

RETHINKING SECOND WAVE FEMINISM: A POSTSTRUCTURALIST
APPROACH TO THE LATE 1980S' FEMINIST MOVEMENT IN TURKEY IN
THE CASES OF FEMINIST AND KAKTÜS MAGAZINES

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Prof. Dr. Meliha Altunışık
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Prof. Dr. Ayşe Saktanber
Head of the Sociology Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Inst. Dr. Barış Mücen
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Prof. Dr. Alev Özkazanç (Ankara University, PSPA) _____

Inst. Dr. Barış Mücen (METU, SOC) _____

Prof. Dr. Ayşe Saktanber (METU, SOC) _____

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last name : Demet, Gülçiçek

Signature :

ABSTRACT

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Gülçiçek, Demet

M. S., Department of Sociology

Supervisor: Inst. Dr. Barış Mücen

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This thesis analyses the second wave feminist movement of late 1980s in Turkey with the poststructuralist feminist methodology. Based on the interviews with the feminist circle of the magazines of Feminist (1987-1990) and Kaktüs (1988-1990), the resignification of the term “woman” is analysed as a performative politics as it is conceptualised by Judith Butler. During the resignification of the term “woman”, new ways of doing politics and new themes of politics are analysed as simultaneous effects of this process.

Keywords: Second Wave Feminism, Performativity.

ÖZ

İKİNCİ DALGA FEMİNİZMİ YENİDEN DÜŞÜNMEK: FEMİNİST VE KAKTÜS DERGİLERİ ÖRNEKLERİNDE TÜRKİYE’DE 1980 GEÇ DÖNEM FEMİNİST HAREKETİNE POSTYAPICALCI BİR BAKIŞ

Gülçiçek, Demet

M. S., Sosyoloji Bölümü

Danışman : Öğr. Gör. Inst. Dr. Barış Mücen

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Bu tez Türkiye’de 1980lerin geç döneminde ikinci dalga feminizmi postyapısalcı feminist metodoloji ile analiz ediyor. Feminist (1987-1990) ve Kaktüs (1988-1990) feminist dergi çevreleriyle yapılan görüşmelere dayanarak, kadın kategorisinin Judith Butler’ın kavramsallaşması olan yeniden anlamlandırılması performatif bir siyaset olarak analiz edildi. Kadın teriminin yeniden tanımlanması sırasında yeni politika yapma yolları ve yeni politika yapma temaları bu sürecin eşzamanlı etkisi olarak analiz edilmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: İkinci dalga feminizm, Performatiflik.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The feminist movement of the 1980s in Turkey is generally referred to as part of the second wave of feminism, similar to the Western context (Tekeli, 1998; Sancar, 2011, Timisi & Gevrek, 2011, Grünell & Voeten, 1997).¹ One of the distinctive characteristics of the second wave feminism, among others, has been its strong emphasis on “secondary position of woman” in social/political domains with the claim that the only way to eliminate the subordination of woman could be possible by developing the independent “woman’s perspective” (Koç, 2013, 199; Ovadia, 2009, 72; Düzkan, 2011). Among many characteristics of the second-wave feminism, I specifically discuss this point, because the critique of the poststructuralist feminism, which is referred as one of the orientations in the third wave feminism towards the second wave, has particularly targeted at this claim (Butler, 1993; Butler, 2007; Scott, 2011; Butler & Weed, 2011). According to the poststructuralist feminists, the claim of the emancipation of woman on the basis of producing an independent woman’s perspective relies on an essentialist construction of gender categories. Judith Butler, one of the leading figures of this third wave feminism, argued that the idea of “woman’s perspective” is founded on a binary framework of women and men. This is, according to her, a very sharp, exclusionary and normative understanding of the category of woman, which leads to a fixed and

¹ Use of the term “second wave” distinguishes the feminism of 1980s from that of the late Ottoman and early Republican women’s movement, which is considered to be first-wave feminism in the context of Turkey.

reified position for women (2007; 38).² Its normative construction itself becomes a problem since it always excludes certain womanhoods and sexualities (Butler, 2007).

The “waves” seem linear; the second wave using the category of woman, and the third wave criticising it. But is this the case? In other words, does this mean that they follow a linear timeline through which the latter destroys the former? As an alternative approach, in this thesis I attempt to analyse the second-wave movement with the methodological contribution of the poststructuralist feminism. Rather than focusing on Butler’s critique of the essentialist construction of woman category, the aim of this thesis is to analyse the production of the category of woman and its transformation into politics in the specific context of the feminist movements in the late 1980s in Turkey by using Butler’s theory of performativity as a heuristic tool to understand this process. To analyse this process, I focused on the *Kaktüs* and *Feminist* magazine circles which are considered to be two of the most significant and influential political forces in feminist politics in the late 1980s in Turkey. My analysis is mainly based on in-depth interviews with those women who were actively involved in these magazines in order to understand through which specific relations, experiences and practices the category of woman was produced and translated into politics in that particular context. I follow three questions to explicate this process in my analysis.

First of all, it is important to point out in which relations and experiences the category of woman was regulated in the leftist politics prior to the 1980s. This is an important question to understand the dynamics of the transformation of the category of woman because many practises of the magazines of *Feminist* and *Kaktüs* are based on the critiques to leftist norms on womanhood. The second question is how the meaning of the category of woman has shifted in the second wave feminist movement. This question is important for my analysis to find out how in multiple forms the category of woman has been re-defined and how it has turned into a political category. The third question is how this change in the meaning of the category has altered the means of doing politics. This question is crucial to see the

² Another critique of Butler on that issue is the distinction between sex and gender, which also refers to a binary construction between nature and culture (1993; 2007).

fact that the impacts of the redefinitions of the category of woman is not only limited to the category itself, but opens up new ways of doing politics.

1.1. General context of second wave feminism in Turkey

Many scholars argued that it is no coincidence that the second-wave feminism in Turkey emerged in the 1980s (Sancar 2011, Sirman, 1989; Tekeli 2010b; Arat, 1999), by pointing at the significant effects of the September 12 military coup on political life. The military coup led to the closure of many political organizations, trade unions and associations, and many right and left wing political militants were arrested and suppressed. Many political activities were restricted by the military coup, and by the 1982 Constitution afterwards. As a result, especially the socialist movements were seriously damaged (Özçürümez & Cengiz, 2011, 24). However, somewhat ironically, the second wave of the feminist movement started to emerge in this atmosphere. According to Tekeli, the decline of the leftist movement led some women to start questioning the leftist politics (as cited in Özçürümez & Cengiz, 2011, 24). This new group started to question the apparent lack of any interest of the leftist movement in woman's issues, with the socialist revolution being the main aim. It has been claimed that when some women started to raise this argument in Turkey at the beginning of the 1980s, they were doing so under the effect of Western feminism; and indeed, some of those that were raising their voices were educated-middle class women (Tekeli, 2010b) with some connections in the United Kingdom and France (Sirman, 1989).

By 1983, certain publications, public meetings and consciousness-raising groups of feminist women had been launched in İstanbul and Ankara, and in that year, a small group of feminist women were asked to write in a weekly literature magazine called "*Somut*" in a section entitled "*4. Sayfa*" (The Fourth Page). The articles of this magazine were published between 4th of February and 27th of May in 1983. This was the first organisation which was held by a group of feminist women after 1980s³.

³ All articles of the *4. Sayfa* is republished in its 30th year. See Yazko Somut 4. Sayfa: İlk Feminist Yazılar.

An İstanbul-based group named *Kadın Çevresi* (Woman's Circle) was organized as a feminist group with the status of a company to circumvent the restrictions on political organisations that were put in practice following the military coup. This woman-only group organised consciousness-raising groups, and at the same time published four books and both the *Feminist* and *Kaktüs* magazines (Koç, 2013, 194)⁴.

The political activities of these groups, *Kadın Çevresi* and some other independent feminists were based on the organization of campaigns with the aim of reaching the public sphere. One of the most important campaigns organised at that time was the street protest carried out to highlight the issue of violence against woman in 1987, which was the first legal protest after the 1980 military coup.⁵ Around 3,000 women took part in the protest, which cried out the slogan "Women Exist".

Between 1987 and 1990, which is the period focused on this thesis, three main organisations are worth noting. The first one is the launch of Feminist magazine, which is published seven issues between March 1987 and March 1990. In the second issue of the magazine, it is said that they had printed 2,600 copies of the first volume of the magazine, and all had sold out, leading them to print 3,000 copies of the second issue (Grünell & Voeten, 1997, 222). According to Handan Koç, one of the participants of Feminist magazine, nearly all of the women involved in the magazine were from the *Kadın Çevresi* group (2005, 102). The circle of Feminist Magazine is known as a radical feminist group even all the members did not actively support this tradition⁶.

⁴ In the documentary of İsyân-ı Nisvan, these period is told by the women who were active members of *Kadın Çevresi* (Özman, 2008).

⁵ The reason why this protest was allowed to take place is sometimes thought to be based on women not being seen as a "danger" to the existed authority.

⁶ For an detailed analysis with an emphasis on 1990s women's movement see Beşpınar's Article named *Women in Turkey: Caught between tradition and modernity* (2011)

The second important organisation after 1987 was the launch of Kaktüs magazine, 12 issues of which were published between May 1987 and September 1990. The full name of the magazine was “Socialist Feminist Kaktüs”, and the articles were mainly feminist replies to Marxist theoretical inquiries and reactions to certain contemporary issues. Kaktüs Magazine circle had organised common feminist activities with the Feminist Magazine circle; however, they also aimed to connect with socialist movement in order to introduce feminism to them (Koç, 2009; Savran, 2009).

Thirdly, there are also some women’s organisations which have strong connections with certain leftist fractions. These groups do not declare themselves as feminist groups; however, they include both feminist women and non-feminist women. Women’s Association against Discrimination (*Ayrımcılığa Karşı Kadın Derneği*) and Women’s Culture House (*Kadın Kültür Evi*) were established as independent feminist organizations. Although the main group of women sought to follow the socialist tradition of Aydınlık and TKP, they are both known as being Atatürk’s ideas followers in a socialist perspective. Among the other women’s groups were the Democratic Women’s Association (*Demokratik Kadın Derneği*) (comprising women of the Direniş, Devrimci Yol and Kurtuluş fractions of the leftist movement) and the Women’s Association for Democratic Struggle (*Demokratik Mücadelede Kadın Derneği*) (Bilmiş, 2006, 66). Some of the women in these organizations defined themselves as feminists, but their main focus was the socialist movement and they were more interested in contemporary politics in Turkey. In contrast, the women of Kaktüs and Feminist magazines sought to promote a theoretical and political feminist conceptualization, in addition to contemporary politics (ibid, 66-7).⁷ Timisi and Gevrek mention that both magazines are significant resources for tracking the feminist movement of the 1980s Turkey (2011, 14). In this thesis, I will analyse these two feminist magazine circles to “track” the production of the category of woman and its transformation into politics by using Butler’s theory of performativity. Two magazines argue different approaches such as radical and socialist feminism; however, during this thesis, rather than concentrating on their

⁷ *Siyah eylem* is an example for this issue, being organized in reaction to prison conditions and feminists are arrested (Tekeli, 1998, 340).

differences about feminist traditions, the resignification of the term woman is problematized. Their common points seem more significant to understand the process of resignification; thus, the difference between these magazines will be addressed if only it is related with the resignification of the term woman.

1.2. Literature review

In this part of the introduction chapter, I will briefly explain the main points raised in existing literature related to the second and third-wave feminism in Turkey to be able to explain the importance of understanding the late 1980s' feminism in Turkey as a performativity. It is necessary here to note also the distinction between the "second-wave feminism" of the 1980s and the Ottoman Women's Movement, which is considered to be the first wave. The Ottoman Women's Movement covered a period of approximately seventy years (1868-1935) (Zihnioğlu, 2011, 43),⁸ and sought to gain equal right in education, employment and suffrage. Moreover, in the latter years of the Ottoman Empire, there were a number of organisations and magazines defining themselves as feminists.

According to Tekeli, after the Ottoman period, there was a gap in the feminist movement until the 1980s (1998, 337). During that time, women's political efforts were limited to charity work or attempts of spreading the ideas of the newly founded Turkish state. Zihnioğlu refers to these actions as the Kemalist Women's Movement⁹, and she claims that this period lacked feminist activities (Zihnioğlu, 2011, 43). The second-wave feminism, as I have emphasised, emerged only after the 1980s in Turkey and was distinguished from the first wave in terms of three discursive characteristics, as emphasised in existing literature.

⁸ This period started to be discussed during the second wave of feminism in the late 1980s. Prior to that, the Ottoman Women's Movement had been subjected to little research, and very little was known about the movement. The emphasis of the women of second-wave feminism was to search for women's struggles in history. For examples of this, see Tekeli (2010b), Çakır (2010), Demirdirek (2011), Sirman (1989).

⁹ Zihnioğlu also claims that the first wave continued beyond this period, but in a different form (ibid).

The first characteristic was the claim that women were subordinated only because they are woman, regardless of any distinctions derived from class, ethnicity, race, age, etc. The group who were the subordinators were men in this conceptualisation, and the woman's perspective in this wave was that this subordination had to be broken. The idea of woman's solidarity was also very important in the development of this perspective, thus, "woman's subordination" and "woman's emancipation" were indicated commonly in this period. The first and last sentences of the Women's Emancipation Manifesto, declared in 1989 with the wide support of feminist organisations, read: "We, as women, are subordinated and exploited as gender. [...] Hand in hand, for women's liberation!" (Feminist Magazine, vol. 11, 1989; Kaktüs Magazine, vol. 6, 1989).

The second characteristic of the second-wave feminism in Turkey is the claim that gender should be considered as a social, not biological issue. In this regard, being a woman is not a natural characteristic, but rather a social construction. Sex and gender¹⁰ are distinguished in that the former refers to biological characteristics, while the latter refers to social characteristics. This distinction allows us to claim that the subordinated position of woman can and should be challenged as gender is a social construct but not a biological fact (Savran, 2009)

Finally, the politics of the private space are discussed in the second-wave feminism. According to Banu Paker, the power and the effect of the second-wave feminism is related to the slogan "The private is political" (2012, 300)¹¹. Contrary to the idea that politics is limited to only the public sphere, the private space is problematized from the feminist perspective. Şirin Tekeli¹² says that in the consciousness raising groups, where experiences are shared with an attempt to understand the conditions of

¹⁰ The original Turkish terms, which are referred here are *cinsiyet* and *toplumsal cinsiyet*.

¹¹ Banu Paker was an active participant of the feminist movement at the beginning of the 1980s. She was also active in the circle of Kaktüs magazine.

¹² She was one of the important figures in the beginning of the feminist movement.

woman, the characteristics of the second-wave feminism are proven; the private is political¹³ (2010b, 124).

Coming to the third wave of feminism in the context of Turkey, it cannot be described as an exclusionary split in contemporary political organisations. The third-wave feminism has been mostly debated at a theoretical and academic level in Turkey. It is apparent that those involved in the discussions are yet to agree on a single definition. Firstly, the term is sometimes used as a “threat” against feminism, being referred to as postmodernism, in which women are depoliticised by criticizing the category of woman.¹⁴ This is a very common approach, especially among those from the second-wave tradition (Koç, 2013, 210).

Secondly, the third-wave feminism is widely referred to as “diversities feminism”,¹⁵ in which the focus is on the differences of certain groups, such as the Kurdish woman’s movement, LGBTIA groups and individuals.¹⁶ Based on the “identities”, diversities are celebrated in this stream, emphasising the different subordinate positions of woman. This is seen as an attempt to broaden the “subjectivities” of woman (Dietz, 2003).

¹³ See Nükhet Sirman’s article for the relation with Western second wave feminist practices and its effect for the case of second wave feminism (1989).

¹⁴ This kind of understanding is not limited to feminist debates in Turkey. In the book *Feminist Contentions: A Philosophical Exchange*, Judith Butler, replies to Seyla Benhabib, Drucilla Cornell and Nancy Fraser in her articles *Contingent Foundations* and *For a Careful Reading*, defending her poststructuralist position in reply to the accusations of depoliticisation with the words: “So ‘postmodernism’ appears to be articulated in the form of a fearful conditional or sometimes in the form of paternalistic disdain toward that which is youthful and irrational. Against this postmodernism, there is an effort to shore up the primary premises, to establish in advance that any theory of politics requires a subject, needs from the start to presume its subject, the referentiality of language, the integrity of the institutional descriptions it provides. [...] [But] is it the case that all politics and feminist politics in particular, are unthinkable without these prized premises?” (Butler, 1995, 35-6)

¹⁵ This term is sometimes used to refer to the intersectionality feminism, which aims to understand the category of gender through the relations of race, ethnicity and sexuality.

¹⁶ Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, intersex and asexual.

Finally, the third-wave sometimes refers to the poststructuralist feminism and/or queer theory, which generally refers to a similar way of politics, based on their intentions to question the identity politics and its consequences. For example, Butler's poststructuralist feminist position led her to question the binary categories of women and men conceptualised in feminist theory. For her, this binary opposition produces heterosexuality even though it is not the intention. Her analysis has led to her being referred to often as a queer theorist. This kind of an effort is sometimes recognized as a kind of depoliticisation, or a threat. Focusing on this tendency of the third wave feminism, I do not consider it to be a postmodernist threat to the feminist politics that I have introduced as the first tradition of the third wave. Butler also addresses to this understanding:

I don't know about the term "postmodern," but if there is a point, and a fine point, to what I perhaps better understand as poststructuralism, it is that power pervades the very conceptual apparatus that seeks to negotiate its terms, including the subject position of the critic; and further, that this implication of the terms of criticism in the field of power is *not* the advent of a nihilistic relativism incapable of furnishing norms, but, rather, the very precondition of a politically engaged critique. To establish a set of norms that are beyond power or force is itself a powerful and forceful conceptual practice that sublimates, disguises, and extends its own power play through recourse to tropes of normative universality. Rather, the task is to interrogate what the theoretical move that establishes foundations *authorizes* and what precisely it excludes or forecloses (Butler, 1995, 39).

In this regard, Butler places an emphasis on the "precondition of a politically engaged critique" with an attempt to understand what is excluded from the political arena; and this is a valuable contribution of the poststructuralist feminism: Questioning political common sense for political aims. According to her, all given norms on subject position or normative universality are suggested to rethink with the questions of poststructuralism.

This kind of tradition of the poststructuralist feminism also criticises the diversities feminism, suggesting that it fails to question identities themselves. Poststructuralist feminism does not permit adding new categories to the existing understanding of woman, such as ethnicity and sexuality, but rather deconstructing them. As an example, the intention is not to add "new" identities to the sexuality category, such

LGBTIA, but to question sexuality itself, as Butler did with the term “queer”. In her use of this term, none of these identities should be fixed and reified in that they should always be intertwined and fluid (Butler, 2007).

Having mentioned the criticisms of poststructuralist feminism targeting the two mentioned understandings, namely postmodern threat and diversities feminism of the third-wave feminism, the question should be asked: what about its criticism towards the second wave? There is a very common argument within the poststructuralist feminism that the second-wave feminism universalises the category of woman through an essentialist approach. As a feminist tradition emerges in response to the second-wave, the reification of the category of woman has been mostly debated in relation to the issue of the universal subject. For this thesis, however, applying this argument could be considered a very quick and causal approach to the late-1980s feminist movement in Turkey. Therefore, my approach to this period will be concentrating on the relations of the women of the magazines of *Feminist* and *Kaktüs* and this attempt helped me to understand the practises based on the concept of subversive performativity which is emphasized by the poststructuralist feminism, especially by Butler. I will open up this concept in relation to my study.

To be able to understand these relations, first let me explain why I turn to Butler’s conceptualization of performativity. Performativity is used both as a concept and as a way of doing politics by Butler to suggest questioning the dominant meaning sets and denaturalising the given. Butler constantly points to the normative constructions and the possibility of deforming them. These norms can only be possible not through a pre-given subject’s efforts but within discursive relations. Moreover, she emphasizes that these relations do not refer to static conditions of certain norms or categories but performed during a process. Butler claims that “gender is not an expression of what one is, but what one does” (Lloyd, 1999, 196). Thus, this is a very significant explanation that forces me to think of the norms in terms of the relations themselves. In other words, it suggests understanding the norms from the relations and practices rather than taking them for granted.

In Butler’s books, the concept of performativity is rethought in different contexts; however, it can be claimed that she is basically questioning the problems of the pre-

given common understandings of gender, sex and subject with different analytical concepts. In all her works, the concept is developed in accordance with the “misreadings” of her works and critiques. In this regard, according to Jagger, in all her works, performativity keeps the claim that there are no pre-given or pre-discursive identities, and the constitution of gender and identity is an effect of signifying practises, and is based on the regimes of power and knowledge¹⁷ (Jagger, 2008, 20). Therefore, I will take her different works into account, from which I develop an analysis of the concept of performativity.

Analysing the second-wave feminism of the late 1980s in Turkey through the concept of subversive performativity has three contributions to the existing literature. Firstly, as I have emphasized above, the second-wave feminism is said to consider the category of woman to be given an essentialist identity; although I will claim that the notion of the “subordination of woman” did not appear out of nowhere, but rather emerged out of very relations of the exclusions within the feminist movement of Turkey.

Secondly, this work will contribute to breaking the understanding of threat associated with poststructuralism, showing that poststructuralism does not necessarily “reject” the second-wave, but has important tools that question the given knowledge. Some approaches in the feminist literature in Turkey categorize the duality of the second and third wave as if they excluded the political practises of each. In this study, my aim is to think the two together.

Finally, this work will also provide a “rethinking” of Butler’s poststructuralist feminist theory. Her theory of performativity is sometimes considered as being limited to the criticism of heterosexuality based on the binary framework of men and women. This is an important criticism within feminism, and this criticism can also be valid for the period that this study concentrates on. However, the concept of

¹⁷ The term “performativity” is also considered to ground within the methodology of genealogy. Butler adapts this concept from Foucault and Nietzsche; and in this sense, feminism is posited as a movement that needs to aim to subvert and deconstruct, rather than accept or reaffirm the dualistic gender categories (Stone, 2005, 4-6).

performativity also opens up a different possibility of understanding in relation to the concepts of subversive resignifications, which mean a slip on a set of meaning of a term. My main focus in this regard is the category of “woman” as a subversive resignification in the political dynamics of Turkey for the feminist movement of the late 1980s. Özkazanç also claims that this focus of resignification is an important reading of performativity; it is not limited to the term “queer” but is a useful tool to understand different terms such as the term “woman” in 1980s¹⁸ (2015, 86).

