



Sharing Is Caring: Living with Friends and Heterotopic Citizenship

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INTRODUCTION: MODERNITY, INDIVIDUALIZATION, AND FRIENDSHIP

The topic of friendship has been largely addressed in Western philosophy, from Plato to Derrida, engaging an array of contributors to modern thinking such as Aristotle, Saint Augustine, Hegel, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Carl Schmidt, and Sartre, amongst others.¹ Conceptualizations of friendship have changed over time and have included perspectives that ranged from friendship as a relationship of symmetry, with shared activities and responsibilities within a public regime, to friendship as a relationship of radical asymmetry where responsibility towards the other takes place before any

¹For an exhaustive examination of the political history of friendship, see “The Politics of Friendship” (Derrida, 1993).

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community is formed. Contrary to philosophers who extensively wrote on the topic, sociologists have historically paid little attention to friendship (Illouz, 2013). Mainstream sociology has focused mostly on socio-economic structures rather than on interpersonal relationships (Allan, 1998).

However, in recent decades, there has been an intensification in the processes of individualization that entails self-discovery, self-reflection, and autonomy (Roseneil, 2007). The ideological notion of individualization entails the belief that the individual is self-sufficient, a self-entrepreneur, and not dependent on mutual obligation. This view constructs the modern individual as someone who must make good decisions and place responsibility for victories or failures on themselves. Opposed to this line of reasoning, everyday experience shows that, on the contrary, individuals are, in the words of Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002), self-*insufficient* and dependent on others, including worldwide networks and institutions. Care and interdependency theories, largely connected to feminist, sociological, and psychosocial studies, criticize what is perceived as neoliberalist theories of individualization, calling for a focus on practices of care and interdependency instead. Jeffrey Weeks (2007) shares this focus on the relational nature of human beings, and by using an ethics of interdependence, Weeks stresses that:

(...) despite the multiplicity of social worlds and cultural patterns, the variety of relationships and different types of family, a common normative consensus does exist around the importance of values of reciprocity, care and mutual responsibility. (p. 178)

Because friendship as a relationship encompasses values founded on what Weeks describes, it is considered a culturally idealized form of relating to others (Friedman, 1993, p. 210) and has triggered increasing sociological attention in the twenty-first century.

But before entering into the conceptualization of friendship, we need to make an account of the process of individualization in modernity. Ulrich Beck and Elizabeth Beck-Gernsheim (2002) distinguish two different paths in its development (in Anglo-Saxonic countries): in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (designated first modernity or industrial society), individualization was initiated by bourgeoisies who aimed to accumulate capital and throw down feudal domination; in late modernity, individualization results as a product of the labour market and is performed by

everyone. This account will allow us to understand friendship as a choice when it came into scene hand in hand with an industrial society and its importance in contemporary society, where individuals victims of institutionalized individualism, paradoxically, become dependent on each other again.

Eva Illouz (2013) claims that the making of capitalism went side by side with the making of an intensely specialized emotional culture: “market-based cultural repertoires shape and inform interpersonal and emotional relationships” (p. 5). In this regard, an account of the modulation of friendship by commercial society² was made by Allan Silver (1990). The author explains that before market/capitalist societies, personal relationships were instrumental and contractual. Friendship is a social relation that depends on a social structure, gender relations, and economic exchange, and as such, before commercial societies, friendship was part of economic social power (Illouz, 2015), and its purpose was to help friends defeat enemies (Illouz, 2015; Silver, 1990). Instrumentality in personal relations was formulated by the Scottish Enlightenment: in the eighteenth century, sociologists including Adam Smith, David Hume, F. Hutcheson, and A. Ferguson addressed the distinction between the instrumental and the personal, in which friendship would be possible under the advent of commercial society (Silver, 1990, p. 1480). Related to the instrumental account, Adam Smith wrote on the *necessitudo* character of friendship. *Necessitudo* is a sort of attachment described by the Romans as the mutual accommodation that produces friendship, that is to say, a relationship occasioned by necessity. According to Silver’s interpretation of Smith, the commercial society substituted *necessitudo* with a morally superior form of friendship, one based on “natural sympathy”, free from the coercion of necessity (Silver, 1990, p. 1481).

