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Invisible Borders of the City for the Migrant Women From Turkey: Gendered Use of Urban Space and Place Making in Cinisello/Milan

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Abstract Policies to overcome the deepening world economic crisis trigger movement of people around the world. Migrants flow into the deprived areas of cities and become constitutive components of these places. The use of urban space for international migrants is restricted. But these restrictions of the space that is experienced and felt in daily life by different disadvantaged groups and genders can differ to a great extent. This study tries to do a gender specific analysis of use of the urban space through the experiences of women migrants from Turkey in Cinisello Balsamo/Milan and attempts to indicate how space, which is constructed, reproduced, and transformed constantly by changing social relations and interactions, can mold, reproduce, and change these relations in turn.

Keywords Women migrants from Turkey · Gendered use of urban space · Urban poverty · Place making · Milan · Cinisello-Balsamo

Introduction

Social and geographical inequalities, un(der)employment, and jeo-strategical wars have been escalating in parallel with the deepening economic crisis in the world. Economic policies that are designated to overcome the crisis have aggravated instead of alleviating these problems. Consequently, migration flows as well as capital movements have gained momentum around the world. People, who are deprived of the means of their livelihood, have been flowing into the geographies and sectors in the wake of capital movements, where accumulation is faster in order to survive. Migrants generally flow into the deprived areas of cities. As the world economic crisis deepens, migrants in the

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most important migrant receiving cities have been losing their already weak social mobility opportunities. Transition zones do not represent initial stages anymore for the "successful" migrants in climbing the social ladder, but they become transit zones until migrating to another such neighborhoods in different cities where they temporarily settle. Currently, temporariness in one place and protracted migration are becoming salient features for the large part of migrants in parallel to the deepening world economic crisis (see Purkis and Güngör 2017). Deprived neighborhoods are not only containers where the poorest migrants and disadvantaged classes of the receiving societies live, they are also places where these disadvantaged statuses and spatio-temporalities are reproduced, perpetuated, and destroyed. Restrictions of the space that is experienced and felt in daily life by different disadvantaged groups and genders can differ to a great extent. Generally, irregularly employed international migrants from different countries, races and ethnicities, domestic migrants, and local long-term unemployed young people, working poor, one parent families, elderly and sick pensioners, live side by side in such neighborhoods. These places are becoming transit zones for the drifting migrants of protracted migration until migrating to another similar place elsewhere as the migratory movements become more transitory (Purkis and Güngör 2017). Restrictions of deprived areas in terms of income, education, public services, infrastructure, housing, healthy environmental conditions, upward social mobility opportunities and out-of-home activities, and their space-time characteristics are not experienced equally by international migrants from different genders. This study tries to do a gender specific analysis of use of the urban space by Turkish migrants in Cinisello Balsamo/Milan and attempts to indicate how space, which is constructed and reproduced constantly by changing social relations and interactions, can mold, reproduce, and change these relations in turn according to different genders. Since social and gender relations are unequal, use of urban space and effects of urban space on male and female migrants' everyday lives are also unequal. Urban space is not only a container of and constructed by social processes but also reproduces and forms socially constructed constraints of women's spatial behaviors. Space and the built environment are constituted by, as well as constitutive of gender, has long been established in feminist analyses of the city (Chant and McIlwaine 2013). The article has a female bias and experiences of men are addressed through the female migrants' narrations.

Turkish Migrants in Milan

Turkish migrants in Milan were one of the most disadvantaged groups of the society in Turkey or they are anywhere else in the world, because of their class, economic vulnerabilities, ethnicity, religion, and in some cases political ideas. They were socially and spatially excluded in Turkey as well. They come from the most underdeveloped and unstable parts of Turkey. The majority of migrants from Turkey in Milan are Kurdish.[1] Both women and men are poor and have basic education. Most of them are from Pazarcık, Maraş, a city close to the conflict area.

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[1] We used the term "Turkish migrants or Turkish women migrants" in the text, because all the migrants from Turkey in Milan are not Kurdish and all of them still have Turkish citizenship.

Although, unequal economic development among the regions in Turkey seems to play important role in their migration, there are also historical-political factors and pressures of continuous conflicts which are intertwined with one another. Almost all of the men had arranged their journey with migrant smugglers. They had worked informally and had performed various temporary jobs until they regularized their situation. Most of them were men, and when they found settled jobs, they brought their families if they were already married or they married to the girls from their village afterwards and brought them to Italy through family reunification programs. Although migration of men from Turkey to Milan dates back 30 years, it increased towards the end of the 1990s. Hence, migration of women to Milan, especially to Cinisello Balsamo, has intensified in the 2000s.