1.3. Method

To answer my research question about the production of the category of woman in a particular feminist context, I conducted a research including in-depth interviews with the women who are involved in *Kaktüs* and *Feminist* magazines. Rather than putting the analysis solely on the articles in the magazines, I prefer to benefit from them as supportive sources. It is because my focus is more on the relations within and between the two magazines.

Before conducting the interviews, I compiled the interview questions based on the articles of these magazines. It was very helpful to have conducted such fruitful interviews, and during the interviews, I did not strictly follow the prepared questions, opting rather for a semi-structured interview technique, which allowed me to add new questions and/or skip the unrelated ones. By doing so, the progress of the conversation was directed by the interviewees themselves.

For this study, I interviewed eight women from *Feminist* magazine and nine women from *Kaktüs* magazine. The interviews were held in May and June 2014, in İstanbul and Bodrum, where the interviewees are currently living. The interviewees were informed that their real names will not be used in the study, but pseudonyms will be assigned. This information was very important to make them feel comfortable about talking, rather than making them feel suppressed about what people will think when they read the study. In that sense, I was able to appreciate the positive effect of using pseudonyms during the interviews.

¹⁸ Özkazanç also offers a few examples from the Turkish context, e.g. the use of the words “*bayan*”, “*ibne*”, “*çapulcu*”. (ibid, 58)

It was not difficult to contact with women to ask them to participate in my study, thanks to my feminist network. However, it was still relatively difficult to reach the contact information of the women from Feminist magazine since it was published using only names and omitting surnames. After I had interviewed those with whom I had contacted through my feminist network, I was able to reach the others through my interviewees.

Prior to conducting interviews, I assumed that the interviewees would emphasise the differences between the magazines due to their differentiation of radical and socialist feminism, but as it turned out, there was more focus on their common points even though they did not specifically underline these points as common. Furthermore, they talked about the differences between the magazines, as Kaktüs started to be published after Feminist to address a different feminist approach, addressing the socialist feminism. On the other hand, the women of Feminist magazine were critical of the socialist emphasis of the Kaktüs. That said, during the interviews it became apparent that the reconceptualization of the category of woman was, more or less, similar for both groups.

Moreover, there were some drawbacks during the fieldwork. The main drawback was the interviewees' not remembering certain issues, debates or political activities due to the 30-year timeline. However, before the fieldwork, because I had predicted that such a situation could be a problem for the conversation, I got prepared by reading the magazine articles. Therefore, I could prompt their memories when it was needed. Such a strategy was mostly very helpful for filling in the gaps. Additionally, interviews with two women in a session worked very well in overcoming this problem. As one woman started to discuss an issue, the other remembered and pointed out a similar or different perspective.

Another challenge was the possible deformation of memories over time. My intention was not to understand the exact or "real" memories, which would be impossible; rather, the interviews were steered by the women themselves in accordance with what they actually remembered.

Another issue was the age difference between the interviewees and me, which worked in a positive way. For them, I was an excited young woman to whom they were mostly happy to tell their stories. In that sense, the age difference positively affected their tendency to share their experiences.

During the fieldwork, I faced with some situations where I was supposed to reveal my feminist standing to form a better connection with the interviewees. I can say that this generally affected the conversation in a positive way. However, in certain occasions, it turned into a limitation because those interviewees felt no need to mention certain debates, assuming that we, as feminists, both thought in the same way.

1.4. Outline of the thesis

This thesis is written to problematize the understanding of the feminist category of woman in the late 1980s in Turkey with the conceptualisation of performativity. In the second chapter, in which the focus is on the resignification of the term woman, I will first introduce the relation between the concepts of performativity and resignification in Judith Butler's problematisation. Then, in the first section, the construction of the normative womanhood in the leftist discourse will be problematized. This leads to an understanding of the constitution of norms in relation to the regulatory ideal in order to see the signified norms on the term woman in the leftist groups which the women of Feminist and Kaktüs Magazines had participated in prior to their participation in feminist movement. Thirdly, the reconstruction of the term "woman" is addressed with a particular focus on the practices that makes the process of resignification possible. It is important in the sense of showing the transformation of a dominant meaning set of the category of woman into a new and subverted one. Accordingly, the consciousness raising groups as a set of collective relations that enable a shift in the meaning of the dominant understanding of the category of woman are discussed. Moreover, the notion of woman's solidarity will be problematized in relation to the question of "with whom should we have solidarity?". Answering this question will provide an understanding of the political (and strategic) use of the notion of woman's solidarity.

In the final chapter, on the new territories of doing politics, the issue of how the resignification of the term “woman” affected and subverted simultaneously the way of doing politics is showed while highlighting the concepts of politics that newly emerged and have not been considered political before. In this regard, I will first describe the new means of political involvement, which has become possible as a result of the politicization of abjection. The issues of the timing of the revolution, to be emancipated or emancipation, the notion of non-hierarchy, and two perspectives for approaching knowledge are problematized. Afterwards, new themes such as violence against woman and sexual harassment, and new problematisations such as sexuality and marriage, and partnership are debated. These are important to show how certain norms and practises that do not at first sight appear to be a part of politics, are now considered part of the political arena.

CHAPTER 2

RESIGNIFICATION OF THE TERM “WOMAN”: THE SLOGAN “WOMEN EXIST”

The slogan “women exist” was often heard around the feminist movement in the 1980s¹⁹, and was also adopted as the title of a song by Filiz Kerestecioğlu, who was an active member of Feminist magazine, before a meeting on Violence Against Woman (Özman, 2008). From the slogan, it is clear that the category “woman” has a special and valued meaning. Rather than suggesting that “women did not exist before, but they exist now”, the slogan implies that women had always existed, but that now they could be signified with a different set of meaning. In this regard, the slogan challenges what is signified as part of a process. The process of resignification of the term “woman” of feminist movement of the 1980s can be understood in a parallel way with this slogan.

In this chapter, I will show the deformation in the reiteration of norms related to womanhood through resignification of the term woman.²⁰ I will begin by introducing the conceptualisation of this resignification in relation to the concept of performativity according to the Butlerian way of thinking, identifying its relationship with my case. Secondly, I will provide the construction of the normative womanhood in the leftist discourse prior to the 1980s according to the women of

¹⁹ This slogan is also the name of the second volume in the Feminist magazine (1987, vol 2).

²⁰ It should be noted that the resignification of the term simultaneously deforms the way politics are carried out. In this chapter, I will focus on the deformations of the term “womanhood”, while the emphasis on doing politics will be addressed in the third chapter.

Feminist and Kaktüs magazines in order to show the signified term woman. This is important because certain norms on the term woman have a significant effect on the process of resignification after their participation in these magazines. Thirdly, I will give a description of the consciousness raising groups, and their collective questioning of the normative area of woman, analysing their effect on the resignification of the term. Finally, I will show the “boundaries” of the notion of woman’s solidarity within independent woman’s organisations for the magazines of Feminist and Kaktüs.

To begin with the concepts of performativity and resignification, Judith Butler problematizes the term “queer” as an example of performative politics and resignification. According to her, within performativity, the category “queer” “emerges as an interpellation that raises the question of the status of force and opposition, of stability and variability” (Butler, 1993, 233). It is a linguistic practice which produces a subject through a shaming interpellation. The term is related to the repetitive “invocations” of social homophobic communities and with “accusation, pathologisation, and insult”. In this framework, Butler explains how this insulting use of the word can be seen as in opposition to the hegemonic social sanctions of heterosexualisation that started in the early 1990s in the United States (ibid, 233). Accordingly, the hegemonic use of the term “queer” “enacts performativity for the purposes of resignifying the abjection of homosexuality into defiance and legitimacy” (Butler, 1993, 21).

Butler’s analysis of the term “queer” is very famous, and it is often thought that the sum total of her interest is in the term. On the other hand, her analysis is not limited to the term “queer”²¹ in that her concept of performativity actually opens up a new area that may be very useful for understanding different social domains. In this regard, throughout the thesis, I shall use the term “woman” in reference to the performative resignification in the late 1980s of the feminist movement in Turkey by

²¹ She says her intention is not limited with the term “queer” many times in her books of *Bodies that Matter* and *Excitable Speech*.

focusing on the practices based on my interviews. The slogan of 'women exist' can be thought with a similar conceptualisation of resignification as queer. During this chapter, I will claim that the term woman enabled a subversive resignification of the term by the collective consciousness-raising groups. Based on the interviews, it can be claimed that the problematization of the term woman is mostly cited in the leftist politics. By considering the interpellation and exclusion of the term woman within the leftist movement, the term "woman" is resignified with a different set of meanings (different to those of the leftist movement) as a subversive performativity. To begin my analysis, I shall first introduce the concept of performativity by linking it to my analysis.

According to Butler, performativity is not a voluntary set of acts of free individuals or pre-existing subjects' will, but it is conditioned by the "regimes of discourse/power" in the Foucauldian line of analysis (1993, 26). Discourse refers to groups of repeatable events that are "connected with historical contexts" that govern acts and practises (Salih, 2002, 47). The term power can sometimes refer to a simple hierarchy between given oppressed and oppressor; however, Butler warns the audience to be careful when considering this problematization of the "various dynamics of discursive power" (2007, xxvii). Rather, discursive power produces and regulates what it governs by producing norms; and in this sense, regulatory power is also a kind of productive power. Taking the examples of the categories of sex, body, heteronormativity, sexual differences and gender, Butler claims that none is separable from discursive productions. From the very outset, these categories are normative, referring to "a regulatory ideal" in the Foucauldian sense (1993, 1). Accordingly, performative acts are only possible within these discursive productions.

All the categories of sex, body, heteronormativity, sexual differences and gender that Butler problematizes are not "simple facts or static conditions", in that regulatory norms are produced through a "reiteration of those norms" within "process" (1993, 2). To explain her conceptualization of the process, she gives special emphasis to the concept of reiteration and claims that the repetition of a norm related to a particular subject cannot be a total replica of a previous norm or act. The categories are a result of a sedimentation of the norms and conventions, and as I have noticed, it is a

“process” rather than a mechanical or static reiteration. As the previous cannot be performed in the same way, certain gaps and deformations emerge during these repetitions, and these gaps contain within them the possibility of a transformation of norms (Jagger, 2008, 43). In this context, the impossibility in repeating the previous act refers to the concept of process.

Sometimes, the impossibility of the replica of a norm or act can refer to the process of resignification of a set of meaning. In that sense, the concept of resignification refers to the radical deformation of the temporalized regulation of signification. In other words, it is a deviation from the dominant norms during process. The meanings of norms within a particular set of social relations may split during repetition and this deviation affects the meaning of what is valued and/or valuable (Butler, 1993, 21-2). I will open up this conceptualisation with an explanation of two important characteristics. Firstly, it will be mentioned that resignification is only possible in the discursive production of an already signified set of meanings. It emerges out of the exclusion of a social meaning, and this exclusion comes to constitute the subject. Secondly, I will define the difference between conservative and subversive resignification and open up the concept of subversiveness. This conceptualisation is important for this thesis as an analysis of the resignification of the term “woman” in the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines.

Now, I will firstly explain the relationship between discourse and exclusion in the process of resignification. Resignification is not a voluntary act of an agency, but is always possible as a result of the exclusionary practices of the dominant power that is shaped within the relationships of discursive production (Butler, 1993, 241). In this regard, it is not a decision or intention of an individual or social group to change the meaning of a normative category, but rather it becomes possible due to the boundaries and exclusions of the discourse. In this regard, resignification opens a “discursive and social space” for certain social relations to emerge, meaning that domination can produce an unexpected set of meaning (ibid, 128). In this sense, certain sedimentation of norms or ideals slips by the excluded group, and these norms, ideals or categories are reterritorialised within the process of the reiteration of norms. A shift in reiterations opens up the possibility of social transformation, and in

this context, this claim refers to a re-experience or re-enactment of the reiteration of the normative act. During the reiteration, certain deformations or gaps may emerge in the norms that can be defined as re-experiences.

Then what about the subject? For Butler, agency is possible through a process of signification and resignification. In her terms, signification is a process of reiteration of the practices of “acts, gestures and discourses that produces the effects in the moment of action” (Lloyd, 2007, 54). The subject is constituted via exclusion and differentiation although it does not come before this relation of exclusion. In other words, the subject differentiates itself – or it is forced to be differentialised – from a constitutive outside (Butler, 1995, 55). Moreover, it does not mean that the subject is constituted at a point and then reaches a certain point of completion; rather it constitutes repetitively, and is open to the constant possibility of resignification (ibid, 55-6)²².

The relation of discourse, subject and exclusion is very clear in Butler’s analysis of the term “queer”. Butler uses a special concept to explain the productive part of discourse and exclusion for the case of queer: abjection.²³ For Butler, abject refers to the “unliveable and uninhabitable” part of social life that is constituted by discursive productions, while unliveable and uninhabitable refers to the “zones of social life which are nevertheless densely populated by those who do not enjoy the status of the subject” (1993, 3). She claims that the practices of “queerness” are a “reworking of abjection into political agency”. Public use of “queerness” is resignified as an abjection of homosexuality to “defiance and legitimacy” within discursive productions. This abjection forces the meaning into a demanding resignification (Butler, 1993, 21). Thus, she brings an analysis to this:

²² On this point, in the book “Feminist contentions: A philosophical exchange”, Butler responds to the claims that the “subject is dead”. She suggests that the poststructuralist position does not simply reject the subject, but rather questions how the subject is constituted. (1995, 35-36)

²³ The etymological explanation of the word, according to Butler, is: “Abjection (in latin, *ab-jicere*) literally means to cast off, away, or out and, hence, presupposes and produces a domain of agency from which it is differentiated” (1993, 250).

Within queer politics, indeed, within the very signification that is "queer," we read a resignifying practice in which the desanctioning power of the name "queer" is reversed to sanction a contestation of the terms of sexual legitimacy. Paradoxically, but also with great promise, the subject who is "queered" into public discourse through homophobic interpellations of various kinds *takes up* or titer that very term as the discursive basis for an opposition (1993, 233).

In this framework, the term "queer" turns to a domain of collective challenge, it is reclaimed and its meaning is expanded for political purposes. Moreover, from this quotation we can see that the collective challenge is not the intention of the subject in that the subject is rather constituted through the force of abjection. This conceptualisation of discourse, subjectivity and exclusion is important for my analysis in the sense that the construction of normative womanhood in the leftist discourse prior to the 1980s, during which women of Feminist and Kaktüs magazine participated in before their participation in feminist movement, is an important dimension to understand the process of the resignification of the term woman. Certain normative signification of the term woman is sometimes referred to during my interviews as a comparison of their way of using the category. A citation to the normative exclusion and regulation enables a deformation of the reiteration of the norms, and the possibility of resignifying the term "woman" emerges.

Having said that, does this mean that all gaps between norms are a result of subversive performativity, as Butler claims for the term "queer"? As my third point, resignification does not necessarily refer to subversion²⁴, in that it can also result in conservative norms (Jagger, 2008, 14). To illustrate, certain acts, such as lesbian and gay marriages, would still be resignifications in that they modify the traditional meaning of marriage although this also strengthens the authority of the traditional meanings of marriage (ibid, 15). In this example, we see that the set of meanings attributed to marriage is not only resignified, but it also enriches the authority of the traditional marital norm conservatively. To sum up, conservative resignifications

²⁴ Judith Butler uses the concept of subversion in relation with the drag case and its relation with parody. However, she develops the concept the line of resignification rather than parody in her late works, after her book of Gender Trouble (Osborne, 172-3).

“project their novelty back onto the accepted meanings to amplify their authority (ibid, 14-5)”.

Butler claims that subversiveness cannot be calculable; however subversion refers to denaturalising one dominant convention (1993, 4). This incalculability refers to the fact that there is no universal definition of subversive resignification, and that it can only be analysed for specific social domains, in this case, the relation of women of the Feminist and Kaktüs feminist magazines. In this sense, rather than providing a given definition, she says that subversive resignification “undermines the hitherto accepted meanings” (Jagger, 2008, 15). It is necessary to add here that the potential for subversive resignification becomes possible during performative reiterations as “a re-enactment and re-experiencing of a set of already socially established meanings” (Butler, 2007, 191). Throughout the repetition – with the possibility of different repetitions, or re-experiences – an arbitrary relation of acts emerges, providing the very possibility of transformation in relation to the previous act. These arbitrary relations can cause a “breaking or subversive repetition of that style” that is performative (Butler, 1988, 519-20).

Butler uses the famous example of “drag”, referring to a man dressing like a woman for the purpose of entertainment as a subversive repetition. In the regulatory ideal of heterosexuality, such a practice creates a discontinuity in that it does not match with the ideal and normative acts of gender (Jagger, 28-9). After Butler uses this example in her book “*Gender Trouble*”, she frequently emphasises that “drag” is not a paradigm for the resignification of the heteronormative categories of gender but is rather a form of subversive performativity. This definition is important in that the act of dressing in drag raises the question of “what is a man and a woman?”, and it forces one to question the common sense binary understanding of women and men.

To show that subversiveness is not limited to the case of drag, she provides a second example in her book “*Excitable Speech*”, in which she conceptualises resignification with reference to speech act theories. She draws attention to the issue of hate speech aimed at injuring a particular group. Hate speech can be performative, meaning that there is the potential for it to be resignified. Even though hate speech can cause harm, Butler considers it to be “an initiating moment of a counter-mobilisation”. The

reiteration of assaultive speech does not simply reproduce and empower the hegemonic power relations. When an act of hate speech is resignified in a positive way, it can deform the reiteration of the norm. To illustrate, Butler uses one of her own personal experiences, in which a child yelled at her from a window: “Are you a lesbian?” to which Butler replied: “Yes, I am a lesbian”. At the moment of this reply, Butler says, “the power of my interrogator was lost”. The intention to interpellate her as an object of fear did not work, as she applied positive meaning in response to this attempt at hate speech. In this case, neither Butler nor the child are the “authors of the speech they use” in that both are “recycling the language” that already “circulates in everyday communication between people” (Lloyd, 2007, 120-1). Therefore, as we can see from the examples of “queer”, “drag” and the conversation between the child and Butler, subversiveness refers to a discontinuity of the norms. The discontinuity may be in a form of opposition to the dominant norm such as Butler’s reply to the child or may not necessarily refer to this kind of a reverse discourse as the drag performance case shows. Or as a third alternative, it can emerge in a collective level as the queer politics emerges. To conclude, there is not a single form of the process of resignification. In the case of this thesis, I will claim that the term “woman” has a collective effort for the resignification in parallel with the term queer. However, this collectivity and subversion emerges in different relations, which will be debated in the consciousness-raising groups section. This is a significant point to help to analyse and understand the process of resignification based on the relations of Feminist and Kaktüs Magazines.

2.1. The construction of normative womanhood in leftist discourse

While preparing my interview questions before I started conducting the interviews, I did not include any questions about the interviewees’ involvement with leftist groups prior to their involvement with the feminist movement of the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines. Despite this, more or less all of the women talked about their experiences as part of the leftist movement and the norms of womanhood, which made me analyse how the regulatory ideal of womanhood was defined within their groups as possible. This explanation was necessary for this study in order to analyse the process of resignification in relation to what is signified in the political arena of the women of these magazines, and that is why I started the analysis with this issue.

The use of the category of woman by these feminist groups and their way of doing politics cannot be thought as separable from the leftist movement. It will be seen that the resignification of category of woman with a feminist context has strong relations with the leftist exclusion of womanhood. Before coming to that, in this section, I will analyse the normative definitions of womanhood of the leftist movement in which the women were involved prior to joining the Feminist and Kaktüs magazine circles in the 1987–90 period. The intention in this regard is to explain the productive power of the exclusion of certain womanhoods based on my interviews with these magazine's women, rather than to analyse the entire normative constructions of leftist movements with a representational claim. In short, this analysis is based on the experiences of the women involved in the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines, and to this end, follows the experiences only of the feminist women involved in these magazines. Regarding this issue, I argue that the normative constructions produce what they exclude in a discursive way, following Judith Butler's analysis of performativity in relation to subversive resignification. If I am to show the subversive resignification of the category of woman and their engagement in politics, it is necessary to show how it is enabled in discursive productions.

In this section, I will introduce Butler's problematization of the norms and regulatory ideal. Understanding the leftist norms on womanhood is important to analyse the resignification of the term woman in the sense of understanding what is signified. Secondly, I will analyse how the exclusion and regulation of the leftist movement prior to 1980s produces and regulates womanhood. Based on the results of my interviews, I will explain three characteristics of the normative boundaries of womanhood, namely being fragile, injured and bourgeois womanhood. This analysis will provide an explanation of how the norms of womanhood regulate and organize the practices.

It is important to distinguish the concept of discourse from construction on their explanation of the constitution of the subject in order to distinguish her conceptualisation from certain academic traditions. Butler distinguishes her theory from the two different traditions of constructivism. In the first tradition, constructivism is considered to be a generative and deterministic linguistic monism

in which construction is understood to be a “god-like agency” that both causes and composes everything. In short, it constitutes, creates and determines that which it names. In the second tradition, constructivism presupposes a voluntarist subject, and suggests also that the voluntarist subject rehabilitates the construction itself (Butler, 1993, 6-7).

In this regard, Butler has two criticisms of constructionism. Firstly, in understanding construction as an activity in which the subject is determined and its effects are fixed, the idea is reduced to a determinism that erases the human agency. Secondly, there is a danger of understanding construction as a unilateral process that is “initiated by a prior subject”. For Butler, construction is “neither a single act nor a causal process” that is begun by a subject, but something that is produced through the repetition of norms in a temporal process. In such a temporality, some gaps occur as the “constitutive instabilities in such constructions”, break away from conventions. Within this process, subjects and acts can emerge, but not a power that precedes or simply constructs the subjects, acts or norms (1993, 9). Moreover, only within this process of reiteration can performativity be possible. It is the reason behind Butler’s emphasis on the impossibility of pre-discursive terms and subjects (1993, xi).

Having introduced the concepts of the norms and conventions, what, then, is a norm? The norm, as used by Butler, does not refer to a rule or a law, but rather something that is produced within social practices as the “standard of normalization” (Butler, 2004, 41). Defining this point, Butler says:

The norm governs the social intelligibility of action, but it is not the same as the action that it governs. The norm appears to be indifferent to the actions that it governs, by which I mean only that the norm appears to have a status and effect that is independent of the actions governed by the norm. The norm governs intelligibility, allows for certain kinds of practices and action to become recognizable as such, imposing a grid of legibility on the social and defining the parameters of what will and will not appear within the domain of the social (ibid, 41).

