Universidade de Lisboa

Instituto de Geografia e Ordenamento do Território

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Gender violence and the right to the night**

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Mestrado em Geografia Humana: Globalização, Sociedade e Território

Dissertação orientada pelo Doutor Daniel André Fernandes Paiva e pelo Doutor Jordi Nofre Mateo

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Júri:

Presidente: Doutora Alina Isabel Pereira Esteves, Professora Associada do Instituto de Geografia e Ordenamento do Território da Universidade de Lisboa

Vogais:

- Doutor Robert Shaw, Reader, School of Geography, Politics and Sociology, Newcastle University
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- Doutor Daniel André Fernandes Paiva, Investigador Júnior do Instituto de Geografia e Ordenamento do Território da Universidade de Lisboa

2025

Declaração de Autoria

Eu Juliette Marion Philippine Galavielle, declaro que a presente dissertação de mestrado intitulada "An ethnography of women's working spaces in the night time: Gender violence and the right to the night", é o resultado da minha investigação pessoal e independente. O conteúdo é original e todas as fontes consultadas estão devidamente mencionadas na bibliografia ou outras listagens de fontes documentais, tal como todas as citações diretas ou indiretas têm devida indicação ao longo do trabalho segundo as normas académicas.

Abstract

This dissertation explores the spatial dimension of gender-based violence for the workers of the nightlife in the city of Lisbon. It is based on an ethnographic study conducted over the course of the years 2023-2024. Through direct observation, participation, interviews and informal conversations, the study collects the experiences of women and gender minorities working as bartenders, waitresses and managers in festive nocturnal spaces such as bars, clubs, restaurants and cultural spaces. The results of this study highlight the exposure of the workers to a continuum of violence, encompassing repeated forms of slow violence (jokes, comments, intimidation) as well as aberrant acts (sexual assault, physical violence, harassment). The dissertation explores how the pervasiveness of violence, mostly gender based but also racist and homophobic, impacts the workers relationship with their workspaces. It reveals the particular spatial strategies and alliances formed between them to discreetly manage their safety while working. Moreover, it analyses these strategies in the light of the right to the city and offers a discussion around the concept of the right to the night, arguing that the strategies employed by the workers in the nightlife venues are materializing their claim for their right to the night. Ultimately, the dissertation uncovers the limits of the right to the night for women working in nightlife venues, and proposes a shift of the discussion to another field, which analyses the materialization of the right to the night in a techno collective organizing rave parties in Lisbon, and studies the volunteers' experiment with policy-making and the creation of an Awareness Team within the collective.

Keywords: Geographies of the night; gender-based violence; nightlife; night work, right to the night

Resumo

Esta dissertação explora a dimensão espacial da violência de género para as trabalhadoras da vida noturna na cidade de Lisboa. Na intersecção entre a Geografia de Género e os Estudos da Noite, este projeto de investigação centra-se na temporalidade da noite nos espaços urbanos. Pretende juntar-se ao recente interesse académico desenvolvido pelo estudo da noite, acompanhando o movimento natural de 'nocturnalização' da nossa sociedade moderna. Esta expressão identifica uma expansão contínua dos usos sociais e simbólicos da noite, evidenciando o papel crescente da noite nas nossas vidas. Porque a noite já não é apenas um momento de descanso, tornou-se um espaço com diferentes usos, reproduzindo hábitos diurnos no espaço noturno: na nocturnização das nossas sociedades, com a ajuda da iluminação pública e do planeamento urbano, a noite pode ser um espaço de trabalho, de lazer, de mobilidade, de festa ou de consumo... as possibilidades são vastas. No caso deste projeto, a noite será abordada como um espaço de festa, e a discussão centrar-se-á na economia da vida nocturna, Mais importante, esta dissertação oferece a oportunidade de olhar para o lado obscuro da noite. Quando a vida nocturna é suposta ser uma temporalidade e um espaço de prazer, leveza, lazer, menos pressão social, geralmente associada à liberdade e à diversão, este estudo centra-se nas questões da violência contra as mulheres, da discriminação e da falta de segurança geral na vida nocturna.

Baseia-se num estudo etnográfico realizado ao longo dos anos 2023-2024. Através de observação direta, participação, autoetnografia, entrevistas e conversas informais, o estudo recolhe as experiências de mulheres e minorias de género que trabalham como barmen, empregadas de mesa e gerentes em espaços festivos noturnos como bares, discotecas, restaurantes e espaços culturais. Estudar esta categoria de trabalhadores implica compreender como as suas experiências de trabalho na vida nocturna estão ligadas ao seu género. Pressupõe-se que as mulheres que exercem estas profissões enfrentam um espetro de discriminação e violência devido ao seu género. Assim, o principal objetivo deste projeto é compreender como as experiências de trabalho das mulheres na vida nocturna de Lisboa são moldadas pela violência de género que enfrentam, e como constroem estratégias para resistir a essa violência enquanto trabalham. Em seguida, ao remobilizar o direito à cidade de Lefebvre, esta dissertação propõe-se refletir sobre a forma como as estratégias das mulheres podem ser entendidas como uma materialização do direito à noite. Por isso, a utilização do método etnográfico é essencial

para se envolver nas experiências e práticas vividas de grupos marginalizados específicos, nomeadamente as mulheres e pessoas não binárias.

Esta dissertação inspira-se metodologicamente em três vertentes do trabalho etnográfico. Em primeiro lugar, pode argumentar-se que o tipo de etnografia aqui efectuada pode ser associado a uma chamada "geo-etnografia", uma vez que coloca a noção de espaço no centro da análise. Em segundo lugar, a dissertação implica um profundo envolvimento com a autoetnografia. Esta abordagem envolve o estudo reflexivo da própria experiência do investigador num determinado campo e tem sido destacada como um método estratégico para abordar tópicos de investigação sensíveis em campos onde outros participantes podem ter limitações na comunicação das suas experiências. Como fui empregada de bar durante muitos anos durante a universidade, decidi utilizar a minha experiência profissional complementar ao trabalho etnográfico e as entrevistas. Por último, a dissertação experimenta uma abordagem de investigação-ação. Neste caso, a investigação-ação é entendida, em termos gerais, como uma forma de investigação etnográfica em que os investigadores estão envolvidos na transformação política das relações sociais no terreno. Desenvolvendo-se espontaneamente à margem do trabalho de campo inicial, este segundo trabalho de campo levou a autora a envolver-se ativamente com um coletivo emergente cujo trabalho aborda questões relacionadas com a segurança das mulheres na vida noturna e, por conseguinte, com o direito das mulheres à noite.

Esta dissertação começa com uma discussão sobre a definição de violência e uma observação da sua manifestação durante a noite. De facto, a violência de género inclui uma variedade de atos psicológicos, físicos e sexuais que penalizam as transgressões das normas de género e reforçam as relações de poder fundamentadas no género. Esta forma de violência abarca não apenas a violência contra as mulheres, mas também a violência dirigida a pessoas LGBT ou a homens que não cumprem as expectativas de género.. O estudo da economia das actividades de lazer nocturnas põe em evidência uma vida nocturna *mainstream* frequentemente caracterizada por ambientes patriarcais, heteronormativas e heteronormativizantes. Neste contexto, a violência de género na vida nocturna tem sido objeto de um número crescente de publicações, com estudos que vão desde a violência física à negociação da sexualidade no contexto de ambientes de festa.

Neste sentido, os resultados deste estudo destacam a exposição dos trabalhadores a um continuum de violência, abrangendo formas repetidas de violência lenta (piadas, comentários, intimidação), bem como actos de violência explícita (agressão sexual, violência física, assédio). A dissertação explora a forma como a violência generalizada, sobretudo baseada no género,

mas também racista e homofóbica, tem impacto na relação dos trabalhadores com os seus espaços de trabalho. Por um lado, o estudo revela e ilustra que existe uma dimensão espacial assimétrica na intensidade da violência de género em Lisboa. Do outro lado, o trabalho de campo mostrou que, muitas vezes, os trabalhadores não sabem como lidar com esta violência, enfrentam-na isoladamente, sem o apoio ou os recursos necessários para a gerir eficazmente, enquanto trabalham, o que tem repercussões consequentes na sua relação com o seu espaço de trabalho.

No entanto, o estudo demostra que os trabalhadores não são vítimas passivas da violência de género, que não só usam e se apropriam do espaço de trabalho, como o produzem ativamente: desenvolvem a capacidade de identificar padrões e antecipar a violência, um conhecimento notável dos seus espaços de trabalho - para os utilizarem com segurança. Dado que os locais de diversão noturna são construídos em territórios específicos que proporcionam diferentes níveis de segurança para as trabalhadoras, esta dissertação constatou que a dimensão espacial da violência de género para as trabalhadoras da vida noturna também tem um sentido de territorialidade.

Mais, a dissertação revela as estratégias espaciais particulares e as alianças formadas entre elas para gerir discretamente a sua segurança enquanto trabalham. Estas estratégias são individuais e colectivas, e são classificadas em quatro categorias: evitar, antecipar, gerir e combater a violência. A investigação demonstra que os cuidados e o apoio mútuo entre os trabalhadores da vida nocturna existem através de muitos mecanismos. Além disso, analisa estas estratégias à luz do direito à cidade e propõe uma discussão em torno do conceito de direito à noite, argumentando que as estratégias utilizadas pelas trabalhadoras dos espaços de diversão nocturna materializam a reivindicação do seu direito à noite. Ao revelar os limites do direito à noite para as mulheres que trabalham em espaços de diversão nocturna, a dissertação propõe uma deslocação da discussão para um outro trabalho de campo, realizado numa perspective de investigação-ação. Aí, analisa-se a materialização do direito à noite num coletivo techno que organiza festas rave em Lisboa, e estuda-se a experiência dos voluntários com a elaboração de policy-making e a criação de uma Awareness Team no seio do coletivo.

Palavras-chave: geografias da noite; violência de género; vida nocturna; trabalho noturno; direito à noite

Introduction

"So, prostitution?"

During the year spent writing this dissertation, I noticed that an interaction happened repeatedly. At almost every occasion where I got to briefly explain my topic of research – women working at night – to someone who was unfamiliar to the subject, the first question I was asked was usually: "so, you are studying prostitution?". The reoccurring conversations that followed this initial reaction made me realise that if there are many career options that involve night schedules, sex work seems to be the first one that comes to mind when the worker is a woman. Then, when I tried to get hired as a bartender in one of Lisbon's nightlife venues, to do fieldwork and earn some money, I was surprised to face rejection and got sent away by many owners and workers. I had years of experience as a bartender, spoke three languages, and was eager to work, how could that be? This went on for a while, until I sympathised with Alex, the bartender of a small cocktail bar located in Bairro Alto. He was working alone in the newly opened venue and was actively looking for staff. He gave me the contact of his boss and told me about a network of venue owners in Bairro Alto, sharing their hiring opportunities on a Whatsapp group. However, he told me to not get my hopes up; his boss was only looking for a man to hire. I reacted, offended, "but why not a woman? I have experience!" he answered, "because with closing at midnight or 1am, with alcohol, there are fights, it's not possible to have a woman alone at the bar".

These experiences shed light on the many projections and imaginaries revolving around gender, work and the night. A quick look at the literature on 'taking back the night' highlights that the two major representations of women in the night are either prostitutes or intruders. As the British geographer Phil Hubbard puts it, there is a historical trope of the flâneur (male) and the prostitute (female) in the night time city. That trope "makes women an important part of the urban scene [but they're] allowed to occupy the night only on male terms" (Hubbard, 2015, p. 591). The gendered nature of the night time economy, which reproduces gender-based power dynamics, is therefore integrating women but in a restrictive, unequal, and excluding way. With this in mind, in the book *Feminist city*, Leslie Kern (2021) presents the figure of the 'intruder'. Because the city is patriarchy engraved in concrete (Darke, 1996), Kern (2021) argues that women feel at best like 'guests' in the city, since they know fully well that they are on male territory and could be perceived as 'intruders' if they do not 'behave properly. This idea of women being intruders in some spaces has been evoked frequently, most notably in Leslie

Starr's take on 'women of ill repute' (2022). Referring to female bartenders as 'pariah femininities' (building on Schippers' framework, 2007), Starr showed how the women doing bar work are 'intruders' who expose themselves to retaliatory violence, which is meant to punish them for challenging the norm and to put them back in their place. The common point between these two representations of women at night, the 'prostitute' and the 'intruder', is that they are both being defined by men, that is, they are examples of what has been called 'male gaze' (Mulvey, 1975; Nicchols, 2017; Aruldoss & Nolas, 2019).

At a crossroad between gender geography and night studies, this dissertation offers an opportunity to look at the realities of nightwork in festive environments for women. This dissertation seeks to leave behind the representations of women as passive actors of the night, to focus on their real everyday work experiences in Lisbon's festive nights, and fight against the idea that women solely exist in the night-time city as objects of the male gaze. It aims to look at inequalities, discrimination, and violence in the nocturnal city and its spatial implications through a feminist perspective, taking inspiration from feminist geographers like Kern, who argues that geography can contribute to feminism by helping us "to understand the how of social phenomena. How exactly does gendered social control operate? How does it manifest itself on the field, and how is it imposed?" (2021, p. 172) [1].

Therefore, this dissertation contributes to the current debate on gender-based violence in the nocturnal city, a topic mostly approached through the study of public space, harassment and the feeling of fear (Koskela, 1999; Gardner, 1994; Di Meo, 2011; Duru, 2019; Pain, 1997; Smith, 1987; Valentine, 1989; Stanko, 1995; Deschamps, 2017), criminality in nightlife drinking settings (Quigg et al., 2020; Graham et al., 2014; Hernández et al., 2022; Fung et al., 2018), women's production of safety and risk management (Kavanaugh & Anderson, 2009; Fileborn, 2015; Burgess, 2002), programs for the prevention of aggressions in nightlife settings (Powers & Leili, 2018; Quigg, et al., 2021), taking back the night (Hubbard & Colosi, 2015; Sandberg & Coe, 2019; Kern, 2021), or doing gender (Hall, 1993; Tibbals, 2007).

Focusing on nightlife venues and recognising how little attention was given to the workers of these spaces (Coffey et al., 2023; Starr, 2022; Bonte, 2019; Duque et al., 2020), this dissertation aims to fill the current gap by addressing how gender-based violence is experienced by the workers themselves. In particular, the dissertation will investigate the underexplored topics of

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[1] The book Feminist City by Leslie Kern was translated in French in 2021, which is the version used for all the authors' citations in this dissertation. For this reason, the quotes might be slightly different from the original English version.

how women or gender fluid people working in a nightlife environment experience gender-based violence, whether they are bartenders, waitresses, managers or promoters, how violence affects their work and their relationship to their workspace, how they react or protect themselves from it, and whether they can change the sexist culture of nightlife. These topics will be approached from a geographical point-of-view, seeking to unveil the spatial and territorial dynamics that underpin gender-based violence and resistance to it in the nightlife.

Through an ethnography of their workplaces, the main objective of this project is to understand how women's work experiences in Lisbon's nightlife are shaped by the gender-based violence they face, and how they build strategies to resist such violence while at work. Ultimately, this dissertation aims to reflect upon how women's strategies can be understood as an embodied materialization of the right to the night.

This dissertation offers to tackle these issues in three major research sub-objectives:

1. **To understand how the experience of violence is shaping woman workers relationship with their workspaces.** Following the idea that space is not neutral and carries affective values, I aim to collect women's insight on the way the violence affects them, how and where they feel it, and how it impacts their work and sense of belonging in the workplace.

2. **To identify the strategies developed consciously or unconsciously by woman workers to avoid, manage or face violence.** These strategies are to be analysed through a geographical lens as a way of negotiating and appropriating space. They can be individual or collective, they can go from the scale of the body to the scale of the city.

3. **To question whether these strategies can be understood as a way of fulfilling a claim for a right to the night as women.** This final objective questions to which extent the right to the night is achievable in woman's nightlife work, and explores the work of the awareness team of a bottom-up collective, to study the claim for women's right to the night.

The research is based on an ethnography of women's workplaces at night, which includes different forms of observation and a set of 10 interviews with women and non-binary workers. The choice of the ethnography methodology for this study is justified by the idea that "the subjects are the experts of their own lives" (Starr, 2021), and that this project needs a methodology that allows engaging with the lived experiences and practices of the workers.

While allowing the researcher to get increasingly more invested and immersed in the field, ethnography also enables a deep understanding of the experiences of the population and to conduct more in-depth interviews. This ethnographic study was conducted during five months and included different forms of observation: direct observation, participant observation, autoethnography (- also called complete observation) and action research, which also demanded a particular attention to reflexivity and finding the right place, ethically speaking, as a researcher to collect sensitive data about violence.

The ethnographic study was conducted in Lisbon and focused on two sites. The first one analysed the nightlife venues of the city centre – the bars, clubs, restaurants, cultural and social spaces opened during the evening and at night. The second one explored the production of free parties in abandoned spaces located in the outskirts of Lisbon, from the point of view of the collective, while making a special focus on the Awareness team experiment.

The findings stemming from the ethnographic study highlight the pervasive effects of violence in the nightlife workers' experience, not only being a victim but also a witness of a wide range of violent acts, that I conceptualized into fast or slow violence (Christian & Dowler, 2019; Nixon, 2011). The findings reveal that the workers of nightlife environments experience intersecting forms of violence throughout their shifts, that they are particularly vulnerable and lack the necessary support or resources to effectively manage it. Building on previous work acknowledging that violence is normalized as 'part of the job' for nightlife workers (Starr, 2021) and that when going out, most women internalise that they should take the responsibility of their own safety (Fileborn, 2015), the fieldwork was able to show the spatial dimension of violence for the workers. It brings attention into the asymmetrical repartition of violence, varying in Lisbon in its nature and intensity, according to the neighbourhood, the status of the venue, and the workers' level of experience and authority in the venue. It also uncovers that the spatial dimension of gender violence for nightlife workers carries a sense of territoriality (Brighenti, 2010; Brighenti & Kärrholm, 2020, 2021, 2022), as nightlife venues are built on specific territories which provide different levels of safety for women and genderfluid workers.

Moreover, this dissertation highlights that violence in nightlife is rarely confronted directly by workers. Instead, they adopt discreet safety strategies, which I categorized into four main types: avoiding, anticipating, managing, and fighting violence. More than a coping mechanism, these strategies are a way for the workers to regain some spatial control, and build agency, authority, and power in an environment shaped by misogyny. The vignettes displayed in the findings also highlight the central role of alliances to improve the workers well-being at work and to foster a

culture of care in the nightlife. These strategies, developed consciously or unconsciously while working, are to be understood as appropriating and negotiating the production of a safer space to work in. Going further, such strategies are to be analysed in the light of the right to the night (Di Méo, 2011; Deschamps, 2017; Guérin, 2019; Hernández-González & Carbone, 2020), building on Lefebvre's initial framework on the right to the city (1972). As it attempts to conceptualize the right to the night for women working in the nightlife, this dissertation suggests that if gender-based violence exists to punish women for transgressing the patriarchal order, then their strategies against it represent a materialization of their claim to the right to the night. With this in mind, this work reflects on the different meanings that the right to the night could have for the workers, by looking at their daily practices and strategies in the workplace. Furthermore, the dissertation also explores how the right to the night is materialized in the work of an awareness team of emerging techno underground collective organising free parties in Lisbon. In the form of action-research, this second fieldwork site provides an opportunity to experiment with policy making and the potential of an Awareness Team to materialize the right to the night by trying to make the nightlife safer and more inclusive.

This dissertation is further divided in four chapters. The first chapter places this dissertation within the interdisciplinary field of nightlife studies and discusses the existing literature on gender violence in the nightlife, while also debating the contours of the right to the night in this context. The second chapter describes the study's methodology. The third chapter presents the study's findings, which describe and debate the ethnographic fieldwork conducted in nightlife venues of the city centre and free parties in the outskirts of Lisbon. Lastly, we conclude the dissertation by discussing how this dissertation contributes toward ongoing research on gender violence in the nightlife.

Chapter 1. Nightlife studies, work, gender-based violence and the right to the night

1.1. Studying the night

In January 2020, 18 researchers from Germany, USA, the UK, France, and Canada published an article arguing for the recognition of Night Studies as a promising academic field. The paper called "Night Matters - Why the Interdisciplinary Field of 'Night Studies' Is Needed" stated that the topic of night studies is "on the cusp of coming into its own as an interdisciplinary field" (Kyba et al., 2020, p. 1). The Night Studies scholars – or in Rob Shaw's (2018) terminology, the "nightologists" – explained the relevance of the field by its capacity to focus on the night as not only a time but also a place – a perspective which presents a lot of interest for geographers. For nightologists, the nocturnal environment is not only an object of research but also a new way of thinking about sleep, lighting, leisure, sociability, culture, identity, safety, representations of space, and media. By placing the night in the centre of the academic attention, Night Studies could then contribute to a better understanding of the topics traditionally addressed by the social sciences.

Engaging in Night Studies requires to take into account the ambivalences of the night and its darkness; darkness has multiple ambiguous meanings and calls for different subjective feelings: "Those who seek darkness to engage in quiet, reflective meditation contrast with others who feel fear and suspicion about what may lurk unseen" (Dunn & Edensor, 2023, p. 8). As Fileborn argues, "along with a sense of fear and the unknown, the night-time also represents a time of hedonism, adventure and the possibility for experiences not available during the light of day" (2015, p.4). In that sense, studying the nocturnal environment refers to and challenges the imaginary of the night as a space enabling more freedom, lower normativity, meeting alterity and alternativity. To study the night can participate in enlightening the "liminal anonymity of the darkness", yet some disagree with it, as they wish for the night to retain its anonymity (Nofre, 2023, p. 94). I argue that practically, this academic exploration of the night seems inevitable as it aims to follow the natural movement of "nocturnalisation of Western life", according to the expression of Craig Koslofsky (2011), addressing the continuous expansion of the social and symbolic uses of the night (Koslofsky, 2011). This phenomenon is also described by Murray Melbin as the "colonisation" of the night in his book *Night as a Frontier, colonizing the world after dark* (1978).

At this point, it seems important to note that a major part of the wider field of Night Studies has been in fact focusing on the exploration of the field of urban nightlife. While living or working in the night does not mean only working in the nightlife in urban settings, it is the focus of this dissertation, therefore the rest of this text will focus more specifically on nightlife studies. In this field, the colonisation of the night is especially visible in cities. It is caused by a progressive shift in the human biological rhythm, with individuals now going to bed at 11pm on average, as opposed to 9pm fifty years ago (Gwiazdzinski, 2017). Alongside this shift, we observe a growing porosity between day and night in cities, which appears in numerous examples like late night shop openings, night exhibitions and cultural events, but also the popularity of daytime raves and festivals, as well as 24h services like restaurants, gym clubs, gas stations, etc. These evolutions are addressed in the academic literature as the '24h city' (Bianchini, 1990; 1995; Adams et al, 2007, Glass, 2018). Following the movement of these social, economic, and biologic changes, scholars notice a shift in the way politics and the urban governance are dealing with the night. Cities like Amsterdam, London or New York City have created the position of "Night Mayors" to address problems directly linked to the nighttime. Other cities like Paris or Genève have normalised Night Councils, carrying out consultations with stakeholders of night uses, and organized large public meetings called "Etats généraux de la nuit", where they meddle nightlife professionals, associations, and inhabitants to formulate solutions to fight conflicts of use in the night-time city (Guérin, 2019). In that sense, a growing number of cities are writing local night charters (mostly focusing on moral voluntary commitments to reduce noise pollution) and dedicating more political attention to night specific topics (Gwiazdzinski, 2017, p. 6). In the environmental sphere, there is also a mobilization and growing concern over the "loss of the night" caused by artificial illumination and shifting schedules in cities (Stone, 2017). In these circumstances, studying the urban night becomes inevitable.

According to Night Studies scholars Nofre and Garcia Ruiz (2023), the origins of Nightlife Studies can be traced back to pioneer work from the 19th century, but its main development started in the 1980s and 1990s with the first major publications on drug and alcohol consumption, violence, drunk driving, night time regulations, and the night time leisure economy as a city planning strategy. The field went through an epistemological turn in the 1990s, with a redirection of the focus on youth subcultures, nightlife consumption and socio-spatial segregation (Feixa & Nofre, 2012). This period is marked by the publication of founding works: *Common Culture* by Paul Willis' (1990), *Club Cultures* by Sarah Thornton (1996),

Clubbing: Dancing, Ecstasy and Vitality by Ben Malbon (1999), and *Urban Nightscapes: Youth Cultures, Pleasure Spaces, and Corporate Power* by Paul Chatterton and Robert Hollands' (2003). These four contributions are central to the understanding of Night Studies and contributed vastly to begin the institutionalization of Nightlife Studies as a new independent research subfield. This first phase of the development of Night Studies was also challenged by the arrival of a new wave of scholars, especially in the early 2000s, "with an increased presence of women and non-white/non-western scholars, giving Nightlife Studies a tremendous shake" (Nofre & Garcia Ruiz, 2023, p. 97). This new wave shifted the focus of attention from the dominant Western male-centred literature.

This shift opened the way to the second phase of the development of the field, which started in the late 2000s and lasted until the Covid-19 pandemic. It is described by Nofre and Garcia Ruiz as "the most vibrant, exciting and flourishing years of Nightlife Studies" (2023, p. 95). During this period, a proliferation of publications, the founding of independent research groups, as well as the development of an international network, contributed to further structure and institutionalize the field. While the contributions are too numerous to be quoted, the research conducted by the The Urban Night Project, led by Will Straw at the McGill University, the launch of Stadt Nach Acht Conference (NIGHTS Conference) in Berlin in 2016, or the creation of the first International Night Studies Network in 2019 largely contributed to boost grant proposals and publications (Nofre & Garcia Ruiz, 2023). The book *Night Studies*, published by the researchers Gwiazdzinski, Maggioli, and Straw (2020) illustrates the diversity of origins and disciplines of the nightologist scholars quite well, by bringing together different investigations and representations of the night, and advocating for an interdisciplinary or even transdisciplinary field, linking geography, urban studies, history, sociology, and anthropology.

The emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic in the 2020 marks the beginning of a third phase for the development of the field, as it brought huge difficulties to conduct fieldwork, and a need to reshape the analytical and methodological strategies. Simultaneously, the nightlife industry went through a crisis and suffered from mostly negative media attention. Nightologists also developed concerns about a surge of sexual violence in the nightlife and redirected attention towards the topics of regulation, policy making, and safety. In this context, the queer nightlife received more attention (Ayedemi et al., 2021; Andersson et al., 2023), as well as the interplay between nighttime leisure, community building, and socioemotional wellbeing (Karampampas, 2020; Borges, 2021). To summarize, these three phases structuring forty years of development of the field show a growing interest for the urban night, many epistemological fluctuations, and

a strong interdisciplinary identity. However, it has to be noted that one can only refer to Night Studies as a field "in construction" (Gwiazdzinski et al., 2020). It does not gather, for now, the characteristics defining a "stabilized disciplinary field" (Krishnan, 2009) which can be recognized as:

> a relatively hermetic body of knowledge, defined in relation to a more or less pre-determined object of study, by a clearly identifiable methodology to which the community of researchers claiming to belong to this discipline refers, and by a capacity for introspection (reflexiveness). (Gwiazdzinski et al., 2020, p. 365)

As for now, Gwiazdzinski et al. (2020) argue that the knowledge gathered on the night is still scattered, and that the structuration of the field is still an ongoing process. They also insist on the need for the involved researchers to feel a common feeling of belonging for the project, which should be defined as "a collective movement in constant evolution" (Gwiazdzinski et al., 2020, p. 348). The fact that this field is in construction is not problematic for this dissertation, as it already fulfils its goal to provide a framework for exploring and thinking the night through the lens of gender violence and labour conditions in party settings. Nightlife Studies also enable us to think of the night as plural, to observe many geographies of the nocturnal space: the night can be a party space, a consumption space, a work space, a political space, etc.

Lastly, nightologists have been developing a growing interest in the gendered nature of the night, especially since the arrival of a new generation of researchers, including women, in the early 2000s (Nofre & Garcia Ruiz, 2023). The studies linking gender and the night have been focusing mainly on the feeling of safety and fear at night (Stanko, 2008), mobility and walking at night (Hernandez González, 2020), the perception of women in the public space (Lieber, 2019), as well as gender roles in the festive setting (Grazian, 2007; Fileborn, 2015). Alongside these classic topics, the arrival of new researchers in the field comes to challenge the fantasy of the night as a carefree party space, and to highlight gender inequalities as one of the many inequalities present in the night space. For example, in his essay 'On the Make: the hustle of the urban nightlife', David Grazian (2009) rejected the idea of nightlife being a democratized and social-capital-enriching third space of social life. He argued that the urban nightlife is characterized by race and class divisions, gender inequities and the exploitation of women, and exclusivity rather than inclusiveness or solidarity. Following the same critical idea, the study of the nighttime leisure economy highlights a mainstream nightlife "often marked by patriarchal, heteronormative and heteronormativizing atmospheres" (Hubbard, 2008, p. 641). In recent years, there has been a burgeoning body of publications on gender-based violence in

the nightlife, with studies going from physical violence to negotiating sexuality in the context of party atmospheres (Quigg et al., 2020, Vaadal, 2022).

In this context, we can start noticing the development of new large-scale projects addressing the topic in the academic world. An important breakthrough was the funding by the European Union's Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020) of the SexismFreeNight project (https://sexismfreenight.eu/). This project involved a consortium of nightlife promoters, NGOs and Universities "to promote safer and more egalitarian nightlife environments" (Plaza et al., 2022, p.3). In Portugal, the Católica University in Lisbon was involved, but most of the activities were based in Porto. The initial plan was to create a Sexism Free Night certification, in order to reduce gender-based violence in party settings, but with the surge of the pandemic, the consortium had to adapt. The project shifted toward the gathering of information on the prevalence of sexism and sexual violence in the nightlife, through a European-wide web survey. The project also developed a European awareness campaign, as well as training material directed towards nightlife professionals. It enabled the creation of a European Network of collectives and organization implementing gender harm awareness. This shows that sexism and violence in the nighttime is a legitimate concern, which is getting a growing amount of attention. While being a relatively new research topic, gendered night studies already reveal that the nightlife environments are not gender-neutral settings (Plaza et al., 2022), as the liminality of darkness affects different groups differently, and there is a common association between fear, violence and the night, with a special focus on gender violence. In the next section, I approach the issue of gender violence in greater depth.

