

GENDERED FIELDS IN WOMEN'S LEISURE TIME EXPERIENCES:  
THE CASE OF 'GÜN' MEETINGS IN ANKARA

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## ABSTRACT

### GENDERED FIELDS IN WOMEN'S LEISURE TIME EXPERIENCES: THE CASE OF 'GÜN' MEETINGS IN ANKARA

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*Gün* is a particular form of female association which is mainly practiced by urban middle-class women in Turkey as a form of leisure time activity where women groups periodically meet with each other. It is also a form of 'social field' where women are positioned through their gendered existences. This thesis attempts to analyze the gendered fields in women's leisure time experiences based on an ethnographic study of two *gün* meetings in Ankara, namely *Karadenizliler* and *Komşular* meetings. In light of gender studies and sociology of leisure, it is argued that *gün* meetings create gendered fields where social control over women leads them to adopt normative feminine leisure-time activities. The dynamics in the *gün* meetings together with the participants' everyday life experiences reveal how *gün* gatherings are thoroughly gendered and how these meetings reproduce patriarchal norms despite some positive outcomes experienced by the participants.

**Keywords:** Women's studies, leisure, everyday life, gendered field, *gün* meeting.

## ÖZ

### KADINLARIN BOŞ ZAMAN DENEYİMLERİNDE CİNSİYETLENMİŞ ALANLAR: ANKARA'DAKİ 'GÜN' BULUŞMALARI ÖRNEĞİ

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*Gün*, kadın gruplarının düzenli aralıklarla buluştuğu bir boş zaman etkinliği biçimi olarak, Türkiye'de çoğunlukla kentli orta sınıf kadınlar tarafından deneyimlenen özel bir tür kadın birlikteliğidir. O aynı zamanda kadınların cinsiyetlenmiş varoluşlarına göre konumlandığı bir tür sosyal alandır. Bu tez, Ankara'daki iki *gün* grubu olan *Karadenizliler* ve *Komşular* buluşmalarının etnografik çalışmasına dayanarak kadınların boş zaman deneyimlerindeki cinsiyetlenmiş alanları incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Toplumsal cinsiyet çalışmaları ve boş zaman sosyolojisi ışığında *gün* buluşmalarının, kadınlar üzerindeki toplumsal kontrolün onları normatif dışıl bir boş zaman etkinliğine yönlendirdiği cinsiyetlenmiş alanlar yarattığı savunulmaktadır. Katılımcıların günlük yaşam deneyimleri ile *gündeki* dinamikler, *gün* toplantılarının nasıl bütünüyle cinsiyetlendiğini ve katılımcılar tarafından deneyimlenen bazı olumlu sonuçlara rağmen buluşmaların ataerkil normları nasıl ürettiğini ortaya koyar.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kadın çalışmaları, boş zaman, günlük yaşam, cinsiyetlenmiş alan, *gün* buluşması.

To My Mother and Father

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The interest in the issue of women's everyday life experiences which provide essential clues about their subordination in a patriarchal structure is increasing day by day. These 'minor' components of social life not only concerns researchers with a feminist stance, but also the social scientists who are interested in various subfields of sociology. One of these branches of sociology is leisure time studies. Leisure time, which has an important place in our daily lives and which is seen as the anti-thesis of work time, is a relatively recent concept which has been used since industrialization. Except a few early studies on the topic like Veblen's pioneering analysis of leisure class (1899), and the prominent studies of Malinowski (1931) and Huizinga (1938), the issue of leisure has become a major area of interest in the West since the 1960s. Although the studies on leisure time have diversified over time, feminist leisure theorists developed a different approach to leisure which explicitly criticizes previous androcentric analyses for neglecting women's distinctive leisure activities and the patriarchal nature of such activities. In Turkey, the patriarchal structure of women's leisure practices are enhanced through unique cultural control mechanisms over women based on two separate worlds of leisure of women and men. An analysis of the culturally specific and distinctive leisure experiences of Turkish women which are different from their Western counterparts provides a ground to make a modest contribution to the literature on feminism.

Many feminist scholars argue that feminism has evolved in three main waves. In the West, feminism developed as an activist attempt in the political sphere to gain equal rights with men in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This period is accepted as the first wave of feminism which developed around the struggle for women's education, work and suffrage in the Western world (Donovan, 2009, pp. 15-68; Dubois, 1998, pp. 8-11). The 1960s was substantially characterized as a

milestone for feminist scholarship which also initiated the second wave of feminism against gender discrimination. In the period between the early 1960s and late 1980s, feminists were not satisfied with the legal and institutional reforms which have not produced the expected outcomes for women's equality. According to Bryson, the importance of personal experiences has increased, and the concept of "patriarchy" has come into agenda (1992, pp. 163-167). The concept of "patriarchy" which is a unique system supporting "men's domination over women" has evolved to be used to understand the different, unequal and oppressive relationships between women and men (Walby, 1990, p. 19). In the same period, women's studies were established as a critique of the disciplines which have neglected women's issues for a long time in the United States and Europe (Kandiyoti, 2010, p. 167). The period after the 1980s is known as the third-wave of feminism. Third-wave feminists criticized the first and second-wave feminists who only analyzed the experiences of Western, white and upper-middle class women. At that time, the notion of 'subjectivities' entered into feminist literature as a key concept focusing on the subjective experiences of Black women or women from different ethnic groups. Hence, the researchers began to focus on "small, localized and contextually specific stories, rather than exploring over-arching master narratives" (Lykke, 2010, p. 148).

Women's experiences of everyday life and powerlessness are the two most discussed themes among the feminist scholars who basically aimed to understand the power relations in society. Feminist approaches about leisure also consider the ways how power relations are incorporated into women's gendered leisure time experiences. Feminist interest in women's leisure developed in the late 1980s and early 1990s and flourished after the 2000s. Although only a few non-feminist scholars emphasized women's unequal access to leisure time during the 1970s (Kelly, 1975, p. 185; Robinson, 1977, p. 91; Wilson, 1980, p. 28), a unique feminist approach to leisure began to develop over the last three decades. After some leading studies opened a new path for understanding women's leisure (Bialeschki, 1989; Green, Hebron and Woodward, 1990), feminist leisure studies began to proliferate after the 2000s (Bittman and Wajcman, 2000; Mattingly and Bianchi, 2003; Mattingly and Sayer,

2006; Raisborough, 2006; Sayer, 2005). These studies analyze women's distinctive experiences of time which are essentially different from men's. In other words, it is argued that women's experience of leisure time is truly gendered where traditional categories like gender division and inequality are constantly reproduced and redefined. In this context, women's leisure activities are defined as home-centered and passive contributing to women's oppression.

Turkey is a rare example where women gained various legal rights enabling their full and equal participation in public as an outcome of the Turkish modernization process. However, the reforms in favour of women have not much changed Turkish women's status in the private sphere due to the persistence of patriarchal norms in the society. Family is the basic institution controlling the lives of women in Turkey. In this respect patriarchal norms together with the cultural specificities of the Turkish society have attracted the attention of various Turkish feminist writers (Kandiyoti, 1987 and 2010; Tekeli, 1990; Arat, 2000; Özçürümez and Cengiz, 2011; Acar and Altunok, 2013). Mechanisms of cultural control over women also create a psychological separation between the worlds of women and men reflecting their different experiences of leisure time. The segregated nature of Turkish women's leisure time practices was studied by Kıray (1981 [1967]) and Kandiyoti (1981). In general, women's leisure in Turkey is highly affected by the norms of patriarchal control which lead women towards normative feminine leisure activities inside women's groups.

Reception day (*kabul günü*), which was a type of formal meeting among women, was an essential path for women to move into public life "in the first few decades of the Republican era" (Özbay, 1999, p. 561). In these days, women received crowded guests in rooms which were not open to the daily use of family members. Reception day was an important form of social gathering among women where they could socialize and reproduce traditional gender roles and femininity by learning "manners, fashion, child-rearing practices and relations among spouses" (Özbay, 1999, p. 561). After the 1980s, women's meetings have changed their form; women began to rotate

money, gold or silver coins, or other valuable materials in their meetings on a regular basis in more steady groups. According to Wolbert, in Turkey, together with the changes in political and economic structure, "the importance of money for social mobility" increased in the eighties (1996, p. 188). The *gün* meeting which is a special form of women's association in Turkey is specific to urban middle-class women. *Gün* is a form of Turkish leisure time activity where women spend their free time with their friends, neighbors or relatives usually in their houses on a reciprocal basis. Nowadays many women prefer to meet in restaurants or at coffee shops which is an emergent trend in *gün* meetings. The exact English translation of the Turkish word *gün* is 'day'. Although there are limited numbers of studies about *gün* meetings, the arguments about *gün* vary depending on the disciplines dealing with these meeting. Some ethnographic and sociological studies about *gün* aimed only to understand the specific features of these gatherings (Benedict, 1974; Sönmez et.al., 2010; Büyükokutan, 2012; Sağır, 2013). Others focused on the relationship between gender and *gün* meetings, which is a same-sex leisure time activity mostly held in private spheres (Lloyd and Fallers, 1976; Özbay, 1995 and 1999; Bellér-Hann, 1996; Wolbert, 1996). Yet others analyzed these meetings with reference to other factors like conjugal family values (Ekal, 2006) or to the role of mouth communication in consumers' decision-making processes (Alemdar and Köseoğlu, 2013). *Gün* meetings also have an economic dimension where women give and take money or other valuable materials like gold coins on a reciprocal basis. The authors studying *gün* use different names to define these meetings such as money day, gold day, silver day or currency day (e.g. Dollar, Mark or Euro days) referring to the material which is being rotated by the members of a group. This simple economic relation is called "rotating credit associations" (ROSCA) in the related literature (Geertz, 1962; Ardener, 1964 and 2014; Wu, 1974; Bellér-Hann, 1996; Ardener and Burman, 1997; Anderson and Baland, 2002). ROSCA is accepted as a strategy against relative deprivation of the groups who are economically marginal. These groups can be the residents of an undeveloped territory or a group of women who are excluded from paid work. Although it is not a rule, women-only groups play an important role in the world of rotating credit associations. In Turkey, *gün* meetings take place mainly

among housewives. However, working women as well as men such as participants' sons or husbands can attend these meetings in absentia although not on a regular basis. In recent years, working women and men have started forming their own *gün* groups with their workmates where they only rotate money. In the Turkish case of ROSCA, rotating money in women's *gün* groups has become much more widespread since the 1980s.

The aim of this thesis is to explore the functions of *gün* meetings as a gendered field which is a specific leisure time practice of Turkish women. My research questions are the following: Do *güns* reproduce traditional gender roles and gendered division of labor? Do "*güns* with savings" contribute to women's independence? Women are mostly an unrecognized category of the society which has a patriarchal structure. Older reception days were the fields of women where they could gain a certain sense of "recognition" within their group. Today, along with the "*güns* with savings", women's freedom to use money is added to the function of recognition. Hence, I will also explore whether the participants feel a sense of security with regards to both economy and being among friends. However, a discussion of the issue of reproduction of femininity which was a significant characteristic of previous reception days is beyond the scope of this study. The information used in this study is based on an ethnographic study of two *gün* groups in Ankara: *Karadenizliler* (from the Black Sea) and *Komşular* (Neighbors), respectively. There were a total of twenty-two members in both groups, eleven in each. Although the majority of the participants in both groups were married housewives, there were four retired, three working, and one student. There were also four participants who did not regularly attend the meetings but rotated the money. I named those who did not regularly attend the meetings as indirect participants as opposed to the regular or direct participants. I interviewed all of the participants, including the indirect participants. I used qualitative research methods to collect information about women's gendered experiences in *gün* meetings. I conducted in-depth interviews together with ethnography to collect detailed information about participants' daily lives. During the interviews a total of forty-seven questions were asked to the participants. The

questionnaire I prepared for those who were not regular attendants was different than the one I prepared for the regular members. In addition, I sometimes changed some of my questions during the interview depending on their occupational and marital status and whether they had any children or not. I also asked some detailed questions about their daily lives, their life expectations, and their expectations of their children and family. I also asked questions about their personal experiences of *gün* practices. These were interesting and important topics for my study since I observed that there are many parallels between women's daily lives and their leisure experiences in terms of gendered fields.

The interviews were carried out in Batıkent which is a middle class suburban area in Ankara, the capital city of Turkey. The majority of the participants had an immigration history. Although some were born in Ankara, their parents were rural origin migrants. All of the women in two *gün* groups and their families were from different segments of the middle class. Ages of the women ranged between twenty-one and sixty-five. The average level of education of the participants was high school. Most of the interviews were comfortably carried out in participants' houses with an appointment. Only one interview was carried out in a coffee shop and three were carried during the *gün* meetings. Each interview lasted about an hour. The ethnographic study of these two *gün* groups was very significant for my work. I have participated in many meetings of each group for about six months between November 2013 and May 2014. Interviews were also carried out during this time period. My participation in these *gün* meetings gave me the chance to conduct participant observation not only about the structure of the meetings, but also about the functions of *gün* in the lives of the housewives. It was also able to observe their behaviors, interactions and attitudes as members of *gün* groups which provided me with a rich and unique insight into their actions and ideas. Thus, my field notes about these observations were very important for this study. Although for an outsider these meetings appear to be very ordinary, they are very functional and have a very complex structure as I will comprehensively discuss and analyze in the following chapters.

The concept of gender needs constant reworking and redefinition based on new empirical evidence since gender relations undergo continuous flux and reinvention. In this sense, *gün* meeting is a fruitful area for further research where different characteristics of gender such as difference, inequality and oppression are experienced by women. Since mixed-sex socializing is incompatible with the norms of patriarchal control such as gender segregation, *gün* meetings become an acceptable or appropriate way of socializing for women. In this context, I define *gün* as a gendered leisure time activity of Turkish women. The term "gendered" can be simply defined as "reflecting or involving gender differences or stereotypical gender roles" (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, n.d.). Women and men become gendered through the social processes that produce gender. Beginning from earlier ages, individuals take on gendered qualities and characteristics through learning masculinity or femininity (Wharton, 2005, p. 31). I will analyze the gendered relations in *gün* meetings using the conceptual framework of Pierre Bourdieu who studied social processes through the concepts of habitus, field, and forms of capital when formulating his general theory of practice.

In Bourdieu's conceptual framework, actors' habituses are formed inside their minds without a conscious intention. They acquire a sense of self through socialization and learn the expectations of the society. In other words, they internalize the existing gender roles in a patriarchal society through socialization. However, the characteristic features of women's or men's gendered habituses are only meaningful and formed in the fields, namely through the "objective relations between positions" outside the individual's mind (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, pp. 97, 101; Ritzer, 2011, p. 530). Gendered habitus operates within gendered fields without a strategic aim. In highly gender-differentiated societies, women's everyday life experiences are surrounded by a number of 'gendered fields'. For this reason, I also define *gün* as a subfield of social field where actors, namely women, are positioned through their gendered life experiences. I argue that women enter the gendered field of *gün* meetings through their gendered habituses, i.e., the mental and cognitive structures through which they apprehend the social world as a gendered form (Bourdieu, 1989,

p. 18). At its core, *gün* meeting is a gendered field that legitimizes the patriarchal norms of male/female segregation and contributes to the reproduction of traditional gender roles through various domestic activities women have to do before and during these meetings.

According to McLeod, "women experience degrees of both autonomy and subordination as they move across social fields such as the labor market, domestic life and the intimate" (2005, p. 22). The social field of leisure time experiences of women can be added to these domains since they bear the same potential for autonomy and subordination of women. *Gün* is a social field where women behave comfortably inside a women group; it generates a sort of public sphere where women can experience some autonomy. However, it is also an area of subordination of women since as a same-sex leisure time activity, *gün* normalizes and reproduces gender segregation. The husbands of women in a *gün* group sometimes control the style of participation even in a women-only leisure practice. Furthermore, the economic relationship within the group brings about economic power and subordination simultaneously. Rotating materials have noticeable importance for the members of the group which also make the meetings continue. When women receive these credits, they gain a sense of economic power which also changes their inferior position in the family. In this manner, ROSCA both raises women's personal wealth and gives them a greater sense of financial security during the times of financial hardship. On the other hand, when women take the rotating money from their husbands, they feel a sense of subordination since housewives are financially dependent on their partners. In most cases, this money is used for household expenditures rather than women's personal savings which is another form of internalized subordination.

I argue that both patriarchal values and sexual division of labour as imposed on women by the capitalist system are essential when analysing the leisure practices and experiences of women. In this context, I will provide a brief overview of the major feminist responses to gender issues in general and also highlight the main points of

Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice in order to discuss the concept of 'gendered fields' thoroughly. I will exclude the discussions about the fragmentations in feminism since I take feminism as a totalizing approach. When discussing the concept of gendered fields in the context of women's leisure time experiences in Turkey, *gün* meetings provide a firm ground for analyzing gender relations through women's everyday life practices and subjective experiences.

I define *gün* not as gendered space but as gendered field since in the given literature the concept of gendered space mostly refers to physical space, hence analysis is carried out within the terrain of feminist geography. As indicated by Ardener, social identity is partly determined by the physical and spatial constituents of individual's environment, so "space defines the people in it" (1997, p. 2). For this reason, gender division has also many reflections in terms of spatial dimension. In *gün* meetings, too, there are also important spatial aspects of gender segregation. For instance, the reservation of inner spaces for women which are relatively safe and predictable "in contrast to the potentially hostile and untrustworthy space outside" can openly be observed in the course of *gün* meetings (Ardener, 1997, p. 10). However, the characteristic relationships in *gün* meetings are beyond the scope of feminist spatial analysis. For this reason, I use the term 'gendered field' instead of 'gendered space' to prevent any confusion about my theoretical approach which is not a feminist geographical understanding.

The methodological approach of this study is based on a synthesis of feminist point of view with a Bourdieusian approach. The most important reason for choosing the feminist approach is because "feminist methodology ... is closer to women's own experience" (Walby, 1990, p. 17). According to Ecevit, feminist methodology emphasizes the idea that the sources of feminist knowledge are women's subjectivities and their life experiences; in this context, feminist methodology focuses on the relationship between knowledge and subjectivity (2011, p. 40). Bourdieu's methodology shares the same principle which attributes a vital role to subjective experiences in knowledge production although it does not fundamentally

specify women's experiences. Despite the risk of an eclectic methodological approach to the study of *gün* meetings, my case study necessitates such a combination due to the richness of the empirical data. Various methodologies can be developed according to different feminist standpoints when studying women's *gün* meetings. However, my aim in this thesis is to discuss the broader social world from women's perspective based on their daily and direct experiences (Lengermann and Niebrugge, 2011, p. 454). Using a feminist methodology together with Bourdieu's approach fits into my analysis about women's *gün* meetings since women's own perspectives and experiences were the key issues discussed in my interviews. The attempt to synthesize Pierre Bourdieu's point of view with the Feminist approach in terms of leisure studies can be considered as an alternative way of dealing with women's internalization of traditional gender roles in gendered fields.

In Chapter Two, I will review the related literature and present the theoretical framework of my study about women's *gün* meetings in Turkey. I will argue that the *gün* meeting, which is the most common leisure activity of women in Turkey, can be best conceptualized as an explicitly gendered 'social field'. There will be two sections in this chapter. In the first section I will discuss the theoretical background of the concept of 'gendered field' with reference to the main feminist approaches on gender and with reference to Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice. In fact, I will produce a synthesis of feminist theory and Bourdieu's approach as a "feminist Bourdieusian" endeavour and relate it with the concept of 'gendered field' in order to analyze the gendered nature of women's world (Huppertz, 2009, p. 45). In the second section of the same chapter, I will provide an overview of the literature on sociology of leisure. In this context, I will summarize the main arguments of different sociological approaches on the issue of leisure. I will specifically emphasize feminist leisure studies in order to develop a more comprehensive analysis of women's *gün* meetings in Turkey.

Chapter Three will focus on the related literature in Turkey. In this chapter, I will provide an outlook about how Turkish women experience patriarchy, gender

differences, inequality, and oppression as well as how these systems influence their leisure time and their *gün* practices. The first section of the chapter provides a discussion of the leading feminist and non-feminist studies problematizing women's inferior position in Turkey. Culturally specific experiences of gender and traditional gender roles which are defined with reference to various differences between women and men and their effects on women's leisure activities will be the focus when analysing Turkish women's gendered fields. In the second section I will provide an overview of the studies about women's *gün* meetings. I will also mention some studies about the economics of rotating savings and credit associations (ROSCA); *gün* meetings appear to be another kind of the ones discussed in these studies. In this respect, this section will be the first comprehensive review of the literature on women's *gün* meetings. In relation to the literature review mentioned above, the participants' former experiences about their meeting practices will also be discussed in the same section. By adding the former experiences of the respondents, I aim to contribute to bridging the gap that exists in the literature about the social history of the women's meetings in Turkey.

Chapter Four will be an analysis of my case study about the two *gün* groups in Ankara, namely *Karadenizliler* and *Komşular gün* groups. I will first present the general profile of the participants from two *gün* groups including their socio-demographic characteristics and migration history. Then I will discuss how economy matters for indirect participation. The main characteristics of the two *gün* meetings and the commonalities and differences between these two groups will also be discussed in detail. For example, although *Karadenizliler* prefer to gather at their house and prepare food for their guests complying with classical *gün* forms, *Komşular* prefer to meet at restaurants. I will thoroughly discuss the reasons behind their choice of meeting places, inside or outside home, which generates a very fruitful discussion about the 'gendered field' of *gün*. My analysis, which is based on my interview data, also includes a discussion about the different aspects of *gün* such as the gendered nature of the meetings and the economic relations among the participants. Participants' experiences of patriarchy through family, marriage,

housewifery, and motherhood will also be discussed as additional types of gendered fields in women's daily lives.

Finally, in Chapter Five I will provide a summary of my findings and main arguments. I will also make some concluding remarks about the important theoretical and empirical outputs of this study. I will also develop some new ideas for future studies.

## CHAPTER 2

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1. Theorizing Gendered Fields

##### 2.1.1. Gender and Feminist Theory

Below, I will briefly discuss the concept of gender and the main approaches in feminist theory. The concept of gender which is one of the major contributions of feminist theory to social sciences should be analyzed as a socially and culturally constructed entity. This sort of construction includes some political outputs that legitimize the system based on differences between women and men. As noted by Acker, though the concept of gender is widely used in both everyday life and academia, even feminist scholars do not agree upon a common meaning (1992, p. 565). However, there are various definitions especially about the characteristics of gender which are based on theoretical differences among scholars. Wharton believes that this kind of theoretical and conceptual diversity can be a source of enrichment rather than fragmentation in feminism (2005, p. 2).

Gender was first referred to as the relational differences between men and women, as well as the social characteristics of these differences contrary to the biological differences between the sexes. More accurately gender is the social construction of identities and roles dividing society as feminine and masculine (Acker, 1992, p. 565). Through this division, gender pervasively orders human activities, practices and social structures as a reflection of power (Acker, 1992, p. 567). It is separated from the "biological or genetic aspects of maleness and femaleness" indicating to sex (Wharton, 2005, p. 20). Simone de Beauvoir formulates in her famously quoted statement that "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (in Butler, 1986, p.35). This statement basically refers to the distinction between sex and gender in

which the former is biological, and the latter is social. It also emphasizes that gender has a social meaning in which "being a woman is one cultural interpretation of being female" (Butler, 1986, p. 35).

Wharton defines gender briefly as the "psychological, social and cultural aspects of maleness and femaleness" (2005, p. 6). More generally, gender is a system of practices which creates and maintains the distinctions based on sex and it legitimizes relations of inequality on the basis of these distinctions (Wharton, 2005, p. 7). Gender is a system in social structure because it transcends simple characteristics of individuals, although it is continually produced and reproduced through the activities of individuals. In this context, Butler describes gender not only as a cultural construction upon identity, but also as a reflexive process of constructing ourselves (1986, pp. 36, 37). This reflexivity refers to the changes in the process of gendering from culture to culture over time. More definitely "gender matters in social life", so it organizes our identities, self-concept and our interactions as well as our institutions where power relations are allocated (Wharton, 2005, p. 9). Power issue is important since the term gender itself refers to two important and inseparable aspects of power which "constitute women and men as different and unequal" (Wharton, 2005, pp. 7, 23).

Feminist theory is a "generalized, wide-ranging system of ideas about social life and human experience developed from a women-centered perspective" in two ways: firstly its starting point is based on the experiences of women, and secondly it describes the social world through women's perspective (Lengermann and Niebrugge, 2011, p. 454). In addition, it seeks to answer the following questions: *Where* is women in social life? *What* is the impetus behind the exclusion of women? *How* we can improve and change this situation? Feminists believe that there have been deliberate efforts to exclude women from certain areas of social life throughout history and that sciences were not free from such practices. As Dorothy Smith argued in her famous book entitled, *Women's Perspective as a Radical Critique of Sociology* (1972), "Men appear in this world as necessary and vital presences. It is not a

women's world in the sense of excluding men ... as women appear in sociology predicated on the universe occupied by men" (2004 [1972], p. 21). As Lengermann and Niebrugge also argue, "what we have taken as universal and absolute knowledge of the world is, in fact, knowledge derived from the experiences of a powerful section of society, men as masters" (2011, p. 456). The second question is more related to the concept of gender. In order to understand the main motive behind the exclusion of women, feminist theory developed the concept of gender as one of its major contributions to social theory (Lengermann and Niebrugge, 2011, p. 455) although some other schools also have worked on the same concept. For this reason, I use the term gender with reference to major feminist perspectives rather than discussing it under the title of sociology of gender. However, there is no single feminist perspective; thus, "the essential qualities of gender remain a point of theoretical debate in feminism" and through these debates one can "distinguish among some of the varieties of feminist theory" (Lengermann and Niebrugge, 2011, p. 455). The third question of feminist theory is about one of the well-known characteristics of critical social theory. Feminist theorists believe that the nature of social life is indisputably gendered. More importantly, they can take a political stance and focus on 'change' in favour of women instead of only theoretically 'understanding' the nature of this gendered social life.

Politics is an intrinsic characteristic of feminist theory. Feminist writing has been always linked to feminist social activism over the last two hundred years despite some ups and downs (Lengermann and Niebrugge, 2011, p. 457). Indeed, in its earliest period, feminism was born as a social movement which has demanded certain rights and equal opportunities with men. In the Western literature, this period is described as the first wave feminism. According to Mills, "pre-modernist and 'first wave' feminism is generally associated with the women's right to vote in the US and Western Europe in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries" (2002). In these regions the term feminism generally advocated for women's rights where "women were actively campaigning around education, political participation, working conditions, health, sexuality and legal rights" (Ramazanoğlu and Holland,

2002, p. 5). On the other hand, Mills describes modernist or 'second wave' feminism that is often identified with the political and economic motives of the 1960s as the one to end discrimination based on gender and to promote equal opportunities (2002). The development of feminist scholarship since the 1960s also corresponded to the second wave of feminist activism and eventually led to the establishment of the terrain of women's studies (Kandiyoti, 2010, p. 167). This was also the period when the study of gender became part of sociology by reconceptualising the relations between men and women and by developing a criticism toward disciplines like sociology claiming that they ignore women (Lengermann and Niebrugge, 2011, pp. 457-458; Wharton, 2005, p. 4). However, 'third wave' feminism is much more concerned about deconstructing gender identities and the relations between women and men within specific communities (Mills, 2002).

Lengermann and Niebrugge (2011) developed a typology to answer the basic questions of feminism around the concept of gender. This typology is also useful to elaborate the variations within feminist theory. Gender has different qualities or characteristics in all societies. The first characteristic is 'gender difference' in which "women's location in, and experience of, most situations is *different* from that of men in the situation" (Lengermann and Niebrugge, 2011, pp. 460, 461). This characteristic was mostly emphasized by the oldest versions of feminism, i.e. cultural feminism and some institutional and interactional sociological theories. It was an essentialist argument that attributes a sort of immutability to the basic differences between men and women based on the biological 'facts' and socio-cultural processes (Lengermann and Niebrugge, 2011, p. 462). However, these theories were criticized for ignoring not only power relations in society, but also the political activism of feminism.

The second characteristic of gender is 'gender inequality' that denotes "women's location in most situations is not only different from but also ... *unequal* to that of men" (Lengermann and Niebrugge, 2011, pp. 460, 461). Theoretical representative of this approach is liberal feminism which demands some revisions in division of

labor through the re-patterning of major institutions in favor of women (Lengermann and Niebrugge, 2011, p. 467). Sexist attitudes towards women which are sometimes analyzed as traditional sustain the continuity of inequality (Walby, 1990, p. 5). Following inequality, the third characteristic is 'gender oppression' where women are oppressed by the direct power relationship between women and men, so they are "actively restrained, subordinated, molded, used and abused by men" (Lengermann and Niebrugge, 2011, pp. 460, 461). Psychoanalytic feminists and radical feminists are the key defenders of gender oppression theory. Radical feminism moves one step further and attributes an "absolute positive value" to womanhood (Lengermann and Niebrugge, 2011, p. 473). In radical feminism, "men as a group dominate women as a group" and men are "the main beneficiaries of the subordination of women" (Walby, 1990, p. 3). According to them, patriarchy is the basic arrangement of oppression as a system where men are privileged in all aspects of social life (Lengermann and Niebrugge, 2011, p. 470); this system does not derive from other systems of social inequality as capitalism or racism (Walby, 1990, p. 3). Patriarchy could be indispensable for an analysis of both gender inequality (Walby, 1990, p. 1) and gender oppression for many feminists. Some feminists such as Walby claim that both the concept and theory of patriarchy is essential to understand the different aspects of women's subordination (1990, p. 2). She conceptualizes patriarchy at different levels of abstraction. At the most abstract level it appears as a system of social relations, whereas at the least abstract level it includes six structures: "the patriarchal mode of production, patriarchal relations in paid work, patriarchal relations in the state, male violence, patriarchal relations in sexuality, and ... cultural relations" (Walby, 1990, p. 20).

Some feminists believe that women experience difference, inequality and oppression differently according to their location within society's arrangement of "structural oppression" (Lengermann and Niebrugge, 2011, p. 460). This approach is mostly defended by socialist feminists who give a special role to class together with patriarchy although structural oppression can also be sourced by differences in race, ethnicity, or age. On the other hand, Marxist feminists retain materialist analysis

arguing that gender inequality derives from capitalism which is not constituted as an independent system of patriarchy. Men's domination over women cannot be separated from capital's domination over labor. In this sense, class relations and economic exploitation of one class by another as a central feature of structural oppression determines the nature of gender relations (Walby, 1990, p. 4). Walby defines socialist feminism as a "synthesis of Marxist and radical feminist theory" and calls it as "dual-systems theory" (1990, p. 5). Rather than focusing on capitalism or patriarchy, both systems are present and important to analyze the contemporary gender relations in dual-systems theory (Walby, 1990, p. 5). Pollert intensively criticizes this dual-system perspective of Walby and her use of the concept of patriarchy as an essential tool to analyze gender relations. She claims that patriarchy as a descriptive category for explanation conveys the risk of "abstract structuralism" which loses the relationship between agency and structure necessary to understand social processes (Pollert, 1996, p. 1). Pollert also criticizes patriarchy by being a-historic (1996, p. 3), implying a fix structure, constituting men and women as antagonistic classes (1996, p. 4) and reserving no place to agency (1996, p. 10). Moreover, Pollert asserts that dualist analysis is unhelpful "since the process of gendering takes place in class relations" as a totality and patriarchy as a system de-genders capitalism (Pollert, 1996, pp. 2, 3, 9). Conversely, she offers an historical materialist approach "*by its very nature* is integrated in the explanation of substantive social experience" (Pollert, 1996, p. 3).

Finally, the fifth approach on gender as a major focus of third wave feminism questions the category of woman when it both interrogates and challenges the concept of gender (Lengermann and Niebrugge, 2011, pp. 460, 461). In this sense, post-structuralist and postmodern feminists challenge the modernist premises of universalism, essentialism and objectivism, and suggest alternative epistemological practices which point out the differences of subjectivities. Judith Butler is the leading theorist of post-structuralist perspective of gender. According to Butler, feminism encounters a problem since "the term *women* denotes a common identity" (2010, p. 4). By attributing a universal base to the oppression of women as patriarchy or

masculine domination (Butler, 2010, p. 5), feminism loses the specificities of subjects. Whereas all forms of feminism accept that gender is a constructed entity, according to Butler (2010, pp. 10-11), "the notion that gender is constructed suggests a certain determinism of gender" that ignores agency. With her own words, "gender does not denote a substantive being, but a relative point of convergence among culturally and historically specific sets of relations" (Butler, 2010, p. 14). Furthermore, "gender is a complexity" (Butler, 2010, p. 22) which maintains a unity in embodied self and against the opposite sex (Butler, 2010, p. 30). She takes Nietzsche's claim that "there is no 'being' behind doing, effecting, becoming" (in Butler, 2010, p. 34) and defends the idea that gender is such a being which is "performatively produced" (Butler, 2010, p. 34). In addition, Butler moves one step further and criticizes the universal binary understanding of masculinity and femininity where homosexual or bisexual practices are suppressed and redefined within the framework of gender (1986, p. 47; 2010, p. 43).

At this point, it is possible to develop a fourth question related to feminist theory: How do we analyze the *differences* between women? Some versions of feminist theory are criticized by taking 'woman' as a distinctive category or analyzing gender from an objective criterion of oppression with reference to the concept of patriarchy. Many feminists assume that it is legitimate to take women as a social category and as distinct from men because of the intensity of their collective interests (Walby, 1990, p. 15). On the contrary, differences based on class, ethnicity, and sexual orientation or different subjective experiences among women create divisions between them. For instance, the experiences of lower class women or women in color are different from that of upper class or white women since capitalism and racist structures disadvantage such women in social life (Walby, 1990, p. 14). In this sense, the debate on gender intersects with different categories and aspects creating distinctions, such as those of class and race (Acker, 1992, p. 567; Wharton, 2005, p. 5). In a modernist frame, socialist, Marxist or black feminism provides some tools to analyze this kind of intersectionality. For instance, as Acker notes, class experiences of women contribute to the differences between women as well as to the differences

between women and men (1992, p. 566). In addition, for some feminists heterosexual assumptions create normative models and these are too narrow to cover the diversity of women's experiences (Acker, 1992, p. 566). On the other hand, it is not only socialist, Marxist or black feminists who criticize concepts such as patriarchy which "presume some coherence and stability over time and culture, suffer from essentialism" (Walby, 1990, p. 90). According to Walby, post-structuralists and postmodernists also argue that the universal category of 'women' suffer from essentialism as patriarchy or other structural systems do (1990, p. 90). However, this kind of approach has been frequently criticized by ignoring power relations in society and the political aims of feminism. As Pollert argues, post-modern feminism is "one of the most stubborn roadblocks standing in the way of its own emancipatory project" (1996, p. 19). On the contrary, as a post-structuralist, Judith Butler thinks that universal categorization of women creates domains of exclusion of subjectivities even if it is elaborated for emancipatory purposes (2010, p. 6). For Butler, unity is not necessary for effective political action, yet it sets up "an exclusionary norm of solidarity at the level of identity" (2010, p. 21).

### **2.1.2. Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of Practice**

In this section I will discuss Pierre Bourdieu's 'theory of practice' which he developed as an attempt to overcome the distinction of "two seemingly incompatible points of view" in social science (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 14): subjectivism and objectivism, in other words structure and agency (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 15). Also, I will briefly explain his main concepts of habitus, field, and capital.