In this quote, we see how she analytically distinguishes between the concepts of the norm and social action, seeing how the norm governs the possibility or impossibility

of an action. As mentioned earlier, norms are reiterated within a process (ibid, 42), and so through the reiteration of intelligible norms, the standard of normalization is constituted. Intelligibility, here, refers to a recognized life in the sense of having value and legitimacy (Lloyd, 2007, 33). At this point I should note that even outside the norm, the exclusion of the standard is still produced in relation to the norms (ibid 42). This point has significance, given that the discourse has boundaries with respect to the “outside of the norm”.

So far, I have mentioned that performativity is not a singular act of a subject, but that reiterations of norms make transformation possible within the productive power of the discourse. If this is the case, how does the discourse work or “produce” the subject reiterating the norms, and/or who deformats the norms if they are not simply determined by the discourse? The subject is an “effect” of the compulsory reiteration of discursive productions, but still, how is the subject produced? For Butler, the exclusionary matrix leads to the possibility of the subjects, being the “simultaneous production of a domain [...] of the beings who are not yet subjects but who form the constitutive outside to the domain of the subject”. In that frame, the subject is produced “through the force of exclusion” (1993, 3). The exclusion draws the boundaries of the norms as its constitutive outside, and in turn, these boundaries provide the possibility for the transformation of the norms (ibid, 8).

In the case of the binary understanding of gender, men and women are enabled in “oppositional and substantial terms, boundaries and markers”, and work as a version of the disciplinary and normalizing strategy. As this example shows, “gender norms operate to regulate and police the acceptable and the licit” (Lloyd, 1999, 196).

In this section, I will begin by introducing how the “fragile woman” norm of the leftist movement draws a boundary of womanhood, and will go on to show how through this norm, the production of non-fragile womanhood became possible. The fragility and non-fragility emerge simultaneously, but I distinguish these terms analytically for the analysis. This point is important in explaining one of the “boundaries” of the definitions of womanhood in relation to the inconsistency of the reiteration of this particular norm, which is the possibility of performativity. To

explain this point, let me start with Nejlá's²⁵ words on her experience of the left movement prior to her participation in the feminist movement:

Actually, my experience is quite similar to that of other women at that time. I was a leftist woman in a left wing organization, and there was always something between men and women. We were going to change the world and we were against exploitation; but there was something missing in all this talk against exploitation. There was always bickering. I am talking about what was going on before 1980. It was not clearly spoken about, but there was always a tussle.

She says that she felt like she belonged to the left ideal, and was challenging exploitation and aiming to change the world, like her comrades. But what was this bickering between men and women that she talks about? She continues:

For example, women should not take part in important stuff because they are fragile, and they confess easily under police pressure. Say there is to be a protest, and it will be a harsh one, and there will certainly be a clash between the police and the group. Then keep women behind, because there is this police thing, and girls give up too quickly. Men are more eager to take the stage. Actually, many times, experience proved otherwise; and I was a woman who would ride into a fight more easily than men. I was one of the few women who would fight with the police when necessary.

She claims that women were considered “fragile” by the leftist group to which she belonged. Firstly, there were suggestions that women might break down more easily under questioning by the police in the event of being arrested by the state; thus, women should not participate in “important missions”. Secondly, they may break the organization of the coordinated action because they are more likely to disperse in the event of a police attack against the meeting, and so should stand at the back during such activities. In this understanding, the norm of womanhood is defined as fragility in the leftist group, of which Nejlá was a member, which is the acceptable form in the performance of womanhood within the regulatory ideal of the discourse.

To begin with my first point, as mentioned previously, the reiteration of the norms, in a Butlerian sense, “allows for certain kinds of practices and actions to become recognizable”, and these conventions define the domain of the social with the

²⁵ Active member of Feminist magazine.

boundaries of what will emerge and what is not (Butler, 2004, 41). Based on this definition, in Nejla's words, we first see that the norm of fragility is not only a singular act, but just as she emphasizes, is something that is repeated (or reiterated in Butlerian terms) in important events and in the organization of meetings. She does not talk about a single event but she mentions a continuation of the fragile consideration of the womanhood; thus it can be possible to name this repetition as a norm. Secondly, she mentions that this reiteration of the norm of fragile womanhood is a recognizable characteristic. She distinguishes herself as "one of the few women" because she "would fight with the police when necessary". In these words, it can be said that the recognisable norm is fragility and she names herself as "non-fragile" as an exception. Thirdly, this recognizable character regulates the limits to which women are expected to commit during meetings, and in what roles they can take part as a member of the leftist group. Discursive power, in this sense, regulates in practice both the organization of the group and the norm of womanhood. In this regard, it can be claimed that one of the boundaries of the leftist discourse related to the category of woman is defined in terms of the characteristics of fragility.

Secondly, the speaking "I" of Nejla distinguishes herself from the fragility, saying that she was willing to clash with the police. According to Butler, the "I" is only possible "through being called, named, interpellated" through discourse (1993, 225)²⁶. Nejla, who is called, named and interpellated as a woman, cites to the norm of fragile womanhood, and declares, based on this citation, that she falls outside of this norm. In this act, the norm of fragile womanhood does not match Nejla in practice; however, this does not mean that Nejla has a different individual will independent from that of fragile womanhood. Rather, we see that the non-fragile womanhood of Nejla, who will fight the police if necessary, is a product of the norm of fragile womanhood. The production of normative discourse, in this sense, makes

²⁶ Butler uses the term interpellation further in relation to the reiterative citation of the norms, providing the example of a phrase in a hospital when a child is born: "It is a girl!" This is "not a statement of fact but an interpellation that initiates the process of 'girling'." Butler says that this is a girl "who is compelled to cite the norm in order to qualify and remain a viable subject" within discursive production. This means that the interpellation of a girl, this naming, does not end at the moment that it is named, but is rather a "setting of a boundary" (Butler, 1993, 7-8).

non-fragile womanhood possible. Fragility occurs in this point, in the non-fragility; not in the act of “men” or not in the general category of woman, but in this repetition and subversion.

The norm of fragility in the leftist fraction of Nejlâ and her expression “my experience is quite similar to that of other women at that time” show that this norm is not limited with her fraction. It is significant to be able to see the resignification of the term woman not because feminist women of *Feminist* and *Kaktüs* started to talk about non-fragility of women but certain exclusions during the protests and certain exclusions based on the idea of woman’s eagerness to speak to the police is debated with its relation to the term “woman”. This process will be debated in this chapter in the second section. Regarding the fragile woman in the leftist understanding, it can be concluded from the experiences of the women involved in the *Feminist* and *Kaktüs* magazines prior to their joining the feminist movement that they did not match the normative ideals of leftist womanhood of the period. That said, this does not mean that the women of the *Feminist* and *Kaktüs* magazines did not match the conventions of womanhood at the very start when they were part of the leftist groups, and so joined the feminist movement. This would be a quick causal explanation, but in many cases, the interviews with the women of these magazines revealed that they were experiencing the effect of the regulatory ideal based on the normativity of the woman in the leftist groups. Sema, an active member of *Kaktüs Magazine*, underlines this point when explaining her feelings of injury within the leftist movement:

They included women just as a showcase. This is my current interpretation, of course, as it felt good for us at that time. But here is what happened over time. Some of us were writing dissertations for associate professorship, and some of us were writing doctoral dissertations. But, we noticed that our knees would shake and our voices would crack when we began to speak at political meetings. We could offer only practical solutions, not political suggestions.

She goes on to mention that even though they were intellectually successful, especially within academic life, they felt discomfort or injury when speaking in the political arena, and so would talk about practical issues rather than political or strategic ones. It can be understood from Sema’s words that it seemed more

important to talk about political suggestions in the leftist politics of the period. This fear to speak may be thought as a fragile interpellation. It might be related to that because women are not allowed to do important work due to their fragility, it would seem to be more “proper” for them to be engaged in important works in politics as Nejla emphasizes above due to being too nervous to endure a meeting, Thus, it can be said that their political responsibilities are bounded. In that case, we see that certain differentiations between men and women emerge even not opposing to norms. These norms were embodied as Sema says “our knees would shake and our voices would cracked”. This boundary is experienced by the women in their fear of speaking on the political issues, and so within this situation they consider themselves only capable of speaking about practical issues. In this practice, we see how the normative discourses can be regulative and serve to police the actions of these women, although this regulative action does not necessarily refer to force. As we can see in this example, regulative actions govern the decision of what to speak about through the internalization of the norms and practices. Having mentioned the norms on fragility and effect of injury in the leftist discourse, also, the fear of being accused of having *petit bourgeois* leanings was quite pronounced within the leftist movement according to the interviews of this study. While it was not limited to women, it did constitute a special fear for them. However, in an article of Berktaç in which she explains the left movement’s perspective of woman, she claims that woman were considered as having more tendencies to “bourgeoisising” (2010, 281). Now, I will begin by explaining how this fear regulated the actions of women in practice related to beautification and clothing; after which I will put forward the suggestion that this regulation was sourced not by the position of men, but by accusative discursive works. During the interview which is held with Fulya and Güliz in one session,²⁷ they spoke about their fear of being accused of *petit bourgeois* sympathies by their leftist groups:

F: Quite the contrary, we were against that kind of femininity. I discovered beautifying only after I became a feminist.

²⁷ Both were active members of Feminist magazine.

G: Of course, it is not appropriate to dress up if you take part in a revolutionary movement. You would purposefully look ugly.

F: I stepped up to the Maltepe brand of cigarettes. It was the “premium”. This is the kind of behaviour one inherits from the old comers in any place. One must adapt. Smoking Maltepe was a habit of *petit bourgeois*. Wait a minute; I’m not one of them, am I? We wanted to get down to becoming a part of working class without being a worker, or without getting to know the real working class.

The two respondents said that as a woman, they were expected to be “ugly” and should not take care of themselves, which Fulya referred to as femininity. It was not only an expectation in that they said that they were acting according to this expectation. In other words, in citing with authority that they were not *bourgeois*, the norm of non-beautify governs their action. Beyond the consideration that smoking a particular brand of cigarette constituted a bourgeois act, I am more inclined to underline the issue of beautification, which is more significant for the interest of this thesis. It is apparent that beautification is absent from the social and political domain due to its connotations with sexuality. Taking these factors into account, it is apparent that the leftist movement in which Fulya and Güliz participated does not allow them to be seen as “feminine”, in the words of Fulya. In this sense, we see again how an ideal shapes the action that it governs. In this regard, when Fulya says, “This is the kind of behaviour one inherits from old comers in any place”, she is referring closely to discursive production in a Butlerian sense. This given norm considers woman to be non-sexual, and is not limited only to beautifying, but includes also choice of clothing as a specific bourgeois act. Esin explains:

One of my classmates was the daughter of a wealthy family. Every time we left [the university] and went to a Socialist Thought Club meeting, we would notice that she had changed her shoes and trousers, and would even replace her handbag with a *bez torba* [a simple cloth bag]. It is essential to understand this pressure. People should not have to feel this kind of pressure. There is this moment I’ll never forget. I had a yellow silk blouse that was quite elegant; and I loved it. I was a student [at university]. I was married then. While I was out with my husband, we came across to one of my revolutionist friends. That night, I couldn’t sleep because I thought I was going to be excommunicated, called *bourgeois*, and everyone was going to think I was not a revolutionist at all. There was a huge psychological pressure. And this was internalized. No one says anything about your blouse. But still, we knew

that holding hands was not favoured because it was not considered a revolutionary behaviour.

From Esin's statement, we can understand the fear of accusations of being *bourgeois*. She lost sleep after a comrade saw her in an "elegant, yellow silk blouse", in fear of not being considered revolutionary enough. Wearing such a blouse was not in line with the norm associated with woman by the leftist movement. The fear of being labeled as *bourgeois* is an effect of the regulatory ideal of woman, being a fear of being on the outside of the normative, and the fear of being excluded through the practice of dressing. It is a norm that can be considered very similar to Fulya and Güliz's words on beautifying in relation to being labelled as bourgeois. However, for the case of Esin, even though she "secretly" wears the yellow silk blouse, she feels the fear as an effect of this regulatory ideal. Moreover, Esin's expression "this was internalized. No one said anything" is very important in showing that the boundaries of the discourse were not always drawn with clearly defined words. The boundaries of being a proper woman in a leftist organization for Esin are not "worded", but they are known. The regulatory ideals, in that sense, are not necessarily in the forms of prohibition or constraints; but it is known that certain kinds of acts are not "revolutionary behaviours".

The use of the word *bourgeois* refers to a huge discursive set of meanings within the leftist movement, and the results of this discourse are not only limited to the regulation of clothing, but they also exclude any kind of woman's organizations. Sevinç, one of the members of Kaktüs magazine, claimed that they considered any kind of woman's organization to be *bourgeois*:

But, as I said before, there were women's organizations at that time [prior to 1980]. There were the Progressive Women Foundation (*İlerici Kadınlar Derneği*) (PWF) and the women's organization Dev-Yol (Revolutionary Path Movement). But I was not a member of any of them. I was not a member of PWF because I belonged to a different political organization. We saw it; I mean I saw it as a movement of the female *petit bourgeois*, so I was not part of it. We saw it as a movement of women *petit bourgeois*; so I was not a member.

The Progressive Women Foundation was a leftist group that sought to turn women to socialism, and so did not organize any activities related to the problems of woman,

but rather aimed to develop as a leftist group in the 1975–80 periods²⁸ (Koç, 2013, 194). Above all, Sevinç said that they were considered to be a *bourgeois* movement in her leftist group. During our interview, she said that she could not think women as a part of political organization, and from this perspective, we can see that the labelling of *bourgeois* woman was not only the result of a given position of men, but it discursively worked in the leftist groups.

In the analysis of the normative boundaries of the leftist movement in which the women of the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines participated before joining the feminist movement, based on the interviews, I have emphasized three regulatory ideals of woman: being fragile, injured and *bourgeois*. The reiterative norms of engaging in politics in the leftist movement lead to intelligible practices of womanhood. Moreover, these categories do not work against each other, but are rather intertwined, as can be seen in the example of the non-sexuality of the beautification, or the examples of fragile and injured woman.

The discursive norms based on the citations of convention of the left both permit and organize the actions of leftist woman; and interpellation, as an effect of discourse, defines the boundaries of womanhood. In this case, it can be concluded that to be able to be a part of these leftist organisations, certain kinds of womanhoods emerged as normative regulations. These regulations include certain practises that do not match with the norms. Through these practises normative forces emerge with the production of the term woman. These three ideals emphasized by the Feminist and Kaktüs magazine members during my interviews helped me analyse the resignification of the category of woman and their involvement in politics. Thus, these ideals will be referred to in order to understand the process of resignification in the sections of consciousness-raising groups and woman's solidarity and sisterhood.

As I have emphasized, I did not aim to provide an understanding of the leftist movement in Turkey prior to the 1980s; but I have focused on the norms of leftist

²⁸ For an oral history study on Progressive Women Foundation, please see: Akal, 2011. For a written speech by Saadet Özkal, one of the participants of this group: Özkal, 2009, 21-35.

movement based on the experiences of the women of Feminist and Kaktüs Magazines. In that sense, the three regulatory ideals are derived from the women who were to become feminists during the 1980s. Hence, if this thesis questioned a different term, these ideals could have been different. What the feminist women from the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines mostly speak about is the questioning of womanhood. In this regard, it can be concluded from the findings that woman should not have been woman to participate in those organizations established around the leftist environments, perform certain acts including fights, arguments, protests and the like. However, those staying out of the leftist frame do not simply mean being excluded from those environments, but these exclusions were being realized through a new production of the category of womanhood. This production of the category of womanhood turns into a normative force for the fact that there are different practices. In the following chapter I will open a debate related to resignification in Butlerian terms, and I will show how the category of woman is used in a different set of meanings and resignified within the two magazines.

2.2. Consciousness raising groups

In the period from the 1980s onwards, the feminist movement in Turkey has taken sharing of experiences among women as an important practice (Aytaç and Koç, 2011, 281-2), mirroring the European movements.^{29 30} At the beginning of the feminist movement, there were many calls for the translation of Juliet Mitchell's book "Woman's Estate". This was postponed, in that Turkey's feminist women wanted to question their own condition of womanhood within the locality of Turkey at the beginning of the 1980s³¹. After this point, different groups of women started

²⁹ For more information about the context of consciousness raising groups in the United States and Europe, see Campbell, 2002.

³⁰ Zehra opens up the relations with Europe: "They were those who also theoretically criticize in different occasions, and met with different actions by experiencing living abroad. Their effort to introduce these experiences to Turkey was a significant contribution".

³¹ This book is translated by Kadın Çevresi. For a conversation of the feminist translators all of whom are from the feminist movement. See: "Çevirenlerin Önsözü" in the book of Women's Estate (1985, 7-17).

establishing consciousness-raising groups at different levels, with the intention of questioning woman's condition in general, and their own specific situation related to womanhood (Aytaç and Koç, 2011, 282). Consciousness raising groups are significant characteristics of second wave feminism (Tekeli, 2010b, 124).

To concentrate on the women of the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines, as the focus of this thesis, consciousness-raising groups was organized within the roof of Kadın Çevresi.³² All members of the magazine were active participants of this organisation, which was established in 1982 and active throughout the publishing life of both Feminist magazine (1987–90) and Kaktüs magazine (1988–90) (Koç, 2005, 102). Under the umbrella of Kadın Çevresi, sharing experiences through consciousness raising groups was considered to be a means (Sancar, 2011, 86) of questioning the patriarchal power relations, similar to the earlier period of the feminist movement at the start of the 1980s.³³

In this section, I will claim that the collective groups of consciousness-raising enabled a shift on the norms on womanhood. This effort to understand the woman's subordination enabled the questioning of the devalued use of the term woman, and this devalued use is resignified through the very relations that have been constructed in these groups. I do not claim that all resignification process of the term woman emerged in these groups; however, it has a special condition for this process as I have seen during the interviews. First, I will point to collective structure of these groups, and then I will focus on its subversive characteristics.

³² Kadın Çevresi was founded as a company following the ban about the establishment of political organisations after the military coup. The women-only group published four books, and brought about the establishment of both the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines (Koç, 2013, 194).

³³ For an account of the beginning of consciousness raising groups in Turkey in the 1980s, see Koç and Aytaç, 2011, 278-294.

2.2.1. The collectivity of consciousness raising groups

If this is the case, then how can we define “collective” in a performative way in a Butlerian sense? To begin with, it should be noted that collectivity is not a concept that Butler emphasised frequently, or explained in any detail. Rather, she uses the concept of collectivity to answer the question “in which kind of action is resignification possible?” or, at least, “through which kind of action would the resignification process be accelerated?” In this sense, collectivity is an important concept in the conceptualisation of the term resignification that even she does not emphasise specifically. I find this concept very useful in analysing the consciousness raising groups, and so I will point to the relation of collectivity and resignification of the term “woman”.

In this sense, I define the concept of collectivity based on Butler’s usage of the term. Firstly, collective action emerges to conceptualise the systemic character of a set of meanings. The signified, in that sense, is thought with a different set of norms through collective action, and this damages the normative area of the signified. This collective process can trigger a process of resignification with the aim of understanding the already signified systemic constitution. Moreover, performative collective practices force the unquestioned norms that discourse governs to be challenged (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, 67-8). For this analysis, the collectivity of consciousness raising groups will be taken as a process for the conceptualisation of the systemic character of womanhood and as groups that enable women to challenge the norms according to a different set of meanings, which will bring about a resignification of the term “womanhood”.

Secondly, collectivity refers not to singular histories, but to a linkage between individuals, as different from a collection of individuals (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, 157). The collectivity emerges out of the very link of a singular story to a patterned social condition. It can be inferred that it is a performative act, in that the singular story is no longer reiterated with the signified term, but deforms when it is thought of as part of a patterned social condition. The set of meanings is injured, and the possibility of resignification emerges. This linkage, at that point, does not refer to a togetherness or sameness of every participant in the group, but is related to their

differences (ibid, 180). Moreover, Butler claims that the “I” is not dissolved in this context, but rather is “linked to a patterned social condition” – in this case, to the condition of womanhood (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, 180).

Now, I will define how the consciousness raising groups in which the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines participated were collective in Butler’s conceptualisation. During my interviews, the women of both magazines mentioned that the aim of consciousness raising groups was not to “*dertleşme*”³⁴, but to understand womanhood based on their experiences through dynamic interaction of the groups. In this sense, these groups were more than a mere daily meeting of women, as Meltem³⁵ claims:

There, we realised for the first time that sharing all kinds of experiences related to men was meaningful for us. I mean, understanding, comprehending and realising what you experienced rather than *dertleşme* with your friends and gossip about your boyfriend ... It was a process like that.

Meltem mentions that these groups were not simply an opportunity to talk about the daily problems faced by the participants, which is “*dertleşme*”, in Meltem’s words, but includes a process of “understanding their experiences” through the sharing of experiences. What distinguishes these groups from a practice of *dertleşme* is the realization that “for the first time sharing all kinds of experiences related to men was meaningful”. This realization is based on understanding the already signified relations and norms between men and women in their activities. This realization became possible by questioning these relations between men and women and the norms that govern such relationalities, and in the very moments of understanding, a shift in the meaning set of the category of woman emerged in relation to men through the process of experience sharing. Thus, understanding experiences differs from *dertleşme* because of this shift from the meaning set of men and women’s relation. In other words, through these groups a new social and discursive space emerged, which Meltem refers to as realisation with reference to their conversations

³⁴ *Dertleşme* means telling and sharing difficulties for the aim of relaxing and solving in Turkish.

³⁵ Active member of Feminist magazine.

to understand their condition different than simply relaxing by gossiping about their boyfriends. Yasemin, an active member of Kaktüs Magazine, talks about how the consciousness-raising groups, the new social space, works:

We were talking very honestly there and also questioning ourselves a lot. Many of our personal experiences were merged there. We were [discussing] why we acted in a certain way. We did not have the chance to hide it. Of course we did; you could evade it, but we did not want to. We really wanted to face up to ourselves.

