

LOCATING THIRDSPACE IN THE SPECIFITIES OF URBAN: A *CASE STUDY*
ON SATURDAY MOTHERS, IN ISTIKLAL STREET ISTANBUL

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ABSTRACT

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By recontextualizing spatiality, it is arguable that the meaning of ‘space’ as a term varies from the most local to the global geographies. ‘Space’ as a term for this thesis does not only mean the architectural spaces, but also the social spaces. This thesis aims to define and investigate the dynamics of ‘Thirdspace’ as a key term and to locate it in the specifities of urban within the area of resistance and transgression. ‘Thirdspace’ is illustrated as a wider sphere of participation for

political resistance. As a space, it is the new meeting places for diverse oppositional practices, for multiple communities of resistance. It is a space that is both center and the margin, which enables the radical social action everywhere in the world, from local to the global. The theoretical framework for understanding the tools of our critical approach will be provided by a comprehensive literature about 'identity politics,' which can be defined as the theoretical base of the concept of 'Thirdspace.'

After an extensive analysis about the dynamics of 'Thirdspace' for political resistance, it is concerned to locate the concept of 'Thirdspace' within the material world as a case study. The case study aims to exemplify firstly the 'Istiklal Street' as 'Thirdspace', secondly political position of 'Saturday's Mothers' as 'thirdspace of political choice', and lastly to demonstrate the reciprocal relations between them within the framework of the relationship between space and politics.

Keywords: Identity Politics, Thirdspace, Resistance, Istiklal Street, Saturday Mothers (Mothers of Disappeared)

ÖZ

KENTSEL MEKANDA ÜÇÜNCÜ-ALANI TANIMLAMAK: İSTANBUL İSTİKLAL CADDESİ VE CUMARTESİ ANNELERİ ÜZERİNE BİR ARAŞTIRMA

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‘Mekan’ tanımı bir terim olarak yerelden küresel ölçeğe çeşitlilik gösterebilir. Bu çalışmada ‘mekan,’ sadece mimari mekan anlamına değil, aynı zamanda sosyal mekan anlamına gelmektedir. Bu tez, öncelikli olarak, ‘Üçüncü-alanı’ bir terim olarak tanımlayıp dinamiklerini incelemek, devamında ise bu terimin farklı açılımlarını ‘direniş’ söylemi içinde inceleyerek, şehrin öznelliğinde karşılığını

bulmaya çalışır. ‘Üçüncü-alan,’ politik direniş açısından geniş katılımları sağlayan mekan kabul edilmektedir. Bu, bir mekan olarak, çeşitli muhalefet etkinliklerinin, çeşitli direniş topluluklarının bir araya gelebildikleri yeni buluşma yeridir. ‘Üçüncü-alan,’ yerelden küresele radikal toplumsal eylemliliğe olanak tanıyan, eşzamanlı olarak hem merkez hem de çeper olarak tanımlanabilecek olan mekandır. Eleştirel yaklaşımımızın araçlarını anlamaya yönelik teorik çerçeve, ‘kimlik politikaları’ üzerine kapsamlı bir literatür taraması ile temin edilecektir.

Tez, ‘Üçüncü-alan’ kavramının ‘toplumsal direniş’ dinamikleri üzerine kapsamlı bir incelemesini yaptıktan sonra, bu kavramın şehir mekanında karşılığını bulmaya çalışır. Araştırma, ilk olarak, İstiklal Caddesi’ni ‘Üçüncü-alan’ olarak örneklendirmeyi amaçlar. Devamında Cumartesi Anneleri’nin politik konumunu ‘politik tercih açısından üçüncü-alan’ olarak incelemektedir. Son olarak bu iki alt başlık arasındaki ilişki ‘mekan’ ve ‘politika’ ilişkisi bağlamında analiz edilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kimlik Politikaları, Üçüncü-alan, Direniş, İstiklal Caddesi, Cumartesi Anneleri.

To Saturday Mothers

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It is about politics a new cultural politics choosing the margin as a space of radical openness and hybridity about finding meeting places where new and radical happenings can occur about a politics of deterritorialization – and – reconnection a politics in which arguments over **SPACE** its enclosures exclusions internments become subjects for debate and discussion, and more important , for resistance and transgression E. Soja. In *Thirdspace*

Are there women, really? Most assuredly the theory of the eternal feminine still has its adherents who will whisper in your ear: ‘Even in Russia women still are women;’ and other erudite persons – sometimes the very same – say with a sigh: ‘Woman is losing her way, woman is lost.’ One wonders if women still exist, if they will always exist, whether or not it is desirable that they should, what place they occupy in this world, what their place should be. ‘What has become of women?’ was asked recently in an ephemeral magazine.

Simone de Beauvoir. “The Second Sex.” In *Gender, Space, and Architecture*

1.1. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPACE AND POLITICS: HEGEMONY AND COUNTER-HEGEMONY

The relation of politics with space does not only determine the line of politics but also influences both the physical properties and symbolic meanings of space. This relation may be established via examining the hegemonic processes as a first step. The ruling class employs space as a means to extend its own values as 'common values' through hegemonic processes and tries to discipline the urban space in order to achieve hegemony. According to Buci-Glucksmann, 'urbanization' is one of the apparatuses for hegemony. Hegemony establishes its own apparatuses according to the class in which it is formed. According to this, educational institutions, cultural institutions, informational organization, the apparatuses inherited from the previous mode of production, living framework and urbanization are hegemonic apparatuses.¹ For this reason, being able to control the spaces and areas of the city by hegemonic methods is very important for the ruling forces.²

However, just as political tension permits resistance and struggle as well as pressure, the ruling forces partially permit the appearance of the rhetoric, which may be liberating for the dependent classes, in space in order to provide the permanence of the hegemony. Hegemony in part permits the resistance of the dependent masses in the name of reconciliation; thus, the prevailing order is able to provide the necessary conditions of social transformation for the dependent classes. In this context, the dependent classes also have their say in the use and shaping of the urban space. As pointed out by Sargin, under the light of all these, it is possible to mention divergent social and spatial applications dominant to the conservative social order. Such a process may be said to regulate the balances in the society, turning the power

¹ Quoted in Carnoy Martin, "Gramsci ve Devlet," translated from English by Mehmet Yetiş. *Praxis* 3, (2001), p.257.

² The relationship between the hegemonic forces and public space was stated by Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from Prison Notebooks* (New York: International Publishers, 1971) and Antonio Gramsci, *Modern Prens*, (Ankara: Birey ve Toplum Yayıncılık, 1984).

relations upside down.³ Social resistance is able to create a change in the usage of spaces by redefining the space; therefore, the number of spaces for resistance increases. In this context, the urban space must be defined as a space where social actors challenge and conflict with one another. The urban place, where hegemonic and counter-hegemonic forces will struggle for their places, will be influential for the shaping of the society according to the outcome of such struggle.⁴

The importance of analyzing the hegemonic process to understand this dynamic relationship between power and space contains the importance of the ways in which these hegemonic struggles occur. As Soja states hegemonic powers do not simply manipulate naively given differences between individuals and social groups, they actively produce and reproduce difference as a key strategy to create and maintain modes of social and spatial division that are advantageous to its continued empowerment. The strategies for social and spatial divisions can be accepted as one of the means of hegemonic powers. Therefore, counter-hegemonic process needs to resist against this differentiation and division. Right beside this strategy 'identity politics' become a current issue for the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic processes as an apparatus. This relationship between the hegemonic processes and 'identity politics' opens the possibilities of relating space with 'identity politics.'

1.2. SCOPE OF THE STUDY: RENOVATED ANALYSIS OF SPACE AND POLITICS

For that reason, during the process of analyzing the dynamic relationship between space and politics, recognizing an one-to-one correspondence between growing theories of 'identity politics' and the critical theories about space is not a coincidence. It is difficult to ignore the word 'identity' in contemporary social sciences. Over the last decade, it has come to importance on more and more areas of inquiry. A huge literature about 'identity politics' has influence on the

³ Güven Arif Sargın, "Kamu, Kent ve Polytika," in *Başkent Üzerine Mekan-Politik Tezler: Ankara'nın Kamusal Yüzleri*, ed. Güven Arif Sargın (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), p. 25.

⁴ For more detailed information see David Forgacs, "Hegemony, Relations of Force, Historical Bloc," in *The Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916-1935* (New York: New York University Press, 1992), pp. 189-209.

contemporary thought about humanities and social sciences. Theories about space from most local to the global scale are one of these areas of inquiry being acquired a shape by the contemporary debates around ‘identity politics.’ The reciprocal relationship between ‘identity politics’ and space can not only be argued as effectual on the production of the space, but also as effective on the improvement of the debates around ‘identity politics.’ This section aims to provide definitions on ‘identity politics’ and its relation with the critical theories about space to provide a theoretical framework for further study. Within this perspective, this thesis can be accepted as a renewed analysis accorded by contemporary social theory, on the relationship between politics and space.

1.3. DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM AREA: ISTIKLAL STREET AND THE RESISTANCE OF SATURDAY MOTHERS

Our study is a case study on Istiklal Street and Saturday Mothers⁵ within the framework of relationship between space and politics. In the light of the researches about the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic struggles over the space to define and investigate the problem themes and such possibilities of relating Istiklal Street and Saturday Mothers, the correspondence between Istiklal Street as radically open space and space of resistance and Soja’s concept of ‘Thirdspace’⁶

⁵ At this point, we are urged to give a brief information firstly about Istiklal Street and secondly Saturday Mothers in order to introduce our case study. Although, we will mention about them in a detailed way during the third chapter, it will be useful to introduce Istiklal Street and resistance of Saturday Mothers for the introductory part of the thesis. Istiklal Street extends in Beyoğlu between the Tunnel Square and the Taksim Square. It can be accepted as the cultural, economic, and social center of Istanbul as a pedestrian district due to its location. It is a historical, tourism, and commercial axis between Taksim and Eminönü. In addition to its location, there are many other characteristics of the street that provide the centrality for it. During the process in analyzing Istiklal Street, we made a two-stage research including literature and field research. The information about Istiklal Street, our method for analyzing it, and the reasons of our choice to analyze the street, as Thirdspace will be explained in the third chapter in more detailed way. Resistance of Saturday Mothers can be defined as the resistance against the ‘disappearances under custody.’ It is a transgression activity, which started on 27th. May 1995 with 30 relatives of the lost people, and went on until the mothers declared that they would discontinue on 13th. March 1999. This resistance has been continued during 200 weeks by sit-ins of relatives during half of an hour in each demonstration in front of Galatasaray High School. The purpose of this resistance is to find the lost people and made the responsible punished. Similar to an analysis on Istiklal Street a two stage research was made. Sourced in writings were benefited. Then, we have continued research by in-depth interview method. As we have already stated more detailed analyses about these methods will be mentioned in the third chapter.

⁶ It can be stated that Thirdspace is a critical term to provide the sensibility of established spatial or geographical imaginations. It has the potential to relate ‘identity politics’ with space as a conceptual term. ‘Thirdspace of political choice’ in its broadest definition can be identified as the

can be argued as significant. This correspondence is not only relevant for space, but also for politics. Resistance of Saturday Mothers can clearly be identified with Soja's term that is 'thirdspace of political choice.' They had created an alternative geography through transgression; they had come from the margins to the center and had created a new space of resistance at Istiklal. Their political position as described by Soja was the 'thirdspace of political choice,' because of multiple forms of oppression derived from their ethnicity and gender, and multiple and contradictory identities between motherhood and resister. The main aim of this thesis is, then, to come to a clearer understanding of 'Thirdspace' and its relation with resistance by its analysis in the urban specificities. Within this structure, we believe that our study would assist to understand firstly the relation of space with resistance by the help of contemporary social theory, and secondly to illustrate and investigate 'Thirdspace' in the specificities of the urban. We need a theoretical framework to construct a base for the concept of Thirdspace and its relation with resistance. Theories on 'identity politics' provide a comprehensive framework for our analysis about 'Thirdspace' because not only of its relation with the links between space and politics, but also of Soja's direct references to 'identity politics' within the structure of 'Thirdspace.'

This chapter includes the theoretical framework of the thesis, which is basically on the relationship between 'identity politics' and space. It can be argued that, this kind of introduction will illuminate the following chapter, which is about re-reading of Thirdspace. The second chapter aims to unpackage and repackage concepts introduced by Soja during his analysis on Thirdspace to bring to light his theoretical framework. This study can be accepted as a guide for our further study about Istiklal Street and resistance of Saturday Mothers. The third chapter is an attempt to analyze the concept of Thirdspace within the urban specificities by its emphasis on resistance. Istiklal Street was chosen as the field of study for this work. The criteria for analyzing a physical space within Thirdspace perspective have been obtained via searching the sub-titles of Thirdspace. The main objective of the fourth chapter is to analyze the resistance of Saturday Mothers as

reflection of Thirdspace within the area of resistance and transgression. More detailed analyses about the meanings of this term and others that were established by Soja will be stated during the second chapter.

‘thirdspace of political choice’ with the emphasis on their multiple identity, multiple form of oppression, and the relationships between their resistance and space. Throughout this study, relation between ‘identity politics’ and space is illustrated by this resistance and its relation with Istiklal. Lastly, it is aimed to verify our arguments about ‘identity politics’ and space in the conclusion chapter with the help of the outcomes that have been obtained from our case study. This chapter can be accepted as theoretical summary of our arguments and their relation with the case study.

1.4. FORMATION PROCESS OF ‘IDENTITY POLITICS’

In order to establish our frame in a comprehensive and coherent way that depends on the rich literature about ‘identity politics,’ we have to mention firstly about the definition of ‘identity politics.’ The point is that ‘identity politics’ implies more than the relation of identity and politics. It is a political discourse all by itself. To embody this argument, we will secondly examine the stages of this formation process. In the light of the findings about this process, ‘modernist identity politics’ can be ascribed as a structure that has a specific form with its attitude towards differences and marginalities. On the other hand, the new form of identity politics differs from ‘modernist identity politics’ in terms of democracy and its relation with political resistance. To come to a clearer understanding of new identity politics, and its differences from modernist ones, then, we will analyze the changing perception of identity. After ascertaining the new form of identity politics as a specific political discourse, we will examine the relation of this new identity politics with space. Introducing a new conception of space by critical geographers will open a perspective for us to understand the potentials of space for empowering political resistance. As we will mentioned in a detailed way, these spaces are open to the marginalized and the peripheralized. They have the potential to provide the meeting places of all the peripheralized. By this combining characteristic, these spaces have the dynamics to empower resistance against all forms of oppression. These are the spaces of radical openness, of a strategic location for recovery and resistance, a meeting place where new and radical happenings can occur beyond the centered domain of the hegemonic urban order.

Throughout the study, this chapter tries to make clear the changing conception of space with the effects of changing perceptions of identity and ‘identity politics.’

‘Identity politics’ is a term that combines identity and politics. Therefore, as Rosalind Brunt has described before, ‘identity politics’ can be defined as politics whose starting point is about recognizing the degree to which political activity and effort involves a continuous process of making and remaking ourselves – and ourselves in relation to others.’⁷ Although, Brunt’s definition about ‘identity politics’ emphasizes the dynamic relationship between identity formation and politics, a huge literature about identity politics suggests that identity politics is more than the association between identity and politics. It is not a simple reflection of the practices about the effects of politics during the identification process, or the influences on the current themes in political arena via different identities. With its contemporary meaning, ‘identity politics’ also contains a meaning about a specific political standpoint as a discourse. As we will mention in a detailed way later on, identity politics extends its frames behind the limitations of relationship between identity and politics with its assertions about resistance for emancipation. To define and investigate the way in which identity and politics became a political discourse, it is necessary to analyze the process of this formation diachronically within the framework of changing perceptions of identity.

Enlightenment can be an appropriate starting point of our survey about the formation of ‘identity politics,’ because of the traditional assertion of essentialists within contemporary social theory about identity, difference and hierarchical social orders and effects of these assertions to current ‘identity politics.’ As Carter, Donald and Squires have mentioned the Enlightenment changed the thoughts about the superiority of the landowners with the claim that all people were equal in their capacity to reason, and so allowed to equal political rights. This improvement, which can be accepted as an advance to share the political rights among the crowd of the people, instead of privileged minorities, however, had some negative effects for the acceptance of the differences in the public

spheres. Carter, Donald and Squires highlight the fact that the state expressed rights only in universal terms, applying equally to all. Differences were accepted as irrelevant to one's political status, role and rights namely as irrelevant for public spheres.⁸ To extend their argument here we might say that this model has been a mechanism for subordination, because of its roots depend on the suppression of difference. Moreover, as Bondi puts it correctly, those, who have the authority to define knowledge, have identified these differences that were suppressed. Thus, qualifications of equality have become impossible to differentiate from the authors of this viewpoint who can be identified as white, Western, bourgeois men. As a result of this process, establishment of this stereotype as white, Western, bourgeois men and the spurious claim for universality of this stereotype, in actual fact, creates excluded, marginalized groups who cannot fit into this pattern.⁹

At the next step, this assumptions and certainties of liberal humanist approach was challenged by Marx by his direct rejection of this stereotype. As Bondi illustrates he refused the "notion of an irreducible, stable, unalienated essence at the core of every human individual."¹⁰ In challenging this liberal-humanist conception of the human subject, as Bondi argues, Marx opened up possibilities for resisting "normative claims (rather than the egalitarian ambitions) of liberal humanism." He insisted that identity is not innate or pre-given, instead, a sense of ourselves as individuals namely our identities are constructed by social processes. In so doing, he implied that there are no necessarily universal or unchanging attributes of human identity.¹¹ It may be worth emphasizing that Marx provided the theoretical bases for the construction of counter-hegemonic human subject who can challenge the hegemonic powers and organize the subordinated against the dominant groups. Bondi puts it as follows,

⁷ Quoted in Liz Bondi, "Locating Identity Politics," in *Place and the Politics of Identity*, eds. Michael Keith and Steve Pile (USA and Canada: Routledge, 1993), p. 84.

⁸ Erica Carter, James Donald, and Judith Squires, "Introduction," in *Space and Place: Theories of Identity and Location*, eds. Erica Carter, James Donald, and Judith Squires (London: Lawrance & Wishart, 1992), p. ix.

⁹ Liz Bondi, 1993, *Ibid.*, p. 86.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

“Subordinated groups can make use of these insights to insist on the fraudulence of the apparent self mastery and authority of the bourgeoisie individual, to resist their positioning as ‘others’ or ‘minorities’, and to construct alternative identities as part of a politics of resistance or opposition.”¹²

It can be argued that the assertion of oppositional identity within bourgeois ideology was central for this struggle. Therefore, identity becomes a challenge to rather than compensation for, relations of exploitation with this new perception derived from the arguments of Marx, in view of the fact that differences between people did not appear as innate and unbreachable. Finally it can be stated that, ‘identity politics’ have militated against the development of broadly based ideology of Enlightenment and come to a state of a discourse for oppositional political movements.

During our diachronic analysis about the formation of identity politics, we can realize with the help of Bondi’s arguments that Marx’s conception of subjectivity can be located between

“an anti-humanist notion of consciousness as produced by social forces beyond the control of the individual, and a more humanistic notion of the possibility of achieving (at least temporarily) a stable, coherent, common, authentic identity.”¹³

By analyzing Marx’s view, one can understand his fixed, well-defined, class identity, which is formed against the hegemony of bourgeoisie. Although, his emancipatory attempts against the homogenizing effects of Enlightenment within the public area and the relations of exploitation, it is clear that his conceptualization of identity also causes the homogenization with the emphasis on unchangeable class identity. It can be argued that his model has turned out to be as much a theory for homogenization as a counter to it, because its bases rest upon the priority of a stable, and unchangeable class identity.

¹² Ibid., p. 86.

¹³ Ibid., p. 86.

1.5. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ‘MODERNIST IDENTITY POLITICS’ AND THE ‘NEW FORM OF IDENTITY POLITICS’

Referring to what we have introduced up to now, we have strived to identify one form of ‘identity politics’ by the emphasis on its homogenizing effect. Although, it involves the contradictory political positions such as humanist notion of Enlightenment and anti-humanist, revolutionary character of Marxism, it is possible from a specific point of view to state this ‘identity politics’ as a discourse. This is not an ignorance of the exact opposition in some debates between these two positions. It would be utterly misleading to ignore their different stance within the counter-hegemonic discourse. However, one can gather them in a specific perspective as a ‘modernist identity politics’ through analyzing their universalistic approach, rationalist discourse and beliefs to stable identities.

Subsequent to a period in which the conceptualization of identity has changed¹⁴, we can argue for our diachronic analysis that the formation of ‘identity politics’ has also transformed in an innovative way. Soja and Hooper, as for many critics before them, have suggested a new identity politics¹⁵ as a further step of

¹⁴ Freud’s discovery of unconscious has caused a radical change in the perception of identity.’ His analysis on the unconscious proved the inherently split, and so non-identical nature of the self. As a continuation, “De Saussure’s work on linguistics in which the subject is positioned within a pre-existing set of language rules rather than being the ‘author’ of statements” and “Foucault’s analysis of individuals as the product of ‘disciplinary power’, which produces docile bodies” have caused the radical changes at perception of identity towards a heterogeneous and ambivalent way. See for more detailed information Linda Mc Dowell, “Spatializing Feminism,” in *Body Space: Destabilizing Geographies of Gender and Sexuality*, ed. Nancy Duncan (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 33. Saussurean linguistics and his structuralist view posited the self “as the product rather than the author of symbolic codes and systems.” In addition, surveillance strategies, power of many collective institutions, and process of subjectification of the individuals operated by the cultural apparatuses and technologies, as Foucault analyzed before, produces an increasingly individualized subject instead of identical groups based on the class, race, or gender. After all these changes in the perception of identity, the impact of feminist criticism, then structuralist and more recently with poststructuralist critiques of an essentialist subjectivity, for Hetherington, as for Mc Dowell before him, has become the last step within the area of theory about identity by opening the new visions by “fractured, hyphenated and multiple identities.” Kevin Hetherington, *Expressions of Identities: Space, Performance and Politics*, (London: Sage Publications, 1998), p.21.

¹⁵ It is not intended to describe the ‘modernist identity politics’ as an old version with this conceptualization. Instead, it is avoided to put the modernist identity politics as a completed process and a dead end. This is also the reason of avoidance to use the ‘postmodernist identity politics’ as Soja and Hooper puts it for the fact that one can argue that ‘modernist identity politics’ evolves through this new form of identity politics. See Edward Soja and Barbara Hooper, “The Spaces that Difference Makes: Some Notes on the Geographical Margins of the New Cultural Politics,” in *Place and the Politics of Identity*, eds. Michael Keith and Steve Pile (USA and

‘modernist identity politics.’ Ascertaining the differences between ‘modernist identity politics’ and ‘new form of identity politics’ can be stated as constructive and illuminating for our further survey about this new ‘identity politics’ and space. We can analyze these differences passing through two headings. The first one is more related with the question of democracy, and the second one is about the effects of ‘identity politics’ to the resistance for emancipation.

The discussions on ‘modernist identity politics’ have put the status of democracy in question.¹⁶ As Tajbakhsh mentions democratic requirement derived from the different perception of identity has necessitated the current experiences of heterogeneity more than previous historical periods. Although, differences existed during these periods, the problem of appearing into the public sphere and of entering into a mutual conversation have become a current issue by the criticism of ‘modernist identity politics.’¹⁷ It can be argued that differences are excluded from the public sphere and forced into shadows of the private one by ‘modernist identity politics.’ This is not to say that, as Carter, Donald and Squires put it correctly, differences have been denied by this position. However, they have been located in a private sphere by a deception about the norms and procedures of the public realm as neutral and equally accessible to all.¹⁸ According to Tajbakhsh, new form of citizens, who are the tolerant of a high degree of ambiguity and difference through possessing a reflective, mature, and contingent sense of the self, have changed the perception of public sphere.¹⁹ This hybrid sense of the self, imposed by the new identity politics, is able to envision, formulate, and support

Canada: Routledge, 1993), p. 188. Because the discussion about the relationship between modernism and postmodernism exceeds the limits of this study, we are forced to leave this issue as undiscovered and to choose a term without latent meanings. ‘New form of identity politics’ is, therefore, chosen as a term to define and investigate the form of ‘identity politics’ in contemporary literature.

¹⁶ Although, it is not intended to analyze the term of democracy in a detailed way, here it can be necessary to mention the implications of the term for our thesis. The question of democracy implies ‘Western democracy’ that means the equality and neutrality for all citizens within the public sphere.

¹⁷ Kian Tajbakhsh, “Introduction,” in *The Promise of the City: Space, Identity, and Politics in Contemporary Social Thought* (Berkeley, London, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), p.6.

¹⁸ Erica Carter, James Donald, and Judith Squires, “Introduction,” in *Space and Place: Theories of Identity and Location*, eds. Erica Carter, James Donald, and Judith Squires (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1992), p. ix.

the existence of the others within the public sphere. Discussing the hybridity and variety of identities within the public sphere by the new identity politics has opened up the new visions about the public sphere. As we will analyze in a detailed way along the debates around the position of this new identity politics within the geographical context, the emerging of subordinated identities and meeting of these identities within the public area has improved the new perception of public sphere.

As we move on the issue of relationship between ‘identity politics’ and resistance as a second difference between ‘modernist identity politics’ and new identity politics, we firstly have to put the connotation of resistance clearly within identity politics. The resistance of counter-hegemony against the hegemonic powers on the way to prevent oppression, subordination, and exploitation can be defined as the basic struggle in which the resistance against the force of homogenization and normalization has occurred. Force of homogenization and normalization as one of the means of hegemonic powers prevents the empowerment of counter-hegemonic struggles. This effect of homogenization and normalization on the resistance against the all-hegemonic means has put on the agenda by contemporary ‘identity politics.’ According to it, resistance against the homogenizing effects of ‘modernist identity politics’ is the struggle for empowering the resistance against all forms of oppression, subordination, and exploitation.

Soja and Hooper criticize ‘modernist identity politics’ within the framework of its relation with political resistance against oppression, while they are defending the necessity of a new ‘identity politics.’²⁰ They state the resistance against the homogenization and normalization as a critical part of resistance against all forms of oppression. Following the study of Soja and Hooper on ‘modernist identity politics,’ one can assist to understand the position of ‘identity politics’ within the area of resistance, because the main emphasis of their research on it is rooted on the advantages and disadvantages of ‘modernist identity politics’ for resistance against oppression. They criticize ‘modernist identity politics’ to state its

¹⁹ Kian Tajbakhsh, “Difference, Democracy and the City,” in *The Promise of the City: Space, Identity, and Politics in Contemporary Social Thought* (Berkeley, London, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), p. 176.

differences from new identity politics. According to them, ‘modernist identity politics’ prevents the political alliances by supporting the divisiveness and excluding differences. They summarize the reasons of this disadvantage of ‘modernist identity politics’ for the struggle against the hegemonic powers into two sub-titles. The first reasons of this exclusionary characteristic of ‘modernist identity politics’ can be stated as its binary logic, and the second as its totalizing and essentialist view.

The first criticism of modernist identity politics is related with the idea of binary opposition. Modernist identity politics, as it defined by Soja and Hooper, defines particular, radical subjectivity within its own oppressive binary structure, as universally significant.²¹ These divisions between the binaries not only pretend not to see the marginalities, but also cause unnecessary competition between the differences. Flexible and co-operative alliance and empathy between these differences are muted by the primacy of one binary is known as the challenging of other. Soja and Hooper mention as follows that even when one form seems open to alliance with others, “it is usually open only on the former’s terms and under its primary strategic guidance.” The result of this logic on binary opposition and division into two has been the production of “parallel, analogous, but rarely intersecting channels of radical political consciousness, each designed and primed to change their own discrete binary world of difference.”²²

The second criticism of modernist identity politics is focused on the totalizing and essentialist characteristics of it. For Soja and Hooper, in both theory and practice, considerable degree of closure and exclusiveness that is derived from this totalizing and essentialist characteristics is embedded within the strategies and tactics of modernist identity politics.²³ “While there have been fruitful dialogues between radical movements, the deeply engrained essentialism of modernist identity politics have tended to create a competitive exclusivity that resists, even rejects, seeing a ‘real’ world populated by multiple subjects with many (often changeable) identities locating in varying (and also changeable) subject

²⁰ Edward Soja and Barbara Hooper, 1993, *Ibid.*, p. 189.

²¹ Edward Soja and Barbara Hooper; *Ibid.*, p. 186.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 186.

positions”. Hence, modernist identity politics, in its fear and rejection of the differences and marginalities, often intensifies “political divisiveness rather than working toward a multiple, pluralized, and yet still radical conceptualization of agency and identity.”²⁴

Under these ordered conditions, ‘modernist identity politics’ can be defined as exclusionary and divisional. This is the problem especially relevant for the social movements that realize universalistic encompassing of other radical subjectivities and differences. Although these social movements have a sensitivity and so the potential for political progressive unions, their assumptions of the primacy and privileging of one or another set of agents over the others in the process of radical, social transformation weakens their potential to be an extensive union for this radical and social transformation. As Soja and Hooper illustrate in these cases, these tendencies of ‘modernist identity politics’ abrogate any cross-cutting alliances of political significance by attributing ‘false consciousness’ or subordinate identity to all radical subjectivities other than that emanating from the ‘primary’ bipolarity.”²⁵

On the other hand, the potentials of new identity politics such as the disordering and the reconstitution of difference, and different conceptualization of the self are the basis for a new cultural politics, which have the potential to create strategic alliances among all who are peripheralized, marginalized and subordinated by the social construction of difference. Many critics celebrate ‘identity politics’ as the arena of cultural and political resistance within society. Therefore, the new communities of resistance composed of marginal and multiple identities can be assumed as a part of new identity politics. For new identity politics, these marginal and multiple identities²⁶ associated with race, class, gender, sexual orientation, disability and so on do not generally related with the questions of choice. These are the discursive locations that are associated with resistance. It can be argued that feminism, lesbian and gay activism, black political and cultural

²³ Ibid., p. 186.

²⁴ Edward Soja and Barbara Hooper, 1991, Ibid., p. 187.

²⁵ Edward Soja and Barbara Hooper, 1993, Ibid., p. 186.

²⁶ The meaning and implications of these terms that are marginality and multiple identities will be analyzed at the second chapter in a detailed way.

movements, movements of youth and disabled have all arisen in some way from reconstruction of the boundaries of identity as a political action. Indication of their marginalisation has become a source of resistance with the emphasis of new identity politics. As Hetherington states the main issues behind the interest in identity and in identity politics is the relationship between this “marginalisation and a politics of resistance, and affirmative, empowering choices of identity and a politics of difference.”²⁷ This politics of difference is empowered by the strategic alliances of all peripheralized that are oppressed by many dimensions of subordination including class, gender and race. Soja and Hooper state this polyvocal ‘identity politics’ as a progressive attempt towards a social transformation project.²⁸ They have argued that this new cultural politics maintains a commitment to radical social change with the deconstruction²⁹ of ‘modernist identity politics’ as a powerful critical foundation. The intent behind this new form of resistance is to reconstitute “a new cultural politics of difference and identity that moves toward empowering a multiplicity of resistances rather than searches for that one ‘great refusal’, the singular transformation to precede and guide all others.”³⁰

To investigate this ‘new cultural politics of difference and identity’ that can be named as new identity politics, we are urged to involve with the conception of identity within this new discourse. An open sense of identities to resist the forces of homogenization and segregation has become a current issue for ‘identity

²⁷ Kevin Hetherington, *Expressions of Identities: Space, Performance and Politics*, (London: Sage Publications, 1998), p.21.

²⁸ Here, one can firstly realize one-sided analysis about ‘new identity politics.’ There are many criticisms about the theories of ‘new identity politics’ about diversity and the political alliances between the all peripheralized. First of all, the way that different political groups constitute a political union is not clearly stated by ‘new identity politics.’ With respect to new identity politics, the only way that has been mentioned for these strategic alliances is provided by democratic tolerance between the different subjectivities. But, how this democratic tolerance can occur is not clear. Is there a new kind of oppressed within these political group? Or what can be done for the fight between the different interest group? We could not answer these questions in this chapter. All we have done about the discussion around ‘identity politics’ is just explaining the theoretical background of Soja’s book. It is not the scope of our study to discuss the ‘new identity politics’ with its advantages and disadvantages for resistance. Here we are urged to frame our thesis again. We have tries to illustrate Soja’s concept of Thirdspace as a material space. Therefore, our thesis can only be accepted as the study derived from Soja’s conceptual framework.