Associated with the loss of traditional ties and the emergence of greater levels of uncertainty, choice is one of the aspects that constitute how people organize modern relationships (Budgeon, 2006, p. 3). Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) use the term *homo options* for the fact that the contemporary subject is characterized by choice—everything must be decided. Individualization is not a choice, but what each one does with their self is: “individuals must be able to plan for the long term and adapt

² Commercial society was a term coined by the philosopher Adam Smith in his book *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, first published in 1776, to designate what would be later known as capitalist society (Silver, 1990, p. 1479).

to change; they must organize and improvise, set goals, recognize obstacles, accept defeats and attempt new starts. They need initiative, tenacity, flexibility and tolerance of frustration” (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002, p. 4). However, as said before, despite individualization and the multi-option character of individuals, they still depend on other people. The authors even categorize individualization as a “paradoxical compulsion” because, on one hand, it presupposes that each person breaks familial/community ties and constructs their biography (that previously were pre-defined), and, on the other hand, it presupposes that this same individual constantly deals with others (networks, the labour market, the welfare state) (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002).

Michel de Montaigne was probably one of the first theorists to give the input of choice in relation to friendship. The philosopher declared friendship as the highest degree of perfection in society, one that could only be achieved outside the family, scholarship, or the workplace, where free will could be exercised (de Montaigne, 2009). In this regard, a relationship between a parent and a child could never be one of friendship because its nature imposes a relationship based on respect. Social relations would be situated in the level of “mere humdrum acquaintances” (Dallmayr, 1999, p. 106). The roles within the family are socially ascribed (Friedman, 1993, p. 209). In the same logic, sociologist Shelley Budgeon (2006) speaks about the moral significance of friendship that “emerges from its voluntary nature and unlike socially ascribed relationships the commitment shared by friends is freely given” (p. 7). Also, Marilyn Friedman (1993) theorizes on friendship as a quasi-voluntary relationship: “Friendship, in our culture, is a notably voluntary relationship: as adults, we choose our friends; and, together with our friends, we generate relationships that, more than most other close personal ties, reflect our choices and desires” (p. 207). It is voluntary in the sense that there is no external coercion to be a person’s friend, and because friendship, unlike family or kin, is not a socially ascribed relationship, it has no socially defined purposes or functions (Budgeon, 2006; Friedman, 1993). Friedman supports the voluntary character of friendship on aspects that are morally grounded, such as loyalty, support, care, and intimacy.

To summarize, there was a shift in the paradigm of friendship relations before and after late modernity. Before capitalism, relationships were seen as instrumental, and they were part of economic power. The beginning of the industrial society seemed to bring a sense of individualization freed from relations based on necessity, once the labour market could provide

individuals with self-sufficiency. If everyday experience shows that individuals are merged in several networks and are more dependent than independent, neoliberal theories of individualization are subverted, but the voluntary character of friendship remains. This leads to a fundamental premise that constitutes a turning point regarding other forms of a relationship considered in literature until the 1990s—friendship is a relationship that has to actively be sustained, contrary to kinship, which confers an ascribed status (Friedman, 1993). When engaged in a friendship, there is a mutual commitment to be attentive and responsive to the friend’s needs or desires (Friedman, 1993), and there is an ongoing process necessary to maintain the relationship. In Eva Illouz’s (2015) terms, when comparing friendship to love, “in friendship there is no event of falling in love, there is no epiphany, there is no original event. Friendship is a process” [video]. Similarly, Jamieson writes about the process of building a close connection between people, that is, the process of intimacy, which does not oblige physical contact (Jamieson, 2011). Because of its constructive character, it may be difficult to trace the moment when one becomes a friend of another; indeed that moment may not even exist, making it not clear to identify if one is a friend or not.

In her article devoted to friendship, Sasha Roseneil explains and unpacks some of the reasons why people should care about friends (Roseneil, 2004). By considering friendship a “relationship of increasing social significance in the contemporary world” (Roseneil, 2004, p. 411), and of special importance for lesbian and gay men, the author investigated how friendship matters to people, especially those who are living outside conventional families. Many LGBTQ+ people suffer marginalization within their families of origin, besides the daily LGBTQphobia in the wider social context, and they rely on their friends to find emotional and practical support. The results showed that people are centring their lives more on friends and less on couple relations: “people are substituting the ties of friendship for those of blood” (Roseneil, 2004, p. 403). Friendship and non-family relationships are challenging the hierarchy of intimacy, contrary to the tendency of most studies, in which sexual partners and family of origin assume main importance over friendship (Budgeon, 2006). To some extent, also that question triggered Budgeon when writing about friendship in late modernity: what is the role and meaning of friendship to the lives of people not “conventionally partnered”, that is, outside conventional norms of intimacy?

