LISTENING TO POSSIBLE WORLDS:

THE 2019 ISTANBUL FEMINIST NIGHT MARCH AND ITS ACOUSTIC CONFLICTS

EGE AKDEMİR

BOĞAZİÇİ UNIVERSITY

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Ege Akdemir

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Listening to Possible Worlds: The 2019 Istanbul Feminist Night March and Its Acoustic Conflicts

The thesis of Ege Akdemir

has been approved by

Prof. Meltem Ahıska _____

(Thesis Advisor)

Assist. Prof. Saygun Gökarıksel _____

Assoc. Prof. Begüm Özden Fırat _____

(External Member)

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Ege Akdemir, certify that

- I am the sole author of this thesis and that I have fully acknowledged and documented in my thesis all sources of ideas and words, including digital resources, which have been produced or published by another person or institution;
- this thesis contains no material that has been submitted or accepted for a degree or diploma in any other educational institution;
- this is a true copy of the thesis approved by my advisor and thesis committee at Boğaziçi University, including final revisions required by them.

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ABSTRACT

Listening to Possible Worlds: The 2019 Istanbul Feminist Night March and Its Acoustic Conflicts

This thesis is about the relationship between sound and power. It takes the 2019 Istanbul Feminist Night March as a case study where women participants were accused of protesting the sound of the call to prayer that was broadcast during their annual Women's Day demonstration. This allegation was later propagated and substantiated by the President via an audiovisual video collage that he displayed during his rally. Defining this series of events as *acoustic conflicts*, the thesis contributes to the argument that the soundscape of a nation is a gendered site of power on three main axes. First, it exhibits the political power of the silenced voices and sounds of women through examining the acoustic atmosphere of feminist night marches and other feminine-soundscapes; second, it reveals how the current gendered power regime of the government operates over the soundscape of the nation by untangling the President's allegation towards women protestors; and third, it offers an analysis about how the contemporary conditions of the production and circulation of audiovisual representations affect social and political day-to-day listening practices via a discursive and audiovisual analysis of the video collage displayed by the President. Based on theories of feminism, aesthetics, affect, and sound studies, and through ethnographic fieldwork and media analysis, the thesis brings these three axes together around the question: how the relationship between sound and power contributes to and challenges the hierarchical sensory configuration of the patriarchal social system.

ÖZET

Muhtemel Dünyaları Dinlemek: 2019 İstanbul Feminist Gece Yürüyüşü ve Akustik Çatışmaları

Bu tezin ana kapsamı ses ve iktidar arasındaki ilişki üzerinedir. Tez bu ilişkiyi, 2019 senesinde kadınların ezanı ıslıklamakla suçlandıkları İstanbul Feminist Gece Yürüyüşü üzerinden inceler. Her sene kadınlar 8 Mart'ta bu yürüyüşü düzenleyebilmişken 2019'da polis tarafından engellenmiş ve Cumhurbaşkanı tarafından bir video kolajın kanıt olarak gösterildiği bir mitingde ezanı ıslıklamakla suçlanmışlardır. Tez, bu olaylar bütününü *akustik çatışmalar* olarak tanımlar ve ulusal ses peyzajının cinsiyetlendirilmiş bir tahakküm alanı olduğu savına üç ana eksende katkıda bulunur. İlk olarak tez, Feminist Gece Yürüyüşlerinin akustik atmosferini ve başka feminen ses peyzajlarını örnek göstererek susturulmuş kadın seslerinin politik gücünü tartışır. Ardından Cumhurbaşkanının kadınlara yönelik suçlamasını inceleyerek iktidarın ulusal ses peyzajı üzerindeki cinsiyetçi rejiminin güncel dinamiklerini açığa çıkarır. Son olarak tez, Cumhurbaşkanının gösterdiği video kolajı inceleyerek; görsel-işitsel temsiliyetlerin günümüzdeki üretim ve dolaşım koşullarının gündelik sosyopolitik dinleme pratiklerini nasıl etkilediğini sorgular. Feminizm, estetik, afekt teorilerini ve ses çalışmalarını baz alarak ve etnografi ve medya analizi yaparak tez bu üç ekseni şu soru üzerinden bir araya getirir: patriarkal sosyal sistemin hiyerarşik duyusal alanının kurulması ve bozulmasında ses ve iktidar arasındaki ilişkinin nasıl bir etkisi vardır?

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Although I have done the writing part of the thesis, it is impossible for me to say that this thesis is mine alone. Starting from the very initial thought, this thesis has gained a life and a persona of its own. Creating different assemblages through its growth and changing with every interaction, it has become a dynamic force field that resists the limits of my laptop's screen. In the name of the thesis and myself, I would like to thank the people who enabled these lines to be written.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the thesis

On 8 March 2019, women gathered in Istiklal Street at night, as they had done for the past 17 years, to celebrate Women's Day. This time, however, the police had set up barricades that prevented them from walking. Insisting on the fact that their right to demonstrate cannot be restrained, women urged the police to open the barricades by shouting "open open open."[1] While waiting, they also whistled, shouted slogans, sang songs, and danced, even though their bodies were being squeezed together by the barricades that blocked every possible entrance and exit. Around 20:45, right after Isha ezan[2] women were attacked by the police forces with tear gas and rubber bullets (Arabacı, 2019).

The next day a video started to circulate on social media showing the protestors chanting during the delivery of ezan right before the police attack (Figure 1) (Başal, 2019). This video ignited an endless flurry of online reactions that accused women of protesting the ezan. Things took a massive turn when the President himself displayed that same video in a public meeting in Adana the next day. The President presented the video by saying, "a group, who supposedly got together for Women's Day, disrespected the call to prayer of Muhammad with whistles and slogans. Let's have a look."[3] The clip the President displayed, however, also

[1] In Turkish, the word "open" [aç] also has a connotation of unclothing, or flashing, revealing one's sexual organs, the word also has a similar nuance to "send nudes", so women were benefiting from a double entendre here.

[2] *yatsı*, the call to prayer that signals the sunset.

[3] "Güya Kadınlar Günü için bir araya gelen bir grup, ezana ıslıklarla, sloganlarla terbiyesizlik ettiler." (Güncel, 2019)



Figure 1. Still images from the video of the 2019 feminist night march. Source: [Güncel, 2019]

contained different images and audiovisuals from different spatio-temporalities (Güncel, 2019). The demonstration video was montaged together with pictures/images/videos from the Gezi events, oppositional party (CHP and HDP) meetings, and the photos of women from the CHP Istanbul Provincial Directorate of Women's Branch (Figure 2). It was also juxtaposed with an image from the night of the 2016 coup d'état attempt, the national flag, and a mosque (Figure 3). After showing the montage, the President declared that the women taking part in the 2019 Feminist Night March were disrespectful to the nation and "they are not devoted to the nation with their hearts and minds"[4] (Güncel, 2019). With these words, the President positioned women protestors in a national acoustic conflict much larger than any supposed disrespect they had shown to the ezan. This national broadcast of the transformed accusation inflamed a social media outrage as the following day



Figure 2. Canan Kaftancıoğlu, the Provincial Head of CHP, circled in each of the photos. Source: [Güncel, 2019]

[4] "Çünkü bunlar kalpleriyle de zihinleriyle de bu vatana bağlı değiller."



Figure 3. "Gezi Park Provocation" a video clip taken from 2013, "APO slogans in CHP-HDP demonstrations", Sela accompanies the overlapped images of the Turkish flag and a mosque. Source: [Güncel, 2019]

all mainstream news media headlined the President's speech (Başal, 2019). Unsurprisingly this accusation also escalated into anti-feminist, pro-ezan gatherings and demeaning discussions about the motives of thousands of women who marched that night ("Taksimde ezan", 2019).

This move of the President was interconnected with the upcoming local elections where his party (AKP: Justice and Development Party), in alliance with MHP (Nationalist Movement Party), was running against the alliance between CHP (Republican People's Party) and İyi Party (Good Party). Therefore, the case can easily be read as a calculated political move that favours the President in the ballot boxes. But the situation is more nuanced. If we approach this event as a clue about the bigger structural conditions that triggered it we are led to questions such as: What was unique about the sounds of feminist night marches that required a re-narration by the state? How and why were the sounds of women received as being against the sound of ezan? Under what conditions did the President consider promoting this accusation to be a beneficial endeavour for the state? How and why did women protestors end up being subjects who are *not heartedly and mindfully devoted to this nation*? I believe that asking these questions has the potentiality to reveal the social and political positioning of women in the period of AKP, and the way the AKP operates power over the bodies and soundscapes of women. Furthermore, I believe this case is also an example of how contemporary conditions of the production and

circulation of media affect our social and political relationalities. Understanding the audio-visuals which the President put into circulation enables a framework to discuss the impact of representations on the maintenance of the hierarchical sensory configuration of the social sphere. Examining how these media forms construct our social fabric by entering our everyday life also necessitates opening up a discussion about the consumption of these forms. In this framework, how we listen to the events that we have not experienced becomes a key question about the way we relate to each other. And the sense of listening presents itself as an activity that both contributes to the patriarchal system and has a potentiality to alter it. It does so by constructing and challenging the tensions between power structures that aim to tame and shape the conditions of how we relate to each other. And by supporting non-normative collective and individual desires that call for alternative forms of alliances and relationalities.

Defining the series of events regarding the 2019 Feminist Night March as examples of *acoustic conflict,* the thesis aims to contribute to the argument that the soundscape of a nation is a gendered site of power on three mains axes. First, it exhibits the political power of the silenced voices and sounds of women through examining the acoustic atmosphere of feminist night marches and other feminine-soundscapes; second, it reveals the current dynamics within the current gendered power regime over the soundscape of the nation by exhibiting the implications and consequences of the President's allegation towards women protestors; and third, it offers an analysis about how the contemporary conditions of the production and circulation of audio-visual representations affect social and political day-to-day listening practices via a discursive and audio-visual analysis of the video collage shown by the President. Via investigating the conditions of the way sounds are

created, distributed, and consumed within the sensory order of our social fabric, the thesis provides a case-based testimony about the soundscape of the nation and how it is contested. Based on theories of feminism, aesthetics, affect, and sound studies, and through ethnographic fieldwork and media analysis, the thesis brings these three axes together around the question: how does the relationship between sound and power contribute to and challenge the hierarchical sensory configuration of the patriarchal social system?

1.2 Theoretical framework and curiosities

The thesis is constructed upon the intersection of several theoretical fields. Some of the key concepts that were influential in creating these intersections are: feminism, gender, sound, voice, activism, affect, aesthetics, power, and representation. The thesis aims to contribute to the junctions of the fields that are involved with these concepts in Turkey.

1.2.1 Women movements

Feminist and women's activism in Turkey has been mainly discussed within the period of modernity of Turkey (Ahıska, 2000; Özbay, 1999; Bozdoğan & Kasaba 1997; Arat, 1997; Sancar, 2014; Abu-Lughod,1998; Göcek & Balaghi, 1994) in the field of law (Baytok, 2012, Koğacıoğlu 2004, 2007), within the framework of Islam (Köse 2012, Göle 1996; Arat, 2005; Gökarıksel,2018), Kurdish (Çağlayan, 2007,2012; Ali & Tas, 2018; Çaha, 2011; Yüksel, 2016) and Armenian movements (Emekçioğlu & Pınar, 2006), and through specific cases such as Saturday Mothers (Ahıska, 2014; Baydar & İvegen, 2006; Altınay et al., 2019). These works are influential in understanding the ways in which women's movements have been

discussed within the academic field of Turkey. To understand the discussions around different political concerns and activisms, it is also beneficial to examine the periodicals prepared by women such as *Kadınların Sesi*, *Feminist*, *Pazartesi*, *Kaktüs*, *Cımbız*, *Somut*, *Uçan Süpürge*, *Roza*, *Jujin*, *Dolaşan Mavi Çorap*, *Eksik Etek*, *Jin û Jiyan*, *Feminist Politika*, *Amargi* and more recent digital blogs such as *Çatlak Zemin*, *Reçel Blog* and *5Harfliler*. I found these non-academic platforms insightful in tracking the interior dynamics of the activism practices of women. In the last decade, activism of women has also begun to be discussed through its interaction with social media, especially around the case of Women's Day and Gezi protests (Aksu, 2017; Çelenk, 2010; Çöteli, 2015; Furuncu, 2014; Karagöz, 2013; Şen & Kök 2017; Kara, 2006; Eslen-Ziya, 2013). These works were constructive in tracking the new forms of digital activism and their effect on mass movements as they dwell upon how these movements are represented, but I believe the other side of the coin is also interesting: how representations of the spaces of activism affect the public perception of women's movements. Moreover, within this framework of women's movements in Turkey, not much has been produced particularly on the feminist night marches, even though it has become the sole mass protest that has the success of continuing for more than a decade. By approaching this ritual as a manifestation of a feminine soundscape, this thesis aims to contribute to the canon by investigating the feminist night marches and its representations from an angle that prioritizes the impact of these representations on the perception of the soundscape of the march. Feminist night marches as a movement that has been gaining momentum each year in uniting women is a topic that deserves academic attention. The thesis, therefore, is contributing to the studies regarding women's movements through the argument that there is a unique political power in a soundscape that contains the voices and sounds

of women via analysing the acoustic conflicts that are generated around this soundscape. The thesis is also extending the recent works on these issues by offering an analysis of how the representations of these marches affect the way non-protestors relate to the experience of women protestors. This is, of course, both a methodological and a thematic contribution that feeds from several theoretical fields.

1.2.2 Feminine voice in the soundscape of the nation

Studies of soundscapes and the feminine voice were influential in forming the theoretical backbone of the thesis. The concept of soundscape, popularized by Murray Schafer (1994) is used to describe the sound environment of a geography and is mostly used in the fields of anthropology and ethnomusicology, especially in works that aim to understand the effect of non-human factors on the object of analysis. It enables to define the atmosphere of a geography and the connections between organic and non-organic materialities. The rise of the usages of the connections between soundscape, nation, culture, and power in Turkish academia corresponds to the period after Gezi protests.

Gezi was a turning point for studies regarding the relationship between activism methods, aesthetics, and the soundscape of protests (Üzümkesici, 2018; Bahalı & Bayazit, 2017; Gürsel, 2013; Bianchi, 2018). Most specifically, works that focus on the contribution of women in Gezi provide a general understanding of the novel ways in which women make politics (Kara 2015; Rahte & Tokdoğan, 2014; Arat, 2013; Potuoğlu-Cook, 2015, Baydan, 2015). Before Gezi, music has been a significant sub-topic in this new academic interest regarding sound studies, nation, and culture. Specifically, discussions around arabesque music enabled an angle to investigate the soundscape of Turkey through its sociological changes, urban life of

big cities and the aesthetic outcomes of class and culture differences as well as the state's disciplining techniques over the soundscape of the nation (Özbek, 1991; Özgür, 2006). The sound edition of MSGSÜ Social Science Journal has also been a recent critical endeavour in creating a platform for academics who are working on sound and voice in social sciences. This volume of the journal contains articles that discuss the soundscape of Turkey via different subject matters such as the sounds of urban neighbourhoods (Kytö, 2018), acoustic control practices (Bayram, 2018), and representations of the silence of minorities in cultural productions (Kılıç, 2018; Yıldız, 2018; Kaymak, 2018). One article from this journal that has utmost value for this thesis is by Tülin Ural, who studies the soundscape of Turkey in the early Republican era and its effect on women and their voices. Her work is not focusing on mass movements, but it provides insights about the history of the control over the feminine soundscapes in the nation. Ural's work can also be discussed within the body of works that focus on the intersection of voice and power in Turkey (Saybaşılı, 2018; Salık, 2019; Schäfers, 2015, 2019; Kurtuluş, 2010; Bilal 2004; Kalpaklıoğlu, 2018). Another work in this intersection that motivated me to do research on the connection between sound/voice and power is Umut Tümay Arslan's book *Mazi Kabrinin Hortlakları* (2010), which contains a chapter about how the image and voice of Zeki Müren in movies were used as ideological tools of a national ideal. The chapter is very compelling in that it applies psychoanalytical ways of thinking to discussions on voice in cultural studies. It is one of the few works that exhibits the representative power of voice and its connective capacity between gendered subjects and social power in the context of Turkey. Meltem Ahıska's book *Occidentalism in Turkey* (2010) is another comprehensive work about how sound and voice were used as ideological apparatuses in the early Republican era for the purpose of shaping

ideal political subjectivities. The book enables a historical framework regarding the ways in which soundscape of the nation has been instrumentalized by the state, especially through the radio. The canon in Yeşilçam movies can also be added to this framework, as they explain how the dubbing technology in Yeşilçam movies permitted an extra tool to control, create and manipulate the ideal voices of the subjects that the industry/power regime wants to portray (Erdoğan 2003; Bayraktar 2017; Alptekin, 2017). All these works form a field regarding the soundscape of Turkey and although some of them touch upon the fact that the state's ideological instrumentalization of the voice is always gendered, I believe adding a specific focus on feminine soundscapes of political demonstrations can enrich the discussion these works have generated.

1.2.3 Soundscapes of demonstrations

One key work that focuses on the feminine soundscape of political demonstrations is Evrim Hikmet Öğüt's article "Cultural Production as a Political Act" (2018) that analyses the songs sung in the feminist night marches. This article is also the only published academic work I could find that takes feminist night marches as a case study. Öğüt, focuses on the two very famous songs of the demonstrations and approaches them as forms of collective political action. Öğüt, however, does not focus on voices as other works mentioned above do, she analyzes the subversive power within the collectivity of the group Bandsista, a women's musical collective, and their creation process of writing these two songs. Her main argument is that this collective cultural production, its performance, and transference are forms of rebellion against the patriarchal system. I share a similar approach with Öğüt, yet my aim is to go beyond the field of songs and enter the field of sound in general. A work

that shares this theoretical interest - but lacks the feminine soundscape focus that Öğüt has - is Emine Şirin Özgün's PhD thesis "The Sounds of Political Action in the Streets of Istanbul" (2012). In this canonical work, Özgün provides an analysis of the relationship between the sound structures of political demonstrations in Istanbul and the social context they were performed in. She takes labour day May 1st demonstrations, Nevruz and Republic Day celebrations as case studies and analyses the sounds (*song*scape, slogans and soundscape) of these ritualistic demonstrations to unravel how sound is used for politics. Her work focuses on demonstrations before Gezi, therefore is open for contributions about the changing acoustic dynamics within the last decade. Both Öğüt and Özgün are affluent in musical theory; their works have a focus on musical transcriptions of rhythms, songs, and lyrics of the sounds they examine. I prefer to shift from this focus of musicality, as I am more interested in what these sounds do rather than what their discursive or musical transcriptions imply. My aim is to contribute to the interest these works have ignited by focusing on the material relations between political subjectivities, voice, and sound both in the process of sounding and listening to politics.

This approach necessitates a broader understanding of demonstrations that also includes the ways they are listened to. It is always challenging to define the exact beginning or ending of events as they are combinations of small actions, fractions, multiple starts, and they have ripples and memories. In this thesis, I try to approach the case study holistically. I will consider all dynamics before or after the march as equal elements of the event of the 2019 Feminist Night March. This approach is critical to reveal that each dynamic, each narrative, and affect before or after the event, defines and constructs the event. Within this perspective, I also consider the audio-visual representations of demonstrations as they play a big part in

the recognition of the event, how it is perceived and how it will be remembered. I do not wish to go into the details of different representation technologies that shape the way we encounter demonstrations; however, combining the sounds of politics and the way we listen to them through investigating representative materials opens up novel challenges about a bigger question - how do we relate to each other in our contemporaneity? In his article "Demonstrations: sites and sights of direct action", Andrew Barry (1999) traces a similar focus and asks, "[h]ow do electronic and photographic media figure in the conduct of a political demonstration? Does the development of electronic media necessarily lead to an overproduction of information in which any sense of the point of the action is lost?" (p.84). These are questions that I find relevant to this thesis, but my focus also gives importance to the ways these representations are used by the power regime to shape the way we relate to each other, or to narrow it down: the way we listen to each other. I am especially interested in what happens when sounds of a demonstration, sounds of an experience are recorded and combined with an image. In what ways these audio-visual representations are vulnerable/resistant to new reproductions and montages, especially of those with definite ideological agendas? Which materialities/emotions/experiences remain, and which others escape when a political performance is represented through an audio-visual? How do these representations construct the way demonstrations are witnessed? These are the questions that I find valuable to situate this case study in a broader context regarding the relationship between having a voice and the potentials and limits of sounding politics in our contemporaneity. These questions will pave the way to understanding the effects of news media representations in constructing the conditions in which one can or cannot be heard in the way one intends to be listened to.

1.2.4 Adding listening to the canon

All the works mentioned above were critical in understanding how the soundscape of the nation has been used by different power regimes as a site of power; and how subjects, their voices, sounds, and their music have become ideological tools and targets of, or threats to the regime. In that regard, these works also reveal the usage of the senses and acoustic parameters in the power mechanisms of the state. I believe that looking into the case of the accusation towards women participants of The Feminist Night March contributes to this framework in two main ways. First, it reveals the gendered nature of this sovereign power over the soundscape of the nation and the significance of the feminine soundscape against the patriarchal order. Secondly, it focuses on the other side of this discussion: listening. While the first focus investigates sound and voice as intensities of political subjectivity and sites of power the second focus examines the relationalities of these dynamics, which have the potential to subvert the boundaries of the norms of social interaction. These two approaches combine the questions regarding how women make politics and how we relate to each other. Considering the subject matter from both of these angles unravels not only the ways the soundscape of the nation is created and contested but also the forms of relationalities these dynamics create.

1.3 Research conduct and methodology

The thesis is based on semi-structured interviews, focus groups, media analysis and ethnographic research. After deciding upon my research topic in March 2019, right after Women's Day celebrations, I conducted four interviews with women I was already acquainted with. These interviews were crucial in framing my primary research questions and the theoretical framework of this thesis. I have written a

shorter version of this thesis based on these interviews and presented it at a workshop titled, "Writing Society: Ethics and Politics of Research in Precarious Times" organized in collaboration with the British Academy and Sabancı University in September 2019. This workshop enabled a platform to discuss my thesis with an international academic audience and enabled me to reshape my research into the structure it has today. The workshop also enabled me to create a starting point for my fieldwork as many women who attended my presentation offered their help during the process of fieldwork.

In the following months, I conducted one medium scale (with 5 interviewees) and one small scale focus group (with 2 interviewees[5]), and five other in-depth personal interviews. I decided to do in-depth interviews with women who have a history of organized feminist activism to have the chance to also gather insight about the histories of these organizations. In the focus groups, I aimed to unite women who were not currently in a union, organization or collective to focus on the personal perspectives rather than the history of the women's movement. The discussions in the focus groups were centered on the experiences of women in the Feminist Night Marches. The structure of the discussion had three main parts. We first discussed their daily struggles regarding what it means to have a voice as a woman in Turkey. I opened the discussion with Şirin Tekeli's quote:

> As women assistants from different fields, one day, we realized something. In meetings, we, the women, hesitate to speak up when we have something to say, whereas our male friends are perfect speakers. For example, Nail Satlıgan, he took two small notes and spoke for half an hour without a single subject-verb agreement error, without even looking at the notes. When we saw these men who spoke like this, we could not speak, although we were giving lectures during that time. We concerned ourselves about the reasons

[5] Due to last minute cancellations of two other interviewees, this session became a very small scaled one, which actually turned into an advantage as the interviewees had more chance to deepen their thoughts and a more intimate atmosphere generated a safe space for personal topics to be discussed.

> why we cannot speak up and formed a women's commission within TÜMAS[6] in 1979. [7] (Özdemir, 2016)

The reason I started with this quote was to ignite a discussion about the conditions of having a voice in our time. I was curious if the same concerns were still prevalent. The details of the discussions about this topic are discussed later on in the thesis but in short, we can say that the concerns were not gone after forty years.

The second part of the discussion was about the experience of being in the Feminist Night Marches. We discussed what value women attribute to the event and what emotions and feelings they had within the march. I asked for specific stories and memories about all the Feminist Night Marches they have attended and tried to understand what was different about the case of 2019.

In the last part, I showed the video clip of the President's speech where he displays the video collage as grounds for the accusation. We then discussed the conditions and the purpose of the accusation and the aesthetic and political intentions and repercussions of the video compared to the general policies of the AKP period about women.

One-to-one interviews followed a similar character of the above, but rather than focusing on the first part, I spent more time on understanding their association with the organizations they were affiliated with. These interviews were made with women who were current or former members of feminist organizations such as: Mor Çatı Women's Shelter (shelter for women against domestic violence) Çatlak Zemin

[6] Tüm Üniversite, Akademi ve Yüksek Okullar Asistanları Birliği'ni (TÜMAS) was an organization formed in 1975 for all assistants in the academia of Turkey for democratizing the laws of the university (Özdemir, 2016)

[7] "...farklı branşlardan kadın asistan arkadaşlar günün birinde bir şeyi fark ettik. Toplantılarda, biz kadınlar söyleyecek bir şeyimiz varsa, söz alıp söyleyemiyoruz, çekiniyoruz. Erkek arkadaşlarımız ise mükemmel konuşmacılar. Mesela, Nail Satılgan, iki küçük not alır, yarım saat o notlara bile bakmadan, tek bir cümle düşüklüğü olmaksızın konuşurdu. Böyle konuşan adamları görünce biz konuşamıyorduk, oysa diğer yandan ders veriyorduk. Niye biz de söz alamıyoruz diye dert edindik ve 1979'da TÜMAS'ın içinde bir kadın komisyonu kurduk."

(a feminist blog that was formed in 2016, which is also one of the most active members of the organization of the recent Feminist Night Marches), Havle (a muslim feminist women's organization), Sosyalist Feminist Kolektif (a socialist feminist collective which diffused in 2015) and Ritim Kolektif (a group formed within SFK in 2010 in an aim to create a musical community, which also performs at the parties that are always organized after the Feminist Night Marches). In these interviews, which lasted from half an hour to three hours, I focused on both the experiences of these women during the Feminist Night Marches, the history of feminist activism in Turkey, and the significance of the night marches within this historical framework.

Overall, I made formal interviews with sixteen women, but I have informally discussed the topic with more than forty women during a one-year span. These informal interactions happened over short small talks or spontaneous, long discussions with women I know and women I have just met. I was lucky as each time I mentioned my research, women were immediately eager to share their own experiences. Even before deciding upon my research question, I partook in many social gatherings where the 2019 Feminist Night March was discussed. I do not give direct quotes from these off-the-record interactions, but they inevitably affected my overall analysis. You can hear the voices of these women who willingly shared their thoughts, in parts where I seem to be making generalized statements. When I am usually indicating that *many* women share a certain opinion, one can assume that I am referring to the remarks of all the women I got in contact with, both on and off-the-record.

My research sample is by no means representative. All the women I have talked with were between the ages of 22 to 40. They were all living in Istanbul when I interviewed them. They were all university graduates or students. We did not delve

into the differences of their background, but it was certain that they had different origins, orientations, and opinions in terms of politics, gender, religion, and ethnic identity. I have talked with women who identified as a feminist and women who did not mention anything of that sort, women who attended the Feminist Night Marches once or twelve times. These different backgrounds only presented themselves between the lines. Especially in the focus groups, women were determined not to let these differences dominate the overall discussion. They stated their differences when it was necessary to specify a certain argument, but other than these moments, women did not make their personal positions the centre of their participation. Therefore, I do not use descriptive adjectives when I am introducing them. The only exception to this is Ayşe, who defined herself as a Muslim feminist. In our one-to-one interview both Ayşe and I were focusing on her political and ideological position as we both believed that it added a specific value to the discussion.

Another major outlier within the interviews was the women who were in the organization committee of the Feminist Night Marches. These women experienced the march differently than the attendees. Although they shared many mutual emotions and opinions about the value of the march with other women, their voices contained an additional burden when they explained their own stories. These women, who were either in the organization committee or who had to plan the after party of the march were burdened with the responsibility of making sure that everything goes smoothly. For them, the march passed very quickly since they were always working to fulfil a duty or fix a problem. Very often, they had to leave at a certain time to go and prepare the after party, or they were too focused on arranging the megaphones, the collection of banners, or arranging the electricity for the speakers and so on.

As for my own position as a researcher, although I share many concerns of the women I have talked with, I was only able to attend the 2020 Feminist Night March, and that was after I finished writing the thesis. Therefore, while I was analysing the case of 2019, I based my research on interviews and audio-visual media and news media that were already published. I had enough experience to have a sense of what it is like being in a protest, yet I have not experienced an only-women protest. This enabled both a familiarity with and a critical personal distance to the research topic. However, after I attended the march in 2020, I decided to share my ethnographic observations too. In Chapter 6: Epilogue, I describe my observations with audio files I have gathered from the march. Even though the experience of the march I have attended was clearly different from the case of 2019, I believe telling the experience of the 2020 march contributes to the thesis on multiple levels and opens it up for further questions.

For methodological concerns, I tried to pursue an analysis that privileges the ear. Staying loyal to the political purpose of the thesis, I tried to open up my ears and listen to the nuances of the subject matter of my analysis. Therefore, when I was analysing the interviews, the field, and the representative media, I tried to focus on the sounds rather than visuals or semiotics. The approach I took when I was focusing on sounds was a materialist one, which advocates referring to sound as a material intensity composed of complexes of forces (Cox, 2011). This approach explores the volume, rhythm, and intonation of different sounds and their associations with bodies, but more than this, it focuses on what they do, how they situate and disorient bodies, how they formulate and reformulate assemblages and territories. This approach is inspired by the Deleuzian lexicon and also makes use of theories of affect (Deleuze, 1978, Thompson & Briddle, 2013; Clough, 2007). Salomé Voegelin,

- also an advocate of material approach to sounds - defines this as an interest in the *sonic*, "instead of fixed identities and meanings, stability, sounds and stasis, the sonic exposes us to action and movement, to fleeting understandings, verbs and contingent possibilities" (Cobussen 2013, p. 2). Unlike Voegelin, I do not use the concept *sonic*, but I do refer to the overall experience of sounds as acoustic encounters. I believe the word *acoustic* is more inclusive of the atmosphere of the sounds, their affective spheres and performance. Also, I use the word *sound* in a broader sense as a material intensity that "exposes us to action and movement, to fleeting understandings, verbs and contingent possibilities". In this framework, I found Lefebvre's take on rhythms to be the most influential example of how this theoretical approach is performed as a methodology (2017).