Yasemin mentions firstly that the discussions involved them questioning why they acted in a certain way, which is what Meltem refers to as “understanding” in this new social space. She talks about the “merging of experience”; the word “merge” is very important here, implying that relating the experiences does not refer to a collection of stories, as each experience that is shared in that group affects every other experience. It is the collective “understanding” of “why they acted in a certain way”. This kind of an understanding is a collective effort to posit the signified norms on womanhood that emerge from their action. In this effort, understanding their actions was possible within the collective groups not as telling singular stories of the individuals, but as a linkage of experiences that surround these women and to understand the signified norms on womanhood.

Secondly, in these collective questioning practices of the new social space, there emerged an “openness” for this questioning effort to appear. Yasemin refers to openness by saying that they could evade such a questioning, but they “really wanted to face up to” themselves. By these words, it is seen that the practices of questioning is reiterating in a process. The resignification of the term woman has become possible with such a reiteration. Fulya talks about this possibility, by pointing how consciousness-raising groups allowed them to question themselves altogether:

[We] may hurt each other’s feelings while experiencing these things at the same time; but they were indispensable for me. [...] I discovered Fulya through these discussions [with others]. This information was very important. Maybe that’s why it is meaningful today to express that Fulya is a feminist. The reason why I don’t feel disappointed now is that they, [Güliz], Özlem and Ayse didn’t leave me alone. Although I was deeply hurt ... I would think

differently now if I hadn't felt that pain. [...] This is a great way of doing politics.³⁶

In relation to reiteration of collective questioning, she points that she, as a feminist woman, discovered herself “*through*” these conversations. The questioning was neither a telling of stories, nor an accumulation of knowledge through the summing up of experiences in a “peaceful” way. Rather, these dialogues involved a considerable challenge that was seen mostly as an appreciation of the group. This is the process of questioning the social condition of a social group, of woman, and it resignifies it in a collective way with an “openness” and “challenge”. In Fulya’s words, the issue of the appreciation of challenge is very important. Let me remind the feeling of injury, which is introduced in the debate of leftist normativity prior to the 1980s in this chapter, Sema was emphasizing that “their knees would shake” and “their voices would crack” when they started to speak at the leftist political meetings. Different from such kind of a embodied injury, now Fulya talks about a challenge that hurts but not feels disappointed. Thus, Fulya talks about not feeling alone and “discovering” herself through these conversations as “a great way of doing politics”. In this regard, it can be said that the regulative effect of injury was challenged not by performing the exactly opposite form of injury as it is mentioned by Sema, but took another form by being challenged yet not feeling injured.

The aim was to posit womanhood within the social condition, as mentioned in Kaktüs magazine:

In consciousness raising groups, women discuss the pressures that they have to face on their own; and in this way it is no longer an individual problem of each woman. Sharing experiences in these small groups and the realisation of women being a social group are very important (Kaktüs, 1988, vol 1, 13).

³⁶Another important point was raised by Fulya, when she was explaining their challenging of each other, is that “It is very significant politics”. From the very beginning, these groups were defined as political practices. The reterritorialisation of doing politics will be explained in the third chapter; but for now, I am more inclined to point out the effects of the resignification of the term “woman”.

There are two points in that quotation. Firstly, it is seen that in the consciousness-raising groups, the pressures on woman are discussed. This is a collective effort to understand and question the already signified norms on womanhood and the systematic reiteration of exclusions and regulations. Secondly, through collectively talking about these exclusions, the “realization” of being a woman becomes possible. This realization makes the agency of woman possible. This is the process of resignification, a shift of a set of meaning of woman, which makes this meaning valuable. Now, I will point to how this process of resignification undermines the dominant norms³⁷.

2.2.2. Subversive character of experience sharing

In the first chapter I mentioned the norms of womanhood in the leftist movement, based on the experiences of the women of the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines. As the feminist women of both magazines had a background in leftist politics, the citation and interpellation of the leftist movement still matters, not for the recognition, but for the “joy of exclusion”. In using this term, I mean that the reaction of the leftist movement did not really create a problem for either magazine; on the contrary, the feminists felt joy at certain points, as Fulya explains. Fulya, speaking about the relationship between the leftist and feminist movements during the late 1980s years, said:

Feminism is your own womanly experience. It means, [it is underestimated due to] not knowing which part of your life can be considered political. There is an underestimation that arises out of

³⁷ Related to this point, I am well aware of Butler’s criticism related to the binary constitution of men and women within the feminist movement. Starting from her early works, including “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution” and “Gender Trouble”, she questions the effects of using the category of women in feminism. However, as I have mentioned in the introduction chapter, this criticism cannot be “applied” to the feminism of the 1980s in Turkey just because they are using the same category. The term “women”, as used by the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines, was derived from the *practices* of exclusion, and does not yet refer to an unquestionable category, being rather the very process of questioning womanhood. I was compelled to add this footnote as when Butler gives significance to the term “the scale and systemic character of women’s position”, she also criticises its use as a reified category. I do not think that this is valid for the period in which I am interested.

that point. But this was not distracting for us. For me, it was an indicator that what we did was right. The [feminist] language used and the rage displayed resembled that of a very young woman, as we were not yet able to produce a more mature language.

The point made by Fulya here was repeated by different women interviewed within the course of this study. Firstly, for Fulya it was an indicator that they were doing right and they experienced a “joy of exclusion”, referring to the productive power of exclusion. Moreover, in the words of Fulya, we can see that the boundaries with the leftist movement became clearer through their practice of consciousness-raising. The leftist movement is outside,³⁸ and Fulya talks from the inside the feminist movement. Taking the leftist movement as a basis, Fulya can claim that they were doing well, and this point means that the outside has both a discursive effect and a productive power. Simultaneously, the “inside” of feminism becomes clearer through the repudiation of the left; and now the boundaries become clearer, and come to shape the feminist movement. At that point, we see that the norms of womanhood, as defined in the leftist movement, split, and the word “woman” is adopted as a valuable term.

As mentioned earlier, repetition is “a re-enactment and re-experiencing of a set of meanings that are already socially established” (Butler, 2007, 191). Subversive repetition refers to the denaturalising of one dominant convention (Butler, 1993, 4). I will now turn my focus to the effect of consciousness raising groups on the resignification of the term “woman”.

For the women of the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines, prior to being open to discussion by consciousness raising groups, womanhood had already been signified according to leftist common sense meanings and norms. Fulya explains the already signified set of norms on womanhood that was in place when she first participated in consciousness raising groups:

What we call consciousness raising is kind of a catharsis, discovery and getting to know one’s self. Is this possible? When I first got there and they

³⁸ Butlerian way of using the concept “outside” does not refer to a non-discursive ontological area, but to something that can be only considered in relation with discourse (1993, 17).

talked about what it was to be a woman, I remember asking “What do you mean, “being a woman?”” A man comes along and loves me, and then we understand. In bed, we realise. They say “We are all human. We will start a revolution, and then, everything will be alright. What do you mean women suffer? It’s the working class that suffers!”

It is apparent that Fulya’s normative thoughts on womanhood are based on the meaning of “love of men”, or that both women and men are human. Moreover, she cannot comprehend the position of woman as a part of politics. Politics, and the related subordination category, were only about the working class and the leftist movement. These were the dominant conventions that governed signification of woman and politics. However, Fulya explains how her thoughts changed as a result of the discussions in the consciousness raising groups on the experience of womanhood:

Consciousness raising meetings were very hurtful. I mean, what came up when we talked about how we made love. [From a leftist approach] Associating violence with the state was acceptable, but we were not at all aware that it should also be considered violence when our boyfriend did it. We didn’t know about emotional or psychological violence, or financial abuse. We didn’t understand the relationship between our voluntary actions and violence; or we wouldn’t make a big deal out of one or two slaps on the cheek. Later, we would realise that we had already experienced them all, and found out that what we had considered “voluntary love making” was actually abuse and non-consensual intercourse; rape ... These were very hurtful. I cried more than ever before in my life during the meetings at Kadın Çevresi.

It can be claimed that the consciousness raising conversations that caused Fulya to cry had the effect that the signified womanhood that could be understood in bed was then changed according to second quotation from Fulya. To begin with, she talked about how the category of violence was related only with the state in the leftist movement; but after becoming engaged in consciousness raising groups, it is thought with the very relationship to her boyfriend. Other forms of violence, such as emotional, psychological or financial, came into consideration, and now two slaps matter, regarded not very different from the violence of the state. Secondly, she talks about non-consensual intercourse, rape, and at that point we see how the established meaning of sexuality can transform from voluntary love making to rape. In both

cases³⁹, we see how the dominant regulatory norms related to violence and sexuality are denaturalised and resignified with a new set of meanings based on the valued woman category through the repetition of consciousness raising groups⁴⁰.

I explained the subversive character of experience sharing as a collective activity; however, this does not mean that the particular conceptualisation of womanhood is suddenly destroyed. A deformation of the norms of womanhood emerged even within these groups, in that they continuously encountered the dominant understanding of womanhood. Yasemin, a member of Kaktüs magazine, clarifies this issue:

Our emotions, relationships, situation at home and work, why we acted in a certain way, why we behaved in a certain way, forms of intimate relationships [were mentioned]. I was able to benefit a lot from these meetings. We could reveal many things, even things we kept hidden from ourselves, if we didn't evade. But there were interesting moments. For example, there was a woman banker [...]. I don't remember how she came to join us. Her relationship with her husband was in ruins. We couldn't guide her, I mean, it remained like that. She didn't know what to do. Suddenly, the conversations changed. Her language changed. She had experienced serious problems with her husband. I remember her problem only vaguely, but we were unable to guide her. There was no women's movement to embrace her. We weren't in the position to offer her support if we suggested that she built a life for herself. We were actually struggling. We were taking baby steps.

Yasemin began by describing the understanding, questioning and openness of the consciousness-raising groups (terms discussed in the previous part), and she refers to the effect of consciousness raising groups on one particular woman, a banker, who participated in these groups. When Yasemin says: "Suddenly, [...] her language changed. She had experienced serious problems with her husband ... but we were unable to guide her", she points to the gap between the norm of the dominant

³⁹ All the concepts of sexuality, violence and sexual harassment will be discussed in the third chapter, second section, but for now, I focus on the subversive character of consciousness raising groups.

⁴⁰ In that part, I want to emphasise on the subversive character of consciousness-raising groups by showing that a shift on the Fulya's understanding of woman. The issue of physical violence, which is very important for the interests of this thesis, will be analysed in the third chapter, section 3.2.1.

understanding and the challenged one.⁴¹ From Yasemin's words we can see that resignification does not refer to a total change of meaning in a category, as there are always limitations. Despite the fact that the normative understanding of womanhood of the woman banker has deformities, the dominant understanding still works, and an inconsistency emerges.

Now I can conclude that the main aim of consciousness-raising groups, is to posit the term "woman" as a patterned social condition through the reiterated sharing of experiences and challenging themselves. Through this process of collectivity, the term "woman" gradually seemed valuable; in other words, the term is attempted to be resignified according to the interviews of Feminist and Kaktüs magazines. This resignification emerges through citing the exclusion of left, as a subversive set of practice, which denaturalises the norms of womanhood. That said, still, this subversion does not refer to a total change of meaning in different social areas, but continues to undermine the dominant meanings. In the following section, I will explain the notions of woman's solidarity and sisterhood that are emphasised in these groups of the feminist movement, including the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines.

2.3.Woman's solidarity and sisterhood

For the feminist movement, according to Abadan-Unat, the concepts of woman's solidarity and sisterhood are emphasized as basic issues of 1980s' feminism (1998, 332), and they are used as a tool for the resignification of the category of "woman". During this section, I will conduct a debate about what is woman's solidarity and how it emerges in the political relations.

2.3.1. Independent woman's organisation

Although the women of the feminist movement in the 1980s raised different arguments at some point, they all supported independent woman's organisations (Sirman, 1989, 7; Bora, 2011, 18). It seemed important to be able to distinguish itself from other movements, especially the leftist one; and even if it has connections to

⁴¹ After the 1990s, the feminist movement gave special emphasis to these "limitations" through, some examples such as women's shelters and feminist lawyers.

other movements, it has to be independent to be able to struggle for woman (Bora, 2011, 18). I noted during my interviews that independent woman's organisations are seen as raising the potential of woman's solidarity and sisterhood for the women of the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines. To begin with the reaction of the leftist movement to the feminist movement, the resignification process was not appreciated within these groups according to Esin, an active member of Feminist Magazine. She speaks about the reactions and the focus of feminist women:

Even though most of us were either married or had boyfriends, we were seen as misandrists. [There was] ridicule, insults, etc. ... from the leftist movement. But we didn't care, we were very brave, we expected no affirmation at all, because we had learned and talked about ourselves thanks to feminism and the consciousness raising groups. Constituting woman's solidarity, sisterhood ... These were the main goals for us.

She states that the attempts of humiliation and accusations of misandristism did not bother them because they were interested in woman's solidarity and sisterhood. This parallels Fulya's claim related to the ignorance of the left in the politics of experience: "But this was not distracting us. For me, it was an indicator of what we did was right." In this point, we can again see a citation to leftist movement, through a claim of ignorance. As we can see from this statement, this ignorance does not refer to a non-effect, but rather has a productive power that draws a boundary between the leftist and feminist movements. Thus, the accusations of leftist movement as "non-acceptable" misandrists condition the term woman's solidarity. It is the constitutive outside of the leftist movement. Saying leftist accusations made the feminist term of woman's solidarity does not simply mean that the leftist movement determined the term of woman's solidarity. Rather, leftist accusation enabled the political relations of woman's solidarity.

Then, for the "inside" of feminism, what is woman's solidarity? What kind of a gap exists in the meaning set of woman? Fulya, an active member of Feminist Magazine, says:

We learnt to have solidarity within ourselves [as feminist women]. The first thing I understood was that the woman I talk to was not my opponent. Everyone already was your opponent. Being a good leftist lies in reading

well, possessing intellectual knowledge, acting well, escaping well, hiding well, etc... All of [these] ‘goods’ have certain sides to fill in some attributes. Once you have separated from the left, once this has been abandoned, a terrible abyss emerges ... with no meaning ... We were always told that if we are unhappy, we don’t know how to be in love, because we were selfish. We could share everything except our lovers, and so on ... One sees here: She is not my opponent. What I say can lack certain points but that is OK; she completes it. The debate that how knowing too well results in a hierarchical construct... Using your body, its shape might constitute the hierarchy. The most important thing [is] equalising expressions. The speaker is there, yet the others aren’t. We discovered this in there. That is to say, no one preached counsel to another.

Fulya defines woman’s solidarity, through constructing the opposites of the leftist movement characteristics being a good leftist, reading well, knowing, being intellectual, having good political meetings, escaping well, hiding well. Rather than these “goods”, she is talking about solidarity. However, we cannot say that the notion of the solidarity was possible in relation to opposites of this leftist norms that Fulya talks about. For example, we cannot say that when Fulya became feminist, she abandoned being an intellectual, reading well, not hiding from police etc. However, it can be inferred from Fulya’s words that the domination of these norms in the leftist groups is debated as a form of hierarchy and the notion of woman’s solidarity included abandonment such kinds of hierarcies. The void, or rather the ‘abyss’ in Fulya’s words, enables a space upon which their solidarity can emerge. In this regard, Fulya says “she is not my opponent, What I say can lack certain points but that is OK; she completes it”. The notion of hierarchy or non-hierarchy will be debated in the third chapter as a part of the study of the reterritorialisation of politics, but for now I will focus on the issue of equalising expressions, according to Fulya’s emphasis in parallel to the “injured” woman norm that is debated the first chapter. Overcoming the fear of speaking, solidarity subversively enables one to speak, relying on the encouragement given in these groups.

Because these debates were held in the name of woman’s solidarity and sisterhood in the independent woman’s organisations, it can be claimed that the term woman is also shifted in the sense of constituting woman’s solidarity by attempting to avoid certain hirerachies different from the ones they experienced in the regulations of the leftist groups. Thus, this can be named as the process of resignification.

2.3.2. Boundaries of woman's solidarity

Women of both magazines were supporting woman's solidarity but this does not mean that any and every women were welcomed into the independent woman's organisations or the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines, as the case of this thesis. The inside of these magazines includes a certain understanding of womanhood, and identifies them by drawing a boundary. I will explain these boundaries based on my interviews. It is important to see how solidarity and its boundaries emerged in the political relations with the leftist movement.

There are two exclusionary principles of the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines, which are men and anti-feminist women. Nihal, an active member of Kaktüs Magazine, defines the first excluded:

In my Trotskyist organization, feminism was not perceived as being a bourgeois movement, or an enemy of socialism; but an independent organization, or an independent involvement into the woman's organization had caused major debates, nonetheless. Their attitude was like: "We have no problems in the organization, and something must be done for the condition of woman, but why do you do it independently? You can also do your thing in here". In due process you come to see that it cannot be done in there, that it must be conducted in an independent space, specifically apart from men, you come to realize it more and more⁴².

Nihal says that after the emergence of feminism different leftist groups had different approaches to feminism, which was something that was often stated by different women during my interviews. A few leftist groups did not consider feminism to be bourgeois or anti-socialist, though none of them supported independent woman's organisations, said Nihal. "We understood that politics related to woman should be carried out in an independent area from men," she says, from which we can see that the boundaries of woman's solidarity had started to be drawn. She said that they had been told to carry out some works related to woman in the leftist groups, but they soon saw that they could not do it there. For this reason, Nihal says, it should be an

⁴² During my fieldwork, none of the women declared the position of the leftist group to which they had participated, aside from the Trotskyist ones. It is apparent that the Trotskyist leftist groups had a different approach to feminist organisations. This subject is not discussed in depth here, in that it falls outside the scope of the thesis; however, it may be an important issue for further study.

especially independent space from men, although this does not mean that woman's solidarity was welcoming to all women. Secondly, woman's organisations were open only to "potential feminists", and were barred to anti-feminists, as the second circle of exclusion. Nihal continues to explain this point:

There were some women who weren't against feminism, but opposed an independent woman's organisation. They saw the existence of independent organisations as something that was in opposition to their very existence. I mean, they were thinking in the same way as their men. We wanted to engage in a political and ideological struggle against these kinds of women and men. We were seen as separatists against their own base. Attempts were made to oppress us in many different verbal and literary domains. We sought to draw a line between these women and us when we called ourselves feminists. The women, who worked with us, were not obliged to call themselves feminists; but they should not be anti-feminist. They were in no place to persuade us. That was a line: We are feminists! It became important to draw that line. We acted not just with other women, but with women who did not reject our line, even if they did not fully support it. That was the case. Those women [who did not reject feminism] really carried worries concerning women; they wanted to learn [about] feminism.

From Nihal's statement, firstly, it can be understood that some women were not totally against independent groups, nor were they clearly anti-feminist, and these women were the potential for the solidarity. This is an important issue for the political constitution of woman category. From this point, we can see that the term "woman's solidarity" is considered to have a strategical meaning that emerges in relation to the leftist movement. Secondly, Nihal says some women considered independent woman's organisations to be "separatist", and sought to suppress them. Because the women who consider independent woman's organisations to be separatist cannot persuade the feminists that Nihal talks about, these feminists drew boundaries excluding some of the women who do not reject feminism. To protect the feminist space, not all women can be a part of woman's solidarity, for which Nihal uses the clause "they were thinking in the same line with their men". They cannot be in the space of feminism because they threaten the space itself, its independence, and so they must be excluded.

In this second exclusionary circle of woman's solidarity, we see that solidarity does not simply mean including all women into the realm of feminism. Handan Koç, an

active member of Feminist magazine, said that it was not their aim to love woman, but to change them during these years (2013, 197). Gülnur Savran from Kaktüs magazine says that the members of the magazine were trying to distinguish between woman's solidarity and womanism. While womanism for Savran refers to "we are women and special, and we love each other without a political effort", woman's solidarity refers to a political approach, to creating a linkage of different actions of womanhood, such as the subordination of married women and sex workers (2005b, 128). In this context, their understanding of woman's solidarity has a political ground, meaning that the resignification of the term "woman" with a valued set of meanings does not refer to the love of all women, but that political effort is necessary. This political effort, within the terms of my analysis, refers to a deformation of the norms, rather than the acceptance of the dominant norms on being married or single.

That said, this subversion does not mean that subversive dimension of the solidarity is equalised in all expressions. The limits of subversion in the sense do not change all meanings at a definable point. During my interview, Özge⁴³ spoke about how she was happy with the notion of woman's solidarity, but says that she was excluded from Feminist magazine.

They did not say "leave" openly, but it came to that. I remember being told, 'you are a libertarian, not a feminist! You are a sexual libertarian ...' and I was aware that I had been excluded. That was the point of disengagement. It was frustration. I do not believe I could be precisely what one needed to be in there. Perhaps that's why I wasn't very suited to the cooperative working that they demanded. I don't know what my incompatibility was.

Özge's comment highlights some inconsistencies in the subversion of solidarity. Subversive performativity is not possible without regulatory norms (1993, 28), but in Özge's case the regulatory norms of woman's solidarity excluded her from being a part of the solidarity. She does not even know why she is excluded, although it may be that being a sexual libertarian, of which she was accused, was deemed unsuitable for cooperative working, leading her to conclude that, "I do not believe I could be precisely what one needed to be in there". In this case, a threat to the internal affairs

⁴³ Active member of Feminist magazine.

of the independent woman's organizations was not tangible, at least not to Özge. Sexual liberation was one of the aims of the magazines of Feminist and Kaktüs, as I discuss in the third chapter. However, Özge's inclusion into the political organization was seen as a diversion from the political aims, by pointing to her sexual libertarian identity in her account. The regulatory norms within the drawn boundaries of the organization were at work, but not without inconsistencies. Even though such norms emerge with well-defined boundaries, certain leaks in the normative structure also emerged. Özge says she does not know "what one needed to be in there", even though the claims of the independent woman's organizations were clear. Such inconsistencies had an effect on the drawing of the boundaries of woman's solidarity. These organizations, through exclusionary practices, came to resignify the term 'woman', but this term was not formed without its inconsistencies, as we can observe in Özge's case.

In this chapter, I have discussed the resignification of the term "woman" mainly in the practices of consciousness raising groups and the notion of woman's solidarity. To be able to discuss the process of resignification, the construction of the normative womanhood in leftist discourse is debated firstly. Thus, certain norms are emphasised based on the women of Feminist and Kaktüs during the interviews of this research. These norms were important to analyse the process of resignification in order to understand what is signified on the term "woman" in the leftist politics which all the interviewees were a part of before the 1980s. Certain normative womanhoods in the leftist groups such as fragility, injurance or fear of labelling as a bourgeois woman are emphasised by them.