²⁹ Soja and Hooper state that deconstruction does not mean to destroy. It means “the ebbing tide of ‘modernist radical politics,’ to renew its strengths and avoid its weakness.” Edwards Soja and Barbara Hooper, 1991, *Ibid.*, p. 187.

³⁰ Edward Soja and Barbara Hooper, 1991, *Ibid.*, p. 187.

politics.’ Identities can be defined as more incomplete, fluid, multiple, overdetermined, or hybrid. They are never reducible to stable entities that are closed to influences of others. Keith and Pile importantly put the identity as an incomplete process rather than an outcome.³¹ This is why identity is defined as incomplete, fluid, multiple, overdetermined, or hybrid. Keith and Pile identify that any articulation of identity is only momentarily complete. “It is always in part constituted by the forces that oppose it (the constitutive outside), always contingent upon surviving the contradictions that it subsumes (forces of dislocation).”³² In this contradictory characteristic of identity formation, subjects are articulated as incomplete, whether they have some fixed characteristics to a certain degree. As we have mentioned before, the most crucial characteristics of this identity formation for our thesis, is its support to the existence of the others within the public sphere through their cognition of their self, which is an incomplete and changeable process. Incomplete, fluid, multiple, overdetermined, and hybrid sense of the self is able to confront and co-operate with the differences in the public sphere. This pattern of ‘identity’ and ‘identity politics’ formed with the help of these changes in the perception of identity, can be defined not only as a term which implies the relationship between identity and politics, but also as a specific formation that aims to empower resistance against the hegemonic power by preventing the exclusions and diversities within it.

1.6. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ‘NEW IDENTITY POLITICS’ AND SPACE

Later than ascertaining new identity politics as a specific discourse, we can further our survey in order to investigate the correlation between new identity politics and the conception of space. It can be argued that new identity politics had opened the new vision within the frame of politics and space. Increase of locational terminology in contemporary theoretical debates is highly related with this new vision. Thus, as Mc Dowell argues

³¹ Michael Keith and Steve Pile, “The Politics of Place, The Place of Politics,” in *Place and the Politics of Identity*, eds. Michael Keith and Steve Pile (USA and Canada: Routledge, 1993), p. 28.

³² Michael Keith and Steve Pile, 1993, *Ibid.*, p.27.

“for theorist interested in questions about individual and social identity, whether working in the humanities or the social sciences, geographic questions, questions of location and dislocation, of position, of spatiality, and connections are central.”³³

A whole range of spatial metaphors is being used to identify these new perspectives on space, such as liminal space, hybrid space, thirdspace, ambivalent space, not-space, tougher public space, impossible space, and concept of spacing. Many critical geographers are curious about the discovery of these spaces. They discuss the potentials of these spaces for political struggles not only for reserving a place in the urban space, but also for empowering resistance. Emerging of a new conception of space that is different from the traditional one is the central point of this discussion about the space and new identity politics.

Zukin introduces the notion of ‘liminal spaces,’ which slip between global markets and local place, between public and private value, between work and home, between commerce and culture. To her, these ambiguous and ambivalent spaces are effective for construction of identity and politics.³⁴ Bhabha (1994) in his political discourse too stresses the significance of geographic movement for identity that can be described as new, transitional, and hybrid identities emerging from mass movements and the intermixing of different peoples. Bhabha suggests, as Mc Dowell states in her article, “we are seeing the emergence of ‘a third space’ in the contemporary world.”³⁵ Tajbakhsh suggests the notion of ‘spacing’ to express not static heterogeneity but the fluidity of boundaries and the instability of objects. He used this term to reflect, “the active, unfinished, and layered quality of the spaces we inhabit (and that inhabit us), the spaces within which we create meaning.” He has especially emphasized the notion of border as important places of meaning and social life.³⁶ Hetherington also states the liminal as the term to identify these spaces with the emphasis on ambivalent characteristic of these spaces. By stressing ‘identity politics’ the issue he has mentioned is the alternate ordering of identity. He extends the arguments about the ambivalence and

³³ Linda Mc Dowell, “Spatializing Feminism,” in *Body Space: Destabilizing Geographies of Gender and Sexuality*, ed. Nancy Duncan (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 30.

³⁴ Quoted in Michael Keith and Steve Pile, 1993, *Ibid.*, p. 7.

³⁵ Quoted in Linda Mc Dowell, 1999, *Ibid.*, p. 40.

³⁶ Kian Tajbakhsh, 2001, *Ibid.*, p. 164.

heterogeneity of these spaces through considering the creation of marginalities as transgressive situations and lucid practices of resistance.³⁷

Within the framework of our research, it is necessary to construct the relations of these spaces with counter-hegemonic struggles. We can summarize the relation of these spaces with counter-hegemonic struggles under two sub-titles that we have mentioned before. The first relation is relevant with the question of democracy through the constitution of subjectivities within the specificities of the space. The second is the political potentials of space as the meeting place of these different political agents.

As the first step, we can argue by following new identity politics that, these spaces which have been defined as the meeting place of different social actors can be accepted as a source of democracy and freedom in which constitution of any type of identity is possible. Hetherington argues that performative repertoires in particular spaces supply the new counter-cultural lifestyles. Such marginal spaces provide not only the production of marginal identities but also acts of protests and resistance. Performative repertoires in particular spaces supply the transgressive practices and resistance through constitution of the new self-identity.³⁸ Those spaces such as streets which include “women’s centers, alternative book shops, meeting places for environmentalist groups, whether they may be mainstream groups or more radical ones, animal rights networks, a few remnants of the once thriving peace movement, gay and lesbian pubs and clubs, and a host of tiny anarchist groups” support the constitution of alternative lifestyle and their political resistances.³⁹ Variety of public spaces and openness of these spaces provide the area for marginalized and peripheralized who were suppressed by mainstream stereotypes.

As the next step, it can be argued that the political potentials of these spaces are behind the question of democracy. The political significance of such spaces is not only related with being involved in public spheres. Behind this struggle over

³⁷ Kevin Hetherington, 1998, *Ibid.*, p. 103.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

space, the emphasis here is on the potential of these spaces to empower political alliances. As Keith and Pile stress correctly, what is of particular relevance here is the “hybridity through which political codes of difference are crossed and transgressed through the process of syncretism rooted in simultaneously imagery and real spatialities.”⁴⁰ These spaces are there for a critical exchange. They have the potential to contain, as Soja and Hooper assert that “the multiple communities of resistance, polyvocal political communities capable of linking together many radical subjectivities and creating new ‘meeting places’ and ‘spaces’ for diverse oppositional practices.”⁴¹ To extend their argument, here we might say that these spaces can be identified as the heterogeneous public spaces that exceed the restrictions of rationalist concepts imposed on space. These spaces in which the multiple identities and polyvocal communities are constructed, are the site of contestation between these multiple and variable identities. It is a confusing and uncertain space in which the ‘identity politics’ have developed. hooks stated these spaces as “the central future location of resistance struggle, a meeting place where new and radical happenings can occur.”⁴²

To investigate these possibilities for struggles against all forms of oppression, these spaces need to be analyzed with their characteristics as Soja has mentioned in his book, *Thirdspace*. Thirdspace can be described as a flexible term that attempts to capture what is a constantly “shifting and changing milieu of ideas, events, appearances, and meanings.”⁴³ Among many geographers, sociologists, and political scientists, who use this term to interrogate the relationship between the spatiality, identity, and the politics, Soja, can be supposed as the former of the term by his comprehensive analysis about the meanings of the term. The basic ground of Thirdspace can be basically described as a strategic location for seeking political community among all those oppressively peripheralized by their race, class, gender, erotic preference, age, nation, region, and colonial status. This definition of Thirdspace is basically related with the political identity of communities that emerges through the differences. He had drawn on ‘identity

⁴⁰ Michael Keith and Steve Pile, 1993, *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁴¹ Edward Soja and Barbara Hooper, 1993, *Ibid.*, p. 184.

⁴² Quoted in Edward Soja, *Thirdspace* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), p. 83.

⁴³ Edward Soja, 1996, *Ibid.*, p. 2.

politics' to open new ways of reading the city in terms of its dynamics to political struggles in his study. Therefore, rereading of the concepts within Thirdspace can provide to improve our arguments in a systematic way firstly about the space and politics, secondly about Istiklal Street and Saturday Mothers.

CHAPTER 2

RE-READING *THIRDSPACE*

In encouraging you to think differently, I am not suggesting that you discard your old and familiar ways of thinking about space and spatiality, but rather that you question them in new ways that are aimed at opening up and expanding the scope and critical sensibility of your already established spatial or geographical imagination.

E. Soja. In *Thirdspace*

If you are a postmodernist, it is proclaimed, then you cannot be a Marxist or be committed to a continuation of the progressive projects of the European Enlightenment. And vice versa: to be committed to radical social change one must resist the enchantments of postmodern thinking.

E. Soja. In *Thirdspace*

2.1. CHARACTERIZATION OF THIRDSPACE

The precedent purpose of this chapter is to provide a reading of Edward Soja's book named *Thirdspace*, understanding the theoretical infrastructure underlying the concept and introducing the terms, which are formed as a product of this theoretical infrastructure. It may be thought that the re-evaluation of the book within the limits of this thesis limits the potentials of the concept, Thirdspace. However, when it is understood that the priority contribution of this thesis is not to study the Thirdspace concept or the point of view in all aspects, the study of the book itself within our field of interest will be conceivable. As we have mentioned before, it is claimed that the theoretical basis of the Thirdspace perspective is the relationship between the 'identity politics' and space. For this reason, this part mostly covers the emphasis of Soja in this respect. For matters requiring serious discussions, such as the discussion of modernism vs. post-modernism or the relation between space and its representation, Soja's conclusions are mentioned rather than the process. When examined within the context of political struggle, only the introduction to these subtitles have been found sufficient; Soja himself states that the purpose of this point of view is to make more comprehensive political synergy easier.⁴⁴

This chapter, which starts with emphasizing that the concept of Thirdspace is a critical term, continues with a more detailed analysis of the concept. The concept is studied under three main definitions defined by Soja and in progress; it is mentioned how this point of view influences the conceptualization of the space. The contribution of Soja's point of view to our study is that it enables us to see space as space of the resistance. Having set off with the writings of Lefebvre in order to reach this argument, Soja especially emphasized the aspect of space in terms of being inclusive for diversities. Mentioning the necessity for a struggle against homogenization, Soja shows Thirdspace as space for this struggle. Throughout the chapter, how Soja reached this argument was sought and the concepts, which arose throughout this process, were made clear.

⁴⁴ Edward Soja, *Thirdspace* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), p.5.

To state the outline of this chapter, departure point of our analysis about Soja's book *Thirdspace* can be accepted as his definition about three meanings of it. After an analysis on these definitions, we are urged to analyze Thirdspace as a combinatory perspective between two opposites of history-geography, modernism-postmodernism, and Firstspace perspective - Secondspace perspective. As we move on the subject of political resistance, it is stated that Thirdspace perspective has the potential to generate counter-spaces. With the help of Lefebvre's arguments,⁴⁵ one can argue that Thirdspace has the potential to support political resistances with its radically open perspectives about differences and others. Right beside this point, 'identity politics' becomes our current issue again.

Edward Soja defines Thirdspace as a critical term that provides the sensibility of established spatial or geographical imaginations. In its broadest sense, he states Thirdspace as "a constantly tentative and flexible term that attempts to capture what is constantly shifting and changing milieu of ideas, events, appearances, and meanings."⁴⁶ However, even in its broadest sense, this description cannot be a comprehensive description as an introductory part of Soja's study. It is necessary to state that this new spatial metaphor basically emphasizes the political actions against all forms of discrimination. His effort within the framework of political action against discrimination can be defined as an effort to find out a way in

⁴⁵ The intellectual journey of Henri Lefebvre, a French philosopher, can be accepted as the starting point of Edward Soja to establish the Thirdspace perspective. The concept of 'triple dialectic' – *une dialectique de triplicite* – is the base of Soja's transdisciplinary perspective. Soja has searched Lefebvre's writings and argues that his triple consciousness that has been derived from "his Marxist explorations of the spatiality and sociology of every day life," relates the historicity, sociality, and spatiality in a comprehensive manner (Soja, p.7). These conceptualizations of Lefebvre can be stated as the base of trialectic thinking of Soja. He argues that Lefebvre "various recombination of center – periphery relation in such concepts as the critiques of every day life, the reproductions of social relations of productions, the bureaucratic society of controlled consumption, the struggle over the right to the city and the right to be different, the urbanization of consciousness and the necessity for an urban revolution, and a more general emphasis on the dynamics of geographically uneven development from local to global scales" springs from Lefebvre's interdisciplinary approaches and creative spatial consciousness (Soja, p.8). Then Soja combines this interdisciplinary approach and spatial consciousness as the trialectic of spatiality via alternative readings of *The Production of Space*. By this alternative reading, he has stated Lefebvre's three types of space: "the perceived space of materialized Spatial Practice; the conceived space he defined as Representations of Space; and the lived Spaces of Representation" as the source of Firstspace, Secondspace, and Thirdspace (Soja, p.10). After these comprehensive analysis about Lefebvre's trialectical mode of thinking, Soja defines Lefebvre's position as a radically open perspective that has the potential to analyze 'space of social struggle' (Soja, p.68).

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 2.

which one can react against “growing problems of poverty, racism, sexual discrimination, and environmental degradation.”⁴⁷

After this very general definition of Thirdspace, we can improve our survey about Thirdspace under his three definitions. The first is related with the importance of spatiality. He states Thirdspace as the interjection of a critical spatial imagination into the interpretive dualism between sociology and history. The second definition points the discussion of modernism and postmodernism. It means the possibility of “a more open and combinatorial perspective” between them. The last one can be described as a space between Firstspace perspective and Secondspace perspective. He also defines this space as real-and-imagined places.⁴⁸ Consistently with this standpoint between history-geography, modernism-postmodernism and Firstspace perspective-Secondspace perspective, he defines the space as the arena of the combinations. He said that “Thirdspace itself ... is rooted in just such a recombinatorial and radically open perspective” about space.⁴⁹

When we follow our order in definitions, we can start our study about Thirdspace with Soja’s analysis about the relationship between history and geography. His starting point to criticism of mainstream social theory is the superiority of history over geography. He argues that space hides consequences from us more than the time.⁵⁰ Particular importance of space and spatiality, therefore, is the critical beginning of Thirdspace. With the help of postcolonial discourse⁵¹ that involves

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 1.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 5.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 5.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 165.

⁵¹ Soja especially emphasized on Said, Bhabha, and Spivak with references to postcolonialism. He separates the ‘postcolonial’ from ‘anti-colonial’ in order to emphasize the complex form of governmentality of the term. According to him, colonization is not only oppressive but also enabling simultaneously like Foucault’s notion of power. With the stress on the potential to create resistance, postcolonial discourse is moved beyond modernist anti-colonialism (Soja, p.125). We can start with Edward Said to introduce a postcolonial discourse. He emphasized the conjunctions between the periodization and spatialization. He starts with the critic of spatial practices of colonialism by analyzing Orientalist geographies. He criticizes the representation of center and periphery in terms of space, knowledge, and power. By doing this, Said has extended the critic of historicism towards the possibility of constructing a critical geohistory. Homi Bhabha explores the nature of cultural difference. He defines the cultural diversity as a form of control. For him, differences between cultures cannot neatly be categorized and cannot be framed by the universalism of liberal democracy and Marxist historicism. Against this containment of cultural difference, he introduces the notion of hybridity that can be defined as the ‘third space’ enables other positions to emerge. Gayatri Spivak adds a new dimension to the understanding of

Said, Bhabha, and Spivak, and feminist geographers such as Hayden, hooks, Hooper, and West, he criticizes the capitalized and institutionalized discipline of history. For him, History and Geography are separated into different and discrete intellectual niches within the formation of the specialized social sciences.⁵² During this formation process, the city and urbanism became a secondary agent with contrast to historicism. However, this sovereignty of the history over geography has started to be broken with the recent development of transdisciplinary studies. He puts it correctly that geography, spatiality, and critical urbanism are the current themes in these developing studies. He points that this change can be the “most important philosophical and intellectual development of the 20th. Century.”⁵³ In addition to his criticism on this mainstream historicism, he avoids the anti-historicism via stating ‘geohistory.’⁵⁴ Therefore, his attempt can be described as a restoration of dialectical relationship between sociality and historicity. He proposes an “ontological trialectic of sociality-historicity-spatiality, with all three operating together at full throttle at every level knowledge formation.”⁵⁵ The challenge of Thirdspace, therefore, is derived from its transdisciplinary effort. It is the meeting point of all modes of thought that can combine “geographers, architects, urbanists, and others for whom spatial thinking is a primary professional preoccupation.”⁵⁶

The importance of geography in the same degree with history that is rooted within this transdisciplinary approach can be accepted as an innovative step in modern epistemology. The binary logic of modernist and rationalist approach that can be defined as the source of dialectical reasoning is criticized by Soja. To identify his attitude as modernist or postmodernist approach can be behind the scope of our study. He describes this insightful new ways of thinking about space and spatiality as radical postmodernist perspective. On the other hand, he criticizes “self-

Thirdspace. She opens up the texts of Marx to non-Euro centric readings. This attitude is recognition of heterogeneity (Soja, pp. 134-142). After an extensive analysis on these critics, Soja has borrowed some terms of postcolonial discourse, such as ‘decentered subjects,’ ‘oppositional practices,’ ‘critical exchange,’ ‘resistance struggle,’ and ‘new and radical happenings’ to explain the postmodern culture of borderlands (Soja, p. 130).

⁵² Ibid., p. 168.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 169.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 170.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 171.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 3.

proclaimed postmodernists.”⁵⁷ According to him, destruction of all vestiges of modernism or the entire enlightenment project of progressive social change is anti-modernism. He advises the deconstruction and strategic reconstitution of modernist epistemologies in the name of not destroying the modernist approach but improving its discourse. In addition, he criticizes anti-postmodernism. He says that postmodernism is not a polar opposite of modernism. According to him, postmodernism is not against progressive intentions. The point of this discussion in *Thirdspace* around modernism and postmodernism can be stated as an effort to find out alternative possibilities which have the potential to create combinations or mixtures between these two opposites of the social theory.

As the last definition of Thirdspace, we are urged to define and investigate Firstspace and Secondspace perspectives. Soja has established these terms through following Lefebvre’s analysis about space. He identifies Firstspace perspective as the focus on the real world and Secondspace perspective as interpretation of this reality with the help of ‘imagined’ representations of space.⁵⁸ These terms can be matched with ‘perceived space’ and ‘conceived space’ with the words of Lefebvre. After an extensive analysis about the arguments of Lefebvre, Soja is more concerned to understand alternative possibilities to combine these binaries. For Soja, as for Lefebvre before him, reductionism starts with the logic of binarism. According to Soja, this categorical and close logic needs to be broken by finding another way that is termed as ‘thirding-as-Othering.’⁵⁹ This term means an effort to deconstruct and reconstitute the binaries to produce an open alternative. The reflection of this view on the categorization of space can be identified as the combination of the material world and our thought about it or the combination of the perceived and conceived, Firstspace and Secondspace, real and imagined, spatial practice and representations of space. This is the ‘real-and-imagined’ space, ‘spaces of representation,’ or Thirdspace.

As we will mention in a detailed way, for Soja, this combinatory characteristic of Thirdspace has the potential to generate ‘counter spaces.’ He argues that

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 3.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 6.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 60.

abandoning the logic of binary opposition between geography and history, modernism and postmodernism, and Firstspace perspective and Secondspace perspective can provide a new vision to analyze spaces as the fields of resistance. These are the spaces of resistance to the hegemonic order arising from all forms of oppression including gender, class, and race.⁶⁰ These counter spaces have the potential to combine all subordinated, peripherilized or marginalized.⁶¹ The relationship between space and political resistance can be accepted as the starting point of his analyses about Thirdspace.

Soja's emphasis on political resistance can be stated as clear and visible during his analysis about Lefebvre. He starts with analyzing Lefebvre's political position within Marxism, because of his main focus on political resistance during his analysis about Thirdspace. He describes Lefebvre as a 'nomadic Marxist' by stating his distinctive brand of Marxism.⁶² According to him, Lefebvre's position was "constantly open and flexible, always reactive to dogmatic closure, never content with any permanent construct or fixed totalization."⁶³ This position of Lefebvre which is open to new visions in order to prevent the static formations, is identified as radically open perspective by Soja. It means the possibilities of combining differences and otherness. This emphasis on 'difference and otherness' can be accepted as the most crucial point of Soja's study.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 68.

⁶¹ By referring to Soja again, marginality can be stated as a term to define all oppressively othering categories determined as the opposites of the centrality (Soja, p.84). As a subject position, being in the center implies to be involved by mainstream stereotypes that we have mentioned in the first chapter. On the other hand, being in the margin is a subject position that differs from this stereotype in terms of race, class, gender, colonial status, and sexual preferences. Here it is necessary to state that marginalized implies a group of people that does not fit the mainstream stereotype that we have mentioned in the introductory chapter as 'white, Western, and bourgeois man.' Soja defines 'marginalized' as the peripherilized by the "mainstream of American political, intellectual, and everyday life" (Soja, p.84). Therefore, marginalized and peripherilized are used to imply the same model that include all oppressively othering categories including race, gender, class, colonial status, and sexual preferences during our thesis. On the other hand, 'subordination' as a term implies the oppression of a group of people in comparison to another one. For example, it can be argued that women are subordinated in comparison to men, because of patriarchy.

⁶² Ibid., p. 33

⁶³ Ibid., p. 32.

2.2. 'IDENTITY POLITICS' SURROUNDED BY *THIRDS*SPACE

Within the limits of our study, it is important to realize that Soja mentions about Lefebvre as “one of the first to theorize difference and otherness in explicitly spatial terms.”⁶⁴ He expresses that Lefebvre stated a need to struggle against the increasing forces of homogenization. Within the specific geography of capitalism, the right to be different against these forces of homogenization and fragmentation is an important part of collective resistance.⁶⁵ Soja mentions about Lefebvre as the prefigure of the later development of “critical postmodernism, spatial feminism, post-Marxism, and much of what has now come to be called critical cultural studies and the new cultural politics of identity and difference.”⁶⁶ Following this argument, it is necessary to mention about his analyses about ‘identity politics.’

Soja argues that the cultural politics of difference or ‘identity politics’ are primarily results of the workings of power in society and on space. In other words, as Soja puts it correctly, “power – and the specifically cultural politics that arise from its workings- is contextualized and made concrete, like all social relations, in the (social) production of (social) space.” These relations between space, power, and cultural politics must be seen as not only oppressive but also emancipatory. Soja describes the differences that are ascribed to gender, race, class, region, nation, etc., and their expression in social space and geohistorically uneven development, as “brute fashionings.” For him,

“Like social space itself, they are neither transhistorical nor “natural” (in the sense of being naively or existentially given, as in human nature). This brute fashionings, as the social and spatial production and strategic reproduction of differences, becomes the catalyst and the contested space for both hegemonic (conservative, order-maintaining) and counter-hegemonic (resistant, order-transforming) cultural and identity politics.”⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 34.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 35.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 38.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 88.

Binary ordering of difference produced by modernist epistemologies such as “capital/labor, self/other, subject/object, and white/black...” establishes radical subjectivities around these fundamental categories. Therefore, in both theory and practice, as for Soja, closure and exclusiveness are included by modernist cultural politics.

“Even when one counter-hegemonic movement avows its openness to alliance with others, it is usually open only on the former’s terms under its primary strategic guidance. The result has been the production of parallel, analogous, and segregated channels of radical political consciousness and subjectivity, each designed and primed to change its own discrete binarized world of difference.”⁶⁸

Soja criticizes the primacy and privileging of one or another set of agents in the projects of radical social change. To put it in another way, these essentialist tendencies prevent alliances and strategic corporations for political struggles.

In contrast, new cultural politics of difference resists against these essentialist tendencies. In addition to its struggle against these strategic reproductions of binaries and differences, it is different from the monolithic and homogeneous, abstract and general, historicism and pluralism. As we have mentioned at the discussion around ‘identity politics,’ he mentions about new forms of ‘identity politics’ that has the sensibility for heterogeneity and multiplicity, concrete and particular, variable and changing.⁶⁹ Necessity of this sensibility towards heterogeneity is derived from the multiple subjects in the society.

2.4. THIRDSPEACE OF POLITICAL CHOICE

2.4.1. Multiple Subjects

Soja argues that real world is populated by multiple subjects who have many and often changeable identities. These identities are located in varying and changeable

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 90.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 83.

subject positions. One can simultaneously has many different identities such as black, American, woman, Kurdish, Shiite, man. These subject positions that can be named as 'multiple identities' can be pluralized by means of their different standpoint. These identities are not essence of these subjects. It is the new identities that can be chosen as a radical standpoint. It is identified as "radical conceptualization of agency and identity" by Soja.⁷⁰ Therefore, these multiple identities are highly related with the political positions of the subjects. It can be argued that different political positions of the social agent are related with different form of oppression over this agent. Therefore, as Soja illustrates in a comprehensive way, there is a reactionary relationship between these identities of the subjects and the form of oppression and subordination over them.

To illustrate this relationship, Soja mentions about bell hooks not only within her arguments about Thirdspace, but also her subject position with her own life.⁷¹ He explains the reason of choosing bell hooks for this illustration by stating "there is no one better to illustrate the radical openness of Thirdspace its strategic flexibility in dealing with the multiple forms of oppression and inequality, and its direct relevance to contemporary politics..."⁷² After this emphasis on radical openness, multiple form of oppression and contemporary politics, he continues with her subject position. "hooks finds her place, positions herself, first of all as an African-American woman ..." This positioning of identity and subjectivity is an purposefully effort to struggle against hegemonic and homogenizing order. It involves a stress on the oppression and exclusion derived from the ethnicity and gender and a reaction to mainstream stereotype as 'western, white, bourgeois man.' Choosing these re-centered identities is a consciousness action to resist against "dominant, order producing, and unremittingly modernist ideology and epistemology of difference." She has chosen a 'radical-black subjectivity' as the

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 91.

⁷¹ Bell hooks is a cultural critics who is stated as the creator of the term 'thirdspace of political choice' by Soja. She moves beyond the modernist binary oppositions of race, class, and gender. By contextualizing new cultural politics (Soja, p.96). Hooks has described her position as an African – American woman. This positioning of her subjectivity is a conscious act of political resistance. Soja argues this positioning identity can be defined as 'thirdspace of political choice' (Soja. p.97). These terms will be analyzed in a detailed way during the following sub-titles. For more detailed information see bell hooks, "A Revolution of Values," in *The Cultural Studies Reader*, ed. Simon During (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 233-241.

⁷² Edward Soja, 1996, Ibid., p. 13.

“construction of other forms of counter-hegemonic or subaltern identity and more embracing communities of resistance.” This can be ascribed as the consciousness choice of marginality.⁷³

2.4.2. Multiple Forms of Oppression

The relationship between these ‘multiple identities’ and ‘embracing communities of resistance’ is constructed by the relationship between these identities and oppression. First of all, as we have stated in the previous chapter with the references to Tajbakhsh, this new form of subjects –or citizenship- have the democratic tolerance to ‘others,’ because of their changeable identities. Secondly, their ‘multiple form of oppression’ derived from their race, gender, colonial status, class position, and sexual preferences require more comprehensive resistance against all these oppressions. This form of oppression is one that includes polycentric mix of other forms of oppression, exploitation, and subjection. Different forms of oppression, exploitation, and subjection become a different and complex means of oppression via mutual interaction as well as preserving their autonomy. Therefore, multiple, pluralized, and radical conception of agencies and identities have to create the potential to provide dialogues between various radical movements against this form of oppression.⁷⁴ This new conceptualization of citizenship inspired by new ‘identity politics’ can open up “new possibilities for radical resistance to all forms of hegemonic subordination” with the help of ‘multiple communities of resistance.’⁷⁵

Choosing the subordinated and excluded identities designated by this ‘multiple form of oppression’ is defined as ‘thirdspace of political choice’ by Soja. He illustrates this position through analyzing hooks.

“She (hooks) chooses a space that is simultaneously central and marginal (and purely neither at the same time), a difficult and risky place on the edge,

⁷³ Ibid., p. 97.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 91.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 92.

filled with contradictions and ambiguities, with perils but also with new possibilities: a Thirdspace of political choice.”⁷⁶

Choosing these marginal identities provides the possibility of radically open resistance. It is a critical response to homogenization. ‘New citizenship’ that chooses marginality can create ‘multiple communities of resistance.’⁷⁷

2.4.3. Multiple Communities of Resistance

These multiple communities of resistance struggle against all forms of oppression that are derived from gender, race, class, and ‘all oppressively Othering categories.’⁷⁸ They consist of many different marginal identities to resist against ‘multiple forms of oppression.’ This can be accepted as strategic alliances for solidarity and coalition. The relationship between these multiple communities of resistance and space can be examined under two sub-titles. The first one is related with the identity formation of subjects. The second one is related with the contestation of different social actors. As the first step, one can argue that these multiple communities of resistance and polyvocal political movements struggle for the right to be different and right to have the locations at the urban as the ‘other.’ This struggle for appropriation and use of space affects identity formation or the identification process of the subject. As it will be illustrated later, constitution of different subjectivities in urban space is related with this appropriation. Secondly, ‘multiple communities of resistance’ can provide the link between much radical and different subjectivity and can create new ‘meeting places’ and real-and-imagined spaces for diverse oppositional practices. Here, we arrive at the point of argument that the space of this collective resistance is also defined as Thirdspace by Soja. It is a meeting place of all peripheralized or marginalized subjects. As we have mentioned in the introductory chapter, this new conception of space is highly related with the changing perception of

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 97.

⁷⁷ For more information see bell hooks, "Choosing the Margin as a Space of Radical Openness," in *Gender Space Architecture*, eds. Jane Rendell, Barbara Penner, Iain Borden (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 203-210.

⁷⁸ Edward Soja, 1996, Ibid., p. 84.

identity. Soja mentions about new and different form of citizenship in this politically charged space.⁷⁹

2.4.4. Spaces as the New Sites For Struggle

In the light of these findings, Soja analyzes space as the new sites for struggle. According to him, re-visioned spatiality provides the construction of interconnected and non-exclusionary communities of resistance. He defines this conceptualization of space as the ‘spatialization of cultural politics.’ This creative spatialization is a discourse that empowers the multiplicity and “combinatorial rather than competitively fragmented and separated communities of resistance.”⁸⁰ For Soja, as for hooks before him, occupying and reclaiming these spaces are the political struggles. These spaces are the locations of radical openness and possibility. This term about space that is ‘radical openness’ depends on Lefebvre’s transgressive conceptualization of lived space.

It is “an-Other world, a meta space of radical openness where everything can be found, where the possibilities of new discoveries and political strategies are endless, but where one must always be restlessly and self-critically moving on to new sites and insights, never confined by past journeys and accomplishments, always searching for differences, an Otherness, a strategic and heretical space ‘beyond’ what is presently known and taken for granted.”⁸¹

These are the spaces in which “one’s radical subjectivity can be activated and practiced in conjunction with the radical subjectivities of others.” Therefore, it is a spatiality, which involves polycentric communities of resistance and identity.⁸²

Referring to what we have stated up to now, we have tried to uncover Soja’s argument about space. As the next step, we can continue with our case study to investigate the possibilities of analyzing a physical space through Thirdspace perspective. The concepts that we have dealt with during this chapter provide our frame in the following chapters. It can be argued that this re-reading of

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 35.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 96.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 34.

⁸² Ibid., p. 99.

Thirdspace can assist to understand the dynamics of Istiklal Street and the resistance of Saturday Mothers.

CHAPTER 3

ISTIKLAL STREET AS THIRDSPACE

I resurrect Lefebvre's calls for a trialectical articulation of the micro and the macro in a critical understanding of the fullness of social space.

E. Soja. In *Thirdspace*

Self and other, and the spaces they create and are alienated from, are defined through projection and introjections. Thus, the built environment assumes symbolic importance, reinforcing a desire for order and conformity if the environment itself is ordered and purified; in this way, space is implicated in the construction of deviancy. Pure spaces expose difference and facilitate the policing of boundaries.