1.1.1.   Studying gender-based violence

Johan Galtung (1969), leading scholar on the study of violence, defined violence in its broad sense by sorting it in three categories: direct, structural, and cultural violence. According to Galtung, direct violence, the most visible form of violence, is exerted within individuals in the form of physical or verbal aggression. Structural violence - or systemic oppression, manifests in social norms, policies, laws, to perpetuate harm and marginalize certain groups. And finally, cultural violence can be understood as the theory, the justification of direct and systemic violence. It involves norms, symbols and narratives that promote power imbalance and normalize harmful behaviours. In this framework, the various forms of violence are interconnected; they intersect and operate as a continuum. Thinking violence as systemic and

interconnected is helpful to introduce the definition of gender-based violence. Scholars like Kelly and Westmorland highlight that violence is often thought of in terms of incidents, whether a one-off event or repeated incidents, and not in terms of a system of violent power (2016). This dissertation will use a definition of gender-based violence incorporating its systemic and intersecting nature, and understand violence as a continuum. The sociologist Marylène Lieber, specialised in gender studies, proposes the following definition:

> Gender-based violence covers a wide range of psychological, physical and sexual acts that punish transgressions of the gendered order and reaffirm the structural dimension of gender-based power relations. From this perspective, gender-based violence covers not only violence against women, but also violence against LBGT people or men who do not conform to gendered expectations. From the 1970s onwards, women's movements brought the debate into the public arena by denouncing the private or individual dimension that was still too often associated with this type of abuse. In doing so, they helped to theorise the links between domestic violence, sexual harassment in the workplace, rape and sexual assault, emphasising the notion of a continuum. (2020, p.1)

Lieber's definition highlights the broad nature of gender-based violence, and includes not only women but LGBT people and gender non-conforming people, including men. She stresses the central role of power relations in gender-based violence by defining violence as retaliatory, as acts that punish those who do not conform to or transgress the patriarchal order. She mentions psychological, physical and sexual violence, as well as domestic violence, sexual harassment, rape and sexual assault, that she connects around the notion of continuum, emphasizing the contributions of feminist movements to recognize and help theorize the concept and bring the debate to the public arena.

This debate she mentions opposes different definitions or approaches of gender-based violence. Some scholars especially in criminology and psychology focus on 'intimate' partner violence and emphasise the individual characteristics and interpersonal dynamics to predict risks of violence within relationships (Felson, 2002; Thornton et al, 2016). This conception is largely criticised for overlooking the systemic factors that contribute to patterns of violence and oppression. Other scholars, like Diana Russel, defend the systemic definition of violence, arguing that addressing gender-based violence cannot be possible without considering its embeddedness within broader structures of inequality and power. The pioneer scholar and activist was one of the first to provide a holistic approach to gender-based violence. In her 1975 book *The politics of rape* she englobed not only physical violence, but sexual, psychologic and economic violence in her definition, underlining the social and cultural factors who contribute to perpetuate this violence. In her book, she explained rape as a display of socially defined perceptions of masculinity, instead of deviant behaviour, which is a turning point in the

understanding of violence. This idea of violence being not only isolated acts but the symptom revealing an invisible system of oppression was then largely taken over in the feminist literature. For these researchers, mostly developing from the 1970s in the United States as feminist activists and writers, gender-based violence is understood as an expression of patriarchal culture and power struggles. Violence against women is a manifestation of systemic oppression aimed at keeping women in a position of subordination and silence, to perpetuate male domination (Davis, 1981; bell hooks, 2000). To put it in other words, according to feminist scholars, the root of violence and its objective is to maintain a form of status quo. It is the expression, or the consequence of a systemic oppression. They argue that it characterizes in physical acts and in more subtle forms of domination and control, such as psychological or economical violence. Most importantly, according to them, violence against women has to be analysed in regards to racism and other discriminations, which brings the understanding of violence to the theory of intersectionality. Intersectionality was introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), an American law professor, in her essay "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex". There, she studied the case of black women, marginalised from both feminist and anti-racist movements, and argued that the individuals with intersecting identities suffered from different forms of intertwined discrimination. With the term intersectionality, she enveloped these unique intersections (race, gender, class, and sexuality) that shape each individual's experience of oppression or privilege. In academic circles and beyond, intersectionality became a central concept: thanks to this theory, it is now possible to study violence at different levels, from symbolic to physical, economic to sexual, while taking the context into account and acknowledging the unicity of each of the violent situations. These different approaches of understanding violence, the individual, the systemic, or the intersectional, show that thinking violence comes from a subjective experience, with each researcher's own bias and exposure to violence influencing the perception. Through these examples, it has also been hinted that violence can materialize in very different ways, can range from the exposure to a single verbal violent act to an imprisonment in a cycle of abuse.

Defining gender-based violence also means to delimit what composes violence, what kind of acts are understood as violent. In this debate, it is easy to only accept as violent the acts that are spectacular, aberrant, also called 'fast violence' or 'eventful violence' (Duru, 2019; Christian & Dowler, 2019). However, there are many other manifestations; Liz Kelly dedicated her work to shifting the standard approach on violence. Kelly argued (1988) that seeing violence as isolated horrifying acts would lead investigators to seek explanations in the individuals'

pathology and deviancy, rather than connecting it with the structures and norms of 'acceptability', 'decency' and 'respectable society' sanctioned by violence. She claims that 'aberrant' forms of violence against women are at the one end of a broad spectrum of socially accepted male aggression, coercive behaviour, notions of entitlement and deep-rooted patriarchal norms. For example, with the framework of the continuum of violence she can explain how the 'stranger' rape is on the continuum of normalized behaviours, like making misogynist jokes, engaging in sexual harassment, violating personal boundaries in intimate settings, or pressuring dates or partners into sexual activity. In other words, the notion of continuum of violence allows to reintegrate abnormal events into structures and find their roots, as well as to try to anticipate and prevent them.

On the other side of fast violence, we can find 'slow violence' - fast and slow violence are notions developed around the concept of structural violence (Galtung, 1969) in the spheres of environmental studies. The term slow violence was introduced by Rob Nixon in his book *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, arguing that underprivileged people are the ones who suffer the most from it, as it is "built on the bedrock of social inequality" (2011). Compared to structural violence, there is an "explicitly temporal emphasis" (Christian & Dowler, 2019): it is a violence that occurs "gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all" (Nixon, 2011, p. 2). As the term is now used outside of the original environmental field, it can be employed in gendered geographies to tackle the less flagrant part of the continuum of violence, the 'unspectacular'. This is what geographers and gender studies scholars Christian and Dowler (2019) explored. To link the concept of slow violence to the experience of gender violence, they argue that slow violence is experienced in "banal, everyday, intimate, and routinized ways", that it "is invisible when compared to fast violence" (2019, p. 1066). According to them, it is also out of sight because of the invisibility of feminized experience. As much as Lieber (2020) did, they highlight the contributions of feminist researchers, as well as queer and critical race scholars, to integrate slow violence with fast violence as part of a continuum. Practically, it seems to make sense as both follow similar patterns in the continuum of violence. With this in mind, Christian and Dowler (2019) argue for a deconstruction of the binaries, to highlight better the co-constitution of fast and slow violence.

Despite the growing acknowledgement of the social weight of gender-based violence, there are many disagreements within the academic world. While some researchers are focusing only on

certain types of violence like physical or sexual violence, others take a broader approach, systemic, drawing attention to intersectionality or including every type of violence, fast and slow, into a spectrum. These debates reflect the complexity of the issue and the diversity of women's experience. Having defined gender-based violence, let us take a look at the way it is addressed by scholars from gender and feminist geography.

1.2. Geographies of the urban night: A 'feminist gaze'

Scholars from the field of geography have studied gender-based violence in the urban space mostly by analysing the gendered use of public space. They analysed the production of the city and noticed how the different uses of urban space were also determined by gender (Di Meo, 2011; Coutras, 1996). While conducting a study on the ways female residents of Bordeaux (France) use and read the city space, Di Meo found that their use of space, their mobility and their perception is linked to "spatial prohibitions or spatial apprehensions" that are more or less experienced, accepted or even identified by those concerned. He identified that women avoid certain spaces and form "invisible walls" in the city, that are linked to their "mental barriers", especially at night (2011, p. 317). Before him, Massey argued that "the limitation of women's mobility, in terms both of using space and constructing identity, has been a crucial means of subordination" (1994, p. 179). For Gardner, public space can be considered as one territory to which men hold greater rights than women: a territory from which women are often excluded by harassment and fear of male violence (1995). In France, this "sexual segregation" was noticed as well by Jacqueline Coutras, doing pioneer work in gendered geography in the 1990s. She argued that women in the city were not as carefree as men (1996), and presented some of the spatial consequences derived from male domination.

These works highlight the gendered use of public space, meaning that people of different genders have unequal use and approach to their urbanity (di Méo, 2011). They also refer to the concept of territory. According to Di Meo, the territory reflects the economic, ideological and political appropriation of space by groups who construct a particular representation of themselves, their history and their uniqueness (1998). Looking at the territory and gender-based violence, it seems interesting to mention the concept of proxemics in anthropology (Hall, 1966). In this theory, we divide the space into different zones; personal space, social space and public space. Each zone carries different values, expectations and meanings; for example, if the public space is accepted as shared between individuals for different uses and reserved for large

audiences, the personal space is understood as intimate, it is the region surrounding a person's body, which means that they regard it as psychologically theirs. It is a space reserved to intimate relationships (friends, lovers, children or close family members), and a private territory which a person may "lay claim to", may want to defend against others (Moore, 2010). In that sense, proxemics observes individuals maintaining their personal space as the most inviolate form of territory (Richmond, 2008) and can help to understand the spatiality of gender-based violence (harassment or sexualisation, for example) as entering and violating a person's personal space. Violence affects and reconfigures women's relation to space - for many reasons, one of them could be because it also crosses personal space boundaries.

The study of women's relationship to space have led scholars to focus on studying fear extensively. In geography, this topic is covered by the subfield of geography of fear, which focuses on the feeling of fear in order to relate gender-based violence to its spatial repercussion. This field developed in the 1980s and 1990s decades, when surveys on the fear of crime and violence were particularly popular in North America (Kern, 2021). The polls used for the studies aimed to compile data on where, when and with whom women are afraid. Study after study revealed similar trends: women identified cities, in the evening at night, and strangers, as the main sources of potential danger (Kern, 2021). These results are not surprising; they show the reality of women's fears and highlight how the night is associated with danger in these imaginaries. However, the data on women's geographies of fear does not match actual crime statistics data. The reported levels of fear among women were up to three times higher than amongst men, which does not make sense since the aggression rate for men in public spaces is higher than women's (Kern, 2021). Following this, a debate around the "paradox of fear in women" emerged as scholars started to question women's "excessive" or "irrational" fear of crime in urban areas at night. They observed that this fear was not statistically accurate, as the concrete rates of violence perpetrated against women by strangers did not match their fear of crime (Stanko, 1995). While fearful women (Koskela, 1999) are afraid of narrow and dark streets at night, they are more likely to be victims of violence in the privacy of their homes (Persson, 1981, in Tiby, 1990, Davidoff and Greenhorn 1991; Krahé, 2016). This paradox led feminist researchers to criticize the methods used for the data collection and point out the lack of contextual explanation for women's "irrational fears". They notably argued that fear is a social construct (Koskela, 1999), and that the studies are not enabling to question the role of power dynamics (Whitzman 1993), trauma or media (Kern, 2021) in the development of the excessive sense of fear. Scandinavian geographer Hille Koskela also adds that even if

statistically the worst crimes are committed in the domestic space, gender-based violence must be understood as a continuum of violence, which explains why woman can be so afraid outside (1999). As Pain puts it, "private violence can make one more fearful in public space" (1991, p. 417). In that sense, opposing the private and the public space is not relevant. In addition, the fear of the night can also be explained by the cultural construction of the night time space as a place of fear and darkness (Hubbard, 2005; Williams, 2008). Moreover, if the sense of fear is so hard to grasp in a rational way, it is also because it clashes with a need of control and materializes into space in complex ways. As Kern explains, the fear that women feel towards men tranforms into a geographical logic, where women would rather choose the places, than the people, that they need to avoid (2021). According to the geographer Gill Valentine, this is a way of coping with a constant state of fear: "women cannot be afraid of men all the time, so in order to maintain a certain illusion of control over their own safety, they identify places and times when they run the risk of encountering dangerous men, in other words, places to avoid" (1989, p. 171).

These contributions show that the fear of violence has repercussion on the relation to space and contributes to the production of space (Koskela, 1999). They also show that women are actively putting up strategies to cope with fear and not put their safety at risk. Geographically, it shows mostly through the avoidance of certain spaces, as Valentine, Kern and Pain suggested. As Kern explains (2021), it goes even beyond, with the creation of mental maps, in which women pick from their experiences, emotions and collective imaginaries to build an understanding of the safe and unsafe spaces. These maps are unique and constantly evolving, for different reasons. First, they evolve with the time of the day, because women feel that their freedom to use urban spaces varies over the day (McDowell, 1993). With the dark coming at night, they are likely to avoid more spaces. Then the maps vary not only with the temporality of the day but also according to the day of the week, the season. Lastly, Pain's research shows that they are modified by the events that happen over the course of life; by getting older, accessing maternity (Pain, 2001) or being exposed to violence or attempts of violence (Koskela, 1999). As Leslie Kern puts it, "an unpleasant or frightening moment can transform them forever" (2021, p. 173). These maps are also interestingly displaying how women form tacit alliances when they are dealing with the fear of violence. The author Koskela (1999) underlines that the unsafe spaces, especially in the nocturnal city, are predominantly populated by men, while the presumable safe places are usually those who gather more women.

The strategies documented around the geography of fear illustrate very well that the "individual use of space is not based on independent free choices but is instead a product of social power relations" (Koskela, 1999, p. 112). This reveals that there is a direct link between the use of space and gender-based violence, which raises the question of the role that fear and violence play in maintaining the status quo. According to radical feminists, if violence is used collectively by men against women, it is with the social objective of instigating fear in women in order to control them, limit their use of public spaces and keep them dependent on men for protection (Whitzman, 1993, Duncan, 1996; Starr, 2021). This position is debatable, but most interestingly, it can be used as a provocation to reflect on the ways women can challenge this social control. By avoiding a space out of fear or putting invisible walls (di Méo, 2011), women are forced to reproduce the masculine domination over space against their will (Koskela, 1999). In that framework, the fearful women deciding to stay inside are leaving space for their oppressors, who gain even more spatial control (Smith, 1987; Pain, 1991; Jóhannesdóttir & Skaptadóttir, 2023; Doan & Schwarz, 2020). In other words: "Feelings of fear are simultaneously a consequence of women's subordinate position and their own contributions to the perpetuation of gendered power in relation to space" (Koskela, 1999, p.121). Practically, this means that the fear of crime reduces both the quantity and the quality of women's use of the night-time city (Parikh, 2018, Shaw, 2022). This shows how much the production of space is a result of constant emotional negotiation. This dissertation will contribute to the debate by addressing it from the point of view of the women deciding to be outside working in the night time. These women's choice of working in the nightlife emerges as a form of opposition to the possibility of staying home, in that sense they are not complying with what feminist scholars call the virtual curfew (Kinsey, 1984, in Pain, 1997, p. 234).

The debate around the geography of fear has identified three main strategies that can be employed by women in order to cope with gender-based violence. The first one is the avoidance strategies mentioned above. This strategy of avoiding the spaces that are perceived as unsafe helps women by coping with their fear and feeling safer, but it also puts a responsibility on the individual level: women who distance themselves, exclude themselves, make mental maps and lay low are accepting to take the responsibility of their own safety (Fileborn, 2015). As mentioned above, this strategy is criticized by the radical feminist geographers because of its spatial implication: if the avoidance strategy is valid and understandable, the absence of women in the space does not challenge the status quo. In fact, it reinforces the masculine domination

and social control of women (Koskela, 1999; Kern, 2021; Smith, 1987; Pain, 1991; Jóhannesdóttir & Skaptadóttir, 2023; Doan & Schwarz, 2020)

A second strategy, derived from the avoidance, is 'managing the risk'. As many researchers point out, women have built in a capacity of agency regarding their fear (Stanko, 2008; Koskela, 1997; Burgess, 2002). This process can be summed up with the question "but is it worth taking the risk?" (Burgess, 2002). The answer comes from women's instinct, their sensitivity, and their habit of collecting information about potential danger (Kern, 2021). To assess risk and elaborate safety strategies, women collect informations from direct involvement with violence, the 'but-nothing-happened' encounters, observation, the impact of the media and cultural images of women, and shared knowledge of family, friends, peers, acquaintances and co-workers (Stanko, 2008, p.123). Equipped with the information they gathered and trusting their intuition, women can then decide whether or not to face their fear, rather than avoiding the space. This negotiation over safety to use the space is what Hille Koskela calls the audacity and disobedience of "bold women" (1997, p. 311).

Going further, the third type of strategy that emerges from the geographical literature is through confrontation, to reclaim the space and advocate for a right to the night. The best example of this strategy seems to be activism, with the development of night marches. Starting from the late 1970's, feminist activists organized 'Take back the night' demonstrations in North America, in cities like Philadelphia, New York and San Francisco to draw attention on violence against women. With the simple objective of winning the fear over, the path of these marches would cross the neighborhoods perceived as dangerous, in the night time, while women were chanting slogans and flooding the street with presence and noise. Later on, these marches were exported to Europe under different names, and also organized regularly in other countries like Canada, or more recently, India. Leslie Kern, who also participated in these marches in Toronto, wrote: "Take Back The Night is not just about reclaiming the night, but also the space: the movement insists that women have the right to access all urban spaces at all times, in a safe and confident manner" (2021, p. 141). This shows that if the initial goal of these marches was to condemn disproportionate violence against women, it transformed with time into a political claim to reappropriate the space, and especially the night space. It must be noted that this third strategy of reclaiming the night is limited because of its danger; the women deciding to reclaim a space by being present in it can face retaliatory violence (Starr, 2021) or what Marylène Lieber calls "rappel à l'ordre" [call to order] (2008, p. 264) – this point will be addressed in depth in

the next section. In that form, the third strategy can only take place safely in specific dispositions: reclaiming a space collectively is less risky as reclaiming a space alone.

However, as this dissertation will show, there are many forms of reclaiming the night, not only through formal organized protests. It can include all sorts of examples in everyday life, in which women, individually or collectively appropriate a space or a time where they were historically marginalised. With this idea in mind, it seems reasonable to highlight how the presence of some women in male-dominated environments can be associated with the third strategy. In the temporality of the night, evolving or working in masculine spaces such as bars or clubs means challenging the fear, the gender norms and taking the risk to be exposed to some violence. Geographers have not yet researched thoroughly the specific field of the night, but some sociologists and criminologists have initiated the work. The next section will present this work, which questions how the women working at night are experimenting and reacting to violence.

1.2.1. Research on women working in the nightlife

This section explores the literature focusing on women's work in the nightlife and their experiences while coping with gender-based violence. If there is little geographic research on the topic of nightlife work, Parikh's research in Mumbai (2018) already provides interesting insights on the stigma around women working at night. By studying the mobility of women taking night shifts for outsourced call centres, Parikh highlights the following paradox. In a context of neoliberal modernization, where this industry disproportionately employs women for night shifts, she found that they were also simultaneously demonised as "bad women" for being out on the street at night, that their presence in the public space at night "challenged cultural notions of respectability". In that sense, their struggle to make mobility decisions to commute in the nocturnal urban city occurs "within individual and societal concerns about safety [convenience] and respectability" (2018, p. 13). Drawing on Parikh's contribution, Shaw (2022) explored the geographies of nightwork, highlighting the double standard between men and women: "female night workers become essential in maintaining connections between global cities but are nevertheless labelled as irresponsible for being out at night" (2022, p. 1155). Shaw also stresses how night work can be a "marginal activity"; with employment being "poorly paid, taken by migrants or those with few qualifications, out of necessity rather than choice" (2022, p. 1157). This gives insight on the working conditions of the women taking night shifts in

nightlife venues and hints their potential precarious state. Shaw also highlights the risks inherent to night work, stating that the work itself can be risky or expose the workers to secondary risks of violence: "these secondary risks are themselves felt more severely by women and other marginalized groups" (2022, p. 1157). However, he concludes by explaining how the need to explore and unpack inequalities in night-time labour cannot blind scholars from the fact that the work can be enjoyable and chosen - for many reasons, such as "the reduced surveillance/greater freedom, the ability to produce and create new social spaces, the ability to mix work with leisure". If undoubtedly the night workers can enjoy the nocturnal elements of their labour, Shaw's take somewhat romanticizes the night and overlooks issues that affect particularly marginalized groups. This dissertation aims to contribute to understand how night work presents more risk for some populations, namely women and gender non-conforming people.

Mentioning "secondary risks of violence" in night work, Shaw does not go into details (2022, p. 1157). It seems fair to assume, based on numerous criminology studies on the nightlife environment, that he could be referring to risks of excessive alcohol consumption, illicit drug use, and sexual violence (Quigg et al., 2020, Graham et al., 2017; Hughes et al., 2008; Tinkler et al., 2018). In a systematic literature review published in 2020, scholars from health and harm reduction identified no less than 61 academic studies on nightlife-related sexual violence. The review does not showcase any geographic work, but identifies nightlife as an environment that encourages "high risk behaviors" and constitute a "hotspot for sexual violence" (Quigg et al., 2020). The studies are relevant to mention here as they clearly expose the risks faced by the workers every day in their work environment: "Visiting pubs, bars and nightclubs has been associated with increased risk of sexual violence" (Quigg et al., 2020). Scholars found that in nightlife venues, females were more likely than males to experience nightlife related sexual violence as a victim, and males more likely to be a perpetrator (Fung et al., 2018; Hughes et al., 2008). Moreover, five of the studies focused on the ways female noctambules were altering their behaviours to reduce their level of vulnerability when frequenting nightlife settings (Fileborn, 2015; Graham et al., 2017; Graham et al., 2014; Kavanaugh & Anderson, 2009; Kovac & Trussell, 2015). The strategies mentioned in these studies included limiting alcohol consumption, avoiding walking around alone, avoiding interactions with strangers, alerting others, shaming aggressors, and watching other women's drinks to prevent spiking.[2]

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[2] To spike a drink means to put alcohol or drugs into someone's drink without their knowledge or permission.

These criminology studies and the emerging work of geographers such as Aparna Parikh or Robert Shaw helps to fill in the gap on the topic of gender-based violence in night work, but it also shows that there is still a lack of geographical studies on the lived experiences of the workers of the nightlife themselves. In geography, it is hard to find literature on the topic. Some authors mention the festive spaces as "patriarchal, heteronormative and heteronormativizing atmospheres" (Hubbard, 2008), while others highlight the "(re)production of the patriarchal heteronormativity" in dance bars in Southern European countries – such as Portugal (Nofre, 2016). In his study on the flirting tactics employed by dancers in a bar located in Bairro Alto, Nofre reveals how individuals of both genders are guided by gender roles (Moore, 1994) and constantly renegotiating space together, with the men pursuing the women, or "female hunting" (Grazian, 2007) and women feigning indifference. More recently, the sociologist Emily Starr, one of the few references working on female bartenders, argued that "the bar is a masculine space" (2022), and "the barworker is performing "men's work"" (2022). She added that the low skill wage jobs – like bartending or waitressing – are supposed to concentrate "a higher rate of sexual harassment, safety violations, and job insecurity" (Christopher, 2012). Her contributions on retaliatory violence and the workers construction of a rebel identity will be developed later in this section.

In this context of high-risk masculine space and patriarchal heteronormativity, one could argue that the women bartending or working in the nightlife venues expect to witness some violence happening during their shifts. But interestingly, most studies focus on the bartender's role as potential allies for either encouraging predatorial behavior or mitigating conflict. In the first case, an interdisciplinary article on the promotion of sexual assaults by bartenders shows how their interactions with the customers were subtly encouraging sexual assault (Duque et al., 2020). The article demonstrates that bartenders might promote sexual violence, for instance, by sharing personal information about a female customer with a male client (giving her phone number, talking about her 'reputation'), helping males clients flirt by increasing their status in the women's eyes (by being friendly, favoring them), using alcohol to disinhibit her (by adding a bigger dose in the drink, offering shots), or jointly disregarding the women targeted (making fun or insulting them, which is easier if they speak different languages). These strategies revealed by Duque et al. (2020) show how male customers can make alliances with the bartenders in order to get in touch with a target and establish sexual encounters. While in some situations, the alliance between them helps to initiate an encounter and is not necessarily harmful, it seems like in most of the cases described the men allied are not respecting the

women's consent and objectifying her, reducing her to her supposed sexual availability in the venue. Moreover, the article also describes a "win-win" situation for the bartender, where the alliances are not only benefiting the customers: when the alliance works out and the customer successfully obtains an encounter with a female customer, the bartender can count on his new ally to help him back to flirt with someone else in return. The worker will also get a financial reward, by securing a new regular and earning more tips. Duque et al.'s (2020) study sheds light on how central the role of the bartender is in the promotion or prevention of sexual assaults by male customers, and highlights an interesting dynamic of alliances around the bar counter, but it focuses only on the customers and does not address the violence that could be faced by the bartender himself or herself.

Other sociology studies point out the responsibility of the bartender in mitigating conflict between customers to prevent aggression in public drinking establishments. This is the case for at least one American program entitled 'bystander intervention programs', which are aimed at bar staff (Powers & Leili, 2017), and one European program called 'STOP sexual violence' (Quigg et al., 2021), which aim to raise awareness on sexual violence and encourage bar staff's willingness to intervene. The book *Raising the bar* also explores the link between bar staff intervention and the prevention of gender-based violence (Graham & Homel, 2008). Recently, Coffey et al. (2023) explored the gendered politics of women managing violence in bar work in greater depth, by addressing the potential of placing women in high-ranking positions in drinking venues. According to their study, women's capacity to "recognize, intervene, and defuse potentially violent situations" is a fitted solution to respond to the problem of men's violence in the venues (Coffey et al, 2023, p. 1). These studies are very helpful to understand the central role that the bartender plays in dealing with violence in nightlife spaces. However, they show that most of the academic attention is focused on their willingness to intervene in mitigating conflict or caring for the customers, and they omit to mention how the bartenders and bar staff can be the targets of violence or can be affected by this violent environment. This gap in the literature can be put into perspective through the idea advanced by Fileborn (2015) on the way young adults produce their own safety during a night out. She essentially claims that, in nightlife's risky environment, women have interiorized the idea that their safety is their personal responsibility. She argues that because women are "inculcated from a young age to assume responsibility for the prevention of sexual violence", feeling safe in the context of a night out in a bar "is not a natural or automatic state of being", it is "the result of the active and strategic choices" they make during the night (Fileborn, 2015, p. 2). Applying this perspective

to bartenders, and especially female bartenders, can be useful to understand that they probably do not have the natural capacity to intervene in situations of conflict because they also need to produce their own safety. This provides insights on the internal negotiation that could happen every time this situation presents itself, and also shows that the management of their own safety, according to Fileborn, lies in their own hands. Once more, these studies linking the production of safety, the risky environment and the central role of the bartender/bar staff show a clear gap in the literature; no geographic study has addressed the bartender's production of safety yet. However, two articles can bring some material to help understand their experiences. Both were written by female scholars whose fieldwork consisted in working in nightlife spaces as bartenders or waitress. While they do not specifically study the strategies to avoid or defuse gender-based violence, they provide an in-depth analysis of their experiences of violence at the bar.

Marie Bonte is a geographer specialized in Beirut's nightscapes. She defended her PhD on the leisurescapes in the context of the post-conflict situation in Lebanon. After finishing her PhD, she went back in a detailed article on her approach of fieldwork as a female foreigner researcher. She explains that her working experiences in bars as a waitress in Beirut helped her realize how the venues are a "masculine world", with a "gendered division of labour" (Bonte, 2020). Because she did it herself, she could describe the expectations placed on the women who work there. As she says, "bars and restaurants are, generally speaking, places of performance and even of doing gender: providing good service is like prolonging the feminine stereotypes associated with availability, deference or kindness" (Bonte, 2020, p. 118). She notably quotes an advice given to her by another bartender: "*The smartest thing is... smile. Don't react*". Moreover, she describes night outs during her fieldwork where she was successively targeted in three modes: predation, protection, and seduction :

> During the same evening, I was in turn a person to be seduced (offered drinks, invited to dance), a prey (touched without being asked), and a person to be protected. This gives rise to three modes of interaction: predation, protection and seduction, which mirror male performance: that of the barman who offers drinks, that of the customer who allows himself an aggressive approach, and that of the regular who assumes a role of protection and informal control. (Bonte, 2020)

Marie Bonte is not the only scholar mentioning different types of sexist interactions in the nightlife, this was also done by Emily Starr, a sociology researcher who spent 15 years of her life bartending on the side of her academic career. In a unique article addressing the construction of the identity of bartending women, Starr (2022) puts in opposition the "respectable women" and the "pariah feminities". By "respectful woman" she is referring to the ones that stay in the

domestic space and fit gender stereotypes. "Pariah feminities" is a concept developed by Schippers (2007) to describe those who negotiate their way into masculine spaces – like she did when bartending. While both of these two approaches that women adhere to can face violence, the second category gets exposed to what Starr calls "retaliatory violence", because they stand "outside the protections of respectable femininity" (2022, p. 800). According to Starr, retaliatory violence aims to put back the female staff in their place, to punish them for wanting to challenge the gender norms, for being intruders in a forbidden space (see also Kern, 2021). Retaliatory violence can take many forms, and Starr details them very clearly:

> Sexual harassment, fetishization, and double standards are systematic forms of heteronormative punishment that ensure women bartenders remain feminized workers in masculinized workplaces. (2020, p. 800)

Drawing upon interviews with bartender and observation, she highlights how sexual harassment is predominant in nightlife jobs, "in some work culture, sexual harassment becomes part of the job" (Starr, 2022, p. 803). She explains that the blurred lines between work and harassment can be justified by the management choices, who privileges customers over workers' wellbeing. The consequence of which is that in case of harassment from a client, the female bar staff can only rely on their individual responsibility to mitigate it. She also notices that there is a tendency to sexualize the workers in order to make profit, to increase revenue by attracting more customers (Guerrier & Adib, 2000; Wolkowitz, 2006) which exacerbates the employee's vulnerability.

Going further into her analysis of the construction of the female barmen identity, Starr (2022) shows how the workers are torn between two positions. On the one hand, the female bartender's powerful role in the venue makes her "one of the boys" (p. 807), which makes her a witness of male's behavior towards women, a group in which she belongs, and a potentially powerful ally to men. On the other hand, her position outside the hegemonic femininity makes her deviant: she is "the other" (p. 807), or the "women of ill repute" (p. 812) which exposes her to retaliatory violence. In different words, the female bartenders depend on men for protection in this masculine space, while being victims of them.

With this article, Starr underpins the idea that the women who opt for the third strategy, that is, claiming space and negotiating their way into masculine atmosphere, will inevitably face violence. In this sense, her work is central for this dissertation, to articulate the different notions of gender-based violence, women's strategies, and claim-making. However, and this is important, Starr nuances that most of the female bartenders encountered during her fieldwork

are not aware of the underlining political statement that they make while bartending - they just bartend. Most of them do not think about their job as a way to reclaim a space that is dominated by men. As she puts it, the rebellious bartender is largely "apolitical" (2022, p. 811). This can be justified by the easy access to the job and the precarious state of most workers. Observing the lack of literature on the topic, this dissertation aims to question the political connotation of working at night for women. How politically charged is it to be a woman working at night? Can we understand violence as a retaliatory sanction against women working at night, transgressing the patriarchal order? Can they advocate for better working conditions in the nightlife? What is the role of care in this issue?

