REMEMBERING AND MOURNING THE UNGRIEVABLE: GENDERING DEATHSCAPES THROUGH THE MATERIALITY OF DEAD BODIES OF TRANSWOMEN IN TURKEY

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Submitted to

Central European University

Department of Gender Studies

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Critical Gender Studies

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Budapest, Hungary

2016

Abstract

This thesis examines the deaths of transsexual women in Turkey by looking at two concepts; deathscapes and ungrievability. It is constituted by three main arguments. The first one states that the deaths of transsexual women are deemed ungrievable in the public sphere in Turkey. Either there is a void, a silence in terms of representing their deaths or existing representation of their deaths makes it impossible to remember and mourn them as transwomen. This thesis acknowledges that ungrievability in the domain of the representation cannot account for all forms of remembering and mourning that are purposely excluded from the public sphere in the first place to create that ungrievability. This is why this thesis aims at looking for alternative ways of remembering and mourning that do not have a reflection in the public sphere, through doing an oral history study with people from the LGBT movement in Turkey. The second argument is that these alternative ways can be located at a rapture point resulting from inadmissibility of dead bodies of transwomen into deathscapes which are defined as spaces, including bodies, exclusively assigned to death and to performing rituals of burial and practices of memorialization. In close relation with the second argument, the third one claims that transwomen cannot occupy their own bodies as deathscapes, and they cannot occupy the formal deathscapes as long as their bodies still carry the traces of their non-heteronormative gender performances inscribed upon their bodies while they were living. Their inadmissibility into deathscapes creates the rapture in the conventional rituals of burial and practices of memorialization in the sense that they cannot account for LGBT people's need to care for their own deaths. This opens up the possibility for LGBT people to come up with different burial rituals and practices of memorialization of transwomen. This thesis, thus, brings a spatial and gender lens to death, and remembering and mourning the dead.

Acknowledgements:

I want to express my wholehearted gratitude to my informants who were so generous to tell me their stories. It is never easy to talk about the deaths of your loved ones. Without their courage to live through those stories again, this thesis could not be possible.

I cannot thank Andrea Pető enough for her constant moral support and academic advices. Her insightful comments on this thesis was the most helpful and her constant encouragement kept me writing.

I am very grateful for Nur Sultan Çırakman for her friendship which has stood the test of time. She helped me find my way when I was feeling lost, by encouraging me to study on what interests me the most. Without her encouragement and much needed psychological support, I could not go through the process of writing on a topic that involves death. I also want to thank Sara Ahmed and Tankut Atuk who have provided warms hugs, sweet smiles and two pairs of curious ears whenever I needed to talk. Their clever comments helped me a lot.

My sister, Nalan Koçak, who has never stopped supporting me in every possible way always inspires me to be a better person, sometimes not for myself, but for her and her alone. Simply thank you!

Contents

Introduction

I flew to Ankara on the early morning of 20 April, 2016 in order to start the second part of my fieldwork on remembering and mourning transsexual women's deaths. I was scheduled to make an interview with a well-known Turkish LGBT activist on the same day. Unfortunately, he had to cancel the interview, leaving me wondering what will be my next move since I was considering him as the gatekeeper of the field in Ankara. I was planning to ask him to introduce me to people from Pembe Hayat, a transgender rights organization established in 2006. I spent two days interviewing two people I contacted personally. On the third day, I decided to go to Pembe Hayat in person, introduce myself and hope that they will agree to talk to me. Once I was there, they showed genuine interest in my work and agreed to be interviewed. And they told me that I was very lucky to come Pembe Hayat on that day because the organization was packed with many transwomen and the activists of the organization, and they were expecting more people coming in the following days. The reason behind the busy traffic of people in the organization was that the Mayor of Ankara had just initiated police raids on trans sex workers living and working in Etlik, a district of the city. The police were asking these people to leave Etlik on the ground that after two bombings in Ankara, they were no longer able to provide security for trans sex workers, security that has never been provided before.

The organization was helping these people by placing them in temporary accommodations, providing financial help and giving them legal consultations. Moreover, they were monitoring the legal procedures of those who were arrested by the police. They were holding meetings with the representatives of the Peoples' Democratic Party, one of the opposition parties in Turkey, discussing what can be done about the police raids on Etlik. The stories I listened and observations I made concerning the police raids while I was in the organization pointed out to the fact that transwomen were vulnerable to arbitrary displacement and police violence while at the same time they construct their own networks of support in order

to attend to that vulnerability. Moreover, I realized that neither the police raids nor their vulnerabilities could be represented in the public sphere. I expected newspapers or news channels to mention the police raids. I looked for any official statement of political figure on explaining the reasons of the police raids. But none of these happened, only the website of Pembe Hayat have provided updates on the actions being taken against the police raids by the organization itself.

This specific instance in which transwomen's vulnerabilities against arbitrary displacement and police violence could not enjoy public representation is actually a reflection of a much bigger problem that transwomen undergo in their daily lives. They have to live near dead (being subjected to attacks meant to end their life) and constantly witness the deaths and/or hospitalization of their fellow transwomen on almost daily basis. That is to say, they are marked by various vulnerabilities that collaborate to bring these people near death. Yet the fact that they live near death and that they actually die because of living near death hardly finds their echoes in the public sphere; their deaths do not get to be represented. In the case where they achieve a low level of visibility and representability, they never enjoy a representation that mentions vulnerabilities giving way to their deaths. Instead, the ways in which their deaths are represented erase their gender identity and to trivialize and banalize the reasons of their deaths. For example, they are address as "men who turned out to be transvestite" and with their birth names instead of their chosen names which signify the lives they chose to lead. Or they are represented as 'perpetrators' of their own deaths because they 'tricked' their killers into believing that they are women.

Following these observations, I aim to answer the following questions throughout this thesis. Without recognition for the deaths of transwomen in the public sphere in Turkey, how can remembering and mourning their deaths be possible? How can we remember and mourn the loss lives of those whose deaths never get to be represented in the public sphere? Are there

alternative and non-heteronormative ways of representing these deaths and mourning and remembering them? In which ways counter narratives could be developed to address this issue?

I conducted twelve interviews following an oral history methodology with people from different LGBT organizations in Ankara and Istanbul and with people who are not connected to any of these organizations. The recurring themes of the narratives of my informant (the care for the dead body, the rituals of burial and practices of memorialization) led me to utilize two concepts in order to answer the research questions stated above; ungrievability and deathscapes. In the Chapter 2, by using Judith Butler's concept of ungrievability, I will argue that the lack of representation or banalizing and trivializing representations of deaths of transwomen prevent the deaths of transwomen from being mourned and remembered in the public sphere. The deathscapes, on the other hand, will help me to theorize the materiality of death bodies of transwomen. Deathscapes are considered as spaces which contains the death and separate it from the living. These spaces are envisioned to include everything that is related to death, including corporeal bodies of the dead, the burial rituals of the bodies and practices of memorialization. I will argue that transwomen's death bodies, with their materiality and corporeality can be considered as deathscapes. Following this logic, in the Chapter 3, I will demonstrate that transwomen cannot occupy their dead bodies as deathscapes while at the same time they are excluded from, what some people call, formal deathscapes (the morgue, the mosque, the cemetery and so on) on the ground of that their bodies still carry the traces of performing non-heteronormative gender norms (long hairs, having boobs and penis at the same time). In the Chapter 4, I will argue that the fact that their entry into deathscapes is restricted as a result of their gender identity creates a rapture for LGBT people, a point of destabilization of conventional burial rituals and practices of memorialization. It is because they cannot perform these rituals and practices as long as the dead bodies of transwomen are not allowed to occupy various deathscapes. This rapture, on the other hand, opens up the possibility for LGBT people

to reappropriate conventional rituals and practices while they construct their alternative, non-heteronormative ones as well.

Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework and Contextualization of Deaths of Transwomen in Turkey

In the narratives of my informants, three main themes were repeated; the care for the dead body, the rituals of burial and practices of memorialization. In order to theoretically address these themes, and to understand the wider social context within which they gain meaning and have an influence over my informants in particular and over LGBT movement in Turkey in general, I will be employing two concepts; deathscapes and grievability. Deathscapes will help me to conceptualize the ways in which the material remains of a transwoman's dead body are being handled by her relatives and friends within the limits of a religious (Sunni Islam) and heteronormative understanding of dying and death. Grievability, a concept developed by Judith Butler, will help me to conceptualize the ways in which heteronormative and conventional (in religious terms) rituals of burial and practices of memorialization prevent relatives and friends of transwomen from mourning and remembering transwomen in *the public sphere.*

1.1. Theorizing the Line between Death and Life through a Spatial Lens: Deathscapes

The term deathscapes, according to Avril Maddrell and James D. Sidaway, indicates "the relationships between space/place and death, bereavement and mourning…reflecting both the 'spatial turn' within the wider social sciences and humanities, as well as the growing engagement with death, mourning and memorialization within geographical research"[1]. Christien Klaufus defines it as "landscapes of dead disposal in which processes of mourning and memorialization and meaning giving are intertwined with more pragmatic biological and environmental matters concerning the decomposition of corpses"[2]. Both definitions suggest that

[1] Maddrell and Sidaway, *Deathscapes: Spaces for Death, Dying, Mourning and Remembrance*, 1.
[2] Klaufus, "Deathscapes in Latin America's Metropolises: Urban Land Use, Funerary Transformations,and Daily Inconveniences," 101.

there are certain sites, regulated places reserved for the dead, separating it from the living and the flow of daily life such as hospitals, cemeteries, mortuaries. Young and Light's definition of deathscapes further highlights this separation; "deathscapes are highly varied sites in which the dead are buried and/or represented and where the living undertake various forms of performances and embodied practices in relation to the dead"[3]. These sites are marked by death, and the dead bodies are seen in their proper places when they are put within these limits. Outside of these sites, life continues and death is kept at bay until it is again experienced within these controlled sites. Jenny Hockey, Carol Komaromy and Kate Woodthrope present a similar argument by referring death's "spatial sequestration within hospitals, residential homes, funeral parlours and cemeteries"[4]. Thus it seems like clear-cut boundaries between places where life and death resides are established. The living, on the other hand, occupies these spaces for the care of the dead body and for mourning and remembering. The acts of preparing the body for burial, performing the rituals, and later memorializing the dead are done by the living within the limits of landscapes of death.

The literature on deathscapes is diverse in content. It discusses the effects of increasing urbanization, population and cultural transformation on the spaces of death in metropolitan areas. For example, Christien Klaufus discusses the growing need to find alternative ways of disposing[5] that occupy less space such as "vertical storage, grave recycling, and the reuse of composted organic material from cemeteries"[6]. Elizabeth Kenworthy Teather follows the same logic of urbanization, but this time combining it with the increasing effects of neoliberal market economy on the urban spaces of death by discussing the privatization of the care of the dead

[3] Young and Light, "Corpses, Dead Body Politics and Agency in Human Geography: Following the Corpse of Dr Petru Groza," 137.
[4] Hockey, Woodthorpe, and Komaromy, *The Matter of Death: Space, Place and Materiality*, 224.
[5] The word 'disposing' is the choice of the author. I am openly against using it in referring to burying the dead bodies, as it may result in devaluing and dehumanizing the body.
[6] Klaufus, "Deathscapes in Latin America's Metropolises: Urban Land Use, Funerary Transformations,and Daily Inconveniences," 108.

bodies, and increasing number of private cemeteries[7]. The literature does not limit itself to the spatial boundaries of cities and countries. It includes a lively discussion of deathscapes on an international level. Alistair Hunter looks at the role of deathscapes in building a diaspora identity[8]. Hunter claims that while sending the dead body to the home country may be a way to reinforce the idea of a temporal residence in the host country, being able perform their own culture's rituals of burial and burying the dead in the host country can help consolidate their relations with that country.

However, these interpretations of deathscapes perpetuates and highlights the supposed distinction between the spaces of living and the dead. Maddrell and Sidaway argues that death can move beyond these aforementioned sites, into everyday life blurring the line between the dead and the living. In other words, they acknowledge the fact that these spaces drawing the lines between the living and the dead can be trespassed. For example, they mention domestic space of the home as an undesignated place of death, or private cemeteries constructed within the limits of people homes[9]. By grounding on these observations, Young and Light make a distinction between formal spaces and informal spaces of death, thus indicate the possibility of deathscapes that are more integrated into the daily lives of the living. While they define places such as memorials, crematoria and cemeteries as formal spaces, they provide examples of "diverse informal spaces such as the home or different locations associated with the life and death of the deceased (roadside shrines, a seat in the pub or sports club, a memorial bench on their favourite part of a walk)"[10]. The dead bodies or other forms of materiality that embody the

[7] Teather, "The Case of the Disorderly Graves: Contemporary Deathscapes in Guangzhou," 191.
[8] Hunter, "Deathscapes in Diaspora: Contesting Space and Negotiating Home in Contexts of Post-Migration Diversity."
[9] Maddrell and Sidaway, *Deathscapes: Spaces for Death, Dying, Mourning and Remembrance*, 3.
[10] Young and Light, "Corpses, Dead Body Politics and Agency in Human Geography: Following the Corpse of Dr Petru Groza," 137.

dead person can 'creep' into the flow of everyday life and be integrated into the spaces of the living.