D. Sibley. "Purification and Control." In *Geographies of Exclusion*

3.1. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STREET FOR ANALYZING THIRDSPACE

The purpose of this section is an attempt to analyze the concept of Thirdspace within urban specificities. Istiklal Street in Istanbul was chosen as the field of study for this work and the street was examined in two stages. In the first stage, it is suggested that the spatial expressions of Istiklal Street will be analyzed within Thirdspace perspective, considering specific criteria of the concept and re-reading Soja's book. The need to define the concept of Thirdspace as real or material space or a concept with an equivalent within urban specificities is expected to be important. Although, Soja argues that

“The illusion of opaqueness about space has led to a concentration on concrete forms, where space is fixed, dead and undialectical and what is lost from view are the deeper social origins of spatiality, its problematic production and reproduction, its contextualization of politics, power and ideology.”

He insistently states that “the illusion of transparency dematerializes the space, it becomes an abstraction, a supposedly real representation of concrete forms: spatiality is reduced to a mental construct alone.”⁸³

However, perceiving spatiality as a mental construct alone leads to a serious deficiency in urban analysis. Similarly, it is important for us to emphasize that the concept of Thirdspace is not just a mental construct, that it is spatiality with an equivalent within urban specificities.

Why a street is chosen for locating the Thirdspace is first and foremostly related with the political openness of the streets. As Fyfe puts it, streets are the topography of social encounters and political protest, sites of domination and resistance.⁸⁴ Theme of disorder on the street with that of resistance provides the political base for the streets. Exploring an infamous ‘anti-police’ location in contradiction with the state authority into everyday life on the street, shows the

⁸³ Michael Keith and Steve Pile, “The Politics of Place, The Place of Politics,” in *Place and the Politics of Identity*, eds. Michael Keith and Steve Pile (USA and Canada: Routledge, 1993), p. 4.

⁸⁴ Nicholas R. Fyfe, “Introduction: Reading the Street,” in *Images of the Street: Planning, Identity, and Control in Public Space*, eds. Nicholas R. Fyfe (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 1.

attempts to maintain territorial control at the streets Therefore, as for Cresswell, the street is “the site where deviance, political uprising and revolution is so often located.”⁸⁵

If we enlarge our argument about the relationship between streets and Thirdspace to a certain extent, it can be argued that streets capture a creative tension by manifesting itself in different forms, “between the street defined from above as a space of order and discipline and the street as experienced from below as a space of conflict and contestation.”⁸⁶ Therefore, the street can be secondly defined as the place of contestation and conflict. Less criticizes many commentators because of their focus on the street only as a site and symbol of democratic protest and politics. To put it in another way, they suggest that members of the public can gather freely to discuss and debate their political beliefs in public spaces.⁸⁷ On the other hand, police efforts to claim sovereignty over the street weaken this argument. In fact, taking to the street is not an inherently democratic and emancipatory act. Much of the confusion, as Less would suggest, is the consequence of a singular understanding of the street, and more generally of public space. Public space is historically defined as either free and democratic or repressed and controlled, but it is both at the same time. It is not only a space of political struggle and transgression, but also a space of repression and control.⁸⁸ “Therefore, the streets are the ambivalent spaces, a space in which there is a desire both to accommodate a pluralistic public and to control it through rational strategies of surveillance and discipline.”⁸⁹

Lastly, streets can be defined as the sites for diverse experiences. In addition to having political openness and contestations or contradictions, Daly defines the

⁸⁵ Tim Cresswell, “Night Discourse: producing/consuming meaning on street,” in *Images of the Street: Planning, Identity, and Control in Public Space*, ed. Nicholas R. Fyfe (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 271.

⁸⁶ Nicholas R. Fyfe, 1998, *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁸⁷ Lorette Less, “Urban Renaissance and the Street: Spaces of Control and Contestation,” in *Images of the Street: Planning, Identity, and Control in Public Space*, ed. Nicholas R. Fyfe (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 236.

⁸⁸ Lorette Less, 1996, *Ibid.*, p. 238.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p.245.

street as a place where we confront the ‘other.’⁹⁰ For example, the every presence of disabled people on the streets, as beggars or street-traders, represented a minor victory for those struggling for some sense of inclusion in an exclusionary society. If we gather together Fyfe’s argument in this sense, the street can be defined as the place of the confrontation not only with these marginalized groups but also different identities. The rituals and relationships, practices and representations played routinely on the street, reveal different experiences of others about their way of life. How people make sense of their lives by way of the street, revealing the rituals and relationships, practices and representations, which are played out routinely on the street.⁹¹ In the light of these three findings, it can be believed that street is an advantageous place to analyze the Thirdspace concept within urban geography.

3.2. ISTIKLAL STREET AS THIRDSPACE

The importance of Istiklal Street for Istanbul in cultural, economic and social terms cannot be denied. The street extends in Beyoğlu between the Tunnel Square and Taksim Square. It may be observed that there are four important foci throughout the street. Starting from Taksim Square, one reaches the Ağa Mosque and surrounding within the initial 400 meters, Galatasaray Square after 350 meters, and Tunnel Square after 750 meters.⁹² The street was closed for the traffic and designated as a pedestrian district on 29th December 1990.⁹³ The fact that Istiklal Street was transformed into a pedestrian district made it a historical, tourism and commercial axis between Taksim and Kapalıçarşı, Eminönü and Sultanahmet. The expansion points in Istiklal Street pedestrian axis are Taksim Square, Tepebaşı expansion around Odakule, Tepebaşı and Aynalıçeşme expansion around Galatasaray, and Galata expansion around Galata Tower. The street is intensively fed from these points. Istiklal Street is one of the business centers of Istanbul due to its location. While the firms are concentrated on the

⁹⁰ Gerald Daly, “Homelessness and the Street: Observations from Britain, Canada, and the United States,” in *Images of the Street: Planning, Identity, and Control in Public Space*, ed. Nicholas R. Fyfe (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 111.

⁹¹ Nicholas R. Fyfe, 1998, *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁹² Prof. Kemal Ahmet Aru, *Report of Beyoğlu District Development Project* (Istanbul: Mas Matbaası, 1995), p. 27.

⁹³ Prof. Kemal Ahmet Aru, 1995, *Ibid.*, p. 12.

street, such concentration somehow lessens in lanes. According to a research by Mimar Sinan University dated 1985,⁹⁴ while 65% of the total number of buildings usable on the street and in the lanes are utilized for commercial activities, a serious enhancement occurred in entertainment and cultural activities after the region was closed for the traffic, as we will examine below.⁹⁵ The local populace became minority in the commercial section, thus private areas were replaced by public areas.

During the process of examining Istiklal Street as Thirdspace, a two-stage research was made for a comprehensive study of the street; in the first phase, written sources were thoroughly searched, and the second phase was fulfilled as field research. During our research of written sources, we have tried to collect data about not only current situation of the street, but also history of the street. Istiklal Street and surroundings, being both a commercial, cultural and entertainment axis between the Tünel and Taksim and also the central business area of the metropolitan Istanbul, have a long and vivid past. The information obtained through the historical process is consistent with the typical characteristics of today's living Istiklal Street. For this reason, determining the present condition of the street was not considered sufficient, the effect of historical process on present day was also mentioned. To obtain the information about the current activities at the street, we have searched archives of the newspapers for the year 2002. While newspapers were searched, online sites of newspapers Radikal, Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet and Milliyet, the sites of the political groups organizing the demonstrations and Bağımsız İletişim Ağı (BİA-net) were examined. With the help of comparative studies on these different sources, it has been realized that the online sites of Cumhuriyet, Hürriyet and Milliyet newspapers provided little news on the demonstrations, and the sites of political groups claimed uncountable number demonstrations in Istiklal in 2002. The news scanning performed via comparison method revealed BİA-net and Radikal Online as sufficient and dependable resources.

⁹⁴ This research was appointed to Mimar Sinan University Department of Urban and Regional Planning in November 1984 by Beyoğlu Municipality via Association for Improving and Preserving Beyoğlu.

⁹⁵ Prof. Kemal Ahmet Aru, 1995, Ibid., p. 24.

In the field research, both site analysis that includes observation on the street was done on Istiklal Street and in its surroundings, and statistical information were gathered from Beyoğlu Municipality and District Police Quarters in order to find out the crime rate on the street and the lanes. During the on-site research, observations were systematically made during five days in a week by walking from Taksim Square towards Tunnel Square. Time intervals of these walking were accorded by the different usage of the street. There are three observation sessions during a day that are morning session, noon session, and night session. The hours of these sessions varies in order to observe the traffic that is changed by hours. All observations on site were made at the first week of March 2003. Statistical information that is the second of our on-site work was gathered with the help of Municipality and Police Department. It can be argued that this information has been obtained with the help of the agents of authority. Therefore, one can states this statistical information as official and insufficient. Here it is significant to emphasize that the reason of submit to Municipality and Police Department is to reach diverse sources about Istiklal Street. It is intended to meet the deficit about the probability of biased information by the research of newspapers, on-site observations and the interviews with Saturday Mothers.⁹⁶

As a result of all these analyses, the characteristics of the street, which may be related with the concept of Thirdspace, were gathered under four titles. Firstly, Istiklal Street can be defined as the space of border. Secondly, it can be argued that the street has a potential for radical openness. Thirdly, Istiklal Street can be identified as a place of hegemony that can be defined as the source of the place of counter-resistance. Lastly, it can also identified as a place of counter hegemony that is the place of resistance.

3.2.1. Istiklal Street as the Space of Border

It can be argued that combining qualities of Thirdspace reflects the sensibilities of the contemporary critical urban studies especially about the relations of space with the logic of binary opposition. This criticism about the binary logic, which is

⁹⁶ The methods that have been followed during the interviews will be mentioned in detail at the

derived from new identity politics, is gathered around the terms about border. As Tajbakhsh mentions “the significance of the metaphorical dimension of spatial terms such as ‘border,’ ‘margins,’ ‘fissures,’ and ‘outside/inside’ play a large role in the new cultural politics of difference.”⁹⁷ Starting with the discussion of multiple identities, Hetherington argues, as for many other critical geographers such as Keith and Pile, that the idea of centrality and marginality should be seen together without dividing them into binary oppositions.

“Certain marginal, or heterotopic sites, come to take on a social centrality within the spatial politics of the expressive alternative groups and identifications associated with the New Age, new social movements, youth subcultures and so on.”⁹⁸

With the movements and transgression of these marginalized groups, the division of space as central or marginal becomes invalid and the urban space combines full of gaps, contradictions, folds and tears. Hesse defines these urban spaces as the new geographies in which marginal communities inscribe themselves.⁹⁹

These new geographies, which is named as Thirdspace by Soja has the potential to extent its limits by theorizing the relationships between not only centrality and marginality, but also all binary oppositions. Especially his focus on Lefebvre’s deconstruction of binary logic in thinking about space and other complexities of the modern world make clear various recombinations of binary oppositions in the struggle over the right to the city and the right to be different which can be accepted as the major themes of Thirdspace. Soja argues that these conceptualizations springing from Lefebvre’s creative spatial consciousness infiltrate every chapter of Thirdspace.¹⁰⁰ Other binary oppositions summarized by Soja as the “knowable and unknowable, real and imagined life world of experiences, emotions, events, and political choices that is existentially shaped by generative and problematic interplay between centers and peripheries, the abstract

section about resistance of Saturday Mothers.

⁹⁷ Kian Tajbakhsh, “Introduction,” in *The Promise of the City: Space, Identity, and Politics in Contemporary Social Thought* (Berkeley, London, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), p. 21.

⁹⁸ Kevin Hetherington, *Expressions of Identities: Space, Performance and Politics*, (London: Sage Publications, 1998), p. 138.

⁹⁹ Quoted in Michael Keith and Steve Pile, 1993, *Ibid.*, p.36.

and the concrete, the impassioned spaces of conceptual and the lived.”¹⁰¹ Because of these combining characteristics, we can identify this quality of Thirdspace as ‘the notion of border.’ Thirdspace is the space of border between centers and peripheries or central and marginal, public and private, the conceptual and the lived, commerce and culture, and hegemony and counter-hegemony. As we will deal with in details later, Istiklal Street has the characteristic of being a border between the above-mentioned binary oppositions. However, it is important to note here that the use of the term ‘border’ does not mean a line that separates two opposite poles. Although such a state is defined as ‘border’ in literature, what is meant by this term is to be an area enabling mutual interaction between these two poles, rather than being on a point of separating them.

If we examine them in an order, the characteristic is that the street is a border field between the center and the periphery. When we study the physical state of the street, the first thing to attract attention will be the contradictions of the nearby surroundings among themselves. Istiklal Street is located between Tarlabası Boulevard and Siraselviler Street. Tarlabası Boulevard and Tarlabası and Kasımpaşa Quarters, extending down the boulevard, are places where groups that may be named as peripherilized¹⁰² by Soja’s term are concentrated. According to the data of Beyoğlu Police Headquarters, nearly all of the crimes committed on Istiklal Street are committed by those living in Tarlabası and Kasımpaşa. Moreover, Tarlabası is defined as the drug center of Istanbul by one of the police officers at Beyoğlu Police Headquarter. The streets, usually marked by neglected, old, sometimes wooden and sometimes reinforced concrete buildings, are left insufficient in terms of both illumination and environmental arrangement. Even cleaning the streets is considerably neglected by Municipality. Both the users and the spatial position nearly testify that this area is periphery. On the other hand, when we study Siraselviler Street and enclosed Cihangir neighborhood up the Istiklal Street, the emerging chasm is surprising. Siraselviler Street, being an important commercial center like Istiklal Street, is surrounded by shops, hotels,

¹⁰⁰ Edward Soja, *Thirdspace* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), pp. 7-8.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁰² Although it is not the scope of our study to analyze the residents of Tarlabası and Kasımpaşa, the data obtained from Police Headquarters about the crime ratio of these residents can let us define them as peripherilized with reference to Soja.

cafés, restaurants and similar entertainment sites. The region, with a significant flow of people, is connected to Cihangir, considered as luxurious in Istanbul. It was emphasized that Beyoğlu Municipality tried to put Cihangir in such a state that it would act as model for other streets of the city for street design, materials, sidewalks, urban furniture and green areas, within the scope of Beautiful Beyoğlu Project during next year. However, the municipality does not consider any such practices in the foreseeable future for Tarlabası, evidently in greater need for such a work. Sıraselviler Street and Cihangir Neighborhood, which may be defined as center in terms of spatial politics, are different from Tarlabası with all these characteristics. İstiklal Street, lying between these two neighborhoods, which are completely opposite to each other in both social, cultural and economic terms, is a transition between these two districts.

The street, accommodating the users of both sides, preserves its function as a transition district when we examine the physical aspects. It may be claimed that the function of being a transition between center and the periphery is valid not only for the other neighborhoods nearby the street but also the avenue itself. These streets (*sokak* in Turkish), having quite different aspects when compared to each other, may show sudden changes in both social and physical spaces even within themselves. A street starting with fancy shops may, after a little walk, turn into a place with very cheap and shabby bars, where people lie on the ground. Moreover, while the street, with its bookshops, secondhand booksellers and publishing houses, is the district with the greatest-concentrated legal information production in Istanbul, the illegal leaflets, newspapers and pamphlets distributed in the streets make it also the place for illegal publications. İstiklal Street, which is center by one aspect of it, may become periphery due to its openness to marginality in both social and physical terms. The street, which may have these two aspects simultaneously, is able to create zones to unite the two poles and to enable mutual interaction; rather than forming a sharp distinction between these two poles.

Second, we may say that the street is a transition field or border between the public and the private. The fact that the spaces in the street may be defined as both

public and private enables the street to accommodate many niches, which may act as a passage between these two areas. Here, the main emphasis is not whether the spaces in the street are structured as public or private in physical or functional terms. Our real focus is how the spaces, which are expected to be public physically and functionally, have become private spaces by alternative forms of use. For example, although the ATM chambers in the street are structured for public use, the homeless and the children living in the streets, who make them their Home and sleep there during late hours in the night, break down the public aspect of these niches. It gets difficult for you to enter these chambers, which partially become their private space. These spaces are no longer public or private due to this temporary function they have. In Istiklal Street, it is possible to find many similar spaces in Istiklal Street, which may be explained by the concept of 'heterotopia' on which Soja based the concept of Thirdspace.¹⁰³ A similar assessment is also valid for the streets in hot weathers. The locations adopted as spaces by the homeless and children living in the streets cause a restriction for the other users. Of course, it is possible to take this as an urban analysis and to examine the proximity and passage areas of the public and private spaces. The experience of the passage to the street from the existing houses is quite interesting, although their number diminished considerably on the street. The house, which is totally private, loses this aspect as of the door. Because many apartment buildings are full of public spaces such as offices, entertainment and cultural areas. It is highly probable that your neighbor next door may be the people visiting a café. In such apartment buildings, with a completely heterogeneous user profile, the definition of private space becomes quite narrowed down and the customary order of private, semi-private and public becomes invalid. The user finds himself in a space that may be defined as totally public with no need to go out on the street. And to go on to the street from the apartment building, from the street to the avenue will not cause any change in this. Istiklal Street, having no customary public-private differentiation, makes up an alternative marginal space in these two binary oppositions.

¹⁰³ Soja states that 'heterotopology' is described by Foucault in a way that resembles what is being described as Thirdspace. He extends his argument not only by analyzing Foucault's method but also his conceptualization by arguing that conceptualization of 'heterotopias' resonates the micro or site-geography of Thirdspace. See Edward Soja, 1996, *Ibid.*, pp. 154-157.

Third, the street may be claimed to be a border between the lived space and conceptual space. Thirdspace is defined as a creative recombination and extension of Firstspace perspective and Secondspace perspective by Soja. Whereas Firstspace perspective is focused on the real and material world, Secondspace perspective interprets this reality by imagined representations of spatiality.¹⁰⁴ By acquiring Lefebvre's terms to the literature about Thirdspace, Soja matches Firstspace with lived space, and Secondspace with the conceptual one.

“I have described as a Firstspace perspective and epistemology, fixed mainly on the concrete materiality of spatial forms, on things that can be empirically mapped; and the second, as Secondspace, conceived in ideas about space, in thoughtful re-presentations of human spatiality in mental and cognitive forms. These coincide more or less Lefebvre's perceived and conceived spaces, with the first often thought of as 'real' and the second as 'imagined’”¹⁰⁵

As the continuity of these descriptions, Soja states Thirdspace as the area that shelters the lived space and conceived space simultaneously. That is the reason why Soja defined Thirdspace as real-and-imagined places.¹⁰⁶ If we consider this definition with the dimensions of Istiklal Street, it may be suitable to relate the representations of the street with the street, in other words, the material space, as examining each of these representations will not be covered by the scope of this thesis. There, the foremost point requiring consideration is whether the street is a representation of space, that is, conceived space, because, the street itself is a material or 'real' space. The point to consider for the answer to this question may be whether the street includes its representations within it. If we can answer this question, that is, if we can find that the street is also a representation of the space, then we can conclude that Istiklal Street, which is already a lived space, is at the same time a conceived space. The point observed at site during this analysis was how the street formed its image. Various representations, images and presentations formed throughout the street were sought just as in Orange Country and Los Angeles analyses in Soja's book, *Thirdspace*. The first thing that is noticed is that, the street is a memory preserving organization. It may be claimed

¹⁰⁴ Edward Soja, 1996, *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

that Istiklal Street is a nostalgic simulation due to the preservation of the historical structure of the street and restoration works as well as the images used here. As claimed by Soja in the analysis of Los Angeles, we may say that Istiklal Street is also reorganized in order to represent the history and cultural legacy of the city.¹⁰⁷ Tramcar is the most important of these images arranged for this purpose in the street, with intensively visual and functional simulation (Fig. 3.1). Tramcar, with no functional validity in the transportation technology of the age, is an efficient symbol to arouse the feeling of nostalgia in the street. In addition to the tramcar, turned into a project in the year 1990 during the reorganization of the street as a pedestrian street; the exhibitions related to Beyoğlu's history, arranged to remind the history, attract attention. These exhibitions on the left and the right throughout the street, consisting of the photographs expressing old Beyoğlu, make up what Soja calls a "chronological corridor that creates the richly heterotopic site."¹⁰⁸ As explained in the Project for Improving Beyoğlu, these activities, which are performed mainly for tourism purposes, may form a very strong image when united with the historical structure of the street. Another point that attracts attention in relation with the representation of Istiklal Street is the variation of the themes included in the street. The first place of attraction in the street, with different images for different streets, is Yeşilçam Street. Although Yeşilçam Street is no longer related to the local cinema industry, the street still preserves that image. The posters, introductory information and the view of Emek Cinema support such image throughout the street. Then, another place of attraction is Tosbağa Street. This one, where the photography studio of the well-known photographer, Ara Güler, is located, is esteemed as the street of art by Beyoğlu Municipality. This street, mentioned in the improvement report, seems to have acquired the desired identity with the privatized spaces and their images relating to photograph, painting, cinema and literature (Fig. 3.2).

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 191.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 193.



Fig. 3.1. The Area in front of Galatasaray High School
(www.beyoglu-bld.gov.tr)



Fig. 3.2. Ara Café, *Tospağa Sokak*, Istiklal Street, Istanbul
(www.beyoglu-bld.gov.tr)

Finally, the outstanding theme is the image of marginality, reflected by the passages of the street. It is clear that especially Atlas and Alkazar Passages address to a specific group of consumers of the second-hand garment shops, shops selling goods and clothes imported from the Far East, piercing and tattoo shops, music and poster centers and incense-sellers. It is interesting that all such shops are amalgamated in such passages, while it is not usually possible to find one of them anywhere on the street. All these privatized places, which we may not come across unless we enter the said passages, give the passages an image relating to being distinct. This culture is one that produces a specific manner of dressing, specific attitudes, specific taste of music, addressing the population defined by Hetherington as 'new age group.'¹⁰⁹ These passages, full of visual and aural simulations, contain marginality as a different theme owing to such simulations. All these themes on the street give the impression of diversity on the street not only in a material dimension but also at a cognitive level. Both the historical and the variety images of the street are so powerful that they do not remain in a conceived dimension, they also have an impact on the formation of physical spaces as we mentioned above. As Soja mentions the Istiklal Street is a place "where the power of Secondspace representations is opening up new ways to reproduce its dominance, not just over the perceived space of daily practices but over the whole of lived spaces and its primary sites."¹¹⁰ The synchronous unity of the lived and conceived space in the street and mutual interactions, enable us to define the street as a border between lived and conceived.

Fourth, the street is a border between commerce and culture. These activities, which we are accustomed to see in different zones according to the widespread urbanization concept, coexist within the same zone in Istiklal Street. As we will examine in details later, the existing commercial structure of the street became balanced with the cultural structure, especially after the street was closed for vehicle traffic. The synchronous intensity of the profit-oriented activities such as banking and non-profit activities with purpose of cultural services such as exhibitions, lead the street to be between these two different types of activities and

¹⁰⁹ Kevin Hetherington, 1998, *Ibid.*, p. 2.

spatiality as required by these. These different and opposite functions do not only make up the spatiality adopting them. What must be noted here is that, this unity results in an interaction and cultural trade is realized in the street. The bookshops, secondhand booksellers, publishing houses, newspaper-magazine vendors, cinemas and all such places, which form a considerable part of the existing commercial buildings, are the ones where the cultural trade takes place. As may be seen, the street is not only between these two opposite poles, but it also forms spaces suitable for them to have correlate in various manners.

Finally, we may say that the street is a border between hegemony and counter-hegemony. However, as the main theme of our study is formed around these concepts, this will be referred below in details. The fact that all the binary oppositions that we found up to this stage in our study coexist in Istiklal Street synchronously, provide us with important data to define the street as Thirdspace. Studying the concept of “space of border” under these four titles specifically for Istiklal Street, enabled us to develop a comprehensive analysis in terms of subtitles emphasized by Soja. At this stage, we may move on to the concept of ‘radical openness’, the second defining quality we specified for Thirdspace concept.

3.2.2. Istiklal Street As Radically Open Space and Cultural Hybridity

Soja accepts Lefebvre’s transgressive conceptualization of lived space “as an-Other world, a meta-space of radical openness where everything can be found, where the possibilities for new discoveries and political strategies are endless.”¹¹⁰ Attaching the meaning of radical openness to Lefebvre’s conceptualization of the production of space reinforces the radical openness what Soja has tried to convey as Thirdspace; the space where all places are.¹¹² It is also the space searching for differences, an Otherness.¹¹³ These descriptions of Thirdspace can find its reflection at the Istiklal Street with its emphasis on the ‘space where everything can be found.’ This definition that is ‘the space where everything can be found,’

¹¹⁰ Edward Soja, 1998, *Ibid.*, p. 198.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 56.

needs to be developed within the framework of the specificities of the physical urban geographies to improve our arguments about the Istiklal Street and Thirdspace. This means that this definition about space is so abstract and metaphorical, but at the same time has the very potential to define the real, material geographies. At the conceptual level, it means a strategic and heretical space, for Soja, ‘beyond’ what is presently known and taken for granted, where one must always be restlessly and self-critically moving on the new sites and insights for opening new political visions. At the material level, this means, as Soja exemplified at his analysis on Amsterdam, a space where consists of contradictory and complex places, places where everything can be found, and radically open to all differences such as the simultaneous existence of the tolerated and planned resting place for the city’s hard-drug addicts and a church at the same area.¹¹⁴ If we turn to Istiklal Street, these radically open places can be pointed. At the first step, the representations of the street can prove our argument.

In Istanbul Encyclopedia, the street and the surroundings are defined together with prostitution, tramp dens, lanes where young ladies used to fear to wander about alone but also with the theaters, cinemas, bookshops or book displays, art galleries.¹¹⁵ Likewise, Kaptan defines the street with brothels, gambling houses, minority schools, colleges, pubs, musician’s teahouses, concert offices dispatching young girls to the country; with its underground world acting as intermediaries for horse races, selling drugs, providing heroine, stealing and buying-selling goods in secret; by its being the center of our country’s cinema; as covering many cultures mingled, kneaded, enriched.¹¹⁶ Istiklal Street includes many different ranges for not only spaces but also for lifestyles. For example, Yeşilçam and Abanoz are the names of the two streets, which have lived very closely in Istiklal Street. But when you say Yeşilçam, one thinks of the cinema world, while Abanoz suggests the brothels. Beyond these, diverse lifestyles appeared in Beyoğlu even in the same period and same place.¹¹⁷ As Kaptan also

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 34.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 282.

¹¹⁵ Behzat Özdik, “İstiklal Caddesi,” in *İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1993), p. 267.

¹¹⁶ Özdemir Kaptan, *Beyoğlu: Kısa Geçmişi, Argosu* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1998), p. 85.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 66).

mentions, many authors listed similar aspects while defining the street and privatized spaces located there. It is not a coincidence that the descriptions of these authors were so different. The street shows great variations from one space to another and the diversity it has makes it different from public spaces that we are accustomed to see in traditional urban analyses.

In order to support our theoretical arguments about the street, we can analyze the variety of meeting places at the street as the second step. According to the data of Beyoğlu District Police Headquarters dated 18 March 2003, there are a total 1266 public spaces in Istiklal Street and close headquarters with the following distribution: 159 restaurants & bars, 89 restaurants & bars with music played, 64 places with the permission to sell alcoholic drinks by glasses, 501 cafés, 75 bars, 4 casinos, 43 night clubs, 50 discos, 46 taverns, 8 computer shops, 38 internet cafés, 142 hotels, 14 cinemas, 33 places which may be defined as bath places –Turkish bath – rooms for singles - pension. The intensity and variety in the entertainment places of the street presents unlimited choices for places of meeting and socializing. In addition to these, according to the data received from the Beyoğlu Municipality, there are total 68 non-governmental organizations in Istiklal Street and surroundings; 50 of which are foundations and associations,¹¹⁸ 5 of them being friendship foundations, 10 being cinema foundations, 19 being associations working for public benefit and 16 being foundations; moreover 8 trade union branches, 10 branches of the occupational chambers. As we will mention later, such places in the street contribute to the political activity in the region. Moreover, there are 58 places performing cultural and artistic activities with the following distribution: 9 theaters, 1 library, 13 cultural centers, 23 art galleries, 6 cinemas and 6 training institutions. If we add 30 bookshops, 24 music centers, 16 secondhand book dealers, 38 publishing houses, 16 antique dealers¹¹⁹ to these figures found by the Municipality, it amounts to 182. The street may be the place for both commerce, and entertainment and culture with all these places. Besides, 7 consulates and 3 cultural attaché offices enrich the user profile of the street,

¹¹⁸ There are also many spaces for political parties, offices of labor union and chambers at Istiklal Street. However, the municipality has not had a detailed data about these spaces yet. For this reason, the data that cannot be obtained from municipality were obtained from 'İstanbul Kültür ve Sanat Haritası.' İstanbul Kültür ve Sanat Haritası, sayı: 96 (Nisan 2003), pp. 115-143.

¹¹⁹ İstanbul Kültür ve Sanat Haritası, 2003, Ibid., pp. 115-143.

providing ethnical diversity. Another factor contributing to such diversity is the existence of 12 churches currently serving in the street and lanes. It is not a common thing to have 2 mosques but 12 churches on a street and to have these churches serving for different sects (Fig. 3.3). The Mevlevi houses, mosques, Orthodox Greek churches, the churches of Catholic Greek-Origins, which are not very likely to be found even in Greek, Gregorian, Catholic and Protestant Armenian Churches, Anglican churches, Catholic churches and Protestant German and Protestant Holland churches, whose community consists of Italians, the French, the Spanish and Maltese, synagogues nearby, Syrian Christian Metropolitan, Keldani Catholic Church remaining from Melkets, Orthodox Russian churches on the road to Karaköy, where the White Russians never gave up serving ceremonies and where, all the Russians can now go without hesitation; all these located on the street and nearby provide examples of diversity in the district.¹²⁰ All these figures are the evidences that the diversity of the spaces in the street is not an illusion caused by the liveliness of the social environment. To the contrary, this diversity and openness may be seen as the source of the liveliness and hybridity.

¹²⁰ Özdemir Kaptan, 1998, *Ibid.*, p. 16

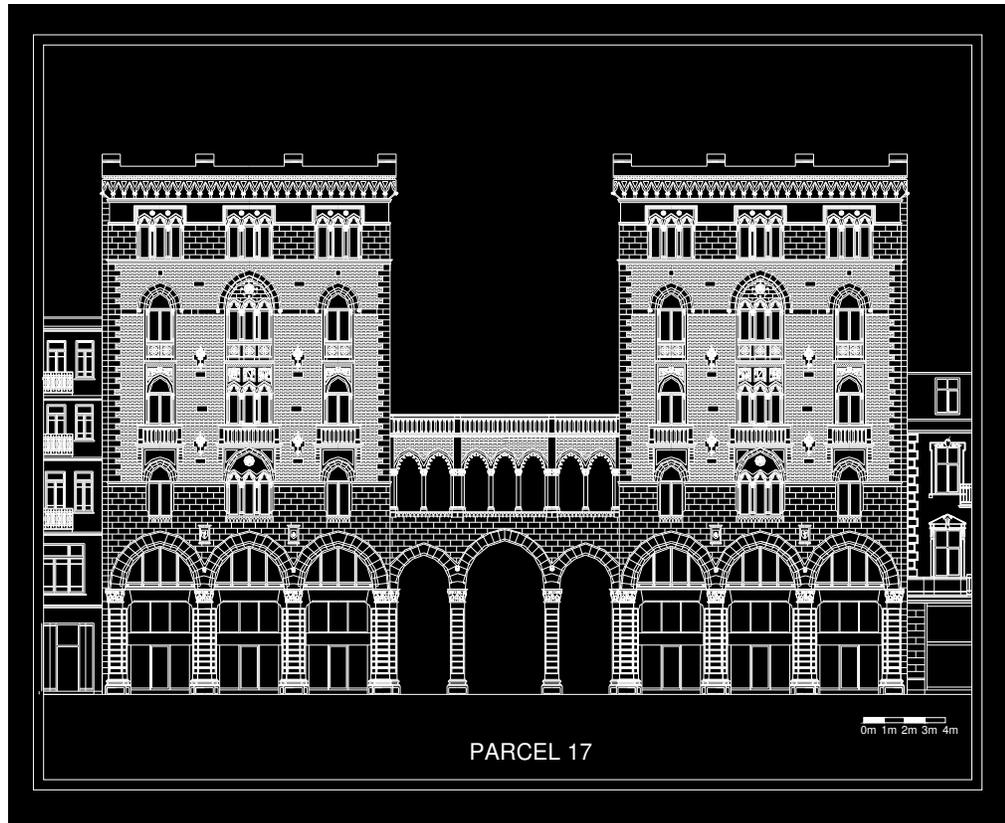


Fig. 3.3. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, elevation of a church at the street, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)

What is important here is not that the street just includes these spaces, but also that it enables relations between them. Just as Soja mentioned, “each standing clear; but also a secret and conjectured object, filled with allusions and illusions.”¹²¹ The spaces are both have their autonomy and have a mutual relation. The cultural center enriches the political areas and also feeds from them. Similarly, the entertainment spaces both provide action for commercial spaces, just as commercial spaces provide action for cultural spaces. These conjunctions prevent the fixed, dead and undialectical material spaces, instead provide the dynamic, radically open spaces filled with new possibilities and differences.