Care is defined in the dictionary as protecting someone or providing what that person needs (Cambridge, n.d.). In the academic literature, the notion of care was popularised by Carol Gilligan with her Ethics of Care (2003) which led to define care as socially engendered and undervalued, socially and economically. For this dissertation, care is approached as a social practice and labor. It is defined in the Care Manifesto as a capacious word, whose meaning embraces not only 'hands-on' care – "the work people do when directly lookin after the physical and emotional needs of others" – but also care as a "social capacity and activity involving the nurturing of all that is necessary for the welfare and flourishing of life" (Chatzidakis et al., 2020, p. 13). In other words, "care is our individual and common ability to provide the political, social, material, and emotional conditions that allow the vast majority of people and living creatures on this planet to thrive" (p. 13). In this manifesto, the authors advocate for alternative kinships of care, that go beyond family and especially motherhood – the archetypal caring relationship – to extend to the 'family of choice' in LGBT circles, the care for 'strangers like me' among marginalized social groups, or 'caring across difference', in hospitality or war for instance (Chatzidakis et al., 2020; see also Weston, 1991; Roseneil & Budgeon, 2004; Byron, 2021). Following this idea, the authors argue for a promiscuous ethics of care, universal and indiscriminate, ranging from the most intimate relationships to the most distant. The notion of care in the nightlife is still underexplored. However, it can be found in the work of queer author Laurent Gaissad, who focused on harm reduction and gay sexual encounters in festive settings. He advocated in a 2022 conference for better "Care on the dancefloor" in gay parties, inspired by the work of the Australian author Kane Race. This idea of care on the dancefloor will be extended later on to of workers of festive settings who are women or genderfluid.

Studying the literature shows that gender-based violence in the nightlife has been already researched mostly by sociologists and anthropologists, but that there is little research material

in geography – or else – on the violence experienced by nightlife workers who are women or gender-nonconforming. This literature overview also shows that in the few existing work, the topic has not yet been examined in relation to the right to the city. This will be the objective of the next section.

1.3. Reclaiming the right to the nocturnal city

In this section, I review the literature on the right to the city, beginning with Henri Lefebvre's foundational work and then exploring the contributions of other scholars who have developed this concept further. I aim to examine how this right relates specifically to women and seek to identify how a "right to the night" materializes in Lisbon for women who work in the city's nightlife. While this section is largely conceptual and experimental, it provides a critical framework that will be highly relevant for interpreting the findings of this study.

1.3.1. The right to the city

The right to the city is a concept proposed by the Marxist philosopher Henri Lefebvre, introduced in his book *Le droit à la Ville* (1972). This section will present the original concept, and then discuss the contributions from other researchers who have built upon it.

The book *Le droit à la Ville* was published originally in 1968 in the context of the French revolts of May' 68, in which he participated[3] (Costes, 2009). The May 68 movement, led jointly by factory workers and far left university students, protested against the Gaullist government and authoritarian structures, patriarchy, paternalism, capitalism, and consumerism. It rejected traditional institutions and called to establish egalitarian relations at work, at school and in the family. In France, it took place mostly in occupied universities, factories and in the streets of the Latin quarter in the centre of Paris. This period lasted a few months and was punctuated by vast spontaneous demonstrations, national strikes, street riots, and protest art. The movement has a major cultural significance in the French imaginary, as it transformed the society by

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[3] In her book Lire Henri Lefebvre, Le droit à la ville, Vers une sociologie de l'urbain, (2009), Laurence Costes suggests a "close connection between The right to the city and the surge of Nanterre" (the university where he was teaching, and where the May' 68 movement started). In the introduction of the third edition of the book (2009), Remi Hess and Sandra Delceux subscribe to Costes' suggestion, arguing that Lefebvre and his group of teaching assistants were not at all strangers to the agitation, but its instigators.

marking the beginning of the 1970s sexual liberation, and it is still frequently referred to as a fundamental shift in the history of French society (Ross, 2008). The context of the publication of *Le droit à la Ville* is crucial to understand the tone and the objectives of Henri Lefebvre (Iveson, 2011). In the introduction, which sounds like a warning, he writes:

> "Cet écrit aura une forme offensive (que certains jugeront peut être offensante). Il vise à ouvrir une réflexion vers des possibilités" [In English: 'This writing will take an offensive stance (which some may find offensive). It is intended to open up the possibilities'].

Lefebvre (1972) states that the questions relative to the city or the urban reality were not yet seen as political, but the city and global agrarian civilisations were in crisis. Lefebvre (1972) affirmed that his objective was to bring these issues into the political consciousness and agendas. To do so, he provides a critical analysis of the urban problematic, defining the city as "a projection of society on the ground" (1972, p. 54). Most of the book focuses on describing and reflecting on the crisis: according to him, the city was progressively becoming a product, prioritizing exchange value over use value. Lefebvre projects that under the influence of capitalism, the inhabitants who 'use' the city will be marginalized in favour of those who seek to capitalize on the 'exchange' value of urban space (Kyumulu, 2013). This critical analysis aims to open up the reflection around the conceptualization of a right to the city, which he initiates at the Chapter 12. There, Lefebvre starts by defining a need for theoretical reflection to redefine the forms, functions and structures of the city. He points out the social needs inherent to urban society, that he opposes to the individual needs dictated by the consumer society.

From this, an argument emerges. Lefebvre frames the right to the city as a superior form of rights – the "right to freedom, to individualization in socialization, to habitat and to inhabit" (1972, p.125). He argues that first, the city has a specific need for qualified places, places of simultaneity and encounters, places where exchange is not based on exchange value, (but on use value), trade and profit. Moreover, the users need to not only use the city but to participate in its creation, to contribute to rethink urban life. The concept implies "the right to the [city as] oeuvre, the right to participation and appropriation (clearly distinct from the right to property) (Lefebvre, 1972, p. 125). The ideal city according to Lefebvre, "would be the ephemeral city, the perpetual oeuvre of the inhabitants, themselves mobile and mobilized for and by this oeuvre" (1972, p. 124).

For Lefebvre, the city as he defined "is dead, but the urban persists in the state of dispersed and alienated actuality, of germ, of virtuality" (1972, p. 96). However, he believes that it is possible

to move beyond the concepts and theory of the city, through the praxis (social practice) of the urban society. In that case, it is possible to envisage building a new city:

> "On new foundations, on a different scale, under different conditions, in a different society – neither going backwards (towards the traditional city) nor forwards (towards the colossal, shapeless agglomeration)" (1972, p. 97).

Lefebvre argues that the right to the city is "emerging as a cry, a demand" (1972, p. 107). Here, there could be an interesting parallel to make between the revolt of May 68 and Lefebvre's point of view, as he repeats on many occasions that this transformation must be carried out through praxis, and by the working class, the same one that occupied the factories and led the strikes. He also argues that science and the arts – the ones who occupied the universities – should be at the disposal of the urban revolution. This is notable as the topic of this dissertation focuses on the right to the night of the workers of the nightlife in Lisbon, and expands to the experimental practices of an artistic self-managed collective.

Overall, Lefebvre's original publication uses critical analysis to initiate the conceptualization of the right to the city as a utopian concept. It can be understood as a revolt, a cry for change, it points out where the city fails, and how it could be. However, Lefebvre (1972) does not give a clear definition of the concept. In his words, the right to the city can be defined as "the right to urban life, to renewed centrality, to meeting places and exchanges, to rhythms of life and timetables that allow full use of these moments and places, etc." (1972, p. 133). He suggests exploring this through either "transduction" or "experimental utopia" (1972, p. 100). But there is no explicit illustration or materialisation of the right to the city in the book, and there is not really any alternative proposal of a model. For example, when he says that he wants the "urban reality to be for "users" and not for speculators, capitalist developers or technicians" (1972, p. 118) he does not specify how this could be achieved. Besides minor propositions, such as limiting the role of the car in the everyday life and in the economy, he suggests to rethink centrality as a new 'playful centrality' (1972, p. 122), focused on culture, sport, play, and gathering. This extends into rethinking leisure. Lefebvre believes that our societies should no longer oppose everyday life with partying, or everyday life with leisure, but rather restore the party to everyday life (1972, p. 118). That way, reclaiming the city could also be through partying, through the praxis, in nightlife.

Many authors (Harvey, 2008; Mitchell, 2003; Marcuse, 2010; Soja, 2010; Iveson, 2011; Merrifield, 2011; Kyumulu, 2013) have since then attempted to remobilize critically the concept to define what the right to the city means in the modern city (Purcell, 2005), who is entitled to

it (Dikec, 2005), and what rights are concerned (Attoh, 2011). According to many authors, the original concept seems to remain a good alternative framework to fight the current neoliberal city. For instance, the American geographer Kafui Attoh highlights how the concept is inspiring, especially in its approach of the city for users and as oeuvre:

> "The right to the city signifies a great deal. It signifies the right to inhabit the city, the right to produce urban life on new terms (unfettered by the demands of exchange value), and the right of inhabitants to remain unalienated from urban life" (2011, p. 674).

The geographers Don Mitchell and Joaquin Villanueva also underscore the right to the city as a right that embodies an argument for not being excluded, and especially for "full political participation in the making of the city" (2010, p. 668). The sociologist Mehmet Barış Kyumulu builds up on it by explaining how Lefebvre's framework is not only asking for more democratic participation, but implying a "kind of political participation directed towards transforming the social processes that shape urban space and its very governance" (2013, p. 3). In other words, "this participation is to remake the city in novel ways and not to reproduce its existing dynamics" (2013, p. 3). In that sense, Lefebvre's original cry can be understood as intemporal and a great inspiration to think the city differently.

The literature also shows that the right to the city has been appropriated by scholars in many different conceptions; the authors explore the right to housing (Marcuse, 2008), to transportation (Bickl, 2005), the political freedom to protest or occupy (Mitchell, 2003), or define what public space is (Gibson, 2005). Previous literature on the concept has focused on marginalized groups such as homeless people (Phillips and Gilbert, 2005; Van Deusan, 2005), or immigrants (Dikec, 2005). These disparate interpretations lead Attoh (2011) to qualify the concept as vague and radically open. It seems like the concept as it was thought by Lefebvre can be easily applied to many different aspects of urban life, so why not applying it to the night or to gendered exclusions? According to Attoh, "the right to the city, as becomes clear, can constitute rights of many kinds and can belong to groups and individuals whose struggles may appear quite distinct" (2011). The 'capaciousness' of the concept enables it (Mitchell & Heynen, 2009), and is also beneficial to unify the struggles of marginalized groups around a common concern (Mitchell & Heynen, 2009). And, as Attoh argues (2011), many rights can converge into the collective right to the city – for example, the right to housing connecting with the right to participate in urban design, connecting to the right to affordable transportation.

Sadly, most of the literature shows that these authors are struggling – because of the openness of the concept – to agree on its practical scope. They either point out the incoherence of the

concept or question the relevance of the original framework. On the incoherence for example, Attoh (2011) demonstrates that on the spectrum of the right to the city, when different rights collide, it is hard to understand which one prevails. Kyumulu argues that in its application, Lefebvre's work is turning nowadays into a "conceptual vortex", that is "pulling together contradictory political projects under the banner of the right to the city" (2013, p. 2), by mixing together grassroot militants and business-oriented institutions. According to him, this is particularly bad because the international agencies like the UN-HABITAT are turning the concept into a business-friendly version, "co-opting Lefebvre's notion into exchange value terms" (2013, p. 15).

In that sense, regarding the relevance of the initial framework, the authors participating in the theoretical debate point out that, due to the process of globalization, the original concept became obsolete and needs to be reframed. Many different proposals have been made in this sense. For David Harvey (2008), the right to the city is a human right. For Andy Merrifield (2011), it should be conceived as a politics of encounters. On the other hand, Kyumulu (2013) argues it should be conceived from a Marxist perspective emphasizing the use and use value, and especially labor. The point of this dissertation is not to discuss these contributions, however, it seems interesting to note the last one, as labor is a central topic of this dissertation.

This section gave insight into the right to the city's original concept as formulated by Henri Lefebvre, and it aimed to explain the basic framework and its limits. In the next sections, departing from Cameron Duff's advocacy for an affective right to the city, I will discuss how to adapt and rethink the concept of the right to the city to the condition of women working in nightlife venues in Lisbon, in order to formulate the concept of the right to the night.

1.3.2. Discussing women's right to the city

As it was showed in the previous section, if the uncertainty surrounding its concrete meaning persists, the right to the city can risk becoming a mere "catch phrase" (Purcell, 2005). In the literature, there is little research on women's right to the city. Usually, it takes the angle of pluralistic citizenship, arguing for more inclusive participation of women in decision-making (Wekerle, 2000), or the angle of public space. As Fenster argues, fear to use public spaces is preventing women to fulfilling their right to the city (2005, p. 224). But another way of understanding women's struggles could be through the affective right to the city, a concept

proposed by Cameron Duff (2017) to underline the materialization of the right to the city through the analysis of its affective and performative aspects. The following section will explore the author's contribution and demonstrate the relevance of analyzing the struggles of women working in the nightlife within the framework of the affective right to the city.

On the theoretical debate surrounding the right to the city, Duff agrees that the right to the city is an effective strategy for building an opposition to neoliberalism and its impact on the use of public space (Iveson, 2011), or for reviving interest in more radical democratic organization of urban areas (Harvey, 2012). But being aware that the concept can be an "empty signifier" (Harvey, 2012), Duff steps away from the abstract debates over the meaning of the concept, to contribute with a more practical approach. He questions how users and inhabitants embody the right to the city, how they claim it, and how they are affected by it. His objective is to study how "to make the right to the city a social, affective and material reality for individuals and groups living precariously", because he believes that the "ethical and political significance" of the concept "depends on *who* gets to fill it with meaning" (2017, p. 2). This emphasize on the *who* is important. As the concept is open, it means that anyone can appropriate it, and make it converge into one big collective right to the city. For Duff, whose ethnographic work focuses on homelessness, the signification of the right to the city can be found in the "everyday experience" of homeless people. For the topic of this dissertation, it comes from the everyday experience of the women facing gender-based violence in their nightlife jobs. While they are completely different struggles, they can both bring meaning to the collective right to the city. As Duff argues, the presence of the homeless people's bodies and belongings in the public space is itself showing the failure of housing, the failure of the collective right to inhabit the city. But he believes that as much as it is a failure, their appropriation of a corner of the street is actually embodying and performing their right to the city. By doing so, they are claiming their right to access shelter, security and belonging.

In his analysis, Duff mobilizes many concepts that can be extended to the topic of this dissertation. Firstly, he mentions non-representational forms of politics (Vasudevan, 2015) that he connects with the lived experience of the right to the city. In Vasudevan's analysis of occupation-based practices as means of protesting, the political movements who choose to occupy public spaces in order to reclaim the city and protest against austerity measures are choosing to use non-representational forms of politics. Non representational forms of politics refer to practices that do not rely on traditional forms of political representation – such as elections, political parties, or legislative bodies – but rather on alternative modes of contestation

such as direct action. They are different sets of practices that embody the political claim, that embody the contestation. Here, in the case of the occupations, they unfold as spatial politics, materializing in an improvised and creative manner, to stimulate social transformation; they are "different ways of extending bodies, objects and practices into space in order to create new alternative lifeworlds" (Vasudevan, 2015, p.318). With Duff, the everyday lived experiences of homeless people living in the city streets are also non-representational forms of politics, they are practices that embody a political claim, the one for the right to housing. This means in his analysis that homelessness is a struggle for place, a struggle for "the right to inhabit place, to linger and thrive in the city" (Duff, 2017, p.3). This struggle takes the form, not of a protest or an activist collective, but of homelessness itself (by inhabiting the street, disposing belongings and visibly living there) – which is called 'everyday forms of resistance' (Scott, 1985): subtle, daily, non-confrontational acts and strategies employed individually and informally by subordinate groups to resist the domination of more powerful actors. This concept of the everyday forms of resistance included in the framework of non-representational forms of politics can be easily remobilized for women. Keeping in mind how unsafe and fearful women feel in the city, especially at night, the everyday decision to work in a male dominated environment, to walk through a dark street, to risk being present in a space that excludes them and/or scares them, and elaborating daily strategies to resist subtly to patriarchal oppression falls easily into the category of the everyday forms of resistance. From the three strategies mentioned in the previous section (avoiding, taking the risk, and reclaiming), the last two qualify easily as everyday forms of resistance.

There are many ways to perform everyday forms of resistance while at work. The literature on everyday forms of resistance in the service industry is focused on the notion of doing gender (Tibbals, 2007; Hall, 1993). The original concept of West and Zimmerman (1987) defines doing gender as "complex array of socially guided behaviors that render particular pursuits and activities as evidentiary expressions of masculinity and femininity" (Tibbals, 2007, p. 731). Moreover, "doing gender produces, reproduces, and legitimates normatively acceptable versions of masculine and feminine expression" (Tibbals, 2007, p. 731). Ethnographic studies as the one by American sociologist Chauntelle Tibbals (2007) question how doing gender can be done as a form of resistance in waitressing jobs. She observes that, as much as refusing normative ways of 'doing gender' can be a form of resistance, performing normatively accepted versions of gender can also be done as a method of resistance in some workplace settings. This contribution shows how performing and embodying gender in the workplace can be associated

to non-representational forms of politics. It gives insight into the ways in which workers can perform and reclaim their right to the city, to work in the city, especially as women.

Going further, on the scale of the body materializing the right to inhabit or work in the city, Duff mobilizes Judith Butler's work on the 'performative theory of assembly' to formulate a 'right to appear'. The philosopher, a famous contributor on the topic of gender performativity, is useful here to understand the role of the body in non-representational forms of politics. While formulating her theory of assembly, Butler (2015, p. 18) explains the power of the body in political assemblies: "showing up, standing, breathing, moving, standing still, speech, and silence are all aspects of a sudden assembly, an unforeseen form of political performativity that puts liveable life at the forefront of politics". In other words, she describes how one can perform a political claim with their body simply being present in a certain context. This means that the very presence of a precarious body, or a women's body in the case of this dissertation, its simple activity in a space is an unforeseen but concrete form of political performativity. It is this access to the political through performativity alone that Butler calls 'the right to appear': a "right to be visible, to occupy public space, to ventilate social and political concerns, to act" (Duff, 2017, p. 2). As Cameron Duff uses the right to appear to read homelessness as a claim for the right to the city, it is interesting to apply Judith Butler's right to appear to women who work at night. Keeping in mind the vulnerability of women in the night environment, their avoiding strategies and concerns for safety, questioning their right to appear in the night starts making a lot of sense; women's bodies, instead of being removed, are present and active. In a masculine work environment, filling the space with a working body, that is gendered and sexualized or excluded, and accomplishing daily tasks, simple tasks that the job requires, performs a political claim, materializes the right to access the night as a workplace, to be treated fairly there and challenge the status quo.

Thus, Cameron Duff's take on the affective right to the city provides an interesting framework to study the women who work in nightlife settings. It enables to complete the contributions of feminist geographers, to understand these women as inhabitants embodying their right to the night. The following section will question what exactly the right to the night can be, by exploring the academical and non-academical literature and showcasing some of those who "remake the city" (Duff, 2017).

1.3.3. Women's right to the night in Lisbon

But what exactly is the right to the night? What does it mean for women? What set of rights does it refer to? The expression already exists in academic and non-academic writing, but remains very superficially explored.

In a broader sense, the right to the night refers to a debate over the cohabitation of and conflict between different uses of the night time space (Guérin, 2019). Studying the conflicts of use reveal the cohabitation of these 'night rights': there is the right to work or have a business in the nightlife industry (for business owners, workers), the right to sleep or rest (for residents), the right to party and for leisure time (for local party people, tourists), and arguably the right to develop night-time tourism (for institutions), etc. But more than a contested space, the nocturnal city space needs to be considered as commons in the sense of Lefebvre; a space where the collective, rather than private interests, governs access and use. The nocturnal urban spaces are to be reclaimed for collective use rather than allowing them to be consumed as commodities for profit. As Jalón Oyarzun (2017) points out, "to think of the night as commons" implies considering the night as fulfilling many different social roles, which opens a discussion about the right to the night.

However, and this is the most important here, scholars underscore an "asymmetry" in the 'right to the city' for women, particularly noticeable at night (Hernandez et al., 2020). Looking at this asymmetry, the biggest contribution to a conceptualization of women's right to the night was done by the French sociologist Catherine Deschamps in a book chapter titled Le genre du droit à la nuit Parisienne [The gender of the right to the Parisian night] (2018). Usually, Deschamps focuses primarily on sex work, but here she also draws upon a few other of her own ethnographic works to conceptualize the right to the night, namely one on the "everyday act of stepping out of the metro" at night in a busy Parisian Street, and one on the practices of encounter of multi-partner women in Paris (Deschamps, 2011). As Deschamps (2018) observes a gendered use of space shaped by the feeling of insecurity at night, she refers to Lefebvre's 'right to the city' and argues for a need to start discussing a 'right to the night'. She explains in a related article:

> It is not so much or only a 'right to the city' that is not equally shared, but a right to the night, which embodies the imaginary of danger and ontologises various feelings of social belonging. (2017, p 212)

Deschamps does not really define the concept in this chapter. I understand it rather as a call for a deeper reflection on the right to the night, where she mostly comes back to some of her findings to question the access of women to the urban night. Comparing the different discourses of the women from her studies, she observes that even for the women who may be more 'at ease' than others in the urban night, the 'invisible walls' remain (Di Méo, 2011). In that sense, her conception of the right to the city and the right to the night seems to be a right to access and enjoy the urban night and its opportunities – also in its material and symbolic resources. It revolves mostly around safety in freely accomplishing different activities (such as practicing sex work, using transportation and walking alone, encountering partners in the night time).

This approach is backed by Night Studies scholars Hernández-González and Carbone, who questioned a few years later the gendered right to the night in Mexico (2020). Remobilizing Lefebvre's right to centrality and right to difference (1968), they underscored the forms of exclusion and inequality that women experience in the nocturnal city. They found in their study that women of different social classes had opposite approaches to their mobility at night, depending on their need to work. According to the authors, this "heterogeneity" can be explained by the "informal learning resulting from daily experience of the night" (2020, p. 18). In this respect, Hernandez and Carbone suggested that the gendered use of the urban night was a failure of women's right to the city, especially women's 'right to difference' – which implies the recognition of spaces for encounters and conflicts (Hernandez-Gonzalez & Carbone, 2020).

In addition to these preliminary conceptualisations, the authors identified a need for intersectionality in the right to the night. As much as Hernandez and Carbone did (2020), Catherine Deschamps (2017) argued that studying the night invites for an intersectional approach of the urban and temporal inequalities (see also Kergoat, 2009). According to Deschamps, "the equal right to the city and to the night should be questioned both in terms of the potential for mobility and use of public space by different populations, and in terms of their ability to participate in the interplay of interactions across all timeframes" (2018, p. 35).

The few contributions on women's right to the night display a gap in the literature to define the concept. At this stage, it has been mostly explored regarding mobility concerns in different public spaces and the gendered feelings of safety at night. As for now, it seems like the right to the night could mean many different things for women – the right to leisure, to party, to move around freely, alone, to not be harassed or scared, to work or rest, to meet other people, to have sexual or friendly encounters, to be treated as equal as men – these themes revolve mostly

around safety and freedom. Building on Lefebvre's right to the city, what does women's right to the night refer to? While this dissertation follows Duff's (2021) call to focus on the concrete materialization of rights, rather than conceptual debate on what these rights might mean, I am interested in suggesting the following preliminary definition.

The right to the night must be understood as polysemic, as a concept that encompasses many kinds of rights. Following Lefebvre's framework of the right to the city, the right to the night could be defined through the materialization of the right to difference, and of the right to access the night spaces. This would mean practically a right for women to exercise their right to difference by accessing spaces of encounters and conflict, night spaces that can be occupied and transformed according to their practices, their experiences and identity. To some extent, it means to reject the nightlife spaces designed only for men, where women feel like 'guests' (Kern, 2021). To a lesser extent, it means to advocate for nightlife spaces where differences are not merely tolerated but celebrated, where women and gender non-conforming people can thrive – and work under good conditions – as much as men. Moreover, it is interesting to look at the right to the night while thinking of the night as commons. In Lefebvre's framework, the city as commons is arguing for a collective use of shared resources rather than evolving in privately owned and controlled spaces. The right to the night as commons would designate a nocturnal city that is accessible to all and commonly used, where women belong in and produce the shared resources of the night-time economy equally, for the common good of all users. This idea can be extended to the right to create the city, to Lefebvre's city as oeuvre. Seeing the night as oeuvre implies for women to perpetually participate in the creation of nightlife, to contribute to create the nightlife that they want to work in. In that sense, the workers of nightlife venues are not only using and appropriating the work space, but actively producing it. This means that they have enough power and influence to make some changes in the venue they work in, whether these changes are material or social.

To summarize, the right to the night encompasses not only access to nocturnal spaces for work and leisure, but also the demand to thrive there, to be treated with respect and equality in these spaces. In that sense, women's right to the night would be a right to access the nocturnal space, for it to be a space of encounters (or work in the case of this research), to be safe, to be treated respectfully and equally. It would also mean having enough power and influence over the workspace culture to be able to change it, if necessary. And to actively participate in the production of space, and to have a say in the discussion over women's struggles in the night. In this sense, the right to the night emerges as a political right, akin to the way in which Lefebvre

(1972), Harvey (2008), Mitchell (2003), Marcuse (2010) have conceptualized the right to the city. That being said, we can now move forward. Having attempted to define what the right to the night could mean, the rest of this dissertation will follow Duff's (2017) argument; because it is more important to make the right to the city a reality, the main goal should be to study its concrete materialization. Accordingly, the meaning of women's right to the night can be found in the way they embody it. In this dissertation, the focus will be on the women using the night life space as a working space. Studying their struggle with gender-based violence and how they build strategies for their safety seems to be a good entry door to understand what the right to the night could mean to them.

While the right to the night remains a vague and underexplored concept, the notion of 'taking back the night' or 'reclaiming the night' is more present in literature. It could be argued that literature on 'taking back the night' is already addressing different forms of claiming for the woman's right to the night. We can identify five practices highlighted by this field of literature. The first one encompasses protesting, and perhaps its most visible example are the Take Back the Night demonstrations previously mentioned (Sandberg & Coe, 2020). The second set of practices involves educating the professionals, especially training bar staff to react to violent situations or helping women in need of assistance (Hardcastle, Hughes, & Quigg, 2015). The third one is through policy-making, by writing academic projects, manifestos and creating labels (such as the Sexism Free Night Project[4], Manifesto da Noite[5]). The fourth set of practices includes the everyday forms of resistance of the women themselves, workers or partygoers (Starr, 2021; Fileborn, 2015). And finally, a fifth set of practices involves the creation of new spaces, namely safe spaces for minorities.

This section aimed to conceptualize women's right to the night. It showed how the concept has been under explored and attempted to build on the few existing contributions to highlight the different meanings it could have. It confirmed that the gendered right to the night was asymmetrical and explored different forms of resistance, of claiming for a right to the night. Most importantly, following the reasoning of Cameron Duff on the right to the city, it argued that women's right to the night must be approached by looking at its concrete materialization, through the study of their practices, of their strategies against violence in the nightlife.

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[4] The Sexism Free Night Project is a European academic project focusing on sexualised violence in nightlife environments, which also created an awareness campaign and training material for professionals

[5] Manifesto da Noite is a manifesto approaching many topics relevant to the nocturnal city in Sao Paulo, Brazil, reflecting on regulations and aiming to conciliate the right to the city with the right to the night

The conceptual chapters of this dissertation started by looking at the literature on gender-based violence at night. It underscored the relevance of night studies and a growing interest for the study of the nocturnal environment, especially for the gendered nights since the 2000s. It then focused on gender-based violence by discussing the different approaches to define it, and introduced the notions of slow and fast violence. Then for the second part of the conceptual chapters, the focus was put on the contributions of gendered and feminist geographies on gender-based violence. It looked at the gendered use of space, territory and the role of fear in women's relation to space at night. It introduced the different kinds of strategies that emerged from the literature review (avoiding, managing and fighting), before moving on to the few contributions focusing specifically on women working in nightlife environments. Taping into criminology and studies on sexual violence in the nightlife, the literature review asserted how academia describes nightlife as 'hotspot for sexual violence', concentrating risks of violence against women. It showed how many contributions described the nightlife spaces as violent and patriarchal, but also highlighted how few authors focused directly on the workers of the venues. While some authors studied the role of the staff to mitigate conflicts and/or care for the customers, very few research has been led on the bar staff's experience of violence as targets and/or witness. This section looked into the few works focusing directly on women working in the nightlife, revealing important notions such as the nightlife as a masculine world, retaliatory violence, performance, violence as part of the job, and the central role of care. Lastly, the third section explored women's right to the city at night. It went first into Henri Lefebvre's original concept of the right to the city and its discussion, to then transpose it to women working at night. It questioned women's right to the night building on Cameron Duff's take on the affective right to the city (2017) and dialogue with Butler. Acknowledging the asymmetry in women's right to the night, it attempted to conceptualize what the right to the night could mean for women working at night, and argued that more than a meaning, the importance of this work would be to study the workers everyday practices to reveal the materialization of the right to the night. The next section will present the methodology and the field.

Chapter 2. Methodology

2.1. Research objective

This research stems from the interest in understanding the role that gender violence plays in the experience of women who work in the night time economy. Studying night time economy workers requires understanding how their professional experience in the nightlife is tied to their gender. Developing a career in the night time economy as bartenders, waitresses, managers or promoters, these women are exposed to a spectrum of discrimination and violence in their workspace. Through an ethnography of their workplaces, the main objective of this project is to understand how women's work experiences in Lisbon's nightlife are shaped by the gender-based violence they face, and how they build strategies to resist such violence while at work. Ultimately, this dissertation aims to reflect upon how women's strategies can be understood as an embodied materialization of the right to the night.

To achieve its main objective, this dissertation addresses three research sub-objectives:

1. **To understand how the experience of violence is shaping woman workers relationship with their workspaces.** Following the idea that space is not neutral and carries affective values, I aim to collect women's insight on the way the violence affects them, how and where they feel it, and how it impacts their work and sense of belonging in the workplace.

2. **To identify the strategies developed consciously or unconsciously by woman workers to avoid, manage or face violence.** These strategies are to be analysed through a geographical lens as a way of negotiating and appropriating space. They can be individual or collective, they can go from the scale of the body to the scale of the city.

3. **To question whether these strategies can be understood as a way of fulfilling a claim for a right to the night as women.** This final objective questions to which extent the right to the night is achievable in woman's nightlife work and explores the work of the awareness team of a bottom-up collective to study the claim for women's right to the night.