Turkish migrants form a small group in Italy. Milan is the Italian city with the largest Turkish community. There are 1076 migrants from Turkey in the Milan Centre which means less than 1% of total registered migrants (The National Institute for Statistics in Italy, ISTATa). While the percentage of men is under 50 among other migrant groups, it is 52.2% for Turkish migrants in Milan.

Cinisello Balsamo where the data of this study based on has one of the highest domestic and international migrant populations among municipalities of Milan metropolitan area (17.1%)[2] and also has one of the largest Turkish community (133 people) (ISTATb, ISTATc, ISTATd). Most of these migrants are from Romania, Egypt, Peru, and Ecuador. Majority of migrants from Turkey are also men (55.6%) (ISTATd) in Cinisello. Official statistics only include migrants with permanent work permits but not with temporary ones which come across more often. They do not include seasonal and domestic workers as well. Therefore, these figures may not be reliable.

Although the percentage of female migrants is increasing, migratory movements from Turkey to Milan have still been dominated by men.[3] Female migration from Pazarcık, Maraş to Cinisello Balsamo, Milan does not carry similar characteristics of the global female migration patterns. While autonomous migration of women is increasing in global migratory movements, the majority of women migrants from Turkey migrated to Milan through family reunions.

Methodology

Analyzing migration requires nuanced and a flexible methodological approach. In this study, we adopted a relational approach to be able to take into account agency-structure interaction dialectically and tried to unearth the interactions and intersections between the microlevel of individuals and the macrolevels of culture, economy, social policy (Kok 2007, pp. 4–5), and power relations. Gardner (2009, p. 20) emphasizes the interconnectedness of all levels of analysis by indicating that lives are structured by cultural expectations, gender, and historical contexts as well as individual choice. Since migration is about movement in both time and space, it is subject to change and influenced by global structures (such as the continually shifting and deeply gendered international labor market); this approach might help us connect the "micro" level of

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[2] Third after Baranzate 31%, Pioltello 25%.
[3] For a more detailed account of migration of men from Turkey to Milan, see Purkis and Güngör (2017).

individuals with the "macro" level of structure, a long-standing challenge to migration studies. Hence, there is a need for interdisciplinary approaches to be able to address the relationship between place, global dynamics, and migration processes in analyzing contemporary urban restructuring (Schiller and Çağlar 2009, p. 178).

The analysis of the use of urban space and mobility of women and men migrants from Turkey at the urban scale and its role in construction of urban space as well as constructed by it needs to be understood in complex and relational ways.

Empirical part of the study is based on the data derived from the field research which was undertaken in the period between June and September 2013 in Milan, Italy. Twelve semistructured in-depth interviews and two focus group meetings with men and women from Turkey were carried out in the framework of the field research. The sample this article is based on a focus group meeting with 10 women and five in-depth interviews in Cinisello Balsamo. The sample consists of 15 women, which represents around 30% of migrant women (considering majority of migrants from Turkey are men and some of the 133 migrants are children). In addition, participant observation and notes of informal conversations with other Turkish migrant women who did not want to be tape recorded inform this article. The article focuses on women's experiences. Men's use of urban space in comparison to women is analyzed through their wives' narrations. Most of the men were either doner kebab restaurant owners, workers in these restaurants, or their suppliers. This is not a coincidence but one of the outcomes of the economic crisis in Italy, which is the part of worldwide crisis. Others were construction workers, subcontracted workers, or informal sector workers. Out of the 15 women, only one had a stable work in their own kebap shop. Another one worked as a cleaner occasionally. Others did not work. They were either too old to work or had small children.

Although the article bases on a small group of women migrants' experiences, in a relatively small neighborhood, and carries some contingencies of the sample group and the locality, it is important to understand the mutual interconnectedness of the global and the local.