¹²¹ Edward Soja, 1996, *Ibid.*, p. 56.

In spite of all the spatial diversity in Istiklal Street, it is not the physical environment that provides the radical openness aspect of the street. Istiklal Street's most important aspect, which enables us to define it as a field providing radical openness, is that the street makes up an area where diversity is reflected to the daily life. This has been a place where many diverse cultures met each other at the doors of the daily life, which may neither be given up nor be closed down. These cultures exchanged with each other in daily life and got enriched. Many different cultures have been coexisting here, while preserving their own characteristics, since very old days, with a tolerance difficult to see in many other places of the world. This quality of the street urges us to search beyond the definition 'space where everything can be found'. The definition about the 'space where everything can be found' should be extended to contact its social and cultural meanings. Cultural hybridity is one of the defining qualities of the Thirdspace, where social codes of difference are crossed and transgressed. As for Keith and Pile, there are "simultaneous presence of multiple spatialities which provides the medium through which such contradictions may be subsumed or even naturalized."¹²² Therefore, one can extend the definition about 'the space where everything can be found' with the concept of 'cultural hybridity' to enlarge the vision about radical openness.

To explain 'cultural hybridity' in the street and to examine the reasons for that, it is necessary to view the user profile first. According to the information received from Taksim Police Headquarters, the user population in Istiklal Street exceeds 3 million during day, and this figure even increases on weekends and at the end of the business hours. Such an intensive use, of course, arises from the fact that the street is a historical, tourism and commercial axis and the intensity of the public places in the street and its lanes. However, what must be noticed here is that, such an intensive use does not only originate from the quantities of these spaces, but also the quality. As we mentioned before, the fact that the street is a commercial, entertainment and cultural center synchronously leads to such intensity. Accordingly, the user profile becomes diverse. The user profile is made up of the residents in the street or its lanes, those employed in the business places there,

¹²² Michael Keith and Steve Pile, "The Politics of Place, The Place of Politics," in *Place and the*

those on a shopping visit, those visiting the place for entertainment and other cultural activities, those visiting the parties, trade unions, non-governmental organizations and the pedestrians using the street as a point of passing. Such diversity in the user profile existed in the past of the street from a different point of view.

The basis, which enables the present condition of the street, is mostly related to the past. While examining the relation of geography of the street with its history, we could not trace back before 19th century, as the street was not formed in its present meaning before then. Especially with the declaration of the Reforms in the Ottoman Empire, the street acquired its present identity as a result of the rapid reorganization owing to the minorities living here and the priorities given to them. Before dealing with the reasons of this diversity and tolerance that also marked the past of the street, it may be useful to provide some information in relation with the condition of the street then.

When one studies the spaces included in the street throughout the 19th century, it is possible to observe the diversity of the street under the conditions of the time. Especially a comparison with the other parts of Istanbul reveals a far greater diversity than usual.¹²³ We can say that a similar exceptional condition exists for the architectural structure of the street. The buildings with statues, which influenced the architectural characteristics of the street, and the tolerance over them in the past, become meaningful when we consider the past lifestyles of the street (Fig. 3.4-3.6). What is interesting with the existence of these buildings in

Politics of Identity, eds. Michael Keith and Steve Pile (USA and Canada: Routledge, 1993), p. 19.

¹²³ Before touching upon these reasons, brief information relating to the spaces of the street then may be useful in terms of comparing with today's situation. Like present, we see that many clubs and societies were formed in Pera in the second half of the 19th century, most of them for cultural purposes. These clubs, which may be regarded as avant-garde for the Istanbul of the period, lead the way to the definition of the street and surroundings as a cultural space. Similarly, the fact that publishing houses for the newspapers and magazines, having a different sort of importance for Istanbul of the 19th century, were gathered in this field provided a cultural center aspect then, just as today. See Nur Akın, *19. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Galata ve Pera*, (İstanbul: Literatür Yayınları, 1998), p. 60. Embassies, apart from being a political focus between the Ottoman Empire and their own countries, also brought the Western art and lifestyle over here by especially artistic and cultural activities (Ibid., p. 8). The foreign publication sellers are mostly amalgamated in Galata and Pera districts in Istanbul (Ibid., p. 8). In addition to these, the entertainment places of great diversity from balls, low class *café chantants*, *café chantants*; to night clubs, oriental music performances, brothels, bordellos, pubs, tea houses, restaurants, and taverns increased the number of socializing spaces. See Özdemir Kaptan, 1998, Ibid., p.102.

the street is that Turkish people, who usually do not image to have statues built for their buildings, never regard them as strange, accepting these buildings with statues as natural. The culture of that time, which regarded the statues as idols, did not react to those statues.¹²⁴ Such a tolerance, evident not only in social environment but also the structural environment, shows that the street had a comprehensiveness and openness, which are not likely to be found under normal circumstances.

According to the information received from Mete Tunçay, when one studies the 1925-26 State Almanac of the Republic of Turkey, Beyoğlu was a different state then in Istanbul and the total population was 305.577 distributed as follows: 148.070 Turk and Muslim, 82.371 Greek origin, 24.043 Armenian, 24.761 Jew. The remaining population was made up of Catholic Armenians, Protestants, the Latin, Bulgarians, Syrian Christians, ‘*Ulahlar*,’ Catholic Green origin people.¹²⁵ According to a census dated 1935, of the population residing in Beyoğlu 145.990 people were Muslims, while 127.863 people were non-Muslims.¹²⁶ This ethnic diversity has continued throughout the history of Istiklal Street, enabling the formation of a multi-cultural environment in the street and nearby. The group leading the way to the formation of such an environment was the Levantines, who were half-western.¹²⁷ According to Akin, various groups of Istanbul had been left

¹²⁴ The fact that there is no police record for the destruction of statues in Beyoğlu reveals that this is another kind of place. The most important of these 19th century buildings with statues on Istiklal Street, still used in Beyoğlu, are Avrupa Passage, Rumeli Bazaar, Halep Bazaar, Santa Maria Business Center, famous Çiçek Passage and Alkazar Cinema. See Mustafa Cezar, *XIX. Yüzyıl Beyoğlusu* (İstanbul: Akbank Ak Yayınları, 1991), pp. 230-231.

¹²⁵ Özdemir Kaptan, 1998, *Ibid.*, p.117.

¹²⁶ Mustafa Cezar, *XIX. Yüzyıl Beyoğlusu* (İstanbul: Akbank Ak Yayınları, 1991), p. 357.

¹²⁷ As mentioned by Akin, these people were Europeans who came to Istanbul for various reasons and married local and foreign non-Muslim folk, settling in the city. With their languages, dressing, tastes, lifestyles and entertainment, they were quite a different group from the Muslim Ottomans living in Istanbul, especially the historical peninsula, Üsküdar. They reflected these aspects to their architecture and they formed a different outlook for Galata and Pera, where they lived. For more detailed information see Nur Akin, *19. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Galata ve Pera*, (İstanbul: Literatür Yayınları, 1998), pp. 15-30.

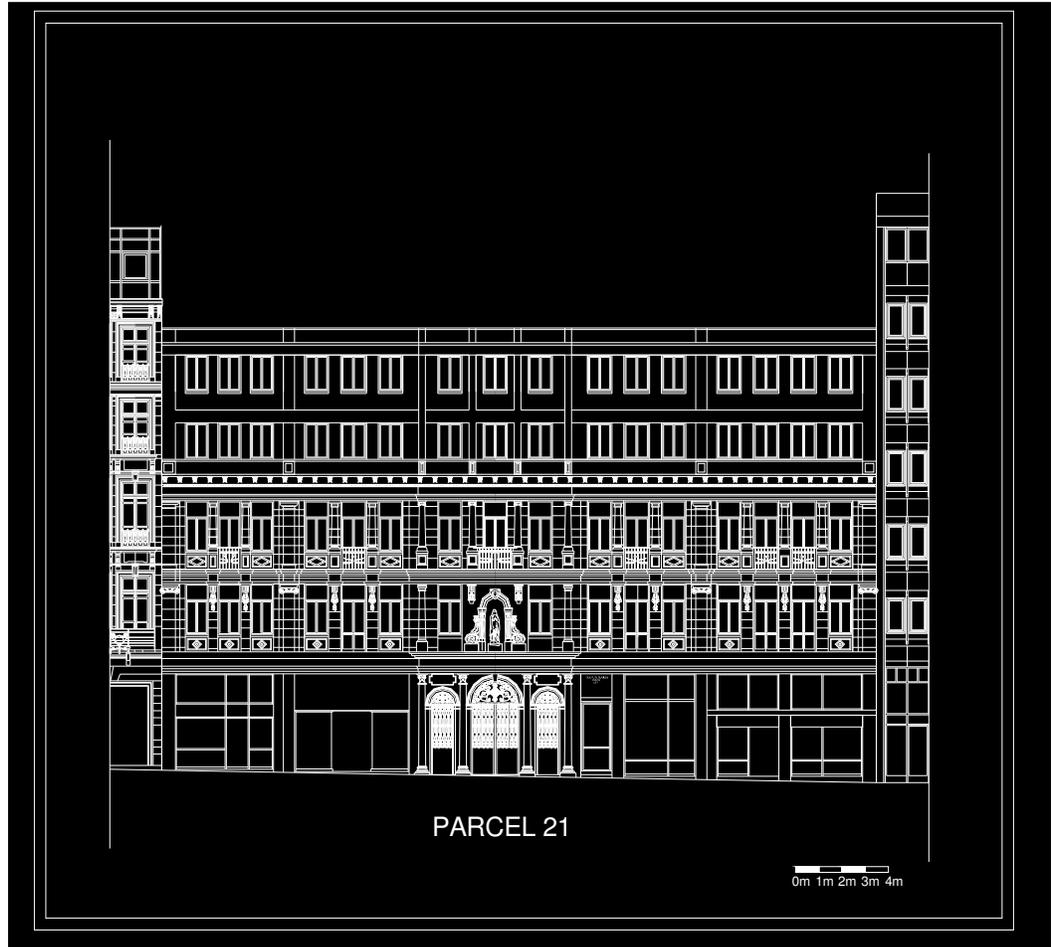


Fig. 3.4. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, elevation of a building with statues, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)

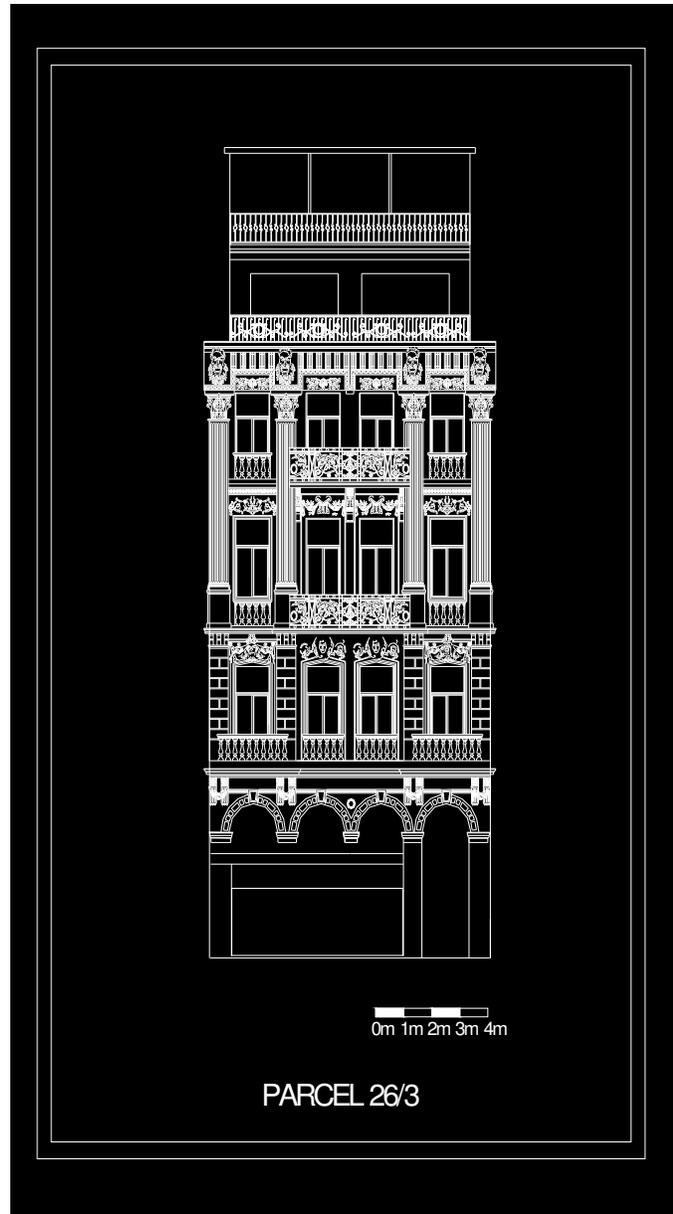


Fig. 3.5. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, elevation of a building with statues, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)



Fig. 3.6. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, elevation of a building with statues, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)

free to continue their own faiths and traditions from the beginning. The minorities increased their activities and density especially after the Reforms granted them privileges. These minority groups, and the social and physical qualities of the whereabouts they lived, contributed to many originalities of Istanbul, in addition to influential characteristics such as its location and historical accumulation, and these minority groups formed vivid parts of the diversity. In this pluralistic atmosphere that made Istanbul itself, Greek origins, Armenians and Jews together with Levantines, created interesting lifestyles and surroundings in specific places they lived, such as Fener, Kumkapı, Balat, Galata-Pera, during the 19th century, when Ottoman Empire had close relations with the West.¹²⁸ Beyoğlu is one of the leading areas, where minorities and foreign people, separated from the majority of Istanbul, lived as intensive populations, with this diversity in lifestyles. It is possible to observe the proofs of tolerance towards the minorities here. For example, during the naming of the streets in Pera in 1851, it was emphasized that

¹²⁸ Nur Akın, *19. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Galata ve Pera* (İstanbul: Literatür Yayınları, 1998), p. xi.

the streets would be named in all languages spoken in the country.¹²⁹ Moreover, the minority newspapers of the era spoke of the tolerance of the government towards the carnival festivals of the minorities with appraisal.¹³⁰

The diversity formed by these groups with different cultures, left their traces although they do not exist anymore. It is important that the openness and tolerance in Istiklal Street survived since 19th century. When it is considered that the social environment, as well as the physical environment, may be comprehended as a result of the diachronic analysis rather than a synchronic, the historical analysis gets the importance that deserves. The lifestyles and the habits of the daily life in the street are a result of a specific process, however much they may have changed. Of course, this diversity and openness of the street, both in past and at present, have historical reasons. For this reason, while examining the reasons for the concept of ‘radical openness’ in the street, it is meaningful to place the historical reasons to the second place.

The outstanding reason for this openness of Istiklal Street since its formation is no doubt the union of the Western and Eastern cultures here. With the Westernization movements, the lifestyle in Galata and especially in Pera of the era required a Western physical environment. The hotels, pastry-shops, restaurants, cafés etc. formed in this physical environment created a very original physical environment.¹³¹ The enhancement of the relations with the Western states increased the interest in the Pera district, where majority was formed by the Levantines and the non-Muslim folk, and new settlements and structuring started here. Moreover, the Faculty of Medicine settled in Galatasaray helped to create an important focus in the district in addition to the embassies and their surroundings, providing a considerable social activity here.¹³² The district, which had an enhanced esteem together with the Westernization movements, enjoyed investments with an increased velocity that is beyond comparison for other parts

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 125.

¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 45.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 63.

¹³² Ibid., p. 3.

of the city, and it was subjected to physical arrangements.¹³³ Until the end of the 19th century, innovations and developments of Western style chased one another. For example, a post office was established in Galata and a cable station in Pera.¹³⁴ These arrangements had considerable influences on the social life of that era. All these physical developments may be said to have determined the present characteristic of the street. However, it must be noted here that Istiklal Street is original as much as it is cosmopolitan. Beyoğlu did not become a bare and dull mirror where the foreign cultures were reflected; it became an urban space that absorbed various cultures, not terminating them but permitting them to survive their independent existences; however, creating a synthesis peculiar to itself, above all of them.¹³⁵ First of all, the East survived here with all its vigor and deep-seated accumulation from the past, it did not diminish when it faced foreign lifestyles, it fused with those lifestyles, and it influenced them as much as it was influenced by them.¹³⁶

Another factor affecting today's physical environment is that the region is the one where the formation of bourgeoisie began in Turkey. Opening out to West and the close commercial relations with the West, lead to the formation of a commercial bourgeoisie in Istanbul with an ever-increasing power. The minorities formed the finance bourgeoisie with the commercial policies of countries such as Britain and France duly supported by the Industrial Revolution. In this era, the wealth of the bourgeoisie, consisting of the merchants and senior bureaucrats, whose efficiency increased day by day, gained great dimensions. It may be found that the most splendid business centers and apartment buildings of Galata and Pera were owned by this group, called "the greatest consumers."¹³⁷ With the influence of this class,

¹³³ Among these arrangements, those aimed to revive the social life were, opening and paving roads, illumination and naming of the streets, so that the availability of the streets and the lanes would increase. In addition to these, the subdivision plan between Galata, Pera and Pangaltı, began in April 1858 and was completed in 1860. According to this plan, the houses, embassies, important schools, all the entertainment, rest and leisure spaces are located in Pera and its extension toward Taksim, that is Istiklal Street. Moreover, Tünel dated 1874, facilitating the transportation on the steep road between Galata-Pera provided a comfort in terms of transportation and contributed to the vivacity of the district. See *Ibid.*, pp. 23-25.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹³⁵ Özdemir Kaptan, 1998, *Ibid.*, p. 135.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

¹³⁷ Nur Akın, 1998, *Ibid.*, p. 7.

a different city in social, cultural and physical terms emerged in Galata and Pera after the 1850s with the union of the foreign groups.

When the influence of the emerging bourgeoisie united with the suitability of the physical environment, the street became the 'first' again. Also stated by Akin, the importance attached to the display arrangement especially in the second half of the 19th century, coupled with the ads in newspapers, caused quite large numbers of people to wander on Istiklal Street, watching the displays even if buying nothing. This point, an innovation in itself, is greatly dwelt upon and it is emphasized that for the first time, people started to go out in the streets for quite different reasons in the daily life of the 19th century.¹³⁸ The fact that walking along the street concept has been a habit since the second half of the 19th century, reveals that the present interest in Istiklal is partly related to the social memory and custom.

The third factor enabling such openness in the street has been the architectural aspects of the streets and the lanes. Istiklal Street consists of a main axis and the lanes opening out to it. Both sides of the street and the lanes are arranged with four and five-storey houses, with a massive look. When we examine the relation of the street and the lanes with these buildings, the achievement of their current positions in creating a social environment may be observed.

Finally, we have to examine today's spatial policies among the reasons helping for the formation of present characteristics of the street and enabling us to define the street with one having radical openness. The works of Beyoğlu Municipality aiming to arrange the physical environment to animate the social environment,¹³⁹

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 67.

¹³⁹ One of these works is Beyoğlu Improvement Project, started by Beyoğlu Municipality as we mentioned before. By this project, signs were placed to show the tourism spaces and areas on the street, the identity information on historical architectural works, new arrangements were provided for lanes leading to the street and the street life was enriched with new city furniture so that the environment may be socialized and activity may be enhanced. The rehabilitation zone in Yeşilcam Street and around it, helped the economic and cultural improvement in the district. After the infrastructure works in Mis Sokak, the seating units separated by anchor separators and illumination units, made this street a social meeting space. Likewise, Tospağa Street was also arranged as a meeting place, such arrangements increased the availability of the street. These investments aiming to enhance the social life are influential for the formation of the aspect of the street, which we define as radical openness. Because the formation of such variety in spatial terms

as well as the open-air activities organized by them;¹⁴⁰ provide a permanent facility for socializing for people there. These activities, organized by not only the municipality but also our non-governmental entities and individuals, provide that the street does not leave its user alone.

Social environment, which is formed by all the factors that we mention above, namely, the intensity of use, historical reasons, physical aspects of the street and the lanes, and the current spatial policies not only extend the user profile, but also leads to collisions and mutual interactions between these users. Just as Soja explains, Istiklal Street, may be defined as just the equivalent of the radically open concept due to these two aspects,

“... is an efficient invitation to enter a space of extraordinary openness, a place of critical exchange where the geographical imagination can be expanded to encompass a multiplicity of perspectives that have heretofore been considered by the epistemological referees to be incompatible, un-combinable. It is a space where issues of race, class, and gender can be addressed simultaneously without privileging one over the other.”¹⁴¹

3.2.3. Istiklal Street As The Place Of Hegemony

There is geopolitics to policing the street, a set of ongoing strategic efforts to ensure that police presence shall seem all-powerful. Police officers regularly exercise territoriality; they seek to influence social action through controlling space (Fig. 3.7). Although the controlling spaces in Istiklal are not defined by the officers under Taksim Police Department as specific, privatized points, the special police forces (swift forces that is ‘*çevik kuvvet*’ in Turkish), employed independently from District Police Headquarters, have permanent officers on the point of the street to the Taksim Square and in Galatasaray Square. Moreover, it

is related with the vivacity of the social life. See Report of Beyoğlu District Tourism Development Project.

¹⁴⁰ The variety of the social activities in Istiklal Street enriches the social life and provides a diverse user profile. These activities are performed by non-governmental organizations on one hand, and by Beyoğlu Municipality on the other. According to the data received from the Protocol Directorate of Beyoğlu Municipality, each year on 23rd April, the municipality holds a Peace and Children Festival and also Festival of Children’s Book each year. In these festivals, average 5 thousand books from 50 publishing houses are presented to children. During Turkish Cinema Activities organized on 14th November each year, people march up to Muammer Karaca Theater in Taksim Square and free film displays are provided.

¹⁴¹ Edward Soja, 1996, Ibid., p. 5.

may be observed that the officers of Taksim Police Headquarters do not stay fixed at a point, they rather patrol the street. 122 police officers and 6 night watchers are employed in Taksim Police Center, responsible for Istiklal Street and lanes. These officers patrol the street for twenty-four hours a day in teams, and their existence is frequently noticed. Especially “swift force” teams are observed to tend to be in crowded at their locations, sometimes having a shielded vehicle with them, becoming more perceivable and using this as a threat. Alongside the officers under Taksim Police Headquarters and swift forces, other officers used for establishing hegemony in the district are the municipality watchpersons.



Fig. 3.7. One of the Resistances in the Street
(<http://www14.brinkster.com>)

All these efforts to claim sovereignty over the street, however, are always subject to contestation. According to the Beyoğlu District Police Headquarters Administrative Office, in the year 2002, total 2743 criminal cases were found with the following distribution of figures: 74 - seizure and robbery, 20 - murder, 46 -

arson, 9 - attack on location, 11 - kidnap, 5 - rape, 6 - prostitution, 1 - adultery, 5 – attempt to rape, 32 – attack on police, 2 – attack on other state officers, 124 – events where weapons are used, 68 - assault, 384 - injuring , 41 - cheating, 40 – gamble, 27 - threatening, 32 – suicide, 8 – bribery, 134 pick-pocketing, 145 – stealing by snatching, 293 – car theft, 219 – house robbery, 326 – office robbery, 184 – car robbery, 418 – other forms of robbery, 52 – death under suspicious conditions, 4 – accidental death, 205 – death by other means.¹⁴² Such a high rate of crime in spite of the permanent existence of police, shows that there is a constant conflict and competition between these two groups. Especially the 32 attacks on the police in the year 2002 show that directly the presence of the police is contested, rather than contesting the hegemony of the police via committing crimes. These attacks may be in the form of reacting to police at the time of the event, or may spontaneously occur for no specific reason. This reaction against the police arises out of the fact that they are seen as the representatives of the system, as Hebert argues.

“Police officers can control none of the social forces – namely dynamics of race and class that affect employment, education and housing – that most profoundly shape life. Indeed, officers are regularly seen from the street as symbol of the wider systemic forces that structure and constrain opportunities.”¹⁴³

These data show us that police is a group, whose presence is not desired on the street by all the groups, which may be called marginal.

This reaction to the police continues in various forms and on various scales when it comes to the contestation of having a place in the spaces of the street. During the study of the period (March 2003), the first struggle was the one between the security forces and the political groups, who had demonstrations nearly everyday. The demonstrations for putting out the lights in Mis Street, the protests in Taksim Square, the marches throughout the street, the demonstrations in Galatasaray

¹⁴² Although these cases are found by Taksim, Karaköy and Haliç Police Department, nearly 90% of all these crimes are committed in Istiklal Street and surroundings, according to the District Police Headquarters.

¹⁴³ Steve Herbert, “Policing Contested Space,” in *Images of the Street: Planning, Identity, and Control in Public Space*, ed. Nicholas R. Fyfe ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 234.

Square, all these are also supported by the other users of the street due to extensive reaction against the war; the security forces, on the other hand, permanently control these groups spatially. The movement of these groups within the space is controlled by the assigning the march route for the mass by the security forces, providing barriers so that the mass will not get out of the specified area and by use of force when these are not observed. The writings and placard attaching activities of the groups may as well be included in this struggle. The placards are brought down by the teams of municipality, but political groups restore them in a very short time. Another struggle is between Beyoğlu Municipality and the owners of the shops in the street and lanes. The owners, who do not wish to obey the restrictions imposed by the municipality, have been in a permanent struggle, with a longer term compared to the previous example, about the uniform signboards, purifying the front sides of the buildings from excess attachments, and extension of the stores into the street or the lanes. Moreover, a spatial struggle occurs between the municipality officers and street vendors in the street (*'işportacı'* in Turkish), who perform an unregistered and illegal trade. Although these sellers do not have definite places in the street and the lanes, usually specific sellers occupy specific spaces and they do not get very far away from their respective spaces. These sellers, who leave their locations as soon as they are informed that municipality officers will come, appear at the same place a while later, therefore, showing a flexible resistance with no confrontations in the struggle for space. Also, the children living in the streets, beggars and the homeless are noticed for their location in usually the ATM chambers of the banks, and sometimes the entrances to the apartment buildings and specific niches alongside the street. The homeless, excluding the children, whom Beyoğlu District Police Headquarters Children's Office tries to locate in suitable places, are sometimes removed from the district and sometimes overlooked. Finally, we may mention prostitutes who are there in a mobile condition. These groups, included in the active struggle to hold their places although they do not have definite locations, face the immediate intervention by the security forces, and are being removed from the street. The street musicians and artists have not been included in this struggle groups, as they can be observed very rarely. However, it

must be noted that they will also be included in this struggle for space as the weather conditions change.

3.2.4. Istiklal Street As The Place Of Counter-Hegemony

This contestation over the territoriality of the Istiklal Street necessarily calls those who are searching about Thirdspace to identify the street as a meeting place of all peripheralized, a place for struggles over all forms of domination. For Soja, what is still missing from the critical rethinking of geography is an appreciation for the wider range of otherness and marginalities found in the polycentric coalitional communities of resistance.¹⁴⁴ He follows bell hooks to exemplify the contemporary leadership of cultural studies scholars, in the creative investigation of Thirdspace and their spatial awareness in the strategic margins, “based not just on race, gender, and class but also on sexuality, age, nation, region, nature, empire, and colony.”¹⁴⁵ To echo Lefebvre, Soja mentions the necessity of a resistance,

“on a wider terrain for the right to difference, to be different, against the increasing forces of homogenization, fragmentation, and hierarchically organized power that defined the specific geography of capitalism. He located these struggles for the right to be different at many levels, beginning significantly with the body and sexuality and extending through built forms and architectural design to the spatiality of household and monumental building, the urban neighborhood, the city, the cultural region, and national liberation movements, to more global responses to geographically uneven development and underdevelopment.”¹⁴⁶

Lefebvre mentioned the multiplicity of these struggles for the right to be different in the binary oppositions of center and peripheries, central and marginal, public and private, the conceived and the lived, commerce and culture, the hegemony and counter-hegemony. He investigated a place for collective resistance, a meeting place of all peripheralized or marginalized that is the ‘Thirdspace of political choice.’¹⁴⁷ Thirdspace has a potential to create a strategic flexibility in dealing with these multiple forms of oppression and inequality. These combining

¹⁴⁴ Edward Soja, 1996, *Ibid.*, p. 125.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

characteristic of Thirdspace as the meeting place of all peripherilized can be realized as a place for struggles over all forms of domination in the Istiklal Street.

The first group of peripherilized whose major meeting place is the Istiklal Street is composed of the homeless and the street children. According to the data provided by Beyoğlu District Police Headquarters Children's Office, in 2002 423 children were found to be addicted to thinner, 411 children employed on the streets, and 45 with no relatives in Istiklal Street. Daily mentioned that life on the street for them is a painful experience. Because they try to come up with not only the cold, snow or rain, but also police patrols, violent muggers, angry shopkeepers, and members of the public who are repelled, embarrassed or shamed by homeless people.¹⁴⁸ Hidden resistance of those for territoriality can be realized not only by their spatial locales as I mentioned before, but also by their definition, according to Less, as 'street children' ('*sokak çocuğu*' in Turkish) that indicates the possession of space.¹⁴⁹ In addition, their marginality and resistance become visible by analysing their tendency to the crimes. Again, according to the information obtained from the same place, of the cases brought to the attention of the public order department, 19 children of the age group 0-11, 155 children of the age group of 12-15, and 224 children of the age group 16-18 were taken under custody in events that occurred in Istiklal Street and the lanes in the year 2002. The most widespread crimes among them are pick-pocketing and stealing by snatching.

The second one of peripherilized can be migrants. As for Keith and Pile, the migration is an invocation of communal space, which is simultaneously both inside, and outside.¹⁵⁰ Tarlabası that is near the Istiklal Street is the resources of this resistance at the Istiklal Street. The Turks and Kurds, mostly coming from the east of the city, are mostly located in Tarlabası, a similar of which may be found anywhere in Istanbul. According to the information given by the officers in

¹⁴⁸ Gerald Daly, "Homelessness and the Street: Observations from Britain, Canada, and the United States," in *Images of the Street: Planning, Identity, and Control in Public Space*, ed. Nicholas R. Fyfe (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 111.

¹⁴⁹ Lorette Less, "Urban Renaissance and the Street: Spaces of Control and Contestation," in *Images of the Street: Planning, Identity, and Control in Public Space*, ed. Nicholas R. Fyfe (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 250.

¹⁵⁰ Michael Keith and Steve Pile, 1993, *Ibid.*, p. 18.

Taksim Police Headquarters, the majority of the crimes in Istiklal Street are being committed by those residing in Tarlabası.

The third group of the peripherilized is composed of homosexuals and others that have sexually marginal positions. With the help of observations, it can be argued that Istiklal Street is the meeting place of homosexuals. In addition, many sites constructed as a guide for homosexuals within area of Internet mention the Istiklal Street and its many different places as the coherent meeting places for gays, lesbians, and also for transsexuals. As an example, according to the Internet site named *Gayrehber*,¹⁵¹ there are 3 gay bars and 1 gay restaurant in Istiklal Street and its lanes. These are places that call themselves gay bars. In addition to them, the street has many places, which do not specifically mention their being gay places but which may be visited by the gays very comfortably. Usually, within the scope of Istanbul, Taksim Square and Istiklal Street are defined as places of peaceful leisure for gays. Similarly, 8 different places were defined in Istiklal Street for transsexuals, and especially Bayram Street was pinpointed as leisure area.