Bourdieu begins by criticizing the two edges: abstract objectivism and extreme subjectivism. Basically, he avoids the "tendency to *intellectualism*" in social science (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 1). Except epistemological and methodological concerns, "scientific practice never takes the form of an inevitable sequence of miraculous intellectual acts" (Bourdieu, 1980, p. 16). However, "science presupposes not only an epistemological break but also a social separation", so he offers an implicit theory of

practice in which the social conditions making science possible are not neglected (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 1; 1980, p. 5). Objectivist approach takes theory as a "spectacle which can only be understood from a viewpoint away from the stage" and it distinguishes "two relations to the world, one theoretical, the other practical" (Bourdieu, 1980, p. 14). On the contrary, theory of practice focuses on "dialectical relations between the objective structures to which the objectivist mode of knowledge gives access and the structured dispositions within which those structures are actualized" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 3). Every theoretical analysis includes theorists' "subjective relation to the social world and the objective (social) relation presupposed by this subjective relation" (Bourdieu, 1980, p. 29). That is why "Bourdieu did not simply seek to develop an abstract theoretical system; he also related it to a series of empirical concerns" (Ritzer, 2011, p. 534) so that he defends the integrity of the theoretical and the empirical (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 2; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 160). Bourdieu insists that the theory of practice establishes "an experimental science of the *dialectic of the internalization of externality and the externalization of internality*" (1977, p. 72). Actors are not unconscious: they are determined by objective factors in this dialectical relation. Their role in knowledge production is also important, because they subjectively have the "logic of practice" (Bourdieu, 1980, p. 11). Bourdieu's understanding of practice becomes more meaningful in his core concepts since the dialectical relationship between the subject and object appears to be more crystalized in these concepts.

Bourdieu's famous concept habitus refers to "the mental structures through which they [actors] apprehend the social world ... the product of the internalization of the structures of that world" (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 18). These are "structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures" without a conscious aiming (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 72). Habitus is the source of series of moves of agents which do not contain intention (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 73). More definitely, it is a "socially constituted system of cognitive and motivating structures" of agents whose subjective motivations are defined in a socially structured situation (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 76). One important characteristic of habitus is that it is not a fixed entity, but a

dynamic one. In other words, it is a "strategy-generating principle enabling agents to cope with unforeseen and ever-changing situations", as asserted by Bourdieu (1977, p. 72). However, habitus does not totally refer to an individual system in which every agent's habitus is based on his/her intrinsic life experiences at a given moment. Rather habitus integrates past experiences to present ones as a product of both individual and collective practices in accordance with the schemes engendered by history (Bourdieu, 1977, pp. 82-83). Hence, members of a specific social class have similar experiences more than any member of another class, although it is impossible for all members of the same class to have the same experiences. This shows that habitus is a "generative and unifying principle" creating a "unitary lifestyle, that is, a unitary set of choices of persons, goods, practices" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 101; 1998, p. 8). In this way, habitus provides "the unconscious unity of a class" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 77). Variations in a class habitus are the "individual system of dispositions" which is called by Bourdieu as "personal styles" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 86). Since Bourdieu's position is away from the determinism of mainstream structuralists, habitus does not "determine" individual action and choice, it merely "suggests" what people should think and do (Ritzer, 2011, p. 532).

Relationality is the critical aspect of Bourdieu's theory. As concepts, social reality becomes meaningful only within a "system of relations" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 96). In a parallel vein, Bourdieu defines the concept of field as "a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, pp. 97, 101). Habitus and the specific dispositions that it constitutes are "only formed, only function and are only valid in a field, in the relationship with a field" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 94). Although habitus exists in the minds of actors, fields appear outside their minds (Ritzer, 2011, p. 530). On the other hand, habitus is not simply a mental schema, but the way one moves across and within fields (McLeod, 2005, p. 14). In highly differentiated societies, there are a number of social microcosms which correspond to different fields and their subfields such as artistic field, economic field or religious field where each follows specific logics (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, pp. 97, 104). Actors' positions in different fields are determined

through various forms of capital (economic, social, cultural, and symbolic) which they own. As Bourdieu argues, "a capital does not exist and function except in relation to a field"; thus, one must construct the specific forms of capital in order to adapt to the specific logics of fields (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, pp. 101, 108). For this reason, a field is also a "field of struggles" where individuals or groups seek strategies "to safeguard and improve their position and to impose the principle of hierachization" according to the distribution of different capitals (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 101).

In *The Forms of Capital* (1986), Bourdieu supposes different forms of capital and the structure of their distribution at a given moment in time which represents the immanent structure of the social world (1986, p. 242). He argues that social world cannot be reduced to the rules and assumptions of the economic structure. As the most material type of capital, economic capital represents itself in the immaterial form of cultural capital or social capital and vice versa (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 242). In his own words,

Capital can present itself in three fundamental guises: as *economic capital*, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights; as *cultural capital*, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications; and as *social capital*, made up of social obligations ("connections"), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital, and may be institutionalized in the form of title and nobility (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 243).

A fourth form of capital can be added to these three forms that is *symbolic capital* apprehended symbolically in any form (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 255). In addition, in his analysis of domination Bourdieu uses the notion of *symbolic violence* as "soft" forms of violence which is practiced upon a social agent with his or her complicity (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 167). In fields, agents are firstly distributed according to the overall volume of their capital, and secondly according to the relative weight of the different kinds of capital (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 7). Bourdieu's understanding of the composition of society with varying degrees of capital is also a

refusal of the structuralist or objectivist approach to class. According to him, previous theories constructed *theoretical classes* which are generated from objectively homogeneous groups, and have fixed properties (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 10). It is the "theoreticist error" that one finds in Marx or other objectivist approaches which tends to deduce actions and interactions from the structure (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 17).

Parallel with his tendency towards empiricism, the construction and use of Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field or capital "emerged in the practicalities of research enterprise, and it is in this context that they must be evaluated" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 161). In *Distinction (1984)*, Bourdieu attempts to apply a series of his concepts to an empirical case examining the "aesthetic preferences of different groups" (Ritzer, 2011, p. 534). Social field distributes itself in the form of different practices of agents. This creates a sense of distinction where "*differences function as distinctive signs*" (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 20). For example, those who have antique furniture play golf in selected clubs or ride horses mostly look like traditional members of the old bourgeoisie, whereas people having different *tastes* represent different groups. In this sense, "social space tends to function as a symbolic space, a space of lifestyles and status groups characterized by different lifestyles" (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 20). Distinction here is "*difference*, a gap, a distinctive feature, in short, a relational property existing only in and through its relation with other properties" (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 6). In this work Bourdieu tried to show that "culture can be a legitimate object of scientific study" (Ritzer, 2011, p. 534).

Bourdieu's approach is one of the important attempts to build a link between subjective and objective relations in social science. As Ritzer claims, this is the distinguishable characteristics of Bourdieu's theory where he offered "a distinctive theory of the relationship between agency and structure" (2011, p. 536). He realizes this distinctiveness through the integration of theoretical and empirical efforts and argues that "research without theory is blind and theory without research is empty" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 162). On the other hand, Wacquant thinks that

Bourdieu still gives an epistemological priority to objectivism over subjectivism, although the two analyses are equally emphasized (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 11). However, Bourdieu insists that his intention is,

To escape from under the philosophy of the subject without doing away with the agent, as well as from under the philosophy of the structure but without forgetting to take into account the effects it wields upon and through the agent (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, pp. 121-122).

### **2.1.3. The Concept of 'Gendered Field'**

I will now discuss the concept of 'gendered field' in the context of the synthesis between feminist approaches on gender and Bourdieu's theory of practice which I have summarized above. I conceptualize my research topic, namely women's *gün* meetings, as 'gendered fields'. Hence I attend to expand my research on *gün* meetings by drawing on Bourdieu's conceptual framework to understand gendered relations better. However, I will not simply apply but adapt his concepts to gender relations; I will use the concept of 'gendered field' in place of 'gendered space' in order to understand the gendered nature and dynamics of women's world in the *gün* meetings. As argued by McLeod, feminist engagement with Bourdieu offers productive ways of reconceptualizing the relationship between gender, habitus and social field (2005, p. 25). In this sense, the concept of gendered field not only refers to the gendered relations devaluing women's position in macro structure of society, but also engages with the lived experiences of women in the field of *gün* meetings in terms of micro analysis.

Moi claims that the theoretical relevance of Bourdieu's works for feminism is considerable (1991, p. 1019). Since Bourdieu presents a distinctive theory of practice, "a Bourdieusian approach enables us to reconceptualize gender as a social category" (Moi, 1991, p. 1019). Construction of gender as a social category is mostly actualized in the common details of everyday life which Bourdieu gives a special attention while constituting his theory. As Moi asserts, "Bourdieu makes sociological theory of *everything*" (1991, p. 1019). Furthermore, both feminist theory and

Bourdieu stresses the 'experiences' of actors. Bourdieu, like feminists, recognizes that "theoretical narratives and political programs are themselves embedded in social relations" (McCall, 1992, p. 837). However, Bourdieu himself had little to say about women: "the place of gender in his thought is somewhat undertheorized" (Adkins, 2004, p. 3; Moi, 1991, p. 1020). According to Lovell, "Bourdieu's sociology is ... in danger of positioning sex/gender ... as secondary to that of social class" (2000, p.12). On the other hand, Bourdieu develops some arguments on this issue by arguing that the sexual division of human beings into two basic categories is an arbitrary cultural construction and that sexism bears the danger of essentialism (Moi, 1991, p. 1030). Bourdieu's analysis of gender in *Masculine Domination* (2001) is mostly based on his own fieldwork data collected in Kabyle in the early 1960s. In his book he explains that in Kabyle society, "the division of labor between the genders becomes the foundation of the division of the world" (Krais, 1993, p. 159). For this reason, Moi argues that "in contemporary society ... the position of women ... in relation to social power is far more complex and contradictory than Bourdieu would seem fully to acknowledge" (Moi, 1991, p. 1033). However, Bourdieu himself says that,

The objective structures and cognitive structures of a particularly well preserved androcentric society (such as Kabyle society as I observed in the early 60's) provides instruments enabling one to understand some of the best concealed aspects of what those relations are in the economically most advanced societies (2001, p. vii).

According to Bourdieu (2001, p. 1), masculine domination is a consequence of *symbolic violence* in which "the traditional relationship between the sexes is structured by a habitus which makes male power appear legitimate" (Moi, 1991, p. 1030). Krais similarly argues that masculine domination in the form of *symbolic violence* is incorporated as a part of agent's habitus (1993, p. 169). By masculine domination Bourdieu develops "a male-gendered conception of social structure", as asserted by McCall (1992, p. 839). Similarly, Dillabough thinks that when Bourdieu names gender categories as 'masculine', he appear to some as an essentialist thinker (2004, p. 494). Conversely, "a Bourdieusian perspective ... assumes that gender is

always a socially *variable* entity, one which carries different amounts of symbolic capital in different contexts", specifically in the current social conditions "maleness functions as positive and femaleness as negative symbolic capital" (Moi, 1991, p. 1036). In terms of gender relations, some feminists give a special importance to Bourdieu's concept of *symbolic violence*. For instance, Kraus thinks that symbolic violence as a form of subtle, euphemized and invisible mode of domination, acts upon women to maintain the oppression (1993, p. 172). This is because it is a socially recognized form of domination that one can realize "in the various social fields outside the family, and probably in the normal course of life inside the family, too" (Kraus, 1993, p. 172).

According to Kraus, "gender identity is a deeply rooted, bodily anchored dimension of an agent's habitus. It affects the individual in the most natural parts of his or her identity" (1993, p. 170). Hence "every agent inevitably acquires a gendered habitus" based on gender difference (Kraus, 1993, p. 170). Dillabough states that Bourdieu's own belief is that all groups respond to a gendered habitus in varying degrees premised upon differentiated forms of domination (2004, p. 500). Though Bourdieu's analyses of habitus and field commonly refer to classes, it is possible to argue that if gender has a habitus, there must also be a field where a related habitus can arise. Field is conceptualized here as a "network of social relations that follows rules and regularities that are not directly explicit" (Huppertz, 2009, pp. 49-50). In this sense, Moi argues that gender, like class, is a part of a general social field rather than any specific field of gender (1991, p.1034). In this context, McLeod offers two ways of understanding the relationship between gender and field in terms of feminist engagements with Bourdieu (2005, p. 19). Firstly, social fields are understood as differentiated by gender (like class or race); and secondly, subjective dispositions can be gendered because gender is an inherited and embodied entity that is shaped in interaction with social fields (McLeod, 2005, p. 19). At every level of the general social field, one can regard gender and gender domination (Lovell, 2004, p. 49). However, I argue that gender relations are also sustained by components (subfields) of social, cultural and economic fields in a *relational* way. In this sense, my own

research topic *-gün* can be considered as one of those subfields which has “its own logic, rules and regularities” (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 104). In other words, I associate gender with “particular social fields” inspired by Bourdieusian social theory (Adkins, 2004, p. 6).

In more detail, all social fields have some characteristics which are determined by gender relations as a consequence of gender difference, gender inequality, gender oppression or structural oppression caused by the patriarchal and capitalist systems. Therefore, although I do not present *gün* or other subfields as a ‘field of gender’ particularly, I claim that the whole compositions of these fields are totally ‘gendered’, so they constitute the ‘gendered fields’. This is because I agree with McLeod’s statement that “structurally differentiated social fields ... offer potentially stronger ways of conceptualizing gender” (2005, p. 21).

Furthermore, there is no such thing as pure “gender capital” (Moi, 1991, p. 1036) since gender does not generate a pure field. However, this does not mean that the structure and volume of women’s economic, social and cultural capital are not under the influence of gendered relations which are carried by the gendered habituses of actors in various forms of gendered fields. As argued by Skeggs, we become gendered through being lived, just as we become classed, raced and sexed (1997, p. 9). Hence, it is possible to talk about a sort of ‘gendered capital’, not an entire ‘gender capital’. According to Huppertz, “Bourdieu overlooked the possibility of gendered capital” (2009, p. 45). However, feminist thinkers developed some arguments on this issue. For example, McCall asserts that forms of capital have gendered meanings since they are given shape by gendered dispositions (1992, p. 842). These gendered dispositions act in the form of embodied cultural capital where “certain types of dispositions are themselves forms of capital” (McCall, 1992, p. 843). This way of looking can be sourced from the feminists’ idea that “femininity is culturally learned and may operate as a form of cultural capital” (Huppertz, 2009, p. 49). In this context, feminists do not argue that “gender relations are purely cultural”, but they believe that “the discourses of femininity and masculinity become embodied and can be used

as cultural resources" (Skeggs, 1997, p. 8). Huppertz develops this idea by exploring two forms of capital: female capital and feminine capital (2009, p. 45). In her own words,

Femininity is generalized female condition. Hence, female capital is the gender advantage that is derived from being perceived to have a female ... body; whereas feminine capital is the gender advantage that is derived from a disposition ... learned via socialization, or from simply being hailed as feminine (Huppertz, 2009, p. 50).

In this sense, Huppertz argues about the conditions of femininity as an asset when she is using the terms female and feminine capital. Conversely, I believe that being a female may not always be an advantageous position in terms of the relations of power leading to gender difference, inequality and oppression in a society although some favor this as sisterhood among women. In many cases being a woman or femininity in general prevents access to power positions in society. Skeggs claims that women have limited resources to increase their capital assets and to turn them into material rewards (1997, p. 9). However, claiming that femininity creates a gender capital is different from claiming that social, cultural, economic and symbolic forms of capital are gendered. For example, when a woman has gendered social capital, this situation tends to cause her exclusion from male-dominated spaces. To put differently, gendered nature of forms of capital is mostly advantageous for the dominated sex, i.e., males. For instance, gendered economic capital can have the outcome of appropriation of property mostly by males, or as Bourdieu himself argues, "possession of strong cultural capital is not enough in itself to give a woman access to the conditions of real economic and cultural autonomy with respect to men" (2001, p. 107). Therefore, I side with the argument that gender does not compose a pure capital, habitus or field, though these forms are explicitly gendered in their core. Bourdieu's major contribution in the context of gendered fields is his emphasis on both "structural and psychic dimensions of domination" (Dillabough, 2004, p. 501). This means that gender domination -or difference, inequality and oppression are normalized through actors' habituses in different fields which are thoroughly gendered. Bourdieu's theory also shows how subjects come to embody such gendered structures in everyday social practices (Dillabough, 2004, p. 500). My opinion is that

women's *gün* meetings are one of those gendered fields where women embody gendered structures in their daily practices. At the same time, they normalize such structures through the mental and cognitive patterns in their gendered habituses and reproduce gendered fields outside their minds.

In fact, by using the concept of gendered field, I do not claim that gender is the most relevant factor to determine the relations of actors in every social situation or in every field. However, as Moi argues, it is always in principle a relevant factor in all social analyses since social agents are always undoubtedly gendered (1991, p.1037). At the same time, in the context of my case of women's *gün* meetings, it is the most determinant factor when analyzing the experiences of women in a normative female leisure time activity. McCall criticizes Bourdieu arguing that he never takes gender as an analytic category in the construction of his concepts, even though gender characteristics appear as descriptions of dispositions and capital (1992, p. 851). Bourdieu mostly prefers to make a multi-dimensional analysis of class relations which are not reduced to economic structure, but adding to cultural, social and symbolic dimensions of capital. Although Bourdieu separates his analysis of class from deterministic theories of class, the problem of women's class position or the class issue in feminism appears as a complicated issue. In other words, both class and gender are the main concepts to analyze the difference, inequality and oppression in society. As argued by Kraus,

Whereas class domination has long been a subject of sociological research and, indeed, was one of the social problems that gave rise to sociology as a science, our knowledge about the bases, mechanisms, and consequences of gender differentiation is more recent and more fragmentary (1993, p. 156).

Feminist analysis on the relationship between class and gender is mostly debated around the economic capital of women. This approach generally refers to women's position in paid employment and to the division of labor within household (Walby, 1990, p. 10). Some radical feminists on the other hand emphasize that "sex is class" on the basis that "women are disadvantaged by their position in reproduction" (Walby, 1990, p. 12). On the contrary, Marxist feminists like Pollert asserts that

gender and class constitute a unity in which class relations are always gendered and vice versa (1996, pp. 11, 22). Although Pollert's contribution to feminism is important, her analysis also follows the path of economic determinism deriving from her Marxist position. On the other hand, Bourdieu defends partly a similar position by arguing in his book *Distinction* that "sexual properties are as inseparable from class properties as the yellowness of a lemon from its acidity" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 107). However, Bourdieu's contribution to class analyses, i.e., arguing that different forms of capital can also be an essential tool when analyzing women's class positions, is more promising than a Marxist feminist position. Wacquant argues that "an invitation to think about Bourdieu is of necessity an invitation to think beyond Bourdieu and against him whenever required" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. xiv). In this sense, the concept of 'gendered field' can be both a challenge and enrichment by adding a gender dimension to Bourdieu's conceptual framework. Moreover, it will also provide a useful basis for rethinking feminist studies on gender.

## **2.2. Sociology of Leisure**

### **2.2.1. The Main Approaches in Sociology of Leisure**

After a brief summary of the emergence of the concept of leisure and the related early literature on it, I will now summarize the major approaches in the field following the 1960s, including action approach, social systems approach and interactionist approach. This will be followed by a discussion of Marxism's contribution to leisure studies. The role of Bourdieu's theory of practice in contemporary leisure studies will be also be discussed.

In its development, leisure has both a rich historiography and is a historical product which emerged as a cultural category in a time when leisure was unknown and initially identified by new words like institutions, rituals and/or myths (Hunnicut, 2006, p. 55). Scholars have agreed that hunter-gatherers had no word or general concept which defines leisure as well as 'work' as we understand these concepts

today. This is because at that period there was no clear cut difference between work and other spheres of life (Hunnicut, 2006, p. 56). According to Hunnicutt, beginning with Greeks, humans firstly recognize leisure as a cultural category contrasting with work (2006, p. 57) and their valuation of one of them has been changed and opposed over time. In the nineteenth century, sourced from the process of industrialization, leisure was understood as an anti-thesis of work within the context of social science perspectives on industry. In this sense, dissatisfaction from the long working hours and inconvenience from the routinization and mechanization of work gave rise to a more emphasis on leisure (Green et. al., 1990, p. 10).

Veblen's (1899) study about leisure class is the first modern classic work in the study of leisure which pioneered our understanding of the significance of identity and leisure's function to convey status and power in the industrial society (Rojek, 2005, p. 89; 2006, p. 8). Today, Veblen's work is still a rich source for an analysis of leisure. In Veblen's terminology, "the upper class constitutes a *leisure class* who enjoy massively greater access to economic capital". However, economic capital or 'wealth' is not enough to be a member of the leisure class, because the membership requires "the display of cultural criteria and codes of behavior" (Rojek, 2005, p. 89). Basically, the members of the leisure class are characterized by 'not to work' or literally "freedom from the need to engage in paid employment" (Rojek, 2005, p. 89); their social status is concentrated in specific leisure forms such as hunting, learning and speaking 'dead' languages, or organizing balls and parties. After Veblen, some anthropologists continued to be interested in leisure in the first half of the twentieth century. For example, "Bronislaw Malinowski (1931) and Alfred L. Kroeber (1948) described leisure as a creative domain wherein cultural innovation and progress may take place" (Chick, 2006, p. 42). Also in 1938, Huizinga stressed the importance of 'play' as an indispensable part of the progress of culture in his philosophical writing, *Homo Ludens*. Rojek identifies that apart from Veblen and the limited works in the early twentieth century, there was little academic interest on leisure as a cultural category (2006, p. 6). In the 1950s, studies on leisure were soared with the interplay of many disciplines especially sociology, psychology,

economics, geography, and political science. However, as Rojek asserts, the interdisciplinary approach on leisure "drew upon an analysis of state and market solutions to questions of urban-industrial resource allocation, especially issues relating to maintaining order and managing change", so "the question of leisure did not emerge as a topic of concern ... as ... emerged in the nineteenth century" at that decade (2006, p. 6).

Apart from the early works of leisure theorists, leisure studies have been one of the areas of interest for Western scientists from the 1960s onwards (Rapoport and Rapoport, 1974, p. 215). Chris Rojek (2005) describes the main approaches in sociology of leisure under five titles: Action Approach, Social Systems Approach, Interactionist Approach, Marxism, and Feminism. Firstly, action analysis, which is also Rojek's own perspective of leisure, is based on the grounded investigation of leisure practice through the interplay between factors of personal choice, location and context (Rojek, 2005, p. 49). In this way, leisure is analyzed as social, cultural and economic force that conditions the *situated* actors whose main traits are embodiment and emplacement through extrinsic factors. Therefore, 'positioning of actors' is the most important notion in the action approach to leisure. Instead of a positive view on leisure that focuses on the cooperative and integrative potential of leisure practice as a means of personal satisfaction, action analysis puts forward the actors positioning through the criteria of determined class, race and status (Rojek, 2005, pp. 50, 51).

The second approach in the sociology of leisure is the social systems approach which is theoretically derived from the sociology of Talcott Parsons. It is developed against the psychological approaches that posit the actors as atomized individuals. Theorists of this approach as Cheek and Burch (1976) describe leisure as a social institution contributing the stability and growth of society as a social organism; in this sense, leisure serves as an expression of social solidarity and norms of the larger social order (Rojek, 2005, p. 57). Similarly, the works of Dumazedier (1967), Rapoport and Rapoport (1974), and Parker (1983) particularly focus on leisure as the functional

and integrative mechanism in maintaining social order (Rojek, 2005, p. 59). Some sociologists within this structural-functionalist line prefer to make ideal-typical definitions of the concept of leisure. The concept of *ideal type* which is one of the major contributions of Max Weber to contemporary sociology can be defined as a conceptual tool or as an analytical construct which cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality (Weber, 1949, p. 90). However, sociologists can develop ideal types which are helpful for their empirical researches to grasp the true nature of social phenomena or as Weber states, "to understand and explain them causally" (1949, p. 43). For instance, in his analysis of modern society, Weber developed the types of authority as ideal types to reveal the nature of bureaucracy and rationalization. In this sense, ideal-typical definitions of leisure in social systems approach can be defined as creating conceptual tools which may not be found in reality. On the other hand, these definitions are both useful and helpful to understand leisure in the society of social order. This is because according to structural-functionalists, society is always directed towards a self-maintaining order through which actors internalize the shared norms and values of the society. If not, system develops social control over individuals to prevent deviations. In this sense, although Dumazedier stresses the importance of the 'free will' of the individual, leisure includes some boundaries arising from social roles. According to Dumazedier (1960):

Leisure consists of a number of occupations in which the individual may indulge of his own free will -either to rest, to amuse himself, to add to his knowledge or improve his skills disinterestedly or to increase his voluntary participation in the life of the community after discharging his professional, family and social duties (in Rapoport and Rapoport, 1974, p. 218).

Kaplan's definition, on the other hand, adds multi-faceted functions to leisure:

The essential elements of leisure ... are (a) an antithesis to 'work' as an economic function, (b) a pleasant expectation and recollection, (c) a minimum of involuntary social-role obligations, (d) a psychological perception of freedom, (e) a close relation to the values of culture, (f) the inclusion of an entire range from inconsequence and insignificance to weightiness and importance, and (g) often, but not necessarily, an activity

characterized by the element of play. Leisure is none of these by itself but all together in one emphasis or another (in Rapoport and Rapoport, 1974, p. 218; Kaplan, 1961).

Rojek defines the third approach in the sociology of leisure as the interactionist approach which is influenced by symbolic interactionism and specifically by the thoughts of Erving Goffman (2005, p. 61). As Rojek claims, "The interactionist approach in Leisure Studies partly began as an attempt to overcome social systems approach to leisure which give pronounced importance to the stability of leisure function and leisure roles" (2005, p. 64). Kelly as the key figure of this perspective describes leisure as "a state of becoming" (1987, p. 19) which means that the individual has the capacity to destroy the structural influence and constraints of location and context in their voluntary actions of leisure (Rojek, 2005, p. 61). Against the social systems approach, Kelly attributes a sort of unpredictability and freedom of choice to the nature of leisure (1975, p. 186). When leisure is commonly considered to be not only what people choose to do but also to decide a time that is not counted as work time or other required activity, these bring the central dimension of "chosenness, discretion or freedom" (Kelly, 1972, pp. 50-51). Furthermore, leisure is less predictable than other segments of our lives when we do what we do not have to do (Kelly, 1975, p. 186). In this sense, Kelly proposes three kinds of leisure activities which are (i) *unconditional leisure* where activities are chosen for their own sake and their intrinsic value and satisfaction free from work or other social role obligations; (ii) *coordinated leisure* where activities are like work activities in their form but are freely chosen; and (iii) *complementary leisure* where activities are chosen according to the expectations of work, family and community roles (1975, pp. 186-187). More in detail, as Kelly elaborates, "Cultural activities are most likely to be unconditional and group activities complementary. Worklike activities are usually either coordinated or complementary. Recreational activities are divided between unconditional and complementary" (1975, p. 187). For this reason, it is hard to determine a leisure concept that explains all conditions since any activity can take any form according to the varying situation. Besides, how people choose leisure and

develop leisure styles is determined by "other people closest to them and in a resource context specific to a time and place" (Kelly, 1975, p. 189).

Before continuing with the remaining approaches, respectively Marxism and Feminism in Rojek's scheme, I will emphasize some of the important issues of the twentieth century leisure studies which were hotly debated. In American sociology structural analysis was common which referred to people's allocation of time during a day to understand what leisure is. Wilson (1980, p. 22) refers to Robinson who divided the day into hours of obligatory activity and hours of free time (1977, p. 90). In this way, "obligatory activities included work, housekeeping, childcare, catering to personal needs, and necessary travel" while leisure or free time can be subdivided into "organizational activities, attending to the mass media, and socialization and recreation" (in Wilson, 1980, p. 22). However, there are no common sense criteria to define leisure that theorists can agree on. As a criterion, most used characteristics was firstly 'time' which was concretized with the temptation to describe leisure as 'free time', and secondly 'function' in relation to work (Rapoport and Rapoport, 1974, pp. 215, 216). Similarly, as Wilson argues, whereas some sociologists treat leisure as a portion of one's own time, others regard it as a quality of experience unconfined to particular times (1980, p. 21). As a matter of fact, leisure studies mostly referring to working people falsely equate non-work time with free time but it is essential to note that "obligatory non-work activities" such as personal hygiene, housework, shopping requires a critical amount of one's day time (Wilson, 1980, pp. 23, 24). For instance, housewives as an important group should be considered from this perspective; they can be evaluated as having free time during the whole day although they spend most of their time on the activities mentioned above. Moreover, it is difficult to determine which portion of women's at-home activities can be counted as work or leisure. This shows that structural approaches to define leisure time have some constraints because of the variety of daily activities which cannot easily be categorized partly due to the differences among social actors who are engaged in these activities.

Additionally, as Wilson argues, "not all nonwork and nondomestic time is seen as 'free' in the sense of having been freely chosen. For some people, free time is something imposed, which must somehow be occupied" (1980, p. 25) as in the case of women's unpaid work time. In this context, feminists such as Bittman and Wajcman offer four categories allocating a day: "paid work, unpaid work, self-care, and free time" (2000, p. 166). Mattingly and Bianchi also classify free or leisure time as "time not committed to market work, domestic caregiving, or personal care" (2003, p. 1000). This division can explain the condition of housewives who do not participate in paid work but mostly spend their time in unpaid work activities. It is possible to argue that this kind of feminist approach is more explanatory than the structural approaches since it does not take the time devoted for self-care or for domestic 'responsibilities' as free time. Moreover, because of gender inequality, women's unpaid work time spent at home has an 'obligatory character' which force them to just stay at home. Thus, one can conclude that unpaid work time is not considered as leisure time of women. Furthermore, "there is a sexual division of labor in relation to these two types of work" (paid and unpaid work) and for feminists "the sexual division of labor is rooted in a system of unequal power between men and women" although some scholars contradict this idea arguing that the division is assigned "by the operation of some rational allocation of resources" (Bittman and Wajcman, 2000, p. 167). However, it should be emphasized that this second approach arguing for the complementarity of the sexes is not consistent either with the feminist perspective or with the framework of this thesis which is based on a feminist outlook.

Other determinants mostly debated in the twentieth century leisure studies were *family* and *life cycle*. Wilson specifies *family* as having a "major institutional influence on free time" and people learn the context of their leisure role within the social and cultural atmosphere shared and transferred by family members (1980, p. 32). Moreover, according to Kelly, parenthood brings a shift to activities which are more family role-related where the demand for a leisure activity for personal satisfaction is diminished (1975, pp. 188). This is because "parenthood not only adds

roles and numbers to the household, but adds new dimensions to the way people see themselves" creating new self-images (1975, p. 189). The other debated determinant of leisure was the issue of *life cycle* which was based on the argument that "some leisure activities are adopted as others are abandoned at each stage" (Kelly, 1975, p. 188; Wilson, 1980, p. 34). In this context, Rapoport's study (1976) based on in-depth interviews carried out in England is important. According to Rapoport, each life-cycle stage has its own focal leisure concerns: adolescents demand stimulation and variety in their leisure activities; adults in their early ages see their leisure activities assisting their adjustment to a new family or work conditions; adults with children organize their leisure according to the demands of children and home; and finally elders' leisure activities are mostly shaped by socioeconomic factors (Rapoport and Rapoport, 1976; Wilson, 1980, p. 34). According to Wilson, some other major determinants of leisure such as *group dynamics* in leisure, *institutionalization* of leisure, and *political functions* are neglected and there is a need for more macro-sociological analysis about the relationship between leisure and the other institutions of society or the state (1980, pp. 36, 37).

In terms of a macro perspective on leisure, increasing indisposable income in developed countries and technological products available for mass consumption are raised the need for leisure facilities (Rapoport and Rapoport, 1974, p. 225). In this respect, residual time from work is restricted as a result of the increasing flexibility in work hours. Structurally, these create a need for the institutionalization of roles and activities dealing with this phenomenon of leisure creating 'leisure industries' in the modern society (Rapoport and Rapoport, 1974, p. 226). Furthermore, it is possible to analyze leisure more satisfactorily with respect to the creation of leisure industries where socioeconomic *conditions* determine one's time spent in leisure, its quality and limitations as well as the types of leisure activities. Wilson characterizes the primary determination of economic conditions by arguing that "income level is most closely associated with the absolute amount of money spent on leisure; otherwise it shapes leisure behavior only by placing limits on the activities that can be afforded" (1980, p. 27). On the other hand, as Wilson adds, despite modifications

or critical amount of ambivalence, "lower socioeconomic groups tend to imitate the leisure styles of the higher groups" (1980, p. 27). Additionally, in many of the institutions leisure is filtered and directed by middle-class norms and middle-class people (Wilson, 1980, p. 27). For this reason we can reach to the conclusion that leisure is primarily a concept specific to middle and upper-classes who have enough money and more time than the lower-classes to recreate, enjoy, and relax themselves. It also functions as a higher class manner where economically lower segments of the society emulate them to show their status in the society. In Wilson's own words, "leisure will function as a status symbol, a mark of one's position on the 'real' stratification ladder" (Wilson, 1980, p. 27). In this sense, leisure creates its own elites who know the "correct" style and have the "right" experience whereas the others imitate the "leisure elites" (Wilson, 1980, pp. 27, 28). Wilson uses the concept of "leisure elites" independent of economic and political elites in the society. Many studies underestimate the unstructured forms of leisure which the lower socioeconomic groups prefer because of their unsteady working and living conditions causing unsteady forms of leisure activities such as "visiting friends, gossiping, and talking about neighborhood and family events, aside from watching TV" as major activities in low income communities (Wilson, 1980, p. 28).

According to Rapoport and Rapoport, from the earliest days of sociology, theorizing about leisure has been linked with theorizing about work (1974, p. 221). For example, Marx and Engels, as prominent names, emphasized the *dehumanizing* effects of capitalism at work and the indecency of the nineteenth century leisure pursuits as reactions to the oppressiveness of the work situations. Similarly, theorists of leisure in the twentieth century also felt the need to refer to *work* while analyzing leisure. I previously mentioned Kaplan's (1961) definition of leisure as "an antithesis to 'work' as an economic function" (in Rapoport and Rapoport, 1974, p. 218). More complicated than this definition, Wilson refers to Parker and Smith's scheme of possibilities about the relationship between work and leisure (1980, p. 29):

- (a) leisure can be an *extension* of work, in which case the activities of the two are similar, the demarcation between them is weak, and work is the

person's central interest; or (b) leisure can be set in *opposition* to work, in which case leisure pursuits are deliberately counterposed to work and clearly set apart from it; or (c) the relation can be one of *neutrality*, in which case, although work and leisure activities are somewhat different, the demarcation between them is not strong and the person is slightly more interested in the leisure than the work sphere (Parker and Smith, 1976, p. 52).

In terms of work and leisure relationship, the tendency is to analyze it "by the degrees of work involvement or alienation" (Wilson, 1980, p. 29) meaning how leisure activities resemble work or how the two can be differentiated from one another in certain degrees where there is also a "compensatory relationship between work and leisure *satisfaction*" or dissatisfaction for a person's self-fulfillment (Wilson, 1980, p. 30). On the other hand, it should be argued that these analyses of work and leisure relationship of the twentieth century sociologists were mostly based on *individualistic* conceptualizations regarding a person's own involvement in both activities. These works were eventually differentiated from the works of the nineteenth century theorists. These individualistic conceptualizations in leisure studies were substantially the consequence of the American intellectual and research leadership in the subject. However, according to Rojek, the Marxist contribution as the fourth approach in the sociology of leisure constituted a major challenge to the American leisure theory which tended to replicate the ideology of American civil society centralizing individualism, liberalism and pluralism in leisure forms and practices (2005, p. 65).

In Marx's own work (1844), he separated the realm of *necessity* from the realm of *freedom* under capitalism. According to Marx, workers' realm of necessity is occupied by the interests of the capitalist class where they appropriate the surplus value for their own sake. On the contrary, the realm of freedom consists of the elements of a more developed form which is identified with the rise of genuine communist society (Rojek, 2005, pp. 71-72). However,

Even capitalism allowed workers time away from work to replenish their energies and stimulate personal growth. This is the sphere of leisure relations. Marx argued that under capitalism working-class leisure forms and practice

are driven down to replenishing energies exhausted by the demands of work (Rojek, 2005, p. 71).