This chapter stems from work conducted in the INTIMATE research project that looked into friendship as a key area of intimate citizenship alongside partnering and parenting.³ The specific qualitative data that informs this chapter draws on biographic narrative interviews with self-identified lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer people and semi-structured interviews with experts on related topics: LGBTQI activism, gender studies, and architecture. Eligibility required participants to be over 18 years old and to be cohabiting with a friend at the moment of the interview. All interviews were conducted in Lisbon in 2017–2018.

LIVING WITH FRIENDS IN CONTEMPORARY LISBON

In modern life, relationships are constituted and organized by uncertainty and choice (Budgeon, 2006, p. 3). With transformations regarding technology, the economy, and globalization, relationships are more flexible and less permanent (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002, pp. 697–698). The loss of traditional ties is giving place to more fluid social forms, and friendship emerges as a significant bond in people’s lives. Those ties are particularly vital for people in risky or vulnerable positions, especially for minorities who suffer everyday discrimination and economically precarious people who depend on others for emotional or material support.

Based on the assumption that queer people engage in particular types of friendship networks which are different from those within the heteronorm, blurring boundaries between lovers and friends and setting aside hierarchies of conjugality (Roseneil, 2004), I was expecting to find participants cohabiting with friends based on personal choice (i.e. someone who freely chooses to live with a particular person), either to “escape” from home (family of origin) or to avoid the normative scripts of conjugality and intimacy. However, I was aware of the traditional Portuguese context of familism in Portugal, where deep proximity subsists between family members that count on each other from an instrumental and affective point of view and kinship is built as an important factor in the configuration of the social networks (Portugal, 2011).

³INTIMATE was an international research project coordinated by Dr Ana Cristina Santos and developed at the Centre for Social Studies, University of Coimbra, between 2014 and 2019. The project has received funding from the European Research Council under the European Union’s Seventh Framework Programme (FP/2007-2013)/ERC Grant Agreement “INTIMATE – Citizenship, Care and Choice: The Micropolitics of Intimacy in Southern Europe” [338452]. Part of the research leading to this article has also received funding from Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P./MCTES (reference no. PTDC/SOC-ASO/4911/2021).

In this sense, this study aimed at exploring the reasons why LGBTQ people choose to live with friends, instead of living with their family of origin, or partners, or even alone. One piece of evidence that emerged was that, actually, people do not choose to live with others and they would rather live alone, but social transformations and economic constraints do not permit them to do so.

The particular context of Portugal as a Southern European country, with its familist tradition and economic precarity, makes this case study an interesting one in which to explore the ways, if any, in which social and economic transformations occurring in contemporary Lisbon influence friendship patterns of those living outside the heteronorm.

The Portuguese capital city is facing a tremendous social and economic transformation due to a growing tourism gentrification process (Mendes, 2017). Housing buildings in the centre are being used for exclusive touristic short stays, and permanent residents are being displaced from those buildings to give way to temporary residents (tourists) (Gago, 2018). With the rise of touristic residences, economic and social consequences immediately affect the local population: rent prices rise; dwelling houses are being replaced by guesthouses; locals are being displaced from the centre; living alone is economically unviable; and living with others is becoming an economic effort as well. On the strength of massive tourism, property owners prefer to make use of their properties as tourist accommodation because economically it turns out to be a much more profitable business for them than long-term rents. Related to this, a relatively recent phenomenon emerged in Lisbon which the Left Bloc party called “real-estate bullying” (Esquerda.net, 2018). Real-estate bullying refers to actions by property owners to evict the tenants from the houses. Strategies vary from works in the building, cuts in electricity or water, floods, or other incidents that prevent the full enjoyment of the house. This type of bullying is taking place because of increasing tourism accompanied by rising rents, making it challenging for people to afford a house in Lisbon.