In addition, the deathscapes literature recognizes that human body can become a part of deathscapes as well, marking the space for the death by their corporeal bodies. For example, there is a "temporal containment of death within an age-related cohort of people- those who have lived beyond the age of 65" and a "relative absence from the lives of children and younger adults"[11]. That is to say, a group of people above a certain age limit are seen as markers of death and this idea is further underpinned by the fact that their bodies are confined within spaces such as care-houses or hospitals which are themselves sites of death. Furthermore, we can argue that death and discussions of death are limited to the bodies of people who are supposed to have exclusive relations with death such as hospice staff, coroners, pathologists, funeral directors, crematoria managers, the owners of burial grounds, bereavement counsellors and so on. Their bodily existence as being close to the dead bodies and those who mourn the dead result in them being landscapes of death. The fact that the living people can be markers of space reserved for the dead destabilizes the constructed distinction between the living and the dead.

1.2. Contributions to the Literature of Deathscapes:

My first contribution to the existing literature is to gender deathscapes. The literature does not discuss the role of gender in conceptualizing deathscapes, apart from one article written by Kate V. Hartig and Kevin M. Dunn. They demonstrate spatially specific construction of masculinity through the roadside memorials to commemorate people killed in motor vehicle accidents in Australia. They argue that as people killed in these accidents are mostly young men, commemorating their deaths by turning roadsides into deathscapes results in "conservative memorial of youth machismo; of heroic aggression, disregard for safety and

[11] Hockey, Woodthorpe, and Komaromy, *The Matter of Death: Space, Place and Materiality*, 224.

egocentrism". Nonetheless, deathscapes are still discussed within the binary of man and women and the limits of a heteronormative imagination of the world. There is a gap in the literature concerning what is the place of non-normative humans within deathscapes. In order to address this gap, in the Chapter 3, I will show the ways in which gender norms are reproduced within deathscapes, and how gender norms control the entry into the formal spaces of death. Occupying a formal deathscape or being a deathscape (this time in the form of a dead body) requires performing of gender norms of a heterosexual life and death. I will argue that the dead bodies of transwomen's bodies are not admitted into formal deathscapes because deathscapes are initially designed as the places of death for those who have lived a heteronormative life. The traces of anything that is non-heterosexual are barred from entering into these spaces. In order to be admitted, these bodies are cut and reshaped into normative bodies.

1.3. Ungrievability of the Deaths of Transwomen

In order to theorize the Chapter 4, I am planning to use Judith Butler's concept of grievability. Judith Butler, in *Precarious Life: the Powers of Mourning and Violence*, argues, in its most basic form, that some lives are more liveable and some deaths are more grievable than others in terms of their representability in the public sphere. Butler's empirical observations that motive her to make a case for some people being more grievable in the public sphere come from the ways in which different 'victims' of 9/11 and of the following 'war on terror' declared by the US are represented in the public sphere, if they get to be mentioned at all. Some people become heroes of 9/11, represented as fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters of the country, thus turned into grievable subjects. In order to make them mournable, the representation of these people were imbued with images of heteronormative relationalities while being purged from any implication of non-normative ways of existing and establishing kinships. In other cases, she observes "the erasure from public representations of the names,

images, and narratives of those the US has killed"[12]. The 'victims' of the US's war on terror are reduced to simple numbers, demonized by stripping them off traces of humanity and by putting them into spaces (such as Abu Ghraib Prison) where their human rights are violated repeatedly with immunity.

Following these observations, Butler argues that "the differential allocation of grievability that decides what kind of subject is and must be grieved, and which kind of subject must not, operates to produce and maintain certain exclusionary conceptions of who is normatively human: what counts as a liveable life and a grievable death?"[13]. Butler moves beyond an understanding of mourning that connotes a process of bereavement aimed at coping with death and managing the life with the loss. Designating a group of people as grievable subjects while not others on the grounds of their gender, race, religion, age and so on assigns the act of mourning a regulatory power over remembering and memorialization. To put it differently, Butler states that, "those who remain faceless or whose faces are presented to us as so many symbols of evil, authorize us to become senseless before those lives we have eradicated and whose grievability is indefinitely postponed"[14]. Becoming a grievable subject by virtue of representations of a group of people in the public sphere means that they will be remembered and memorialized (in a specific manner for example as a heterosexual being), marking the lives they had led before they died as liveable lives, and the death they had as memorable deaths. Butler, in *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?*, further develops her concept of grievability. Butler goes into a detailed discussion regarding the effects of ungrievability on how the lives of ungrievable subjects are perceived. Butler asserts that "If certain lives do not qualify as lives or are, from the start, not conceivable as lives within certain epistemological frames, then these

[12] Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, xiv.
[13] Ibid., xiv–xv.
[14] Ibid., xviii.

lives are never lived nor lost in the full sense"[15]. Butler's argument does not go into the discussion of an ontological existence of certain lives. She is not talking about corporeal body existing and occupying a space, touchable, visible thus can be affected and be affected by. She is referring to certain epistemological frames that consider some forms of existing as living and liveable lives while other forms of existing are excluded from the definition of what counts a liveable life. And if a form of existing is never acknowledged as life in the first instance, how could it be registered as a loss and be mourned and remembered? As an answer to this question, she states that "an ungrievable life is one that cannot be mourned because it has never lived, that is, it has never counted as a life at all"[16]. A form of existing which is never regarded as living within the public sphere, whose representation lacks the quality of a livable life cannot be mourned because the erasure of that existence is not registered as loss.

Sara Ahmed, in her book *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, touches upon a similar discussion of ungrievability with a specific attention to queer people's lives and deaths. Ahmed argues that "queer lives have to be recognized as lives in order to be grieved"[17]. She believes that "…queer lives cannot 'be admitted' as forms of loss in the first place, as queer lives are not recognized as lives to be lost"[18]. Like Butler, Ahmed ties ungrievability of queer lives to "a failure to recognise queer relations as significant bonds, or that queer lives are lives worth living, or that queers are more than failed heterosexuals, heterosexuals who have failed 'to be'"[19]. According to Ahmed, this failure has led queer activism to the politics of grief trying to address the question of what losses can be regarded grievable[20] (Ahmed, 2004, p. 156). By referring to AIDS crisis of 1980s, Ahmed asserts that queer activism in response to the failure

[15] Butler, *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?*, 1.
[16] Ibid., 38.
[17] Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 156.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid.

to grieve queer lives lost to AIDS came up with new forms of mourning and commemoration, producing works of collective mourning aimed at making the loss of queer lives visible in the public space[21]. At this point, Ahmed asks a question that departs her discussion of grievability from Butler's; "what are the political effects of contesting the failure to recognize queer loss by displaying that loss?"[22] In other words, what are political implications of making an ungrievable subject grievable in the public sphere?

As a case study, Ahmed takes the public mourning after 9/11. She observes that some deaths were privileged over others, creating a hierarchy of the death in their representation in the public sphere. Moreover, she notices that some of the deaths did not appear at all. Since the mourning of the deaths was done only in a heteronormative framework, there was no space and no idiom of remembrance to even mention queer loss. The rhetoric of the loss was revolving around the dichotomies such as father-mother, sons-daughters, and brothers-sisters. As a result, Ahmed asserts that "the very necessity of identifying some losses as queer losses reveals how most losses were narrated as heterosexual losses in the first place"[23]. However, Ahmed warns us about the possibility of creating 'other others' because of methods and strategies of asserting queer losses into the public space. For example, the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association made the following response after 9/11; "Even on a good day, many GBLT Americans felt unsafe or at least vulnerable in ways large and small. Now, that feeling has grown even more acute and has blanketed the nation"[24]. Ahmed argues that this response establishes an analogy between the queer feelings of unsafety and vulnerability and the same feeling of citizens which stems from the threat of terrorism[25]. Through the analogy, queer lives and losses are included into the national mourning. Yet in this process, those who are not from

[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid., 158.
[24] Ibid., 157.
[25] Ibid.

the nation are once again categorically silenced and marked as un-grievable. This is why Ahmed believes that when queer activism contests the failure to recognize queer losses by displaying those losses, they should be really careful about what kind of representations they are using and which idioms they are invoking in order to claim grievability for queer losses. This warning will be a guiding principle of this thesis while I am looking at the ways in which LGBT people in Turkey reappropriate existing rituals of burial and practices of memorialization in Turkey or create their own rituals and practices.

I will shortly contextualize ungrievability of deaths of transwomen and their representation in the public sphere in Turkey. But before doing so, I will expand on Butler's usage of the public sphere. Butler is vague in employing the term, seemingly not referring to the distinction between the public and private sphere. This is a dichotomy that has been long criticized by the feminist literature on the ground the distinction reiterates the private sphere as feminine and belonging to women and the public sphere as masculine and belonging to men. Butler does not touch upon this dichotomous understanding of the public sphere since it looks like she is imagining the public sphere a space of representations, of appearances. She looks at how certain representations are generated, distributed and reproduced in the spaces such as newspapers, news channels, speeches of public figures for the enjoyment and consumption of a larger part of society, while some forms of representations are marginalized, silenced and eradicated. She states that "the public sphere is constituted in part by what cannot be said and what cannot be shown" and that "the limits of the sayable, the limits of what can appear, circumscribe the domain in which political speech operates and certain kinds of subjects appear as viable actors."[26] The sphere which is characterized as public is realized and actualized through setting limits of what can be represented in those spaces and what cannot be. In other words, the public sphere itself is performative in the sense, for example, that only certain gender

[26] Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, xvii.

performances can be represented in these spaces. The fact that non-normative gender performances cannot appear in certain spaces marks these spaces as public (or should appear as performances that are 'unnatural', 'not-normal', 'unacceptable', 'unsustainable' and so on). Following this logic, Butler sees the public sphere, the newspapers, the news channels, public figures, as spaces where we are "…establishing whose lives can be marked as lives, and whose deaths will count as deaths"[27] because the lack of their representation or their representation as not-viable lives will constitute them, in the public sphere, as unliveable lives and ungrievable deaths while on the other hand defining what the public sphere is. Throughout the rest of the thesis, I will be using a similar idea of the public sphere and generation of various representations concerning transwomen and their deaths in Turkey.

1.4. Contextualization of (Un)Grievability of Deaths of Transwomen:

In this sub-chapter, I aim to provide a summary of relevant literature that mentions the representation of deaths of transwomen in the public sphere. However, my research on academic sources revealed a few articles and books that only talked about different forms of representation of transwomen[28], but not their deaths. The most comprehensive one of these studies belonged to Özlem Hoşcan (2006) who made an in-depth media analysis of the portrayal of homosexuality in the Turkish press between 1998 and 2006 and who also discussed transsexual representation in the press within the same timeframe[29]. Yet nowhere in the whole thesis has she mentioned the representations of deaths of transwomen, let alone gays and lesbians. The fact that there is a void in the academic literature on the representations of deaths of transwomen in Turkey actually signals to the idea that their deaths actually have a hard time

[27] Ibid., xxi.
[28] Altinay, "Reconstructing the Transgendered Self as a Muslim, Nationalist, Upper-Class Woman: The Case of Bulent Ersoy"; Görkemli, *Grassroots Literacies: Lesbian and Gay Activism and the Internet in Turkey*; Ertin, "The Drag Queers the S/HE Binary: Subversion of Heteronormativity in Turkish Context."
[29] Hoşcan, "The Media Portrayal of Homosexuality in the Turkish Press between 1998 and 2006."

in finding a space in the public sphere, including the academia as well, all of which perpetuates their ungrievability.