In the second section, it is emphasized that the collectivity of consciousness raising groups enables the resignification of woman and reveals a shift away from the dominant meaning of the term, while also enables subversive practices among women. In the third section, the term "woman's solidarity", based on some exclusions for to whom to establish solidarity, also enables a resignification of the term "woman" in the political arena. Within the chapter, I concentrated on the resignification of the term "woman". To link the construction of the normative

womanhood in the leftist groups, not the collective and subversive characteristics of the consciousness raising groups were related with the signified term woman in the leftist groups necessarily as the opposite of the norms, but emerges in a new context. To illustrate, the feeling of injury to speak about the political issues by the woman is not covered with the declaration of non-fragility of woman by the magazine circles of Feminist and Kaktüs, but the notion of woman's solidarity is emphasized.

The problematisation focused on the process of resignification of this split in the already signified norms not only deforms the meaning of woman, but also affects the way of engaging in politics. Nejla stresses this point:

A different sisterhood; small groups were all very exciting because while everyone shared their experiences, people [linked themselves with what was said by others] ... Women [in that period,] engaged in politics by transforming themselves. Transforming themselves meant to be a feminist, and that was itself politics.

The transformation of the women themselves was itself engagement in politics, as Nejla mentions. The transformation process as a subversion had created the ground upon which the feminist politics had emerged. In the following chapter I will analyse the reterritorialisation of the term "politics" in relation to resignification of the term "womanhood".

CHAPTER 3

NEW TERRITORIES OF DOING POLITICS

Up to this point, I have explained the resignification of the abjected term “woman” as a subversive performativity, based on my interviews involving women of the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines. In this chapter, I will concentrate on the subversive side of doing politics in relation to the resignified term “woman” within the circles of these two magazines. It cannot be said that the term was resignified first, after which doing politics was subverted. According to the interviews, I will claim that two factors (resignification and doing politics) affected each other simultaneously. Butler also suggests that performativity does not first refer to a resignification and then to its subversive effects, claiming that there are different scenarios in that it may or may not be in a line, or resignifications may also have unsubversive effects which I have already discussed. The distinction between subversive and conservative resignification is discussed in the introduction of second chapter. In this thesis, I separated analytically the resignification of woman and the subversive effect of engaging in politics although I will claim that these terms are not linear, but rather affect each other continuously. In this regard, I discuss them in relation to each other, while in this chapter I concentrate on the new territories of the doing politics of the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines.

The feminist movement declared themselves as a political organization in the very beginning of its emergence in Turkey. However, it can be an important note that there are possible reasons for the simultaneous effect of resignification of the term woman and doing politics for the cases of the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines. Firstly, the women involved in these magazines were formerly active members of the

leftist movement, and the exclusion and regulation of the term “woman” emerged in the very relations of leftist politics, as explained in the second chapter, with the norms of fragile, injured and bourgeois woman. All of these norms were regulatory ideals within the leftist movement; however, the feminist women of the 1980s were critical of these norms in regard to their inclusion/exclusion, or their inclusion in a certain normative way. This means that this kind of an exclusion was embedded within the relations within the political arena, which was where the challenges against it also emerged.

Moreover, the collective activities of consciousness-raising and the notion of woman’s solidarity within independent woman’s groups were organised as a part of political domain. Here, we need to recall the words of Fulya and her explanation of their practices of consciousness raising, “It is perfect politics”. In this sense, we see that the practice of questioning womanhood emerged as a way of doing politics. Moreover, in the second chapter I showed with whom solidarity was established – not with women in general, but with those who were not in the least anti-feminist. In this sense, it is apparent that the established solidarity fell within the political field. These notions were also a part of politics which enables to resignify the term woman. However, in this chapter I will emphasise the new territories of doing politics which are performing in relation to the process of resignification. In both practices, the resignification of the term “woman” is treated and dealt with as a part of the political realm. In addition to the process of resignification, a different kind of subversive way of doing politics and new subversive concepts emerged in opposition to the leftist movement. In this chapter I will explain the “different kinds of doing politics” as a new way of being involved in politics, as well as the new concepts of doing politics, but I should first introduce the conceptual tools of performativity related to my analysis of the subversiveness of political engagement for the period.

In this chapter, the two points that are introduced in different contexts throughout this thesis are important for the analysis of doing politics, namely the politicisation of the abjection and subversiveness.

To begin with the first point, Butler uses the concept of the “politicisation of abjection” to refer to the extension of the field of possibilities through political

contest by those who fail to conform to the regulatory norms, to the realm of intelligibility. As performativity is conditioned by the regime of the discourse and power that produces and regulates the reiteration of norms and action (Butler, 2004 26), the political contest of the abjected emerges within the very relations of discursive production (Lloyd, 2007, 75). The politicisation of abjection does not necessarily refer to the quality and quantity of politic involvement, such as its size (the number of the members of a political group) or its effect on social institutions or social policy. In other words, the politicisation of abjection does not necessarily refer to a reverse discourse in which the dominant normative explanation is totally changed, but is rather “an effort to rewrite the history of the term and to force it into a demanding resignification” (Butler, 1993, 21). Related to this, Butler pays attention to the deformation of the norms within a particular relationship. At this point, it is important to note that abjection, possible through the exclusion of the discourse, may or may not be politicised, according to Butler. The “occupation or reterritorialisation” of a term can refer to a political resignification (Butler, 1993, 231), and she uses this concept specifically in reference to the term “queer politics”. In this thesis, we also see a politicisation of the term “woman” and the deformation of norms of political engagement in different practices, relationships and discourses. Thus, I will focus on the practices and the relations of the women of magazines of *Feminist* and *Kaktüs*, and use the explanation of “politicisation of abjection” to understand these relations. By doing so, I do not equalise the abjection of the queer that Butler opens up, but linking a similarity about the abjection of certain kinds of womanhoods.

As to the second point, I have already mentioned that the subversion in Butlerian conceptualisation refers to the denaturalisation of one dominant norm in a specific set of relations and undermining the given meanings (Butler, 1993, 4). This denaturalisation is possible through reiterations of a re-experience and the re-enactment of a set of meanings (Butler, 2007, 191). Through reiteration, sedimented norms cannot simply be repeated as the same of the previous one, and so an inconsistency emerges and it can be a subversive performativity (Butler, 2007, 229-30). In this chapter I will discuss the sedimented, dominant and given norms of political engagement for the women of the *Feminist* and *Kaktüs* magazines, and

show how their practices and questionings had undermined the norms in the very relations of political engagement.

Based on this analytical explanation of the politicisation of abjection and subversion, I will problematize two main “newnesses” in politics for the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines⁴⁴. Firstly, I will introduce the new way of doing politics, which is referred to as an opposition to the leftist movement in my interviews. It is no coincidence that all of the women involved in the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines speak about their way of doing politics in relation to their opposition to the leftist movement. I define these practices as the politicisation of abjection, possible through the signified way of doing politics as a discursive production, and I will claim further that what it affects has subversive consequences in this regard. Secondly, I will explain the new themes of politics that are possible in relation to the resignification of the term “woman”. Some of these themes seemed to be natural, or they emerged only in certain groups (in the cases of physical violence and sexual harassment) in their dominant understandings, while others emerged during feminist engagement and were problematized as a part of doing politics (such as those that are related to sexuality, marriage and partnership), according to the results of my interviews.

During my interviews, when I asked the interviewees about the feminist way of political organisation, nearly all came up with a comparison to the leftist movement. One particular phrase that was used mentioning the leftist way of organisation was used by Fulya:⁴⁵ “Probably our engagement to left made us familiar with street politics – how to organise political meetings, how to run away [from the police], how to put up political posters.” So, it can be claimed that aside from “street

⁴⁴ In that regard, it is obligatory to explain that neither of the “newnesses” belongs only to these magazines. From the very beginning of the movement, some of these notions had been discussed. Also, the effort was not limited with these magazines that were held in İstanbul, but the feminist women from Ankara were also debating these issues. However, during my fieldwork, when I had the interviews with the women from both Feminist and Kaktüs, they explained these topics as non-separable issues. Thus, these “newnesses” are not limited with these magazines, but they were doing politics based on them.

⁴⁵ Active member of Feminist Magazine.

politics”, the way of engaging in politics was challenged in these groups (Ovadia, 2013, 4), as a result of the “process undermining the dominant and normative ways” of doing politics (Butler, 1993, 21). I will focus on four different ways of doing politics that emerged in the dynamics of critiques to the leftist movement: the time of the revolution, the idea not of the emancipation of the working class, but of women, the claim of non-hierarchy and the approach to the theory of politics.

3.1. New ways of doing politics

3.1.1. Time of the revolution

One criticism of the feminist movement of the 1980s that came to light during my fieldwork related to the leftist movement after the 1980s was the postponement of dealing with the woman’s issue as a part of politics. Berktaç mentions two approaches of the leftist movement related to “the subordination of woman”. First, she argues that there were “more important issues” than woman’s problems in leftists organizations, and that it would be diversionary to take the time to be interested in woman as a part of politics; and second, the subordination of woman had been a result of Turkey’s feudal structure, and the problem would necessarily and automatically be resolved within a socialist system. Both approaches were criticised by the feminist movement related to the level of importance attributed to woman (2010, 279), and these criticisms were also important for the women of the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines, as I saw during my fieldwork. Within the process of the resignification of woman, it was expected that woman should be considered a part of politics for both magazines. This expectation deforms the time of revolution, as Nejlâ⁴⁶ clarifies with the claim that revolution can be practiced in “everyday life” at the moment of action:

Leftists are those who want to take the power into their hands; I mean socialism is like that. Power is the target. [...] In left wing ideals, revolution is always deferred. One day [it will come]... But we thought the emancipation of women could be achieved only through our own revolution, as feminism

⁴⁶ Active member of Feminist Magazine

teaches women that the revolution is every day, and everything we change is part of this revolution. This shop [Nejla owns her own shop] is a field I have created for myself, by myself, I think. Every single part of this is my little revolution, and this revolution is going to grow one day, [...] just like any other uprising. We used to think that it could only happen through such tiny little steps.

We see two important points in Nejla's statement. Firstly, she mentions that the leftist movement aimed to have socialist power. Until the time this power is taken, the revolution is postponed. In relation to the "woman's revolution", she claims that this postponement damages the importance of woman's politics. It is in this point that we see that the woman's revolution is distinguished from the leftist revolution. Thus, the idea of a woman's revolution is possible with the citation to leftist idea of revolution in the discursive production. In other words, woman's revolution is abjected from the idea of leftist revolution in that particular relation. With the politicisation of the abjection, the idea of leftist revolution creates a "frustration". This frustration is related to the emancipation of woman (related with the resignification of the term) that forces them to think about the time of the revolution.

Secondly, in relation to the first point, the frustration of not finding a place in political arena for woman, which is called woman's revolution by Nejla, deformats the very idea of revolution. Different from leftist understanding, the revolution can be undertaken every day through "little revolutions" accordingly. At that point, we see that the category of woman is not simply added to the already signified idea of revolution, but that a split emerges that changes the practice of political engagement. Rather than struggling for taking the power for radical changes as leftist movement does, feminist movement considers everything they change as revolutions. It means that while leftist movement mentions a big social transformation, the feminist conceptualization that Nejla opens up talks about the transformation of everyday life in its own temporality. The abjection of the woman's revolution made it possible for such a problematization to emerge. Nejla's shop, thus, can be seen as an example of her own "little revolution" for her in the temporality of everyday life, where she opens a space for herself as it is seen in the example that the shop was also a revolution accordingly. In this sense, it can be claimed that a dominant norm of the

revolution is subverted via the politicization of abjection in relation to the resignification of woman.

Then, how can the “little revolutions” that Nejla mentions be specified? Sevinç says that little revolutions take place through changing their lives and their own environment:

[In the leftist movement] everything would be possible if the grand social project could be realised. This kind of thinking was part of the left wing culture. We [feminists] were going to create different policies, and this meant fighting for our lives in our life practices in order to transform how we lived by engaging in politics in our own everyday environment.

Rather than the leftist claim of the “big social(ist) project”, Sevinç says the struggle was aimed at changing their lives and life practices. The first point, changing their own lives, is discussed in this thesis in the section on consciousness raising groups, where the aim is to understand the condition of womanhood through openness, and by challenging each other to this end. This is the process of resignification changing practices in their everyday lives. Making her second point, she talks about “engaging in politics in their own everyday environment”. At first look, this idea can be similar to the leftist aim of organizing people to commit to a fraction of the left. However, what Sevinç mentions is doing the revolution itself in their own environments, not increasing the number of feminists to take the power as Nejla says above. It is a parallel argument with the famous slogan of “personal is political”, which is debated during the third chapter. Their environment is political, but not personal; thus, this environment is also a part of doing politics. Nejla clarifies this point in the following quotation, clarifying what doing politics is in their environment:

And so we all brought politics into [our] own lives, our love affairs, our friendships. We liked it a lot when we could politicise the things that were considered feminine, the things that were subjected to humiliation and despised by men. We revolutionised the way we saw all of these despised things attributed to women, on which the masculine world has been built, and brought such politics into our lives. We used [all these things] both in our relationships and friendships, [and] in our street protests. Wearing colourful outfits and writing [political] graffiti [on walls], taking part in discussions ... [we also did such things]. That’s [both] what we liked the most, I think. I’m not saying that we should affirm all feminine stuff, but things can change if

you are able to transform these feminine things [...] into revolutionary acts [...], such as walking into an all-male pub for the first time with a group of women⁴⁷.

Nejla talks about two areas of doing politics with respect to feminist action. Firstly, she says that doing politics in their lives, love affairs and friendships was what they liked most, and is what Sevinç referred to as “politics in their own environment”. The valued use of “things considered feminine, humiliated and despised” refers clearly to the process of resignification, and also to the politicisation of abjection as a political contest involving the humiliation of all that is feminine. The contest is a deformation of the norms of the feminine in Nejla’s terms, and the exclusion of this term “feminine” is used for doing politics. Nejla’s emphasis in using this term in their lives is a “little revolution”, and we understand from this that the littleness does not refer to its ability to affect more people, but the possibility to engage in politics in one’s own relationships and environment.

Secondly, she talks about “revolutionizing” the feminine element as a part of politics in street protests by “wearing up colourful outfits and writing [political] graffiti [on walls], taking part in discussions”. I have endorsed Fulya’s words by saying that their engagements to left had made them familiar with the street protests⁴⁸. Now, Nejla talks about the street protests as an “imitation” of the leftist way of doing politics; however, this reiteration is not the same with the imitated. The practise of wearing up colourful outfits and writing political graffiti are enabled with the resignification of the term “woman”. Using colour is also a part of resignification. Feminist Magazine, by aiming to differentiate itself, used colours in the Magazine. The content of the graffiti is also different from the previous act of left. The reiteration is not the replica of the previous act, in this example. Moreover, to illustrate this point, Nejla talks “raiding” all-men’s pubs as groups of women as a protest. According to Savran, such protests aimed to show that women are excluded

⁴⁷ The line of the sentence in this quotation has been changed by the author for the purpose of clarity.

⁴⁸ The full phrase is: “Probably our engagement to left made us familiar with street politics – how to organise political meetings, how to run away [from the police], how to put up political posters.”

from certain social areas (2005, 86). In this point, the signified norm is that some women cannot enter certain pubs. However, with the politicization of the abjection, the norm is challenged and these pubs came to be considered as places to do politics. The resignified term of woman, in other words, enabled a doing of politics in such an area.

In this regard, it is seen that the resignified term is used as a part of politics, and there emerges a shift from the norm of the leftist revolution through the process of resignification. The very idea of the revolution is damaged in this process due to the frustration concerning its time within these groups and it is considered as sets of political acts in the everyday life in their own environments in addition to the street protests. Even those street protests are also in the context, which is performed with the term “woman”.

3.1.2. Emancipation, or to be emancipated

One of the most common criticisms of 1980s feminism was carried towards the notion of “saving” or emancipating the working class, as claimed by the leftist movement⁴⁹ (Bora, 2011, 22; Paker, 2012, 300). For the feminism of the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines, it was also something to challenge, which is something that became apparent during my fieldwork, in that the declaration of the interviewees was focused more on their own emancipation. The problem of the leftist argument, according to these magazines, was the fixed and hierarchical positions of the emancipated and those “in need” of emancipation. The women of these magazines spoke about the discovery of emancipation of woman in a collective way, but not to save other woman. This is an important argument that disrupts the norm of the left related to the binary understanding of the emancipated and the emancipator, but still has certain limitations on the practices of these magazines. Özlem’s, an active member of Feminist Magazine, point clarifies this argument:

⁴⁹ The issue of emancipation is also criticized by the feminist movement in relation to “state feminism” or “Kemalist feminism” as it is seen in some works of the women who participated in the feminist movement after the 1980s (Tekeli, 2010a, 29-30; Kandiyoti, 1987). However, none of my interviewees added this issue to the debate of emancipation.

For me, the most meaningful part of [feminism] is that it is not trying to save [others]. Feminism is about identifying yourself with who you really want to be after starting from your own self, your own oppressions or your desire for freedom. Of course, there were flaws in practice; but these flaws were political, not theoretical.

Özlem says that the aim was not to emancipate other women. The starting point was themselves, and their desires were at the center⁵⁰, but she maintains that there are practical problems. I will return to these problems later in this part, but for now, speaking on the emancipation debate, Esin refers to a change in how they posited themselves and how they engaged in politics:

... We expressed clearly that we would not make the same mistake as the revolutionary movement; and that was ... [to recognise ourselves as] enlightened. We were middle class people, not working class. As revolutionists, we had set out to emancipate the working class, but our main concern this time, as a movement, was not to emancipate anyone. First of all, we had to free ourselves, who were we to think that we could free others [...]? We were discovering, and this was beautiful. I mean we were not replicating what was already there. We were discovering concepts of theory and practice within ourselves.

Esin firstly mentions that they would not be repeating the leftist mistake of emancipating the working class, of which they were not a part. “Who are we?”, she asks and talks about the repositioning of the group: “We are middle class intellectuals, and we need to discover ourselves”. At that point we see a shift in position to doing politics based on the evaluation that they are not working class. This is not a simple self-awareness of being middle-class but an effort to emancipate themselves as women. Now, the focus is on the woman for themselves to do politics.

Secondly, in Esin’s words, we see that emancipating others is considered as a mistake. It is such because of the hierarchical relation between the knower (emancipator) and the known (emancipated). Thus, there is an implication that the effort to emancipate the others is a problematic one. The right action, in this sense,

⁵⁰ In that point, I need to note that the own desires of feminist women does not appear in itself, but they “push” each other to desire in a feminist way. Remember the challenging part of consciousness raising groups. Figan was talking about how they criticize each other to think “from women’s perspectives”. In the following part of non-hierarchy, this point will also be debated.

would suggest that each person should (collectively) emancipate herself in whatever social group they belong to, in this case, woman. This is a controversial argument, which is debated academically and politically in different perspectives, and its resolution is not possible within the limitations of this thesis. What I want to emphasize is that this debate introduces a “denaturalizing” question of this binary understanding. Furthermore, this question deforms the understanding of politics. With this case, the claim to save other people is undermined, and politics took another form, aiming at “saving themselves”. This is a discovery in Esin’s words, although the discovery does not refer to the creation of a form that comes from nowhere. It is not a voluntary act, but is a deformation of the reiteration of the norms. Thus, her words, “we were not replicating”, can be explained in this deformation, which is possible through the politicization of the abjection.

Moreover, during my interview with Duygu, she spoke about the limitations of “emancipating themselves”, while adding the importance of this claim:

Our words and our actions were enticing, but we did not make any extra efforts to bring those women in as we were resentful of the leftists. Better call it as left wing organisations of that period in Turkey. Organising people [as the purpose of left wing organisations]. It was just bringing some people into the movement, rather than transforming ourselves together, rather than collectivizing that action. We [as feminists] built a collective reaction towards this. [But] when you can’t replace this with any other ... after a while, you see the same women again [...]. I transform myself here. I do exist and I engage in politics for myself. This is the good way out; this is the right way out, but it may transform into relaxed individualism unless you take the trouble to reach out to the women around you and spread the word.

Here, Duygu refers firstly to the problems of organising people with the sole aim of bringing people into the political groups. The problem of this practice is its aim of increasing the number of members of the leftist groups. This effort is the opposite of “transforming collectively”. This point can be thought with the cases of the socialist aim of taking the power in its hand until the revolution and emancipating the other by bringing them to the leftist organization. Rather, Duygu talks about the approach

of feminism as “transforming ourselves together, collectivising the action”⁵¹. She calls it an effect of resentment to the left, whereof the above-mentioned practice is one to avoid. In that resentment, we again see how the approach of feminism is constituted in relation (or in opposition) to the left movement on the debate of emancipation.

Secondly, Duygu refers to certain limitations in this approach, similar to Özlem at the beginning of this section, pointing out the limitations that occur in practice and their inability to make the movement bigger. What Duygu named as the possibility of relaxed individualism refers to the lack of effort to “reach out to the women around you and spread their words”. This can be considered as a paradox compared to the effort of doing revolutions in their environment as feminists. However, by that point, Duygu refers to the failure of leftist norm of bringing people to the organization. The “failure” in that point is not doing politics in their environment, but it is to bring them to the feminist organization. In regard, Duygu refers to the failure of a leftist norm of increasing the number of people of an organization, which continues to affect Duygu’s words. That said, does this point to a failure of subversion? I do not think this is the case, as subversion does not mean “successfully” changing all the norms or escaping all the norms of the abjected. In this case, we see a question of the dominant discourse of emancipation, and it is a part of subversive performativity by deforming the understanding of politics.

3.1.3. Non-hierarchical organization

One of the other arguments of feminist movement different (and also derived) from left is the idea of a non-hierarchical organisation. According to Şirin Tekeli,⁵² this was a new way of organisation:

⁵¹ As it is emphasized in the chapter of “Resignification of the Term Women: The Slogan of Women Exist”, the consciousness-raising group is an effort to do this kind of a politics.

⁵² Tekeli is one of the key figures at the very beginning of the 1980s feminism in Turkey.

