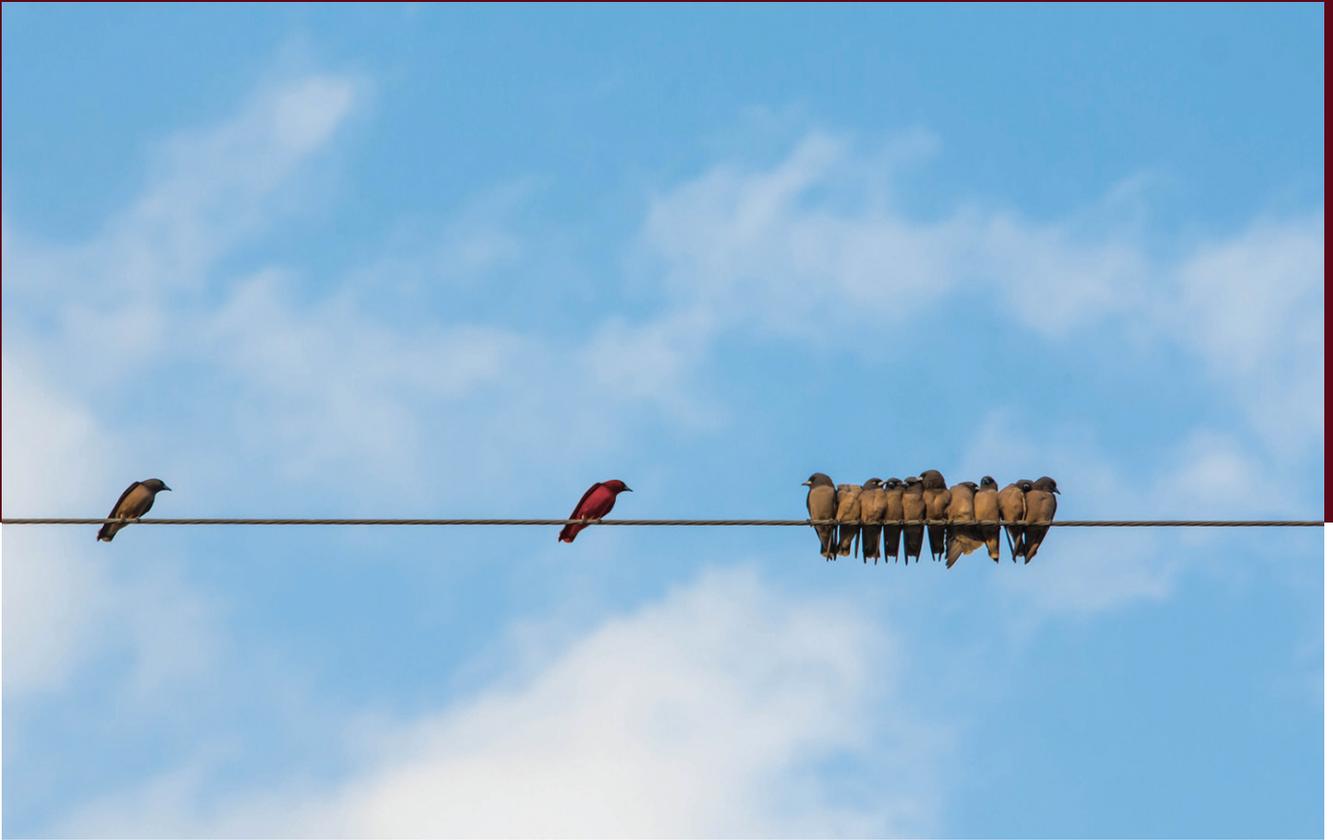


# EDUCATION PROGRAM ON FIGHTING RACISM IN THE FIELD OF LGBTI+'S REPORT

## EXAMINATION OF REFUGEES LGBTI+ IN TURKEY: RACISM



2019



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This work is a collective work of the HEVI LGBTI+ Association.

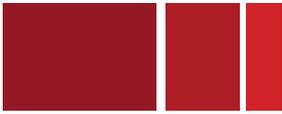
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# ENTRY

With the social movements that started in North Africa and Middle East countries in 2010, which led to change in many areas, especially in the political, social field Human movement(mobility)<sup>1</sup> towards turkey gained momentum. Especially in Syria in 2011 millions of people have been displaced<sup>2</sup> due to the hot war conditions that began. Refugees entering Turkey as masses have become more visible in all aspects of life and the “refugee policy problem” that exists in Turkey has become more complex and deeper.

Geneva Convention of 1951 and Additional Protocol of 1967, signed after the second World War the concept of refugees<sup>3</sup> has been defined and Refugee Rights have been secured internationally. Turkey, which is a party to the convention, does not define those who come from outside European countries as refugees by placing geographical reservations. This definition of Turkey is subject to a regime of impermanence from the geography of the Middle East, where it receives intensive migration. The Turkish asylum system, regardless of geographical location, prevents the benefit of equal legal status with the conditional Refugee<sup>4</sup> and temporary protection<sup>5</sup> regime, which is one of the types of international protection for Turkey. The aforementioned legal impermanence turns into a desperate wait for refugees. While these are happening in Turkey, the EU and other European countries, which from a neoliberal point of view suggest migration as a “security threat”, are not content with barbed wire, knitted walls, and are making anti - migrant propagandas active with an emphasis on “terrorism”.

While ignoring the problem of “not giving refugees a place to stay or turning people into asylum seekers more ruthlessly”, the experiences of displacement of refugees, the conflict derivatives they face and the forms of resistance they develop in these processes are different from each other.

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1 In this paper, the concept of human mobility was used instead of migration. The concept of human mobility is used to draw attention to the dynamic and continuum of migration. (Bkz. Sirkeci & Cohen 2013 migrant cities)

2 Persecution, people who have been forced to flee their country due to widespread violence, armed conflict situations and other human-made disasters. These people usually flee in bulk. These people are also sometimes called “de facto/real refugees”. (Richard Perruchoud - Jillyanne Redpath - Cross, Glossary of Migration Terms, International Organization for Migration)

3 By UN definition, a refugee is “a person who has a justified fear that he will be persecuted because of his race, religion, nationality, membership in a certain social group or political opinion, and therefore leaves his country and does not return or wish to return because of his fear.” (UNCHR)

4 Events that occurred outside of the European countries, because of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion is persecution because of that will suffer because they are afraid with good reason, is located outside the country where the protection is a citizen of this country that have not benefited from, to a stranger who wouldn't benefit from it due to the fear in question, or the outcome of such events is located outside the country of residence where you lived previously, or who are unable to get there because of the fear in question Who do not want to return after the given status refers to the process of determining the status of stateless persons. Until they are placed in the third country, the conditional refugee is allowed to stay in Turkey. ([http://www.goc.gov.tr/mobilicerik/sartli-koruma\\_546\\_552](http://www.goc.gov.tr/mobilicerik/sartli-koruma_546_552))

5 It refers to the protection provided to foreigners who have been forced to leave their country, who cannot return to their country, who have come to our borders or who have crossed our borders in order to find urgent and temporary protection, and who have not been able to determine international protection status individually. ([http://www.goc.gov.tr/mobilicerik/gecici-koruma\\_546\\_552](http://www.goc.gov.tr/mobilicerik/gecici-koruma_546_552))

When we look at this differentiation on the context of gender inequality, we encounter refugee LGBTI+, which legal rules and administrative practices make “invisible”.

Refugee LGBTI+, who carry various identities together, are subjected to multiple discrimination and are left alone in this context.

With the establishment of Lambdaistanbul in 1993 and Kaos GL in 1994, the LGBTI+ movement of Turkey, which formed its own self-organization, continues its work in the field of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity. So far, the oldest and largest LGBTI+ Honor’s march in the Balkans and the Middle East until recently was carried out(performed)<sup>6</sup>. The LGBTI+ movement of Turkey fighting for multifaceted existence and organization that sometimes has been (or is) caught up in segments outside its field; its fight against racism and discrimination in the field LGBTI+ still not enough.

HEVI LGBTI+ group, which came together in 2013 as a result of discrimination in the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey and the inequality created by the colonialist perspective and started as an initiative formed by Majority Kurdish, afterwards, it continued its work by including LGBTI+s from various identities (Arab, Farsi, Armenian, Greek, Alevi, Christian). HEVi LGBTI+, which has been in existence as an initiative for nearly 2 years, became an association in 2015 has found itself in “migration” an area in which it is actually no stranger.

The majority of those who make up to HEVI LGBTI+ Association are in fact the “undesirables” of Turkey’s internal migration flow. Perhaps we can explain the fact that we can integrate very quickly into the refugee field by not forgetting when we come from the village and when we are urbanized, and by keeping our immigration in a corner of our minds all the time. The experiences of racism and discrimination, often exposed by those outside of Turkish identity, have changed size and goals with refugees from Syria in 2011. The social discontent against refugees from outside the country has turned into a new racism and this transformation has been used as a material for domestic politics by political parties. LGBTI+ have also been affected by this rising racism in Turkey, and have taken a discriminatory stance against the refugee LGBTI+, whom they interact with in particular- partially - and have engaged in racist practices.

HEVI LGBTI+ Association has faught with multiple discrimination since its first day (inception), it worked to cover different ethnic, religious, geographical and similar diversity alongside LGBTI+ identities. It has promoted<sup>7</sup> racism and multiple discrimination through its activities in 2019. As a result of this work, education on racism and discrimination in Turkey has been carried out and reported. In the first part of the education program, “asylum” experiences of refugees LGBTI+ who emigrated from Middle East geography to Turkey due to gender insecurity and war, under conditional refugee and temporary protection status were used as educational material. In this work, the concept of racism on the basis of discrimination was based on the exposure of Refugee LGBTI+ in their country of origin and in Turkey.

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6 <https://bianet.org/bianet/toplumsal-cinsiyet/209205-lgbti-onur-haftasi-basliyor>

7 <http://www.stgm.org.tr/icerik/detay/hv-lgbti-dernegi-aylik-toplantilari-basliyor>

The work did not include any information that would pose a danger to their safety by taking into account the privacy of the refugee LGBTI+ who shared their experiences within the scope of the education program. In the second part of the education program, the racism and hate speech exposed by LGBTI+ who have various ethnic and religious identities, as well as the LGBTI+ who are from Turkey, are included in their own narratives. In this section, the LGBTI+s who shared their experiences wanted their names to be clearly included in this report. In the third part of the program, the presentation of sociologist Polat Alpman in the context of “sexism and racism” has progressed in the form of question and answer.

The content of the “racism in LGBTI+ area “and Education Program” organized in cooperation with HEVI LGBTI+ Association and Heinrich Böll Stiftung Turkey representative is composed of the experiences of the refugees LGBTI+ living in Turkey, as well as the experiences of LGBTI+ with various ethnic and religious identities.

This work describes negativism as “racism,” regardless of where “racism begins.” in which discourse or behavior even with good-intentions is felt to “subjects”.

The work also found that the new wave of racism in Turkey, particularly those of Syrian refugees, has increased among LGBTI+. As the LGBTI + movement and its activists, it has been observed that the language we use sometimes and the activities we do sometimes cause discrimination and racism to become more legitimate. Throughout the education program, LGBTI+ have had the opportunity to examine and evaluate the discrimination and problematics experienced through their experiences.

Throughout the history of the Republic, it has been observed that LGBTI+ have an adequate role(A)in fighting discrimination and racism, which are systematically exposed to all identities other than Turkish identity. The LGBTI+ movement, which seeks to produce social policies in many areas, is seen to produce social policies(e)in the fight against racism. This educational study revealed that social movements in Turkey-and the LGBTI+ movement in particular - need urgent new work and social policies in the field of combating racism.



# 1

## **SESSION: EXPERIENCES OF DISCRIMINATION/ RACISM EXPERIENCED BY REFUGEE LGBTI+**

Hello everyone and welcome. “Our training program to fight racism in scope of LGBTI+” the first part will include experiences of racism that our LGBTI+ refugees’ friends have been exposed to in their countries and in Turkey.

**\*\*\*I’m a Kurdish Iraqi, I came from Erbil. I’m living in Yalova for twenty-seven months. I want to make a point before I move on to my speech, it should not be forgotten that; no one wants to leave his country, his family or his beloved ones behind to emigrate! unless they have to. In the story of most LGBTI+, no one migrates for a better “life,” only to save his life.**

I’m a doctor, I studied medicine for 6 years and graduated in 2015. I studied at an international high school on a full scholarship, which shows that I worked hard. I knew before I was 18 that I was gay and because I wasn’t a very strong person in our society and because I wasn’t going to be the strong person who they wanted, I had to do something for myself, which could happen with education. I could only make a life for myself by learning (reading), so I gave myself to education(reading). As a result, I became a doctor and started working and I had a very luxurious life; I had money, my car, my family, my title, I had everything. When I used to go somewhere, people would show respect. Everyone knew me because my family was a well-known family and I had a beautiful life. All I couldn’t have there and wanted as “secret” was freedom. I didn’t want anyone to know about me to respect that I was gay, I just wanted to have a secret life, but that wasn’t even possible.

As a result, it was found out by my family that I was gay, in our culture, if you are gay then you are going to get killed under the name of honor and I am a tribal child and my father is the head of our tribe. According to them, we are disgraced! That’s why I ran away without telling anyone. Later, of course, they found out that I came to Turkey and they’re still after me. I know if they find me, they’ll kill me in a second.

When I first came to Turkey, I registered with the UN in Ankara and they sent me to Eskisehir. Why did I do all this? I studied for 20 years I left my profession, I left a beautiful life just to stay alive, not to be killed.

I came to Turkey because there was no other country to take refuge in. I couldn’t go to Syria, I couldn’t go to Iran, they’re worse than us. I didn’t come here with pleasure I had to come here. If I had not experienced these troubles there, if I had been free defiantly would not have left my country. If I had some time, I could get a visa to any country I wanted but I didn’t have the opportunity to do it.