Gender and Migration

The most striking features of the contemporary labor migrations throughout the world since the mid-1990s, during which the free movement of capital is also accelerated (Price and Benton 2008, pp. 4–5), have been increasing rate of female migrants in the migratory movements, and informal and protracted nature of these migrations.[4] It is not a coincidence that these features have been taking place in the period of crisis of capitalist accumulation. Restructuring of production processes, and flexibilization of labor markets, have been the main pillars of neo-liberal policies together with

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[4] See Anthias and Lazaridis (2000); Boyle and Halfacree (2005); Brettel and Hollifield (2000); Castles and Miller (2003); Erel and Lutz (2012); Gaugh et al. (2006); Hardill (2002); Kofman (1999); Kofman et al. (2005); Lenz et al. (2002); Lutz (2007, 2010); Momsen (2005); Morokvasic (1983, 1984, 2003, 2004, 2007); Morokvasic et al. (2003); Parreñas (2001); Phizacklea (1983); Sassen (1988, 2003); Schireup et al. (2006); Sharpe (2002); and Reyes (2002).

facilitation of free movement of capital, which are implemented to overcome the longest over-accumulation crisis of capitalist system that meant dismantling of welfare state and devaluation of labor. Shrinking welfare system has sharpened up already existing social, economic, political, spatial, environmental, and gendered inequalities even in the developed countries. Free movement of capital combined with the deepening inequalities provokes the movement of people globally. However, the movement of people is still highly regulated by the state, and policies can be altered dramatically in response to the needs of the labor market and sudden shifts in national security concerns (Price and Benton 2008, p. 26). Migratory movements from Turkey to other countries are also affected from these wider tendencies of capital accumulation, which pave the way for displacement of people, but they are intertwined with the contingent factors such as ongoing ethnic conflicts, political pressures, high unemployment rates, and changing social atmosphere in favor of migration as the networks have been set up between different cities and regions. Although migration of women from Pazarcık has not been autonomous, they were aware that it was a highly likely prospect for them:

> "After the primary school, our families generally do not want to send us to school. We work on the family farm until we get married. There are many people working abroad from our village, the most of the girls expect to marry one of those guys one day." (F1, 31, 2006,[5] husband is a construction worker.)

Until the mid-1980s, migration theories either did not take into account gender or they addressed female migrants as dependants of men. Female migration was analyzed in the framework of family reunification and a move from a traditional to a modern setting. However, current migratory movements carry distinctive gender dimension and a considerable number of scholars have been pointing out gender dimension of migratory flows since then, accompanied with the emergence of new concepts in the related literature such as feminization of workforce, feminization of migratory movements, and feminization of poverty (see footnote no. 4). According to Schireup et al. (2006, p. 22), family reunification is continuing to be a significant component of migration into Europe.

Although, there are different experiences in different socio-spatial contexts in terms of gender component of migratory flows, currently migration experiences of women analyzed as a separate phenomenon than of men. Weakening welfare systems, increasing labor participation rates of European women, reluctance of their husbands in sharing domestic chores, and increasing rates of aging population in the European countries have led to the emergence of exclusively female migrant occupations.[6] The paid domestic-work (cleaning and care) employment demand in Europe and the gendered division of labor in both sending and receiving countries combine to produce a specific demand for female migrants (Andall 2013; Lutz, 2007; Reyes 2002). These are the types of works that enforce gender, class, and immigrant statuses of female migrants. Because, these jobs are seen as extension of women's domestic roles and they are devalued compared with the more public domain roles of men. Migrants, men, and

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[5] Dates indicate migration to Italy.
[6] Female migrants also work in labor-intensive parts of sectors such as agriculture, manufacture, and service.

women are generally employed to perform low paid, temporary, difficult, and informal jobs, and they are incorporated into the receiving societies and labor markets from the lowest stratum. But gendered structure of labor markets and prevailing patriarchal mentality in both receiving and sending countries aggravate female migrants' situation even more so than men (Kofman et al. 2005, p. 25; Morokvasic 1984).

Contrary to the tendencies of current global migration patterns, all the women from Turkey in the sample group came to Italy through family reunions. Their migration was basically not a labor migration. All except one of them had a basic education. One had never been to school and almost all of them were coming from farmer families in Pazarcık, Turkey, and they also had carried out agricultural work before marriage. Most of them had arranged marriages, e.g., by seeing their prospective fiancées' photos. The men were in Italy.

> "One of our neighbors back in our village had shown my husband's photograph to me. He was working at a kebab shop in Italy. Apparently, he had noticed me on a wedding video of his friend and wanted to marry me... Well, I dreamed of Milan completely different. It meant to me getting away from the village and having my own life with better standards." (Z, 25, 2009, husband works for a kebab restaurant.)

Getting away from a heavy agricultural work and expectations of a better life affected their marriage and migration decisions. Three women had lived with their in laws a few years before joining their husbands in Italy. Hence, the idea of migration through marriage also represented an escape from the pressures of families both of their own and their husbands' and it also meant having their own lives. In spite of having more freedom in that sense, they felt disappointed with their life standards in Cinisello.