The research is based on an ethnography of women's workplaces at night, which includes a set of interviews with woman workers. The choice of the ethnography for this study is justified by the idea that "the subjects are the experts of their own lives*" (Starr, 2021). According to Duff

(2017) the solution to avoid emptying the right to the city of its substance is to use it as a way of combating exclusions and to take a direct interest in marginalized users and their experiences. In that sense, the purpose of this ethnographic study is to engage with the lived experiences and practices of specific marginalized groups, women here. Ethnography was created and has been developed in the field of anthropology first. It is a method of collecting and interpreting data that requires for the investigator to participate in the object of the study. This method, also called participant observation, has been used in geography since the 1970s (Jackson, 1985). Its use gained popularity in the 2000s when geographers started to look at spatial practices and performances, in addition to spatial representations, narratives and discourses (Herbert, 2000; Morton, 2005). In that sense, applying ethnography seems to be the best method to study gender-based violence and its effect on women's use of night space. It allows the researcher to observe women at work, in their practice of space, while being present and active in the same space. According to Crang and Cook (2007), there are three phases of work in this methodology: entering the field, documenting it through writing or photography, and having informal conversations and interviews. By getting increasingly more invested and immersed in the field, the ethnographic method allows a deep understanding of the experiences of the population and to conduct more in-depth interviews.

This dissertation takes methodological inspiration from three strands of ethnographic work. First, it can be argued that the type of ethnography done here could be linked to a so-called "geo-ethnography", as it places the notion of space in the core of the analysis. As Nofre et al. (2016, p. 6) explain, "geo ethnography has most often been used to describe the coupling of Geographic Information System technologies with ethnographic data" (for instance, Matthews, Detwiler, & Burton, 2005). However, Nofre at al. (2016, p. 6) provide an alternative understanding of geo-ethnography, one that "aims to provide a richer and more in-depth analysis of individuals and groups by examining the intersection of space, human expression and interactions". This dissertation follows this interest in undertaking ethnographic work that attaches great importance to space.

Secondly, the dissertation entails a profound engagement with autoethnography. This approach involves the reflexive study of the researcher's own experience in a given field, and it has been highlighted as a strategic method to address sensitive research topics in fields where other participants might have limitations in communicating their experiences, for instance, due to fear of reprisal (Boğaç, 2020; Butz & Besio, 2004; 2009). Given that autoethnography has been criticized due to the danger of universalizing a single person's perspective as truth (Dauphinee,

2010), the approach is applied in this dissertation in tandem with traditional ethnography, which also encompasses semi-structured interviews, and action-research.

Lastly, the dissertation experiments with an action-research approach. Here, action-research is broadly understood as a form of ethnographic research in which the researchers is engaged with the political transformation of the social relations in the field. While this dissertation does not engage directly with the application of a participatory action-research methodology (Kindon et al., 2007; Mason, 2015; Koopman, 2024), the ethnographic work led the author to actively engaging with an emerging collective whose work is tackling matters pertaining to women's safety in the nightlife and therefore the women's right to the night.

The rest of this chapter will be divided into three sections. The first one will be addressing data and methods, which will be structured in three points: entering the field, data collection, and data analysis. Then, the methodology will address my positionality and ethical concerns. Lastly, it will provide some context on the field of study, by mentioning the academic research already led on Lisbon's nightlife.

2.2. Data and Method

The fieldwork was conducted from February 2024 to June 2024. It took place in Lisbon, capital of Portugal. It consisted of an ethnography which can be broken down in three sequential steps: (1) Entering the field; (2) Data collection, and (3) Data analysis. These steps are described in detail in the next subsections.

2.2.1. Entering the field

During the fieldwork, I experimented with a range of ethnographic observation techniques. It started with direct observation, evolved into participant observation and, at some occurrences, it evolved into complete observation.

The field of study was delimited accordingly: the venues selected to be observed are all located in the city centre of Lisbon, in historic and or touristic areas easily accessible by walk and or public transportation. The term 'venues' designates bars – from all kinds, ranging from cocktail bars to wine bars or festive clubbing bars – restaurants, social and cultural spaces, as well as

small clubs, all open during the evening and/or at night. The fieldwork initially intended to focus on the neighbourhoods of Bairro Alto and Intendente, but, following the natural movement of the snowball sampling method, it progressively extended to take place in the following neighbourhoods: Bairro Alto, Cais do Sodré, Rossio, Bica, Santos, Intendente, Príncipe Real. The decision to limit the fieldwork to the city centre was motivated by practicality and accessibility reasons, as well as the objective to focus on the heart of the city which offers a more concentrated and diverse sample of nightlife venues.

Now that the field is delimited, let us dive into the different observation technics that were used during the fieldwork. I am applying the term direct observation to the first times I was going to the venues to observe the layout, opening hours and prices, feel the atmosphere, understand the staff organization, get a glimpse of the practices and the interactions between bartenders and customers. It involved being alone to have freedom over my movements and time management. Most of this observation style happened in the beginning of the fieldwork, in the months of February and March. It took place mostly on weekends, two to three times a week, during the beginning of the evening – starting from 7pm until 9pm on average. The intention was to scout the locations to collect practical data and gather general knowledge about the venue before either coming back to conduct more observation, ask for a job, or have informal conversations or interviews with the workers. I took photos and recorded my impressions on a voice recorder, to then transcribe them to a fieldwork journal on my computer. This observation style revealed itself to be more challenging than I thought, as my solitary presence in the venues was unusual and I was targeted by men who made me feel uncomfortable.

Direct observation then evolved into participant observation. Crang and Cook (2012) describe this "engaged immersion" (p. 59) as in tension between participation which implies "a close, intimate connection with others" and observation which implies "a distanced separation from these same others". Thus, participation observation is understood as the "prolonged insertion of the investigator into the living environment of the investigated" (De Sardan, 2008, p.3), while the observation consists "as much in observing as in listening, smelling and, to a lesser extent, tasting and touching" (Oloukoi, 2015, p.37). In my case, it consisted of immersing myself in the venue as a customer this time, to experience the space as a regular girl partying with her friends. Following Bonte's approach, of blurring ethnographic work with my private leisure life, I subscribed to her "deliberate confusion between the time of the survey and the time of my own nocturnal leisure activities" (2020, p.116). Going out this way was the most spontaneous thing for me and my night owl group of friends. On one hand, I was feeling safer

and more spontaneous, following the group's preferences and networks. On the other hand, I could use the opportunity to spend more time in the venues, and notice the practices of the workers and customers, observe their body language, how they interact with their space, which place is avoided, which one is appreciated, and their interactions. I could sometimes naturally provoke informal conversations with the venue's staff or customers, or ask for the feedback of my friends.

Another way of entering the field and conducting observation was through working as a bartender in two venues. The first job was bartending from 6 pm to 3 am in a touristic bar in Bairro Alto. The second was voluntary work in a cultural association in Intendente from 7 pm to midnight. They both involved working in a team, in mostly Portuguese and English, and to complete tasks such as taking orders, making the drinks, putting them on the counter, managing the cash machine, cleaning up, while staying active in the bar space and interacting with the customers. As Marie Bonte described it for her fieldwork in Beyrouth, working as a bartender to study the nightlife can be associated to "complete participation" (Gold, 1958). This form of participation refers to a situation in which the researcher is "deeply embedded within the social context they are investigating and is seen by the participants as a complete and legitimate member" (Bonte, 2020, p 117). This method enables gathering the most data, as it places the researcher in the middle of the field, in complete immersion. By working, it was possible to have access to the other side of the counter, to be closer to the workers, see the bar from their perspective, and observe them better, but also to exchange about our experience and gain deeper insight on the hidden rules and strategies they/we employ. It was easier to enter the field and collect data this way, about others and about myself through autoethnography. However, this observation style was only used for short periods of time – two days in the first venue, one day in the other. Firstly, because the amount of data gathered was already abundant and sufficient, but mostly because the involvement in the field was too intense to be extended for longer. Especially in the Bairro Alto venue, the bad pay and violent environment made the job too demanding to pursue the autoethnography. These different techniques were complementary to collect data. I used them successively based on my level of comfort and data needs. I documented my observations in an ethnographic notes file on my computer, usually on the same evening or the day after. Additionally, I made voice recordings in real-time, took photographs, and had regular conversations about my fieldwork with my circle of friends and my tutors.

Before and during ethnographic fieldwork, I also collected information about the history of the nightlife in Lisbon from non-academic literature, newspapers and blogs. To find the

venues in which I undertook ethnographic observation, I relied mostly on a combination of social media use, flânerie, my personal network, word of mouth, and active participation in the local youth scene.

The participants in the sample for the semi-structured interviews were encountered through the same process, thanks to the connections I made through working in a restaurant and a bar, my friends student jobs, social night life, and posting on social media. I made the choice to interview only women working in the nightlife, as well as gender minorities. This selection was based on the feminist standpoint theory (Smith, 1987), which argues that feminist social science should be practiced from the point of view of women. Following this argument, I decided that women's lived experiences should be the starting point of my research on gender-based violence in the nightlife. During the recruitment process, I discovered the term Flinta*, which is a German acronym meaning women, lesbians, intersex, non-binary, trans and agender people. The asterisk represents all non-binary gender identities. I used this term to describe my sample selection when communicating in contexts where its meaning was understood (on social media for example), and in other situations I would keep referring to my target group as 'women and gender minorities', or simply 'women'.

Around the midpoint of my fieldwork, when I had already gained an understanding of the field, I began conducting interviews – from the end of the month of April to the beginning of June. The role of these interviews is central, as they give space to the subjects of this study to express their understanding of gender violence, the strategies they employ, and how they embody and materialize the right to the night by themselves. I used a snowball sampling method to recruit my participants, starting from acquaintances and mobilizing their network. There were two important criteria: to identify as a women or gender minority, and to work or volunteer in a nightlife venue in Lisbon. To build the interview script, I relied on a semi-structured framework, with questions organized around themes, and aiming for an informal tone. Especially when talking about gender and violence, it seems reasonable to give the interview a flexible aspect, to respect the participant's boundaries and potential strong emotions. This approach also allows more proximity. I further describe the interview data collection in the next section.

While I conducted the interviews, the participants' answers to questions about the embodiment and materialization of the right to the night showed me how limited they were in their range of actions. That is, participants displayed little power to change or contribute to

change in the oppressive or dangerous environments in which they found themselves. This realization led me to explore a second field. As I was still conducting the interviews, I got involved in an experimentation within the techno collective that my group of friends created. Originally, this group of friends gathered Portuguese and international young adults around a shared interest for techno music. The group was going out together and organizing house parties, which got progressively bigger, until the collective took the step of hosting raves in some of the abandoned spaces located in the outskirts of the city. As the parties were rapidly gaining popularity in underground circles, some of the women and gender fluid person of the group noticed the existence of predatory behaviors and uncomfortable situations during the parties. Four members of the collective, including me, decided to take the opportunity to do something about it. We decided to form what we called an 'Awareness team', following the model we saw in Germany or France, but also in Lisbon clubs such as Planeta Manas and Outracena. The purpose of the awareness team was very experimental; it was a group of voluntary ravers, that had no prior experience whatsoever in this kind of work, but aimed to set grounding rules, and train a team of volunteers to keep our parties safe and enjoyable. Since we were a grassroots, self-organized collective, any kind of initiative was possible and had the potential to transform the parties. The objective was also to create a physical safe space in each party, and use it to encourage mindfulness around gender-based violence, harassment, drug intake, safety, spatial awareness, etc. The creation and development of this Awareness Team was documented since the beginning. Each event and meetings were reported on the next day in a Word file, with photos, and received feedback from the members and the ravers. Because this initiative developed in my personal time, I did not include it from the start in my thesis topic. However, given that it so clearly became the extension of my research topic, I mentioned it to my supervisor, and we decided to incorporate it as part of the ethnographic study. My participation in this initiative can be understood as an experimental action-research approach. Indeed, after realizing that the women working in nightlife venues have limited power over their workplaces, it seemed interesting for me to explore a different field with more possibilities in the nightlife. With hindsight, it now seems apparent that I created this Awareness Team in reaction to my first fieldwork, to treat the right to the night in a more active, creative and political manner, and to reclaim the nocturnal city through nightlife, through political action within free parties.

2.2.2. Data collection

The data collected from this ethnographic study is qualitative. The full database is comprised of two data sets: the ethnographic notes and the interview transcripts. The ethnographic notes gather descriptions made from the different types of observations (direct, participant, and complete), including informal conversations, photographs, and vocal notes. The descriptions were assembled chronologically in a written document named "Fieldwork notes". The document is composed of descriptions of venues, nights out, reproductions of informal conversations, descriptions of my work experiences, and of my voluntary work within the collective.

The interviews were conducted with a sample of 10 women and gender non-conforming people, aged 20 to 31. Table 1 describes the participants' characteristics. The interviews took place between the 23rd of April until the 5th of June. Eight of them were conducted in person and two on zoom. Six were done in English, three in Portuguese and one in French. They were all translated into English afterwards. They lasted between 40 minutes and 2 hours, with an average time of 1 hour and 19 minutes. The venues where participants worked had diverse profiles – some were small pubs, others were elegant wine bars, while others were big and popular clubbing bars.

Table 1. Characteristics of the interview participants.

Job title	Type of venue	Type of customers	Neighbourhood	Experience
Barmaid	Cocktail bars	Touristic	Cais do Sodré Bairro Alto	2 months 1 year
Bar back	Bar club	Alternative	Intendente	1 year
Barmaid	Cocktail bars	Touristic	Bica Bairro Alto	> 1 year 1 year
Manager	Wine Bar	Touristic	Santos	>1 year
Waitress	Karaoke bar	Touristic	Bairro Alto	6 months
Volunteer	Cultural association	Alternative	Intendente	3 years
Manager	Cocktail bar	Touristic	Rossio	2 months
Waitress	Wine Bar	Touristic	Santos	4 months
Manager	Bar club	Touristic	Cais do Sodré	2 years

	Wine bar		Príncipe Real	2 years
Waitress	Pub	Touristic	Rossio	1 year

To preserve the anonymity of the participants, the choice was made to not disclose their names, their age, their nationalities or the name of their workplaces. Their gender identification and sexual orientation are also omitted, to not easily identify them. For this reason, we only disclose the job title, the neighbourhood, the profile of the venue, and the time working there. The majority of participants worked full time. Some were students or cumulated two jobs, working part time or only in weekends. This was also kept confidential to protect them. Every participant signed an informed consent form and were asked about their anonymity choices. While some participants had left their jobs and were not concerned about maintaining their anonymity, others expressed multiple times their concerns about the potential repercussions – before accepting the interview or during – noting that Lisbon's nightlife is a "small world" or a "village" where they preferred to avoid any possible issues. Every participant agreed to be recorded, and to have their interviews transcribed into a written document. Every participant also agreed to be quoted anonymously. However, at some points of some interviews, participants made it clear that the shared information was not to be quoted, that it was only for me. Most of them asked to read the final version of the dissertation. This caution on their end was totally comprehensible, since the data collected during the interviews was mixing work and intimate topics. I would make sure to make them comfortable. I had a disclaimer in the beginning of each interview, explaining that they could change their mind, delete or modify a part of their interviews if they were not comfortable anymore about sharing. None of the participants made such request.

I opted to structure the interviews into five different sections (presentation and entering the topic; night work; gender-based violence; strategies and alliances; reclaiming the night), with each section containing five or six questions. Table 2 describes the interview script.

Table 2. Interview script. Source: author.

Presentation and entering the topic
1.　　　Introduction of myself and the project, disclaimer.
2.　　　Name, age, gender identity.
3.　　　Can you tell me about your working history in the nightlife? How many years of experience working in the nightlife, positions occupied, which type of venue, which one was your most/least favourite, explain why.
4.　　　Why did you choose to work in the nightlife?

Night work
5.　　　Please describe your typical shift.
6.　　　Where you work, who is in charge (male female age)? how is the team organized? how does the boss manage the team?
7.　　　How was the recruitment process? And the training?
8.　　　As a woman, what do you think people expect from you in this job? What does your boss, coworkers and the clients expect? This was explained during training?
9.　　　Positive and negative points about the job? Do you expect to pursue bartending in the future? Can your position evolve?
10.　　　Do you feel safe in the bar? How is the bar organized for safety? Is this effective? Do you have staff for security? Do you feel protected by them? Who (else) protects you? Did people who trained you mention it?

Gender violence
11.　　　Is there a certain dress code to follow? Certain behaviour, rules or ways to speak with clients? Can you tell me about a situation in which you felt pressured to act or dress in a certain way? How did you feel?
12.　　　What are your boundaries, limits at work? Do you remember one moment when they were crossed? Do you want to describe what happened? Can you tell me where in the bar it was, what time of night it was, or if it was at the beginning or end of the shift?
13.　　　How did you react? How did your work mates react? And the boss?
14.　　　Did you ever refuse to do something ? What were the reactions ?
15.　　　Can you recall moments where you felt uncomfortable or scared at work? Can you tell me what time of night it was, or if it was at the beginning or end of the shift? Did the client show signs of being under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs?

Strategies and alliances
16.　　　In terms of gender relations and safety, what did you learn since you started working? Did you modify your behaviour since the beginning?
17.　　　Do you feel or act different at work? Do you have a different personality at work? What is your work self / work identity like? Does it vary throughout the night?
18.　　　How do you feel comfortable? Where in the bar? Do you have a space to rest?
19.　　　What situations generally make you uncomfortable ? Do you recognise patterns, behaviours ? does your behaviour change throughout the night ?
20.　　　How do you evaluate the gravity of a situation? How do you recognize problematic behaviour, potential violence? How do you react on the spot in that moment?
21.　　　If something bad happens to you, or someone else, do you know how to react? Is there a pre-established protocol in case of violence? Do you have someone to talk to in the workplace, an ally? Who do you feel close to in the workspace? clients/coworkers?
22.　　　How do you prevent yourself from being affected?

Reclaiming the night
23.　　　How do you make people feel safe? How do you help girls feel safe in the bar? Do you feel comfortable intervening in problematic situations? Do you talk about it with your coworkers?
24.　　　Do you feel in power? In control? Like you can add something to the culture?
25.　　　If you could change some things in the place where you work, what would you change?
26.　　　If you could open your own place, a perfect bar, how would it be? What would you change? What would you keep? Can you describe the space and the rules you would implement?

Most of the questions started as open-ended, to let the person answer freely and spontaneously. Then, if the participant needed more guidance, or if the answer needed more details, the script offered follow-up questions, or more specific options to answer with yes or no answers. For example, in the section "night work", one of the questions was "What do you think people expect from you in this job ?". This question aimed to address the concrete tasks of the job, to understand the organization of the venue in greater depth, and how the management communicates with their employees. But it also meant to potentially introduce the theme of gender violence by hinting on other forms of expectations, such as to dress or talk in a certain way, to play by gender roles, to give attention to customers, to perform feminity, or a specific character. Following this open-ended question, there was the option to add a follow-up question about each parties' expectations (namely the boss, the coworkers, and the customers), and if the answer went into gender-based expectations, there was the option to ask if these expectations were clearly enunciated during the training, or implied later, during the work. In the event that the hint wasn't perceived by the participant directly, I moved on and asked later about it more specifically in the section about gender violence.

Another example in the section about gender-based violence is the set of two questions: "What are your boundaries, limits at work? Do you remember one moment when they were crossed? Do you want to describe what happened? Can you tell me where in the bar it was, what time of night it was, if it was at the beginning or end of the shift?" then "How did you react? How did your work mates react? And the boss?" I would ask the first question, then, add the others or not, depending on the answer and the flow of the conversation. It is important to note that this set of question is sensitive, because it generally led the person to share a significant episode that affected them negatively, and for some the gravity of the episode had a traumatic effect. In this case, I would let the person speak as much as they needed, without interrupting, and tried to validate them by showing empathy. I then used the follow-up questions carefully, only if possible and necessary. A question that worked very well – in the section about strategies and alliances – was "How do you feel comfortable? Where in the bar? Do you have a space to rest?". If the person found the question too vague, I would explain that since I am conducting a geographical analysis, I am interested in knowing which spaces in the bar they liked or disliked the most, and why. This question aimed to understand whether some spaces of the bar were associated with specific emotions. By the end of the interview, when we had built enough trust, I would ask about their opinions on changing the nightlife, on caring for others, and give them the opportunity to use their imagination or add a comment.

Interviews were audio-recorded. After the interviews were completed, the audio files were transcribed to text and archived in the project's database folder.

2.2.3. Data analysis

The data collected through these different methods was codified and sorted into tables, with the purpose of finding common points between the observations made in the ethnography, in the autoethnography, in the experimentation and the interviews. The codes were created during the data analysis process.

The emerging codes encountered with all the material were the followings: the pros and cons of working in the nightlife, the diversity of the nightlife offer, the division into neighbourhoods, hyper-festive atmosphere of certain neighbourhoods, survival of some alternative/underground venues, more or less violent atmospheres depending on the neighbourhood and the venue, the precarious culture of night work in Lisbon, gender roles in the recruitment and business model of the venue, gendered organization of the staff of most venues, unspoken gendered rules and expectations towards workers, in the dress code, attitude and tasks, identifying and grading violence, recognizing patterns of violence, reacting to it discreetly in the context of work, the different kinds of strategies employed to prevent, avoid, manage or fight the violence, depending on the personality of the worker and power dynamics (is it a coworker, a client, a boss or manager?), finding alliances or being isolated, the vulnerability of the beginning, gaining experience and building a work personality/authority, the interactions of the working body with the space, the emotions that lie in the workspace; which place is avoided, which place is appreciated, the role played by security, caring for others, having power, changing the culture, reclaiming the nocturnal city through nightlife, writing policies, negotiating gender and safety in free party settings.

These codes were compared and organized into tables with their illustrations. For example, one of the most used tables was about the violence experienced at work and the strategies elaborated by the workers. It was made in three columns; the first was naming the participant, giving contextual data about them and their work, the second column gathered all the types of violence they faced during the work (it could range from concealed slow violence to their most striking experiences of physical or sexual violence), and the third listed their strategies and alliances (the strategies could be spatial, or in their tone, body language, described behavior, etc.), they

could be individual or collective, the 'alliances' refer to their allies, or underline their solitude. When it was possible I quoted them directly in the table. I regularly updated a file started at the stage of the literature review, which was a document that tried to anticipate the findings I might make, to distinguish categories and patterns in the data collected in the fieldwork.

To write the findings, I used the codes and contextualized them with the help of the literature review. I sorted them into categories and articulated them around a spatial analysis, with different scales. I divided them into three main categories. The first one describes the violent culture of the nightlife in Lisbon, with the idea that the nature and severity of violence encountered by the worker differs significantly based on the venue – and the worker's identity. It draws upon material from the observations and the interviews. The second one focuses on the strategies and alliances of the workers, with an emphasis on the spatiality. It mostly draws upon the interviews of the workers. The third one reflects and discusses the topic of the right to the night through reclaiming nightlife, from two perspectives: working in the nightlife venues, and political action in an underground party collective. This section draws upon material from the interviews and the preliminary observations from the Awareness Team experimentation. The latter were used carefully, as to not reveal too much on the identity of the collective and its members, due to fear of reprisal. Moreover, as this initiative is still at its beginnings, with only a few months of activity, the data is analyzed carefully, and put in perspective with the initial field to open the reflection.

2.3. Positionality

The decision to conduct ethnography for this thesis acknowledges that the topic of violence will inevitably have influence on the data collection approach. To study gender-based violence as a woman while using the ethnographic method means risking being subject to some of this violence, to be exposed to dangerous situations, and to have to take safety decisions impacting the data collection. There were many such occurrences during my fieldwork. A good example of this happened during a short phase of autoethnography, while I was working as a bartender in Bairro Alto (Lisbon's most festive and touristic neighborhood). I had initially planned to rely on autoethnography to collect most of my data, which seemed easy since I was used to work as a bartender and waitress for most of my student life. But after two days of work in Bairro Alto, I decided to quit the bartending job and change my method. Even if the position was ideal to

collect data – I was right in the midst of my object of study, completely immersed in my field, witnessing and experimenting many forms of violence, having access to informal conversations with other workers, observing strategies and engaging in exchanges with colleagues about them –, I was too impacted by the toxic environment and felt endangered. The decision to quit this venue was disappointing for my project, but essential to manage my safety. To find a middle ground, I decided to stop working as a bartender and kept going with the participant observation strictly on the other side of the bar counter. Later on, when I felt more secure, I went back to bartending occasionally.

This example shows how my positionality as a researcher affects and enriches my research. On one hand, being a woman, young, white, cis gender, able, coming from a developed and rich country, studying and working in a side job, made me privileged enough to develop a research project in university and also be a desirable worker for this bar. I had already a good number of years of work experience in bars, clubs and restaurants, and knew the rules of bar work, which made me confident enough to enter the field. On the other hand, in this example, I was the victim of my own object of study, being subjected to violence and still lacking resources to protect myself. In other words, my identity gave me the potential to insert myself very easily into my field, but also made me vulnerable and the subject of the violence I wanted to study. Some previous works acknowledge the difficulty of conducting an ethnography as a woman. For instance, in the book *Harassed - Gender, Bodies, and Ethnographic Research*, the researchers Hanson and Richards (2019) show how researchers who are women are gendered and objectified in a way that impacts their research work. They challenge the common understanding of what a "good ethnography" could be – "solitary, dangerous, that requires intimacy to create authentic connections between the researchers and participants" (2019, p. 25). They offer an alternative to the method, a critical approach of ethnography, that they call an "embodied ethnography", as Sharp explains (2020) "that recognizes and explicitly acknowledges that the bodies engaged in fieldwork affect the data collected and the knowledge created from the process" (2020, p. 2). This approach enables gendered researchers to write about "how our gendered bodies affect the connections we are able to create in the field, in interfering with or enhancing our access to the site or to particular types of conversations" (Sharp, 2020, p 2).

In that sense, it is obvious that my identity and how I was presenting myself – a young woman, foreigner, but with bartending experience – facilitated my presence in the field, and my connections with other gendered workers. My fieldwork would have been very different if I

was a Portuguese man. On a positive side, because I am a woman, I did not have to prove myself so much to work or build trust in the interviews; even as a stranger, my participants already assumed I was *on their side*. They usually confided in me during interviews and informal conversations, using formulas such as "we as woman know that…", or by sharing shameful experiences with the thinking that "you also worked at night so you're also going to be empathetic too". In the intimacy we shared, especially during the interviews, it felt on some occasions that they saw me as a confident, a new friend, or to some extent even a therapist, which made me feel somewhat uncomfortable. This intimate approach, coming from shared experiences, gave me the opportunity to collect more sensible data, but in some occurrences, it became a bit overwhelming. Set aside the interviews, on a more negative note, I noticed that my gender sometimes made it harder to conduct ethnography at night, because I could not do it as easily as men do it. As many other female scholars mentioned it (Bonte, 2020; De Raphélis, 2022), doing fieldwork at night alone as a woman made me a suspicious presence, and a potential target. I was awkward entering the venues alone and observing alone, so I usually took the opportunities of my private leisure to link it with ethnographic observations. Group outings enabled me to feel safer, to be a regular customer in the eyes of my surroundings and to be more spontaneous – sometimes I also told my friends that I wanted to go to a specific place for my thesis and they were nice enough to go with me. But it could be limiting, as I could not see myself taking them to the worst places in Lisbon and risking their safety – my poor friends, they were not getting anything out of it. So, sometimes the data was not worth taking the risk. To summarize, most of the time my own experience and positionality made me closer to the field and participants, but I also had to set some boundaries to protect myself, limiting my ambitions.

At this point, it seems necessary to address the issue of the subjectivity of my experience. While ethnographic work like this one is popularizing, it is criticized for lacking objectivity. This topic has been thoroughly debated. Many scholars such as Sandra Harding (1992) argue that it is an illusion to chase neutrality in social science. They believe that rather than searching for an impossibly exact and neutral perspective on the geographical world, recognising and analysing positionality reinforces the rigour of scientific knowledge production. This attitude of acknowledging positionality – "starting by saying where you're talking from" – can ensure a "high degree of objectivity", also called "strong objectivity" (Harding, 1992). I think it has already come to light, I am a feminist woman, and I saw this research – as some of my participants did – as an opportunity to amplify women's voices on a subject that is still taboo. I

personally believe that working in the night is amazing, very fulfilling, I love the nocturnal environment and the possibilities it gives to encounter otherness and explore myself. At the same time, I also dislike working at night because of the pervasive misogyny, backwardedness, and capitalist mentality I experienced at work, and I dislike observing how it affects me and even more other minorities. It is this very paradox that compelled me to study the night, driven by my conviction in the liberation of women's voices and bodies in the nocturnal city. While I am uncertain whether academic research alone can effect profound change, I take solace in knowing that, in my own modest way, I have used my privilege to spark meaningful reflections. The purpose of this dissertation is not to provide neutral scientific knowledge, but rather to uplift women's voices as a contribution to the field – and a form of resistance. This research work is political and feminist, it would not make sense otherwise. Following Donna Haraway, I would argue that feminist objectivity means quite simply situated knowledge (1988).

2.4. The study context: Lisbon nights

This section concludes the methodology by explaining the relevance of studying gender in the nocturnal city in Lisbon. Choosing Lisbon as the research site is relevant because of the scarcity of existing research on this topic. In their article on the Disneyfication of Lisbon night life, researchers Nofre and Martins (2017, p. 116) notice that "most studies on the urban night are almost exclusively referred to Anglophone contexts". This is the case for the cities of London (Chatterton & Hollands, 2003), Philadelphia (Grazian, 2007), New Orleans (Starr, 2022), Sydney (Rowe & Lynch, 2012), and for the UK (Roberts & Eldridge, 2009) and the US (Stanko, 2008; Gardner, 1995), the list is long. However, "far too little attention has been paid to the contribution of the night-time economy to the social, cultural, spatial and economic re-shaping of South European cities" (Nofre & Martins, 2017, p. 116).

In Lisbon, the academic activity is mostly revolving around the independent research group LXNIGHTS, a collective created in 2014 to gather a group of interdisciplinary researchers from geography, sociology, anthropology, psychology and even musicology. Their publications on the urban night in Lisbon highlight dynamics that are specific to South European cities. They intervene in the context of the development of night life as a strategy for attracting tourism and stimulating economic growth, which is a strategy relevant in most of the neoliberal world: scholars highlight that most of the European cities view the expansion of night-time leisure economy as a way to stimulate economic growth with tourism (see Nofre et al., 2023; 2020;

Nofre, 2020; Chatterton & Hollands, 2003; Eldridge & Smith, 2019). But in the case of Lisbon, the development of night life comes along with the intense process of touristification happening since the occurrence of the "tourism boom" in 2017, that made Lisbon become one of the most 'touristified cities' in Europe (Barata-Salgueiro et al., 2017). Most of the publications of the LXNIGHTS group focus on the consequences of this massive touristification of the nightlife, on the spatial, social, cultural, economic evolution of the city at night. We can notice, for example, the use of the concepts of 'touristification' of the night, 'disneyfication', 'party-tourism', as well as the exploration of 'gentrification' processes, the role of Erasmus students in these dynamics, or the study of the 'biosecuritization' of 'hyperfestive' spaces in some delimited neighbourhood, usually Cais do Sodré and Bairro Alto. There is also an interest for exploring the connection between nightlife and community wellbeing, as well as the resistance of marginalized groups. These publications have been very consistent in the past years and bring a good understanding of the main dynamics structuring the evolutions of the nocturnal life of Lisbon. They are usually based on an ethnographic method, which provides detailed descriptions in the articles and a deep knowledge of the field.