I came here and I had more difficulties here, first we went to Eskisehir and as a result of our great efforts we found a home. The weather was very cold and the bills were not opened. For a month we lived in that house in the cold; no electricity, no water and we didn't get our identity yet so we couldn't have subscription (for gas, water, electricity) and we just stayed out in the cold for a month. We used to go to cafes to charge phones. The owner of the house knew we were refugees, I was telling him, "Brother, I'll give you money and you'll subscribe (for gas, water, electricity)." The owner of the house said if you want you can stay in that house or leave, I'm not going to subscribe (for gas, water, electricity) for you. Together my lover came with me, my lover wasn't as strong as me. At the end of a month we found a friend who came from Tekirdağ, thanks for him, he subscribed (for gas, water, electricity) for us. That friend stayed with us one month, again because we are refugees and especially because I'm Kurdish that friend used to throw words on (hit on) me "You are dirty, why you come here, you are terrorists", I said, Why am I a terrorist what have I done to you or to anyone? Okay, you came and helped us, and only to subscribe for us you took two thousand Turkish Liras. In fact, he stayed with us together ate, drank, had fun, but unfortunately, he stole two thousand TL more from me and left just like that. Then I sent him a message asking why did you do that?. "You guys deserve it," he said. Why, what did I do?" You come and do evil in our country, you are dirty" he wrote. I started looking for work, the only field where I could get a job was washing dishes. "Are you refugee?" whenever you answer with yes no one gave you work and no one gives. Okay let's skip this.

Immigration office is where all of our papers stuff is done, sometimes I used to go at noon, they were yelling out, "where the fuck are you?". It supposed to be a professional person in front of me. Never mind me (forget about me), he shouldn't talk like that out of respect for himself. The government is paying you for this job, you're not doing it for your own good. How many times have I come out of that immigration office cried and I've always asked this question: "What's my fault?" My fault was just being gay. We have been repeatedly insulted, cursed, but there is nothing to do, we buried them all in our hearts. We lived in Eskişehir for 6 months, there was no job and our money was almost finished. During those 6 months I swear we only ate potatoes. We had to do this to be able to pay the rent, the bills and to survive. I entered the Hornet, and from there I found some Iranian Kurdish friends, they said, "Come to Yalova and we will help you.". This happened when the only person I'm in touch with from my family, who was my sister texted me. "Run from wherever you are, your father fingered out your place. He is going to send someone there." Without getting anything out of that house, I just took my bag and got out. We came to Yalova without even handing over the key, then I sent my lover to Eskisehir to hand over the key and close subscriptions (for gas, water, electricity). Because my lover didn't know Turkish very well and because he

was soft-natured when asked for our deposit because he, the owner of the house roughed it up and said, "You have an iPhone in your hand, and you still say we don't have money, you come here as a refugee you are taking advantage of all the rights." We came to Yalova. A friend got me a job, but I was able to work there only for 4 weeks. I went and memorized the menu, and I learned how to cook any kind of food, so they wouldn't say, "you can't do anything." I started working on the third day, the chef left the kitchen to me, saying, "You're a successful person, you're going to stay here." Then I overheard the waitresses talking among them, "This refugee, we have to get him fired, he can't be chief on our own." I was scared and quit that job. And then I found a house, which they say is "a place like that if you tie an animal up, it doesn't stop". We cleaned up and arranged the house. We stayed in this house for a month then we had to go out, my deposit's gone, and we ended up on the street again. Then we went over to a friend of mine, where I got a job as an English teacher. These problems were over, this time another one has begun. There was a person working at the immigration office. His job there was the processing of refugees. He used to come to my work every day and chased me. 6 months went by like this. One day he cut my way off, saying, "You're either going to have sex with me or I'm going to make up a story and close your file and send you back to Iraq." I couldn't go and tell the immigration office about it because my record was in Eskişehir and I lived in Yalova without permission. Lastly, I shared the situation with friends in Yalova, who spoke to the man and then left me alone. If my friends hadn't convinced him, I would have had to live somethings with that man otherwise my file will be closed and I'd be sent to Iraq, that is, to die. One day I went to a grocery store, asked for cigarettes and handed 50 TL, the sell gave me change more than the price of cigarettes. The cigarette's price was 10 TL, he gave me 45 TL. I said, "Uncle, you've given me extra money." He looked at me as if I wanted too much. Then he said, "Here is Turkey, here is not Iraq." I didn't understand. Then he said "you're liars. You can deceive each other in Iraq, but we are Turks, you can't fool us here." Then I tried to explain the situation again, I showed the money I had, "10 TL of cigarettes, you gave me 45 TL, so you gave me extra money." I said. He realized he was actually getting it wrong so he said, "Come On, Come on," and he kicked me out of the grocery store. I'm giving this example because the people here have become so, for them, the refugees are dirty, traitors, liars. According to way of thinking Syrian, Iranian, Iraqi doesn't matter, anyone who isn't Turkish is bad.

Last but not least, you can be Iraqi, you can be Turkish, you can be a doctor, you can be a cleaning worker, none of it matters, all of us are human beings. Now how do I say that all of the Turks are bad, I cannot say because I cannot generalize. I've met many nice people too. I wish that we, as refugees, are looked at like this, of course we have bad ones among us; as in every nation, every community, every society. Despite all the negativity we have experienced, I'd like to thank Turkey, it has become a shelter for us. As a Kurdish person, I wish the Turkish state (country)

never to be harmed and that the Turkish people will always live in happiness. I am ready to do whatever I can to beautify Turkey. All I want is for the Turkish people to understand us now. We had a family, a business, a house. They wrapped us in cotton wool and looked after us, we didn't grow up in garbage, we're not bad people.

■ \*\*\*Slav xer hatin. (Hello, welcome)

I'm Iranian. I came from the Kurdistan region of Iran. I call myself LGBTI+ member. I was so ignorant about it where I live that I don't know if I'm gay or bisexual; but I identify myself as LGBTI+. If I need to get to the point by talking about my family, I come from a Kurdish and religious family. First, it's religion, then it's race, then it's something else but sort of like that. My mother's family is religious and my father's family is Kurdish nationalist. There is a lot of pressure on the Kurdish people in Iran. Living in a family like this is a bit hard as an LGBTI+. My father, my brothers, expected me to be patriarchal. As I mentioned, my father's family was involved in the Kurdish fight, my uncles were killed for disobeying the Iranian government, so everyone in my hometown knows my family. It's impossible to be LGBTI+ in a family like this. They say you come from a family like that, how can you be a "faggot-Fogo"?

On one hand I have to respect my family: my uncles, our thoughts ... On the other hand, I have a different feeling to them. It's actually a normal feeling, but it's different to society. I was in between and I had a many hard times. I couldn't pretend to be straight. I won university and went to Tehran, which was a chance for me. I gained Petroleum Engineering, had to quit, then moved on to the Department of social services. In my college years, we were secretly doing activism with some of our friends. You know Iran's position on this issue; we are being sentenced to death in Iran, we are being sent to jail, as well as we are not being put in human place. But it's not just those troubles, you'll never live like a human being. We wear earrings, for example, so we are beaten. When we complain, we're guilty again. We are accused of being immoral. In 2012, 16 persons in Iran were caught at an LGBTI+ event, keeping us in custody for a week. We were photographed, we were minted there, a few of our friends were harassed. This was done by telling us that you are against the regime and against Allah. Like everyone else, I loved my country so much and still, I had to come here. On one hand I'm Kurdish, on the other hand LGBTI+ and on the other hand I was Sunni in a Shia government. In Iran, Pharisees are the primary citizens, while Kurdish and Azeris are not widely accepted by the regime. I had a profession but because of the identities I counted, I was not given a space to work.

I came to Turkey in 2016 with the guidance of my friend, I had to leave my country and come to Turkey otherwise I wouldn't leave my country to go to even the most beautiful country in the world. Because I could be much better in my own country

Ever since I came to Turkey, I've been hiding myself everywhere. If I'm on the bus or in a closed place, I don't pick up when my phone rings; because I'll be speaking either Kurdish or Persian. It happened to me a few times, when I was on the bus my phone rang, I spoke Persian in a low voice, everyone turned and looked at me. They ask me where you're from, "I'm Iranian," I answer, the next question "Are you from Tabriz?" they're asking. When I say "no I'm not from Tabriz" they don't talk. When saying "I'm from Tabriz, I'm Azerbaijani" they say "well, very good you are from us Turkish". Whenever I say that I'm Kurdish, "How is it possible? Are there Kurdish people in Iran?" they wonder. With this feature, Turkey is similar to Iran. People are breaking up. I guess if I go to America, they won't talk to me like, "You're a Kurdish." Here they asked me even such a question, "Have you been circumcised?". We are two neighboring countries, they don't even know what language we speak, what ignorance this is. Most of our friends, including me, work 14 hours for 40 TL, washing dishes. One day the owner of workplace says to you don't come when there's no problem, and of course he won't pay you. You can't even object to injustice because you don't know the language. As a result, the country doesn't matter, the biggest problem for us as LGBTI+ is discrimination. Wherever there is racism, there is no acceptance of LGBTI+. When I was found out that I was LGBTI+ in the city where I live, I received threatening messages: "you are not a Kurdish, you are a traitor, you are an agent of the government." So, if you are LGBTI+ you can't be Kurdish. For Kurdish, it is sacred that I die for the sake of race, while it is right behavior, it is unacceptable that I am LGBTI+. This is not just something that happens with the Turkish. "Would it be both Kurdish and LGBTI+?" if you ask me. If you want to be an activist, it's called war for your people. Obviously go die in the war, that's flattering for us but don't be LGBTI+. It will be said that our brother was martyred, they will be proud. And for what? For race.

\*\*\*I'm 30 years old. I'm Iranian, I'm Azerbaijani. I've been an activist on LGBTI+ and women's rights for 12 years. Before I came to Turkey, I was also an activist in Iran on these issues. If we need to talk about LGBTI+ and racism field, I want to talk about the first ones in the countries we belong to and the next ones here.

The Azeri people are divided into south and north. When we say South Azerbaijan, we are talking about the part in Iran. The types of discrimination in these two separate regions is also variable. As a country, if we start from the place called Azerbaijan, we should always keep the discourse of "Turkish is not gay" in a corner

of our minds. If you're gay, you're not one of us, no acceptance, no certainty. Israel has made you this way, you are the product of the opposites of Islam. "They bring out people like you to disrupt our culture," they say. It's a huge shame for families that their children are LGBTI+. If you're a Turkish, you need to expose straight codes(signs). If you're a woman, you should sit at your home and cook. Your head should be on the ground. If you're a man, you've got to be tough, you've got to fight whenever you can. You have to be beyond what's defined as manhood. When we talk to friends who are in Baku or cities around the world, I encounter this very much: If you have an LGBTI + identity, what happens in all families without exception is not to accept you. In addition, police are so brutal for LGBTI+, people are being detained by raiding homes. The point I want to point out is that you're not detained at an LGBTI+ event or an activity. Straight inside the police House. One of our friends was beaten and taken to the hospital, the hospital handed our friend over to the police as she does not provide treatment because she is a Feminine. Why is she being handed over? Because in the eyes of the community, she is sick and guilty. There are many problems in Northern Azerbaijan, we are not even allowed to live in secret. You cannot be a Muslim if you are LGBTI+, some of our friends come to Turkey because of this pressure, some of our friends go to Russia. Those with a bit of a good situation are trying to get to Europe. On the other hand, an LGBTI + heritage is not benefited in any way. The family does not want to share the inheritance, and the state supports it very well with its courts. When most of our friends carry the injustice experienced by their family to the court, the judge asks "What are you going to do with this property or money? What are you going to use it for?" As a result, in the face of the court, this results in adverse claims of inheritance. In the LGBTI+ field there, when we tell them at the panels or elsewhere, discussions are also being conducted within us, "You insult our state by telling them, "or" let's not make our country worse by telling them." These friends also turn a blind eye to what they fear, and they want us to turn a blind eye. When we come to Iran Azerbaijan, the sanctions of the Iranian government are taking place. The Iranian government, for instance, appears to be supporting transgender. When we look at the Society, of course, it does not accept the society, it is the same Society; North Azerbaijan does not recognize South Azerbaijan. I was born close to Tabriz and studied in this city until the middle of primary school. I didn't know what homosexuality meant at the time but I had a friend, we were holding each other's hands while we were studying together. One of my uncles saw this, and I was a third-grader in elementary school at the time. From then on, my family began to exclude me and I was never allowed to stay together with other men.