Even though majority of them had temporary jobs such as cleaning or working in kebap shops owned by relatives or husbands in the first years of their migration, they did not work especially after having children. Only one was continuing to work in the family kebap shop, because her in-laws were living closer and looking after the children. There is a very clear gendered division of labor at home that restricts the women's use of urban space compared to men. The women look after the children and do the housework, and the men are bread winners. Despite this situation, nearly all the women wanted to work to be able to stand on their own feet. But, the men generally did not want them to work. All the women were in working age (21 to 33) except three women who stated that they were too old to work (between 53 and 61 years old).

Theoretical Approaches to Place Making and Cinisello Balsamo

Migrants are one of the main constitutive parts of urban space. The spatial organization of society is integral to the production of the social, and not merely its result (Massey 1994, p. 4). There are two major arguments about construction and reproduction of space. One argument puts emphasis on intersections and interactions between

transnational flows, circuits, network topologies, and territorial legacies[7]; on the other hand, second argument stresses on territoriality.[8] Most social theorists, including Durkheim, Weber, and Parsons, have contained their concept of society within the territorial and institutional boundaries of the nation state (Urry 2000). According to the first argument, space is constructed out of social relations. As these social relations are inherently dynamic, simultaneously multiple and intertwined with power, spatial scales are as well. Space is not seen as absolute, static, and bounded, but open and porous. According to Massey (1994, p. 5), places are formed out of social interrelations at all scales. Place is a particular moment in those networks of social relations and understandings. Places are also the moments through which the global is constituted, invented, coordinated, and produced (Massey 2004, p. 11). Understanding space in terms of continuous flows challenges fix notions of place identities as well. Second approach treats space as stable, fixed, and bounded geographical container. Both of these approaches are challenged. According to Harvey (as cited in Jones 2009, p. 495), reduction of everything to fluxes and flows and the consequent emphasis upon the transitoriness of all forms and positions have its limits and say nothing. Harvey (2009, p. 199) also notes that place-based community entails a delicate relation between fluid spatiotemporal processes (both relative and relational) and relatively permanent rules of belonging and association constructed in absolute space.

Paasi (2004, p. 542) draws attention to the similar point by stating that scales are not fixed, but they may be partly concrete, powerful, and bounded, but also partly unbounded, vague, and invisible. Jones (2009, p. 496) offers an alternative understanding of relationizm: "One way to take things forward might be to consider a conceptual middle road between space as territorial anchorage and fixity and conceptions of space as topological, fluid, and relationally mobile." Flows of commodities, capital, people, and ideologies are meaningless without temporary fixities which are produced, reproduced, transformed, given meanings, and destroyed through continual social and political struggles or actions. Hence, relational approach goes beyond dichotomous thinking.

Harvey (2009, p. 191) draws attention to dialectical existence, interactions, and concurrence of different dimensions and approaches of place making: "Places plainly have material, conceptual, and lived dimensions of the sort that Lefebvre describes. They can likewise be considered as absolute (bounded, fixed, and named), relative (interconnected and interactive through myriad flows), and relational (internalizing forces, powers, influences, and meanings from elsewhere)."

Cinisello Balsamo where we implemented our field research has one of the highest international migrant populations in the Milan metropolitan area. Domestic and international migrants are integral part of making and remaking of urban space and everyday life.

Bauman points out that "reality of borders" was as a rule, most of the time, is a class-stratified phenomenon (1998, p. 12). When capital and commodities move freely around the world without any space and time limitation, movement of people with

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[7] See Agnew (1994); Allen and Cochrane (2007); Allen et al. (1998); Amin (2002, 2004, 2007); Amin and Thrift (2005); Doel (2007); Farías and Bender (2010); Massey (2004); McFarlane (2011); Ong and Collier (2005); Rankin (2011); Robinson (2004, 2005); Sassen (2002, 2008); and Urry (2002, 2007).
[8] See Gottmann (1973), Johnston (1991), Kaplan (1998), Kaplan and Hakli (2002), Mann (2003), Prescott (1987), Sack (1981, 1986), and Taylor (2003).

lower social status faces several spatial, physical, economic, and social barriers. They have no power over all-too real-space to which they are confined (Bauman 1998, p. 89). This is true for the Turkish migrants as well. Migration was not their free choice but necessity. They will probably move to another such neighborhood in another country as a result of deepening economic crisis in the world or in Italy, not because they want to but because they have to in order to survive. Cinisello provides a temporary "anchorage" for them. They had felt reality of tangible and intangible borders where they had lived before in Turkey, and now in Cinisello-Balsamo, Milan. The borders of Cinisello in terms of physical, economic, and social are all too real especially for Turkish women migrants. One reason for the existence of these borders is due to their migrant and class positions in the society, which are closely related to global power relations. The other reason is their gender roles in the society which is a consequence of gender power relations.