As the last group of peripherilized of the Istiklal, we can mention about the political resisters. Cresswell defines the space of the street as a space in which we encounter words and pictures in voluminous quantities, advertisements, instructions, political messages, newspapers, and illegal posters.¹⁵² This can be an initiative starting point to analyze the political characteristic of a street. As any user of the street may find out easily, illegal magazines, newspapers and leaflets are constantly distributed alongside the street. As one advances towards the lanes from the street, graffiti and placards increase in number. These observations provide us with the political activity that we are not accustomed to see in other parts of the city. What is noticed further is that, as we mentioned before, the presence of numerous party buildings, professional chamber branches and many non-governmental organizations that may be called political along the street and the lanes. These enhance the political vivacity on the street. According to the

¹⁵¹ <http://www.gayrehber.tripod.com>

information obtained from the newspapers and on-site observations, majority of the press declarations take place in front of the place of the group making the declaration. Similarly, the marches throughout the street start from the building of the group calling for the march. Again, according to the newspapers, total 22 mass demonstrations were made in Istiklal Street in the year 2002. Nine of these were marches throughout the street and were not restricted to one specific area. Other demonstrations in the form of press declarations, organizing theaters for protest, exhibitions aimed at protesting and mass cabling were made in specific niches in the street. These demonstrations show a variety both in terms of their purpose and their forms. For example, the street serves the disabled, who protest the conditions they are forced to live in, on the day for the disabled, while it also serves those against the war. The political resistors of the street show examples of the potential of the street for uniting, by the variety and different combinations in themselves (Fig. 3.8 – 3.9). This is the spatial counterpart of the expression defined by Keith and Pile as ‘new spaces of resistance’, as based on Soja’s arguments.



Fig. 3.8. One of the Marshes in the Street
(<http://www14.brinkster.com>)

¹⁵² Tim Cresswell, “Night Discourse: producing/consuming meaning on street,” in *Images of the Street: Planning, Identity, and Control in Public Space*, ed. Nicholas R. Fyfe (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 269.



Fig. 3.9. One of the Marshes in the Street

(<http://www14.brinkster.com>)

“New spaces of resistance are being opened up, where our ‘place’ (in all its meanings) is considered fundamentally important to our perspective, our location in the world, and our right and ability to challenge dominant discourses of power.”¹⁵³

New spaces of resistance means a place, which has the potential to combine the different positions and strategies which described both as little tactics in the lived worlds and great strategies in geopolitics by Soja and Hooper.¹⁵⁴ It is the logic of capital itself, which produces an uneven development of space. These spaces need to be mapped, so that they can be used by oppositional cultures and new social movements against the interests of capital as sites of resistance. It is argued here that “needs to be given the political deployment of (real, imagined, symbolic) space, and that the purpose of such questioning is to enable the formation and the maintenance of progressive political alliances.” This means the extension of old

¹⁵³ Michael Keith and Steve Pile, 1993, *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁵⁴ Quoted in Michael Keith and Steve Pile, 1993, *Ibid.*, p. 38.

communities of resistance and the creation of alternative political possibilities. In order to create these alternative possibilities, a different sense of space needs to be invoked, a space which is not static and passive, and apolitical.¹⁵⁵ This new 'meeting place' and 'spaces' for diverse oppositional practices can only be created by multiple communities of resistance and polyvocal political communities capable of linking many radical subjectivities together.¹⁵⁶

To exemplify these multiple communities of resistance and their new meeting places, we are forced to analyze not only the physical characteristics of the Istiklal Street as a new meeting place, but also to analyze the resistance on the street as the resistance of multiple identities. Referring to what we have introduced up to now, we have analyzed the Istiklal Street with its two defining qualities as the 'space of border' and 'space of radical openness' to define and investigate the reason of political movement at the street. To come to a clearer and more comprehensive understanding of Thirdspace, we need a search about the relationship between the street and politics. In order to complete our analyses about this 'new meeting place,' we need to enlarge our study on Istiklal Street. Relationship between 'identity politics' and space requires more comprehensive research than social and physical analyses of Istiklal Street. It is important to remember that Thirdspace perspective depends on the analysis of the places as the 'spatiality of identity politics.' Although, we have mentioned about the different types of resistance at the street after our research about the some characteristics and their reasons about the concepts of border and radical openness, it will be necessary to analyze these resistance in a more detailed way to define and investigate the problem theme. For this reason, we are urged to analyze not only Istiklal Street as the 'real space,' but also resistance of Saturday Mothers to illustrate our arguments about 'spatialization of identity politics.' To sum up, in order to achieve the detailed and comprehensive analyses about the relationship between the multiple identities and the new places of resistance or between the

¹⁵⁵ Quoted in Michael Keith and Steve Pile, 1993, *Ibid.*, p. 36.

¹⁵⁶ Edwards Soja and Barbara Hooper, "The Spaces that Difference Makes: Some Notes on the Geographical Margins of the New Cultural Politics," in *Place and the Politics of Identity*, eds. Michael Keith and Steve Pile (USA and Canada: Routledge, 1993), p. 184.

multiple communities of resistance and Thirdspace, we are urged to select a resistance on the Istiklal Street as the second step of this case study.

3.3. RESISTANCE OF SATURDAY MOTHERS

Why we have chosen the resistance of Saturday Mothers is this reciprocal relationship between the resistance of multiple identities and the meeting places of these identities. Choosing the resistance of Saturday Mothers as a case study for locating Thirdspace in the specificities of the urban, among many other marginalized groups at the Istiklal Street can be in the right, when their relations with the sub-concepts of Thirdspace will be analyzed. First of all, their multiple and contradictory identities as the resisters and the mothers are very significant for our analyses, because as we mentioned above of the importance of multiple identities for Soja. Secondly, multiple oppression of them derived not only from their race and class, but also their gender is crucial. Multiple forms of oppression deserves a emphasis, for the reason that they are the source of ‘multiplicity of resistance,’ so the ‘new meeting places.’

The resistance of Saturday Mothers, which is differentiated from other political activities, continued at the square in front of Galatasaray High School. Their activity, which started on 27th May 1995 with 30 people sitting-in “for those¹⁵⁷ lost under custody” in Istanbul, Istiklal Street, in the area in front of Galatasaray High School, went on until the mothers declared that they would discontinue “the Saturdays” on 13th March 1999.¹⁵⁸ After Hasan Ocak was taken under custody on 21st March 1995 in Istanbul and was lost, the sensitive people and organizations, which came together in the process for seeking Ocak, had an important role in the formation of these actions. According to the interviews with both the relatives of the lost people and the representative of ICAD (International Committee Against

¹⁵⁷ In the history of the Republic of Turkey, lost under custody starts with the military coup of 12th September in 1980. After 1980 military coup, 13 people were recorded as lost under custody. After a long time, in 1990's, the claims for lost under custody appeared again. “The claims were mostly from the Region of Extraordinary State. As of the year 1991, the claims for people lost under custody according to the applications to the Human Rights Association (İHD), are as follows by years: 1991 - 4, 1992 - 8, 1993 - 36, 1994 - 229, 1995 - 121, 1996 - 68, 1997 - 45, 1998 -9, 1999 – 1 (BIA-Net, Mater, 2001).

¹⁵⁸ (BIA News Center, 2002).

Disappearances),¹⁵⁹ Ali Ocak, we may say that no specific organization led the way throughout the process of the formation of the actions. The actions went on for 200 weeks; the relatives of the lost people sat in front of Galatasaray High School for half an hour in each demonstration. The general format of the action is that, every week, a person, who is lost under custody, is reminded and a press statement is given. Then, every week, a mother, whose child is lost, tells how her child became lost and the action ends. In these actions with no placards or banners, only clothes and photos of the lost people are carried. The purpose of this action is to have their children, lost under custody, found and to make the responsible ones punished.¹⁶⁰

3.3.1. Method for Analyzing the Resistance of Saturday Mothers

While examining the action of the Saturday Mother's within the context of its relation with the concept of Thirdspace, sources in writing were benefited from at first; and 8 people, whose relatives were lost and who regularly attended the actions, were interviewed by 'in depth interview' method. An in-depth interview is a qualitative research method that permits person-to-person discussion. "Qualitative methodologies involves a phenomenological perspective whereby researchers aim to understand, report and evaluate the meaning of events for people in particular situations, that is, how their social world is structured by the participants in it. The focus of qualitative methodologies is the way in which participants interpret their experiences and construct reality."¹⁶¹ It can guide the researchers through providing increased insight into people's thoughts, feelings, and behavior on important issues. Some examples of qualitative methodologies are, "interview, focus group, open-ended questionnaire and participant observation." Qualitative interview allows the interviewer to persuade an informant to talk at length about the topic of concern. The in-depth interview uses a flexible interview approach. It aims to ask questions to explain the grounds of a

¹⁵⁹ For more detailed information about ICAD, see <http://icad-committee.com/ingilizce/oncad.htm>

¹⁶⁰ For more detailed information, see Yıldırım Türker, *Gözaltında Kayıp: Onu Unutma*, (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 1995).

¹⁶¹ For more detailed information, one can visit the web site of Society and Culture Association. <http://hsc.csu.edu.au/pta/scansw/method.html>

problem or practice in a target group. This methodology involves the researcher and the interviewee in one-to-one correspondance.¹⁶²

During the interviews with the relatives of the lost people, information was sought in terms of the questions as given in the Appendix. The questions were structured to obtain information firstly about identities of mothers and secondly about the Istiklal Street within the framework of the Thirdspace perspective. The first set of questions aims to get information about oppression that the mothers were subjected to, and their identity transformation. The second set of questions has been accorded to gain knowledge about radical openness of the street. The third and the fourth groups of questions intend to analyze the street as place of hegemony and counter-hegemony.

All the relatives interviewed are either mother, wife or sister to a lost person. During the interviews, any orientation was avoided in order to ensure the objectivity of the study and the activists themselves were encouraged to lead the interview as much as possible.¹⁶³ This is an unstructured interview, which aims at getting the answers to all questions. Here, it is necessary to state that the main aim of the interviews is not to collect information about mothers' life and their demographic identity formation. Instead, the main emphasis is on their resistance within the frame of the relationship between 'identity politics' and space. The interviewed activists, who lost their relatives were Kiraz Şahin, Emine Ocak, Hanım Tosun, Gülşah Taaç, Elmas Eren, Hüsniye Ocak, Asiye Karakoç and Birsen Gülünay, the order being the order of the interview dates. Here, it is important to emphasize that all of the mothers have given permission for revealing their names. No other criteria were used except having participated in the actions while determining the relatives to be interviewed (such as a specific class status or ethnic origin). However, as the construct of the actions was developed on the concepts of 'maternity' and 'family,' as may be understood from the name, specific care was taken that the interviewed women would be the members of the family. The interviews took place at their houses. The interviews lasted between

¹⁶² Ibid.

3-5 hours. All meetings were completed in the interval between March 2003 and July 2003. Ali Ocak was also interviewed in addition to those participating in the action as a relative of a lost person in order to be able to monitor the process relating to the actions.

3.3.2. Galatasaray Square as the Resistance Area

Before we begin our analysis relating to Saturday Mothers, it may be useful to provide the location for it, the area in front of Galatasaray High School. The area in front of Galatasaray High School is a junction of four roads. Istiklal Street, stretching to the south-north between Tünel and Galatasaray creates a definite angle to the north after Galatasaray. The area in front of Galatasaray High School seems like the center of Istiklal Street. Two streets leading from Tepebaşı and Aynalıçeşme unite and open out to Galatasaray. At the corner where Meşrutiyet and Hammalbaşı Streets meet, there is the British Palace. The square bears a monument made of 50 thick metal pipes, built in memory of fiftieth year of the Republic. The most important building of the square is Galatasaray High School. Opposite the high school, there is Galatasaray Post Office.¹⁶⁴ What must be emphasized in this square in relation with our subject is that, most of the political activities in Istiklal Street take place there.

Here it will be beneficial, both to exemplify and to support our arguments, to conclude our analysis relating to Istiklal Street and to examine the potentials of the street in terms of the actions of Saturday Mothers before we move on to the relation between ‘identity politics’ and space. As we have mentioned before, Istiklal Street as the ‘meeting place for recovery and resistance’ and ‘the new space for critical exchange’ provides the medium for the contestation between different, marginal social actors and different political groups. And in fact, as Tanrikulu points out, the fact that the actions could continue for 200 weeks in spite of the barriers of the security forces and that, for the first time an action could be realized every week without obtaining permission became a serious

¹⁶³ For the techniques of indepth interview, see Kathryn Anderson and Dana C. Clark, “Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analyses,” in *The Oral History Reader*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), pp. 157-172.

'civil disobedience.'¹⁶⁵ The regular continuity of the 'transgression' in public domain is bound to the potentials of İstiklal Street. In this chapter, as we already mentioned in our studies within the framework of the Thirdspace discussions, the facts that the street is a 'space of border', has 'radical openness', and is simultaneously both the 'place of hegemony and counter-hegemony' played important roles in the permanency of the actions as well as their extension¹⁶⁶. The indicators that show that the actions became widespread and found their places in the public conscience are that many people from very different sections of the society came together in these actions, that the actions became known both in national and international platforms of action, and that the number of the lost people decreased after the actions started.¹⁶⁷ Within this context, the performance of the actions in İstiklal Street in front of the Galatasaray High School is significant.

The relatives of the lost people answered the question as to why they chose the location in front of Galatasaray High School very similarly in terms of some emphasizes, and very specifically in others. According to the interview with Ali Ocak, the representative of ICAD in Turkey, the choice of this place as the area of action was in no way a coincidence. While starting the actions, simultaneous actions were performed in Kadıköy Altıyol and in Square of Freedom in Bakırköy together with the Galatasaray High School, but the activists could not hold anywhere except the area in front of Galatasaray High School.

¹⁶⁴ Behzat Özdik, 1993, *Ibid.*, p.269.

¹⁶⁵ Nimet Tanrıkulu, "Cumartesi Anneleri," in *Toplumsal Hareketler Konuşuyor*, ed.Leyla Sanlı (İstanbul: Alan Yayıncılık, 2003), p. 292.

¹⁶⁶ After the actions started, many foreign broadcast organizations came to the area in front of Galatasaray High School to report news. Many international delegations visiting Turkey visited Galatasaray, some delegations came only for solidarity with the Saturday Mothers. The Turkey's Human Rights Record had a separate page relating to the Saturday Mothers. In addition to these, the Irish rock group U2 composed a song for Fehmi Tosun, who was one of the lost persons, and Sezen Aksu wrote a song for the mothers (Tanrıkulu, p.292). On 31st August 1996, the German-French joint TV channel Arte broadcast a 28 minute documentary on Saturday Mothers titled "The Nutty Women of Istanbul", directed by the famous documentary director Bernard Debord. This documentary, which was widely appreciated in Germany and France, then got the great prize in ...FIPA Festival. On 26th October 1996, Saturday sit-ins started in various cities of the world. Amnesty International held simultaneous sit-ins in various cities such as Paris, Berlin, Sidney and London for solidarity with Saturday Mothers. In addition to all these, the deputies of the period visited the area in front of Galatasaray High School to support the sit-ins. Women's groups, professional chambers, human rights organizations, trade unions, parties and other non-governmental organizations participate in many sit-ins. See Tanrıkulu, 2003, *Ibid.*, pp. 281-285.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 291.

The first reason given for the choice of Istiklal Street and the area in front of Galatasaray High School as the area of action is that the street is a crowded, central place, accommodating diverse people. Nearly all of the interviewed relatives mentioned Istiklal Street as being central in both physical and social terms. Among the main reasons for the selection of the street as the area of action are the transportation facility due to its physical status, possibility of traveling by only one vehicle from nearly each location of Istanbul, the presence of a very active crowd due to the status of a social center and the presence of many organizations and establishments. Ali Ocak says that performing actions here would receive a much higher attention as Istiklal Street is a place with many intellectuals and organizations, with a highly active community.

“Now, first of all, it is a very busy street. Second, we thought we would raise more sensitivity if we had our actions in a place where there were many intellectuals, organizations and where the society was more active. We thought it was the best place, where everybody could hear and see us.”

After mentioning the vividness of the street, Gülşah Taaç states that the security forces did not let them have sit-ins in Kadıköy and Bakırköy. Hüsniye Ocak also mentions similar experiences.

“Our target was also Özgürlük Meydanı in addition to there. We also aimed Kadıköy as well, because these three were nice places, which would have an impact. The places we held our sit-ins were meaningful. We were taken under custody for many times in Bakırköy. We were also taken under custody in Kadıköy. But they beat up old mothers at there.”

Nearly all the relatives confirm that, although the security forces of the state used violence against the activists in Kadıköy and Bakırköy, they could not show the same attitude in the area in front of Galatasaray High School. These interviews lead us to conclude that Istiklal Street was chosen because it was a politically active place, beyond merely having the potential to gather various people. For these aspects, the security forces of the state can sometimes withdraw in their attempts to gain control of the space and can let the groups, which we may call counter-hegemonic, to have their places in the street.

In addition to the choice of Istiklal Street for actions, the choice of Galatasaray High School on the street leads to the explanation of the specific values of this area. In addition to being on Istiklal Street, it is on the crossroads, it enables access from various points, the street extends at this point providing space for those to have sit-ins, it is close to buildings with symbolic significance such as Galatasaray High School and Galatasaray Post Office; and these are the reasons for its choice as an area of action. Ali Ocak tells that the post office to the opposite of the square was also important for the choice of the area in front of Galatasaray High School and that they slowly established their existence in the square in processes for mailing letters from this post office to the prime minister, president and the deputies.

“Throughout this period, when we performed activities and press statements for Hasan, it was the most important point. There, many actions such as sending many wires, mails to the assembly, Prime Ministry and even Presidency took place. Then we thought about this and we started to have such activities with the support of the relatives of the lost people.”

Hüsniye Ocak adds that Galatasaray High School is a historical building with an impression in people’s minds and that the places aimed initially were all meaningful places.

To sum up, the main reason to choose Galatasaray High School as an area for action turns out to be the fact that it is conceived as the center of Istiklal Street. It is physically central and it also ensures the activity necessary to be a center. Nearly all the activists mention that the street is crowded, that all types of people passed through the street, that it is an area with a tourist population, and that it is very close to many organizations and establishments; they see all these as factors ensuring the permanency and extension of the actions. Moreover, when we examine the area by a smaller scale, they mention that the area in front of the high school is preferred because of the importance of Galatasaray High School as a historical building, the influence of the other buildings around, such as the high school and post office, the facility of the transportation and extension of the street at this point.

When studied within the framework of the concept Thirdspace, it may be claimed that the reason for the street and area in front of Galatasaray High School to enable such a type of ‘transgression’ and ‘resistance’ originates from the potentials of the street. Some characteristics of Istiklal Street, which we have examined in details in the first part of this analysis and the influence of these characteristics on the political activity of the street, were confirmed by the data obtained during the interviews.

CHAPTER 4

'THIRDSPACE OF POLITICAL CHOICE:' RESISTANCE OF SATURDAY MOTHERS

From then on, they were out in the streets. The street meant politicization and getting to know the life as it is, no matter what happened or what one did. The street meant seeing. The mothers of the prisoners were not only out in the streets; they were in the streets and in action.

E. Temelkuran. In *Kızım Oğlum Devletim*

I could never speak. You know, I am not so bold. Rıdvan sometimes used to ask me, mother, why don't you defend yourself? Err, I don't know, I got these manners from my parents. I mean, my mother was like that, our families were like that, and we were used to it. Moreover, I cannot talk a bit to the faces of men. I get very embarrassed... I talk if necessary. It's not my job to talk. My children talk when they are with me, I can't talk.

A. Karakoç.

The subtitles, which enable us to examine the position of the Saturday Mothers, as ‘thirdspace of political choice,’ are the ‘multiple oppression’ suffered by the mothers and the ‘multiple identities’ that they have. Under the two headings that we have mention at previous chapter, at first, the ‘multiple oppression’ that the mothers were subjected to will be mentioned. The mothers, who were subject to oppression not only in terms of class relations but also relations arising out of ethnic and gender relations, illustrate the variety of oppression as defined by Soja and hooks. Then, it will be examined how the mothers’ identities changed during the demonstrations, which they started out with their traditional roles of being mothers, in relation with the concept of ‘multiple identity.’ What is noted here is not that the identities of the mothers were transformed into resisters; but that, the mothers had these two identities at the same time. Further, as the conclusion of this chapter, this alternative style of Saturday Mothers that will be established, as a ‘thirdspace of political choice’ and the relation of such activity style with Istiklal Street will be mentioned. This reciprocal relationship between the resistance of Saturday Mothers and Istiklal Street will be analyzed with the references to spatialization of ‘identity politics.’



Fig. 4.1. Aclan Uraz, The Area in front of Galatasaray High School,

Cumartesi Anneleri Fotoğrafları

(İstanbul: Çağ Yayıncılık, 1997).

4.1. MULTIPLE OPPRESSION OF SATURDAY MOTHERS

By the order above, we may start to investigate the activities of the Saturday Mothers and the relation of this activity style with Soja's Thirdspace concept. 'Multiple oppression' on these women can be visible by examining their demographic identities. When the socio-cultural identities of the women are studied, it is seen that most of them were born in Southeast, in villages of cities, where Extraordinary State (*'Olağanüstü Hal'* in Turkish) was announced; and they mostly have Turkish, Shiite or Kurd identities. Majority of them have no education. Many of them were made married by the will of their family at very early ages like 14-15 and they have many children, having been mothers when very young. Although this is the profile for the majority, there are other women born in other cities -like Çanakkale or Istanbul. For many, the common point in their lives is the experience of migration; they migrated in order to provide better education for their children, to find jobs and sometimes because of the pressures they faced in their villages. When their socio-economic levels are considered, it is found that these women, mostly from the lower classes, settled in slums of Istanbul after migration. The city life not only exploits them in terms of gendered exploitation such as housework, child care, field work, which they had known and been accustomed to before, but also create new challenges for them. Mothers now realize the struggle to make a living and they have to manage their houses as well as being direct parts of the manufacture process by jobs such as doing textile pieceworks at home. When all these demographic identity information are studied, within the framework of our subject, we may assert that the mothers were subject to a multidirectional oppression and exploitation because of both their low socio-economic level of income and the discrimination originating from gender and ethnicity. This argument, brought forward by the examination of the written sources relating to Saturday Mothers, has been confirmed during the interviews with the relatives of the lost people. According to the data obtained as a result of the conversations, the mothers are exposed to a multidimensional oppression due to their gender, ethnic identities and class positions.

4.1.1. Oppression rooted in ‘Gender’

The first type of oppression that we will mention is oppression due to gender, which becomes perceivable in some women by various restrictions such as not being able to talk and not being able to open their faces when there are men around, not being able to leave the house without being accompanied by men. Asiye Karakoç expresses the uneasiness that she felt for being together with men while telling about the distress she faced during the actions.

“I always used to take photos with me. I made no sounds. You know, I am not so bold. Rıdvan sometimes used to tell me, “Mom, why do you not defend yourself?” I do not; this is how I have been brought up by my parents. I mean, my mother was like this; our families were like this is the way we are used to things. I cannot say anything when there are men around. I am very embarrassed. This is my nature. I do not know how. I am embarrassed, very embarrassed. I mean, I cannot speak to every man. Only when I have to. For example, when I visit doctors, there I talk. I can not talk to everybody. I talk only if necessary. It is not my business to talk. My children talk when they are with me, I cannot.”

The fact that Karakoç never talked when there were men around until the actions shows that she was subjected to a form of oppression, which may be explained by gender-based relations. She never talked when there were men around due to the way she was brought up, primarily because she was a woman. Karakoç frequently mentions gender-based limitations in the rest of her conversation. The fact that she could not leave the house without accompanied by a man, besides not being able to talk with men, provides another example of such case. Karakoç says that her husband would have never permitted her to participate in the actions if she had been living with her husband, and then, she says that one of the reasons for her quitting the actions was her son’s jealousy. “My son is also very jealous. He does not let women to go out” she says. In the course of the conversation, we find out that this oppression against going out was not just a pressure, but it is also adopted by Karakoç.

“Last night my daughter-in-law came and she said, ‘Come on mom, let us go to the park and buy a watermelon.’ I said, ‘I can not come even if you kill me. How can I go and buy watermelon? I cannot go to the grocer.’ Some women can go freely. They visit places and consume pips and beverages etc. I have never opened my mouth, eaten or drunken in my life. My children say, ‘Mom, you never bring us things.’ I swear I am embarrassed.... My children used to want me to bring them pips when they were children. I used to tell them, ‘I swear I am embarrassed, go and get yourselves.’ I have such a nature. I can not go anywhere by myself.”

Karakoç also mentions that she never opened her face when there were men around, besides not being able to speak to men and not being able to go out without men. “I was embarrassed there. Hasan told me to uncover my mouth. I can never uncover my mouth and my face. I was very embarrassed. He said, ‘Mama, you are going to talk. You will talk, even if with two or three words, but you are going to talk.’” Asiye Karakoç, who has uncovered her face for just once, to speak during an action, emphasizes that she tried to hide herself so that men would not see her face:

“I used to hold up Rıdvan’s photo so that I would not be seen. I was ashamed of myself. I wanted nobody to see me, if people saw the photo, it was enough for me. I was embarrassed. We went to Rıdvan’s grave once. I took up a flag. I did not even see what the flag was. My face was not seen.”

It may be asserted that the manner of bringing up, direct prohibitions and social pressures are significantly observable in some mothers participating in the actions. Gülşah Taaç interprets her life as slavery when she talks about her life.

“They made me marry and I went. I went to a poor, impoverished house. A horribly impoverished house. They used us like slaves. I was the only young married woman in a single house. They used to think like that. Like, let making you marry when you are young, so that you can not rebel even if they oppress you. Neither against your husband, your mother-in-law, father-in-law; nor against your parents. They make you marry. You marry without being introduced. This is how we got married. Of course, we had children. Always with respect, with tolerance. We never rebelled and resisted against anything. We were used like slaves. Now I make it out, we were slaves then. I mean, I used to feel like that, like a slave. Then we had children, 4 of them, 5 of them and then we came here.”

Taaç emphasizes the gender-based oppression that they have been subjected while referring to education.

“They did not let us go to school. Because, you can not have an education if you are a girl. Girls cannot have education. I was very enthusiastic to have education. I used to dream about the school in our village, Aşkale. My father did not let me go there. I used to read books in my dreams. I learnt it by myself. I was so enthusiastic. Then, with that poverty, I took my children and came here. I hoped to make all my children have education. We came here. We built ourselves a house, we provided the means. We had our children go to school.”

Moreover, the women are quite busy with housework. Many women think that one of the reasons for their quitting the protests was that they started to neglect their responsibilities at home. For example, Elmas Eren says she had to quit actions because she had to look after her mother-in-law, who had become sick: “Then my mother-in-law was paralyzed, I looked after her for 8 years. I could go to actions total 5 or 6 times during that period. Because I had no time.” Birsen Gülünay mentions the difficulties of leaving children at Home and going to actions.

“There were such times when my children were fed up with my participation in the actions every week... They did not let me go. They used to lock the door; they used to hide my shoes, my identity card. Just to prevent me. In many families, similar circumstances were experienced. Many had to look after their grandchildren.”

According to the data obtained during the interviews, it may be claimed that a considerable part of the oppression faced by the mothers was gender-based oppression. Both the direct prohibitions and restrictions they are subjected and the burden of work that they are subjected due to their identities as mothers make this oppression visible.

4.1.2. Oppression rooted in Ethnicity

Some of the women are also oppressed due their ethnic identities. These women, some of whom had to migrate because of their ethnic identities, are also oppressed in Istanbul because of their ethnic identity. These oppressions sometimes have visible reflections. For example, Asiye Karakoç tells how she is called ‘*gavur*’ (a Turkish phrase used to look down on non-Muslim folk) and why the young boys departing for their military service are seen off just in front of her door and she is

uncomfortable about it.¹⁶⁸ Karakoç tells that they are oppressed severely because of their ethnic identity:

“Rıdvan had no fault. Rıdvan’s only fault was that he was a Kurd. We Kurds raise our children with such a trouble. I said one is fighting for survival under torture, the other at home. I do not know why. We are also human beings. Why do we have to suffer so much torture, I do not know. We are also human beings.”

Moreover, Emine Ocak and Karakoç frequently told during the interviews that they did not know Turkish very well, that they improved it during the actions but still they had difficulties speaking it. The invalidity of one’s mother tongue and frequent banning of such language may become a limitation for the freedom of expression for the mothers (Fig. 4.2).



Fig. 4.2. Asiye Karakoç and Emine Ocak, Aclan Uraz, *Cumartesi Anneleri Fotoğrafları* (İstanbul: Çağ Yayıncılık, 1997).

¹⁶⁸ Berat Günçikan, *Cumartesi Anneleri* (İstanbul : İletişim Yayınları, 1996), p. 52).

4.1.3. Oppression rooted in Class Status

In some cases, this type of oppression may become a more latent form with forms of oppression based on gender and class status. None of the interviewed women have had a regular income and social security throughout their lives. Nearly all of them live in squatter houses (*'gecekondu'* in Turkish) of Istanbul, they cannot benefit from any opportunities of the city. They are not able to take care of their health problems –they all suffer similar health problems due to both their ages and the violence used by the security forces during the actions- because of the lack of economic means. These women, all of whom migrated to Istanbul, are also exposed to oppression in class terms, Gülünay summarizes the economic status of the mothers as follows:

“We are all poor, working people. There are those visiting us. I mean, people you consider as your family, as your parents, who are sick. Sometimes people could not come because they were unable to find the money to travel. Each lived in different, far districts. I mean, people had difficulties in coming. Of course, people provided monetary aid to Saturday’s Mothers in campaigns, solidarity campaigns in Europe, considering this economic condition. This really provide some relief for the people. I mean, people had the chance to find enough money for travel, they had to chance to come.”

This diverse oppression – being oppressed relations that we refer above may simultaneously exist for Saturday Mothers and may constitute a more comprehensive and multilateral mechanism. As mentioned by Soja in his book, these mechanisms of oppression may exist simultaneously and may become a new and comprehensive means of oppression by their mutual interrelation.¹⁶⁹

4.2. MULTIPLE IDENTITIES OF SATURDAY MOTHERS

Another subtitle that enables us to study the actions of Saturday Mothers as a ‘thirdspace of political choice’ is the ‘multiple identities’ that the mothers have. ‘Multiple identities’ basically originates from the ‘multiple form of oppression’ that the mothers are exposed to, as we mentioned above. The social status of the mothers, in terms of gender, ethnicity and class, lead them to have diverse

identities simultaneously. In fact many different identities may be used together to define the mothers. Like Alevi woman, Kurdish woman or poor, working class woman.

Another reason for the multiple identities of the mothers is that they combine the identities of the traditional motherhood and the resistor. It may be said that the mothers assumed traditional identities of being a mother before starting the activities. Fisher, in her book, analyzed the activities of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo in Argentina, and emphasized that the mothers there had common experiences and concerns peculiar to being women traditionally. According to Fisher, this is the only skill that the women, most of whom participate in social and political life for the first time.¹⁷⁰ When the same identity analysis is performed for Saturday Mothers, who are very much like the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, it may be observed that the concept of motherhood is emphasized again. According to Temelkuran¹⁷¹, many say “I was there as a mother.”¹⁷² The struggle they fought was their first political experience. Like many other housewives, the Mothers also thought their roles in life were restricted to being housewives and mothers for their children. The houses they were in before the activities were not spaces where they fought against the system; to the contrary, these were the places that they provided the continuance of the system by their general roles of motherhood. Eren tells her interest in politics before the start of the Saturday sit-ins as follows: “Neither my husband, nor me or my children knew about politics. Then something happened to us.” Similarly, Gülünay also defines herself as an apolitical person before the actions:

“Of course I knew my husband had a political life but I had no idea that opponents were taken under custody and made lost in Turkey. Because, my husband was a political person, I was an apolitical person. I had such a life. I kept on my life as a housewife. I never imagined that my husband would be

¹⁶⁹ Edward Soja, *Thirdspace*, (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), p. 91.

¹⁷⁰ Jo Fisher, *Mothers of the Disappeared* (London: Zed Books, 1989), p. 18.

¹⁷¹ For analyses relating to Saturday Mothers, I benefited from Ece Temelkuran’s book titled, ‘Oğlum, Kızım, Devletim,’ which mostly tells “The Mothers of the Prisoners.” Although “The Mothers of Prisoners” was a different group from “Saturday Mothers,” their activities were many times common and made by solidarity. The data relating to “The Mothers of the Prisoners,” who participated in activities in front of Galatasaray High School, have very important clues for our thesis.

¹⁷² Ece Temelkuran, *Oğlum, Kızım, Devletim* (Istanbul: Metis Yayınları, 1997), p. 13.

made lost under custody. But I sometimes worried that he would be shot during a conflict or that he would be arrested. I mean, anything could happen at any time but I never imagined being lost.”

Taaç tells she did not know anything about politics before she started to participate in the actions and she participated in them as her son wanted her to do so.

“I did not know anything. Of course I was very sorry, I could not do anything except being sorry. At last my son said, ‘Mom, you can not do anything crying here and leaving here in a collapsed state. Go, do what other are doing for me, for us’.”