By the way, I didn't know and didn't understand at the time what it meant to hold someone's hand and that feeling. This is spreading among relatives, not only you but your family are being marked, this family is described as being a hole. After this

process, the head of the family leans forward. You deserve everything that happens to you, you can be beaten, you can be raped, you can't talk in front of them, the thing that is cut to you is to shut up. You can't object, if you object, your family will be the first to beat you. There are no rights, no rules, no government when it comes to us. We moved to Tehran when I was in fourth grade. I thought I'd have a different life, but unfortunately, I was raped at the mosque by 3 people when I was 15. I had the same thing on my way to college. I couldn't say anything to anyone at the time out of fear. I didn't go to school for a month, I didn't tell my parents that. Everything would have been worse if I had told my parents. In the aftermath of these events, I told my parents I was gay. First, I told my mother, then my aunt, and then a relative found out. And they threw me out of the family. I went to an institution like the director of Social Policy there, just like here. I was told I was transgender and needed surgery. My family said, "You can't be trans, if you want to be trans, go away, don't spoil our family, don't spoil our culture." After my brother's friend found out I was gay, everyone in the neighborhood where my parents lived found out I was gay. Even in the restaurant where I had dinner, no one was sitting at my table, or talking to me. We were living in a Turkish neighborhood; I was told that you are not one of us. In the meanwhile, I completed my bachelor degree and started my master's degree. Discrimination was going on everywhere. Everyone was pretending that I had a disease and that I was going to infect them as well. I was detained for doing activism, I was sentenced to prison. I've seen death in front of me many times. By the way, I was in good situation economically, I had education, I had a boyfriend, I wouldn't have left my own country and come here if I hadn't been in a difficult situation. I have fought hard with my family, with the state, with the community, but I would never have gone anywhere else without the danger of death. Because again, it's very difficult to build a life from scratch. For the Azerbaijanis, there is a different situation in Turkey. There is also positive discrimination in the field of LGBTI+ for Azerbaijanis, and when it comes to society, the first thing they see is your homosexuality. I heard the same thing here in the community: "come, aren't you a Turkish? Be a Muslim, you'll get better. Why are you doing something like this? We have culture, we have dignity. Maybe the Pharisees passed this disease on to you." There's positive discrimination here because we're Azerbaijanis, but the only thing we're asked about is not being gay. "You are Turkish; you are the honor of this land. "Unfortunately, homosexuality is a bad thing in Turkish culture because I come from a racist family. But if you have an active role in their relationship, there is some acceptance of that role, even though homosexuality is bad in their eyes; but if it's the opposite of the role, you're not human and you shouldn't live. We need to look at discrimination over racism in the LGBTI+ field, in fact, we usually talk about phobia from the outside. We all know what the community gives us. If we work with open identity in our workplaces, it's OK when women talk to us but when a man talks to us, he's excluded from the field of working with us. Men can

never talk to gays, and if they do, there's definitely a sexuality. When we look at the LGBTI+ field in Turkey, there is a huge discrimination against LGBTI+ refugees. Racism against LGBTI+ refugees is more prominent, especially in entertainment places where Turkish LGBTI+ go. Sometimes we don't hear it from any LGBTI+, we hear it from activists in the community. At the meetings of the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey, we are told how bad discrimination is. The logic is, let's turn a corner or ignore those who don't speak the same language as us, LGBTI+ who don't believe in the same thing as us. There is this discrimination within LGBTI+ refugee as; it is Syrian, Iranian, Iraqi, etc. In fact, the only thing that's different from each other is our cultures. As LGBTI + refugee I have witnessed in an event that the Kurds are mentioned in "he does not know the east, my love, they do not understand much" is said. But if the person we are talking about came from Izmir, he is absolute.

\*\*\*I'm Syrian, Kurdish, 28 years old. I had a very good life in Syria. I'm an architect. I graduated in 2014. I worked as an academic for a year in college. A year later, I came to Turkey to avoid the military service.

My family came to Turkey as a result of the occupation of Kobane by Daish in 2015. 3 times I tried to enter Turkey through illegal ways across the border, but did not work. My parents gave 300\$ to someone this way I was able to cross the border and enter Turkey. I came to Urfa, where I worked for a construction company for about 3 months. I had agreed about 2000TL, but I was only able to get a payment of 500TL on the project's delivery. Afterwards I started working in an association. I had a straight friend there, I trusted him and told him that I was gay. A week later, he said, Let's talk somewhere. He said he would tell my parents everything I told him. "I trusted you, why do you do this and what do you want in return?" I said. He asked for money in return. I was also a semi-volunteer at that association and was able to earn between 500TL to 700TL a month. I gave him 350TL first, then 300TL. The third month he asked for money again, during that time my family had returned to Kobane. The Association where I worked closed, my family left, I was left alone and I had no money. I went to a few associations in Urfa and asked for help because there are no jobs, no money, no family. An association helped and I came to Istanbul. But like the first time I came to Urfa I was on my own and there was nothing again.

I was talking to some Turkish people via applications (Facebook, hornet, etc.) after two or three sentences "Where Are you from?" they ask. "I'm Syrian," I say. They either block me from those applications or they don't talk. I found a house in Taksim and gradually I made friends. As a restorer I started to work in the Grand Bazaar. People who see me where I work " what are you doing here?" they were asking. When I said I was working, "Shame on our government, how you work here and

make money.” They were saying. We had an engineer on the field, he saw a photo of me from the gay application, he threatened me. But there was a woman there, she helped me. As I said, I had a very good life in Syria, until the war. Here wherever I go, I face racism. “What are you guys doing here?” it’s said.

### ***Dialogues of Racism:***

\*\*\*We were talking in Arabic as we walked up the stairs of a place called Shahika (Şahika). Of those who saw us, he said, “This is where they didn’t enter. How did these Arabs find this place?” we witnessed them talking.

\*\*\*I’m talking on Tinder, “you’re so handsome, where are you from?” they’re being asked. When I say I’m Iraqi, they just delete it. There are too many who take a stand against us in this way. In the applications, it is stated that Persian and Arabs should not write, or that only Turkish and Europeans can write.

\*\*\*We are told, “Why do they go to another place when there is ‘tek yön’, and they come and ruin our environment”. There are Association parties take place, I’m Azeri and they don’t say much because they know me, but next to me they say, “when are these Arabs going to leave?”

\*\*There’s a club called Love; we went a couple of times. We were told, “only Turkish can enter.”

\*\*\*The guest doesn’t like the guest; the host doesn’t like any of them. As an Iranian LGBTI+, sometimes we want to go to ‘tek yön’some of our friends we want to go together say, “Let’s not go to ‘tek yön’, there are Arabs there.”

\*\*\*Turkish LGBTI+ who are living in Yalova in particular are reluctant to communicate with us. What a pity on us, being LGBTI+ doesn’t save us from being racist.

\*\*\* There was event was held in Yalova in Kurdish language for Kurdish LGBTI+. Some of our Pharisee friends questioned why some of the activities were held in people’s mother tongue.

\*\*\* When we looked at classical racism, biological differences were being revealed. In new racism, racism is done through cultural differences.

\*\*\*I wonder if the situation in Turkey is it a racism? Or is it people’s fear of being “invaded”? I think that distinction is important.

\*\*\*As an Iranian Kurdish LGBTI+, the only point I was not discriminated against in Turkey was that I was Sunni.

# 2

## DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM IN THE LGBTI+ MOVEMENT IN TURKEY

**Can:** Friends in the previous section we talked more about the experiences of discrimination and racism experienced by our LGBTI+ refugees' friends. In this section, we will talk more about the experiences of discrimination and racism in particular, which various identities of Turkey are subjected to, and then discuss them through all other experiences. Let me start the session before it gets too far.

As we begin the session, we will present two friends from Turkey who have LGBTI+ identities as well as other identities. The first is Agrin and the second is Miran. Agrin defines herself as a Kurdish Trans activist. Miran, on the other hand, defines himself as Alawite and sexless/queer. I would like to open a parenthesis here, we are people who are involved in the LGBTI+ movement or are associated with this movement in some way, and we know that being LGBTI+ does not ensure that we are free from all phobia and discrimination unfortunately. We are often exposed to racism, whether implicitly or explicitly, or can be racist. I want to leave it to the Kurdish Trans activist Agrin without further ado.

**Agrin:** Hello Everyone, My Name Is Agrin. I have been trying to get involved in the LGBTI+ movement since about 2015. I'm trying to make place (to open a channel) for myself. I try to be visible through my trans visibility, as well as my Kurdish identity, even though we are unwanted or invisible by force. In 2015, I first started organizing with a political formation, not with an LGBTI+ organization. Then I got into the LGBTI + movement because I was not accommodated, so to speak, I was discriminated. Within the political party, he kept saying, "is that what happens? How so?" I couldn't stand the arguments over so I left. And I decided to get involved with the LGBTI+ movement. I first met HEVI and started working with them. At first you don't know anything about LGBTI+ activism, and there are things about being a Kurdish in Turkey. You live in more suburban areas; you can have a language problem. For example, my Turkish was not very good, and I think it never had to be. There's a fear of not being able to express yourself that this situation brings, and you're just stunned, they sound very different to you, when you start to meet with Turkey LGBTI+ movement you are stunned. I started attending meetings with my recognition of the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey. For example, you start to talk in very crowded meetings, you want to say something about the subject; but when you talk, you realize that some of them laugh. There are jokes being made over the

Kurdish identity, you realize that your talk is not worth as much as the other's talk, and you feel it. I was constantly exposed to so-called jokes about being Kurdish. You're there, but they don't accept you. You're subject to constant ignorance, marginalization. My criticism is that not only Turkish individuals who are involved in the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey, but also activists who I can call middle-class white Kurdish who are accepted within the movement. That's what some middle-class Kurdish LGBTI+ cutters who want to benefit the elite are doing.

When a debate takes place over being a Kurdish, the middle class, I say, never stands by it. In fact, they can get in front of you and make unfair and hurtful criticisms and jokes about identity. They can do this not just at political meetings but at many events. For example, when there is something about the Kurdish in the parties, it can be a matter of halay (special kind or dance); it's as if Kurdish is being reduced to halay. I like to dance halay but also I like to dance at the club. Every time a Kurdish name is mentioned, pretending to be halay is actually a discrimination. They act as if the Kurdish should have only halay, as if they were oriental in all refugee activities. I never forget, one day I attended an organization event in Ankara with my friend. There was a party on the night and there was an argument. During the argument, the people in front of us said to us, "you smell of cheese with grass." We talked about it with the people who organized the event, nothing was done and we were subjected to racism there. Then we had to leave the event. They said they had taken the person away after so much; but as soon as it happened, we had to leave the party because they didn't do anything. We were forced to leave, not to commit violence against us. For example, in some meetings such as "Shut up Kurdish girl" or "Shut up terrorist girl" words are said under the name of the joke. These are really sad things that make you feel bad. Thanks a lot. I'm a little excited, I'm finishing my speech here for now, and if I have additions later, I will.

- **Can:** Thanks a lot Agrin. Kurdish equals halay is a racist thing in itself. For example, I am Kurdish and I don't like halay at all. If there is a party of the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey, there is unlimited dancing and fun, but if this event is a refugee event, they are call it raks. I've seen such an event recently. The name was especially for LGBTI+ refugees' event "come habibi let's do raks". Because you are a refugee then you are habibi and you do raks. It's a racist thing in itself.

\*\*\* : We also live something like that in Iran. For some reason, whenever we mention that we are Kurdish, they act as if we can only do halay. I went to a wedding, everyone was dancing. I joined the dance, a Pharisee friend came close to me “You are Kurdish, how can you dance like that?” he asked me a question like that and I was very uncomfortable. Unfortunately, we have to go through things like that all the time.

**Ahmet K:** I’m actually going to talk about something backward, something much far behind. In the early 2000s, the bear movement was just a beginning and continuing informally. The Internet was so new, people were communicating through chat rooms. No LGBTI+ associations, including Kaos and Lambda were yet organizing like an initiative. The name of the formation, which started to form as bears over the web, was designated as “Turkish Bears” and the name of the web was taken. When the bear was heard, a lot of people started to participate in a year across Turkey. Armenian, Arab, Kurdish Bears also joined the group and a discussion began over the change of name of the formation. But there was a group of people, they said, “everyone who lives here is also Turkish, and so there is no need for the name of the group to change.” they were looking at it like that, insisting it should be like that and not change. When the final discussion was not concluded, the group split into two, and those who said to keep a group name so began to gather under the name of Turkish bears. The other group formed the Anatolian Bears. The Anatolian Bears tried to exist within the Bears of all walks of life, and this split and dissociation came up to the “Istanbul fall” and “Ankara Spring” Meetings. Because there was no Pride at the time. At the meetings there, this division was discussed and most of the participants said, “You are leaving because of ethnicity. What’s the need for that” we’ve come across rhetoric like that. In fact, it was questionable to create something common to escape from the Turkish name hegemony and create something else. “Why are you leaving? You’re interrupting the movement.” we were subjected to such unfair criticism. This example I gave was about past experiences.

To give an example more recently, I can give an example of the establishment of HEVI. At the time of the Gezi Park there was a formation called LGBT Block. It was a block of LGBTI+ from different identities that came from all over Turkey. I was in the coordination of that block. I was interested in co-ordination within the park and the LGBT+ block’s social media. The Kurdish LGBTI+ also decided to organize an organization called HEVI because they were exposed to discrimination and racism within the Gezi Park and in the LGBT+ block. The Kurdish LGBTI+ there decided to unite and form HEVI. Because there was also racism and discrimination.

**Can:** There is actually a reasonable upper identity in Turkey. It's an identity that the state has approved as well. That upper identity: Being straight cis-male, being between 25-35 years, being young, we can define being Muslim - Sunni, so to speak, not being old, not being crippled (disabled). Apart from this, all other identities and forms are actually entities that are alienated and subjected to discrimination. Today, we also come together to talk about the existence of the state outside of this form of Turkish identity, which is already accepted by the state, and to convey to each other through experiences. I would like to leave the talk to Miran before the topic gets any more distracted. Because Miran is a friend of ours who lives in Turkey and carries alevi identity apart from gender identity and sexual orientation and carries out studies in this field.