Lefebvre's introduction of the everyday to the leftist philosophy and ideology opens up new angles to understand the dynamics, movements, and relations of things (1991; 2014). In *Rhythmanalysis* (2017) his methodological approach comes from the focus on the body, mobility, relationality, and materiality. A rhythmanalyst, in this sense, investigates the space-time-energy of things, events, subjects, and structures. Lefebvre remains loyal to the triadic/dialectical thinking but surpasses the Hegelian tendency to arrive at a synthesis. Therefore, even though binary concepts serve as a starting point in Lefebvre's approach, the subject matter is always situated in a triadic structure. But this structure is never stabilized; on the contrary, everything is discussed in its mobility, through changes, as becomings. From this perspective, the rhythms within meta-concepts such as history and nature are discussed as active dynamics, as rhythms. The rhythmanalyst then aims to listen to the world, to its silences, harmonies, and melodies in order to create meaning. The rhythmanalyst uses the body as a metronome to get into the material relationalities

these dynamics create and serve. Everything is investigated in their wholesomeness and relationality. This approach offers a way out from *apriori*, deterministic, logical or positivist restraints that usually create a one-way causality. It allows the researcher to catch the importance of the senses within our relationship to the material conditions that surround us, and our bodies as actors within these conditions. Putting the body into the research, this methodological approach is critical in comparing different sensory encounters, especially while comparing real life experiences and their representations. Accordingly, I approach the audio-visual and the interviews as having rhythms that stimulate the senses and enable or disable different forms of relationalities.

In interviews, the concept of atmosphere was also a fecund tool to do sensory ethnography (Pink, 2015). Atmospheres are conditions of possibilities to feel sensations, they are felt as if happening outside the boundaries of the self, but they are felt in "an object-like, quasi-concrete way" (Costa et. al., 2014, p.352). The material approach to atmosphere that focuses on what these atmospheres do on a body was influential in making sense of the affective conditions of subjects and their potentialities of multiplicity and their openness to encounters. Trying to listen to the sounds of the interviews to understand the atmosphere enabled me to hear the nuances that one could miss easily if one focuses on the spoken material only.

1.4 Overview of chapters

The thesis is composed of three main chapters. In sum, by taking the sounds of the 2019 Istanbul Feminist Night March as a case study, these chapters exhibit the political power of women and their voices, discuss the way the current regime approaches this power and question the contemporary conditions of communication

that regulate the dynamics in between. The first main chapter, chapter two, starts with the general overview of women's movement in the 80's that generated the political atmosphere for the Feminist Night Marches. I argue that the discussions of inclusivity, starting from the '80s and heightening with Gezi entailed the demand for a space where different subjectivities can coexist together. Feminist Night Marches, as a space that meets this demand, can be considered an outcome of this ongoing discussion of inclusivity. These marches are also an outcome of various forms of gendered oppression that silence women, therefore I also offer an analysis of the historical, philosophical, political, and social conditions that shape the patriarchal power regime that renders women silent. I also look into the reflections of these conditions in contemporary Turkey and its national history to display in what ways women were, and are still affected by these conditions in this geopolitical landscape. I then analyse the experiences of Feminist Night Marches where women speak up against this silencing oppression. In this part, I investigate where Feminist Night Marches drive their political power from. I argue that the Feminist Night Marches' unique power against the patriarchal structure is the dual existence of resistive and celebratory collectivity it manifests. I unravel these forms of collectivities through shared actions such as shouting and walking together and elaborate on the affective space that these collective actions generate. I suggest that the acoustic environment of the march plays a critical role in the formation of this affective space. I analyse the sound of the Feminist Night Marches through the remarks raised in the interviews and theories of sound studies and suggest that the sound of these marches which prioritizes who is speaking rather than what is spoken is pointing to an overflowing of desires. I discuss what type of politics this sound generates through theories of

Rancière (2004, 2010, 2011) and I finalize the chapter by examining the significance of this overflowing of desires through theories of Deleuze and Guattari (1998, 2004).

To contextualize The Feminist Night March Of 2019, in chapter three, I delve into the history of the policies of AKP regarding women, nature and public spaces. I exhibit the similarities between their treatment as docile spaces that are waiting to be put into use for the ideological purposes of the state. I put forward the patriarchal, biopolitical, neoliberal and neoconservative methods and values behind this treatment. I build a discussion that the connection between these attitudes points to the state's general claim over the *territorial sovereignty* of the nation, its land, and its subjects. I insert the term *territorial sovereignty* from the article of Natália Maria Félix de Souza as a concept that explains the occupant and repressive claim of the regime to take back a site of power "lost through modern capitalist oppression and emasculation" (2019, p.96). I argue the usage of mosques, ezan and sela are recent apparatuses of ideology in this endeavour, that also disclose the state's usage of "affective politics of Islamic Populism" (Başdurak, 2020, p.135) over the soundscape of the nation. I offer all these discussions as an explanation of the fact that the way regime treats women is not a specific case about gender, but a consequence of an overall method of exercising power that is indeed gendered in itself where the female body and her voice are implicitly approached as sites of inscription for the predominant discourses of power. Accordingly, I situate the acoustic conflicts between the sounds of women and ezan in this framework as an example of this territorial inscription.

I then untangle the acoustic conflicts that the President's accusation evokes. In four different sub-chapters I define what these conflicts do, what they enable and what they prevent. I discuss that they are a form of framing women protestors as

dangerous in a way that pushes them out of the category of the women ideal of the state. I argue that the specific way of doing this through accusing the sounds of women rather than criticizing their political demands or written banners contains a life-demeaning aspect to the silencing of women that overlooks their political subjectivity and attacks their material existence. As this sound is critical in the expression of the collective desires of women, redefining it as a reaction against ezan, is an enclosure over the overflowing female desire present within the march. This repurposing of the desires of women contributes to the state's claim over the *territorial sovereignty* of the nation that operates through creating a monorhythmic national soundscape. The acoustic conflicts that the President promotes show how this process is gendered; how women, their body and their voice are expected to carry out and represent the power regime of the nation.

In chapter four, I discuss this occasion as an example of a broader problem regarding the representation of political demonstrations. I argue that the technological advancements of today enable a nuanced dynamic over the usage of audio-visuals, where they are open for endless forms of manipulation once they are produced. I then analyse the audio-visual collage that the President displays. I exhibit how the combination of sound and image creates a directionality that frames the experience in a way that benefits the territorial claim of the state. I argue through the theories of Lefebvre that this type of representation turns the *presence* of the experience into a *present* that gives an illusion of witnessing a real event without actually experiencing it (2017). I analyse how the circulation of media commodifies experiences and creates a regime of reality where ideology inserts itself into everyday life. I then discuss how everyday life is structured in a way that makes some subjects less visible and less audible than others (Rancière, 2004, 2011). I

claim listening as a critical sensory tool in this distribution and argue that the audio-visual collage that the President displays and his accusation are the outcomes of a form of listening that is closed in a way that blocks dialogue. I finally try to expand the definition of listening in a way that serves to alter this distribution rather than recreating it, so that the sounds of Feminist Night Marches and other sounds resembling them do not fall on deaf ears.

After the conclusion, in chapter six, I describe my ethnographic research on the Feminist Night March of 2020. I provide audio clips from the night and try to explain the correlations and divergences of my personal experience with the experiences of 2019 that I listened to from other women. Finally, I analyse how the state continues similar disciplining methods regarding the sounds and voices of women.

CHAPTER 2

THE POWER OF CACOPHONY

"This story is not all mine, nor told by me alone. Indeed, I am not sure whose story it is; you can judge better. But it is all one, and if at moments the facts seem to alter with an altered voice, why then you can choose the fact you like best; yet none of them is false, and it is all one story."

— Ursula K. Le Guin, The Left Hand of Darkness

As far as I can remember, the first time I truly began to question gender conceptions was when I was learning French in middle school. The fact that certain objects, feelings, and ideas were feminine and others masculine was very fascinating to me. I was trying to understand what was masculine about the wind (*le vent*) or feminine about a door (*la port*), creating and imagining the correlations between what I understand from a "man" or a "woman" to the characteristics of objects or concepts. I was very upset when some words that I liked turned out to be masculine, I felt as if they ended up in the wrong team. One way or another, as everyone else, I became accustomed to a word that has its own rules regarding gender. Similar to the unsubstantial gendered disposition of language, social life also contains gendered norms and categories that are socially constructed. Day by day, the predominant notions of gender leak into the way we perceive our identities, our environment, and our relations. These are by no means solid notions; they change and evolve each minute. As Judith Butler suggests, gender is not a natural or an inevitable thing, it is the outcome of repeated actions which are translated into our sensory world via the

discourses of the regime (Butler, 1993). Butler also argues that the sexualized body is a creation of these processes. The body is a "discursive site" that reflects upon the discursive regimes of its time (Stark, 2017, p.64), but the binary system of sexuality and gender is always troubled by bodies that go beyond the predominant discursive regimes (Butler, 1990). Conflicts, compromises, and adjustments are always present in the negotiations of these changes regarding gender. These negotiations happen both at micro - via one performance, one decision of clothing etc. - and macro levels via political riots or juridical acquisitions. Each level supports and triggers one another leaving a mark on history and memory. The story that is told here is one negotiation of the sort that introduces the soundscape created by the sounds coming from the body as a "discursive site".

This chapter will be based on the Feminist Night Marches in Istanbul. I will first go into the social and historical conditions that generated the Feminist Night Marches by focusing on the feminist movements in the 1980s. I will describe different periods of the 17 years of Feminist Night Marches. Then, I will offer an analysis of the philosophical assumptions and material conditions that contribute to the ongoing patriarchal structure that silences women. I will provide this insight through an analysis of the feminine voice. This approach enables an angle that investigates the intersection of a woman's body and her position in the field of politics. After discussing the position of feminine voices in contemporary Turkey, I will go into the analysis of the experience of partaking in the Feminist Night Marches. I will focus on the meanings that women attribute to these events, I will exhibit the individual and collective emotions they trigger and explain the affective state they cause. Overall, this chapter provides a reading of the Feminist Night

Marches through an acoustic perspective to hear its political compound that remains unheard.

2.1 Historical background of feminist activism in Turkey

The 1980's were a specific turning point for the women's movement in Turkey. As Yeşim Arat argues, it was a period where young feminists challenged the Kemalist feminists of the early Republican era (Arat, 1997, p.102). After all, as Nurdan Gürbilek points out, the post-coup era of the '80s was a period where subjects and ideologies that were subjugated and silenced during the early Republican era were resurfacing. Turkey was experiencing the rise of Islam and discovery of the Kurdish culture (Gürbilek, 2015, p.11). Arat indicates that feminists of the '80s were not threatened by these new dynamics; on the contrary, they were urging open dialogues between new actors (Arat, 1997, p.107). It was a period where women were criticizing the instrumentalization of feminism for the purposes of the state and trying to form new solidarities that emerged from the experience of being a woman (Tekeli, 1998; Arat, 1997, p.104). As Arat states, "women were acting as women for women" in the '80s (1997, p.106). Stella Ovadia explains this new form of action as such: "We tried to say "I" or "we"; not "those" women, but "we women." Not "woman questions" [*kadın sorunları*], but questions of being women [*kadınlık*], becoming women [*kadın olma*] attempts to become subjects. To tell about ourselves and speak in our name" (as cited in Arat, 1997, p.104). Ovadia's comment contributes to Gürbilek's remark that the '80s were both a period that silenced subjects and created subjects who wanted to speak up and explore alternative ways and channels of self-expression (2015, p.21). Correspondingly, feminists in the '80s

opened up new channels to talk about what it means to be a woman and generated new modes and forms of resistance to the patriarchal oppression (Çakır, 2011).

Although women started to unite through consciousness raising groups in 1981 after the coup d'état of 1980 (Ozan, 2015), one significant event is singled out as a critical moment of gaining momentum in the post-coup period: the 1987 solidarity march against the battering of women. In my interviews, women often referred to this event as a moment of origin when they were telling the history of the Feminist Night Marches. One of the phrases I heard throughout my interviews was "there is only women solidarity left," referring to today's condition, which is to say that the women's movement is the most visible, most organized, and active political group within Turkey. This idea of women holding the torch of the opposition is a very common discourse that circles in many other daily conversations; and it is a recurring theme in history, as the 1987 march was also described by similar phrases (Demirdirek, 2015; Altınay & Fırat, 2012, p.158, 298).

The 1987 march against the battering of women is significant in the memories of women as the first legal march after the coup d'état of 1980, and as the first event where women were gathered in numbers that surprised even the women who organized the event (Karakuş, 1987, p.7). On 17 March 1987, more than 3000 women walked from Kadıköy to Yoğurtçu Parkı after a judge refused to grant a divorce to a woman who was being abused by her husband (p.6). The famous idiom that the judge used which triggered many women to take it to the streets was "A woman shouldn't be without a stick on her back and a foal in her belly"[8] which translates to "you should always beat a woman and make her pregnant." The demonstration in 1987 is remembered as a symbolic moment of the start of a new

[8] "Kadının sırtından sopayı, karnından sıpayı eksik etmemeli" (Şahir, 2019).

era, even by women who were not there. Ece, one of my interviewees who is a feminist activist and a lawyer said, "women poured to the streets in '87 in the chaotic state after the coup, where no leftist organization had made a call of action"[9] to indicate that women's struggle always maintained a critical position during times of extreme political oppression. Flash forward to now, after the coup d'état attempt in 2016 and the two years of state of emergency after it, the state has a very limited tolerance for political opposition. Almost 30 years later, women's demonstrations are once again seen as the only political movement that still has momentum.

Indeed, 1987 serves as a point of acceleration for the feminist struggle in Turkey. It can be argued that this acceleration has benefited from the rising global awareness of women's issues (Eslen-Ziya, 2013). Especially the ten years between 1975 and 1985 which were declared as the ten years of women by the UN brought special attention to women and their concerns. On the local level, the rising network of women through organizations such as İlerici Kadınlar Derneği (İKD, a socialist women organization in the 70s) also contributed to this awareness by opening a political space for women in the 70s, when the political discussions were dominated by student movements and Marxist ideology (Kara, 2006, Keşoğlu, 2010). These ideologies often tended to advocate the opinion that a separate women's movement would divide the fight against the class system (Sirman, 1989; Keşoğlu, 2010; Tekeli, 1989; Berktay, 2010). Some disagreed and insisted that a separate women's movement was necessary. Sirman notes that "the post-1980 era can be conceived as a period marked by new attempts to define and regulate social order, this time through efforts to redefine modes of legitimate participation within the political domain"

[9] "Hiç bir sol örgüt sokağa çıkma çağrısı yapmamışken darbe sonrası o kadar kaotik bir ortamdayken 87'de kadınlar dayağa karşı sokağa döküldü."

(Sirman, 1989, p.15). Although this new space created by women expanded within the leftist circles through the years, the 1980 coup ended activities of all organizations including those of women. After the coup, the first legal demonstration in 1987 opened the doors for new possibilities for women to make their voices be heard. Cities in Turkey started to host many crowded women's marches and feminist campaigns following that year (Sirman, 2013; Amargi, 2012). In the following October, women organized a carnivalesque event under the "Solidarity against Battering" campaign as a follow up event (Ozan, 2015). In this meeting women gathered to discuss what more could be done about violence against women, but it is stated by a woman who attended this meeting that even in this meeting, men, "occasionally managed to suppress the high pitched [*ince*] voices of women with their most husky [*kalın*] voices as if they had no opportunity to talk"[10] ("Kadınlar Şenliği," 1987, p.9). Next 8 March, in 1988, women opened a pop-up museum called Temporary Modern Women Museum and displayed the daily utensils and objects women are confronted with in their daily lives such as kitchen utensils, cleaning equipment or IUDs (Figure 4). This was an "important gesture of claiming the



Figure 4. From left to right: "The Monument of Unknown Women", statue of a bride with dish gloves, "A Woman's Intellectual Activity on a Sunday" Source: [Filmmor, 2016]

[10] Böyle bir ortamda bile, sanki hiç konuşma olanakları yokmuş gibi yine en kalın sesleriyle kadınların ince seslerini zaman zaman bastırmayı başarabildiler. (Kadınlar Şenliği, 1987)

presence and the reality of the body repressed and abstracted in the dominant public discourse of the nation" (Erol, 1992, p.113). This was, again, in an attempt to create a shared ground for women by showing that domestic labour is a shared form of oppression that unites all categories of women (Öztürk, 1988, p.24). In 1989, the famous "Our bodies belong to us, no to sexual abuse" campaign, also known as the Purple Needle Campaign, provided women with small needles as defence weapons to use in case of a physical abuse (Karakuş, 2019). The discourse of the body was becoming more and more significant within feminist circles through these events. These campaigns and events were critical in the 1980's for finding novel grounds of coming together.

March 8th of the same year was also a new chapter in the feminist mass marches. The 1989 demonstrations in Sultanahmet and in Bağlarbaşı brought women from diverse backgrounds together. Feminist organizations, feminist magazines, women politicians, leftist feminist associations, women nurses, women students, and individual women all got together for the first time (Amargi, 2012, Kaktüs, 1989). In these marches, finding common ground and deciding upon the main messages were harder tasks in comparison to organising themed campaigns. But collaborative efforts paved the way for many valuable discussions. For example, in 1989, the 8 March demonstrations created a big turmoil when male fellows of socialist women joined the march and the slogan "man and woman hand in hand towards free days"[11] was chanted after their arrival. This ignited the question of whether men should join 8 March demonstrations or not. This was a critical question that was actually the repercussion of a bigger issue: whether women should exist in these spaces with their political identities, ideologies and practices, or is it possible for all women to find an

[11] Kadın Erkek Elele, Özgür Günlere" (Savran, 1989, p.12)

equal ground where they can harbour an inclusive environment for all women to exist together (Kaktüs, 1989). In Women's Day demonstrations, the participants were coming from different political backgrounds and resistance practices. Even though they were getting together for shared concerns, each had their unique experience of what it means to be a woman in Turkey. Different political groups wanted to vocalize their own political concerns in the demonstration, but this often conflicted with the priorities of other groups. These conflicts kindled many dilemmas, but the shared concern regarding the necessity of collaboration generated many productive discussions that continue to affect the feminist communities today.

For example, up until 1996 it was heavily discussed if March 8 is called International Women's Day or Worker Women's Day (Karakuş & Akkaya, 201; Keşoğlu, 2010). This debate was connected to the fluctuating influence of the leftist ideology in the '90s where the decomposition of leftist organizations has led to a period of a disorganized activism scene and women started to discuss if creating women groups within these formations support or harm the leftist agenda. Up until this day different groups refer to Women's Day differently, but the dispersiveness of women demonstrations caused by this discussion had a temporary pause in 1997, with a mass demonstration on 8 March where Kurdish and Turkish women joined forces for the first time (Karakuş & Akkaya, 2011, p.60). This was also a turning point for the political agenda of feminism as it resulted in the question: Can women from different political orientations find a common ground, and if yes, how? In 2013, a new discussion emerged about different gender identities of women, when Ayşe Düzkan verbally offended several trans men by arguing that they do not belong in a women's march ("Ayşe Düzkan'ın", 2013). These conflicts reflect upon the discussions that occupy the political field of the time of their occurrence, but what

we see in common is that they are all about inclusivity. Be it about leftist, Kurdish or Muslim women, men, lesbian women, trans men or trans women, feminists always maintain the shared concern regarding the necessity of collaboration and inclusivity. In an interview from 2014, Ezgi Sartaş, who was a feminist activist and a research fellow in Ankara at the time of the interview, says, "Is it possible to construct the words and actions of women on the shared denominator of womanhood, or will it always be lacking to create discourses and practices that do not take the existence of Kurdish women, lesbian women, women with headscarves into account?"[12] (Rahte & Tokdoğan, 2014, p. 71). The ongoing discussions of inclusion and the unity of diverse identities can be read as the ripples of the global feminist discussions on being together with our differences. Although this discussion is still prevalent in the political agenda of feminists, each era brings its own novel concerns.

Looking back, one can see that the search for new dynamics for political expression in the '80s had its effects on the upcoming years of women's movement. Compared to the '80s, '90s are usually discussed as a quieter period, where Kurdish women's movement deepened[13] and micro-networks and legal organizations[14] started to emerge (Arat, 1997, p.106; Bora, 1996; Koçali, 2004; Bora & Günal, 2016). The '90s was a period where women only occasionally joined forces around specific topics. This was regarded as a sign of the loosening grip of unions, but it was indeed

[12] Kadınların eylem ve sözleri yalnızca kadınlık ortak paydası üzerine inşa edilebilir mi, yoksa Kürt kadın, lezbiyen kadın olarak, başörtülü kadın olarak var oluşları hesaba katılmadan oluşturulan söylem ve pratikler eksik mi kalacaktır?

[13] Although they did not last very long, magazines prepared by Kurdish women were very important for these years. These magazines are: Rosa (1996), Jujin (1996) ve Jin-u Jiyan(1998). (Berber, 2017a; Al Ali & Taş, 2018)

[14] Mor Çatı Kadın Sığınma Vakfı (1990), Kadın Eserleri Kütüphanesi ve Bilgi Merkezi (1990), İ.Ü. Kadın Çalışmaları Merkezi (1990), Kadın Dayanışma Vakfı (1993), Kadının İnsan Hakları-Yeni Çözümler Derneği (1993), *Pazartesi* Dergisi (1995), Başkent Kadın Platformu (1995), Uçan Süpürge (1996), Kadın Adayları Destekleme Derneği -KA-DER (1997) ve Kadın Merkezi- KAMER (1997) are the outcomes of this period. (Berber, 2017a)

a potentiality to form new types of solidarities (Düzkan & Ahıska as cited in Kara, 2006), and it can also be thought as the beginning of the movement's adaptation to the neoliberal world, lack of government aid/support and the rise of private funding. The early 2000s also witnessed fractured 8 March demonstrations and the extension of the 90's project feminism with the increase of campaigns and projects that are funded by private institutions, international NGOs or ministry offices (Bora, 2014; Ergüneş, 2006). In this context it became harder to schedule a time and place for demonstrations as state officials rarely permitted daytime demonstrations and feminist organization committees preferred weekends for more attendance. A critical turning point took place in 2003 with the first night march, when women gathered at night for the first time. This practice continued to be conductive to uniting women. Women who did not belong to a union or an organization, or women who could not join the call of strike that feminist organizations declare during March 8ths, were able to attend the night march after working hours. This small practical change had a big impact on the future of the 8 March demonstrations.

In the early years, the night marches were accompanied by daytime demonstrations and protests were organized in several places other than Istiklal, including Kadıköy, Sultanahmet and Bağlarbaşı. In time, the multiplicity of daytime events decreased, and the visibility, attendance and the significance of the feminist night marches increased. This has several reasons. In the same interview with Ezgi Sartaş, Mehtap Doğan, a member of several feminist organizations when they were active (Socialist Feminist Collective, Abortion is a Right Platform and Istanbul Feminist Collective) describes the rising importance of Feminist Night Marches as such:

> The loosening power of women's emancipation movement, the lessening of feminist demands within women's activities, the blurred lines of ideological and political background that divides feminist and non-feminist women urged feminists to create a protest separate from the protests that they are already a part of. They wanted the protest to belong to all women and that no one should have come into prominence, so they decided to restrict the usage of any placards, flags, banners, or tokens that are signed by or are associated with an organisation. (Rahte & Tokdoğan, 2014, p.72) [15]

Feminist Night Marches which started with 100 women in 2003 with the slogan "They are all men, is it a coincidence?"[16], to protest war and occupation have reached 40.000 women in 2017, the first year of the state of emergency after the 2016 coup attempt (Gürcü, 2017). Beyond the agenda of the feminist movement, it is also paramount to understand the political atmosphere of Turkey in the last decade to gain a better understanding of the rising importance of the Feminist Night Marches.

Gezi protests hold a pivotal position for the last decade of Turkey's political field. Gezi, in itself, is undoubtedly a very complex and nuanced phenomenon that had many political and social outcomes. The critical point about Gezi for feminism in Turkey is the new forms of resistance and solidarity it generated. It enabled many people to take to the streets for the first time, where many women said that now that they have tasted what it is like to be on the street, they do not want to go back inside (Rahte & Tokdoğan, 2014, p.78). It showed a potentiality of being together and it increased the importance of humour in politics. In many interviews I conducted, women referred to Gezi as the source of novel forms of thinking and activism that enabled a know-how and experience to create politics without bringing pre-given political identities to the field. It displayed the possibility of creating solidarity

[15] Kadın kurtuluş hareketinin güç kaybetmesi, kadın etkinliklerinde feministlerin taleplerinin daha az yer almaya başlaması, feminist olan ya da olmayan kadınları ayıran ideolojik/politik arka planın bir hayli bulanıklaşması gibi nedenlerle feministler bundan on iki yıl önce, bir parçası oldukları eylemlerden ayrı, feminist bir eylem yapma kararı aldılar. Bütün kadınların eylemi olsun, hiç kimse öne çıkmasın diye de imzalı, bir kurumla özdeşleşmiş döviz, bayrak, pankart, simge taşınmamasını kararlaştırdılar.

[16] Hepsi erkek tesadüf mü? (Rahte & Tokdoğan, 2014, p.72)

among ordinary citizens who are not associated with political organizations. This was very eye-opening to a generation who had aloof relations with organized political activism. Therefore, what Mehtap points to by the indication of a will to create a protest for "all women" refers to this new potentiality of being together discovered in times of Gezi. After the Gezi protests, Feminist Night Marches met the demand for a space that enables differences to coexist, a space that does not harbour pre-established, and somewhat rigid and cliché political ways of being and resisting.[17] An open and flexible space that is also always pregnant with change, conflict and dialogue.

While Gezi opened up doors to new potentialities, it also marked the beginning of a fast-shrinking process in human rights and civilian space in Turkey. Similar to its participants, Gezi was also a turning point for the state, which quickly adjusted to the political environment and developed novel ways of exercising power. After Gezi, the political climate and the oppression of the state worsened. The bombings in 2015 and 2016, the continuing war against Kurdish people, the attempted coup and 2 years of state of emergency crushed the civilian space and the political opposition. Despite these conditions, women still walk every 8 March in great crowds. All these factors contributed to the rising importance of the Feminist Night Marches, but it is without saying that the core reason behind these walks are the worsening effects of patriarchal social and political system that silences women. It is essential to look into the deeper roots of the historical and philosophical background of patriarchy to understand why women choose to gather in the middle

[17] Another example of this type of space open to multitudinous voices and identities is the Istanbul Pride march, which started with 30 people in 2003 and reached 100,000 in the following years (İstanbul LGBTİ+ Onur Haftası, 2018). Many women I have interviewed also attend Istanbul Pride, and define it as a space where they can be completely free. Some even argued that they had stronger bonds with Pride compared to feminist night marches.

of the city each year to shout, dance, sing and protest together as a form of resistance.

2.2 The feminine voice and its discontents

There is something that I find fascinating about the presence of some women of age in public spheres. Some elderly women make an entrance onto a bus as if they own it and everything in it, including you. They can immediately ignite a conversation and ask you very personal questions or demand something from you that you would not normally do for a stranger. They give extra detailed information about their lives and expect you to comment on them. It is as if the years have given them a certain laxity or a sense of entitlement foreign to their body and they are not afraid to perform it. I find it very amusing to watch these women, they inspire me to be more like them, and they inspire me to stop overthinking and act, speak up. For example, if I want a window far from me to be opened in a bus, I always first contemplate if I really want to shout in a crowd. Thinking of these women allows me to overcome this unnecessary thought process and raise my voice. It seems foolish that I had to teach myself to speak up, but I know I am not alone. It is often the case that women struggle to find their voices and use them. Usually, one has to be aware of the situation and go through a self-learning process to gain her voice. It requires a particular self-reflexivity to acknowledge and deal with this diffidence and a woman is lucky if she can gain her voice, because sometimes it is not possible even if she is aware of the conditions that silence her. One of my interviewees, Irem, said that she has a tendency to speak if no woman is talking during the class discussion even if she does not want to:

> I realized that it is always men who are talking, they do not really care whether what they say is creative or important, especially in a lecture on politics. After a certain time, I started talking, even though I did not really want to, just as an act of self-activism so that there is a woman in the discussion. I speak because I know that if I enter the discussion most probably other women will also start talking.[18]

The feeling that women tend to think and contemplate more on what they are going to say was almost prevalent in every subject's opinion I interviewed. Another interviewee, Idil, for example, made a similar point, she was talking about different energies, masculine and feminine, and how everyone has them regardless of gender but then she said:

> But they [*men*] talk without thinking about the consequences. On the other hand, women always have a process as if they have to say the most beautiful, the most perfect thing. Of course, we can talk for hours on energies, but there is also the burden of the history that society brings. "She made a mistake, it is lacking, it is wrong," these things always turn in her head making her try saying the most correct thing. Men, they do not have this.[19]

In a different focus group, Ayla who works in a film editing company provided comments that supported Idil's insight. She described how she always must make heated debates with her colleagues (who are all men), who interrupt her and talk over her all the time, and how she has to fight for her arguments. When I asked her why she thinks that men tend to interrupt her, she said:

> I think the main issue is that they believe too much in their ideas. We are doing creative work, so I am thinking five times before throwing out an idea. I think about the questions they may ask, the problems that my idea may have. And they like to challenge, but when they are challenged, when I say to them "but don't you think that there is a loophole in what you say," they turn

[18] "Şunu farkettim sürekli erkekler konuşuyor. Onların umrunda değil söylediklerinin yaratıcı veya önemli olup olmaması, hele politika dersi ise, ve bir süre sonra sırf bi kendi kendime bir aktivizm olarak içimden aslında konuşmak gelmese de bir kadın da konuşuyor olsun diye konuşmaya başladım. ...çünkü benim girmemle büyük ihtimalle başka kadınlar da konuşmaya başlayacak diye."