Even though the empirical data used in this chapter do not report experiences of direct house bullying, they do report precarious housing conditions which people are facing in Lisbon. For example, at the moment of the interview, Maria was looking for a new house because she had to leave the place where she has been living for the past four years since the owner was going to sell it to an estate agency. Although the main problem is money-related, other obstacles overlap when looking for a new house. Maria was facing difficulties in finding an affordable house, but the

problem did not derive exclusively from expensive prices but also bureaucracies. In most cases, property owners are no longer responsible for the lease contracts. This role is now assumed by estate agencies that demand several documents from future tenants such as an employment contract, the last two months' salary, and a tax declaration. For people in precarious employment situations, these criteria may be difficult to meet, as was the case for Maria:

It is impossible. I don't have an employment contract, Mafalda [her flat-mate] has a part-time job. Although I don't have a contract, I have a salary that allows me to have a house, but I don't have any proof of it. Last year I was not in Portugal and where I was I wasn't obliged to declare taxes because I didn't stay there enough time, and now it is this situation of us being kicked out from the centre. (Maria, cisgender lesbian, 25–29 yo)

The rental houses Maria and Mafalda were discovering cost around 300 euros per room in places that they must share with up to four people. The only solution they have is to move to a cheaper area of the city. Maria seemed very well informed and aware of the problem Lisbon is facing, and she explained how the house rents do not meet the European Union criteria:

The European Union criteria are that the rent must be 35% of your monthly salary. If you take into consideration that the national minimum wage is 530 euros, the rents should be much lower. And this is a major problem because what's going to happen, people are going to Almada [a city on the south riverside of Tagus], the centre is getting empty, you have like, I think presently 12,000 people are living in the centre that is the touristic centre but you have 100,000 tourists entering every day. In other words, they are kicking us in the ass to transform this into an amusement park. (Maria, cisgender lesbian, 25–29 yo)

With more tourists than inhabitants circulating in the centre, Lisbon is facing striking social and economic transformations. Job precariousness plus massive tourism associated with rent increases gives young people no hope to start living by themselves in central Lisbon. This situation relates to the late emancipation young adults have been experiencing in Southern European countries (Minguez, 2003; Montoro-Gurich & Garcia-Vivar, 2019). Late emancipation means that young adults take a long time to leave the house of the family of origin, which usually happens after

marriage or economic independence. In those countries, the state fails to provide young people with the economic independence they need to start a new life, and their family members assume this burden, creating an economic dependency for the younger generations and feeding the familism tradition. In a context where the labour market is unstable and house rents are too high to be affordable even for those who have a full-time job, LGBTQ people may rely on peers to “construct” life outside the cultural tradition.

Patrícia Pedrosa, an architect interviewed for this study, explains how this context affects young adults’ perspectives of life:

The financial crises bring the youngest generation the awareness that they will never have the capacity to buy a house, even renting can be difficult. There are no stable jobs, so even those who don’t have the tradition of having studied in another city and never had the experience of sharing a house in the university context, realise that it is the only emancipation strategy.

As the desire to keep living in Lisbon is implanted, flat-sharing appears to be one strategy of emancipation when living alone is out of reach and going back to the parental home is not an option, not only because, after leaving the family home, people do not want to take a step back but also because that same home may be a space of discrimination regarding sexual orientation or gender identity. According to the annual report of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA Portugal) for the year 2019 regarding discrimination against LGBTQI+ people in Portugal, 13.33% of the respondents reported having suffered discrimination from family members, especially from parents (10.37%) (ILGA Portugal, 2020, p. 17).

Participants in the study revealed that the idealized form of habitation was living alone, although all of them were in a situation of cohabitation at the moment of the interview and the previsions were to stay in that situation for the foreseeable future. While experiences of sharing houses began at university, none was a student anymore. Most of them had moved in with unknown people with whom they became friends after cohabiting. Others moved in with someone that was already a friend.

As stated earlier on in the chapter, friendship is a relationship constructed through time. In the specific case of the cohabiting with friends study, most participants were strangers until they moved in together and then started building up that relationship. Categorically, there are a few

conditions for the establishment of friendship: its fullest realization happens in the conditions of support, affection, positive regard, equality, and trust (Friedman, 1993, p. 211). When people live together, they construct and consolidate these aspects, negotiate house-related responsibilities, spend time together, and take care of each other—and all of these activities influence emotional intimacy, for better and for worse.