**Miran:** : Hello, I'm Miran. I come from a Kurdish Alevi family from Sivas. I define myself as Alevi. I am a believer (have faith), and I also define myself as Kurdish. Politically, on the other hand, I can't define myself as a homosexual; because over time I may change whom I will desire. I see myself as sexless. I don't want to confine myself to a category, I'm just trying to get myself to exist a little bit within cultural categories. We have many identities in everyday life. I am also an anthropologist, a designer, a man with breasts, a long-haired man, and a man with whom I am nothing. But after I started living as Miran, not by the name assigned to me, I began to see it as a field of fight within myself. I was in Dersim in 2012 and during the Gezi time, and we started an LGBTI+ organization in Dersim. For the first time in that period, I started to engage in the LGBTI+ movement. Before, I had contact with the LGBTI+ movement, but I tried to exist with my Kurdish-Alevi homosexual identity without fear of the father, the family, the state by blackening my eyes in the process I said. It was effective, too. With the Gezi process in Anatolia, organizations started in 15-16 different cities at a time, they were strong organizations in the places where they were located. At that time, we were door-to-door, wandering and talking about ourselves. If you ask why we were wandering around at that time, taking the risk of marking our doors to get ourselves there, I lived for 2 years as an open homosexual in that small 15,000 population center of Dersim and I lived in Cemevîl (Cemevi or Cem house is a special place for Alevi people where they get education about faith) during this process for 1 year. So, I was right in the center. I was at the center of faith, and I was at the center of activism. Because in Kurdistan, where the Alevi population is strongest, it is also one of the most important places politically, yet people have begun to confront LGBTI+ identities without confronting their own identity. It was a serious phase. LGBTI+ flags began to fluctuate in Dersim Square on May 1, Women's day. That's how we lit the first fire. Then I was threatened and I started to have some psychological

problems as well and so I had to give up work there. I attribute this divergence to the psychological process I have experienced rather than the threat. When I went back to the family home, I saw that it wasn't actually my home, because as I got into activism, I realized how much I was turning into. Everything I've been told up until now was up to me. According to the teachings of the Alevi faith, when you enter into a faithful identity, homosexual relationship is not welcome. How do we

know that? We can see this in the explanations of the religious institutions which can be called as the Alevi's religious affair in Europe. We know this from the Cemevi Foundation statements, from the statements of some Alevi grandparents. Even though they say how democratic they are, we know that some Alevi grandfathers stubbornly refused to accept the marriage. According to Alevi's belief homosexual marriage cannot happen. If you say why, because marriage has established itself through reproduction, the marriage of two people is reasonable if it is going to be a child, if it can be. Basically, they don't say that, homosexuality is forbidden directly, but you cannot make your marriage, you cannot be available in terms of faith. What we call availability is that when an Alevi reaches a certain age, he chooses a brother's path and thus becomes available. After availability, entered to Cemevi, which can exist within itself. Haci Bektashi is one of the 4 door 40 authorities of The Guardian I mentioned. Availability ownership status. So, if I couldn't get married, I wouldn't be able to skip one of those Alevism steps and never reach the order they call kamil. I started to face faith here, I started to fight. I've met many grandfathers.

When LGBTI + activists came to Dersim at that time, they came to our Cemevi. One of your grandparents explains it in assembly, I'm with 2-3 friends involved. Grandfather eats food and makes fun of it. He told us: "what if three homosexuals came from Ankara and asked me such things. I'm explaining things about being an Alevi, of course, they are souls in our eyes. Then they went and I started laughing." Then I looked at it-those were times I wasn't open to - that means that even as enlightened Democrats, as progressive as they seem, this discrimination continues to produce itself over and over again. He says these things knowing that he thinks I'm not homosexual, but if he knew my homosexual identity, he would take the Democratic, beautiful, "progressive", humanistic side of Alevism and, of course, he would have died first. I think their biggest enemies, are homosexuals, secretive homosexuals, and hence homophobia. Their homophobia is the homophobia of hidden homosexuals. What I saw in faith was exactly like that. It is the person who laughs against your face here and tells you about the bases of faith, raping his own daughter from behind, or spewing homophobia at the level that can praise homosexuality here and kill homosexuals from behind. They started my fight zone. Then we met with certain friends and started working on it. Various Association institutions: we met with Pir Sultan Abdal Association, Haci Bektashi Association,

we did not have a collective meeting individually. We've all come across similar things. No one was talking in homophobic way, it's interesting, no one was insulted. But what I saw in Dersim was that there was no place for Alevi homosexuals in politicized Alevism. What I see here is similar. My Trans friends are having trouble on their way home from Cemevi. A couple of friends reached out to me, they said, "We entered Cemevi, there was no trouble in Cemevi; there was talk when leaving alone." "We went to grandfather, he laughed at us." they said. That's how people experience various kinds of discrimination. When you look at it, no environment, no institution or organization is seriously LGBTI+ friendly in my opinion. We talked about how hidden, implicit racism, which is a hidden potential that everyone really has within racism. I think every person, including homosexuals from the same point, has hidden homophobia, or serious homophobia, racism and sexism that is compatible with it.

On my front line like this, I've seen and experienced these things. I'm very critical of my own faith when it comes to it, but I'm a believer. Why am I a believer; because I am a person who likes to fight more. I think I can convert. I think it's a field of fight. I think belief is also a field of fight. I think being a Kurdish is also an area of fight. I don't attribute that to any sense, I just think it is in my own life and I'm fighting in these areas. I'll continue to fight. I will continue to exist.

I have been in HEVI LGBTI + since it was founded in 2013. For example, I can easily say that this is the only area where I do not experience distinction. In that sense it's with my personal belief or identity, so I care about that. Everyone has to dig up the foundations of their faith in real areas, or I don't know, fight even against teachers who seem homophobic at university because Secret homophobia or secret racism is so horrible, one day they will show up. In this sense, I care about our own fight for life, our fight for existence, and so I continue to work. I'm done for now. Thanks.

- **Can:** We also thank our two friends who have shared their experience.
- **Agrin:** I want to add something came to my mind. When Ahmet spoke. Remember, when HEVI decided to become an association, some activists from the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey told us, " why are you associating?", "there are many associations already." We have encountered such discourses. In fact, some people did not even want us to become an association. Yet we were trying to establish a new space where we could exist with all our colors and identities, and we did, I just wanted to add that.

- **Can:** : It seems useful to discuss the subject a little outside of HEVI. Everyone is talking about how far HEVI is free from phobia, discrimination in that sense. I think that in many places, including HEVI, we are subjected to discrimination and racism. We are implicitly or explicitly or unaware of discrimination in all areas, or we can discriminate or racism. Miran's sharings were very, very important, he explained from the perspective of LGBTI+ phobia and discrimination, which are more involved in culture and faith. I would like him to share with us if there are experiences of racism in the LGBTI+ movement on the basis of culture and belief. Because obviously even HEVI has been in 2019, still been able to take these issues of racism and discrimination into its agenda seriously. I think it's a big shortcoming that its own establishment manifesto was anti-racism but didn't talk about it so comprehensively. Especially the fact that the LGBTI+ movement is not being talked about in the rest of the world is also a deficiency in itself. By doing this activity, we actually set the agenda with the aim of speaking from all perspectives of racism and discrimination. For centuries Kurdish identity has been subject to racism and discrimination in this country. However, to speak, during the period we have come, this was a segment in the lower layer of the Kurdish identity, which is seen as an unprotected sub-identity. There is the cut that has been made by refugees, more precisely and in particular by other refugee groups: Syrians. I think we can add racism against Syrians on our agenda. There may be suggestions for solutions. It could be based on our own experience, and I find it very valuable to talk about it. For example, there is a lot of discriminatory rhetoric, like the definition of "those who are fleeing from war," or "we are looking after them," which may be through the language we use. Maybe we can talk about it through these tags. These discourses actually contain racism directly within itself.

- **Agriin:** For example, "even Syrians" rhetoric is discriminatory racism.
- **Can:** You are so right. For example, we do activities "LGBTI + refugees do not come" we say. I wonder if we can't reach them rather LGBTI+ refugee can't reach us? Have we ever thought about it and changed our methods as activists and organizations?
- **Mehmet:** : After what you said, we can talk about this. I also work in the field of refugees in civil society. Although the claim of this field is to be neutral or to approach people-oriented, in fact more is likely being done in this field. Hold on from the biggest international organizations, to the smallest formations that don't actually carry refugee agreements or corporate identities, which we might call small in the local. For example, some organizations use official documents even when recording to the refugee's system "coming by illegal

means” or “coming by official means.” Every trauma is stubbornly repeated every time, even if you automatically see the person in front of you as a client or try to see the beneficiary. Unfortunately, these situations are often the case because most of the institutions are looking through data collection. Sometimes in NGOs, it’s not about humanitarian aid or support, it’s more about data activism. Unfortunately, it’s the institution I work for, so we can do it. I’m actually saying that and I’m a bit uncomfortable. In other words, I do not feel as if the population is trying to be determined and the mobility is trying to be detected. Even in the academic researches, there are tests that are given to refugees from Kurdistan in Syria without any validity and security tests, whether they can really disturb people or if they are translated directly from Turkish into Kurdish or Arabic and sometimes directly applied to refugee children. Some of these tests are intelligence testing, some are development testing, and they are exposed to these insecure tests that are unfamiliar to their culture, which are not created in their native language. As I worked in the field of LGBTI+, HIV+, sex workers, and in the field LGBTI+ refugees, I realized that, indeed the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey has not taken on the agenda of LGBTI+ refugee. You know, they didn’t put refugees on their agenda alone. In this, the visibility of transgender people is made less visible than that of gays and lesbians. They are trying to make HIV-positive LGBTI+ more invisible. On the one hand, I apologize very, very much for this statement, but as if we are hearing too much of the rhetoric far from discriminatory and scientific research that the number of people infected with HIV has increased after the arrival of LGBTI+ refugee in Turkey. There is also talk of sex work being carried out by refugees in Turkey. So even the police against the imprisoned LGBTI+ refugee can say this rhetoric very comfortably for the refugee, even though he is on the side of a psychologist, a social worker or a lawyer. They can say words like” there were no such things in Turkey before they came.” It’s not even a very extreme case, but when we try to explain it or say something over sex work, it’s like, “No there was before refugees. This was already a profession” when we said, “No, and if he/she did, my whore was doing it too.” we can face police and people. As I said before, everyone who works in the smallest non-governmental organization is pursuing a career in this field. If you’re studying Social Work, Sociology, Psychology, or if you’re studying “Refugee act” they call it. It is sad to see that even a volunteer in the smallest place, perhaps even a person working in a UN agency, cannot look human or individual-oriented in this area because people are only looking at money and career-oriented, and it is also difficult to make up for the harm it does. Because when you come from the state, the other person can be more prepared. This is also the case for the refugees who are coming to Turkey.

- They can know that such discriminatory things will come from the state or They can know about Turkey before.; but it goes with the hope that when they come to an NGO they will really get help, really see solidarity, or really be together with people who have become in the situation like themselves. When the other person doesn't show it, I know a lot of people are upset with that attitude and obviously there are people who don't want to access NGOs even though they are really in need.
  
- **Can:** : In fact, one of the main problems is not to allow refugees into the public. Is it not an indication of racism in itself to stand against and not accept its representation in the public? The fact that the LGBTI+ movement did not raise such a problem is a problem in itself. For example, the LGBTI+ movement basically cares about being visible, getting out of the closet. Because we know that our existence has something to do with being a bit visible. Unfortunately, as our movement, I do not think that we do anything special about refugees at the point of being visible and making the invisible visible. I attribute this to the fact that the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey is more represented by people we can call middle class and white. Turkey itself is a country of the Middle East, as well as the history of the Republic and even the pre-European curiosity to be, because of its emulation of its own reality is turning back, as I think. We also see this in the LGBTI+ movement here. I would like to give a few examples that I have witnessed in the movement myself: "Sister, these are Middle Eastern Kezban (person doesn't know anything even where to go)", "Ah we have been unable to go to the places when those came." "Sister Syrians are dirty.", "Girl Taksim always full of Arabs", And so many discriminatory and racist discourse can be produced unfortunately. Many believe that all of the LGBTI+ refugees are considered to be at primary school level, which may be the case. However, as someone who works in this field, I would say that the educational situation is filled with people who are trained and educated on an equal level with us or even very higher than us. Also, According to a country with a second language education system like Turkey you don't see many people here speaking a second language but many of refugees are speaking 2 languages and even some of them are speaking 3 languages so I can say that the number of refugees who speak 2 languages are more than us.
  
- **Ramtin:** Going back to civil society's perspective on refugees, I've worked with them in this field for 1.5 years. I was working in another association for a period and now I work as an interpreter in another association. I realized that apart from certain people, social workers, psychologists, sociologists who work there are homophobic. Even very homophobic. They actually think

they're serving themselves without discrimination, but they're homophobic themselves, their behavior is homophobic. When you go with your open identity, the questions they ask are so overwhelming that people are really surprised. I don't understand how you can be so discriminating as someone who has been trained in this and when you think that the institution you work for is an association in the field of human rights. And you can live that in a non-governmental organization where you have to work repeatedly. In a human rights association I visited before "Are you an LGBTI+ person? Then sit there" they said. They set us up, they said that among the other advisers, and they separated us from them. Some associations give LGBTI+ people appointments at other times. They don't want other clients to see LGBTI+s. Or if the LGBTI+ individual is coming, they warn each other to send him away quickly. This discrimination also exists among LGBTI+ refugees. Especially after the arrival of the Syrians increased further. "Wish we hadn't taken them", "Are not they Arabs? Then they can go to Saudi Arabia", "Let them go, let them fight, let them die" I've heard things like that a lot. I come across a lot, a lot, in some places. Unfortunately, we also need to talk about this racism within the associations. It is understandable that there is no discrimination, no racism in the image within some associations, but in reality, they can be very racist. After leaving that Association, the reaction of the association's employees against the refugees was very racist. I don't want to say the name of that association, but even within the UNHCR there are racist people like that, unfortunately. Sometimes you get such news that surprises you. Especially from inside LGBTI+ refugees. For example, if the Afghan LGBTI+ is going to go to a place so that the registration is taken, OK OK is said to pass. They don't even listen if you're Afghan LGBTI+. Some associations are able to do that discrimination very well, which we fight together. Aid organizations can also openly enforce this discrimination. There is a similar shortage in government offices, for example registering a population. If you're visible, they need to check your house by the police department first. Then they'll only get your registration once the immigration office has approved it. There's always this kind of discrimination.