The media reports[30] of LGBT organizations, on the other hand, documents the ways in which the deaths of transwomen appear in the public sphere, even though it is limited to the media. The book, *Hate Speeches against LGBT People in the Media*, prepared and published by KOAS GL and Pembe Hayat (2015) actually covers a large timeframe from 2010-2015 and includes the findings of the referred reports[31]. The book detects three commons methods of trivializing and banalizing the deaths of transwomen in the media[32]. While I am talking about the findings of the book, I will provide a few examples from the media in order to better contextualize how these three methods actually make deaths of transwomen ungrievable in the public sphere. First of all, the book argues that in almost all news, transwomen are referred as transvestite. A reference to these people being 'woman' cannot be found in these news. For example, İHA, one of the biggest news agents in Turkey, prepares a newspaper article titled "Transvestite Murdered in Fatih" saying that the man who was murdered turned out to be a transvestite[33]. The second method is to use the birth name of these people in addressing their deaths in the news. Their full birth names are frequently mentioned (without using abbreviations to protect their privacy), their 'chosen' names only comes up as 'nicknames'. Two newspapers, Sözcü and Millyet, report the dead of the same transwoman by saying 'a transvestite nicknamed Şeker Buse" and then gives her full birth name in the news article[34]. The last method is to show the murderer as the victim of transwomen who lured the murderer into a 'sex trap' by pretending to be a woman. Another newspaper, Akşam, titles its news article regarding the murder of a

[30] KAOS GL, "LGBT Media Report for 2012"; KAOS GL, "LGBT Media Report for 2013"; KAOS GL, "LGBT Media Report for 2014."
[31] KAOS GL and Pembe Hayat, *Hate Speeches against LGBT People in the Media*.
[32] Ibid., 11.
[33] İHA, "Fatih'te 'Travesti' Cinayeti!"
[34] Sözcü, "İstanbul'da Korkunç Cinayet! Travestiyi Evinde Öldürdüler"; Milliyet, "Bakırköy'deki Travesti Cinayeti Böyle Görüntülendi!"

transwoman as "I thought he was woman but he turned out to be transvestite"[35]. These three methods of banalizing and trivializing the deaths of transwomen and the examples I provided help us to contextualize the dynamics of making transwomen's deaths ungrievable in Turkey.

1.5. Contributions to the Concept of Grievability

In the Chapter 4, I will argue that the concept of ungrievability carries the risk of ignoring forms of mourning and remembering that do not and cannot take place in the public narratives. In other words, concept of ungrievability runs the risk of decontextualizing and dehistoricizing the existing rituals and practices of mourning and remembering the deaths of transwomen because of the fact that it mostly focuses on a lack of representation of various deaths or on discursively impossible representations of non-normative people as grievable subjects and viable actors of politics in the public sphere. The very reason why the deaths of non-normative people become ungrievable in the public sphere is the way in which they their representations (and in some cases lack of representation) are constructed in order to erase the long history of hate crimes that claim transwomen's lives in Turkey and to ignore socially constructed vulnerabilities of transwomen which open their bodies up to death. In other words, utilizing a concept which is built upon the idea of a void of representation of deaths may result in a void, not in just representation but in historization and contextualization of those as well. In the end, the lack of representation of the deaths of transwomen in the public narratives does not mean lack of practices of mourning and remembering their deaths. As the narratives of my informants indicate, many reappropriated conventional and non-conventional practices of mourning and remembering exist within LGBT movement in Turkey. There may be cases where ungrievability of a group of people in the public narratives results in actual inability to mourn and remember in the sense that these people are deprived of means to mourn and remember. However, within this thesis, ungrievability of transwomen is caused on the level of public

[35] Akşam, "'Kadın Sandım Travesti Çıktı.'"

narratives. Of course there are instances where the actual means of mourning and remembering (being able to bury the dead body and marking the grave with the 'chosen' female names of transwomen) are actually taken away from the relatives and friends of these people. However, at these points, they develop their own means. All in all, my contribution to the concept of ungrievability is the argument that it only marks a void within the public narratives. Expanding it to cover the daily practices of mourning and remembering of LGBT people would be dehistorsizing and decontextualizing those practices.

Chapter 2: Methodology

The method of collecting data for this thesis is Oral History. I used a mix-method approach throughout the data collection process in order to facilitate the interviewing process and, in some cases, make interviews possible. I conducted semi-structured interviews in person, and via Skype and e-mail. In April and May 2016, I conducted interviews with thirteen people in Ankara and Istanbul. My main objective in choosing these two cities was to get access to the only two transgender rights organizations in Turkey. Istanbul LGBTT based in Istanbul and Pembe Hayat based in Ankara focus on the political, economic, social and cultural issues surrounding transgender people though they are in close relations with other LGBT organizations in Turkey, as well. They establish solidarity networks with and among transgender people to resist against discrimination, hate crimes, violence and social exclusion. Their activism on hate crimes and violence puts them into a position where they have close connections with transgender people who have gone through the loss of someone close to them. Moreover, the fieldwork itself indicated that the activists of these organizations themselves have lost their transgender loved ones and fellow activists. As a result, these people have stories to share about the care of the dead bodies, and remembering and mourning the dead who, one way or another, touched upon their lives.

However, I did not want to overemphasize these two organizations' rituals and practices of mourning and remembrance as there are other organizations in Turkey that also address hate crimes and cases of violence against transgender people. In addition, I wanted to include the voice of those people who are not involved in LGBT activism, but still inevitably experience the loss of their transgender loved ones. And as I proceeded with the interviews, I realized that the narratives were told from the point view of those people who seek professional help for the care of the dead people. I also wanted to include the perspectives of these professionals (imams and morticians) into the thesis, as well. My concern of having a group of informants coming

from diverse backgrounds resulted in the following sampling; four transwomen from Pembe Hayat, one cisgender woman from Istanbul LGBTT, one transwoman from Lambda Istanbul and LuBUnya, one gay man from LuBUnya, one gay man from KAOS GL, and one transwoman who is associated with Turkish Communist Party 1920 for the past five years, but had been involved with LGBT activism in Turkey since 1980s, and 4 people who are not associated with any LGBT organization. Within these 4 people, one transwoman has been earning her livelihood as sex worker for nearly 30 years now, and she was in Pembe Hayat on the day of interview only because of the police raids. One gay man has shared with me the story of the death of his transwoman friend, while one cisgender woman has shared the story of funeral ceremony of her father who was a 'radical atheist' and did not want to be buried according to Islamic rituals. And one cisgender woman shared her expertise as mortician trained in washing the dead bodies of women in lived with Islamic traditions. As a result of the diversity in my informants' background, this study cannot make a claim to represent the unified approach of LGBT movement in Turkey towards remembering and mourning transwomen deaths. However, since this study can reflect different ways of caring for the dead body of transwomen, rituals of their burials and practices of their memorialization by their friends, families and LGBT activists.

2.1. Limitations and Reframing

The initial conceptualization of this study was centred on transgender murders. I wanted to limit myself to murders to see how they are represented in the public narratives of the news or other public figures and institutions, and compare it to narratives of LGBT people. My motivation was to underline the role of the public narratives in making transgender people ungrievable (applying Butler's concept), and then to look for the moments of resistance against the ungrievability by different practices of remembering and mourning by LGBT people. However, the results of my fieldwork forced me to rethink and re-conceptualize the framework

of this study in two major ways. First of all, I could not include the narratives of transmen. I tried to contact four transmen through my personal relations (either I was acquainted with them or they are friends of my friends). After explaining the content of the study, one of them did not agree to talk to me by stating that he has nothing to say about the matter. The other one agreed to talk, but could not make a room in his schedule. The remaining two simply did not reply back to my e-mails. Furthermore, while I was present in Pembe Hayat, I could not get in touch with any transman because there were only transwomen in the organization. And my informants mostly talked about the deaths of transwomen. There was only one mentioning of a transman named Ali Gül throughout the whole interviews. As a result of the lack of transmen's perspectives and of the narratives about their deaths, I could not comment on transgender people in general, and had to narrow down the focus group of the study to transwomen. This marks a clear limitation of this study, but a limitation that can be overcome in future by interviewing transmen.

Secondly, my informants talked about not only murders but also suicide and deaths by natural causes. According to the narratives of my informants, the harassments that the dead bodies of transwomen underwent and the limitations imposed upon the families and friends of transwomen in handling the funeral ceremony exist regardless of the nature of how transwomen died. Even though I explicitly directed questions concerning the murders of transwomen, their answers integrated stories of various kinds of death without making distinction between those who are murdered and those who died owing to other causes. In other words, the non-normative rituals of burial and practices of memorialization and different applications of the normative ones are applicable to every death my informants mentioned. The narratives integrating different modes of dying led me to give up on my initial focus on the murders. But more importantly, they made me realize that I, too, was being a part of exclusionary politics of death by solely focusing on murders in my thesis. If I had drawn the framework of the thesis within

the limits of transwomen murders, then I would have been excluding the stories of those who died by other causes. That is to say, in the early stages of research design, I simply assumed that Butler's ungrievability applied to murdered transgender people because it was easy to observe the exclusionary language of the news concerning the murders of transgender people and to claim that that language constructs transgender people as ungrievable in the public narratives. However, the act of referring transgender people in a public narrative (even though the purpose of the act to dehumanize transgender people) makes them intelligible to some people (to me, or to those who criticize the language of the news). The news of murders, in this case, provide a low level of visibility to transgender people which makes it easier to discuss this issue analytically simply because the murders can show up in our radar. But how about the deaths of transgender people who could not even enjoy the low level of invisibility that the murder stories enjoy? As it is clear from my own mistake, it is highly possible to ignore, silence and marginalize other forms of deaths that transgender people face and render them further ungrievable while trying to reveal rituals and practices of remembrance and mourning that could make transgender people grievable. This is why I will treat the concept of ungrievability with caution in my thesis. The ungrievability will be methodologically employed to mean a void only marked by non-remembrance of transgender people *in the public narratives*, and I will argue that the deaths of transgender are not mourned in *the public narratives*. In other words, this void only exists in terms of representation in *the public narratives*, but the practices of the daily life of LGBT people challenges this void, which will be discussed in the Chapter 4 in more details.

Despite my endeavour to highlight the stories of various deaths of transwomen, I cannot claim that I am not entirely excluding a group of transwomen. Among my informants, only one transwoman was not associated with LGBT activism, and she was still able to get accessed to Pembe Hayat. And only one gay man shared the story of death of his own friend. All other

stories of death came from people who collected these stories by their relations to activism. As a result, this thesis limited in its discussion of the deaths of those who could not get access to activism or to whom activism could not access. I am sure that there are deaths of transgender people that did not make it to the news or are not known by LGBT activists.

2.2. Position of the Researcher and Methods of Interpreting Oral Sources

Throughout the research period for the thesis, my positionality remained somehow elusive, shifting from being an insider to an outsider. I was having a hard time pinpointing my position vis-à-vis to people whose stories I wish to listen. Was I someone who have a shared sense of community with these people based on our experience of being LGBT in Turkey? Or was I someone who just came from Budapest to Ankara and Istanbul to make a research on the deaths (murders at the time) of transwomen (transgender people at the time), a researcher who has been shaped by a certain set of norms of institutional knowledge production? One thing I know was to that I needed to reflect upon my various 'identities' that I bring into this research project, how these identities can have an impact on the development of a researcher-informant relations and how they can affect the research process itself, the way the stories were collected and the way I will interpret these stories[36].

Robert Merton (1972) establishes a distinction between what he calls the Insider and Outsider Doctrines. The Insider Doctrine holds that a researcher who has been socialized within a group of people that he or she wants to study on and with whom he or she has shared experiences can have "the direct, intuitive sensitivity that alone makes empathic understanding possible"[37]. In other words, so as to be able to comprehend symbolisms and socially shared realties of the group, and to understand "the unwritten grammar of conduct and the nuances of

[36] Kerstetter, "Insider, Outsider, or Somewhere in between: The Impact of Researchers' Identities on the Community-Based Research Process," 99–100.
[37] Merton, "Insiders and Outsiders: A Chapter in the Sociology of Knowledge," 15.

cultural idiom", the research should undergo a continued socialization in that group[38]. Merton problematizes the Insider Doctrine on the ground that it can turn into an extreme Insiderism. He takes it to mean the rise of a new credentialism; "the credentialism of ascribed status"[39]. This form of credentialism claims that understanding can only be accessible for a few people who make a claim to the identity of the group they are studying on, thus effectively establishing a monopoly over the knowledge produced on and by that group. The Outsider Doctrine values the position of the research (who did not socialized within the subjects of the research) as "the relatively objective inquirer"[40]. The researcher who is not "tied down in his action by habit, piety and precedent" is able to "raise questions for inquiry less apt to be raised at all by Insiders"[41]. In other words, the researcher as outsider can see through and is not affected by the social and cultural commitments that members of a social group feel towards each other and make observations that are less prejudice, thus produce knowledge that are more objective. This doctrine has been criticized for obvious reasons. No researcher can come to the fieldwork without a social, cultural and economic background and prior commitments as a result of that background. The researcher may not be holding the same prejudices of the members of the group that she or he studying, but she or he may be operating with prejudices of her or his own background towards that group. Moreover, the researcher as outsider can experience hardship in establishing trust with these people and thus in gaining access to research informants.