In the remaining part of this section, we will gain more in-depth knowledge of the experiences of young LGBTQ adults who live with friends in Lisbon, the reasons that led them to this mode of cohabitation, and how they manage daily life.

Ray is a non-binary person who lives with a cisgender heterosexual woman named Stef. Ray found a room for rent on a Facebook page and went to see the space and the persons living in there, Stef and Catarina. Ray immediately moved in with them, but shortly after, together with Stef they looked for another house for just the two of them, and they have been living together since then. Ray came out to Stef as polyamorous and non-binary, and Stef's reaction varied from shock to questioning and then acceptance and support. They have now a supportive relationship, as Ray describes it:

Just the fact that I can go home and have someone to talk about this type of things and someone who really wants to have a sit and have dinner and also share their life, it is such a huge relief, because it is like a family, it is this feeling of *home away from home*, because we are always looking for the home-coming, and home is our emotional support. (Ray, non-binary pansexual, 25–29 yo)

When they come home, they share their day and the personal and professional problems and give emotional support to each other. Despite identity differences, Ray found meaningful emotional support in Stef. There was a moment when Stef asked Ray which pronoun they would prefer her to use. Gender pronouns are an important aspect of identity affirmation for non-binary and trans people. Pronouns work as an extension of names, and in Portugal, names are gendered (Santos & Santos, 2017), and each pronoun corresponds to a gender. When someone does not identify with the assigned sex at birth, they may choose another pronoun that better reflects their gender identity. So by asking for the preferred pronoun, Stef is demonstrating a sense of respect towards Ray's self-identification. She also knows some of Ray's partners with whom she is very friendly. There

is this effort to be respectful, to be close, and to mature complicity. “Friendship inspires us to let down our defences, to reveal our deeper selves, and we do this voluntarily only if we trust the friend not to take advantage of a knowledge of our vulnerabilities” (Friedman 1993, p. 211). Ray now fully trusts Stef and this feeling is reciprocal, as Stef trusts Ray to take care of her dog:

I love her [the dog] very much. I feel that dog like mine, even because I’ve been living with her for two years and it is very pleasant. If Stef does not have time or if she is not able, or if she is going to be home late, I walk the dog. I give her food, I pet her, I give her whatever she needs. The new toys, it was me who gave them to her. Crystal is a fantastic dog, and it is a huge added value to the house, and to our relationship.

The embodied sociality of animals (McKeithen, 2017) seems to be an aspect that strengthens relationships, including friendships. Since the second half of the twentieth century, animals have become part of the house, penetrating intimate space and enabling the establishment of more than human families (Power, 2008). Animals are redefining the scope and meaning of the family environment, and to cohabit with someone who has an animal seems to escalate to a certain kind of co-parenting activity, as happens in Ray’s experience. Another interviewee reported a similar situation. Carina has a dog and her flatmate co-cares for it. She expressed how important it is for her to live with someone who cares about her dog: “She takes care of the dog, she puts water in his bowl (...) for me, that’s the most important thing, Frederica taking care of Charlie, cause if I knew she was mean to it I wouldn’t tolerate that” (Carina, cisgender woman, bisexual, 25–29 yo).

Will McKeithen (2017) in her work on the “crazy cat ladies” proposes the home of the cat lady together with the cat as a queer ecology, that is, a home where intimacies amongst multiple forms of beings take place. The author asserts, “the crazy cat lady occupies a queer periphery. She not only loves cats too much, but she also loves them more than humans, instead of a husband, and literally in place of heteronormative domesticity” (p. 3). Pets are breaking the boundaries between human/animal and indoors/outdoors, and they are becoming part of the family (Haraway, 2008). Although homes are crafted as anthropocentric, non-humans produce domestic life (McKeithen, 2017, p. 3), and we found in Ray and Carina’s discourses that the presence of a dog contributes to modelling their

friendship and the domestic partnership, by sharing love and care whenever it is needed. By challenging the expected cohabitation model, one which is normatively heterosexual and fulfilling the couple norm (Roseneil et al., 2020), cohabitation between friends, the same way as cohabitation between a “crazy cat lady” and her cat, queers the ecology of home, in which the domestic place becomes a heterotopic place (Foucault, 1984), detached from the meaning for which the house was designed.