The research group does not focus on gendered night studies, but has already explored interesting dynamics, notably in the article "Club Carib": A Geo-ethnography of a dancing bar in Lisbon" (Nofre et al., 2017), investigating the flirting strategies on the dancefloor of Club Carib, a bar located in the Bairro Alto. This article analyses the spatial organisation of the bar and describes the flirt rituals between white female tourists and non-white Portuguese speaking regulars. It reveals how the party space is the scene of reproduction of social dynamics and gender roles, but also a space for constant negotiation between individuals. Set aside this group, there has been few academic projects focusing on the night in Portugal: we can mention a few thesis in urban planning and history (Monteiro, 2018; Vaz Santos, 2008; Fournier, 2021). There are as well a few blog articles (2018) and newspaper articles (Soromenho, 2010) on Lisbon's historical bohemian night life. We can also mention a documentary on the neighbourhood of Cais do Sodre (Torres, 2022) as well as archive videos of the nightlife (Dentinho et al., 1984). Documenting more recent nightlife activity in Lisbon, the magazine Rhythmic Culture published interviews with actors of the local techno scene (2020; 2021), and independent articles were written on the queer, techno and alternative scene (Yeung, 2019; Welsch, 2019; Cafolla, 2018; Remington, 2023). It seems also interesting to note the activity of associations such as Female Pressure Portugal advocating for more equality in the electronic scene by hosting workshops and supporting female and queer artists.

In some spheres of the nightlife, there seems to be an ongoing reflexion on improving the representation of women and marginalized groups in party settings and promoting safer nights in Lisbon. But in the academic coverage, there is still a gap in the topic of gendered night studies. For this reason, this dissertation contributes to collect data in Lisbon on a multiscalar base – the city, the neighbourhoods, the venues, the body, and a theoretical reflection on reclaiming the night.

Chapter 3. The geographies of gender-violence for woman workers and the right to the night.

While this dissertation is focused on violence and discrimination faced by women working in nightlife settings, it seems essential to first acknowledge the positive aspects of night work, highlighting what makes the night-time economy an appealing space for employment. It is important to recognize why women may find night work to be both interesting and fulfilling, even though this dissertation will address the challenges and darker realities of their experiences – the dark side of night work. This broader perspective ensures a more balanced understanding of the dynamics at play in women's participation in the night economy. During their interviews, most participants said to appreciate working in a job where they can be social and meet individuals in this specific setting. They shared their stories of encounters spontaneously, and how they thought alcohol helped people loosen up and provoked interesting conversations. They had different motives to start working. Some mentioned that they had the fantasy of working at night, or applied by curiosity, because they wanted to experiment this lifestyle themselves. Others stated that they needed a complementary income and preferred to work at night. Some also stated that their conservative family context did not allow them to enjoy nightlife, so working in a bar was a way of contouring that restriction.

Their discourses show that through work, some accessed nightlife, party spaces, artistic spaces or queer spaces. Others highlighted that, most importantly than earning an income, their nightlife jobs enabled them to learn some skills, either technical – about wine tasting, cocktails making – or social – how to do hospitality service, how to perform as a bartender, how to build authority with customers or manage a team, a space. If the majority were young and saw their jobs as transitory, or as additional income, others pursued nightlife as a career and climbed up to manager positions. Two of my interviewees explained that their experience made them want to open their own venues; one wanted to open a cocktail bar in Lisbon, while one said to be taking courses to become a wine producer and open her own business.

Moreover, and this idea will be further developed later, almost all the interview participants mentioned positively that they matured and that their social skills improved while they worked in the nightlife. If most of them started their jobs without prior experience, they quickly learned coping skills that they kept for the future, like "how to pretend to be doing great" or "how to avoid discomfort". In person, during their interviews, some of them would present the most bubbly and sweet personalities while telling me how they learned to be "rude" or even "scary"

to set boundaries with the customers at work. It seems like they in fact developed their confidence and authority in reaction to situations of abuse, of violence, or insecurity, to prevent them to happen again, and "survive" in the job. For these workers, learning how to be more assertive and impose authority is seen as a positive outcome from their jobs. Their experience working at night seemed to have expanded their personality, to have shown them how they can reinvent themselves and surprise themselves to overcome difficulties. And even if some of them pointed out the negative sexist context, and questioned how unfair the situation was, most of them focused on the positive result in themselves and seemed proud of their evolution.

This chapter presents the findings from the fieldwork. It is organized into three parts. The first part of the findings focuses on the woman workers' experiences of violence. It explores the impact that violence can have on the workers' relationship to their workspace, their practices, and how they produce their safety while working at night. The second part observes their strategies against violence and contextualizes these strategies within the right to the night. The third part shows the limits to the workers' claim to the right to the night in conventional nightlife settings, and explores an alternative experiment in Lisbon to further reflect on the materialization of the right to the night.

4.1. Working in a violent culture

This first section of the findings focuses on the workers' experiences of violence. The section shows how central gender-based violence can be in the nightlife work culture, in all its forms, and how it shapes the workers' relationship to space. More precisely, I describe how violence is understood to be part of the job, how risk is minimized by workers, and how gender-based violence in the nightlife is also differentiated across space.

4.1.1. Violence as part of the job

I have very sweet memories and super bad memories at the same time in this bar really.

This observation made by a bartender summarizes the contrasted opinions the workers had about their experience quite well. In the case of this worker, the very sweet memories refer to her friendly encounters made during work, having fun while working and enjoying the

bartending job itself. The super bad memories refer to her experiences of sexual assaults that occurred during her shifts, progressively falling into drug addiction, isolation, and feeling betrayed by male night friends who sexualized her. The mixed assessment made by this participant came back often during interviews and has already been identified by scholars like Starr who remind that, in some work cultures, even during the day, "the organization of work embeds sexual harassment within workplace cultures, thus becoming part of the job itself" (2021, p. 803). At night, this means that dealing with harassment issues has become part of the daily tasks a feminized worker needs to accomplish during their work shift. The fieldwork revealed that this banalization of violence can lead the workers to minimize the impact of violence on their job experience. Workers had a tendency to mention violent events or their fear of violent events as something common, or normal, that was negative but not enough to make them want to quit.

The following illustration is an extract from my fieldwork journal, relating my personal experience as a bartender working in a touristic bar in Rua Atalaia, in the "hyperfestive atmosphere" of Bairro Alto (Nofre & Malet Calvo, 2019). It recounts some of the violence I have been the victim of in the course of my work. Documenting this violence from the point of view not only of others but myself feels intimidating, but it is also important to show the tangibility and universality of these violent experiences. Eliciting my own episodes of violence to analyze them in this research also carries an empowering aspect. Arguably, if a researcher studying gender-based violence in the nightlife is also subjected herself to gender-based violence in her autoethnographic work, it seems hardly impossible to accuse other women of naivety or wrongly assessing threats. It reverses the blame, showing how much violence is part of the culture, inevitable and banalized as "part of the job".

> Around 22h the bar became pretty full. Groups of customers were arriving in waves, passing by the bar as one of the many stops of their pub crawl. During one wave, a group of British men from London stayed at the counter and got my attention, they tried talking to me a lot. We made small talk about where we come from, the usual, but it was difficult: I understood they were already very drunk, taking a lot of shots and barely holding the alcohol. They didn't seem particularly threatening, but I didn't have a good intuition about them, probably because they were acting very rowdy. In the beginning they were very energized while talking and drinking, galvanized by the alcohol and moving around in all directions, taking a lot of space. Then they started to climb the bar, repeatedly. With the other bartenders we pushed them away from the counter, many times, while telling them "No! You can't do that!", half serious, half laughing. I was pretending like it was just chaotic and funny, but inside I was a bit concerned, thinking "what happens if they really climb the counter, they are so unpredictable". One of them especially had very uncoordinated arms and hit the cups hanging from the top of the bar, the glass shattered and fell everywhere on the counter. The broken pieces fell inside some drinks that we were preparing and straight into the ice container, the other members of the staff got pissed and started a verbal altercation. The customer responsible for the damage was not very

conscious of what he did but one of my coworkers pressured him to be careful and he calmed down a bit. At the same time, one of my coworkers, a Brazilian man, was trying to flirt with me in French, while pouring beers and entertaining a couple of Portuguese customers, using the few words he knew to amuse them. I didn't like that he was doing this, but I am used to this kind of behaviour, and I found it quite harmless, so I didn't react so much in the beginning. But when he started to repeat "Je t'aime mon amour" on loop, I stopped him abruptly – "calma" – which made the clients laugh, and made me feel just bad. While this was happening on one side of the bar, I remember the group of English tourists becoming even more crazy a few meters away, being very loud, screaming and fighting each other, making sexual jokes and even imitating sexual acts in front of me. To get my attention, they pretended to use the bar as support for sexual intercourse, looking at me and waiting for my reaction. I was busy making a cocktail and on autopilot mode, so I didn't see them at first, and didn't react, but when I understood what was happening, that they were waiting to get my reaction, I glitched. At first, I didn't do anything, I just stayed there. Then I turned my head to my coworker, in disbelief, crossed his eyes while getting away from the counter. My coworker was also stunned, but he told me "Here this is normal" and laughed it off. I realized at this moment that I was really alone, the maximum I could share was an eye contact. My other coworker kept trying to talk to me in French, another customer arrived, I mentally took some distance from the situation and kept working, just trying to go through the night before resigning.

This extract of my field journal highlights many things. First, it gives a good description of the chaotic atmosphere that characterizes the venues of Bairro Alto past 10pm, with a controlled and vibrant mess, to which we add the sound of music blasting in the speakers, the videos of customers dancing over the tables on the TV screens, the street vendors trying to sell flowers and lights. It shows well how the customers and staff interact around the counter, how alcohol and flirting are a big part of the nightlife culture there. Second, it also shows how violent the atmosphere is: there is screaming, fighting, broken glass everywhere, and we have to physically push back and pressure customers to not climb the bar. In addition to that, the violence directed to me as a woman and a worker is overwhelming: my coworker is harassing me in French to bond with the clients, I am the only woman at the bar and I get sexually harassed by customers, in a very obvious way, while the other bartender does not react to my distress, only tries to mitigate the situation by using sarcasm. Third, this whole scene concentrates different types of violence (unwanted attention, sexualization, physical and verbal violence, sexual harassment), but the violence there is never addressed, it is accepted as if it was just part of the atmosphere. The only time something really causes a problem is when the bar itself is attacked (being climbed or covered in broken glass). It is protected by the workers, who use violence unapologetically (pushing back, yelling, intimidating). However, it is shocking to see that when the violence is directed towards a worker, especially a new girl, there is no response and no ulterior conversation about it. During the shift, my coworkers and I went through other tense moments, but we were able to distance ourselves, to not take things too seriously, we were still laughing and chatting together. We did not get into any conflict together, because I decided to just ignore and quit the job. In that sense, the description shows how violence can be banalized,

how it can be accepted, at the expense of victims, whereas it means verbal violence, sexual harassment, or physical confrontation. The feminist geographer Pain explains the banalization of violence as a way of threatening and enforcing social control over women. According to her, sexual harassment "evokes fear of more severe sexual attack through routinely creating a state of insecurity and unease amongst women" (1991, p. 421).

But then how to deal with violence? In some of Lisbon's most festive venues, in the neighborhood of Bairro Alto especially, security agents play an important role in regulating the chaotic atmosphere. The presence of bouncers can bring a sense of control, and add to the feeling of safety of the workers. However, it can in some situations add to the violent atmosphere. According to the following participant, who was working in one of the touristic bars of Rua Atalaia, the bouncers' violence was the only solution to punish sexist behaviour:

> When the people are drunk and then we have to call the bouncer and they grab them and they throw them out [laughs] it's normal for us, when we… when you're working with them, after three months you will be ok with this. Because when I went there, when it was my first time, I saw someone being beat up like this and I saw the blood, it was so horrible for me what should I say horrifying for me I was like oh my god I have never seen something like this

In this quote, this worker recalls feeling shocked when witnessing a customer being beaten to blood, after she called the security on them. Her reaction is understandable, she is witnessing a spectacular and unusual act of physical violence. But then, as she mentioned many times during the interview, she got used to it. Seeing blood at almost every shift became normal, and she did not feel bothered anymore, or responsible for it. In her case, her exposure to violence was multiple; the physical violence between bouncers and customers came in response to gender-based violence, in addition to the racism she was experiencing during her shift. She explained during her interview that she was used to being grabbed or touched by the customers while she was waitressing in the room, and that the loud music and busy atmosphere of the place only allowed her to rely on the bouncers to defend herself. She could not talk over the music to the clients, so she took the habit of calling the bouncers systematically in case of problems. So, in this case, the physical violence from the bouncers, that shocked her initially, was normalized, because it came in response or in addition to many types of abuse from customers and staff, that was degrading and generated a lot of stress. In this example too, and even with the presence of security staff, violence progressively became just part of the job for the worker.

A key to understand why, despite the presence of women in the venues, the violence against them is so banalized and accepted, could be through the study of the gendered work organization of nightlife venues. Scholars showed it before, the nightlife is a masculine

universe. Starr argued that the bar is a masculine space where women were performing men's work (2021), while Bonte described the gendered division of labor in a pub in Beirut, where she worked as a waitress, in immersion into a "masculine, alcoholic world" (2020, p.117). According to Bonte, "to say that bars are a masculine world means that it is men who run them, occupy the most advantageous positions and expect women to respect predefined roles" (2020, p.117). During my autoethnographic work as a bartender in rua Atalaia – which I understand as a form of complete participation (Gold, 1958), I observed the power dynamics in the bar and realized that I was working in a masculine universe:

> Out of five workers, we are three women. There is a manager who is very well respected, a promoter in the street who seems to be the star of the venue, with a lot of influence, and me at the bar. There is also a male bartender next to me, and another guy washing dishes. At first glance, I get the impression that here, most of the prestigious jobs are held by women. But throughout the night I understood: the boss is a Portuguese man, the regulars are his friends, we are made to understand that they have power, that we must respect them; they drink without paying, have the best table and ask for tailor-made cocktails. I must do what they ask, that's clear. Same for the police that comes in and out for drinks. The bar is equipped with an inflatable doll and other objects that sexualize women's bodies, and the televisions show videos of customers on tables dancing enticingly. I quickly realize that if women seem to have responsibilities here, it's more for the image, in reality I have been put at the bar so that I am visible, so that I'm the image of the bar, like the manager and the promoter, but in reality, the ones who make the rules are the men.

In this description, I describe the power dynamics in the venue: who is in charge and who is not, who has power and can negotiate, and who obeys. This bar is organized as many others in the form of a pyramid, with men on top, reinforcing the idea that Lisbon's nightlife is ruled as a masculine universe. There is at the lowest rung the gay male dishwasher, and the new bartender women (me), then higher, the straight male bartender, a bit higher the manager and promoter who are both women, and on top of the pyramid the male owner and his friends. Their privilege comes from many intersections of domination dynamics: they are white old men, Portuguese, resting and enjoying their time of leisure as a group, when the rest of the staff is foreigner, young, queer or women, new colleagues who do not know each other, working. During my shift, this group of men was enjoying the best table of the venue. They were very polite with me, and gazed at my work, making some comments or encouragement. There is a paternalistic tint there, but also a form of control: they were evaluating me, as much as the manager did, but they were also evaluating the manager. In that context, it is hard to disrupt the power structure and negotiate with the top of the pyramid. To respect the power structure, I understood that I need to provide a good service by doing gender (Hall, 1993), which means to reproduce feminine stereotypes associated with availability, deference and kindness to the

owner and his friends (Bonte, 2020). Doing gender and doing a good service seem incompatible with negotiating the rules or reacting to gender-based violence.

Therefore, violence holds a central place in the job, it is banalized and accepted by the workers as a "part of the job". Workers cannot counter it and struggle to negotiate the power dynamics. The next section will look more closely at the violence experienced by the workers.

4.1.2. But in the end nothing happened

The data collected from the observation and the interviews showed that the women and gender non-conforming people working in the nightlife venues were exposed to: namely double standard, sexualisation, objectification, moral harassment, intimidation, degrading or misogynistic comments, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual assault, verbal violence, transphobia, fatphobia, queerphobia, racism, unwanted attention, rape, chemical submission, micro-aggression, stalking (non-exhaustive list). Practically, it could take the form of being forced to dance, to kiss, being touched or grabbed, being yelled at, not being listened to and or trusted on their knowledge, having to argue with customers about the rules of the venue, receiving transphobic comments, comments about their bodies or physical appearance, like fat shaming or sexualisation, being drugged, followed home, harassed by a coworker/manager/owner, or dealing with double standard (having to prove themselves more than their male colleagues, doing the harder tasks or less valorised tasks like cleaning the bathroom repeatedly).

Among all these forms of violence, two main categories of violence can be distinguished: "fast violence" and "slow violence" (Nixon, 2011). The first one, fast violence, designates the acts that are visible and generate a "widespread concern", according to feminist scholars (Christian & Dowler, 2019). It characterizes the public, the rapid, and the spectacular kind of violence (Christian & Dowler, 2019). The fieldwork revealed that some of the workers were exposed to fast violence, like sexual or physical violence in their workplace, as the next quote illustrates:

> You know all the time I was… in general I was feeling safe, and in the beginning, I was under the [supervision of a] Brazilian guy, I was like "his girl", but then when he went out, I was like ok I'm the boss here you know I need to be strong. Because one time, there was a big family of Italian people. It was all the bar for this Italian family, and they were like from 18 to 60 a big family of men and women, and it was good for us because it's good money. Italians are crazy you know [laughs]. So, we were working and the Brazilian guy told me 'I'm going outside to pick some ice', I said 'ok', and I promise it was like 5 minutes no more, and one old guy came

inside of the bar – it's a private zone you know – so he came inside and he took me and gave me a kiss in the face, and also [shows how he touched her body] and at that time I was like 'ok I'm going to be strong, I'm going to say to this guy to go outside', but I was like in shock. And then the Brazilian guy came, and he saw all the situation like 'what the fuck', I was shaking and crying and he said 'you can go outside, if you need something you can tell'. And at first, this was the first thing that happened there, and... and then I went inside again to keep working you know, I can't stop working. And this guy tried to come inside again, and at that time I was like 'no, no'. And I stopped him, and I put him outside of the bar, like he couldn't come inside, you know.

In this quote, the bartender shares a story where one of her customers sexually assaulted her while she was working alone in the venue. In this case, it is very easy to identify sexual violence: this man she does not know waits for her to be alone, goes behind the counter to kiss her and touch her without consent. The fact that she is in shock, that he tried two times, and her strong physical reaction (crying and shaking), added to her coworker's reaction validates the episode as something violent. If this episode is so clearly identified as violence, it could be because the story is shocking, but also because it fits the stereotypical stranger rape paradigm (Fileborn, 2015): the man is a stranger, old and probably drunk, he sexually assaults a young woman, without hiding and gets away with it.

However, it is important to note that this bartender was subjected to many more repeated forms of violence, including objectification from regular customers, misogynistic comments from her boss, and double standards between her and her male colleague. She mentioned them openly during the interview, but did not give them the same importance as her assault story. In that sense, the fieldwork revealed that it was harder for participants to recognise slow violence (Nixon, 2011); the kind of violence that is less spectacular, that happens daily and has a discrete nature. Some examples of this slow violence in the nightlife include sexist jokes, discredit, intimidation, or double standards. The workers tended to minimize the gravity of acts of slow violence, or say that they were lucky enough so that "in the end, nothing happened". To unpack this expression, I argue that even if they seem less significant, these acts of slow violence in the nightlife cannot be minimized, they are to be understood as part of a continuum of violence. Their banal, everyday nature, actually supports and annunciates future acts of fast violence, like the assault of the bartender, because they forge the right violent environment for it. In that sense, the repetition of small acts of slow violence does not come in opposition to shocking acts of fast violence. As feminist scholars argue, fast and slow violence have to be treated as a single complex, as they co-constitute each other (Christian & Dowler, 2019).

During her interview, one participant mentioned that one of the owners of her workplace was "a little bit of a wild card". She said that he had an inappropriate behavior with her, but that in

the end nothing happened. When I asked her if she agreed to tell me more about him and his behavior, she answered:

> Yes sure, it's totally fine! Nothing like, hmm I don't know what is the level of craziness or something but like hmm nothing physical ever in terms of like whatever some kind of super physical thing that could happen so there's that […] But this owner, I always thought his behavior was a little bit questionable, he was just this charming – in the beginning – extroverted and seemingly warm person that always used to say sentences like "oh we have to get all the waitresses to be women, I only want women waitresses in the wine restaurant because they're just so nice to look at" you know all this type of things, which to me didn't really sit well because I immediately understood the tone through which he is saying that, I don't think he cared that much about the job aspect of the place at all. But eventually he was the one who was drinking a lot of the wine there, and when closer during the evenings when he had drank plenty amount of booze and he was visibly intoxicated he was the one who was coming to me and asking me "oh do you want to drink a glass of Porto wine with me" on the shift like "I allow you, I am the owner I allow you, come drink with us, come drink with us" all these things and I didn't drink with them ever, but I just felt like it was a little bit overstepping a certain boundary, even if the place was chill, but even outside of that I just felt like ahh [mimics awkwardness] and then because he had asked me for my phone number for work purposes because he had to send me something like an invoice or anything, he had started to text me from time to time to ask whether I wanted to meet after my shift and whether I wanted to go for drinks like suggestive type of – what I would think are very suggestive type of sentences that you don't say just because you are a platonic friend to someone which we weren't even [laugh] so anyways all the requests I declined, I never saw that person outside the work environment, but eventually he just he said various compliments from all sorts of nature mostly like 'you look so great' and 'you look so sweet' and 'you look so this and you look so that', which I also thought were too extensive like in frequency to the point where it becomes – at one point it becomes inappropriate and this was that […]. At the end of the day, I would say he made my experience much more uncomfortable when he was there even by the presence and by all this suggestive 'come drink with me' and 'have a seat' have this have that hmm but then he also disappeared pretty much as he came and it switched to another owner.

In this quote, she refers to a waitressing job she did for four months in a touristic wine bar in Príncipe Real. While she worked there, she describes what seems like harassment from the owner, who is her direct boss. Her description fits the spectrum of slow violence (Nixon, 2011), with intimidation, pressure, unwanted attention, physical comments, misogynistic comments and objectification, inside and outside the workplace. While she qualifies his behavior as abnormal, and states that he is overstepping and suggestive, she does not qualify it as harassment. By definition, it was. She was repeatedly receiving unsolicited comments objectifying her, inside and outside the workplace, making her feel uncomfortable and stressed around him. She later explained how his behavior disrupted her work, because she did not know how to juggle between being a good employee, while also putting strict boundaries with her boss and physically avoiding him. The slow violence she received from him clearly affected her mentally and her relationship to her workspace. With everything she said, it is interesting to notice her hesitation in the beginning of the extract to recognize the gravity of the situation, how she struggles to qualify it as violent, because she thinks it is not spectacular enough – she

explains very awkwardly that she does not know the levels of craziness of the behaviors that could happen. Doing this, she refers to her imaginary, to the realms of the possibilities, and she also compares her situation to other imaginary ones, who could be worse. As she says, there was nothing physical, implying that the incidents that happened to her were not that bad. I argue that if employing the "nothing happened" expression to qualify this harassment shows how much violence is banalized in the nightlife, it is important to consider how much the "nothing happened" is actually not coming from luck, but from the many precautions this worker took for her safety: she never gave him a chance to be alone with her, never accepted to be disinhibited by alcohol in his presence, always avoided him physically by pretending to be busy, moving around everywhere in the venue to be protected from him, and never arrived early or stayed late at the venue. These strategies will be unpacked later, but already support the following point: I argue that slow violence is omnipresent in women's night work in nightlife venues and needs to be acknowledged as violence, as much as the most visible, "fast violence", is (Christian & Dowler, 2019).

In the nightlife venues, slow violence seems to be completely underestimated and understudied. For example, talking about double standards and objectification, most of the participants were aware that their recruitment had something to do with their gender first, and not their skills. I noticed that most of the participants and workers that I observed were conventionally attractive, all valid, and presenting features fitting beauty standards. As previous research found (Loe, 1996), women are often hired as waitresses if they epitomize stereotypically feminine characteristics and/or character types, such as the "girl next door" or the "prom queen". In the nightlife of Lisbon, most women were young, had long hair, were thin, white, and took care of their appearance, they wore makeup and trendy clothing. During the interviews, some workers worded clearly that they knew that their presence in the venue, as women, was a business tactic, to attract a masculine crowd. Others implied it, by explaining that women have different skills then men, and know better how to talk to men, perpetuating stereotypes about feminity and doing gender (Coffey et al., 2023; Hall, 1993). Hiring attractive women and displaying their bodies to create business opportunities is a common practice in the nightlife – especially when it comes to hiring promoters. On the sexualisation of women's bodies in nightlife work, Hubbard and Colosi described a similar phenomenon in sexual entertainment in England and Wales and argued that "the city is a sexual marketplace where bodies are constantly on display and all is for sale, with the female form being used to seduce the viewer (2013, p. 601).

These vignettes show the nature of the violence that the workers were exposed to during their work. They show how they are confronted to a diversity of violent acts, ranging from slow violence to spectacular violence, and how the workers themselves were characterizing their experiences of violence, highlighting their difficulties to identify the violence that was less spectacular. This shows that the nightlife venues of Lisbon are a space where some violence is more tolerated than others. However, I argue that despite this distinction, the different types of violence identified in the observation belong in a single complex, a continuum (Christian & Dowler, 2019). The next section will opt for a more spatial approach and show how the kind of violence can be associated with the kind of space.

4.1.3. The type of violence varies spatially

One of the most valuable intakes from the fieldwork was probably to understand that the workers' experiences of violence were varying with space. More precisely, the intensity of gender-based violence varied depending on the time, the type of venue, the standing of the place, the crowd, the staff, and most importantly, the neighborhood.

During the direct observation, it was easy to identify certain neighbourhoods as more festive than others. Cais do Sodré and Bairro Alto are the two main party neighbourhoods of the city; they concentrate the highest density of bars and offer a continuous "hyperfestive, carnivalesque atmosphere" (Nofre & Malet Calvo, 2019), every day, from 6pm to 2am. They employed four out of the 10 interview participants. As they explained to me, the venues they worked in were always busy in the weekends, relying on tourists to fill the space. They served mostly cheap beers, shots, and some basic cocktails. They usually played loud commercial music, mixed many languages and offered activities such as karaoke, free shots, bar games or a clubbing atmosphere. Some venues, especially those in Rua Atalaia in Bairro Alto, and those in Rua Nova do Carvalho (today known as Rua Cor-de-Rosa or Pink Street) in Cais do Sodré, spill out into the street, with customers and staff enjoying the outdoor nightlife. These venues are notably famous for their promoters, usually young and attractive girls standing directly at the door, who hail passers-by and invite them inside to share a free shot. In these two neighbourhoods, the study showed the largest amount of violence, and specifically spectacular kind of sexual or physical violence directed to workers or customers – what I called "fast violence" before. They

stood out as the ones where the workers experienced the most intense and traumatic kinds of violence, in addition to many forms of slower violence.

However, the observation also focused on neighbourhoods such as Intendente, Príncipe Real, Bica, Santos, and Rossio in the city centre, and revealed different dynamics. In these neighbourhoods, the nightlife does not hold as much of a central place as it does for Cais do Sodré and Bairro Alto. The venues are less dense, and not as systematically festive. They present more diverse aesthetics and crowds, and more differences in the prices and opening times. In these neighbourhoods, the violence observed was less intense, less spectacular, but mostly its nature depended on the venue itself. Many characteristics matter here, such as the opening hours, the standing, or how central the alcohol is in the venue's identity. The interviews revealed that the workers tended to experience less violence when the venues closed early, around 11pm. They explained it could be because the customers were just starting their nights, they were not already drunk at closing time, and so they were less likely to cause issues. They could however finish their nights in Bairro Alto or Cais do Sodré, or in one of the many clubs alongside the river. Workers also tended to experience less violence when the venue was not focusing primarily on selling alcohol, when the place was also offering food, or was an artistic space who happened to also serve alcohol. This was also the case when the space was organised as an associative place, with membership cards and communal rules to respect. As one participant explained "if we agree at the door that here we are all members, that we are a collective, in solidarity, the experience inside afterwards is smoother". The type of crowd also played a big role, the workers' experience was different whether it was a touristic crowd, queer people, oldest couples or immigrants from a specific part of the world. Some participants also mentioned that the standing of the venue mattered, that elegant, chic venues had less issues of violence. As a manager told me "We don't attract this type of people" – which does sound a bit classist. In those neighbourhoods, the women working there expressed more safety, said to be exposed to little to almost no violence. However, their interviews revealed that they were actually exposed to some violence, mostly slow violence – some occasional verbal violence, misogynistic comments or intimidation.

One of the interview participants worked in a touristic bar in Pink Street, Cais do Sodré, and then switched to a calmer wine bar, in Santos. She was very reflective on her experiences of violence and compared the two places with me:

> I was more disrespected in [Cais do Sodré], but I was more discredited in [Santos]. […] In [Cais do Sodré], the people were there for the alcohol, not for the beverage, I could give

anything, and they would drink it. In the wine bar, no, the people were there for the product, not for the quantity but for the quality. And also, in the other when I started, we closed at 3am, there we closed at 11 or 10pm.

The names of the venues are hidden and replaced by their neighborhoods for anonymity reasons. In this quote, she compares her two workplaces. She explained how working in Cais do Sodré was more about facing confrontational clients, fighting back, being in opposition to drunk customers who would try to disrespect her or cross her boundaries. However, in Santos, her experience was different, she said people doubted her, that she was taken less seriously regarding her wine knowledge because she was a young woman, and that male customers would not trust her. Another participant made similar comparisons between her two workplaces. When I asked her if she liked the atmosphere of Bairro Alto compared to her former job in Bica, she answered:

It's pleasant, but the other was in Bica in a street that is less frequented than the one of [her current bar], and it was more like couples, or friends, or people travelling alone, I mean there is some of that in my current bar, that's why I stay, but there are also a lot of old perverts who come here stand in front of you and look at you without moving, or when I am at the window smoking "olá, bela, linda" only annoying stuff.