However, my experience as a researcher within the limits of the field of this study could not be categorized alongside the lines of only one of these doctrines. In every interaction between me and my informants, my position shifted back and forward, from insider to outsider and vice versa. I brought with me my gender identity, class and education to the fieldwork.

[38] Ibid., 18.
[39] Ibid., 14.
[40] Ibid., 32.
[41] Ibid., 33.

Each of these elements of my background marked my positionality in every encounter with my informants, and put me in a position of both insider and outsider. I can argue that while I was devising my fieldwork, deciding on which people to talk and which organizations to contact, I felt like an insider. As a gay man who has socialized in Turkey, and who has built prior relations with LGBT activists, it was relatively easier for me to establish bonds of trust with my informants and gain access into different LGBT organization. For example, one of my informants, Sema, with whom I went to the same university in undergraduate was only an acquaintance. We know each other only from a few meetings of the LGBT organization of the university. At the end of the interview, when I thanked her for sparing time to talk to me, she said that she has stop giving interviews[42] because a few of her interviews were used in researches that are homophobic and transphobic. And she said that she agreed to see me since she trusted me as a 'lubun' not to do such a research. Her specific use of the word 'lubun' which means "gay, queer, fairy" in Istanbul's Queer Slang[43] used especially by transgender sex workers to avoid the police while they are doing sex work indicates her trust in me as a gay man (and someone with a similar education background). My education proved to be a further help, and positioned me as an insider when I tried to contact Pembe Hayat. Dilara, who is, at the same time, one of my informants has been working as an activist in Istanbul LGBTT and has close relations with people from Pembe Hayat. I knew Dilara from the same master's program we attended. When I asked her to introduce me to people from Pembe Hayat, she sent an e-mail to Buse, the chair of the organization, asking her if she would want to talk to me. Within just an hour, she got a reply saying that she will if I go to Pembe Hayat in person to fill out a form called 'academic research form'.

[42] While in undergraduate, her story as a transwoman living in an all-men dormitory in the university was published in a newspaper. And since then her active involvement in LGBT movement has gained her a certain level of popularity resulting in people asking for interviews.

[43] Kontovas, "Lubunca: The Historical Development of İstanbul's Queer Slang and A Social-Functional Approach to Diachronic Processes in Language."

When I went to the organization, my position as an insider started to shift to an outsider. I ringed the door bell, only to face a women holding the door slightly open and still chained to the door frame. She asked my reasons to be there, and I told that I wanted to do an academic research and that I was there to fill a form for it. She realized that I had a knowledge of how the organization works when it comes to academic research and then let me in. She politely led me into a big room that is used for conferences and meetings. She asked who told me to come to Pembe Hayat. Upon hearing Buse and Dilara's name, she was friendlier and went inside to get the form. Although I had the credentials of Buse and Dilara, my position as a researcher still marked me as an outsider who is there to conduct research on them, and their lives. Moreover, they shared a similar reservation that Sema had, namely the possibility that the stories they share can be used for homophobic and transphobic purposes. The first sign of this reservation was the questions on the form. They asked me to define what does homosexuality and transsexuality mean and how will I be using these terms in my research. The second one is that they wanted to get a copy of my thesis, I assume, both to check its content for any sign of homophobia and transphobia and to archive it. The last one was Ganimet's answer when I asked her if she wanted to see my thesis before I submit it. She said that as long as I do not say things that are transphobic, then it is ok to send it to them after I submit it to the university. I was in the organization by the recommendation of people they trust, but they still have their (rightful) reservations about me because they consider me as not one of them, but as a researcher who can produce a thesis that may cause damage to the organization and LGBT movement in Turkey.

I believe that my gender identity again helped me to develop an interest and have a prior knowledge about the murders of transwomen in Turkey, and the discourses surrounding the representation of these murders. I have been following the news concerning these murders since approximately 2007. However, as a gay man who is from a middle class family with an access

to higher education, I cannot make a claim to share transgender people experience of exclusion. As I have already provided examples in Introduction, transgender people are marginalized from the society to the point that their existences in the streets are limited by the Misdemeanour Law. Their revenues of incomes are usually limited to sex work (which opens up their bodies to hate crimes), since they are not allowed to work in other jobs as transgender. Their social and economic vulnerabilities[44] push them near death. I am an outsider to the experiences of transwomen, especially those of trans sex workers because of my class and gender identity. All in all, my fieldwork experience suggests that interviewing is actually a process of continuing negotiation between the researcher and the informants, a negotiation of position and of power. Intersection of gender identity, class and education affect the ways in which the researcher and the informants interact, and in which the knowledge is produced. In other words, my own constantly shifting position throughout the research indicates that the doctrines of insider and outsider reproduces a dichotomy that prevents understanding complicated relations that develop between the researcher and the informants. In order to supress this dichotomy of insider and outsider, some scholars suggested to look at "the space between"[45] the two, as I have done so far. According to this framework, "all researchers fall somewhere within the space between complete insiders and complete outsiders" occupying "…different spaces depending on the context of a specific research project"[46]. It is the responsibility of researchers to reflect on where they are being positioned in "the space between" in response to changing situations of the fieldwork.

[44] Of course their own social and economic vulnerabilities vary within themselves which prevents us from making a universalized claim to absolute nearness to death in every transwomen's case. I will later in the paper argue that transwomen with more financial means can reach a low level of accessibility to deathscapes which is denied to those who lack those means.

[45] Dwyer and Buckle, "The Space between: On Being an Insider-Outsider in Qualitative Research"; Kerstetter, "Insider, Outsider, or Somewhere in between: The Impact of Researchers' Identities on the Community-Based Research Process."

[46] Kerstetter, "Insider, Outsider, or Somewhere in between: The Impact of Researchers' Identities on the Community-Based Research Process," 101.

What kind of problems my shifting positionality may have caused during the research period? The first one could be my close relations to the group of people I am working. This can result in me being 'too subjective' in conducting the interviews. Melanie Greene (2014) points out to the possibility "that the perception of the insider researcher is narrowed, as too much is familiar; research at home limits the analysis of social and cultural structures and patterns…; and the researcher may become normalized to an extent that threatens to impede analysis"[47]. In order to attend to the problem that I may assume a prior knowledge about how my informants want to represent themselves, I started every interview with the same question; 'Could you please introduce yourself in any way you want?' This question is intended to understand self-representation of my informants; whether they call themselves transwomen, cisgender, homosexual, lesbian, queer; whether they represent themselves as sex workers, activists, academics, or another other occupy; whether they argue that they are very knowledgeable in the general topic of my thesis (I presented the topic as the murders of transgender people and what happens to their bodies), or they have limited knowledge on the topic. By opening a space within the interviews for these people to express their own ways of representing themselves, I want to prevent myself from consciously or unconsciously exploiting the trust links I established with the help of my status of insider. Moreover, throughout the interviews I refrained from using phrases such as 'as you could understand', 'as we know', 'as we all experience' that could indicate a shared understanding of the topic being discussed and bound the informants' stories to a space of vague assumptions and bias I may hold as an insider.

The second problem could be me being 'too subjective' in analysing the narratives of my informants. As an insider who has been investing in LGBT movement in Turkey, I could be inclined to overemphasize the positive sides of my informants' narratives about their

[47] Greene, "On the Inside Looking in: Methodological Insights and Challenges in Conducting Qualitative Insider Research," 4.

involvement in creating their own rituals of burial and practices of memorialization, while overlooking the exclusionary practices they may have been developing within the movement itself. In order to attend to this problem, I will be making use of Lisa Diamond (2006) understanding of dynamic nature of interviews and interviewing. Diamond argues that instead of looking for consistency in the memories of participants, we should treat all memories as "dynamic and situationally influenced", especially autobiographical memories which are "particularly sensitive to individual's present goal, self-perceptions, and interpersonal contexts"[48]. Such dynamic understanding of interviewing and interpreting implies that informants are influence by the positionality of research as well as the informants' commitments to wider social issues. Lynn Abrams (2010) reframes this argument in the following way; "the oral history interview is a three-way conversation: the interviewee engages in a conversation with his or herself, with the interviewer, and with culture"[49]. Hence it is necessary to look for cultural dynamics at play that shaped the interviews, as well as my informants' possible intention in choosing some narratives over others.

So as to demonstrate how could Abrams' concept of Oral History interview as a three-way conversation work, I will talk about one of the factors shaping my informants' articulation of memory; their involvement with LGBT activism. Edna Lomsky-Feder argues that "Existing literature tends to treat the remembering subject along one of two axes: assimilation of personal memory into the collective, or the search for an authentic and counter voice"[50]. In other words, in analysing how informants' remember, people have looked for instances in which either interviews constitute authentic and counter stories to the master narratives/discourses or they supported or repeated the master narratives/discourses. Lomsky-Feder believes that the field of

[48] Diamond, "Careful What You Ask For: Reconsidering Feminist Epistemology and Autobiographical Narrative in Research on Sexual Identity Development," 477.
[49] Abrams, "Subjectivity and Intersubjectivity," 76.
[50] Lomsky-Feder, "Life Stories, War, and Veterans: On the Social Distribution of Memories," 84.

memory is not a monolithic entity, it incorporates different meanings that are not necessarily consistent[51]. The act of remembrance can be an element of strategic use and liberating potential, but at the same time, it is always performed in the context of the field of memory that is socially constructed[52]. The interviews with my informants provide us with a glimpse into the liberating potential of telling stories of exclusionary practices of care for the dead body involving transwomen deaths; LGBT people constitutes different ways of remembering and mourning their own deaths. However, at the same time, my informants overlook other forms of limitations on grievability and assign differential allocation of grievability to some people themselves. For example, Ganimet says

> People say my son was a soldier and he is killed. The dead bodies that died as a result of politics of war become a source of pride, death is a source of pride. While people say our honourable martyr, honourable guerrilla, they died for their homeland or for their identity, they died for their homeland, mothers of transwomen cry in secret and in shame.

In order to argue for how transwomen are rendered ungrievable, Ganimet represents the dead soldiers as bodies that are assigned grievability via a discourse of nationalism. However, she ignores the fact that these soldiers become grievable only as war heroes which means that other possible forms of grieving and mourning these people are limited. They can be mourned through specific rituals established around martyrdom. In the end, Kristin Langellier (1989) maintains that 'All personal narratives have a political function in that they produce a certain way of seeing the world which privileges certain interests (stories and meanings) over others, regardless of whether or not they contain explicit political content'[53]. My informants are inclined to emphasize their vulnerabilities while possibly overlook others'. It is their explicit political agenda to politicise the deaths of transgender people. While I agree with their political agenda as an insider, I will be keeping in my mind Abrams' idea of interview as a three-way

[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid., 85.
[53] Langellier, "Personal Narratives: Perspectives on Theory and Research," 271.

conversation, and reflect upon the moments in the narratives of my informants that may result in exclusionary politics of deaths.

Chapter 3: Gendering Deathscapes: Forceful Transformation of the Dead Bodies of Transwomen into 'Men' For Burial

> Why have we come to batter a body that is totally incapable of doing anything, of moving and hurting? Why are we still afraid of that dead body? We gaze at a body that cannot move in horror and still try to take out her boobs, try to cut her hair. I could not understand this; I still do not understand. (Buse, a transgender sex worker and LGBT activist)

Buse's depiction of mutilation of dead bodies of transwomen as a part of their preparation for burial is a story among many others that most of my informants narrated. Before embarking upon my journey to Istanbul and Ankara to interview transwomen and those who are actively involved with LGBT movement in Turkey, I prepared myself mentally and academically (theoretically) to address issues of handling and caring for the dead bodies of transwomen. At the time, I knew that the mosques which are the main institutions in Turkey arranging the funeral including washing and preparing of the body for the burial[54] did not approach trans dead bodies positively, and make it difficult for the families and friends to bury them. Yet I did not know the exact nature of harassment that the dead bodies of transwomen and their families and friends have to undergo. Once I started listening to my informants who have to suffer through such harassment themselves as friends or sometimes as they call themselves 'the chosen family' of the deceased, I realized that I was neither mentally nor academically equipped to address what I was hearing from them. Throughout my intensive research period on the deaths of transwomen, on how these deaths are remembered and mourned, I did not come across detailed

[54] The members of other religious groups can be prepared and buried by their own religious institutions such as churches, synagogues, and cemevi for Alevi people. Yet if the corpse is not claimed by anybody, she is buried by the state according to Islamic traditions trough the help of a mosque.

depictions of what happens to the dead bodies. Thus my focus was mostly on what kind of rituals and symbolic actions take place at the moment of and after the burial of the dead bodies[55].