[19] "süreç ve sonuç şeyi düşünmeden konuşuyorlar ama kadının hep bi processi var orda sanki hep en güzelini en mükemmelini söylemek tabii burda sadece bireyde de istediğin kadar enerji konuşalım ama orda toplumun yıllardır getirdiği şey var sürekli hata yaptı eksik oldu kusurlu oldu gibi gibi şeyden sürekli tüm süreci kafasında bir şey yapıp bir şey söyleyecekse en doğru en bilmem neyi söylemesi halbuki bir çoğumuzun gördüğü gibi erkekler için o yok."

> sour. I think as long as they love their ideas this much the interruption will continue. There is a confidence there, a confidence that makes them construct nice sentences, not nice arguments, but nice sentences.[20]

It is influential to re-quote Şirin Tekeli here. In a recent interview, Tekeli says that they, meaning the women who worked at the university in 1979, "realized something. In meetings, we, the women, hesitate to speak up even when we have something to say," whereas men, she goes on, could speak without any grammatical errors for minutes. She explains that they found this very unsettling and founded a woman's committee in the leftist organization for young academics, (Tüm Üniversite, Akademi ve Yüksek Okullar Asistanları Birliği'ni (TÜMAS)) to confront this issue. Hearing similar stories and feelings in 2019, 40 years after Tekeli, makes it visible how certain embodied power dynamics are imposed so strongly that even years of feminist struggle cannot rip them out from a woman's body and her consciousness. The female body and her voice have always been sites of power. The rising importance of disciplining bodies as a form of positive and productive form of power in the regime of modernity has been a theme that Foucault develops. Although he focuses on how the gender regime is reshaped through the discourses of the modern regime of power, he is also criticized by feminists for his tendency to approach all experiences of gendered bodies as the same without taking into consideration the differences between a woman or a male or a trans body. His theories are criticized of being gender neutral as his works do not explore let alone acknowledge the diverse disciplining techniques operated on different gendered bodies (Diamond & Quinby 1988, McNay, 1991, 1992; Bartky, 1988; Ramazanoğlu,

[20] "asıl mesela şu bence kendi fikirlerine o kadar inanıyorlar ki. Yaratıcı bir iş yapıyoruz bir yandan o yüzden ben böyle bir fikir atarken 5 kere düşünüyorum falan kafamda, şöyle sorular sorabilirler şöyle cevap veririm falan diye düşünüyorum, onlar bayılarak fikir soruyorlar ama sonra soru sorunca bunun şöyle bir düşüklüğü var diye, bi bozuluyorlar falan. O yüzden fikirlerini sevdikleri sürece bu atılma hali devam edecek. bir özgüven var orda o özgüvenle onla o kadar güzel cümleler kurabiliyorlar. güzel argümanlar değil güzel cümleler."

1993; Butler, 1990; Grosz, 1994). The neglect of gender inequality in his theories has ignited discussions on the female body and the gendered disposition of disciplinary techniques of power. This theoretical ouvre also impacted feminist theories concerning Turkey. As Ferhunde Özbay discusses, the modernization period of Turkey which began "in the late nineteenth century and spread throughout the country after World War II" (1999, p.556) operated through the genderization of space which created different experiences for women and men. She argues that although the late Ottoman and Early Republic era are mostly discussed through the reforms that included equal rights for women within the areas of education, work and political participation, women were also instrumentalized for the ideological purposes of the nation through a strict discipline over her body, her reproductivity and her role in a family. The female body has become both a signifier and a product of "modernization", and in the case of Turkey, a signifier, and a product of a Western and secular nation (Kandiyoti, 1992,1995; Göle, 1996; İlyasoğlu, 1998). The way she dressed, the way she walked and talked became symbols of the civility of the nation. Tülin Ural (2018) approaches the effects of the civilization of the female body from a very particular point, which I believe can create a bridge from this discussion about modernity back to Şirin Tekeli and her friends' hesitation to speak up. Deriving from Norbert Elias, Ural explains how the noise of the civilization quieted down during the process of modernization, leading to certain types of "civilized behaviour" which instead of the spontaneous vulgar noises of the pre-modern times, values the silence of order, regulation, and caution. Ural digs up the gendered regime of this civilization process by investigating the Adab-ı Muaşeret books that provided guidelines and advice for the proper ways of being a civilized subject. For the newly subjects of the Turkish Republic, who have been constantly under major

transformations, these books offered a carbon paper for becoming ideal citizens. They also served the purpose of laying out the new codes of how to behave in the public sphere, especially for women who were encouraged by new regulations to partake in new public roles in the Republic. Ural argues in another article that the books indicated that a woman should "participate in the [sic] urban life in a way to exhibit modernity; however, as the carrier of the national identity, which is identified with honour, they should also be able to control themselves, even in the face of harassment" (2019). What Ural points to is that this control and self-discipline over the female body is mainly regulated through her voice. By going through these books of good manners and etiquette she portrays the acoustic rules of the civilizational ideal as the tools of the pedagogical missions of the early Republican era where the body and its sounds have played a huge role in training subjects how to become proper citizens. Self-control becomes the main issue; the voice has to be regulated all the time. Proper tones, volumes and accents are all defined according to gender and power positions subjects maintain. This disciplinary approach to the body works to tame and shape citizens into more predictable, submissive subjects. Not disturbing others also becomes a key element of this ideal; always being in check to control the body and its mechanisms to cause less distress to others becomes a signifier of the civilized subject. Women maintain a unique position in this endeavour as they are the site of rigorous attempts of defining a modern national identity. Ural argues that the fact that modernization is a form of disciplining that abrades the extremes and excesses, and a process of quieting is constantly reminded to women through regulations over her voice. She is advised not to laugh out loud, to not drink and dance more than it is necessary, and to not indulge in cavalier behaviour. She is advised to live her extreme emotions in the private sphere and not show them to

others in the public sphere. As it is written in one of the books, "she should not cry even though she is in endless pain and sorrow, she should hide the excess of her pain, her grief, and her joy at home"[21] (as cited in Ural, 2018, p.92).

Young women had a specific value in this context as they were expected to embody and manifest the new reforms of the Republic. They were expected to participate in daily life and the public sphere but to always be in check of their voice. An etiquette book even states that:

> One of the most important things that a young girl should be careful of is her voice… when you enter an assembly, you comment, speak. Then you feel that all this charm is ruined, and all your good impressions are collapsed when you speak up. Because the tone of your voice is awful: your accent, pronunciation, the way you speak is awkward and drowsy. After this, they will not hesitate to put you in the class of beautiful but vulgar girls. (p.92)[22]

When a woman is burdened with these regulations on her voice, its mark stays on the body and its experience and the practice of self-discipline are usually passed on to the next generation. In this framework, the activism of Şirin Tekeli and her friends in 1979 can be regarded to be against this prevalent imposition of certain rules upon the voice of the female subject.

The regulation of the female voice is not, of course, something that started with the civilization processes of Turkey or the regime of modernity. It has been a persistent motivation in patriarchal regimes across contexts and is rooted in a long history of patriarchal social, political and economic systems. Anne Carson (1995) in "The Gender of Sound" traces the gendering of sound back to Ancient Greek society.

[21] "[kadın-sokakta] kahkahalarla gülmemeli ve sonsuz bir acı ve teessür içinde bile olsa ağlamamalı, acısını kederini, neş'esinin fazlasını da eve saklamalıdır."

[22] "Genç kızın erkenden dikkat ve ihtimam göstermesi lâzım gelen şeylerden biri de sedasıdır….Meclise girince söz söyler, konuşursunuz. O zaman bütün bu cazibenin bir anda mahvolduğunu ve uyandırdığınız iyi tesirin söz söyleyince berhava olduğunu hissedersiniz. Çünkü sesinizin ahengi fenadır: şiveniz, telaffuzunuz, söz söyleyişiniz sakil ve uyutucudur…O vakit sizi güzel fakat bayağı kızlar sınıfına ithal etmekten çekinmezler"

She starts with the sentence, “It is in large part according to the sounds people make that we judge them sane or insane, male or female, good, evil, trustworthy, depressive, marriageable…” (p.119), which defines the importance of sound within our social relations very precisely. It also defines why it is critical to approach gendered social interactions via sound. Our voices and ears carry history, they carry social norms, and they help in sustaining the predominant hierarchical structures. Considering the fact that the voice is the primary tool of communication, of relating, self-expression, language and meaning, the connotations around it influence social interactions and power dynamics immensely. Carson in a way deconstructs the prevalent meaning structures around voice by providing several examples from history that exhibit the ongoing processes in which different acoustic characteristics became connected to gender categories. Giving examples from Aristotle’s conceptualization of the female voice as containing her “evil disposition” or the tale of Echo who was denied control over her own voice as a punishment for using her womanhood for unrequited love, Carson illustrates how having a feminine voice came to be regarded inhabiting a position that is detached from logos, reason, and rationality. In contrast, the male voice became associated with *sophrosyne* - the ability of having reason, solid wisdom, temperance, tranquillity and self-control (p.126). Gendering of voice continued its dominance to the present via strengthening its hand due to the rise of binary forms of thinking within the Enlightenment theories. This continuity ended up feeding the binary that conceives men with lower and coarser voices to be more authoritative, charismatic, convincing or rational, while high-pitched voices are described as feminine, irritating, irrational or emotional.

One contemporary example of the outcome of this acoustic binary in Turkey is feelings of general irritation towards vocal women protestors. In private conversations, the shouts and chants of women protestors are often dubbed an ear-shrieking sound, which allegedly devalues the cause, while no similar comments are made towards male protestors. Many times, I have heard people complain about "the irritating, ear scratching shriek" of women protestors. I have heard people say, "she should shut up" or "I wish a man or a woman with a lower-pitched voice could shout instead of her." The visceral reaction to the feminine shouting voice and the urge to silence her has always been a very interesting topic for me. Oftentimes when I confront the people who get irritated by the sound of shouting women activists, they define their reaction as a bodily, physical or even biological one that they don't really think about. It is an immediate reaction that comes from within, "I just really don't like it," is a very common answer, but I agree with Irem's comment on this point:

> I think this is something we learn; you know that a social aspect is uploaded to a biological thing. What is annoying is something we define within the social, I do not know, the sound of a lorry can be annoying to me whereas another person might not even hear it. I am sceptical about this biology thing.[23]

On the other hand, another interviewee, Ayşe, said that she was also very irritated by shouting women during protests to the extent that she changed her Yandex navigation voice from female to male once. We were discussing why this might be and she said, "When do we shout anyway?" indicating that maybe the question is not

[23] "Ama bu da öğrenilmiş bişey biyolojik bir şeye sosyal bişey yüklenir ya, rahatsız edici ne demek tamamiyle bizim sosyal olarak tarif ettiğimiz bir şey ben ne bileyim tır sesini rahatsız edici bulurum başkası bulmak duymaz bile, onun için biyolojik açıklama şeyine şüpheliyim."

why the female voice is not very admirable but *where* and *when* a woman is heard to raise her voice is triggering an annoyance:

> We shout when we are scared, when we are raped or when we have fun but like really crazy fun, or when we run amok... Usually, you raise your voice when you are misunderstood or if you are trying to make your voice be heard within multiple voices.[24]

Shifting the question of why to when enables a more thorough understanding that lies behind the common irritation regarding shouting women. Ayşe later argued that women usually raise their voices in states of obligation, but her previous statement contradicts this generalization as she also stated that women raise their voices when they are having "crazy fun". Although there is a validity in thinking that most of the times when a woman raises her voice is out of obligation, thinking these moments as states of extremity creates a more inclusive ground to discuss women's voices. When a woman shouts, it is usually assumed that an alarming and discomforting situation or extreme joy has occurred. Whereas it is not uncommon to hear men shout, as they always do when they get angry, or excited or happy, or annoyed. It also does not necessarily indicate that they are behaving in extremes or they are in danger. "When I hear a man shout, the first thing that comes to my mind is "Who is he shouting at? Who is he disturbing?', but when I hear a woman scream, I immediately think that she is in danger."[25] says Ayşe as we continue discussing. Her remarks point to a learned reaction towards the sounds of women that is different to the sounds of men. is a result of the aforementioned history of disciplining the female voice, the female subject is constantly warned and educated to control her voice, to *hide* her emotions

[24] biz ne zaman bağırıyoruz? korktuğumuzda, tecavüze uğradığımızda, çok eğlendiğimizde ama *çok* eğlendiğimizde, ya da cinnet geçirdiğimizde...genelde ses yükseltme olayı anlaşılmadığında ya da çok seste kendini duyurmak için [ama bunlar hep zorunluluktan gibi]"

[25] Erkek bağırınca "Kime bağırıyor bu? Kimi rahatsız ediyor bu" uyanıyor ilk bende...Kadın bağırınca direkt tehlikede diye düşünüyorum.

at home. A woman who is loud in public is a subject that is out of the norm. Be it a moment of danger or joy for the woman in question, it is always a risky moment for patriarchy, and for general order within the "civilized" Turkish nation that expects women to remain silent. All these presumptions point to a sensory order that has very strict rules about who can do what, where and when. Rancière's concept of the distribution of the sensible comes into mind here. Rancière argues that the senses of the social are divided in certain ways by positioning bodies to specific times, spaces and forms of activities. As subjects are formed into groups that are associated with certain ways of doing and being, their participation in the social is also implicitly shaped and framed. Rancière associates the distribution of the sensible with the order of the police. For example, he mentions Plato, who argues that artisans cannot partake in the administration procedures of the community simply because they don't have the *time.* They must be at their *working place* to *perform* their jobs, while other activities are taking place elsewhere. "Having a particular 'occupation' thereby determines the ability or inability to take charge of what is common to the community; it defines what is visible or not in a common space," (2004, p.12). Hence, the distribution of the senses conditions the possibilities of perception, by creating self-evident sensory laws that divide what is sayable and unsayable, audible and inaudible, and visible and invisible. In this context the vocalic expression of women becomes bound to the private, and its performance in the public especially at night becomes risky for the normative distribution of the sensible.

The conditions are different for men. Not only is it very common and even expected for them to be loud in the public sphere, but it is also common for them to shout together. Football arenas and places like the coffeehouses or the parliament always host collective shouts of men. This is not unusual at all, while for women,

screaming and shouting together is always an exception because it refers to extreme danger, sadness, or joy. Thus, the screams of women mark a threshold of the normal; a breach in the maintenance of the flow of the ordinary. It is also portrayed as an excess of emotion and a lack of reason. A female scream marks a loss of control, a display of the lack of *sophrosyne*, and the failing grip of the language. Be it a woman shouting a slogan during a protest or a woman shouting "help" while in danger or a woman laughing loudly in a public place or Greta Thunberg's "impassioned" speeches, it does not matter. These are all categorized as a noise that symptomizes a crack in the order, a limit of language and reason, where words are not enough, and extreme emotional expressiveness takes over. Carson explains this gendered conceptualization of sound as a gradual detachment of logos from the feminine voice. She argues that this gradual detachment led to the exile of the female body from the field of language and consequently the field of politics. Women became *others* who yell, shout, sing and chant, or when they speak or protest, they are ridiculed, laughed at or not taken seriously. In the patriarchal system the female voice is either caged in the private sphere or exiled to the periphery of the city never to be listened to.

The collective sounds of women were also regarded as an alarming event in Ancient Greece. As Carson explains, these collective sounds often referred to as ololyga[26] were a climactic part of women's rituals or festivals. They were likened to very distressing noises such as emotional cries or animalistic shrieks; and therefore the events of its occurrence were banned from the city:

> No proper civic space would contain it unregulated. The female festivals in which such ritual cries were heard were generally not permitted to be held in

[26] It is also interesting to note here that *ololgya* is in fact a onomatopoeic word, a word that is based on sound rather than language. Like zılgıt, the wordless chant that one does with the tongue. Zılgıt is used mostly in protests and weddings, and has a sound that is similar to: leeleeleelee.

> the city limits but were relegated to suburban areas like the mountains, the beach or the rooftops of houses where women could disport themselves without contaminating the ears or civic space of men. (Carson p.125)

Carson also provides insights from thinkers back in the day that define exposure to *ololyga* as a state of "political nakedness," as an association with the supernatural, the wildlife and savagery. In other words, the collective voices of women were regarded as uncivilized and unworthy of the ears of the civilized men. Thinking of Feminist Night Marches as an *ololyg*a opens up new ways of understanding it. it as thousands of women in a city center performing a ritual: that is, shouting, whistling, and making noises that generate strong reactions from the hegemonic order, that of masculinity. Some laugh at it, some get annoyed by it, some want to silence it. In spite of this response, the insistence on performing this sound has political power, and its history is still visible in our everyday lives. Despite these reactions, the insistence on performing this sound has a political power, as this history still impacts our everyday life. *Ololyga* is still unwelcomed or laughed at or banned.

2.3 Voices of women in Turkey

Women mentioned that men usually make fun of them while they were protesting. While some men laugh it off, other men, who hold political power, try to ban it. Women's gatherings are rarely allowed, and not just in mass marches either.[27] Simultaneously, women are urged not to laugh in the public space, as former Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Arınç declared. They are not listened to in their requests for

[27] Right now, when I am writing this a group of women gathered in Kadıköy to perform the dance of las tesis. This is a new performance created by a group of women from Chile to draw attention to femicides. Women sing a song and dance with their eyes closed via a black eyepatch. The movement generated a momentum in the world as many women answered to the call of las tesis to adopt this song to their language. İstanbul is right now the only country where police attacked this protest and took women under custody. I wrote this on 12 December 2019, protest was on the 8th of December.

sanctuary. They are warned not to walk outside if they are pregnant (Sarı, 2015). They are encouraged to obey their husbands and give birth to at least three children.[28] These are all examples of the fact that women's collective presence, their voices and their bodies in the public sphere are heavily regulated in Turkey. It is important here to state that these regulations are aimed to create a type of womanhood that is in line with the patriarchal normative regime that the state enforces through its discourses. This type of virtuous womanhood that the state affirms can take on different forms, but they all have very rigid boundaries. The most typical figures of this ideal are mothers, believers, teachers, or good wives, but women with these titles can only earn these titles if they remain within the descriptions of these categories defined by the hegemonic patriarchal norms sustained and reproduced by the state. A small slip from these descriptions can lead into the denunciation of the subject as a woman, making them liminal personas, whose position is "necessarily ambiguous, since this condition and these persons elude or slip through the network of classifications that normally locate states and positions in cultural space" as Victor Turner explains (1967, p.359). Saturday Mothers is an example of the liminal position of women who remain outside the ideal categories upheld by the state. Saturday Mothers who gather each Saturday to demand an explanation about their missing relatives are mostly mothers who had lost their children during the '90s when state violence heightened particularly in the Kurdish regions. However, different from mothers of martyrs who are cherished as

[28] In a wedding I attended where the President was a witness, he really took the microphone and demanded the wife to make 5 children by saying, "if there is one, it is awkward, if there is two, there is competition, if these is three, there is balance, if there is four, there is prosperity, the rest will be taken care of by God" ("bir olur garip olur, iki olur rakip olur, üç olur denge olur, dört olur bereket olur, gerisi Allah Kerim…"). Later I learned that he has been doing the same speech since 2014. I wonder if he is going to raise the number and come up with new word plays. This can turn into a tongue twister.

holy subjects with great sorrow, these mothers are treated with extreme violence and disrespect by the state officials, and their grief remains unrecognized by being discredited. The Kurdish origin of most of the Saturday Mothers and their overall demand towards the state to clarify the inexplicable loss that the enforced disappearances have caused, fuel this difference. Saturday Mothers are mothers and not mothers at the same time. The value of their motherhood is less than some others because they do not fulfil the criteria of being patriotic and obedient citizens. In these conditions, being a woman in Turkey translates to being in a constant threshold. Women are both a danger and a trophy; they are both regarded as very vulnerable and very capable. They are stuck between the bipolar duality of being an object or an abject[29]; being a threat to the society with her overflowing desires and being a non-sexual superhuman who can do anything for her loved ones. As Meltem Ahıska summarizes, "The status of subject is granted to women through this bipolar coding," (2016, p.213) any subjectivity outside these binary positions creates confusion. A "bad" mother who puts herself before her children or a murdered woman sex worker destabilizes the moral codes of the normative regime regarding who can be a woman and what it means to be a woman. The state promotes this binary as a disciplining method, to create docile bodies that match its normative discourses. While maintaining this moral division through its discourses, it fails to provide the necessary conditions in which women have equal rights with other citizens. Moreover, the state constantly categorizes women who fight for their rights as "bad women" or as terrorists and mark their womanhood as dangerous by referring to them as an ambiguous crowd. Let me remind that the President called women

[29] Here abject can be thought in line with Kristeva's notion as a thing that is neither an object of the I nor the object of the other (Kristeva, 1982). The repulsed and rejected or the excess of the norm, the self, the body. Or in Butler's definition as contradictories that should be taken out to maintain the order (Meijer, 1998).

protestors of the 2019 march "a *group* who supposedly got together for Women's Day" rather than a group of women, or just women. Why? Are these women not women? Or is their womanhood not necessary to be mentioned? Either way, this claim of robbing activist women from their womanhood shows that activist women and the women ideal promoted by the state do not match.

In a country where approximately 400 women are murdered each year[30], not allowing women to raise their voices against femicides, not creating policies that prevent this violence, arguing that women protesters are terrorists or spraying tear gas during the 25 October, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, are acts that support the system which creates a social and cultural atmosphere where individual man feel justified and can get away with misogynistic acts in their daily lives. There is a systematic violence against women, it is a war, a *femigenocide* (Segato cited in Souza, 2019, p.84) and governments are part of it. It is indeed horrifying that years and years of constant violence against women and hundreds and thousands of women being murdered still do not trigger the necessary legislative, social and political changes. Women learn how to fight their own battles in this war; they have to take action for their own rights. This is an ongoing process that progresses slowly with small victories along the way. In Turkey, women fought and won battles against virginity controls, law no. 438 that gave reduction to the rapist who assaulted sex workers, the anti-abortion legislative changes, and enforced the laws that register marital rape as crime, ban sexual inequality in the workspace, and make maternity leave sixteen weeks (Berber, 2017b) but of course, it is not enough (Ince, 2014). Currently, women are protesting against never-ending

[30] We Will End Femicides Platform (http://kadincinayetlerinidurduracagiz.net/kategori/veriler) and Bianet (https://bianet.org/kadin/bianet/133354-bianet-siddet-taciz-tecavuz-cetelesi-tutuyor) provide updated news and reports on femicides.

femicides and forcing the government to put the Istanbul Convention and law no.6284 in effect, which are both approved but never realized regulations that aim to prevent and protect women from violence.[31] The government continues to operate as an authoritarian patriarch and ignores the urgency of the issue by limiting the movement of women who fight for equal rights.

The rise of the neoliberal populist movement of the right-wing has also worsened the situation for women (Souza, 2019), by creating discourses entangled with anti-democratic and authoritarian administration that feed on patriarchal structures and the idealization of the toxic masculinity of political figures. This, once again, makes women and other groups that maintain a disruptive force against the patriarchal state such as the LGBTQI+, the target of excessive regulation, violence, devaluation, and discrimination. It is evident that those in power perceive these groups as a threat and use marginalization and hatred against them as a tool to unify conservative masses on their behalf. Especially in Turkey, the ongoing consistency of the mobilization of women has been a movement that the government tries to silence or manipulate for several decades. In order to not make all women its enemy, the government acts carefully on how to define the women that it wants to silence. One example of this narrative play is the President's reference to women protestors as a "group", not women, a genderless ambiguous group. This othering and de-framing of women help the government to position itself as the protector of the righteous values instead of being seen as an oppressive power that discriminates

[31] "The Istanbul Convention is widely recognized as the most far-reaching legal instrument to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence as a violation of human rights." Turkey signed it in 2014 but still have not made the necessary laws and regulations for it to be in use. https://rm.coe.int/istanbul-convention-questions-and-answers/16808f0b80. The law 6284 is a new law that was put into use on 20 March 2019 for women who were victims of male violence. Even though the law was criticized to be protecting family values rather than women, it is still seen as an achievement of the long struggles of women activists, politicians, and lawyers. Nevertheless, the law is not enacted properly. https://www.catlakzemin.com/eldekini-kaybetmeden-el-ele-olmak/

against women. However, as long as the government continues to see women activists as an enemy, it also inevitably stays threatened by it. In other words, while continuing patriarchal practices to maintain its power by referring to feminists as antagonists, it inevitably creates its own enemy and re-establishes the power of activist women as an oppositional force against itself. With the rise of conservative male authoritarian figures whose misogynistic discourses get us stuck into this loop, the narratives of women fighting for their lives and their desires continue to be challenging for the current discourses of the government. Women become more and more burdened with real life-threatening situations because of these dominant misogynistic discourses of the government that devalue women. Women's bodies, voices, gestures, her sexuality, and her basic desires become the mark of the enemy territory to be tamed and suppressed in order to maintain the patriarchal structure that enables current authority figures to remain in power, and all the men who favour them to continue their misogynistic acts.

March 8 Feminist Night Marches are above all protests against this everlasting oppression of the patriarchal system that banishes the voices of women from the city, the system that fails to listen to them, fails to see and recognize them as they are, as they want to be. But it is also more than that. Right now, March 8 demonstrations have become a contribution to the women's demand to be listened to, to be acknowledged and respected in their claim of taking back what they are robbed of. The continuity of this ritual also enabled a space of experience that harbours excitement, joy, and celebration. In the next section, I will describe how feminist night marches open up a temporal affective space in Istanbul where women experiment alternative practices and collective existences. Feminist Night Marches have become a form of doing politics that goes beyond operating through categories

of friend or foe. The politics of Feminist Night Marches is perhaps best understood through the Rancièrian concept of *dissensus,* defined as the "re-configuration of the common experience of the sensible" (2010, p.104). This re-configuration process, or *dissensus* in Rancière's terminology is not a conflict of interests, rather, it is a procedure of challenging the "natural order of bodies" (p.90). It is a political and an aesthetic process that creates ruptures in the established system of the distribution of the sensible. It reveals the arbitrariness of the inherent sensory order and generates new perceptions, visibilities for the purpose of equality. It provides a claim of visibility and audibility that was cheated from an inadmissible party. Through *dissensus*, subjects who have been deprived from their political subjectivity claim a political voice, affirming that it did not belong to a certain party to take away in the first place. Going into the details of the experiences of women who attend these demonstrations amplifies the different ways in which the feminist night marches challenge the prevalent sensory order and manifest alternative communalities simultaneously.

2.4 Testimonies of the Feminist Night March participants

The conversations I had with women who attended Feminist Night Marches allowed an understanding of the position of feminist struggle in the current political climate I briefly discussed in the previous section. It is of equal, or perhaps more of value, what significance women attribute to these events today. What follows is the combination of all the conversations we had regarding what it means and feels to be in these marches with one's body and voice. I will discuss what expectations and problems participants have regarding the demonstrations. For the sake of an easier understanding, I have categorized these discussions in different themes, nevertheless,

it must also be stated that these themes sometimes - if not always - were entangled in the way similar to how memory works. Conversations were always leaping from one moment to another, following a certain feeling or an idea that has remained from the experience. This is especially important to point out because in almost every conversation there was a sensation regarding the Feminist Night Marches that failed to be put into the "right words". Therefore, the atmosphere generated by the re-memorization of the marches during the conversations was as intriguing to me as the content of the interviews and something I will try to enlighten in this section.

2.4.1 Being on the Street at Night, Emotions from the *Inside*

For women living in Istanbul, and in many other geographies one can assume, the self-discipline of avoiding walking alone at night is very common (Feminist, 1987a, p.18). Women constantly keep track of potential dangers. One can always be a target of verbal harassment including catcalling, honking horns, whistling, cursing and so on. In time, one learns to avoid reacting to this ritualistic abuse, as it usually makes the situation worse. Women often even organize their plans accordingly so that they will not encounter a potential threat, "I make myself be walked home sometimes, just to avoid verbal harassment"[32]said Nilüfer when we were discussing what is like to be out late alone.

Thousands of women walking together at night on Istiklal is, therefore, a symbolic act of claiming the night and the streets and defying the conditions that necessitate this self-discipline. "I believe that those men have to see it,"[33] Ezgi tells me. She has attended the Feminist Night March two years before the last one, "It is a

[32] "Sözlü tacize maruz kalmamak için bazen kendimi eve bıraktırıyorum."
[33] "O adamların görmesi gerektiğini düşünüyorum."

moment of a power-flip, they see us, in our most extravagant and free selves, walking together and they can't do anything."[34] She explains this as a moment of empowerment; being able to walk on that street without any fear or anxiety that she had before was liberating for her. The joy she finds in this power-flip is a shared emotion by all women, although with different descriptions. Some attendees describe it with a more revengeful tone, as if they reclaim a right that has been taken away from them, as a moment of justice, some describe it as a momentary celebration, some describe it as a manifestation of a resistance against a long history of oppression. Nilüfer even defined it as an *unloved relative*, "It is not something that I go head-on" – she was having conflictual feelings towards the night marches due to anti-trans discussions aforementioned in the march -, "I always think long and hard before going, but when I go, I say, 'I fucking love you!'" [35] Several other women defined being in the march as a moment of uniting not just with unloved relatives but with long-missed friends, of women comrades, sisters, "I unite with friends whom I love, but cannot see over a year"[36] says Ece. "It was like a situation where I had come across an acquaintance in my own neighbourhood… I saw many familiar faces and that made me feel safe"[37] said Ezgi with a smile on her face. I was getting the feeling that she was talking about the sudden joy that rushes to your face when you have an unexpected encounter with a loved one.

