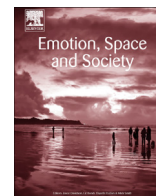


Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](http://www.sciencedirect.com)

Emotion, Space and Society

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/emospa

Affective economies of Beyoglu in Istanbul: The construction of 'Disgust' and 'Fear' in neoliberalization of nightlife



Dr. Haktan Ural

Ankara University, Fac. of Letters, Department of Sociology, Dil ve Tarih-Cografya Fakultesi, Sosyoloji Bolumu, Sıhhiye, Ankara, Turkey

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 29 January 2016

Received in revised form

17 February 2017

Accepted 20 February 2017

Available online 24 February 2017

Keywords:

Nightlife economy

Neoliberalization

Affect

Subject positions

Istanbul

ABSTRACT

This study contributes to understanding neoliberalism in Beyoglu, by examining how neoliberal discourses create and circulate normative meanings in nightlife. I suggest that neoliberal discourses and practices inform a value structure in everyday life which identifies subject positions in terms of affiliation and marginalization in Beyoglu's nightlife scene, based on the affective economies of Beyoglu. Affiliation/marginalization distil through moments of contact, imbued with various affective dispositions. I argue that spaces of affiliation shape and are shaped by the affective dispositions of (middle-)classed night-time euphoria. Conforming to norms of desirability, attractiveness and safety, they present a cultural and economic model attuned to neoliberal rationalities. Two dominant stereotypes of 'undesirability' emerge in affective terms: (i) those of 'ineligible' dispositions which produce emotions of 'disgust', and (ii) those of 'fearful' bodies constantly moving across the night-time leisure places of Beyoglu. By examining the relationship between neoliberalism and affective economies in Beyoglu's nightlife, this study contributes to research on night-time leisure places, providing insight into linkages between emotional subjectivities and rational thinking.

© 2017 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Diverse emotions such as fear, discomfort, anxiety, disgust, et cetera, are central to the meaning-making processes in nightlife. As a number of studies examining the emotional geographies of nightlife show, the affective registers of leisure places are performatively constructed through emotional and spatial experiences. For instance, Brands et al. (2015) study on student experiences in Utrecht shows a perceived ambiguity that derives from nighttime encounters, which evoke a possibility of harm and gives rise to fear, discomfort and anxiety. It demonstrates that non-human (e.g., lighting) and human (e.g., police forces and undesirable groups) elements may play a central role in generating and intensifying these emotions. Similarly, Hubbard (2005) suggests that certain feelings of anxiety, discomfort and stress emerge from 'unsettling encounters' with certain social groups and practices. Encountering differences, then, is interconnected with emotions, and the generation and intensification of certain emotions in night-time leisure places are strongly linked to gendered, classed, raced and sexualized subjectivities. Hubbard (2013) demonstrates that certain practices that do not conform to white, middle class and heterosexual ideals are represented as disgusting bodies that

undermine respectability and desirability. In another example, Held (2015) ethnographic study on Manchester's Gay Village shows that women's feelings of comfort and safety lead to the formation of their gendered, classed, raced and sexualized subjectivities.

Such literature provides an insight into co-constructions of subjectivities and emotionally-informed spatial experiences in night-time leisure places. However, the relationship between emotions and rational styles of thinking in that domain has not been scrutinized. As Ettlinger (2009, p. 93) argues, "actions of the heart are an integral part of, not separate from, calculated action." In this study, I address the emotional geographies of night, considering that relationship between rationality and emotions. I demonstrate that emotional experiences also act upon rational subjectivities, vocalizing neoliberal discourses. Drawing on fieldwork conducted in Beyoglu's nightlife in Istanbul, I illustrate that affective dispositions invoking distinctions on the basis of gender, class and ethnicity reflect upon discourses of marginalization in neoliberal rationalities.

Beyoglu, one of the most prominent hubs of nightlife in Istanbul, presents pleasure-seeking of a diversified and fragmented character. Multiple forms of night-time revelling, comprised of entertainment practices in bars, pubs, nightclubs, concert halls, and their local variants, such as *pavyons* and *türkü bars*, are central in the

E-mail address: haktanural@gmail.com.<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2017.02.003>

1755-4586/© 2017 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

construction of a convivial urban identity revolving around night-time leisure places in Beyoglu. By dint of the district's lively atmosphere, Beyoglu has been seen as setting a particular precedent for urban development goals in the city, with the rise of neoliberal governance. Attempting to boost the urban image, Beyoglu is reimagined as furnishing 'culture-oriented tourism' in Istanbul's neoliberal restructuring (Aksoy, 2012). Relying upon the district's cultural heritage, Beyoglu is considered to be a centre of attraction for affluent groups and tourists.

The neoliberal remake of Beyoglu has already been comprehensively examined in terms of the transformation of socio-spatial relations. In this literature, neoliberal discourses and practices are largely seen as the processes setting, or reinforcing, boundaries across spaces of wealth and poverty, and excluding undesirable segments of society from urban life (Kuyucu and Ünsal, 2010). Indeed, Eder and Öz (2015) demonstrate the manifestations of neoliberal urbanism in the currents of nightlife in Beyoglu. They present nightlife in Beyoglu as increasingly commodified and corporatized through urban transformation projects and regulatory practices, mostly executed by local government.