In the mid-1980s, Marxism mostly pointed to the role of class inequality in the distribution of leisure chances, the determination of economic infrastructure as the ultimate source of political and cultural domination in the regulation of leisure forms, and ideological manipulation of higher classes in leisure relations (Rojek, 2005, p. 65). Accordingly, the Marxist tradition in leisure studies appointed more importance to the significance of *culture* in spheres of consumption and leisure as Rojek emphasizes (2005, p. 66). Marxist scholars stated to be interested in the question of how economic inequality is *culturally* represented in leisure practice and cultural relations (Clarke and Critcher, 1985; Rojek, 2005, p. 66). This allows more variation in the analysis of leisure following the work of Pierre Bourdieu. The concepts of Bourdieu also have revealing importance in analyzing and interpreting leisure. Since I have summarized Bourdieu's theory of practice in the section above, here I will only emphasize the importance of Bourdieu's concepts in relation to leisure studies and with reference to some leisure theorists.

According to Lee, Dunlap and Edwards, Bourdieu's theory of practice presents a unique comprehensive approach for examining different practices of leisure in contemporary societies (2014, p. 315). This is because Bourdieu's multidimensional usage of the concepts of capital which he did not reduce the concept solely to economic capital. Therefore in the context of leisure practice, which is mostly comprehended with reference to social connections between people and cultural aspects of daily life, the forms of social and cultural capital have to gain prominence in leisure analyses. In this context, only the degree of economic capital is not sufficient to determine one's class position and tastes which led to different leisure practices. The concept of taste is a key to decipher the relations between cultural capital and leisure. Class differentials in cultural capital or 'class fragments' generally channel people of similar class backgrounds together who have the knowledge of "legitimate" taste performing specific leisure forms (Rojek, 2005, p. 66; Wynne, 1998, p. 51).

In their work, Lee, Dunlap and Edwards applied Bourdieu's theory of practice in order to analyze a specific form of leisure practice, i.e., recreational hunting in the United States, and they argue that there is unequal participation through gender and race in contemporary American society (2014, p. 318). Lee, Dunlap and Edwards analyzes how Bourdieu's framework "illustrates socio-historical backdrop ... in which hunting has been constructed as a gendered and racialized leisure activity" by focusing on power dynamic and formation of habitus (2014, p. 320). They also emphasizes how "white male writers who had more symbolic capital in the field of recreational hunting exercised symbolic violence to exclude women and people of color from recreational hunting" (Lee, Dunlap and Edwards, 2014, p. 319). This study denotes how Bourdieu's approach can be applied in a specific leisure practice.

### **2.2.2. Feminist Leisure Studies**

In this section, I will first explain the feminist approach on leisure including its criticisms against other approaches on leisure and against the patriarchal structure of leisure practices. Then I will provide a summary of the studies associating leisure with women.

According to Rojek, despite its contributions Marxism "fails to incorporate a multidimensional perspective on power that acknowledges the specificity of gender ... influences on ... leisure forms and practice" (2005, p. 73). This brings us to the fifth approach on leisure, namely Feminism. Green, Hebron and Woodward develop a critique of androcentric approach on leisure from a socialist feminist perspective against marginalization of the experiences of women in leisure studies in their leading book entitled, *Women's Leisure, What Leisure? (1990)*. According to the authors, in contemporary society women and men both access and experience leisure differently. This is sourced from "the sexual division of labor in capitalist society ... and ... reinforcement of traditional gender roles" together (Green et. al., 1990, pp. 18-19). In this context, feminist analyses on leisure reject the idea that woman is a

neglected category whose problems can be solved through piecemeal changes in social policy (Green et. al., 1990, p. 18). On the contrary, the feminists manifest their primary concern as "both to understand the patriarchal structures that oppress women and to seek to change them" (Green et. al., 1990, p. 22). In this sense, Bialeschki believes that between feminism and leisure there are a number of parallels. For instance:

Leisure has been largely an androcentric concept just as society has been largely patriarchal. Both feminism and leisure focus on a revolt against domination. Both are devalued by those in power. Both offer a transformational perspective with new goals for social change. The goals of the feminist movement can be applied directly to women's leisure (2003 [1989], p. 51).

In a truly patriarchal society, on the other hand, leisure is a vital area where gender division and inequality are both redefined and reproduced. In addition, from a socialist feminist perspective it can be argued that "capitalism developed and utilized the distinctions between male and female areas of activities". Whereas men's primary role was in production, women were primarily responsible from reproductive activities. This reproduction/production dichotomy is the dominant ideological distinction between men and women in which women's reproductive capacity against men's productivity is used to legitimize the inferiority of women, as argued by Green et.al. (1990, p. 32). Rojek also argues that the undervaluation of women's work and gender segregation in employment causes women's financial dependence on male partners as well as putting great pressure on domestic laborers (2005, pp. 153, 154). Therefore, "women's participation in a leisure activity is constrained by a lack of time and money compared with men in the same class formation" (Rojek, 2005, p. 74).

In the social history of leisure, according to feminists, "the history of leisure is predominantly a history of male leisure" which "in the past, as now, relatively few women were taking part in organized and visible leisure activities" (Green et. al., 1990, p. 38). This is because women have always been taken as primary home-

makers who could only socialize in the domestic sphere, although men relax and socialize for their own right in a wider terrain. Furthermore, ideological stereotypes against women divide them into those respectable women who are mothers, wives and daughters, and those beyond the limits of respectability as 'fallen women' (Green et. al., 1990, p. 116). When the respectable ones are socially controlled in both private and public spheres, unrespectable women are not only condemned and excluded, but also exploited by the visibility of their sexuality. In 'private sphere', women are faced with relative immobility within the boundaries of their respectable roles as mothers or wives since the stereotypic figure of 'good wife or mother' necessitates the characteristics of self-sacrifice and obedience to family and cleanliness of home (Green et. al., 1990, pp. 117-119). On the other hand, the process of social control in 'public sphere' forces women to behave in an acceptable manner in public which is "compatible with established female roles" in order to overcome the fear of violence or sexual harassment from strangers (Rojek, 2005, p. 75). In this context, "such 'avoidance' strategies also led to a greater reliance on male partners and friends for protection" (Green et. al., 1990, pp. 122, 127, 133). This led women to seek 'secure' leisure activities outside the home where male control over public spaces is unavoidable. In relation to out-of-home leisure, Rojek emphasizes the point that because of their domestic responsibilities, "women are more likely than men feel guilty about enjoying leisure outside the home" (2005, p. 155). To sum up, social control over women both in public and private spheres are a normal feature of women's daily lives which has also implications on their leisure activities. However, feminism cares about the female networks "as a source of alternative values and strength for 'fighting back' against male dominance", though some are skeptical about the potential of same-sex groups against patriarchal values, because they might also reproduce the sexual division of labor (Green et. al., 1990, p. 136).

The studies associating leisure to the women's issue have been intrinsically accelerated by feminist scholars mostly in the 2000s although feminists have emphasized sexual division of labor and unpaid and unequal character of women's work since the nineteenth century. The feminist approach on leisure has also

developed lately in terms of leisure studies which supports the unequal relationship between the sexes that has ignored women for a long time. However, this does not mean that there has been no emphasis on gender differences in leisure before the feminist scholars developed an approach on this topic. For example, in some leading studies it was argued that there is gender segregation in leisure and difference in activities preferred by men and women, where women's leisure is mostly home-centered and relatively passive (Kelly, 1975, p. 185; Robinson, 1977, p. 91; Wilson, 1980, p. 28).

Similar to previous leisure studies, feminist quest on leisure have started to discuss the issue in relation to work as well as in relation to the differences in women's experiences (Bittman and Wajcman, 2000; Mattingly and Bianchi, 2003; Mattingly and Sayer, 2006; Raisborough, 2006; Sayer, 2005). As Sayer claims:

Women's movement into paid work has not led a redistribution of household labor between men and women because women's performance and men's avoidance of unpaid work remain potent daily enactments of unequal gender relations (2005, p. 286).

According to Bittman and Wajcman, when the scarcity of leisure time with the increasing work hours and flexibility reduces the quantity of free time and quality of contemporary life, there is a considerable amount of "gender gap in leisure" following the emergence of "dual-earner family as a norm" where "women ... simply add a shift of paid employment to their existing responsibilities for housework and child care" (2000, p. 165-166). This means, despite the fact that women's time commitments to paid work have increased positively for their economic emancipation, managing household labor and child care remains as their main responsibility (Mattingly and Sayer, 2006, p. 206; Sayer, 2005, p. 287). This situation has been taken different names in the existing theory such as the double burden, the double day, the dual burden, or the second shift. On the other hand, as Mattingly and Bianchi claim, "Though much attention has been paid to women's double burden of market and household work, studies of gender differences in other

uses of time including free time activities are far less prevalent" (2003, pp. 999-1000).

In relation to women's specialized responsibility of child care and homework, feminists have argued that women have a distinctive experience of time which is basically differed from men's. Women's distinctive and lower status in the family, the market, and society may also generate gender differences in their experience of time that is not totally tied to paid market or unpaid domestic labor (Mattingly and Bianchi, 2003, p. 999). Bittman and Wajcman refer to the studies of historians (Landes, 1983; Thompson, 1967) to elaborate on the link between the development of clock time and the industrial organization of labor, "since men 'specialize' in paid employment ... their subjective lives are ruled by linear clock time" (2000, p. 168). On the contrary, according to feminists, women experience time differently because women's time has been mostly cyclical or task oriented (Bittman and Wajcman, 2000, p. 168). Indeed, women fundamentally coordinate multiple activities that cannot be captured by approaches that "separate work from leisure, public from private time, subjective from objective time, and task from clock time", according to Adam (1995, p. 95). At the same time, women mainly take the responsibility to ensure the quality of leisure experiences for others; this means they act as 'coordinators' of family life who could not effort for their own leisure pursuits adequately (Mattingly and Bianchi, 2003, p. 1001). For this reason, the analysis of women's leisure experience must be congruent with the cyclical and distinctive nature of women's time suggesting "a reformulation of the concept of a gender gap in leisure" (Bittman and Wajcman, 2000, p. 168). As Deem (1988) argues, "women may have less primary leisure time but that women's leisure time may be qualitatively 'less leisurely' than men's" (in Bittman and Wajcman, 2000, pp. 168-169).

Bittman and Wajcman's study is based on thirty-six surveys conducted in nineteen countries (ten of them are OECD countries) during the period from 1961 to 1992. Later, surveys conducted in Australia were added to the study. In this work, there are

illuminating conclusions in terms of the character of leisure showing the gender gap in leisure (Bittman and Wajcman, 2000, p.165). According to their study, men enjoy a higher-quality leisure than women, even though the aggregate time spent on leisure is equal (2000, p. 181). Furthermore, women's leisure is more open to be interrupted by a number of leisure episodes related to their contamination to unpaid work more than men, so this is named as the "fragmentary character of women's leisure" (Bittman and Wajcman, 2000, pp. 181-182; Mattingly and Bianchi, 2003, p. 1001). Therefore, "women are significantly disadvantaged by their uneven responsibility for the physical care of children" (Bittman and Wajcman, 2000, p. 184) since they spend their time for the caring of children more than playing with them and they perform more of the household labor than men (Bittman and Wajcman, 2000, p. 185; Mattingly and Bianchi, 2003, p. 999). In sum, all these responsibilities bearing by women decrease the quality of leisure time, although the quantity is similar in the Australian case. Besides it creates an important amount of 'gender gap in leisure' legitimizing the system of unequal distribution of power relations between sexes and women's disadvantaged condition in society.

In another study, Mattingly and Bianchi (2003) make similar arguments for the US experience based on the research that examines gender differences in the quantity of free time. They align the major factors that limit the quantity of leisure time of US women as wifehood, motherhood and women's commitments of work (Mattingly and Bianchi, 2003, pp. 1002-1004). As spouses, there is evidence that when women marry, their share of housework significantly climbs up, though the opposite is true for men. As I previously mentioned, men's benefit from parenthood is much more than women's since overall demand from women as mothers increases with the presence of children. Additionally, their efficiency in market work is oppositely felt by women that they are inadequate due to their obligations at home (Mattingly and Bianchi, 2003, pp. 1002-1004). All these facts contribute to the idea that women are exposed to enormous amount of 'leisure deficit' which is based on factors such as *contamination, fragmentation* (of leisure time), and the decline of *adult leisure* -that is defined as "pure leisure" when children are not present (Mattingly and Bianchi,

2003, pp. 1004-1006). However, Mattingly and Bianchi's "findings stand in contrast to Bittman and Wajcman's (2000) analysis of Australian data, where differences were in quality, but not quantity, of leisure" (2003, p. 1014). Based on their study, they found that American men have more free time than women, and this also includes the amount of "pure free time" (Mattingly and Bianchi, 2003, p. 1014). Qualitatively, women's activities may also be less relaxing than men's because of the compulsory nature of their activities undertaken for the purpose of family well-being or cohesion (Mattingly and Bianchi, 2003, p. 1025). In another study, Mattingly and Sayer examine the US time diary data from two different representative studies conducted between 1975-1976 and 1998-1999 (2006, p. 210). Based on their analyses, they argue that there is persistent inequality in gendered time-use processes that creates the "gendered experience of time pressure" between 1975 and 1998; although time pressure on men remained stable, women's time pressure climbed up significantly during these years (Mattingly and Sayer, 2006, p. 205). In this manner, they use the definition of 'feeling rushed' since the time pressure on women has risen. In their own words, "higher amounts of free time will be negatively associated with subjective feelings of being rushed" (Mattingly and Sayer, 2006, p.208). Compared to men, women experience a higher level of feeling rushed through both *multitasking* -particularly combining housework with leisure time activities, and *disruption* [referred *fragmentation* in the previous study] (Mattingly and Sayer, 2006, p. 209).

Additionally, Sayer uses the same representative time diary data of 1975 and 1998, but she adds the 1965 data into her research in order to analyze the "trends and gender differences in time use" in the period when women's participation to paid work has significantly increased and when the feminists were criticizing gender division of household labor (2005, pp. 285-286). She claims that one of the rationales behind the gendered time use patterns is that "women's performance of domestic labor is still part and parcel of being a 'good' wife and mother" (Sayer, 2005, p. 287). Based on this identification, the norms of appropriate femininity and masculinity are built for women and men as caregivers and breadwinners for their families, respectively (Sayer, 2005, p. 287, 288). In this sense, women's participation in paid

work is associated with masculinity which is seen as an inappropriate manner for women, whereas domestic work is associated with femininity; thus, devalued. However, women's increasing engagement in paid work as breadwinners has not undermined the power of the ideology of good mothering. Women's time devoted to produce 'good' children has remained (Sayer, 2005, p. 297); thus, mothers' participation to out-of-home leisure activities has decreased.

Raisborough (2006) develops a different perspective on women and leisure relationship and analyzes women's experiences of accessing "serious leisure". The concept of serious leisure can be defined as the highest level of women's participation in leisure activities where they develop empowering identities *through* leisure activities. It is a kind of amateur, hobbyist or volunteer activity where participants "launch themselves on a career centered on acquiring and expressing their special skills, knowledge and experience" (Raisborough, 2006, p. 244). In this sense, women's access to leisure enables them to disengage themselves from the demands of normative femininity as good mothers and respectable wives (Raisborough, 2006, p. 242). In this respect,

Issues of access have been at the centre of mainstream feminist campaigns against women's exclusion from the public spheres of social, political and economic life. Feminism, emerging from the 1960s, resisted the seemingly natural alignment of women with domestic duties in the home to campaign for women's freedom of opportunity within the public spaces and systems shaping socio-economic and political realities. Feminist leisure theorists were likewise concerned with women's access to out-of-home leisure. They argued for women's right to regular leisure ... for their empowerment and liberation (Raisborough, 2006, p. 243).

In other words, women's serious leisure, a contemporary attention in feminist leisure literature, is a special arrangement in the lives of women which transcended the problem of access *to* leisure in order to empower women. Instead, they access empowerment, emancipation and freedom *through* leisure activity. This idea derives from the development of postmodern theories emphasizing the role of agency. In this sense, the issue of how women access *to* leisure have lost some ground

(Raisborough, 2006, p. 243). On the contrary, women can use different discursive relations contained in leisure spaces to weave new femininities against normative gender relations (Raisborough, 2006, p. 244). Through this approach leisure sites become "subversive spaces where women can exercise their personal agency by creating self-defined subjectivities that undermine those imposed by patriarchal culture" (Raisborough, 2006, p. 244). Activities of serious leisure "provide the space for them to create distinct social identities developed in accordance with the values of the serious leisure world" (Raisborough, 2006, p. 245). In this way they can more or less escape from the demands of normative or traditional femininity (Raisborough, 2006, p. 255). However, according to Raisborough, through the acquisition of a serious leisure identity, women are not able to cope well with the demands of normative femininities, instead they become temporarily dislocated (2006, p. 258). Indeed, the desires of normative femininity are hard to overcome only with special kinds of leisure activities due to the ingrained nature of gendered social fields. However, as we can see from the example of serious leisure, it contains some possibilities for freedom and emancipation for the participants of leisure activity.

## CHAPTER 3

### *GÜN* IN TURKISH EXPERIENCE

#### **3.1. Turkish Women's 'Gendered Fields'**

##### **3.1.1. Culturally Specific Experiences of Gender**

I presented a theoretical framework for a discussion of the concept of gender and its main characteristics such as gender division, inequality, and oppression based on the Western literature on the topic in the previous chapter. I will now argue that while women's experiences of gender are based on universally shared systems of patriarchy and capitalism, there are also variations according to culturally specific norms of gender division, inequality and oppression. Below, I will present an outline of the specificities of the Turkish case where there is a strict separation between women and men in the social arena.

It is well-known that with the formation of the new Turkish Republic in 1923, women gained various rights and also increased their visibility in public life. Although "the Ottoman modernization period involved some reforms against the subordination of women, yet the most comprehensive transformation is observed in the founding era of the Turkish Republic" (Coşar and Gençoğlu, 2008, p. 327). According to Kandiyoti, although women gained their rights through their own struggle in Western countries, rights given to Turkish women were not obtained through a women's movement, but were granted by a governing group committed to the goals of modernization and Westernization (1987, p. 320). Mainly because of lack of political activity, Kandiyoti claims that Turkish women were "emancipated but unliberated" (1987, p. 324). However, Çakır argues that from the nineteenth century on, Ottoman women who were organized around various women's periodicals and associations began to make demands about their status in public life

(1996, p. 22). Hence, the political reforms which took place in the 1930s like suffrage can be seen as an outcome of women's own struggle and of the efforts of the republicans (Çakır, 1996, pp. 312-313). Reforms in favor of women were mostly practiced by women of the urban bourgeoisie (Kandiyoti, 1987, p. 322; Tekeli, 1990, p. 145). Since the rural areas of the country which comprised the majority of the population were weakly integrated into the reformation process, traditional exclusionary values against women could not be totally eliminated (Tekeli, 1990, p. 146). Özçürümez and Cengiz argue that it is the "paradoxical impact of the modernization process on women in Turkey ... which brought ... cultural contradictions" in different parts of the country (2011, p. 27).

It can be argued that in the Turkish case there is a contradiction between the legal status of women in the public sphere and their experiences of domination and subordination in the private sphere. Tekeli predicated this idea arguing that although there have been important changes in terms of the legal rights given to women, "there has been very little change in basic institutions affecting the real status of women during the last hundred years" (1990, p. 141). Similarly, Arat also claims that though "gender equality was granted in the public realm ... patriarchal norms continued to be practiced and replicated in the private realm" (2000, p. 112). According to Lila Abu-Lughod, women's conditions in Iran and Egypt are similar to those in Middle Eastern countries during the first half of the twentieth century. Though reformers advocated for women's greater participation in the public sphere through education, unveiling, and political participation, women's domestic responsibilities remained the same (Abu-Lughod, 1998, p. 8). Furthermore, in Western feminism it is accepted that gaining public rights does not prevent the oppression of women. Especially second wave feminists who were dissatisfied with the focus on legal and institutional spheres of emancipation emphasized the role of patriarchy in everyday life experiences of women (Özçürümez and Cengiz, 2011, p. 23). In Turkey, the basic and most important institution that affects women's experiences in the private realm is the family. In the Ottoman society both in urban and rural areas women were exposed to the direct authority of men via the

institutions of state, religion and family (Tekeli, 1990, p. 142). Although the new Republic was successful in eliminating the negative effects of state authority and religion to a certain extent, the oppressive role of family in women's lives remained the same or showed a little change particularly in rural areas.

From the 1950s onward rapid structural changes were observed in Turkey which also influenced the position of women both in the family and society. These structural changes can be described as "the freeing of rural labor from the land (in particular landless families); urbanization resulting from migration to cities; the revival of commerce and industry in urban areas; and rapid social mobility" (Tekeli, 1990, p. 145). These developments increased women's dependency to men; thus, "subjecting them to more oppression". Particularly *gecekondu* women who migrated from rural areas became much more dependent on their families and husbands after moving to cities (Tekeli, 1990, p. 147). The breakup of family production with migration had important outcomes in terms of male-female segregation. When men started to work as wage-laborers, "women maintained their positions as unpaid family laborers ... and took on the position and status of housewife" (Tekeli, 1990, p. 146).

While analyzing women's experiences of difference, inequality and oppression in the Turkish case or in the Middle East, Kandiyoti asserts that women's experiences are directly influenced by culturally specific experiences of gender (1987, pp. 334-335). In this sense, Western feminist literature made inadequate and incomplete analyses of the specific experiences of women under Islam which are different from Western women's (Kandiyoti, 1987, p. 335). According to Kandiyoti, "Islam as an ideological system does provide some unifying concepts that influence women's experiences of subordination" (1987, p. 319). As argued by Arat, "Islamic tradition ... excluded women from the public realm and used concepts of male-female complementarity rather than equality (2000, p. 110). However, among Islamic societies, there is also a great deal of diversity according to the nationalist histories and social policies of different countries (Kandiyoti, 1987, p. 320). In this sense, Turkey is a peculiar case among other countries where most of its population can be defined as Muslim.

However, Islamic nature of a society should be considered "with reference to its broader political project rather than the dominant religious affiliation of its population" (Kandiyoti, 1987, p. 321). Islam is not always an inclusive starting point to understand women's experiences of subordination in Turkey. Some authors like Kandiyoti notes that Islam has an important place which causes and legitimizes some specific experiences of women's oppression in Turkey (1987, p. 317). However, Tekeli claims that "the cause of women's oppression in Turkey cannot be the Islamic religion" since the implementation of comprehensive legal reforms on the status of women and secularism as a founding principle of the state created "a different kind of consciousness among Turkish women" from the societies governed by Islamic laws (1990, p. 140).

In Turkey, strict cultural control over women affects their subjective experiences of femininity (Kandiyoti, 1987, p. 324). These cultural controls have two outcomes. Firstly, it creates a psychological separation between men and women which is called as gender segregation. Kandiyoti thinks that gender segregation does not have any positive function since it is "the mode of control of female sexuality" (1987, p. 325). Secondly, cultural control over women is a corporate activity which is mostly practiced by women's near circle of relatives, parents, siblings, and even neighbors who see themselves as responsible for women's appropriate sexual conduct (Kandiyoti, 1987, p. 325). Corporate control of female sexuality links women's sexual purity to the honor of the male members of a whole community (Kandiyoti, 1987, pp. 326, 334). Arat associates these controls with "communal norms and customs" (2000, p. 107). These restrictive and oppressive forms of domination produce specific experiences of one's gender in Turkey, and more generally in the Middle East (Kandiyoti, 1987, p. 333).

Generally women's participation of paid work both increases their status and is evaluated positively. However, Tekeli notes that work has not brought women emancipation and much has changed about their roles in the home (1990, p. 148). Nevertheless, the money women earns generally goes directly into the family budget

according to Tekeli (1990, p. 148). Family roles in Turkey create culturally specific forms of gender experiences. According to Tekeli, although both in the West and in Turkey there is a tendency towards disintegration of family, in Turkey it is still very difficult for an individual, especially a woman, to establish a personal identity independent from the family (1990, p. 151).

In contemporary Turkey, Islamic and patriarchal moral concepts are increasingly taken as a point of reference (Acar and Altunok, 2013, p. 14; Kandiyoti, 2010, p. 174). In this context, Acar and Altunok discuss the concept of "politics of intimate" referring to the "policies, decisions, discourses, laws and norms which regulate intimate and family relationships, sexualities and reproductive capabilities of individuals" (Acar and Altunok, 2013, p.15). The concept of 'politics of intimate' is based on a neo-conservative rationality reaffirming the existence of state policies in the private realm where there is an increasing emphasis on motherhood and on gender segregation. In this context, Acar and Altunok assert that "the notion of gender equality loses its significance" (2013, p. 14). Therefore, religion-inspired patriarchal value systems in Turkey foster the idea that "women are increasingly placed within the boundaries of the private sphere and their subjectivities are defined with reference to the traditional roles of caregiving" (Acar and Altunok, 2013, pp. 16, 20). The emergent trend in Turkey's current political and social life paves the way for a new discussion about gender-specific cultural experiences in Turkey. Below, I will discuss women's experiences of subordination in private life with reference to the intermesh of religious and patriarchal point of views.

### **3.1.2. Private/Public Distinction**

In this section, I will provide an overview of the major theoretical approaches to the distinction between private and public discussing the distinctive nature of women's experiences. This discussion is important for understanding the nature and dynamics of gendered fields in the Turkish case. The private/public distinction is mainly based on different physical and social fields which are reserved either only for men or

women. These fields are an indicator of the principle of gender division and segregation.

Generally, women are universally restricted by "circumscribed" spaces as home, family, village, community and so on; conversely, men can move along more amorphous public spaces that provide them a sense of freedom (Ridd, 1997, p. 194). My case of *gün* meetings is also an important example of these "circumscribed" social fields in which women can socialize with the same sex in a restricted area such as home. Even though there are examples of women going outside, socializing and entertaining in various public spaces, they can experience other forms of social restrictions which circumscribe them. Although it is assumed that women's exclusion from the public spheres is mostly confined to simpler and less developed societies which bear communal norms, this can also be observed in well-developed institutional structures (Sciama, 1997, p. 88). However, the private/public distinction is best crystallized in societies where various forms of gender inequality and oppression against women are harshly experienced. Turkey is among these societies where gender roles of men and women are strictly defined with regard to the principle of private/public distinction.

These attributes of private and public refer to both spatial and social distinctions between the worlds of men and women. As described by Lloyd and Fallers, in Turkey men are public figures whereas women are private and domestic ones (1976, p. 243). In other words, gendered fields in individuals' lives in Turkey are sustained by the principle of the private/public distinction which deserves to be evaluated under a separate title since this distinction is essentially a determinant principle of women's leisure experiences, specifically of *gün* meetings.

The distinction of social roles according to the dichotomous relationships of male and female spheres is not specific to the Turkish case. In the Western literature there are references to these relationships which explicitly separate the social worlds of men and women. For instance, Ridd argues that women are responsible for the control of home as their own space and of those who enter this space, whereas men

"occupy an amorphous physical space outside the home" (1997, p. 194). Home is the main place women are responsible for. Traditionally, everything related to home is also related to women. Even working women have a "natural domesticity" since they are also housewives (Oakley, 2005, p. 97). However, distinctions are not limited to physical spaces like home and out-of-home. As argued by Sciama, both in social and economic terms "women are almost universally confined to private spheres, while men have access to more rewarding public spheres" (1997, p. 88). Furthermore, our symbolic worlds and emotional attributions to either men or women are actualized in the sense that division is the basic principle of the gendered world. These divisions are shaped by the various categories of gender division. Mostly biological differences between men and women are used to legitimize the existing gender division and inequality, hence individuals accept the power relations based on gender as natural and given as if they are biological traits. In Table One, I present a list of the various categories of gender division based on the attributions involving male and female fields. These categories are symbolized by binary oppositions. Table One includes most of the categories in the existing mainstream literature.

**Table 1:** The Categories of Gender Division

<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
Private	Public
Inside	Outside
Home	Street
Village	City
Culture	Nature
Pure/Clean	Dirty/Nasty
Family/Kin	Non-family/Non-kin
Domestic	Non-domestic
Homework	Paid work
Reproduction	Production
Caregiver	Cared-for

Binary thinking that identifies "attributions of superiority and inferiority both differentiates between the 'self' (the same) and its 'other' (the different) and actively constitutes a social relationship privileging the same who has the power of the name, subordinate, exclude or silence the 'other'" (Ramazanoğlu and Holland, 2002, p. 107). In Western feminism and in terms of gender relations, the above mentioned divisions overlap with the social construction of woman as man's other. Woman is not only man's other, but also constructed as subordinate to man on the basis of these dualistic distinctions (Ramazanoğlu and Holland, 2002, pp. 107-108). According to the Bourdieusian conceptual framework, these distinctions are the main categories that one can internalize during childhood through gendered habitus as factual divisions of gender. With reference to Bourdieu, these are mental and cognitive structures which are the sources of various movements of the agents (1977, pp. 72, 73). As argued by Kandiyoti, different cultural modes of control create different subjective experiences of femininity for women (1987, p. 324). We experience, understand and reproduce the world around us according to these binary principles of gender based on men's domination over women. Even if men and women observe the same reality, "their social constructions and their experiences of the world ... differ fundamentally ... and ... these will inevitably affect their perceptions" (Ardener, 1997, p. 19). As gender is a constructed category, these divisions based on gender are also built structures which legitimize the domination of men over women. Categories of gender segregation are also the reflections of power relations in society that is meaningful in different social, cultural and economic fields such as *gün* meetings which is one of these fields. Özbay argues that forms of oppositions like "active/inactive, inside/outside the home could be regarded as male-dominated ideologies in advanced industrial societies" (1995, p. 90).

There are various sociological and anthropological studies which provide some essential clues about the nature of gender segregation in some Turkish villages, towns and cities (Stirling, 1965; Lloyd and Fallers, 1976; Kıray, 1981[1967], Kandiyoti, 1987; Tapper and Tapper, 1987; Delaney, 1991; White, 1994). Furthermore, there are other studies mostly about Eastern and Mediterranean

societies which reach results similar to the Turkish case (Chatterjee, 1989; Sciama, 1997; Abu-Lughod, 1998).

According to Stirling, traditional gender division is based on the principle of "strict segregation of the sexes" in Turkish villages (1965, p. 98). In her book, *The Seed and the Soil* (1991), Delaney discusses this issue of segregation in a Central Anatolian Turkish village through "the symbols and the meanings of procreation" (1991, p. 201). According to Delaney, the outside of the village symbolizes a wild area, whereas inside the village, "one is enclosed, safe and protected just as the womb encloses and protects the child", so the village symbolizes a unified female body (1991, p. 211). For this reason, "the village, like a proper woman, is described as *kapalı* (closed, covered); the town or city is *açık* (open). The city is *bulaşık* (tainted, soiled); the village is *temiz* (clean and pure)" (Delaney, 1991, p. 207). In the village, men are "the only fully social beings" who can use public buildings since "to enter the street is to enter the wild area of the village" (Delaney, 1991, pp. 212, 237). This is why this wild, soiled and dangerous section of the village which is like a town or a city is closed to women whose place is the home unless they are covered (Delaney, 1991, p. 237).

Even in towns and cities, relationships between men and women are determined according to the above mentioned inside/outside distinction. Kıray studied the conditions of women in a small town in Ereğli in 1967. According to Kıray's observations, in typical Turkish families of the town, women and men clearly live in separate worlds. While husbands do not spend much time at home, women cannot enter into men's worlds outside (1981[1967], p. 262). In *Money Makes Us Relatives* (1994), White arrives at similar conclusions in the context of cities. In many traditional families a woman "often sees her husband only at night" (1994, p. 53). This is because most of the traditional husbands prefer to go out in the evenings to meet their friends and return home late (White, 1994, p. 53). Similarly expectations from girls and boys are also different. Daughters are seen as a source of labor whose main responsibility is domestic work such as taking care of other family members,

cooking, cleaning the house and so on, whereas a son can get a paid job becoming a source of income (White, 1994, p. 74). This situation is consistent with Tapper and Tapper's argument who argue that "women are still ... strongly associated with the privacy of domestic life" (1987, p. 83).

The findings of my study suggest that the above arguments summarized about women's seclusion in Turkey continue to exist in less visible patterns although there is increasing urbanization, higher levels of education, and increasing labor force participation of women in paid work. Male-dominated gender ideology is still dominant and the expectation for commitment to provide household labor is higher for girls compared to boys. In line with the dominant gender ideology or gender role ideology, men are accepted as primary money-makers while women are inherently responsible for social reproduction. Social reproduction includes all types of domestic work, elderly care, child care, and also care for the husband. These are the works mostly fulfilled by women who do not have any material gain because of gendered division of labor (Kurdoğlu, 2011, p. 114). Özbay notes the general theory of production/reproduction dichotomy as follows: "with the expansion of capitalism, production is realized to a large extent through institutions outside the home, while women take up activities of reproduction inside the home" (1995, p. 90). In this manner, domesticity of women is still seen as a given and as a natural characteristic of femininity; women are condemned unless they fulfill these roles. On the other hand, most women in the cities increasingly participate in production activities outside the home, but they are also forced to fulfill their roles in reproductive activities. This double standard against women is also legitimized by the differences in male and female roles which are very explicit dividing the worlds and social networks of women and men strictly (Ayata, 1988, p. 19).

In *Sex Roles in Edremit (1976)*, Lloyd and Fallers emphasize the importance of solidarity among women which they gain through solidarity groups of their own, completely separated from those of men's. In their own words:

Our point is not the familiar one that women, submissive in public, manage to influence their fate by domestic scheming, manipulation and hen-pecking. This is true, but probably universal. Our point is rather that in Edremit women have an institutional structure and sense of solidarity of their own, parallel to those of men, which give them a substantial field for self-assertion and a psychological independence of men -an independence underscored by the performance of those women who break into the public sphere (Lloyd and Fallers, 1976, p. 260).

These parallel groups consist of various formal and informal gatherings like *mevlüd* (a religious ritual), *gün*, and wedding parties which are the sources for comfortableness and companionship for women in the town (Lloyd and Fallers, 1976, pp. 252-253). Related to this point, Sciamia asserts that "anthropologists' discussions of private as opposed to public domains in other cultures often reveal a great deal of emotional commitment to the notion of individual privacy as freedom" (1997, p. 92). In this manner, Lloyd and Fallers speculatively claimed that "the separated women of Edremit are ... more independent, at least psychologically, than American women" (1976, p. 255). Kandiyoti challenges Lloyd and Fallers' argument about the positive potential of segregated women's groups. She argues that sisterhood and solidarity of same-sex groups "tell us very little about the underlying dynamics of women's experiences" (Kandiyoti, 1987, p. 325). She also adds:

There is nothing in segregation per se that necessarily breeds rivalry or fosters solidarity ... it is the mode of control of female sexuality, which includes the practice of segregation, that has a direct bearing on how gender is internalized (Kandiyoti, 1987, p. 325).

As mentioned earlier, the division of the women's and men's worlds is not specific to Turkey. Some near Eastern cultures to western ones bear the same principle of inside/outside distinction. For instance, Chatterjee writes about the everyday lives of Indian women whose social space is separated into the inner and the outer spheres (1989, p. 238). Social roles are divided by gender to correspond to the separation between "the world" and "the home". External is the domain of material interests and of men. The home, on the other hand, represents our inner spiritual self and must

remain unaffected by the profane activities of the material world; it is the domain of women (Chatterjee, 1989, pp. 238-239).

Abu-Lughod argues that in post-colonial nations, division of the world into an inner and an outer domains is a cultural process initiated by nationalists where "men could safely emulate the ways of the West and appropriate its technologies in order to gain power as long as the home with women ... could be preserved as a space of spirituality and cultural authenticity" (1998, p. 17). In this way, women could be removed away and protected from the undesirable influences of Western culture.