The feeling described by many women resembles the feeling of *bayram*, which are ritualistic holidays where you get together with relatives, loved or unloved

[34] Güç dengesinin dönme anı, en aşırı ve özgür halimizle beraber yürüdüğümüzü görüyorlar ama hiç bir şey yapamıyorlar.
[35] "8 mart sevmediğim akraba gibi, eskiden kadınlardan başka alınmasın falan bir sürü sorunu şeyi vardı... hep öncesinde tartıp biçtiğim ama gidince de ulan seni çok seviyorum dediğim"
[36] bütün yıl boyunca görmediğim ama çok da sevdiğim birçok arkadaşımla orda bir araya geliyorum.
[37] Kendi mahallemde bir tanıdığa rastlamışım gibi bir histi. Birçok tanıdık surat gördüm, güvende hissettim.

ones. 8 March, which is also referred to as *bayram of women* in Turkey, is described by the women who attend it as an atmosphere that truly contains the spirit of a *bayram*. It is a festive moment where people are urged to be in their best behaviour, where people help and support each other. Of course, not every holiday is positive as such, still *bayram* has very positive connotations in the social imaginary of Turkey. It is often told and represented as a time where differences and opinions that usually trigger fights on a regular day are avoided and the limits of understanding, empathy and sensitivity are elevated. This idea of a temporary optimistic coexistence can also be found in the marches and is caused by the combination of several emotional states.

There are specific emotions and concepts mentioned by almost everyone while describing the experience of being in the Feminist Night Marches: safe, proud, powerful, judgement-free zone, solidarity, intense, excitement, joy, anger, discharge, sharing, common ground, belonging, togetherness, alive and trust are the most mentioned. From all these concepts *trust* was the most repeated word that women have used. It is an etymologically interesting word, because *trust* in Turkish, *güven*, also has a connotation of *safety*. Therefore, what women were trying to point to when they were saying that they felt "güven" is a combination of both trusting each other and feeling safe because of this trust. "I know that if something happens to me someone will immediately help me" was a sentence repeated in many different formats.

This *trust* triggers a unique sense of togetherness that is based on a shared experience rather than a shared enemy. This is a very nuanced yet a very critical difference. Through the interviews I made, what I realized is that women rarely spoke of an enemy. While referring to the night marches they mostly talked about

other women, what they did together, how they understood each other, helped each other, or conflicted, confronted each other. It is evident that women are gathered in Istiklal street to protest *against* the conditions and individuals who participate in the structure that creates and reproduces their problems. Nevertheless, what lies at the core of their solidarity is not this counter-position, but a deep awareness about the fact that they share a common experience. And these shared experiences not only consist of their struggle, but there are also witty, funny and joyful commonalities that unite these women non-verbally. For example, many women claimed that there is an instant intimacy within the march that is formulated through these unspoken shared daily practices that only women know. In the march, this takes the form of a solidarity based on the feeling of being certain that one can easily find a common ground to turn a stranger into an ally. Women gave many examples of the intimacy caused by this sense: sharing a biscuit, walking arm in arm with strangers, helping other women during the police attack, joking around with strangers, complimenting each other, finishing each other's songs are just some of them. In a way, women said that they weave a network of non-judgmental safe zone where they can exist as they want, knowing that they will not be ridiculed or shamed or harmed. It is telling that women often used the word, “inside” while referring to the aura of being in the march. As if the march divides the public sphere, creating an interior and exterior for women. This is not a recreation of the interior that women are locked into; it is an attempt to effuse the interior to the exterior. A reclaim over the public sphere and the right to feel safe at home and on the streets, it is an attempt to blur the associations of home as safe and street as dangerous for women; breaking the seclusion between fragmented daily experiences of women locked in separate private spaces and exhibiting the interconnectedness of seemingly singular sentiments and practices. It

is a temporal and transitional space where women reconfigure the distribution of the senses, reclaim the night, experiment different subjectivities, different ways of being and relating to each other, a different version of the social or as Berger (1968) suggest they are "rehearsals of revolutionary awareness." It is a portrayal of what can be, a potentiality of a free and unrestricted existence of female bodies and voices at the city centre.

2.4.2 Walking and shouting together, affect of being in rhythm

As we tried to dig more into the dominant emotions within the march: walking, dancing, and shouting together stood out as the catalysts of the togetherness within the march. Brandon LaBelle in his book, *Acoustic Territories* (2010) goes into different connotations of walking. He argues that walking, although is a simple act, generates an idea of mobility, due to the bodily commitment one puts into this effort, combined with the mental state that generates and accompanies it. "To walk is to already leave behind one place for another. To search, to seek, to wander: the walk is the making of an itinerary" (p.123). To walk is to walk to difference, to change place, maybe not always with a destination in mind, but always with a potential for discovery. Walking, therefore, is both a very bodily expression and a symbolic portrayal for a demand of change and action.

Walking is a huge part of the march. Being in movement physically and the tangible and corporeal experience are the common aspects of the Feminist Night Marches women often acknowledged:

> There is a thing about being there bodily. The day after (the march), when I woke up, I tried to compare the night in terms of experience. And I realized that it is the same kind of satisfaction when I go hiking or climbing in nature. There too, I physically walk, I lift my hand, put up a banner. I have a voice.

> Being in the march with my body is what makes it different from any other. It is more 3D. [38]

What Idil describes as the satisfaction of the 3D experience is an expression of the affective and emotional outcome of practicing the corporeal existence of oneself. To take a road, to put one foot after the other, to give labour into an idea, into a journey is exciting and life-affirming. As Rana explains, one can also find this satisfaction through shouting and getting a hoarse voice, "The next day I woke up with a certain relaxation and said, "Aha, that's why these idiots go to these football matches all the time."[39] Other comments echoed with Idil and Rana as they described how *good* it was to walk together and shout together and to be together side by side. Although *good* is relatively a less descriptive word, I could sense that all these testimonies pointed to an intensity of emotion and energy and the satisfaction of its release through collective bodily action.

Finding a commonality between these corporeal experiences that define the general feeling of being in the march was difficult during the interviews. I was focused on the emotions, trying to get descriptions of feelings, but participants continued to say how *good* it was by using the phrases: "iyi geliyor" and "güzel geliyor". The literal translation of these phrases is "good comes", and "beautiful comes" but they refer to a positive outcome as if something that makes everything better, something makes it easier, it makes you feel good, capable, at ease. This was a frustrating point for me as I was not reaching anywhere even though I encouraged women to define what they meant by these phrases by using descriptive sentences

[38] Orda bedenen olma halinin bir şeyi var tecrübesel olarak. O coşkunun ve ertesi gün kalktığımda o huzuru nerde yaşıyorum diye düşündüğümde doğada yürüyüş yaptığımda ya da tırmanış yaptığımdakine benzer bir tatmin hissi gibi. Orda da bedenen yürüyorum. Elimi kaldırıyorum pankart taşıyorum, sesim var, daha üç boyutlu gibi.

[39] "Ertesi gün bir rahatlamayla uyandım ha ha dedim bu gerizekalılar bu yüzden futbol maçına bu kadar çok gidiyorlar."

and adjectives. The turning point was when I realized that they were using these phrases because it was hard for them to define what they felt. They could not find the right words that will do justice to their emotional experiences. These phrases, in fact, were pointing to a blockage in language. Subjects usually struggled when I asked them to elaborate what they meant by "iyi geliyor" they often said things such as: "being together with other women makes me feel powerful" or "I felt that it made me tangibly stronger, as if I can do anything after this". These kinds of expressions were valuable as most of the time "iyi geldi" did not find any particular explanation, but many women said walking together, being together and shouting together was *good*. Thinking with Spinoza's definition of affect as the change of intensity in one's capacity to act made these phrases more meaningful (Deleuze, 1978). The collective act of physically being together in the march was fuelling their affective mood, it was increasing their capacity to act; and its manifestation and exercise created a satisfaction, a discharge. This was easier to detect when I focused on the atmosphere of the discussions rather than the words that women used. I started to realize that while women expressed their emotional state of being in the night marches, their voices gained a new tone and they leaned into the table while talking, moved their hands more and their eyes were livelier too. The rhythm accelerated and sentences from different voices followed each other in a more fluid manner. I soon realized that this change can be experienced as a moment of reminiscence where the initial experience of the march is manifested again, but in a different time and space. It was as if they were reliving the moment. This was a telling starting point as it contained clues of their initial affective states within the march. It became clearer that what they were trying to express was pointing to the fact that their collective corporeal experience was increasing the intensity of their capacity to act. They were being

more active, more positive, more energetic, capable, more powerful. Being together which made them feel joyous, alive, and safe is indeed a power that unites and empowers women, creating a solidarity that makes it easier for them to deal with the ongoing struggles of their lives. Feminist Night Marches are important to women for this reason as many of them said again and again that they only feel the intensity of this capacity on the 8 March when they share the same rhythms with other women.

This is only one day in a year; there is indeed a dearth of opportunities for public togetherness in the lives of women in Turkey. There are no spaces or times where women occasionally get together in large numbers in the public sphere. Unlike other aforementioned male dominated spaces, it is not common for women to gather in large numbers in public spaces, or express and perform collective emotions. It always becomes an "occasion" when they gather in public space. It is regarded as an excess that requires close attention and regulation by the state. Accordingly, the conditions that prevent collective action of women such as walking or shouting together limit the proliferation and normalization of solidarity and joy among women. The state's ban on the 2019 march and the police barricades that trapped women in immobility are a tangible materialisation of state power. The prevention of walking occludes the manifestation for change, and affects the sound of women, and the physical and verbal communication within the march. The constant expectation of unprovoked police violence fosters an environment of fear, and subjects turn inward, towards their own bodies into a state of individual alertness. These restrictions rob women from the potential to affectively engage with each other, from creating a mixture of collective bodies that lift each other up physically and spiritually.

Against this urge to control and discipline, Feminist Night Marches are a manifestation of the demand to spread the power of togetherness. The collective bodies of women gain a resistive force just by being together. Holger Schulze in explaining resistive gatherings argues that when sonorous masses get together, they form a resistive collective existence. This unity becomes an entity, and:

> It is present, it acts, it moves, and it gestures; it sounds and it resonates: It is - if you will- a moving body of resistance. *It* is a *They:* those aliens are here. They exist. They demand attention, recognition, and focus. As listening and sensory bodies, collective corpuses. A multitude of focuses, of lives and forms of existing, biographies, desires, habits and idiosyncrasies. (Schulze, 2018, p.201)

Just being there, demanding ears to listen to them and eyes to see them is the resistance embedded in the existence of the union of their bodies. For Schulze, "your bodily presence *as such* in this location, on *that* time of the day, together with *those* other human bodies *is resistance* in all its materiality*"* (p.202-203), but the collective experience of resistance creates an overflowing existence that transgresses politics of recognition. It invites a kind of solidarity that also affirms living and togetherness beyond particular identities.

Women explained this mode of resistance as a demand for being free to walk and make noise together. Idil says, "It is such a discharge and a story of self-creation *(kendini var etme)*, I can shout here today and I am going to shout until the end, everyone, hear, we are here, we are crowded."[40] Many also defined it with the phrase "gövde gösterisi" literally translates as *display of body,* but means a show of force, "it is a show of force to the public, it is a show of force to the government. It is a state of saying: we exist, we are here, and we are doing this at the centre of the city,

[40] "O böyle bir deşarj, yine bir [kendini] var etme hikayesi bugün burada bağırabiliyorum ve sonuna kadar da bağırıcam herkes de duysun burdayız o kadar kalabalığız"

and we must do it,"[41] says Ece. Even in the aftermath, this intensity continues, "when I go back from there, I feel very alive, the days after too, I feel very alive".[42] All these testimonies point to a state of an increased intensity that is hard to pin down, but it is a strong and empowering state that manages to create a unique form of solidarity among women. What is also valuable in the way that women describe this intensity is the binary it has within. It contains both anger against the state of oppression they are in as well as an appreciation of life and solidarity. It is both, a show of force to enemies, and a 3D, joyful experience that gives satisfaction. As Nur says, the march often takes on a mood "As if we did not have any trouble and we go there to celebrate ourselves a little."[43] Being together for women is both a form of resisting and a celebration. This combination is what I consider to be at the core of the power of Feminist Night Marches.

2.4.3 Beyond language, the *phoné* of the sounds of the marches

In this section, I offer to analyse the power of this togetherness and the increase in the intensity of the affective state through the acoustic environment of the march. The sound of the march is a huge part of the totality of its experience:

> When there is no walk, there is no sound, it is like that in my memory. When it is banned there is a rupture, but where there is walk, there is aliveness, there is a very *yekpare*[44] sound. When you, as an activist, hear that sound you say "there you go, this march is a success![45]

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[41] "Kamuya gövde gösterisi, devlete gövde gösterisi. Biz varız buradayız ve şehrin en ortasında bunu yapıyoruz ve yapmalıyız. Biz varız deme durumu.

[42] Oradan dönünce çok canlı hissediyorum, sonraki günlerde de çok canlı hissediyorum.

[43] Sanki hiç derdimiz yokmuş da azıcık kendimizi kutlamaya gidiyormuşuz gibi.

[44] I decided that it is best not to translate this word, because it loses its nuance, and the specific connotation that Idil used it. Yekpare can be translated as integral, uniform, unique to, intact, solid.

[45] "Yürüyüş olmadığı zaman ses yok, benim hafızamda öyle engellediği zaman bir kopukluk ve nerde o yürüyüş ve canlı olma hali var çok yekpare bir ses var yani kafamda. yürüyüş aktivisti olarak sesi duyunca hah tamam bu yürüyüş oldu diyosun."

For women, the march has a very distinct sound. Songs, whistles, and slogans all come together in a way that is unique to the march. Idil points to this uniqueness by saying that the march has a *yekpare* sound. By *yekpare* Idil refers to the uniqueness of the cacophony of the march. Cacophony is usually defined as a noise which is discordant and ungovernable, therefore as Ebru Yetişkin in her article "Cacophony: Revealing the Noise of Control" argues, any sound that is "bad" for the dominating discipline of the power regime can be called a cacophony (Yetişkin, 2018, p.98). Indeed, women too defined the sounds of the march as a cacophony, a bundle of noises, but as Idil points out it is a very particular and unique sound that is integral to and at the core of the experience of the march. It is not homogeneous, but it is a strong and solid sound emerging from a collective. Although this sound is without a doubt overwhelming at times, it is a sound that they embrace. The embracing of this ungovernable sound by women gestures towards the diversity amongst the women themselves. This cacophony is an unregulated and raw co-existening in a way that is neither disciplined, categorized, or framed. It is a dynamic force field that contains and prompts unconventional forms of relationalities. Several women, for example, indicated that the march can feel very disorganized due to the volume of whistles, and the march can be very chaotic. "People say things, but you never understand them,"said Irmak.[46] Almost no one hears the declaration, even though the megaphone. As such, some have argued that this acoustic nature of the march renders communication complicated. Yet the difficulty of conversation enables another form of dialogue within this cacophony. As Idil argues, "we diverge on so many issues when we sit around a table, but in the physicality of the march that

[46] "İnsanlar bir şeyler diyor ama hiç anlamıyorsun."

doesn't happen."[47] In the night marches, women who do not know each other or who possibly have very different ideologies get together for a shared purpose and somehow, they find a way of being together. This physical collectivity is both exhilarating and disturbing, it is not something one experiences every day, it is not common, it is fresh and disorienting and exalting at the same time. The acoustic state of their togetherness reveals additional ingredients of their acoustic collectivity. Untangling the composition of this cacophony, by starting with the slogans it contains, provides a starting point for understanding the political power of this acoustic collectivity.

Slogans that make the most of the qualities sound during the march move like waves. A slogan emanates from mouth to mouth and from ear to ear creating an acoustic presence like a ripple and then it fades away. Then another ripple emerges in another place, as if immense but unseen raindrops are falling on top of the march and making where they land resonate. The dissemination of the sounds of the march, therefore, does not have a linear disposition, but a centreless and a temporal one. What is even more interesting in the performance of these slogans is that it does not privilege words. It is more akin to attending a beat, a rhythm. La Belle, defines this acoustically through the dancing body: "the sonic body can already be thought of as a sort of dancer, as one driven by the beat yet finding its own particular expressive shape, as a responding counter-rhythm that follows the beat while already breaking it" (La Belle, 2010, p.125). Indeed, Irmak compared joining a slogan to dancing; "It is a feeling like you just have to close your eyes and dance, like joining a song in a

[47] Masanın etrafına oturunca bir sürü konu hakkında ayrılabiliyoruz, yürüyüşün fiziksel ortamında böyle bir şey yok.

concert, it requires a little confidence and a certain amount of dedication."[48] The rhythm of the body and the body-slogan connection, invites us to think about the sonority of the marches in a new way. This is especially so when thought together with Ayşe's remark about slogans: "It did not really matter to me after a point. You realize sometimes that the slogan is nice but after a point, it is just enough to just say aalee lööö."[49] How can we evaluate this marginalization of language and this prioritisation of rhythm, of this the bodily/vocal form of expressions? After the dancer allegory, La Belle's continues: "such moves poignantly locate rhythm as means for reordering place, for publishing against the inscriptions marked on the body, and as a production of another kind of public space" (p.125). If we concur with La Belle's metaphorical analysis, what may be the counter-beat that women are generating? This is a question that necessitates understanding how the acoustic performativity within the march leads to "another kind of public space".

"Alee löö" within Ayşe's comments are a good starting point as they are representations of sounds that do not signify anything within language. The reason I focus on this is its similarity to Carson's explanation of ololyga:

> The *ololyga* with its cognate verb *ololyzois* one of a family of words, including *eleleu* with its cognate verb *elelizo* and *alala* with its cognate verb *alalazo*, probably of Indo-European origin and obviously of onomatopoeic derivation. These sounds do not signify anything except their own sound. The sound represents a cry of either intense pleasure or intense pain. To utter such cries is a specialized female function. (1995, p.125)

Ayşe's comment defining slogans similar to these corporeal sounds that signify joy or pain is remarkable in revealing the bodily and sonorous quality of the march. De Certeau (2011) offers an analysis of these "audible citations" from "voices of the

[48] "Konserde şarkıya eşlik eder gibi gözlerini kapatıp dans etmen gerekiyor gibi bir his. Azıcık güven, biraz da adanmışlık gerekiyor."
[49] "Gerçekten önemli değildi benim için bi noktadan sonra a bak bu güzel sloganmış diyorsun ama bi noktadan sonra aalee lööö yapsan bile yeter."

body" within legends and phantoms as "words that become sounds again". They are "reminiscences of bodies lodged in ordinary language and marking its path, like white pebbles dropped through the forest of signs," and they create "enunciative gaps in a syntagmatic organization of statements" and, "These contextless voice-gaps, these 'obscene' citations of bodies, these sounds waiting for a language, seem to certify, by a 'disorder' secretly referred to an unknown order, that there is something else, something other" (p.163). In this regard "alee löö" hints to the significance of the action of vocalizing being more of value to what is said, what is meant. It is an aural, "enunciative gap" (p.163) standing out within the order of signs. De Certeau, of course, makes this remark through analysing texts, but it is not so difficult to adjust this analysis to everyday life since the order within the social, akin to language is obtained through constructing a consensus weaved between arbitrary systems of signification. In other words, phallogocentrism still maintains a critical role in defining who is reasonable, who gets to be a political subject, and who gets to have a voice (Davis, 1995). Within the arbitrary categorizations of the gendered norms of social life, who can do politics and how becomes heavily dependent on language and grammar. The order of the social, especially the field of politics, operates through a notion of voice that focuses on the enunciation of words that make sense in the semantic order. Within this order, the "alee löööö"s of women do not find a place within the land of grammar, language and politics, but they do secretly refer to an "unknown order", as De Certeau points out. Thus, mass political riots of our decade often require an understanding of voice not as "a form of transparent political representation of specific demands" but as a vocality of presence that demands being heard and acknowledged (Kunreuther, 2018, p.5). This also indicates a demand for novel forms of listening from the ears that lay outside the march. These resistive

moments by generating new beats, and creating aural gaps, form a temporal intensity that hijacks the flow of the pre-established entanglement between language and the social order or in the words of Schulze, "the mere presence of resisting corpora questions the harmonizing power structure," (p.205). Sonorous resistive bodies create glitches in the harmony that is imposed on them.

This does not mean that the sounds of whistles, chaotic slogans and songs do not have a harmony of their own. As Ayşe argues "the combination of the screams of women created a harmony, it became a music."[50] The din that women describe is meaningful, significant, and telling for the women who attend the march, as the token of success or as a musical harmony, this cacophony is valuable. Even though it may not prioritize language in the way it is operationalized in the existing order of daily life, its performance and the experience of bodies that listen to and create it leave a mark regarding a state of resistance and coexistence on subjects. It is, after all, a material manifestation of politics that brings out a potentiality.

Kathleen Stewart's concept of atmospheric attunement is helpful here to explore this potentiality. An atmospheric attunement is "an alerted sense that something is happening and an attachment to sensing out whatever it is" (2010, p.14). It is a sensory state that requires a form of tuning in by alerting all the senses. Subjects in Feminist Night Marches tuning in to the acoustic atmosphere can be thought as "intimacies of things thrown together is a sense of something happening that might somehow include an 'us' whose ears prick up, whose bodies labour" (p.14) the concept of atmospheric attunement serves here as a methodological tool to understand the material significance of bodies who walk and shout together, as for Stewart, the act of tuning in, "turns a potentiality into a threshold to the real" (p.4) it

[50] "Bütün kadınların çığlığı bir ahenk oluşturdu, bir müzik haline geldi."

creates a sensory state that resonates the boundary between the potential and the material. To clarify more what this potential refers to it is influential to bring Adriana Cavarero into the discussion.

In *For More Than One Voice* (2005), Adriana Cavarero suggests going back to the roots of speech and reconsidering the division between the semiotic and the phonic which basically refers to the division between speech/language and voice/sound. As mentioned earlier via Carson, since starting from ancient Greece the ideology of logos was entangled with the processes that resulted in gendered perceptions of different sounds and voices. This process also has its roots at the division between language and voice, between the semiotic and the phonic. The gendering of voice that Carson discusses is enriched when thought of alongside Cavarero's description of the historical processes that led to the "devocalization of logos". Cavarero argues that in time, the definition of logos started to prioritize the semantic over phonic even though in the beginning, and etymologically speaking, the concept of logos equally valued both qualities regarding voice (p.35). In time, logos lost its connection with the *phoné*. It is evident that this loss is also connected to the gendering of sounds through the binaries logocentrism creates. Where the grammar, the linguistic, reason and writing became more associated with men and semantics, the rhythmic sounds, nonlinguistic enunciations, the body, and songs became concepts that are more affiliated with women and the *phoné*. Both Carson and Cavarero aim to reveal and subvert this separation that creates hierarchies and promotes unbalanced social relations.

Cavarero does this by reintroducing the *phoné* into the discussion of logos. She starts her analysis with a quote from Calvino, "a voice means this: there is a living person, throat, chest, feelings, who sends into the air this voice, different from

all other voices" (p.1). By refocusing our attention to the body of the subject that speaks, Cavarero highlights the phonic aspect of voice that has lost its place to speech. She reminds us that a voice is after all, an acoustic performance that conveys the uniqueness of its performer. By following this ontological source in vocalic transmissions, Cavarero urges us to reimagine interaction as an acoustic space that values the uniqe sources and vocalic singularities within it. This imaginary hints at the possibility of a political space that is fuelled by sonic interaction, by vocalic connection rather than semantic transference: a political space that prioritizes the connection of vocalic singularities rather than the semantic references within these vocalic performances. This vocalic move is also an attempt to reclaim and redescribe logos in a way that disqualifies the umbilical cord between reason, language and the masculine voice that Carson points out. For women who are confined to the borders of *phoné*, as the ones disadvantaged in acquiring language, meaning and reason as Carson puts forward, Cavarero's endeavor is especially important as it offers a new potentiality to describe politics, and to dismantle the power dynamics within the social sphere. The feminist night march is indeed a manifestation of putting the state of *phoné* before *semantike*. It prioritizes who is speaking and which bodies are performing rather than what is said. During protests, the subjects who tune into this potentiality stand at the edge of this material transformation. They perform this potentiality; they exhibit a political performance that redefines logos that is both linguistically and materially valuable. Feminist Night Marches serve as incubators that ignite new materialities, as aforementioned they are states of rehearsing alternative modes of existing. It serves as a field of potentiality that bears new subjectivities and foreshadows novel forms of social interactions. Its participants feel this material transition and they affirm it.

Schulze's another concept comes to mind here. He argues to think through these material intensities as a form of realizing being singular-plural in the meaning that Jean Luc Nancy suggests. What Nancy argues that existing means co-existing since we are thrown to the world altogether, meaning, being in the world is always a being in the world with others (Nancy, 2009b). Schulze interprets this as a moment of feeling related to the subjects around you with a sort of intimacy that you have not realized before, but for Schulze, this existential realization is temporary as there is always an outer force, be it security members, barricades or soldiers that disrupt this flow. When these external forces inevitably ignite violence, the existential and perhaps affectual state (Schulze defines it as "energetic load" (p.203)) transforms into an expression of "raw anger, fear, and bloody, freshy, voluptuous atrocity" (p.204). You become bare, open, vulnerable. The noise of the clash Schulze argues interrupts the existential moment and forces it to "articulate a distinction and a difference" (p.204). This noise, however, is as transformative and productive as it is destructive, "corporeally noisy tensions precede a disruption in one's individual habit of action, in our performative persona" (p.204). Schulze calls this material change within a person an emergence of a *persona resista.* The experience of material potentiality has its ramifications on their bodies after the event. As Schulze argues this resistance is not, "A resistance that is not directed toward deconstruction of a superstructure or a powerful dispositive alone. Resistance in this existential and corporeal sense aims at material transformations, at a materialist correction of individual lives and biographies" (p.205). One question here is if these material changes prerequisite a noisy conflict with external oppositional forces or can the sound of the march itself be a noisy conflict that disrupts the material conditions it's vocalized in? From my interviews I understood that even participants who only

attended peaceful night marches experienced these material changes that Schulze defines. Ezgi for example who went to the marches only once gives a fitting example to this, "after the march, I became more confident in wearing shorter skirts in public."[51] Or as mentioned earlier women stated that they felt physically stronger after the march as if they can do anything. Many women described the increase in their tendency to create random solidarities among women in their daily lives after attending the march. Schulze's concepts open up challenging points to investigate the material changes one goes through within these affective fields of togetherness and collective experience of demonstration and violence. Leaving the question of whether we should stick with the definition of *persona resista* aside, it is evident that the march in a sense provides women a new perspective to tackle real-life conditions, as it is not only a political performance of a "counter-rhythm", a demand of a new public space, but it is also a generator of material changes on the subjectivities and bodies that attend the march.

2.5 Consistency and changing practices of politics

For women, the lack of collective existence of women is evident and the consistency of the Feminist Night Marches that compensate this lack is very important. The continuity of this practice as a ritual, walking together at least once a year, feeling the solidarity of their collective existence that has a material impact on their bodies are as valuable as the walk itself. Women often gave comments that display the fact that the consistency of the Feminist Night Marches is referred to as a legendary example of perseverance. Each woman I have talked with mentioned that the feminist struggle is the only active political branch that can still unite the masses;

[51] "Yürüyüşten sonra dışarıda mini etek giyme özgüvenim arttı."

even after a coup d'état attempt, even during the state of emergency, women will resist. “We are always here” is the message that they want to pursue. “We are here” is indeed a common sentence that can be heard in feminist movements and also Queer movements in all over the world as Butler argues, “The ‘We are here’ that translates that collective bodily presence might be re-read as ‘We are still here,’ meaning: ‘We have not yet been disposed of. We have not slipped quietly into the shadows of public life: we have not become the glaring absence that structures your public life,’ ” (2013, p.196) or as the famous slogan of Prides in Turkey goes, “Where are you my love? I am *here* my love!” (Nerdesin aşkım? Burdayım aşkım!). On the other hand, many women are of the opinion that walking together once a year does not have an immense legislative impact, “when we look at it, we walked 1 year, 2 years, 3 or more, it does not change anything, but this is something that goes on.”[52] says Ece, she continues to say that people, especially men do not change their attitude because women are walking once a year, but it is at least a show of force “gövde gösterisi” against the show of force of the government, after all, “change does not come with one walk.”[53] It is common opinion that this *show of force* against the government is stronger due to its permanency. For women in the shrunk civilian space of today’s Turkey, Feminist Night Marches are the only time where they can be free in what they do, say or desire. Accordingly, the ban of this march is also a show of force of the government against this freedom. The conflict between walking and banning walking has become a symbolic act of the power dynamic between the state and women. In the last march the police “framed” and “squeezed” women to

[52] “Baktığımda biz 1 sene yürüdük, 2 sene yürüdük, 3 sene yürüdük diye bir şey değişmiyor, ama bu devam eden bir şey.”
[53] “Değişim bir yürüyüşle gelmiyor.”

the limit that, "sounds started to come from bodies"[54] Ezgi says. It was "chaotic" and "scary" other women said. Some of them also said that they were physically oppressed, compressed to the limit that they felt that they were going to die there. This is a very different experience from other marches. The ban of the march prevented the joy within it, and all the elements that generate the joy that was prevalent in other marches. Ayla defines this as the fragmentation of the sound of the march, "I remember the sounds were fragmented. I cannot remember anything being said in unison. Everybody fell into groups. Especially since we were not moving. It seems as if for the sound of the march to emanate there has to be a flow."[55] The prevention of the flow of marching together breaks the cacophony that makes the march a march. All women described the last march as very different from the others. It was, indeed, a march that showed their perseverance, but this was very infuriating for women, "After the event, we sat down and said, 'really?' We can't even walk today? It's just so annoying when you demand why you can't walk and they only say 'because',"[56] said Nur, a regular of the night marches to explain why she got very upset after the march. The connotation of the "because" can be found in the earlier parts of this chapter. The collective physical presence of women, and the expression of their desires and the solidarities they form which materially change their bodies and the way they live is what the state is trying to tame. "8 March walks are not a revolution in itself. It is also not something that you give the state a petition and then you pursue it… Everybody wants to jump and play, they want to say I am

[54] "Bünyelerden ses gelmeye başladı."