This study contributes to understanding neoliberalism in Beyoglu, by examining how entrepreneurialist discourses create and circulate normative meanings of nightlife. I illustrate that some normative meanings are informed by affective dispositions in Beyoglu's night scene. As suggested by Keil (2002), neoliberalism can be discerned as a discursive universe regulating everyday life, and neoliberalization as conceived a governmentality informing discursive frameworks that generate individual or collective dispositions. These frameworks underlie a neoliberal value structure implying a normative vision that designates 'affiliation' and 'marginalization' (Miller and Rose, 2008). Drawing on fieldwork conducted with the actors of night-time leisure places in Beyoglu, I argue that the formation of 'affiliated' and 'marginalized' spaces rests upon affective dispositions.

I draw upon a framework that sees the formations of subjectivities, emotions and spaces as interfused with each other (Bondi, 2005; Bondi et al., 2005). In analysing these processes, Ahmed (2004a, 2004b) studies have been useful, as they provide insight into how emotions play a role in the formation of subject positions. In her conception of 'affective economies', Ahmed (2004b) sees emotions circulating between people, practices and places. This notion leads to an understanding of a processual formation, in which subjectivities of self and other are created. According to Ahmed, affective dispositions are cultivated as a form of capital in the very relations between people, objects and places. In the formation of these dispositions, proximity and encounters generate diverse series of impressions, which eventually entail negotiations of the boundaries across the actors (Ahmed, 2004a, 2004b).

In Ahmed (2004b) conception, performability is central to the construction of affective meanings. People, practices and places are signified by various emotions through performative utterances. Thus, meaning-making processes are informed by emotional subjectivities. For instance, the meanings of desirability, attractiveness and safety in the night scene of Beyoglu are constructed through reiterated utterances. These practices are imbued with affective dispositions that come to define and regulate what is legitimated and valorised. They constitute the normative vision identifying the distinction between affiliation and marginalization in neoliberalizing Beyoglu. Viewing the situation through this lens, I argue that spaces of affiliation shape and are shaped by the affective dispositions of (middle-) classed night-time euphoria. Conforming to norms of desirability, attractiveness and safety, they present a cultural and economic model attuned to neoliberal rationalities. These middle class competences provide legitimacy to

the bearers of affiliation in identifying what (or who) is undesirable. Accordingly, there emerge two ways of giving meaning to the stereotypes of 'undesirability' in emotional terms: (i) those of 'ineligible' dispositions which produce emotions of 'disgust', and (ii) those of constantly moving 'feared' bodies crossing the night-time spaces of Beyoglu.

1. Neoliberal subjectivities and affect

There is extensive literature discerning neoliberalism as a political rationality that creates and promotes particular subjectivities. Much thought invokes the studies of Foucault (2007), that outline the ways in which systems of governance seek to order and control individuals' involvements with resources, spatial practices, ways of acting, ways of thinking, et cetera. Neoliberalism is understood as a modern version of governing society in such a way. For instance, in Larnar (2000, p. 12) view, neoliberalism is discerned "as a system of meaning that constitutes institutions, practices, and identities in contradictory and disjunctive ways." This conception of neoliberalism delineates normative relations and practices cultivating entrepreneurial and innovative subjectivities within an active society, rather than hegemonic rule over the societal order. Neoliberalism is not merely derived from a modality of state action operating as a capital-conducive institutional body. It permeates the political and social realms in congruity with market rationality (Brown, 2006). This leads to the formation of a political culture in which subjectivities abiding by entrepreneurialist discourses are created and promoted (Lemke, 2001).

Understanding neoliberalism as a political project which creates particular subjectivities, affective dynamics are also deemed to be linked to these processes (D'Aoust, 2014). Affective qualities – derived from relations with people, objects and places – can be identified in particular forms of knowledge, its capacities mobilized as a productive force, and particular subject positions marked with distinct affective terms. In order to understand these dynamics, Anderson (2012) conceives of neoliberalism as a practice of governing 'all of life', involving affective capacities. In that regard, affective life comes to be the 'object-target', to be governed in the way that its value-conducive components are extended and promoted, and other components, incongruent with accruing value, are diminished. For instance, practices seeking to govern the symbolic economies of cities in pursuit of producing creative, inventive and convivial sites, evince the centrality of affective life in entrepreneurialist discourses and practices (Thrift, 2004; Shaw, 2015). Affective life becomes both the object of knowledge identifying its desirable elements and technological component responding to the needs and demands of neoliberal rationalities (Anderson, 2014).

Anderson (2012) identifies neoliberal government of affective life in two ways. The first involves the creation and valorization of collective affects that serve the neoliberal rationality. In this vein, Vradi and Montsion (2014) show that self-responsibilized and self-interested subjects of volunteerism are imbued with affective competencies, and Richard and Rudnyckij (2009) demonstrate the role of affective ties binding different neoliberal subjects. The second involves segmentation of the population in terms of differential affective qualities. Particular groups may be marked with certain affective dispositions that name other subjects as menaces to the social order set forth by the market rationality. These dispositions derive from discomfort with certain people, places or practices (Wrenn, 2014). Self-interested neoliberal selves come to identify and label these components of collective life as incompatible within the bounds of market rationality. This study is concerned with the latter dimension of affective governance. I argue that the self-interested neoliberal selves in Beyoglu's nightlife

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/5045493>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/5045493>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)