Sciama also studied the issue of privacy of women in the Greek peasant communities and reached results similar to Delaney's. In Greek villages, "most contacts and negotiations with the outside or public world of villagers ... are conducted by men, and only men handle money and make decisions" (Sciama, 1997, p. 98). Sciama explains this as follows:

The most significant dividing line in their [villagers'] conception of society is that between kin and non-kin, and if kin are associated with all that is good, holy, comfortable and reassuring, while non-kin are competitive, hostile and deceitful, then women's lack of independent social contacts outside the home and the family can hardly be regarded as 'deprivation' (1997, p. 99).

These studies are important since they show that culturally specific experiences of gender cannot be reduced to one country only; they reflect near cultures in many ways. Interaction between different cultures from the Mediterranean to the Middle East has caused some similarities in terms of the structural basis of women's subordination which bears a strict separation of the worlds of the two sexes.

### **3.2. Studies into *Gün* Meetings and Rotating Credit Associations**

#### **3.2.1. *Gün* Experiences of Women from Past to Present**

Existing literature contains surprisingly few studies of the *gün* meeting concept, despite it being a very special form of women's association in Turkey, and in which patriarchal control is highly influential in women's lives. To the extent that they exist, this topic has attracted the attention of researchers from many different disciplines, such as anthropology, sociology, ethnology and communication sciences. Such a diversity of interest suggests that *gün* meetings provide a fertile ground for researchers. Although some studies – generally ethnographic ones – focus directly on the dynamics of the meeting, while others addressed *gün* in regards to other factors, such as gender, migration or communication. In this section, studies that refer either directly or indirectly to *gün* meetings in existing literature will be put under scrutiny (c.f. Benedict, 1974; Lloyd and Fallers, 1976; Özbay, 1995 and 1999; Wolbert, 1996; Ekal, 2006; Sönmez et al., 2010; Büyükokutan, 2012; Alemdar and Köseoğlu, 2013; Sağır, 2013) so as to provide a better understanding of *gün* meetings.

In *The Kabul Güünü: Structured Visiting in an Anatolian Provincial Town (1974)*, Benedict defines "Reception Day" as "a particular form of female association which takes place among middle and upper class women in provincial towns and cities throughout Turkey" (1974, p. 28). Although the Reception Days described by Benedict are somewhat different from today's *gün* meetings, certain characteristics allow us to regard them as one of the first forms of *gün* that led to their current form. According to Benedict, the origins of these meetings "can be traced back to the Ottoman period", which they were "seemingly reserved for women of high social standing in urban centers" for whom opportunities to enter the public realm were limited (1974, pp. 44, 45). In a parallel vein, Özbay argues that "in the first few decades of the Republican era, the participation of ... women in a form of public sphere was mainly limited to such Reception Days" (1999, p. 561). As Benedict argues, the "separation of the social lives of men and women" constituted the basic motivation behind *gün* (Benedict, 1974, p. 33); and Wolbert similarly claimed that in a society where the worlds of men and women are separated, "attending a *gün* is an opportunity to accept the border between the female and the male world" (1996, p. 203).

Benedict asserted that such Reception Days were not exclusive to towns and cities in Turkey, being a very popular form of meeting in most Middle Eastern countries, from Lebanon to Iraq (1974, p. 29). He gathered basic data from a provincial town of southwestern Anatolia and collected additional data on similar meetings in Istanbul and Ankara (1974, p. 30). In the Turkey, *gün* meetings are gender-specific, where only women can attend; however, in Benedict's analysis, Reception Days are class-specific, with only "women of particular social rank" able to attend (1974, pp. 30, 33). In *Tütüneli* (the pseudonym used by Benedict for his field), the first Reception Days were introduced to the town by the wives of non-local civil servants who settled in *Tütüneli* in 1954 (Benedict, 1974, p. 34). In *Sex Roles in Edremit* (1976), Lloyd and Fallers similarly described Reception Days as "a very formal style of visiting" where "the wives of civil servants and army men" were the only attendees (1976, p. 252). In this sense, it provided a sense of togetherness among non-local women who were considered to be different from the local ones. As claimed by Benedict: "If not better educated than the locals, they were at least more cultured. A distinctly different lifestyle and set of expectations made them appear cosmopolitan to local women – a type of social worth little known before in *Tütüneli*" (1974, p. 36). In this sense, what differentiated these participants from the local people was actually the volume of their economic and cultural capital. Non-local women, as strangers, could act in unity against different ways of local life, which they found "rustic", and in doing so, bridged a kind of social gap between themselves and others (Benedict, 1974, p. 35). It was also a means of emancipation from "boredom and alienation from conservative regulations" that restricted the role of women in the town (Benedict, 1974, p. 35). For this reason, despite being a gender specific occasions, Reception Days could be said to have a positive function for women, helping them emancipate themselves from the conservative male-dominated regulations of a small town. At the end of the first year of these occasions, the circle of non-local women had widened to include wealthy and influential local women, who came to influence the lives of the non-local women. As Benedict claimed, "in 1955 it was a shocking spectacle to see non-local women in relatively short skirts,

bare arms, and lacking a head cover walking down the main bazaar street, a manner and place forbidden to local women" (1974, p. 36).

Özbay defines Reception Days as "schools for the modernization of middle-class women" (1999, p. 561). In these special days before the 1980s, women had an opportunity to discuss "manners, fashion, child-rearing practices and relationships among spouses" (1999, p. 561). It was a way for women to participate in the public sphere and to learn a sort of lifestyle. In this manner, the reception rooms played a special role in providing a sense of publicity. As argued by Özbay:

Western furniture, such as armchairs and occasional tables, were not yet an internalised part of their culture, and seemed to be even physically uncomfortable. This gave the feeling of being in a public place, where the room was a showcase for the household and family (1999, p. 561).

The earlier Reception Days were somewhat different from the contemporary meetings in both form and content. Reception Days differed from intimate neighborhood activities due to their more "official atmosphere" (Özbay, 1999, p. 561), while the members of today's *gün* groups can behave in a more comfortable way. Sometimes the relationships in *gün* meetings function as extensions of the group members' informal relations; and so they can easily make jokes, laugh and entertain themselves in a more informal atmosphere. The Reception Days were mostly attended by large crowd of women, ranging in number from twenty to eighty participants, with a high turnout in the reception rooms of the hostess. The number of people attending such events and the participation of "the most socially desirable people" indicated the success of the meeting (Benedict, 1974, p. 38). Today's *gün* meetings, on the other hand, are held by a specified group of women, usually numbering around ten. Both Reception Days and *gün* meetings are organised on a monthly basis, but while the members of *gün* groups reciprocally bring a pre-determined sum of money or other valuable items, the Reception Days had no such economic aspect. The only reciprocal relationship on Reception Days was the participants' involvement. As argued by Benedict (1974, p. 38), reception days basically "involved women visiting each other and had no further aim" such as

collecting money (Sönmez et al., 2010, p. 97). Due to the high number of women participating in Reception Days, they could be "used to announce new friendships or to maintain or suspend current friendships", which had the potential of changing a person's social map (Benedict, 1974, p. 39). Lloyd and Fallers argued that these functioned well for women, allowing them to make new friends (1976, p. 252). In contrast, in *gün* meetings, such kinds of important changes in the participants' social maps would be unusual due to the limited number of participants. Moreover, groups are usually composed of people who are acquainted, meaning that the composition of a *gün* group changes only rarely. For a Reception Day, "the hostess opens her home for the entire afternoon, and her guests choose their own time of arrival and departure within this framework", where "women generally arrive in groups of two to five and remain for one to two hours," according to Benedict (1974, p. 40). In contrast, in *güns* the guests arrive between 13:00 and 14:00 and leave between 16:00 and 18:00, depending on the weather conditions. In addition, in Benedict's case, Reception Days were held in the "privacy of ... homes", but today women may meet in restaurants or cafes (Benedict, 1974, p. 29). While "the reception is used as a means of reinforcing the participants' interpretation of the town's social structure and their place within it", *gün* meetings far from fulfill such a function due to the cosmopolitan environment (Benedict, 1974, p. 46).

According to Özbay, today, the increasing participation of women in public life "has lessened the significance of the former 'Reception Day'" (1999, p. 564). According to Özbay, "they no longer functioned as a 'school for modernisation'," since more women are now going out and have various contacts in public life (1999, p. 564).

*Gün* is an institution that brings about both integration and segregation. In Wolbert's view, it is a method of creating informal relations and developing "urban social networks" among women who are integrated into a women's group (1996, p. 188). In her case, Wolbert defines *gün* meetings as a key institution of integration for Turkish re-migrants returning from Germany (1996, p. 186). She argues that "participation becomes a mark of confidence: Being a member of such a closed circle can be regarded as an indubitable sign of social integration" (Wolbert, 1996, p. 199). On the

other hand, similar to Reception Days, *gün* meetings "reproduce the segregation of the male and female worlds" in which the group easily endures "the isolation and marginality of a housewife's existence" (Wolbert, 1996, p. 188). The expectations of the guests from the hostess coincide fundamentally with the traditional demands associated with housewifery, namely cleanness, tidiness, proficiency in cooking and child-rearing. Women either intentionally or unintentionally reproduce the patriarchal ideology that assigns home and family-based responsibilities to women. As Wolbert claims:

The '*gün*' relieves them of unpredictable duties as a hostess. It is a means of restricting a woman's contacts to her neighbors, which she established after her return, without endangering them. Here, the '*gün*' community appears to be a professional organization of housewives that demands certain efforts and from which you cannot wholly withdraw (1996, p. 196).

*Gün* meetings and further contacts among women give them the regular "opportunity to get away from their husbands and families for a while", despite its function in reproducing traditional gender roles (Wolbert, 1996, p. 203). Women fulfill the same duties for different people as a form of leisure practice, in which they both reproduce and escape from their daily practices.

*Gün* meetings in their contemporary form became popular in the 1980s, and were first considered to be an "indirect way of saving money" for middle-class women (Özbay, 1995, p. 105; Wolbert, 1996, p. 188; Ekal, 2006, p. 6). Rather than using the name "Reception Day", labeled their new forms of occasion as "guest days", "money days", "currency (dollar, mark, and euro) days", "gold days", "silver days", or, in short, "day" (Özbay, 1995, p. 105; Sönmez et al., 2010, p. 95). In these meetings, women usually meet once in a month in the home of one of the participants or in tea gardens, patisseries or restaurants. They collect a "predetermined sum of money (according to the value of silver or gold on that day)" among themselves and give it to the host of the *gün* (Özbay, 1995, p. 105). This relationship continues reciprocally until all of the participants have collected their money. Wolbert argues that Reception Days, originally practiced by upper-class townswomen and the urban elite,

have turned into an occasion for urban middle-class women, where the material relationship plays an important role (1996, pp. 186, 188). Wolbert explains this trend, arguing that "in the eighties the politico-economic tendency to favour trade, export and tourism increased the importance of money for social mobility", and accordingly, women, especially housewives, also started to increase their relationship with money (1996, p. 188).

There have been some recent studies dealing with the issue of *gün*. Sönmez et al. made a comprehensive quantitative study in 2010, collecting data from 399 regular attendants of *gün* meetings in Eskişehir, Turkey. The outcomes of the study revealed that *gün* meetings function as spaces where Turkish women "share common enjoyments and boredoms, cope with stress, develop their communication skills, learn new things, and make economic and moral investments through their participation" (Sönmez et al., 2010, p. 96). Although these positive functions can be observed also in my case study, I propose that moral investment is a vague term that requires further elaboration. Sönmez et al. state that their study has three interrelated objectives: First, to identify the specific kind of leisure activity of Turkish women in their homes; second, to investigate the differences between the employed and unemployed in terms of participation of *gün* meetings; and finally, to investigate the differences in women's practices with regards to their occupational status and demographic characteristics (2010, p. 97). Sönmez et al. concluded that *gün* meetings are mostly carried by married housewives whose educational levels are extremely varied, and who are between the ages of 31 and 50. It was further concluded that *gün* meetings were the least popular activity among working, single, uneducated and very young women (Sönmez et al., 2010, p. 98). The study carried out by Sönmez et al. identified some of the most frequent activities held during the *güns* as "eating and drinking refreshments", "conversation about current affairs", "handicrafts" and "conversation about other people", whereas the least frequent activities are such productive pastimes as "producing decorative goods", "wood painting" and performance-related abilities like "playing a musical instrument" (Sönmez et al., 2010, p. 99).

Büyükokutan also conducted an ethnological study of *gün* meetings, this time in Muğla, Turkey. In her study entitled *A Folkloric Approach to Traditional Golden Days: "Example of Muğla"* (2012) she argues that the traditional structure of *gün* is modified according to changing social and economic conditions. That is, despite its cultural and social characteristics, women attending *güns* today do so as an investment, or to cover a materialistic necessity (Büyükokutan, 2012, p. 117). According to Büyükokutan, even though many women organize *gün* meetings as a leisure time activity, the will to receive a determined amount of money is an important factor for ensuring the continuity of such meetings (2012, p. 119).

*Gün* groups are generally made up of participants with similar economic and cultural backgrounds, and they accept new participants accordingly. Büyükokutan notes that the new participant's "secretiveness" is vital for her acceptance into the group (2012, p. 121). Participants of the *gün* discuss various topics like their daily lives, family problems, TV series and politics, but they also share information about the things they have learned recently. In this sense, *gün* meetings function as schools in which women exchange information about different topics, similar to the function of coffeehouses for men (Büyükokutan, 2012, pp. 124, 126). Büyükokutan argues further that the educational processes in *gün* meetings have an essential place in the lives of women, especially for those who cannot easily express themselves in public life (2012, p. 127). Büyükokutan's main argument is that *gün* is an important example of how a traditional cultural activity can be sustained with some updates and modifications. In this sense, money is the basic element ensuring cultural continuity in the context of *gün* meetings (2012, p. 131).

Sağır analyzed the perceptions of retired women about *gün* meetings in Safranbolu (2013), with particular focus on the meetings of elderly and retired people. According to Sağır, "the retirement that generally corresponds to later stages of life of people is seen as a process of expansion of the free time and ... became [*sic*] evident by the loss of social role" (2013, p. 477). As a result of this, the retirees start

to seek new areas of socialization, like *güns*, and define new social roles for themselves (Sağır, 2013, p. 477). In addition, after retirement, *güns* can provide the continuity of relationships that were established in the workplace. As Sağır claimed, the decisive feature of these *güns* for retired women is to prevent a total break from working life and from the workplace friendships after retirement (2013, p. 487). Generally, these are meetings that started as young and working women's *güns* and turned into retired/elderly women's *güns* (Sağır, 2013, p. 492). Sağır also discussed a "Reception Day" experience in Safranbolu based on a participant's testimony in which women met on the first Thursday of every month, but without exchanging money. These meetings were announced to the entire city, so the events would be crowded, and interestingly, this practice continued until 1997 (2013, p. 493). This Reception Day experience in Safranbolu draws attention for its duration, which was longer than the cases discussed by Benedict and Özbay.

Some studies preferred to analyze the various relations and dynamics that can be observed throughout *gün* meetings. For example, Ekal discussed the role of mother-in-laws in *gün* groups in her study entitled *'How should a Kaynana Behave?': Discussions on the Role of Mothers-in-Law in Two Gün Groups* (2006). Similar to my case study, Ekal's respondents were also mothers, and they too "experienced rural to urban migration either before or after their marriage" (2006, p. 4). According to Ekal, *gün* is a distinctive form of women's association "through the performance of certain values" (2006, p. 7). As she argues:

Among those values, women's observance of the boundaries of the conjugal family appears to be a significant way for them to assert their compliance with what they perceive and construct as 'modern'. The claims to observe the boundaries of the conjugal family, on the other hand, become all the more complex in the case of *kaynanas* [mothers-in-law]: a woman's memory of her 'traditional' mother-in-law stands in opposition to her own perception as a 'modern' mother-in-law (Ekal, 2006, p. 7).

Ekal summarized some examples of the role of mothers-in-law in perpetuating the norms of traditional kinship within the community, although the conjugal family was seen as a norm of modernity (2006, pp. 8-9). She presented her observations related

to the participants' thoughts and experiences about the mother/daughter-in-law relationship. Although the participants characterized the “mothers-in-law 'in the past' as intolerant”, they argued that now a mother-in-law should be tolerant towards the wife of her son (Ekal, 2006, p. 13). Hence, according to Ekal, "the discussions in *gün* meetings ... provide us with what is the meaning of being a *kaynana* in urban middle-class neighborhoods where the norm of the conjugal family prevails", despite the changing meanings of the kinship roles (2006, p. 16).

Lastly, Alemdar and Köseoğlu, who are from different disciplines, develop an approach relating to the communicative characteristics of *gün* meetings. In *gün* meetings, women have face-to-face contact through which they "share and collect information about their everyday life practices"; thus, *gün* plays a role in the consumer decision process for its participants (Alemdar and Köseoğlu, 2013, p. 46). The authors carried out interviews with 31 participants of five different *gün* groups in İzmir, Turkey, and found that verbal communication in *gün* meetings plays an important role in promoting the sale of a product, even if the product is not advertised in the media (2013, p. 73). This shows that the participants trust the reference of the previous experience of a person that is known to them more than the media commercials when buying a new product (Alemdar and Köseoğlu, 2013, p. 73).

### **3.2.2. Economics of Rotating Savings and Credit Associations (ROSCAs) in *Gün* Meetings**

Actually *gün* is a "specific form of a rotating savings and credit association in urban Turkey" (Ekal, 2006, p. 2). These associations, known as ROSCA, differ from other kinds of visits among women in that they involve "the [equal] contribution of money from each member" (Ekal, 2009, pp. 4, 6). Similar meetings emerged in Turkey during the 1980s as an urban phenomenon and in the form of rotating money associations. Former meetings known as reception days are different than today's *güns* (Bellér-Hann, 1996, p. 120). *Gün* is a unique form of ROSCA. Throughout the

world there are various examples of similar associations, although they may differ in respect to length of meeting, the number of participants, forms, purposes and the profiles of the members.

Interest in the topic of ROSCA has been mainly anthropological (Geertz, 1962; Ardener, 1964; Wu, 1974; Anderson and Baland, 2002; Ardener, 2014), in that it is considered as a simple economic relationship, differentiated from the more complicated economic relation forms. Within the frame of this study I make an analysis of the social and economic features of ROSCA, but only in their relation to social features. Geertz described ROSCA as an institution for countries "moving from a static economy to a dynamic one" against the mentality of "Western-type savings institutions: banks, savings cooperatives, and the like" (1962). In ROSCAs, "traditionalistic forms of social relationships are mobilized so as to fulfill non-traditionalistic economic functions" (Geertz, 1962). According to Geertz, despite the differences between practical examples of ROSCA, the basic principle is the same everywhere:

A lump sum fund composed of fixed contributions from each member of the association is distributed, at fixed intervals and as a whole, to each member of the association in turn. Thus, if there are ten members of the association, if the association meets weekly, and the weekly contribution from each member is one dollar, then each week over a ten week period a different member will receive ten dollars (i.e., counting his own contribution) (Geertz, 1962).

Ardener argues that Geertz's definition lacks some aspects and does not fully represent all aspects of such associations. She argued that:

Contributions are not, in fact, always fixed ... and the whole of the lump sum is not always received by a member. Further, the use of the term 'sum' is not satisfactory ... [because] contributions can be made only in cash and not in kind" (Ardener, 1964, p. 201).

Accordingly, rotating credit associations are defined by Ardener as "an association formed upon a core of participants who agree to make regular contributions to a

fund, which is given in whole or in part, to each contributor in rotation" (1964, p. 201). She also emphasizes the presence of groups, where nowadays "members might meet their monthly fees exclusively online, paying into each member's nominated bank account" (Ardener, 2014, p. 5). In these contemporary forms of ROSCA, the social features are eliminated explicitly in favor of solely economic goals.

Geertz studied the rotating credit associations known as *arisan* in Eastern Java, Indonesia in 1953–54, and identified some differences between the urban and rural forms of *arisans*. Although rural forms contained an aspect of festivity where "each person who draws the fund is responsible for ... providing food and coffee for other members", urban *arisans* are specifically economic rather than social institutions (Geertz, 1962). He asserted that "the feasting aspect softens the harshness of economic calculation aspects" (Geertz, 1962), as villagers attend meetings so as to enhance social solidarity, whereas city dwellers see the association as a good way to save money. Geertz notes that *arisan* are rare among the elite, who mostly prefer to socialize in groups related to political parties, youth groups, labor unions, charitable organizations, women's clubs, and so on (1962). For this reason, it can be claimed that while *gün* is basically a meeting of middle class women, *arisan* is a class-specific activity.

Geertz also studied the rotating credit associations in different parts of Asia and Africa. In some cases, the ROSCAs had more complicated economic patterns in which even the interest rates of payments are calculated. As argued by Ardener, in some associations, in order to determine the level of contribution of each member for each meeting "complex mathematical formulae are necessary" (1964, p. 202). The basic economic function of ROSCAs is that "they assist in small-scale capital formation, or more simply, they create savings" (Ardener, 1964, p. 217). Instead of putting their savings into banks or protecting it themselves, individuals prefer to give them to a keeper. As Ardener claims, "in a rotating credit association capital need never be idle. If, instead of being kept at home, the money were given to a treasurer

to keep, he could put it into circulation until it was transferred back to the subscribers" (1964, p. 217).

In this way, subscribers receive a collective sum of their money or other kinds of materials when their turn comes around. In addition, ROSCAs "discipline their members to save" (Anderson and Baland, 2002, p. 989). Some associations are motivated by purely economic goals, where "the founder of an association had to sign a written contract ... and have it countersigned by two guarantors" (Geertz, 1962). Wu shows how *hui*, as the Chinese rotating credit association, functioned "as a means of financing business" among Chinese "who had no knowledge of modern economic theory" (1974, p. 570). This shows that unlike *güns*, some examples of ROSCAs are very businesslike. For instance, Geertz claimed that *ho* associations in Vietnam are "run by professional managers" and must be "notarized by the government" (1962). According to Geertz, such forms represent a "movement towards increased economic rationality" which is "reflected in the declining importance of the ritualistic, solidarity-strengthening elements" (1962). In its core, Geertz argued that rotating credit associations are an "intermediate institution, a product of a shift from a traditionalistic agrarian society to an increasingly fluid commercial one" – essentially, "a middle-rung in the process of development" (1962). For its Eastern forms in Asia and Africa, ROSCA mobilizes familiar motivations, like social solidarity, and applies them to unfamiliar purposes, like saving money (Geertz, 1962). This is similar to Büyükokutan's argument that in *gün* meetings, the tradition is updated according to changes in the social and economic structure (2012, p. 117). On the other hand, Ardener found this aspect of shifting from traditional to commercial inadequate in covering all forms of ROSCAs, and questions "why these associations flourish in some societies which have made this transition, while they are less important in others which have also done so" (1964, p. 221). Wu answered Ardener's question by stating that "the explanation cannot be arrived at by describing the rotating credit association in terms of its structural features alone, for the entire context of the sociopolitical environment, cultural values, and economic motives must be fully delineated" (1974, p. 582).

Ardener conducted a comparative study of rotating credit associations from different parts of the world (1964). Like Geertz, she described anthropologically the associations in a wider territory of Asia, Africa, America and Europe and presented a descriptive framework, rather than analyzing the deeper social and cultural meanings of the occasions. Ardener argued that although there was little evidence about the origins of these associations, in line with the present evidence, ROSCAs "have not developed independently in each community in which they are found" (1964, p. 208). Despite ambiguities, Ardener argues that the origins of ROSCAs "might lie in cooperative work groups among farmers ... [and] spread among petty traders, artisans, and factory workers" in the mid-1800s (2014, p. 4). Rotating associations also vary with regard to "size, qualifications for membership, structural complexity, and in many other ways", and accordingly "their social and economic significance also varies from one community to another" (Ardener, 1964, p. 202).

In this context, according to Ardener, ROSCAs cannot be understood in terms of "economic' motive alone", in that they also provide "social benefits in a world of increasing ... personal isolation" (1964, p. 222; 2014, p. 3). Wu also argues that social functions of ROSCAs "extend far beyond their economic function" (1974, p. 576). Similar to Geertz, Ardener claims that "feasting and other parts of entertainment played in important part" of these associations, in that they develop "the bonds of trust between members" and bring "social capital" (1964, p. 207; 2014, p. 4). According to her, "the total number of members may range from a handful to several hundred", where membership criteria are based on locality, occupation and/or status (Ardener, 1964, p. 210). Whenever the number increases, the economic purposes surpass the social feasting element. Furthermore, individual contributions may be "in cash or in kind" (Ardener, 1964, p. 211). Sometimes organizing an event can be accepted as a sort of contribution. Ardener states that in some Chinese associations, organizers "may be required to make contributions only in the form of feasts" (1964, p. 211).

There are also some sanctions to protect the continuity of associations. A ROSCA "obviously cannot function unless all members continue to keep up their obligations" (Ardener, 1964, p. 216), and it may sometimes become "rooted in the economic and social system" of a community where it may be "the subject of special legislation" to protect "both the association as a whole and ... individual members" (Ardener, 1964, pp. 216, 217).

A ROSCA is always based on voluntary participation. As both Ardener and Wu observed, in urban contexts they often support the solidarity of group members, like neighborhood or kinship groupings (1964, p. 220; 1974, p. 576), which may refer to both social and economic solidarity. In a recent study, Ardener underlines an aspect of those meetings that was also frequently observed among the members of the *giins* (2014) throughout the field research. She claims that if a member of group is in financial need, the turn can be quickly adjusted to her (Ardener, 2014, p. 3). In this sense, familiarity becomes an essential aspect of participation and the establishment of monetary trust among members. For instance, Wu argued that in Chinese *hui* associations, Europeans that want to participate have been prevented from doing so because "the Chinese are uncertain about the character of the Europeans" (1974, p. 575). Sometimes it assumes the potential to increase the prestige or status of the participants. For example, in South Africa "a recognized motive in joining these associations is prestige, as through them you may become known not only as generous but also as reliable" (Ardener, 1964, p. 220). Similarly, in Chinese associations whether or not a person is recruited to a ROSCA "depends upon his wealth and social status" (Wu, 1974, p. 574).

In the instances emphasized by Ardener, it would seem that the participation of women was a significant aspect of these associations. In some Indian communities, the urban areas of Vietnam, and various parts of Cameroon, Ghana, South Africa and Sudan, women's groups constituted the core of the associations, despite the groups being mixed (Ardener, 1964, pp. 203-208). However, there was no emphasis on the meaning of women's participation in ROSCAs in the works of either Geertz or

Ardener, although their cases showed that women constituted a significant proportion of the membership of these associations. Although Ardener's 2014 study touched upon ROSCAs among women, in my opinion, the gender dimension of these associations has not been addressed adequately in theory, despite the extensive prevalence of woman-only ROSCAs. On the other hand, in a recent study, Anderson and Baland considered ROSCA with respect to the household consumption of women using data from Kenya (2002), and argue that "being a female" is an important determinant of ROSCA participation (2002, p. 984). For the authors, participation in a ROSCA is a strategy of married women who want to protect their savings from their husbands' immediate consumption (Anderson and Baland, 2002, pp. 963, 990). Contrary to the case of *gün* meetings, Anderson and Baland's study of ROSCA participation among Kenyan women revealed a level of membership of women with an independent income, in that in Kenya, it is mostly working women who join rotating credit associations (2002, p. 965). For this reason, the money contributed to rotating associations was primarily their own money, which they kept away from the use of their husbands. That said, because of the gendered relations in society, this was also the money which they spend on household needs and children rather than on personal needs (Anderson and Baland, 2002, pp. 966, 967, 980).

Bellér-Hann diverges from other researchers who studied *gün* by analyzing *gün* as a form of rotating credit association. In *Informal Associations among Women in North-East Turkey* (1996), she discussed two types of rotating associations in the Turkish case: rotating labor associations known as *imece* in rural parts; and rotating credit association among urban women, i.e. *gün* (Bellér-Hann, 1996, p. 115). Since they have no substantial relation to the case study of this thesis, it is not preferred to focus on the *imece* associations. On the other hand, according to Bellér-Hann, in the Turkish case of *gün* meetings, "there is a very conscious effort to make the credit association as egalitarian as possible" (1996, p. 121). In the Bellér-Hann's case study, she observed that organizing ROSCAs served as sign of status (1996, p. 122), and claimed that in order to acquire social status, some lower-income families "have resorted to organizing 'towel days' (havlu günü)" (1996, p. 122) in which each

woman "contributes a good quality item, usually embroidered towel" which will probably be added to a daughter's trousseau (Bellér-Hann, 1996, p. 122). Bellér-Hann's case shows that rotating credit associations have not only economic, but also social meanings that contribute to the construction of the social identities of the participants (1996, p. 129)

### **3.3. Reflections of Gender Segregation on Women's Leisure Practices**

The culturally specific experiences of gender and the separate worlds of women and men are reflected on the leisure-time activities of women in Turkey, which are based mostly on same-sex group activities, as is the case with *gün* meetings. Although gender segregation in leisure time activities is a universal phenomenon, in societies where individuals socialize under highly segregated circumstances, the parallel networks of sociability of women have different connotations. According to Kandiyoti, in the West "men-only leisure activities" have the potential to create a self-contained world and culture, whereas women's culture emerges as a residual category (1987, p. 329). Adversely, in the leisure practices of women in Turkey, women can develop a "self-definition" through various leisure practices in same-sex groups. In this sense, women's leisure activities can compose an explicit category of women's culture (Kandiyoti, 1987, p. 329). Mübeccel Kıray defines this culture as the "independent 'women only' subculture", since most women in Turkey face some barriers when attempting to "enter into the total life of the community" (1981[1967], pp. 273-274).

Kandiyoti argues that leisure practices can be examined along two axes: "leisure is spent within primary groups" and in "secondary organizations (such as clubs and associations)" (1981, p. 237). While the former involves direct access to people, in the second group individuals access each other indirectly via an organization. According to Kandiyoti, the lives of women in Turkey, as well as those of the Western working class "present examples of intense primary group, sex-segregated socializing", although Western working-class women are more dependent on their

husbands' work connections (1981, pp. 237-238). Kandiyoti claims that in Turkey intense forms of segregation can be observed:

Women's parallel networks of sociability are highly articulated and involve structured visiting patterns, specific forms of religious and ritual participation as well as specified forms of group entertainment. A lot of self-expressive activity takes place within single-sex groups (such as singing, dancing and joking), and women do not depend exclusively or primarily on men for their self-definition (1987, p. 329).

While analyzing the leisure activities of women in Turkey, one may also mention women's leisure "in a culture where 'fun' is frowned upon, and in which women's honor is valued highly". In this regard, it is expected that women "should not be seen in public much, and they should never make themselves conspicuous" (Kıray, 1981[1967], p. 268). For this reason, their primary groups including friends, relatives and neighbors, described as women's "homosocial networks" by Abu-Lughod (1998, p. 12), which are essential for women's leisure activities.

During my interviews, I asked the participants about their previous leisure-time activities, including *güns*. They mostly said that their leisure time experiences were women-only experiences, referring to them as *kadın kadına* (woman to woman) activities. The social activities of young girls were, and still are, based mainly on same-sex groups in both rural and urban settings. The participants claimed that when they were young, they mostly did handicrafts, they prepared their dowry (*çeyiz*), and they chatted and gossiped with the other girls in their neighborhood. Meetings among women also functioned as places where they learned how to fulfill the traditional gender role expectations, and in this sense, domestic activities were mostly emphasized by the participants, including childcare and cleaning, as a part of their women-only leisure experiences. Respondent 9 gave an example of how young girls used to serve older women in the women's groups:

At that time, since there were not many places to visit, as is the case today, we joined women's groups. However, they took advantage of the girls and

made them serve. We used to attend these meetings and help the *hanıms*<sup>1</sup> (ladies or mistresses) in *gün*.

Recalling the women's meetings, another respondent said “in our district, our mothers and sisters gathered in separate rooms to chat and make handicrafts. They used to talk about daily routines. Raising children and so on” (Respondent 16).

In Turkey, same-sex leisure time activities can be categorized under five headings, in which women can recreate themselves, both within primary groups and through secondary organizations. These are: informal “drop-in” visits (*çatkapı*), formal visits, ceremonial visits, going outside with small groups and attending secondary organizations (Kıray, 1981[1967], pp. 268-269). However, it should be noted that this is a very rough categorization, since the categories include substantially the main activities of middle-aged housewives, and mostly those living in the cities. The interviewees of *gün* meetings met during the field work are mostly the members of this group; they are generally middle-aged; most of them do not work; and most have migrated from different villages and towns in Turkey, where traditional gender roles in which the lives of women are kept under strict control, to Ankara during the 1980s and 1990s. Furthermore, different categorizations of leisure can be proposed for different groups; for example, young female students or women who work have the potential to lead to different results, especially in terms of the level of gender segregation in their activities. As Kandiyoti claims, although certain societies or groups impose no visible restrictions on the movement of women, this does not mean that “women share the same social worlds as men” (1987, p. 329). In every patriarchal society, segregation in the leisure activities of men and women can be found to varying degrees.

The first form of same-sex leisure activity is the informal “drop-in” visits. According to Kıray, this is the “most striking” leisure activity among the lower income groups, who endlessly visit each other on an informal basis (1981[1967], p. 268). It can be said that drop-in visits sustain gender segregation, in that most women prefer to meet

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<sup>1</sup> This term will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

when their husbands are not at home. Furthermore, husbands may actually avoid coming home if they know that there is a female visitor, unless they are family members or relatives.

In drop-in visits, intimacy and modesty are the two shared themes that were often emphasized by the interviewees. For their leisure experiences in the past, drop-ins were more common than *gün* meetings, and for this reason, when talking about their leisure experiences in their youth, the respondents mostly referred to drop-in visits as being both more intimate and modest when compared to the meetings of today. In fact, nearly half of the participants used the term “intimacy” quite frequently when comparing their experiences of drop-ins and *gün* meetings. For instance, Respondent 1 said that in the meetings of the past:

The laid tables were not so beautiful. Small snacks were offered with tea. Cologne was poured onto guests’ hands to "welcome" them. Coffee was made. Guests could come any time after ten or eleven o'clock. Nobody was disturbed when there was a drop-in visit.

According to the Respondent 14, drop-in visits were usually made by neighbors and relatives. Referring to the intimacy positively, she said:

My mother’s communication with her neighbors was very positive; but we also had many relatives in Ankara. At the weekends, the gatherings were usually with relatives, and were generally accompanied by food ... My aunts, my uncles ... We were always close to our relatives. There was no telephone at those times, and there was no concern whether the children had homework or whether the family was available for a visit. It was a drop-in. Our home was heated by a stove. There was a room next to the sitting room where we studied. Guests would not consider the fact that the children may need to study. That said, the intimacy was much more sincere, of course. Home visits in the past were much more intimate.

Similarly, Respondent 7 expressed:

Previously the occasions were warmer. Even in the case of neighbors, I have only two friends that I can drop in on unannounced; for the others, I should first let them know or ask them whether I can come round for a cup of coffee. Previously, for example in the *gecekondü*, the doors of houses were

not locked. You could walk directly through the garden gate. Our home was never empty when we were living in a *gecekondu*.

Respondent 19 also remembered similar situations related to drop-in visits in the *gecekondu* neighborhoods of Ankara: "Since it was a *gecekondu* district, everybody's door was open. Everybody could easily drop by everybody's house". In this sense, previous meetings were accepted as being more entertaining and intimate, whereas today's *gün* meetings are associated more with tiredness and stress by the participants. As Respondent 1 said:

Old home visits were more cheerful, joyful. There was a cozier environment. At present, you say "it is my turn to host *gün*", and you become stressed. You are worried about what to cook, or cooking something different. You start cleaning one week prior to *gün*. Windows, curtains, carpets ... You go to the market and fill your shopping cart because you want to cook this, that and the other ... You feel so tired, and stressed. When *gün* starts, all these things get jumbled up. Both the stress you feel and the service you provide become unimportant. That is to say, you just get tired, nothing else. In the past it was more comfortable. You had a few things put aside for such days. Serving them was much more appreciated. It was a much cozier atmosphere.