[55] "Seslerin bölük pörçük olduğunu hatırlıyorum, böyle tek bir halde herhangi bir şey söylenebildiğini hatırlamıyorum herkes grup grup, Bir de hareket etmeyince. Sanki o şey sesin yayılması için akışın olması gerekiyor."

[56] "Yürüyüşten sonra oturduk ve dedik ki "Gerçekten mi? Bugün de mi yürüyemeyeceğiz? Şey çok gıcık, neden yürüyemiyoruz diye soruyorsun ve cevap olarak sadece 'çünkü' diyorlar."

alive, I am here, and I am going to a party after this. ”[57] says Ecem. This quote is very telling in summarizing the aura of the marches. In a time, as Ecem says, that we are trying to survive by going home and watching Netflix, where everyone is suffering from post-traumatic order of something; celebration of life by dancing and shouting provides a lifeline. War, bombings, the violence of the police, unpredictable lawsuits and dismissals, sonic booms of the coup d'état attempt, one can continue to give examples to the traumatic experiences of a citizen of Turkey. Against these traumas, the Feminist Night Marches affirm life and existence, manifest togetherness and joy. It is a practice of which the consistency holds a pivotal point for many women who are always pushed to the verge of breaking. “It is important that we continue this, it is important that we pass on this experience”[58] Ecem continues, the ritual of the Feminist Night Marches is also a conveyance of experience and memory. It serves as a space that enables the transmission of a way of living, a way of surviving and coping. Therefore, for women, although the slogans and banners are important, what is also important is that they “get together and overflow (coşmak)”[59] This state of “coşmak” invites Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of desire, which they define as an affirmative, positive and productive revolutionary force rather than a closed system that defines sexual difference based on the theory of lack as the classical Lacanian and Freudian theories suggest (1998). For them, desire, is an active and anarchic force that appears at the rupture of organized systems (Stark, 2017). The performance of women during the Feminist Night Marches point to this

[57] “8 Mart yürüyüşü kendi adına devrim yaptığın bir şey değil elbette hükümete talep sunduğun ve peşine düştüğün bir şey de değil. Herkes zıplamak ve oynamak istiyorum ben yaşıyorum burda varım burdan da partiye gideceğim.”
[58] “Onun sürdürmenin önemli olduğunu düşünüyorum. Belli bir deneyim aktarımı önemli yani.”
[59] “Önemli olan o kalabalığın bir araya gelip coşması yani.”

type of desire: an overflowing of energy caused by the collectivity that has the power to change organized systems.

I have come across some testimonies of women from the feminist movement of earlier decades who define this state of overflowing as a process of depoliticization (Berber, 2017c), and a loss of revolutionary essence, (Tekin, 2016)) where slogans are "softer", and the "basis" of the togetherness is "not solid." (Amargi, 2012). Many women I interviewed objected to this perspective. The ones who objected the most were the ones who had witnessed more years of Feminist Night Marches. "Back then, things like what will be the agenda, what will we highlight were the questions discussed, it was also powerful for women to get together back then, but in time it transformed into a situation that shouts 'we are not dead, we are here,'"[60] says Ecem. Pınar defines this as a change of making politics:

> It depends on what we understand from "severe politics", and "more political". If I can hear words like vagina and pussy more easily, if I can connect with trans people in different ways, that is something different. On the contrary, right now the slogans and banners are getting much more attention even from leftist men. They are saying, 'this is way too much' (bu kadarı da olmaz ki). Actually, the answers given to these remarks are politically sharper and true to themselves and they refer to the importance of March 8 and the demands of women very accurately without looking into divisions such as race or other.[61]

It is true that Feminist Night Marches have become a practice that values unity and diversity of women rather than their political affiliations, nevertheless as Pınar and Ecem define, this does not mean that they are less political. What we see in the

[60] "Eskiden hangi konu gündemde neyi öne çıkartacağız gibi şeyler konuşulurdu, o zaman da bir sürü kadının bir araya gelmesinin bir gücü vardı, ama gittikçe biz ölmedik burdayız diye bir yere döndü."

[61] Politik daha sert, daha politik derken ne anladığımızla alakalı bir şey. Ben daha rahat artık orda am vajina gibi kelimeleri daha rahat duyabiliyorsam, translarla daha farklı bir yerde buluşabiliyorsam farklı bir şey. Şu an tam tersi son 8 Martlarda gösterilen afişler pankartlar sloganlar çok daha fazla haber oluyor özellikle solcu erkekler tarafından tepki çekiyor ama bu kadar da olmaz ki deniyor aslında onlara verilen cevabın kendisi ben politik olarak daha keskin daha sözünde duran sözünden sakınmayan daha kadın olma haline aslında 8 Martın şeyi bu etnik kökenin, şeyinin nerden olduğunu bakmadan kadın olmaktan ihtiyaç ve taleplerine daha çok işaret eden bir şey bence.

history of the Feminist Night Marches is a change of doing politics – a politics that does not depend on making statements and speeches and reproduce the connection between politics and the narrow usage of logos. It is not a politics that only demands recognition. It is not a politics that define and target enemies and friends. It is not a politics in which desire is only projected towards a specific cause, or a subject or an object. It is a politics by women for women and for a better world. It comes from a shared experience and points to alternative ways of relation. It is a performance of a solidarity that shouts many things simultaneously. It is joy and anger at the same time. It is a performance that challenges ears and eyes and invites them to a new materiality. It is as Berger (1968) suggests - a rehearsal for revolutionary awareness.

2.6 Conclusion

Feminist Night Marches continue to hold a critical part in the activism of the opposition in Turkey. Similar to the '80s, women's movement is regarded by women as the only big political movement that can unite the masses even within the oppressive political atmosphere of our day where any type of activism is harshly attacked by the government. Feminist Night Marches offer a space for women to come together through their shared experiences and walk and shout against the patriarchal system that generates their problems while also celebrating their lives. Through their collective physical resistance, they perform a potentiality, where they exist without fear, freer with their desires and choices. They perform an acoustic ritual that breaks the predominant ways of being and existing. From a Rancièrian point of view, they perform a dissensus, as "a difference between sense and sense: a difference within the same, a sameness of the opposite" (Rancière, 2011, p.1). Through their performance, women - despite its limitations - offer a political space to

echo back the voices of silenced women back into the public sphere. They reclaim their place, their visibility, and their auditability by re-configuring the dominant sensory regimes through celebrating their existence, by putting their bodies and voices at the city centre, by shouting, cursing, dancing, and chanting they invent "new forms of collective enunciation" and "new configurations between the visible and the invisible, and between the audible and the inaudible, new distributions of space and time - in short, new bodily capacities," (p.139). The march offers a new form of commonality, a new potentiality of being together. Women get physically affected by this experience, and this experience is extremely valuable as the collective existence of women is still rendered dangerous and therefore limited under the patriarchal gender regime of contemporary Turkey. Women, by walking, shouting and dancing together tune into an atmosphere that hints a new way of existing, they gain a new power that increases their capacity to act. The continuity of this ritual is extremely crucial for women, as this ritual has become a symbolic act that connotes that they are there, they exist, no matter what. Their perseverance is empowering all women against the continuation of the current government's anti-feminist and patriarchal policies and narratives. Against this oppression, women find ways to unite and resist alongside their differences and celebrate life and solidarity.

CHAPTER 3

CACOPHONY VS. EZAN: THE CASE OF 2019

So far, I have discussed the history of women's movements in Turkey, the history of patriarchy's motives and methods of silencing women, and I exhibited the power within the sounds and voices of women protestors that resist this silencing. My primary focus was to unravel the point of view of women protestors, their motivations, desires, and the power of their togetherness. In this chapter, I will focus on the dynamics behind the President's accusation and what it actually does politically and socially, how it affects women, what it enables and what it prevents. I will then go into the analysis of the acoustic conflicts of the 2019 Istanbul Feminist Night March, but before doing that, I want to take a step back and probe where this event stands within the socio-political climate of its occurrence. This event is, after all, a symptom, and a clue regarding how the power of the current regime operates. I want to reveal under what conditions did accusing women of protesting the ezan during their annual protest the patriarchy in Taksim became a beneficial political move for the current government. This question, of course, necessitates a parenthesis about the significance of Taksim and ezan to fully understand why the President chose to propagate this particular accusation. What I would like to do in the next section is to explore these different dynamics and reveal their relevance to the case study. This methodological and theoretical interference will illuminate the backdrop of the accusation and ignite a deeper discussion about the gendered power regime of the current government.

3.1 Gender regime of AKP: Marking territories, hailing subjects

The Feminist Night March Of 2019 stands out as an exception in the history of Feminist Night Marches. After a long period of nonviolent 8 March night walks, this was the first protest where police attacked women. It is also a unique event where women were accused of protesting something outside of their political agenda, the ezan. In this context, the accusation of the President can easily be regarded as a tactical move to change the agenda in a way that unburdens the President's responsibility to acknowledge the real purpose of the protest, shifting his role from the accused to accuser. This account is valuable, but limiting the analysis to this framework and reading this event as a tactical move, fails to acknowledge the intrinsic nature of gender politics within AKP's ideological edifice. Zeynep Korkman, in her article, "Politics of Intimacy in Turkey: Just a Distraction from 'Real' Politics?" (2016) argues that there is a tendency to read unsettling remarks of government officials about gender issues as merely tactical attempts to change a conflictual political agenda. Korkman concurs that this approach erases issues regarding gender from the sphere of "real" politics. Deniz Kandiyoti referring to Korkman's concurrence further argues that this approach also "invites us to spell out with a greater degree of precision the various ways in which the politics of gender in Turkey is *intrinsic* rather than *incidental* to a characterization of its ruling ideology" (2016, p. 105). In my analysis of the President's accusation towards women protestors, I will follow the lines of Korkman an Kandiyoti and approach the event as a case that reveals the intrinsic nature of gender politics within AKP's ideological scheme. I aim to discuss this intrinsic nature through seemingly different objects of power within this event: violence against women, politicization of Islam and aggressive control over public space. These are all critical issues that require

attention for the overall analysis of the event. However, rather than addressing these issues separately, I will reflect upon the common causes that entangle them as the repercussions of the same type of governmentality. I will show the interconnectedness of these three seemingly diverse issues through revealing the historical and political linkages that still shape our social imagination today. I will trace AKP's violent approach towards women, natural landscapes and public spaces to their understanding of progress. I will discuss this through contemporary examples where the body of a woman, nature and public spaces become sites of power in the name of progress and finally, I will assert that the national soundscape is also a target of this type of power that feeds from the intrinsic linkages between patriarchal, biopolitical, neoliberal and neoconservative ideologies. I will then argue that when these interconnections are thought of as the symptoms of weakening/emasculation of the ideology of the nation (Souza, 2019) they reveal a patriarchal territorial claim within the operation of the government. Showing the interconnectedness of the different themes within this set of events will also eventually shed light on the conditions where creating a binary between ezan and sounds of women can work in favour of the government's ideological stability.

3.1.1 In the name of progress

In an attempt to enlighten the rising rates of femicides in Latin America, Natália Maria Félix de Souza argues that violence against women is "less about the personal manifestation of aggressive sexualities and more expressive of the attempt to recover a certain *territorial sovereignity* lost through modern capitalist oppression and emasculation" (emphasis added) (2019, p.96) where the borders of the power operations are "no longer related to the familiar territory of the nation-state, but to

the mobile network of bodies that are not fixable" (p.94). She invokes Rita Laura Segato's argument to take out violence against women from the field of identity politics and stop defining violence against women as a minority problem or as a "question of women" and start approaching it as a symptom of the effect of biopolitical regime on female subjects, where bodies of women become the site of power for the governments to impose their ideological agendas. On a similar note, Kandiyoti argues for the context of Turkey, that the rising rates of violence against women points to a disturbance within the patriarchy. She calls this *masculinist restoration* that comes into play when the "patriarchy-as-usual is no longer fully secure and requires higher levels of coercion and the deployment of more varied ideological state apparatuses to ensure its reproduction" (2013, January 10). Thinking through this context enables to discuss violence against women in a more nuanced political framework of gender politics and patriarchal power regimes. Therefore, while explaining the relationship between *territorial sovereignty* and the female body Segato and Souza, point out to the connection between the biopolitical function of power and the processes of colonial modernity of Latin America:

> ... the paradigm of power created by colonial modernity makes the exercise of power over these bodies a means to assure sovereignty over the national territory. From its inception, then, violence against the colonised female body, even when it occurred in the domestic arena, was never simply private, but an expressive manifestation of a certain political imaginary of conquest, the means through which colonial modernity was created. (p.95)

While traveling to our geography, this theory may require adaptations (Said, 1999). I do not wish to go into Turkey's complicated relationship with colonialism, (Ahıska, 2006; Beşikçi, 1991) but I still believe that the quote gives us a clue about how the body of a woman is treated as a site of power. In Turkey the current political power regime too, operates with a desire to claim a *territorial sovereignty* through a

gendered biopolitical function by operating on subjects of the nation, especially women. Deriving from de Souza, I use the concept of *territorial sovereignty* as a form of exercising power that approaches subjectivities, bodies, lands, events, memories, experiences, narratives and other phenomena as if they are material spaces that can be controlled and conquered; as sites, terrains that must be contained/shaped/framed/enclosed according to the landscape the state wants to exhibit. Bodies of women, of course, are the primary targets of this conception of power.

We have seen through Carson and Cavarero the deep roots of patriarchy that go back to ancient times. The patriarchal logic of domination for survival, or enclosure for power, found novel subjects with the rise of the biopolitical regime, where, as Foucault argues, the human body has begun to be approached as docile but also useful and productive (1995, 163-169). In biopolitical regimes, the government regulates populations though the technologies of biopower "… that exerts a positive influence on life, that endeavors to administer, optimize, and multiply it, subjecting it to precise controls and comprehensive regulations" (1987, p.137). Within biopolitical regimes, concepts related to life, death, reproduction, health and illness and questions such as how many kids you will have and how long will you live become the object of power. Biopower operates hand in hand with disciplinary power. For Foucault, disciplinary power, which emerged before biopower, is a mechanism of power that targets and regulates the individual body, space and time and prioritizes rehabilitation rather than punishment. Different from disciplinary power, biopower both targets the individual (through governing personal desires) and humanity as a species (by focusing on the population). In both disciplinary and biopolitical power the female body becomes a site of inscription burdened with additional

responsibilities and expectations. In the context of Turkey, not different from the westernization and modernization periods of the early Republican era where women were at the crossroad of "given emancipation" and "demanded self-control" while keeping the burden of representing the values and ideals of the new nation, now too, the female body is treated as a site where power and ideology of the state are contested. Although in different eras, novel ideologies and political agendas shape how this power is contested. Currently, we see the effects of neoliberalism and neoconservatism adding their flavour to the mix. In the governance of AKP, this becomes even more evident when one acknowledges that the power regime treats nature, public space, and women the same: as docile and productive spaces waiting to be tamed, territorialized and regulated. Unbinding these entanglements, and understanding this long-lasting connection is necessary to expose the way the government exercised its *territorial sovereignty* during the 2019 march.

In her book *Woman and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her* (2016), Susan Griffin tells the story of widespread assumptions about women through a combination of real-life events and recursive narratives. What is interesting in Griffin's work is her insistence on displaying the affinity between nature and women as the key factor of the hierarchical structure of relations between gender binaries. Griffin argues that women's association with nature puts them in a juxtaposition of being passive and dangerous at the same time. This causes women to be seen as more submissive, similar to a land that waits to be conquered. While she waits for discovery she must also always be under control as her nature is too wild and lacking in intelligence. And this affiliation stigmatizes her as the lacking part of the modern binary gender roles. If men represent reason, civilization and politics, women represent emotion, vulgarity, and nature. This puts her in a vulnerable position as the

lacking and bare part waiting to be more civilized, or as Segato puts it "the body of the woman [becomes] the frame or support on which the moral defeat of the enemy is written" (as cited in Souza, 2019, p.94). As Federici lays out with the example of witch hunts, the connection with women and nature - which is initially a connection that improves women's strength, independence, and solidarity with other women- has always posed a threat to the binary structure of the patriarchal system that requires submissive subjects to exercise its power upon. Witch hunts showed that women in nuclear families, stuck to the private sphere, away from nature is a more beneficial gender norm for the patriarchal power structure of the modern world (2018). In this hierarchy, although egalitarian movements seem to open up ways for women to take on new public roles, the participation of women in public space always comes with a cost. As many thinkers have pointed out such as Cixous and Lyotard, "in so far as woman is socially 'initiated', she is initiated by decapitation, either metaphorically (mutism) or literally... She has nothing to forfeit but her 'voice', her head, her reason. Her relation to the body politics will be limited to the corporeal and to her use as a natural resource" (Grosz, 1994, p.54). The way for women to become a political subject is hindered on many levels because of her affiliation with nature. She is always regarded as submissive, as an open land, an open space that awaits a conquest mission to discover, tame and educate her. Sue Best in an article explains this affinity through theories of Kristeva and Irigaray and by contemporary examples of this connection such as cities that have female mascots, or descriptions of public spaces as feminine characters in different textual sources. She argues that all these examples "[speak] of a persistent desire to domesticate space, to bring it within a human horizon and, most importantly, to 'contain' it within this horizon" (p.183). The connection between woman and space

leads to “the pacification, domestication and containment” of both parties (p.190). Lefebvre takes the connection between women and space a step further and makes correlations between the neo-capitalist space and the female body, by referring to the fractured, borderless, and vulnerable body of the women, “The ways in which space is thus carved up are reminiscences of the ways in which the body is cut into pieces in images (especially the female body, which is not only cut up but also deemed to be ‘without organs’!)” [62](as cited in Best, 1995, p.183). He argues that both space and the human body are milieux in which the system and social relations take a body. There is indeed a similarity between the way the government treats women, nature, and the public sphere: as ahistorical loci where power should be exhibited. Combined with neoliberal and neoconservative ideologies the current government’s policies affirm this through possessive and coercive approaches towards this trio.

The neoliberal and neoconservative tendencies within the regime of AKP are perhaps most visible in the policies of sexuality, family, and reproduction (Acar & Altunok, 2013). In addition to the moralising expressions of Turkish politicians, including, “a woman should have at least three children” ; “a women should not laugh out loud in public” ; “a pregnant women should not walk in public sphere” ; “the unemployment rate is high because women are also looking for jobs”; and “a rapist is more innocent than the rape victim who gets an abortion” (Sarı, 2015), the

[62] Although “body without organs” is a concept associated with Deleuze and Guattari (1998, 2014), Lefebvre only mentions them in one footnote (in an unrelated issue) and uses the concept as a description of a body that is dismembered and desexualized: “The 'heart' as lived is strangely different from the heart as thought and perceived. The same holds a fortiori for the sexual organs. Localizations can absolutely not be taken for granted where the lived experience of the body is concerned: under the pressure of morality, it is even possible to achieve the strange result of a *body without organs* - a body chastised, as it were, to the point of being castrated” (1991, p.40), “An empty body, a body conceived of as a sieve, or as a bundle of organs analogous to a bundle of things, a body 'dismembered' or treated as members unrelated to one another, a *body without organs* - all such supposedly pathological symptomatology stems in reality from the ravages of representation and discourse, which are only exacerbated by modern society, with its ideologies and contradictions (including that between permissiveness and repressiveness in space) (1991, p.203).

last decades have also seen, the AKP government seek to curtail women's rights through attempts to ban abortion in 2003, the regulation of alternative reproduction services such as assisted procreation so as to only benefit married heterosexual women, the renaming of the Woman and Families Municipality to the Families and Social Policies Municipality, and refusing to implement the Istanbul Convention and Law No. 6284 On The Protection Of Family & Preventing Violence Against Women (Acar & Altunok, 2013). Also, as Kandiyoti refers to Berna Yazıcı, the lack of social welfare that came with neoliberalism brought with itself a discourse of *strong family* in the period of AKP. Kandiyoti argues that there has been a marriage between neoliberalism and neoconservatism in Turkey. The social protection by the state gave its way to the institutionalized welfare system, and the government's conservative discourse about women being the natural care providers encapsulated women into the private sphere by diminishing the urgency of the necessary welfare tools that support women entering the labour force, making them even more susceptible to systemic violence. These policies about the intimacy of the private and the public create regulatory mechanisms over the female body and her environment. Kandiyoti asserts that, "This combination of neoliberal rationality and neo-conservative governmentality results in a narrowing of options and a denunciation of claims for different lifestyles, counter imaginations or even liberal rights-based claims of individuals," (p.107) meaning that the visibility of lifestyles that do not confer with the women ideal of the strong family is not welcomed or tolerated in the public space. Making women objects of regulation both in the private and the public space, these policies claim a *territorial sovereignty* over the female body by putting physical and mental boundaries to the lives of women. The same approach is visible in the government's treatment of urban and natural landscapes.

To make sense of the connection between the government's approach to women and its approach to urban and natural landscapes it is paramount to touch upon the concept of progress. Susan Buck-Morss explains that although the usage of progress was first put into use as a criterion of evaluating the lacking aspects of history, it gradually became identified with the actuality of real-life events (Buck-Morss, 1999, p.80). In a similar vein, Reinhart Koselleck traces the transformation of the usage of progress from the 18th century and infers that its emergence can be thought in accordance with the attempts to cope with the fast changes and novelties of the Enlightenment era (Koselleck 2002, p.220). He argues that thinking history as a progressive process enables to render the fast changes of modernity meaningful by historicizing them in a linear rationality. Progress, therefore, gradually became an innate quality of the way subjects perceive history and their everyday lives in modernity. Koselleck refers to this transformation as the process in which progress turned into a *transsubjective actor* that acts as a distinct agent who can affect history with its own power. Koselleck argues that the rise of progress as a *transsubjective actor* has its roots in humanity's encounter with nature: "Only the growth of knowledge about nature, by way of which the authority of antiquity was displaced through the autonomous use of reason, opened up - at first only partially - a progressive interpretation of the future" (p.225). Defining nature as stable and unchanging enabled an accumulation of knowledge over nature that is "methodologically driven forward" and this progressive approach eventually turned into a relationship of domination (p.225). Koselleck discusses how the treatment of nature as a docile and ahistorical space for the idea of progress led to the domination of natural sources. What we see now is a crisis caused by coming to a limit of this type of understanding of progress. Similar to the alliance Kandiyoti points to

between rising femicides and threatened masculinity, the rising mega projects of AKP that dominate and disregard nature, hints at the fact that the "progressive power of the state is no longer fully secure and requires higher levels of coercion and the deployment of more varied ideological state apparatuses to ensure its reproduction" (Kandiyoti, 2013, January 10).

AKP, operating within this crisis of progress, although has been criticized harshly due to its reckless and mega-size construction projects that rampage natural resources, chooses to promote these projects as evidence of its success in advancing the country.[63] Çavuşoğlu and Strutz indicate that AKP seeds its power in economic growth generated by the construction sector and promises of mega-projects. In their article, they argue that this power configuration benefits from a version of the Republican principles of corporatism that is recoded and strengthened by Islamism. The corporatism of the early Republican era was an approach that is both economic and cultural. It incorporated interest groups and trade unions into state establishments, but also worked in order to protect and harbour societal values as a mediator between the state, the economy and civil society. Çavuşoğlu and Strutz argue that type of corporatism saw the society as a homogenous mass without religious ethic or class difference where "the individual has responsibilities towards the state, but its role as a citizen does not include the reclamation of rights" (p.138). The AKP adaptation of the Republican model, combined with neoliberalism and neoconservatism also renders differences invisible, but differently, it assumes that these differences can be overcome if all citizens (brothers) work in harmony for development. Similar to Kandiyoti's argument that suggested a marriage between

[63] Also visible in several slogans such as:'Don't stop, move on' ('durmak yok yola devam') or 'Stability shall continue, Istanbul shall grow' ('İstanbul büyüsün, istikrar sürsün')(Çavuşoğlu & Strutz, 2014, p.141).

neoliberalism and neoconservative familism, we see a marriage between neoliberal idea of progress through construction and neoconservative ideas of Islam as its tool of establishment. Corporatism around construction today is used as a cultural tool to re-establish the ideological values of the state.[64] Çavuşoğlu and Strutz exhibit three main values visible in construction projects of AKP, Islamism, nationalism and developmentalism. They reveal the interconnectedness of these values and how they are exercised in the name of progress. Unsurprisingly, these construction projects also benefit from expropriation of private lands in common use. The commodification of natural lands, mountains, forest, and agricultural lands reveal the hollowness of the understanding of progress AKP embraces. A similar approach to nature that Koselleck discusses is still present in AKP's approach to natural lands. For many, these projects are crazy, not in the positive sense that the President uses (Fox, 2020, February 17) but crazy as disastrous and reckless. Gezi being one of them, AKP has faced multiple campaigns and protests that oppose their treatment of nature. It is immensely interesting for me that there is a narrative affinity between the slogan of these protests and other protests about sexual and political abuse. The recurrent slogan that is used in campaigns against AKP's nature erasing projects is "do not touch". Over the years, many campaigns about protecting the nature have used this slogan: Kaz Dağlarına Dokunma, Salda'ya Dokunma, Olimpos'a Dokunma (Don't Touch Mount Ida, Don't Touch Lake Salda, Don't Touch Olympos) are just some recent examples. This slogan derives from a sexually charged connotation connected to harassment. Indeed, the same slogan is also used for campaigns about harassment, Çocuğuma Dokunma (Don't Touch My Child), or campaigns about

[64] Çavuşoğlu and Strutz give several examples to this: Removal of Kurdish people from Süleymaniye with AKP's Ottoman Mahalle urban transformation project, Sulukule transformation which force-moved minority groups (especially Roma people) who do not fit the corporatist body of the state, Tarlabaşı, Ayazma transformations, the list goes on.

power abuse of the government: Öğrencime Dokunma, Üniversiteme Dokunma, İnternetime Dokunma (Don't Touch My Student, Don't Touch My University, Don't Touch My Internet). All these campaigns point to a type of abuse, physical, sexual, or legislative that is either performed by or failed to be prevented by the government. It reveals how tactile the policies of the government are felt by citizens who do not approve these policies and the ideology they represent. As if an immense hand, descending from the sky is intervening with the lives of the citizens in the way that it sees fit; claiming a territory through exerting its dominance to the extent that it denies the agency of subjects and materialities it regards as invaluable.

3.1.2 The case of Taksim

As the government continues to see these abusive interventions as tokens of power, historically significant sites where "dangerous" memories or unwanted subjects are present are attacked harsher. Taksim, where women choose to protest, is a site of this kind. The story of Taksim has always been a site of this territorial conflict. Taksim area and Istiklal Street have always maintained a critical role in the agenda of different regimes as the symbolic centre of the city of Istanbul. In the early Republican period, Taksim was handpicked to be the new centre of the city rather than the old city area (Fatih) which was visually loaded with ottoman heritage (Çınar, 2005). In the following decades it has been torn to opposite poles by the seculars and the conservatives, one can easily trace the political agenda of Turkey through architectural projects concerning the area. One key project in this fight is the mosque in Taksim Square that has always been at the agenda of conservatives and is now finally being built during the AKP period. Bülent Batuman (2019) in his recent book about the architectural projects within the AKP period argues that even though

making a mosque to Taksim Square has always been an important mission for the conservative municipalities and governments, the initial vision of AKP did not fully follow the Islamic conquest desire that was prevalent in the 1950s. For many years building a mosque to Taksim Square has been regarded as a symbol of victory of the Islamic ideology. Similar to the metaphor of putting a flag on a captured land, building a mosque at the heart of the city, right across from the Atatürk Cultural Center, was seen as the secular regimes' surrender to Islamism. However, Batuman argues that AKP approached Taksim from a perspective that combines the necessities of the neoliberal market and their neoconservative agenda. This meant that the neoliberal and neoconservative ideologies left their marks on the area more than Islamism. The mosque project was accompanied by several others that erased cultural values and treated the area as a source of profit. Not to mention that these ideologies also served a greater nationalistic purpose of rewriting the history of a space that is the locus of generations of memory (Akşit 2010). As Istiklal Street and Taksim were also a harbour to different cultures, livelihoods of minorities and the beginning of the Kemalist regime, the transformation of these spaces also meant an erasure of the marks of these areas. As Akşit suggests this is not "a history of how communities are destroyed by failed policies, but of a systematic nationalist policy of neglecting certain historical spaces" (p.345). One of the first projects of Erdoğan during the elections in 2011 was to restrict car access to the square, which meant creating an immense underground road system. The project proposed seven different underground tunnels that not only limit the pedestrian access to the square but cut the space into pieces (similar to Lefebvre's fragmented female body) in an attempt to conquer from within. Similar to many other projects, perhaps the most recent example of all being Canal İstanbul Project that aims to cut the western Thracian

land into two by creating an artificial 45-km-long canal, AKP continues to cause irreversible harm to nature by approaching it not only as a docile land waiting to be fractured/put in use, but also a source of profit. As the Transport and Infrastructure Minister Cahit Turhan says while explaining Canal İstanbul, "All of the investments we did are land rent projects. They aim to bring income to this country. What does land rent mean? It means profit" ("Turkey's Transport Minister", 2020).