- **Ahmet K:** In fact, my observation is that NGOs working with refugees are doing their work on refugees more like they are on paper. Some even carry out studies only because they are able to get a lot and easy funding in this field. They seem to be working for refugees by having nothing to do with refugees, without any knowledge of refugees' situation or immigration, just to get funds. As you can see, the aim of those institutions is not to offer support for refugees, but rather to do things like the routine activities of an NGO. The rest of it, let the fund come and the association work, nothing

happens beyond what we get paid (salary). It is strange that the content of the event is the same all the time, let's make panels, set up two tables, find two speakers and refugees, of course, if they can find, let's bring a few refugees to the event and let's read into their minds and tell them what is known all the time and then let's walk away. That's what I observe most of the time. This kind of activity was once done so much that no one now has a reputation for these activities nor does anyone want to participate. I think there's a solution for that. No matter what the area, whether it's on rights or anything else, if 2 people sit there and read and walk away from the refugee's head to head, it doesn't actually add anything to those listeners and, of course, to the refugees. Instead, I care about empowering the refugee through psycho-social joint activities, which HEVI also does, which I find very valuable as an individual. Social events in particular are very important. It's important to be able to reach people, to come into contact with problems. If I'm going to give an example, let's sit here and have a chat or take a boat trip together, or I don't know, have a joint picnic, all of us go out into the public domain and be there. That's what's really important and supportive. Or it is very important to come together on a day when people consider it special, to bring together and celebrate such events that develop the intercultural dialogue that they care about, and to come in touch with common ideas. Having fun together, doing things, they bring psychological support among themselves at the same time. Most of the time, the coming refugee, you have this problem, let's direct the psychologist to say that sounds distressed. Of course, with psychological support, these things are different, but I think some people and institutions are missing out on this dimension of social support, the dimension of contact, the dimension of producing things together. It's important to do meaningful and supportive work, there's no point in over-the-top activities on paper.

- **Ramtin:** There are many projects. In fact, most of the time I expressed it too. They see refugees and LGBTI+ in particular as projects. Sometimes some people call me, Ramtin so we can do this together. I'm asking people who don't actually have anything to do with it, "okay, let's do it, but what do you know about this field?" Answer: "actually, nothing". I say Why do you want to do this; they can't give a clear answer. We see a lot, they call to the event, they take photos and then when you look at it you see nothing. Because all it means to them is to take that photo. So, does the work contribute to the life of the refugee in the slightest? No, Of course not. But unfortunately, some of our activist friends and NGOs do so; they can only do things with the goal of making money.

- **Ahmet K:** I'm sorry but I want to add something. It's a bit about HEVI, too. For example, when HEVI entered the field, it made similar mistakes. It worked mostly on panels and training (studies). For example, the first LGBT refugees' meeting was on 17 May at the Homophobia Biphobia anti-transphobia meetings with panels and trainings, there were a lot of LGBTI+ refugee. At the end of the events, a Trans woman told us: "we are constantly going to every association's event. We listen and listen and go back. You're telling it for hours and others have told it over and over again, and what you're talking about doesn't have a solution to my problem. I'm saying something that can't be solved with what you said, and when I get out of here, I'm dealing with the same problem again." she said. There, I saw that after the event of HEVI, such panel activities were no longer useful. I understood the lack of social activities with refugees and the fact that no matter how much we met, we were not in contact(touch). Already in the subsequent decisions, instead of approaching this problem through education, we chose to produce something more common through social activity and contact. Which is why even now HEVI and its activities are so pursued with interest by LGBTI+ refugee. People come and have the opportunity to talk, to socialize, to come into contact. For example, what HEVI does, it is right to go to Yalova almost every month, to do continuous social activities, to come together on special occasions. This point is very, very important.
  
- **Orhan:** When you go to an association, the first question is often "Where Are you from?" Then "what are you doing?" Their approach to you is shaped by your answer to these two questions. How ridiculous it is for them to ask about this in a charity-Solidarity Association. There are many LGBTI+ associations in Turkey. I came across a program recently. More than 10 trans stay in the same house somewhere under the guest-house name. I go beyond my limits and use the word that they are in a miserable situation. I am so sorry for this word, you will say "who are you to say that" but unfortunately it is. Then you learn that the so-called Charity Association has stolen a lot of money over this project. Now who are you going to believe and who are you going to ask for the account of the rights of most refugees, foreigners. They get the fund from Europe over these friends. They see them as good bread and use them. That's why people don't want to get together. We live in a world with borders but LGBTI+ is a rainbow, there is no limit. But come and see this rainbow comes out after the rain, and some of the activists are like lightning, not rain. I think if we are talking about the othering of the other, especially in the LGBTI+ Association, we need to distribute the authority not to one person but between 10-15 people. Because we humans deify ourselves and try to exist.

\*\*\*There was talk of contact here, I think that's very important. To be together, to be in touch with each other, of course. The real issue is about Syrian refugees, almost 9 years since they came and they have been subjected to very serious racism and disinformation since the time they arrived. So, this is already something that inevitably destroys visibility.

. What we really need to do is to fight together against racism. In fact, it looks as if it's spreading so far from bottom to bottom, or so out of order. Here they take our bread, rents have gone up a lot since they arrived, and so on. It seems as if ordinary people are doing these things but actually if we look a little more deeply, we can actually see very well how central this is, managed from a single center. For example, the election, both the ruling party and the main opposition party "We will send them" said. Already CHP says it "will send them" from the moment they arrive. Good party (IYI Parti) is the same. Immediately after the election, let's take possession of the election's results Bolu's mayor with CHP, whatever all the available steps against the AKP will be taken for supporting Bolu's mayor who said that he would expel refugees.

"We will not do anything special to them in Istanbul," İmamoğlu said. Which they appear to be Social Democrats. Friends of the neo-Nazis in Europe do these things. Now we're actually coming to the story of what we call democracy right here. We need to see very well what we support and when we support it in the name of democracy. We need to see where it's taken. On the one hand, it is a good thing that the ruling block has regressed, but we also need to see which way the gains have been taken. This is an achievement, but when we look at racism, we should see that racism is rising. So, for Syrians, for refugees to be able to go out on the street, to show themselves, there needs to be something that gives confidence and supports that movement. You have criticized NGOs, and I agree a lot. What we need is something to be visible on the street that makes this issue visible. And we need to do it fast. No matter who it is, İmamoğlu needs to answer. I think the mayor of Bolu should give an answer for that. Second, people can't choose where they're from. Being Syrian or Turkish is not something we choose. These are our sexual orientations but the things we choose and all these things that bring us together again and intersect in a corner of life. But that's how it works in this system, right? That's how it runs a vast colonial system. Why do we go every day? How do we work 10 hours and 16 hours? It's very comfortable because they can bring us against each other. Homosexuals, women with a little more salary, and so on. We are experiencing a serious economic crisis, yes, we are actually looking at those privileges which are coming a bit further this way and the hostility towards refugees is growing right here. They are losing their position and it can be very easy to turn to people whose living standards are declining and show a goal. For example, friends Turkey's -2.5 billion dollars - S-400's discussion at the moment. So, for example, we do not sit down and question

it, it can actually be forgotten. Who does this actually serve at the end of the day? He's in the dominant class. Turkey's capitalism works for TÜSIAD, the coach and all those who create it. So, it seems to me that it is very important to contact, to go out on the street and to fight against racism all of this together.

- **Can:** Thank you for your additions but if I didn't get it wrong you said sexual orientations are a choice somewhere in your conversation.
- **\*\*\*** I mean, these are our own choices.
- **Agri:** These are not our choices. Anyway, this is another debate in itself.
- **Can:** In fact, what you're voicing is an LGBTI+ phobic thing for itself.
- **\*\*\*:** So, I didn't say it in any sense for homophobia.
- **Can:** You know, no one can choose their identity.
- **\*\*\*:** I didn't say anything about identities.

- **Can:** But it's also an identity, no one chooses to be Syrian or Turkish, nor does it choose one or more of their LGBTI+ identities. So, whatever you say this is a discriminatory LGBTI+ phobic thing in itself. So, I felt the necessity of correction. Because HEVI is also a safe space for us LGBTI+s. We are already all in Turkey 6-7 association. HEVI is one of them, whether we like it or not. So, we are very careful at this point and we also want it to be done. We also feel this necessity in our safe spaces. I wanted to correct you in that sense.

- **\*\*\*:** Thanks, But as I mentioned, I didn't want to say anything in that sense. Okay, this is our own thing. We have socially attributed identities. I wanted to say it in another sense.
- **Can:** I think we're a little messed up and let's move on, please.
- **Müzeyyen:** : I think this is our third event as HEVI over the trial of the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey with LGBTI+ refugees. As a result, I see this, LGBTI + individuals and LGBTI+ movement in this direction to draw attention to, or rather not attract the groups that I said that there are also people and institutions working with refugees. I mean, nobody comes here to do what they do, they do it over and over again, they don't even look over why they needed it. If it was me, I would need a look at it, or as associations we do, we are in contact with associations that work with refugees and especially those working in the LGBTI+ refugees' field. We keep each other informed of the work being done. But the other thing you know is that our association is filled with people who come to us individually and say,

“find us a refugee.” Some days we get many calls, we are faced with requests from people who have no connection and who are constantly calling us and saying, “Find us refugees.” But at these events, especially in the refugee LGBTI+ refugee field, our friends came to us and said, “How do you contact so many refugees?” they ask questions like these, and they’re surprised. But for some reason they’re not interested in this kind of activity either. Let’s say he couldn’t come on his own, no one will come from the formation of the association. In short, I would like to point out that, while we have not been able to take attention to the problem here, I think it is important to continue such activities. Maybe in 7, 8, Even 10 events we will achieve this but we will eventually succeed it and I believe we will ensure that the LGBTI+ movement in Turkey confronts this racism, which is implicitly or explicitly involved.

- \*\*\* I want to talk briefly about some associations. Everyone wants a safe place, wants a space then wants a job, it’s very important to find work than financial support. But Iranian LGBTI+ are also discriminated against in another way. Because there is no war in Iran, people are reacting and they don’t want to give jobs. However, they do not know that most of the LGBTI+s coming from Iran have an education and in fact they can find a job suitable for this education. But when it comes to Turkey, there is no work permit and people are unemployed because there is no space. Including me, because I don’t know Turkish language very well I am constantly having language problems. There is no LGBTI+ one language school, or course we can go to in Yalova. People also have problems because they can’t say their problems. This is a major problem in my opinion, they wanted to do some associations but the governor’s office does not give a permission, it puts pressure on associations unfortunately. If associations are not going to do something for our business and other problems, they need to try to help with other issues. Social activities are very good for us. For example, we want to study at University here, but we can’t get it because of the language problem. No one has much knowledge of these matters. Finally, I want to give an example. I went to the doctor in Yalova with my two friends as an interpreter. We went to internal medicine. To do test for HIV and Hepatitis test. Then the doctor said to us in angry way, “why do you always come here and want to get tested? I don’t understand you”. “You’ve come to our country, why do you keep doing these things?” he said and he didn’t agree. He wouldn’t let us get tested. When we went to another doctor, we knew very little Turkish 2 years ago. We told the doctor that we want to get tested. He also told us, “Here is Turkey, go first, learn Turkish good enough, so get tested.” he said that and sent us back. Then we tried to speak English but he told us “No, here is Turkey, you have to speak Turkish.”

- \*\*\* I'm from the All of You Immigration campaign. Just as we are demanding, the concept of refugees is broken. Already broken in Turkey. So, these arrivals, those who come from all over the world, those who come from Syria, Afghanistan, Iran are out of position. They have no legal position. So whichever institution you go to, depends on the initiative of the person there, if he is conscientious, he treats you well if he is unscrupulous, he treats you badly. So, these are the problems of not identifying refugees. But people who can protect their rights, they can show such kinds of solidarity. The Syrian phenomenon in Turkey is something new. Or there was always racism between us against the Kurdish people, but it's new against the Syrians. However, you know in Europe, there is constant migration from everywhere. There are people from their colonies, people from their colonies, people who have emigrated, and for years, resistance organizations have also been strengthened against this, and their demands have been accepted by those organizations and refugees. Therefore, these rights have been achieved through a fight. So, these things are always political. It is entirely political for you to be accepted with your own identity, your period, or your status, your orientation. In this sense, we have launched a concrete demands campaign of the "Refugee right to be granted" campaign, which depends entirely on how widely this can be disseminated as soon as this is accepted. It is very important for HEVI LGBTI+ association to get their hands on that in this scope. It is important to face racism among LGBTI+ individuals, especially in the field of LGBTI+. Therefore, we always need to produce a certain discourse together with the street movement. Because the language of power produces a certain discourse. We need to produce another discourse against that discourse. All these problems that are experienced and described, when you go to the hospital, of course, no one knows that you do not have an interpreter or something. It's recognized abroad, but it's already acquired after a long fight for rights. In this sense, we seem to be at the very beginning of these things, which coincides with the economic crisis like this, which is racist rhetoric, so our work is very difficult. But in all this chaos, we have to maintain order. But if we decide together where and how to work and what language to use, because we are all subject to this discrimination. And there are no other people who can stand by the Syrians and show solidarity with them. We need to start and continue this right now.
- \*\*\* Geneva agreement is a convention that puts Turkey's geographical limitation. It is even the only council of Europe that is a party to the convention by geographical restriction. Now that's actually at the core of the troubles we're going through. Because the European Union asks What status an asylum seeker comes with when he arrives: "what status do you have?" Even our ministers can't answer. We said a lot of things to the coming asylum

seekers. First, we said guest, which is a concept that has no international validity. They didn't settle for this concept, then they called it temporary refugee, but that gives them no rights. In fact, the main problem is this: as far as I can tell, there were no experts working on refugees in Turkey in 2013 when this first started. So, there were two or three of them, and they were mostly studying the migrations within Turkey. They were studying migration from the east to the western provinces. So, we made a mistake like this. We've completely opened the border. It was something that a country with security paranoia like Turkey should never have done, but for that period, there were also travel events, of course, which opened the borders to strengthen the hand of power, then they tried to close the border again, which they would not have looked at, they passed on record. This past Thursday there was a meeting of the European employment and Social Innovation Programme fund, one of the funds that Turkey is a party with. There was a meeting of it. It was a meeting where refugees' funds were going, where he was being talked about. It turns out, in fact, the way the existing funds are given is being distributed for as many as 50 thousand registered refugees. In other words, when you take 50 thousand as a parameter, you can evaluate it over refugees that Turkey can register. However, NGOs report that the number is more than 3 million, which is only for refugees from Syria. There are also refugees from very different countries. The basis of this is that NGOs in Turkey are already on assistance and solidarity. What remains are a very small number of NGOs working rights-based at work. These associations are working in the logic of let's find work for them or let's give them food. When it happens, there is little activity in this country that will positively change that perception in this fight for rights, or in the process of othering them by the people at the fundamental point "either they...". Mr/Ahmet mentioned the panels. Yeah, those panels are really nice things. It allows people looking at life-like points to come together at the same time. But these panels are not conducted as a rights-based activity in Turkey. It's just like that "It's done just because I'm doing it, or it's done to get funds" as I was just told. At the moment, Europe is heading for a broad contraction in its funds. Refugees' funds will be largely disrupted or subjected to very large inspections, especially in 2020 and beyond, 2021-2027 periods. At the moment, the European Union is not keeping its promise to obtain longer and easier visas, which it has promised to provide a visa as required by the repatriation agreement. To me, the main reason is that the number of NGOs working with refugees is very small, rather it goes through aid rather than Rights-based, which unfortunately does not fit together in one frame.