As explained in all the written resources on the mothers, Saturday’s Mothers were in harmony with the traditional identity of motherhood before they started the sit-ins. They define themselves before the actions as “apolitical” or people “not knowing anything about politics”.

However, it may be asserted that participating in actions caused significant changes in the motherhood role (Fig. 4.3). According to Fisher, the entrance of mothers into the public domain transformed a force, which was known as conservative in the society before, into an opponent one. Participating in actions of Mothers of Plaza de Mayo led the Argentinean mothers to redefine the roles of traditional motherhood and to change their perceptions on their roles within the family and the society.¹⁷³ The understanding of the mothers changed as to the society they live in and their places within the society. The struggle, which they started to look for their children, turned into a permanent struggle against injustice.¹⁷⁴ According to Torre as many other critics,

“This case illustrates the process that leads from the embodiment of traditional roles and assigned scripts as wives and mothers to emergence of active, transformative subject, in spite of – or perhaps because of – the threat

¹⁷³ Jo Fisher, 1989, *Ibid.*, p. 18.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 171.

or actually of physical violence that act of protest attract in autocratic societies.”¹⁷⁵

Temelkuran also states in her book that the most important common point between the “Mothers of the Prisoners” and the mothers in Argentina is that the mothers of the prisoners turned the politicization process, which they experienced in a very short period and at a very high rate, into a permanent consciousness.¹⁷⁶

“From then on, they were out in the streets. The street meant politicization and getting to know the life as it is, no matter what happened or what one did. The street meant seeing. The mothers of the prisoners were not only out in the streets, they were in the streets and in action.”¹⁷⁷

The mothers learnt many things from the street and being in the street. In an interview by Nadire Mater, from BIA News Network, one may very easily understand that the mothers adopted a political identity and they were not interested in the problems of their children alone. After two members of HADEP became lost under custody, Hanım Tosun, one of the Saturday Mothers, said, “Maybe, if actions in Galatasaray continued, they would not have gotten lost!” She says, “I can not help asking myself if losing under custody is restarting. The state has to clarify the event of Tanış and Deniz.”¹⁷⁸ These words point out that the mothers, or the spouses, believe in the need for struggle, even if they lost all the hope for the loss of their own children or spouses. At this point, we find out that mothers were at a point that was different from the traditional identity of a mother or a spouse.

Taaç is one of the mothers, who has undergone a radical identity transformation. Taaç states that, while she was completely against the actions before; she has been participating in all the actions relating to the lost people and prisons. She does not even feel offended for the charges she faced for such actions: “We had a declaration in Sultanahmet for F-type prisons, now they charged us. Three of us. Something like one and a half years or two years. I do not care. In this way or

¹⁷⁵ Susanne Torre, "Claming the Public Space: Mothers of Plaza de Mayo," in *Gender Space Architecture*, eds. Jane Rendell, Barbara Penner, Iain Borden (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 141.

¹⁷⁶ Ece Temelkuran, 1997, *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

that, we go there, we may as well live in them.” In the course of the conversation, she even says she does not shrink from being defined as a ‘member of an organization’.

“They finally brought me before the court for being a member of an organization. I told the prosecutor, Mr. prosecutor, how can I be a member of an organization. Maybe I could be if I were younger. But now I am old, I can not even see. He asked me whether I would join if I were young. I said, of course I would join. I said, because we are involved in good things. But I said, I am a bit old, I can not always join.”

However, the most important point to be cared in our context here is that, the identities of the mothers were not transformed from motherhood into the identities of the resisters in its traditional meaning through the process of the actions. The point, which drew attention during the interviews, was that the mothers never gave up their identities as mothers while performing these actions. When a detailed study is made on the identities of these mothers, it is found that many of them have no relations with any of the organizations; to the contrary, they have quite ordinary lives, with daily neighborhood relations. These women, who came out into the public domain together with the process of actions and who expressed their own voices so loudly, made themselves present in the streets by the identities of this private domain and the language that they created there.

The words of Karakoç, the mother of a lost person, shows that the existences of the mothers there did not fit to generally broad definitions. Karakoç, who had never spoken in the presence of men until she became a Saturday Mother, made a press statement relating to her son, Rıdvan, who was lost under custody, during actions in Turkish, which she could speak very little and she opened her face in the presence of men for the first time in her entire life in order to make such press statement. During Saturday actions, Karakoç who did not even go to the market from her house until the actions, did many things, which she did not regard suitable to herself before. Being in the street, sitting next to other people, making press statement for her lost son requires a very important change for Karakoç. Now, her voice is quite political.

¹⁷⁸ Nadire Mater, BIA Net, see <http://www.bianet.org>

“I made speeches. I made three speeches in total. I told them: The swift forces raided our house twice for Rıdvan. They did not arrest him. I told them that they had told me, they told me Let Rıdvan come and surrender, if he does not surrender we will kill him wherever we find him. I said I had told so. But Rıdvan committed no crime. If Rıdvan had committed any crimes, they should have charged him. I can not translate them into Turkish easily. I told then they should have sentenced Rıdvan. Why did they kill him? I said, I do not know what sort of a law this is. This is how I talked.”

Another mother of a lost person, Eren, while defining herself before the actions, frequently states that she never had any relations with such things before. While mentioning her involvement with the actions, she even says, “Of course, you are obliged to relate to these families. You have to resort to whatever means you have in hand (*‘denize düşen yılanı sarılır’* in Turkish). You become involved whether you wish or not.” She sees those starting the actions as the last means to resort. However, these ideas are completely changed after the actions: “Then I was very pleased with the friends. Very nice actions were made. Of action, I do not mean very excessive things, but everybody could express whatever she wanted as a mother and as a spouse.” While the common point that Eren could find between herself and other relatives of the lost people had been her lost children, a common language and friendship developed between her and the others during the action process. Eren now sees the problems of others as justified and is interested in them. On one hand, she says that she did not go there to make politics and any politics that she would be making after that age would be of no use; while, on the other hand, she emphasizes that she now knows who’s right and who’s wrong, doing the best she can for this purpose.

“I did not go there making politics. No good can come out of my politics after this age. For this reason, I did not go there as a political person. But you can see the right and the wrong. You have to see them. You see the one who is right and the one who is wrong.”

The way she defines herself is fit neither for somebody who does not know anything about politics, nor for an active resistor. These ambivalent characteristics of Eren illustrate ‘multiple identities’ that are defined by Soja.¹⁷⁹ Hanım Tosun, who lost her spouse under custody, defines the violence that she was subjected to

¹⁷⁹ Edward Soja, 1996, *Ibid.*, p. 91.

during the actions and the way she resisted such violence by saying, “They grabbed our hair, they never left it go. Then I decided to have my hair cut and did it. I mean, I even had my hair cut because of them;” thus reminding how important her hair was. Tosun, who was between the identity of traditional womanhood and the identity of a resistor, was sad because she had to have her long hair, an indispensable element of being a woman, cut for these actions. Gülünay, who lost her spouse, defined herself as an “ordinary, apolitical person” before the actions, while she said she was more sensitive to social problems after the actions. Gülünay explains the transformation she experienced during the actions as follows:

“Then, after a long process, I started to be more sensitive about social problems. I mean, I started to comprehend the political situation in Turkey after I talked to people. In fact, it was a means. I mean, people can go out in the streets and can develop sensitivities when they are hurt. People do not become sensitive and do not act for anything unless something happens to them. I acted with other people. Because I understood their pains. Their pains were my pains as well. I mean, I started to be with the relatives of the other lost people with the idea that our pains were common.”

Gülünay’s words prove that no longer she was interested in finding her husband alone. She was interested in the relatives of the other lost people as well, and she was sensitive about the social problems, she went out into the streets for this reason.

During the interviews, it was found that the identities of these women, who gained political consciousness and who changed their lifestyles thoroughly during the process of seeking their children or spouses, differentiated from the identities of traditional motherhood during the actions.

What is in question here is that, the mothers simultaneously have the identities of both motherhood and political resisters. The identities of the mothers in this case fit neither the traditional motherhood model nor the resistor model. The mothers broke the public-private dichotomy by preserving motherhood identities.¹⁸⁰

¹⁸⁰ Sarah A. Radcliffe, “Women’s Place/ El Lugar De Mujeres: Latin America and Politics of Gender Identity,” in *Place and the Politics of Identity*, eds. Michael Keith and Steve Pile (USA and Canada: Routledge, 1993), p. 189.

Radcliffe, in his article in which she examines the mothers of the lost people in Argentina, states that the actions of the mothers are established within an area where the ideological hegemony of the military regime is valid, in other words, where the motherhood is valid. “Female mobilization took place in and around particular places which became significant (in real and ideological terms) under the military regime: places which had been outside the frames of reference of political meaning previously.”¹⁸¹

“Of course, the Mothers’ community of identity developed in opposition to the state’s treatment of their children, and not in support of the state’s rhetoric about the family. However, in the imagery, practices and assumptions about the content of and the boundaries between ‘public’ and ‘private,’ certain continuities exist between the military’s basic cell’ of the family and the Mothers’ activism. Thus, the link between mothers and children was perceived to be a direct, unmediated one begun at birth.”¹⁸²

The situation in Argentina, combined with the respect for the status of the mothers, enabled a strong political resistance, as pointed out by Torre as well.¹⁸³ The form of the rebellion surprised the army. The army had largely established its moral authority by showing itself as the only force to defend Christianity and family values against the threat of ‘Marxist subversives.’ The image that they had formed together with the church, the symbol of stability and order in family life, in other words the identity of motherhood, now stood as opposed to them.¹⁸⁴ Similarly, Saturday Mothers also came out into the field of action with the same identity of motherhood. However, differentiations were formed in their perception of their identities. By the theoretical support of the ‘multiple identity,’ forming as a result of the interaction and the coexistence of all these emphasizes and both identities, we may be able to define the manner of action of the mothers as ‘thirdspace of political choice,’ as defined by Soja.

It may be observed that ‘thirdspace of political choice,’ provides a suitable point of view while examining the actions of Saturday Mothers, especially considering the relations of the actions with space. As we have pointed out in the second

¹⁸¹ Ibid., p. 107.

¹⁸² Ibid., p. 108.

¹⁸³ Susanne Torre, 2000, Ibid., p. 142.

¹⁸⁴ Jo Fisher, 1989, Ibid., p. 119.

chapter, if we consider the relation with ‘identity politics’ established by Soja while using the term, ‘thirdspace of political choice,’ this ascertainment will enable us to study the actions of Saturday Mothers within the context of spatialization of ‘identity politics’ in later stages of our study. As we have mentioned before, multiple forms of oppression and multiple and contradictory identities of the mothers which can be defined as the issues of ‘new identity politics,’ provide a coherent background to emerge the new form of resistances. As Radcliffe shows women entered into new locations (the street and the main squares) and different political positions in the changed political context.¹⁸⁵ Their political position as described by hooks was the thirdspace of political choice, because firstly of multiple forms of oppression derived from their ethnicity and gender, secondly multiple and contradictory identities between the motherhood and resister, and lastly their new form of resistance. Resistance of Saturday Mothers as the new form of resistance which is highly related with their association with the space, can illustrate the spatialization of ‘new identity politics.’ We can improve our arguments about the Istiklal Street through analyzing the relationship between this new form of resistance, which highly depends on ‘new identity politics,’ and spatiality (Fig. 4.4).

Soja and Hooper state the real-and–imagined ‘other spaces’ as ‘the new sites for struggle’ and as the necessity of interconnected communities of resistance. They improve hooks’ argument about multiplicity of spaces. According to them new cultural politics of difference and identity are spatialized from the start.

“This creative (re)spatialization is more than an appealing metaphor or abstraction. It is a vital discursive turn that both grounds the new cultural politics and facilitates its conceptual re-visioning around the empowerment of multiplicity, the construction of combinatorial rather than competitively fragmented and separated communities of resistance.”¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵ Sarah A. Radcliffe, 1993, *Ibid.*, p. 102.

¹⁸⁶ Edwards Soja and Barbara Hooper, “The Spaces that Difference Makes: Some Notes on the Geographical Margins of the New Cultural Politics,” in *Place and the Politics of Identity*, eds. Michael Keith and Steve Pile (USA and Canada: Routledge, 1993), p. 189.



Fig. 4.3. Mothers in Resistance, Aclan Uraz, *Cumartesi Anneleri Fotoğrafları* (İstanbul: Çağ Yayıncılık, 1997).



Fig. 4.4. Mothers in front of Galatasaray High School, Aclan Uraz, *Cumartesi Anneleri Fotoğrafları* (İstanbul: Çağ Yayıncılık, 1997).

4.3. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ‘IDENTITY POLITICS’ AND SPACE

It can be argued that this spatialization of ‘identity politics’ or spatialization of new cultural politics of difference evokes different sense of space. It is another spatiality without distinctions. It is another spatiality,

“which cannot be so neatly categorized and mapped, where the very distinction between mind and body, private and public space, and between who is inside or outside the boundaries of community, is obliterated and diffracted in a new cultural politics of real-and-imagined everyday life.”¹⁸⁷

As Keith and Pile put it correctly, there is a dynamic relationship between identity politics of place and the spatialized politics of identity. This discourse is grounded in particular notion of space.¹⁸⁸ A multiplicity of spatialities simultaneously present can emerge in the urban.¹⁸⁹

The first is related with the effects of space during identification process. As Hetherington argues identity formation as a process of identification is a spatially situated process.¹⁹⁰ In our case, it can be argued that identity formation of Saturday Mothers during their resistance is highly affected by space. One of the ways in which the identities are transformed, is being in transgressive situations and lucid practices of resistance within place. Hetherington adds that performances in places constitute these practices that are effectual for identity formation. Transformation of the identity within the space is “the alternate ordering of identity.”¹⁹¹ According to this discourse, the key to the relation between identity formation and space is the actions of ‘transgression’ formed with the values specific to the space. If we go on studying the relation between the Saturday Mothers’ actions and Istiklal Street with this point of view, we have to re-emphasize the identity transformation process that we mentioned before. However, the basic point emphasized here is not the ‘multiple and contradictory identities,’ adopted by the mothers within the process of the actions, but the

¹⁸⁷ Edwar Soja, 1996, *Ibid.*, p. 116.

¹⁸⁸ Michael Keith and Steve Pile, “The Politics of Place, The Place of Politics,” in *Place and the Politics of Identity*, eds. Michael Keith and Steve Pile (USA and Canada: Routledge, 1993), p. 20.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹⁹⁰ Kevin Hetherington, *Expressions of Identities: Space, Performance and Politics* (London: Sage Publications, 1998), p. 16.

influence of the space, that is Istiklal Street on the formation of such identities. The fact that such a manner of action could last for 200 weeks by the potentials of Istiklal Street and Galatasaray High School is not a very usual case for our society. Within this context, the matter is not only experiencing identity change by coming out into the public domain but also experiencing an identity transformation due to being involved in a ‘transgression’ activity within public domain.

Nearly all of the mothers to be interviewed had never been to any actions before. Moreover, a great majority had never been to Istiklal Street or to the area in front of Galatasaray High School before. The ‘transgressive situations and lucid practices of resistance within place,’ as specified by Hetherington as a means for identity transformation, are formed by the resistance of the mothers within a public domain. For Hetherington “identities are transformed in ‘marginal’ places.” He argues that these places are the sites of cultural and political resistance in which process of identity formation is reproduced.¹⁹² Within this context, the infrastructure as supplied by the space is very influential on the transformation of traditional motherhood identities into the ‘multiple and contradictory identities’ as we mentioned before. As we studied in detail in the previous chapter, the potentials of Istiklal Street enable the formation of such ‘transgressive situations and lucid practices of resistance.’

The second relationship between ‘identity politics’ and ‘space’ is related with the critical exchange of different political codes and different social actors for the resistance or transgression within the space. As we have mentioned at the introductory chapter, the use of space is a very important apparatus for the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic powers. This Gramscian perspective has been moved from the subject of the struggle between the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic powers over space through the arguments of Edward Soja. Soja and Hooper agree with this Gramscian perspective with the argument that “the appropriation and use of space are political acts.”¹⁹³ However, he is concerned to

¹⁹¹ Ibid., p. 103.

¹⁹² Ibid., p. 122.

¹⁹³ Edwards Soja and Barbara Hooper, 1993, Ibid., p. 190.

understand not only the contestation between hegemonic and counter-hegemonic powers but also the contestation between different marginalized groups within space. The effects of 'identity politics' over the debates around the space provide this new vision about the contestation between the different social actors. According to this vision that can also be defined as Thirdspace perspective, appropriation and use of the space is a political project, because of the radical openness of the space. It is "the place where one's radical subjectivity can be seen and practiced in association with other radical subjectivities."¹⁹⁴ As Soja expresses, this is the spatiality of new identity politics. It has been "searched for but never discovered in modernist identity politics." To put it in another way, "it is a spatiality where radical subjectivities can multiply, connect and combine in polycentric communities of identity and resistance." It is the spatiality for the contestation between different social actors to provide the strategic political alliances between these "polycentric communities of identity and resistance." As Soja and Hooper put it correctly, it is "a spatiality of inclusion rather than exclusion."¹⁹⁵

If we study the actions of Saturday Mothers within this context, it is possible to mention the area in front of Galatasaray High School as one where diverse social actors come together. In this experience, lived for 200 weeks, the relatives of the lost people, the daily users of the street, the tourists moving between Sultan Ahmet and Taksim Squares, those visiting the non-governmental organizations in the streets or the lane, shopkeepers of the street, media members, police officers all met in front of Galatasaray High School. Istiklal Street or the area in front of Galatasaray High School has the potentials to ensure the coexistence of all these identities. The coexistence of all these diverse identities played an important role for the permanence of the actions. During the interviews, many clues were found for the formation of "polycentric communities of identity and resistance," as specified by Soja.

In the process of studying the area in front of Galatasaray High School as a space enabling the coexistence of diverse social actors and political codes during the

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 191.

actions of Saturday Mothers, the coexistence of, respectively, the daily users of the street, tourists, the shopkeepers of the street, media members, other political groups on the square and finally the security forces of state, as well as Saturday Mothers, will be examined. All these diverse political groups and identities could come together in front of Galatasaray High School during Saturday sit-ins. During the examination, after mutual relation established by each group on the square with others is examined, the spatial counterpart of this relation will be provided within the borders of the area in front of Galatasaray High School, on a micro scale when compared to the Istiklal Street analysis in the previous chapter. What is aimed by this study is to find the spatial counterpart of simultaneous coming together of the diverse social actors in the same area within the process of spatialization of 'identity politics.' By this study, it is aimed to exemplify that the relationship between 'identity politics' and 'space' has a counterpart in 'material' or 'real' space. The physical counterpart of the potential of the space to bring diverse social actors together and the strategic development of it became visible during the actions of the Saturday Mothers. In this context, we may specify the specific contribution of our study as attempting to address and exemplify the physical aspect of the process of 'identity politics' for spatialization.

If we study the process of coming together of social actors in an order, we may first mention the daily users of the street. The reactions of those passing by the high school when they see the mothers are important in terms of understanding this interaction. According to the data obtained during the interviews, some of the ordinary users of the street were surprised when they saw mothers and wanted to get more information (Fig. 4.5). Hüsniye Ocak says that their sitting there created question marks in the minds of the people, that they wanted to get more information. According to the data received from the interviews, some users of the street supported the actions by standing or sitting with the mothers after they learnt the reasons for such sit-ins.

“When we used to sit there, people used to ask why we sat there of course. There were people who asked why we were sitting there and why we were waiting there. I mean, they used to look at us, why we wanted to sit there.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 192.

We used to say, 'My brother is missing or my husband is missing.' They used to say, 'Oh my God.' We said, we sat there because we wanted their killers. This was our natural right. This made people curious. They used to read about it. They asked, where they could find information, how they could learn."

Pointing out that sitting-ins were attracting the attention of passer-bys, Tosun says that nearly everybody stopped to take a look, but fewer people came to sit with them when there were a lot of policemen. "They did not sit although they wanted to. But they came and stood with us. They did not sit but they approached, the people supported us by standing with us." Gülünay also says the daily users of the street were quite interested in them, establishing a mutual communication.

"People watched. They watched with interest. There were even those who used to take photos or shoot films. I mean, as the actions went on, people who had work to do there got to know us. They knew that we were the Saturday's Mother. They knew what our troubles were. People knew, for whom we were there, for what purpose we were there."

The diverse social actors passing by Istiklal Street come across the Saturday Mothers while passing in front of Galatasaray High School and as mentioned by Fyfe, they are also in a social contestation by being present in the street. For him, "streets can be an active medium through which social identities are created and contested."¹⁹⁶ Similarly, Istiklal Street provides an environment, in which social identities come together, struggle, transform and multiply.

The spatial expression of this coexistence was realized by the coexistence of the daily users of the street and activists in the area in front of Galatasaray High School, in a manner not to prevent each other's existence. According to the data obtained from the interviews, these diverse identities did not intervene in each other's presence on this street. One of the reasons for the activists to prefer the area in front of Galatasaray High School as the place for sit-ins is that the street extends at this point and so, the sit-ins to be held here do not prevent the daily use of the street. In fact, all the activists mentioned that they showed great care not to prevent the traffic flow of the street or to barricade the tramway road during sit-

ins. All the relatives of the lost people stated that, when activists were crowded sufficiently to barricade the road completely, the crowd dispersed in the direction of Taksim and Tünel Squares and did not prevent passage from the street. The activists, who specified the tramway road as the borders for their field of action, emphasized that, when dispersing in the direction of Taksim and Tünel Squares, they never barricaded the lane ends and the gate to the high school, and never prevented the daily usage. Taaç says,

“We used to sit alongside that metro path lengthwise. We did not cross the road. We used open the road for tramcar. When the tramcar came, we used to open the road. Then the tramcar passed and went ... We used to turn this side upwards. We moved upwards so that our people used to sit. The mothers, those holding photos, we used to sit in turns. This is how we used to do it. We did not barricade the street. Can we barricade the people, the tramcar, we can not.”

The sensitivity of everybody interviewed in this matter and their emphasis when asked to draw the borders for the field of action is an example of their sensitivity towards the existence of diverse social actors in the same space during their struggle to get hold of such place. Hüsnüye Ocak especially emphasizes: “We never barricaded the road. We never obstructed the road of the people. We also never obstructed the metro road. But, for a couple of times they sued us for barricading the metro road. That is absolutely a lie.” Similarly, it may also be stated that the users of the street in no way intervened in the activists during sit-ins. As mentioned above in short, the daily users of the street either started to communicate with the activists or did not react at all. The relatives of the lost people in the interviews stated that they received no negative reactions from the ordinary users of the street. While sit-ins were in progress on the high school side of tramway road in Istiklal Street, the normal flow of the street went on the other side.

It is a significant interactive process that not only the ordinary users of the street, but also the tourists started to communicate with the mothers when they saw them. In spite of the serious language problems, the tourists passing by the square

¹⁹⁶ Nicholas R. Fyfe, “Introduction: Reading the Street,” in *Images of the Street: Planning, Identity, and Control in Public Space*, ed. Nicholas R. Fyfe (London and New York: Routledge,

showed great interest in the actions. Hüsniye Ocak says "...those people showed so great an interest that it seemed as if they were felt guilty inside... they were very ashamed, they behaved as if they were guilty." Other relatives of the lost people also state that the tourists highly got involved and supported the actions. The fact that these people, who were away from their own geographical spheres, could support a political resistance in front of Galatasaray High School is closely related to the potential of Istiklal Street to gather these people, in other words, the tourists, the ordinary users and Saturday Mothers. As the spatial positioning of the passing-by tourists in the area in front of the high school is identical with the positioning of the daily users of the street, it is not separately dealt with.

The third group existing in the street is the street shopkeepers. It is quite difficult to provide a clear definition as to the reactions of the shopkeepers against the action. According to some relatives, the security forces of the state mentioned that the shopkeepers were uneasy about the sit-ins. However, Taaç says that she visited all the shopkeepers after such warnings by the security forces and that she learnt that there was no such uneasiness. Taaç says,

"They said the shopkeepers were bothered because of us. We went and visited each shopkeeper. We asked, 'So, are you bothered because of us?' Most said 'No, why should we be bothered? ... Why should we be bothered because a mother seeks for her child?'"

She adds that they were supported by the shopkeepers as well. Similarly, Eren tells that they were not supported by the shopkeepers in Kadıköy but the shopkeepers in Beyoğlu were different, they helped them, saying that the reason for this was that the shopkeepers in Beyoğlu had been in Istanbul for a very long time.

"The shop owners in Kadıköy became shop owners later. These people have been brought up when they were young. Old shop owners, they are, the shop owners of Beyoğlu. This is how we know it. Because we used to live there, too. Galatasaray, Beyoğlu, the shop owners there have been brought up like that. I mean, people who have been through many things, who know a lot about life."

We cannot draw any data from the interviews to specify whether the attitudes of the shopkeepers towards the actions were positive or negative. However, it becomes to assert that the shopkeepers were closely involved in the actions. In our

context, the fact that the sit-ins entered into the agenda of the shopkeepers enables mutual interaction and the gathering and interacting of diverse social factors in the same space. As pointed out by Daly: “In addition to having political, social, and cultural functions the street is a place where we confront the ‘other,’ people.”¹⁹⁷ Such was the condition for the shopkeepers as well. These ‘transgression’ and ‘resistance’ activities of the mothers in the street enabled them to be visible and to enter into the agenda of diverse social actors. As Keith and Pile put correctly, what is particular relevance here is “the cultural hybridity through which political codes of difference are crossed and transgressed through the process of syncretism rooted simultaneously imaginary and real spatialities.”¹⁹⁸

It may be asserted that presence of the daily users of the street, tourists, shopkeepers and Saturday Mothers in the same space during the actions was due to the mutual democratic tolerance of these diverse social actors. Although the security forces of the state claim that the shopkeepers were not content with the presence of the mothers in Istiklal Street, nearly all of the relatives interviewed stated that they received no negative reactions from the shopkeepers in this respect. On the other hand, it may be stated that the relatives of the lost people did not have a position to threaten the presence of the shopkeepers on the street throughout the actions. Due to the area they were positioned on the street, the activists could in no way present a threat to the presence of the shopkeepers.

In relation with the gathering of diverse social actors, meeting of media with Saturday Mothers is included in our subject. Of course, this subtitle, which may be the subject of a much more comprehensive study, may be studied as the coexistence of diverse social actors, who are impossible to come together, in public space within the limits of our research. The sit-ins in front of Galatasaray High School attracted great interest of the media and the encounter between these social actors ensured the mothers to become more visible before greater masses (Fig. 4.6). All the relatives of the lost people mentioned intense interest of media during interviews. Taaç, while mentioning the interest of media, says, “The media

¹⁹⁷ Gerald Daly, “Homelessness and the Street: Observations from Britain, Canada, and the United States,” in *Images of the Street: Planning, Identity, and Control in Public Space*, ed. Nicholas R. Fyfe (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 111.

was always with us, they always came, may God bless them (*'Allah razı olsun'* in Turkish).” Eren emphasizes that the actions could not continue without the press. The media members, who played an important role in the recognition of the actions then, represented a group between the security forces of the state and the activists in front of Galatasaray High School. As mentioned by some relatives of the lost people, they were attacked by the security forces of the state in some cases and they constituted a barrier to the violence towards the activists in others. Eren says:

“I swear, the press was very busy with us. They used to come very frequently. May God bless them; we were destroyed had it not been for the press. They always used to come. The journalists looked strange while running with us... when we were in Galatasaray, the press was always interested in us. Especially they were very interested in me, may God bless them. They always used to gather around me saying “Aunt, aunt, have you come?” But the press had no fault; it was all police’s fault. The police used to take the news from the press. Such things happened. The cameras were broken... They attacked them in the most violent way. They used to break the cameras, they used to do everything.”

It may be claimed that the positioning of the media members in front of Galatasaray High School took its shape according to the relative positioning of the security forces and Saturday Mothers. According to the statements of the activists, media members were sometimes able to enter into the area in front of Galatasaray High School, but at other times, they were subjected to the reaction and even violence of the police and were sent away from the area. According to the statements of Eren, police attacked the media members many times, breaking their cameras. Similarly, their presence in the area depends on the position of the activists, whom they wish to view, in the area. However, it may be said that the media members were in front of Galatasaray High School, around the field of action and around Saturday Mothers every week, though under different conditions.

In the process of contestation of social actors, it is possible to mention the coexistence of diverse political groups during the actions. Not only the relatives of the lost people, but also various political parties, trade unions, deputies, branches

¹⁹⁸ Michael Keith and Steve Pile, 1993, *Ibid.*, p. 19.
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of professional chambers, women’s organizations, various associations and many similar non-governmental organizations met in front of Galatasaray High School. In this context, the area in front of the Galatasaray High School can be defined with the words of Carter, Donald, and Squires, as the “public sphere that is site of contestation between groups of distinct, located identities.”¹⁹⁹



Fig. 4.5. Daily Users of the Street and Mothers, Aclan Uraz, *Cumartesi Anneleri Fotoğrafları*, (İstanbul: Çağ Yayıncılık, 1997).



Fig. 4.6. Media as a Social Actor during the Resistance, Aclan Uraz, *Cumartesi Anneleri Fotoğrafları*, (İstanbul: Çağ Yayıncılık, 1997).

¹⁹⁹ Erica Carter, James Donald, and Judith Squires, “Introduction,” in *Space and Place: Theories of Identity and Location*, eds. Erica Carter, James Donald, and Judith Squires (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1992), p. xiv.

These distinct and located identities within different political groups have contested and combined in front of Galatasaray.²⁰⁰ Gülünay defines this union as follows:

“Of course, our actions developed in coordination with our friends working in human rights organizations, democratic mass organizations. Of course, we were unorganized people, we were politically undeveloped. We were all families. In this sense, there were people, individuals, and organizations to lead us. We acted together. Of course, revolutionary, democrat, sensitive, patriotic people did not abandon us to be alone. Representatives of the organizations and the people from the trade unions used to come and sit with us.”

The actions not only united the local political organizations but also provided the unity of international non-governmental organizations with the other groups and social actors in front of Galatasaray High School (Fig. 4.7).²⁰¹

²⁰⁰ “Algan Hacaloğlu (Deputy of Republic Popular Party in Istanbul), Atilay Ayçin (General Chairman of Hava İş Trade Union), Atilla Aytemur (Deputy General Chairman of Solidarity and Freedom Party), Celal Beşiktepe (Second Chairman of the Turkish League of Chambers of the Architects and Engineers), Celal Yıldırım (Chairman of Turkish Dentists’ Chamber), Cengiz Uzuner (Member of the Executive Board of Confederation of Public Workers’ Trade Unions), Ercan Kanar (Chairman of Turkish Human Rights Association Istanbul Branch), Ercan Karakaş (Deputy of Republic Popular Party in Istanbul), Ergin Cinmen (the Spokesman of the Initiative of the Citizens for Illumination), Erkan Önsel (The Chairman of the Chamber of Pharmacists), Ethem Cankurtaran (Chairman of Republic Popular Party in Istanbul), Ethem Kurca (The Chairman of the Chamber of Metallurgy Engineers), Fatma Hikmet İşmen (The Member of Party Council of the Freedom and Solidarity Party), Levent Tüzel (General Chairman of the Party of Labor), Mahmut Şakar (Chairman of People’s Democracy Party in Istanbul), Mehmet Kılıçarslan (Chairman of the Party of Labor in Istanbul), Murat Çelik (General Chairman of Modern Jurists Association), Mustafa Kul (Deputy of Republic Popular Party in Istanbul), Muzaffer Demirci (Secretary General of the Turkish Chamber of the Dentists), Oktay Ekinci (Chairman of the Chamber of Architects), Osman Baydemir (Deputy General Chairman of the Human Rights Association), Osman Ergin (Member of the Executive Board of Istanbul Bar Association), Osman Özçelik (Party Council Member of People’s Democracy Party), Sabri Topçu (General Chairman of TÜM-TİS), Seyit Ali Aydoğmuş (Representative of Popular Homes for First Region), Ufuk Uras (General Chairman of Freedom and Solidarity Party) attended to the press statement in week 173” (Tanrıkulu, p.285).

²⁰¹



Fig. 4.7. Mothers from Argentina, Aclan Uraz,
Cumartesi Anneleri Fotoğrafları
(İstanbul: Çağ Yayıncılık, 1997).