Taksim region continues to be a source of profit and symbolic power for AKP. In years, paving stones were replaced with concrete - so that they cannot be thrown to the police,- trees in the Istiklal Street were taken off - so that water tanks and panzers can enter the street -, Gezi Park was almost turned into a shopping mall - for rent purposes but, thankfully was prevented by mass protests - Tarlabaşı restrict was forcefully evacuated - detaching immigrants, low income citizens and sex workers from their neighbourhood -, and AKM was demolished - to be replaced with a bigger, more functional and more *modern* version of itself (AKM, 2017). Istiklal turned into a commercial street, lost its last remaining minority artisan stores and cultural spaces; fragmented, cut into pieces and ripped from its history and memory, but it remains to uphold the symbolic duty of being the city centre where different ideologies clash. It is still a significant social and political site, not just for the government, but also for the civilians to manifest their ideas, declare their demands, and protest their concerns. Taksim and especially Istiklal are historically, socially, and politically loaded places of which sovereignty over its territory is critical. The politics of AKP regarding public space and nature has a means-end approach that turns into a form of domination that Koselleck describes. Nature and urban spaces are seen as ahistorical social spaces without agency. Or they are expected to carry the histories and meanings that the state imposes on them willingly. They are seen as

submissive spaces where the government can mark its power, or they are forced to be submissive to the power of the sovereign in order to rewrite history in a way that erases the memory and agency of these spaces and its former users. The attitude of the government against nature and public spaces and the female body includes attempts of claiming a territory for the benefit of the power regime. The critical issue that links this discussion back to the topic of the thesis is that the accusation directed to women whistling the ezan reveals another space where this type of treatment is visible: the national soundscape.

3.1.3 Mosques as microphones of interpellation

As aforementioned, the last extensive project of the government in Taksim is the immense Taksim Mosque that is built right across the ruins of AKM. Starting from the '80s, making new mosques was always seen as an ideological attempt of Islamic governments (Bartu, 1999, Baykan, 2010; Büyüksaraç, 2005, Tekin&Gültekin, 2017). AKP also pursues this ideological urge (Batur, 2005). Making new mosques, especially in regions where the citizens are visibly more secular or making big mosques that everyone can see from everywhere has become a recurrent symbolic act that AKP continues. In this context, mosques serve "as structures for the localization, control, and supervision of bodies" (Hirschkind, 2004, p.142). What is interesting in this endeavour is the fact that the establishment of new mosques serves as an act of marking territory that not only on a visual and spatial level but also on an acoustic one. The soundscape of Turkey has always been a contested site (Köymen, 2017). In the early Republican era, the Arabic ezan was treated as a remnant of the Islamic and Eastern past that the new Republic wanted to leave behind. Accordingly, the Arabic ezan was officially banned in 1942, ten years after the introduction of

Turkish ezan. During this period, conflicts arose in several cities, imams who recited the ezan in Arabic were taken into custody, some of them were even prisoned (Azak, 2010). Then in 1950, when the Democratic Party came into rule, the Turkish ezan was banned. The early Republic era was a period of secularizing the soundscape of Turkey, but it also experienced periods of backlash and Islamization after the 1950s. Five times a day the call to prayer creates an acoustic territory through reaching the ears of the citizens in its acoustic chamber. Thinking through Althusser's concept of interpellation, mosques serve as ideological state apparatuses that operate both through its mass and through the hailing of ezan. Accordingly, ezan, in terms of its volume, its technique or its language has always been a disputed topic regarding the control over the urban soundscape of Turkey. It is a tool of claiming a territorial sovereignty over the urban soundscape of the nation. The politicization of ezan, however, increased its intensity and gained new connotations after the 2016 coup d'état attempt where mosques were used as tools to mobilize citizens against the military forces.

I was in Istanbul during the night of the coup d'état attempt of 2016. All night I heard sela and ezan echoing from the mosques, accompanied by the sounds of low flying jets, bombs, shouts, and tanks. Sela which is an Arabic chant of sacred texts, is commonly performed when there is a funeral ceremony in the mosque. It was also used as a means of communication during the Ottoman Empire in the case of conquests of new lands, or for calling soldiers into war (McPherson, 2009, Denise Gill 2016). As the symbol of conquest and death, sela is capable of creating multiple emotions including, grief, sadness, martyrdom, heroism and terror. In contemporary Turkey, sela was not a particular sound that had a widespread connotation besides ceremonial purposes surrounding funerals. However, during the night of the coup

d'état, as Köymen explains, "After Erdoğan issued his call for citizens to take to the streets and defend democracy via FaceTime, *sela* and *ezan* became symbols signifying affiliation with Erdoğan and resistance to the coup" (p.108). During the night of the coup d'état, requested by the Directorate of Religious Affairs, selas were broadcast incessantly, and most of the time they included a message after the finish: "In order to defend our democracy against this traitorous coup attempt, our president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is asking our people to go out and reclaim public squares and airports to show our disapproval of such intervention for the sake of Allah and our state" (Başdurak, 2020, p.134). Some mosques even broadcast the recording of Erdoğan's voice reading the famous poem that caused him to go to jail in 1999 (Ceylan, 2017, p.24). The sela from the mosques during the night of the coup d'état attempt can be given as the perfect example of acoustic interpellation, "the performance of taking it to the streets was a sort of identification with the calls from the minarets, in this way, it was also the construction of the subjectivity of being recognized as a member of the nation"[65] (Batuman, 2019, p.87). However, this interpellation was a critical moment of reconfiguring the definition of the nation and its righteous subjects. Using sela and ezan as instruments for defending "democracy" and calling those who responds to the hailing of the mosques "the people" AKP has managed to strengthen the definition of the citizen ideal for the "New Turkey" fantasy as a conservative, pious and nationalist subject. This new definition of the "people" deepens the secular versus religious binary that is engraved in Turkey's political history. Nil Başdurak in her recent article "The Soundscape of Islamic Populism" argues that the usage of sela and ezan in the coup d'état attempt, however,

[65] "Sokağa çıkma performansı, minarelerden yapılan çağrıyla özdeşleşmeye, böylelikle de milletin bir ferdi olarak tanınan özne pozisyonunun oluşumuna dair bir edimdi."

does not come from AKP's strong bonds with the religious faith of Islam but on their "ideological use of religion within the political realm" (as cited in Başdurak, 2020, p.139). Başdurak confers that the usage of mosques as a mobilization of its supporters and naming this as a national sovereignty is a performance of "affective politics of Islamic Populism" (p.135) that transforms the public sphere for the benefit of the ideal citizen of the "New Turkey" and silences and denounces the rest of the subjects as traitors. The public space becomes an open area where the Islamic performativity of ordinary people are encouraged. This encouragement took on another level after the coup attempt with Democracy Vigils. These were mass gatherings that continued for weeks after the coup d'état attempt. Unique songs composed or arranged for the government were played very loud through high-tech speakers in public spheres accompanied by the "Ya Allah Bismillah Allahu Ekber" chants of the masses that attended these meetings. Masses were invited into collective public namaz and zikir sessions under the guidance of certain tarikats[66]and sela was again broadcast very loudly each day. Now, each year on 15 July, once again, at the request of Directorate of Religious Affairs, mosques from all cities transmit sela all together to memorialize the event.

For other subjects who do not share the same religious values, these performances ignited a fear for the future of the country (Başdurak, 2020, p.141). For many citizens who did not take it to the streets, the night of the coup d'état was a traumatic acoustic experience. Sound is a unique component of the sensory memory of subjects of trauma, as for whom the experience is often "defined by noise more than anything else; what they remember, even years afterwards is the visceral shock or disorientation of overwhelming and unceasing din," (Hendy, 2014, p.201). The

[66] Religious Sufi orders which were banned in the early Republican era.

acoustic turmoil of the night, the sonic booms, rhythmic Arabic chants, gunshots and bombings got stuck to the sound of sela and ezan, making them triggering auralities for many citizens who describe the night as a traumatic event. In her book *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2004) Sarah Ahmed formulates the concept of stickiness to explain how emotions work through sticking to circulating materialities in order to create and shape surfaces of individual and collective bodies. As Sarah Ahmed explains, these types of stickiness create new meanings and emotions by uniting different concepts and materialities together. In this case the sound of the sela and ezan got stuck to the Islamic populism of AKP, but for some people, it also got stuck to the fear and anxiety of the night of the coup d'état where people thought that they were entering a jihadist regime. For those who refused the interpellation of the mosques, sela and ezan turned into triggering sensory memories of a traumatic experience. After the coup d'état attempt, many people expressed the anxiety they feel when they are exposed to the loud volume of ezan for a long time. For example, Nilüfer, who was at a terrace overlooking the line between the police force and the feminist marches in the protest of 2019, 3 years after the coup attempt, shared her instant fear when she heard the ezan:

> Oh God, it is coming. Already, the ezan was a very powerful sound, very loud, when it was broadcast, I said we are done… I think I have connected it with the… On 15th of July I was in Ankara, and at 2 at night planes are flying, sonic booms are happening. That sound then ezan, that sound then ezan... We could not sleep until 9 in the morning. For me, the highness of volume of the ezan was like a call to take it to the streets. We were sleeping on the floor that night, windows of my home broke, we had turned off the lights. I think I connected it to this.[67]

[67] "Ben ezanı duyunca dedim, Allah, geliyor. Zaten ezan çok güçlü bir sesti, çok yüksekti. Ezan okununca ben dedim gittik yani. Ben büyük olasılıkla şeyle de ilişki kurdum 15 temmuzda Ankara'daydım ve gece 2 gibi falan uçak uçuyor sonar boom oluyor, o ses, arkasından ezan o ses arkasından ezan ve sabah 9'a kadar uyuyamadık. Benim için zaten o kadar yüksek ezan sesi bir sokağa çıkın ezanı gibi geliyor. O gece biz koridorda yatıyorduk, benim evimin camı kırıldı, ışıkları falan kapatmıştık. Sanırım onunla bağlantı kurdum"

In fact, after the coup d'état, "many of those loudspeakers [*of mosques*] were apparently left at high volume," (Farooq, 2018) purposefully. This new volume of the ezan was so loud that one year after the night of the coup d'état attempt, the complaints urged the Diyanet to issue a new memo that orders (ezan) to be no more than 80 decibels loud (Farooq, 2015). Considering the fact that the threshold was 65 decibels in 2012, the rise of the volume of the ezan entails the fact that when the "impact is strengthened with physical reinforcement via amplification, religious utterance undertakes the responsibility of acoustic sovereignty" (Ceylan, 2017, p.15).

The continuity of this usage of mosques heightened the critical position of ezan as a denominator of supporters and non-supporters of the government. The speech of the President in the Adana meeting after accusing women of protesting the ezan reveals the continuity of this role of ezan. The President argues that his alliance is against a group who has no tolerance for ezan and the Turkish flag. He recites the following verse from the national anthem, "These adhans[ezans] and their shadadads [testimonies] are the foundations of my religion, And may their noble sound prevail thunderously across my eternal homeland."[68] Then he goes on, "Those who do not respect ezan also do not respect the flag, those who do not show respect to ezan also do not show respect to the nation, those who do not protect the ezan will not protect the country" (Güncel, 2019). For him ezan is the sound of the nation that must echo all over the homeland and must be acknowledged and protected at all costs. Ayşe, who, as aforementioned, defines herself as a Muslim feminist said, "I think for the secular camp, ezan and the government coincide. Since the narratives of the

[68] Bu ezanlar -ki şehâdetleri dînin temeli-
Ebedî, yurdumun üstünde benim inlemeli.
Ezana hürmet etmeyen bayrağa da hürmet etmez, ezana saygısı olmayanın bu millete de saygısı olmaz, ezana sahip çıkmayan bu ülkeye de sahip çıkmaz

President and AKP include more religious tones, the reaction of these people against the ezan is in a way a protest against the state"[69] Besides becoming stuck to Islamic and conservative ideologies, the usage of ezan and sela by the government also generated a sense of enclosure in the public space:

> It is this literal space between belonging and otherness that defined which bodies had the right to "appear" in public spaces, which bodies were meant to be a part of the political movement, and which bodies were to be silenced and/or excluded from the making of the epic myth. (Başdurak, 2020, p.144)

In this distribution of the sensible, the question of belonging and otherness becomes critical. The usage of sela and ezan was, indeed, a reconfiguration of the nation that pushed certain subjects out of its territory. In this framework, the fear for the future of the country goes beyond holding an anti-government position. It becomes a question of belonging. It translates into a fear of losing the status of being a recognized political subject, of losing the access to belong to and be free in the public realm. However, what does this mean for women who already had limited access to the public sphere and a very dubious recognition as a political subject?

I have displayed the links between the way the current regime treats nature, public sphere and women as all of the three are approached as means to an end, as empty and docile spaces waiting to be subjugated for the ideological purposes of the regime. I have also tried to show how the national soundscape has been approached in the same manner, especially after the attempted coup, as a space for the government to exercise its territorial sovereignty. In this framework, the President's accusation becomes a performance that reveals the government's attempts of recomposing the nation in a way that is in accord with its Islamic populist agenda.

[69] "Seküler kesim için çoğunda ezanla devletin bağdaştığını düşünüyorum, çünkü işte söylevler cumhurbaşkanının AKP'nin daha dindar bir yönden ele alındığı için o insanların ezana tepkisinin bir kısmının o anda devlete karşı bir protesto olduğunu düşünüyorum."

This incident makes it apparent that the bodies of women and their voices once again are taking the burden of being the primary carriers of the power regime and a representative site where its discourses are contested. They are forced to become the symbols of the national ideal. Their bodies and voices are instrumentalized in displaying how the public space should be configured. They are expected to represent the transformation of the public sphere and the soundscape of the nation that is in accord with the political agenda of the government. In the next section, I will unravel what the accusation of the President does with a focus on understanding how through this accusation the regime claims a territorial sovereignty upon the feminine soundscape of the march.

3.2 Making sense of the accusation

In this section, I will provide a short introduction before unravelling the accusation of the President. I will first transfer what women protestors think about the accusation and exhibit their opinions about the combination of ezan and the sound of the protest. I will then explain the context in which this accusation and the video collage were propagated.

3.2.1 Comments of women protestors

After touching upon the conditions in which the acoustic conflicts between the sounds of women protestors and ezan have emerged, I would like to analyse how these acoustic conflicts affect women who attend feminist night marches. I should note that my aim here is not to investigate whether women protested the ezan or not. I have talked with women who said they heard the ezan and others who did not. I talked with women who said that the sounds of the march heightened during the

ezan, while some others said that it definitely did not. None of the women said that they raised their voices intentionally during the ezan, but some said, "what if I did, I can if I want to, what is wrong with that", some said, "I would never do that, we have many head-scarved women with us" or "maybe it did, but unintentionally because the sound of the ezan was very loud" but most of them said similar things to the following comment, "I do not even see the point in this argument, it has nothing to do with our purpose."[70] All women shared the opinion that they do not feel the need to talk about this or even respond to this accusation. On the other hand, Ayşe said this discussion hit them the most, referring to Muslim feminists. They were criticized by their male friends and by their general environment via questions such as, "You see that they are sinners, what are you doing with them" or via advice such as, "If you spend more time with these feminists you will become sinners too, you have no place being with them." For Ayşe it was a shock to live through this experience. When she heard the ezan she said, for a second, she and her friends looked at each other, puzzled in deciding what to do, "because there is an important and meaningful sound for us there, but the voices started to rise, and we belong and support these voices too, it was like being in purgatory."[71] She then said that she raised her hand and shouted "Hey! We are here too!" At that moment she described that someone from the LGBTQI+ group right across from her heard her and beckoned her friends to quiet down. "Seeing this was very important to me" Ayşe said, "seeing that an

[70] "Yapsam ne olur istersem yaparım ne var bunda", "Öyle bir şey yapmam, başörtülü bir sürü kadın var aramızda.", "Belki yükseldi, ama istemsizce çünkü ezanın sesi çok yüksekti", "Bu tartışmanın bir mantığını görmüyorum, amacımızla hiç alakası yok."

[71] "Bizim için değerli ve anlamlı olan bir ses var bir yandan başka sesler de yükselmeye başladı ve o grubun da içindeyiz ve biz o seslerin de içindeyiz ve o sesleri de destekliyoruz o an bizim için arafta kalmak gibi birşeydi."

LGBT person shared my value at that moment and stopped, relieved me,"[72] after seeing this, she said that she decided to remain at the march, "the reality that all these people can coexist with different truths motivated me to stay there at that moment."[73]

Non-Muslim women too were hesitant about the issue, "I did not say anything, it does not make sense to me when there are head-scarved women between us, so I stayed silent,"[74] said Nilüfer, who was watching the march from a distance and heard the ezan from outside the march. But many women said they did not hear the ezan and that even discussing this accusation was like falling into the trap of the President. They were not particularly affected by this accusation; most of them said that it is a very common form of othering that they are indeed very used to. They tried to remember what happened in other marches, "Did we not ever march while ezan was on before? I'm sure we did"[75] one said. "Maybe someone took a video and they thought that it might work, maybe it was spontaneous,"[76] another said, "Maybe they did not make us walk so we were very close to the mosque when ezan started,"[77] "It does not matter, be it random or conspiracy."[78] Women disagreed on whether this was a planned event or not, but for all women this was an attempt to divide their solidarity and to discredit their protest by taking their voices out of context. Women who attend Feminist Night Marches are aware of the multiplicity they have within. They know that they have different political opinions, different religious and sexual orientations, and they still get together. Arguing that women are

[72] "Ama o anda LGBTI'den birinin benimle o anda o değerli paylaşıp durmasını gözümle gördüm ve için rahatladı."
[73] "İnsanların hepsinin farklı doğrularla hep beraber aynı anda beraber olabileceği gerçeği beni o anda orada olmak için motive etti."
[74] Ben hiçbir şey söylemedim özellikle kitlede başörtülü kadınlar olunca saçma geliyor o yüzden sustum,
[75] "Daha önce hiç ezanla yürümedik mi? kesin yürüdük ya."
[76] "Belki biri öylesine video çekti ve işe yarar diye düşündü, belki spontandı."
[77] "Belki bizi ezan başladığında caminin yanında kalalım diye yürütmediler."
[78] "Farketmez, ister tesadüf ister komplo olsun."

only making sounds to protest the ezan is an attack on these women on several levels. Before going into the different ways in which women activists are affected by the President's accusation, it is essential to understand the quotidian context in which he made this allegation and the content that was shown as the evidence.

3.2.2 Short analysis of the video and its context

The local elections were in three weeks when the President displayed the alleged video collage at Adana demonstration. For this election, AKP had formed the People's Alliance with the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) and was running against the Nation Alliance formed by the Republican People's Party (CHP) and the newly formed nationalist İYİ Party. The Kurdish People's Democratic Party (HDP) was not officially aligned with any group but was organizing its candidates in accordance with the favour of the opposition. With such actors in the game, usually during the times of election the tactics of polarization intensify. This video can be read as an ideal representative of this polarization. The President introduces the video by giving an opening speech that blames other political parties for disrespecting the Turkish flag. It is necessary to point here that the flag and the national anthem, similar to ezan, had become repeated themes that AKP uses while reaching out to its masses after the coup d'état attempt. Accordingly, just before showing the video the President says "the previous day, at Taksim, Istanbul, under the leadership of CHP and HDP a group who supposedly got together for women's day, disrespected the call to prayer of Muhammad by whistles and slogans. Let's have a look."[79] The video starts with a scene of a flag burning, accompanied by an

[79] "Önceki gün Taksim'de CHP ve HDP'nin öncülüğünde, güya kadınlar günü için bir araya gelen bir grup Ezan-ı Muhammedi'ye ıslıklarla, sloganlarla terbiyesizlik ettiler. Şöyle izleyelim."

explanatory text that indicates that the footage is from Gezi Protests. Then we see a series of quarrels, videos and photos that exhibit the lack of Turkish flags in HDP and CHP meetings (Figure 2), or chants of Kurdish slogans in CHP demonstrations. Then we come to the night of March 8 (Figure 1). The footage of the march is shot from the top of a building at Istiklal, the gaze of the camera starts with the image of the mosque and then tilts down to the street full of women. The call to prayer and the sounds of the march are heard together. After that sequence we see photos from within the march. These images are of women who attended the march and took photos with the CHP provincial head, Canan Kaftancıoğlu (Figure 3). In every image Kaftancıoğlu's head is circled, in a way that posits her as a target, while a dramatic song plays in the background. The collage ends with a praise of nation and Islam, where the overlapped images of the mosque and the Turkish flag are accompanied by sela (Figure 2). The President then says that they as AKP present a *municipality of the heart* that welcomes everyone but *they* (meaning everyone in the video before the last part of mosque and sela) "by disrespecting our flag and ezan are attacking our freedom and future directly." "Be sure that they have never read the Istiklal Marşı,"[80] he continues, by indicating that those who disrespect the ezan also disrespect the nation and can never be a true citizen of the state. Then he tells a poem about the national flag and makes everyone repeat the words, "one nation, one flag, one motherland, one state."[81]

The mosque in the video seen during the Feminist Night March section is the aforementioned immense mosque that is being built at the Taksim Square. Its

[80] "Onlar bayrak ve ezana saygısızlık yaparak doğrudan istiklal ve istikbalimize saldırıyor. Bunların tek ittifakı ezan ve bayrak düşmanlığıdır. Bunlar emin olun İstiklal Marşı okumamışlardır."

[81] He ends with saying that he has a surprise for the "ladies". "I'm sorry guys the surprise is for the ladies. I am going to offer you some tea (keyif çayı) but I am not going to make it here, I will give you the tea and you are going to brew it at home." The surprise for the women is apparently a package of Rize tea and some extra domestic labour.

positioning in the video creates the illusion of it being the source of ezan, even though ezan comes from a very small mosque right next to it called, Taksim Mescidi. In the first seconds of the video, even though the actual source of the ezan is not visible, the viewer can still match the audio with the visual of a potential source. Women on the other hand remain invisible, we only hear their sounds. This is defined by Michel Chion as an *acousmatic sound*, a sound of which the source is unseen (Chion, 1994). This type of sound is usually used in mystery movies to create suspense before a big reveal (Kane, 2016). In this formation, the sourceless sound turns into a *sound object*, where the sounds of the march without a visible source gain a materiality by becoming an object in itself (Chion,1994). The objectification of the sounds of the Feminist Night March is critical here to underline. The sounds of women here are materialized as an independent agent and enter the representative regime of the video through this materialization. The mind, prioritizing the sight first, starts the recognition with the mosque. The sounds of women therefore, with the lack of visual source, become stuck to the vision of the mosque. When the images of the march enter the visual screen, this pre-established agency is matched with the bodies of women. It sets up a base where the combination of the sound and image is already biased. After this first shot, it becomes difficult to listen to women without this imposed anti-ezan positioning. The whole experience takes on a new meaning when stuck in the linear audio-visual representation. I will go into the analysis of this occasion as an issue of representation by discussing the details of the effects of audio-visuals evident in this event in the next chapter. In the following sub-chapters, I will only examine this event as an acoustic conflict where two sounds are put against each other. I will try to unravel why and how putting the sounds of

women in this conflict benefits the government and in what ways this positioning affects women protestors.

3.3 Naming and unnaming women activists

Immediately, what we see in the President's attempt of positioning women against Islamic values is a form of framing women by taking them out of context. By turning women activists into an ambiguous group that belongs to a certain alliance, the President deframes and reframes the experience of these women. In an article about representing mass movements, Setrag Manoukian (2010) argues that:

> Naming crowds on the street already implies the interpellation of a political subject, that is, a process of disambiguation that extracts one or more names (society, mob, mass, class, etc.) out of amorphous and nonhomogeneous gatherings on the streets, out of crowds that mobilize and disperse in a matter of hours. (p.12)

Keeping in mind that the President's definition of the attendants of The Feminist Night March as "a *group* who supposedly got together for the women's day" and thinking through Manoukian's remarks, one can also argue that what the President does is a simultaneous process of naming and unnaming. The lack of gender adjective in President's choice of words while referring to women protestors - rather than calling them feminists, or women protestors or women he chooses to say *a group, who supposedly got together for Women's Day*-, is an act of delegitimizing and ambiguating the crowd of women. While desexualising the protestors, this narrative also produces the woman ideal of the state by defining the limits that it cannot trespass. The question then turns into defining who a woman can be. By referring to women as *a group*, the President pushes women activists out of the category of women that matches the ideals of the state. He demands that these people can only be evil-natured civilians who are tricked by other political groups,

indicating to the extent that any woman who does not value ezan as much as he does cannot be regarded as a woman in the eyes of the state. The main threshold here that defines the womanhood of the subjects is the respect for ezan. Some women I have talked with define this tactic as a standardization of the enemy through alienation. Ece says:

> It is pure manipulation, just an attempt of marginalizing us. For example, the LGBTs are *de facto* seen as the others. He does not have to do anything specific about them. He just says that they are perverts and that is it. But what is he going to say to the fifty percent of the population, the women? Of course, he is going to say that they protested the ezan, so he can marginalize us.[82]

İdil, on the other hand, argues that this act of marginalization is not specific to women:

> Actually, there is nothing specific that he does against women here. What he does is the same, reproducing national values and Islam. When we look at the video there is CHP and Kurdistan, FETÖ and women. He does not differentiate these from each other. It does not see the women's movement as less valuable. It is not about that. It is a devaluation, no not devaluation, devaluation is too naive, it is a war of eradicating things that are harmful for its discourse.[83]

I believe both of these comments are valid. Positioning women against the sound of ezan is both a tactic against women who protest the patriarchal regime, and a very common tactic of promoting Islamic values as the characteristic of what defines an "us" for the state. It is critical here that the othering of women is done via the sound of ezan. The "not-us" group that women are categorized with are all referred to as the ones who do not respond to the interpellation of the ezan, who do not fulfil the new

[82] "Tamamen manipülasyon, sadece bizi öteki yapma çabası. mesela LGBTİ'ler zaten toplumda öteki görülüyor onlar için ekstra bir şey yapmasına gerek yok bunlar sapık diyor tamam bitti ama toplumun yüzde 50 si kadınlara ne diyecek bunlar ezanı protesto ettiler diyor ki ötekileştirilen."

[83] "Aslında burda kadına yönelik yaptığı özel bir şey de yok yaptığı hep aynı aslında milli değerler ve islam yani onu türetiyor her alanda bu videoda işte baktığında CHP var Kürdistan var FETÖ muhabbeti var kadınlar var yani bunları ayırmıyor yani kadın hareketini mesela daha az değerli daha kıymetsiz gibi ayırmıyor bu da yok yani söylemin içinde kendini kötü gelen her şeyi değersizleştirme ya değersizleştirme çok naif kalıyor yok etme savaşı."

definition of the "nation" (Ceylan 2017, p.26). Their failure of response makes them subjects of shame and disrespect in the eyes of the state.

For women, being exposed to this type of marginalization because of the feminist night march is not uncommon. The attempt of naming women protestors as order breakers, sinners and "bad women" is a reaction that surfaces each year. However, these attempts were always made through the banners that women carried. Women were scrutinized in social media or in newspapers because of the "extremity" of the messages they carried (Amargi, 2012; "Kadın yürüyüşü," 2018). The case of 2019 was the first time that women were also accused via the sounds they made. There is a nuanced difference between accusing women from what they have written and accusing women via their sounds. Going into this divergence is important in understanding the uniqueness of this acoustic attack.

3.4 Banners vs. sounds

Each year after the march, there is an online war going on about what women have written on their banners. Critiques of banners can be thought as pressure measurers, showing the most conflictual and normative topics of its time. As Naz states, they usually generate the reaction: "this is way too much."[84] Criticizing women via banners is easy; written placards are easily photographed, their messages do not change according to the subjective position of the viewer. Although they are easy targets, for those who do not experience the presence of women during the march first-hand, these banners are lacking in representing the general aura and the context of these messages. They only represent a particular verbal position, and they fail to transfer the physical, the emotional atmosphere of where it was carried which

[84] "O kadar da değil, bu çok fazla"

certainly adds further connotations to the message that the banner carries. When these banners are photographed, they gain a fixed position that can easily to be taken out of context or singled out for lynching. These photographs also usually include the face of the carrier, and news media images also use close ups of these women to single them out and expose them to the public, as if they are indicating that women cannot hide in a collective, as if they are trying to spread individual fears, hoping that women will say "what if that was me?" Banners operating through language are easy targets of criticism as they only transfer a sentence rather than a story. One cannot help but go back to the *phoné* and *semantike* divergence in the description of logos that Cavarero points out. Banners, falling to the semantic side of this binary, are more inclined to become subjects of political discussions by easily bypassing the political subjectivity of its enunciator. Criticisms of the banners are criticisms of the messages that they carry. Criticizing the sounds of the march, however, is a more direct attack on the subjectivities of women. It is an attack, not to the viewpoint of women but to their presence. As explained earlier, the cacophony of this march is a unique representative of the collectivity of these women. It is a sound that is generated from their stance against the patriarchal oppression and the joy of their existence. It is a sound of their will, their struggle, their existence, restating Schulze's description, "A multitude of focuses, of lives and forms of existing, biographies, desires, habits and idiosyncrasies" (Schulze, 2018, p.201). Therefore, reframing this sound and rewriting its context undermine the legitimacy of the protest and the subjectivity of women who attend it. It is a reaction that denies the vocalic singularity of those that are shouting by turning a deaf ear to their agencies, narratable and audible selves. It is not only an attack on their womanhood and their

protest, but “a fundamental misrecognition, the denial of one’s status as human” (Bassel, 2018, p.8).