However, when I directed the question 'what happens to the body after the death?' to my informants, I was given accounts of direct involvement with the materiality of the dead body. They talked about how the body was carried out of the scene of murder, how they have to fight to have a claim over the body after the necessary involvement with the police and the hospital, how they have to find an imam who will be willing to handle the body and the funeral, but mostly importantly how the body was disrespected in different ways and even cut and reshaped into a 'man' so that it can be buried. This chapter will deal with three issues; (1) reasons of mutilating dead bodies of transwomen and (2) the function of the mutilation as gender policing of deathscapes. As a result, I will first attempt to inquire into the reasons of mutilation of transwomen's dead bodies. I will argue that the dead bodies of transwomen possess a gendered notion of agency that invokes emotions and prompt actions to get rid of that agency in the form of mutilation of their dead bodies. The corporeal traces of their gender performances before they die prevents them from occupying their own bodies as deathscapes because of the traces of their. I will revisit the idea of bodies as deathscapes, and argue that the transwomen's dead body become a space of contestation over how a death body should have a heteronormative appearance to count as a proper deathscape. This idea that non-heteronormative bodies cannot be deathscapes will be the first premise of my argument that deathscapes are gendered and entry into these spaces is regulated and policed by gender norms and heteronormative gender performances. The second premise of this argument will that dead bodies of transwomen are not allowed into formal spaces of deathscapes, as well. Their bodies are not admitted into mosques and cemeteries unless they are mutilated to liken to 'men'.

[55] I will provide a discussion that is as lively as it is gruesome concerning rituals and commemoration of transwomen in following chapters.

The materiality of the body and the depiction of what happens to the corporeal body in the face of hate crimes, heterosexism and heteronormativity is another embodiment of vulnerabilities in both emotional and physical sense resulting from being a transwoman in Turkey. This recognition of vulnerability will inform my analysis of the materiality and agency of transwomen's dead bodies. I will argue that vulnerability does not have to mean lack of agency. On the contrary, in the case of transwomen's dead bodies, the form of utter vulnerability these bodies possess as they are inanimate and unable to refuse or resist things done upon them reveals us the ways in which the materiality of the body (the traces of transition from men to women such as long hair and surgically enhanced breasts) manages to create a site of either attack on gender identity of the deceased (cutting the hair and taking out the silicones) or resistance for others to keep the traces of the transition intact.

3.1. Why Dead Bodies?

The first and the most obvious answer to this question is that eight out of twelve informants discussed in one way or another what happens to the bodies of dead transwomen. They provided morbid and vivid details of handling of materiality of the trans dead bodies; (1) paramedics and polices' refusal of carrying the dead body out from the scene of murder, (2) taking the silicone out of their breasts, (3) buzz-cutting their long hairs, (4) in some cases cutting the penis and putting it in the mouth of the dead body, and (5) imams and morticians' refusal of washing the dead body and of preparing it for the funeral. The reoccurring theme of corporeal involvement with the dead body in the narratives of my informants compelled me to shift my focus away from remembering and mourning the deaths of transwomen and re-centre it around the effects of materiality of dead body on the living. Throughout the interviews, the dead bodies became narrative tools to tell their stories of remembering and mourning murders of transwomen. That is to say, while they were narrating a plotline of a murder story from its beginning (receiving the news of death) to the end (putting the body underground and

developing continuous bonds of remembering), they kept referring to the issues of care for the dead body; how they either were unable to fulfil their duties of care for their dead friends' bodies, or had to use their own resources and come up with different methods of handling the materiality of the dead body in order to work around highly formalized rituals of a funeral that only serves the needs of a strictly heteronormative society. The dead body in their narratives embodies a space of facing with yet another disciplining power of the society corporeally reshaping the dead bodies and controlling the rituals around them (thus disciplining the living through the dead) and of contestation and resistance to that power. As a result, I start wondering how such ways of contacting and interacting (both acting on and being acted upon by) with the dead body can transform our understanding of the dead bodies as inanimate, neutral, asocial and apolitical.

This brings us to the second answer to the question why dead bodies. By their colourfully dreadful and striking descriptions of the materiality of the dead bodies of transwomen, my informants represent these bodies as having an impact on the living. These bodies are not simply carried around from the scene of murder to the morgue, from there to the mosque and then to the cemetery. At every stage of transition from a living to a dead under the ground, these bodies awaken a varied range of emotions; disgust, repulsion, hatred, pity, sadness, grief, love, longing, and so on. Moreover, they prompt actions as well; investigating, carrying, probing, cutting, harassing, protecting (the dead body from harassment), preserving (the traces of transsexuality), resisting (to the disciplinary power), inventing (new methods of care for the body). This is why considering "corpse as 'merely' material remains, stripped of agency, identity, and self"[56] would prevent us from recognizing the social and political potentiality of the dead bodies in shaping the living's understanding of remembering and

[56] Young and Light, "Corpses, Dead Body Politics and Agency in Human Geography: Following the Corpse of Dr Petru Groza," 137.

mourning as well as gendered characteristics of regulating the entry into the spaces reserved for the dead, of the rituals of burial and of practices of memorialization. Craig Young and Duncan Light identify a similar problem; "dead bodies have tended to be overlooked or conceptualized as neutral, static remains fixed in space with little consideration for their potential mobility and agency"[57]. Their way of re-instating agency to the dead bodies is to look at their potentiality for mobility[58]. Their conceptualization of agency of dead body is centred on the assumption that "the presence of bodies in landscapes inscribes spaces with particular meanings" and that "moving corpses is one strategy to reconfigure space following a period of political chance"[59]. In order to underpin this point, they follow the movements of the dead body of Petru Groza, a significant political figure in post-World War II socialist Romania. Groza's body has been moved around and buried at three different places to either emphasize the country's socialist past or to forget it[60]. Moreover, they argue that in each of his resting places, different practices of remembering were developed. A similar and bigger scoped project was done by Katherine Verdery (1999) in which she looks at the reburials of different political figures from post-socialist countries. In her book, she maintains that "a dead body is meaningful not in itself but through culturally established relations to death and through the way a specific dead person's importance is (variously) construed"[61]. Thus it is no surprise that both of these works took important political figures as their case studies. The changes in perceived importance of the dead body and variations in the culturally established relations to death are magnified and can be more easily observed in the case of these people because their deaths and the rituals around them are publicly visible. In addition, their relative importance (changing according to the political atmosphere of the time) grants them the ability to move more freely from one space to

[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid., 138.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid., 139, 141, 142.
[61] Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Postsocialist Change*, 28.

another as this movement itself is the symbolic action of increasing and decreasing their importance. Or in Verdery words, "by repositioning (corpses), restoring them to honour, expelling them, or simply drawing attention to them, their exit from one grave and descent into another marks a change in social visibilities and values"[62] But what happens to the dead bodies who have never enjoyed the political and social visibility in life as well as death, or who were socially dead[63] long before they were physically killed or whose very reason of death is that their "capacity to preserve a liveable life"[64] is restricted and sometimes even stripped away because of their gender?

All these questions are applicable to the transwomen's death bodies. How can we formulate and frame their agency without referring to their visibility and mobility in the public sphere as they could enjoy neither in life and death[65]? As I have already, rather implicitly, suggested above, the agency of transwomen dead bodies can be located in the visible traces left upon their bodies by gender performances. When I am talking about the dead body having agency, I am referring to its ability to still subvert gender norms by the traces of transition (from man to woman) engraved upon its materiality. In other words, the agency comes from the dead bodies' potentiality to subvert normative image of how a man's body should look like. This potentiality is realized in the cases where having long hair and boobs alongside a penis cause attacks or efforts of protection. Of course whether it is realized or not, the potentiality to invoke emotions and prompt actions will still be present in the visible traces left upon the bodies by

[62] Ibid., 19.
[63] Foucault et al., *"Society Must Be Defended": Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-1976*, 256. "When I say "killing, " I obviously do not mean simply murder as such, but also every form of indirect murder: the fact of exposing someone to death, increasing the risk of death for some people, or, quite simply, political death, expulsion, rejection, and so on".
[64] Butler, *Undoing Gender*, 2.
[65] Human Rights Watch, *We Need a Law for Liberation*, 73. "Police also use the new powers in the revised police law and the Misdemeanor Law (Kabahatler Kanunu) to detain and fine transgender people, using articles on noise, disturbances, and disobeying orders against them".

gender performances. At this point, I am actually filling in a gap that Butler's concept of performativity does not address. Butler argues that

> "...acts, gestures, enactments, generally construed, are performative in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are fabrications manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means. That the gendered body is performative suggests that it has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality."[66]

Butler's idea is that the gendered body is constituted by the corporeal signs and discursive means and by constantly embodying these signs and means in the form of daily performances. Or as Sara Salih formulated; "All bodies are gendered from the beginning of their social existence (and there is no existence that is not social), which means that there is no "natural body" that pre-exists its cultural inscription."[67] But what about the dead bodies which can no longer embody the corporeal signs and discursive means by daily performances? It would be plausible to argue that the living people who are still performing masculinity and femininity will continue the discursive production of the dead bodies by, for example, applying different rituals of funeral and remembering for men and women (without even considering people who are non-heteronormative). However, I argue that in the case of transwomen, those daily performances of masculinity and femininity transform body itself into a corporeal sign and discursive means. This means that the dead bodies do not require to be animated to perform; the signs of subversive gender performances are imprinted upon their bodies. And people attack at these signs (removing boobs, cutting the hair and the penis) in order to eradicate a performance which has been already subjected to a violent censorship in the form of murder. In the next sub-chapter, I will discuss the agency of the transwomen body in relation to space.

[66] Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, 173.
[67] Salih, *Judith Butler*, 62.

I will argue that the signs of subversive gender performances and the emotions and reactions they cause will determine the ways in which those spaces can be occupied.

3.2. The Gendered Policing of Deathscapes; How to Occupy Your Own Body as a Deathscape:

The main argument of this sub-chapter is that a transwoman is not allowed to occupy her own dead body as a deathscape because of the gendered agency of her dead body (the ability of the materiality of their dead bodies to prompt action and induce emotions). A dead body, its corporeality, occupies a space. That space in the shape of a dead body come to be seen as a deathscape because it is now representing the materiality of death. That space in the shape of a dead body is where we observe how death physically works and take a hold of us; decomposition of the body, the smell and the fluids. The body that was once living is now dead and decomposing and it becomes the ultimate reminder, symbol and signal of death, thus a deathscape. And the dead bodies as deathscapes command a certain ways of caring for themselves, such as washing, clothing and preparing for the burial. However, only certain bodies that are heteronormative (in this case resembles the socially constructed presentation of what a man or a woman should look like) are considered as deathscapes. The dead bodies that caries the traces of non-heteronormative gender performances are either not cared for or in some cases mutilated in order for them to be deathscapes.

The narratives of my informants provide an instance in which transwomen could not occupy their own dead bodies as deathscapes in the form of an individual in transition from man to woman. As an example, after I asked what happens to the dead bodies of transwomen, Arjin, a 18-year old activist who has been socializing in Pembe Hayat for 4 years now, states that;

> It depends on the family; if they are more accepting (of their children's gender identity), they bury her as she is. If she has an unaccepting family, and she changed

> her name in the national ID, and she had silicone, they remove silicone. If the hair is long, they shorten it. The hair is cut and then they register her with her male name….The closest death we had was Mother Aide, she died. We saw the same things happened to her, it was one and a half or two years ago. These things were observed, we lived these.

Arjin points out to the fact that the traces of a transwoman performance, silicones and long hairs in this case, erased so that transwomen can be buried. They are not allowed to carry those traces on their bodies and be deathscapes at the same time. In Arjin's narrative, we see that the regulatory power of deathscapes are enacted through the family who decides to mutilate the body or not. However, they are not the only actors wielding that power. Ganimet makes a similar observation but this time the imam acts as the police of the gendered borders of deathscapes;

> In the case of trans (deaths), you have to convince the imam who says I am not going to wash the body. He says I am not going to do it because she has boobs, take out the boobs first. The doctor is not taking out the boobs, we have to come together and take out the boob even if it is illegal. The corpse is androgenized again. Even though she died because of this, she died in the path of becoming a woman, by tremendously disrespecting the body, the corpse is likened to men. As if it is not enough that the corpse is androgenized, you have to put pressure on the imam. I will beat you up, I will do things to you, you have to wash the body and bury it or else it she will start smelling.