From these comparisons, it seems like Bairro Alto and Cais do Sodré present more intense forms of violence for the women working there. It seems like they are exposed to more frequent and spectacular forms of gender-based violence in the venues of these two neighborhoods, while they are exposed to occasional or slow violence in the others. In the scale of the body, this asymmetry of violence between neighborhoods is also noticeable in the clothing: the interviews revealed that the participants who worked in venues in Bairro Alto, especially, had either uniforms or were told by their superiors to dress "sexy", to "show their bodies". This could be the case in other venues but was not as systematic, as the owners did not dare to be so direct with their employees, and they used the tone of encouragement more often than the tone of requirement.

In this sense, we can argue that there is a perception of a spatial distribution of violence in Lisbon's nightlife venues, as two neighborhoods – Bairro Alto and Cais do Sodré – are standing out in the city, for being more violent, in the sense of fast violence. After looking at the scale of the city and its neighborhoods, the next section one will go into more detail and look into the venues themselves.

4.1.4. Three spaces of safety in the workplace

In Lisbon's nightlife venues, there are safe and unsafe microspaces within the workplace. The fieldwork revealed that the workers felt different levels of safety or comfort, depending on which space of the venue they were using to work. Let us focus on bars. In the masculine universe of the bar, the women and gender non-conforming people working there tended to categorize the venue's different spaces regarding their presumed "level" of safety, their feeling of comfort or discomfort. During interviews, they described what can be associated to mental maps of the venues. These sensitive maps all varied individually, depending on many factors including their past experiences of violence, their intuition, what they perceived as threatening, and what they were told to worry about (see Stanko, 2008; Pain, 1991; Kern, 2021; Koskela, 1999). In that regard, the findings suggest that the gendered workspace in nightlife venues can be divided into three parts, associated with the workers presumed level of safety. Figure 1 represents an imaginary bar in Lisbon. It aims to illustrate the different micro-spaces of the venue and link them to their associate level of safety as expressed by the workers.
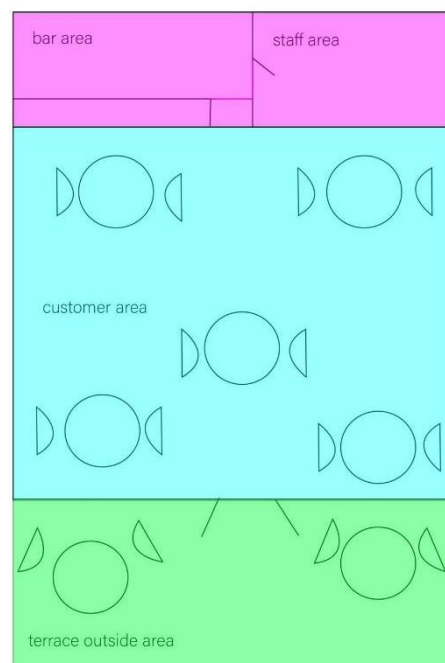

Figure 1: Model of the three spaces of safety in bars for women workers. Souce: author.

First, when talking about their feelings of safety, the workers made a distinction between the space that is inside the venue and the one outside the venue. The zone represented in green in this bar would be the least safe space to work in: the terrace being on the street/square represents danger and lack of control. Then, the second zone, in blue can be more or less safe: when staying

indoors gives some protection from public space, the proximity with customers in the room nuances the feeling of safety. And the third zone, finally, in purple, represents the safest area of the whole venue; the workers felt the safest while staying behind the bar counter – it operates as a physical separation with the customers. If it existed, they would also mention resting or hiding in the storage room, in the changing room, or wherever space was planned for the team to rest or eat.

This attempt to categorize the bar's different spaces is simplified to the maximum here, it needs to be unpacked and nuanced, depending on the characteristics of each place, and the workers relationship with the other members of the staff. During the fieldwork, this tendency to categorize the micro-spaces of the bar appeared many times in the observations and came up spontaneously during some interviews – before the specific question was asked. For example, a participant working in a bar in the Rossio area shared in an interview how she mindfully evolved in the venue's space. She evoked that she was scared to close the terrace at night because of the presence of homeless men sleeping in the street of the square, and because of a robbery that happened to her colleague a few months ago. She recalled how one time, some of the homeless men of the square unexpectedly started to yell at her customers, and how she, not knowing how to react, took shelter inside the bar. She also explained that it was a common habit in this venue for the workers to sit down at the regular's table and have a drink with them, if the bar was not busy. However, some regulars could make her uncomfortable or make sexist comments. In that case, she would go back to the bar, stick to it, and pretend to be busy there.

> They were sitting on a bench [on the square], I don't know what happened, but I came out because I heard yelling and one guy was just like yelling yelling yelling. I didn't know what to say, I didn't want to tell them anything, I'm scared to tell him like "stop don't do this" because I was like I don't want him to yell at me, I don't want to be yelled at. So, I was just like I'm going inside. […]

> [when the regulars make sexist jokes] I'm like I'm gonna go back behind the bar. It's kind of my safe place, because people usually are sitting, people don't sit at the bar they'll just sit at the tables, so if I don't want to talk to these people, I'm literally not far, I'm going from sitting here to just right there [laughs] and I'll just go back there and I can make a drink, I can be on my phone back there, I'll just do something else so that I am now separate from the conversation. Yeah, it's a separation and I'll just be back there, minding my business. It's where I go when I want to be alone, when I don't want to talk to people, I don't want people to talk to me, I'm just like let me sit back here, until I have other customers I need to talk to.

In her case, the venue is organized in a way that enables her to cut the conversation and sit behind the counter alone. It gives her comfort when she needs it and offers a separation from the rest of the room, with the bar counter acting as a spatial separation from the rest of the room, a boundary, a border between customers and workers. From her interview, it seems like she

uses the bar space as a strategic resting space; when she has the energy to argue with her sexist regular customers, she is in the room with them, when she gets tired or needs comfort, she goes back behind the counter. The protection of the counter can also be used by some workers as an asset to safely expel a customer from the venue when they do not have security staff. A participant shared in her interview how she would stay behind the bar counter and ask for the customer to leave, without her ever leaving the protected area of the bar. So, to put it in other words, she would use the protection of the purple area (behind the bar counter), to remove the threat from the blue area (the room) and restore its safety while displacing the threat in the green area (outside), that is already the least safe, and where she does not need to go.

However, for other participants, the distinction seemed to be less obvious. While most of them felt like the space outside the venue provoked fear – especially during closing and when leaving work, some were equally or more scared of what could happen inside – because they would be trapped. In that sense, the blue and purple zones inside the venue could be perceived as less safe when the worker was facing violence from members of the staff. This was the case for a participant who explained that she used to try spending the majority of her time outside, talking with customers on the terrace, because she was scared to stay inside and have to avoid her predatory owner. Even the safety of staying behind the bar can be nuanced: while the bartenders appreciated to have a private space to work in, separate from the customers, some also qualified it as a "pervert magnet". Behind the counter, the bartender is more visible, and attracting the attention of customers, which makes them more likely to be subjected to violence. Especially if working alone, they can feel stuck behind the bar, having no escape from the confrontation with a customer that would insist on staying in front of them or to drink at the counter, close to them. As previous research showed, staying behind the bar can therefore mean protection, but only partial and ambiguous (Bonte, 2020).

Going further, this attempt to categorize the different micro-spaces of safety in the bar shows how territory and territoriality are an important matter to the workers, in the way the space is arranged. Previously mentioned, the notion of territory helped uncover the gendered use of public space (di Meo, 2011), with women feeling like guests, or intruders on male territory (Kern, 2021), the public space being considered for Gardner as one territory to which men hold greater rights than women; a territory from which women are often excluded by harassment and fear of male violence (1995). Looking at nightlife and highlighting such dynamics where the feminized workers are categorizing specific micro-spaces with different levels of safety to manage the risk of violence in the venue reinforces this idea. According to Brighenti (2010),

territories are interactional, "they result from encounters and from the affects developed during those encounters. Territories are the effect of the material inscription of social relationships" (p. 57). They are undergoing constant reconfiguration, depending on relations of domination and territorial practice – an "imaginative mechanism whereby someone is initially recognized as an intruder or insider in relation to one's territory" (Brighenti, 2010, p. 58). Accordingly, the workers may perceive the bar as a territory that they must defend against outside intrusions, particularly those that violate their physical and emotional boundaries. Using Robert Sack's ideas on territoriality (1986), we can say that when the bar workers create psychological or physical boundaries, to protect themselves on masculine territory, they are performing their territoriality. These boundaries can be marked by concrete actions (for example avoiding certain areas of the bar, choosing specific positions) or by a mental demarcation of spaces, where certain areas are seen as safer than others depending on the perceived risk of violence or harassment. According to Brighenti (2010) "the activity of drawing boundaries, while in many cases implicit and even invisible, is the constitutive process of territorialization" (p. 60). In that sense, the categorisation of micro-spaces in the venues shows that the bar as a work space is either a territory to negotiate or to defend for the workers, where territoriality becomes a mean of resistance against the dominant vision of the venue as a masculine territory and the violence associated to it.

This first part of the findings reviewed the different kinds of gender-based violence experienced by the workers in the nightlife venues. It pointed out how violence tended to be banalized and seen as part of the job. It revealed a distinction between slow and fast violence and argued that they belong in a single continuum. It highlighted how the nature of violence presented spatial components, and described that in Lisbon, some neighborhoods were characterized by more spectacular violence than others. It also showed how the experience of violence affects the relation of the worker to its workspace, by proposing a three-space understanding of the feelings of safety of the workers in the venues and discussing the notion of territoriality. The next section will focus on the workers' strategies regarding violence.

4.2. Discreetly managing safety

The following section presents the main strategies developed by the women and gender non-conforming people to face gender-based violence in their nightlife jobs. It focuses first on their

behavior, or what we called "work personality". It then develops on their spatial strategies, in an attempt to categorize the different strategies and analyze them in the scope of the right to the night.

What is your work personality?

> In Brazil we have this thing called "jogo de cintura", or waist game, I don't know if you've ever heard this expression before. Cintura is the waist, and the waist game is when at times you don't want to be rude with a person, but you want to maintain distance, but you also want to bring her to you, to attract her. So imagine: if you give a warning to someone, you frown, then you call him over and you offer him a shot. You understand? You win a customer, he understands the limits, he's going to respect you, and everything is ok in the situation.

The expression "jogo de cintura"[6] is a metaphor commonly used to describe a person's ability to adapt to difficult or unexpected situations with flexibility, skill, and diplomacy. Figuratively, a person with "jogo de cintura" is someone who knows how to navigate challenges skillfully, find creative solutions, avoid conflicts, or handle tense situations with ease. For example, if someone manages to avoid a misunderstanding or handle a crisis at work without causing tension, other employees might say they showed good "jogo de cintura." This expression seems to summarize the work personalities and the skills of workers observed during the fieldwork quite well. In the interviews, participants explained how they learned with experience how to find balance between being friendly, attract and do a good service, but also being serious and maintaining some distance to have authority and protect themselves. The study showed that most of the workers cultivated a mistrustful attitude with customers, always anticipating the potential issues that could occur. Many mentioned in their interviews that in case of any issue, they simply reminded their counterparts that they were there to work, and only to work. In addition to that, they used simple strategies such as lying or being vague about their personal information, ignoring or not asking the question back, deflecting or using humor to dissolve tension.

Their work personality was also showing through the scale of the body: to go to work, they modified their physical appearance, either with makeup or clothes. Some said to be toning down their fashion style to avoid comments, others were dressing up, while others focused on covering up their skin more than usual or wore uniform-like clothing. While doing autoethnographic work, I noticed that changing my physical appearance – putting more make

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[6] The expression is common in both Brazil and Portugal.

up than usual, wearing an all-black outfit – helped me put myself in character before work, to perform being a bartender, and distance myself from the scene. As if not wearing my regular style made me a slightly different person to work. Mentioning performativity immediately resonates with Butler's (1988) theory of gender as performative, where performativity is defined as a "ritualized production", reiterated under and through constraints, where different forces are controlling and compelling the shape of the production (Butler, 1993). Performing at the scale of the body participates in the production of space. As Lefebvre argues, "every living body is a space and has its space: it produces itself in space and produces space" (1972, p. 199). Performing in the nightlife work is not limited to gender performance, it also extends to performing the job itself, performing being the bartender, the waitress or the manager, individually or collectively. A manager pointed out how she and her team entered a different character at work, that it felt almost like doing a performance:

> I used to say "here it's a show", in [the bar] I even had a curtain that I was opening and closing. So, a lot of the time when I started it was like "come on people, let's start service, let's go? Let's go!" and then it seemed as if everyone in my team brings a character like 'let's go, let's do it, let's smile, let's get into another posture' and [at closing] I closed the door, and then I closed the curtain for the [customers in the street] who were looking through the window, when we had to count the money and clean everything. And when I closed it, I used to say "that's all for today people the show is over". It was almost a performance what the staff was doing you understand? They had to throw the ice in the air, and they had to smile, then they had to clean while looking at everything, close the tables, close the accounting, everyone has its role super well defined, because it's a dance! So, when the things work, it's very nice it's almost a dance you know, fluid.

This extract shows how much the behaviors are codified inside the venues in order to achieve this "dance". At closing time, she established a routine where every movement, every displacement has a purpose and an intention, and everyone has a role in the dance. It shows how the performativity of the workers in this type of venues extend from their own singular performativity – their bodies, their physical appearance – to reach the collective performance, the dance that she describes. It is a different performativity, not for the customers anymore, but for the sake of the closing routine.

Lastly, the study revealed that the workers developed a specific spatial awareness while at work. They explained how they were "hyper vigilant", on "high alert", or "reading the room" to perceive it all during their shifts, trying to anticipate or understand the situations before they unfold. One of the bartenders explained to me how she chose her work station in the venue to be able to overview the whole place while bartending. Another explained how they navigated the venue, moving around discreetly, constantly overhearing conversations, observing body language and keeping scores of the alcohol level of the crowd. In the literature, safety is

understood as a "contextually specific emotion" (Fileborn, 2015, p. 4). It is "constantly (re)configured and (re)negotiated' on a situational basis" (Brands & Schwanen, 2014, p.68). It that regard, it makes sense for the workers to make efforts to be able to constantly re-evaluate theirs and other people's safety in the venue. A common rule of bartending is to avoid standing behind the bar with the back turned away from the customers. One should always try to face forwards. In that spirit, the manager of a touristic venue told me that while making conversations with customers in the room, she took the habit of physically re-placing them, turning them around, so that her own back would not be turned against the crowd. This probably made the customers amused, but it gave her a better sense of control over the venue.

These findings show that the behavioral strategies or 'work personalities' of women working in nightlife venues are a learning process, a constant balance made of a combination of vigilance, spatial awareness, some suspicion, authority, and performance, but also playfulness, and if needed, deflection or avoidance. The findings also hint that violence is rarely addressed, and that the strategies elaborated by the workers are made to either prevent violence or dissolve tension, to manage their safety discreetly, and to avoid being in confrontation or calling out violent behavior.

4.2.1. Spatial strategies: avoiding, anticipating, adapting or fighting

The fieldwork revealed that the women working in nightlife venues adopted a wide range of strategies in reaction to gender-based violence experiences. After giving some insights on their behavior, on their attitude at work, this section presents the strategies that have a spatial nature. The following offers to think about spatial practices linked to the experience of violence. Intentionally or unintentionally, the participants of the fieldwork all revealed that they elaborated spatial "rules", strategies, that they used while at work, to either avoid, manage or fight violence. These rules or strategies can be sorted by categories. In this dissertation, I propose sorting these strategies into four main categories; they are either made to avoid, to anticipate, to adapt or to fight violence. This section will present these four categories and explain their relevance within the framework of the right to the night.

Avoiding

At least six out of ten interview participants expressively mentioned that when facing a violent or potentially violent situation, their first reaction would be to "flee", "step away", or "avoid" it. This happened for example when a conversation with a customer turned uncomfortable, the worker would leave it by pretexting to go back to work somewhere else, and then proceed to physically avoid the space used by the customer. It could mean staying behind the bar more, contouring their table, pretending to be busy with other customers, or ignoring them. In emergency, it could also mean for some to leave the venue, go outside, go home, or hide in a storage room. To a lesser extent, it can signify for a worker to simply turn her back, or to make herself unavailable by "running everywhere", being hyper mobile in the venue. Feminist geographers found that fearful women, instead of avoiding people, avoided places, to cope with a constant state of fear "in order to maintain a certain illusion of control over their own safety" (Valentine, 1989, p. 171). One of the participants spontaneously used the expression "I remove myself from the space". I argue that when removing themselves from the space, the workers clearly point out the violence and its abnormality, by not engaging with it, which can be understood as an act of everyday resistance (Wekerle, 2000). However, by doing so, they have to accept to abandon what is theirs – their workspace. In that sense, avoidance is the most extreme form of strategy. In this spatial negotiation, the fearful workers accept to lose the space they need to use for work, to prioritize their safety. Consequently, their spatial exclusion contributes to perpetuate gender inequalities in the workspace (Koskela, 1999). It is also interesting to notice that in their avoidance practices, the workers are strategically using the space for their needs, placing themselves where they are protected, moving out of reach. Here is what one of the participants explained:

> Because the space is small, so I don't really have a place to flee behind the bar – besides the window, talk to someone.

In that example, she was working alone in a very small venue, a touristic bar in Bairro Alto. She was frequently confronted by drunk men who would harass her by standing in front of her at the counter, asking questions or making comments about her. She pointed out that the spatial organization of the venue did not allow her to go somewhere else, besides leaving her bartending workstation to talk to someone at the window next to her. This comment suggests that she would appreciate having more options to remove herself, it shows how avoiding is also part of building agency over the workplace.

But avoiding is also about power dynamics, and it is interesting to compare two situations with workers who have different status in the venue. One participant said to be ready – as a manager – to abandon the venue if there ever was the urge, that she would always put her security first. She said that if there ever was a client who became aggressive and too threatening, "fleeing was always an option", and that her decision would get the support of the owner. But opposingly, a young waitress, with little experience in her new job, was not allowed by her supervisors to ignore the customers, even the ones who made her feel unsafe. With that interdiction, she had no choice but to risk it, and then call the bouncers in case of issue, which would happen often. She ended up quitting the job after a few months. Because she could not avoid to risk physical violence during her shift, she had to choose between working or quitting, she definitely removed herself from the space by quitting, which is also a way of avoiding violence, the ultimate one. In that sense, the first manager had more power than her in the spatial negotiation for safety, she could temporarily avoid violence, and didn't need to avoid the venue definitively.

Anticipating

The study revealed that the most experienced workers had built the knowledge to recognize patterns of violence, to identify when and where an issue could occur during their shifts. It goes along with the behavioral strategy mentioned above, to be hypervigilant and have some suspicion, always. But it also materializes in very concrete spatial ways, anticipating violence in time and space. Spatially, it meant that some places were identified as more scary, more risky than others; for example "the terrace at night", because it was outside and dark, or "the secondary bar upstairs" because it did not have security, and the clients were more reluctant to respect the house rules. It meant that when going to these specific spaces, the workers were more vigilant and mentally prepared to have to face potential violence. Going there could be associated with altering their behavior, being already more assertive, less friendly, or reacting faster to call help. But most importantly, the main pattern identified by the workers was linked to time.

The study revealed that the biggest tension of bar work for women happened during closing. It is a stressful time for many reasons. First, because at this point of the night, the clients are at their most drunk state, and the less likely to respect the workers authority. Practically, observing the workers right before closing meant hearing them repeat to insisting customers that they could not be served anymore, that the bar was closing, that they were sorry, they could not do

anything about it, that no, not even for one more drink, etc. Secondly, because closing represents a rush in their work agenda; having to close the venue means having to clean and prepare the space to be ready to work on the next day, it is physically demanding and happens at the end of the shift while the staff is already tired. If the venue is hiring security personnel, they are the most active in this time frame, evacuating the venue and facilitating the staff's cleaning work. However, when there is no bouncer involved, the team is in charge of emptying the venue, which frequently creates tension. The venues are usually set with a routine, to indicate the soon to be end of the party; the bartenders announce the last orders, the waitresses can go warn the customers at their tables, and some places even have a bell ringing to announce the end of the night. Here is the description of one of the participants, when asked about how she clears the bar alone at 2am:

> I kick them out! If someone is screaming if someone has to say you get out, it's me. Especially more when I feel like getting home [laughs]. I say "guys we need to close, we need to close" and if they say anything I say "police, police, police" that we have a fine, which is true, if they arrive after 2am and they see the door open it's going to catch their attention, if they see people inside, whether I'm serving or not they're not going to try to understand, it's going to end up with a fine. I don't pay it myself but it's a very good excuse. If it's not enough, a little pat on the back, and I admit that sometimes it happened to me also to push them to the exit [laughs].

She describes that during closing, she is assertive and shows authority: she screams, repeats that the bar is closing, if her authority is not enough she also refers to an external authority, the police. She admits, a bit embarrassed, that she also uses touch, a little pat on the back, or even pushes out the customers. Her description implies that if she does not use these technics to keep control over the closing, the customers could negotiate with her to stay longer, which sets the stage for a whole new range of fears. As many workers shared in their interviews, the idea of remaining alone in the bar space in the presence of drunk customers who insist on staying is very scary:

> As long as we are two or three person, it's harder to invade our space.

The main strategy is to never be alone during closing time. Being alone implies vulnerability, while the presence of other members of the staff is reassuring. This person explained that in her workplace, it was not allowed to leave the venue alone at closing, that the staff members needed to stay in the space and leave all together when the bar was properly closed, to avoid a situation when one worker is left closing alone. This way, the establishment can not be invaded. Another bartender explained that she had to close alone on week days, and was on high alert:

> I was thinking about that the other day I was like what would be my weapon if someone came in and bothered me one day, and I don't know why I was thinking about this but it was just a

thought like well if I'm alone okay what do I do, so I was like the knives are there, we have this glass bottle here, we have all these glass, and the register is here, here is me, if they want that, I'd have to be like I don't know what I would have to do but the knives are over there, but if I go grab the knife I'm in the little tiny corridor in the hallway so I have no escape , nowhere to run, but if I'm in the main part there's two doors there is this door here and this door there I could go out either door if I really needed to

This extract shows how the worker is anticipating a situation of violence that could occur when she is alone. She is describing the work space, how she could use it to escape, and what work tools she could use as a weapon. The reoccurring mention of the closing and being alone during the interviews shows well that the workers have identified this time of the night as the most unsafe and elaborated strategies accordingly. During my autoethnographic experience, I also noticed how the ambiance changed right around closing. This extract of my field journal describes the first night closing the bar in Bairro Alto:

During the night, [my coworker n°1] asked me where I lived and offered to walk home together when the bar closes. At this point, I didn't know him, I had met him on the same night, so I hesitated to agree, and I said I would see later. I didn't know if I could trust him to bring me home, but I also figured it would be sketchy to walk alone in Bairro Alto at 2:30am in the morning. When the time of leaving approached, [my coworker n°2] told me in a very direct way that we were going to leave together, because it is too dangerous to be outside alone. When we finished closing the bar, around 3am, we all left at the same time. As soon as we opened the door, [my coworker n°1] started to walk very quickly in one direction, which made us lose track of [my coworker n°2] who was throwing out the trash. I told my [coworker n°1] to wait, and he didn't bother at all. He was rushing and told me to go with him. Bairro Alto was indeed very sketchy, and felt a bit unsafe, we were walking fast, between the customers in the street. I didn't recognize customers from the bar, but I noticed a lot of men were trying to talk to me or asking me for cigarettes as we were walking. [My coworker n°1] looked stressed, [he was generally very relaxed] but as we reached the end of the street, he relaxed and started to make conversation. We had a nice conversation and went home without any issues.

This experience of leaving the bar in a panic is interesting for many reasons. First, it seems like my coworkers, who are both male, knew more than me about how to exit the venue safely. I had never experienced this in my previous job, to feel their nervousness, as if something happened before and they were not telling me. And second, it seemed like they feared Bairro Alto in specific; when we went out in Rua Atalaia, they both clearly did not want to spend time in the street, they were rushing so much to the point where we lost each other in the crowd. But as soon as we left Bairro Alto, the tension evaporated. Interestingly, my coworker did not bring me all the way to my house, we split in a street nearby, as if he knew exactly which street was threatening or not. At the time, their attitude seemed exaggerated.

Moreover, the interviews revealed that the workers' anticipation of the closing was preventing a specific event from happening. After finishing their shifts, the workers were scared of being followed in the street by their customers. Three participants working in Bairro Alto shared

stories about customers who bothered them during their shift, then went outside, waited for them to finish to close the venue, and tried to follow them home. To prevent this from happening, they never left alone, some walked out of the venue in groups and split later, one asked the bouncers to escort them to their bus stop. Observing this phenomenon reveals how the fear of violence influences the workers relationship to space. This fear after closing also correlates the theory that the space outside the venue is perceived as the most unsafe one. It also participates to show that the safety levels can vary between neighborhoods, as these three participants all had negative experiences in Bairro Alto. This strategy to go home in groups comes as a security measure to be able to keep working in security in those neighborhoods, go home in security after work, and not be excluded from these spaces. Mitchell (2000, p. 210) argues that "the very act of having to gather in large numbers to show that they belong indicates the degree to which women are excluded – often quite violently – from public space". In that sense, the strategies elaborated by the workers to anticipate violence and adjust their behavior can materialize their claim for a right to the night.

Adapting discreetly, using the space strategically

In addition to the previous strategies, the study showed that the workers were building agency in the workspace by individually managing their own safety discreetly, by regularly taking informed decisions throughout their shift, adapting their behavior constantly with the knowledge they collected. An example of this can be found in the "jogo de cintura", the Brazilian expression mentioned earlier by a bartender. It can also be illustrated by the spatial strategies employed by some workers. For example, in this interview extract, the person is working in a spacious venue with many rooms, and explains how to navigate closing the building, cleaning the space while repelling the customers who insist on staying:

> I feel like you just have to deal at the [bar n°1 and n°2] that are a little bit more calm, because you don't have the security there, but usually it's because it's more calm that you don't need it, so you just have to say five times to the same person that you really can't do it [to serve them]. But like on the [bar n°2] that is more tense, me personally I just say one time that I can't and I just probably go in the back until they leave, because the security is there so I don't have any obligation to say yeah you can't you can't you can't

In the extract, the focus is made on the different strategies of "dealing with the clients" that this person is adopting, considering many factors; in the first bars, since the atmosphere is calm around closing and there is no security present in the room, the responsibility of emptying the space falls on the worker (Coffey et al., 2023). They have to face the clients, alone, and be

patient enough to repeat many times that they cannot serve them anymore, until the customer accepts to leave. Because they are alone in the room, it can feel more risky and scary, so their attitude is primarily aimed at avoiding conflict or defusing tension. In the second bar, that is more tense, there is security, and a back room where the staff cleans the dishes. The worker uses this place as retreat when a customer is too insistent, leaving the responsibility of the negotiation to the security. Their attitude in the second bar is therefore different. This extract shows how the workers decisions and strategy to diffuse tension or avoid conflict adapts to fit the different characteristics of the space – tense or calm, full or empty, with or without security, closed or opened to a back room for retreat, etc. This illustration should be seen as a moment when the worker demonstrates their agency (Rose, 1993; Massey, 1994) by properly processing the information available, making wise and calculated decisions (Kern, 2021) and using the space to their advantage. It shows that the worker is not passively experiencing pressure or intimidation from the clients in their work place, but actively taking part in producing it (Koskela, 1997) by boldly repelling them or strategically limiting their interaction.

This idea of agency also extends to the workers' own body. One of the participants explained in her interview that she felt like she had a reckless behavior while bartending as a younger woman, and was lucky that nothing wrong happened to her. At the same time, she shared how she had developed specific clothing strategies, she knew how to intimidate or manipulate customers, and had formed many alliances in the street with other workers who would help her deal with occasionally aggressive customers. This is how she described her choice of clothes

> Nothing too small, nothing too revealing, the arms ok, it didn't bother me, but no open shirt, never short shorts or tight clothes, nothing like this, normally I would like to cover myself a bit more […] I think that I escaped from some situations because I was better dressed, not better dressed don't understand this wrong, it's wrong, but I was more covered up, let's say, so I was showing myself looking less available for the people. […] The choice of clothes comes a bit from Brazil, because since childhood what happens in Brazil is that the people talk a lot when you walk in the street, so since small I had comments and it's very strange for a child that is 12 or 13, so there was always this duality of wanting to show myself because I was growing up but also at the same time I was hiding to protect myself from this time of catcall.

This quote shows how the choice of clothes goes beyond respecting a work dress code. First, it aims to send a message to the customers: she is covering up to look less available. By doing so, she is using her physical appearance to negotiate her relationship with customers. Modifying her regular style makes her less fearful and more confident, it is an everyday practice of resistance (Koskela, 1997), to resist being sexualized. But secondly, she explains that her clothing choices come from her experience of catcalling in Brazil when she was a young girl. She explains that she inherited from this period a duality between wanting to show herself and

wanting to protect herself. This shows how the clothing decisions she takes now in her job in Portugal comes from past experiences and past negotiation with herself. When she says "I was very lucky that nothing wrong happened to me", I argue that there is no luck involved, she was successfully shaping her agency in the workplace. She was capable of taking safety measures that fit her needs, to negotiate respect from her customers while producing a healthier workspace. Looking at the scale of the body calls for a quick detour to the concept of body territory. Developed after the concept of proxemics (Hall, 1966), by Latin American and especially Brazilian decolonial scholars, the "body-territory" refers to the space immediately surrounding us. While in Latin America, the notion of territory "is often understood in dialogue with social movements, their identities, and their use of it as an instrument of struggle and social transformation" (Haesbaert, 2020, p.76), the "body-territory" draws attention to "the power of corporeality both as an object of the exercise of power and as a (embodied) subject of resistance" (Haesbaert, 2020, p.76). According to feminist scholar Cruz Hernandez, "the female body reveals the concreteness of numerous 'other scales of oppression and resistance: family, public square, community, neighborhood, social organization, Indigenous territory, etc.' (2017, p.43). Observing the strategies of the workers regarding their own bodies and clothing while thinking of the concept of body territory highlights their resistance to sexualization at work, and how clothing can be a way to take back some control over the negotiated territory of their bodies. Resisting gender-based violence by developing strategies around their bodies too can contribute to materialize women's claim for a right to the night.

Fighting back

In addition to the strategies to avoid, anticipate or adapt to violence, the study revealed that workers also had developed ways of fighting back, in a spirit that fits particularly the idea of reclaiming the night (Kern, 2021; Sandberg & Coe, 2020; Starr, 2021; Fileborn, 2015; Deschamps, 2018, 2017; Hernandez et al., 2020; Hernández-González & Carbone, 2020). During my observations, I noticed many times bartenders putting customers back in their place, literally. The workers kicked out customers from the venue or confronted them in public. They used their authority to forbid them from doing something, or educated them on their sexism. They described small actions, that could seem insignificant, like not laughing at a joke, frowning at someone, "giving an 'eww' look". They also engaged in more challenging actions, such as saying to a regular customer "your sexist jokes are not funny", or grabbing someone's hand in public and saying "I don't like being touched". These acts come in reaction to violence,

they are legitimate, and can be understood as a way of boldly reclaiming respect in the work space. But in the context of work, they are charged with more meaning, because they put the worker in a delicate position. Reacting this way to the sexual harassment or misogynistic comments from the customers means to risk escalating violence, or to see the customer leaving, losing money, and ultimately losing a job. One of the participants described the following conversation with her supervisor.