These organizations and foundations met in front of Galatasaray High School as diverse groups and they constituted a different, marginal political alliance there. In this context, the area in front of the Galatasaray High School became “a location for recovery and resistance, a meeting place where new radical happenings can occur.”²⁰²

In fact, during the actions of Saturday Mothers, the area in front of Galatasaray High School became an area where diverse political groups met and formed a combination. All of the relatives interviewed stated that the sit-ins, which they started alone as the families of the lost people, became increasingly supported by various mass groups and various non-governmental organizations as the weeks passed. Gülünay mentions again:

“The masses who supported us came neglecting the intense blockade of the police, they tried to support us. I mean, people did not abandon us to be

²⁰² Edwards Soja and Barbara Hooper, 1993, *Ibid.*, p. 192.

alone. It was really nice. I mean, we needed the masses to last a form of action for long years. We needed people to support us. We could not continue this action for more than three years with a pack of elderly parents and people. It was impossible for us to last without the support of the masses, the support of the organizations. The police would take us out very quickly, never to let us in again.”

However, the simultaneous coexistence and unity of these political groups, with diverse perspectives and diverse purposes, became possible at the end of a process. During the initial weeks, some groups criticized the form of action of Saturday Mothers. The fact that they sat without chanting any slogans for half an hour and that the actions took place in a manner which may be defined as pacifist led some groups to attempt to change the manner of the actions. Gülünay says that their form of action was silent protest, but especially young people did not like this form and insisted on chanting slogans. Hüsniye Ocak, on the other hand, emphasizes that reconciliation took place between those criticizing the form of action and the families of the lost people and all the political groups adopted themselves to this form of action.

“While we were sitting there, some political groups were accusing us with being passive. They turned up their noise at us. Then, when this resistance started to raise some voice and extended, the people who said those things started to come there.”

According to data obtained as a result of all the interviews, we learn that the Saturday Mothers could carry on their actions in their own format. By the help of these data, it may be possible to assert that reconciliation was formed in time between the diverse political groups, each trying to make its voice dominant in the square, and each group simultaneously preserved its existence in the square. The area in front of Galatasaray High School became an area in which the groups, each sensitive to a different form of oppression, could coexist simultaneously, and interact mutually and could form a new and distinct political unity out of this alliance. In this sense, the area may be defined as one of the “new spaces for critical exchange and creative responses,” as defined by Soja and Hooper.²⁰³

²⁰³ Soja and Hooper, 1993, *Ibid.*, p. 193.

Soja and Hooper express that politics of difference and identity open this ‘new spaces for critical exchange and creative responses.’ In addition to them, Keith and Pile affirm this spatialities, which can be identified as the spatiality of ‘identity politics,’ provides the medium through which the contradictions between the different identities and different political groups may be subsumed or even naturalized²⁰⁴ to provide a more comprehensive communities of resistances.

In the process of studying the area in front of Galatasaray High School as an area, where diverse social actors and identities or identity groups come together, the contestation, encounter and struggle between the security forces of the state and other social actors is an important subtitle. The spatial gathering, encountering and struggling processes between the social actors that we mentioned up to now advanced in the direction of stronger cooperation between diverse identities, as defined by Soja; however, the contestation of the security forces of the state and these social actors developed in a different way (Fig. 4.8 – 4.9). The ‘multiply, connect, and combine’ process, that took place between the identities of diverse social actors, did not take place between these social actors and the security forces. For a very limited process, a mutual interaction could occur between the security forces and diverse identities or social actors. The security forces accepted the existence of Mothers in front of Galatasaray High School for a very short time, they even took a bus to the square saying, “Come on, let’s seek for your lost people together, we support you, here, we even allocated a bus for you.”²⁰⁵ However, this mutual communication lasted very short, only to be replaced by an intense violence against the activists.

The security forces sometimes even denied the constitutional rights to the activists. In week 171 of the sit-ins, 25 people were taken under custody. In week 172, the sit-in was not permitted and 157 people were taken under custody this time. Moreover, the period of custody, which had been one day, was made four days.²⁰⁶ The attack by the security forces, which began in week 170 of the Galatasaray wit-ins, on 15th August 1998, lasted 7 months. There were people

²⁰⁴ Michael Keith and Steve Pile, 1993, *Ibid.*, p. 19.

²⁰⁵ <http://www.hurriyetim.com> (1998).

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

who were taken under custody on each Saturday, meaning 31 times.²⁰⁷ During these seven months, in which the constitutional right to make press statements without any permissions was denied, total 431 people were taken under custody, beaten up, assaulted, dragged on ground and insulted for periods changing between a few hours and five days. The collective custody period for these people is 932 days. The reports for inability to perform work were received for total 84 days. They were also sued for ‘resistance to the police,’ and opposition to the ‘law on meetings and demonstrations.’ Moreover, they even judged illegible women for writing graffiti on the walls of the cells.²⁰⁸

This data, acquired through reading resources, was verified during the interviews and nearly all the relatives of the lost people complained from the oppression that they were exposed by the security forces of the state during the actions. The violence, which became unbearable due to both the increase of the support and participation in the actions and the changes in the state policy, led the actions to be ended. The fight of having their places in the space, fought against the security forces of the state, took place as a form of struggle that is very different from the spatization of new identity politics. The coexistence and conflicts of the social actors that we have been examining up to this point took place by means of the ‘democratic tolerance’ of diverse identities in the same space; the simultaneous presence of the security forces and the other social actors in the same space was far from such democratic tolerance. The attack of the security forces not to accommodate the activists in the square and the struggle of the activists to be accommodated there turned into an anti-democratic and strategic conflict.

As we define Istikal Street and the area in front of Galatasaray High School as the ‘place of hegemony’ and the ‘place of counter hegemony’ simultaneously, it is proper to examine this struggle under these two subtitles. The attempts of the security forces of the state to control such area and to keep the activists away from such area may be defined as the contention of the hegemonic forces to acquire such space. In contrast, the insisting struggle of the activists to exist in the same space every week against this is the struggle of the counter-hegemonic forced to

²⁰⁷ Nadire Mater, 2001, Ibid.

use and appropriate the space. The struggles of the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic forces, employing different methods for the respective struggle, include different strategies (Fig. 4.10).



Fig. 4.8. Security Forces, Aclan Uraz, *Cumartesi Anneleri Fotoğrafları* (İstanbul: Çağ Yayıncılık, 1997).



Fig. 4.9. Security Forces at the Street, Aclan Uraz, *Cumartesi Anneleri Fotoğrafları*, (İstanbul: Çağ Yayıncılık, 1997).

²⁰⁸ Ibid.



Fig. 4.10. Appropriation of Space by Authority, Aclan Uraz,
Cumartesi Anneleri Fotoğrafları
(İstanbul: Çağ Yayıncılık, 1997).

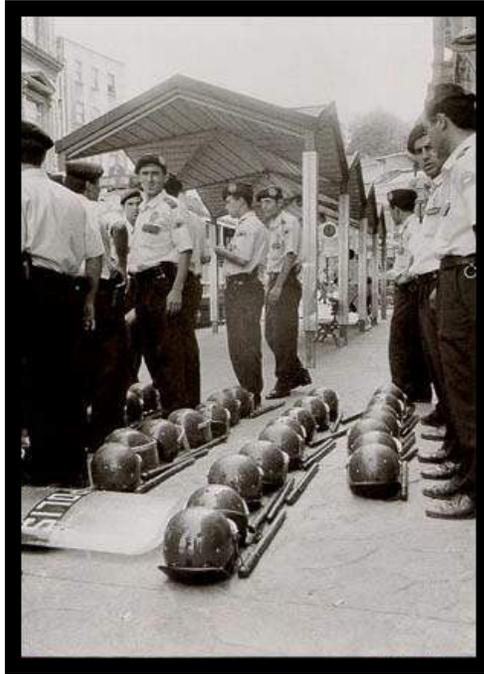


Fig. 4.11. Preparations before the Event, Aclan Uraz,
Cumartesi Anneleri Fotoğrafları
(İstanbul: Çağ Yayıncılık, 1997).

The most efficient and widespread method of the hegemonic forces, in other words the security forces of the state, for the control of the space has been the violence employed against the activists throughout the Saturday actions (Fig. 4.11). The outcome of all the interviews is that the police used intense violence against the activists a while after the actions began. Emine Ocak says the police hit them and threatened them many times. “They came and took me under the custody. They took every week again and again. During two years. They hit us every week. They hit my leg, my arm, and my head.” Kiraz Şahin (Fig. 4.12) points out that the police did not do anything at first but used too much violence on them as time passed and the actions became more crowded. Taaç tells about an event that happened to her during an action:

“They used every sort of methods on us. They applied gas, Oleoresin Capsium (OC) gas. One day, of course I did not know what OC gas was, they applied OC gas in my mouth because we were chanting slogans. I did not realize it was OC gas, of course I did not know it. I found out that my mouth was poisoned. I swallowed it. I thought I died. They took us under custody. We asked for water, they did not give water. We asked for *ayran*, they did not give. My body burnt, my stomach burnt.”

Tosun also mentions that OC gas was used against them:

“They beat us in the car from the area in front of Galatasaray until we arrived at the police station. Once they used OC gas, one or two people fainted in the car. I had my sister-in-law with me when they used OC gas. I knew how it was, I endured as much as I could, I did not breathe. My sister-in-law did not know; she fainted very badly. We were taken under custody. I realized she was about to die. Her face was all red with blood. Her eyes protruded. I was afraid, I thought she was going to die. She had a baby that she breast-fed. I knocked on the door many times. I said them “The woman’s going to die, it is a sin”. He said, “This is not your father’s house”. I pleaded him to bring milk at least. He asked for money. I gave him the money. He went and brought milk.”

Besides using OC gas, we learn that the activists were also directly attacked during the interviews. Tosun tells about her experiences in a sit-in:

“They used to beat very violently, really. Once Ali Ocak was also with us. Two or three policemen attacked him. They got him into the car. I saw that they were killing Ali. Ali already had troubles with his ears. There were two rows between us. I passed through them. I have never fought in my life. In

the sense of fight, I have never fought. I threw myself on Ali along the rows. Because I saw that Ali was about to die. A policewoman held me here and threw me aside, they are like karate fighters, she asked me why I protected him. I saw that Ali was about to die, this is why I threw myself to save him.”

Hüsniye Ocak also mentions a similar violence practices: “During Galatasaray age, they used truncheons but in Galatasaray the police used to kick from below. And my legs became purple every day, every week. The vein clogging in both my legs occurred for this reason.” According to the information obtained from the other interviews, in order to disperse the activists in the area, the security forces employed methods such as hitting, kicking, forced custody, applying gas bomb attacking by dogs on the sitting activists. The second method employed by the police in order not to let the activists into the area is to circle the action area before the time of the action. Taaç tells:

“They used to encircle us. I mean, at first they used to permit but towards the end, we absolutely had to look for a place to enter... Then we used to leave our flowers there. They did not let even that. Leave our flowers. Then they did not let the press either. Towards the end, they blocked the press as well. They prevented those coming to take photos, they threatened the press so that they would not publish them. So the press left.”

Kiraz Şahin mentions a similar practice: “They used to encircle the people. They did not let anybody into the circle. They used to beat those inside. I used to shout out of the circle. They used to say, ‘Do not shout there, come shout inside’” This circle, formed with both the metal barriers and the police officers, prevents the access of the activists to the area actively.

The third method mentioned by the interviewed relatives of the lost people is to fill the area in front of Galatasaray High School with police officers, police cars, panzers and some construction materials on the date and time of the action so that the activists are not left any area to perform sit-ins. Hanım Tosun defines this as the occupation of such area by the police. “They were putting the bricks there. It was as if they were repairing. They were continuously doing something there. They were putting the bricks. They put the police cars there.” We learn from Tosun that the police put materials such as bricks etc. in front of Galatasaray High School, making it as if there are restoration works there, so that there would be no

room for the activists there. Taaç describes the existence of the police in the action area as follows: “When they did not permit the action, the place used to be incredibly full... We used to be surprised. As if there was a war. We used to ask, what is this? One would not employ so many policemen even during a war.” Hüsniye Ocak says that crowd of police officers prevent them from entering the square:

“They barricaded there by filling with police. For example, they used to egg 50-60 police there. Or they parked the police cars there so that we would not sit. So that there would be no place. But we still found some space. We used to say, let us sit there.”

We understand that the fourth and final method employed by the security forces to control was to take the relatives of the lost people under custody as ‘suspects.’ The relatives of the lost point out that the police identified them some time after the gatherings started, took them under custody as soon as they stepped into İstiklal Street. According to Tosun, the police kept the ends of the streets and took the mothers under custody as soon as seeing them:

“They used to occupy some points. They used to occupy the street ends so that we would not enter. They did not let us. They took even some ordinary people under custody. Towards the end, police knew us all. The same police came every week. They used to attack us and take us under custody.”

Tosun even states that the police did not let them to get out of the apartment building in which the Istanbul Human Rights Association was located when they would publicly declare that they end the actions due to the extreme violence they were subjected to. Thus, they had to make their press statement behind the gate of the apartment building.

“We could not go in this way or that. The police came as far as in front of İHD’s²⁰⁹ gate. We got out of İHD, they did not let us pass the gate. We used to make our press statement behind the door. Because they barricaded the gate, they did not let us out. They did not let us pass İHD’s gate. We made our press statement behind the gate. We said, we had to cancel. We said, we would discontinue for a long time.. and we discontinued until the week of the lost this year.”

²⁰⁹ İHD means ‘Human Rights Association’ (‘İnsan Hakları Derneği’ in Turkish).

Hüsniye Ocak also says that they were taken under custody, even before reaching the area in front of Galatasaray High School:

“Sometimes we used to meet. We used to bump into each other in Istiklal Street, for example, we used to bump into each other when we went there in groups. They used to barricade the road so that we would not enter the square, they used to take us under custody. When we asked why we were taken under custody, they told us we were taken under custody because we were doubtful persons.”

This example enables us to understand that the attempts of the police to control the space was not only for the area, but also for the whole street.

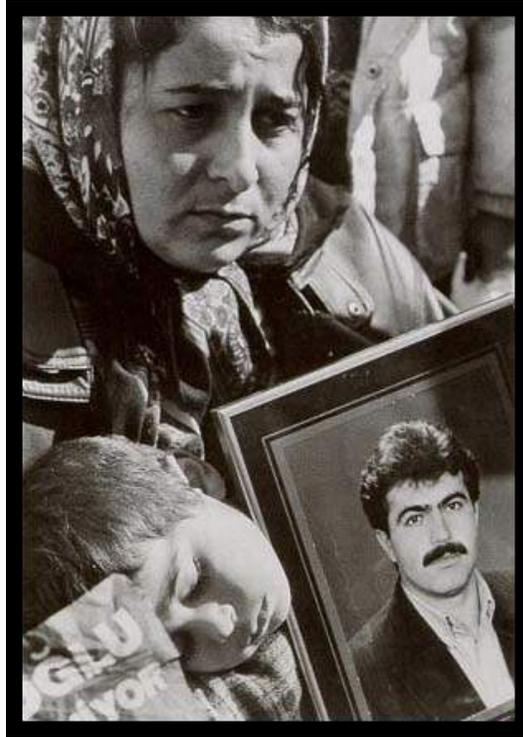


Fig. 4.12. Kiraz Şahin, Aclan Uraz,
Cumartesi Anneleri Fotoğrafları
(İstanbul: Çağ Yayıncılık, 1997).

While the efforts of the security forces to control the space continued by these methods, we might also mention the methods employed simultaneously by Saturday Mothers to access to their final destination. According to the activists, the most important condition for them to be able to exist in such site was to sit silently in the gathering place and not to affect the routines of the street. Tosun

answers the question “What did you do so that the police would not enter the gathering place?” as, “First of all, we never chanted slogans...As Saturday’s Mothers, we had such a style. We never chanted slogans. Everybody who came there used to chant slogans, but we were silent, we wanted to sit there.” Gülünay also says that the police would not let them to stay there for a second if they would have not so.

“With us, the state does not let such an activity or an activity, in which we can barricade the whole road. Our protest developed in just quiet manner there. I mean, we were no harm to nobody. We thought that sitting in front of the high school in Galatasaray comfortably and announcing our problems to the public would be a more positive and a longer manner of action.”

Majority of the other relatives of the lost people mention this subject, emphasizing that they were using their rights there, so that they thought the police should have permitted them. Taaç emphasizes this while telling their made of action:

“We used to go and sit there with flowers and cloves in our hands. However they permitted for 5 minutes or 10. For example, let us suppose we sat for half an hour. Then we used to make our statement and go. We never did anything to anybody, we never attacked, and we never did any harm to the shopkeepers. We sat there silently... We did not chant slogans. I mean we used to think, ‘let us not chant slogans, let us do it however we decided’.”

The fact that the activists determined such a strategic style in order to exist in the area points out that the fight to have one’s place in the space goes beyond just being present there or not. The existence of the counter-hegemonic forces in the street may have a close relation with the manner of their existence.

We find that the second method used by Saturday Mothers to have their places in the gathering place was to attempt to have a mutual communication with the police by talking to them. As a result of these talks, developing as virtually a bargaining every week in case the police did not let them enter, the mothers were able to enter the area in some weeks. Again Taaç tells about a dialogue between her and the security forces as follows: “We asked how many minutes we shall sit. We first asked to sit for an hour, and then we said 5 minutes. Or we said, let us have our press statement and go.”

The third method employed by the relatives of the lost people was to leave the symbols such as the photos of their lost relatives, clothes etc., which they brought with them, in the area (Fig. 4.13). According to the information that Hüsniye Ocak provides us, the relatives of the lost people showed a more serious initiative for this purpose in the first week of the actions and had a statue of the lost built. This statue, which remained in front of Galatasaray High School for 4-5 weeks, was then removed by the police officers. This statue, made of iron and assembled on the wall of the high school, represented the presence of the relatives of the lost people in the area even when they were not there. Then, photos and clothes were used for this purpose. The activists, aware of the fact that their presence in the area would only be possible for a very limited and planned time, continued their struggle of presence there in this manner.



Fig. 4.13. Photos of Lost Relatives, Aclan Uraz,
Cumartesi Anneleri Fotoğrafları
(İstanbul: Çağ Yayıncılık, 1997).

Another method employed by the activists to be present in front of Galatasaray High School was to follow a different route to access the area in each week. The activists, who met somewhere far from Istiklal Street, hired taxis and came as close as possible to the high school via a different route in each week and they

attempted to enter the area. Taaç describes this struggle, which was quite effective:

“We were seeking for a point to enter. Where shall we enter Galatasaray? We used to pick up various streets. Just like in the movies. One day, there is the Hamam Lane near Galatasaray, we came there. We came from the banks and entered into that lane. There we found some space and left the flowers there. The police ran immediately, as if we had left bombs. They said, so you found there vacant.”

Hüsniye Ocak tells that their method to get rid off the police was coming from the side streets towards the end of the third year.

“We used to go out very early and we wandered through many streets, so that we could enter the square. We entered the side streets, we made our route longer, we got on taxis, we used to sit when we were very close to Galatasaray. I mean, this is how it was during the attacks. For example, we used to get on a taxi as 5-6 people. We used to get off there, in order to have our press statement. So that we could at least make our voice heard.”

Tosun also tells that the latest weeks were full of struggles:

“The we did something. We used to get taxis down there, near Etfal. We used to come to the back of Galatasaray. They found us there, too. They followed us. They made us all get off the car and took us all under custody. Really, we had many weekends full of struggle in this manner.”

The fifth method is to take strolls around the area. In this method, the resistors, who went to the area in front of Galatasaray High School before 12:30, the exact hour for the start of the sit-ins (who must not be taken under custody before reaching there for the applicability of this method) pretend to stroll around the street by maximum 15 steps to the area, trying not to catch the attention of the police. At the sit-in time, they suddenly gather in front of Galatasaray High School and sit where they are. Gülünay tells:

“In some weeks, we saw that they occupied the area that we would be sitting. Like parking cars, panzers etc. We waited until we were surrounded by groups of people, like 3 or 5 people. Then, when 10-15 people came there ... the people gathered at once. We came to the area. From very little distance. Like maximum 15 steps. Then the police had to withdraw.”

The last method employed by the Saturday Mothers was to provide the flexibility of their actions. When the gatherings in front of Galatasaray High School were not permitted by the police officers, mothers performed their resistance in close places such as in front of the post office or “next to the high school. Hüsniye Ocak tells the situation as follows:

“I mean we wanted to sit at this point that week; the next week we went to the same place to see it occupied by the police. We used to sit towards the post office. Then, we used to sit in front of the post office. For example, if they closed that point, we used to sit in this corner. We used to sit in the side road. They used to barricade one place we would be sitting in every week.”

Tosun stresses that, in weeks when it was impossible to sit because of the density of the cars and police, they performed by standing in vacant spaces.

4.4. CONCLUSION: ISTIKLAL STREET AS ‘THE PLACE WHERE NEW AND RADICAL HAPPENINGS CAN OCCUR’

What are the new and radical happenings? Here, we need to turn back our quotation at the introductory chapter. Turning to this quotation will complete our theoretical circle.

“It is about a new cultural politics, choosing the margin as a space of radical openness and hybridity, about finding meeting places ‘where new and radical happenings can occur,’ about a politics of deterritorialization – and – reconnection, a politics in which arguments over space, its enclosures, exclusions, internments become subjects for debate and discussion, and more important, for resistance and transgression.”²¹⁰

Throughout the case study, we have tried to illustrate resistance of Saturday Mothers as ‘new and radical happenings’ and therefore, Istiklal Street as ‘the place where ‘new and radical happenings’ can occur. There are many similar events, which can be identified as ‘new and radical happenings’ at Istiklal Street. All these activities can be analyzed within the similar framework and can be accepted as the further study of this thesis. We have chosen the resistance of Saturday Mothers as the first step, because of its clear and easily identified

²¹⁰ Edward Soja, 1996, *Ibid.*, p. 319.

indications. This resistance is new and radical happening, because of its relation with our all sub-titles that we have mentioned before. We may summarize the conclusion that we may draw from the case study as follows:

The actions of Saturday Mothers caused the identity transformation that we have mentioned. The mothers, who have ‘multiple identities’ due to the ‘multiple forms of oppression’ they are subjected to, may be defined as having multiple identities also due to the fact that they bear the identities of both the traditional motherhood and the resisters. This form of action not only enabled the presence of the mothers in the area in front of Galatasaray High School but also their existing in a condition formed as ‘transgressive and lucid practices of resistance’ within this space. As we have mentioned during our analysis about the effects of space during identification process, this transgressive situation at the area in front of the Galatasaray High School has caused a radical transformation of mothers’ identities. Here, it can be argued that Istiklal Street has the potential to embrace this kind of transgressive situations with its characteristic that have been stated at the third chapter. Continuation of this transgressive and lucid practices of resistance during three years in spite of all counter pressures is related with these potentials of Istiklal Street and the area in front of Galatasaray High School. Question of democracy is the matter of this identification process, because of the high tolerance between the different and conflicting social actors. This tolerance of the social actors is related with their multiple subjectivities or multiple identities. This identity transformation of the mothers with the help of the continuation and expansion of the transgression is the first reason of our definition about the resistance of Saturday Mothers as ‘new and radical happenings.’

It can be argued that it is the multiple identities that can create new form resistances as Soja and Hooper mentioned as ‘politics of difference.’²¹¹ Here, explaining this new form of resistance, which we emphasize as different forms of struggles will be meaningful in terms of understanding the relation of Thirdspace’s roots with ‘identity politics.’ These various forms of struggle are those arising out of all differences such as gender, race, class, region, nation, and

²¹¹ Edwards Soja and Barbara Hooper, 1993, *Ibid.*, p. 192.

sexuality. Here, the oppressed emphasize the identity diversities, identity politics and cultural politics of difference. In relation with Thirdspace, Soja emphasizes the distinctive features of the new cultural politics of difference and its relation with the 'new spaces of resistance.'²¹² In this context, we can argue that this 'new spaces of resistance' is the space where political codes of difference and different social actors are contested.

When the form of the relationship established with the space during the actions is considered, it may be asserted that the area in front of Galatasaray High School enables the gathering of diverse social actors, provides the regular presence of the activists there against the hegemonic forces and contributes to the identity transformation process due to its potentials. Second, when the relation of the actions with the 'multiple form of oppression' is examined, what attracts attention is that the actions gather diverse political groups fighting against diverse pressures such as the feminist groups, workers' trade unions, professional chambers and many non-governmental organizations. The participation of these diverse marginal groups could be possible due to the diverse forms of oppression that the mothers were subjected. Political groups sensitive to pressures originating from gender, ethnicity and class participated in the actions. One of the reasons for the actions to be so comprehensive is no doubt the fact that being lost under custody was seen as a problem needing to be solved immediately. However, the social status of the Saturday Mothers also enabled them to get support by a very wide range. Diverse political groups came to the area of action due to their own sensitivities and formed a different type of gathering there. Although it can not be asserted that the Saturday Sit-Ins formed a resistance against the pressures originating from gender, ethnicity or class; it can, however, be asserted that this new political group, formed by the gathering of the diverse political groups during the actions, had all these sensitivities due to its radical openness. This can illustrate the relationship between 'multiple form of oppression,' 'multiple identities,' and resistance. As we have mentioned above, the reason of stating resistance of Saturday Mothers as 'new and radical happenings' is basically derived from this contestation and corporation of different social actors during the

²¹² Edward Soja, 1996, *Ibid.*, p. 83.

events. In this juncture, it is clear that this contestation can be materialized by this relationship between the resistance and the social actors with multiple identities. Social actors with multiple identities that are derived not only from the multiple form of oppression, but also from the identity transformation have the potential to create strategic, political unions for more powerful resistance by democratic tolerance. ‘Multiple form of oppression’ that the mothers are subjected to, provides the wide range of supports from different political groups. Additionally, multiple identities of the social actors supply the democratic tolerance between different social actors who constitute more powerful political alliances. This new form of resistance that is empowered by the strategic alliances between the different social actors is the ‘new and radical happenings.’ This summary can be accepted as the second reason of our identification about the resistance of Saturday Mothers as ‘new and radical happening.’

After the analysis that we have provided about new form of resistance and radical happenings, it is possible for us to define Istiklal Street and the area in front of Galatasaray High School as ‘new spaces of resistance.’ Istiklal Street and the area in front of Galatasaray High School, being ‘new spaces of resistance,’ enabled the identity transformation process of the mothers as well as getting them meet with diverse social actors. The political coexistence arising out of the gathering of diverse political stances and social actors, enables the formation of ‘new cultural politics of difference,’ defined again by Soja.

As we have mentioned in a detailed way at the third chapter, Istiklal Street has the potential to empower the new form of resistance that we have mentioned above by its significant characteristics. It is the place of border between space between centers and peripheries, public and private, the conceptual and the lived, commerce and culture, and hegemony and counter-hegemony. For this reason, it can be argued that Istiklal Street has the potential to combine these binaries instead of dividing them. As we analyzed during the field research, it is the radically open space where everything can be found. ‘Space where everything can be found’ is one of the spatial metaphors of Soja. It not only reminds the variety of meeting places at the street, but also variety of the cultures at the street. In

addition to this, it is simultaneously the place of hegemony and counter-hegemony. Therefore, it is the place of contestation and conflict. Here what is important for our study is that, it is the place of contestation between many different social actors including street children, homosexuals, environmentalists, feminists, and members of trade unions. that can be stated as ‘all peripherilized’ by Soja. It is the place of contestation between authority and these social actors during the transgression activities. By the means of all these activities, it is the place that provides the niches for identity transformation, and the place that can provide the strategic alliances between ‘all peripherilized.’

The purpose of this case study has been to study and exemplify the relations between ‘identity politics’ and space according to the subtitles designated by Soja. In order to achieve this goal, first the relation of the ‘multiple oppression’ with ‘multiple identities’ was determined and then the relation of these ‘multiple identities’ with space was analyzed. The space both enables the formation of these ‘multiple identities’ and ensures the diverse social actors to establish stronger political unions by coming together. These political gatherings, which can be defined as the ‘new and radical happening,’ have the potential to struggle against ‘multiple oppression.’ The effects of space during this happening have been analyzed within the framework of the concepts that have been established by Soja in *Thirdspace*. According to theoretical structure established at *Thirdspace*, it can be possible to identify Istiklal Street as the ‘place where new and radical happenings can occur.’

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This site of resistance is continually formed in that segregated culture of opposition that is our critical response to domination. We come to this space through suffering and pain, through struggle. We know struggle to be that which pleasures, delights, and fulfills desire. We are transformed, individually, collectively, as we make radical creative space which affirms and sustains our subjectivity, which gives us a new location from which to articulate our sense of the world.

b. hooks. "Choosing the Margin as a Space of Radical Openness." In *Gender Space Architecture*

In the light of these findings, we believe that our study would assist to understand the dynamic relationship between space and politics within the framework of literature about 'identity politics.' To come to this point of view, we have started with the survey on this literature about 'identity politics.' Therefore, we have to be urged to mention about the huge literature about 'identity politics' at the introductory chapter, beside the definition of the problem area and the scope of the study. With the argument that hegemonic powers not only control the differences between social actors, but also generate these differences to continue its sovereignty, we have come to the analysis of 'identity politics.' This association between the hegemonic processes and 'identity politics' has provided a base to relate space with 'identity politics.' The first section has intended to investigate the meanings of 'identity politics' and its relation with the literature about space to supply the theoretical base of our case study.

The significance of our study on 'identity politics' is derived from its emphasis on specific discourse of 'identity politics.' The implication is not only the relationship between 'identity politics' and space. Instead 'identity politics' entails a political discourse all by itself with its emancipatory speech. To embody this argument, we have examined the formation process of 'identity politics' in a comprehensive framework. After an analysis about the formation process of 'identity politics,' we have been urged to analyze 'new identity politics' as the contemporary discourse. Within the frame of this thesis, potentials of 'new identity politics' for political resistance can be accepted as crucial. These potentials such as the disordering and the reconstitution of difference and different conceptualization of the self, can create strategic alliances among all those who are peripheralized, marginalized and subordinated by the social construction of differences. For this view, the marginal and multiple identities related with race, class, gender, sexual orientation, disability and so on do not generally connected to question of choice. These are the strategic choices for resistance. Soja and Hooper affirm new identity politics as a progressive attempt to combine all these strategic choices or locations. It is a polyvocal 'identity politics' that has the potential to combine all marginalized towards a social transformation project.

After stating new identity politics as a political discourse for emancipation, we have continued our survey to analyze the relationship between new identity politics and space. It has been argued that new identity politics has opened up new vision about the relationship between politics and space. After ascertaining the relationship between ‘identity politics’ and space as a theoretical framework of our thesis, we have continued with the re-reading of Soja’s book, *Thirdspace* to bring the roots and the concepts of the book out into the open.

During Chapter 2, we have firstly discussed the meanings of Thirdspace via following Soja’s arguments. Soja has been stated that ‘identity politics’ or cultural politics of difference is the outcome of the workings of power in society and space. Therefore, ‘identity politics’ has been analyzed in its relation with workings of power in his book. Soja separates ‘identity politics’ in his analysis into two categories as ‘new cultural politics of difference’ and ‘modernist identity politics,’ because of this relationship between ‘identity politics’ and power. As we have mentioned at the introductory chapter, new form of ‘identity politics’ differs from ‘modernist identity politics’ in terms of the sensibility for heterogeneity and multiplicity, concrete and particular, varying and changing. Necessity of this sensibility against homogenization and normalization processes is derived from new conceptualization of social agents for him. Soja has identified this new conceptualization of social agents as ‘multiple subjects.’ ‘Multiple subjects’ or ‘multiple identities’ is our first term that has been re-discovered in the second chapter by re-reading of *Thirdspace*. As the next step, we have continued with other critical terms for our case study. These terms that have been analyzed during this chapter can be stated as ‘thirdspace of political choice,’ ‘multiple form of oppression,’ ‘multiple communities of resistance,’ and ‘space as the new sites for struggle.’