Formal visits are the second category of same-sex leisure activities. For women who are "better-off", unexpected visits are not so acceptable, and so they organize more formal visits, like "at home" days (Kıray, 1981[1967], p. 268). "At home" days refer exactly to *gün* meetings, but the difference is important, in that in a Bourdieusian sense, the distinction between these two forms is based on the differences between the volume and level of the participants' economic and cultural capital. As Kıray argued, "the women who do not have 'at home' days [i.e. *gün* meetings] consider this way of entertaining 'snobbish'," while "those who have them, consider 'dropping in' to be inconsiderate" (Kıray, 1981[1967], p. 268). In my case study, many participants of the *gün* meetings, who actually belong to the middle-class, also stated that they do not prefer to drop in too much recently. Conversely, the participants who were previously from the lower-class stated that *gün* was not one of the leisure time activities that they attended. For example, Respondent 7, who used to live in

*gecekondu* (squatter house) before, stated that she started attending and hosting *gün* when she got married in 1986 and moved to an apartment.

During the field research, since most of the participants had rural or urban lower-class past, the interviewees did not express any experiences about these upper-class Reception Days except for two respondents. For instance, Respondent 18 stated that:

My mother was used to host *güns* once a month. She organized Reception Days. In the case of the Reception Day, for example a particular day of month, say every third day of the month, she would host *gün*. In every third of the month, she was prepared and expected the guests. Sometimes three to five people would show up, sometimes shockingly twenty to thirty people. I mean, in that day whoever was available could participate. They did have the habit of collecting money. Only tea was offered. Besides, some foods like cake, *börek* (pastry). These were also offered to people who arrived. If it was crowded, some guests left home after she had the treat in order to leave a place for the new comers ... They planned that day previously with the neighbors and friends. Because they also regularly met except the *güns*, they used to say for instance Mrs. Zatiye would host *gün*, and they visited at that day. In my childhood, that's what I witnessed. After I got married, we also gathered but we were gathering at somebody's house and say 'I can host it next week'. For the last fifteen years, *güns* have involved money exchange. In the past, there was no money involved.

This case is strongly similar to the type of former Reception Days, which Benedict and Özbay elaborated in terms of the time period in which it was held, number of the participants attending the meeting, and the arrival and departure times of the guests. Respondent 18 also stressed that there was no monetary relation involved in those Reception Days. On the other hand, another respondent gave an example that women had collected gold coins in their *güns* in 1970s:

My mother used to host *altın günleri* (gold days), that they organized on a monthly basis. Today's *güns* are more modern. For instance, at that period, they didn't gather outside home. I remember that there were at least forty five people in my mother's occasions. It was '70-'73 period. I remember very well. In those times, there were only gold days. My mother used to carry me with her, of course. (Respondent 15)

In this case, a transition from the former Reception Days to the *gün* meetings of today in the 1970s can be observed. The gold days exemplified by Respondent 15 carried characteristics of both the former and latter types. Although the period of popularity and the number of participants were more similar to the Reception Days, there was a material aspect to the gatherings, with women collecting gold coins in rotation, like in today's *gün* meetings. Despite the material relation among the participants, it is today's meetings that can be considered more "more modern", according to Respondent 15.

In this research, many participants claimed that they had collected money or other valuables in their meetings since the 1980s, and referred to these meetings as *paralı gün* (*gün* involving money). The participants tended to differentiate between *paralı gün* and other visits on the basis of the financial element (Respondents 9, 12, 14, 16 and 18). To ensure equality, the host of the meeting was generally paid an amount tied to the current price of gold on the day of the day of the meeting, although one of my interviewees claimed that fluctuations in the price of gold may lead to unfairness (*haksızlık*), in that the value could decrease from the last meeting, meaning that the first member receives the highest value, while the last one receives the lowest. She stated that started to see a return on their money 10 years after they started the meeting (Respondent 17).

The field study of this thesis reveals clues to the role of material exchange. Many interviewees indicated that money was only a "means", not an aim, for them to meet their friends (Respondents 1, 5, 13, 15, 17 and 22). For example, Respondent 1 stated that if there was no money involved, they could have postponed the meetings, because the money provides a "reason" to meet. In contrast to the findings of Büyükokutan, some of the respondents indicated that it was the necessity to deliver money rather than receive it that generally triggers the gatherings (Respondents 6, 10, 15, 16 and 17). As stated by Respondent 10:

Money motives you, it pokes. You should deliver that money. Even if you have something else to do, you should postpone it. You force yourself to

give the money. If there is no money involved, you can always consider not attending a meeting. This makes you distanced from it in time.

These testimonies of the respondents show that they do not want to be perceived as putting so much emphasis on money, since this would be conceived as an undesirable motivation. Almost all of them stated that money was not important. Furthermore, being thought of as a borrower among their friends or neighbors is also something that they tried to avoid. Respondents 3 and 8 believe that they could easily meet again if no money was exchanged, in that the friendship and neighborly relations between them are the most important things. Respondents 4, 10 and 12 also stated that they may collect money by themselves, and there is no need to organize a *gün* to gain money; claiming that they attend *gün* only to meet their friends. Respondent 12 was another participant whose involvement was not motivated by the exchange of money. Despite her good economic situation, she attended every meeting, while Respondent 18 stated that she gives, and so receives, only half of the stated amount of money. The last two respondents are keen to show how money is not important for them, while Respondent 11 claimed that there was little point in meeting if there was no exchange of money, as you would be spending your time in vain. Respondent 21, who attends “indirectly” (rarely attending meetings, although she gives and receives money), argued that the only objective was to collect money, suggesting that everyone intends either to give or to receive that amount of money. Monetary relations and closeness are perceived as two opposites by most of the participants, and for some, the material aspect of the *gün* meetings is accepted as a factor that hampers intimacy. For example, Respondent 16 underlined that, “everything is based on money now ... It seems to me that there was more intimacy in the past”. Respondent 21 also indicated that money harms the intimacy among the women. Regarding the findings of my field study, although many participants did not want to appear money-minded, I agree with Büyükokutan's claim about the essentiality of money for the continuity of meetings.

The third form of leisure activity is ceremonial visits, made on the occasion of birth or wedding celebrations and deaths, or may be in the form of housewarming parties

and religious ceremonies like *mevlüt*<sup>2</sup>. During such visits, women meet to mark either a gratifying or a sad occasion, and these kinds of meetings were considered important events in the interviewees' experiences. Almost all of the respondents confirmed that they frequently attended ceremonial visits, both in the present day and in the past.

Within the context of the fourth category of leisure activities, women go out in small groups to engage in a particular activity, such as the cinema, a picnic or shopping. When Kıray conducted her field research in 1967, she claimed that women went shopping "in weekly open-air markets in the main street" (1981[1967], p. 269). However, today most women, including the interviewees of this research, prefer to go to shopping malls for the purposes of shopping and socialization.

These four forms of leisure activity discussed above provide examples of the leisure "spent within primary groups" (Kandiyoti, 1981, p. 237). The fifth and final form of leisure differs from these, being carried out through secondary organizations. Most women prefer to attend training events or courses, where they believe their time is better spent, in that they develop new skills and can show their abilities. They may also take part in such sports as step classes, aerobics or swimming by registering with organizations or clubs. Women may attend these activities either individually or with a group of friends or neighbors. If a woman attends by herself, she avails herself of the greater likelihood of meeting new people with which to socialize, and so in this way, she can widen her friendship circle. That said, women rarely join such organizations if they do not have separate groups for women, and so they rarely make male friends in these secondary organizations.

Mixed-sex leisure activities remain marginal in the leisure experiences of the interviewees. Marriage is an essential stage in women's lives, after which they can engage in mixed groups. For example, Respondent 16 talked about the change in her pre-marriage and post-marriage activities as follows:

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<sup>2</sup> *Mevlüt* is a religious gathering, organised on the occasion of birth, death or death anniversaries, in which a poem on the life of the Prophet Muhammad is recited and food is served.

We had our own groups. When we were young girls, for instance ... We did that everybody could do with her peers. In fact, after I got married, I had a beautiful environment. We were living in small towns. We had very beautiful groups. Friend groups ... We had *gazin*os (clubs); we used to get together in *gazin*os. We had lovely times in the towns and districts ... Our husbands used to join us.

A respondent, who had previously worked claimed that she had always joined in family event where women and men were together:

We had family gatherings with our friends from the workplace. Once a month, we would gather in each other's homes or for dinner. These occasions were held together with the spouses as a family. I never remember us, as women, having to sit separately. (Respondent 19)

From the narrations of the interviewees' leisure time experiences, marriage and employment provided them with opportunities to socialize within mixed-sex groups. That said, gender segregation is apparent in leisure activities, since in the family, women can socialize with other men only when their husbands are present. Friendships among men and women who are not relatives were never mentioned by the respondents.

It is possible to acknowledge that women's roles and contacts in public life have been increasing and diversifying over time. However, as observed from the experiences of the interviewees, who are mostly middle-aged and middle-class housewives, *gün* meetings have an essential place in their lives as the most basic and visible form of leisure-time activity. Most women claimed that they were part of more than one *gün* group, which allowed them to participate in public life. Although many women can leave the home, they can only generally engage in occasions of appropriate forms due to the social control that stems from the patriarchal social structure. For this reason, *gün* meetings held in different public places are considered to be the most respectable leisure activity by those women, where they can adapt themselves easily to the norms and expectations of the patriarchal system that restrict them when they go out in public.

In the following section I will present my own study of the two *gün* meetings in Ankara, during which I will discuss in depth the ways *gün* meetings constitute gendered fields based on the study of the *Karadenizliler* and *Komşular gün* groups.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE CASE OF TWO *GÜN* MEETINGS IN ANKARA: "*KARADENİZLİLER*" AND "*KOMŞULAR*"

*Gün* can be considered as an activity that is mainly practiced by urban middle-class women. As can be seen in the different studies reviewed in Chapter Three, it has defined in a number of different ways: as a kind of leisure time activity; as an ethnographic cultural gathering; as a particular form of rotating credit association; or simply as a sphere of communication. These different definitions make *gün* both a local and a universal phenomenon. Its form and characteristics have also been subject to continuous change, having been affected by different forms of rotating associations in the world. Moreover, it can also be considered as a social field in which gender roles dominate in Turkey. The participants of *gün* meetings tend to be women with similar backgrounds, being generally middle-aged, originating from different segments of the middle class and residing in cities. Unlike the older reception days, *gün* meetings have emerged since the 1980s as an event in which economic relations have become much more dominant. In this regard, there are participants whose relationships with the group are based only on economic motives, who I prefer to refer to as “indirect participants”, while the regular attendees of meetings I call “direct participants”. The term “indirect participant” refers to members of *gün* groups that can only give and receive money, and who do not participate in regular meetings. Indirect participants, who do not constitute a uniform group, can be considered marginal, unlike the direct participants.

*Gün* events take place in various cities of Turkey, with, on the whole, middle-class participation. In this chapter an analysis will be made of the findings of the field study conducted in Batıkent which is a suburban area in the west of Ankara with a predominantly middle-class population, in which the leading leisure time activities for women include *gün* meetings. These meetings can be described like gendered

fields reflecting gender differences and unequal gender roles. In this context, this chapter will analyse how a leisure time activity like *gün* is gendered through various social, economic and cultural dynamics related to gender. The intention in this study is to throw light on these dynamics through an analysis of the perceptions and experiences of women from the *Karadenizliler* (from the Black Sea) and *Komşular* (Neighbours) *gün* groups, who were interviewed in Ankara between November 2013 and May 2014. This study has also an ethnographic element, based on my regular attendance of these *gün* meetings. Questions about the specific *gün* experiences of the participants, as well as their experiences related to gender both in the *gün* meeting and in a wider social context, were asked in interviews in order to shed light on the meetings and the gendered relationships of the participants in everyday life. This study will also make a thorough analysis of the different dimensions of gender relationships based on the perceptions of the women related to their leisure time and everyday life.

#### **4.1. General Profile of the Participants**

The case study is based on an analysis of two *gün* groups, namely *Karadenizliler* and *Komşular*, which are the names of the groups as used by the participants. The socio-economic characteristics of the participants of the two groups were similar, and, on the whole, both held their meetings in the same district, i.e. Batıkent, meaning that both groups of women came from more or less from the same social group. While the ages of the group members were also similar, and most were married housewives, there were two basic differences between the members of the two groups. The first of these was the motive behind the composition of the groups, in that the *Karadenizliler* group membership was made up of women from Black Sea coastal cities while the women in the *Komşular* group had no common place of origin, with their only connection being that they were all residents of the same apartment building in Batıkent. The second difference was in the places where the women met every month. While the participants of the *Karadenizliler* group met in their own houses

and offered home-made refreshments, the *Komşular* group preferred to gather in different restaurants or cafes.

**Table 2:** General Characteristics of Participants

<b>Participant</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Age</b>	51	60	47	65	63	56
<b>Homeland</b>	Giresun	Kars	Çankırı	Kırıkkale	Ordu	Trabzon
<b>Level of Education</b>	High School	Associate Degree	Intermediate School	Uneducated	Primary School	Primary School
<b>Marital Status</b>	Married	Married	Married	Married	Married	Married
<b>Number of Children</b>	1	2	3	4	3	3
<b>Occupation</b>	Housewife	Retired Teacher	Housewife	Housewife	Housewife	Housewife
<b>Gün Group</b>	<i>Karadenizliler</i>	<i>Komşular</i>	<i>Komşular</i>	<i>Komşular</i>	<i>Karadenizliler</i>	<i>Karadenizliler</i>
<b>Participation</b>	Direct	Direct	Direct	Direct	Direct	Direct

**Table 2:** General Characteristics of Participants (Continued)

<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>
52	58	44	59	62	52	41	47
Kayseri	Ordu	Kırıkkale	Çankırı	Ordu	Ordu	Çorum	Kars
High School	Primary School Left	Intermediate School	Primary School	Associate Degree	High School	Primary School	High School Left
Married	Married	Married	Married	Widowed	Married	Married	Divorced
2	2	3	3	2	2	2	2
Retired Civil Servant	Housewife	Housewife	Housewife	Retired Teacher	Housewife	Housewife	Care worker & Cleaner
<i>Komşular</i>	<i>Karadenizliler</i>	<i>Komşular</i>	<i>Komşular</i>	<i>Karadenizliler</i>	<i>Karadenizliler</i>	<i>Komşular</i>	<i>Karadenizliler</i>
Direct	Direct	Direct	Direct	Direct	Direct	Direct	Direct

**Table 2:** General Characteristics of Participants (Continued)

	<b>22</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>
	39	21	46	48	58	46	58	49
	Ankara	Çankırı	Ordu	Malatya	Ordu	Ordu	Ordu	Bilecik
	Associate Degree	Bachelor Student	Bachelor's Degree	Associate Degree	High School Left	Associate Degree	Primary School	High School
	Married	Unmarried	Married	Married	Married	Married	Widowed	Married
	1	0	1	3	2	1	2	2
	Accountant	Student	Financial Advisor	Retired Civil Servant	Housewife	Housewife	Housewife	Housewife
	<i>Komşular</i>	<i>Komşular</i>	<i>Karadenizliler</i>	<i>Komşular</i>	<i>Karadenizliler</i>	<i>Karadenizliler</i>	<i>Karadenizliler</i>	<i>Komşular</i>
	Indirect	Indirect	Indirect	Indirect	Direct	Direct	Direct	Direct

In Table Two, general characteristics of the participants are presented, including basic information related to the numbers of participants, their ages, city of origin, level of education, marital status, number of children, occupation, the *gün* group with which they were involved and the style of participation (direct or indirect). There were a total of twenty-two participants in the two groups, with eleven participants in each group. The participants are arranged in the table chronologically in terms of when the interviews took place, which results in a mix of the *Karadenizliler* and *Komşular* participants in the table. The participants of the *Karadenizliler* group were respondents 1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 16, 17, 18 and 20, while those of the *Komşular* group were numbers 2, 3, 4, 8, 11, 12, 14, 15, 19, 21 and 22.

The second column records the participants' ages. As can be seen from this column, the majority of group members are middle-aged, with a mean age of all participants' ages of 51. The participants of the *Komşular* group were marginally younger than those of the *Karadenizliler* group. The mean value of participants' ages by group was 47.73 in the *Komşular* group and 54.27 in the *Karadenizliler* group. The oldest member of the twenty-two participants was sixty-five and the youngest was twenty-one. The youngest member, being Respondent 21, was the daughter of Respondent 3, and attended the group only indirectly for economic purposes, being from a social network that was considerably different to that of the older members of the group.

In column seven, the participants' occupations are indicated. It is not surprising that of the twenty-two participants, fourteen were housewives. Although some of the housewives "knit and sell their products" through informal networks among women they "consider this to be more a leisure activity than work" (Özbay, 1995, p. 94). It would be a fair assumption to make that a correlation would exist between the levels of education and occupations of the participants, and indeed it was found that those with a higher level of education were more likely to be in work, given the greater number of job opportunities open to them. Aside from Respondent 17, the highest level of education among the housewives was high school. There was only one respondent housewife with a degree, although she claimed that she had registered to

the Open University after getting married not for a career, but in order to improve herself and to encourage her lazy daughter. Despite this exceptional case, the other four participants who had associate degrees were either working or retired. The retired respondents (Respondents 2, 10 and 19) attended the meetings as direct participants, while Respondent 22, who continues to be employed as an accountant, was an indirect participant of the *Komşular gün* group. As high school graduates, Respondents 7 and 14 were also in work.

Another correlation was identified between the style of participation – denoted in the final column as either direct or indirect, – and educational level and employment. The more educated and working participants tended to be indirectly involved in the *gün* groups, although this situation cannot be generalized. It can be observed in Table Two that the last four participants (Respondents 19, 20, 21 and 22) attended the groups indirectly, and they were also the ones who had the highest levels of education and who were employed, aside from one who was a student. Of these four participants, two had an associate degree, one was graduated from university and the other was expecting to graduate. Furthermore, two of the indirect participants also worked, one was retired and the other one was a student. *Komşular* group had more indirect members (three) than *Karadenizliler* (one).

In terms of marital status, the majority of women were married and had at least one child, with a mean number of children of 2.09. There were eighteen participants who were married, two who were widowed (Respondents 10 and 16), one who was divorced, although she claimed that she was expected to remarry her husband (Respondent 7), and one who was an unmarried student (Respondent 21). Most of the participants said that they had started to organize *gün* meetings after getting married. Housewifery was another essential factor in participation in *gün* meetings, in that while their husbands were at work, housewives sought for ways to spend their leisure time within a day. In this sense, *gün* meetings were places where married housewives could fulfill their need to socialize, relax, entertain and share information.

**Table 3: Migration Experiences of Participants**

<b>Gün Group</b> <b>Migrated from</b>	<b><i>Karadenizliler</i></b>	<b><i>Komşular</i></b>
<b>Village</b>	Respondents 5, 6, 13, 16,	Respondent 11
<b>Town</b>	Respondents 1, 9, 10, 17, 18	Respondents 2, 3, 4, 12, 21
<b>City</b>	Respondent 20	–
<b>Local/Not migrated</b>	Respondent 7	Respondents 8, 14, 15, 19, 22

Table Three above shows the migration experiences of the participants, with the members of the *Karadenizliler* and *Komşular* groups represented in different columns. There are also three basic categories of settlement defining from where the participants have migrated: village, town and city. The table also lists the local participants on the fifth line, indicating those who were born in Ankara, and as such, had no experience of migration in their lives. That said, these participants were actually second-generation migrants whose parents had migrated before their birth, and it is for this reason that I use the term migration 'experience' rather than migration 'history', in that the term 'history' would generally include the ancestors of the participants, but I wanted to specify the participants' own experiences. These participants tended to be lower or lower-middle class Ankara residents in their childhood and adolescence, but had managed to elevate their status to middle class.

In Table Three, a prominent difference can be seen between the participants of the *Karadenizliler* and *Komşular* groups, in that migration from villages was more common among the members of *Karadenizliler* group than the *Komşular* group.

Although four participants in *Karadenizliler* migrated from various Black Sea villages, there was only one participant in the *Komşular* group who came from a village to Ankara. On the other hand, a similar difference can be seen among the local members who did not migrate. While five members of *Komşular* group were local residents of Ankara from birth, there was only one participant of the *Karadenizliler* group with the same characteristic. It can be argued that the participants of the *Komşular* group were more urbanized than those of the *Karadenizliler* group, whereas at the same time, the *Karadenizliler* group included more participants with a rural past. Furthermore, the number of participants who migrated from towns was equal, a five for each group. Lastly, it can be seen that migration from a city to the metropolis was uncommon among the participants of both groups.

Today, the women attending both groups are predominantly urban middle class, although what differentiates the *Karadenizliler* group from the *Komşular* group is that most of the members transitioned from the traditional rural to urban middle class through migration. Erman defined these women as "economically advantaged migrant women" who do not have to work hard to survive in the city (1998a, p. 155). According to Erman, the husbands of these economically advantaged middle-class women are mostly "small-scale" and "moderate-scale entrepreneurs" who "make enough money to support them at home" (1998a, p. 155). For some members of the *Komşular* group, this transition has been experienced substantially through a shift from the lower to the middle class within the city, as second-generation migrants who were "more urbanized and have more schooling" (Erman, 1998a, p. 157). It should be noted, however, that marriage played a vital role in their change of social class.

In following these general characteristics of the participants, some differences between the *Karadenizliler* and *Komşular gün* groups can be found. The *Komşular* group is made up of marginally younger participants than the *Karadenizliler* group. Furthermore, the *Komşular* group, who preferred to meet outside the home setting,

had more indirect participants than *Karadenizliler*. Since the members' participation was based on a common region of origin, the *Karadenizliler* group included more participants whose native backgrounds were similar, in contrast to the members of *Komşular* group who came from various backgrounds. Additionally, in terms of migration, the *Komşular* group was more urbanized, while the *Karadenizliler* group had more rural characteristics. Finally, in terms of their levels of education, marital status and occupation, the two groups had similar characteristics.

#### **4.1.1. Indirect Participants: Does Economy Always Matter?**

In two *gün* meetings, there were a total of four participants, who attended the group only indirectly, with three in the *Komşular* group and only one in the *Karadenizliler* group. It should be noted that indirect participation is a means of being included only in monetary exchange, and so it would seem that the sole motivation of the indirect participants is economic. To understand how economy matters in indirect participation, it is necessary to separate the indirect participants into two groups: (i) those who may not attend directly due to such obstacles as work and childcare, and (ii) those who cannot identify themselves with the *gün* groups.

The participants who stated a desire to attend regular meetings but may not attend due to obstacles in their daily lives tended to stress the positive aspects of *gün* meetings, such as the opportunity for socialization. As stated by Respondent 19 from *Komşular gün* group, who is retired but has to look after her small children:

Socially, a person cannot always stay alone in the house. To establish a relationship, to socialize, to move jointly in everything, namely, a circle of friends is very important. A neighbor, a friend, friendship for me ... Of course, I want to be together. Emotionally ... it's good for my soul; I talk; I have a chat. So I have a better day.

In this context, even for indirect participants, *gün* meetings represent an opportunity for the participants to develop a social relationship rather than merely an economic association. Respondent 20, whose job prevented her from participating directly, said the following regarding this situation:

They [the participants] want me to participate in *gün* meetings. Sometimes, you know, if I have a chance, I can establish such a relationship. It is actually a social relationship rather than only putting money in. Perhaps, how should I say, I go once or twice so we have a chance to meet. It becomes good for me as well. You know, I miss [them]. They are pleasant people in any case. This doesn't happen all the time. It's such a pleasure. (*Karadenizliler*)

The working participants indicated clearly that their motive is not purely economic, and that actually they do not need that money, since they already earn a salary. In contrast, one indirect participant who is a student said that her mother encouraged her to attend the group only for economic reasons, and the *gün* was a good way of saving money:

My mother decided that I should participate. She thought that at least economically, it becomes like a separate income. However, their *gün* meetings don't fit into my schedule, since I'm a student. Indeed, I want to go to them a lot, because their occasions are very entertaining. Although I can't go and my schedule doesn't fit (but when my schedule has allowed, I went; I have been twice before), rotating money is good and useful in a sense, because nobody can save one hundred and fifty lira every month. It's generally like this for everybody; but when you have to give money to others, when it's obligatory, you can save money (Respondent 21, *Komşular*).

It can be argued that whereas an economic motive is necessary, as can be seen in this case, the participants who cannot identify themselves with the group generally prefer to attend indirectly. *Gün* groups are generally made up of middle-aged housewives, and the participants who are working or are younger cannot entirely identify themselves with the group, and so may prefer to attend indirectly. It is factors related to identity that are a more significant motive for indirect participation than economy, which can clearly be seen in the cases of Respondent 20 from *Karadenizliler* and Respondent 21 from *Komşular gün* groups. Both argued that although *gün* meetings are entertaining, they do not want to attend directly.

Respondent 21, who is a young student, engages in different social activities with her peers, and so for her, *gün* meetings are an activity with which she maintains a purely economic connection. Age emerged in the study as an important obstacle for young participants, and it was this that complicated Respondent 21's identification with the group of housewives in the *Komşular gün* group:

All of them are housewives, but I'm a student. They looking for activities in which they can get involved, but I already have enough things to do. In this regard, I don't need this activity as much as them. Since they're housewives, they can't do different things. Their only form of entertainment is the *gün* meetings ... I have a group of friends with whom I meet from time to time. We go bowling; go to the cinema ... Activities like these happen. We're generally in school. We sit in a cafe. It is similar to a *gün* meeting; I realize that; however it is only an occasion for eating, and then leaving. There's no giving of money of course. It happens with the sole purpose of entertainment.

Respondent 20, an employed member of the *Karadenizliler gün* group, stated that she was aware of a gap between her daily life activities and the sphere of the *gün* meetings. For her, *gün* meetings, as an activity for housewives who are not in work, is a "soft" place for her, away from the hardness of work life. Her identity as a working woman exemplifies the main difference between the direct and indirect participants. According to her, "there's no relationship between the work I do and the conversations there. It is a different field for me. You know, in a more humane dimension ... Something that is not commercial, not political. That's such *soft* conversation".

Aside from one young participant, the indirect participants tended not to want to appear like they attached excessive importance to money, although this was not the case only for the indirect participants, as many of the direct participants also did not want to appear to be money-oriented. That said, it could be understood that the economic aspect did not always matter as far as the forms of participation are concerned.

#### **4.2. The Characteristics of Two *Gün* Meetings**

#### **4.2.1. Karadenizliler Gün Meeting: Sharing a Common Past**

*Karadenizliler gün* meetings take place in the home and have the function of sharing a common past and common place of origin. According to Erman, migrants often prefer to "socialize with other migrants in the city" (1988a, p. 157), and in the present case, the participants are *hemşehris* (fellow citizens) who in 1995 organized a special "club" of eleven women from the Black Sea coast of Turkey, although the group members have changed over time. For migrants, *hemşehrilik* ("the institution of *hemşehri* relationships") functions like "a mechanism of membership of a particular group of people with similar origins" (Dubetsky, 1976, p. 438; Erman, 1998b, p. 545). In this sense, *Karadenizliler gün* meetings are a particular form of association that started twenty years ago, when four core members of the group decided to establish a *gün* club. The core group is *Fatsahlılar*, referring to people coming from a particular district in the city Ordu, who were friends from the same locality, and who met up again in Ankara after migrating due to their husbands' appointments. The group has grown over time as people invite their relatives or neighbours from the Black Sea Region to join. According to Abu-Lughod, these kinds of migrant associations in the city are important since they enable "rural to urban adaptation" (1964, p. 10).

The format of the meetings follows a particular routine. Every month, the participants gather in a member's house, with the sequence of meetings decided by the drawing of lots at the last *gün* meeting of the previous rotation. The sequence may change if a particular member has a valid excuse, such as financial need, travel or illness. The guests may arrive either alone or in a group of two to four women. The women wear their most stylish clothes, and bring their own fancy slippers or shoes. Upon arrival, the hostess invites into her living room where they discuss their lives, and events such as marriage, sickness or death, or they talk about what they have been doing since their last meeting. If one of them has been to her hometown, she speaks about her visit to bring the "air of the homeland" to the meeting (Respondent 1). All of these are listened to with interested. The hostess then invites

her guests to the dining table on which all the foods are laid out. These are mainly 'folkloric' dishes of the Black Sea, which the guests eat while drinking tea. After the meal, they sit in their armchairs and chat while drinking Turkish coffee. They collect the money towards the end of the meeting and say *Güle güle harca!* (Spend it with joy!). Finally, they say good-bye to each other until the next meeting, kissing each other on their cheeks. If any participants live in the "immediate vicinity", they will tend to leave last (Wolbert, 1996, p. 194).

The change in environment when migrating to the city can lead to feelings of insecurity, complicating the lives of first-generation immigrants. This has resulted in a need among the members of the group to protect their traditional ties against the difficulties faced when living in a cosmopolitan city like Ankara. According to Erman, for first-generation migrants, maintaining identification with the village continues in the city (1998b, p. 545). For example, Respondent 1 said that:

In villages, there was a more intimate atmosphere of conversation. In the city, everything is so formal ... You always need to be careful. It's more boring. You can be more intimate when you come together with familiar people in villages. However, there are people from different cultures here, and you can't know how they will react to what. So you should always behave carefully. You have to weigh your words, thinking 'does she resent it if I make a joke, or will she be upset if I criticize her?'

The cohesion and unity among the members of the *Karadenizliler* group, which are based predominantly on their *hemşehrilik*, are emphasized by each and every participant of the group. According to Dubetsky, in the city "the solidarity of people from a particular area is heightened vis-à-vis the presence of non-hemşeri" (1976, p. 440). Actually, their common place of origin is a tool for the development of more intimate and cohesive relationships among them. When I asked them about the meaning of coming together for these *gün* meetings, most of them approached the issue using such phrases as similarity, intimacy and carrying a common culture. According to the participants of the *Karadenizliler gün* meeting, they can become closer to each other through their 'similarities'. For example they said, "We're closer

since we're the same" (Respondent 6) and see each other "like sisters" (Respondent 10).

Compared with the other *gün* meetings that they join, most of the participants argued that they prefer this one due to the intimacy and comfort arising from their similarity. The most common similarities referred to by the participants were their foods, habits, ceremonies, traditions, speech and idioms, dances and music. Food is important for all the participants, with nearly all of them referring to it as a part of their common culture. This is understandable, since offering food to one's guests is the most essential part of the *gün* meetings. Respondent 1 stated that *Karadenizliler gün* meeting is where they feel "warmth", "hug tightly" and "make jokes easily" with each other. According to her:

Since we are closer, we behave much comfortably. We know that none of us would be upset. Apart from this, we can stop by each other's kitchen; we can help. I hesitate to do the same things with my neighbours, as I feel that she would think I am meddling in her house. In this sense, I feel warmer and closer to my *hemşehris*.

Respondent 17 similarly said, "I'm more comfortable here, since they are the people of our region. I don't have any concerns. When I speak, I don't think they misunderstand me. Since we have a lot in common, I like their conversations more". Contrary to closeness and similarities emphasized by the participants, some members address each other using the term *Hanım*, which means lady or mistress. As argued by Wolbert, *Hanım* "expresses certain distance" among people who use it (1996, p. 191). In the group, use of the term *Hanım* is widespread despite, except in some exceptional cases. The term is usually used by younger participants when addressing their elders; nobody calls a member *Hanım* if she is younger than herself. I observed during a meeting that it was mostly older members addressing each other in this way. In Turkey, people who feel certain closeness usually address each other with kinship idioms like *abla* (sister), *teyze* (aunt), *amca* (uncle), and so on, and in this regard, the situation of the *Karadenizliler* group is interesting and quite contradictory for a group who so often emphasize closeness based on a common origin and past.

However, the term *Hanım* also serves as a sign of respect for and subordination to the more powerful person in societal relations.

Despite their close ties based on *hemşehrilik*, the members of the *Karadenizliler* group rarely visited each other on occasions other than the monthly *gün* meetings, aside for weddings, funerals, etc. Some of the respondents stated that it was enough to meet once a month (Respondents 10 and 17), and there were no drop-in visits throughout the period of my observation of the group. One of the respondents stated that visits actually decreased year-by-year due to priorities such as caring for grandchildren (Respondent 18).

In terms of participation, although they refer to their gatherings as *Karadenizliler gün* meetings, there is no strict restriction that only *Karadenizliler* can participate, although it may be argued that the *Karadenizliler* behave like an "identity group" (Erman, 1998b, p. 545). Most of the respondents said that they generally prefer to admit people from the Black Sea, and although "being from the Black Sea" is not a strict rule of participation, the group generally accepts it as the first requirement of membership. According to them, it is hard to develop coherence with those who are not from the Black Sea due to the cultural differences. In the words of Respondent 6:

There is no restriction, we only want to harmonise with new-comers. Nevertheless, we don't want so many from the outside. If it is a *Karadenizliler gün* meeting, we want members from the Black Sea. We are like a family. Our cultures are similar; our foods are the same.

The entry of a new member into the group generally begins with the suggestion of a "reference person". Before a new member can join, the reference person must gain the approval of the group, and if the reference person is a trusted member, the group will easily accept the application. *Karadenizliler* do not intentionally exclude new-comers, however, they want to know about any new members before allowing her to participate in the monetary rotation. If a group member (especially from the core four) has a good friend or neighbour, but is not from the Black Sea, she can also participate. Respondent 7 is from Kars, but is a close friend of Respondent 6. As a

stranger who is not from the Black Sea region, Respondent 7 stated that she attended the first couple of meetings as a guest, and as a “friend of a friend”, who did not give or receive money. After the group got to know her sufficiently, Respondent 7 was included in the monetary rotation. This shows that in *gün* groups like *Karadenizliler*, new participants may need to gain the trust of the group before being accepted if they are a stranger. Trust is also necessary for economic relations, since the group want to be confident that a new member can fulfill her economic responsibilities in giving and receiving money.

Even if a member who is also a stranger is accepted to the group, she cannot be a full member, and in this regard, not 'being from the Black Sea' comes with some handicaps. For instance, she may feel like an outsider in the meetings, and cannot become a 'reference person'. As stated by Respondent 7:

For example, I can't say to one of my friends, 'come and join our *gün*', since all of them are from the Black Sea. I joined through Mrs. [Respondent 6]. When they speak about, for instance, Samsun, Ordu and Giresun, when they talk about their villages, I feel like a stranger. I can't get involved in their conversations.

Her relationships with the group outside the *gün* are conducted through the reference person. For instance, when the group decides to organize a special meeting, like a ceremonial visit, they firstly tell the reference person to invite her. In this sense, it can be argued that *Karadenizliler* group maintains a barrier between themselves and the people who are not from the Black Sea region.

In her case, Wolbert stresses that the German remigrants' *gün* meeting was a way of reintegration into Turkey for the members (1996, p. 186). Similar to these remigrants, whose *gün* circle stimulates the memory of a shared past and revives a familiar atmosphere, the *Karadenizliler* group's “sharing of a common past” serves as a strong tie among them and has kept the *gün* group together for about twenty years (Wolbert, 1996, pp. 200, 201). Erman claims that some migrants in the city "maintain a balance between their old and new lives, remaining inside their rural

community and taking advantage of *hemşehri* ... while making changes in response to wider urban society" (1998b, p. 556). Similarly, the participants of *Karadenizliler* group feel the need to protect their ties of common origin while socializing with their *hemşehris* in the city. Moreover, they can paradoxically express certain distance between themselves through the use of the term *Hanım*, and rarely visit each other aside for ceremonial visits and *gün* meetings. This situation shows that they cannot be as close as they indicated. In this sense, the situation has two distinct facades: while the coexistence of these two needs, i.e. the protection of common ties and the socialization with *hemşehris*, can be considered as corresponding with a resistance to urbanization, it can also be claimed that the urban lifestyle has been already internalized by the members of this small group, in that they maintain an explicit balance between their old and new lives.