Although unorganised⁵³ forms of work were considered a significant gain and a source of pride by those who were part of the new women's movement [80s feminism], the fact that the others who had never had an experience in political organisation outside of a political party or foundation found it impossible to comprehend this movement, and criticised it [...], which was proof of the movement's uniqueness (2010, 32-3).

Tekeli's emphasis on the uniqueness of the movement included a claim of non-hierarchical organisation within feminist groups, and it cannot be understood by other forms of organizations. The women of the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines also emphasised this issue in both its importance compared with leftist organization and its limitations in the practices of feminist organisations. Then, to what kind of hierarchy are the feminists referring? Özge provides her understanding of the notion of a non-hierarchy while she was involved in the leftist movement, and describes meeting the feminist idea of a non-hierarchy. Beginning with her understanding of hierarchy based on her experience is the leftist movement:

You should have seen me when I was a militant at this Stalinist organization! Well, even there, there was this thing. Let's say you are sympathizer, a strong sympathizer who is closer to the center of the organization, then you must surpass a hundred levels before you can actually join the [leftist] group, you know, become a member or an affiliate of the group. I remember I was writing frequent letters to the central committee saying "there was hierarchy here". It was a Stalinist organization, right? I mean seriously, what was I expecting? [...] Once I wrote to them: "There are chiefs, and there is hierarchy here, but no comradeship. There are superior-subordinate type of relationships." Much later my husband told me that they had so much fun reading these letters. [...] He told me they made fun of me when they received my letters. .

Özge talks about her lack of ease with the hierarchy, the leaders, the lack of comradeship, the process of being a member of a leftist group, and the distinction between the lower and higher ranks. Moreover, as it is seen from Özge's words, this kind of a hierarchy was not a problem for the particular leftist group; thus they were "making fun" of Özge's letters. During the study fieldwork, I saw these kinds of relationships repetitively being defined as a hierarchy, and it is "cited" within

⁵³ In Tekeli's article, unorganised refers to a non-hierarchical organisation. They clearly have a political organisation, about which they care, that includes such factors as consciousness raising, women's solidarity and a non-hierarchical structure.

feminist organisations with an aim to break it. The feminist movement had made a claim about organizing in a non-hierarchical manner. Özge says that the claim of non-hierarchy influenced her when she first met with the Feminist magazine:

I understand that I don't belong there [in left wing movement]. I used to be upset when they called me an anarchist as an insult [because I was against the hierarchy]. Coming from that kind of an organization at an eye level, building horizontal relationships in a feminist environment really surprised me and impressed me. I thought this is it. This is where I belong. This is where one can do politics.

In Özge's words, we see that after her frustration in the leftist movement, she was influenced by the non-hierarchical claim known in feminist circles analogically as "organisation at an eye level"⁵⁴ which implies a horizontal organization. Saying "this is where one can be in politics" is important in demonstrating how the notion of politics slipped. In this understanding, the politics can only be performed in a non-hierarchical organization. While in the leftist movement Özge's letters had an effect to make fun of, as her husband tells her much later, there emerges another organization model based on horizontal organization. In this remark, we see that the dominant norm on hierarchy is deformed in relation to the leftist norm. Fulya opens up the notion of non-hierarchy within these groups:

In an institutional structure [like left wing movement] people know the mere way to be organized: There is a chain of command and voluntary obedience. Alright, there is some questioning, but we are about to start a revolution, they say. Don't question, obey. Then we came together [within feminist movement] without all those limitations. I remember having discussions about raising our voices while we were talking, because even this could count as creating hierarchy between us.

After referring to the form of the leftist hierarchy as instruction-obedience, similar to Özge, Fulya claims that the notion of non-hierarchy is debated, and even loud voices

⁵⁴ The original Turkish version of this phrase is "göz hizasından örgütlenmek".

are seen as part of a hierarchy⁵⁵. At that point, we see the definition or boundaries of what kind of a hierarchy actually is being debated. Nihal provides a description of the problem:

Allright, solidarity not hierarchy, but there are very different types of personalities. In my opinion, non-hierarchy shouldn't mean disorderliness. It shouldn't mean that I can do whatever I want. When that is the case, all the work is piled on someone else's shoulders. Then, those who work harder have the say and it gets reaction. [...] It was an environment where there was no hierarchy and we tried to bring freedom into it; but personalities would become strictly determinant. When one is a very silent person, and the other is the dominant one, then silent one remains silent and dominant one has the say in an environment like that.

Nihal points out two dangers of the notion of non-hierarchical relation that were debated in the late 1980s in feminist movement. Firstly, it should not mean a lack of work discipline due to its possibility of unbalanced work so that a person who takes more responsibility would say more. This could reproduce hierarchical relation again. Secondly, the more dominant characters may affect the quality of the discussions. From Nihal's words, we can see that the boundaries of a hierarchy were formed within the feminist movement, and comparing her perspective with that of Özge about the leftist hierarchy, it is apparent that Nihal's concerns regarding the hierarchy within feminism were focused more on the allocation of work and the more dominant characters. In this regard, we cannot say with ease that the hierarchical relations, which were emerged evenly in both cases as the feminist group challenged the notion, sourced from the leftist normative ideal, and this led to a change in the debates on the issue. At this point, what is subversive in these debates is that they appear as part of the question for a non-hierarchical organization. The politicization of abjection makes these debates possible as the practices that undermine the normative understanding of the leftist hierarchy.

⁵⁵ In that point, we again see a "cite" to the notion of the time of the revolution. In this case, Figan says that the urgency to realize the revolution also halts questioning the hierarchy in the left organizations.

3.1.4. Approach to knowledge

In the last part of the third chapter, I introduced two tendencies in the feminist movement: radical feminism (Feminist magazine) and socialist feminism (Kaktüs magazine). The two approaches share common traits in the process of the resignification of the term “woman”, and support a similar base, as seen in the practices of consciousness raising groups and woman’s solidarity, and the two share similarities also in the aims of their way of doing politics, such as not “postponing” revolution, not emancipating others and their non-hierarchical claim. Where they differ is the target audience. While the women of Feminist magazine aim to reach a wide range of women, such as housewives, women of Kaktüs Magazine aim to reach the socialist women and men by these magazines. Nihal as a member of Kaktüs Magazine is making this point clear:

Feminist Magazine wasn’t published with a claim to reach housewives but there was a difference in its target audience. We [Kaktüs Magazine circle] didn’t believe that we could reach housewives. We rather believed that we could easily reach intellectual women. We would influence other women [not intellectuals, such as housewives] with campaigns. But we never thought that these two things were exclusive of each other. We really cared about core socialist wing to embrace feminism. In the meantime, we were doing things like anti-harassment and anti-violence campaigns. We were trying to be active on both sides. They [Feminist Magazine women] didn’t have such a concern. They published that journal just like that. Actually, it was a matter of carrying too many eggs in a basket [that we carried on our shoulders]. [...] But we thought that transforming private space meant being a feminist, but this journal wasn’t the mediator of it, the purpose of this journal was different.

Nihal highlights an important emphasis of Feminist and Kaktüs magazine in this quotation: the audience of the magazine was not housewives, as Nihal mentions was the case for Feminist magazine, but rather intellectual socialist women. They even participated in certain campaigns, such as the Street Protest of Violence against Woman, with the intention of influencing housewives, with the Feminist Magazine women and other feminists; they tried to influence the socialist women and men, the “core socialist wing”. It was, in this perspective, very hard to influence both housewives through political campaigns and intellectual socialist women through the

magazine. Thus, feministisation of the socialist movement was important for Kaktüs magazine, and the magazine was the tool to influence them.

Through these intended audiences, there emerge two subversive ways of approaching scientific/theoretical knowledge as a means of reaching the target audience. The Feminist magazine does not consider this kind of knowledge as a source of political legitimation different from the leftist dominant understanding of reaching a wide range of women. On the other hand, Kaktüs magazine takes care of this knowledge, especially with the Marxist theory, to be able to reach the intended audience of left movement. I will analyse these approaches as two subversive ways of undermining the dominant relation of theoretical/scientific knowledge and legitimation of the politics. This is a significant point for the concept of subversion, because subversion does not yield a single way of denaturalization of an unquestionable norm, but it can (and it should) emerge in many different ways and relations to undermine different norms in different social relations. I read both approaches of Feminist and Kaktüs magazines as subversive. Now, I will show how their relations to knowledge are in relation with the audience emerged.

Let me begin with the Feminist Magazine to be able to see the relation to knowledge. When Feminist magazine started to be published in 1987, it argued against the legitimacy of leftism through theoretical debates. Rather than making its arguments stronger through a “scientific” knowledge, they did not take it at the center of the magazine articles and their approach. Güliz spoke about the leftist reaction to Feminist magazine and their position on theory in that context:

Left wing said there would be no typical theoretical writing. They didn't find it serious because it was pink or something like that. I didn't know whether we should take them seriously or not. Because we were there. We had words to say. I couldn't decide whether they took us seriously or not. They wouldn't consider it as scientific. I even wrote something about it [in the Feminist Magazine]. It was like a children's magazine, because its form and content were different. They [leftist movement] didn't know exactly what to do.

Güliz mentions that owing to the lack of “typical theoretical articles”, the leftist movement did not consider Feminist magazine to be either serious or scientific. For the leftist organisations that were critical of Feminist magazine, the dominant

convention was the legitimisation of politics through theoretical and scientific argument. The dominant norm does not reiterate, in that sense, due to “non-theoretical” articles of Feminist Magazine.

Moreover, the approach of Feminist magazine, according to Güliz, was based on ignorance. This does not mean that the production of Feminist magazine was independent of the leftist discourse, but that was based rather on the possibility to reject – or abject – this discourse. Through ignorance, other ways of legitimisation emerged. On this issue, one particular article published in Feminist magazine asked the question: “What can we do if science does not explain everything? I say I am subordinated and I go to the street [for political purposes], where they tell me to be scientific. What will happen now? Is there a problem in science if it does not explain my subordination?” (İdil, 1987, 16). In these words, the knowledge of science does not necessarily provide a ground for doing politics. It does not explain the subordination of woman; thus, this norm is repeated and deformats the reiteration. But how is knowledge considered in the Feminist Magazine circle? Güliz explained the issue of knowledge as a part of politics during our focus group interview that involved her and Fulya:

G: Think about it, these are the things that people don’t even mention in any other [leftist] political movement. “This just doesn’t feel right for me.” What does this mean? Normally there is a scientific fact, whether it feels right or not. This was also the case in our relationships with each other. When I couldn’t find the words to explain the situation, I would say “I don’t know. This just doesn’t feel right for me.” In these debates, one of the things that made me feel really good was being able to say that. It was clearly a luxury.

F: Because not knowing was a shame.

G: In one of the meetings, Işık⁵⁶ said this and I really liked it. “Come on, we are not supposed to know everything. Is that even possible?” This is liberating for those coming from a movement [she means left movement] with strict frameworks.

⁵⁶ She talks about a member of the Feminist Magazine.

Güliz raises two points here. First, she mentions the leftist reaction to the notion “This just doesn’t feel right for me”. The reaction is clear: there is a scientific truth as to whether you feel well or not, as the dominant norm of science in leftist politics. However, saying “I do not know, this just doesn’t feel right for me” deformats the obligation to make a political claim. This does not mean that science is unimportant, but it means that to be able to make a political claim, feeling well or not matters to have a point.

Secondly, Güliz refers to the “luxurious” notion that knowing is not obligatory for existence in the political arena. It was important, as she says, when compared with leftist politics, in which knowing provides the potential for legitimacy of an argument. This is a shift from the normative understanding of Marxist theoretical/scientific knowledge of the leftist movement. Now the luxurious notion works and they do not necessarily establish the political legitimacy on this kind of knowledge. This is one way of subversing the dominant understanding of the leftist understanding.

In brief, the approach of the Feminist Magazine is based on subversively rejecting the idea of theoretical and scientific knowledge’s condition for doing politics. Kaktüs magazine has a different approach on this account. One of the main differences between the articles of the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines is the daily language used in Feminist magazine and the theoretical Marxist language adopted in Kaktüs magazine. The distinction between the two is important, in that Kaktüs magazine was launched in 1988, one year later than Feminist magazine, with a claim that they put forward different arguments about feminism.

While both magazines are interested in private space on a similar ground, Gülnur Acar-Savran, in one of her written speeches, mentions that the main aim of Kaktüs was to establish a relationship between private and public space for feminist purposes (2002, 251-2); Yasemin highlights this difference and their goal:

But we always tried to set the relation between personal space, private space and public space. In our writings and in building our own language... Maybe this is the conjunction point with socialist feminism. I mean, it can be said that we followed a path to relate the problems of woman’s oppression to the

system even if we didn't call it patriarchal capitalism or capitalist patriarchy at that time but a male dominant system. [That is why we talked about] the relationship between private and public space with such an emphasis. This was our difference from Feminist Magazine. Not that Feminist Magazine did not touch upon private space issues, but we didn't limit our topics to that, actually.

Yasemin says that they differed in their approach from Feminist magazine in their intention to establish the relationship between the subordination of woman and the (capitalist) system. Both magazines raised the problem of the private space, as discussed in relation to the consciousness raising groups, but in Yasemin's words, the women of Kaktüs magazine did not only limit themselves to this notion. This point is important, revealing that their political activity differed only in terms of the content of the articles, as Nihal says below:

We used to talk about our private space at Kaktüs. But this stuff would not be published in that form; we took it to [a different] a political platform. That was our preference, we decided so.

I have shown that Kaktüs magazine women were using the knowledge of leftist movement to establish links between the private and the public spheres to affect the socialist women. Different from Feminist Magazine, the leftist knowledge does not refuse but the notion of woman's oppression tried to be linked with the capitalist system as Yasemin says. This kind of an effort, criticizing the leftist knowledge and declaring that it is a "male-dominant system" is another way of subversion on knowledge. In that case, the leftist knowledge is criticized and denaturalized by establishing the relation with private and public space with feminist aims.

As I have claimed, subversive performativity does not refer only to one single certain form of subversion, but it can emerge in a different form of undermining the dominant norms as it is seen in the cases of Feminist and Kaktüs magazine women's efforts on the legitimacy of knowledge for doing politics.

3.2. New themes of politics

Starting from the very beginning of feminist movement after the 1980s in Turkey, certain issues that previously had no political significance began to appear in the

political agenda. During my fieldwork, four themes emerged in this regard: physical violence, sexual harassment, sexuality, marriage and partnership. In this part, I will explain how these concepts were considered by the magazines of Feminist and Kaktüs. It is important to see the relation with the resignification of the term “woman” and its subversive denaturalizing effect of certain norms, because via these processes, these themes are considered as part of doing politics.

3.2.1. Physical violence

Violence against woman was much debated in the feminist movement, starting from its very emergence in the 1980s in Turkey (Berktaş, 1998, 6). In this part, I will show how the term “violence” was subversively used as a part of politics and reterritorialised by the feminist movement as a part of the performativity of the period.

The Street Protest of Violence against Woman was mentioned by the interviewees with great enthusiasm during my fieldwork. The event was organized after a judge made the comment “You should not leave a woman’s back without a stick, nor her belly without a child” in a lawsuit in which a pregnant woman was seeking divorce after her husband subjected her to violence (Tekin, 2007, 60). This was the first political street meeting after such public meetings were banned by the 1980 military coup (Gündüz, 2004, 119). For the women that I interviewed, this meeting was very important, in that the issue of violence against woman was debated by the movement not as an individual act, but as a systematic issue that needed to be politicized. How had they come to this conclusion? To answer this question, I will borrow from the words of Meltem, an active member of Feminist magazine:

One should not jump into conclusion that what a woman experienced would be considered as hitting, slapping or battery. But, in Woman’s Circle (Kadın Çevresi) we heard for the first time from a woman that she was beaten by her husband and how she felt. It may sound usual now but it felt like a lifting up a heavy veil at that time. Then either we didn’t know something like that could happen or even if we knew about it, we used to assume that it was related with poverty or psychological disorders. I’m not saying that we never saw women slapped in Turkish movies, but it was a very shocking, sad and consciousness raising thing to hear from people who were there for the same

reasons as ours that that slap was in fact very close to us and that it was not always a cinematic or fictional moment.

One of the most significant points made by Meltem is that the feminist women already had ideas related to the violence against woman. Before defining the term within the patriarchal power relation, they considered it to be a problem of poverty or a psychological disorder. They saw certain images of a slap in Turkish movies, which they assumed as fictional moments. Gülnur Savran, who is an active member of *Kaktüs* magazine, highlights the predominant justification for violence against women, “My husband is angry and cranky, and this is his nature; that is, personality.” (2005a, 93) For both Meltem and Savran, the social norms of violence against woman, such as being poor, having a psychological disorder or being angry and cranky, are mentioned. However, as Meltem says, the collectivity of consciousness-raising groups led these women to see the norms on violence against woman. The repetitive norm is discussed in the consciousness-raising groups, and it is noted that “in fact being beaten is very close” to them. Understanding the reiteration of this theme causes a subversive effect as Meltem says “[like] a lifting up [of] a heavy veil at that time”. This phrase refers to the fact that Savran points out that the norm that considers violence to be natural, and individual act is debated in terms of the power relations of patriarchy. This is subversive because it does not refer conventionally to “hitting, slapping or battery”, but to systemic social violence against woman as a patriarchal act. This is subversively denaturalizing the norm of violence, seeing the reiteration of it and making it a significant part of doing politics. Thus, they mentioned with a great enthusiasm about the Street Protest of Violence against Woman. The “devalued” individual understanding of violence against woman is undermined within these questions.

The reconsideration of the term violence also denaturalizes its usage in the leftist politics. I have brought up Fulya’s words on the context of subversive character of experience shared in the chapter of consciousness-raising. She clarified this following point:

“Associating violence with the state was acceptable, but we were not at all aware that it should also be considered violence when our boyfriend did it. [...] We didn’t understand the relationship between our voluntary actions and violence; or we wouldn’t make a big deal out of one or two slaps on the cheek.”

In Fulya’s words, violence seems only unacceptable when the state commits it in the dominant norms of leftist movement. “One or two slaps on the cheek” performed by the boyfriend do not seem violence “enough”. In that understanding, violence seems as an external force that comes from the state, and the voluntary relations such as partnership could not include a form of violence. In the leftist movement, which was aiming at taking the power in its hands for a revolution—to realize the big socialist project, violence was only named as violence if it was related to the aim of their revolution. However, in Fulya’s words, we see that the slaps that come from a boyfriend came to be considered as violence, through their collective activities. This is a subversive conceptualization that denaturalizes the leftist understanding of violence. In this subversive questioning, violence is considered not as a practice of an external enemy, but as a practice that can emerge in the very internal relations that are constructed voluntarily. In this conceptualization, even the relations in the leftist groups can be considered as a part of violence, which posits a radical break from the leftist movement. Thus, the leftist norm of violence is undermined with the debates on physical violence against woman.

In brief, in the cases of Meltem and Fulya it is seen that the norm of violence, which was previously explained as natural and/or individual, is subverted within the collective relations of consciousness-raising groups. Moreover, the leftist understanding of violence, which is assumed to come externally only from the state, is undermined with the claim that violence can be seen in the internal relations within the groups as well. In both cases, it is seen that the norm of violence is denaturalized. In agreement with my argument, Savran also considers this attempt to be a redefinition of the term “violence” (2005, 93).

3.2.2. Sexual harassment

In a very similar approach that took place in the denaturalization of violence, sexual harassment also came to be considered as a social and political patriarchal issue that

emerges from the patriarchal relations. A booklet entitled “Cry, Let Everybody Hear”⁵⁷, containing 23 stories of women about sexual harassment, was published in 1988 by feminist groups including magazines of Feminist and Kaktüs, and independent feminists (Kılıç, 1998, 355). Moreover, Purple Needle Campaign was organized, connoting pricking the needle to the men who harass women (Grünell & Voeten, 1997, 227). Sexual harassment was a similar notion to violence against woman in the sense that it was also subverted by the feminist women. Meltem explains the debates on sexual harassment:

Then, some of us told us about the sexual harassment that they had experienced. They spoke of these things maybe for the first time in their lives, and it was amazing to share such experience in a political environment rather than in a safeguarded one. [...] What you think would not be done against you because you are a woman is in fact exactly what can be done against you just because you are a woman. We used to talk and talk and talk. Then the comprehension settled smoothly.

Meltem has two emphases. Firstly, she refers to the repetition of their conversations about sharing experiences of sexual harassment, i.e. “talk and talk and talk”. Through the reiteration of these conversations, the unspeakable experience of sexual harassment was spoken “in a political environment” rather than a safeguarded one. In this political environment, this idea emerged: what seems unrelated to womanhood is acted upon them precisely because they were woman. The category of woman was transforming in the sense that sexual harassment was carried out onto them because they were woman. It means that the category of woman is defined by potentially being sexually harassed. In other words, the relation with the issue of sexual harassment and the category of woman is linked in a political environment.

Secondly, it is seen that the resignification of the category of woman and the politicization of the abjected make the challenge to sexual harassment possible. While questioning whether sexual harassment problem is not a part of leftist or any other political movement, in other words, while the relation of its systematic reiteration would not be thought as a part of politics, it began to be considered as a theme of doing politics. With this questioning, sexual harassment emerges as a

⁵⁷ The Turkish name of this campaign is “Bağır herkes duysun”.

political problem of woman that needs to be told (as the booklet's title shows: Cry, Let Everybody Hear) and challenged. The Purple Needle Campaign, for example, is an effort to declare that sexual harassment is a part of politics.

In short, the reiterative conversations on sexual harassment led to its relation to the category of woman. Also, this issue emerged as a part of politics that need to be spoken and challenged. This is also a shift from the norms of womanhood as it is seen through the case of sexual harassment.

3.2.3. Sexuality

Handan Koç, an active member of Feminist magazine, claims that sexuality was one of the main issues of debate, which paralleled what I saw during my fieldwork. Most of the feminist women had an active sex life (within marriage or not) and cared about their sexuality in that they were also supporting a sexual revolution. I will analyze this issue in three parts; sexual revolution, married woman norm and understanding of sexuality.