The imam, by not accepting the body as its, but forcing she to transform 'back' to what he sees as appropriate for the deceased, marks the body of the deceased as a heteronormative deathscapes, policing it and not giving pass for those non-normative bodies. The morticians who wash the body can assume the same policing 'duty'. Buse claims that

> Unfortunately, we have encountered imams that refuse to initiate the funeral and who say that I am not going to do things you want. And we have encountered with people, I do not know what you call those who wash the body, who refuse to wash the body.

Furthermore, gender policing of the borders of deathscapes eventually implies controlling the limits of gender norms of the society in general as well. By showing that you have the power and right to mutilate a body that is non-heterosexual, you are sending the message that non-heterosexual bodies will be outside of social limits of what can be done to a body. Dilara seems

to questioning the policing of gender norms through dead bodies by saying; "I mean the woman is already dead, it is done anyways. You are still trying to get her out of her own body. Where did he get her hair cut? In the morgue? I don't know". The phrase Dilara used, "to get her out of her own body" actually summarizes the main argument very elegantly. By cutting, carving, mutilating their dead bodies, transwomen are taken out of their own bodies which they envisioned and shaped while they are living and put them into a body that the imams or the family consider as fit for a heteronormative human.

The last act of mutilation mention in the narratives of informants was cutting of the penis and putting it into transwomen's mouth. Ganimet asserts that

> Usually the penises of transwomen are cut and put into mouth of the dead body. You actually face with these kind of stuff a lot. Look at how twisted the world is. They do not even show respect for your body. You are dead, but you being death is not enough.

This extreme form of mutilation is directed at the bodies of these particular transwomen on the ground that they have both a penis and boobs, two things that should not exist together. Ganimet further elaborates on this point by saying "your dead body lays unclaimed and nobody wants it. They say look at him, he has boobs like women but has a penis also". None of my informants mentioned what happens to transwomen who completed their sex change process as in having both boob and vagina reconstruction. It would be informing to know that if they are being subjected to such acts of mutilation. But within the limits of the narratives we have, the bodies having boobs and vagina prompts a higher level of violence and aggression towards the body as the transgression of gender norms become clearer for those people who codes gender according to bodily signifiers.

The agents of gendered policing of deathscapes do not have to be always outside of the LGBT community. Buse brings up the possibility that transwomen themselves can participate into the policing because of different reasons;

> But of course we also have to see our own confusion within. Some people, for example, say come on she is about to be buried, just take her boobs out, we have seen friends like that. I was terrified by a trans woman saying another trans woman 'take her boobs out'. Did not she struggle for this, did not we struggle for this for years? In addition, there are trans people who say that take my boobs out and then give me to my family (when she dies), cut my hair and then give me to my family. I mean you have been struggling for this, and you already gave up on so many things for this. She thinks that at least my family will claim my body like that, maybe she is sharing her final wishes for the moment of her death.

For Buse, transwomen express their will to 'liken' to men after they die so that their families will accept their bodies. These transwomen may want their dead bodies not to remain unclaimed, or they may wish their bodies to be with their families even though they do not accept their gender identity. However, neither Buse's narrative, nor others', suggests any possible reason why transwomen may want to take out the boobs of dead transwomen. And I do not have enough information to speculate on this story.

3.3. The Gendered Policing of Deathscapes; How to Enter into Formal Deathscapes with Non-Normative Bodies:

It is not just the boundaries of heteronormative bodies as deathscapes that are being policing and controlled. The boundaries of formal deathscapes such as mosques and cemeteries are limited and even shut down for the non-normative bodies, be them alive or dead. The gendered policing of formal deathscapes is, then, actualized through (1) by refusing to take the dead bodies of transwomen (who cannot at the same time occupy her own body as a transwomen) into these spaces, and (2) by preventing living transwomen from entering into these spaces where they can care for their own deaths and perform rituals of burial and practices of memorialization. To exemplify the first form of policing, the fact that the imams and morticians refuse to wash the dead bodies of transwomen result in these bodies to be trapped in the morgues. They are not allowed in the formal deathscape of the mosque in the form of a transwoman. As a result, the imam asks LGBT people to liken her to man in order her to be admitted into the mosque. The first form of policing happens, not as explicitly as it is in the

case of mosque, but more implicitly in the case of cemeteries as well. Demet asserts that the unclaimed dead bodies of transwomen are buried in the cemeteries for the nameless

> Only the family can claim the body, or else she is buried in the cemeteries for the nameless or we need the signature of the family to claim the bodies ourselves. When the family does not claim the body, the state buries her in the cemeteries for the nameless.

Ganimet supports the same claim by saying;

> According to the laws in Turkey, if you are not one of the first degree relatives, then you cannot take the body. In other words, you have to be related to the body, a first degree relative, you have to have such a bond with the body. Since transgender people are not seen as relatives in Turkey, we have a hard time getting the bodies, and usually the bodies like those are buried in the cemeteries for the nameless.

The fact that the dead bodies of transwomen are not claimed by their families and that the state does not give them to the people who will care for them in a manner that would respect the gender identity of those bodies limit those bodies' entry into formal deathscapes by 'condemning' them to the cemeteries for the nameless. Although they have their 'chosen' families who are willing to claim a right for the care for the dead body, these bodies treated as having no social and cultural connections to their environment and buried as nameless. Moreover, the conditions of these cemeteries reflects the unwillingness of the state to admit transwomen into formal deathscapes. In one way or another, the dead bodies of transwomen should be buried since other forms of 'disposing' dead bodies in Turkey are not allowed and are not physically possible (there is no crematorium for example). These bodies have to be buried in cemeteries which means that they will necessarily be admitted into formal spaces. In order to stress inadmissibility of these bodies into formal deathscapes implicitly, the states bury them into cemeteries that are in horrible conditions. The only cemetery of the nameless in Istanbul is located outskirts of the city where public transportation does not go. And the cemetery is floating with water and mud[68]. By placing them into a deathscape that is not suitable

[68] Agos, "Kilyos'ta Içler Acısı Mezarlık."

according to conventional standards of a formal deathscape, these bodies are implicitly excluded from formal deathscapes.

The second form of policing is enforced by controlling the entry of living transwomen into formal deathscapes. In the narratives of my in formats, transwomen are not admitted into the mosques and cemeteries by again the family and the imams. Buse talks about how she is unable to attend her own friends' funerals;

> Let alone the fact we cannot do our own funerals, we cannot attend to the funerals our other (cisgender) friends. We going to a funeral is a problem. We watch the funeral afar, and pass by, and live our own pain within each other.

Ganimet provides the details of how her family did not want her to come to her own father's funeral;

> The last year when I heard the news of my father's death, my mother told me not to come. Come on (mother) you are all crying together hugging each other. You are looking at the old pictures of my father. You are living through this pain together. And you told me not to come. I had to mourn alone in a room of a house which is used for doing sex work. I mean I could not cry in front of the girls because she is about to fuck with a guy, she has to make him happy. I cannot attend my own family's funeral. This is so painful. I would really like to see my father's coffin.

As we have already discuss before, the deathscapes are not simple spaces of death, they are at the same time designated places of practices of mourning. Ganimet's family not just excludes her from deathscapes (the mosque and cemetery) on the ground of her gender identity, but at the same time limits her ability to mourn her father in the conventional sense, among family members with their emotional support.

Inability of transwomen to occupy their own bodies as deathscape and not being allowed within formal deathscapes while both alive and dead prevent the (chosen) families and friends of the dead transwomen from participating in conventional rituals of burial and practices of memorialization in Turkey. I will provide shortly explain what I mean by 'conventional' and provide ample examples, but for now, Ganmet's remaining comment on her inability to attend her father's funeral will help me to make my point.

> I would really like to see my father's coffin. Let's assume that I am Muslim, I could pray for him versus from Quran. I could hire someone to do it. I could give 10 liras to Imam in the name of my father. They even prevent me from being part of this.

Ganimet was kept outside of the spaces where she could perform these rituals to mourn and remember her father in conventional sense. This exclusion from deathscapes creates a rapture of emotion and desires to care for the dead body and mourn and remember it in any way possible. And this rapture from conventions and spatiality of the death opens up a space for them to either apply conventional rituals in different forms or come up with non-conventional/non-confirmative rituals and practices of commemorating. An argument which will be expanded on in the following chapter.

Chapter 4: How to Make the Ungrievable Grievable again?: Rituals of Burial and Practices of Memorialization Employed by LGBT People in Turkey

I will first explain what I mean by conventional rituals of burial and memorialization in Turkey, and provide a summarized list of those rituals so that I can show how LGBT people either reappropriate these rituals in different forms or practice their own rituals deviating from conventional ones. The conventional rituals around burying, mourning and remembering the dead are shaped and reshaped by the discourse of Sunni Islamism which is prevalent throughout Turkey and endorsed by the Presidency of Religious Affairs[69] (Diyanet İşleri Bakanlığı or for short the Diyanet). Other religions in Turkey enjoy freedom to conduct their own rituals in their own religious institutions according to the Article 40 of Lausanne Peace Treaty[70] with the exception that cremating a corpse is not possible[71]. If a body is not claimed by any religion, she is buried by the state, which means that she will be washed and prepared for the funeral in accordance with Sunni Islamic traditions in Turkey. The non-religious forms of burial basically become impossible since the Diyanet that is characteristically Sunni can control and regulate the funerals of those who do not explicitly or implicitly belong to a religion. The rituals that the Diyanet endorses can be said to represent the conventional ways of caring for the dead in Turkey because every dead body who does not belong to other religions has to face the regulations of

[69] The presidency was established on May 3, 1924 'to administrate the affairs related to faith and worship of the religion of Islam'. For more information, please see: http://www.diyanet.gov.tr/en/kategori/kurumsal/1

[70] The Article 40: "Turkish nationals belonging to non-Moslem minorities shall enjoy the same treatment and security in law and in fact as other Turkish nationals. In particular, they shall have an equal right to establish, manage and control at their own expense, any charitable, religious and social institutions, any schools and other establishments for instruction and education, with the right to use their own language and to exercise their own religion freely therein".

[71] *Public Sanitation Law*; *The Regulations for the Services of Funeral and Burial*. The Article 224 of Public Sanitation Law (Umumi Hıfzıssıhha Kanunu) gives the right and responsibility to open crematoriums to the local municipalities, yet the Rugulations of the Services of Funeral and Burial of the municipalities (Cenaze ve Define Hizmetleri Yönetmeliği) does not say anything about crematoriums at all. This practically prevents the building crematoriums.

the Diyanet which is in line with Sunni Islam. This is actually a structural limitation as well as the hegemony of Sunni discourse in Turkey; the mosques as designated space of preparations are designed for Sunni Islamic rituals, and the imams and the 'morticians' are educated to prepare the body in line with Sunni Islamic traditions. Every step of the burial rituals will be inevitably shaped by these spaces, these people, and thus the traditions of Sunni Islam.

The Diyanet published a handbook for the services of funeral in 2008 which is still in distribution and use by the mosques and the directorates of cemeteries in conducting funerals. The handbook describes every step to be taken, from the moment of dying to the moment after burial[72]. The outline of these steps are; (1) the dying person is taken care of and comforted, (2) the person right after dying is put in a position that is easier to wash later (positioning body before rigor mortis settles in, (3) the person is washed and enshrouded by white fabric, (4) the person is put into a coffin to be carried to first the mosque where the funeral ceremony takes place and then to the cemetery, (5) the person is put into her grave, and (6) people give their condolences and try to provide solacement to the family. These steps are enriched by detailed rituals, in other words, specific actions to be taken around and on the dead body. At the moment of dying, the person is comforted by the sound of someone who is reading verses from the Quran. Two Arabic phrases that indicate dedication to Allah and Islam (Kelime-i Tevhid and Kelime-i Şehadet) are repeated. The dying person is faced toward the Qible (the direction of the Kaaba, the sacred building at Mecca) if possible[73]. After her death, the washing takes place as an act of "boy abdesti" in Turkish or Ghusl (Islamic Ritual Ablution) in Arabic. This requires washing certain parts of the body in a specific order and in a specific manner while quoting different verses from the Quran[74]. The body is put on a stone called 'teneşir' which is censed

[72] Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, "Cenaze Hizmetleri Rehberi (The Handbook for Th Services of Funeral)."
[73] Ibid., 22–23.
[74] Ibid., 29–30.

three, five or seven times, and her feet are positioned towards the Qible. And I already provided the details of gendered rituals of washing and preparing the dead body in the Chapter 4.