#### **4.2.2. *Komşular Gün* Meeting: "Houses are larger, but guests are fewer"**

*Komşular gün* meetings are organized among neighbours who have been residents of the same apartment for approximately ten years. Wolbert emphasized that for many *gün* groups in Turkey "locally dependent neighbourhood contacts" are one of the basic areas of socialization, other than kinship contacts (1996, p. 189). The participants of the *Komşular* group have been meeting for eight years, and their preference to arrange a *gün* was based on their having no contact at all as neighbors in the same apartment block during the first two years. Although they had previously met in their houses, they had preferred to meet outside home for the last two years. The general assertion was that *gün* meetings were the only way to come together with their neighbours, though they do not have any problem in their personal relationships. In their relationships, it is apparent that the *Komşular gün* group is more formal than the *Karadenizliler* group, and that the participants maintain a certain distance between themselves. I also observed reluctance among the participants to meet, and so only a few members attending the *gün* meetings in person, preferring to send the money.

In contrast to *Karadenizliler*, the expansion of the group was a much demanded thing, and all new-residents of their apartment block would be asked to join the *gün* if it was known that they do not work, since the meetings are held during the week. There is no intermediary mechanism in which a reference person builds a contact with the group, as is the case with *Karadenizliler*. If a new resident wants to join them, she can easily be recognized as a member of the group. The relationship begins generally with a small visit to the new resident's home for a 'welcome visit', as they described by the respondents. All of the decisions of these kinds of meetings are determined during the *gün*, and inviting a new resident to join is a task that is undertaken generally by the participants with the best organizational abilities. Some members continue to attend the meetings even after moving out of the area if their new home was nearby. The location of the *gün* is actually made up of two apartment blocks; although participation was accepted only for residents of one apartment block. When I asked the reason for this, the respondents generally complained that there was gossip in the other block. In this group, gossip was generally accepted as a negative situation that threatened their privacy. The participants of the *Komşular gün* group wanted to protect their privacy as a group which appeared to be significant for maintaining group solidarity. In this sense, the fear of gossip provided boundary maintenance for the group. Gluckman claims that among relatively small groups, there are important positive virtues of gossip and even scandal that maintain the unity of these groups (1963, pp. 308-314). Individuals begin to get "a feeling of community" while they are involved in gossip since "the outsider cannot join in gossip" (Gluckman, 1963, pp. 308, 312). As clearly indicated by Gluckman, "the right to gossip about certain people is a privilege which is only extended to a person when he or she is accepted as a member of a group or set. It is a hallmark of membership" (1963, p. 313). As noted by Gluckman, "scandal when directed by members of a group against another group is unifying, and ... it asserts the superiority of the scandalizing group" (1963, p. 314). When the members of the *Komşular gün* group collectively criticized the residents of the other apartment block due to their gossiping, they actually implied their own superiority over the other group. However, if the members of a group do not have a sense of community which is based on

common objectives, gossip or scandal cannot "contribute to the cohesion of a grouping of persons" (Gluckman, 1963, p. 314).

The majority of participants said that there was no restriction on participation, but stated that the number of participants should not exceed eleven due to time constraints. Economy was more important for the indirect participants, and could even be a reason for restriction. There was a suggestion that the restrictions on participation was connected to economic conditions, which shows that a *gün* group can be understood along the lines of a partial economic unit, even for direct participants. On the other hand, Respondent 21 who was an indirect participant of *Komşular gün* group stated that participation was going to be restricted with some rules when she criticized some participants for not giving their money regularly:

In previous *güns* there was no restriction, but from now on there will be. They made a specific decision to remove those who do not come to *gün* meetings, because people who don't come don't give money, also and don't think the other members. Perhaps a person is in debt and is relying on this money, but some people don't consider this. I know that they took this kind of decision. People, who wouldn't come, won't come anyway. Moreover, their absence isn't the only problem. They don't carry out the duties that they are supposed to. They don't send their money. They don't consider the other people, but gossip too much when they don't receive their money. They don't see the same problem when it is them not giving.

In the wider sphere of leisure, most activities of the participants were in the form of *gün* meetings, being members also of other *gün* groups with their relatives, former neighbours or workmates in Ankara, known as 'Relative day', 'former neighbour day', 'Military day' (referring to the workplace) or 'Teachers day'. Although they joined these gatherings in the form of a *gün* where they also collected money, some of the respondent's referred to the meetings they hold with their relatives as *güns*, despite there being no monetary commitment. In this regard, for some of the participants of the *Komşular gün* group, the description of *gün* was not reduced to meetings involving money. This can also be regarded as a consequence of the decrease in other kinds of meetings, such as drop-in visits. Among the members of *Komşular*, drop-in visits were also rare. Away from the monthly *güns*, the rarity of drop-in visits

corresponds to the decrease in neighbourhood relationships in comparison to the past, although there were some close friends who meet regularly:

Sometimes one of my neighbours invites me over; sometimes I go to them. I sometimes knock on their doors saying 'let's go to my home'. We can easily drop by. There is no problem, in short. But with specific people ... You are closer with some people, of course, with the ones you have a previous acquaintanceship. (Respondent 3)

Drop-ins are generally modest meetings, where the hostess does not have to prepare a lot of food, and so they are not as exhaustive as *gün* meetings, as stated by Respondent 14:

Neighbourhood relationships are decreasing, but I don't know that it's better or worse today. Now you can't visit a neighbour without telling her beforehand. In my opinion, houses are larger, but guests are fewer. Previously, houses were small, but there would be too many guests. Maybe since there are many expectations now, people don't receive guests, because today's meetings are so exhausting.

In terms of what *Komşular gün* meetings mean to the participants, the most common expressions used by the participants were the feeling of sharing, creating a change in their lives, relaxation by distancing themselves from their homes and seeing new places, getting to know what is going on in the apartment block, or the desire to learn what is happening around them, curiosity, talking about their troubles, relaxing and entertaining. There was no specific emphasis on the meaning of neighbourhood, in contrast to *Karadenizliler* group, where the participants made sense of their *gün* in the context of *hemşehrilik*. The participants of the *Komşular* group did not mention any tension in their *gün* group, and generally preferred to maintain a certain distance from their neighbours in order to prevent such tensions from arising. As stated specifically by Respondent 4, closeness is accepted as a reason for gossip and jealousy. On the other hand, some participants stressed their discomfort at the distance kept between neighbours, saying, "Everyone is participating in their own rat race in their lives; everyone has become selfish" (Respondent 8). In this sense, it can

be argued that the lack of tension among the participants of the *Komşular gün* group is based on the absence of any closeness among the members.

#### **4.2.3. Meanings of Inside and Outside Home**

*Karadenizliler* and *Komşular gün* meetings can be differentiated from each other in the sense that the first are arranged in the privacy of the home, while the participants of the second *gün* meet in such public spaces as restaurants and cafes. The choice of venue for *gün* is an important issue that bears a kind of gender dimension. As stated in the previous chapter, the inside/outside division is one of the categories of gender segregation that legitimizes the traditional attributions to gender. Women are always confined, like private figures, in contrast to the freedom of movement enjoyed by men in various public spaces. For this reason, the habit of arranging a *gün* meeting inside home can be understood, as it reproduces the traditional perception of gender division and inequality. In a traditional understanding, femininity is socially controlled through 'respectable' forms of female leisure time activities in a patriarchal society. In feminist leisure literature, it is argued that male control over public spaces directs women towards more secure leisure activities in private spaces. The home is the basic terrain where women can both socialize with those of the same sex while reproducing their domestic roles and responsibilities.

In this context, *Karadenizliler gün* meetings are one of those secure and respectable leisure practices engaged in by women that are mostly held in the private realm. It is remarkable that 'to arrange the *gün* inside or outside' was not a compromising topic among the participants. While some of the younger members argued that they would prefer to go outside, the older ones generally insisted that the *gün* should remain inside. In *Karadenizliler*, the respondents said that a discussion had been made on this topic, but that the idea was quickly quashed, since most of them wanted the meetings to remain in the home. The respondents can be divided into three categories based on their feelings about the inside/outside issue: those who think that 'inside' is absolutely the best place to arrange *gün* meetings; those who are in-between, who

argue that 'inside' is better, although outside would be more advantageous; and those who support the idea that the 'outside' is the best place to meet. In the decision-making process, the first and second groups have the capacity to dominate the others due to their higher status based on their age and their positions in the *gün* as founders of the group. These two factors demand a level of respect and obedience to them.

In the *Karadenizliler gün* group, the members of the first group, as fervent opponents to arranging meetings outside, generally spoke about the discomfort and formality of hosting meetings outside. Home was defined as a "warmer place" than a restaurant (Respondent 17), although there was a certain paradox in defending the home as a meeting place, in that they claimed that they felt restricted outside the home, although in theory, the outside provides for greater freedom of movement. This restriction can be attributed to the internalization of gender roles and social control which entails rules of behaviour that should be followed in public places, in that the women feel like they cannot move, speak, laugh or entertain freely in a place that is occupied by men or strangers. As stated by Respondent 16 from the *Karadenizliler gün* group:

I never prefer the outside world ... because there is a need for formality there ... You need to be careful how you speak; you can't speak comfortably. Hustle and bustle ... You have a lunch there; you get up and everyone goes home. However, we are not like that here. We have a very nice environment for conversation; we laugh and we chat. We can share everything that we have experienced. Everything ... We can get each other's opinions; we can make suggestions. If we are outside, I don't think we can be that comfortable. You must be more formal outside. You should be careful what you say, and in your manner. Home seems to me to be nicer. We are all together here. There are waiters outside; there are different men, different people. I don't prefer to meet outside.

This statement shows that how women can internalize the gendered habitus as a system of dispositions by which they distance themselves from men in the social sphere. Most of the participants in the first group referred to the home as a more comfortable and intimate environment. For example, according to Respondent 9, "an intimate environment can be created in the house. I can't laugh as I wish in a

crowded area outside. When I speak up, I draw attention." The public realm is also accepted as an environment of superficial and economic relations, in contrast to the intimacy of the home. Respondent 20, an indirect participant of the *Karadenizliler* group, expressed that:

Being at home also brings intimacy. That is to say, visiting somebody's home offers a different intimacy. Outside, there is a 'let's eat, let's drink, let's gather money, let's go' feeling. In short, there's no such intimacy outside. I think this is the difference.

Whereas guests hosted in the home do not pay for their lunch, when the group goes outside, everybody pays her own bill. This was criticized by some participants as an unacceptable element of meeting outside, in that it reduces the aim of *gün* only to an economic relationship:

I think meeting in houses is better. Doesn't everyone want her friends to come to her house once a year? You can go outside by yourself. In the home, the hostess prepares everything. When you go outside, everyone pays her own bill. Is that so? My guests, my friends visit me once in a year; how can I charge them? (Respondent 5)

For the *Karadenizliler* members, the traditional character of the meetings, where the members socialize with their *hemşehris* with whom they share a common culture and past, was an important aspect. Not only did they engage in a kind of leisure time activity like *gün*, but also shared a common culture while preparing and eating local foods, speaking with local idioms and talking about familiar issues. They would not be able to do the same things so comfortably while in the public realm. For this reason, meeting outside was unacceptable for many of the participants, since the outside was also an untraditional, i.e. modern, sphere of superficial relations.

The way someone defines routine work also determines the will to make it. Although in the home the hostess must undertake many tasks that are compatible with her duties as a housewife, like cooking and cleaning, they carry out these duties willingly for their friends, since it is seen as a leisure time activity, carried out once a year in a participant's house: "I like to serve my friends, to prepare with affection. I don't get tired; even if I am tired, I don't feel it" (Respondent 6). "We gather once in year in

each house, so we want to have our tea and chat in the house comfortably. Outside is easy, but the home is more intimate. I prefer the house. I'm not afraid of the preparation" (Respondent 13).

The second group, being those in-between, mostly supported arranging *gün* meetings in the home, although aware of the facilities outside. While the majority of the participants of *Karadenizliler* fell within the first group, there were two participants who were neutral on the inside/outside issue. For these participants, the outside was similarly defined as a sphere of economic relations, while the home is more intimate. For instance Respondent 18 expressed that "outside meetings seem like money meetings", but considered hosting *gün* meetings inside home as disadvantageous, since the preparations can be exhausting.

Those who wanted to arrange the *gün* meetings outside spoke mostly about its advantages, such as socialization and being in the outside world, and emphasized the positive aspects of being served and not being tired out by preparations. Outside, they said, women can escape from their duties of housewifery. Respondent 1 expressed why she preferred to meet outside:

Outside you sit at a prepared table, the waiter takes your order, everything, including your tea, is brought to you. You can sit without getting tired. At home you get exhausted. You plan to offer one or two things, but it's not according to the plan. You just do it in order not to be disgraceful. For instance, I planned four kinds of offerings this month. When I looked at the table, I realized that there were eight kinds. At home, it makes you too tired physically.

For a newcomer, it is hard to participate in decision-making processes. In a closed group, the status/hierarchy may be based on the earlier and older members of the community. "To arrange the *gün* outside home" was a topic discussed among the group members, although it was the oldest members that determined the location for *Karadenizliler gün*. The younger or newer members said that they preferred to go along with the decision of the founders of the *gün*, even if they want to go outside. This was not a critical issue among the younger participants, in that they are able to

participate in other *gün* groups to fulfill their need to socialize outside and to 'get some fresh air'. They feel some sort of respect for their elders, since in Turkey, respecting the choices of people older than you also means respecting traditional family values.

Arranging *gün* meetings outside home was a distinctive characteristic of the *Komşular* group, and is also an increasing trend among the urban middle-class. This sort of meeting is important, since it deconstructs the distinction between the inner and outer domains that is based on the segregation of genders. According to this scheme of inner/outer distinction, as the basis of female/male segregation, women joining the *Komşular* group represent a new world of women's gatherings, extending their scope into the world of the outer domain that is accepted traditionally to be a male sphere. The increasing trend among women to go outside for *gün* meetings is also challenged by Sönmez et al.'s claim that leisure among Turkish women's is still home-centred (2010, p. 101). It can be argued that this new form of *gün* carries potential in the emancipation of women, allowing them to occupy a traditionally male sphere, i.e. the outside.

It is not surprising that seven members of the *Komşular gün* group argued that outside was the best place to meet; in contrast to two participants who stated that inside was better than outside, and one indirect participant who indicated the negative and positive attributes of both. As housewives, many of the members of the group spend most of their time in the home, and so outside, they can enjoy the sense of leisure, as a break from their everyday routine. They get to see "different places" outside (Respondent 22). Speaking about the disadvantages of meetings in the home, most spoke about the exhaustion of having to host so many guests. 'Bothering about the preparations of the *gün*' was the most commonly stated reason for preferring to meet outside. Those who are persuaded of the advantages of the outside believe that all members of the group share their preference, saying "everybody likes it now" (Respondents 3 and 4). Their general ideas about the available facilities outside are as follows:

Actually, it's more expensive at home. There is cleaning, there are all kinds of things you should offer, and because of that, everyone wants to exhibit their abilities. The cost is also increasing in this situation. For this reason, meeting outside becomes more economic. In the house, you cannot socialize as you have to serve your guests. The *gün* becomes meaningless in this regard. For me, the meaning of *gün* is to chat and talk about the old times with friends. Outside, someone does the work; you don't get exhausted. It suits me more. (Respondent 12)

Some participants think that *gün* meetings arranged at home are more expensive, with the need to shop and tiredness cited as extra costs of hosting *gün* meetings at home (Respondent 21).

In contrast to *Karadenizliler* group, the *Komşular*'s approach to the comfort issue was somewhat different. Although some members of *Karadenizliler* defined the outside world as an uncomfortable place where they cannot chat with ease, one particular participant of the *Komşular* group stated that the hostess cannot socialize within home, since she is constantly serving her guests (Respondent 3). Unlike the *Karadenizliler* group's pleasure at serving guests, treating it as a leisure time activity, the members of the *Komşular* group were not happy to carry out duties as a hostess in *gün* meetings.

Even for an indirect employed participant, the outside domain is more preferable due to the double-burden issue (Respondent 22), relating to the need to carry out domestic duties at home, even if their commitment to paid work increases. Referring to the relationship between gender and employment in Turkish case, Tekeli says: "Employment outside home has not much changed women's roles within the home. Although they work as much as men do in their jobs ... work has not brought them emancipation" (1990, p. 148). In feminist leisure studies, it is also claimed that women have a distinctive experience of leisure time that is different to that of men, based on their domestic responsibilities. What distinguishes women's leisure from men's is that even for working women, the time spent at home is more than for men. In this sense, it is understandable that a working woman would have a need to go

outside: "We are always at home. We want to go outside, to sit in different places outside. Eventually, all of us are housewives of a sort, though I also work. Visiting different places is good for all of us" (Respondent 22).

Although most of the participants insisted that they find the outside more advantageous, they do not want to seem like they are escaping from the housework, attributed to housewives as one of their responsibilities. While they do not want to do housework and spend leisure time outside, they also consider housewifery is a basic duty from which they cannot escape. For this reason, they used statements like "I still like to host guests" (Respondent 15).

The *Komşular gün* meetings are of vital importance in permitting the women to occupy the outer domains that are traditionally reserved for men<sup>3</sup>. However, despite the potential for the emancipation of women from the privacy of the home, women are unable to experience real freedom through such leisure time activities as *gün* meetings. This is based primarily on the fact that middle-aged women groups still prefer to socialize with the same sex in terms of leisure, and the participation of men in a *gün* group is restricted to their inclusion in monetary rotation. Secondly, as argued by some of the participants of *Karadenizliler* and *Komşular gün* groups, they still experience social restrictions outside that prevent them from behaving as comfortably in restaurants as they can in the home. They are concerned that they may be seen as engaging in such socially unacceptable behaviours as laughing or speaking loudly. This is clear evidence that women internalize significantly normative feminine behaviour through their gendered habituses, which may unconsciously motivate them to avoid socially undesirable behaviour.

### **4.3. The 'Gendered Field' of *Gün***

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<sup>3</sup> For a study analyzing the interrelationship between space and gender with a focus on the everyday lives of women in urban public spaces, see Selda Tuncer, *Going Public: Women's Experience of Everyday Urban Public Space in Ankara across Generations between 1950s and 1980s*, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation (Sociology: METU, Ankara, 2014).

*Gün* is a form of 'social field' that is thoroughly gendered. Using the concept of the gendered field, Pierre Bourdieu's conceptual framework together with feminist approaches on gender is accepted. The field in Bourdieu's theory can only be meaningful with the concept of habitus, in which individuals internalize the social structure and behave unintentionally according to the rules of this internalized system. Bourdieu argues that habitus is a very dynamic entity which is also a "strategy-generating principle" in different situations (1977, p. 72). Bourdieu defines social strategy as "taking on its meaning in a system of strategies generated by the habitus" (1980, p. 16). Habitus is the "series of moves which are objectively organized as strategies without being the product of genuine strategic intention" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 73; 1980, p. 62). In other words, habitus is the source of different "strings of 'moves' which are objectively organized as strategies" (Bourdieu, 1980, p. 62). According to Swartz, "Bourdieu speaks of action as strategy to emphasize the interest-orientation of human conduct" where individuals try to obtain conscious or unconscious advantages from different situations (1997, p. 67). For example, marriage is not simply "a set of ritual acts" but it includes strategies "oriented towards the maximizing of material and symbolic profit" or "accumulation of symbolic capital" (p. 16). Families are institutions to perpetuate several strategies including *reproduction strategies* "which aim at the direct transmission of economic capital" or symbolic capital accomplished by the transmission of a family name (Bourdieu, 1988, p. 19). Similarly, *gün* meetings as social fields are a particular gendered habitus which include some strategies such as going outside. Meeting outside the home assures women's recognition in male spheres which increases their symbolic capital. Rotational exchange among the participants is also a strategy helping women to make their own savings as a form of economic capital. These strategies shed light on the concept of gendered field which also refers to a particular gendered habitus and related strategies developed by women.

From a very early age, they develop a "gender-specific socialization" that separates strictly the male and female worlds (Krais, 1993, p. 171). Through socialization, the two sexes develop male and female habituses in which they suppress the

characteristics of each other. In patriarchal societies, the entire lives of women are surrounded by a number of gendered fields, like *gün* meetings. Although Bourdieu's emphasis was not so much on gender, following his scheme it can be argued that individuals internalize the patriarchal structure through their gendered habituses, which brings a kind of gender segregation through such leisure activities as *gün* meetings. Despite their positive psychological outcomes, *gün* meetings are gendered in terms of three interrelated themes: (i) male and female segregation, (ii) the reproduction of traditional gender roles, and (iii) the participants' indifference towards politics.

In both *gün* groups, the participants tended to state their positive feelings about the *gün* meetings, and in terms of leisure, this kind of positive stance is meaningful, since *gün* as a leisure time activity represents "a contrast to the everyday routine" and "stands out from the infinity of housework", especially for housewives (Wolbert, 1996, p. 194). As expressed by Respondent 1 from the *Karadenizliler* group:

It is a different atmosphere. I feel more relaxed. I get away from my routine work at home. Going to bed and getting up ... It is always the same thing at home. When I go to *gün*, I feel like I can spare a day for myself.

To "socialize", "learn something new", "see friends" and "fulfil their longings" were the reasons given for attending, and since the participants' leisure-time is limited, they asserted that they looked forward to *gün* meetings with excitement. Most of the participants stated that they felt psychologically "relaxed" at being able to let off steam with their friends, and "happiness" at meeting their friends. Respondent 9 from the *Karadenizliler* group emphasized these positive psychological effects as follows:

Since I take care of my parents, I'm very busy. *Güns* have a therapeutic effect on me. I don't have a social life and time to spare for myself. For this reason, I care about these *gün* meetings so much. *Gün* days are my therapy days, by which I fill my leisure time.

The participants claimed to be able to refresh themselves through *gün* meetings, and they would make special efforts to prepare for the meetings by going to the

hairdresser and wearing their best clothes. According to Respondent 7 from *Karadenizliler*, "When there is a *gün* meeting, I'm specially prepared. For instance, I go to hairdresser on Friday. I feel better when I take care of myself."

As a same-sex leisure time activity that is subjected to patriarchal male control, *gün* is a gendered field, in that it firstly accepts male/female segregation, despite the positive psychological influences on women mentioned above. Wolbert asserts that in a society where traditional gender roles are harmfully experienced by women, attending *gün* is a way "to accept the border between the female and male world", although it regularly gives women "the opportunity to get away from their husband and family for a while" (1996, p. 203). In this sense, *gün* meetings do not eliminate gender relations, in that as gendered fields, they rather reproduce them. For example, Respondent 19 from *Komşular* group said:

There are more things that you can share with women. For example, there is a saying 'only women are sensible to women' (*tr. kadının halinden kadın anlar*). Men think differently, they look at everything from a different standpoint. That is to say, men get on well with men, just as women get on well with women, in my opinion.

The participants stated that they felt more secure and comfortable in women-only groups, in that they need to be careful when they are together with strange men other than relatives:

*Güns* are more comfortable of course; we are among women, all in all. When there are only women, of course we can move more comfortably. We can feel comfortable only with male people when they are relatives. Previously, before my husband's death, we had evening meetings, and you should be careful being beside men there. Can we be as comfortable as when we are among women? It's not possible! (Respondent 16, *Karadenizliler*)

In Western literature, leisure is analysed usually as a personal matter, while feminist analyses remind us of its broader meanings in terms of gender. In this sense, *gün* is a secure area in which women have minimum contact with men, and so is accepted as an appropriate form of leisure. Male control over women's leisure time is an

indispensable outcome of the patriarchal structure. In terms of leisure-time activities, the participants usually experienced this male control through their husbands, and need to gain his permission to attend such an activity. Men, on the other hand, want to know and make decisions about where their wives go, with whom they meet and when. Respondent 18 from *Karadenizliler* clarified this situation:

When I was young, my husband didn't want me to go anywhere that I didn't know, so I never visited anyone who had invited me ... Previously, there were evening visits as couples, but my husband didn't like them. He said 'I don't feel comfortable. You meet with their wives in the daytime. When I come home, I want to lie down, to take a rest. Leave me the evenings.'

A *gün* meeting, in this sense, is an acceptable leisure-time activity that dominant husbands can 'allow' their wives to attend, rather than mixed-sex leisure activities, as indicated by Respondent 22 from *Komşular*:

When I look from my husband's point of view, he says 'you are with women anyway. Nothing will happen. Okay, go'. However, when I suggest going to a different place, to go outside with my friends ... when I say 'let's go to a bar, let's do this, let's do that; let's go and have fun' or 'let's go to a restaurant together', he says 'no'. He has a different approach. However, when there's a *gün* meeting, he doesn't have any negative feeling.

*Gün* meetings can further be considered a gendered field since they reproduce traditional gender roles. Especially in the *gün* meetings held in the home, they involve many activities for the hostess before and during the meetings that are extensions of such household tasks as cooking, cleaning and childcare. Moreover, *gün* is not a qualified form of leisure that Mattingly and Bianchi described as "pure adult leisure" (2003, p. 1006). One respondent who is also a university student underlined her mother's and female relatives' excessive efforts to both clean their houses and cook delicious foods for the guests:

The house was always cleaned, as if it is a particular goal. House cleaning was really very important, and they would start to clean the house three or four days before the guests arrived. I still think of my uncle's wife or my mother ... They had *gün* meetings then, and would panic every time. They had concerns like "what can I prepare? What do they like? Does that one

suit to their taste? How do I clean the house? Nowhere should be dirty". (Respondent 21).

Since housewives cannot avoid their motherhood 'responsibilities', they generally bring children or grandchildren to meetings. This responsibility of caregiving is what restrains women inside the home and prevents them from going outside. For instance, an indirect participant of the *Komşular* group explained her indirect participation with her childcare responsibilities as follows:

I would prefer *gün* meetings at home because of my children. If it was in the apartment, I could leave my children home alone and attend the meeting. I suggested gathering at home, but they kept on doing it outside. Actually, for me it wouldn't matter, but I suggested it because of my children (Respondent 19).

A third factor indicating that *gün* is a gendered field is that in the meetings, women usually talk about personal and familial topics like the problems and the futures of their spouses and children (Sağır, 2013, p. 480). These personal topics restrict women from developing a consciousness of politics, which is related closely to the woman question. Particularly in *gün* activities held in the home, topics related to the home, such as housework, come up much more often than outside *gün* meetings (Sağır, 2013, p. 490). Most of the participants consider politics to be completely irrelevant to their lives, which is based primarily on the desire to avoid any conflicts within the group and to protect the group cohesion, as said by Respondent 2 from *Komşular*: "We cannot easily speak of politics since there are people with all opinions. Since we gather for only a limited time and don't want to upset anyone, we don't get into politics". Politics is also an area that they think women cannot understand or do not like to talk about:

I never liked politics. I avoid speaking about it. It's the only topic that I avoid. I don't like it, in short. Why would politics enter our meeting? It brings no benefit to me. It only puzzles one's head (Respondent 12, *Komşular*).

Similarly, respondents 4 and 11 from the *Komşular* group stated their indifference with politics as follows: "I'm not so interested in something that I don't understand. I don't watch the news, since it makes me upset and bored" and "Of course, some things shouldn't be talked about. We are not politicians. What can we do as housewives? We speak about our children, our husbands. We can't lead in these topics [politics]. It's not our business."

Many participants of the *Karadenizliler* and *Komşular gün* groups internalized the patriarchy rather than challenging it. In both groups, the traditional gender roles, in which women are submissive and do not have the potential to perceive complicated issues like politics, were reproduced. Coşar and Gençoğlu claim that indifference with politics among women constitutes a "major disadvantage" for feminism (2008, p. 337). The participants' positions were also in direct opposition to the famous feminist motto "*the personal is political*", which argues that the individual experiences of women and the power relations in a patriarchal society are closely interrelated.

To sum up, *gün* is a gendered field in which women internalize patriarchy through their gendered habituses, and reproduce gender division, inequality and domination within the frame of a normative feminine leisure-time activity. What makes a *gün* meeting a gendered field is firstly the internalization and reproduction of traditional male and female segregation; secondly, women's responsibility for household tasks and childcare; and thirdly, the participants' indifference to politics, which is closely related to their everyday lives, despite its positive psychological effects like relaxation, happiness and refreshment.

#### **4.3.1. Economy: a Gendered Field?**

In Turkey, *gün* is a form of savings in which the social significance outweighs the economic motive, especially for women who attend directly. However, the economic relations associated with *gün* meetings cannot be ignored, since there is a strong

relationship between savings and gender relations. Studies into the gender meanings of ROSCAs are limited, although one can point out the study of Anderson and Baland (2002) and Ardener's current emphasis on rotating credit associations among women (2014). Why women-only groups have grown to become a significant example of these associations is a subject that has yet to be investigated.

In *gün*, as a specific form of saving in Turkey that is mainly reserved for women, there can be observed a relationship between the women's unequal economic position and *gün* participation. In this regard, *gün* is a gendered field for women based not only on the social reasons underlined above, but also economic relations. It has been argued previously that the participation of men in *gün* meetings is limited to the economic rotation aspect, where "the collection of funds is not associated with a social gathering" (Sağır, 2013, p. 480; Wolbert, 1996, p. 126). In the present case also, one indirect participant stated that her brother's participation in the monetary rotation started before hers (Respondent 21). Generally, the meaning of *gün* for most men is limited to the opportunity to save money. On the other hand, for women, the money aspect of *gün* has a more complex meaning, being related also to the gendered relationships of the patriarchal structure.

As a gendered economic relationship, rotational exchange is a strategy of the economically marginal people who have no independent income. Bellér-Hann asserts that ROSCAs "represent an adaptive response to a condition of poverty and relative deprivation" (1996, p. 127). Due to the socially and economically retreated position of women, they are subjected to relative deprivation in contrast to men in a patriarchal social structure. The material gain of rotating credit associations constitutes a means of saving and economic assurance for women who are relatively deprived.

In the interviews, I asked participants such questions as how they sourced the money for the *gün* meetings, how did they spend the money, did they have a right to use it and what do they feel about its usage. Housewives, who constituted the majority of the participants and were financially dependent on their husbands, usually obtained

the 'money of *gün*' from their husbands in two ways: either from the 'allowances' that their husbands regularly allocated to them, or obtained from their husbands specifically as 'money of *gün*'. In both situations, when the money was given by the husbands, the women regarded it as a debt that had to be repaid to their husbands. On the other hand, the working and retired participants who had their own salary claimed that they gave 'money of *gün*' from their personal budgets. The working and retired participants had more rights to the use of their money than housewives, and so it can be argued that rotational exchange is more for the benefit of housewives than working women.

**Table 4:** Usage of the 'Money of *Gün*'

<b>Forms of Usage</b>	<b>Saving</b>	<b>Spending</b>
<b>Personal</b>	9	5
<b>Familial</b>	2	<b>13</b>

From the table above it can be seen that the participants preferred to save or spend the 'money of *gün*', and the numbers represent how many times the forms of usage were indicated by the participants. One participant could refer to more than one form of use, which explains why there are more numbers than the total number of participants in the study, i.e. twenty-two. Some of the participants claimed that they put the money aside for their personal use, giving them a certain sense of freedom and economic assurance. Personal use included making "savings" and spending for personal needs like shopping, as can be seen from Table Four above. According to the Respondent 1:

My husband and daughter can only use this money if I give it to them. It is felt well because you think of it being for your own use. I think that if I face any difficulty, I'm not financially strained; I can use this money.

Respondent 3 said that with the money of *gün*, "You have more freedom. You have money. If you don't have money, you are nothing in any case." According to Table

Four, it can be seen that participants generally preferred to save the money than spend it. In the *Komşular g n* group, two of the participants said that they have a *zula* (secret store of money) that was hidden from their husbands, and that the money from *g n* went to this *zula* (Respondents 7 and 22). This strategy of married women is similar to the example of the Kenyan women involved in rotating credit associations in Anderson and Baland's study, who do not inform their husbands about their savings in order to protect them from their husbands' immediate consumption (2002, pp. 963, 990). Few participants claimed that they used the money for familial saving, although two participants said they saved the money for their families, specifically for the needs of their children.

The 'gendered use of money' is a kind of relationship that makes the economy of *g n* a gendered field, and its use can be considered gendered in two ways.

First, the women tend to spend the money on household expenses and to satisfy the needs of other family members rather than on themselves. This is referred to in Table Four as 'familial spending', and was the most stated category of use among the participants. They cannot treat the money as their own, even if their husbands do not interfere with its usage. For example, Respondent 18 said: "I never refer to this as my money. I sometimes give all of it to my husband. If necessary, we buy something or invest it." In this way, they reproduce the traditional identification of women with the spheres of the home and family, according to which they only consider spending the money on family necessities. These may result from the internalization of traditional gender roles like motherhood, as expressed by Respondent 16:

Of course, nobody can interfere in the use of the money; but I'm a mother. If my children are in a difficult situation, I can't say that I'll use the money myself. If my children are in need, I give it to them.

Second, husbands directly interfere with the means and form of rotational exchange, since they regard it as their own money. This situation was also indicated in Table Four as 'familial spending', and can be considered a means of men to restrict their

wives even in a normative patriarchal leisure time activity like *gün*. Respondent 15 related her experience of this:

In the beginning we gathered gold coins, but we have returned to money now. My husband said, 'gold coins are not appropriate. You can participate only if you gather money'. Since there are fluctuations in the value of gold, it was decided that money would be gathered according to the current price of gold.

In this kind of patriarchal relationship between the husband and wife, women need to repay the money directly to their husbands, as stated by Respondent 11. "What can I spend that much money on? I repay it to my husband. When the *gün* comes along again, I retake it from him. I don't spend it on myself." Respondent 15 also indicated that she had no opportunity to use the money:

If it was up to me, I'd buy clothes; I'd buy knickknacks that I want; however, since my husband confiscates it, I don't have the chance to do that. I give it to him. He said, 'If you give me, you can attend, but if it's left to you, no way'. He doesn't like indulge his wife; he's such a man. He also makes the kitchen shopping by himself. As a matter of fact, I can't buy as much as he buys with the money he gives to me. It's not enough. The money of *gün* doesn't help me; I only participate in the *gün* meeting.

This direct form of economic control over women increases their deprivation. In the *Karadenizliler* and *Komşular gün* groups, the first form of gendered use of money, in which they restricted themselves on their own terms, was more widespread than the second one, in which they were restricted by their husbands.

The 'gendered use of money' is also what makes the economy of *gün* a gendered field, in that whoever gives the money has the right to receive it, unless a member takes part in the rotation with her own money. Due to the sexual division of labour, those that pay are generally the husbands who are engaged in paid work. It is an expectation that activates gender inequality, in that as the housewives repay the money to their husbands, they have no material gain that prevents them from being deprived. Moreover, when women separate the 'money of *gün*' for household expenditures, they cannot again avoid from relative deprivation. They further

reproduce the traditional gender role according to which women are identified with the domestic spheres of the home and family. Rotational exchange creates a sense of independence for women who can use money for personal saving and spending. However, it is also a means of attending the meetings and socializing within a gendered form for women who cannot personally use the money from *gün*.

#### **4.3.2. Gendered Fields in Women's Everyday Life Experiences**

Leisure time activities constitute an important part of the daily lives of an individual, and in a patriarchal system the gendered relations in everyday life are reflected on leisure time practices. In this regard, the participation of women in *gün* meetings, as a form of normative feminine leisure time activity, cannot be considered apart from their everyday life experiences. Women attend *gün* meetings as a consequence of the gendered fields, which are internalized through their gendered habituses. It will be argued in the following section that the gendered fields in the everyday lives of women are based on their experiences of patriarchy through family, marriage, housewifery and motherhood. This will include also an analysis of whether or not the working participants have the potential to eliminate gender roles.