Firstly, I suggest that sexuality is also resignified in a similar way to the issues of violence and sexual harassment though for the case of sexuality, the effects of the norms are clearer in the lives of these women based on the findings from the interviews⁵⁸. According to Özge, sexual revolution had also entered the feminist movement:

An atmosphere of sexual freedom was introduced to my close environment with feminism. Hooray, women suddenly became sexually free. At the same time, these women labelled women who would sleep with men. They are feminists, and they do it with anyone and everyone. Of course, there was a lot

⁵⁸ These three issues can be thought in relation to the debate of doing politics for themselves, which is introduced in the part, "Emancipation, or to be emancipated". For the first two, physical violence and sexual harassment, these issues are explained during the interviews as experiences of limited number of feminist women. As it is understood, the point was mostly considering these issues such that these can potentially happen to any women even if they did not experience these. However, for the case of sexuality, the social and political norms were more engaged to their lives, because all feminist women supported the sexual revolution; thus, they talk about the normative constraints in their lives that I will explain in this section.

of sex. Everyone was discovering. Feminism and sexual freedom came into question at around the same time.

As Özge says, parallel with the feminist movement, women debated the sexual freedom issue and they were “discovering” sexual experiences. The regulatory norm of non-sexual woman (remember the case of non-sexuality of *bourgeois* woman) is challenged with the debate of sexual freedom. In other words, there emerged a subversive inconsistency through the reiteration of the norm of asexual woman as introduced in/through Özge’s discovery.

However, at this point, the image of feminists emerged as “women who are potentially open to sex”. This difference between the intended meaning of sexual freedom and their image highlights the inconsistency. It is considered as a disturbing issue as it is seen in Özge’s words, e.g. “labelled” and “feminists do it with anyone and everyone”.

However, according to Koç, this image was not valid for all feminist women, as those who were married certainly were not subjected to this kind of behaviour. She mentions some words of a feminist friend of hers in a speech article, where she talks about the Feminist Magazine experience:

One of my friends said “I call myself a feminist without any concerns, and they don’t mess with me or think, ‘What is this feminism thing? Does she want it [with a sexual connotation]?’” Because I am married, that’s why [they were not asking].” Otherwise these men act like you are supposed to have sex with them and this is a serious kind of harassment (2009, 116).

Koç mentions that the disturbing labelling that Özge talks about was not valid for married woman, and defines it as a form of harassment. In Koç’s friend’s story, it is seen that the norm appears the moment men label a feminist woman as married or non-married. While the unmarried woman are considered as the ones that want, or are available, or necessarily want sex, the married woman themselves are found “concernless” about this approach. In this relation, there emerges a point: woman’s sexuality is not individual, but considered collectively according to the form of “labelling” in this context.

During their participation in the feminist movement, Koç says, “we claimed that the sexuality of woman was not only in the interests of such magazines as *Cosmopolitan*”. In this regard, the feminist attitude that Koç mentions is related with understanding the issue with its relation to the systematic conventions on woman’s sexuality (2005, 1013).

This distinction means that even when the politics of sexuality are engaged in by feminist women, the dominant norms of the distinction of the married and single woman continues. However, I have discussed a few times that subversion does not mean to successfully change all the norms. The emphasis, in this case, is on the effort to distinguish sexuality from the way it is considered in magazines like *Cosmopolitan* introduces⁵⁹. This effort is possible through the resignification of the term “woman” that has strong relations with doing politics. Therefore, the consideration of sexuality with this process of resignification challenges the norms on sexuality. Remember the leftist norm of *bourgeois*, for example. In this case, woman were considered as asexual beings. The term of sexuality is reterritorialized, therein woman can (and should) have a sexual life. However, even the norms continue to work as can be seen in the case of when the feminist women are labelled as the ones, who can have sex with anyone and everyone, it appears to be something disturbing. It seems to be disturbing to women not because they were doing wrong or that they should be asexual like the norm of *bourgeois*, but because the problem was the normative understanding itself in that context.

Drawing from the comments made by Özge, I will address the worries surrounding unsafe sexuality:

But women experienced more disappointing things. Sure, it was hard. Men didn’t use condoms for instance. I remember this, [...] a friend of mine, with whom I became friends when I was in jail. I used to have saddening conversations with her. We used to talk about how a guy wouldn’t use a condom just like the others and how we couldn’t ask him to put one on.

⁵⁹ In that period, there is a magazine for women in a similar approach with *Cosmopolitan*, named *Kadınca*. These magazine also places emphasis on sexuality as free women. But feminist magazines distinguish themselves from such magazines. For further reading, see: “Türkiye’de Medyada Kadın: Serbest, Müsait Kadın veya İyi Eş, Fedakar Anne” (Saktanber, 2010)

Sexual freedom also brought great concerns for us. Would we get AIDS? What was going on, what were we doing? Ok, we wanted to make love, but what was exactly going on? I remember having serious difficulties with such contraception. Also, having a sexual partner was an issue.

The desire to have sexual relationships leads to problems, according to Özge. She explains how they were afraid of contracting AIDS due to the reluctance of men to use sexual protection. In that point, we see that the subversion of the norm of sexuality turn against women as a problem, once again.

Therefore, it can be concluded that there emerged sedimented norms on the issue of contraception, and how the category of women is produced by this problem of contraception. However, Özge implies that this was a problem for them. They did not simply accept the norm. On the contrary, the issue was a problem for them. This is subversion in the sense that the case of not using contraception became a problem for these women. It was in the moment of problematizing an on-going issue that the subversion took place. This point can be also seen in Özge's words. She says that they could not ask men to use condoms. Does it mean that sexuality could not be subverted? Is it a continuation of the normative understanding of woman's sexuality? Rather, the problematization that men have to be use contraception is also subversion.

3.2.4. Marriage or partnership

Marriage or heterosexual partnerships⁶⁰ can be considered as another area that was debated at length by the feminist movement of the 1980s. There is even a protest of divorce to protest the family structure including 30 women (Koç, 2013, 200). The debates and practices on marriage and partnership also took place in the discussions of women of the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines. It can be claimed that, based on the resignification of the term "woman", relationships with the husbands and boyfriends of feminist women split as an effect of engagement to feminist politics. In

⁶⁰ I named the term heterosexual. Even nearly any women did not put it in this way; they were clearly referring to men or boyfriend. The problematization of heterosexuality seems very limited in this period.

this part, I will show how these debates emerged in the practices of feminist politics. Sema explains how her relationship with her husband changed in process of defining herself as a feminist:

And at that point, I started to confess to myself that, umm, how should I put this, both my consciousness and my relationship with my husband, which seemed almost perfect in fact involved a proper hierarchy as a reflection of what is imposed on us by the society. And an amazing thing happened at that point. I mean the process of identifying my every single action with the concepts I had already known and struggling to resolve the controversy. This process resulted in a break up, but a long time had to pass before that break up. I'm not saying that I broke up with him immediately.

Sema says here that her marriage was considered "almost perfect" both by herself and those in her environment. This is a sedimentated norm, which is defined as an ideal marriage. However, during the process of feminist debates, she "confessed" to herself that her marriage had a significant hierarchy. What she had internalised about her marriage perished, and its meaning was broken. In that case, we see how the very practices of feminist debates themselves lead to the questioning of the "hierarchy as a reflection of what is imposed on [them] by the society". As it is elaborated in the non-hierarchical organization part, hierarchy emerges as a problem in the debates of these feminist women. Because of the denaturalizing of this norm of ideal marriage, there emerges a controversy between Sema and her husband. Moreover, she says, divorce did not happen immediately, but it took a long time. In that point, we see that deformation of a norm does not emerge in a single act, but it happens in a process.

We see that Sema's marriage was broken because her understanding of ideal marriage was deformed. In Nihal's case we can also identify a similar deformation, because the time she spent on her political works affected her marriage:

At least, I lived like a militant taking it very seriously. I think it transformed my relationship with my husband a lot. Of course it also caused some tension as well. We broke up at a later point anyway. My feminist attitude was not the only reason of course; but it transforms one's relationships with men extensively. First of all, that one must attend women's meetings five times a week means that she can't be at home to cook. Practice of the things has to change. I had to ask my husband to spare more time to take care of our children.

Nihal points that even her feminist attitude to her husband affected the divorce, which is similar to Sema's case but she adds a different emphasis and explains her divorce with that: The time she spends for cooking or taking care of her child is decreased because of her active participation in feminist activities five times a week. In this case, we see that the normative understanding of "woman's responsibility" is deformed due to Nihal's "militant" feminism. She does not necessarily cook or take care of her children, and the norm that women are obliged to do this kind of job shifts. This is a subversive relation that undermines the norms on marriage.

In both the cases of Sema and Nihal, their feminist engagements affected and denaturalized certain norms of marriage. Sema's way of seeing new hierarchies or Nihal's attitudes towards specific works which are seen as woman's responsibility are denaturalized during the process. The undermining of the deformation takes time as both of these women emphasize the time of their divorce.

This chapter has addressed the new territories of doing politics of the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines in regards to the resignification of the term "woman". I have claimed throughout this chapter that this resignification does not come before or after politics, or vice versa, as the two simultaneously become possible. To illustrate, the questioning of the timing of the revolution becomes possible through the expectation of woman's revolution (which emerged during the process of resignification), and the norm of the time of the revolution constitutes the process of resignification. This argument is important in any rethinking of the particular period of second-wave feminism in Turkey, and the Feminist and Kaktüs magazines, taking into account the concept of performativity.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

Throughout this thesis, the question of “in which relations the category of woman in a particular feminist context transformed into political arena in the late 1980s in Turkey” is tried to be explored. Based on the interviews with the active participant circles of Feminist and Kaktüs, which are the most significant feminist circles of the period, I define this transformation as a performative resignification in Butlerian terms. This study enables us to see that these two waves do not necessarily exclude or reject each other; but the second wave can be understood by rethinking the relationship between the second and the third wave feminism with a conceptualisation performative resignification. In that sense, one of the main arguments of this study is that using the term woman and doing politics of the second wave feminism in the late 1980s in Turkey can be analysed through subversive characteristics on the issue of regulations and exclusions of certain womanhoods. Thus, it can be said that during this thesis, Butler’s concept of performativity is also “rethought”. Performativity briefly refers to a subversive shift on a set of meaning of a term. Accordingly, in the relations of the late feminism of the 1980s in Turkey, there emerges a similar slip which Butler’s concept of analysis can be flourished to understand these relations.

As an important finding of this thesis, all women with whom I have interviewed participated in the leftist movement before their participation in these feminist magazines, namely Feminist and Kaktüs. Thus, in the second chapter, named *Resignification of the Term “Woman”: The Slogan “Women Exist”*, the construction of normative womanhood in leftist discourse prior to the 1980s is debated. I analysed this normative constructions based on the interviews with the women from Feminist and Kaktüs magazines. The discursive regulation of norms on womanhood by the

leftist movement is discussed to understand in which relations the term woman is signified in the leftist movement. In that sense, three main characteristics of the normative boundaries regarding womanhood, which are fragile, injured and bourgeois womanhood, are derived from my fieldwork. These leftist norms on womanhood are important to see the resignification on the term woman, and new territories of doing politics of late 1980s' feminist movement. Not because feminist movement of the period used the exact opposite of the signified normative constructions in the leftist movement but because these norms are debated and problematised in a different context parallel to the process of the resignification of the term woman.

Followingly, in this chapter, how the term "woman" is subversively resignified with a valued set of meaning through certain deformations of the reiterations is discussed. By doing so, it is concluded that the collectivity of consciousness raising groups is an important way to question the normative constitution of womanhood and its subversive effects. These groups provide important practises for the resignification of woman in the sense of questioning the already signified constructions on womanhood. Afterwards, I discuss the "boundaries" of the notion of woman's solidarity within independent woman's organisations. The notion of woman's solidarity works on a political ground in the sense of questioning with whom to have solidarity.

In the final chapter, the new territories of doing politics are problematized. The resignification process of woman simultaneously deformed the territories of doing politics. As part of new ways of doing politics, it is showed that how critiques to the leftist movement deformed certain norms of doing politics in parallel with the resignification of the term woman. The time of revolution, for instance, is criticized by the feminist movement of the late 1980s, and they problematized the postponement of woman's issue until the revolution. After putting this criticism forward, they did not simply add the category of woman to the existing idea of doing politics based on the leftist revolution, but deformed it with a new claim that revolution could and should be performed in everyday life. Moreover, the idea of emancipating the working class is debated within the process of resignification, and the norm of knower and the known are opened to question. Furthermore, Feminist

and *Kaktüs Magazines'* understanding of two ways of considering knowledge is covered in relation with their audience. Both approaches can be considered as subversive performativities. In addition to the new ways of doing politics, new concepts of politics emerged in parallel to the resignification of woman in these feminist groups. Some notions such as physical violence and sexual harassment, which cannot be regarded as a part of politics, denaturalized, and the systematic power relation is questioned. Via this questioning, both concepts are organised as parts of the political struggle. Moreover, the concepts of sexuality and marriage were in the agenda of the feminist movement in terms of woman's position.

For further studies, this kind of analysis can be developed in advance. Although I focused on the relationship of women in the feminist magazines in İstanbul, it is also possible to analyze them in other places. For example, there are also Ankara groups, which did not concentrate on publishing magazines but became important organisations with consciousness raising activities and organizing other activities (Timisi and Gevrek, 2011, 13).

Moreover, research on the relations of the Women's Association against Discrimination and the Women's Culture House could be held. These organisations are significant since they are both independent woman's organisations including both who defines themselves as feminists and not. These kinds of studies could have valuable contributions in showing how regulatory norms work in these groups and which kind of contradictory relations appear within them.

Finally, as a suggestion for further studies, it would be a great contribution to conduct a comparative study between the 1980s feminism and the current feminism in Turkey. The current feminist movement's relations may be analysed with the concept of subversive performativity. A comparative research on these periods has not been held yet, and it would be a significant contribution to problematize these two periods with the methodological tools of the poststructuralist feminism.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: TURKISH SUMMARY

Batı bağlamına benzer bir şekilde, Türkiye’de 1980 sonrası feminist hareket genellikle ikinci dalga feminist hareket olarak tanımlanmıştır (Tekeli, 1998; Sancar, 2011, Timisi & Gevrek, 2011, Grünell & Voeten, 1997). İkinci dalganın ayrıştırıcı özelliklerinden birisi “kadının ikincil pozisyonuna” ve “kadın bakış açısına” yaptığı vurgu olarak düşünülebilir (Koç, 2013, 199; Ovadia, 2009, 72; Düzkan, 2011). Bir çok özelliğinin arasından bu konuya vurgu yapmamamın nedeni, postyapısalcı feminizmin eleştirisinin özellikle bu noktalarda yoğunlaşmasıdır (Butler, 1993; Butler, 2007; Scott, 2011; Butler & Weed, 2011). Postyapısalcı feministler, kadının özgürleşmesi iddiasının özcü toplumsal cinsiyet kategorilerinin üretilmesinde etkisi olduğunu iddia ederler. Üçüncü dalga feminizmin en önemli isimlerinden birisi olan Judith Butler kadın ve erkek kategorileri arasında ikili bir çerçevenin ortaya çıkardığı etkileri feminizm içi bir eleştiri yaparak sorunsallaştırır. Ona göre, bu tür bir ikili kullanıma dayalı feminist politika çok keskin, dışlayıcı ve şeyleşmiş bir kadın kategorisi yaratır. Bu normatif kurulumun kendisi sürekli olarak bazı kadınlıkları ve cinsellikleri dışladığı için sorunludur (Butler, 2007).

Peki, bu dalgalardan lineer bir tarih çizgisindeymiş gibi bahsedebilir miyiz? İkinci dalga feminizm kadın kategorisini kullanırken üçüncü dalga bunu eleştiriyor ve yıkıyor diyebilir miyiz? Bir diğer deyişle, bu durum üçüncü dalga feminizmin zorunlu olarak ikinciyi eleştirdiği ve yok ettiği anlamına mı gelir? Alternatif bir yaklaşım olarak, bu tezde ikinci dalga feminist hareketi postyapısalcı feminizmin metodolojik katkısıyla analiz edeceğim. Bu süreci analiz edebilmek için, Feminist ve Kaktüs dergisi çevresine odaklandım. Bu dergi çevreleri geç 1980lerin Türkiye’deki iki en önemli ve etkili politik örgütlenmelerindendir. Bu tezin analizi de Feminist ve

Kaktüs dergisi çevresi kadınlarıyla derinlemesine görüşmeler aracılığıyla 1980 sonu feminist hareketinin kadın kategorisinin nasıl yeniden anlamlandırıldığına odaklanmıştır. Bu analiz, üç temel sorunun etrafında dönmektedir. Birincisi, kadın kategorisinin 1980 öncesi sol hareketi içerisinde hangi ilişkiler ve normlarla düzenlendiğine işaret etmek önemlidir. Bu, Feminist ve Kaktüs dergisi kadınları özelinde kadın kategorisinin dönüşümünün dinamiklerini anlamak için önemli bir sorudur çünkü daha sonraki eleştirilerin kadınlık üzerine normların sol hareket içindeki düzenlenmesi noktasına odaklandığı görülüyor. İkinci soru, ikinci dalga feminizm içinde kadın kategorisinin anlamının nasıl kaydığı üzerinedir. Bu soru, bu tezin analizi için kadın kategorisinin farklı formlarının nasıl yeniden tanımlandığını ve politik bir kategoriye dönüştüğünü anlamak için önemli bir sorudur. Üçüncüsü, kadın kategorisinin anlamındaki değişimin politika yapma biçimlerini nasıl dönüştürdüğüyle ilgilidir. Bu soru, kadın kategorisinin etkilerinin yeniden tanımlanmasının etkisinin sadece kategori için değil, politika yapmak konusunda yeni yollar açtığını görmek için önemlidir. Tüm tez boyunca bu soruları peşinden gidilecektir. İlk iki soru ikinci bölümde tartışılırken, üçüncü soru son bölümde açılmaktadır.

Kimi akademisyenlere göre, Türkiye’de ikinci dalga feminizmin 1980lerde ortaya çıkması tesadüf değildir⁶¹ (Sancar 2011, Sirman, 1989; Tekeli 2010b; Arat, 1999). 12 Eylül 1980 askeri darbesinin etkisiyle pek çok politik örgütlenme, sendikalar ve derneklerin kapatıldığı, pek çok sağ ve sol kanat politik militanların tutuklandığı ve bastırıldığı bir dönemde ortaya çıkmasının üzerine düşünülmüştür (Sancar 2011, Sirman, 1989; Tekeli 2010b; Arat, 1999). Tekeli’ye göre, sol hareketin düşüşü bazı kadınların sol hareketi sorgulamasına yol açmıştır (aktarım Özçürümez & Cengiz, 2011, 24). Bu yeni grup, sol hareketin kadınlarla ilgili görünür bir ilgisinin olmamasını sorgulamaya başlamışlardı.

⁶¹ Birinci dalga feminizm, Türkiye bağlamında genellikle yetmiş yıllık bir periyoda denk düşen (1868-1935) Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi olarak düşünülür (Zihnioğlu, 2011, 43).

Bu dönemde ortaya çıkan ikinci dalga feminist hareketin üç temel özelliğinden bahsedebiliriz. Birincisi, kadınların sınıf, etnisite, ırk, yaş gibi farklılıklardan bağımsız olarak sadece kadın oldukları için ezildikleri iddiasıdır. Bu kavramsallaştırmada, ezenler erkekler olarak konulur. Kadın bakış açısı bu dalga içinde ezilmeyi kırarak, bitirecek, desteklenmesi gereken olgu olarak konulur.

Türkiye’de ikinci dalga feminizmin ikinci önemli özelliği, toplumsal cinsiyetin biyolojik değil toplumsal olduğuna yapılan vurgudur. Bu açıdan, kadın olmak doğal bir özellik değil, toplumsal bir inşadır. Yani cinsiyet ve toplumsal cinsiyet ayrıştırılır. Bu tür bir ayrışma, ikinci dalga feminizm için, kadınların ikincil pozisyonlarına karşı mücadele edilebileceğini ve edilmesi gerektiğini anlamak için önemlidir olmuştur (Savran, 2009).

Son olarak, ikinci dalga feminizm içinde özel alan politikası tartışılır. Banu Parker’e göre, ikinci dalganın gücü ve etkisi “Özel olan politiktir” sloganından okunabilir (2012, 300). Politikanın sadece kamusal alandan oluştuğu fikrine karşı olarak, özel alan feminist bir perspektifle değerlendirilir. Şirin Tekeli, deneyimlerin kadınlıkla ilişkisinin kurulduğu ve sorgulandığı bilinç yükseltme toplantılarında ikinci dalganın özel alan tartışmasını açtığını söyler (2010b, 124).

Türkiye’de üçüncü dalga feminizme gelince, güncel politik örgütlenmelerde ciddi anlamda ayrılmış bir akımdan bahsedemeyiz. Üçüncü dalga feminizm, çoğunlukla teorik ve akademik çerçevelerde tartışılmaktadır. Bu tartışmalar da tek bir üçüncü dalga feminizm tanımında toplanmaz. Daha ziyade, üçüncü dalga feminizm adı altında birkaç farklı geleneğe işaret eder. Bu geleneklerden ilkinde, üçüncü dalga feminizm, bir farklılıklar feminizmi olarak düşünmektir. Kürt kadın hareketi, LGBTIA gibi “kimliklerin” farklılıklarına işaret edilir bu gelenekte. Kadınların farklı türde ezilmişliklerini ön plana çıkararak kendi spesifiklikleri içinde aşmaya çalışılır.

İkinci bir gelenekte, üçüncü dalga, postyapısalcı feminizm ya da queer harekete işaret eder. Bu tür bir geleneğin temel amaçlarından birisi kimlik politikasını ve onun etkilerini eleştirmektir. Örnek vermek gerekirse, Butler’ın postyapısalcı feminist pozisyonu kadın ve erkek arasındaki ikili kategorilerin etkilerini sorgulamasına yol

açmıştır. Ona göre, bu ikili karşıtlık niyet o olmasa bile heteronormativiteyi üretir. Bu analizi, Butler'a genellikle queer teorisyen olarak işaret edilmesine neden olur. Bu tür bir sorgulama ya da sorunsallaştırma bazen bir tür depolitizasyon ya da feminizmin kazanımlarına bir tehdit olarak görülmüştür. Fakat, Butler'ın çabası politik alandan dışlanmış olanı analiz ederek özellikle özne eleştirilerini göz önünde bulundurarak mevcut politikanın verili alındığı sağduyulara (*common sense*) işaret etmektir.