3.5 Manipulating the cacophony

The sound of the protest, as aforementioned, is a bundle of noise that is made up of slogans, chants, and songs of women. The experience of this sound from within is described as a cacophony by women. Due to whistles and constant shouting, it is often a deafening and disorganizing sound, yet it is unique to the march itself, as without it or without its free flow the march is said to be lacking a certain quality. This sound also bears in itself a multitude, of different backgrounds, different political ideologies, different emotions; that is to say different voices. Women who experience the sounds from within the march acknowledge the multiplicity these sounds contain. They make sounds together, knowing that they have their differences. Oftentimes they come across some slogans or reactions that they do not fully approve of. They tackle this right there and start a dialogue over it - like Ayşe who shouted, “Hey! We are here too”- or they listen to it but not join as they value the fact that it is an open space where women get together with their differences. No matter the case, the sounds they make are made by their voices, the sounds as Ayşe says, that they value and continue to add their voices to. It represents the power of their collectivity, of them being able to exist together, to shout together, to resist together with their differences; causing a cacophony that has a symbolic harmony of its own. It is a ritualistic chant, a shriek, a combination of shouts, an *ololyga* against the general silencing of women. It is not necessarily a representative of a leftist, liberal or a conservative political opinion. It is the sound of women. “Half of the population”, as Ece states. When the President argues that these sounds are against

the ezan, what he does is an attempt to break this symbolic power of the cacophony of women. By indicating that these sounds are actually made to protest the ezan, the President attributes a particular additional political charge to the soundscape of the march. This in turn also erases the multiplicity of women and their initial reason for shouting together at the city centre. The Feminist Night Marches create a space that is safe for a woman to exist as she wants. It is a space where she can be free in her desires, free in the way she talks, the way she walks, the way she dances. And the sound of this space is the expression of this overflowing of desires. It is a ritual where women express their emotions, be open about their sexuality and celebrate life together as subjects from different backgrounds and political ideologies. Arguing that these sounds are created to protest the ezan is an act of enclosure over the free flow of the feminine desire. Here, as Meltem Ahıska remarks, the feminine desire should not be thought within the limits of its primary definition as the sexual desire of women: "The threatening female desire that provokes male violence concerns *Eros*—the libido that extends to beauty, knowledge, creative work, and politics, as well as corporeal bodies" (2016, p.227). Putting the sounds of women against the sound of ezan is a framing of the expressivity of this *Eros*, this libido of women that fuels their existence and the freedom in their choices and desires. The President's accusation manipulates the manifestation of the agency of women by creating a crack in the cacophony of women. It is an act of claiming territorial sovereignty over the desire of women. This desire is as aforementioned a productive and anarchic flow of energy that is not oriented toward an object, and that what makes it dangerous, as Deleuze and Guattari indicate, "no society can tolerate a position of real desire without its structures of exploitation, servitude, and hierarchy being compromised' (Deleuze, 1978, p.116). The overflowing state of this desire that has the potentiality

to make and do things has to be tamed for order to be maintained. It must be given direction to be controlled. Arguing that the collective desire of women is actually against ezan is a form of *directionalizing* the desire of women by creating a fantasmatic object. It narcissistically, shifts the desire of women to a direction of a sound that represents the territorial dominance of the government. By doing so, it also tries to fracture and tame the inherent diversity that this sound embodies by writing another narrative that silences women. This new narrative that directionalizes the overflowing desires of women by manipulating the cacophony of the protest fails purposefully to acknowledge the demands of women protestors, their political subjectivities, and their presence. Instead of listening to its presence this silencing narrative casts women a new role as enemies by taking them out of context and situating them in an unrelated storyline.

3.6 One nation, one rhythm

This new unrelated storyline also silences women through imposing more dominant rhythms on them. The famous story of the sirens comes to mind here. As half-woman half-monster creatures in Greek mythology, Sirens are known for their dangerous voices that call into its listener and kill them with giving extreme pleasure (Cavarero, 2005, p.104). In most cases they are mentioned when women and sound studies collide, but very few of these accounts mention the different versions of their defeat. The most famous defeat is by Odysseus who urges his men to put earwax into their ears so that they do not hear the Sirens and asks them to bind him to the ship to go through the dangerous acoustic site of the Sirens while also keeping his abilities of hearing. Another defeat, however, is achieved many years before, by Orpheus, a musician priest who defeats the Sirens with his own singing. Using his own voice

and his lyre, he silences and drowns the Sirens by creating a dominant soundscape that is safe for him and the ship crew, but intolerable and deadly for the Sirens (Hagood, 2019). These two different approaches to Sirens indicate two different regimes of power that are still performed simultaneously today. One is based on a lack of listening and the other on dominating the space of listening. [85]

As stated before, the government's ambition in leaning into Islam as an ideological guide resulted in the mushrooming of mosques. Ezan, emanating from these fortresses of the state's tools of interpellation five times a day, creates a daily rhythm that calls its listeners to do the deeds of the Islamic practices. I have offered to rethink these mosques as the symptoms of the government's ambition in creating an acoustic territory, working in a way similar to Orpheus' dominant soundscape. But one must not forget that mosques also work in the level of social interaction by creating communities. Batuman expounds on this issue by revealing the policies of the Directorate of Religious Affairs in turning mosques into spaces of culture and interaction to promote social bonds and dialogue. For this purpose, the imams of smaller villages were encouraged to visit neighbours in their houses or to create reading rooms, sports areas, teahouses, community clinics within mosques. This was a critical step for Turkey, as different to other countries with Islamic regimes, in Turkey; mosques are mostly used for prayers instead of being social spaces that unite the masses. Batuman reads these recent attempts as the Islamization of the quotidian, where the practices and values of the religion exceed the boundaries of religious

[85] The position of Odysseus is somewhat ambiguous here. Can we say that he offers a third form of power? A man who challenges the prophecy that declares no one who hears the sound of the Sirens will survive and if anyone does it will be the end of Sirens. Odysseus performs a simultaneous challenge and submission here. He becomes open to the sounds of the Sirens and its effects, but he blocks all his chances of fulfilling his desires. He in a way castrates himself. I leave the unique position of Odysseus out of this discussion. For more about Odyssesus' position: Adorno & Horkheimer's book Dialectic of Enlightenment (2002) pages: 25-50.

spaces and infiltrate the daily lives and practices of civilians by the hand of the state. Cihan Tuğal, in his article "Transforming Everyday Life: Islamism and Social Movement Theory" argues that this was a very central tactic of the AKP's utilization of Islam:

> The reorganization of time and daily activities, though seemingly "social" only, involves the hand of the state (and other major political institutions like municipalities), since actors are aware that institutional reordering of time is necessary for a durable reorganization of life (e.g., for a sustained reorganization of everyday activities around prayer times). (2009b, p.452)

For those who do not maintain a religious life, this Islamization of the quotidian or "denaturalization of the secular life" (p.452) takes on different meanings. The ezan that one hears five times a day, for example, can become a bad criterion while picking a new home if the mosque is too close and the ezan is too loud, or sometimes it can be a comforting sound that signals the upcoming day, or it can be an annoying sound that represents the government, but often it remains totally unregistered. If one does not pray five times a day, one gains certain obliviousness to the sound of ezan. As Lauren Berlant argues, in liberal societies this obliviousness is a form of freedom, where:

> Freedom includes freedom from the obligation to pay attention too much, whether personal or political—no-one is obliged to be conscious or socially active in their modes and scenes of belonging. For many this means that political attention is usually something delegated, and politics is something overheard, encountered indirectly and unsystematically, through a kind of communication more akin to gossip than to cultivated rationality. (2012, p.13)

In this regard, the President's accusation can also be read as a part of the Islamization of the quotidian project that attacks this obliviousness. What the President does with this accusation is in a way turning public space into a mosque courtyard (5Harfliler, 2012). It is religiously charging the public space where, in contrast, one should have the freedom to exist with one's obliviousness. Of course, the public space is never

free of certain national obligations. One can be criticized for being disrespectful, for example, if one does not drop everything and stand still for one minute during the sirens of the commemoration of Atatürk's death anniversary, or if one does not become silent and stand when the national anthem is playing. These sounds hold the power of cutting across the daily lives of civilians; they hold a power to dominate the national acoustic landscape. Similar to these sounds, ezan also has rules of its own, but these rules operate on a minor scale. Rather than the power to freeze the flow of daily lives of all citizens, these rules serve as indicators of the religious affiliation of spaces or subjects. Turning off the music during ezan, for example, means that that space is run by religious values, or joining the ezan with a prayer indicates the faith of the individual. But ezan never holds a power that can completely stop the flow of daily life especially in societies that harbour diverse cultures. It regulates bodies that respond to its hailing and for others it is only a sound that one hears five times a day. The President's accusation made women question the power of ezan over their political expressiveness. Although their protest was not against ezan, they were confused if they were expected to stop protesting or stop making sounds when the ezan was broadcast. "How can we stop protesting when ezan is there, it is five times a day, if you do not let people march, we will conflict it one way or another."[86] Ezgi said, others also stated that ezan is just a sound that plays in the background; it does not have power over their actions. Ayşe argued that the combination of ezan and protests were kind of a nice harmony before she realized that some sounds within the march became higher during the ezan. Some explained this heightening with the assumption that women raised their voices during the ezan because it is so loud that it suppressed their own voice. But what women did during the broadcast of ezan is

[86] "Ezan varken nasıl duralım, günde 5 kere okunuyor, insanları yürütmezsen illa ki çalışacağız."

beside the point. What matters is the fact that the President's accusation is an imposition of turning ezan into a national value that all civilians must recognize. Politicizing ezan, attacks the obliviousness towards it. Its recognition becomes the primary aim. The reaction towards it - affirmative or dissenting - does not matter as long as it is recognized. In this context, ezan becomes a sound that divides the masses, and divides the public sphere into two, a sound that creates poles and triggers emotions. The President, on the other hand, by taking on the job of politicizing ezan, *sticks* himself and the government he represents to its sound (Ahmed, 2004). Through this stickiness, ezan takes on the duty of spreading the ideology of the state five times a day to the ears of the civilians. In the meantime, it becomes harder and harder for those who want to stay oblivious to ezan or to remain detached from this stickiness and its political connotation, to listen to ezan freely.

The President states in his speeches that he longs for "one nation, one flag, one motherland, one state." One can easily add "one rhythm" to this chant. The government accepts all citizens to live by the rhythm that it sees fit. Subjects who are oblivious to this rhythm, who dance to new *counter-rhythms* are forced back into the rhythm or pushed out of it completely. For the state, which has built its ideology on this expectancy of a monorhythmic course of life, the polyrhythm of the Feminist Night Marches is an unacceptable anomaly that challenges the stability of the state. This type of togetherness, this type of collectivity is not tolerated. The video collage that adds women into a fantasy union under the title of "not-us" by defining them as a disruptive noise that breaks the singular rhythm of the longed ways and values of the ideal state demonstrates this intolerance.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have first discussed that the accusation of the President is a representative of a certain form of exercising power that aims to claim and protect a territorial sovereignty caused by the threatened masculinity of the state. I displayed how this attempt is gendered, leaving women in a more dangerous position as the sites where "the moral defeat of the enemy is written" (as cited in Souza, 2019, p.94). I have exhibited the connections between woman, her body, and natural/urban spaces within the neoliberal and biopolitical framework to reveal the fact that there is an affinity between how the government treats all of them as empty, ahistorical places that can be conquered for its ideological purposes or that can be put into use or be abused for empty notions of progress. I argued that the soundscape of the nation and especially feminine soundscapes are also milieus where this territorial power is exercised. I have further argued that AKP's neoconservative political agenda uses Islamic ideology and its apparatuses such as ezan, sela and mosques to dominate these fields especially after the coup d'état attempt. Within this context I then provided a short analysis of the video collage that the President displayed to support his accusation and argued that his accusation contributes to the aim of territorializing the overflowing desires of women protestors present in their cacophony by directionalizing and repositioning it against ezan. By overlooking/overlistening the womanhood of protestors - calling them a *group* -, by not listening to their voices, not registering their actual demands and desires, and inserting ezan as the only antagonist, the President reveals how the government uses a territorial and gendered power over the soundscape of the nation to cover its lack of tolerance for criticism and multiplicity and insert its desire for Turkey to be one nation/one rhythm that suits all its ideological agenda.

CHAPTER 4
LISTENING TO THE MARCH THROUGH THE VIDEO

Until now I focused on how our sensory order is acoustically gendered and how women challenge this order via making sounds together. I then unravelled how the state deals with this sound, and how it claims *territorial sovereignty* over the soundscape of the nation by dominating it with its own rhythms. In this chapter, I will first exhibit how the state uses the media to distribute its own rhythms via analysing the video collage the President displays. Then I will open up the discussion to a broader question and ask: how representations affect the way we relate to each other? Unlike the pre-internet era, the public demonstrations all over the world connect to and interact with each other at high speed. The audio-visuals of these public gatherings have the capacity of circulating over the world within the moment of their experience. Social media and the internet have generated a pool of audio-visuals that are open to be used by anyone who has the access to reach it. Although this openness is a source of freedom, it also constitutes vulnerability. Similar to the Feminist Night Marches, all over the world, audio-visuals of demonstrations are potential targets of manipulative political propaganda. Therefore, the connection between the Feminist Night March and its usage by the President also point to a broader discussion about mass demonstrations and their representations. Looking into this event as an example of a political demonstration whose representative audio-visuals are used for political propaganda allows a framework to explore the structural limits regarding the way we relate to each other's experiences. The concept of having a voice becomes complicated here, as how that voice will be listened to is beyond control. Arguing that this structural limit determines the conditions of how

we listen to each other, at the end of this chapter, I ask: what can we do to find novel ways to understand the true rhythms of each other's experiences? Can we redefine and re-embrace the act of listening in a way that reveals its potentiality to undermine this structural limit?

4.1 It is all about the perspective

The multi-layered nature of my encounter with the accusation of the President made its analysis as an audio-visual media rather difficult. The case includes several parts and was displayed in multiple mediums. From inside out: there is the real-life experience of the Feminist Night March, then there is the original video that shows the mosque and the march and the photographs taken from inside it, then there is the edited video collage that horizontally unites all these audio-visuals with other videos of other subjects from different times. This collage was then displayed in a real-life event, during the meeting in Adana through big screens. Moreover, the demonstration was also broadcast on TV with the video collage added on a small screen next to the President and finally there is the video that I watched through my laptop. The relationship between image and sound represented in media is usually analysed according to the medium it is displayed in. This makes the technological tools that create this medium, its history and its user-experience critical factors in determining the way the observer experiences the displayed sensory stimuli. For example, it is discussed that in movies the sound is bound to the image, the visual becomes the main object of sensory attention, however, in TV, the sound is discussed to be more privileged than the image (Obert, 2008). Then where does the complicated multi-layered case described above stand? The nuanced contemporary conditions of the consumption of audio-visual media today resist this categorical

relationship between sound and image when thought together with the mediums they circulate in. In this Russian doll of an experience explained above, I mainly aim to focus on the audio-visuals that are used to represent the Feminist Night Marches while keeping in mind the contexts they were displayed. I will discuss the relationship between sound and image in representations and focus on what these representations do.

During our interviews, many women argued that the President's accusation was based on a positional difference. "Inside, the experience is very different, you do not see it from above, you do not see it from that angle, nor can you hear the sounds like that. From outside, a cleaner (berrak) sound is heard but when you are inside the march, what you hear is a din (uğultu)," [87] says Nur to describe different visual and acoustic perspectives. The interior acoustic experience and the outer are, in fact, extremely different. Especially because of the whistles that almost blind you, many women did not even hear the ezan "I think it was heard from outside. From above, you can get all the sounds, it is not surprising, but inside..." [88] said Idil claiming that it would be rather impossible to hear the ezan from within the march. The analysis of the fact checking page www.teyit.org, that provides many videos from the march supports the fact that there were multiple acoustic experiences that night depending on the position of the listener. The ezan is barely heard in the videos that are taken from within the march, whereas the videos that are from above or near the march have a clearer sound of ezan.

[87] "İçeride tecrübe baya farklı, yukarıdan görmüyorsun yandan da görmüyordun, sesleri o şekilde duymuyorsun. Dışarıdan daha berrak bir ses duyuluyor ama yürüyüşün içinde duyduğun şey uğultu."
[88] "Dışarıdan duyulmuştur bence yukarıdan bir ses alabilir yani tüm sesleri, o çok şaşırtıcı değil ama içerde…"

Thinking about positions opens up stimulating discussions regarding the contemporary intersections of aesthetics and politics related to this case. Often discussed under the topic of representation, the way mass riots are captured and put into use can demonstrate many critical points about the significance of political riots in our technological age. Although the opportunity of creating and broadcasting your own representation through technological advancements has generated more potentials for self-expression, these images and audio-visuals and the subjects that they contain are in fact vulnerable as the bodies in resistance they capture. It is true that they are fixed representations of a certain experience; however, the unlimitedness of the context these audio-visuals are put into use makes them defenceless against manipulation. These photographs and audio-visuals can be cut, acoustically altered, montaged in ways that can erase the initial story that is portrayed in them by creating a brand-new narrative. As Manoukian (2010) argues:

> Once they have been uploaded on YouTube, these videos enter into the society of the spectacle, and their mixture of intensity and dispersion begins to evaporate as they are edited, reassembled, and transformed yet again into images cut off from experience. They are reframed in the context of news programs on television, embedded in blogs, quoted as links, reassembled with musical background or as fragments of longer narratives, remade as images that stand for something. (p.257)

The video collage that the President uses is the perfect example of this manipulation. Montaging together bits and pieces of audio-visuals, the collage puts forward a narrative that rewrites the story of everyone in it. It erases every experience it sets forth to represent. It pulls them off from their time, from their own truths and reinserts them into everyday life in a role that the government wants them to play.

For example, the photographs of women with Canan Kaftancıoğlu taken as a memento from inside the march were initially shared in Twitter from the official account of CHP İstanbul Provincial Directorate of Women's Branch ("Ezana

Hakaret," 2019). Independent from the intentions of their initial creation, they became a part of AKP's propaganda. When combined with other elements of the collage, they help to support the narrative, storyline, and the casualties that the collage-maker wants to portray. Before these images of Canan Kaftancıoğlu, the collage displays the video described in Chapter 3. As explained earlier, at the beginning of the video collage, the eye sees the mosque and not the women, but the ear hears both the sound of ezan and the sound of women. This creates a privileged recognition for the mosque-ezan connection as the eye and the ear always prefer to match. This connection is cognitively a more understandable stimulus; therefore it becomes the primary starting point of making sense of the video. Sounds of women, on the other hand, ripped from a visual source, hang in the air as an excess force field, doomed to be stuck to this *mise-en-scene* from a position of adjunction. When the camera tilts down and we finally see the women protestors from the drone perspective we say, "oh that is the source of the sound." However, the presence of women becomes framed with the previous *mise-en-scene*. The viewers are nudged in a way to think *women are protesting during the broadcast of ezan* instead of *ezan is being broadcast during the protest of women*. The photos of Canan Kaftancıoğlu from within the march displayed right after this video are then presented as testimonies from within. They are accompanied by a dramatic song, but the previous acoustic conflict continues to haunt these images. Even though as Nur explains, the interior acoustic experience and the exterior were very different, the montage of these photographs from the interior of the march right after the video creates a linearity that transfers the acoustic atmosphere of the previous video to the photos from inside the march, as if these two positions share the same acoustic experience.

This is created through a play between the senses of vision and hearing. In his definition of *acoustic space* McLuhan differentiates these two senses:

> [Acoustic space is] a sphere without fixed boundaries, space made by the thing itself, not space containing the thing […] [I]t is indifferent to background. The eye focuses, pinpoints, abstracts, locating each object in physical space, against a background; the ear, however, favors sound from any direction. We hear equally well from right or left, front or back, above or below. If we lie down, it makes no difference, whereas in visual space the entire spectacle is altered. (Carpenter & McLuhan, 1960, p.67-68)

Accordingly, the montage of the video manipulates the images and gives a direction to the centreless aural experience of the march. The image constantly attributes a source and a direction to the sound, taming it and putting it in a linear fashion. It creates a linearity that binds the exterior experience of the sound with the interior acoustic experience with the help of images. This linearity also contributes to the rendering the sound of the march as a directional acoustic performance against ezan. The nailing of sound to the image disables the borderless and open experience of the acoustic space of the demonstration. It blocks the transaction of the experience of an acoustic space and fixes the experience in a closed world of representation. In this new narrative, the sounds of the march, the overflowing of energy and desire evaporate in transmission.

4.2 Turning *presence* into *present*

The video, in this sense, presents a case of rewriting history via turning an experience into a representation. This is a common mechanism of the media. Henri Lefebvre (2009a) in his analysis of the media puts forward a dichotomy that best describes this technique: *presence* and *present*. Lefebvre underlines the dichotomy carefully while explaining the consequences of representation within the media, “The present simulates presence and introduces simulation (the simulacrum) into social

practice" (p.28). He argues that media creates a *present*, a fake sense of being there, happening through repetitive portrayals of simulations, "With the present, which is *there*, there is only exchange and the acceptance of exchange, of the displacement (of the *self* and the *other*) by a **product**, by a simulacrum" (p.28). Meaning, that the sensible, tangible, and affective of the presence contains a quality that escapes the grip of the forms of representation that only simulate the eventality of the experience. Lefebvre argues that this failure derives from the simulacrum's lacking focus on the rhythm of the innate temporal disposition of the *presence* of the experience. The representations that are created with the aim of creating a *present*, a false sense of being there, are indeed commodifications of the rhythmanalytical truth of the situation it aims to capture. Our everyday lives are mediatized and commodified through these simulacra that block the transmission of the *presence.* The *presence* in the women's march, the affective and the tangible rhythms of their bodies and sounds are turned into a *present* in the video created for the ideological purposes of those in power. The video clip in the collage offers a *present* for the masses to consume in a way that the government wants, as a testimonial evidence of the truth of the regime. It produces a new narrative and a new rhythm that cuts up and sticks together different spatio-temporalities. It does this manipulation on two different levels. Internally, the video of the demonstration only uses the time frame where the ezan is heard. And the overall collage mixes this time frame with other temporalities that belong to different contexts in a way that suggests that they are the beats of the same rhythm. As Lefebvre remarks, "producers of the commodity information know empirically how to utilise rhythms. They have cut up time; they have broken it up into hourly slices. The output (rhythm) changes according to intention and the hour" (p.48).

Moreover, we live in an era where digital fraud is very common. Be it Instagram filters or photoshopped images, modification culture has damaged the accountability of the audio-visuals that circulate in our everyday life. Images and sounds are easily detached, altered, remixed or repositioned. In this technological advancement, a photo is never taken for granted as evidence anymore, or the sound recordings of politicians can be dismissed by declaring that they are montaged. Many people consume audio-visuals within the media with the knowledge that they are the simulacra of a *presence* that is not completely revealed. In this situation, the representative power of audio-visuals becomes dependent on the creator-consumer relationship. Because what we see today is a duality of both an unyielding trust in the regime of reality that the circulation of audio-visuals weave and a constant distrust towards the audio-visuals that are displayed. In this duality, believing or not believing in a representation becomes dependent on the relation of the viewer/listener to the creator of the content or the owner of the medium. The question then becomes who chooses to listen to whom? Who listens to what and how? These are the critical questions that shape our political affiliations, our social interactions, and our capacity to have understanding and compassion.

4.3 Having a voice vs. making oneself be heard

Thinking of the conditions of listening is essential to problematize what it means to have a voice. The concept of having a voice is usually discussed in reference to the liberal democratic idea that every citizen has a voice to represent themselves just like a vote, a say, a control over the decisions that shape their lives. The phrasing of the concept having a voice, however, puts the responsibility on the bearer of the voice. Huw Hallam in his article on the neoliberal habits of listening offers to read this

issue from another angle. He uses the term "making oneself heard" (Hallam, 2012, p. 2). This usage recognizes the power of the speaker, but it also reveals the other side of the bargain, the listener. Hallam argues that making oneself be heard, or having a voice is always an interaction that requires double thinking from both sides. Hallam focuses on this discussion because he argues that there are lacks and excesses of listening in the neoliberal framework we live in. With the rise of technology and the usage of media, we are always already embedded in sound. We are exposed to sounds we do not wish to hear, which necessitates the creation and control of our own personal sonic spaces to keep us from these abuses (Flügge, 2011). This safe space can be generated through earplugs or simply via learned ignorance, protective negligence, or apathy similar to the performance of the crew of Odysseus. Either way, the question of having a voice or making oneself be heard requires a double thinking as Hallam argues to understand who is listened to under what conditions, or who can really have a voice. The conditions of who is allowed to speak, whose voice is heard shift according to power dynamics within the distribution of the sensible. And not only subjects' audibility, visibility and their connection to time and space is determined within this distribution, but also our senses, how we see and listen change according to the power regime. Therefore, making oneself be heard is a struggle on both sides, it is necessary to make sound *and* control its forms of consumption, and it is harder to create both of these conditions simultaneously when the audiovisuals of subjects are open to manipulations and the mediums in which presences are turned into present are regulated by hierarchical power structures.

4.4 Conditions of listening

When asked who listens to The Feminist Night Marches, Irmak told me that it is definitely an echochamber, "feminists listen to the Feminist Night Marches."[89] Ezgi also said, the demonstration is done by women for women. All the women describe the event, the sounds, and the voices of the night in their own terms. They go there with their own voices, connect their voices with others, enter a dim of the sounds of women and leave with certain experiences, emotions, and thoughts, maybe a little changed, but still maintaining their uniqueness. Is this multiplicity transmitted to the ears that listen to them? How do the ears that listen to them make sense of this event? To what extent they can understand what happens at these events? After her echo-chamber comment Irmak also said: "Of course other people listen to it too. For example, AKP media advisors also listen, but they listen with their asses. Their form of listening is for searching materials that they can pick with tweezers and turn it upside down to create propaganda for their masses."[90]The video that Erdoğan displayed at the Adana meeting is the perfect example of listening with a definite intention.

In his book, the *Art of Listening* (2013), sociologist Les Back argues, "Our culture is one that speaks rather than listens. From reality TV to political rallies, there is a clamour to be heard, to narrate, and to receive attention. It reduces 'reality' to revelation and voyeurism" (Back, p.7). Everyone struggles to be heard, but there is no guarantee that one is going to be listened to in the ways one intends. The inevitability of being heard differently than one intends to, is the unavoidable reality

[89] "Feministler feminist gece yürüyüşünü dinliyor."

[90] "Tabii başka insanlar da dinliyor. Mesela AKP medya danışmanları da dinliyor ama kıçlarıyla dinliyorlar. Onların dinleme biçimi böyle cımbızla çekip çevirip kendi kitlelerine propaganda yaratabilecekleri materyalleri aramak üzerine."

(or lack) of the democracy of our era. Especially in authoritarian regimes where speech is bound to the powerful, where "To take power is to win speech" (Bassel, 2018, p.151), the unpredictable reception of one's voice is caused by the ever changing power dynamics between the roles of the speaker and the listener. Being misunderstood is not the issue here. "It is one thing to be heard differently than one wants to be. It is quite another to be systematically and disproportionately distorted with stigmatising implications" (p.22). There remains a certain inaudibility of the silenced even when they raise their voices. "Political equality can result by seizing the speaking role and demanding that the powerful listen," (p.151) but in an environment where the ears are clogged, how can one make the powerful listen? Demonstrations are a part of the demand of being heard in one's own terms, but, as we see, in the case of Feminist Night Marches, the way that the government listened to the voices of women is experienced as a form of violence. The video collage and the accusation that comes with it, indicate that the listening form of the state is a form of listening that denies capturing the *presence* of the experience of this event on purpose. It fails to capture the acoustic transference that prioritizes the singularity of the voices of who are speaking, of the subjectivities within a collectivity who make the sound. Then what form of listening is necessary to acknowledge these unheard sounds?

Le Guin in *The Wave in the Mind* (2012) focuses on the vocal aspect of speech and the connective power of the transmission of voices. She argues human communication operates on several levels besides language; it also transfers culture, history, and feelings. You cannot fully understand the message when you only focus on the meaning of the sentences uttered; you also have to sense the tone, gestures, the timbre even.

These aspects on the voice focus on the relationality, the space created between subjects, or the intersubjective transmissions it enables; the hidden meanings in the voice that escape the grip of language. In the space and time of transference, the lines where I and the Other stand blurs. It forces the speaker and the listener to enter a somewhat intersubjective sphere where the mimics and the gestures start to synchronize. This is not, however, a loss of the self, it is more akin to a unitary of singulars, a form of sharing that opens up new potentials. It is a connection of particular ontologies in Cavarero's terms. It is an experience that recreates and dissolves the idea of the self at the same time. The speaker knows that there is an Other who listens to them and they also hear their own voice, but at the same time, they share an acoustic interaction that combines them with the Other who listens.

Jean Luc Nancy's theories on listening connect to this framework in a thought-provoking way. Nancy develops a very specific form of listening that he describes as *to be all ears* or *to stretch an ear,* as if a body becomes a full ear that is open to welcome every detail of the sound it encounters; every detail within or without language, to be aware of the lines between the lines, looking for meaning, to be on the edge of meaning. For Nancy, being all ears means approaching the idea of the self. Sounds continuously go from and within what we perceive as the body and in this echo, in this reciprocity, a space opens up. A space of tension, a relationship almost, that enables connections between the outside and inside. This space is formed by "the resonance of a return [renvoi]" (Nancy, 2009a, p.8). This is Nancy's closest definition of a self. Opening up the idea of self through an acoustic perspective generates a space of relationality in the form of listening. The following quote perhaps best explains the relationality listening gives birth to:

> To listen is to enter that spatiality by which, *at the same time, I am* penetrated, for it opens up in me as well as around me, and from me as well as towards me: it opens me inside me as well as outside, and it is through such a double, quadruple, or sextuple opening that a "self" can take place. To be listening is to be *at the same time* outside and inside, to be open *from* without and *from* within, hence from one to the other and from one in the other. Listening thus from the perceptible singularity that bears in the most ostensive way the perceptible or sensitive *(aisthetic)* condition as such: sharing of an inside/outside, division and participation, de-connection and contagion. (Nancy, 2009a, p.23)

In this form of listening a new pattern of existence that enables coexistence of dualities and discrepancies emerges. It is a different form of spatiality that makes its subjects vulnerable in a productive way. The form of listening Jean Luc Nancy formulates is a sensory state that opens you up, that leaves you exposed to new potentials, new meanings, new singularities. It is a process that weaves and unweaves the idea of the self at the same time. In this sense Cavarero and Le Guins's ideas on the voice go hand in hand with Nancy's conceptualization of listening. It is as if they call each other, the vocalic ontology of Cavarero and the surplus meaning in voice Le Guin points to, calls for a certain listening that can be found in Nancy's theories. When combined, these sensory concepts open up a political space full of new sensory orders, understandings, new communalities, new forms of being together as Rancière suggests; but it is necessary that the ears are synched with the voices in a positive and open way so that the message does not fall on deaf ears. In a state where mass mediums of communication are regulated by power regimes can we truly listen in a way that Le Guin and Nancy indicate? Can this form of listening go beyond the simulacra of the representations that generate a sense of *present* and actually capture the rhythms of the *presence* of the subject matter? This is a difficult question as when our conditions of listening are structured this way, it becomes challenging to maintain open ears and we tend to fall into established patterns of listening within the distribution of the senses.