Socio-Spatial Segregation in Milan and Cinisello Balsamo

Migrants make up the most disadvantaged segment of working class in Western metropolitan areas. This manifests itself spatially as socio-spatial segregation, in other words separation of homogenous residential spaces in social and ethno-racial terms. Migrants' neighborhoods are composed of intersections of class, ethnicity, race, and poverty. Neighborhoods of migrants and native disadvantaged classes are segregated from the neighborhoods of middle and upper classes, which aggravates their social exclusion (Wacquant 2007, p. 75). Migrants from Turkey are generally located in the lower status areas in the South and South East of Milan Centre where migrants congregated and process of gentrification is underway at the same time or they live at the periphery of Milan Centre such as Cinisello-Balsamo. Milan city center is traditional stronghold of the upper socioeconomic classes; lower and lower-middle classes in the central and semicentral areas have been displaced by higher middle classes towards the suburbs in the outskirts of the city in parallel with gentrification processes (Marzorati and Quassoli 2012, p. 142).

Turkish migrants live in dispersed locations in Milan. Although they do not form ethnic enclaves, they live together with the most disadvantaged parts of Italian working class and vulnerable part of the society such as pensioners, unemployed young, single-parent families, and domestic and international migrants. This is especially true for the area where migrants from Turkey live in Cinisello. They live in the old town of Cinisello around Gramsci Square which is the historic heart of the town. As mentioned above, they do not form ethnic enclaves, but they live in close proximity around the square with other disadvantaged groups.

Cinisello Balsamo is such neighborhood that has one of the highest populations of Turkish migrants in Milan.

> "Well, there are mostly Arabs and Romanians here, but also many others. Some elderly Italians live here as well. There are 30–40 families from Turkey." (A, 33, 2009, they are in partnership with two kebab restaurants.)

"Majority of Italians living here are elderly and retired, there are also some single-parent women or widows. But there are not many young people." (G, 23, 2010, husband works for a kebab restaurant.)

Cinisello-Balsamo is a town of about 75,000 inhabitants in the northern urban fringe of Milan (ISTATd). It has been a deprived neighborhood that is undergoing a gentrification process since the end of the 1990s. It is in the first ring around the municipality of Milan. Hence, it attracts investors searching for profitable opportunities. But the composition of population and spatial setup especially around Piazza Antonio Gramsci, where migrant women in the sample live, still has the characteristics of a deprived area.

The town was a home of heavy industries in the Fordist era. Migrants from south of Italy met the labor requirements of the factories such as Breda, Pirelli, Magneti-Marelli, and Falck. Cinisello grew at a very fast rate between 1951 and 1971 to meet the housing needs of newcomers especially in the form of co-operative self-building actions without any city planning, which led to a very poor environmental quality (Tornaghi 2007a, p. 76). Since the 1980s, the town has been experiencing a deep spatial, economic, and social transformation. As the industries have been outsourced, they are replaced by logistics and retail services and new technology development sector. Closure of industries between 1980 and 1995 produced a very high rate of unemployment (12%) (Ciommo 2001, p. 11). Cinisello was one of the highly deprived neighborhoods in Italy which has been affected from deindustrialization consequences such as contaminated land, dismissed buildings, unemployment, and low level of educational skills (Tornaghi 2007b, p. 5). The town has been subject to different gentrification projects since the end of the 1990s (Calvaresi and Carmichael 2005, p. 3). Currently, the social composition of population is slowly changing as a result of people from the city of Milan with higher socioeconomic status flowing into the area in search for cheaper housing estates. Although this phenomenon increases the average socioeconomic status, it also increases the gap between the highest and the lowest (Tornaghi 2007b, p. 5).

Gendered Use of Space and Place Making

Fenster (1999, p. 229; 2005, pp. 219–223) considers that both the right to use of space and participation in the urban life as the fundamental human rights and these rights for women are violated because of gender power relations. Privileged areas of urban space are appropriated by the privileged classes all over the world. But using urban space to its full extent is a gender matter as well as a class. Already limited use of urban space for lower classes is more limited for migrants. If they are female migrants, this limitation in some cases transforms into nearly a confinement, let alone participation in the decision making processes. Limitations of space start from their houses. Migrant women included in the sample complain especially about the high house rents. They live in very small and untended houses.