Besides sharing responsibilities and taking care of the pets, another central aspect of friendship is taking care of each other. Jasmin, a non-binary person living with a cisgender male friend, has a chronic health condition that from time to time inhibits them from being physically active. Their flatmate help was essential to overcome bad days:

I had a very complicated phase of hard work and he had those considerations like if I asked him he would make me breakfast in the morning and bring me a coffee for me to be able to get up. Also if I see him in trouble I always take care to make him some food. There is this type of kindness of asking each other if we are OK. (Jasmin, 30–34 yo, non-binary, pansexual)

Traditionally, care is a gendered concept (Poole & Isaacs, 1997) associated with womanhood; women are socially expected to take care of others, be it their children or other’s children, their elderly parents, disabled family members, or others. Critical feminist perspectives have been working on dismantling this stereotype towards a more inclusive and transgressive notion of care, for instance, evidencing trans people as care providers (Santos, 2020). Laura Kessler coined the term “transgressive care” to designate practices of care within the familiar context that can essentially be emancipatory when they work as practices of resistance as, for instance, was the case of Black enslaved women when they reconquered their freedom and transformed intimacy and reproduction, of which they were previously deprived, into practices of political resistance (Kessler, 2005, p. 14). The same works for queer people; when they are discriminated against by the state concerning citizenship rights, their family constitutions become a political site of resistance (Kessler, 2009, pp. 181–82). When considering friendship, transgression may shift to a forward level, since as Roseneil reminds us, “friendship is a significantly different relationship from that of mothering, lacking controlling institutions and firm cultural expectations and conventions” (Roseneil, 2004, p. 414). It becomes valuable to recognize the transformative potential of care inside

family structures but also outside of them, when the state and the family fail to provide welfare or when people choose non-normative paths for their life and friends or the community.

Although the preferable way of living was living alone, sharing a house with others was revealed as vital in cases like Jasmin's or Ray or Carina. Whether through taking care of each other or pets, symmetric reciprocity and instrumental aid turned out to be well-being-related aspects which were only possible due to the presence of others in the house.

Another factor that emerged as crucial for a good environment when sharing a house was ideologies. Still with Jasmin, they explained how their political engagement contributed to providing comfort to the domestic partner and consequently to their relationship:

I am non-monogamous and politically engaged in many issues and I think that living with Mike brought him names and discourses for him to live his relationships. Many times I feel that for him it is good to live with someone who doesn't judge him nor his relationships, and he can understand them now (. ...) We have a relationship of tremendous affection and support.

Contrary to the trend of victimization of trans and non-binary people, Jasmin emerges not only as a care receiver but also as an agent of care (Santos, 2018).

According to Friedman (1993), friendship has no socially defined purpose, but it surely contributes to individual well-being: "Through shared affection and mutual support, which contributes to self-esteem, friendship enables the cultural survival of people who deviate from social norms and who suffer hostility and ostracism from others for their deviance" (p. 219). My study suggests that it is extremely significant for LGBTQ people to share their intimate space with people who are politicized, open-minded, and non-judgemental. The story of Carina is exemplary in this regard. It was only after moving in with Frederica, a feminist college friend, that Carina came out as bisexual. Carina had been raped a couple of months before the interview. She explained that the political awareness of her flat-mate Frederica and her critical feminist perspective contributed to sharpening Carina's interpretation of what had happened and to remove the sense of guilt she had somehow internalized:

I had a huge meltdown and I was for like an hour laid down on the floor, crying, and she was there helping me, cuddling me, saying that we are

strong and we will get over it. She didn't make any judgment because she has feminist ethics, and that was something really cool about her (. . .) She is a feminist person and I felt I was not going to have to battle to deconstruct things and be judged and suffer slut-shaming and prejudice. I already have such a boring work and life is so mean, I don't want to come home and have to deal with those battles. It is your home; you are supposed to be there in your comfort.

Carina needs to live with someone who does not judge her. She explained she decided to live with Frederica because Frederica was a feminist and would not raise problems at home because Carina was bisexual. Eventually, living with Frederica enabled Carina to consolidate her bisexual and feminist identity. As we learn from Graham Allan (1998), the processes of friendship contribute to the sense of the self in terms of identity and self-validation. Carina was dealing with internal conflicts about her sexuality, and those same conflicts were dissipated while her sexual identity was consolidated in new structures of socialization with her feminist friend at home.