A gendered habitus is formed through the assigned gender roles in a patriarchal family, beginning from a woman's very early ages. The natal family surrounds and controls the lives of many women, like a gendered field, throughout their lives, even if they leave that family. Women are directed intrinsically to identifying themselves with their mother, who is responsible from domestic tasks, rather than their father, who both brings money into the house and is the primary decision maker. The father is sometimes an authoritarian male figure who restricts directly the female members of the family. For example, as patriarchal authoritarian figures, fathers or grandfathers may not allow their daughters to go to school. Tekeli claims that as an explicit instance of gender inequality, "families have a tendency to spend their money on the education of sons rather than daughters" in Turkey (1990, p. 151). The participants of *gün* meetings were highly experienced in the effects of these forms of

control in their lives resulting from patriarchal control in the family. Particularly those who came from a rural background argued that their fathers did not let them gain an education: "My father said 'what's the good of educating girls'? But my brother, who is two years older than me, is a teacher. They send him to a school far away, but they didn't send me" (Respondent 13).

I could have been a teacher, but my father, who is now deceased, didn't allow me to get an education. In the past, girls weren't educated, although they should have been. I have a brother. He's a mechanical engineer. But they didn't educate me (Respondent 5).

One other participant emphasized her teachers' unsuccessful attempts to change her father's mind about her education:

I wish I had been educated. I wanted it so much because I was so smart at school. For instance, my mathematics teacher and another teacher came to our home and said, 'please, educate this girl'. But my father wouldn't send me to school (Respondent 3).

According to Respondent 16, old people who prevented their children from getting an education were backward minded (*gerikafalı*), telling about her own experience:

If I had had the chance, I wanted to be a doctor. I'd love to help people with their health, but of course it was prevented. We've found a job for my sister in public service. One day, we went to the village. My grandfather, who is now deceased, was alive at that time, and my sister gave him money. My grandfather was so affected that he cried, as older people are so emotional ... He prayed so and so. I said to my grandfather: 'Grandpa, you didn't educate me. If I was educated and received a salary, I could also give you money'. He hit his head. 'That opportunity has passed' he said and opened his hands. He also regretted the decision. They didn't want me to educate my little one. This is the mind of the old people in the village. I call it "backward mindedness (*gerikafallık*)". There was such backward mindedness. When my father enrolled us in the school, my grandfather said to my father 'Abdullah (my father's name) educates his girls to write letters to their husbands'. There was such a mentality. My brother graduated from primary school in first place. His teachers begged so much, saying 'Mehmet studies very well. Uncle *hadji* (*hacı dayı*), let him be educated' (at that time, after the fifth class of primary school, it passed directly into teacher training school). Since it was a small place, a small town, the teachers knew the students' parents. My grandfather ridiculed the teachers. 'I have' he said

'only one grandson' (my brother was the only boy among seven sisters). He said 'if my boy lives at the state's expense, who lives at my expense?' My grandfather didn't allow us to be educated. My father wanted us to, but the elders ruled at that time. My grandfather said, 'you can't school them. I will tear down the house if you send them to school'.

The participants who experienced the forms of patriarchal control and gender inequality directly in their earlier years through restriction developed a sensitivity regarding their daughters, not wanting them to experience the same male oppression, as stated by Respondent 3: "I always support my daughter. I say 'my girl, we couldn't do it, but you can do it'". Respondent 16 also explained how she supports her daughter, so that she will not have to experience the same oppression she had:

I've been oppressed so much since I was a primary school graduate. So I have given (my daughter) advice since her childhood. 'Study and become a dignitary', I have always said: 'Be an enlightened person. Study a lot. Don't be oppressed like your mother.'

Education is an important way of acquiring superiority over men and being able to compete with them in the outside world. Compared with rural families, who place direct restrictions on their girls, later generations are much more conscious about the necessity of women's education. In these families, family members try to impose their choices about education on their children. As argued by some of the younger participants, even though they were educated, they were directed to be educated in subjects that their families or fathers found acceptable. For example, the youngest respondent claimed that she had started attending her current university with her father's coercion (Respondent 21). Respondent 20, a university graduate, told about her experiences in this regard:

I studied economics and administrative sciences. At that time we didn't have such knowledge about the faculties. 'Can our score be sufficient for a university in Ankara'? Ankara was the place we could go, and you calculated accordingly. 'Which departments are suitable for me in order to go to Ankara'? You had already made your selections with your father, and this choice was deemed appropriate. It was a stressful process if you wanted to enter a university at that time. He made his choice as such. Actually, it

wasn't suitable for me. How do I know? I also wanted to be a teacher. English teaching for instance... I wanted it so much.

There were also families that gave no value to the education of girls in cities. Respondent 22, who has an associate degree, expressed how she was restricted by her family:

I love animals so much. I wish I was a veterinarian, but I was prevented by my family. At that time, they said: 'Girls aren't educated ... I won't send you out of the city'. For this reason, they demanded the Open University. They said: 'If you study, you should study under our eyes', imposing their choices on me. My desires were never taken into consideration, and so I couldn't get my dream job.

If they cannot go to school, marriage is the only way of getting away from the family for women who experienced harsh patriarchal control in their natal families. For most cases in Turkey "a woman ... in order to leave her natal home, must marry" (White, 1994, p. 39). That said, women may not always be emancipated through marriage, since patriarchal control may be transferred to the husband. As argued by Delaney in her study of a Turkish village, "the only way for a woman to leave the village, except for visits with the family, is by marrying a villager who lives elsewhere. The mobility of women is attached to and controlled by men" (1991, p. 238). For some of the participants in this study, marrying a civil servant or a soldier, which were considered more or less regular and reputable, was another means of mobility. According to Respondent 13, whose husband is a civil servant, "My mother wanted me to marry so much, saying 'my daughter, we have suffered a lot in the villages; you would have at least a good life with this marriage', because he is a civil servant". Furthermore, arranged marriages were also widespread among the participants of this study, where the choice of mate was based not on the decision of the girl, but on their family. "In any case, the choice of a mate is by no means a personal matter ... it is ultimately her family's responsibility to see to it that a suitable match is arranged" (Kandiyoti, 1987, p. 325). Only a few of the participants of the *gün* meetings claimed that they were free to select their own husbands, in that the groom would rather be suggested or insisted upon by the natal family.

Kandiyoti indicates that "Women's success is associated to the external (luck) and thus less dependable causes, whereas men's is more often attributed to the internal (ability and effort)" (Kandiyoti, 1981, p. 240). Similarly, in terms of the selection of a mate, marrying a good and considerate husband is tied closely to such external factors as 'luck', whereas a bad and oppressive husband is the outcome of their misfortune. A participant considered herself to have been lucky in marriage, as it brought her emancipation from her oppressive natal family:

When I got married, I gained my freedom. In there, I was still accountable to my mother and brother. I even joke with my husband, 'I married you to escape from the village, since you were in a big city'. I can say that I gained my freedom through marriage. When I look at my past, I have no regrets. However, if I had a husband who asked for an explanation; if I had an unhappy marriage, I would regret (Respondent 1).

After marriage, women are again surrounded by gendered fields in which their domesticity defines them primarily as homemakers. Housework and childcare are the primary responsibilities of women, even if they work, and some of the participants complained that these activities take up almost their whole day. Although through marriage the status of women is sometimes increased, patriarchal control expects them to become good mothers and respectable wives. Most women internalize this patriarchal expectation of motherhood through their gendered habituses, which they even cannot think about questioning, as a 'sacred' duty. According to Chatterjee, this is a subtle form of authority that exercises itself through persuasion: "As with all hegemonic forms of exercise of dominance, this patriarchy combines coercive authority with the subtle force of persuasion. This was expressed most generally in ... the adulation of woman as goddess or as mother" (Chatterjee, 1989, p. 248). In Bourdieusian terms, it can also be defined as a kind of "symbolic violence" that is structured by a habitus that defines as legitimate the patriarchal power over women (Moi, 1991, p. 1030). In most cases, women who do not accept their roles in the patriarchal system may face the risk of being condemned by the majority of society. As stated by Butler, the maternal instinct is a "cultural fiction" that is considered to

be "organic and universal", and "motherhood is actually being promoted ... as a compulsory social institution" (1986, p. 42). Some of the participants spoke about how they fulfilled their roles of motherhood and wifehood based on patriarchal control:

I should do everything with due consideration. In the end, I am a mother, I have a spouse and I have responsibilities towards them. I should carry out my duties towards them before expressing myself and socializing. I think that expressing yourself is not that important if you're an irresponsible mother and spouse. (Respondent 1)

A participant with an associate degree relates her educated nature with motherhood. Receiving a higher education is a means of self-fulfillment for women. In contrast, Respondent 19 considered it to be like a tool for fulfilling her responsibilities to motherhood, perceiving herself as a 'trainer mother' and a 'caregiver mother' as follows:

I pick up the children from school and give them their lunch. Then we start their school work. If they have an exam, I help them revise ... My university degree helps very much; I can help my children. I can teach them easier.

Though education is an essential factor in increasing the status of women, for some "motherhood remains a potent source of self-identity, satisfaction and autonomy" (Sayer, 2005, p. 298). In her study in which she analysed the "intergenerational change among Turkish women", Kandiyoti asserted that, when compared to their daughters, mothers were more likely to define "successful women ... in exclusively domestic terms as a 'good mother and wife'" (1981, p. 244). A similar situation can be observed in the motherhood experiences of the participants of the two *gün* groups, and their devotion to their children.

**Table 5:** Decision-maker in the Home (for Married Participants)

<b>Decision-makers</b>	<b>Me</b>	<b>My husband</b>	<b>Both of us</b>
<b>Number of participants</b>	4	7	8

In terms of the husband-wife relationship, I asked the married participants "who makes the decisions in the home"? As can be seen from Table Five above, decisions were usually made by the husband and wife together; some participants indicated that their husbands were the primary decision-makers; while only four stated that they were the primary decision makers, and of these, three were not economically dependent on their husbands (two were working and one was retired). In this sense, it can be argued that the economic freedom of women provides them power in decision-making processes. It should be noted that there was a division between couples in terms of the kinds of decisions that they made. Although women claimed on the whole that they were involved in decisions related to the home and children, they had little authority in decisions related to the family budget and expenditures, unless they had a separate income.

Ayata argued that in families in which the education levels of the woman and man are relatively low, and when the woman does not work outside the home, the weight of authority of the man and his status inside the home are more explicit and unquestionable (1988, p. 16). Men tend to manage the home based on the acceptance of the woman of the husband's authority and superior status within the family (Ayata, 1988, p. 17). Some participants stated that it was their husbands that usually did the shopping, including kitchen needs and furniture. In such a relationship, it was generally the men's income and choices that dominated. Ayata indicates that in high-income families, women have much more right to speak than in lower income families (Ayata, 1988, p. 16), in that even if the woman does not have a separate income, she can make her own choices in issues related to the home. Some of those from middle-class families expressed that they had no authority inside home, even over their children. As Respondent 15 said: "Whoever has the money also has the authority. I don't have any authority, even over my children. They only love me and hold esteem. Either willingly or unwillingly, they respect to their dad".

According to a study by Bourdieu, individuals whose habituses differ from the prevailing group seek to develop *strategies* "to safeguard and improve their position" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 101). For example, a woman who enters the male world through paid work may need to repress her feminine characteristics in order to survive there. For this reason, the patriarchal structure needs various "traditional occupations for women, such as teaching, midwifery, nursing and sewing", which are also suitable jobs for women (Kıray, 1981 [1967], p. 272). In the traditional categories of gender segregation, since paid work is a sphere that is assigned to men, as claimed by Mernissi, "a woman who earns a salary will be perceived as either masculine or castrating" (1987, p. 171). As similarly stated by Respondent 20, who works as a financial advisor, "I do not perceive myself like a woman, but rather as genderless at work." Escaping from the gender roles is a *strategy* of working women so as to enter the field of paid work in a Bourdieusian sense. It can be argued that the participation of women in working life has the potential to eliminate the gender roles that legitimize gender division, inequality and oppression; however, working life is not so much ungendered, and can be experienced as a gendered field for both women and men. That said, more women than men have to face the disadvantages of unequal gender roles also at work, as indicated by the same respondent:

Struggling as a woman is a different thing ... Say that our most important problem is debt, which always accumulates. Male friends, for instance, can go to a man's workplace and sit, but I can never do such a thing as a woman. I can't say: 'give me my money'. As I can't break my politeness, it's harder. (Respondent 20)

I concluded the research by asking the participants for their ideas related to gender equality, to which most of them replied with criticisms of the lack of equality in Turkey. The main sources of gender inequality stated by the participants were their upbringing by their mothers or families, the patriarchal system, bullying by men and the passive role of women in religion in the face of male dominance. Although most of the participants were critical of the gender inequality in Turkey, they did not necessarily approach the differences in gender in the same manner, but rather accepted that women and men are different in some ways.

There are two trains of thought in the two groups regarding gender difference. The first group used gender difference to affirm some positive characteristics of women like meticulousness, attentiveness and cleverness, while the second group referred to the term when emphasizing that men are physically more powerful than women, using statements like: "Women and men cannot be compared with each other. A woman is woman; a man is man. Men are different, they are stronger" (Respondent 3). "Perhaps men can be one step ahead of women, since they're stronger" (Respondent 13). One respondent connected gender difference to personality and biological characteristics, saying: "A man's personality is different. Actually, he shouldn't be superior, but we have different personalities to men. We are biologically different" (Respondent 2). Another respondent accepted gender difference, but indicated that it cannot be used as a reason for the repression of women:

Inequality always occurs. At the very least, there is inequality that comes from our disposition. Our strength isn't the same. Men's strengths are different to women's strengths, but a woman shouldn't be held back because of this. If a woman says: 'my strength isn't enough, but I can do as much as my strength allows', she should do every kind of work.

I argued previously that there are many categories of gender division that legitimizes men's superiority over women. In this sense, accepting gender difference is also a means of normalizing gender inequality and ensuring domination, since the difference is on the basis of the unequal position of the genders. However, differences between women and men should not be considered dangerous as direct forms of patriarchal domination. In this sense, internalized gender differences are a vital part of a gendered habitus. There were a number of participants in both *gün* groups that did not recognize gender difference as a threat to equality. It is also an example of symbolic violence, which is a subtle form of domination. The participants' disagreements over gender inequality while accepting gender difference is what makes it a form of symbolic violence, since "in the very moment it is recognized, however, it can no longer function as symbolic violence" (Moi, 1991, p.

1023). To accept men as a superior essence based on their strength shows how patriarchy as a system affects individuals ideologically.

Despite their negative characteristics, which threaten gender equality, the individuals' perceptions of patriarchy carry the potential for change. Respondent 17 presented a meaningful example of such change as follows:

I observe gender equality in my own environment, but I also observe that men's superiority continues while going through the Black Sea. I think maybe it comes from their upbringing. My husband isn't like that, but he left his hometown at an early age and continued his education in a different place. He learned what was normal through experience. I think that he became conscious.

In her case, it can be observed that her husband's departure from a relatively traditional place changed his perception about what is 'normal' in terms of gender. In his earlier ages, he found a chance to develop a different habitus that made him a 'conscious husband' through his experience of different fields in the city. It can thus be understood that what makes a field gendered may be subjected to change through the 'ungendered experiences' of individuals.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

According to Kandiyoti, women's everyday life practices in Turkey are directly affected by gender-specific cultural experiences (1987, pp. 334-335). In this sense, Turkish women's leisure time activities have the potential to create a peculiar form of women's culture unlike those of Western women. In Western leisure literature, feminist approach gave way to an understanding about women's unequal access to leisure time as an outcome of the patriarchal system. There is a 'gender gap' both in the quality and quantity of women's leisure time. Most women's lack of time and money is a factor to increase their financial dependence on their male partners. This creates a kind of time pressure on women which leads them to adopt forms of leisure acceptable by the patriarchal system. Sexual division of labor also forces women to be 'good' wives and 'good' mothers who are explicitly responsible for the house and family. Hence, women's leisure is open to be fragmented and contaminated by the traditional responsibilities of housekeeping and motherhood.

Although Turkish women face all these handicaps in their leisure practices, they also experience a kind of patriarchal control which distinctively segregates women's leisure from men's. Turkish women are viewed as domestic figures more than their Western counterparts. For this reason, their leisure time activities are mostly held in "circumscribed" physical spaces like home where they also reproduce their domestic roles of housewifery and motherhood (Ridd, 1997, p. 194). Even in situations when they can go out into (urban) public spaces, they need to restrict and control their movements in order to meet the expectations of the patriarchal society. Hence, women-only groups, in which women can move freely, become vitally important in Turkish women's leisure time practices. However, solidarity among women inside these female networks does not solve their problem of gender segregation, inequality or oppression. In other words, these gender-segregated networks include some

components deepening women's passivity. As these networks isolate women from wider spheres of socialization, women cannot develop political consciousness and relate their personal experiences to political outcomes.

The main theoretical framework of this study was based on the analysis of "gendered fields" in Turkish women's leisure time experiences. *Gün* meetings as gender-specific leisure activities were discussed in this study within this framework. The concept of gendered field which intermeshes Feminist approach and Pierre Bourdieu's conceptual framework was used to analyze the findings of my field research. The case study was conducted in Ankara, the capital of Turkey, with twenty-two participants from the two *gün* groups, i.e. *Karadenizliler* (from the Black Sea) and *Komşular* (Neighbors). Each group consisted of eleven women. Qualitative research methods including ethnography and in-depth interviews were used in order to comprehend the structure and dynamics of the meetings and the nature of the interactions among the participants of these two groups for about six months between November 2013 and May 2014. Semi-structured interviews with a questionnaire containing a total of forty-seven questions were also conducted at the same time period. Two different question forms were prepared for the direct and indirect participants of the meetings. The initial questions in the questionnaire were designed to collect information about the participants' socio-demographic characteristics including age, marital status, homeland, level of education and occupation. The remaining questions were related to the participants' leisure time experiences in the past; the history, structure and characteristics of their current *gün* group; the relationships among group members; the participants' everyday life activities inside and outside the family, and their expectations from life and children; and their ideas about gender equality.

Most of the participants were married housewives who belonged to urban middle-class with at least one child. There was only one unmarried, four working and three retired members among the twenty-two participants. The average age of the participants from both groups was 51, although the members of the *Komşular gün*

group were slightly younger than the members of *Karadenizliler*. The average level of education attained in both groups was high school graduate. The *Karadenizliler gün* group was an exclusive preserve of women from the Black Sea Region. The members of the *Komşular gün* group, however, were from different cities in Anatolia and the composition of the group was based on the participants' neighborhood contacts. All participants were either first or second-generation migrants. In the *Karadenizliler* group, there were more first-generation migrants with a rural background, who migrated in the course of their lives. The *Komşular* group on the other hand included more second-generation migrants who were born in Ankara.

While analyzing the data, I adopted two differing approaches to *gün* meetings. First, I analyzed the dynamics in the *gün* meetings including a comparison between the *Karadenizliler* and *Komşular gün* groups with a focus on *hemşehrilik* (fellow citizenship) and neighborhood in the context of women's leisure time practices in Turkey. Although the socio-demographic characteristics of the members of both *gün* groups were similar, the motives behind the compositions of each group were different. The *Karadenizliler* meeting was distinguished by its participants' desire to protect their common ties of *hemşehrilik* based on a shared past and culture. They explicitly behaved as an identity group whose motive to protect their common ties was notable. They apparently balanced their previous rural and current urban lifestyle through the *gün* meetings. The *Komşular* group, on the other hand, arranged their meeting in alignment with temporary ties of neighborhood. In other words, the group members did not have strict ties with each other like *hemşehrilik* ties that held the group together. That is, neighborhood did not have a distinctive meaning for involvement in *gün* meetings. Choice of meeting places for their *güns* was another difference between the two groups. Although *Karadenizliler* met in their own houses offering home-made refreshments to their guests, *Komşular* preferred to gather in public spaces such as restaurants. The feeling of leisure was more visible among the members of the *Komşular gün* group since they met outside the home setting. However, in the *Karadenizliler* group, it was difficult for them to carry out some of their activities that maintained their common ties and shared memory unless they met

in their own houses. For instance, they could not offer local foods, perform their local dances or use local idioms and make jokes, which were the most important activities for the group members. Most members of the *Komşular* group, on the other hand, considered holding meetings in the home as exhausting. This is understandable since *Komşular's* main aim was to socialize in a pure leisure time activity to refresh themselves and to collect money instead of maintaining and reproducing their common ties. In the *Komşular gün* group, there were more indirect participants, who did not attend the regular meetings but only exchanged money on a rotational basis. In general, both direct and indirect participants stated that they did not care about the monetary dimension of the meetings. In this sense, the main motives for indirect participation were living conditions and the identification problem with the group.

*Gün* meetings also provided a firm basis for a critical understanding of gender relations, which was the second dimension of my analysis. Within this context, I have analyzed how women's gendered existences influenced their participation in a *gün* group. Gender was the most salient feature of the *gün* meetings in terms of the spatial, contextual and economic dimensions of the meetings. There was also a strong link between women's personal experiences of gender division and inequality in their daily lives on the one hand and their choice of *gün* as the most common leisure time activity on the other. In this context, the concept of "gendered field" is fundamentally linked to women's everyday life experiences in a patriarchal society. Details of everyday life regarding the personal *experiences* of actors have a significant place in Feminist approach and in Bourdieu's theory which comes to life through the concept of "gendered field". For Bourdieusian feminists, gender identity is deeply rooted in one's habitus so s/he inevitably acquires a "gendered habitus" (Krais, 1993, p. 170). Through this way, women embody gendered structures in their daily activities. Every habitus needs a field to arise. As gender is a part of the general social field and shaped by concrete interactions in social fields (Moi, 1991, p. 1034; McLeod, 2005, p. 19), my research group –members of the *gün*, also constitute a specific subfield of gendered social fields which is shaped by gender differences and inequality.

I used the concept of gendered field in place of gendered space since I referred not only to the physical dimensions of gender inequality such as the inside- outside distinction, i.e. female and male spheres, but also discussed the *gün* meetings as "social fields" which include various social dimensions of gender.

Despite its positive outcomes like socialization and relaxation, *gün* meetings are fields of subordination for women. The most noticeable gendered characteristic of the *gün* meetings was gender segregation. As argued by Wolbert, "the border between the female and male world" is accepted by attending the *gün* (1996, p. 203). The *gün* reproduces gender segregation both spatially and socially. For example, the members of the *Karadenizliler gün* group had their *gün* inside home which prevented them to go out into public spaces, which traditionally belongs to men. However, it is debatable whether a *gün* outside home like the *Komşular* meetings can have a potential to eliminate gender segregation since women again restrict themselves to a women-only "secure" sphere where they have minimal contact with the outside world. As indicated by some of the members of the *Komşular gün* group, they avoid behaving in a socially undesirable way like speaking and laughing loudly since there are strangers, namely men, around them when they meet outside the home setting.

Gender relations were not only mirrored in the spatial relations of the *gün* meetings, but the reproduction of traditional female roles was also apparent in most of the activities carried out by the group members. As observed during the field research, women's "responsibilities" of housewifery and caregiving of children or grandchildren continued to exist even during the *gün* meetings. *Gün*, in this sense, cannot be defined as a qualified leisure time activity. Moreover, in the *gün* meetings, women usually discussed personal and familial topics preventing them from developing certain political views or political consciousness. Most of the participants believed that politics is irrelevant to their lives and that it can also create conflict among the members of the group, which they wanted to avoid completely.

Therefore, *gün* meetings are defined as gendered fields where women internalize and reproduce patriarchal values through their gendered habituses.

Within the scope of this study, economic relationship of the *gün* meetings were also analyzed as gendered fields. *Gün* as a form of rotating credit association (ROSCA) symbolizes women's unequal access to economy since economically marginal groups strategically prefer rotational exchange. For women making some savings is a way of coping with their "relative deprivation". Most of the participants who were married housewives were financially dependent on their husbands; thus, they had to take the "money of *gün*" was from their husbands. In some cases *gün* money was repaid to their husbands. Money gives housewives a sense of freedom when it goes to *zula* (secret store of money). However, most of the participants stated that they either spend the *gün* money on household expenses or their husbands directly take it. The first form was more common among the members of the two *gün* groups. What makes the economy of the *gün* a gendered field was this "gendered use of money" where women cannot make personal decisions about money either intentionally or unintentionally. In the Bourdieusian conceptual sphere, it can also be argued that the gendered use of money is also a form of *symbolic violence* which is an invisible form of domination practiced upon the participants of the *gün* groups with their complicity (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 167).

The findings of this study also provide important clues about gendered relations in women's everyday life experiences. These relations were analyzed to discuss how patriarchal control in women's daily life reflects on to their leisure time activities. Family is the basic institution also constituting a gendered field which sheds light on the internalized patriarchal control mechanisms in gendered habitus. Some participants said that they experienced the first form of patriarchal control in their lives through their traditional natal families which was symbolized by an authoritarian male figure like a father or grandfather. The most common experience of patriarchal control over the participants of the *gün* meetings in their childhood was their fathers' reluctance to send them to school. This deprivation made women feel

sensitive about their daughters' education. In other words, there was a difference between them and their parents' attitudes towards girls. On the other hand, although the later generations who moved away from the traditional values dominant in rural regions were more conscious about their daughters' education, they still try to impose their own choices about fields of training which they consider as acceptable for girls. This study also sheds light on participants' experiences of marriage, where the roles of fathers are transferred to husbands. For most of the participants, marriage had a vital role through which they could drift apart from their natal family. Nevertheless, patriarchal control takes a different form in marriage relationship. As argued by Delaney, marriage is where "the mobility of women is ... controlled by men" (1991, p. 238). Most of the participants in this research stated that marriage was the only way to disengage from their village and from pressure. When women marry with a "good" husband, they gain a sense of autonomy; when they marry with a "bad" one, they are again controlled. In this sense, chance is an important factor in these women's lives more than ability and effort (Kandiyoti, 1981, p. 240).

Patriarchal control also reflects itself in women's unending responsibilities of motherhood and wifeness. As indicated by some of the participants, motherhood was explicitly understood as a "sacred" duty and a vital priority; they identified themselves firstly as mothers which has the potential for *symbolic violence*. Among the members of the two *gün* meetings, it was seen that decisions were taken either by the husbands or jointly although the economically independent participants, who were marginal, stated that they were the primary decision-makers at home. In general, men were the primary decision-makers over finance, while women were over the home and children. Although all of the participants claimed that there should be gender equality by criticizing the existing inequality in Turkey, they also accepted gender difference either by attributing positive characteristics to femininity or stressing male power with regard to the biological characteristics of women and men. In both cases, accepting gender difference appeared as a way to legitimize the existing power relations in the society; gender differences were internalized as

natural and given, which is incompatible with the feminist goals of emancipation and freedom of women.

Although *gün* was not analyzed with respect to broader cultural or regional differences in Turkey, the two different *gün* groups in this study provided a ground for comparing women from the Black Sea Region with those who were from the different cities in Anatolia. There were many similarities as well as significant differences between the two groups. The participants in this study were mostly middle-aged housewives in Ankara with urban middle class backgrounds. Their level of education was high-school on average. They were also first or second generation migrants from villages, towns and cities in the Black Sea Region or in Anatolia. Hence, different forms of gender segregation in leisure and the possible strategies developed by the participants varied with respect to the two different *gün* groups analyzed in this study. Further studies about *gün* meetings can be carried out in different regions taking into consideration various other leisure activities among women with different life styles. Moreover, holding *gün* meetings outside the home setting appears to be an increasing trend which is a new form of "leisure industry" and which can be studied thoroughly in future studies. The reproduction of femininity, which was a featured characteristic of former Reception days, can also be studied further in the context of today's "*güns* with savings".

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## APPENDICES

### A. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE DIRECT PARTICIPANTS

1. Kısaca kendini tanıtabilir misin? Yaşın, mesleğin vs.
2. Çocukluğun ne tür bir yerde geçti? Köyde veya kasabada mı, yoksa şehirde mi büyüdün?
3. Küçüklüğünde ya da genç kızlığında kadınlar arasında ne tür ev toplanmaları olurdu; sen bunlara gider miydin? Anlatabilir misin?
4. O zamanki buluşmalarda ne tür hazırlıklar olurdu? Sen neler yapardın?
5. İlk katıldığın günü anlatabilir misin?
6. Eski ev oturmaları ile bugün yaptığınız günler arasında ne gibi farklılıklar görüyorsun?
7. Köy ve kasabadaki komşuluk ilişkilerini karşılaştırır mısın?
8. Şu an yapmış olduğunuz gün ne zaman ve nasıl başladı? Sen ne zaman dâhil oldun?
9. Bu güne katılmaya nasıl karar verdin? Aracı olan kişi ya da kişiler var mıydı? Yakınlık dereceniz neydi?
10. Gün için ne gibi hazırlıklar yapıyorsun? Özenerek giyiniyor musun ya da gün için kıyafet alışverişi yapıyor musun?
11. Bu güne kimler katılabiliyor? Belli bir sınırlama var mı?
12. Katılanların yaşları birbirine yakın mı oluyor? Farklı yaşlardan kişilerin olması konuşulan konuları, güldüğünüz konuları etkiliyor mu?
13. (cevaba göre) sen benzer yaşta olanları mı tercih edersin?
14. Bunun dışında katıldığın başka günler var mı? Varsa nelerdir?
15. Katıldığın bu farklı günleri karşılaştıracak olsan ne dersin? Mesela hangisini daha çok seviyorsun ve neden? Fark var mı bu günler arasında?
16. Günlere gidince ne hissediyorsun, neden seviyorsun?
17. SADECE KARADENİZLİLER: Son zamanlarda günler ev dışında (restoranlarda veya pastanelerde) yapılmaya başlandı. Siz de günü bu şekilde yapmayı düşündünüz mü? Neden evde toplanmayı tercih ettiniz?

SADECE KOMŞULAR: Gün için ev dışında toplanmaya ne zaman karar verdiniz? Neden dışarıda toplanmayı tercih ettiniz? Eskisi ile karşılaştırdığınızda hangisini daha tercih edilebilir buluyorsunuz?

18. Gündeki arkadaşlarıyla aranızda gün dışında başka özel buluşmalar oluyor mu?
19. Bu özel buluşmalar dışında birbirinizle oturma ya da gezme amaçlı buluşuyor musunuz? Ne sıklıkla?
20. Günde genelde ne tür konular konuşuyorsunuz? Bu konuşmalar hep beraber mi oluyor, yoksa aralarında özel konuşanlar oluyor mu?
21. Özellikle konuşmaktan kaçındığınız konular var mı? (cevaba göre: siyaset konuşuyor musunuz?)
22. Aranızda rekabet, kıskançlık veya dedikodudan kaynaklanan gerilimler oluyor mu? Örnek verebilir misin?
23. Bu tarz problemleri nasıl çözüyorsunuz?
24. Genel olarak günlere katılmanın senin yaşamına olumlu veya olumsuz nasıl etkileri var?
25. Günleri kendini gösterebildiğin veya yeteneklerinin takdir edildiği bir alan olarak görüyor musun?
26. Çoğu kişi hemşehri günlerinde hazırladıklarıyla beğenilmek istiyorum, heyecanlanıyorum dedi. Sence neden böyle oluyor?
27. Her ay birinizde bir miktar para veya altın toplanıyor. Bu para boyutu senin için ne kadar önemli?
28. Para toplama olmasa, bu günler yine de yapılır mıydı sence?
29. Bu günlerde borç alınıp verildiğini, yardımlaşma olduğunu duydum kaç kişiden. Güvendikleri insanlar olduğu için mi bu böyle?
30. Gün için vermen gereken parayı nasıl temin ediyorsun?
31. Günde sıran geldiğinde aldığın parayı genelde ne amaçla kullanıyorsun?
32. Bu para üzerinde söz sahibi misin? EVET ise, bu seni iyi hissettiriyor mu?
33. Bir gününü nasıl geçiriyorsun?
34. Evdeki işlerden arta kalan zamanında neler yapıyorsun?
35. Günler dışında katıldığın başka toplantılar, sosyal etkinlikler var mı? Varsa bunlar neler? Anlatabilir misin?

36. Evinizde daha çok kimin sözü geçiyor? Örneğin paranın kontrolü daha çok kimin elinde? Özgürce harcama yapabiliyor musun?
37. Parayla ilgili kararlar dışında evdeki diğer kararları daha çok kim veriyor? Senin daha fazla söz sahibi olduğun alanlar var mı? Varsa neler?
38. Hiç çalışma hayatın oldu mu? Anlatır mısın?
39. Bugün ya da hayatının bir döneminde çalışmak ister miydin? Çalışmıyor olmaktan memnun musun?
40. Eğer fırsatın olsaydı hangi mesleği yapmak isterdin? Eğitim hayatına daha ileri düzeyde devam etmek ister miydin? Bunun engellendiğini düşünüyor musun?
41. Annenle ya da senden bir kuşak önceki kadınlarla aranda fark görüyor musun? Olumlu olumsuz ne gibi farklılıklar var?
42. Çocuklarından bahsedebilir misin? Kaç çocuğun var? Eğitim durumları, yaşları, meslekleri neler?
43. Çocuklarından ne tür beklentilerin var? Kendinle onlar arasında ne gibi farklılıklar görüyorsun?
44. Günler rahat olabildiğin, güvenli ortamlar mı? Eşler çocuklar git gitme diye karışır mı?
45. Gün toplantıları dışında kendini rahat hissettiğin, rahat hareket edebildiğin başka yerler, toplantılar var mı? (Cevaba göre: neden, açıklar mısın?)
46. Peki eşlerin karıştığı, git veya gitme dedikleri başka ortamlar var mı?
47. Kadınların siyasette ve toplumda daha fazla söz sahibi olmaları gerektiğini düşünüyor musun? Kadın erkek eşitliği konusunda ne düşünüyorsun?

## B. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE INDIRECT PARTICIPANTS

1. Kısaca kendini tanıtabilir misin? Yaşın, mesleğin vs.
2. Çocukluğun ne tür bir yerde geçti? Köyde veya kasabada mı, yoksa şehirde mi büyüdün?
3. Küçüklüğünde ya da genç kızlığında kadınlar arasında ne tür ev toplanmaları olurdu; sen bunlara gider miydin? Anlatabilir misin?
4. O zamanki buluşmalarda ne tür hazırlıklar olurdu? Sen neler yapardın?
5. İlk katıldığın günü anlatabilir misin?
6. Eski ev oturmaları ile bugün yaptığımız günler arasında ne gibi farklılıklar görüyorsun?
7. Köy veya kasabalardaki komşuluk ilişkilerini karşılaştırır mısın?
8. Şu an yapmış olduğunuz gün ne zaman ve nasıl başladı? Sen ne zaman dâhil oldun?
9. Bu güne katılmaya nasıl karar verdin? Aracı olan kişi ya da kişiler var mıydı? Yakınlık dereceniz neydi?
10. Güne sadece para koyarak katılmanın ne gibi sebepleri var?
11. Fırsatın olsa günlerde aktif olarak da bulunmak ister miydin, yoksa bu şekilde katılmaktan memnun musun?
12. Hiç para göndermeden doğrudan katıldığın da oldu mu?
13. Bu günün katılımcılarını ne kadar tanıyorsun? Gün dışında bir yakınlığınız var mı ya da görüşüyor musunuz?
14. Bu güne kimler katılabiliyor? Katılım konusunda belli bir sınırlama olup olmadığını biliyor musun?
15. Bunun dışında katıldığın başka günler var mı? Varsa nelerdir? Onlara da sadece para koyarak mı katılıyorsun?
16. Hemşerilerin/komşuların arasında yapılan bu günün dolaylı katılımcısı olmak seni rahatsız ediyor mu?
17. Dolaylı katılıyorsun diye seni eleştiren oluyor mu?
18. Kendinle güne aktif olarak katılanlar arasında ne gibi farklılıklar görüyorsun?
19. (Eğer varsa) Katıldığın bu farklı günleri karşılaştıracak olsan ne dersin? Mesela hangisini daha çok seviyorsun ve neden? Fark var mı bu günler arasında?

