



Who Are We ?

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Our story began in the early '90s when we came together in parks and houses. As a matter of fact, someone used to tell our story a long time ago. But the '90s became a cornerstone on our journey of telling our own story. On our journey that we started to reclaim our own lives, to say "We exist", the first issue of our magazine met with readers on September 20, 1994. "We live in a society that is not only sexist but also heterosexist" was written on the cover of our first issue.

We kept coming together, arguing, inventing new ways. Violence in a park was also our topic, and so was the media; academia was one of our discussions and so was human rights. We've talked about HIV, we've created strategies against hate. Our readers were not just readers, they took their place in our magazine with their letters. We kept going forward while not giving up the dream of organizing, getting together and changing an entire world.

In 2001, we were on the streets with our banners and flags during the May 1st demonstrations in Ankara. Two years later, in 2003, The Problems of Gays and Lesbians and the Search for Social Peace was sort of our opening to the general public. We laid the foundations of the Kaos GL's current workspaces. We started our work without delay by establishing our commissions. In 2005, we completed our application to become an official association and became the first official LGBTI+ association in Turkey.

For over a quarter of a hundred years, we've been trying to organize by fits and starts, trial and error. By trying not to resemble the social structures we criticize, we are trying to create spaces where we can be liberated at least in our own field of struggle. The more we struggle, the more we change, the more we transform. We are, we will continue to be empowered by the social movements while changing and transforming them by making them question their heterosexualisms.

From Kaos GL Magazine, to the Cultural Center, from the May 1st to March 8th, salute to all friends of the Kaos GL who have crossed paths with us, to all the lubunyas that have transformed us, to all the refugee LGBTI+'s, who are trying to survive in the rural while we were talking about how hard it is to be LGBTI+ in the countryside!

We will continue our struggle, by friendship, goodness and of course with hilarity!

The first issue of Kaos GL Magazine came out on September 20, 1994. But first actions that paved the way to both the magazine and the organization were the home conversations in the early '90s:

"We got stubborn one day: There must something to be done. We found each other but there are many more, waiting to be reached out. We have to find them. So, we started to discuss what we had to do to reach them..."

On the year of 1993, the subject of the home conversations was "what kind of magazine that we will publish". In order to open this discussion to contributions from everyone, the posters on the bus stops of Ankara were taken to İstanbul, the Express Magazine.

Dreams came true on September 20, 1994. The first issue was out:

"We didn't come out silently. We declared our first issue with screams. We received replies from everywhere to our scream manifest and magazine. We molded the magazine with our bare hands. We got no money, we borrowed it. We had no computers, so we used the work computers secretly. In short, we were secretly publishing our magazine that we were publishing to not to live our homosexuality in secret. After publishing our first issue, we accumulated enough article, hope, and excitement enough for ten more issues."

The stubbornness still here today. Kaos GL magazine is available to its readers for 25 years continuously. And now Kaos GL has another periodical publication: KaosQueer+. KaosQ+ Magazine is a semi-annual, referred magazine. The first issue came out in November 2014.

Another echo to the call of "there are many more that we have to reach, who are waiting to be reached" is the KaosGL.org website. Founded in 2007, the website is online as a news portal since 2008. On the road to "tell our own story", KaosGL.org is continuing to tell the stories of LGBTI+ people in Turkey and around the world as an internet newspaper; to be the voice of those who are made invisible, whose voices are muted; and to encourage LGBTI+'s to write by its media schools.

While making many dreams from the '90s come true step by step, Kaos GL has also opened its Cultural Center in the autumn of 1999. Cultural Center was the fruit of the stubbornness and love of the magazine. Cultural Center started to bear its own fruits immediately. First came the idea of the library, then the film screenings started...

Kaos GL, while holding many panels, conferences, seminars and similar organizations to fight the prejudices, discrimination and hate against LGBTI+'s, took the homosexuals' fight for freedom to the streets by participating in the 1st of May demonstrations in 2001. Kaos GL that asks "What about the homosexual workers" on the magazine, participates in the field of 1st of May demonstrations. In the summer 2001 issue of Kaos GL Magazine, with the now historical photo of the people running to the field of 1st of May demonstrations with the pink banner, rainbow, and excitement on the cover, the importance of participating in the 1st of May demonstrations is explained as follows:

"Our participation in the 1st of May demonstrations with our "Kaos GL, Voice of the Homosexuals" banner, just after BaharAnkara, has broken yet another ground for Turkey. People that called us in shock, joy, and excitement after seeing our banners on the TV, while we were still in the field have increased our enthusiasm further. Homosexuals have put a firm stamp on this year's 1st of May, and answered the question of how the "coming out" would take place." A year from that, in 2004 the framework of the fields of study was designated and the commissions have already started to work. In the issue that was published right after the attack against the Kaos GL office, these fields were listed as follows:

"We have been discussing education, human rights, law, refugee, sexual health, psychology, psychiatry, working life, media-communication for the last two years. I would like to briefly address the process of emerging and discussion of these areas outside the magazine. In preparation for the "The Problems of Gays and Lesbians and the Quest for Social Peace" symposium held on May 23-24, 2003, we announced that we would like to open a discussion on these fields. After the symposium, we tried to organize and discuss Kaos GL activities through these fields. These discussions and the structuring of commissions on these areas took about two years. This work has evolved to the Kaos GL Convention held on Sunday, June 29, 2004. The second file of the journal is consisting of the problems in the areas listed above, solution proposals and work plans."

Eventually, Kaos Gay and Lesbian Cultural Studies and Solidarity Association (Kaos GL) has made a formal application and acquired its legal entity on July 15, 20015. But the Governorate of Ankara has applied to the Chief Public Prosecutor's office, claiming the association's constitution and the name was against the moral values citing the statement of "Associations against law can not be founded" of the 56th Article of Turkish Civil Code no 4721. The Press Prosecutor stated that there was no need for prosecution upon examining the application of the governorate, thus Kaos GL has become the first LGBTI association that acquired a legal entity.

The first International Anti-Homophobia Meeting, one of the biggest ongoing events of Kaos GL, was held in 2006. Kaos GL Association, which organizes activities in social, cultural and academic fields to promote the human rights of LGBTI's against discrimination, has since been discussing discrimination against LGBT individuals in Turkey and to create a basis for providing visibility. The International Day against Homophobia, May 17, is a day of action and resistance to all physical, moral or symbolic violence involving gender identity and sexual orientation.

The Anti-Homophobia Meeting, the first of which was held in Ankara, has spread throughout the country in recent years in parallel with the phrase "We want the whole city, not ghettos". The Anti-Homophobia Meeting was first held in 2006. The meeting, which was limited to Ankara in its first 3 years, was spread to 6 cities in 2010 and 16 cities between March 5 and May 16 in 2010. In 2014, anti-homophobia events were organized in 37 different cities. In 2015, 40 events were held in 28 cities. Within the scope of Local Anti-Homophobia Meetings, the event was held in Mus, Usak, Igdir, Manisa, Adiyaman, Mardin, Maraş, Zonguldak, Erzurum, Bandırma for the first time in 2016. Throughout the year, 55 events were held in 35 cities. Cities visited during 2016 and organized anti-homophobia meeting events are: Hatay, Adapazarı, Muş, Aksaray, İstanbul, Edirne, Uşak, Tekirdağ, Malatya, Eskişehir, İzmir, Iğdır, Manisa, Mersin, Bodrum, Karabük, Çanakkale, Adiyaman, Mardin, Adana, Samsun, Kocaeli, Trabzon, Maraş, Yalova, Zonguldak, Nazilli, Aydın, Erzurum, Adana, Kayseri, Bandırma, Van, Denizli, Bursa.

In 2014, Tüm Bel-Sen (Labour union for all the municipality workers) was the host of the anti-discrimination symposium, the first of which was held in 2012 in the field of LGBTI rights struggle and social rights. In 2003, at the symposium "Lesbian and gay problems and the quest for social peace", union chairmen did not speak from the podium, while KESK (Civil servants' union), Eğitim-Sen (Teachers' Union), SES(Union of medical workers), Tüm Bel-Sen board of directors were at the symposium that Kaos GL has brought the right to work into the agenda and they all promised that all unions will work for the LGBTI's from then on.

Another major event of the association, the Feminist Forum, was held for the seventh time this year. The Feminist Forum continues to grow its comradeship, solidarity and struggle against heterosexism and patriarchy at the local and global level.

Kaos GL cares about the solidarity over borders and it has started its direct activities regarding the problems of refugee LGBTI's in 2008. Organized visits to the refugee communities in Kayseri, Isparta, and Eskişehir. Reported the problems of LGBTI refugees. The association's work in the refugee field is expanding and continuing with field visits, social and legal consultation, cultural activities and reports.

In 2007, Kaos GL, along with other LGBTI organizations, began monitoring human rights violations against LGBTI people and continues to work to make the social peace, not discrimination and hatred, be the guide of our lives...



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