> I had to put outside of the bar a lot of guys you know, a lot. I didn't have security […] I remember the manager saw me one time putting outside of the bar one guy and he told me "[name] this is money" and I was like "put me outside I don't care" I prefer to lose money than my security

As she explained to me, her work environment was very sexist: her boss was frequently making objectifying comments about her and her manager was not supporting her when she needed to expel disrespectful customers. In that sentence "[name] this is money", the word "this" shows the conflict of interest between them: for her "this" is a man who does not belong in the venue where she works, because he disrespected her, and she needs to assert authority. For her boss, "this" is money, it represents a missed financial prospect. In their power dynamic, she should be losing the struggle with the manager: she is only an employee, and does not even have a contract. However, she is valuable for the venue, and he needs her: more than doing a good job and making money, she is the only woman of the venue, she speaks English, Spanish and Portuguese, which makes her the only worker that can talk to the suppliers, she has a lot of experience, many regulars and many friends in the street. The way she says it "I don't care" is provocative, it is an ultimatum: ultimately, she is asking her manager to choose between firing her, or firing the customer. By standing up to him, she is signaling that she also has some power over her workplace, and that her comfort at work matters more than the financial prospects that this customer could represent for the venue. This illustration shows that despite her fear, she built spatial confidence in her workspace; she appropriated it and actively resisted the violence there (Koskela, 1997). By expelling the customer and standing up to her boss, she was able to boldly reclaim her safety in the nightlife over her boss' financial interests. In that sense, I argue that the workers' strategies to fight back the violence are materializing their claim for their right to access the nocturnal space for work, to be treated there respectfully, and have a say if not. Another example of fighting back violence and producing a safer space was described by a person volunteering as a bartender for a cultural space:

> In this situation it could be useful to ask the person to go outside to talk, the idea is always to bring the person outside, so that bad things don't happen inside the space, and eventually win some time to calm things and if the person is a bit high – in whatever way – to restart, and eventually to solicit this person's exit from the space if they don't conform with our principles

In that example, the venue requires that the visitors agree to communal rules to follow while entering the space. As the volunteer explains, if the person does not behave well, it means that they are disrespecting the rules they already agreed to respect at the door. For this reason, it is easier for the volunteer to negotiate in that situation because the negotiation takes the form of reminding the rules. It does not give them the responsibility of expelling the person, the person can decide to not re-enter the space if they do not want to follow the rules. This strategy is very well thought out, it de-escalates violence, gives an opportunity for the person to change their attitude, while educating on communal respect. It also uses the venue's spatial organization in a strategic way: by offering to have a conversation outside, the volunteer provides time to calm down, a new neutral space to discuss, which also guarantees a smoother expulsion if necessary.

The strategies employed by the workers to fight back violence against women materialize their right to the night. These strategies can range from body language to physical or verbal confrontation; the workers do not want to be touched or accept sexist comments at their job, they do not want to passively tolerate these behaviors and are reacting boldly to make them stop. However, the study also shows how their decision to fight, in a venue that is not supportive, can put them in delicate positions. By doing so, they can engage in power struggles where they risk their jobs. The success of the strategy is a bet; it depends on their ability to do it discreetly, on their power in the venue, and on the venue's ethics. I argue that all the strategies mentioned in this section materialize the workers right to the night; by avoiding, anticipating, adapting or fighting the violence, the women and gender non-conforming people working there are continuously claiming their right to the night, in small and banal acts of everyday resistance. Generally, the strategies listed above were all individual: avoiding, anticipating, adapting or fighting are all the ways a worker can react alone to a violent situation. However, they rarely work alone. Most of them mentioned building friendships within the staff, the customers, or workers of nearby venues. The next section will explore the idea of collectively caring for each other's safety in the workplace. Doing alliances can be considered a fifth strategy, however, it is set apart here to highlight its collective nature.

4.2.2. Caring for others collectively

> Personally, I am not a person who goes to, like, two big men and be, like, 'please get the fuck out of my way of passage' […] Usually when I sense that there's going to be an intimidation kind of thing if I ask someone to leave, I'm just going to go around, or ask someone else to go there and ask them to. Because we have one straight man working there in the staff and usually

when I feel like there's going to have an intimidating moment, I will ask him to go there and tell them like 'yeah, you cannot be doing that, please just move, please'.

Caring for others can look like many things. In this quote, the participant is a queer gender non-conforming worker, explaining how they use alliances to improve their experience at work. Because they find the confrontation with groups of cis male customers too intimidating, they usually contour them physically. When they really need to communicate, but sense some danger, they avoid direct confrontation by asking a straight male colleague to interfere. It points out that having an ally among the staff, someone that is supportive and ready to help, can considerably change the work experience. Another participant described that the attitude of her superior encouraged her to be bolder in facing her regular customers when they were acting "a bit racist, a bit sexist, a bit homophobic":

Me and [her] we would like – [she] is more dominant – like would tell people "You should not say that". Me, I kind of just want to go back to the bar to go back to work. And people, they argue with her like 'no no it's just a joke' and she's like 'it's not funny' and I'm like 'okay good'. [smiles] So [she] gives me more confidence to also be like 'yeah don't say that, it's not funny', because she does this so I'm like 'okay, cool I can do it'.

In the venue she works in, the regulars are very important. They are mostly older men, they are very comfortable in the bar, come almost daily and are friends with the owner. They are generally nice to her, but they tend to make offensive comments or jokes, that unsettle her. During our conversation, she explained that she would generally pretend to not hear them, but go back behind the bar, and put some distance. However, she mentions that when her colleague is present, she is more "dominant", meaning she talks back at them, shuts them up and uses her authority, she feels comforted, and because this coworker is a manager, she even takes it as a sign that it is ok to imitate her. Having this ally is at the same time an emotional support and a permission to be fighting the verbal violence, to confidently put the customers back in their place. It seems like the presence of this other woman in her sexist workspace makes her feel more bold, so she changes her behavior, from avoiding misogynistic comments to fighting them back. According to Koskela (1999) women's courage to be in a space, their mere presence, will make the space more available for other women. The presence of a team member who is louder and more confident, or has more power in the venue, enables them to produce their safety on their own terms, but with the support of another person, who will look out for them. More than a simple presence, in both situations, the workers are being cared for (Chatzidakis et al., 2020). When alone, they would not take any other initiative besides passively avoiding the potential violence, they are empowered by their alliances with another staff member, to actually get what they need, or build the courage to talk back. This idea can be put in perspective with the right

to the city as a collective endeavor (Lefebvre, 1972; Harvey, 2008), with women and minorities collectively looking out for each other.

Eventually, if the workers stay long enough in the venue, this will result in forming new alliances with more vulnerable people in the future, new recruits especially. The observation revealed that new workers, especially when they are young and unexperimented women, were the most vulnerable, and the most susceptible to be victims of violence, which is what I called "the new girl pattern". During the interview with the same participant, she supported the theory by sharing a story highlighting the "new girl pattern":

> We have a chef, he is close with the team, and he would also go out with us. But he would also always get really drunk and be trying to dance with the other girls. And now I remember then being like 'okay yeah, I don't know, maybe he's just trying to dance', and I was just like trying to keep some space, some distance to make it like not – to not make him think that there is something else, because I know that he has a girlfriend back in his home country in Peru. So, I'm like, hmm, you know. And he's a bit older too, so I was kind of like, yeahh, hmm. But now, now that there's the new girls, we went out with the new girls, and he was dancing with her and it was his birthday too, and she was just like, she kind of, you know, girls give each other this look like 'take me away from this', like 'I don't want to be dancing with this person'. So, I would just grab her and we would dance me and her, just so I can be like without hurting anyone's feelings just take her away from this.

This story shows that forming alliances, more than breaking the idea that each worker is responsible for its own safety (Fileborn, 2015), also helps to break the "new girl pattern", with the new bartender being cared for by the older bartender. Going further on the notion of collective care, this illustration also presents a very good example of what Gaissad's idea of care on the dancefloor (2022) can look like for women working in nightlife venues.

The bartender's production of safety is not limited to the bartenders only, it extends to caring for customers, neighbors, or passersby. The ethnography showed extensive gestures and strategies elaborated by bartenders to care for their customers, regardless of their gender. They would offer water cups, ask them questions to check on them, keep first aid kits behind the counter, engage in deep conversations or dissolve tensions after barfights. Interestingly, a general atmosphere of solidarity prevailed in Bairro Alto and Cais do Sodré – some said it was to keep up with the chaotic energy taking over the streets. Many bartenders mentioned how they could count on the neighboring venues to assist them: they shared security staff (informally), information about customers, they lent each other alcohol bottles if the stock was low, ice cubes, etc. Having "friends in the street" made the workers feel safer in their own venues, and part of a bigger picture where they could count on each other. The solidarity

characterizing these two neighborhoods was missed by the workers who left to relocate to new venues, where they felt more isolated.

During the interviews, the workers were asked if they paid specifically attention to women and gender minorities, if they cared for them. Some participants mentioned caring more for queer people, for women, or for minorities in general, being more attentive and keeping an eye on them. During my own work, it happened to me naturally to watch out for women's drinks when they went to the bathroom, or listen more carefully when some customers approached others. If the majority of the workers observed did not get more involved than that, one of them shared a strategy she elaborated to check on her female customers discreetly

> Sometimes I used the cigarette, because I was with a guy working, so I was like trying to create a connection with the people drinking with us at the bar, and I said do you want a cigarette with me, or can you come with me to the cigarette outside, and there I asked. And sometimes I asked and they are like no no no it's ok it's my brother or it's my husband or I don't know, but they really appreciate that, they are like oh thank you so much

By offering to go outside to smoke a cigarette with her female client, just the two of them, she creates intimacy and an ambiance that is favorable to confidence. It is interesting to notice how she goes out of her way to care for these customers, and how they appreciate it. However, it seems also like she is stepping out of the bar because she could not have the same impact if she stayed behind the counter. If she stayed there, in her workstation, surrounded by other customers and staff members, and asked the same question to the same woman, it could be more damaging for her customer than not saying anything. Once more, the idea of territoriality (Brighenti, 2010) helps to understand how the workers use and organize strategically their workspace in order to control and to defend themselves and others against violence.

During the interviews, many participants mentioned how they could "switch" place with other workers. "Switching" meant either moving to another station behind the bar counter or exchanging tables with another waiter. For example, if a waitress had an issue with a customer, being rude or disrespectful, she could ask another waiter to cover their table, or to the manager to take care of the problem. According to the managers' interviewed, this rule was generally admitted and gave positive hints on the venue's management. Switching allowed to give the worker a break, while not stopping to attend the customer. Attributing a new person to deal with a tough customer could arguably mean to take the customer's side, but it is mostly a way for the manager to break down the issue, by giving a second chance, starting fresh with a new person, that is informed of the behavior of the customer. This also deepens solidarity and nurtures the sense of belonging within the team. In most cases, this strategy was enough.

However, if the customer kept the same attitude, the manager would find a way to make them leave. As much as the cigarette technic, this management strategy shows how the workers, managers, bartenders and waiters all together, are using the space to their advantage. Moreover, it seems like caring for others collectively in these venues involves considering space as emotionally charged and navigating through it accordingly.

This section showcased the different strategies employed by the women and gender non-conforming people facing gender-based violence while working in nightlife venues. It showed that they either avoided, anticipated, adapted or confronted violence, but also that they were mostly negotiating their own safety alone, and discreetly building their agency while working. It showed how they used space to their advantage and that negotiating safety usually paired with negotiating power dynamics. I argued that this wide range of strategies, going from the scale of the body to the scale of the neighborhood, all contributed to materialize their claim for a right to the night. The last part of the section related the different kinds of alliances encountered during fieldwork, it showed the importance of care in the venues and how alliances could reconfigure the power dynamics in the venues. The next section will take a different approach, by trying to assess the efficiency of the claim for a right to the night in the context of Lisbon's nightlife venues.

4.3. Exploring the right to the night

This section questions the potential of the claim for this right to actually change the sexist, violent, and excluding culture of Lisbon's nightlife venues for women and gender non-conforming people working there. Until now, to understand the materialization of the right to the night, we looked at practices, relationship to space, strategies, and alliances against violence. However, reflecting on the different strategies, and seeing them as an embodiment of the workers claiming for a right to the night, raises questions. The next section will explore the limits of the claim for a right to the night in Lisbon's nightlife venues, and offers to study an alternative field, the one of a techno collective experimenting with policy-making and an Awareness Team in their free parties.

4.3.1. Changing the culture

My fieldwork has made clear that the issues of violence, discrimination, and general lack of safety in the nightlife compose the dark side of nightlife – because nightlife is supposed to be a temporality and space for enjoyment, lightness, leisure, less social pressure, generally associated with freedom and fun. The concept of the right to the night has emerged as a response to these issues. If gender-based violence exists to punish women and sexual minorities' transgressions of the patriarchal order, then the strategies of these minorities emerge as a materialization of their claim for their right to the night. However, realistically, keeping in mind the hostile climate for minorities in the nightlife, this section reflects on the right to the night for women and workers by asking: can we really change the culture? The literature on territoriality – understood here as the workers' means of resistance – highlights how their resistance can be limited. Indeed, Sack (1986) showed that territoriality "can be turned on and off according to the aims of those who successfully control a territory" (Brighenti, 2010, p. 66).

The ethnography points out different ideas. To some extent, yes, it seems possible to change the culture. In the findings, many illustrations can be found where women boldly face violence in their workplace, do not get intimidated, help others, gain some influence through experience and reach a certain amount of power in the venue to be able to make some positive changes. This is the case of many of my participants, managers or longtime bartenders, who used their social skills, intuition, experience, authority and alliances to refuse to be mistreated at work and educate their surroundings in the process. Some illustrations have already been mentioned: the cigarette tactic, the jogo de cintura, the agency skills, the alliances… I argue that most workers have practices that clearly embody a claim for a right to the night: when they are in their workspace, their presence already says something; appearing in a masculine world as a woman or queer person and performing their jobs while being at risk of violence can be considered itself an act of everyday resistance, performing their right to appear in the sense of Duff (2017) and Butler (2015). More than their presence, it is by their practices that they are also actively claiming for the right to access the night as a workspace and enjoy it. Expelling customers who disrespect them, talking back at sexist comments, going around clients or switching places, learning how to perceive every situation and anticipate threats, communicating with their managers when a person makes them uncomfortable, calling allies, dressing up or down, anything that goes against male domination is itself an embodied claim for the right to the night. I argue that reclaiming the nocturnal space, reclaiming the night, happens through many more

or less visible acts of the workers, from their simple presence to the conscious decisions they make for their safety, or the direct confrontation they have with violent people.

However, the ethnography also points out that changing the culture seems hard to achieve. The women and gender minorities working in the nightlife generally lacked power or influence in their workplace to have a say. Besides managers, most participants interviewed only stayed between a few months and a year in their jobs, they were poorly paid, living precariously or cumulating jobs, and were facing many kinds of violence in addition to gender-based violence. Some were exposed to racist discrimination in their workplace. Some had mental health issues, and most of them shared about how nightlife work affected their health and isolated them from the "day world". In this context, with intersections of violence, financial difficulties, unhealthy lifestyle, many of them end up quitting. A look at the panel of the interviews shows that seven out of ten of the participants of the study had already quit or planned to quit their nightlife jobs soon (at the moment of their interview). Of course, there are many reasons for quitting, but it seems like for the women interviewed, quitting customer service was also a way of putting an end to the violence and hectic lifestyle that come with the nightlife work culture. Lefebvre's (1972) right to the city emphasizes the users right to participate in rethinking and recreating urban life, so it can only be disappointing to see women quitting their nightlife jobs, to see them try to make some changes and give up after a few months. Arguably, quitting can be seen as a form of protesting, a last resource claim for their rights. It is also a definitive way of removing themselves from the space. Here is the case of a participant who confronted her boss on his sexual harassment and objectification, but ended up quitting:

> At first I was like you know he's my boss… ok… but then I remember one time he told me something about my body being fat or something and I was like 'what the fuck' but then the second time he told me something, I was super chill, talking to him like 'hey you can talk to me about work but don't talk about my body'. And also don't talk about another women's body because maybe I'm okay with my body but maybe she isn't so don't talk about ladies bodies or no one!" And he was like [grumbling] but he never apologized. And I talked with my work mate and he was like but you know he's like that you know saying that and I was like [mad]. But if you accept this kind of things like, pff where are we going to end? You know he just needs to worry about my work, if I'm doing good, if I'm making money, not about my body, it's my problem not his problem. […] the manager saw me and asked me 'are you ok?' and I said 'I'm planning to leave, I'm planning to quit this job because I'm not good anymore'. And he knows, the manager was Portuguese and he was gay, so he told me 'I know, this boss is shit, but he's our boss'. So… I was like 'I'm going away from here' […] I was super upset. I'm going like I don't need this anymore, because I think I'm not going to stop this, and he can stop paying me so… I was like I'm going yeah. You didn't give me the contract, I'm free! So, I talked to the boss and I said 'you never gave me the contract and I was for one year asking you for this, so…'

She left one week after this interaction, convinced she could not do anything to change her boss' attitude towards her, and scared he would stop paying her. This story is interesting

because this participant had a lot of power in her workplace; she was the only women working there, had good relations with everyone, regulars, friends in the street, she had great authority and was good at putting boundaries with her customers. When the owner made comments about her body, she felt offended, but reacted in a constructive way; she initiated a calm conversation, asked for respect and to refocus on her work performances. This case could be seen as a successful claim for her right to work in the night and be treated respectfully – and she was very good at it with everyone else. However, she resigned after this interaction, feeling worn down by her boss's unending sexism.

More than a power struggle, we can also see here the effects of slow violence. In his definition, Nixon (2011) emphasizes invisibility, as much as the temporal and spatial gaps between the exercise of violence and the appearance of its consequences. This participant's case clearly illustrates the effects of slow violence, invisibility and time lag: it shows that her boss's repeated comments about her body and lack of support during her various confrontations with sexist customers have a delayed impact on her mental health. She shared during the interview that she developed unhealthy coping mechanism and "lost herself" while working. The confrontation might be the last drop, but if she ends up resigning after a year, it is because of the accumulation of the consequences of slow violence on her.

As mentioned previously, the ethnography revealed that the workers tended to downplay their experiences of violence and trauma. This tendency can easily be associated to their state of precarity. In conditions of precarity, altering the workplace culture is challenging, and leaving one's job is often not a viable option. The workers find themselves negotiating between workplace harassment and the need to stay employed. As a result, enduring violence becomes easier when workers rationalize it as less severe than it is. One participant reflected on this topic:

> Actually all this thing made me also think about if this would be my main and only source of income that I would have had a very different experience dealing with this tricky owner, because I was in a privileged position of knowing that my income doesn't rely on these two shifts that I do at this wine bar and I am free to leave any time. I didn't have any contract, I could leave from one day to another but it made me think and I spoke to a friend of mine about this situation if I would be a waitress who this is her sole source of income who is reliant on the contract, on all the taxes on all these information, being with such a person at work would make my life I think ten times more stressful because you never know where these types of person go or how far they can go especially if they're intoxicated every single day, which was the case.

This waitress was only picking two shifts per week in addition to her main remote job. In this quote, she looks back at the harassment she suffered from her owner during her waitressing months and seems very conscious of her privilege. She explains well that earning enough

income in her main job did not tie her to her waitressing job, so she could leave anytime, which alleviates the pressure of having to cope with gender-based violence. This is a rare case, the rest of the women observed did not work in such conditions and had to strike a balance between tolerating some violence, elaborating strategies, and preserving their employment. I argue that while these strategies may temporarily mitigate risks and improve safety, they remain insufficient in addressing the underlying issues.

This conclusion is unsettling, as it demonstrates that the right to the night for women in the nightlife workforce is still far from fulfilled. Looking at the broader context, seeing the precarity and lack of power of the workers in the venues (Bonte, 2020; Starr, 2022), I argue that their strategies to discreetly produce their safety materialize the right to the night, yes, but also show that in these venues, changing the sexist culture seems unachievable. This prompts us to reflect on other approaches and expand the research into new directions. Fortuitously, the occasion emerged almost on its own, as I designed an experiment parallel to this fieldwork, that can be used to support the primary research.

4.3.2. Towards collective work

Lefebvre's concept of the right to the city was used primarily in this dissertation for its idea that every inhabitant in the city has a right to use, to appropriate the urban space in accordance to their needs. However, a second central idea of the theory claims the inhabitants' rights to participate in rethinking and recreating the urban space democratically. In the Right to the city, Lefebvre wrote "The right to the city manifests itself as a higher form of rights: the right to freedom, to individualization within socialization, to housing and to inhabiting. The right to create (participatory activity) and the right to appropriate (quite distinct from the right to property) are involved in the right to the city' (1972, p. 125). For contemporary geographers, Lefebvre' right to the city is a right that embodies an argument for not being excluded, and especially for "full political participation in the making of the city" (Mitchell & Villanueva, 2010, p. 668). For Harvey (2008) and Marcuse (2010), the right to the city goes beyond the right to access the resources of an existing city, it signifies the right to radically transform the material processes shaping it. To put it differently, and using the emblematic cry of the World

Social Forum[7]; "another word is possible". Exploring this idea allows for a breakthrough from the constraints posed by the previous findings. If women have limited voices as bar employees, if they keep being discriminated in these spaces and cannot change the culture in the nightlife venues, they can transition out of such roles and actively participate in creating their own spaces — nightlife spaces that will be more inclusive, more safe, where they will be treated equally as men and exercise their right to participate to the production of the party space.

In Lisbon, the recent years have seen many grassroot initiatives emerge in the electronic music scene to propose an alternative to the mainstream venues. Interestingly, those driving these initiatives articulate their messages in terms closely related to the right to the night. If many of their events possess a secretive to clandestine nature that keeps them from being archived online or well-represented in the literature, some are reported in articles featured in alternative magazines such as Dazed[8] or Hulk[9]. There, the parties are qualified as "sites of resistance" (Yeung, 2019), and their founders explain how they want to change the current nightlife culture. Opposing to the white and heterosexual nature of the parties brought by the touristification of the city, the collectives are re-politicizing the nightlife. Take, for example, the DJ Violet, who qualifies the Lisbon scene as "intensely homophobic and misogynistic" (Cafolla, 2018, no page). She took the opportunity of her set during the Lisbon pride of 2018 to invite her friends' trans bodies "to invade" the stage, to denounce their absence from the line-up. As she explained later "It was an opportunity to occupy space" (Cafolla, 2018, no page), which seems like a great example of embodying a right to the night, to access the nightlife space and enjoy it. The same goes for Mina parties, a techno grassroot collective whose popularity exploded since they started to host parties in a venue located in Prior Velho called Planeta Manas (the name could be translated in English into "Planet of the sisters"). One of its founders, Pedro Marum, stresses how apolitical the clubbing scene used to be, and how Mina enabled to give space to minorities. Consequently, "Lisbon's night is gradually being reclaimed by those who had been excluded" (Yeung, 2019, no page). The articles never mention directly the right to the night, but they showcase important points: first a clear lack of inclusivity of Lisbon's nightscapes, and second, a political claim to access safely and freely the urban night, materialized by the creation of spaces of encounters in the sense of Lefebvre. These spaces are qualified as shelters by Night

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[7] The World Social Forum is a global conference reuniting activists and scholars around the Right to the city concept, demanding for an alternative globalization, against the 'domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism'(World Social Forum, 2001).

[8] Online article https://www.dazeddigital.com/music/article/58127/1/maythey-lisbon-neo-hardcore-queer-party

[9] Online article https://www.huckmag.com/article/in-lisbon-the-dancefloor-is-still-a-site-of-resistance

Studies scholar Jordi Nofre; they provide safer spaces for the queer people who are exposed to hate crimes in the mainstream clubs. According to him:

> Mina's focus is really interesting, because it's not about creating anti-fascist commandos, like sometimes in Barcelona, but taking music like underground techno to subvert the social and political order of the night. Nightlife has once again become an area for creativity, innovation, self-empowerment and contestation to the aggressive capitalist city (Nofre, cited in Yeung, 2019, no page).

More than just creating parties, these collectives are reclaiming the night and therefore the city. As Marum states, "[w]e want to have a real impact and control over the place that we live" (Yeung, 2019, no page). Mentioning these alternative spaces in Lisbon provides good contextual material to understand the opposite culture that dominates the bars and clubs of the more mainstream nightlife. It shows how inhabitants can participate in creating spaces that are more democratic and inclusive, where women and minorities have a say, and how the right to the night for women and minorities can be filled with diverse meanings. For the feminized workers struggling with violence in their workspaces, the right to the night seems hardly achievable. But in those experimentative spaces, everything can be done. Moreover, it can help change the narrative; as many feminists noted, studying women's fears and struggles with discrimination could unintentionally reinforce the production of fear and limit women to the status of victims who have no agency over their own lives (Koskela, 1999). I argue that even if women are the victims of many forms of violence, they cannot be restricted to this status. In the right spaces, they can use their right to the night and participate actively in creating policies, educating the party crowd on women's rights while enjoying the nocturnal space themselves.

At this stage, this dissertation aims to step away from the previous nightlife venues, to explore the potentials of a new party space, an informal underground techno collective, with a different structure and intention, where I contributed to create an Awareness Team experiment. While night scholars point out that informality is a dimension that has not yet been fully explored by nightlife studies, some argue there is a continuum between formal and informal, that should be studied to help to unpack power relations (Aramayona & Guarneros-Meza, 2024). The remainder of this dissertation aims to contribute to it.

The collective was created in January 2024 and held its first official event on the 27th of the same month. It gathered a hundred ravers around DJs mixing techno music, in the courtyard of an abandoned factory in Cacilhas, facing the Tagus River. Prior to the creation of the collective, its instigators had hosted house parties in a student building in the neighborhood of Arroios. They were Portuguese and international students or workers in their twenties, who shared an

interest in techno music, but had no professional background in event planning. Some of us were starting to mix music while others were simply going out, to free parties or club events like Mina in Planeta Manas or Riktus in Ministerium. In Arroios, the parties grew progressively bigger, attracting such crowds that the group was eventually evicted from the property by its owner. In reaction, the decision was taken to keep making parties, but differently; by officially becoming a techno collective, and relocating the events to abandoned ruins, located on the outskirts of the town. This decision could be seen as motivated by a sense of resilience after the eviction, certainly, but at a deeper level, the collective aspired to grow into active participants of the nightlife scene. The collective wanted to become an actor of the underground nightlife, to make our own parties with our own rules, offer a stage to our DJs and nurture this DIY aspect to see what would come. For its first rave, the newly born collective relied mostly on word of mouth, communicated the location coordinates on the day of the event on Telegram and hoped for the best. The event was a success, it started at 10pm and lasted until 11am, leaving us all speechless. The following text sent on the private group conversation of the friends group summarizes well the success of the event "13th hour of rave and 12th DJ. We ran out of alcohol and water by 5am, so only music is keeping people up". The thrill of that night left everyone both dazed and exhilarated, and encouraged its participants to commit more to the collective. A few months later, the collective was recognized as an important actor in Lisbon's techno underground scene.

Coming back to the creation of the collective reveals some obvious parallels with Lefebvre's ideas on the right to the city: by the praxis, we were attempting to reach our utopia of what the night could be; an artistic and leisure space, where each has a role to play to develop a project that looks like us. Let us break it down in three points and show the parallels with Lefebvre (1972), Harvey (2008), Mitchell (2003), and Marcuse (2010).

First, the raves are free parties. In the literature, Anderson and Kavanaugh argue that raves, "historically referred to grassroots organized, anti-establishment and unlicensed all-night dance parties, featuring electronically produced dance music, such as techno, house, trance and drum and bass" (2007, p. 499). These raves intend to be free, to diffuse music to anyone wanting to hear it, to be as inclusive as possible. They are made for the sake of the party, not to create profit. To balance out the expenses of the organization, the collective encourages donations, and created a bar, that serves drinks in exchange of payment. However, someone that does not have the resources to contribute does not need to justify it, and can bring their own drink. This

is a fair compromise, prioritizing to not marginalize those who "use" the party for leisure in favor of those who seek to realize exchange value of urban space.

Secondly, the structure of the collective was thought to stay horizontal, and open to everyone who aims to participate voluntarily, whether it meant to bring support or to take part in the conceptualization of the project, to think about its general direction and identity. If each of us progressively specified in different aspects of the production of the party, we took the decisions jointly, created different canals of discussion and exchanged almost daily. The organization also felt the need to encourage more feedback from the ravers, during the parties and afterwards on social media. We agreed that the quality of the events would come from the diversity of opinions and the growing expertise of each of us. In that sense, the self-managed and DIY nature of the collective crossed with its aim to be democratic corresponds to Lefebvre's right to participate actively and equally in the production of urban space, to rethink urban life.

Lastly, because we were left without a space after the eviction, we naturally turned to the use of some of the city's abandoned spaces. Reappropriating them temporarily for a night to give them back to the ravers – the "users" – is cheap, exciting, and interesting. These spaces that are normally deserted become valued for a night for their aesthetic qualities, their availability, and their nostalgic scenery. The ravers usually appreciate stepping out of the music floor to explore the mix of ruins and nature. They also know that in exchange of being able to use the location informally, they have a responsibility to keep it clean and accept that whenever the police come to stop the party, it must stop. It also has to be noted that the use of these ruins can interfere with city planning projects or private real estate, which can explain more pressure from the police. For example, rumor says that one of the rave locations, currently a squat, is soon to go under construction to build a bridge, while another would have been bought to become a hotel. But the opposing argument could also be made. Temporary events in ruined spaces can endow those spaces with life while they are not being formally used, promoting economic activities or community life (Prior, 2014; Costa et al., 2021). Exploiting these spaces and appropriating them for non-profitable activities before their reintroduction into the real estate market can be seen as a form of resistance, where the urban space is for users, not speculation.

The characteristics of the collective, its structure, its goals and its illegal use of deserted spaces show how completely different the free parties are from those of the night life venues I observed previously. The parties organized by this collective carry utopian narratives and offer new possibilities to reclaim the nocturnal space. Now that this point has been addressed, let us take a closer look at the free parties, and at the awareness team experiment.