- \*\*\* I want to talk to your friend about the work permit he just mentioned, about what he said at work. I want to address the points where NGOs are

failing. I taught English for 8 months at the language school where your friend works. That school is officially a place that is intertwined with the governor. The NGOs there know too. They bring in and employ LGBTI+ refugees. I myself worked 10-12 hours a day there. So, there were days like that and my monthly salary was around 1000TL – 1200TL. We used to go in the morning and even at noon they wouldn't allow us go to the bathroom. The Turkish teachers wanted us to give YDS-YGS classes even though they did not teach YDS and we were able to do them. In the same way, refugee teachers there were constantly trying to exploit them by threatening them with UN-filed files. Unfortunately, the NGOs that know this have not asked for this issue or punishment for those who did that until now and have not spoken at all, even though we have reported it. Other than that, no interviews were taken, nothing was done, for practices and discrimination against refugees in the provincial Directorate of Migration. For example, I wanted to change my past identity. At the provincial Directorate of Migration in Istanbul, he said to me, "Are you a transvestite?" He probably doesn't know what a transvestite is, he only obviously learned a word called a transvestite. Maybe he was using it instead of LGBTI+. So, for example the issue is when they ask Syrian friends first, "Where Are you from? Are you Syrian?" when they say yes, they either wait extra or they scold them for interview. For example, when you say I'm Iranian, they say, " Here you go, go to room A5.". Inside, Room A5 is a nicer room where no Syrians are taken, and you're getting there. I don't know, if you're an Afghan, you're being mistreated. Other mistreatment if you're Iranian, I don't know if you're Kurdish, "are you Shiite or Sunni?" the administrators ask. The officer speaks to you while he is waving with a rosary. You're like, "you're with men together?" they're asking. You ask for permission, and when you give the document, they say," sign that gay paper " they talk with each other about us. This unfortunately happens everywhere. The same we lived in Yalova, I lived it in Istanbul. But the most I lived in Istanbul. Provincial Directorate of Migration officials, especially those working in Istanbul, have no information about LGBTI+s. They have no information, for example when we go with a transgender person who sees that the person is a woman, but they say, "Come sit down, my brother.". The way they talk, the way they act, is really rude.

- \*\*\* I thought that even if we had the best refugee law in the world, it would not work, so I would like to give an example. A trans consultant in Yalova is suing the court (opening a case in the court) for the gender transition process. You know, TCK 40 (Turkish Criminal Law – TCL40) although everyone in Turkey can benefit from this, the judge said in his reasoned decision: "it is understood that only Turkish citizens can open this case.". The person should go and open this case in their own country." he decides. Even if we had written the Geneva

Convention in a system governed by judges who were unaware of the spirit of the Turkish Civil law at its most basic, it would have made no difference.

- **Can:** Thank you so much everyone. I want to make a recap of what we talked about here before we close the session. We actually talked about a lot of things, but we also had the opportunity to share this racism and discrimination that we had to experience in public spaces, especially when we talked about racism in the LGBTI+ field through our own experiences. I have taken some notes, but to be brief, we are already living with racism, discrimination with language barrier, shelter, health, insults, labeling people, Education, superannuation, sometimes harassment and even rape, cross-language hierarchy, ignorance, power, Bad and long working conditions, low wages, conflict of identities, religion and/or religious sects, isolation, exposition, failure to hide. We are aware that the experiences of racism that often exist in the lives of all of us are actually a problem not only for refugees or others in this country, but for all those who remain outside of all the dominant identities. It shows us how valuable and important the trainings, which raise awareness and question what we can do jointly, come together, I say that and I close the session. Thanks.

# 3

## SEXISM AND RACISM

- \*\*Hello our friends, I'm Müzeyyen from HEVI LGBTI+ Association. In the third part of the fight against racism in the field of LGBTI+, our professor Polat is going to tell us about racism and sexism (gender). Please professor go ahead.

- **Sociologist Dr. Polat Alpman:** Hello everyone. Since four o'clock you are here, really may God give you all patience, for a long time you are here. I've made a presentation, but I'm not going to do it. I will try to reformulate another issue; I want to establish a relationship between different forms of discrimination of course if I can. Instead of a didactic presentation, I'd like to make the framework of the issue understandable.

I did my PhD on the Kurdish working class, about the Kurdish working class in Istanbul. So, we can say that usually my field of interest is ideology. Nationalism, conservatism and Islamism. Of course, there are other kinds of interests and curiosities. that come from living in Turkey; such as the political regime in which we live, the fundamental qualities of that political regime and how we can defend our rights under that political regime.

I said I would like to establish a relationship in this presentation. I'm going to focus a little bit on that. Let's start with racism and make it clear what we mean by racism. Racism is a thought of a twentieth century. Its roots are not very old, and it's basically based on these assumptions: Believing that there are biological advantages within the human species(components) and that Physiology or phenotype contain these advantages is the basis of racism. At least we can say that this is the founding belief. In this case we are talking about a belief that has been defeated and a political project, so that belief has emerged and been defeated somewhere in history. It caused wars and was defeated. Just because biological racism is defeated doesn't mean racism is gone or disappeared. These days we're talking about new racism. Balibar and Wallerstein conceptualized this. A new racism, a racism that doesn't wear uniforms, doesn't talk about biological superiorities(advantages), is a racism that walks between us, seeps into our daily lives, settles in our language, sets our perspectives, forms our way of seeing (vision). We can see that in many places. For example, we can see (observe) that religious beliefs, cultural practices, political preferences (views) produce racist discourses. There is a fringe here that we can understand by focusing on their practice of using language, their rhetoric that takes their cultural essentialism to the Axis, their emphasis on ethnic identities, or their attitudes towards gender.

There's actually no reason not to think that talking about things like racism, nationalism, sexism means talking about things that are ridiculous. Are there people who really think, believe, act like this when they are called racism, nationalism, sexism? Are there people who make skin color, cultural difference, gender central to a thought and political program, who design the relationship with the world through these qualities? They exist and live among us. From family to academia, from street to courthouse, there are people everywhere, in law, in art, in health and philosophy, whatever field of life we mean, there are those people. So, let's ask if these people are bad people, that is, because they are bad, they are racist, they are nationalist, they are sexist, or vice versa: Are racist, nationalist, non-sexist people good people? Is this problem an ethical problem that can be explained by the concepts of good or bad?

In my opinion it's not, it's not about being good or bad, it's a matter of system, structure, network or relationship. I want to open this up a little bit, why are we living with this mess? To explain this, I need to have a discussion, a discussion of equality. My field of study is social inequality and discrimination, I work in this field academically. A debate about equality, social inequality and discrimination, I didn't say inequality if you pay attention, I said Let's talk about equality. Where will we look for equality, let's think around(about) this question. Can we talk about equality between these things if the same things can be equal and if the two things are identical? No, we can not talk about it. Equality is not sought between things that are the same (identical). If we're looking for equality in something, first of all, there needs to be difference. Equality is sought between things that are different. So Well, How can we understand this in the context(scope) of racism, nationalism and sexism?

Today, this economic, political, social and cultural tendency is called New racism differences itself, it's drying up (establishing) over differences. It justifies inequality with differences. This could be our bodies, for example, because you are not fit enough, because you are too brunette, because you are short.... For example, you don't need to be black, because you are Hispanic, or because you have a very Middle Eastern image in Turkey, because you are not white enough, you may experience reactions that you do not expect because of your accent, your speech, your use of language that does not fit into the Istanbul accent very well. That difference itself can make you the object of inequality.

There is also something called nationalism. Nationalism and racism are very close to each other, but I am willing to interpret them and separate them, so we can think about them apart. Well, what is this nationalism and why is it emerging? That big fear, the other fear. Racism has no other fear. Racism manifests itself in physical aggression, brute force and oppression, through direct contact and potential violence, being strong, dominating and claiming rights over the weak due

to this power. As seen in the recent massacre in New Zealand, racists build their self obviously, clearly, through political, social ideals, and defend the 'rights' of their power originating from their nature. Because, according to them, there are people who usurp their rights in their own living space.

Nationalism is not like that, though its similarities are slightly different from its basic mechanics. Nationalism sees the other as a threat to its own sovereignty, not as a usurper of rights, and says to his interlocutor, "as long as you accept my sovereignty, you can live here with me, but let's agree at this point. I'm the boss, as long as you accept my sovereignty, as long as you look like me, you can live here, and if you object, you will be excluded!" Let's focus a little on this "other" concept, because this concept, like many concepts in Turkey, is being used without context.

To understand how the "othering" mechanism works, we can have a look at the LGBTI+'s issue. The significant reason for this is the masculinity regime, namely fatherhood, patriarchal. If there is a possibility of being different anywhere, people who see it as a threat to their own identity have to otherize (marginalize) it. This is one of the problems we face in the politics technique called identity politics. When an identity transforms itself into a political movement and becomes power, it soon begins to exert pressure on other identities. A threat to the other's own identity tends to build its distinctiveness as a potential to eliminate its own identity. Behind this is the feeling of losing her/his own identity. Is it more dangerous to be gay in Turkey or in many parts of the world, or is it more dangerous to be lesbian? We see that homophobia towards male homosexuality is stronger, whereas female homosexuality is relatively more tolerant. We see gays being targeted as the main object of attack and hatred, by patriarchal.

When you build a society over masculinity, when you build society over the power of masculinity, being gay becomes a threat to that masculinity regime. If there are gays, this means that it's possible that every heterosexual male is likely to be gay. That's something that threatens heterosexual power and its dominance (sovereignty). What needs to be done then is that the patriarchal order, the patriarchal order, or the patriarchate will eliminate it. "If I destroy it, my Manhood Will Grow Stronger," he attacks in a rage kneeling with anxiety and fear.

Racism and sexism unite right here in the other. They both consider what they see as the other as a threat element that will destroy their identity, eliminate it, assimilate it. So, they come up with violent behavior. Nationalism decomposes here. Nationalism has other mechanisms. Nationalism, for example, can come to terms with you." Act like you're straight, show your identity in the public, in the private domain, at home live as you like but when you go out in the public don't forget who the boss is," he says. When it comes to the public he says "Look, you

know I'm the boss". Reform yourself in accordance with these rules," he says. Its Turkish is; don't ask for rights, don't seek equality. Racism sees claiming rights and wants to destroy it, it has no effort to agree or compromise, while nationalism offers a deal on the failure to come up with the claiming rights, it wants to make those outside the sovereign identity invisible.

Let this be considered part one. Second, I said about equality; since things that are separate cannot be equal, where will equality be sought? The answer is that in differences, things that are different can be equal. If we're talking about equality, that means we're talking about things that have differences between them. So, how do we establish equality of differences, how do we talk about equality of differences? I think that's the hardest question in the world. How do we build the system that recognizes the difference, how do we build such a framework? One of the answers we've found so far is democracy, it's an answer and it tells us; there will be differences, these differences will represent themselves, the state will act as a protective and regulatory mechanism, the state will not identify itself with identity, it will be at equal distance from all differences. This ideal framework doesn't always work. In class societies, ideal frameworks intersect with different power relationships, and democracy can sometimes also pose a threat to differences. You remember recently, they attacked a woman in France that she was trans. Even in a country that is considered central to the idea of democracy, if that can still happen, think about the rest.

Let's look at the new era a little bit. Want to destroy racism, make nationalism invisible, and sexism? Sexism is a combination and reflects the contradictions of the social structure, and when we say the heteronormative society structure, we express how the society is structured with the monopoly of gender. Want also to destroy sexism. When we get to the Twenty-First Century, today we are faced with something completely different, brand new, and we are trying to figure it out. The Post-truth debates, the populism debates, the new-right and similar debates all actually sit in a new framework. At least I think so. This new framework is in summary; in the twentieth century, policies of assimilation, invisibility and destruction were working together. In the Twenty-First Century, identities are not things that are meant to be destroyed. Now, a tendency that wants to bury differences in differences and imprison them is getting stronger. Imprisoning people into their identities. Let me give an example of the Kurdish, I mentioned that I worked on the Kurdish working class in my PhD. In Turkey in the twentieth century, the state wanted to assimilate the Kurdish identity, so it was telling the Kurdish: "you are the Turkish. Accept that you are Turkish and let the problem between us to be solved." In the Twenty-First Century, the state says, " You are Kurdish, we know you are Kurdish." This means, " I'm locking you in an identity called Kurdish." Well, what does this do? This is directly about capitalism, the dominant form of production. We'll discuss this later.