When she is ready for burial, the body is taken to the mosque and placed on a stone called 'Musalla Taşı'. The people stands in front of the body facing again the Qible in order to perform the ritual prayers of Islam for the dead directed by the imam. The imam at this point has to specifically address the body as 'the dead woman' (merhume) or 'the dead man' (merhum). Then they proceed to say different prayers for woman and man[75]. During funeral prayer in the mosque, men form the first line of people standing in front of the dead body on Musalla Taşı, followed by young boys, then women. Upon finishing the funeral ceremony at the mosque, the body is taken to the cemetery. The body is placed into the grave her relatives getting help from friends, and the handbooks advices that if the body is female, then the people that are most 'intimate' to her (her husband and children) should be the ones to put her into the grave[76]. More reading of the verses from Quran follows the closing of the grave. The handbook promotes regular visits to the grave so that the spirit of the dead can be happy and the living can be reminded of the shortness of the live and live accordingly. It also states that the grave should be well taken care of[77]. Once the funeral is done, the family is visited by friends at their home to be condoled. The family makes halva (a type of dessert) in the name of the dead person and distributes it to the people living near. And the reading of the verses continues at home. Later it is done at the seventh, at the fortieth day of her death and then at anniversaries.

After providing this summary of conventional rituals around the dead body and memorializing of the dead in Turkey, I will now show how the materiality of transwomen's dead bodies creates raptures in or points of confrontation with the heteronormativity of death

[75] Ibid., 34–36.
[76] Ibid., 52.
[77] Ibid., 63.

as well as life. This rapture or confrontation allows LGBT people in Turkey to practice their own rituals of burial and to memorialize transwomen in non-conventional forms. The rituals of burial and practices of memorialization described by the handbook of the Diyanet operates within a world where only heteronormative forms of establishing relations with people exist. In a book of 145 pages, one paragraph deals with the existence of non-binary gender relationality, but only to reduce that existence to womanhood and manhood once again[78]. In some instances, the heteronormativity becomes so persistent and prevalent that even the regulations of the handbook are ignored. The handbook explicitly says that the hair of the dead body is not to be cut[79]. Nonetheless, as we have seen in the examples in the Chapter 3, the hair of trans women are buzz-cut in order to 'turn' them into men again. The urge to interfere into a body that is non-normative precedes the existing written regulations. Of course the fact that no legal action is taken against those who do such things shows us the fact that heteronormativity cross-cuts and operates across different institutions of the society in order to police and disciple the bodies. And it seems that heteronormativity also has a hold on deathscapes. The formal spaces of death mentioned in the handbook (the mosque and the cemetery) and the bodies of people as spaces of death (the imam, the 'morticians', the dead body) are envisioned as spaces exclusively for men and women and shaped accordingly. Anything that does not fit into these envisioned spaces are reshaped so that they can be integrated and become deathscapes as heteronormative spaces.

However, the fact that the materiality of transwomen's dead bodies disrupts deathscapes as heteronormative spaces by just existing, and invokes emotions and prompt reactions to prevent those bodies from disrupting those spaces results in counter-emotions and counter-reactions to protect those bodies and preserve them. In other words, deathscapes as

[78] As also mentioned in the Chapter 3, the handbook states that men without penis or testes are washed by men and buried as men. It also recognizes possibility of androgynous people (Hünsa-i müşkil), but advices them to be treated as women for the burial.

[79] Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, "Cenaze Hizmetleri Rehberi (The Handbook for Th Services of Funeral)," 31.

heteronormative spaces are called into question by the very fact that those spaces cause differential treatment of trans people and differential allocation of grievability. Harassing a dead body without impunity in the name of upholding heteronormativity even in death and preventing the family of that body from being a part of conventional rituals of burial and memorialization are all done in order to designate the deaths of transwomen as ungrievable. This works at one level; the ways in they are killed or they died, and the ways in which their bodies are harassed and cut into do not find a resonance in the public sphere or in the institutions of the state. However, at the level of daily lives of families and friends of the dead transwomen, and of the activities of LGBT activism, we can see resistance to exclusionary definition of deathscapes as heteronormative spaces. And we can observe rituals of burial and practices of memorialization that deviates from the conventions and that may not result in differential allocation of grievability for transwomen.

According to the narratives of my informants, being a part of conventional rituals of burial and practices of memorialization for transwomen is regulated and policed by two institutions of the society; religion and family embodied by respectively imams/morticians and relatives of transwomen. Religion involves in the funeral by (1) enforcing conventional/heteronormative rituals and practices and (2) accepting not to enforce them. The family involves in the funeral by (1) not claiming the body, (2) claiming the body and excluding LGBT people from the funeral, (3) claiming the body and including LGBT people. LGBT people, on the other hand, affects the funeral by (1) resisting to conventional/heteronormative rituals and practices while constructing their own, and (2) accepting conventional/heteronormative rituals and practices thus becoming a part of regulating and policing the gendered deathscapes. These possible behaviours in the face of the dead bodies of transwomen interact with one another in a variety of ways, generating unpredictable scenarios. The unpredictability and precarity rules the funerals of transwomen, forcing their friends and families to adopt to the situations. For

example, a family may accept the dead body as it is but imam and mortician can refuse to handle the body, leaving LGBT people in search for those who will prepare her for burial. Or they can find an LGBT friendly imam who accepts to perform the funeral, but the family requests, for example, the hair-cut. The unpredictability and precarity, on the one hand, means no legal protection against harassment and mutilation and being extremely vulnerable to the actions and decisions of others. However, they, on the other hand, can leave enough space for LGBT people to navigate through the limitations of institutions and heteronormativity, and to establish their own rituals of burial and practices of memorial. Applying the concept of ungrievability (as in the public sphere), we can reformulate this statement as the following; while unpredictability and precarity surrounding the funerals of transwomen can deprive LGBT people of conventional means of mourning and remembering, they, at the same time, can bring forth sites of resistance and creative and affirmative ways of making seemingly ungrievable transwomen grievable again. Buse's narrative seems to support this claim;

> And if her family claims her body, we act according to the family's wishes. If the family wants us to attend the funeral, then we attend. If they do not want us there, then we try to respect their wish, and without actually being there we do whatever needed to be done and then hand over the body to the family.

Umut also mentions a similar experience;

> We usually go to the grave only after the family leaves, and do our rituals on our own. Last year when a close friend of ours died, the family allow us to attend the funeral, and we were grateful for this.

I already mentioned the cases where imams and morticians refuse to treat the bodies as women and perform the funeral by addressing her as he. All these different combinations of behaviour can result in ungrievability of transwomen to some extent. Yet there are so many creative and affirmative ways of remembering and mourning constructed by LGBT people that ungrievability is overcome in many instances. Mourning and Remembering is necessarily and itself is resisting ungrievability.

4.1. Reappropriation of Conventional Rituals of Burial and Constructing Alternative Ones:

The need for alternative ritual of burial is voiced in the following quotation of Ganimet;

> If you are a transwoman, then you are buried in a haste without no one understanding how it happens. And, I mean, only heterosexual people can say that I am Christian, I am Alevi, I am Sunni, bury me according to the rituals of my own religion. Are you going to bury me in a mosque? Fuck the mosque, fuck the church. Just bury me properly, and let there be someone to bury me.

Ganimet's call for being buried in a way that does not need to be in line with religious rituals reflects a more general need in transwomen to be able to occupy deathscapes and to receive a burial that would not degrade them or mutilate their bodies. Ganimet's advocacy for rituals that are alternative to religious one, however, does not mean that that general need of transwomen should be always met by non-conventional rituals. In other words, there exists various form of resisting against ungrievability; reappropriating the conventional rituals or constructing new ones.

Starting with reappropriating the conventional rituals, I asked Afet "who washes transwomen bodies?" and she said;

> Usually our (transwomen) bodies are washed by our elders. When I say elders, I am in my 50s now, she is in her 60s. I will give her name too, we call her Mother Meriç. She usually washes our deaths.

According to Afet, they built their own network of people who would wash their death bodies. The crucial thing to notice is the fact that the washing is done by an elder who is also transwoman. The idea that a body must be washed by someone of the same 'gender' seems to prevail at this point because transwomen bodies are washed not by cisgender women, lesbians, gays but by transwomen themselves. Of course this could also be interpreted as a way of establishing a sense of community through the care of body. The fact that they are organized to take care of their own deaths indicates a stronger sense of embracing those people as their own.

Another way of reappropriating the conventional rituals is to find an imam who will be willing to initiate the ritual by addressing transwomen as she or to force an imam to do so. Dilara, in one of the funerals, remembers chasing after a 'LGBT friendly' imam whose phone number and address was given to her by a friend. Or in some cases, my informants were able to convince the imam to perform the funeral by addressing their friends as she. Ganimet, on the other hand, talks about how she had to force the imam to first perform the ceremony, then to say 'she'. The final example of reappropriation is covering the coffin with the rainbow flag instead of covering it with a green piece of cloth upon which verses from Quran is inscribed. All these actions may still be operating with the discourse of a Sunni Islam, but it still challenges the efforts to keep transwomen away from deathscapes and make their deaths ungrievable by limiting their public representations as transwomen (forcing them to be presented as men). The rituals of burial for transwomen are performed by addressing and representing them as transwomen.

When it comes to alternative rituals of burial, the informants' narratives suggest that the political activism and practices of addressing the deaths of transwomen as political can turn into rituals of burial especially in the cases where LGBT people are excluded from the funerals. Within just one minute, Dilara lists the actions to be taken after the news of murder reaches them in a very rapid tone.

> In general, especially the news of trans murders in Istanbul are done via Istanbul LGBTT. They announce the news (among each other) via WhatsApp Groups, saying things like a murder has happened at this place and so on. This is actually very terrifying because there are established and intensive practices. You do the news, you send the news, after that you make a statement to the press. In those statements, you already have a template at that point, and you change the number (of murdered transwomen) from 35 to 36, change the name, and write why she died. And usually the reasons are obvious; it is a murder done my customer, gross negligence of policemen or hospital stuff, or to be more accurate, these people turning a blind eye. You change the reasons (of the murders). After you do these things, you contact (Çiçek) Tahaoğlu from Bianet, write to Amnesty International, there is a clear pattern. The day after (the murder), you write 'trans murders are

> political' on a big canvas, go out to street and make the press release, and the media comes, I mean they usually come.

Dilara's narrative suggests that these political actions to make the news of transwomen murders public have become standardized; there are clear steps to be taken. It is possible to interpret the standardized political actions as a sign of desensitization in the face of constant murders and deaths. Nonetheless, I read them as rituals of burial since these press releases which take place right after the day a transwoman is murdered have similar functions with the religious rituals. They provide a sense of doing something for the dead person while actually being busy with something, anything in a ritualized manner help the mourners to go through motions. These political actions create a scene of funeral that is organized and controlled by not the family or the religion, but by LGBT people. The transwomen rights organization itself becomes the house of mourning for LGBT people as opposed to the family house of the murder transwoman. Dilara says that;

> Then we go the organization, we usually gather in the organization. I mean actually these are the moments when people open themselves up as I have understood and seen and experienced myself. This is actually just like, it is how organizing a wedding is. People have needs, you have to get these. There is deadline you have to meet it. On the one hand, they do her autopsy, you try to reach these people so that you can tell in the press release (the reason of death). These parts pass by very mechanically. Or while reading the press release, people occasionally lose their control shouting "enough is enough" with good reasons. At those times, I mean, you think yes yes someone has died. Apart from these, after (the press release) we go to the organization, we get together there and make helva and so on.

The fact that people shout and cry during the press release shows that it actually provides a similar outlet of emotions that religious burial rituals offer. The emotional outbursts are parts of religious burial rituals. These outbursts are met with sympathy and welcomed as signals of mourning and remembering. The press releases seem to construct a similar space for LGBT people who are shun away from the formal deathscapes. In addition, the organization itself become a space of mourning and remembering. The conventional rituals of burial and practices of memorialization are performed by LGBT people within the organization, such as making helva which is usually cooked by the family members in the family house.

4.2. Reappropriation of Conventional Practices of Memorialization and Constructing Alternative Ones

The aforementioned unpredictability and precarity surrounding the dead bodies of transwomen can and do result in personalized, creative and affirmative practices of memorialization. As an example, Ganimet had developed over the years her own ways of remembering her best friend;

> She, in the end, was strangled to death with a string, and a disabled boy was also strangled to death alongside her because he was an eyewitness. This pain was too big for me and I lost my sanity (her voice shakes). I really lost my mind and I realized that I lost my mind and we smoked weed together. We smoked weed a lot, and we always told to each other that if I die, come to my grave and smoke weed...we said things like 'drink alcohol and smoke weed at my grave if I die'. And there are times when I miss her a lot and want to touch her earth (the earth over the grave) apart from the religious rituals. Because…she was actually my family (her voice shakes)…she was my sister, my comrade. Sometimes I go to her grave, toucher her earth and smoke weed. Recently I arranged a guy and we had sex on her grave (laughter). I played with his dick and things like that. We had been living like that (her voice shakes), it was like this. It (remembering her friend) happens like this for me.