"My house is very small. My kitchen is so small that I can hardly move in it. It is no bigger than this bench [we were sitting on a bench side by side at the Piazza A. Gramsci]. Our bathroom is as wide as the distance between you and me. My living

room can only take one double couch and a television set that is it. I have another small bedroom and a narrow and long corridor. We wanted to rent a bigger flat but rents are too high. We are indebted. We thought when we pay off our debts we probably can move to another flat." (S, 30, 2009, husband is a co-partner in a kebap shop.)

She uses first person singular pronoun when she was explaining parts of her flat. Her everyday life revolves literally around the flat. Her husband works from ten o'clock in the morning to three o'clock the next morning. He has only one day off in a week. She says that her husband sees their only child usually while she is sleeping and shyly adds that she herself hardly sees her husband too. She had worked 1 year as a cleaner before she had the baby. In spite of doing all the housework, shopping, and looking after the baby, she still wants to go back to work, but her husband does not allow her.

"What life do we have here? We are inside the houses all day long working and looking after the children." (R, 30, 2011, husband is a construction worker.)

A very young and pregnant migrant from Turkey also comments about the size of the flat they live in:

"We have one living room with a kitchen and a bedroom, a small bathroom and a narrow corridor. It will not be big enough for us when the baby comes. But we have to stay here because we can't pay more, in fact our landlord asked 650 euros rent per month, we said we could not pay, we could only pay 500 euros and she accepted it." (E, 22, 2011, husband works for a kebab restaurant.)

She is alone most of the day, because her husband works from 10 o'clock a.m. to 22.30 p.m. She does all the housework and shopping. Their rent is already more than one third of her husband's wage. She also wants to work, but her husband refuses.

There are some migrant women in a comparatively better economic situation. A is one of them. Her husband is a partner in two kebap shops. According to her, the flat they live in is big enough, but old and untended. They have two children. Her brother in law lives with them as well.

"My flat has three bedrooms and a big enough kitchen. My mother's house in Turkey is bigger and has better standards. As though they are living there in a city and we are living here in a village. When I clean doors and windows here, the paint peels off. We pay very high rents to these houses. They are not nice." (A, 33, 2009, they are in partnership with two kebab restaurants.)

She was married before coming to Milan and lived together with her in-laws then. Having her own life makes her feel freer in Milan. Her husband also works long hours. She carries out all the housework, shopping, and looking after the children. Economically, she feels better off than the other women, but she also wants to work. She and all the other women wanted to work because they said that they did not like asking for money from their husbands especially for personal needs, and if they did work, they would have their own money to spend more freely. Poverty is gendered (Jarvis et al. 2009, p. 274). Generally, poverty is analyzed in terms of households. This

approach conceals the unequal access in the households to social services, rights, and opportunities (Nussbaum 2000, p. 84). Women, children, disabled, and elderly people experience the poverty more intensely than men (Townsend 1993, p. 106).

Most of the female migrants from Turkey meet every day except their husband's day off in Antonio Gramsci Square[9] in the summer evenings and spend time together chatting or gazing around while their children are playing. They have become an integral part of this square. It is like an extension of their houses. They stated several times that they could not stand their small houses especially in the summer heat. They are allowed to stay out until maximum 10 o'clock at night. Most of these women are close or distant relative to each other. Younger women always feel watchful eyes of elder women who are making sure that they are not transgressing what is coded as honorable behavior in their culture. Older women were instrumental in perpetuating patriarchal power relations. When carrying out this field research, two elder women did not come to the appointment even though they had promised the day before. That day, they did not allow other women coming to the square either. Gramsci Square as a public space was open to these women under surveillance of other relatives and the older women. Even this space which gives them relative freedom had invisible borders of cultural values. On the other hand, in spite of all these difficulties, these women living dispersed around Gramsci Square have formed a social network creatively to overcome spatial limitations of their houses, isolation from the society, and to support each other when necessary. Gramsci Square not only provides a spatial base to realize these opportunities but also facilitates their visibility and acceptance as a part of the community in Cinisello. This clearly shows how space can be molded by and at the same time can mold contradictory symbols and meanings which are changing continuously.