- 20. SADECE KARADENİZLİLER:** Son zamanlarda günler ev dışında (restoranlarda veya pastanelerde) yapılmaya başlandı. Bu konuda neler düşünüyorsun? Karadenizliler gününde dışarıda yapma konusunda bir istek olup olmadığını biliyor musun? Sence hangisini tercih ederler? Bu konuda senin görüşün de alındı mı -alınır mı? Eğer katılsaydın evde mi, dışarıda mı toplanmak isterdin?
- SADECE KOMŞULAR:** Bu ev dışında toplanılan bir gün. Gündekilerin neden dışarıda toplanmayı tercih ettikleri konusunda bir fikrin var mı? Bu konuda senin görüşün de alındı mı - alınır mı? Eğer katılsaydın evde mi, dışarıda mı toplanmak isterdin?
- 21.** Gündeki arkadaşlarıyla ya da tanıdıklarınla aranızda gün dışında başka özel buluşmalar oluyor mu? (Hasta ziyareti, başsağlığı, hayırlı olsun vs.). Dışarıdan katıldığın günlerdeki kişilerden bazıları ile ayrıca özel görüştüğün var mı?
- 22.** Dışarıdan katıldığın günlerdeki herkesi tek tek tanıyor musun?
- 23.** Dışarıdan katılan ve çalışan kadınlara nasıl bakıyor diğerleri? Olumlu olumsuz?
- 24.** Bu özel buluşmalar dışında birbirinizle oturma ya da gezme amaçlı buluşuyor musunuz? Ne sıklıkla?
- 25.** Gündekilerin kendi arasında ya da seninle onlardan biri veya birkaçı arasında rekabet, kıskançlık veya dedikodu veya başka sebeplerden kaynaklanan gerilimler oluyor mu? Örnek verebilir misin?
- 26.** Bu tarz problemleri nasıl çözüyorsunuz?
- 27.** Genel olarak günlere parayla da olsa katılmanın senin yaşamına olumlu veya olumsuz nasıl etkileri var?
- 28.** Her ay birinizde bir miktar para toplanıyor. Bu para boyutu senin için ne kadar önemli?
- 29.** Para toplama olmasa, bu günler yine de yapılır mıydı sence?
- 30.** Bu günlerde borç alınıp verildiğini, yardımlaşma olduğunu duydum kaç kişiden. Güvendikleri insanlar olduğu için mi bu böyle?
- 31.** Gün için vermek gereken parayı nasıl temin ediyorsun?
- 32.** Günde sıran geldiğinde aldığın parayı genelde ne amaçla kullanıyorsun?
- 33.** Bu para üzerinde söz sahibi misin? EVET, ise, bu seni iyi hissettiriyor mu?
- 34.** Bir gününü nasıl geçiriyorsun?

35. Evde ne tür işler yapıyorsun? Bu işleri daha çok kim üstleniyor?
36. Günler dışında katıldığın başka toplantılar, sosyal etkinlikler var mı? Varsa bunlar neler? Anlatabilir misin?
37. Evinizde daha çok kimin sözü geçiyor? Örneğin paranın kontrolü daha çok kimin elinde? Özgürce harcama yapabiliyor musun?
38. Parayla ilgili kararlar dışında evdeki diğer kararları daha çok kim veriyor? Senin daha fazla söz sahibi olduğun alanlar var mı? Varsa neler?
39. SADECE ÇALIŞMAYANLAR: Hiç çalışma hayatın oldu mu? Anlatır mısın? Bugün ya da hayatının bir döneminde çalışmak ister miydin? Çalışmıyor olmaktan memnun musun?
- SADECE ÇALIŞANLAR: Çalışma hayatından bahsedebilir misin? Çalışan bir kadın olmanın hayatına ne tür etkileri oluyor? Ev kadını olmak ister miydin?
40. SADECE ÇALIŞMAYANLAR: Eğer fırsatın olsaydı hangi mesleği yapmak isterdin? Eğitim hayatına daha ileri düzeyde devam etmek ister miydin? Bunların engellendiğini düşünüyor musun?
- SADECE ÇALIŞANLAR: Hayalindeki/ istediğin işi yaptığını düşünüyor musun? Fırsatın olsa başka bir mesleği yapmak ya da farklı bir eğitim almak ister miydin? Bunun engellendiğini düşünüyor musun?
41. Annenle ya da senden bir kuşak önceki kadınlarla aranda fark görüyor musun? Ne gibi farklılıklar var?
42. Çocuklarından bahsedebilir misin? Kaç çocuğun var? Eğitim durumları, yaşları, meslekleri neler?
43. Çocuklarından ne tür beklentilerin var? Kendinle onlar arasında ne gibi farklılıklar görüyorsun?
44. Toplumda kendini rahatça ifade etme imkânı bulduğunu ya da bunun engellendiğini düşünüyor musun?
45. Sence günler kadınlar için güvenli ortamlar olduğu için mi önemli? (Evet, ise, para boyutu mu önemli, güvenli olması mı?)
46. Kadınların siyasette ve toplumda daha fazla söz sahibi olmaları gerektiğini düşünüyor musun? Kadın erkek eşitliği konusunda ne düşünüyorsun?

### C. TURKISH SUMMARY

Türkiye'de kadınların günlük yaşam pratiklerinin bir parçası olan boş zaman etkinlikleri Batı'daki örneklerinden bir miktar farklılaşmıştır. Bu bağlamda, Türkiyeli kadınların boş zaman etkinliklerinin özgün bir kadın kültürü yaratma potansiyeline sahip olduğu savunulabilir. Batı'daki boş zaman literatüründe feminist yaklaşım, ataerkil sistemin bir sonucu olarak kadınların boş zamana eşitsiz ulaşımı konusunda önemli katkılar yapmıştır. Toplumsal yaşamın diğer alanlarında olduğu gibi, boş zaman konusunda da, kadın erkek karşısında dezavantajlı bir konuma sahiptir. Boş zaman kullanımında hem niceliksel hem de niteliksel anlamda kadın ve erkek arasında bir 'toplumsal cinsiyet boşluğu/farkı' bulunmaktadır. Zaman ve para kısıtlılığından dolayı finansal anlamda eşlerine bağımlı durumda olan çoğu kadın ataerkil sistemin içinde normatif kabul edilen dışıl boş zaman etkinliklerine yönelmiştir. Kadının özel bir alan olan eve bağımlılığı da kadınların boş zaman etkinlikleri açısından önemli bir konudur. Bu şekilde kadın hem kamusal alandan, yani iki cinsin bir arada bulunduğu dış mekândan uzak tutularak ataerkil kontrolün etkisi altına alınır, hem de bu alanda kendisine biçilen geleneksel cinsiyet rollerini yeniden üretir. Bunlar cinsiyete dayalı iş bölümünün sonucu olan ve kadını birincil olarak evden ve aileden sorumlu tutan 'iyi eş' ve 'iyi anne' rolleridir. Bu anlamda normatif dışıl boş zaman etkinlikleri, ev işleri ve annelik rolleriyle 'bölünmüş' ve 'kirlenmiş' karakterdedir.

Türkiye'de kadınlar boş zaman konusunda bütün bu engellerle yüzleşmelerinin yanı sıra, kadın ve erkek dünyasını birbirinden katı bir biçimde ayıran özgün bir tür ataerkil kontrol biçimini de deneyimlemektedirler. Toplumsal yaşamdaki bu katı ayırım boş zaman alanına da sirayet etmiştir. Türkiye'de kadınlar Batı'daki kadınlardan daha fazla eve bağımlıdırlar. Boş zaman etkinlikleri daha kısıtlı fiziksel alanlara sıkışmıştır. Kamusal alana çıktıkları durumlarda dahi ataerkil toplumun beklentilerini karşılamak için hareketlerini kısıtlama ve/veya kontrol etme ihtiyacı hissederler. Bu anlamda içerisinde görece özgür davranabildikleri kadın grupları Türkiye'de kadınların boş zaman etkinlikleri açısından hayati önem arz eder. Ancak

bu gruplar, kadınların günlük yaşamın diğer alanlarında yüzleştikleri toplumsal cinsiyet ayrımı, eşitsizliği ve baskısı gibi sorunlarını çözememektedir. Başka bir deyişle, cinsiyet temelinde bölünmüş kadın grupları kadınların toplumdaki pasif konumunu yeniden üretme riski içermektedir. Bu kapalı gruplar, kadını daha geniş sosyalleşme alanlarından uzak tutarken, bir yandan da kadınların kişisel deneyimlerini politik sonuçlarla ilişkilendirebilecekleri feminist bir bilinç geliştirebilmesinin de önüne geçer.

Bu tezin ana teorik çerçevesi Türkiye'de kadınların boş zaman etkinliklerinde 'cinsiyetlenmiş alanlar'ın kadınların *gün* buluşmaları üzerinden feminist bir analize dayanır. Türkiye'de *gün*ler cinsiyete-özü bir boş zamanı değerlendirme biçimi olarak kentli, orta-sınıf kadınlar arasında oldukça yaygın bir buluşma biçimidir. Saha çalışmasından elde edilen bulguların analizinde, Feminist teori ve Pierre Bourdieu'nün kavramsal çerçevesinin bir birleşimi olan 'cinsiyetlenmiş alan' kavramı kullanılmıştır. Saha çalışması Ankara'daki iki *gün* grubundan yirmi iki katılımcı ile yürütülmüştür. Bu gruplar, özgün bir hemşehri buluşması olan *Karadenizliler* ve aynı apartmanda oturan katılımcıların oluşturduğu *Komşular gün* gruplarıdır. Her grup on bir katılımcıdan oluşmaktadır. Buluşmaların yapısını, içsel dinamiklerini ve katılımcılar arasındaki etkileşimleri daha detaylı analiz edebilmek amacıyla etnografi ve derinlemesine görüşmeleri içeren niteliksel veri toplama yöntemleri tercih edilmiştir. Çalışma Kasım 2013 ile Mayıs 2014 arasında iki grubun aylık buluşmalarını katılım yoluyla gözlemleyerek ve her bir katılımcıyla yine aynı dönemde yapılan yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yoluyla yürütülmüştür. Soru kâğıdında bulunan kırk yedi soru katılımcıların sosyo-demografik karakteristiklerindeki farklılıklara göre mülakatlar esnasında değiştirilmiştir. Aynı zamanda, *gün*lerin doğrudan ve dolaylı katılımcıları için iki farklı soru formu hazırlanmıştır. Soru formundaki ilk sorular katılımcıların yaş, medeni hal, memleket, eğitim seviyesi ve meslek gibi sosyo-demografik karakteristikleri ile ilgili bilgi toplamak amacıyla dizayn edilmiştir. Sonraki sorular ise katılımcıların geçmişteki boş zaman etkinlikleri; şu an içinde buldukları *gün* grubunun geçmişi, yapısı ve önemli karakteristikleri; katılımcılar arasındaki karşılıklı ilişkiler, katılımcıların aile

içinde ve dışındaki diğer günlük yaşam etkinlikleri; hayattan ve çocuklarından beklentileri ile birlikte toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği konusundaki görüşleri ile ilgili bilgi toplamayı amaçlar.

İki *gün* grubundan katılımcıların çoğu en az bir çocuğu olan, evli ve kentli orta-sınıf kadınlardan oluşmaktadır. Yirmi iki katılımcı içinde sadece bir adet evli olmayan, dört çalışan ve üç emekli katılımcı vardır. İki grup arasında birtakım benzerlikler ve farklılıklar bulunmaktadır. Tüm katılımcıların yaş ortalaması 51'dir; ancak *Karadenizliler* grubunun katılımcıları *Komşular* grubuna göre bir miktar daha yaşlıdır. Ortalama eğitim seviyesi lise mezuniyeti düzeyindedir. *Karadenizliler* grubunda bir katılımcı dışındaki bütün katılımcılar köken olarak Karadeniz Bölgesi'ndendir. *Komşular* grubu ise köken olarak daha çeşitli Anadolu kentlerine mensup katılımcılar içermektedir ve grubun oluşumu katılımcılar arasındaki komşuluk bağlarına dayanır. Neredeyse tüm katılımcılar Anadolu'dan metropole gelmiş birinci veya ikinci kuşak göçmenlerdir. Ancak *Karadenizliler* grubu *Komşular*'a göre daha fazla birinci kuşak göçmen içermektedir. Bunlar genelde yaşamlarının bir döneminde evlilik yoluyla kırsal alanlardan Ankara'ya göç etmiş kadınlardır. *Komşular* grubunda ise aileleri daha önceden göçmüş, kendileri ise Ankara'da doğmuş ikinci kuşak göçmenler *Karadenizliler* grubuna kıyasla daha fazladır.

Sahada topladığım verileri analiz ederken, *günlere* iki farklı biçimde yaklaştım. İlk olarak *günlerin* içsel dinamiklerini bu iki grup özelinde birtakım karşılaştırmalar yaparak inceledim. Karşılaştırmanın temelinde *Karadenizliler* grubunda hemşehrilik ilişkilerinin *gün* bağlamında nereye oturduğuna bakarken, *Komşular* grubunda ise bu tema komşuluktur. Bu tarz bir karşılaştırma yapmamın nedeni gruplar her ne kadar sosyo-demografik karakteristikleri bakımından birbirlerine yakın olsalar da her iki grubun toplanma motivasyonlarının farklı oluşuydu. *Karadenizliler* için *gün* grubundaki arkadaşlarının Karadenizli hemşehrilerinden oluşması önemli bir motivasyon kaynağıydı. Karadenizlilik katılımcı olmanın ön koşulu idi ve bu kural nadiren ve çok özel şartlarla ihlal ediliyordu. Gruptaki katılımcıların ortak geçmişe

ve kültüre dayanan bağlarını koruma konusundaki isteği *Karadenizliler*'in ayırt edici bir özelliği idi. Katılımcıların sıklıkla tekrar ettiği benzerlik, samimiyet, sıcaklık gibi kavramlar birçok katılımcı tarafından grubu diğer boş zaman etkinliklerine kıyasla daha tercih edilebilir kılan özellikler olarak öne çıkıyordu. Ortak kültürün sembolü olarak yeme alışkanlıkları, konuşma biçimleri, davranış kalıpları ve gelenekler gibi faktörlerdeki ortaklaşma katılımcılar tarafından en çok vurgulanan benzerliklerdi. Ancak paradoksal olarak gruptaki kadınlar arasında çat kapı olarak adlandırılan gayri resmi ziyaretlerin çok nadiren gerçekleşiyor olması ve birbirilerine 'Hanım' gibi resmi bir hitap etme biçimiyle seslenmeleri grubu sanıldığı kadar birbirine bağlı bir grup olarak değil, önceki kırsal ve şimdiki kentli yaşamları arasında denge kuran bir grup olduğunu gösteriyordu. Başka bir deyişle kentte daha çok hemşehrileriyle buluşmayı tercih eden ve bunu pek çok açıdan tercih edilebilir bulan katılımcıların, günlük yaşamlarında diğer katılımcılarla aralarına koydukları mesafe bu tarz bir kentsel-kırsal dengesinin göstergesiydi. Öte yandan *Komşular* grubu arasındaki bağ ise geçici komşuluk ilişkisine dayanıyordu. Yani komşuluk, bu grubun buluşmalarında hemşehrilik gibi grubu motive edici bir faktör değildi. *Gün*, katılımcılar tarafından daha çok bir paylaşım alanı, günlük hayatlarında bir tür değişiklik yaratma, evden uzaklaşarak rahatlama ve yeni yerler görme, etraflarında olan bitenden haberdar olma gibi anlamlar ifade ediyordu. Bu bağlamda *Komşular* grubu için *günün* daha çok bir boş zaman etkinliği olarak anlamlandırıldığını gözlemledim.

İki *gün* grubu arasındaki en önemli fark buluşma mekânlarıydı. *Karadenizliler* grubu evlerinde buluşmayı ve misafirlerine evde kendi yaptıkları yiyecekleri sunmayı tercih ederken, *Komşular* grubu buluşma için dışarıdaki farklı restoran ve kafeleri tercih ediyor ve hesap her zaman kişisel olarak ödeniyordu. Bu anlamda boş zaman çalışmalarında önemli yer tutan dış mekâna açılmanın kadınlar açısından bir tür özgürleşme yaratıp yaratmadığı da tezde önemli bir soru olarak öne çıkmaktadır. *Karadenizliler* büyük oranda evde yaptıkları paylaşımı dışarıda yapamayacakları için evi daha tercih edilebilir bulurken, *Komşular* grubunun katılımcıları için ev buluşma için yapılan hazırlıkların yoğunluğu yüzünden oldukça yorucu bulunmaktadır. Bu

anlamda grubun katılımcıları evdeki geleneksel rollerinden ve 'sorumluluklarından' bir süreliğine uzaklaşabilmektedirler. Ancak yine de pek çok katılımcı dışarıda evdeki kadar rahat davranamadıklarını, gülemediklerini ve yabancı erkeklerin arasında rahatça hareket edemediklerini söylemiştir. Bu anlamda kadınlar her ne kadar dış mekâna çıkarak ataerkil sistemin kendilerine dayattığı 'evsel' sorumluluklarından uzaklaşma imkânı bulsalar da, dışarıda yaşadıkları kınanma korkusu dış mekânın kendi başına bir özgürleşme alanı yaratamadığını göstermektedir. Gruplar arasındaki bir diğer fark ise dolaylı katılımcıların *Komşular* grubunda *Karadenizliler*'e oranla daha fazla olmasıdır. *Karadenizliler*'de yalnızca bir dolaylı katılımcı var iken, *Komşular*'da bu sayı üçtür. Dolaylı katılımcılar, *gün* buluşmalarında doğrudan bulunmayan, sadece para gönderen; yani *gün* grubuyla ilişkisi büyük oranda para döngüsüne katılımı sınırlı olan katılımcılardır. *Günün* hem doğrudan, hem de dolaylı katılımcıları para boyutunun kendileri için önemli olmadığını belirtmişlerdir. Öte yandan dolaylı katılımcılar için dolaylı katılımın temel gerekçeleri iş veya çocuk bakımı gibi yaşam koşulları ile gruba kendini özdeşleştirememeye sorunudur. Yani sadece para veren ve alan katılımcılar için para, gruba katılmanın birincil gerekçesi değildir.

Tezde *gün* buluşmalarını bu iki *gün* grubu üzerinden incelerken ikinci boyut toplumsal cinsiyet ilişkilerinin eleştirel bir analizidir. Bu bağlamda, kadınların cinsiyetlenmiş varoluşlarının *gün* grubuna katılımlarını nasıl etkilediğini inceledim. Toplumsal cinsiyet ilişkileri *gün*lerin mekânsal, içeriksel ve ekonomik boyutları bakımından en göze çarpan özelliği idi. Aynı zamanda kadınların en yaygın boş zaman değerlendirme biçimi olarak *günü* tercih etmeleri ile kendi cinsiyet ayrımı ve eşitsizliği ile ilgili kişisel deneyimleri arasında güçlü bir bağ vardı. Bu anlamda cinsiyetlenmiş alan kavramı, kadınların *günlük* yaşam deneyimleri ile ataerkil toplumdaki konumu arasında güçlü bir bağ kurar. Buradaki alan Pierre Bourdieu'nun teorik çerçevesini referans alarak, cinsiyetlenme ise Feminist teori bağlamında ele alınmıştır. Yani tezin temel metodolojisi Feminist Bourdieu'cü bir analize dayanır. Kişisel deneyimleri referans alan *günlük* yaşam pratiklerinin incelenmesi hem Feminist yaklaşım, hem de Bourdieu'nün analizinde önemli bir yer tutar. Buradan

hareketle toplumsal cinsiyet kimliği erken yaşlardan itibaren kişinin habitus'unu şekillendirir. Cinsiyete dayalı rollerin benimsenmesiyle ve içselleştirilmesiyle cinsiyetlenmiş bir karakter kazanan habitus, kişinin toplumsal düzlemde gireceği 'alanları' belirler. Habitus aynı zamanda kişilerin veya grupların sahip oldukları ekonomik, sosyal ve kültürel sermayeyle birlikte şekillenir. Bourdieu'nun teorisinde habitus kavramı alan kavramından da ayrı düşünülemez. Aktörlerin gireceği sosyal, ekonomik ve kültürel alanlar habitus'a göre şekillenirken, alanlar da aktörlerin habitus'larını sağlamlaştırma veya değiştirme gücüne sahiptir. *Gün* buluşması, kadınların küçük yaşlardan itibaren cinsiyet rollerini benimsemesiyle oluşmuş cinsiyetlenmiş habitus'larının yeniden üretildiği bir sosyal alandır. Kadınlar cinsiyetlenmiş habitus'larının sonucu olarak cinsiyetlenmiş bir boş zaman alanı olan *gün* buluşmalarına katılırlar. Aynı zamanda *günde* tekrar tekrar üretilen pek çok geleneksel cinsiyet rolü kadınların habitus'larını yeniden şekillendirir.

Tezde cinsiyetlenmiş alan kavramındaki alanı tanımlarken, İngilizce'de daha çok fiziksel alana denk gelen *space* yerine, mekânsal boyutun dışında sosyal alanı da işaret eden *field* kavramını kullandım. Bunun bir sebebi *space* kelimesinin daha çok kadının fiziksel alandaki konumunu araştıran Feminist coğrafyacılar tarafından kullanılıyor oluşuydu. Benim araştırma konum da *gün*'ün evde veya restoranda yapılması gibi toplumsal cinsiyet ayrımı ve eşitsizliğinin mekânsal boyutuna işaret eden önemli tartışmalar içerse de, *gün* sadece fiziksel bir alan olarak tanımlanmaktan çok uzak bir etkinlik biçimiydi. İkinci olarak Bourdieu, teorisinde *field*'ı ayrı bir kavram olarak kullanılırken *space* için ayrı bir kavramsallaştırma yapmıyordu. Bu nedenlerle *günü* sosyal bir alan olarak tanımlama konusunda daha kullanışlı olduğunu düşündüğüm *field* kelimesini *space* yerine kullanmayı tercih ettim.

*Gün*ler, kadınlar üzerinde sosyalleşme ve rahatlama gibi birtakım olumlu psikolojik etkilere sahip olmasına rağmen, toplumsal cinsiyet ilişkileri bağlamında kadınların ataerkil sistem içerisinde ikincil konuma itilmesinin sonucu olarak katıldığı alanlardır. *Gün*'ün göze en çok çarpan cinsiyetlenmiş karakteristiği, kadın ve erkek dünyası arasındaki sınırın katı bir biçimde çizildiği cinsiyet ayrımıdır. *Gün* katılımı

bir anlamda bu ayrımın kabulüne dayanır. *Gün* bu ayrımı hem mekânsal hem de sosyal anlamda yeniden üretir. Mekânsal bağlamda, özellikle *Karadenizliler gününde* görülen kadının boş zaman etkinliğinde bile, geleneksel cinsiyet rollerini yeniden ürettiği eve bağlı kalması durumunu sembolize eder. Kamusal olan dış alan geleneksel olarak da erkeğe aittir ve kadının bu alana çıkması ataerkil sistem içinde kabul edilebilir değildir. Öte yandan kadınların dışarı çıkabildiği *Komşular günü* gibi buluşmaların da bu geleneksel cinsiyet ayrımını yok edip edemediği tartışmalıdır. Çünkü kadın burada da *kadın kadına* bir grubun içerisinde ve kendini grubun güvenli duvarları arasında dış dünyayla minimum iletişim kurduğu bir alanla sınırlamaktadır. Aynı zamanda daha önce de belirttiğim gibi kadın burada da rahat davranışlarını ataerkil toplum tarafından kınanma korkusu ile baskılar.

*Gün*, mekânsal boyut dışında da geleneksel cinsiyet rollerinin sürekli yeniden üretildiği bir sosyal alandır. Hem saha çalışmasındaki gözlemler, hem de katılımcıların verdiği örnekler bu yargıyı doğrulamaktadır. Kadın eğer misafirleri evde ağırlayacaksa, günler öncesinden temizlik yapmaya başlar. İkram edilecek yemek çeşidi oldukça fazladır ve bunların hepsini hazırlama sorumluluğu kadına aittir. Üstelik misafirler gelip *gün* başladıktan sonra bile sürekli hizmet etmesi, misafirlerini en iyi şekilde ağırlaması gerekmektedir. Bunun yanında, eğer bakması gereken küçük çocuğu veya torunu varsa onun sorumluluğu da kadının üzerindedir. Bu bağlamda özellikle evde yapılan *gün* kadınlar açısından nitelikli bir boş zaman etkinliği olmaktan çok uzaktır. Toplumsal cinsiyet ayrımı ve geleneksel cinsiyet rollerinin yeniden üretimi *günü* cinsiyetleştiren bir sosyal alan haline getiren en önemli sebeplerdendir. Saha çalışmasında gözlemlenen üçüncü ve başka bir boyut ise kadınların *günde* kişisel deneyimleri ile ataerkil sistemden kaynaklı sorunlarını ilişkilendirebilecekleri politik bir bilinç geliştirmelerinin önüne geçen bireysel ve ailesel konuları konuşmalarıdır. Aynı şekilde mülakatlarda da pek çok katılımcı, siyasi konuların gruptaki arkadaşlar arasında çatışma yaratabileceğini belirterek *günde* bu konuları konuşmaktan çekindiklerini belirtmişlerdir. Katılımcılar *gün* dışında kişisel yaşamlarında da siyaseti kendi hayatlarıyla ilgisiz görmektedirler. Bu

anlamda *gün*, Feminizmin "kişisel olan politiktir" düsturuyla çelişmesi sonucunda da cinsiyetlenmiş bir alandır.

Bu çalışma kapsamında *günde* belli bir miktar paranın katılımcılar arasında döngüsel değişimine dayanan ekonomik ilişkinin de cinsiyetlendiği savunulmaktadır. Teoride, *gün* tipi döngüsel değiş-tokuş ilişkilerinin daha çok ekonomik anlamda marjinal gruplar tarafından tercih edildiği belirtilmiştir. Bu aynı zamanda kendine ait gelire sahip olmayan kadınlar için stratejik olarak 'görelî yoksunluk' ile mücadele etme biçimidir. *Günde*ki para kadınların bir miktar birikim sağlamasına katkıda bulunması durumunda kadının ekonomik açıdan bağımsızlık kazanıp kazanmadığı da bu tez çerçevesinde incelenmiştir. İki *gün* grubundan ev kadını olan katılımcıların çoğu finansal anlamda eşlerine bağımlı durumdadırlar. Bu yüzden '*gün* parası' da doğrudan veya dolaylı olarak eşler tarafından karşılanmaktadır. Kadın ya *gün* için eşinden doğrudan para istemekte, ya da *gün* parasını eşinin kendisi için ayırdığı bütçeden dolaylı olarak karşılamaktadır. Her iki durumda da para kaynağı olan eş paranın gerçek sahibi konumunda görülmektedir. Hatta kimi katılımcılar *gün* için eşlerinden aldıkları parayı sıra kendilerine geldiğinde eşlerine geri ödediklerini belirtmişlerdir. Bu anlamda eşler arasında bir alacaklı-borçlu ilişkisi yaratan *gün* parası kimi durumlarda ise kadınlar tarafından bir kişisel birikim aracı olarak görülmektedir. İki katılımcı kocalarından gizli para sakladıkları bir zulaları olduğundan ve bunun bir tür güvence yarattığından bahsetmişlerdir. Çalışmada *gün* parasının dört farklı şekilde kullanıldığı saptanmıştır: kişisel birikim, kişisel harcama, ailesel birikim ve ailesel harcama. Katılımcıların büyük bir kısmı parayı ailesel harcamalar için kullandıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Ailesel harcamadan kasıt evin ve evdeki diğer bireylerin ihtiyaçlarının karşılanmasıdır. Ailesel yatırım çoğunlukla paranın çocuklar için biriktirilmesidir. Bundan sonra en çok vurgulanan kullanım biçimi kişisel birikimdir. Kişisel birikim yapma imkânına sahip olan ve *gün* parasını kişisel harcamaları için kullanan katılımcılar için para bir miktar özgürleşme sağlama potansiyeline sahipken, paranın aile ve ev için saklandığı veya harcandığı durumda paranın kullanımı cinsiyetlenmiştir. Kimi katılımcıların eşleri *gün* parasına doğrudan el koyan ataerkil kontrol biçimlerini uygularken, kadınların para üzerinde kendilerine

söz hakkı vermedikleri durumda paranın cinsiyetlenmiş kullanımı Bourdieu'cü kavramsal çerçeve içerisinde bir tür *sembolik şiddet* biçimidir. Burada *sembolik şiddet* kavramı ile ataerkil kontrolün kadın tarafından içselleştirildiği ve gizli, görünmez, iknaya dayalı bir şiddet biçiminde kendisini gösteren baskı biçimleri kastedilmektedir.

Bu tezde elde edilen bulgular *gündeki* cinsiyetlenmiş ilişkilerin yanı sıra kadınların günlük yaşam deneyimindeki cinsiyetlenmiş ilişkilere de ışık tutar. Bu ilişkiler, kadınların günlük yaşamlarında deneyimlediği ataerkil ilişkilerin boş zamana nasıl yansıdığını analiz etmek amacı ile tartışılmıştır. Aynı zamanda boş zaman sosyolojisinde sıklıkla vurgulanan, boş zaman pratiklerinin kişinin günlük yaşamından ayrı tutulamayacağı argümanı ile tutarlı bir çerçeve çizmek amacıyla bu ilişkilerle ilgili ayrı bir alt bölüm sunulmuştur. Kadınların hayatındaki en etkili ataerkil kurumsal yapı ailedir. Aile cinsiyetlenmiş habitus'ta içselleştirilen ataerkil kontrol mekanizmalarını yansıtan, bütünüyle cinsiyetlenmiş bir alandır. Çoğu katılımcı, yaşamındaki ilk ataerkil kontrol biçimlerini, otoriter bir baba veya dede figürüyle sembolize edilen ailelerinde deneyimlenmiştir. Katılımcılar tarafından küçük yaşlarına dair ilk hatırladıkları ataerkil kontrol biçimi genelde büyüklerinin ailenin erkek üyeleriyle kendileri arasına koydukları statü farkıdır. Bu şekilde özellikle kırsal geçmişe sahip katılımcılar tarafından okula gönderilmemek en çok vurgulanan deneyimdir. Bu yoksunluk bu kadınları kendi kız çocuklarının eğitimi konusunda daha duyarlı hale getirmiştir. Başka bir deyişle katılımcılar, kendi kız çocuklarına, ailelerinin kendilerine karşı olan tutumundan çok daha farklı bir tutum sergilediklerini belirtmişleridir. Onları eğitimin önemi ve okumak konusunda teşvik ettiklerini ve görece daha serbest bıraktıklarını vurgulamışlardır. Ancak yine de kırdaki geleneksel değerlerden bir miktar uzaklaşan kentlileşmiş katılımcılar bu şekilde bir bilinçlenme süreci geçirmiş olmalarına rağmen, ataerkil kontrol biçimleri bu sefer de çocukların eğitim görecekları alanlara müdahale etme biçiminde devam etmektedir. Bu anlamda ailenin genç kadın üyelerine geleneksel olarak kadına uygun olduğu düşünülen tercihler dayatılmaktadır. Daha genç ve eğitilmiş katılımcılar için eğitim konusunda bu tarz müdahale ve kontrol biçimleri oldukça belirgindir.

Bu çalışma ayrıca katılımcıların babaların sahip olduğu ataerkil rollerin kocalara aktarıldığı evlilik deneyimlerine de ışık tutar. Evlilik kimi katılımcılar için aileden, köyden ve oradaki baskıdan uzaklaşma biçimidir. Ancak burada da kadınlar için şans faktörü oldukça önemli bir belirleyendir; zira eş seçimi çoğu durumda kişisel bir karar olmaktan oldukça uzaktır. İyi bir eşle evlenen 'şanslı' bir kadın bu evlilikle birlikte bir miktar otonomi kazanabilirken, kötü eş, kadın üzerindeki ataerkil kontrolün devam ettiği bir şanssızlık göstergesidir. Kadının hareket alanı evlilikle beraber yeni oluşturduğu ailede, eski ailesinde olduğu gibi erkek tarafından kontrol edilmektedir. Ataerkil kontrol, aile içinde kadının eş ve anne olarak 'sorumluluklarının' sürekli devam ettiği kimi zaman içselleştirilmiş bir baskı mekanizmasıdır. Pek çok katılımcı anneliği 'kutsal' bir görev ve hayatlarındaki birinci öncelik olarak görmektedirler. Bu anlamda iyi anne ve iyi eş olmak da bir tür *sembolik şiddet* biçimidir. İki *gün* grubunun katılımcıları evdeki kararların genellikle eşlerle ortak veya eşler tarafından alındığını belirtmişlerdir. Kararların kendileri tarafından alındığını söyleyen sınırlı sayıdaki katılımcı genellikle çalışan ve ayrı bir geliri olan kadınlardır. Evde kararlar ortak alınsa dahi karar alanları farklıdır: erkekler ekonomik konularda üstünlük sağlarken, kadınların karar alabildikleri alanlar genelde ev ve çocuklarla ilgili konulardır.

Cinsiyet eşitliği konusunda neredeyse bütün katılımcılar hemfikirdir. Hemen tüm katılımcılar Türkiye'de kadının geri konumunu ve cinsiyet eşitsizliğini eleştirmektedirler. Ancak mülakatlarda verilen cevaplar doğrultusunda cinsiyet farklılığı konusunda benzer bir eleştirel bakış açısına sahip olmadıkları gözlemlenmiştir. İki *gün* grubunun katılımcıları, ya kadınığa dikkatli, özenli ve titiz olma gibi birtakım olumlu özellikler atfederek cinsiyet farklılığını savunmaktadırlar ya da kadın ve erkek arasındaki biyolojik farklılıklara vurgu yaparak erkeğin fiziksel olarak güçlü olduğunu ve bunun kadın erkek farklılığını gerektirdiğini belirtmektedirler. Her iki durumda da cinsiyet farklılığını doğal bir süreç olarak kabul eden görüş, verili ataerkil güç ilişkilerini meşrulaştıran ve kadının

bağımsızlığını ve özgürlüğünü savunan feminist amaçlarla çelişen bir özelliğe sahiptir.

Bu çalışmada *gün* Türkiye'deki daha geniş bölgesel ve kültürel farklılıklar bağlamında çözümlenmemiş olmasına rağmen, tezde çalışılan iki farklı *gün* grubu Karadenizli kadınların hemşehri buluşması ve Anadolu'nun çeşitli illerinden kadınların komşuluk temelinde biraraya geldiği *Komşular gününü* karşılaştırmanın zeminini oluşturmaktadır. İki grup arasında benzerlikler kadar önemli farklılıklar da olduğu bu çalışmada gözlemlenmiştir. Bu çalışmanın katılımcıları büyük oranda orta yaşa mensup, kentlileşmiş, orta-sınıf ev kadınlarından oluşmaktadır. Eğitim ortalamaları lise düzeyindedir ve Anadolu'nun farklı bölgelerinden Ankara'ya gelmiş birinci veya ikinci kuşak göçmelerdir. Bu yüzden, cinsiyet ayrımının düzeyi ve katılımcılar tarafından geliştirilen olası stratejiler iki *gün* grubunda değişkenlik göstermiştir. *Günle* ilgili ileride yürütülecek çalışmalar, farklı yaşam biçimlerine sahip kadınlar arasındaki çok çeşitli boş zaman etkinliklerini de göz önüne alabilir. Buna ek olarak, gelecekteki *gün* çalışmalarında daha derinlemesine çalışılabilecek olan ev dışında yapılan *günler* bir tür 'boş zaman endüstrisi' biçimini almış durumdadır ve daha şimdiden kadınlar arasında yaygınlaşma eğilimi göstermektedir. Önceki kabul *günlerinin* önemli bir karakteristiği olan 'kadınlığın yeniden üretimi' bu çalışma çerçevesinde özel olarak çözümlenmemiştir. Bu tema, gelecek çalışmalarda bugünün paralı *günleri* bağlamında da incelenebilir ve feminist bir çerçeve içerisinde yeniden yorumlanabilir.

## TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

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