Ganimet performs these actions as practices of memorialization because they symbolize the times when she did these together with her friend and because Ganimet thinks that she is fulfilling the will of her friend. However, we cannot overlook the political statement of these actions. Drinking alcohol, smoking weed and having non-heterosexual sex are all taboos of Sunni Islam. Performing them within a deathscape where religious and heteronormative rules regulate and police the entrance into this space is a way to resist to gender norms and to deathscapes as heteronormative spaces.

> Just because I am a faithless, inglorious and traitor trans, I do these (remembering her friend) like these. But on the other hand, some trans people cover their dead. They follow the rituals of heterosexual people and they read verses from books like Quran and whatever book there is. But I have a wound like this, and its pain lessens only like this. Sometimes going to her grave, touching her earth, kissing the stones (of her grave) can be good for me… Please forgive me funerals make me emotional

By owning up the image of 'a faithless, inglorious and traitor trans' and performing those action within the limits of deathscapes, she affirms a memory of her friend that is non-heteronormative.

Dilara narrates a story of the dead body of a transwoman stolen away from her friends by her family. The brother takes the body, likens it to 'man' and buries her with her birth name. This is yet another example of the claim (made in Chapter 3) that transwomen cannot occupy their own bodies as deathscapes. But this story also reveals a bigger picture of an extreme case of depriving LGBT people of means of mourning and remembering their deaths.

> In the beginning (of the talk), I mentioned a story of chasing after a stolen body (of a transwoman). I was talking her brother on phone, and he was saying 'we did not want to claim the body anyways, but we claimed it, what else do you want from us?' Come on, this person has friends. They want to see her and visit her grave. They want to know where she is (buried). He (the brother) says they already buried her with her birth name as – I don't remember her birth name – let's say Ahmet (a male name in Turkish)…He says 'I already got his hair cut'. I mean the woman is already dead, it is done anyways. You are still trying to get her out of her own body. Where did he get her hair cut? In the morgue? I don't know.

The first time Dilara talked to the brother on the phone and asked them whether the family is going to claim the body, he said no. Thinking that the body will remain unclaimed, people from Istanbul LGBTT went to the morgue to get it. However, they learnt that the family already took it without saying anything to Dilara or others. By stealing the body away from her friends and 'chosen family', uprooting her from the space where she lived as a transwoman, and putting her into a grave marked by her birth name, the family tries to erase any signs of a past that could indicate her gender identity. The body is taken away from the people and places that have generated memories of her as transwoman while she lived there and with these people. Burying her in a grave unknown to LGBT people and marked by her birth name aim at non-remembering her and making her ungrievable as transwoman. I am using Andrea Pető's concept of non-remembering. She considers non-remembering as a conscious process of forgetting and also a

process of substituting painful, "hot memories" with cold, less painful memories[80]. At a cemetery unknown to Dilara and others, her body erased of corporeal traces of her transsexuality was mostly probably buried according to religious rituals designed for men. Her place of burial is not marked by a headstone that carries no sign, thus no memory of her, as a transwoman. The family buried a son, not a daughter and by performing rituals in this specific manner, they also try to bury their own memory of her, manufacturing an image of a heterosexual grave for their 'son'. In other words, by the help of conventional/heteronormative rituals of burial, 'hot memories' engraved upon her corporeal body and upon the places where she had lived as transwoman were replaced by cold, less painful memories of her lying in a grave 'transformed' back into a man and memorialized by her birth name on the headstone of her grave.

I do not want to demonize the families by representing them as people who only want to dispose of dead bodies of transwomen. This could be the case in most of the stories including the one that Dilara depicted. However, we must acknowledge the fact that the families themselves are deprived of alternative ways of remembering and mourning as they are confined to perform conventional/heteronormative rituals of burial, and they are socially pressured into non-remembering a son that had performed a non-normative gender identity. Ganimet during our talk mentions the possibility that the families of transwomen are forced to mourn in secret and in silence.

> For instance, we have a culture of mourning (in Turkey), the families of the bodies do not even tell the fact that their children died. Our mothers cry in secret by themselves. Do you get it? This is very sorrowful, tragic. We have culture of mourning…but mothers of transwomen cry in secret and in shame.

Ganimet raises two issues to unpack in this quotation. The first issue is the fact that the open outlet of emotions of the families is blocked. They cannot mourn their children in the image of

[80] Pető, "'Hungary 70': Non-Remembering the Holocaust in Hungary," 2.

transwomen, because openly mourning them would mean showing the signs of a loss to people in their near environment that they want to non-remember. The second issue is Ganimet's usage of emotionally charged mother-child bond and image of victimized woman. In order to sentimentalize the losses, the idioms of memorialization that are already loaded with emotions creating an affective field of familiarity and identification around the losses are utilized by Ganimet. Maria Hirsch provides an excellent example of what these idioms can be and how they work. Hirsch argues that if gender is used as an idiom of memorialization in remembering the Holocaust, it becomes a tool "that mediates the ways certain images have been able to circulate in the visual culture of the postmemorial generation"[81]. Hirsh looks at different exhibitions' methods of appropriating perpetrator images (thus the Nazi Gaze) into the body of artwork. She claims that gendered idioms of infantilization and feminization of victims and hyper-masculinization and depersonalization of perpetrators result in obscuring the sources of the images, and making them appropriable[82] In Ganimet's narrative, the gendered idiom of feminization of victims in the form of mothers of transwomen pulls the readers into familiar emotional grounds so that they can identify with the losses, while at the same time, results in continuum of violence, especially normative violence in this case against those whose losses cannot be feminized in the form of mothers. This point underpins my argument that LGBT people do utilize conventional/normative practices of memorialization.

Going back to the discussion of extreme deprivation of the means to mourn and remember, I want to argue that in the cases where LGBT people do not even have a body to bury and a grave to visit, they turn to oral narrations and small practices of daily life to remember and mourn their friends. The analysis of the narratives of my informants revealed an interesting pattern of repeating the names of murdered or dead LGBT people. The following

[81] Hirsch, "Nazi Photographs in Post-Holocaust Art: Gender as an Idiom of Memorialization," 104.
[82] Ibid., 103–4.

names recurrently appeared in the different narratives; Ali Gül, Ahmet Yıldız, Melek, Dilek İnci, Boysan, Ayda, Eylül Cansın, Zeliş, Deniz, Buse, Alev, Benek, Çağla, Rojin Çicek, and Duygu Dora. Apart from three names mentioned (Ahmet Yıldız, Boysan, and Zeliş), the reaming twelve names belong to trans women who were murdered. These names were accompanied by their stories of how they lived and of how they died. The simple act of recounting these names in their talk can be seen as an act of memorializing these people since their names are not and cannot be repeated in the master narratives of the public sphere. Let's not forget the fact that when these people's murder stories appear in the news, they are addressed by their birth names which they left behind on purpose. The news tries to reframe trans women within the limits of their birth names in the hope of trivializing and banalizing their lives and deaths as trans women. Under these conditions, the uttering these people's 'chosen' names in their own narratives becomes a way for my informants to resist to the attempts of trivialization, banalization and forgetting. My informants create an oral history of trans women which reframes their lives within the limits of their chosen names. The parts of their lives where they were referred by their birth names may be underemphasized within this framing (but we are still aware of the fact that this past exist), yet they can be now remembered by the names they chose. In addition, Dilara notices a similar pattern in her life while she was actively involved with Istanbul LGBT;

> The names are always mentioned. I mean I did not come across events of remembering as practices that much. But as names and stories, not as an event, but as an act of remembering, remembering within daily life happens a lot. Moreover, these people are remembered not just by their good features, by their humorousness in daily life, but also by the way they died. They are always remembered by their own ways of dying because the similar deaths are usually happening later on.

Dilara argues the names of the dead trans people are uttered, and their stories are told in the flow of daily life. She suggests that this form of remembering does not have to be an event that can be attended in a specific time and space. Instead this form of remembering happens as an act within the live itself as it continues, marking these people's death as a part of regular if not

constant process of memorializing. And according to Dilara, remembering the dead as a part of daily life can happen through embodied spaces;

> The girl who was hurt could not get Çağla downstairs[83]. All these things did happen, she was cut in here (showing her neck), they (the murderers of Çağla) wounded her as well. She went to the hospital and then she stayed in that house. She had to live there after two days (of the incident).

The house that this trans woman lives in became a space of daily remembrance for the murder she witnessed and for the attack she endured. And of course this space become a site of remembrance for Dilara, as well. The Istiklal Street on which the house of murder of Çağla was placed or other streets on which transwomen deaths happened are actually spaces for remembering many other murders and incidents;

> Actually a lot of spaces, a lot of points on the Istiklal Street, they remind of many deaths. But They also remind trans women of a lot of things. The places in Fatih remind of lots of things. Beylikdüzü, Avcılar, in all these places, there is always a mode of remembering. While you are passing by somewhere, a trans woman suddenly says that someone was stabbed here. This is actually a living memory, and it plays a really important role in the daily lives of trans women.

Passing by these spaces within the flow of everyday life becomes a constant act of remembering the deaths of transwomen.

My informants also mention other alternative spaces where remembering and mourning are performed by LGBT people. Both Sema and Dilara mentioned Leyla Teras, a bar in Taksim Istanbul as a space of memorialization. They talked about the same death, Ali Gül, who died because of cancer. Right after Ali Gül's funeral, her chosen family and friends went to Leyla Teras because it was her favourite place to hangout. They sang the songs she liked, they read the poems they wrote in her memory. And they put a photo of her behind her favourite seat in the bar. Sema said that now and then a small group of people goes to that bar, sit in that seat and tell their most cherished stories of Ali Gül. Such acts of memorialization inscribes a

[83] Dilara was talking about the murder of Çağla. After she was murdered the police and the medics were called into the house so that they can take the body of Çağla but they refused to touch the body.

memory upon the space, a memory that is kept alive by the daily action of these people and by a photo. Dilara remembers Ali Gül's memorial as one of the most powerful days of her life, witnessing a group of people's coming together to remember and mourn a person of their own. Coming together, creating a space for their shared death, and do the similar practices of memorialization actually create a sense of community among LGBT people. This sense of community especially heightened when transwomen receive the news of deaths of their friends and gather for memorial (as well as for burial). Buse asserts that,

> It is actually one of the most powerful bonds we have. You can try to call and gather people in the organization for any other occasion, and you can only get a handful of people. But just make one phone call and say that someone is dead, the rest will tell each other and everybody will gather in the organization in an hour.

Buse's narrative suggests that practices of memorial (as well as burial) have the power to gather people more than anything else. The sense of community heightens and everybody comes to the 'house of grieving'- the organization- to support each other.

Concluding Remarks

This thesis brings a spatial and gender lens to death and to remembering and mourning the deaths of transwomen in Turkey. The existing literature on spatially constructed notion of death inquiries into how the distinction between the living and the dead is constructed through isolating some spaces as 'deathscapes' and through imbuing these spaces with symbols and rituals of death. However, the existing literature is not sensitive of gender norms affecting the ways in which these spaces are imagined and deciding on which bodies can occupy these spaces and which cannot. By showing that some people are not allowed to enter into formal deathscapes and they, at the same time, cannot occupy their own bodies as deathscapes, I suggested that deathscapes are gendered. The entry into these spaces is regulated by gender norms; the non-heteronormative performances of gender and burial rituals and practices of memorization are brutally erased in the form of mutilating dead bodies. This fact resulted in expanding on Butler's idea of performativity which implicitly assumes that the animated, living bodies will perform the gender norms. However, as I mentioned in the Chapter 3, the dead bodies can, too, perform gender without being animated. The traces inscribed upon their bodies by their gender performances while they were alive can and do still prompt actions and invoke emotions.

The gendered agency of dead bodies can prompts actions to protect the traces of non-heteronormative performances as well. These actions aim to 'preserve' those traces, and remember and mourn the dead as transwomen without forcing them to 'turn back into' men so that they can be admitted into deathscapes. LGBT people in Turkey, either reappropriate existing rituals of burial and practices of memorialization in the forms that would respect the materiality of the dead bodies of transwomen or construct their alternative ones which does not operate according to the rules of a heteronormative imagination of how a deathscape should look like. It is important to note one thing; I am not claiming that these people are actually

resisting to the idea of deathscapes, or performing rituals and practices regarding death. On the contrary, they are still operating within the limits of a discourse that encourages the care for the dead bodies. They are establishing a sense of community through performing rituals and practices that they can call as their own. What they resist to, by the simple act of care for the dead body and remembering and mourning it, is the ungrievability, that void of representation in the public sphere.

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