Another beneficial effect of Gramsci Square is providing some opportunities of social contact with other constitutive parts of the square and the society generally. The square is a meeting place especially in the summer evenings for other migrant groups from different countries and Italians who are also living in the same neighborhood. Traditionally, Turkish women socialize by visiting each other at their homes. They replicate this tradition in Italy in the wintertime. They all mentioned that Italians have been very friendly when they meet in the public space, but would not invite them to their homes. Gramsci Square gives them the opportunity of having some contact with the local community.

"We do not socialise with Italians at their houses. They would not invite us. I do not think it is a language problem or they are racist, but it is not their tradition… I have an old Italian neighbor. We some times talk to each other from balcony to balcony… I have Arab and Chinese neighbors as well. They are nice but we do not visit each other either. When we meet outside especially Italians are very warm and friendly." (A, 33, 2009, they are in partnership with two kebab restaurants.)

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[9] Antonio Gramsci Square is the "historic" town square which was redesigned in the 70s as a "local" square and then recently (2004) redesigned by a star architecture (Scudo and Dessi 2006).

"We are almost all relatives here. I do not need Italian neighbors. When necessary we help each other. With Italians ciao ciao, no more." (S, 30, 2009, husband is a co-partner in a kebap shop.)

The migrant women express that in the winter they socialize by visiting each other at their houses as mentioned above. Men socialize generally in a cafe behind Gramsci Square exclusively for men when they have their day off or they are unemployed. Women are not supposed to go there or even pass close by because the area was considered as a masculine space.

Men work in different parts of Milan. Long working hours and economic constraints limit their use of the city. But they have been in Italy a lot longer than women, and during their work, they are in touch with a variety of people. Consequently, their command of language is better than that of women. Patriarchal power relations and values together with these factors give men advantageous position over women in using the urban space.

Cinisello sometimes seems like an open prison for women. Social pressures from their community, patriarchal values, economic constraints, and language problems put invisible borders around them and hinder their mobility. Restricted female mobility seriously jeopardizes women's entering the labor force, and social networking (Chant and McIlwaine 2013; Kwan 2000, p. 146). They are also more affected from the spatial shortcomings in terms of lack of infrastructure, low-quality services, inadequate shelter, etc. Mobility of women gets more restricted especially after having children. Before having children, they could at least go out of Cinisello with their husbands in their day off more often. With children, reproductive work takes most part of the day.

Language is a big invisible barrier for women. Even the women who have been living in Italy more than 10 years do not speak and understand Italian sufficient enough to go to the doctors when they or their children have health problems, nor they can understand well enough teachers of their children at parent-teacher conferences. They usually go these places accompanied by their husbands or younger girls of school age. Sometimes they pay for this service. This is one advantage young girls of school age over their boy counterparts. Because when boys grow up, they are expected to work in kebab shops to help the family business or relatives. As a result, they drop out of school often. But the girls with limited spatial mobility have more time to spend on their studies; hence, they are more successful at school than boys. Since their Italian is good, they sometimes go along with other women as translators when necessary and earn some pocket money. Almost all the women wanted their daughters to continue their education. It is seen as a way out of poverty and barriers they experience as women. Women's restricted lives in terms of being in the same small social circle that consist of friends and relatives from Turkey and limited use of space as a result of patriarchal power relations prevent them learning the language of the country properly. This situation in turn aggravates these restrictions. It is a vicious circle. There are language courses in Cinisello. Some are free of charge, some are not. Migrant women say that free language courses are too crowded and not too good, the others are too expensive. Without having learnt Italian, they are generally reluctant to go out of Cinisello.

"How can I go out of Cinisello alone! The idea makes me scared. I would have gone in Turkey, because everybody understands me. Say, I get on the bus and went away and get off in the wrong place, what am I going to do? I do not even have a mobile telephone. I can go out of Cinisello only with my husband." (P, 35, 2006, husband works in a kebab shop.)

Language is a serious barrier for women in their social interaction with other people and their integration into the society:

"The majority of women here depend on their husbands for their social lives. No one speaks the language properly. Shopping is easy; prices are attached on the goods. But when you want to speak to other people or make friends you cannot." (D, 29, 2008, her husband is a construction worker.)

There were only 2 women in 15 whose language level and economic standards were better compared to the other women. One of these migrant women stated that she could go wherever she wants to without having worried and her husband never limits her.

"I can go everywhere alone. When I first came here one of the first things I did was learning about bus numbers and their routes. I always look around carefully to learn about my surroundings. If I am lost I can find my way by asking." (A, 33, 2009, they are in partnership with two kebab restaurants.)