Something similar goes for sexism. When any of the LGBTI+ put that identity to the forefront, the dominant identity tells him, “you’re not straight, so you can’t be anything out of what you are. You’re one of those who has to be locked up in your identity. Being a Turkish, being well-educated, being smart, knowing a language, being an artist, that is, having no qualifications, all the other qualities that make you, you are no longer useful.” You have to stay in that identity like a grave where none of one’s qualities work, where one is taken into a kind of Pender, one kind of trap, one kind of fence, one buried in it. “Live in your own identity and don’t you dare get out of there!”

Nationalism applies the same mechanism to the dominant identity and says that; “you are a Sunni (male) Turk. Whether the minimum wage is low or not, don’t object to it. Remember, you’re a Sunni Turk. Does the education system suck? What does it matter, you are already a Sunni Turk.” This identity he identifies with sovereignty also makes him unable to speak. Showing other identities, he said: “Look at Kurdish, look at Syrians, look at Iranians, look at Afghans, look at homosexuals, look at Armenians.... and give your identity a four-handed hug, “ he says, adding that you can derive an infinite number of them. I think one of the ways to understand that is rape’s news. I don’t know if you’ve ever noticed how the rape news is written? It’s very important who was raped here. For example, you remember, the murder of Özgecan Aslan. How much noise was lost in the aftermath of this tragic incident, right? The Turkish public suddenly realized that men were attacking women and raping them. There was a social enlightenment. It was taken to the streets and news was broadcast on television, accompanied by dramatic music. Why didn’t the backlash that ensued when this young woman was raped and killed occur in earlier incidents? Where male violence, patriarchal violence, sexist violence that have spread to almost every part of life did not create a social reaction other than the reactions of a handful of feminists? Because there are socio-political arrangements about who will mourn in the country, we live in. A trans can get killed. He/She should not be mourned for his/her murder, but he/she is not one to be mourned. A terrorist can be killed, he is not one to be held, he is Carrion. The socio-political arrangements of who will mourn and who will be blessed with death can be considered together with the power struggles of who dominates over the body. As I said before, the characteristic of the new era is no longer the rejection of identities, but the acceptance of them by embedding them in identities.

Why do we have such distinctions as racism, nationalism, sexism, culturalism, specialty and so on? We’re really talking about things that can be considered a bit idiotic when you step back and look at them. We’re saying, Let’s not be racist, fine, but that’s not something worth talking about.... It’s like, let’s not eat this table or that bulb. Is this table or that light bulb something to be eaten? Yet there is clearly

a language that offers us to eat this table. So, they're telling us, we're not like these. So ... what you got now? The difference between them and us, how do we build it? Where do you set up these differences, what do these differences mean, if the disparity produced by differences in one's everyday life was not working, it would be pointless to talk about them, so inequality and discrimination are working. It is necessary to produce a kind of essentialism. I've been trying to articulate this for a while. As a Turkish society, we are all steeped in a perspective we call essentialism. Leftists, right-wingers, activists ... I say without distinction, there is an essentialism in every sector. This is how we design the world, there is an identity, this identity exists in nature, it stands like this, it is something like ore. For example, let me talk about widespread opinion, there is an essence called Turkishness. It is a self, it exists in nature independently of us as ore, and the closer we are to that essence of Turkishness, the better it is for us to approach it. However, there are no ethnic, religious or sexual identities as thought in nature. These are all the relational processes that we build in the process of socialization, and most of them are shaped in the parameters of power and power relations. This means that behind all the rhetoric that tells us who we are or are not, there is a mechanism of power that seeks to exert dominance over our body and mindset. These mechanisms emerge in the form of discourses and practices that produce inequality and discrimination, such as racism, nationalism, sexism. He wants the things that separate us to identify people rather than the things that unite us. As long as he can do so, he can protect and maintain his own interests.

- We have time, does anyone want to ask our professor question or add something?

## QUESTIONS

**Question 1:** I'm going to ask you this, the question I'm wondering is, there are many identities, there is actually the identity of the exponent, the White-Turkish. Within the White-Turkish identity, actually we are millions. So, it's not done through LGBTI identities, it's done through what we call the other identities. Are we learning about this, so why can't we get a collective field of fight over this?

I have one more question through LGBTI+ activists. There is a seated language through those who work in this field. I think it's too late, including Hevi, LGBTI and racism issues I'm telling them. Racism is problematic in this field of fight, the LGBTI+ movement do not have enough agenda for that. How can this issue be further agenzized? Should this be done with training or brute expression, hitting them on the head or something?

**Question 2:** racism, sexism, nationalism is of course much older than sexism. Racism and nationalism with capitalist society, which responds to its needs, which responds to its continuity, both positively and in need, so does sexism. It's something that breaks the bond between remanufacturing and production. This is actually something that exists both for the labor force to continue but also for domestic, patient care to actually be maintained. I see the subversive side of the story of what we call masculinity in the family relationship of capitalist society, which is the opposite of what we call homosexuality. Capitalist society is putting itself forward right here. Such is nationalism, for example. We are the people of the same nation who put the boss and the worker in the same position, together with a survival concern of the same point of view, but now a new economic policy is being implemented, tax exemptions are being eliminated, new resources are being transferred to the capital in the meantime, etc. but at the end of the day we are the people of the same system. Racism is something that I think works a lot in this system, for example, we are talking about Syrian immigrants. It's been around since 2011, but we're never talking about the cost of bombs being rained down in the Syrian war. From the United States to the West. However, the reason for the bomb being dropped here was an imperialist situation, but in fact it finds space as a capitalist thing, such as nationalism.

For example, Trump's approach to saying I'm going to build a wall on the Mexican border at the time of the attack by women in Hungary, and to say I'm going to expel them all, is none of them independent of one another, or not coincidentally. These are actually the consequences of capitalism, neither Trump is a coincidence nor Clinton. For example, in the Clinton era, the secretary (minister) of Labor was a black person, but the key part was that the secretary (minister) of the Treasury

was still someone in his own pocket, so these are things that have a lot to do with capitalism. As long as there is capitalism, things will always exist. If we look at the issue as the main enemy, not the tenants, but the landlord, you have found the right target when you point all these things, but a little bit to ignore it means being stuck in the issue of identity. Let's not perceive this as a fight against sexism, for example, the determination of nations, for example, the demands of Kurdish, when we see them as actually part of the class fight, the issue will be very good.

These days, for example, in Sudan, where there has been a dictatorship since '89s, where women have not been seen in public, with the revolutionary movement, with that great movement, women are at the forefront of the fight. A young woman aged 22 actually represents seventy per cent of this movement. In fact, when we come together against the real enemy, we are both very strong and able to implement our own demands.

**Question 3:** As a different point, I want to say something, you said that when it comes to lesbians and gays, gays are more dangerous. The same thing exists in lesbians when we look at racism in heteronormativity or nationalism. For example, a masculine lesbian or transgender man is more reasonable because he represents the power. On the contrary, when we think of "passive" homosexuals for male homosexuals, that is what society does not want to see, but an "active" male homosexual is actually no problem for power. I agree with you here. Here's what I think about being locked up in identities. Especially before we come to the conference in certain countries, I read various articles, there were various questions, people are asked questions, these questions are about your sexual orientation at work. We can now write very comfortably. But we can't write this, my salary is a thousand Turkish Liras your salary is ten thousand Turkish Liras I want to say exactly that. In fact, you said something, leftists say that is self-conscious where did you get it from? This is the subject of another debate, but in fact I am also a leftist, exactly where nature and human relations are not the same, built entirely based on language, our whole lives are built, in that sense identity politics actually convicts us somewhere, as you say. In Turkey, there is a difference. But unfortunately, now capitalism is governed by a single system, so these will overlap quite a lot. In this sense, it is necessary to unite these policies in order to unite our areas of fight further. If you blame the left of Darwinism, we have an equal personal problem with each other, as if there were no classes in capitalism. Okay, You have rights, too, you LGBTI have rights, you can get married, you're looking at one of LGBTI rights. Such rights exist in developed countries. There are even LGBTI-specific debates: debates that you are not real woman. Is it to defend the fight for differences from identities, to defend the equality of differences, but is it worthwhile to look at the point of cut exactly to the enemy?

**Question 5:** Now You mentioned Özgecan Aslan. It was really something that shocked Turkey. It was a very high level of violence, but I know that at least two men at that time condemned from Facebook.... There is a truth about trans murders in the media that you remember has created a public opinion that has spread so much. According to the sources I'm investigating, none of the trans people have died in almost natural ways, all of them are being murdered. What are the parameters that determine this if a trans person has such a problem tomorrow? Because the beauty of the society over the beauty of Ozgecan Aslan to comply with the norms, the level of brutality of the event was high, after that we saw a lot of murders of women. There was Şule Çet, but she's lost her life? Similar women haven't had that much agenda. The ownership of NGOs? Is it the courts or the involvement of NGOs in the court process? I'll ask you to elaborate on this.

**Question 6:** Now a Kurdish. A shattered Kurdish is forced into the metropolis by soldiers in the east. They live in the suburbs of Istanbul, where is the suburb; Tarlabası for example. Cigerxwin says: "Em nebin yek, emi herin yek bi yek (We do not have one, let's go one by one)" Kurdish phrase. If these are not nationalism, they will fall apart. So now a human, is part of the culture. Without unity, without nationalism, they will fall apart. Now is that racism or not?

**Question 7:** in fact, I would like to ask something about equality. What you say about equality and identity. When I look at it as an engineer, yes what is equal is not the same (identical). For example: 3 equals 2 plus 1. Yes, there is equality again, there is identity.

When you say in nature there are no Turkish, there are no Kurdish. Racism is already something completely different. Isn't there some things in nationalism that the property brings? So, we pay taxes, we want to get money, it is not important to protect the land in which we give tax? Or wanting to destroy nationalism altogether? And when we say that there is no country in nature, does it contradict this evolution a little? Here, As Turkish and Kurdish people, they are influenced by the world. For example, the fact that the noses of people living in Siberia are smaller and their eyes are more slant is actually something that is related to nature. And there is a common culture, and there is a common history. It seems to me a bit odd with this evolution while destroying nationalism.

## ANSWERS

I'll enjoy answering the questions. There was this question of black seeing itself, White seeing black, if you remember. All inequalities occur through the internalization mechanism. If there is such a thing as inequality in a society, it is not hurtling and rambling. It sits in a mechanism. It settles into a framework that I call the mechanism of domination. That inequality is rendered piecemeal into body, consciousness, mindset. You must have seen it, there was a video about a black child. When she was asked to choose a doll, she went and chose the white baby. Why she chose the white baby because she too internalized inequality, internalized racism. This is a mechanism, but the oppressed identities have a very original, extraordinary feature. The oppressed see themselves through the eyes of the oppressor. In other words, he/she has the ability to see through the eyes of both the oppressed and the sovereign. In Turkey, when a Kurdish person looks at himself, he sees himself both through his own eyes and through the eyes of the Turkish people. Today, in Turkey, an asylum seeker sees himself through the eyes of the host community, as well as through the eyes of an immigrant. The key here is to understand how the mechanisms that enable the internalization of inequality work. For example, a slogan called "black is beautiful" came out in '68s. It is a political intervention. Black is not ugliness, evil, filth, but a good thing, an intervention to break down internalized inequality. When we look at the comics coming out in the same period, we see a character called Black Panther coming out. It is a land in the middle of Africa that no one on the African continent knows but is actually called Wakanda. This place is equipped with incredible technology. The people who live here have a very technologically advanced civilization and so on.... And there's a character there called Black Panther, running from adventure to adventure. Producing it itself is a political intervention. White Turks ... where does this Turk come from? First of all, from the urban, urban. There is an Urban (city) bond that extends to at least four generations. Educated, knows how to dress, has grace, but also has a habitus, a set of habits, and aptitude to engage with European societies other than him/herself. For example, he/she knows some of the European languages and is able to communicate. That's where they get their whiteness. And he's not really white, so he's from Diyarbakır, Yozgatlı but with parched skin. I think the most popular are the blond ones with colored eyes. Well, we added an adjective next to this white state, we said Turk. Where do those Turks come from? They are quite nationalist, even banal nationalist enough to be called. They are not willing to have any identity shared with the sovereign except their own identity, they are always the boss. We do not say that religious people, Kurdish, Arabs who is living here, do not live in this country, but if it is going to be on television, if it is going to be done in the media, I do it, it is our job to take part in academia, judiciary, politics. Ertuğrul Özkök here...

This white Turkish identity does not build itself according to the identities it faces, it builds itself according to power. Today, the identity crisis of the White Turkish is not a cultural crisis, but a crisis of power. The White Turk, who cannot be a Provincial with the provincial government, can be a licorice or a supporter, but cannot be in power, a crisis arising from his own predicaments. So how does the White Turkish relate to other identities? By looking at where you show your identity. What we call an identity is actually a performance. Since there is no essence in nature, what we call an identity is something performative, something that we exhibit, and its boundaries are not very obvious. You can exhibit your identity like this today. So, can you switch to white Turkishness? It's not that easy to bounce between identities. If you carry the identity of the other, you will continue to navigate the realm of the other. Even if the White Turkish is gay, he experiences this as an element of gratification.

In other words, the way he presents his homosexuality is about pleasure, not a form and identity component.

How to combat discrimination? It's a very long subject. What tools does an association, a non-governmental organization have in the face of discrimination, and what aims can it move towards with those tools?

