalization. While, apathy towards working emotionally leaves them a space for self-control, strategically became a survival tactic under the conditions of precarity. The structure of the working conditions makes not only them but also the jobs dispensable for them and makes it

easy to be replaced with those tactics. The temporary structure of the work itself leaves them a space that they can employ hit-and-run tactics. Working for one month and leaving the job after receiving the salary becomes the patterns of survival.

That tactic is blended with the ones developed in unemployment; such as signaling (a slang word for asking for a small amount of money from the people on the street), pick pocketing, or generally receiving financial support from their friends.- especially for the males, it is a general attitude to receive financial support from their girlfriends-. At that moment, their survival tactics which are shaped through the material conditions consolidate their obscure positions.

Receiving financial support from the girlfriends is one of the main ways of survival under the conditions of unemployment. There exists a mutual financial relationship that shapes also the personal relationships between males and females in the subculture. In their relationship two main effects of the dominant ideology can be observed; patriarchal structure of the society and cultural indications of neoliberal ideology.

On the females' side, that financial relation has two reasons firstly, they try to become distant from the patriarchal and oppressive structure of their families and engagement to the subculture through their boyfriends is a way of achieving this. Secondly, when they enter into that subculture, they face with the same kind of an oppressive social network. In that network, being defined in a distinctive subculture, spending most of their times in an undefined place apart from their parent's house has a negative meaning both in society and in that subculture. So they try to gain recognition and respect through having a permanent boyfriend.

However, temporary material conditions make the youths perceive the life as an uncanny, undefined and temporary whole of relations. Those young people who confront the anxiety, uncertainty, and exclusion of capitalism, they are not free from

its seductions. Beyond the patriarchal perceptions, the perceptions of the youth shaped by neoliberal ideology can be observed not necessarily in the financial relationship between males and the females but in the statements about that relationship. The effects of the fundamental characteristics of neo-capitalism such as; consumerism, temporarily and instrumentalism can be observed in their personal relationships.

Secondly, their drifting material position reflects to their cultural formation. In that sense, their visual style, music consumption and spatial positioning operates as a tool to situate in a position.

First of all, the loss of material engagement of the class redound itself in their visual appearances. Experience of such kind of a rejection in a given time period is not a coincidence. This situation is directly related with the process of becoming precarious which prevent them to construct a solidarity relation with the working class and make them live in an uncertain and marginalized position. It is a both the result and reason of that rejection. In their visual style; positioning emerges through the gaze of the other people on the streets of Kızılay. That gaze relation has ‘double nature’ that contains rejection and seeking for recognition. (Sartre;1943)Those young people, response to that gaze relation in two ways through the formation of a subculture. Firstly, with an internalized departure from the previously constructed cultural practices and the labeling codes that are attributed to them in the society such as; visually the image of *kıro*, spatially the identity of *varoş*. Secondly, with a need to the recognition of the same gaze in order to construct a new position such as visually *tiki*, spatially Kızılay kids etc. through such kind of a process, they try to construct an identity through a kind of disguise and illusion by the modification of their style.

They explain their previous outlook before the application of the apache style as suits and loafer shoes, and “act like a big shot”. Such elements of dressing style when they are applied by lower class people became a part of the visual codes that

are attributed to the *kıro* image. The departure from the visual cultural practices of their class happened through an internalization of the labeling codes and indicates as a ‘double consciousness’ (Dubious:1996) Those young people who internalize the labels, define the other people living in their neighborhoods with that dressing style too. They not only define inhabitants of their neighborhood with that dressing style but also they label them as *kıros* too. They describe the people living in their neighborhoods as *kıro*, distinguish themselves from *kıro* both visually and spatially, and call themselves as *tiki (preppy) and Kızılay Kids*, However they cannot escape from being the subjects of labeling. Their ambiguous material conditions state them in an obscure position.

Their cultural practices such as; style and dance, enable them to be visible in the public and occupy a space in the city center in which they cannot integrate because of the lack of financial capacity and social networks . They try to become visible and to be defined in a position through ‘making do’ and taking attention of the people in the city center. In that way, the effort of becoming distinctive and visible; and integration to the city combines into the same visual style.

Secondly, their music consumption with its contradictory dual character reflects their ambiguous and in-between position too. According to the field research, the combination of both genres of Arabesque, Tecktonik and Arabesque Rap, show an effort to grow distance to their real pain and distress through switching from arabesque music which is more familiar to their pain to tectonic dance which symbolize “apathy”. Listening to Arabesque music represents a timeframe that they stay alone and think about their real problems at home. However, dancing with tecktonik music shows itself as a way of socialization in Kızılay. They share not the nuisances but the negation of them.

They tend to ignore and neglect their problems arising from a class contradiction through their cultural practices. As a result of that tendency they develop not a total departure but a distance to the arabesque music which is identified with their class

culture and is a music genre that depends on expression of the problems. Also, dancing with Tecktonik music on the footbridges, parks and streets of Kızılay, they try to integrate and occupy a space in the margins of the arranged structure of the city center.

As a result we won't say that those young members of working class are resisting to the social structure that put them in an obscure space of marginality. However, it can be said that they are trying to resist the cultural and emotional results of that structure through the possibilities of those material conditions. Subculture is a way that is formed by them as a part of that effort. It also carries the reflections of the obscurity of their positions and shows a fragmented structure in most cases. On the one hand, it can be seen as an articulation to the dominant ideology, on the other hand it still uses the old devices of representation such as arabesque culture. However, it can be said that, this subculture carries the signs of a 'not yet consciousness'. It is not yet a consciousness but that does not mean that it won't evolve to a class consciousness.



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## APPENDIX

### TEZ FOTOKOPİ İZİN FORMU



### TEZ FOTOKOPİ İZİN FORMU

#### ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enformatik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### YAZARIN

Soyadı : TIĞLI

Adı : ÖZGE

Bölümü :MEDYA VE KÜLTÜREL ÇALIŞMALAR

**TEZİN ADI** (İngilizce) : Subculture Formation of Precarious Working Class Youth  
In Turkey: A Field Research on the Case of ‘Apaches’ in Ankara.

**TEZİN TÜRÜ** : Yüksek Lisans  Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamı dünya çapında erişime açılsın ve kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla tezimin bir kısmı veya tamamının fotokopisi alınsın.
2. Tezimin tamamı yalnızca Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi kullanıcılarının erişimine açılsın. (Bu seçenekle tezinizin fotokopisi ya da elektronik kopyası Kütüphane aracılığı ile ODTÜ dışına dağıtılmayacaktır.)
3. Tezim bir (1) yıl süreyle erişime kapalı olsun. (Bu seçenekle tezinizin fotokopisi ya da elektronik kopyası Kütüphane aracılığı ile ODTÜ dışına dağıtılmayacaktır.)

Yazarın imzası .....

Tarih .....