Turkish migrant women in Cinisello were aware of the importance of speaking Italian in their everyday life. Even so, they did not seem to try enough alternative paths to improve their language skills. For instance, almost all of them follow Turkish television channels; they are more interested in news about Turkey than Italy and watch Turkish soap operas. But this situation is vice versa for children who wereborn and raised in Italy.

"I always watch Turkish TV channels, I am not interested in Italian TV… I watch drama series and news… My son always watches Italian TV." (S, 32, 2002, they have a kebab restaurant.)

Out of these 15 women, only 2 of them were watching Italian television. One was the youngest of the group, and the other was the one working for the family kebap restaurant and one of the earliest migrants as well.

"I have only Italian channels at home. I did not want Turkish TV deliberately. I am trying to pick up some Italian but it is difficult to learn a language only by hearing." (E, 22, 2011, husband works for a kebab restaurant.)

"Before I was working in the restaurant I had always watched Italian TV at home. Then we could not receive Turkish TV anyway. I have learnt my Italian from the TV. It is still not all that good but I am managing." (F2, 43, 1988, works in the family kebab shop.)

Migrant women expect their children to remove language barriers through education. As mentioned before, female children have more time to study than boys as an unexpected result of patriarchal values.

> "I have three daughters and a boy. All of them are studying. My eldest daughter is graduated from the department of political science and she is going to do her Master's degree; younger daughter is studying marketing at the university; the youngest one goes to high school and the boy goes to secondary school... I have never asked them to do anything else while they are studying. I want them to have better life than I do." (F2, 43, 1988, works in the family kebab shop.)

Conclusion

Migrant women's Italy or rather Milan is very small. Their lives revolve within few kilometers of their houses. Disadvantages such as sharp gendered division of labor at home, at the city level, and in life; being economically and socially dependent and pressured; and being uneducated increase their vulnerability and aggravate restrictions in use of space. Belonging to the most disadvantaged parts of the society results in living in deprived neighborhoods wherever they maybe. Men and women flow into these spaces which function as temporary territorial anchorage until flowing into another one as migration becomes temporary for the large part of migrants. But migrants do not only flow into these "temporary fixities" but also produce, reproduce, and transform them as well. As it is seen from the experiences of female migrants from Turkey, they have become one of the constitutive parts of place making, but space in turn by being full of power struggles and symbols molds, constructs, underpins, and reproduces the existing inequalities and at the same time opens new paths for new possibilities as in the case of Gramsci Square.

Female migrants' constitutive roles and the use of space in Pazarcık were somewhat different. There was not a significant difference in gender roles, and they had more restricted spatial mobility compared to men. But they all stated that because they were working on the family farm with the other family members, they did not feel the same way when asking and spending money as in Cinisello. Despite their use of space was also restricted as women than men in Pazarcık, this restriction have turned into almost a confinement in Cinisello. Their migration status is one of the most important reasons that aggravates existing gendered inequalities and limits their spatial mobility in Italy. In contrast to increasing autonomous migratory movements of women globally, which facilitates freedom of movement and shifting of cultural restrictions to a degree for working women, these migrants entered to Italy by family reunions. Their enterance to Italy depended on their spouses. Economic and social dependencies reinforced the effects of already existing patriarchal pressures and prevented them to improve their language skills, which almost traps them spatially, and this vicious circle continues. Gramsci Square as a public space was open to the migrant women as long as they were controlled by the gender power relations. It gave them relative

freedom from their small houses but at the same time restricted their everyday lives by reproducing and reinforcing the unequal social and gender relationships. Looking at from another angle, despite invisible cultural borders, by using this square as an extension of their houses and to socialize, these women created a breathing space for themselves to overcome the limitations of their small houses, increased their visibility in the society, and formed a kind of social solidarity network by communicating regularly. From this perspective, Gramsci Square represents "spatial fix" for the Turkish migrant women. Their communication continued at their respective houses in the winter time regularly but less frequently.

Gramsci Square is produced and transformed by the changing social relations, but at the same time, it shapes, reproduces, and changes these relations in turn. The migrant women's everyday lives are one of the constitutive parts of making of this square, which played an important role in shaping their lives as well.

Turkish migrant women have felt spatial, economic, social, and cultural, tangible and intangible borders of Cinisello more than migrant men. These borders are all too real for all migrants to one degree or another as a result of their migrant and class positions in the society. But gender power relations cause the borders to contract for the migrant women even more so.

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