We can say very briefly: The first thing a non-governmental organization that includes a recognition request must first do if it wants a recognition request on any subject is to disclose, clearly demonstrate and document the mechanisms of the system that does not recognize it. To show the barriers to recognition, the tools that prevent recognition, and to combat its dynamics. If these tools can be dismantled, dismantle them or put them on the table and show how to use them so that things to combat become visible. This is a socio-political struggle, it has a legal basis, but ultimately the place to travel is the grocery store where you shop, the doctor who treats you, the employer in the workplace. So, it's life on the street itself. In the end, this fight is based there, but the NGOs have to say that. What are the mechanisms that produce the unrecognized situation encountered, how do they establish themselves, what tools, what legal grounds do they build on, what political tools do they establish, what social areas do they call? in Turkey the main mechanisms is religion, family and education. Do you have anything to say about these things, what kind of framework do you offer? It can be fought by getting to know them, talking to them, looking for ways to partner with them. In fact, you didn't ask a question, it was an analysis of yours and I agree to some extent. We can put the capitalism card on the table as an answer to every question. You tell me the problem and I'll tell you the reason. So why house rents are high, capitalism. Why shoes are expensive, capitalism. I can't find a job, capitalism. I'm not happy with my

religion, capitalism. I'm not kidding here. Capitalism is a structural answer, there is a problem called capitalism, and it produces different mindset. I mean, there's a capital owner. He has one daughter. Can you look at it the way that capital or his daughter looks at the world? You can't look, because you have different experiences. In Marx's words, "can the dream of the person living in the palace be the same dream as the dream of the person living in the slum?" It can't be. Objects of pleasure, desires, dreams, and troubles are classically differentiated. Even their bodies differ. So, capitalism can be presented as an answer to every question. However, social fights and social movements are not areas of fight that can harm and eliminate the enemy. That is why the areas of fight where everyone is defending their right to life need to be replicated. The Kurdish people will struggle with their own identity. If there is a demand, it will be expressed by the Kurdish people. You can support, you can sympathize but don't forget who is the subject of the fight. We don't have the right to express anyone's voice. If those who are not straight fight for their rights, they will. If women are going to fight for equality, they are going to do it. Getting in their place and shouting louder than them means stealing their role. I've learned that from feminists and I think it's very persuasive about social fights. No one needs the philanthropy of someone who considers himself a Democrat. No one has the right to find a way and steal the energy of the fight of the oppressed. A man can be a pro-feminist but he can't be a feminist. He can support, sympathize but not present himself as the subject of the movement. The answer to the question of "who will give this fight" has to be women. As seen in Turkey most of the time "the most progressive men" are forced to give in to this fight. I'm trying to say this is a process that takes place on dialectical ground. No one needs anyone's charity, compassion or pity. To fight is to see her/himself as a subject and an equal interlocutor. Sexism is always teeming with essentialist ideologies such as nationalism and racism. Capitalism also uses essentialism as a political system. Capitalism speaks to us and addresses us with our identities. It talks to all of us. It builds a language when it talks to us and that language breaks us down by looking at our identities. It re-organizes each piece of identity and re-organizes the groups that it has instrumentalized. Class politics begins here.

Class politics chunks this illusion. It aims to look at our real positions rather than identities, to focus on our own labor and to show our position in power relations. It is the politics of squandering the ground beneath the inequalities and discrimination experienced, not the politics of inventing a new identity. Those who fall apart with identities under the conditions of capitalism experience the inequality and discrimination of capitalism at different levels.

Okay, two workers get the same minimum wage, but are they working in the same conditions? No, we didn't work under the same conditions and we don't. Factors such as your ethnic identity, sexual identity, physical appearance, age affect many things,

from your employment process to your working conditions and duration, even your Social Security. For example, an asylum seeker teaches English, works in a private classroom, receives a salary of 2 thousand Turkish Liras. A citizen also works in the classroom and receives a salary of 2 thousand Turkish Liras, so are the two working in the same conditions? Just because they're making the same money doesn't mean they're working in the same conditions. The asylum seeker is always under threat. Working longer hours, more pressure, more jobs and unending domination... Let me give you an example of my own research. A Kurdish worker working in a garment workshop, most of the other employees in the workplace are from Bayburt. Describing his working conditions, he said: "he goes to the toilet whenever he wants, I can't go to the toilet whenever I want. He opens the music he wants on the radio I can't go to the radio and open the music I want. He hangs the Turkish flag on his machine I can neither hang the Turkish flag nor can I hang anything else. Who's the first person to be fired if there's the slightest economic problem, and that's me." When you unravel all these onion peels, the layers of onion, yes, what you have in your hand is capitalism, but the onion itself is more than that. It's a rotten system, and it puts everything in the palm of your hand to sustain itself. It's attacking everything, everywhere. In Peru, it even sells rainwater to companies and punishes those who collect rainwater, such a barbaric regime. I came here from the question of who is the enemy. That's a tough question to answer, because it's not enough just to point out the capital.

Gays, lesbians' issue. Let me explain this issue a little more. Patriarchy, Fatherhood, doesn't matter what we say, when it comes to those who are outside the heteronormative structure, who sees this structure as the primary threat? First of all, who is after to destroy, is trans, I don't think, because trans have the means to destroy and contain. It has already driven them to the street, and as long as transgender femininity becomes an object of violence, they can be involved as they approach manhood. When a Trans becomes visible to the eye, they become the object of transphobia, which also ceases to be a threat. It's not like being gay or lesbian, I think. She can live like anyone in her everyday life, hide herself and protect her own privacy. She can live like this. It's not like being Trans. Why does he want to destroy what is visible from the outside in a way that he is homosexual? There is something different here than transphobia, which may be the wisdom of being called homophobia. He sees male homosexuality as an assault on masculinity, something that disrupts the partnership that results from being male, and is likely to infect himself as well. He sees himself as a threat to his sovereignty and sexuality. "If there is such a thing, it could happen to me, " is a violence caused by fear. He can also establish this as an object of gratification, as he does not feel such fear in the face of male lesbianism. Yet I have to express that these comments are based on superficial observations, so it is not right for me to make precise judgments. But as far as I can see, the domination and discrimination produced by heteronormativity does not work in a similar way on everyone.

For example, imagine a woman, a disabled woman, an Alawi, primary school graduate, Kurdish and homosexual. We can see that the spaces and possibilities where he can negotiate with the sovereign identity and build his life as an equal and honorable person in this society are very narrow. Let's just say that a man who is known to be a homosexual can only be influential in his network of relationships. So, how is this happening, how can it be successful in this system? In my opinion, since he is able to negotiate correctly and effectively, he can shake hands with the system he is in and maintain a certain power within the power relations. What is impossible for many people can become possible for this person. He loses nothing of his power as he is not reprimanded when his photographs come out with another man in the newspaper. So, he has the parts of identity he can negotiate with. It's like when different ethnic identities meet in Sunnism, meet in masculinity, meet in football or one of the political poles. He can find a place there, and shaking hands. Again, there is an unequal relationship, but at least there is a relationship. I don't know how revealing that was. After all, it is important to remember that these definitions are empty ones. We draw a circle here when we say man or woman, there are different things that fill this circle. Almost all of these are pieces built in historical, socio-cultural and political relationships. What we say identity is talking about things that have no name.

Leftists are a matter of essential. It is not a conviction; it is a determination and a determination that is valid for Turkey. Essentialism is a very strong type of thinking in Turkey. Essentialism constitutes the way we establish politics, society, history and nature. The political movement of the left was also carried out with this essentialism. I don't mean to offend anyone by name, but as a political tradition we know very well how they look at differences in society. You too know as well as I know. Some of the leftists in Turkey have even recently discovered the existence of Kurdish people, and they are still not at peace with that. Again, the leftist movements in a common intellectual framework with Kemalists became in this country and one of the reasons for this was essentialist deviations. For a while, some of the left in Turkey looked at the society through the eyes of the merciless state. They were unable to come from higher theories to practical realities because of the metaphysical content they imposed on concepts such as Revolution and class or imperialism and capitalism. This caused them to always see something more sublime when looking at inequalities. Well, could it be called an essentialism, no, but that doesn't stop them from criticizing. It's an ideology built with essentialism, and its claim is that self. And the left, in particular, suggests that Marxism, History, Society and political theory are materialists, and indeed they are. We found them talking in words like reactionaries, bigots, perverts, when such left-wing theory should be abstracted from the relationships in life. I also see that the Left has changed a lot, but I think there is such an aberration in Turkey. I'm open to persuasion by those who think the opposite. Why was the murder of Özgecan Aslan an agenda, why are trans murders not an agenda?

Let me remind you, they raped and killed a Syrian married and pregnant woman, Emani al-Rahmun, in Sakaria. How can any society be insensitive to such barbarism? There was nothing other than emotional ejaculation on social media. The citizens said, “great disgrace, terrible,” and three days later it was forgotten. Inequality and discrimination work in places like this. The emotional reaction that comes out of us collectively is not the same when what happens to one is happening to another, but it differentiates. You may be more sensitive to these issues because of your personal experience, but you need to see the process behind it. The world in which we were born and raised is blind and deaf to them, a world built on it. If there was no public pressure on Şule Çet’s case, it would never have been heard, it would have gone on the record as a suicide case. Again, feminists have managed to make this an agenda, the real change will be when the Imam at the mosque gives a sermon about this murder in his Friday sermon and demands justice. “That was such a murder the Reverend congregation who slaughtered a young girl and rich children, do not be insensitive,” he said. A sermon was given in the case of Özgecan Aslan. There is a sense that religion is sending sermons to mosques. Özgecan Aslan was one of those who got in the van to go home from college. She wasn’t at work, she wasn’t at the nightclub, she wasn’t on the street. Like everyone else, she was driving home in a van. If she’d had fun drinking in a nightclub and been killed, no one would have cared and no one would have thought of reading a sermon, but she was on her way home from college. We’re talking about an infial of male violence that goes all the way here, no one would care if she was killed by her husband, her father, her fiancé, her lover, her older brother or her former lover. So, whose eye is this, the eye that looks at it like this, whose eye is it?

Are the Kurdish people nationalist or should they be? There are some of the Kurdish who are also foolish nationalists, but that’s not what you mean. You talking about oppressed nationalism. I am Turkish, my family is Turkish, my Turkish nationalism is not the same as a Kurdish nationalist from Diyarbakır or Hakkari. When I talk about Turkishness, I talk about the protection of my sovereignty rights. When a Kurdish person speaks of Kurdish-ness, he speaks of inequality and discrimination in his own life. We both do nationalism, but mine is to normalize inequality, and hers is to voice the demand for equality. There are levels and limits to this. I’m not talking about a Turkish nationalism or vice versa that says, “Let’s kill all Kurdish people.” I don’t mean a Kurdish nationalism that says, “Let’s beat the Turkish people and force them to speak Kurdish.” Otherwise, as I said, there is really a foolish level of Turkish nationalism and a similar level of Kurdish nationalism. My view is that Kurdish nationalism will have no social, political, economic and political benefit to the Kurdish people. What the Turkish people achieved from nationalism, endless crises... Kurdish people, on the other hand, think that the Turkish state was founded by the favor of nationalism. They think nationalism is necessary to establish a state

(country). I don't have the same opinion, I am defending the opposite, a democratic country where everyone can take part in the way they are and no one imposes identity on anyone, the state is out of identities. Of course, this is not something that can happen in my view, the Kurdish people will decide that, I hope they are not stuck in a swamp of nationalism. Let's come to the topic of equality. You won't find equality when you look for it in nature. If you are looking for equality in nature, there is no such thing as equality. You can find any example you want on any topic in nature and history. There is also monogamy in nature, as well as polygamy. There is also flattery in nature, and homosexuality. From your point of view, you can find everything you're looking for in nature and history. Therefore, it is useful to be aware of the examples brought from nature and history. Inequality is a society-specific situation. There is also a phenomenon called inequality wherever human exists with culture. I think you're in a hurry to reconcile this with evolution. You think of evolution not as a process of adaptation, but as a process of superiority. Yet inequality is a consequence of becoming a society. We talk about culture because the dynamics of nature's motion mechanics are different from society. Therefore, inequality is a social phenomenon, not evolutionary or biological.

Inequality cannot be reduced to the difference between the biological and physiological qualities of someone on the African continent and the biological and physiological qualities of someone on the European continent. There is no biological or physiological need for us to define them differently. If we are defining a difference that will cause inequality and discrimination, this is a definition that is independent of its biological and physiological qualities. How do we know, from organ transplant to nutrition habits. it can eat anything and everything. This is the skill it can demonstrate. Let's make a more biological definition. They can mate. So, these are members of the same species. Then there must be something else that brings out this inequality. I said that capitalism is the greatest answer, but we can list many things underneath it. Let's look at society again, what is it that will make us all equal? Is to look at the differences again. If the difference is to be established as a constituent element for the formation of equality, then we can establish the search for equality from here on. That is, The Turkish should not become Kurdish, The Kurdish should not become Turkish. It has to be how the woman wants to be; it has to be how the man wants to be. Everyone should be aware that their own diversity is protected, and those differences should be excluded from public debate. The ground on which the debate is set is such a ground, that what ultimately establishes the disparity between us is not nature itself, but nature has no such power. I said there is no identity in nature, there is no identity in nature, there is such a thing as socialization. My mother tongue is not Turkish by nature, but there is a language called Turkish. Language is a product of culture and socialization in the cultural historical process. So where did nationalism come from, imposing the

unity of my language, my history and my society as a political project and saying that I am superior to those who do not look like me? Nationalism did not arise with mythological stories such as common history, common culture, common language, common religion. Nationalism is a desire for sovereignty that builds on the past by looking at the present. So, the history of nationalism is rewritten according to the needs of today. It's writing its own ideology, not what's going on in history. Is not interested in what is really going on. The crisis it is experiencing today is moving from history to rebuilding for today. History is not what's going on there, it's what we write today. The way we write it today is consistent with the needs of the dominant ideology. This is perhaps the most important feature of Marxism. Marxism showed that this way of writing history is ideology, and urged us to analyze power relations. The truth can sometimes shatter the dominant ideology. Althusser says, " Even if Marxism did nothing, he discovered history, he discovered the science of history." exactly, it's over.

- Right on time. Thank you, everyone.