4.3.3. The awareness team experiment

A few months into the creation of the collective, we noticed that our parties were not as inclusive or as safe as they should be. The women, queers and gender non-conforming participants of the organization were harassed during the parties, which was very upsetting and disappointing. We had to start a conversation about minorities' experiences of violence and discrimination in the parties, and more generally, about what kind of party and collective we wanted to be. In this curating process, we agreed that we needed to redirect and take action. We knew that we needed to do something to make the parties safer and send a clear message to our crowd. In reaction to this conversation, the collective made efforts to curate parties where women felt more included: on the 8th of March, for International Women's Day, the FLINTA* line up was showcasing women and non-binary DJs to gather donations for a feminist association. The collective also participated in protests about women's rights and shared their presence on social media. In the same time frame, we created the "Awareness team", inspired by what we saw in Planeta Manas, and Outracena – two clubs in Lisbon who had similar models.

The initial goal of the Awareness Team experiment was simple; to gather a team of volunteers to raise awareness on harassment in the parties and create a safe space for victims within the party. With the organization, the Awareness Team started working on a list of rules, that were shared in social media and in the parties. During the writing process, the collective realized that this experiment could extend to general awareness on harm reduction, mindfulness and solidarity, to create a real sense of community. Accordingly, in addition to the focus on gender-based violence, the code of conduct provided rules for the ravers to care about themselves, about others, and about the party itself. Here are the rules:

[…] is a queer-friendly, anti-sexist, anti-racist collective. Please be mindful of the space you are entering and respectful of people around you. We don't tolerate any form of racism, sexism, transphobia, homophobia, or any kind of discrimination towards fellow ravers.

Everyone has a role in creating safe and inclusive parties. Look out for each other and respect boundaries.

1. Consent must always be an enthusiastic "yes".

2. If someone bothers you or makes you uncomfortable, please don't stay alone and come talk to the awareness team

3. If you witness problematic behaviour, we encourage you to act early. Pay attention to the first signs of sexual harassment and violence

4. Be aware of the space you take up- there is enough for everyone. Respect each one's space on the dancefloor and the DJs space around the mixing table

These rules are made to be understood as guidelines for the ravers. They are shared in Portuguese and English on social media and printed to be accessible in the party and at the Ravers Corner. They were written collectively, with inspiration from other collectives' communication, feminist associations, harm reduction organizations, as well as the SexismFreeNight project. The general idea for the collective was to ground the prevention of violence and harm reduction on a community-based approach: we address the message to "everyone", mention "friends" "fellow ravers", ask to take care of each other, to not stay alone, and give different options to find support in case of problem. The message is not threatening, there is no threat of exclusion, or else, because it would be incompatible with the free party spirit. In fact, the exercise of policy making in a free party setting could seem contradictory, it could be against the "free" aspect of the free party. I argue that the free parties need to be welcoming and safe for everyone who wishes to join, especially for minorities and vulnerable crowds, and that policy-making and awareness can help achieve this goal. The objective of these rules is not to police the party or be exclusive like a club or private event could be, it is to shape the atmosphere of the rave, conveying that by participating in the parties, ravers are expected to adhere to these guidelines. Not doing so weakens the sense of community we want to create and takes away from the party's overall enjoyment.

The 'Ravers Corner' mentioned in the rules is inspired by the model elaborated in the queer club Planeta Manas, and to a lesser extent in the techno club Outracena. It is a defined space in the party, thought of as a safe space, dedicated to meet the ravers. There, some volunteers from the Awareness Team are gathered around a table, ready to welcome ravers in need for

assistance. The table offers food and materials in exchange of symbolic donations. Here is a description of the Corner extracted from my fieldwork journal:

> The first shift[10] consisted of setting up the table at the Corner, with material for harm reduction (we have informational sheets about drugs from Kosmicare, feminine hygiene products, tissues, chewing gum, water, condoms, bananas, tangerines and other snacks, eye drops) as well as more playful material to make the interactions with the crowd better (face paint, glitters, bubbles…). We paid attention to setting the corner in a very visible spot, right by the entrance and close to the main room with the stage, so that people who would go see the DJ wouldn't be able to miss it. We paid attention to decoration, by taking space using two tables, putting our Ravers Corner billboard in the front and lights, fairy wings visible and posters with the code of conduct spread everywhere. We then shared on Instagram some pictures of the corner and indications to find it.

This extract shows how the placement of the Corner is strategic for the experiment. Since each event takes place in a different location, the Awareness Team needs to adapt to the location each time: to find the right place, to be by the entrance, far from the music, in a more calm area of the party, but still in the party. The area around the Corner is generally a space where the ravers go to rest, to take a break from the music, sit down or socialize (Figure 2). The experiment showed that having a combination of serious and playful material works well to fit the party atmosphere while educating ravers on more serious topics. Selecting the right material was experimental, the team relied on trial and error, and on the feedback of the ravers. It constantly evolved, adding elements to improve the quality of the Corner.

Figure 2. Photograph taken on 17/05/2024 during a free party. Source: author.

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[10] The volunteer's attendance at the Corner is organized in shifts of two hours, in duos.

In addition to the Ravers Corner and its stationary team of volunteers, we also asked some members to walk around in the party – what we called a 'floating team' to roam around and detect issues or be available to help. One person was also staying nearby the DJ booth, either behind or on the dancefloor to prevent ravers from bothering the DJ and observe the crowd's behavior. All the volunteers were recognizable with clothing that evolved through time: fairy wings and LED lights in the beginning, then bracelets, t-shirts or yellow fluorescent vests.

During the parties, many different situations were presented to the Ravers Corner. Namely cases of harassment, drug or alcohol abuse, aggressive behaviors, mental health related issues, lost items, physical injuries. The cases could range from serious issues that mobilized the whole team to friendly comforting one on one advice, or even simply giving out water. To answer the needs of the ravers at the Corner, the team met regularly to exchange on their experiences and elaborated protocols with guidelines to frame their response. These helped us to react calmly and confidently to stressful situations. The following extract describes some of the work done by the Awareness Team at the Ravers Corner.

> The rave location was in an abandoned military building, found by [X]. Arriving there, we recognized some ravers from the start that greeted us with a "the awareness team is here", fair enough we are very recognizable with our big sign and fairy wings. We met [X] on the way and went to the party to greet everyone and pick a place for the Corner. We easily decided to place it by the entrance, it worked well the last time to be very visible and in the way to the party. We set the table, lights, all the material on the table and the members arrived progressively. This time we had bracelets in paper made by [X] and [X] to distribute to the members of the organization who could go behind the DJ booth and the Bar. We distributed them, gave the lights to some of the members who did floating team and spread around to put the Ravers Corner sign and rules on the wall, to check out the place and what could be an issue. I noticed some holes on the ground that I blocked with some wood. We also put up some trash bags around the party. We found some palettes who could be useful to sit down by the Corner to make a chill zone. The first shift from 1-3 started and I stayed a little bit with them, the rest of the members dispersed. I took some content to post on social media and greeted the ravers arriving. People were smiling at us or greeting us on the way to the party, or stopping by to ask what we were doing, looking at the sign. […] At this point, a lot of people were asking about water, chewing gum, snacks to eat or just wanted to have a conversation. […] Someone found a wallet on the dancefloor and brought it. Someone went to pick up a lost phone, I asked him to prove it was his, by describing the phone and calling the number. A raver came to the table to ask for support because she felt harassed by a man on the dancefloor, he was pushing her and invading her space. She asked to stay at the Corner and sit down to recharge. She had taken a pill, and I think this experience of harassment was making her struggle with her high. The members of the team took turns to stay with her, talk with her and comfort her. […] I started my shift with [X] and friends around 5. Because I started late, after 5am, I was expecting to have to deal with a lot of issues but by 5am the ravers were already pretty tired and mostly asking for some water or struggling with their high. At some point I was distributing water in cups for people without interruptions, and not having a break. A guy kept talking to me to say that if we need some people to clean at the end he was there. He said it maybe 5 times. His girlfriend was sitting down on the chill area, looking bad. She told me she was not used to drugs but took a pill and then another half, which was a lot for her. Her boyfriend also took the same drugs, but was more used to it and more massive. She was just sitting down curled up in the chill zone, telling me

she was very high and worried to stay like this. I sat down next to her and started to talk. I said something along the lines of : you know even if you feel very high right now in a few hours you will be done, this is only temporary. You can stay here if you want. Do you want some more water ? she accepted, she also accepted a banana and chewing gum. I told her, do you want to take a walk around ? it's very pretty here. She said that no she felt good sitting down with me, so I mothered her. I told her boyfriend to go on a walk and take some pictures and I stayed with her chatting, talking about how beautiful the rave was. She kept thanking me and telling me how nice I was, she was so high I was worried for her. I felt like I had to stay with her in case something happened, I didn't tell her, I didn't want to make her more worried. I just said at some point that the amount she took was too much and that it was a mistake taking more after her first pill. I don't know if she will remember this conversation, but her boyfriend sent a DM to the awareness team Instagram account two days after the rave saying "hello guys ! thank you so much to the party! PS sorry for asking a lot from you, sorry guys. If you need any help with your events I can always help!". After talking with her for a while I told her I had to go back to the corner to take care of other people and she was okay to stay sitting with her boyfriend. […] At some point, a guy that was staying around the corner asked me: are you studying this ? I was very surprised, thinking how does he know? but I played dumb and said no why? he said "someone should study this rave. In this place with all these people, it's like sociology, it's very interesting". I was blown away.

This extract was written on the day after the party. It provides an accurate representation of what the parties are like while working within the Awareness Team: in the unpredictable and lively environment of the party, there is a strong DIY aspect and a sense of community where most individuals know each other and contribute to the event. It shows how the individuals participating in the Awareness Team experiment are curating the party atmosphere by themselves, collectively taking care of the ravers and actively participating in the production of a safer party. That night, the Ravers Corner was always busy; during their shifts, the volunteers took care of a harassment case, gave many harm-reduction advice, distributed water and snacks while maintaining an ongoing conversation around the code of conduct and checking on the ravers resting around the Corner.

How it the Awareness team materializing the right to the night? The participants of the Awareness Team are users and curators of the parties at the same time. Their practices in the party are claiming for safer – in all meanings – and better nightlife. While they have no prior experience in this kind of experiment, they are self-taught and proceed with trial and error. If the right to the night is polysemic and encompasses many kinds of rights, looking at their ongoing practices enables us to understand how the right to the night materializes for them. During the parties they learned through praxis how to communicate (on the code of conduct) and how to use their space strategically (to place the Corner in the right place). The meetings helped them to develop the best logistics, and the collective "rave reviews" helped build theoretical foundations. For example, they made them realize that they needed a diverse team – genders, nationalities, experiences – to cover better the needs of the ravers. By writing

protocols, they learned how to defuse tension, deescalate conflicts, and listen to the ravers who come to bring their issues to the Corner. Since the start of the experiment, they noticed a general improvement in the safety of the parties, less issues to deal with at the Corner, and better communication about related issues. They received good feedback from the ravers, who usually compliment the organization and safety of the party. They noticed that the rules of the Code of Conduct have inspired other collectives to write their own, and how their presence in the organization influences the artistic and general curation of the parties. All these examples show how the right to the night for women materializes in different ways: the volunteers are collectively taking initiatives to exercise their right to difference by accessing spaces of encounters, nightlife spaces here that can be occupied and transformed according to their goals. They are claiming many rights: the right to party, and to do so safely, to belong in, to be treated respectfully and equally, to use the space collectively, to participate in the curation of the party – to have a say and act about the nightlife as *oeuvre* – to have "full political participation in the making of the [night]" (Mitchell & Villanueva, 2010, p. 668), for the common good of all users.

However, this experiment also brought some difficulties: the first obvious limit to the experiment is the lack of training of the volunteers; we are not professionals, and the responsibility of collective care we take in the parties can be overwhelming. Second, we noticed that our availability in the Corner made us ideal targets for violent aggressive behaviors, placing us as "human shield" in the party. To face this issue, we realized that we needed to maintain some authority and boundaries with the ravers, to react as a group to abusive aggression, communicate together about potential threats or switch volunteers to defuse tension. In that sense, the experiment revealed that taking care of the ravers, while protecting ourselves was a similar game than the 'jogo de cintura' mentioned by one of the workers of the nightlife venues. Thirdly, there is a contradiction, a difficulty to bring policy making into a free party context: the last months have seen many debates emerge within the collective around some policies of the Awareness Team, mainly around security. For example, regarding the ravers who do not respect the code of conduct, some members think that raves should avoid any resemblance with club culture and bouncers, while others believe that they should be expelled from the parties like they would everywhere else. As a middle ground, the collective aims to find balance between guidelines to improve the party and leaving enough space for freedom in the events. This also raises the question of who gets to make the rules – the same question is asked in the discussion about the right to the city.

To conclude this brief exploration of the experiment, let us put it in perspective with the original fieldwork on nightlife venues. Given the distinct structures and organizational frameworks characterizing these two fields, I argue that the fight against gender-based violence to reclaim the night inevitably takes different forms. In nightlife venues, workers discreetly negotiate their safety within a context of precarity, developing agency, skills, and strategies to protect both themselves and others within the constraints of what is possible. In the free parties, while rooted in a utopian narrative, there are fewer limitations: volunteers actively participate in creating safer parties, taking initiatives without risking their presence or employment in the space, which allows them to hold enough power and influence to challenge and transform sexist cultural norms. At the heart of Lefebvre's conception of the right to the city is his notion of the city as an oeuvre, or as a work produced through the labor and daily actions of those who live and work in the city. This idea can be applied to both fields. Comparing the workers of the first field to the volunteers of the second reveals that they can have common strategies (having a safe space, relying on alliances, overlooking the space to anticipate threats). These strategies are both materializing their claim for a right to the night; a right to access the nocturnal space, to leisure and party, to safety and equality, to participation and collective care. To some extent, these two fields could mutually influence each other. However, I argue that the second one, even as a utopia, contains more potential to fulfill a right to the night.

Conclusion

This dissertation has explored the pervasive issue of gender-based violence within the context of nightlife, focusing particularly on its impact on workers in Lisbon's nightlife spaces. It is based on five months of ethnographic fieldwork, which provided an important insight into the reality of the everyday life of women and gender non-conforming people working in the nightlife. The research was guided by a three-fold objective. First it aimed to understand how the experience of violence is shaping women workers' relationship with their workspaces. Secondly, it aimed to identify the strategies developed consciously or unconsciously by women workers to avoid, manage or face violence. Thirdly, it aimed to question whether these strategies can be understood as a way to fulfill a claim for a right to the night as women.

Regarding the first objective, this dissertation has highlighted how the workers in nightlife venues, especially young women who are new to the environment, are particularly vulnerable: they not only witness, but also experience intersecting forms of violence while at their workplace. Often, workers are unsure how to address this violence, they face it in isolation, lacking the necessary support or resources to effectively manage it, while working, which has consequential repercussions on their relationship to their workspace.

One of the key findings is that, by exploring different kinds of violence (fast and slow), this dissertation was able to look closely at the range of violence experienced by the workers in Lisbon, and at their reaction to it (Christian & Dowler, 2019; Nixon, 2011). While previous research has acknowledged that violence is often normalized as 'part of the job' for nightlife workers (Starr, 2021), this study further demonstrates that workers develop the ability to identify patterns and anticipate violence. More importantly, while previous works focused on the interpersonal dimension of gender violence in the nightlife (Coffey et al., 2023; Starr, 2022; Bonte, 2019; Duque et al., 2020), this study has shown that there is a spatial dimension to the intensity of gender violence. The ethnographic work enabled to assess that, in Lisbon, the nature and intensity of violence varies according to the neighborhood, the status of the venue, and the workers' level of experience and authority. While some spaces were marked by invisible, common, daily, and disregarded forms of violence (such as intimidation, sexualization or micro-aggressions) others simultaneously experienced more visible and spectacular acts of violence (such as physical or sexual violence). For example, the neighborhoods of Bairro Alto and Cais do Sodré are notable for the more spectacular forms of (fast) violence witnessed there,

adding further layers of complexity to the violence experienced by workers in different settings. However, despite this asymmetry in the spatial repartition of gender-based acts of violence, this dissertation argues that slow and fast violence form part of a continuum (Christian & Dowler, 2019), representing a complex of violence, rather than isolated incidents.

Additionally, this dissertation uncovers that violence in nightlife is rarely confronted directly by workers. This leads us to our second objective. The findings have shown that workers adopt discreet safety strategies, which I categorized into four main types: avoiding, anticipating, managing, and fighting violence. These strategies are developed consciously or unconsciously, and can range from expelling a customer or hiding behind the bar, to constantly overlooking the venue or dressing a specific way. I argue that by elaborating these strategies as coping mechanisms, the workers regain some spatial control, and build agency, authority, and power in an environment shaped by misogyny. By doing so, they are appropriating and negotiating the production of a safer space to work in. My research contributes to the specific context of nightwork, demonstrating that women develop remarkable knowledge of their workspaces – to use it for safety. For example, the interviews revealed that most workers could identify specific spaces inside their workplace where they felt more or less safe, sorting the venues' microspaces into categories, which can be assimilated to previous studies on women's habit of mental mapping the public space (Kern, 2021; Pain, 2001; Koskela, 1999). In this sense, this dissertation has found that the spatial dimension of gender violence for nightlife workers also carries a sense of territoriality (Brighenti, 2010; Brighenti & Kärrholm, 2020, 2021, 2022), as nightlife venues are built on specific territories which provide different levels of safety for woman workers.

Another central finding of this dissertation revolves around care and alliances against violence. The study revealed that the workers who could form alliances at work – with other feminized workers or minorities, but also male coworkers, their managers, or customers – would greatly benefit from these alliances. Their well-being at work would improve, and they also increased their power and influence in the venue. The research demonstrates that care and mutual support among workers in nightlife exist through mechanisms such as collective spatial awareness, constant observation, movement and switching of positions, communication during training, safety measures, as well as having safe spaces. These collective strategies suggest that there are ways to foster a culture of care within the workplace, even under adverse conditions. This shows that care in the nightlife is necessary and should extend beyond the dancefloor (Gaissad, 2022)

– into all the spaces that are part of nightlife, even beyond the nightclub, to the street, like it was observed in Bairro Alto.

This dissertation has sought to go beyond the traditional discourse of women as either fearful or bold in the face of violence. Instead, our third objective questioned and conceptualized women's right to the night as an active and ongoing claim. I argue that if gender-based violence exists to punish minorities for transgressing the patriarchal order, then their strategies represent a materialization of their claim to the right to the night. While the definition of the right to the night remains polysemic, and is not the focus of this dissertation, I argue that, for these workers, the meaning of the concept emerges through their strategies. In this sense, I follow Duff's (2021) call to focus on the materialization of rights, rather than conceptual debate on what these rights might mean. Studying the strategies reveals that the right to the night encompasses not only access to nocturnal spaces for work and leisure, but also the demand to be treated with respect and equality in these spaces. In that sense, women's right to the night would be a right to access the nocturnal space, for it to be a space of encounters (or work in the case of this research), to be safe, to be treated respectfully and equally. However, it would also mean having enough power and influence over the workspace culture to be able to change it, if necessary. And to actively participate in the production of space, and to have a say in the discussion over women's struggles in the night. In this sense, the right to the night emerges as a political right, akin to the way in which Lefebvre (1972), Harvey (2008), Mitchell (2003), Marcuse (2010) have conceptualized the right to the city. In that regard, this dissertation offers a way to think differently, as reclaiming the night has been explored previously in the academic world mostly through activism (Sandberg & Coe, 2019; Kern, 2021). But whether the workers are political about gender-based violence topic, or not, does not change the implications of their right to the night. I argue that women's mere presence as workers in nightlife venues and their everyday acts of resistance constitutes itself a form of political expression, effectively materializing their right to the night.

However, the fieldwork findings also uncovers the limits to the claim for the right to the night. The fieldwork revealed that the workers' precarity and lack of experience impeded their ability to fully reclaim the night in their jobs. Power struggles and vulnerability at work often prevent women from achieving meaningful agency in nightlife spaces. In these venues, they find themselves negotiating between workplace violence and the need to stay employed. This results in discreet, limited, agency or quitting the workplace. One conclusion to this work can be stated as the following: especially when aware of the limitations of the workers in their workplace to

reclaim the night, we can understand their strategies against violence as the best possible materialization of their right to the night – a utopia, hardly attainable. However, looking at these limitations, and making this underwhelming assessment also opens the door to a new field of exploration, outside the commercial nightlife venues.

In the last section of the findings, the focus switches from the workers of nightlife venues to the volunteers of the Awareness Team of an underground techno collective organizing free parties in Lisbon. In this second field, filled with utopian narratives, the research stressed that in this alternative collective setting, the right to the night is more easily pursued, with every participant contributing to create a safer, more inclusive nightlife environment. The fieldwork showed that this collective approach enables policy-making and provides direct support to victims of gender-based violence while educating the public. Though this model shows promise in reducing misogynistic violence within nightlife spaces, it also introduces new challenges, which warrant further investigation.

These findings provide an opportunity to reflect on several key considerations. It is worth starting by mentioning that in this study, the ambivalence of nighttime spaces is evident. Nightlife spaces simultaneously offer possibilities for freedom and connection across differences, while also serving as sites of potential violence. This duality between freedom and safety concerns was present throughout the fieldwork. It highlights the subjective nature of the party experience, where individual perceptions can vary significantly. I found that this ambivalence and subjectivity around the night can be both vertiginous and motivational to pursue research, especially as a young female researcher.

Moreover, one of the key aspects of this dissertation is the study of the workers in their environment. It is essential to draw parallels between the two fields explored in this research, because the dissertation focused more on their differences. While nightlife in massified and touristified central urban areas is notably constrained by capitalist dynamics, where workers contribute to wealth creation for the venue often at the expense of their well-being, the parties organized by the collective provide a space that is rejecting capitalist dynamics, and ignoring financial goals. The volunteers involved in the awareness team experiment have different motives to work for the collective – not necessarily political, but they seem to be genuinely interested in contributing to enhance the quality of the parties. Interestingly, in both contexts, the workers are involved in often unrecognized care work, prompting critical questions about the definitions of work and labor. Specifically, the unpaid, feminized labor associated with awareness teams raises important discussions. As Shaw (2022) highlights in *Geographies of*

Night Work, feminist scholars have long critiqued how prevailing conceptualizations of work and paid employment shape expectations about what constitutes labor (McDowell, 2015). In that regard, I argue that awareness labor should be paid, when it takes place in venues like clubs or bars, who also benefit financially from it. However, in the context of non-profit partying, it might be more difficult to implement this initiative.

Additionally, the research uncovers a paradox regarding access and policy-making. In the massified and touristified central urban areas, financial and material barriers to access nightlife exist alongside a lack of formal policies against gender-based violence. In the opposite, in the free parties organized by the collective, the space is characterized by its inclusivity, its relative absence of barriers, but is also governed by semi-formal rules. In other words, financial constraints limit access to the nightlife venues, while personal values and rules constrain individuals in the raves. The emerging concept of awareness teams is a novel area for exploration, placing care and community at the heart of the parties. It also invites us to reexamine what constitutes freedom within this framework. In the context of free parties, it is vital to respect the self-managed, DIY identity of alternative underground culture, as excessive regulation could undermine this ethos. Working in the awareness team provided a space to debate this question with the members of the collective, to try to find the right balance between freedom and safety. This ongoing debate within the collective also emphasizes the need to consider who has the authority to establish these guidelines and rules. In an organization supposedly horizontal, who gets the final say is vital. In this sense, thinking about the right to the night as a political right, in the line of the right to the city (Dikec, 2005; Attoh, 2011; Kyumulu, 2013), raises questions about who holds the power to represent and establish rules for the community. Furthermore, each context reveals asymmetrical feelings of belonging in the party and differing resources for making claims. As Vanessa May (2011) asserts, this sense of belonging is not complete unless individuals feel they can actively participate in shaping the values, meanings, and norms of a group. This notion underscores the variability in resources available to individuals for claim-making within these spaces. While the asymmetry of resources for claim's making was made evident in the nightlife venues, it has not been explored yet in the preliminary work on the Awareness Team experiment.

To continue this conclusion, I would like to address the limitations that I faced, notably regarding the fieldwork in the massified and touristified central urban areas. While this dissertation's most significant contribution likely lies in its insights into women's everyday experiences working in the nightlife, it is crucial to acknowledge that this is largely attributable

to the methodology and to my positionality. Leading an ethnographic work which includes an autoethnographic aspect enabled me to have access to the intimate reality of women's work struggles in the nightlife and to contribute to a rather under-researched topic. However, it would not have been possible if I was not a woman, and if I had not had similar work experiences in the nightlife myself. This point was already made in the methodology section, but it is important to reinforce how central my positionality is to the findings, as it also underscores the importance of reflexivity in research. Before I started the fieldwork, reading the literature on feminist or women-led investigation primed me to expect to face some limitations. I expected to have to take safety-related decisions for myself, or struggle to access some spaces, which occurred on many occasions. Notably, during the first phase of observation, I encountered some limitations due to my gender and my concerns for safety. I had to find the right compromise between the data collection objectives and my own well-being. Deciding to stop working in violent venues for the autoethnographic project was disappointing, but self-explanatory. However, I did not anticipate the biggest challenges to revolve around related ethics questions, not about myself but about others this time.

During the interview phase of the fieldwork, at first, I encountered considerable resistance from participants when it came to disclosing the names of certain venues or sharing potentially compromising information. They would ask me not to mention the most interesting information in the final project, or to hide anything risking to reveal their identity. On their end, it was out of fear of being recognized and lose their job, or reputation, which was reasonable. Some of the information mentioned in the interviews implied criminal liability, making it public could have had a major impact on their work environment. There was also a psychological factor, as I sensed that some participants could feel shame about what they were sharing. On my end, I settled for what was on hand, tried to be reassuring and grateful for their trust. It could be frustrating at times – I had to get creative in the writing to respect the anonymity – but mostly highlighted just how taboo this research subject was. Taboo for them, but also for me; I almost censored some extracts of my fieldwork journal in the findings, worried to expose my own encounter with sexist and sexual violence in nightwork. It showed how the topic at hand – women's navigation of violent nighttime spaces – occupies a deeply personal and political intersection, touching upon issues that resonate with all members of society. With this realization hitting during the beginning of the interview phase, I then faced the biggest ethical challenges.

How to conduct a feminist investigation? When the interviews revolved mostly around these strangers' intimate experiences of violence, and when their experiences were similar to mine, I struggled to find the right balance between gathering data and maintaining an ethical, respectful stance as a researcher. It was not so much about being pervasive, the issue was different. On numerous occasions during interviews, I found myself crossing the line between the role of a neutral researcher and that of a supportive, even protective, confidante. When the participants shared difficult stories, I would struggle to find the right balance between showing compassion, giving them enough time, but also encouraging them to continue talking, and keeping control over the structure of the interview. There also were moments when the participants unwillingly adopted victim-blaming narratives, made internalized misogynistic comments, or disqualified themselves as experts of their own lives. While I naturally would have adopted a feminist friendly posture, I did not know how to react. In other words, I struggled between treating my participants as research participants, and not as vulnerable humans. More than simple empathy, I struggled to find the right place as a researcher, and felt responsible for the impact that the interviews could have on the participants. I knew I was stirring up difficult memories, and was scared of crossing their boundaries and breaking trust. While I do not think that blurring the boundaries between research and advocate is a limit itself, I find it disrespectful and crossing a line to tell someone, as a researcher, that the episode they are describing is a serious matter and more than that, to qualify it for them. One interview participant described clearly a case of sexual and moral harassment, without naming it, and I wondered for days if I was right to not say anything to her. I figured that for the sake of the interview, and taking into account that I am not qualified to provide legal council, I could not adopt such a political or juridical stance, and had to refrain from my regular habits. This internal dialogue during the interviews enabled me to protect myself from too much proximity and vicarious trauma from the participants, but there were also instances where I felt as though I had betrayed my participants by not intervening or speaking up.

This raises important questions about how to conduct research on violence in a way that is ethical, sensitive, and just, while also adhering to the researcher's objective – sometimes uncomfortably detached – goal of collecting data. It is a difficult balance to strike: how can one engage in feminist research without allowing personal biases or emotions to 'pollute' the process? How can a feminist researcher find the right balance between empathy and methodological rigor? These are questions that remain partially unresolved. Finally, this reflection leads me to consider whether the field of research, in its current methodological form,

is adequately equipped to address such complexities. The emotional, ethical, and practical challenges that arise when researching sensitive topics like gender-based violence demand a research framework that is attuned not only to the needs of the participants, but also to the ethical dilemmas faced by the researcher. As the landscape of feminist research continues to evolve, there is a pressing need for methodologies that can better accommodate the relational, emotional, and political dimensions inherent in such work.

Lastly, I want to reflect on future lines of research and explore new, creative possibilities for advancing the insights gained from this study. Taking into account the previous considerations on feminist research, future research should continue to embrace a deeply autoethnographic and intimate approach when it comes to study women's experiences, as this has been fundamental to understanding the nuanced experiences of women in nightlife contexts. It remains a priority to further document the everyday experiences of women working in the nightlife—an area that is still largely under-researched. In this regard, adopting innovative methodological tools such as mental mapping and life history narratives could provide fresh perspectives. Additionally, expanding research beyond Lisbon to other cities could offer comparative insights into how different urban contexts shape women's experiences and strategies.

The previous reflection is also encouraging to pursue more in-depth action-oriented research, particularly building on the experimental work initiated with the Awareness Team. There is substantial potential to explore further the free party context, focusing on its utopian narratives and the alternative possibilities it offers for creating safer, more inclusive parties and reclaiming the nightlife. More specifically, I am interested in examining the safe space of the Ravers Corner, to develop more tools for policy-making, and to understand how awareness teams function democratically in regards to the right to the night. It would be very interesting to identify diverse approaches to policy-making within the informal, self-regulated spaces of the free parties, or alternative spaces, and make them dialogue. Comparing different collectives across cities would allow for a deeper understanding of how cultural influences shape approaches to creating safe, inclusive spaces in nightlife. I also have curiosity for a more sensory-based ethnography, especially when it comes to sound. Researching the role of music in curating the right atmosphere and attracting particular crowds deserves more attention. The role of soundscapes can also dialogue with the awareness labor itself, and be a useful tool for communication and education. Understanding the relationship between music, crowd dynamics, and awareness work could open new avenues for fostering safer and more inclusive nightlife environments.

Moreover, there is significant scope to explore questions around collective management, democratic participation, and the development of systems that engage participants more effectively to reclaim the nocturnal environment. How can the work of awareness teams be better recognized, valued, and disseminated into other collectives? A further area of interest would be to conduct surveys and ethnographic studies with ravers themselves, assessing how the efforts of the Awareness Team are perceived and how they could be improved, or expanded. Following the development of this initiative, particularly in volunteer engagement, would provide valuable insights into how to foster a culture of safety and inclusivity in the nightlife in general. In that sense, it would lead to discussing the interactions between feminized work and care in the nightlife more in depth. Another pressing issue is how to confront external pressures, particularly repression, and develop tools to support collectives in responding effectively. This could also consist of a study on how the underground and bottom-up initiatives influence the mainstream venues and neighbourhoods, which could involve re-visiting my two fieldwork sites.

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