The voluntary character of friendship contrasts with socially ascribed relationships such as the familial. The voluntary choice implied in friendship sustains the relation by “shared interests and values, mutual affection, and possibilities for generating reciprocal respect and esteem” (Friedman, 1993, p. 248), and this is especially relevant for marginalized people, as can be learned from the excerpts.

Hitherto I have described the voluntarist and caring character of friendship while simultaneously bringing daily experiences of young LGBTQ adults who cohabit with friends in Lisbon. I have demonstrated that friendly relationships within a shared house can arise through necessity, which in turn is created by what seemed to save us from dependency—capitalism. In the next section, I will give an account of how the architecture of the houses that were built to host traditional middle-class Portuguese families are being reconfigured to host non-normative and non-kinship constellations under the Foucaultian concept of heterotopia.

HETEROTOPIC FRIENDSHIP

The term heterotopia has its origins in medicine and refers to an error of place of a certain tissue (García Alonso, 2014; Johnson, 2016). Lebert developed a study on dermoid cysts in 1852, entitled “Des kystes

dermoïdes et de l'hétérotopie plastique en general”, where he gives an account on tissues or organs that may develop in a spontaneous and autogenous way in bodily places where they are not supposed to exist, due to an “aberration of nutrition” (Lebert, 1853, p. 224). That is the case, for instance, of tumours. Since the very beginning, the idea of heterotopia is connected with the freakish, the unusual, and something strange to the geography, be it corporal or societal. Foucault’s first reference to the word heterotopia was in 1966, in the preface of a text that was later translated into “The Order of Things”, referring to a classification of animals found in a Chinese Encyclopaedia by the Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges (Johnson, 2016, p. 1):

(a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) sucking pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous (g) stray dogs, (h) included in the present classification, (i) frenzied, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a very fine camelhair brush, (l) et cetera, (m) having just broken the water pitcher, (n) that from a long way off look like flies. (Foucault, 1984, p. xv)

This “strange” classification, as Foucault categorizes it, is a heterotopia because just like tumours or cysts, they are incoherent categories that are part of the same body/classification and create unusual juxtapositions. It consists of a taxonomy of another system of thought that confronts us with our limitation of thinking (Foucault, 1994, p. xv), and it inspired Foucault to theorize about a place in which several incompatible sites could juxtapose. The cemetery is one example of heterotopia provided by Foucault, and it “illustrates how heterotopias change their function at different stages in history and reflect wider attitudes in society” (Johnson, 2016, p. 11).

If we apply this idea to households, they also change their functions during history, and even the same building may have different functions over time: to host a traditional nuclear family; to host people who live with friends; to host tourists; to host a doctor’s office; or any other business. Heterotopias are spaces that depend on the social circumstances, and what is considered a heterotopia for one is a place for the “other” in certain circumstances and may be converted into a place for oneself in other circumstances (García Alonso, 2014). By relating the notion of heterotopia to households where non-related people live, we accept them as heterotopic places.

As explained by Pedrosa, people mostly live in houses designed by architects or constructors that are originated from a succession of models repeated through time and sustained by a specific family type. In Lisbon, some houses were made for families with high economic power, presenting a room with a small bathroom for the house cleaner next to the kitchen. This is a solution that dates from the nineteenth century and which extends until the mid of the twentieth century, as it was a regular practice to have domestic employees, and so the design of the house remained unchanged over time (Silva, 2016). Usually, house models implement a clear separation between the private and the common area, and sometimes they may be more than two rooms, one of them to work as an office room, especially when the then called head of the family—traditionally the male breadwinner—held a high office position. According to Pedrosa’s analysis, those types of houses are now a solution for non-related people who have different financial resources, as each room has a different size or peculiarity and may have a different price accordingly.

What can be observed in contemporary Lisbon is friends cohabiting in houses that were designed for traditional families, and this is the moment one enters heterotopia. The moment when it was socially expected that one would be living with a romantic partner, starting a traditional family and buying a house (Roseneil et al., 2020), becomes actually the moment in which one is moving from house to house instead, sharing the space with strangers or friends for variable periods of time, living a precarious life without legal recognition of that specific model of domestic partnership, and leaning on each other for survival.⁴ This phenomenon is what we might call heterotopic citizenship or, in Ruth Lister’s words, “citizenship on the margins” (Lister, 1998).