Soja defines ‘thirdspace of political choice’ as choosing the subordinated and excluded identities designated by ‘multiple forms of oppression.’²¹³ He puts the ‘thirdspace of political choice’ as a way to create ‘multiple communities of

²¹³ Ibid., p. 97.

resistance.’²¹⁴ These multiple communities of resistance have the potential to resist against all forms oppression resulting from gender, ethnicity or class status. These communities can be accepted as strategic alliances for coalition between different marginal identities. After ascertaining these terms about ‘identity politics’ and resistance, Soja continues with the relationship between these ‘multiple communities of resistance’ and space. He has examined this relationship under two titles. The first one is related with the identification process within space, and the second one is about the potential of space to bring people together. Firstly, right to be different and constitution of different subjectivities at urban space are related with the appropriation of space. Appropriation of space as a political act effects the identity formation of the subjects. Secondly, contestation of different social actors becomes possible within urban space. Urban space provides the association between radical and different subjectivities, different political groups and diverse oppositional practices. At this time, we have arrived at the point of argument that Soja defines this new ‘meeting places’ as Thirdspace.²¹⁵ These ‘new spaces for resistance’ is the space where “one’s radical subjectivity can be activated and practiced in conjunction with the radical subjectivities of others.”²¹⁶

After the re-reading of Soja’s book, *Thirdspace*, we have continued with the analysis of Istiklal Street to locate Thirdspace within urban specificities. Our theoretical frame is constructed by the concepts of *Thirdspace* that have been analyzed during the first and second chapters. At the first step, spatial expression of Istiklal Street has been analyzed with the help of concepts that we have mentioned before. Four titles that are related with Thirdspace concept have been determined. At the first instance, Istiklal Street has been defined as the space of border. The criticism about the binary logic that is nourished by ‘new identity politics’ is our starting point for this analysis. Combining characteristic of Thirdspace perspective has opened up new visions for analyzing an urban space. Therefore, it is possible to analyze Istiklal Street as the space of border between centers and peripheries or central and marginal, public and private, the conceptual

²¹⁴ Ibid., p. 84.

²¹⁵ Ibid., p. 35.

²¹⁶ Ibid., p. 99.

and the lived, commerce and culture, and hegemony and counter-hegemony. At this point, it is significant for our analyses that ‘border’ does not divide two opposite poles; instead it means an area that provides a reciprocal interaction between these two poles. Secondly, it has been argued that Istiklal Street is a radically open space. It can be argued that spatial feature of Istiklal Street is not only derived from the physical environment, but also from the daily life at the street.

Then, we have arrived at the point of argument that Soja established these terms to form their relation with politics. In the light of this finding, we are urged to find the political counterparts of these terms. Place of hegemony and place of counter-hegemony our other sub-titles to analyze Istiklal Street in relation with politics. It has been identified as the place of hegemony, which is the basis of counter-hegemony. During our case study, first the hegemonic control on the street has been examined under the titles about ‘sovereignty of hegemonic powers’ and ‘place of contestation.’ Subsequently, all marginal groups surviving on Istiklal Street have been identified and the street has been stated as a ‘meeting place of all peripherilized’ that can be grouped as homeless and street kids, migrants, homosexuals, and political resisters. It has been argued that Istiklal Street has the potential to shelter all these peripherilized. New spaces of resistance are defined as the places where has the potential to combine all these different identities, the different positions and strategies as for Soja and Hooper.²¹⁷ These spaces need to be ascertained in order that oppositional cultures and new social movements against the interests of capital as sites of resistance can make use of them. A different sense of space, which is not static, passive and apolitical, needs to be raised to create the strategic alliances between all peripherilized. Within this context, Istiklal Street has been analyzed as ‘new spaces of resistance’ in related with counter-hegemonic process. These are the spaces that are able to link ‘multiple communities of resistance’ that we have mentioned at the second chapter. To analyze the relationship between these ‘multiple communities of resistance’ and ‘new spaces of resistance,’ we have been urged to examine not only the physical characteristics of the street, but also the resistance on the street

²¹⁷ Quoted in Michael Keith and Steve Pile, 1993, *Ibid.*, p. 38.

in a detailed way. For this reason, we have analyzed the resistance of Saturday Mothers to illustrate our arguments about ‘spatialization of identity politics’ as the second step of case study.

After the narration of the resistance, we have briefly described our methods during the interviews and introduced physical properties of the area in front of Galatasaray High School where can be defined as the location of this resistance. It has been argued that this area has some potential to support this resistance. As we have mentioned in a detailed way during the third chapter, regularly continuation of a resistance without obtaining permission during three years can be accepted as very serious civil disobedience. Here, we have examined the potentials of the street and the area in front of Galatasaray High School in terms of the resistance of Saturday Mothers in order to support the reliability of our arguments at the third chapter. It has been stated that the possibility of regular continuation of the transgression in urban space can be supported by the potential of Istiklal Street and some niches on it such as the area in front of Galatasaray High School. As it has been argued in the third chapter, the facts that the street is a ‘space of border,’ ‘radically open space,’ ‘place of hegemony,’ and ‘place of counter-hegemony’ have played important roles in the permanency of the actions as well as their extension.

It is significant that all the qualities mentioned by the interviewed activists are consistent with our arguments about Istiklal Street. They have mentioned the street as a ‘space of border’ and a ‘radically open place.’ The variety of the user profile, the pressure of the political groups at the street, ‘cultural hybridity’ and ‘variety of meeting places’ are the factors allowing the actions of Saturday Mothers to be permanent and extensive. We have tried to analyze Istiklal Street and the area in front of Galatasaray High School within the framework of

Thirdspace perspective in the third chapter. While performing this analysis, we have focused both the physical and social aspects of the street with reference to Soja. Then, we have carried on studying this space specifically in terms of the resistance of Saturday Mothers to establish the relation with Istiklal Street.

The main purpose of the fourth chapter is to analyze the resistance of Saturday Mothers as ‘thirdspace of political choice.’ During this analysis, we have examined this resistance by a two-stage survey. The first stage is the effort to illustrate the resistance of Saturday Mothers as ‘thirdspace of political choice.’ It is intended to establish the relations between the sub-titles of this concept with the help of analyzing the resistance of Saturday Mothers. At the second stage, this resistance has been examined by its relation with the area in front of Galatasaray High School to illustrate our theoretical frame about ‘identity politics’ and space. It is intended to establish the relationship between these two stages as ‘spatialization of identity politics’ at the conclusion part of this chapter.

In order to illuminate the meaning of the ‘place where new and radical happenings can occur,’ we have been urged to define the meaning of ‘new and radical happenings’ at first. As we have mentioned before, the resistance of Saturday Mothers in the urban space caused identity transformation. It has been argued that the mothers have ‘multiple identities’ derived from ‘multiple form of oppression’ they are exposed to, and from identity transformation they have experienced. This form of resistance at the area in front of Galatasaray High School has caused a radical transformation of mothers’ identities. This identification process has been not only based on the presence of the mothers at the urban space, but also their position in the transgressive practices of resistance. This identification process that the mothers have experienced has been analyzed as ‘new and radical happenings’ during our case study. When the relationship between ‘identity politics’ and space that has been termed as ‘spatialization of identity politics,’ is considered, it is important to realize that Istiklal Street has the potentials to provide a coherent background for this identification process. Persistence of these practices of resistance despite all counteracts can be explained by these potentials

of the street. This is the reason why we have called Istiklal Street as the ‘place where new and radical happenings can occur.’

When the form of the relation established with the space during the actions is considered, it is possible to say that Istiklal Street is the ‘place where new and radical happenings can occur.’ Istiklal Street has provided the regular presence of this resistance and therefore contributed the identity transformation due to its capacity to resist against the forces of authority. Additionally, it has been stated that it enabled the contestation and combination between different social actors and political codes. Istiklal Street has assembled many different marginal groups or political groups in the area of action, provided the political alliance between these groups and offered the coherent alcoves for transgressive situations such as the area in front of Galatasaray High School. For this reason Istiklal Street can be labeled as ‘the places where new and radical happenings can occur.’

Throughout all study what we have tried to do, is to analyze the relationship between the politics and space with references to contemporary literature. Therefore, as we have mentioned at the introductory chapter, our study can be accepted as renovated analysis about the relationship between politics and space. At the one step behind, it is an analysis about the relationship between ‘identity politics’ and space. To establish the relationship between these two concepts, we have followed the arguments of Edward Soja at his book, *Thirdspace* for theoretical structure. Then, we are urged to illustrate our arguments with a case study on Istiklal Street and the resistance of Saturday Mothers. The scope of this study was firstly to illustrate Soja’s arguments about the relationship between ‘identity politics’ and space within the material space. Secondly, it can be argued that this thesis provides a perspective to analyze Istiklal Street that is an important research area for urban design. It is intended to open the possibilities of integrating material (firstspace) space and imagined (secondspace) space for an architectural analysis.

What can be further implications of this thesis? We can start with the combination between Firstspace and Secondspace within the frame of architectural discipline. By remembering Soja again,

“Understanding the city must involve both views, the micro and the macro, with neither inherently privileged... The appropriate response to the micro vs. macro choice is thus an assertive and creative rejection of the either/or for more open-ended both/and also.”²¹⁸

With the help of this argument, one can realize the importance of the local views from the city streets. In this manner, architecture becomes the central discipline to analyze the micro-geographies of everyday life. As we have mentioned above, it has been tried during our thesis to provide a perspective to analyze Istiklal Street as an urban space. This perspective intends to combine micro and macro scales around a critical term of Soja. We have analyzed an urban space, a street, with the help of the Thirdspace perspective under four sub-titles which involve both micro and macro analyses. The architectural scale of this research varies from the ATM chambers of the street to more macro-spatial scale. What is intended during this thesis is to illustrate Soja’s arguments about the relationship between ‘identity politics’ and space with the help of these spatial analyses. For further step, this study can be extended with the analysis of other niches, which provide a coherent place for resistance at Istiklal Street. We have examined the area in front of Galatasaray High School as one of these niches at the street. This study can be relevant for other niches at Istiklal Street such as Mis Street or Galatasaray Post Office. It is significant that political groups chose Mis Street among many other lanes at Istiklal, and Galatasaray Post Office among other post offices for their political resistances. It will be possible to understand the architectural potentials of these places for political resistance with the help of comparative studies on these places. Some architectural characteristics such as location of the place within cityscape, effects of the buildings for the social environment and for the contestation can be analyzed to understand the political potential of space with the emphasis on architecture. These comparative studies on these places can provide the clues about ‘new place for resistance.’

²¹⁸ Edward Soja, *Thirdspace* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), p. 310.

In addition to this, our study can assist to open a vision for the analysis on the spatial restrictions on women within existing urban pattern by analyzing movement pattern of the mothers within the urban. As one of the sub-titles of our thesis, we have already mentioned about this subject with references to the relationship between ‘identity politics’ and space. But there is a huge literature about the effects of patriarchal urban order that prevents the women access to urban space. This thesis can be accepted as the source to examine the spatial movements of the mothers within Istanbul. Relationship between Saturday Mothers and Istiklal Street can be re-evaluated with references to criticism of existing urban pattern. The data obtained from the interviews can be re-analyzed with references to Sarah Radcliffe and Doreen Massey in order to provide a comprehensive study about this urban order. How women are excluded from urban space until the time of this resistance can be the central question for this research. The analyses on the journeys of mothers from their home to the area in front of Galatasaray High School and their identity transformation during these actions are the rich sources to be examined for the theoretical discourse on the subordination of women within existing urban patterns. As Hetherington states “transgressive situations and lucid practices of resistance” within space is a mean for identity transformation.²¹⁹ It is significant for our case study that being within the urban space is itself a transgressive situation for the women who were interviewed.

As the other implication of our thesis, one can realize the different relation of diverse social actors with space. Throughout of our survey, we have analyzed the critical exchange of different social actors within space in the name of more powerful political unions. In contrast, it is important to realize that contestation between the members of civil society and the agents of authority within space require more comprehensive analysis. Our case study has illustrated that members of civil society such as daily users of the street, tourists, street shopkeepers, the media, and diverse political groups can contest, combine, and create more powerful political unions. Democratic tolerance between these social actors provides this alliance between different social. On the other hand, contestation

²¹⁹ Kevin Hetherington, *Expressions of Identities: Space, Performance and Politics*, (London:

between these social actors and the agents of authority within urban space is different in terms of question of democracy. Existence of the agents of authority can eliminate the other social agents. Our case study can be extended to analyze these different relations among civil society and the agents of authority within urban space. Here it is important to realize that political struggle in Istanbul is different from the struggle in Amsterdam that is illustrated by Soja in his book. This local difference is basically derived from the democratic tolerance. Within this frame, our thesis can be extended to analyze this difference at urban space by a comparative study between Istanbul and Amsterdam. This study can complete not only the absence of comprehensive analysis about the democracy, but also of the criticism on 'new identity politics.'

All these further studies can be accepted as parts of the whole that is related with the relationship between politics and space. Remembering our first sentence, the relation of politics with space does not only determine the line of politics, but also influence both the physical properties and symbolic meanings of the space. Within this perspective, our case study can be accepted as a material that can be analyzed by the diverse theoretical frames on the relationship between space and politics.

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APPENDIX A

DRAWINGS OF ISTIKLAL STREET AND THE AREA IN FRONT OF
GALATASARAY HIGH SCHOOL



Fig. A.1. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, plan 1. 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)

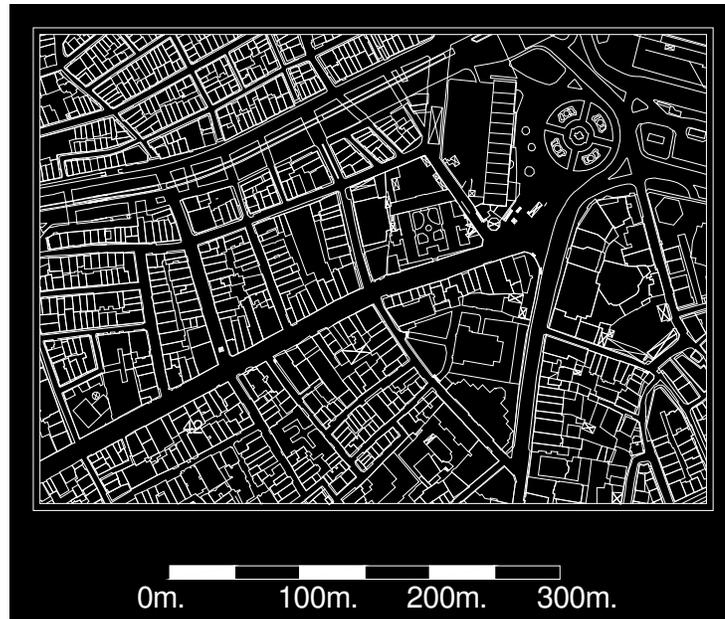


Fig. A.2-A.3. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, plan 2-3, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)

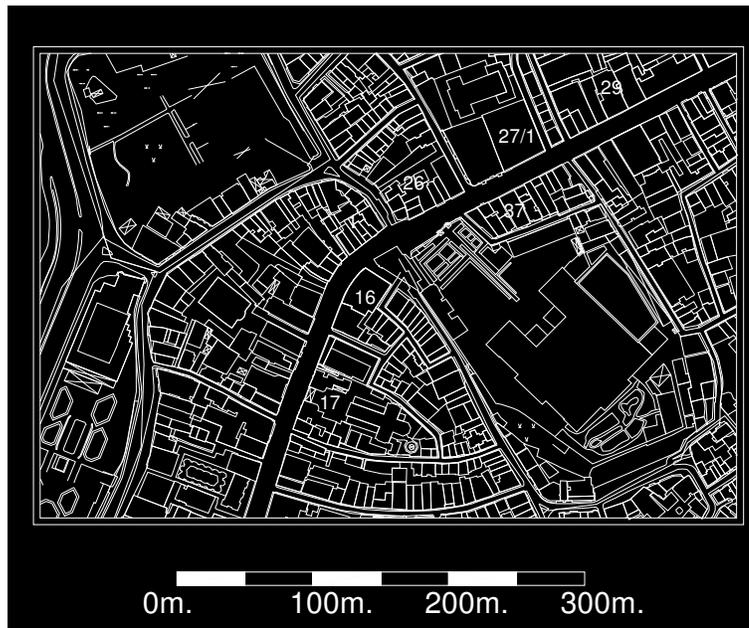


Fig. A.3. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, plan 3, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)

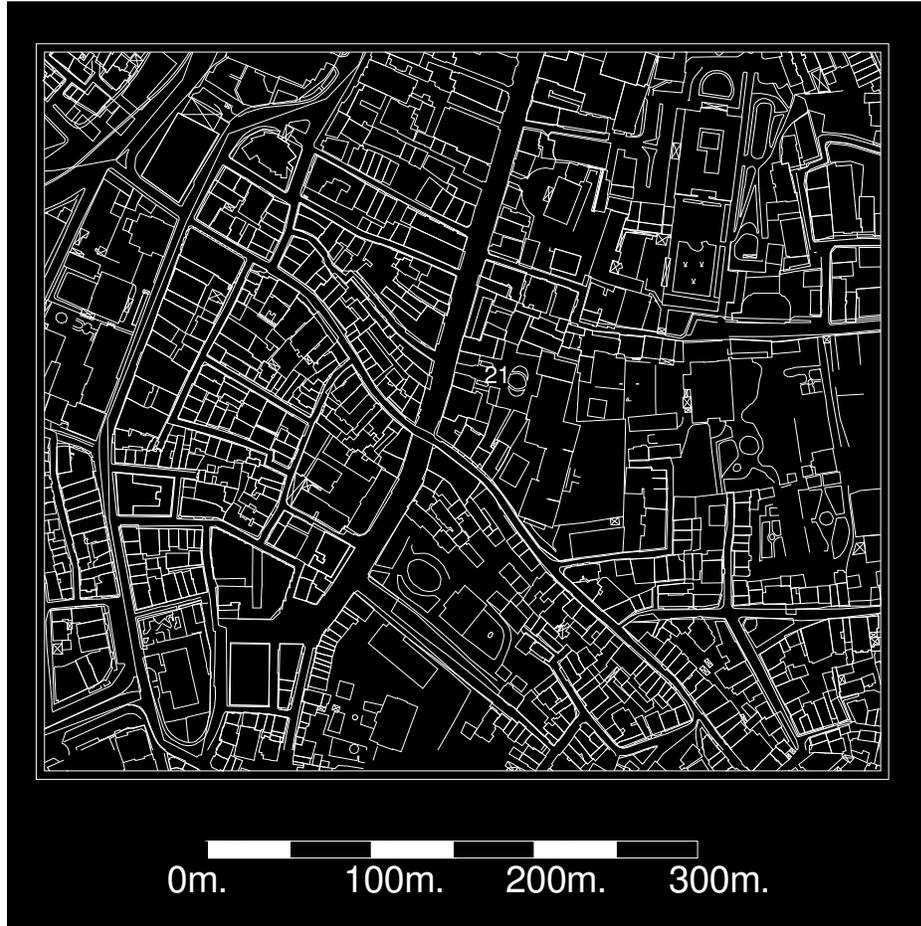


Fig. A.4. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, plan 4, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)



Fig. A.5. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, elevation 1, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)



Fig. A.6. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, elevation 2, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)

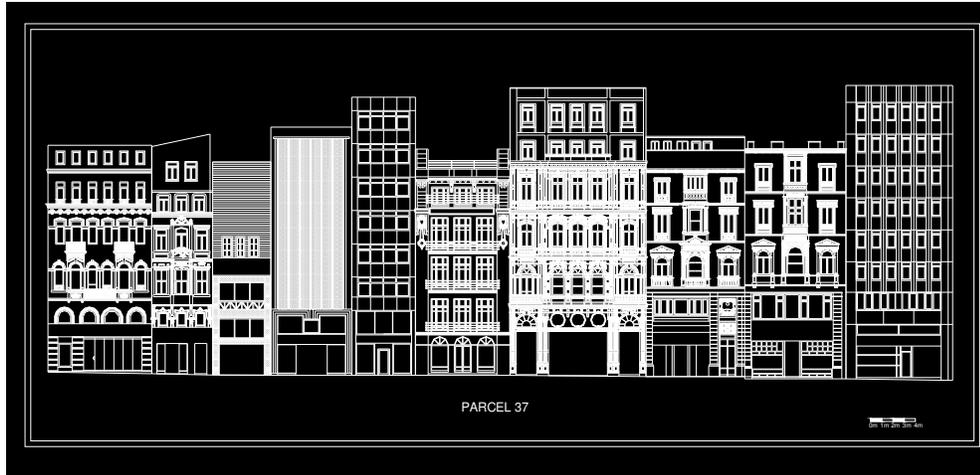


Fig. A.7. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, elevation 3, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)



Fig. A.8. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, elevation 4, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)



Fig. A.9. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, elevation 5, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)



Fig. A.10 Istiklal Street, Istanbul, plan 5, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)



Fig. A.11. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, plan 6, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)

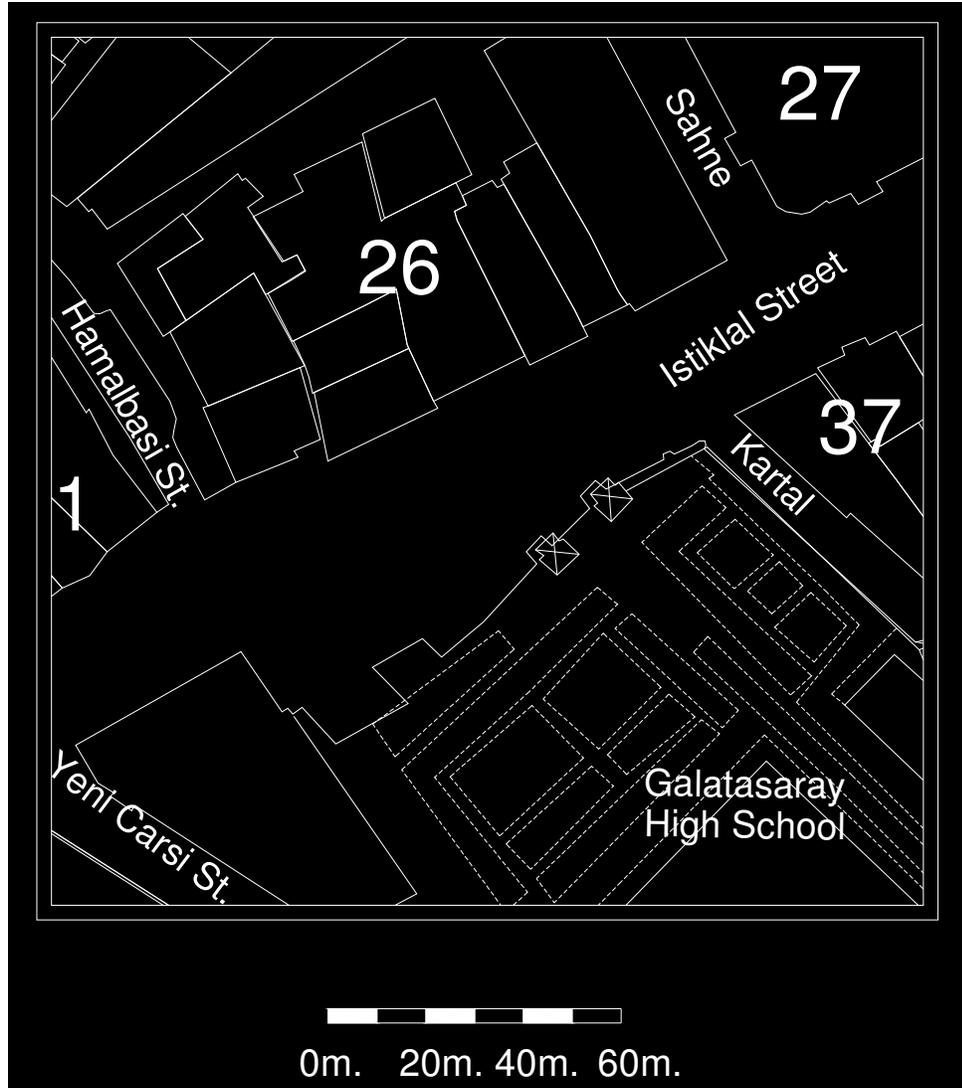


Fig. A.12. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, plan 7, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)



Fig. A.13. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, elevation 6, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)



Fig. A.14. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, elevation 7, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)



Fig. A.15. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, elevation 8, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)

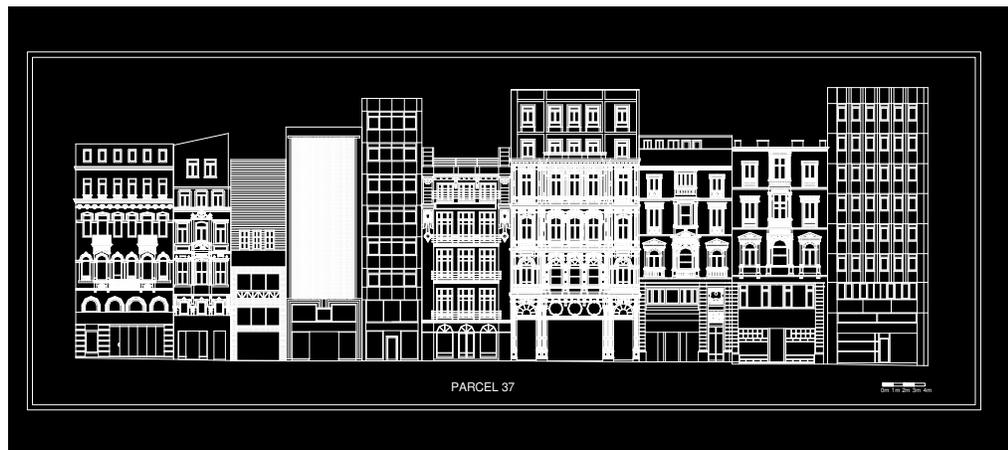


Fig. A.16. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, elevation 9, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)



Fig. A.17. Istiklal Street, Istanbul, elevation 10, 1985.
(University of Mimar Sinan, High School for Profession)

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS

I

1. What is the demographic identity information? Name, age, marital status, educational level, profession, economic status, residence, ethnical identity, time of migration, departure for migration, place of birth, number of children, reason for migration?
2. How did the mothers perceive and describe themselves before starting these activities? Which identity was foremost?
3. After the activities started, how did the mothers start to define themselves? Which identity did they start to emphasize?
4. What were the demands of the mothers before they started the activities?
5. How did the organizing process of the mothers started?
6. Was there any organization behind their own organization, if yes, what kind of an organization?

II

7. Why and how did they choose the area in front of Galatasaray High School?
8. How did the other political groups react to this activity?
9. How did the media react?
10. How did the other users of the street react?
 - a. Did they get the support of the other user groups in the street?
- 11.2. Did any conflict occur with the other user groups of the street?
11. Did other groups make other activities at the same time at the place of the activity?
12. Did the political availability of the square change in terms of other political groups after the activities?

13. During the activity, could other users of the street use the space as usual?
If not, how was the space shared?
14. How do they remember the activity scheme? How do they define the limits of the area?

III

15. How did the police treat the mothers? Did it change in time?
16. How did the police determine the limits of the activity field during the activities? What kind of methods did they employ?
17. How much space did the police leave for the activity? Did this space ever change?
18. What kind of interventions did the police employ in the space to end the activity?
19. What kind of physical interventions were acted on the space after the activities started?

IV

20. How did the mothers define the limits of the activity area during the activities?
21. How much did the mothers want the limits of their activity space to be?
Was this space influenced by any other factors except the number of people attending the activity?
22. What kind of methods did the mothers employ not to let the police in the space?
23. On what points was the intervention by the police defined as breach?

APPENDIX C
IDENTIFICATION BRACELET FOR SATURDAY MOTHERS TO BE
INTERVIEWED

Kiraz Şahin:

Born in 1975 in Sivas. Alevi. She is not educated. She is not employed. She lives together with her husband's father, sibling and her two children. Both her children attend primary school. They live in Istanbul Dolapdere in a rented house. Part of her own family lives in Sivas and part lives in Istanbul. Migrated to Istanbul 15-20 years ago. She moved into Istanbul because she met her husband there when she came to Istanbul on a holiday and then they got married. When her husband, İsmail Şahin got lost under custody in 1996, she contacted Human Rights Association and she participated in the actions of Saturday's Mothers. She attended the actions until they were cancelled.

Emine Ocak:

Born in Nazimiye, a village in Tunceli. She says she is around 80. Alevi and Kurd. They were eight children. She was made married at 15. She bore her first child when 16. she had 11 children. Two of her daughters died of diarrhea while very young, her son Hasan Ocak died under custody. They moved into Elazığ when the children reached school age. When three of her sons graduated from the university, they moved into Istanbul in order to work. Then the whole family moved into Istanbul so that the girls could also attend university. She is now living with her children residing in Istanbul, in Kartal or Okmeydanı. When her son Hasan Ocak was lost under custody in 1995, she came together with the families of other lost people while looking for her son and they started the

Saturday actions. She says she cannot leave the house and attend the actions as she got very old and she has many advanced sicknesses.

Hamm Tosun:

Born in 1966 in Diyarbakır. She has three more siblings. Kurd. She is not educated but she is literate. She was married when she was 16; she bore her first child when she was 18. She has five children. The youngest child is aged 13 and the eldest is aged 23. Two of the children are attending schools, the others help their mother. She is now trying to make her living by selling pancakes in a buffet. They live in Avcılar, Istanbul. Their house is on lease. They moved from Licök village of Diyarbakır to city center in 1983. They migrated to Istanbul in 1989 together with their children. She says that they moved from Licök and Diyarbakır because they were severely oppressed by the security forces as her husband refused to become a rural guard for the state. When her husband, Fehmi Tosun, got lost under custody on 19th October 1995, she applied to İHD (Human Rights Association) and she started to participate in the actions. She attended the actions every week until they were cancelled. Currently, she is both the founder and the volunteer worker of the association called YAKAYDER (Association for Solidarity with Those Who Lost Their Relations).

Gülşah Taaç:

Born in 1941 in Aşkale, Erzurum. She is Turk and Sunni. She is not educated but she learnt how to write and read by herself. She is not employed. Now she lives in Nurtepe, Istanbul. They own the house. She lives together with her two daughters and her husband. One of her daughters, whom she lives with, both goes to school and works part-time. They have no other income except this. They migrated to Istanbul when the children reached school ages in order to have their children go

to school, as there was no school back in their village. She was married when she was 15. She had six children. One of her sons died in an armed conflict. When her daughter said she saw Hasan Ocak, who was lost under custody, when she had been taken under custody, she thought that it was necessary to struggle against the phenomenon of losing under custody and she started to participate in the actions; and she kept on participating until the actions were cancelled.

Elmas Eren:

Born in 1933 in Biga, Çanakkale. They were three siblings. She has no education but she is literate. She is not employed. She had four children. Her elder son was lost under custody. Now she lives in Avcılar, Istanbul. She lives with her husband and daughter. Their house was left to them by her husband's brother. They have no regular income. They make their living by the help of their children. They moved into Istanbul to find jobs in 1954. In 1980, her elder son was lost under custody. When the actions of the Saturday's Mothers began in 1995, she started to participate in them; however, she had to give up because her daughter and mother-in-law were sick.

Asiye Karakoç:

Born in Atabindi Village in Ağrı. She says she is around 75. Kurd. She is not educated. She was married when she was 13. She bore her first child at 14. She has three sons and three daughters. Two of her sons died when they were very young because of diseases. Her son Rıdvan died under custody. In 1976, they moved into Istanbul because of blood feud and in order to find jobs. Now, she is living alone in the family's own house in Karadeniz Quarter in Istanbul. She has no income. She is making her living by her children's support. When her son

Rıdvan was lost under custody in 1995, she contacted Human Rights Association. She started to participate in the actions on the demand of her other sons.

Hüsniye Ocak:

Born in 1952 in Tunceli. Alevi and Kurd. They were nine siblings. High school graduate. They migrated to Istanbul to work with her family. Now, she works in a leather workshop. She is living with her two children and her husband in Okmeydanı, Istanbul. They own the house. Both she and her husband have regular income. Their children go to high school. When her brother Hasan Ocak was lost under custody, she, together with the other members of the family, started Saturday's Sit-Ins while looking for Hasan. She participated in them regularly until the actions were over. Now, she participates in any action related to the lost people.

Birsen Gülünay:

Born in 1966 in Istanbul. Her family moved to Istanbul from Aşkale, Erzurum. She married to Hasan Gülünay in 1981, when she was 15. She has four children. Her eldest child is aged 20 and the youngest is aged 12. Her children go to school. She has no regular income. She tires to make her living by periodical jobs. She now lives in Istanbul around Hasköy sharing the house with her children, a friend and the friend's child. Their house is on lease. In 1992, her husband Hasan Gülünay was lost under custody. After that, she started to seek her husband constantly. She participated in the actions of Saturday's Mothers since the beginning of them in 1995. She went to the area in front of Galatasaray High School regularly every week until the actions were cancelled.