The accusation of the President indicates a unique type of listening that is opposite to what is described so far. This type of listening does not necessarily hear the meaning of language in these marches. It is not a form of listening that listens to the banners, to the semantics of the march. It listens to the sounds of the march, the volume of the march, the rhythm of the march, yet again; it refuses to acknowledge the ontological uniqueness of the voices of the subjects who are creating this sound. It does not get in sync with these sounds; it is not an act of listening from a position that opens you up to potentialities. The danger of this form of listening comes from the ambivalence of it. It is not a form of listening that is fixed on what the other person is saying, or a form of purposeful listening where one intentionally only interprets the semiotic structure of the speaker's words. It is a listening form that pretends to be listening beyond, but still rejects to do so. It is a *closed* listening that restabilizes the self rather than opening it up. As the representative of the regime, the ears of the President are the ears of the state. Therefore, it is also a form of listening that preserves and strengthens the regime rather than opening it up to change, but the question of whether this is a listening that stubbornly shows a lack of attempt to hear its critiques, or a listening that is structurally limited is an open question. But it is not an open question that those in power must always work to find novel ways to keep their ears open.

If listening is performed as entering a vulnerable position, it can open you up to the connections which may change you. It is a structurally and personally difficult deed to maintain a neutral and eager ear in an environment where we are constantly bombarded with unwanted sounds. Especially through the media, that is constantly narrating and constructing a virtual *present* that shapes our understanding of the world around us, one learns the ways to create a form of filter that picks the sounds

that are favourable to hear. Nonetheless these filters, especially ideological ones, can also generate closed forms of relating and communicating, where there is only one directional transmittance. The one directionality of closed listening also disables any form of dialogue that may initiate novel forms of politics and understanding that can lead to change.

4.5 No more dialogue

To understand the importance of dialogue one must go back to the *presence/present* binary of Lefebvre. Lefebvre (2007) argues that, "Mediatisation tends not only to efface the immediate and its unfolding, therefore beyond the present, presence. It tends to efface dialogue" (p.48). Contrary to the present which is *there,* "*presence* is ***here*** (and not up there or over there). **With presence there is dialogue, the use of time, speech and action...** presence situates itself in the poetic: value, creation, situation in the world and not only in the relations of exchange" (p.28). The concept of dialogue is perhaps what distinguishes *presence* from *present* the most. Dialogue is an exchange of sound, a space of listening that can be thought alongside theories of Nancy, Cavarero and Le Guin. It is a sense of sharing, an exchange, a relationality of the rhythm that is innate to the *presence*. All these encounters are blocked when they turn into a *present*. When the media enters into the everyday via the lens of the regime, it also contributes to producing it in accordance with the dominant paradigm. It disables dialogue, it disables listening in the sense Nancy uses. And it also silences the subjects that it represents, "The subject says nothing, has nothing to say. If it objects, if it falls silent; it comes into conflict with itself, with no other result than to contest one of the rhythms of the world and its own existence" (p.48). It is evident that this is not a problem that is unique to the Feminist Night Marches. The lack of

presence in representations is a problem of our era. We connect with events, people and histories via secondary sources that most often are lacking in perspectives, and in tunes that enable a more thorough understanding of the matter we have encountered. Even photographs and videos which are most often regarded as representatives of reality are proven to be misleading. The mediatization of the experience has the power to efface the chance to interact, chance to negotiate, the ability to listen to each other in a way that leads to understanding and taking action. Let me state here that I am not advocating that all forms of representations are generators of closed listening. There are other forms of representation that enable the transference of an experience. It is indeed possible to create representations that go beyond their exhibition value and actually enable a form of transference that contains the elements of the experience or that enables different forms of compassion (Manoukian, 2010). These types, however, are rarer than the ones that circulate within the media on a daily basis. They are also harder to reach as they are mostly created within more alternative fields such as arts, personal blogs, or niche news media platforms.

Moreover, when there are videos -such as the one shown by the President- that make it into 6 O'Clock news and spread to millions through the media sources controlled by the state, where the distribution of the sensible is organized in a way that silences those who must be silenced for the sake of power, the space of self-representation, artistic forms of representation, the space of experience, *presence,* or dialogue shrinks. It gets harder to transfer the wanted messages and rhythms to the listening ears. Ears get more clogged and overwhelmed, with manipulated messages and tunes. It becomes harder to listen to the timbres, gestures within the voices of those who speak. In this one-way transmittance of voice, under the control of the power regime, "dialogue is reduced to dispute. Language becomes 'soliloquy': that

of the speaker who discourses alone, for the masses whom he does not see, but who see him …" (Lefebvre, 2007, p.49). The end of reciprocal interaction, the end of the chance of response fosters a one-way imposition of one dominant rhythm that suppresses every other sound that comes in its way. This one-way rhythm disseminated through the media controlled by the power regime assembles a sensory order for its own benefit, where the voices of women are rendered silent in the public sphere.

4.6 Conclusion: Rhythms for the grey ears

Going back to LaBelle's dancer who dances to counter-rhythms, one can say that the subjects of the feminist night marches are embedded in a pre-given rhythm yet constantly open up space to improvise, alter the order to generate new rhythms, "such moves poignantly locate rhythm as means for reordering place, for publishing against the inscriptions marked on the body, and as a production of another kind of public space" (2019, p.125). This dance is happening via a unique combination of body and listening. The body is moving in a pre-given rhythm, but also moving towards unheard rhythms. One question that one returns to from this discussion is who listens to the Feminist Night Marches if the ears that are targeted are not listening in the intended way? Who listens to these unheard rhythms that women dance to? Or with better phrasing: who *can* listen to these unheard rhythms? It is evident they fall onto many deaf ears and will probably continue to do so. This does not necessarily mean that no one hears them. This sonic ecology fosters new subjectivities, and potentialities that are not fantasies but real conditions that lack accessibility (Voegelin, 2017). Maybe they go into different kinds of ears that I did not mention, the world is not black and white after all. There are ears out there who

suspect things, who are ready to listen to new rhythms. Arzu defines them as "people in the grey zone," ears that are receptive to these new sounds. "The most successful thing that could come out from this event," Irmak says, is that these ears of the, "people who are not aware of the event but still have questions about the way they live, listen to us. Because their attention will turn into support if they listen."[91] Demonstration is a method of political expression with a long history, and its significance changes in each era as the disposition of our social interactions differ. It gains novel advantages and obstacles. Representation being both an advantage and an obstacle creates many questions about the power of demonstrations. Especially when thought through an acoustic perspective, investigating this issue triggers many intriguing points about the significance of the *presence* of Feminist Night Marches and the excesses and lacks within representations that we are exposed to. Trying to listen to them with an open ear will hopefully make us question how we encounter events that surround us, how we listen to things and how we respond to what we hear. After all listening is a question about how we relate to other beings and the world.

[91] "Bundan çıkacak en başarılı şey olaydan haberi olmayan ama nasıl yaşadığına dair soruları olanların dinlemesi. Çünkü onlar dinlerlerse ilgileri desteğe dönüşür."

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The discussion around the subject of inclusivity in the '80s created a foundation for the Feminist Night Marches and its growth. As a dissensus in itself, the Feminist Night Marches open up a space for women who cannot find a free vocal place in the mainstream representative spheres. Feminist Night Marches enable a form of coexistence where all women can raise their voice as political subjects. This is critical when thought in relation to the fact that the soundscape of our contemporaneity, taking its roots from the times of ancient civilizations and reconfiguring itself in the modernization period, is gendered in a way that silences or devalues the feminine voice, while the male voice remains as the sole actor of the political field. Women today are affected by this gendered soundscape of the power regime and get together in different forms to subvert this hierarchical sensory order.

Feminist Night Marches are, therefore, political attempts of reconfiguring this soundscape that generates hierarchical and gendered political and social structures, but these attempts are productive and disruptive at the same. The collectivity of women in the Feminist Night Marches creates an affective assembly that generates new subjectivities and new materialities of alternative ways of coexisting. As Ece says, these marches make women feel that they are "tangibly stronger".[92] The sound of the march that is composed of the voices of the women is the demand of this reconfiguration and manifestation of new material alternatives. This unique cacophony ensues a space that recognizes who is speaking rather than what is

[92] "Somut olarak güçlendiğimi hissediyorum."

spoken. It is a sound that manifests alternative forms of doing politics and being together. It is a sound that subverts the gendered conception of logos that cultivates patriarchal values in doing politics. Therefore, manipulating this sound is a way of recomposing the soundscape of Turkey in a way that reinscribes gendered forms of sovereign power. It is a political performance that re-establishes the hierarchical sensory order. It is a performance that reveals the gendered nature of the power regime and consequently the political power of women. Mary Thompson's words summarize this political power of women that I tried to unravel in this thesis so accurately:

> ...the most dangerous women are themselves noises in the system. They refuse the rule of representation and fail to match up to the constructions of femininity that have been made for them. They respond not by asserting an alternative model of femininity but by remaining resolutely unresolved and transitional. Such beings (or more accurately, becomings) are the elusive and unstable shape-shifters, the anomalies; they are the monsters, the mutants, sirens, and cyborgs. They are dangerous because they are not what we expect them to be, nor do we know the extent of their powers, what they might be able to do. They fail to be accounted for within the orders of identity, existing not outside, as such, but within the grey areas and liminal spaces. The sounds of these shape-shifters disrupt the boundaries of normative dualisms, which function as scaffolding for (masculine) conceptions of social order; they are threateningly noisy and potentially subversive because they expose the permeability of these boundaries, rendering arbitrary the dichotomies that they support. (Thompson, 2013, p.305)

The resistive and celebratory power within the combination of the sounds of women that refuse to be represented and tamed, pose a destabilizing materiality to the established power regime. The acoustic conflicts of the case of 2019 unravel how the state operates in a way to create a *territorial sovereignty* over the nation and its subjects by imposing a monorhythm that silences any subversive noises or soundings of possible worlds. Furthermore, approaching this case from a broader perspective reveals that this is not a one-time case that exemplifies the misogynistic attitude of the regime towards women, but a consequence of the overall gendered dispossession

of the power regime operating with a patriarchal mode towards all issues and subjects in order to establish a masculinist restoration (Kandiyoti, 2013). Patriarchal regimes operate on sets of binaries that foster relations of domination. The AKP regime which fuels its power from a similar set of values reveals its patriarchal tendencies in the similarity between its approach towards women, nature, and public spaces. Be it lands of wilderness, historical urban sites or rights and bodies of women, AKP's approach always contains a means to end perspective that disregards the materialities, histories, and values in order to turn everything into economic or political profit or an ambassador of the dominant ideology. The soundscape of the nation is not exempt from this approach, it too is regarded as a field to be dominated and protected from multiplicity of voices/sounds. In this framework, deriving from biopolitical, neoliberal and neoconservative ideals of the current state, the President's accusation reveals how the female body and her voice are once again targeted as the site where the regime marks its power. Enclosing the overflowing desires of women through directionalizing their centreless and limitless sounds within their protest reveals the processes in which the manipulation of the national soundscape is used to reshape the definition of the ideal citizen and ideal women as well as the rules of the public sphere for the ideological purposes of the state.

The audio-visual analysis of this case study was important in putting forward the idea that representations can contribute to the maintenance of the hierarchical distribution of the sensible. Especially by generating modified and commodified versions of experiences and putting them into use in a way that generates different ideologies and different regimes of truth. They contribute to forms of listening that are closed, that disable dialogue and mutual understanding. This thesis shows that certain experiences such as Feminist Night Marches require a form of listening that

is in line with the thoughts of Le Guin and Nancy; listening that opens you up and diffuses the sense of self for alternative potentialities of existing and being together. If one can be "all ears" one can hear the sounds that call for alternative ways of coexisting. In music, there is a concept called wolf tone that is mostly heard within bowed instruments. It is an unwanted wobbly sound that destabilizes the intended tune. It occurs when "the resonant frequency of a vibrating string and the resonant frequency of the vibrating body of the instrument interact with one another in such a way as to produce a new, unwanted beating tone that occurs simultaneously with a note being played" (Wolf Tone, 2002). Similar to the wolf tone, sounds of women protestors, and many others like them, which are often rendered silent, are ever present, waiting to create unwanted resonances to disrupt the imposed harmony.

CHAPTER 6

EPILOGUE

After writing chapter one, I attended the Feminist Night March Of 2020 in order to make recordings and compare and contrast my experience with what I have heard and written so far. I took more than 10.000 steps that day. The map below shows the route of those steps (Figure 5.). Places that serve as nodal points in my memory are marked with letters. Below, I revisit each mark in an attempt to take you with me in the task of remembering this experience.

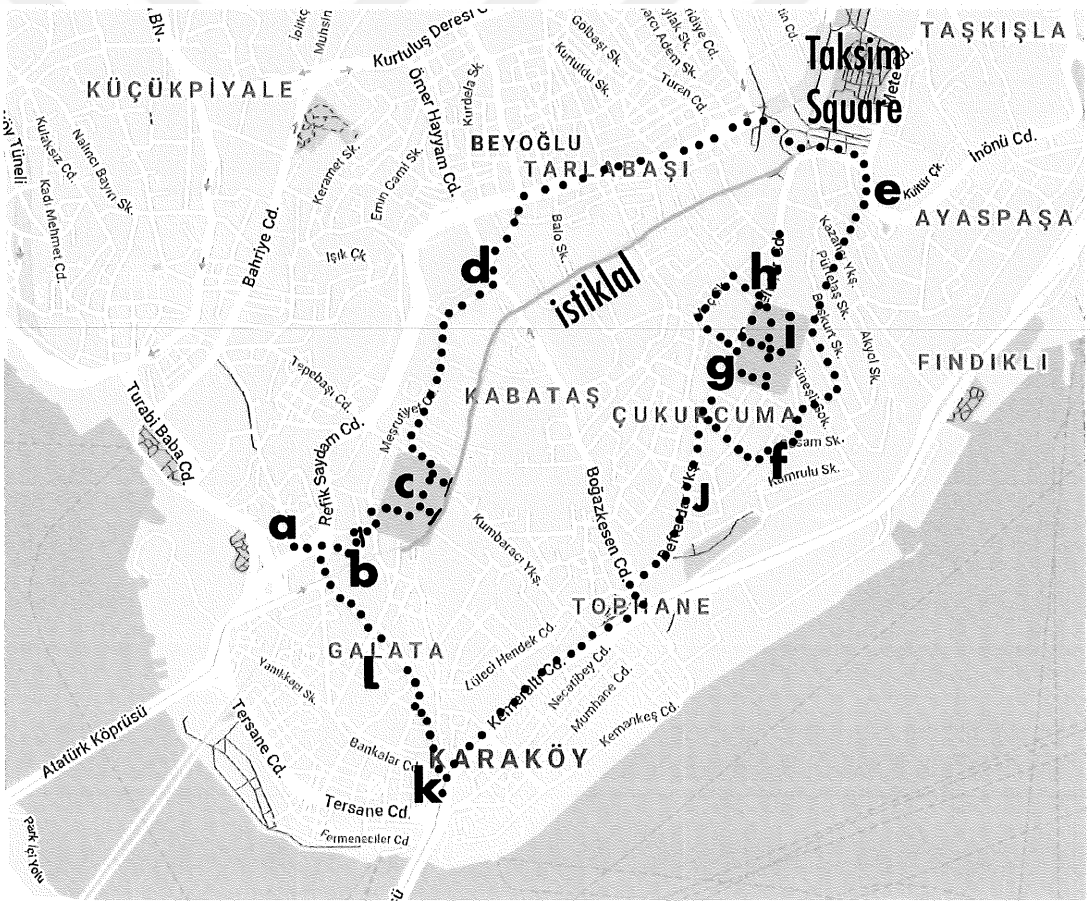


Figure 5. The map of my route, 08.03.2020

On 8 March 2020, Women's Day, the Governor of Istanbul announced that the march is banned from Istiklal. All metros leading to Taksim Square and Şişhane/Galata (two ends of Istiklal Street) were closed. All buses that intersect these

roads were re-routed, the tram and the funicular that connect these roads were stopped.

The call for the march was at 19:00, we left the house at 16:30.

a. The beginning

We go to the parking lot close to Şişhane, thinking it would be easier to enter the march from the endpoint of the march. I am nervous and excited at the same time. It is possible that there will be violence during the march. I get anxious that the recording equipment I borrowed from my friend might be harmed during a potential attack. I ask my partner to record the march from outside with this equipment, from the exact location where the infamous video I discuss in the thesis was shot. I plan to go in the march and record the sounds from within with my iPhone. My plan is to compare these two recordings after the event. I am curious how the sound of ezan and the sound of women clash. I am curious about the decibels of these two sounds and how recordings change according to the positioning of the recorder/device. My plan, however, I soon realize, will not happen.

b. The barricade and the trick

As we approach Istiklal, I spot a crowd. I then see the police, behind a safety strip, blocking the entrance of a street that eventually leads to Istiklal. I see angry faces coming back from the police barricade, and I see several people being let in after showing some kind of documentation. I improvise and buy two tickets for a movie screening close to the starting point of the march, assuming that I can trick the police with an apolitical cause. We approach the barricade and negotiate with the police as calmly and cluelessly as possible, it works, we enter the street.

c. The liminal space

The tension in front of the barricade immediately subsides when we pass it, and a new atmosphere reveals itself. As we walk towards streets that open up to İstikal, we see people sitting at taverns and bars drinking rakı, laughing, chatting, or people sipping their coffees in the garden of Starbucks. They all look normal, too normal perhaps; a typical weekend energy is flowing in the air. It feels like we have entered a buffer zone, a context-less and ahistorical temporality. A liminal space where everything will always remain unaffected by the things going on outside, a snow globe? I try to blend in, try not to disclose my inner motives. I smile politely at the faces that make eye contact with me. From their expressions I realize I am not doing a good job at being a relaxed, random consumer/participant of this spectacle. At that instant I catch other worrisome faces - which I assume to be similar to mine - and follow them. Together, we approach another barricade that blocks the actual entrance of Istiklal Street. I see Istiklal behind the barricade, although I have never seen it this empty. Only a lost tourist family - which I soon realize have connections with the Saudi Arabia Embassy - some self-righteous looking policemen, and a Lebowski looking resident walking his dog are occupying one of the busiest streets of Istanbul. The policeman we negotiate with rejects our demand to enter the street with a smile from behind the barricade, almost feeling sorry for us. They suggest we try other checkpoints closer to our movie theatre so we leave this liminal space as we realize we were knowingly led into a dead end- nothing will happen here, nothing will change.

d. Tension rises

We start to walk up to Taksim Square through Tarlabaşı. And soon the smiling faces of the police and relatively calmer negotiations give its way to shouts, curses and anxious bodies. Policemen are joined by armed security forces here. Lots of guns, armoured vehicles, helmets, shields are floating around. I hear instructions coming from walkie-talkies creating angry and smirking faces. The tension rises as we get closer to Taksim Square, no exceptions are made at the checkpoints here. Bodies are restive. There is an unseen energy flowing towards the barricades, but its physical manifestation is blocked. Only workers whose employers come to rescue from within with a working permit are allowed in. I wonder who these people will provide service for once they are in. It is, after all, a ghost town, a snow globe beyond the police barricades. They will be stuck there, with other people who are also stuck there, not being able to move beyond the cage created between outside and inside. We continue walking; I look at Twitter, talk with friends and learn that women are gathering at Sıraselviler Street, the biggest street that opens up to the junction of Taksim Square and İstiklal. We change our course.

e. The magical arc

Entrances to Sıraselviler close to Taksim Square are unsurprisingly blocked, we start to walk towards Ayaspaşa, hoping there will be a way from below to reach Sıraselviler. We are not alone, many are walking with us, searching for a crack. The area between the end of Sıraselviler and Ayaspaşa is formed by several parallel streets. When you look from Google maps, these roads do not intersect, but actually there are stairs that cut across these streets creating a fast route for pedestrians. The entrance of this stair-based route starts with a Japanese arch that to this day I do not

know the cause of existing. As we walk towards it, this arc opens up to us like a portal that we were all waiting for. It feels like the arch is an instalment from a video game, a shining portal that signals the entrance of a secret space that the player must enter for a final task. The lack of barricade in front of this arch creates a vacuum effect and pulls all of us in like a black hole with an increasing velocity.

f. Rhythm fastens

Everything changes after we enter through the arc. We instantly become a crowd, we start to walk, run, speed walk, skip, all at the same time. The rhythm fastens, we take the stairs in twos, our bodies are restless, eager, determined, we search for the fastest route, we gaze at each other, we are in this together. This is the moment when the dramatic song would start if we were in a movie. We start to hear chants from afar as we get closer to Sıraselviler. We walk/run/jump/dance towards the source of this sound.

g. Entering the march

(Audio File 1.)[93]

I arrive at the entrance of the march. Sonorous bodies are side by side. I slow down, try to return to my regular rhythm to start recording. I pass through armed vehicles, undercover cops, and armed security forces as I approach the march. I hear the sounds as a bundle of noise, a din that is hard to decipher. When I approach the march further, I begin to hear individual voices. I hear a trans woman pull her friend, who is rather hesitant to enter the march. Encouraging her, "Hey, we are women too!

[93] https://soundcloud.com/user-306146817/audio-file-1-as-i-approach-m4a/s-DKSNj5FgnfG?in=user-306146817/sets/audiofiles-for-thesis/s-98FccoGDNjj

Come, don't exaggerate let's go inside"[94] I hear an old man shouting, trying to sell whistles and tambourines to the protestors. I am surprised by the commercial façade of the march I have not encountered before. These singular voices melt into a more uniform chant as I move further, but immediately after I enter the march I see one of my interviewees, one of the ones from the organization committee. I stop recording. She is with friends, on the corner of the march where they can both join the sounds of the march and talk amongst themselves, almost like a welcoming committee. I chat with them a little then I decide to go into the march to return to my recording duty.

h. Sounds of the march

As I enter the march I am immediately blinded by the sounds of whistles. I can almost touch the vibrating throats of women shouting. My skin feels more tangible somehow, surrounded by an unseen force field. I am reminded of McLuhan, sounds do come from 360 degrees, in a centreless, boundary-less fashion, but in a way, my own listening creates a centre for me, I become an anchor of this chaotic experience. I feel that I am the centre of this boundary-less din, but I also feel I am part of this deafening cacophony. Is this me approaching a sense of self in the sense Nancy suggests? The volume is too high though, so much so that the sound materializes, crystallizes around and within me. It is heavy; it weighs on me, but also surfaces a vibrational potentiality. Similar to a runner that is waiting for the start gun, my body is in this tension, but somehow, I am not waiting for the gunshot, I own this tension, it does not matter if I hear the gun or not, or I run or not, the feeling is more akin to being charged. I feel as if I am plugged into a charger in this tension. In this

[94] "Biz de kadınız ayol" , "Gel sen de abartma içine girelim"

chargement, I hear voices of women around me more, although I also hear the echoes of the women who are shouting from afar. Laughter comes and goes, melodic chants, slogans, drumbeats come and go. I give myself to the rhythm, to these acoustic waves, to the reverberations. I join occasionally, but it becomes harder to listen to everyone when I am shouting and I want to listen fully, so I remain silent. As sounds resonate with me and within me, its trembling force in my body surfaces a familiar fear that urges me to spot potential escapes in case of an attack. That undercurrent urge is always there unfortunately, a learned state of being on the edge in Turkey.

i.Helicopters

Audio File 2.[95]

After a certain time, the urgency to escape this tremble prevails, I enter a rather empty street, and I see another interviewee, her familiar face calms me, we talk a little, she is smiling, happy, I can see it in her eyes, hear it in her tone, she is charged too. I leave her and go to a parallel street to listen to the sounds from afar, taking this opportunity as a chance to understand how the march is heard by nonparticipants close by. That is when the helicopter comes. It starts circling around the march, its sound competing with the sounds of the march. There you go, I think, another acoustic conflict. The feminine soundscape is not left alone again. It is interfered with, dealt with, messed with in an attempt to suppress, silence and demean. Aerial surveillance, the all-seeing eye, looking from above also manages to dominate the soundscape. The sound of the helicopter blocks the dissemination of the sounds of the march immediately, when the helicopter is near, I can't hear the march from the parallel streets. Women's voices are silenced by the sound of this territorializing

[95] https://soundcloud.com/user-306146817/audio-file-2-from-outside-with/s-Hvf7XVv8yZI

surveillance. I wonder how the sound of the helicopter is heard from within the march, so I join the women walking towards Karaköy.

j. Invitation

Audio File 3.[96]

The sound of the helicopter is heard less from within the march. Women occasionally raise their voices when the helicopter comes, some curse at it, some just shout louder, but they mostly remain unconcerned. Instead, they shout to women who contribute to the march from their homes. They say "come come come" to them while looking up, their hands lifted towards women at windows. I cannot help but interpret this as an invitation to the helicopter to join them too, to listen to them knowing that from that high up, immersed in nothing but its own sound, the helicopter cannot hear anything that they, the women, say.

k. New actors

We stop walking as we reach Karaköy. Women stop the traffic, pause the flow of ordinary life, and continue their protest. Even there a peculiar acoustic assemblage takes place. Some drivers join the protest with their horns, and others protest the protest with their horns. The ones who are supporting do this rhythmically, trying to join their beats and leaving in between times where only women are heard, whereas the ones who protest just keep pressing their horns in an aim to suppress rather than support. Women remain there, they arrest daily life, they sing, shout, whistle, dance,

[96] https://soundcloud.com/user-306146817/audio-file-3-from-inside-with/s-JsYCPrgoo0t

laugh, chant and assert, “We are not shutting up, we are not afraid, we are not obeying!”[97]

l. Comparison

As we leave the march, I listen to the recordings I have made and realize it is nothing compared to what I experienced just then. In the interaction between me and the recording device, I am in control. I decide the volume, I decide when to listen when to stop, whereas in the march, there is a feeling of surrender. You give in to the sounds that surround you and the volume is so high that your body trembles, you are exposed to the materiality of this immense cacophony. The bodily effect is completely lost in the recordings. A feeling regarding an intriguing anomaly passes through when you hear women shouting through a recording, but the context evaporates. The collectivity and intersubjective relations become silent. It is one thing to be in the march, to listen to it physically and another thing to listen to it from a device. The affective state of the aurality of the march is enclosed, the free-flowing boundless sounds are trapped, directionalized in the recordings. The march, on the other hand, is a simultaneous motion of convergence and dissolving. When you are in it, sounds coming to you and from you open you up to possibility. It is an invisible, an incomplete and insurmountable, yet very tactile and real possibility. A variation of reality perhaps that is present but unheard, unseen, unrealized. It is a possibility of a way of being together, communality, a way of governing. It is there, right there at the tip of your fingers, within your reach, but it is ephemeral - for now - it comes and goes, formulates, and dissolves. The sounds of the march reverberate this potentiality, surrounding subjects within its reach with the intensity of the

[97] “Susmuyoruz, korkmuyoruz, itaat etmiyoruz!”

materiality of this possible world. Feminist Night Marches are attempts to make a possible world where women are not murdered, where they have equal rights, where they are free in being who they want, behaving how they want, desiring whatever and whoever they want. It is an attempt of many that aims to sound the yet unthinkable, unrealizable variation of reality that must and will eventually become the present. However, in the meantime, it makes me think: where do demonstrations stand in making these demands be heard within the hierarchical order of the social? What happens to this possible world when it is transferred to the ears of the masses by being recorded, visualized, framed and montaged? Can we really listen to possible worlds within the march or within other happenings through representations? Even without a representation, even when one is walking by and is exposed to the sounds of these possible worlds, can one truly listen to them? In a world where there are millions of voices and sounds that remain unheard it is indeed a meticulous and demanding work to listen to possible worlds, but it is definitely not impossible, and we must start from somewhere so why not start from opening up our ears a little bit more?

APPENDIX A

AUDIO FILES FROM THE 2020 ISTANBUL FEMINIST NIGHT MARCH

File name: (Audio File 1.) As I approach the march.m4a

Description: This recording is my first recording. It includes me walking into the march; one can hear the sounds rising as I move towards the crowd. Recorded with an original Apple earphones microphone via Voice Memos app on an iPhone 6, on 08.03.2020 at 19:19 in Istanbul.

File name: (Audio File 2.) From outside of the march, with helicopter.m4a

Description: In this recording one can hear how the sound of the helicopter suppresses the sounds of the march for those who are not at the center of it but in other places near it. I was two parallel streets away while I recorded this. Recorded with an original Apple earphones microphone via Voice Memos app on an iPhone 6, on 08.03.2020 at 20.01 in Istanbul.

File name: (Audio File 3.) From inside the march, with helicopter.m4a

Description: You could also hear the sound of the helicopter from within the march, although the effect of it is mitigated in this recording compared to the real-time experience. Recorded with an original Apple earphones microphone via Voice Memos application on an iPhone 6, on 08.03.2020 at 20:15 in Istanbul.

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