This leads me to my final argument in this chapter. I want to suggest that the house that hosts friends is the house of failure, the house of those

⁴There is, however, a common economy law (Assembleia da República, 2001, Law 6/2001, May 11th), which is analogous to the de facto union law in some aspects. People eligible for the common economy are those who live together for more than two years and who share resources and mutual aid. It is applicable for two or more people living together. They benefit from a legal regime of vacations, holidays, and faults, applicable by individual contract effect equal to that of the spouses (although, when the common economy comprises more than two persons, the rights may only be exercised, in each occurrence by one of them); protection of the house of common dwelling; and lease transmission by death. None of the interviewees was benefiting or knew anyone benefiting from this law, and some of them did not know about it.

who fail to meet the heterosexual adult life script, where traditional time is rejected—a criterion needed in order for heterotopia to take place (Foucault, 1984). By realizing the heterotopic character of the house that hosts friends but should be hosting a nuclear family, and by using heterotopia as a tool of analysis, we understand the multiplicity of signification and possibilities that may exist in the same place. It is a space where deviations happen. It is not a place which is accessible nor even desirable for everyone, but it is where the most affectionate relations may happen and where new forms of social practices occur. Friendship has socially disrupted possibilities; it has the “potential to support unconventional values and deviant lives, themselves a source of needed change in our imperfect social practices” (Friedman, 1993, p. 217).

CONCLUSIONS

Changes occurring in private (job precariousness) and public spheres (housing market, gentrification, and tourism) urge informal ties of solidarity. The impact of economic and social transformations on friendship is undeniable. Tourism aligned with precariousness influences the way people occupy spaces, beginning at the place called home, which all of a sudden is expropriated from its original purpose. Homes are now heterotopic places where non-related people develop an intimate relationship. When non-related people share the house on a daily basis of mutual support, respect, and care, they will eventually end up in a relation of friendship. Living with friends is a way for LGBTQ people to overcome everyday prejudice related to non-normative sexualities and to deal with the obstacle of paying for a house. Friends are the legislators of their relationship based on voluntarism. As friendship presupposes mutual exchange, the survival resources it provides, the learnings, and benefits are not unilateral but exchangeable. Friendship networks may be considered constitutive of new forms of families (Weeks, 2007). Family is no longer about biologically fixed boundaries, co-residence, and marriage, but it is a process in constant formation instead: “It is less important whether we are in a family than whether we do family-type things” (Weeks, 2007, p. 181). At the same time, this process of doing family-type things may be preconized by a more than human household (Power, 2008). The new patterns of intimacy and commitment are based on choice and equality, as the excerpts of the interviews confirmed. Finally, the paradox of capitalist individualism ends up being an engine that patterns new forms of friendship based on

the equality it has always presupposed, but also recovering the ancient instrumental character, as individuals depend on each other to survive the system.

This chapter was intended to demonstrate why and how LGBTQ people live with friends in contemporary Lisbon. I provided a resume of diverse conceptualizations of friendship from feudalism to contemporaneity to accomplish the paradox of capitalism that claims to provide individuals with self-independency and self-sufficiency but which is leading to dependency and self-insufficiency instead. The fact that in Portugal people experience late emancipation is intrinsically linked to the inability to be financially independent. I provided an account of late emancipation and familism in this Southern European country and its correlation to the willingness or the necessity for LGBTQ people to develop strategies of emancipation away from marriage and family of origin. It was not possible to proceed without mentioning the gentrification process which Lisbon has been undergoing, alongside mass tourism and the increase in house rents that make it impossible to afford a house. Throughout the interviews, we could understand the reasons leading people to share a house with other people, who may be unknown to them in the beginning, but end up becoming friends, because sharing a house is caring about the other. Care is assumed to be a vital aspect in this sharing, be it taking care of each other, emotionally or practically, or taking care of each other's pets as if they were their own. The transformative potential of care transformed those "houses of failure" into spaces of survival. In the last section, I linked this potential for resistance to the Foucaultian notion of heterotopia. The displacement of the primary function of Lisbon central houses (to host a normative family) into new configurations (e.g. two friends living with a dog) allows us to see through the windows onto the caring way the new inhabitants—heterotopic citizens—construct relationships based on interdependency and asymmetry, without legal recognition and protection, making their intimate space a site of political resistance.

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