Butler'ın da içinde bulunduğu postyapısalcı feminist gelenek, farklılıklar feminizmini kimliğin kendisini sorguya açmadığı noktaları eleştirir. Postyapısalcı feminizm, halihazırdaki kadın kavramsallaştırmasına etnisite ve cinsellik ile bağlantılı yeni kategoriler eklemenin yeterli olmadığını düşünür. Onun yerine, yapısöküme özel bir önem verilir. Örnek olarak, LGBTIA gibi yeni cinsellik kategorilerini basitçe ve tek başına halihazırdaki kimliklere eklemek değil, cinselliğin kendisini sorgulamak temel amaçtır. Butler'ın queer kategorisini problematize etme girişimi ile yaptığı da bu tür bir çabadır. Ona göre bu kimlikler sabitlenip şeyleşmemelidir; akışkan ve iç içe geçmiş olmalıdır (Butler, 2007).

Peki üçüncü dalganın postyapısalcı feminist geleneğinin ikinci dalgaya bakışı nasıl açıklanabilir? Postyapısalcı feminizmin en yaygın eleştirilerinden biri kadın kategorisinin özcü bir yaklaşımla evrenselleştirilmesi üzerine yoğunlaşır. İkinci dalgayla ilişkisi devam ederek, ona cevap vererek ortaya çıkan üçüncü dalga feminizmin eleştirisi bu evrensel özne sorgulaması ile sıkça ilgilenmiştir. Fakat bu tezin ilgisini düşününce, bu tür bir argümanı Türkiye'de geç 1980lerin feminizmine uygulamak fazla hızlı ve nedensel bir yaklaşım olur. Bu tez boyunca, Feminist ve Kaktüs dergisi kadınlarının kendi aralarındaki ilişkilere odaklanınca, ele alınan kadın kategorisinin yine postyapısalcı feminist bir kavram olan (özellikle Butler'ın vurgu yaptığı bir kavram) altüst edici bir performatiflik olarak analizi yapılacaktır.

Bu analizi açmadan önce, performatiflik kavramından çok kısa bahsetmek gerekiyor. Performatiflik dominant anlam setlerini sorgulamak ve verili olanı doğallığını kırmak olarak özetlenebilir. Bu nedenle, Butler normatif inşalardan ve onların deforme olma ihtimallerinden bahseder. Butler'ın performatiflik kavramı kendi çalışmaları ve kitapları içerisinde değişiklik gösterse de, verili ve söylem dışı

kimliklerin olmadığı ve kimliklerin belirli bilgi ve iktidar rejimleri içinde imlendiği iddiasını tüm kitaplarında korur (Jagger, 2008, 20).

Türkiye’de geç 1980lerde ikinci dalga feminizmi performatiflik kavramı ile analiz etmek mevcut literatüre üç şekilde katkıda bulunabilir. Birincisi, ikinci dalga feminizmin kadın ezilmişliğini kadın kategorisinin özcü kullanımı yerine ne tür söylemsel ilişkilerde nasıl ortaya çıktığını sorgulamak yeni bir açıklama getirecektir. İkincisi, bu çalışma postyapısalcılığı tehdit olarak gören bir anlayışa karşı, postyapısalcığın zorunlu olarak ikinci dalgayı reddetmediği, onun yerine ikinci dalgayı anlamak için söylem ve iktidar gibi yeni kavramsal araçlar sunduğunu gösterecektir. Son olarak, bu çalışma, Butler’ın performatiflik kavramını yeniden düşünmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Butler’ın queer terimini analiz etmek için kullandığı performatiflik, farklı toplumsallıkları açıklamak için de kullanılabilir. Özkazanç da Türkiye’de 1980 sonrası feminist hareketin kadın terimini kullanımının performatiflik olarak düşünülebileceğini söyler (2015, 86).

Bu katkıları amaçlayarak, Feminist dergisinden 8 kadınla ve Kaktüs dergisinden 9 kadınla yüz yüze görüşmeler yaptım. Dergilerin yazıları görüşme yapmadan önce tarayıp, görüşme soruları bu yazıların yardımıyla şekillendirdim. Tez boyunca analizlerde dergilerden yardımcı olacak şekilde kullandım, fakat görüşmelerin kendisi temel aldım. Görüşmecilerin kendi adı yerine mahlaslar kullandım, görüşmeler sırasında bu tür bir alanın konuşma niteliğini olumlu bir şekilde etkileyeceğini varsaydım.

Kadın teriminin yeniden anlamlandırılması: “Kadınlar Vardır” Sloganı

1980lerde feminist harekette “kadınlar vardır” sloganı çokça duyulmuştur. Hatta, Feminist Dergi’nin aktif üyelerinden olan Filiz Kerestecioğlu tarafından Dayaña Karşı Yürüyüş Öncesinde bestelenmiştir (Özman, 2008). Bu slogan, kadın kategorisinin özel ve değerli bir şekilde kullanımınıdır. Kadınlar daha önce yoktu, fakat şimdi var varsayımından ziyade, kadınlar vardı fakat feminist hareket içerisinde şimdi farklı bir anlam setiyle anlamlandırmaya çalışıyoruz demektir. Bu nedenle, denilebilir ki bu slogan kadın kategorisi üzerinde halihazırdaki

anlamlandırmaya karşı çıkma sürecinin bir parçasıdır. 1980lerin feminist hareketinde kadın teriminin yeniden anlamlandırılması süreci, bu sloganla paralel düşünülebilir.

Bu argümanımı açabilmek için öncelikle yeniden anlamlandırma ile performatiflik arası ilişkiyi kurmak gerekir. Butler, queer terimi için benzer bir ilişkiden bahseder. Queer'i farklı dışlama yollarıyla aşağılamak için kullanılan bir terimin yeniden anlamlandırılması olarak görür ve performatif bir siyasetin önünün açıldığını iddia eder (Butler, 1993, 233). Bu anlamda, Butler'a göre performatiflik, özgür bireylerin ya da öznelerin iradesinin gönüllülüğüyle değil, Foucault'nun analizi ile paralel düşünülebilecek bir bağlamda söylem ve iktidar rejimleri ile oluşur. (1993, 26). Söylemsel iktidar, normların üretilmesiyle oluşur ve onları düzenler. Bu anlamda denilebilir ki düzenleyici iktidar üretici bir iktidardır. Butler, cinsiyet, beden, heteronormatiflik ve toplumsal cinsiyet gibi kategorileri ele alıp hiçbirinin söylemsel iktidardan ayrı düşünülemediğini argümante eder. Bu nedenle, performatif edimler de ancak bu söylem içinde mümkün olur ve ancak bu söylemsel iktidarların analizi ile açıklanabilir.

Cinsiyet, beden, heteronormatiflik ve toplumsal cinsiyet gibi kategoriler, basitçe gerçeklikler ya da statik durumlar değildir. Düzenleyici normlar bir süreç içinde bu normların tekrarı aracılığıyla mümkün olur. Butler, süreç kavramsallaştırmasını açabilmek için tekrar (*reiteration*) kavramına özel bir önem verir ve tekrar edilen bir normun asla öncekinin aynısı olamayacağını söyler. Bu anlamda, kategoriler de tekrar edilen normların tortulaşmasıdır. Bir normun tekrarı asla bir öncekinin aynısı olamayacağı için, tortulaşmış normlarda bir takım boşluklar ve deformasyonlar oluşabilir (Jagger, 2008, 43).

Butler'a göre, bazen, bu tür bir önceki normun replikasyonunun imkansızlığı bir anlam setinin yeniden anlamlandırılması demek olabilir. Bu bağlamda, yeniden anlamlandırma kavramı halihazırda var olan bir anlamlandırmanın radikal deformasyonu demektir. Bir diğer değişle, süreç içinde dominant normlardan bir kayma anlamına gelir. Bu kayma neyin (kategorinin, normun ya da bir idealin) değerli olabileceği konusunda bir kaymadır (Butler, 1993, 21-2).

Yeniden anlamlandırma, Butler'a göre her zaman dominant iktidarının dışlayıcı pratiklerinin etkisi olarak ortaya çıkar (Butler, 1993, 241). Bu bağlamda, bir birey ya da toplumsal grubun normatif bir kategorinin anlamını değiştirme kararı ya da niyeti ile değil, söylemin sınırları ve dışlamalarıyla kurulur. Yeniden anlamlandırma, yeni bir söylemsel ve toplumsal alan açar (ibid, 128). Bir diğer deyişle, bazı normlar seti dışlanan grup tarafından kaydırılabilir ve bazı normlar, idealler ya da kategoriler normların tekrarı sırasında yeniden bölgeselleştirilir. Özne, bu dışlama ve farklılaşma pratikleri ile mümkün olur (Butler, 1995, 55). Bu problematizasyonu ortaya koymak bu tez için bir önem taşır çünkü Feminist ve Kaktüs dergisi kadınlarının derinlemesine görüşmeler sırasında sol söylemin normatif kadınlığı düzenlemesinde bu dışlama ve farklılaşma pratiklerinin feminist kadın kategorisinin kurulumundaki ilişkisini göstermeye çalışacağım. Bu dergilerin aktif katılımcılarından görüşme yapılan kadınlar, kadın kategorisindeki normatif anlamlandırmaların ele alınıp bu anlamlandırmaların nasıl yeniden ele alındığını anlattılar. Bu süreci alt üst edici bir yeniden anlamlandırma olarak okumam bu nedenledir⁶². Dominant normların verili pozisyonunu sorguya açmaları nedeniyle bu süreci performatif bir siyaset olarak okuyorum. Şimdi bu okumayı açacağım.

Görüşme sorularını hazırlarken, görüşmecilerin Feminist ve Kaktüs dergilerine katılımı öncesinde sol hareketle ilişkileriyle ilgili sorular dahil etmemiştim. Fakat, hemen hemen tüm kadınlar bu süreçten bahsettiler. 1980 yılları öncesinde sol örgütlenmelerde deneyimledikleri kadınlık üzerine normlara atıfla geç 1980ler feminizmi içinde kadın terimini ele alışlarına vurgu yaptılar. Görüşmeler sırasında tekrar eden paternleri üç norm üzerinden düşünmek mümkündür: narin, kırılmış ve burjuva kadınlık. Bunlardan kısaca bahsedeceğim, fakat önce şunu not etmeliyim. Bu normlar 1980 öncesi her sol örgütün normatif kadınlık tanımlamasını

⁶² Buradaki alt üst edici kavramı Butler için özel bir anlam taşır. Her yeniden anlamlandırmanın zorunlu olarak alt üst edici olmadığını iddia eder. Bazen muhafazakar bir yeniden anlamlandırma da olabilir.

Muhafazakar yeniden anlamlandırma bir takım gelenek ve verili pozisyonları korurken alt üst edici yeniden anlamlandırma radikal bir sorgu yaratma sürecine işaret eder. Tez boyunca, neden bu süreci alt üst edici olarak okuduğum spesifik olarak açıklanmıştır.

açıklayabilecek şekilde değildir. Bu normlar sadece sonradan Feminist ve Kaktüs dergisini çıkaran kadınların vurgu yaptığı normlar olarak anlaşılabilir.

Kadınların 1980 öncesi sol hareket içinde narin görünmesi üzerine, görüşme yapılan kadınlardan Nejla, kadınların polis tarafından yakalanma durumunda örgütü ifşa etme ya da eylem sırasında eylem koordinasyonunu kolay bozma eğilimlerinin olduğu şeklinde davranıldığını söyledi. Tezde, kadınların narin olduğuna dair bir normun nasıl bir regülasyona neden olduğu açıklanmıştır. Bu normdan bahseden Nejla kendini bir istisna olarak gördüğünü söyledi ve bu tür bir tavrın feminist harekette nasıl kırıldığına işaret etti. Bir diğer görüşmede, Sema, kendi örgütünde kadınların politik konularda görüş belirtirken nasıl zorlandığından, kırıldığından bahsetti. Bu örnek, bazı regülasyonların nasıl içselleştiğini analiz etmek için önem taşıyor. Ayrıca, kadınların burjuva olarak tanımlanmamak için süslenmek, bazı kıyafetleri giymekten kaçınmak, bu şekilde görüldüklerinde hissettikleri korku gibi örneklere yer verildi. Bunlar tezde ayrıntılı olarak açılmış olmakla beraber, bu özette bu analizin feminist hareket içinde kadın teriminin yeniden anlamlandırılması için özet bir önem taşıdığını söylemekle yetineceğim. Yeniden anlamlandırma sürecinin açıklandığı bazı bölümlerde bu normlara işaret edilmiş ve hangi şekillerde değişime uğradığına değinilmiştir.

Kadın kategorisinin feminist hareket içinde yeniden anlamlandırılmasına gelince, bilinç yükseltme gruplarının bu süreç için önemli bir dinamik olduğunu iddia edebiliriz. 1980lerin başından beri Türkiye’de feminist hareket için özel bir önem taşıyan bu pratiklerin neden kolektif bir yapılanma olarak okuyabileceğimiz ve bu türde bir kolektif yapının ne şekilde altüst edici pratikler barındırdığı açıklanmıştır. Bu süreçte, belli normlarla anlamlandırılan kadın kategorisinin nasıl değer kazanacağı kadın ezilmişliği nosyonunun etrafında tartışılmıştır. Butler’ın sık kullandığı bir kavram olmamakla birlikte, kolektiflik değindiği bir kavramdır ve bu tezde bir anlam setinin sistemik karakterinin etrafında buluşmak ve onu anlamaya çalışmak, bu süreçte farklı hikayeler arasındaki ilişkileri kurmak olarak

kullanılmıştır. Performatif kolektif pratikler, sorgulanmamış normları sorgulamayı amaçlar (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013, 67-8). Tezde bu tür bir çabanın nasıl ve hangi şekillerde bilinç yükseltme gruplarında ortaya çıktığına değinilmiştir. Kadın teriminin etrafındaki bir sorgulama sistemik karakteri, yani ezilmişliği anlama amacı taşır ve sorgu bu etrafta döner. Ayrıca, deneyim paylaşımının amacı farklı kadınlık hikayeleri arasındaki ilişkileri inşa etmektir. Bu kolektif yeniden anlamlandırma sürecinde sol hareketin kadınlık üzerine normatif inşasına sıkça değinilmiştir. Tezin bir bulgusu olan, görüşme yaptığım Feminist ve Kaktüs dergisi kadınlarının tümünün 1980 öncesi sol harekete farklı fraksiyonlarda da olsa dahil olmuş olması bu değinmenin nedenidir ve analizlerde sıkça tartışma konusu edilmiştir.

1980lerde Türkiye’de feminist harekette vurgu yapılan ve kadın teriminin yeniden anlamlandırması süreci için önemli görülecek bir diğer vurgu kadın dayanışması nosyonudur (1998, 332). Kadın dayanışmasının vurgulandığı temel örgütlenme biçimi bağımsız kadın örgütlenmesidir denebilir. Farklı feminist pozisyonlar olsa da, feminist kadınların büyük çoğunluğu bağımsız kadın örgütlenmesini desteklemiştir (Sirman, 1989, 7; Bora, 2011, 18). Derinlemesine görüşmeler sırasında, Feminist ve Kaktüs dergisi kadınları da bağımsız kadın örgütlenmesinin kadın dayanışması ve kız kardeşliği kurmak için potansiyel gördüklerini söylediler. Özellikle sol hareketin bağımsız kadın örgütlenmesine tepki duymasına karşın, kadın dayanışması bu gruplarda, diğer kadınları herhangi bir konuda rakip görmemek, hiyerarşi kurmamak, farklı ezilmişlikleri kolektif gruplar aracılığıyla anlayıp birbirlerine destek olmak gibi özellikleri ön plana çıkmıştır. Burada, kadınlığın yeniden anlamlandırılması sürecinde kadın teriminin değerli bir şekilde kullanımının farklı imkanlarını ve sınırları tez boyunca anlatılmıştır.

Politika Yapmanın Yeni Bölgeleri

Kadın teriminin yeniden anlamlandırma sürecinin, bazı dominant politika yapma biçimlerini de alt üst ettiği iddia edilebilir. Üçüncü bölümde, politika yapma biçimlerindeki bu dönüşüme odaklanılmıştır. Yeniden anlamlandırma ve politika

yapma biçimlerindeki alt üst etme, analitik olarak ayrılmıştır, önce birinin sonra diğerinin gerçekleştiğini iddia etmiyorum. Eş zamanlı olarak, birbirleriyle ilişki içinde ortaya çıktığını analize yansıtmakla beraber, bu bölümde politika yapmanın yeni yolları ve yeni temaları Butler'ın dışlananın (*abjection*) politikleşmesi kavramıyla beraber düşünülmüştür. Dışlananın politikleşmesi, Butler'ın queer için kullandığı, bir terimin yeniden yazılması amacıyla kolektif politikleşmeye işaret etmektedir. Feminist ve Kaktüs dergisi kadınlarıyla görüşmelerime dayanarak, benzer bir okuma yapmaya çalışmıştır.

Yeni politika yapma yolları adlı alt bölümde, dört temel konu analiz edilmiştir. İlk olarak, devrimin zamanına dair bir alt üst etme pratiği ele alınmıştır. Feminist Dergi kadınlarından Nejla'ya göre, 1980 öncesi sol harekette temel amaç iktidarı ele geçirmek iken, bu tür bir politika tahayyülünde kadınların politik durumu göz ardı edilmiştir. Bu nedenle, 1980 feminizminin önemseydiği önemli konulardan birisi, bir büyük toplumsal devrim gerçekleşene kadar beklemektense gündelik hayatı devrimin bir parçası olarak ele alarak politika yapmak olmuştur. Burada, halihazırdaki devrim anlayışını yeniden anlamlandırılan kadın terimine uyarlamaktan yerine, devrim fikrinin kendisinin nasıl değiştiğinin analizi yapılmıştır. İkinci olarak, sol hareketin işçi sınıfını kurtarmak vurgusu eleştirilerek kurtaran/kurtulan ikiliği sorunsallaştırılmıştır. Bu normu sorguya açmanın kendisi alt üst edici bir performatiflik olarak analiz edilmiştir. Üçüncü olarak, yine sol hareket içindeki politik hiyerarşiler sorunsallaştırılarak feminist örgütlenmenin temel iddialarından birisi olan hiyerarşisiz örgütlenme, “göz hizasından örgütlenme” ele alınmıştır. Dönemin tüm feminizminin hiyerarşisiz olduğu iddiasından ziyade, ki ortaya çıkan belli hiyerarşiler analize sokulmuştur, bu konuyu tartışmanın kendisinin nasıl alt üst edici bir pratikler set olduğu açıklanmıştır. Bu alt bölüm için, son olarak, bilgiye yaklaşım konusu ele alınmıştır. Kadın teriminin yeniden anlamlandırılması sürecinde Feminist ve Kaktüs dergilerinde ortaklaşırken, bilgiye yaklaşım konusunda iki dergi arasında bir farklılık görülür. Feminist dergi, sol hareketin bilimsel ve teorik bilginin politika için meşru ve kabul edilebilir görülen tavrına karşılık, bu bilgi türlerini eleştirilir ve “ciddi olmayan” yeni politik bilgilerin peşini kovalar. Kaktüs dergisi ise, amacı sosyalist hareketi feministleştirmek olduğu için, Marksist teoriyi önemser ve onu feminist bir eleştiri ile yeniden kurgulamaya çalışır. Bu alt bölümde, iki türde

yaklaşımın da nasıl altüst edici pratikler olarak okunabileceği tartışılmıştır. Bu analiz, alt üst edici pratiğin tek bir formda olmaktan çok uzak bir şekilde farklı formlarda ortaya çıkabileceği iddiası için de önem taşır.

İkinci bölümün ikinci alt bölümünde, politikaya sokulan yeni temalar tartışılmıştır. İlk olarak, sol hareket içinde sadece devletten geldiğinde politik bir anlamı olabileceği düşünülen kadına yönelik şiddetin nasıl sistematik olduğunun iddia edildiği ve nasıl politikanın bir parçası olarak kurgulandığı tartışılmıştır. İkinci olarak, şiddetle paralel düşünülecek bir şekilde, cinsel tacizin politikayla ilişkisinin nasıl kurulduğu tartışılmıştır. Üçüncü olarak, kadın cinselliğinin, cinsel özgürlüğün politik anlamda nasıl tartışıldığı ve feminist kadınlara nasıl alan açıldığı ve ne tür yeni sorunlarla karşılaştıkları, bu sorunlarla nasıl baş ettikleri ele alınmıştır. Son olarak, feminist politikaya katılım süreci ile görüşme yaptığım feminist kadınların evlilik hayatlarının nasıl değiştiği ve bunun politikayla ilişkisinin nasıl kurulduğu tartışılmıştır.

Sonuç olarak, bu tez “geç 1980lerde Türkiye’de kadın kategorisi nasıl feminist bir bağlamda politik alana aktarıldı” sorusuna cevap aranmaya çalışılmıştır. Dönemin en önemli iki örgütlenmesi olan Feminist ve Kaktüs dergisinin aktif katılım gösteren kadınlarıyla görüşmelere dayanarak, bu süreç Butlercı bir kavram olan performatif bir yeniden anlamlandırma olarak okunmuştur.

Bu çalışma sırasında, birkaç konunun ilerideki çalışmalar için araştırılmasının önemli olabileceği gözlenmiştir. Bu tezin odağında olan Feminist ve Kaktüs Dergileri İstanbul temellidir. Fakat bu dönemde Ankara’da da canlı bir feminist örgütlenme bulunmaktadır (Timisi ve Gevrek, 2011, 13) ve henüz bu örgütlenme üzerinde yeterli bir analiz bulunmamaktadır. Ayrıca, kendini tamamen feminist olarak tanımlamayan fakat feminist kadınların da bulunduğu bazı kadın örgütlenmelerinin kendi tartışmalarını, çatışmalarını araştırmak verimli bir çalışma ortaya çıkarabilir. Son olarak Türkiye’de 1980lerin feminizmin ile güncel feminizm arasında postyapısalcı bir metodoloji ile yapılacak karşılaştırmalı bir çalışma iki dönemi sorunsallaştırmak açısından önemli bir katkı olacaktır.

APPENDIX B: TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enformatik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>

YAZARIN

Soyadı : GÜLÇİÇEK
Adı : DEMET
Bölümü : SOSYOLOJİ

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : RETHINKING SECOND WAVE FEMINISM:
A POSTSTRUCTURALIST APPROACH TO THE LATE
1980S' FEMINIST MOVEMENT IN TURKEY IN THE
CASES OF FEMINIST AND KAKTÜS MAGAZINES

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: