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BECOMING IN NARRATIVE AND MONTAGE

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COHERENCE BETWEEN NARRATIVE AND MONTAGE:
DIVERSIFIED BECOMINGS IN REHA ERDEM'S CINEMA

A Master's Thesis

by
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To those who hold his head high and fight against the hits of life

To those who say my mistakes—occurred from my trust in

people and my frankness—is my life



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The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences
of
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

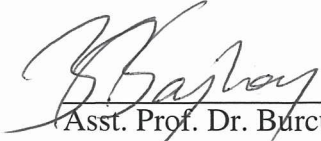
by
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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
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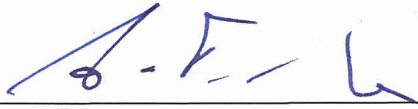
November 2019

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ABSTRACT

THE COHERENCE BETWEEN NARRATIVE AND MONTAGE: DIVERSIFIED BECOMINGS IN REHA ERDEM’S CINEMA

Keskin, Suphi
M.A. in Media and Visual Studies
Supervisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Burcu Baykan

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This thesis aims to demonstrate the coherence between narrative and montage in Reha Erdem’s cinema in dialogue with Deleuzian philosophy and cinema theory, and it analyzes the parallels and divergences between Erdem’s cinema and Deleuzian concepts. In order to accomplish this aim, this thesis explores three films from Erdem’s oeuvre by employing Deleuzian concepts clustered around “becoming”. The three films are *Kosmos* (2010), *What’s a Human, Anyway?* (2004), and *Singing Women* (2013), since they carry a thematic commonality in the narrative of the concept of becoming; and vary with diversified forms of this concept, such as becoming-animal, woman, and imperceptible in terms of form and narrative. Within this scope, the thesis reveals Gilles Deleuze’s consistency between his philosophy developed with Félix Guattari and cinema theory by the agency of Erdem’s cinema. In addition to underlining the parallels, the narrative and formal analysis also delve into Erdem’s reinterpretations of and deviations from Deleuzian theory.

Keywords: Becoming-animal, Becoming-child, Becoming-imperceptible, Reha Erdem, The Impulse-image

ÖZET

ANLATI VE KURGUDA UYUM: REHA ERDEM SİNEMASINDA FARKLILAŞAN OLUŞLAR

Keskin,Suphi
Medya ve Görsel Çalışmalar

Yüksek Lisans

Tez Danışmanı: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Burcu Baykan

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Bu tez, Reha Erdem sinemasının biçim ve içerik yönünden uyumluluğunu gösterirken, bu durumu Deleuzcü felsefe ve sinema teorisi ile diyalog halinde kalarak analiz etmeye, buna ek olarak Erdem sinemasının Deleuzcü kavramlarla örtüştüğü ve onunla farklılaşmaya gittiği durumları keşfetmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaç ışığında, bu tez Erdem’in külliyatı içinden üç filmi “oluş” kavramı etrafında kümelenen Deleuzcü felsefe ışığında keşfe çıkacaktır. Bu üç film *Kosmos* (2010), *İnsan Nedir ki?* (2004) ve *Şarkı Söyleyen Kadınlar* (2013) olarak seçilmiştir, zira bu filmler, oluş kavramının kullanımında tematik bir ortaklık taşımakla birlikte; bu kavramın farklı versiyonları, hayvan-oluş, çocuk-oluş ve farkedilmez-oluş kavramlarının kullanımı yoluyla farklılaşıp içerik ve biçim bağlamında çeşitlenmektedirler. Aynı zamanda, buy olla Gilles Deleuze’ün sinema teorisi ve Félix Guattari ile geliştirdiği felsefe arasındaki tutarlılığın altı da Erdem sinemasının analizi ile çizilmiş olacaktır. Ortak noktaların altının çizilmesinin yanında, biçimsel ve içeriksel analizler, Erdem sinemasının Deleuzcü felsefeyi yeniden yorumladığı ve ondan ayrıldığı noktaları da tartışmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çocuk-oluş, Dürtü-imge, Farkedilmez-oluş, Hayvan-oluş, Reha Erdem

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I was planning to study cinema in my Master's Degree during my undergraduate years at the Department of Communication and Design; however, I was feeling perplexed about my thesis topic. This thesis began to shape when I noticed that Dr. Burcu Baykan's COMD 514 Identity, Space, and Image Course embraces wide range information on visual arts, including Deleuze's readings. I selected this course in my first semester at the department, and research on Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy along with Deleuze's film theory through the instructions of Dr. Burcu Baykan.

Through the GRA 571 Image, Time, and Motion Course lectured by Andreas Treske during my second semester, I deepened my knowledge of image theories and decided on the topic of my thesis. As Dr. Colleen Kennedy-Karpat states, it would be arduous work, studying the "high theory" of cinema; however, I knew the hardship of this uphill project in the beginning.

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Burcu Baykan for her mentorship, patience, and motivation. Her valuable inputs are fruitful for writing a thesis and invaluable to become a better writer in the academic framework. Her guidance thought me how to convey accurate research by employing proper resources. I knew from the beginning that working under her supervision will be demanding, but so improving for my

academic skills. This thesis also displays proof of her distinguished ability as an academic advisor.

I would also like to thank Andreas Treske, Lutz Peschke, Ahmet Gürata, and Prof. Colleen Kennedy-Karpat for their valuable contributions and inspirations to my thinking on cinema, image, and media. I learned to do research and find the proper and prestigious resources on cinema, beginning with my undergraduate years, thanks to Prof. Gürata and Prof. Karpat. Along with the eye-opening inputs of Esra Özban, I began to write my assignments on cinema. I take my studies one step further through Andreas Treske and his theoretical knowledge on the moving image.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aims and Objectives

This thesis analyzes Erdem's three selected movies—*Kosmos* (2009), *What's a Human, Anyway?* (2004), and *Singing Women* (2013)—on the strength of Erdem's divergent applications to the image along with the Deleuzian approach. Erdem writes metaphorical and complicated plots in dialogue with the Deleuzian philosophy in Turkish cinema—even I can contend, the only scripts signifying the Deleuzian approach through the fluid and nomadic leading roles of his films—, and his style of thinking on image deserves in-depth analysis along with his narratives. Thinking of the cinema from the view of cinema's distinguishing characteristics, image and montage, is very recently rooted in Turkey, almost 30 years. The aesthetical interpretation of the image is very recent in Turkish cinema. It is almost at the same age with the emergence of awarded auteur generation, including Reha Erdem, Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Semih Kaplanoğlu, and Derviş Zaim emerged with the 90s.

Erdem comes to the fore among this auteur generation with his manifold applications of editing and narrative diversity, including comedy, apocalyptic, and war genres.

After the economic and productional collapse in the 80s, Turkey cinema rises within

the context of arthouse cinema, albeit the problems in industrialization. As Atilla Dorsay (2004) propounds, the period of the 90s is the renaissance era of Turkish cinema, which raises with this auteur generation. This young auteur generation focuses on the image and its correlation with the plot. Ceylan, Zaim, and Kaplanoğlu have peculiar and eccentric imagistic views; nevertheless, they protect similar stylistic implementations identified with themselves. In this generation, Erdem shines by the agency of his diversified approach to montage and image. His oeuvre beginning with the applications of the classical continuity editing evolves to the most artistic approaches of the subdivisions of the movement-image—concealed under the general framework of the time-image.

Reha Erdem, the international award-winning Turkish auteur, has a unique and eccentric place in Turkish cinema due to his unique cinematography and narratives. Since the beginning of his cinema career with *Oh Moon* (1988), his movies contain maladaptive characters, particularly to modern life. These characters become outsiders of their environment and in transformation independent from society. Beginning with his third feature film, *What's a Human, Anyway?*, Erdem applies influential montage sequences¹ through which he plays with the form and the narrative. Unlike the standard approach, his montage sequences do not display an aspect that condenses the narrative through a series of short cuts, which represent a long period; instead, he embeds subtexts to the montage sequences, and empowers the emotion of the previous shot and/or connotes the meta-ideas. This form of alteration in conventional usage provides him with the reinterpretation of continuity editing. In *What's a Human, Anyway?*, Erdem's plots and cinematographic approach diversifies

¹ Montage sequence is the collage of (short) shots which are immensely juxtaposed into a sequence with special effects to condense space, time, and information. In montage sequences, the overlapping shots do not conventionally represent a thematic and spatiotemporal unity (Bordwell, 2002: 24).

from classical continuity editing; he also begins to write multilayer narratives with various subtexts.

Erdem's third film, *What's a Human, Anyway?* is a milestone in his oeuvre due to its unique leading role along with distinctive editing, including montage sequences. In this movie, the liminality of Ali's characteristics is a preview of the upcoming personifications of the auteur. In the following year, *My Only Sunshine* (2008), he shoots *Kosmos*. The leading namesake role of *Kosmos* is one of the most unusual characters of Erdem's cinema with his paranormal healing powers. In *Singing Women*, Erdem continues to narrativize stories of the in-between characters, who find shelter in nature after traumatic experiences with paranormal abilities.

This thesis propounds that *What's a Human, Anyway?*, *Kosmos*, and *Singing Women* are thematically shaped around the concept of becoming and vary with the emphasis on the different forms of the concept, such as "becoming-animal", "becoming-child", and "becoming-imperceptible". To explore Erdem's approaches through Deleuzian philosophy, three movies are examined owing to their similar characteristic features: *Kosmos*, *What's a Human, Anyway?*, and *Singing Women*. As will be shown in due course, these movies subsume narrativizations of various forms of becoming, including becoming-animal, child, and woman. Additionally, they target the zone of indiscernibility between the human and animal, and provide deterritorialized zones to their leading characters by various methods, such as departure, amnesia, and being stranded. In form, the selected movies ostensibly apply the time-image with the exception of *What's a Human, Anyway?*. Accordingly, Erdem's cinema becomes prominent with the utilization of montage sequences, and the narratives of fluid, transformative, and liminal leading characters with the help of these montage

sequences. These approaches in narrative and form demonstrate divergent, eclectic, and yet liminal characteristics within the context of Deleuzian image theory and philosophy. Furthermore, the montage style diverges due to the different combinations of the movement-image with the time-image. These movies present a wealth of embodiment of Deleuze's ontology, and they create rich combinations of his image theory in terms of form and content. Despite the diversifications, the transformation and fluidity of leading roles display a commonality that provides the opportunity to analyze his narratives regarding Deleuze's² concept of "becoming".

The cinema of Erdem does not only vary in terms of narratives but also the form evolves through his various applications of montage. Erdem's approach to form displays a diversity through the distinctive usage of montage sequences and his cinematography is close to aesthetics of European arthouse cinema with his preferences of long-durational, wide-angle plans, and stable camera usage, except montage sequences. Montage sequences, including various short series of shots, create a contrast between his long takes. The montage sequences also alter the continuity editing through their autonomy. The sequences create "privileged intervals"³ according to Deleuze's (1997) terminology, and privileged intervals have dual functions in Erdem's selected movies: denotative meanings and connotative references to the subtexts. For instance, in some of these series of shots, these connotative signs foretell the plot as in *What's a Human, Anyway?*, or they signify the themes of the subtext as in *Kosmos* and *Singing Women*. Erdem customarily

² Gilles Deleuze co-authored with French psychoanalyst and philosopher Felix Guattari (1930-1992) in many books. Nevertheless, the process-oriented philosophy that Deleuze, which developed with the contributions of Guattari is predominantly known under the name of Deleuze, which is used throughout the thesis.

³ Deleuze (1997) names the gaps as the privileged interval, which evokes affect and flickers thinking mechanisms between the wavering montage technique of the time-image in his *Cinema I: The Movement-Image*.

juxtaposes close-ups and extreme close-ups of various faces throughout these montage sequences. His editing technique is also tailored to the concept of becoming and analyzed according to “the time-image” and the subcategories of the movement-image classified by Deleuze.

This thesis posits that Erdem cinema demonstrates Deleuzian aspects in narrative and form. Thus, the main aim of this thesis is to demonstrate the coherence between the form and narrative of Erdem’s three films in dialogue with Deleuzian philosophy, as well as his cinema theory. Another goal is to display the points that Erdem’s reinterpretations of and resonances between the Deleuzian approach.

1.2 Methodology

In line with its stated goals and intentions, this thesis employs a Deleuzian methodology through covering the crucial Deleuze-Guattarian concepts, which are chosen from the closed connected concepts to the notion of becoming, such as the “deterritorialization”, “Body without Organs (BwO)”, “nomadism”, becoming-animal, “assemblage”, “the movement-image”, and “the time-image” as foundational concept in Deleuzian lexicon. Regarding the ontology of becoming, Deleuze-Guattarian philosophy is open to evolution, change, and making mutual encounters with other systems of thought.

Becoming rejects the idea of a stable identity and a pre-given essence. Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 9) postulate that the whole universe with its individuals are in an endless flow and movement that “the whole is ... the Open”, and the whole “because of its nature to change constantly ... gives rise to something new, in short, to endure”. Deleuze also challenges the sedentary idea of ‘being’ and representation in the Western philosophical thought. Their ontological approach is grounded upon constant

flux, flow, and the transformation of the multiplicities. Becoming accentuates the difference intrinsic to things; hence, it presents a constant movement from one state to another with no specific aim or end-state. Therefore, Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy becomes crucial to analyze Erdem's selected movies due to this philosophy's emphasis on change, flow, and fluidity.

The mutation and flow of the characters make his selected movies eligible to view from the Deleuzian perspective. The transformation of his characters and their influence on their milieu come to the fore. As the analytical chapters of this thesis will demonstrate, they experience emancipation by destabilizing their identity. Erdem modifies these characters and his cinematographic approach from one film to another; nevertheless, he protects the common basis. As becomings subsume the destabilization of fixed identities, representations, as well as the unification of the binary opposition, leading roles of these three movies bring mobility, fluidity, and change to their milieu. Hence, the primary intention of this thesis is to analyze Erdem's cinema in terms of both form and narrative according to the concept of becoming. Due to the variations of Erdem's selected three movies, this thesis employs three different flows of this concept, which are becoming-animal, -child, and -imperceptible, in order to explore narrative and formal approaches of the selected movies.

The concepts of Deleuze's cinema theory is the apparatus to explore Erdem's form. According to Deleuze's approach, this thesis propounds that Erdem's montage oscillates between the movement-image and "the time-image" through his interpretation of the concepts of privileged interval and "nooshock". This liminality presents an opportunity to review the form of Erdem's cinema within the context of

the Deleuzian image theory. Erdem mutates Deleuze's concept of the movement-image beginning with *What's a Human, Anyway?*.

Deleuze states that there is a unity between the image and object by specifying that: "an image is a thing's existence and appearance", and the thing is inseparable from the image (Bogue, 2003: 29; Ashton, 2006: 84). The image is also in the process of change and flow akin to the thing; therefore, "cinema gives us a movement-image" (Deleuze, 1997: 2). In short, a cinematic image is in the process of becoming, flow, and transformation. At this point, the cinematic image is unrepresentable as the object itself. Therefore, Deleuzian cinema theory defines image regimes through its montage, its approach to time, and its influence on thinking mechanisms. Within the tight bonds between the concept of becoming and Deleuze's cinema theory, the close readings respectively perform aesthetical analysis by applying the concepts of becoming-animal, becoming-child, and BwO to the aesthetical context respectively like following correlations: the impulse-image as the becoming-animal of the montage, the affection-image as becoming-child of montage, and the last close reading as the becoming-other of the time-image.

Nevertheless, in order to cover Erdem's cinema holistically, this thesis proposes that Erdem's form provides a peculiar and innovative approach that should be analyzed through the view of Deleuze's lens since the selected three movies display coherent characteristics in narrative and form. Correspondingly, the second chapter reviews some essential concepts of Deleuze and Guattari for exploring Erdem's oeuvre. Hence, it comprises the theoretical framework of this thesis. These concepts are applied in the upcoming chapters to perform close readings of the selected movies of Erdem's cinema.

The primary resource of this thesis is Deleuze and Guattari's second volume of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia: A Thousand Plateaus* (2005), which is utilized for the explication of the Deleuze-Guattarian ontology. In addition to *A Thousand Plateaus*, the writings of Deleuzian scholars, including Brian Massumi, Adrian Parr, Claire Colebrook, Elizabeth Grosz, and Constantin Boundas, are highly relevant to clarifying Deleuze and Guattari's complicated, versatile and heterogeneous terminology. The second volume of *Anti-Oedipus, Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, the most targeting political work of Deleuze and Guattari, is the essential source for analyzing the positions of desire and body in the social context. This book is employed to expand the position of desire towards "molecularity". Furthermore, the books of D.N. Rodowick, and Dyrk Ashton are applied to draw parallels between Deleuzian image theory in the books, *Cinema I: The Movement-Image* (1997), and *Cinema II: The Time-Image* (2000), and his ontology.

Within this scope, this thesis first reviews some concepts of Deleuzian philosophy and cinema theory in order to use in the analysis of Erdem cinema beginning with the third section. After focusing on the set of attendant concepts to becoming, it begins to the close readings with Erdem's sixth feature film. Each close reading is divided into two for the narrative and formal analysis. Then, throughout the fourth chapter, it analyzes Kosmos around the concept of "becoming-animal" to delve into the unveiled details of Erdem's representational mode of narrativization. This concept also a key for the evaluation of editing since Erdem's approach to Deleuzian "impulse-image", which is interpreted as "becoming-animal of editing" (Deamer, 2016, 203). The fourth chapter scrutinizes the Deleuzian concept of becoming-child by analyzing the narrative, as well as characters of Erdem's third feature-length film, *What's a Human, Anyway?*, and ties the concept with the editing. This chapter evaluates the editing

technique in the cluster of continuity editing; however, Erdem diversifies the method through montage sequences first time in his oeuvre. The fifth chapter explores *Singing Women*, one of the most eclectic films of the auteur, in alignment with Deleuze's concept of becoming-imperceptible. The eclecticism of the movie allows this chapter to decipher the movie according to the essay film aesthetics within the general framework of the time-image. The commonality, structured around becoming, of these three movies, provide to endeavor the parallels and resonances between Erdem's cinema and Deleuzian philosophy, as well as cinema theory.



CHAPTER II

DELEUZIAN ONTOLOGY AND ITS REFLECTIONS TO HIS CINEMA THEORY: BECOMING, IMAGE, AND TIME

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the relationship between Deleuze's ontology and his cinematic concepts to form a toolbox for the analysis of Erdem's selected works. With the exception of some Deleuzian scholars such as Roland Bogue and Gregory Flaxman, Deleuzian cinema theory is predominantly studied independently from his philosophy. However, this thesis posits that Deleuze's ontological method has strict bonds with his cinema theory. Accordingly, the first section of this chapter provides an overview of Deleuze and Guattari's idiosyncratic vocabulary that is shaped around the concept of becoming, which is the crux for his ontological approach. The second section elaborates on Deleuzian image theory by relating it to the concept of becoming, owing to the fact that the process-oriented ontology of Deleuze comprises the basis of his cinema theory.

2.2 Deleuzian Ontology Built upon "Becoming"

Deleuze defines philosophy as the art of producing concepts. His methodology consists of strictly tied conceptualizations around the idea of becoming. Deleuze (2001b: xvi) declares: “I make, remake and unmake my concepts along a moving horizon, from an always decentered center, from an always displaced periphery which repeats and differentiates them”. Thus, he aims to accentuate how concepts build connections and how they transform according to their linkages. Deleuzian ontology suggests transversal linkages and relationships among multiplicities. Multiplicities endlessly form assemblages with other multiplicities, and they build a network that Deleuze and Guattari call rhizome in which various transversal relations endlessly renew their nodes (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 7). Their peculiar vocabulary adheres to a rhizomatic form wherein each concept is creatively linked to the others, and generate new multiplicities. Overall, his philosophical terminology is in the process of becoming with a receptivity to evolution and mutation in a dynamic and transformative network.

2.2.1 Rhizome

The analogy derived from the rhizome is developed to oppose the hierarchical and arborescent tradition of Western thought. A rhizome is a horizontal, underground plant stem capable of producing the roots from its nodes (Colman, 2018: 233).

Deleuze and Guattari use this plant stem as a metaphor because of its amorphous form and decentralized nodes. Rhizome adheres to a plane that opposes the arborescent knowledge by its nonhierarchical structure. This shapeless nonhierarchical plane is the growing habitat of “difference”. The difference is essential in Deleuze’s philosophy, which underpins a thought rejecting identity, sameness, and repetition. Deleuze (2001b: 61) defines life as “a swarm of differences, a pluralism of free, wild and untamed differences”. Throughout the history of Western thought, “the

accumulation of knowledge has traditionally been pictured as a tree which rises and develops in and from a central trunk that branches off, occasionally dead-ends” and “returns to the trunk and branches off again” (Ashton, 2006: 58). Deleuze and Guattari overthrow the entrenched structure of thought that grounds itself upon the fixed essence and identity; instead, they propound the model of the rhizome. The rhizome is the endless becoming of multiplicities, as well as ideas forming numerous linkages and assemblages. In a rhizome, “everything ties together in an asymmetrical block of becoming, an instantaneous zigzag” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 307).

Damian Sutton and David Martin-Jones (2008: 46) accentuate that a “rhizome exploits and enjoys continual change and connection”, and yields new linkages and cohesion within a duration of disorganized and nonhierarchical environment.

The rhizome is also the mesh of the concepts stemming from becoming. Deleuze’s rhizome builds a set of lexicons which align with the “articulation or segmentation, strata, and territories; but also, ‘lines of flight’, movements of ‘deterritorialization’ and ‘destratification’” and “an assemblage ..., in connection with other assemblages” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 3). Thus, this never-ending movement among divergent bodies, entities, and things end up with an open and continuous structure that resists stability. The multiplicity in the rhizome is always becoming; hence, in the middle, it transforms into a transition point, “a threshold, a door, a becoming between two multiplicities” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 275). In other words, a multiplicity becomes a zone of passage for the becoming of another multiplicity. This thesis analyzes Erdem’s selected movies through their rhizomatic connections between each other in terms of narrative and form.

2.2.2 Becoming

Becoming is at the heart of Deleuze's process-oriented ontology, and as a node, it gives birth to new concepts. When Deleuze depicts the frame of becoming, he uses many of his concepts in its definition: becoming is an irreducible dynamism, rhizome, multiplicity, movement, deterritorialization, the process of desire, and flow (as cited in Dexter, 2015: 9). It is the central node that is endlessly decentered with a continuous flow. Becoming is the creative movement of multiplicities that are rhizomatically on the quest for linkages and assemblages. Becoming is the interconnection of heterogeneous entities, assemblages of durational processes "differing in rhythm and speed" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 4).

Deleuzian methodology rejects the dialectics and binary oppositions of fixed beings. Being can only be depicted in the frozen slices of moments, conversely, becoming is the never-ending transformation that is immanent in everything. There are neither fixed identities nor pre-given essences; instead, there is nothing apart from the continuous movement of becoming of heterogeneous and dynamic multiplicities.

Becoming is undoubtedly not imitating or identifying with something; neither is it "regressing-progressing" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 239). It is not an "evolution", but an "involution on the condition that is in no way confused with regression" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 39). Deleuze and Guattari advance a life comprised of fluid and liminal desire that propels becomings and forms of assemblages. The basic drive of becoming is desire. Life is the flow of desire in search of becomings.

Becoming is a mode of always being in between with no beginning and endpoints. Therefore, becoming is "a place of shared deterritorialization"; "a zone of proximity"; "a nonlocalizable relation" in "the no man's land" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 293). Deleuze and Guattari depict various types of becomings; however, within the

framework of this thesis, I delve into the concepts of becoming-woman, animal, child, and imperceptible, because these concepts designate the sorts of becomings which are employed by Erdem as narrative themes in his filmography.

2.2.3 Becoming-Woman, -Animal, -Child, and -Imperceptible

The catalyst becoming is “becoming-minoritarian”, owing to the fact that majority symbolizes an extensive influence and “implies domination” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 291); in short, all becomings are minoritarian. Regardless of quantitative abundance, the hegemonic group presents a fixed entity. Being-minoritarian is a result of deterritorialization, an exemption from subjectivity, which is a product of “the social apparatus” (Deleuze, 1992: 162). Deleuze (1992) defines the social apparatus as a reflection of the sedentary codifications of the State that mutilates desire. Emancipation from these codes provide mobilization and becoming. Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 291) position becoming-minoritarian within the context of becoming-woman in the first instance. In the last instance, becomings have a limit which Deleuze and Guattari (2005) entitle as “becoming-imperceptible”.

Becoming-woman possesses an “introductory power” to becomings (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 248), as women are the minoritarian social group adjacent to men. Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 292) appraise man as the “molar entity par excellence” and as a majoritarian structure, which refers to the patriarchal hegemony; in contrast, a woman is molecular and minoritarian. As the initializing step, “being-minoritarian always passes through a becoming-woman” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 291).

Regardless of gender, there can be transitions between genders or sexes with regard to becomings, since the identity of subjectivity is mobile in the Deleuzian lexicon.

Anupa Batra (2012: 2) underlines that “becoming-woman is ... set apart from other

becomings” because becoming-woman “entails those molecular becomings that escape the dualistic economy of gender”. Correspondingly, Elizabeth Grosz (1994: 117) suggests that becoming-woman is not about “inherent qualities of women per se or their metaphoric resonances”, but about woman’s minoritarian status in patriarchal power relations. Deleuze and Guattari destabilize the dominant power of hierarchies, and “make differences different”, as well as abolish the prejudiced systems of identity politics, such as gender, sex, or race (Sutton & Martin-Jones, 2008: 47). Deleuze’s process-oriented philosophy confronts fixed essences, including the representations of identitarian structures. Hence, becoming-woman is neither a representation nor an imitation of femininity, but a catalyst as a threshold for other becomings like becoming-animal. The notion of becoming-woman mainly sheds light upon the transformations of the female characters within *Singing Women* discussed in the fourth chapter.

Becoming-animal is not a transfer from human identity to the animal identity or an alliance of the human and animal. It is the rejection of the anthropocentric world view since becoming is the transgression of the various hierarchies. The concept defends the affinity and transaction between human and animal; therefore, it inverts the thought that gives priority to the human. Thus, becoming-animal provides an assemblage that highlights the zone of indiscernibility between humans and animals. However, becoming-animal “is neither an imitation nor a resemblance” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 10), but it is the “contemplation” and the “contagion” of two species rather than their filiation (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 10; 244). Whereas the only differences constituted by filiation are “small modifications across generations”, contagion provides an interchange—a crisscross between multiplicities (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 41). Within this scope, becoming-animal is not a course of

impersonation, resemblance, or an analogy, but an alliance, contemplation, and a plane of interplay and interaction between living things. This plane is an affinity that familiarizes, deterritorializes, and reterritorializes, both human and animal (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 10). This concept is extensively employed for deciphering the leading namesake role of *Kosmos* within the third chapter.

The deterritorialization is the emancipation of codifications, surpassing the boundaries drawn by the identities. As Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 372) underline, the deterritorialization “constitutes and extends the territory itself ‘by transgression’” of it. The deterritorialization is an immanent movement, at a slow or fast pace, and “the movement” occurring when “one leaves the territory” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005). In the social context, deterritorialization is the process of emancipation from the sedentary codifications and fixed identities through “the lines of flight”. Nevertheless, deterritorialization is followed by the reterritorialization, since the social apparatus is on the alert for the re-codification of multiplicities according to the prevailing social norms.

Mobilization may occur more swiftly and generatively in the state of becoming-child since children constitute the social group broadly open to fluidity. Deleuze & Guattari (2005: 256) accentuate the inclination of children toward “affect” and mobilization, by writing that “children are Spinozist”. They refer to Spinoza’s (2002: 278) definition affect, which delineates affect as “the modification or variation produced in a body (including the mind) by an interaction with another body which increases or diminishes the body's power of activity” (Spinoza, 2002: 278). Children have a broader capacity of affect than adults since they are not mutilated by molar entities, codes, and rules as adults. An adult is a molar child; concordantly, the qualities of

childhood are identified as the capacity of molecularity, intensity, and becoming. Becoming-child also has an affinity with multiplicities as do the other forms of becomings. Additionally, it implies emancipation from the codes that transform children into adults in exchange for releasing desire. It is an involution rather than a regression. The concept is widely examined through the character analysis of *What's a Human, Anyway?*, particularly by viewing it against “oedipalization” and masculinity within the fourth chapter.

Becoming-imperceptible is the frontier limits of becomings and, it is simply effacing subjectification by becoming-other. According to Audrone Žukauskaitė (2015: 60), it is “the new understanding of life as nonpersonal and nonorganic power”. Deleuzian philosophy posits that the generative force and flow of life reject the idea of common ethical rules and transcendental forces; instead, life follows its immanent principles. For Deleuze, desire is intrinsic to the individual and pushes for becoming (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 154). Within this scope, the mere ethical principle becomes the flux of life itself. This creative flow of life disintegrates the foundational model of subjectivity and dispenses a state liberated from the social apparatus (Deleuze, 1992: 162-163). Thus, asubjectification is inevitable for imperceptible becomings.

Becoming-imperceptible is the limit of becomings since it is the result of asubjectification, which gives multiplicities the opportunities of linkages with the anorganic, the indiscernible, and asignifying to the greatest extent (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 279). It is a level of becoming that entails a multiplicity with all the molecular constituents of the world. It is the limit in the transformation of self.

Braidotti (2006a: 154) advances the thought of becoming-other and defines becoming-imperceptible as a “fusion between the self and his/her habitat, the Cosmos as a whole”. Succinctly, asubjectification brings along the amalgamation with the

universe or the other. Becoming-imperceptible is “becoming-every-other” (Hallberg, 1978: 86), a dissolution that enables integration with the multiplicities of the universe.

Multiplicity refers to the mutual connections of different orders and realities (Deleuze, 1991a: 38). Deleuze argues that the rhizome is a network “in which there would not be a fixed center or order so much as a multiplicity of expanding and overlapping connections” (cited in Colebrook, 2002: xix); thus, multiplicity is evaluated as an endless becoming that connects the decentralized parts, bodies, qualities, and quantities. Becoming is a transformation through the lines of flight within assemblages of multiplicities. The transversal relationships among the disparate multiplicities form assemblages.

2.2.4 Body without Organs (BwO)

BwO is a concept intricately connected to the notion of becoming in the Deleuzian corpus. Drawing upon Antonin Artaud, Deleuze and Guattari (2005:4) describe a BwO as a non-formed, non-stratified, non-organized body independent from all types of hierarchies. A BwO inevitably comes into existence within or adjacent to the stratified areas of institutions, and “it offers an alternative mode of being or experience (becoming)” (Message, 2005: 33). This alternative is a remedy for the various types of structuralist, hierarchical, arborescent forms of thought and social structures, including the State, family, and even proper language, though it does not mean a complete form of emancipation from stratified systems. A BwO must maintain some reference to these stratified systems unless it carries the risk of reterritorialization by these systems (Message, 2005: 3). In the social context, a BwO is a non-organized coalescence that offers a substitute for the traditional societal organizations and an assemblage near or within the organization. Hence, a BwO

rejects total unification, but allows for the rhizomatic assemblages of multiplicities; thus, it comprises an antidote to sedentary and traditional organizations. A BwO is, therefore, a medium for the nomadic act. This crucial concept is employed in the next three chapters to analyze the destratification and desegmentation of the milieus of the leading characters in *Kosmos*, *What's a Human*, *Anyway?*, and *Singing Woman* by Erdem.

2.2.5 Nomadism and The War Machine

Deleuze & Guattari (2005) define nomadic assemblages as “the war machine” which is a path for nomadism, free action, lines of flight, and mobility toward the State; in contrast, the State adheres to sedentary work, habit, and enslavement of desire. Against the dominance of the State, the war machine opposes the State. The nomadic act provides desire with elusion from the enslavement. Accordingly, the nomadic act is the way of building the war machine against the State. It is a molecular movement of desire against the prevalent molar entities which “allow the maximum extension of principles and powers” for Colebrook (2005: 181). In other words, the war machine transgresses the boundaries of the categorization, impediments, and definitions that create the codifications.

“The nomad has a territory” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 380) and lifestyle that exists outside of the State. They decentralize the center or convert the periphery into the center. Deleuzian scholar Gregory Blair (2019: 9) defines nomads as, unlike migrants, are the ones who “nevertheless stay in the same place and continually evade the codes of settled people”. Hence, they are always changing and becoming in the peripheries of society or among it by means of the continuous nomadic movement and resistance to the settled values. Thus, nomads pose a threat to the settled codes of the State.

Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 380-381) believe that the threatening aspect of nomads for the State is the possibility of decentralization of the center, the deterritorialization of sedentary values, on the grounds that they adhere to the in-betweenness, and “intermezzo” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 380). The lines of flight built by nomads against the social apparatus constitute an erosion of the codifications.

From a sociopolitical perspective, the lines of flight form the cracks against the normalization attempts of the status quo comprised of “the lines of force” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 160). Therefore, the lines of flight allow individuals to form assemblages and creative connections with other multiplicities, whereas the State endlessly attempts to capture deterritorialized desire to reterritorialize the fugitive of the system: the nomad. “Nothing is left outside the State” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 363); thus, the deterritorialization and reterritorialization constitute a ceaseless nature. The way to enact deterritorialization from the codes is de-oedipalization/asubjection.

2.2.6 Oedipalizing (Oedipalization/Subjectivity)

Oedipalization is the process of individuals to conform and internalize the sedentary codification of the State. Deleuze and Guattari (2000) define desire as a productive machine working similar to a factory. According to their definitions, a human is an assemblage of machines reproducing desire (Deleuze and Guattari, 2000: 1). The “desiring-machine” is productive in the social system since “there are no desiring-machines that exist outside the social machines” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2000: 340). In *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (2000), Deleuze and Guattari claim that desire is mutilated by psychoanalysis since it condemns the desire in nuclear family schema (mother, father, and child) by separating it from its social aspect. The Oedipus

complex yields a schema of the plane of absence for the desire. Thus, psychoanalysis is the apparatus of the capitalist State to compel desiring-machines to conform to the sedentary codifications of molar aggregates. Succinctly, psychoanalysis creates a process of subjectification in line with the social apparatus.

Deleuzian philosophy promotes the decentralization of fixed identities and essences; the subject is not given, but “it is always under construction” (Boundas, 2005: 268). Against the fluidity and flow of the subject, oedipalization functions as a molarization, stabilization, and codification machine. In other words, subjectification is the process of absorbing and conforming to the social apparatus’ sedentary codes that produce fixed identities.

Deleuze and Guattari delineate schizophrenics as the group of people whose desire is not condemned by the Oedipal complex; hence, their desire production is “situated at the limits of social production, the-decoded flows, at the limits of the codes and territorialities” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2000: 175-176). With their revolutionary lines of flight entirely constructed by free desire, “schizos” are the individuals “that turn against capitalism and slash into it” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 376). Thus, they have nothing to do with the identity, gender, or any classifications of sedentary codes. They are in the endless and creative flow of becoming with their uncontrollable nature of desire. Erdem applies this concept with variations in *Kosmos* and *Singing Women* by designating insane characters with paranormal abilities, which are interpreted as the representations of the liberated desire within the third and fifth chapters.

Becoming is the concept that builds rhizomatic thinking, and it bonds Deleuze’s ontology with his cinema theory. Deleuze (2001a) argues that objects are inseparable from their images. Nick Oberly (2003: para.2) states that “the atom, the human, the

eye, the brain” are “all images ... that network the universe of flowing matter”, according to Deleuze. The images are fluid, mobile, and in the process of becoming. Accordingly, a moving image is a multiplicity as the inseparable part of an object in the process of becoming; it firmly corresponds to the flow (Deleuze, 2001a: 58-59). In other words, image is a matter: “Everything is image ... Image of thing and thing itself are inseparable” (Ashton, 2006: 84). Image is almost the same as the object since an object comes into existence in human consciousness as in the form of images. Bergson (2005) evaluates matter as stable, snapshot-wise still images because first, human consciousness stabilizes the outer world for perceiving it, then, contributes to mobility through the memory. The immanence of movement in the image underlines the becoming of the image; the intrinsic movement transforms the image/matter to a movement-image. The time-image, on the other hand, is the image recreating time as infused with indivisible durational units. In order to evaluate the form of Erdem’s three movies, the next chapter overviews the Deleuzian image theory.

2.3 Deleuzian Cinema Theory: Image, Time, and Motion

The privileged position of Deleuze’s cinema theory roots in his elaboration of the moving image according to montage, time, and motion, which are the distinctive constituents of cinema from other art forms. Furthermore, Deleuze (1997) offers to analyze cinema with the ontology of images based on their historical and aesthetic accounts. Above all, he evaluates images as objects and multiplicities in a flow (Ashton, 2006: 107). Admittedly, his image theory bonds with the concept of becoming.

Deleuze assesses cinema as an apparatus of affect, which has an essential significance in his ethics and cinema theory. He classifies cinema as an apparatus of affect functioning through montage, which provides new sensory-motor links with the audience. Deleuzian affect is “nonconscious, asubjective or presubjective, asignifying, unqualified, and intensive”, whereas affection corresponds to emotion, which is “derivative, conscious”, and meaningful “to a constituted subject” (Massumi, 2002: 23-24). As stated by Deleuze (2001b: 140), affect is felt rather than understood. It is limitless and liminal, insofar as it poses a question, and results in an idea due to the fact that affect compels the mind to be confused. Thus, affect becomes a multiplicity when it makes inroads to ideas; that is to say, everything is a multiplicity if it incarnates an idea (Deleuze, 2001b: 182). In short, affect represents the intense, unconscious processes that are not strictly tied with the subjective perception; instead, it embraces individual, non-direct, and changeable psychological processes that come to the fore through the flow, alteration, transformation, and becoming. Accordingly, affect infringes the transcendental borders of fixed blocks, and becomes an apparatus of sparking thought. The augmenting influence of affect on the body is the intensity that equips the body toward the states of becoming. Affect represents the basics of ethics due to its flickering influence on thought and its mobilizing impact of transformative flow. Deleuze (2001b) defines affect as a passage into thought and exceeding the limit of the thinkable. Affect, in the last instance, becomes nothing but thought. It is, therefore, significant, insofar as it is a tool of flickering the thought, a thought of the unthinkable.

Deleuze (2001a: xvi; 215) puts emphasis on cinema since he thinks that cinema has the broadest potential both for “flickering brain, which creates loops” of thought with the movement-image and the sparkle of “unthought within thought” with the time-

image. According to Deleuze (1997), nooshocks, which are observable within the practices of the movement-image, are the apparatus that directly influences the affect mechanisms through planned shocking instants within the organized schema of editing. The nooshock technique is commonly employed during the period of the propaganda cinema, whereas, the privileged interval, conventionally employed within the time-image, has a connotative and proliferating approach on thinking mechanisms in order to generate affect. Hence, his image theory is distinguished mainly under the titles of the movement-image and the time-image regarding their applications of montage, their approaches to cuts, and their means of generating affect. This section overviews the two aforementioned main image taxonomies of Deleuze to evaluate the divergent cinematic applications of Erdem in his movies, *Kosmos*, *What's a Human*, *Anyway?*, and *Singing Women*.

2.3.1 The Movement-Image

Deleuzian image theory dynamizes the Bergsonian image theory. Whereas Bergson (2005) claims that consciousness perceives images as snapshots, and adds movement through their successions, Deleuze (1997: 9-11) tackles the matter as the image, analogous to Bergson, but with a suggestion of immanent movement into the image in line with the mobility of becoming. Ashton (2006: 84) argues that for Deleuze, image and thing are inseparable: “All of these ‘things’ are images, in and of themselves, nothing but ‘images’—overlapping, interacting, moving images, piled one upon the other, comprising the universe. In other words, all matter in the Kosmos is a flowing image. Image is also the movement-image as a result of the mobility and liminality of the multiplicities: “Cinema does not give us an image to which movement is added; it immediately gives us a movement-image” (Deleuze, 1997: 2). Deleuze uses

Bergson's approach to time⁴ to determine the essential differentiation between the movement-image and the time-image as well. According to Deleuze, the time-image constitutes durational, indivisible, and incalculable temporality; and provides a reproductive affect through aiming at individual time perception, whereas the movement-image approaches temporality as homogenous units; creates affect through the nooshocks between the successiveness of editing. In other words, the movement-image in cinema provides the transformative power of becoming through continuity editing.

The movement-image constitutes time through the succession of shots by applying the rational, planned linearity of continuity editing. It utterly interlaces with the heterogeneous, commensurable time statement of Bergson (2001). The time of the movement-image is produced by the succession; that is to say, "between the shot" (Goodwin, 1993: 174-175). The movement-image modifies the sensory-motor schema to produce the affect by the planned shocking instants—nooshocks—dispersed within the privileged intervals of a series of shots. Deleuze portrays the movement-image as the image of the direct messaging of propaganda cinema, which was influential between the early cinema period and the end of World War II (Huygens, 2007: para. 20). The direct affect constructed by nooshocks emerges from the recognition of the importance of montage in cinema. These targeted messages to influence and direct the masses are imposed by means of the nooshocks generated through designed, planned, and rational montage.

⁴ Henri Bergson (2001: 75-124) separates time into two different variations: heterogenous and homogenous time. The former is the mathematical, commensurable, scientific, clock time. The latter is the real, durational time of the individual. Homogenous time is an indivisible and incommensurable unified whole comprising incalculable durations. Thus, it is able to be perceived by incalculable durations. It is a qualitative multiplicity that can be depicted by images in the consciousness. The successiveness and continuity of the past, in fact, comprises a whole with the now. Thus, there are only unified durations grasped by stable images in consciousness and relative and subjective to each individual (Bergson, 146: 164-165).

Nooshock is Martin Heidegger's concept recontextualized by Deleuze by combining it with the concept of "the spiritual automaton" (Deleuze, 2000: 156). Heidegger thinks that man has the possibility of thinking by the exterior and outrageous influence of nooshocks; hence, he states that "what forces thinking is ... the shock: a nooshock" (cited in Deleuze, 1987: 152). Deleuze, with reference to Spinoza, evaluates the human as the spiritual automaton whose thinking mechanisms are in an autonomous and endless state of work. Automatic thinking is the circuit and the shared power which compels thinking and which thinks under a shock (Deleuze, 2000: 203). The cinema of the movement-image is the capacity and the power of communication by generating exterior resonances and ruptures within the schema of automatic thinking. Succinctly, the automatism of the sensory-motor links of the nervous system is disrupted by the nooshocks, and the disruptions give way to the constitution of new linkages for thought. Deleuze (1997: 156) states that "cinema was telling us: with me, with the movement-image, you can't escape the shock which arouses the thinker in you". Deleuze prioritizes cinema due to its power for propagating the thoughts, as "a medium wherein new forms of thoughts manifests itself for the first time" (Huygens, 2007: para.1). Concordantly, the decisive functionality of the movement-image is developing shocks that result in the construction of new, intermediary links in the sensory-motor schema. Through the prevailing conventions, such as planned cuts, linear plots, and continuity editing, the director/editor has a role in influencing the audience by the agency of planned, arranged nooshocks within the context of the movement-image. That is to say, the nooshocks break and reproduce sensory-motor links and make inroads to the continuum of generative thinking by the production of affect. Erdem chiefly applies continuity editing by combining it with the movement-image in *What's a Human*,

Anyway? with a differing approach to nooshocks in comparison with conventional practices, which are examined in the fourth chapter in detail.

Furthermore, Deleuze thinks that montage is a sort of construction targeting the human eye through the camera. By the same token, the movement-image generates affect in discrepant forms according to the different angles of the camera. Deleuze distinguishes the time-image from the movement-image because of the complete and autonomous structure of each shot. On the contrary, the cuts of the movement-image gain importance by the rhizomatic relationships with other shots; hence, camera movements become more critical. The classification of the movement-image, according to Deleuze (1997) follows a chronological order as “the perception-image”, “the affection-image”, and “the action-image” regarding the discovery of distinct usages of the camera since the beginning of cinema.

The perception-image mainly utilizes the point-of-view (PoV) shot but also challenges it by giving the camera and montage independent consciousness, which is a “point of view from another eye”, and point-of-view becomes “the purest vision of non-human eye” (Deleuze, 1997: 81). There is “a correlation between a perception-image and camera-consciousness” wherein the “camera becomes autonomous” (Deleuze, 1997: 74). Historically, the action-image is the latest emerged type that appeared with the development of American action cinema, and it unfolds the “material aspect of subjectivity” (Deleuze, 1997: 65). The action becomes prior, and it prioritizes the objectivity to some extent. It is an imagistic formulation that is close to the realism movement, particularly, influential in literature, owing to its objective approach to the reality in front of the camera, since action is prior to affection in the context of the action-image, Deleuze (1997: 123) writes that “the realism of the

action-image opposed the idealism of the affection-image”. The affection-image gives a semi-subjective reality in terms of the point of view of the camera, and concordantly, it is a transitional form between the perception-image and the action-image. The affection-image defines close-ups as faces, as well as faces as affection units. Deleuze (1997: 141) states that any multiplicity that demonstrates affect composes a sort of face: “There is no close-up of the face. The close-up is the face”. Deleuze segments a form of an image under the title of the affection-image: the impulse-image.

The impulse-image is the force of images as impression units obtained through repetitions. The repetition of the images cements the force of the impulse-image. Deleuze (1997: 124) underlines that a repetition of a gesture may unleash a compulsion, and repetition with minuscule differences may express the diversification from the original. The impulse-image fetishizes the images by dispersed repetitions; hence, it carries an exaggeration of affection (Deleuze, 1997: 123). The high affection owing to the fetishistic tension and balance between cuts create impulses rather than affection; thus, Deleuze (1997: 123-124) locates the impulse-image in the passage between affection and the action. The concepts of the affection-image and the impulse image will shed light on Erdem’s selected movies in which the repetition of close-ups is employed as montage sequences. Additionally, this chapter will demonstrate his cinematic form, which mainly performs a hybridization of the time-image merging it with the overlap of shocking instants produced through the series of close-ups produced by long takes.

2.3.2 The Time-Image

Deleuze coins a new conceptualization for the developing cinema aftermath of World War II, which creates a poetic cinematic language distinctive of the propaganda era in his second book of cinema books, *Cinema II: The Time-Image* (2001). After the beginning of Italian Neorealism (1943), European arthouse cinema appears with the applications of long takes that deal with time in pure states, as durational and irrational cuts, as well as wavering montage (Deleuze, 2001a: xvi-xvii). It is an image regime using false continuity wherein each cut betokens an entirety in itself. False continuity occurs when two shots are joined together in a narrative context and read as being part of the coherent stream of space, time, and action, even though the shots were taken at widely separate places and different times (Messaris, 1997). Succinctly, false continuity opens the space for the audience to unite the gaps of wavering editing. The privileged intervals located between the disconnected shots play the role of affect units of this aberrant montage form. Deleuze (2001a) defines this cinematic approach as the time-image.

The time-image diverges from the movement-image by its durational approach to time. Regarding the time classification of Bergson (2005), the duration is the individual time, which is indivisible, homogenous, unified, and the real time perceived solely by consciousness; conversely, heterogeneous time encapsulates the spatialized and commensurable durations which are invented to measure and standardize time. The time-image is an image regime formed by indivisible durations and is beyond the movement and space: "there are ... the time-images, ..., duration-images, ..., which are beyond movement" (Deleuze, 1997: 11). Correlatively, the long-durational cuts of the time-image are the images filled with time. The image of time is crystallized, namely "within the shot" (Goodwin, 1993: 176). The time-image is also entitled as "the crystal-image" by Deleuze (2001a: 275) to indicate the unified

aspect of duration since it comprises a temporal space in the consciousness with no distinction between past, present, and future. Whereas the movement-image constitutes time “indirectly and quantitatively through movement” of successions of shots (Huygens, 2007: para. 24), the time-image yields its sense of time per se. Each shot indicates an autonomy that integrates its own temporality. Auto-temporalization converts a cut to unified wholes; it bestows the opportunity of durational time reception to each individual. Gaps and autonomy of the units constitute pure intensities which direct audiences to think “beyond the thought” and “the unthought within the thought” (Deleuze, 2001a: 278). Hence, the time-image bestows a sense of reinterpretation and reproduction of time, affect, and thought in each view.

The time-image leads to reinterpretable affect and thought due to the reproductive and subjective cinematic temporality of durations. The virtual characteristics of duration induce the individualistic perception of thought and understanding; therefore, the time-image becomes something independent from the director since the long-takes as durational whole form a self-contained and changeable image of time according to the perception of each individual. The temporality of the time-image is emancipated from space owing to the fact that the abstract structure of durations can only be perceived by consciousness. It is also independent of the movement because the movement is infused into the image by the variability of the time. Thus, the time-image is “an indirect image of time, the pure optical and sound image ... which has subordinated movement” (Deleuze, 2000: 22). The time-image operates by granting the viewer the opportunity to reinterpret the concealed thought, as well as the affection and to construct his own through the gaps obtained by wavering editing since the autonomy of the cuts opens gaps in the progressive line of the montage. These gaps result in detachment from the spatiotemporality. Through the disruption, the viewer is forced

to think beyond the thought. Thus, the time-image is “an image of thought ... acts as a kind of presupposition to thinking” (Huygens, 2007: para.4). In other words, the confrontation between standard time and individual duration compels the audience to re-think the propagated thoughts and build a new image of thought beyond the thought. Hence, the time-image is perpetually questioned by what is behind it. The variability and mutability of the durational approach, as well as the false continuity of the time-image yield subjective affect and thought. The autonomy of plans constitutes eclipses between cuts, within cuts, from which privileged intervals are derived from.

The time-image does not apply shocking instants to create affect, but it diffuses shocks among privileged intervals obtained by the gaps. The durational approach opens the space for not only reinterpretation but also the interstices between irrational transitions. These interstices become privileged intervals, which are implicit optical/sound eclipses. These intervals comprise the mutated nooshocks of the time-image, which are absorbed and scattered in the independence and interconnectedness of the editing for the production of more proliferating affect. Opposite to the nooshocks, affect is not formulated, organized, or imposed; the time-image bestows an open space for the viewer to infer the referential meaning, affection, and thought. Thus, the time-image “is a cinema of the seer and no longer of the agent” (Deleuze, 2000: 2). The impossibility of approaching the film with a single, unitarian meaning creates the perpetual transactions between image and audience, brain and screen, and builds endless chains of reproduction of affect between sensory-motor links (Huygens, 2007: 23). The privileged intervals stimulate affect on the sensory-motor schema by the dispersed and floating “shock wave ... which means we no longer say ‘I see’ or ‘I hear’, but ‘I feel’” (Deleuze, 2000: 158). The time-image serves as an affect apparatus in a preverbal and prelinguistic manner similar to the poetry, since

the shocks are indirect, dispersed, and reinterpretable. The time-image is the dominant aesthetical approach of Erdem with his fourth feature-length movie, *Times and Winds* (2006). As demonstrated in the third and fifth chapter, the Turkish auteur practices this imagistic approach with variations through the agitating, emotive, and interrupting montage sequences.

2.4 Conclusion

The framework of this chapter is an overview of a course of Deleuze's concepts and the relationships between them in alignment with the objectives of this research: the demonstration of the association between the form and the content of Erdem's selected movies according to Deleuzian theory. Hence, this theoretical chapter first scrutinizes a series of Deleuzian concepts formed around becoming; then, it covers the Deleuze-Guattarian image theory through underlining the ties with his ontology. Overall, the chapter overviews the consistent methodology of Deleuzian philosophy. Beginning with the next section, the concepts explained in this chapter are employed to decipher the cinema of Erdem holistically by accentuating the affiliation between its form and content. Within this scope, the next chapter analyzes *Kosmos*, the sixth feature film of Erdem, within the context of form and narrative by primarily drawing upon the concept of becoming-animal.

CHAPTER III

BECOMING-ANIMAL BETWEEN NARRATIVE AND FORM:

BECOMING-KOSMOS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter analyzes the application of the concept of becoming-animal to both narrative and form in Erdem's sixth feature film, *Kosmos*. Accordingly, the chapter is divided into two subsections: the first one explores the narrative according to the concept of becoming-animal and the communicative ability provided by this state of being, the zone of indiscernibility between the human and animal, becoming-imperceptible, and becoming-animal against the segmentation of the society, while the second section discusses the form in dialogue with the time-image and impulse-image. The impulse-image is examined as *the becoming-animal of montage*. The narrative is analyzed by focusing upon the leading namesake role with the movie *Kosmos* (Sermet Yeşil).

Kosmos is one of the most idiosyncratic and complex characters of Erdem's oeuvre. He is a lunatic with supernatural powers. Erdem grants him a healing ability that accentuates his molecularity, which is widely elaborated as this chapter progresses. His diet is comprised of drinking tea and eating sugar. He is never seen sleeping, and

rather than staying at the place provided by the father of the boy whose life he saved, Yahya (Hakan Altuntaş), Kosmos prefers to climb tree holes to stay without any permanent residence. He can even fly or move swiftly in a paranormal way. Sometimes, he communicates with people through inarticulate noises and often talks like an orator. During the introduction of the movie, he migrates to a timeless border town where there is a war nearby. The movie commences with Kosmos' escape from something or someone while he is crying. Analogous to the successor films—in almost all of his oeuvre, except *Run for Money* and *What's a Human, Anyway?*—the leading character departs from his habitat and arrives as a stranger in the new town. Kosmos struggles with the sedentary codes due to his aberrant characteristics. He is indifferent to work, settlement, and nourishment. He steals money, but not only for himself; he collects it for indigent people. His interest in women, including the saved child's older sister, Neptune (Türkü Turan) annoys the townspeople. Kosmos is a usual suspect for the State since he does not even have an ID card. He sustains his life by minimizing his needs except for one thing: he frankly relates his search for love, which makes the townspeople outraged by him. His strange features startle the townspeople despite his healing power confuses them; his outsider aspects cause them to take action against him. Concordantly, Kosmos is outside of recognizable identities, settled life, and sedentary values; the townspeople do not know what to do with him. Nonetheless, the supernatural features of Kosmos, along with his transformation, desire, and his ability for the destratification of society enable the movie to be explored via Deleuzian concepts of deterritorialization, segmentation, becoming-animal, and becoming-imperceptible.

The chapter also assesses the form of *Kosmos* as shaped around the close-ups of the impulse image. Recurrent montage sequences of close-ups carry crucial importance

both for content and form in Erdem's cinema. Erdem uses repetitive montage sequences composed of close-ups in a multifaceted approach in *Kosmos*. This chapter looks at how Erdem shapes the time-image according to his thematic approach. Erdem uses repetitive close-ups by dismantling the face through underlining face units exert a more powerful influence than affection and also utilizes them in order to underline the zone of indiscernibility between the human and animal to convert his editing to the becoming-animal of montage. Within this scope, the following section discusses the concept of becoming-animal employed in *Kosmos* with an integrated method through analyzing content and form by the same aforementioned concept.

3.2 Becoming-Animal in Narrative

3.2.1 Man, Animal, and Flesh

Deleuze discusses the parallels between the concept of becoming-animal and face/head distinction within his monograph on Francis Bacon, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (2004). In this book, Deleuze (2004: 20-21) indicates that the "head is dependent upon the body", even if the head is "the culmination" of its body; and it displays the animal spirit even if it is hidden by the face. The face betokens the man/animal distinction since it is thought of as a decisive factor for the human: "Although the head, even the human head, is not necessarily a face, the face is produced in humanity" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 170). Correlatively, Deleuze (2004: 26) stresses the head rather than face: "The head dismantles its face ... the meat is itself the head; the head becomes nonlocalized power of the meat". Overall, the head is not only an extension of the body, but it signifies a nonorganized part, which is the meat. Contrary to the face, the flesh is the common zone which is shared by animal and human; therefore, Deleuze (2004: 21) calls the meat "the zone of indiscernibility".

Kosmos discusses the indistinction—the dissolution of boundaries between man and animal. Erdem displays animals with unique and peculiar characteristics similar to humans. Throughout the movie, he recurrently dismantles the units of animal faces by a series of extreme close-ups in dialogue with Deleuze's (2004: 20) thought on face: "Face is a structured, spatial organization". Erdem exceptionally employs the close-ups of the animal eyes to display their emotions as human characters of the movie. Also, the sudden transitions from characters' faces to animal faces evoke the idea of the commonality between living things. For instance, after displaying Neptune's face, he cuts to the face of a horse, which remarkably breaks the fourth wall by looking directly at the camera. Within this context, Erdem converts the face to a zone of undecidability between man and animal through montage sequences.

Using the montage sequences in this plane is the peculiar approach of Erdem to utter the inseparable affinity between man and animal. Erdem prefers zooming into the face parts, such as eyes, lips, jaw, and nose, rather than the meat. Through the agitating influence of the sound of the ongoing war on the borders of the town and the extreme close-ups on the animal faces, it is conveyed to the audience that animals also have a psychology that suffers from the cruel atmosphere of the battle. He usually cuts to the eyes of people after displaying the eyes of the same ox or horse he employs throughout the movie. Moreover, the sorrowful eyes and faces of animals are primarily juxtaposed before and/or after highly dramatic sequences. In the introduction sequence, Kosmos saves Neptune's drowning younger brother, and he lays half-stunned, which is typical when he works miracles. Then, Erdem cuts to the eye of a horse endured with a dramatic background melody. These juxtapositions also act as references to the indiscernible but approximate plane between man and animal. To exemplify, a shot of a shaky handheld camera that follows an escaping goose

repetitively overlaps with the cuts demonstrating the sad faces of townspeople. Furthermore, he displays a fight among four brothers after he cuts to a dogfight. Montage sequences overlapping the grappling wolves, curvetting horses, close-ups on the eyes of a horse and an ox with human faces signal the liminal zone between man and animal. The discontent of ill, weak, neglected people living among military vehicles due to nearby combat is represented by the agency of the close-up shots of animal eyes and their stampedes with annoying sounds. These transitions carry out two functions: they disperse into the movie to empower the affect of the previous cut, while also independently performing the zone of proximity and undecidability between human and animal.

Deleuze values this proximity as a means of escape from all subjectivity and identity-based borders. The anthropocentrism's human-oriented view—which categorizes binary oppositions such as mind/body, human/animal, animate/inanimate, and self/other—is the one aspect that Deleuze objects to in his texts. The meat is the “corporeal material” (Deleuze, 2004: 22) that accentuates the zone of indiscernibility between the human and animal. Correlatively, Deleuze (2004: 23; 22) accentuates the meat as a shared zone to break the discrimination and differentiation, and it is the common and “nonorganized zone”, a “zone of indiscernibility” between human and animal.

Although Erdem often uses face parts in *Kosmos*, he accentuates this intermediary zone by displaying flesh through a butcher character working in slaughterhouse Yahya. The close-ups which zoom into flesh in this workplace display the “indiscernible zone of proximity” shared by human and animal (Deleuze & Guattari, 2007: 293). This affinity is also demonstrated by *the topological zone* of shared

proximity; in other words, by the life of animal and man together in town. In compliance with displaying affinity, Kosmos talks about the cruelty of humans against animals while underlining the similarity of their fate: “What they (animals) are exposed to is due to man ... , since there is malignancy instead of justice. What they are exposed to is the same as humans. How an animal dies, a human dies in the same way” (Erdem, 2009).

The zone of indiscernibility or undecidability is the zone of becoming-animal. It yields the passage between the animal and human. Becoming-animal is a transgression of boundaries of humanity toward animality. This passage may grant humans the possibility to form assemblages by a variety of expressions as in the Gregor Samsa example. As Deleuze and Guattari (1986:13) state in *Kafka Toward a Minor Literature* (1986), it is a zone of intensity and enjoyment as Gregor Samsa experiences when he is “becoming-insect” in *The Metamorphosis* (2009a). Deleuze and Guattari (1986) expand this thought, and they posit that Kafka himself encounters the states of becoming-animal through his animal stories and the transgression of the boundaries of the language. As Deleuze and Guattari (2005) underline for Kafka, Erdem illustrates the potentiality of becoming-animal by broadening the limits of language and expression in his characters.

3.2.2 Becoming-Expression through Becoming-Animal

Deleuze and Guattari (2005) state that language, enunciation, and articulation are essential in forging hierarchical stratification. According to them, the basis of the language is the order-statement system that yields territoriality of the assemblages. In other words, they (2005: 378) think that the expressions of territorialization are composed through incorporeal enunciation, acts, and statements that can be deformed

by disarticulated communication. Within this context, the form of territorialization embraces the assemblages of human and nonhuman bodies, actions, and reactions. (Wise & Slack, 2014). Hence, Deleuze and Guattari (1986: 82) astutely indicate Kafka's capability of forming "collective assemblages of enunciation" by writing novels. As a Jew living in Prague who writes in German, Kafka constructs a method for "minor literature", since he pushes the limits of the potentialities of language and expression through his characters (Deleuze & Guattari, 1986). For instance, becoming-insect of Gregor Samsa is "a mournful whining that carries along with the voice and blurs the resonance of words", and Josef K. of *The Trial* (2009b) is "overrun by a polyvocality of desire" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1986: 13; 4). Concordantly, Kafka's work is the deterritorialization of the molar stratification by forming nomadic assemblages outside the territorialization. In other words, nomadic assemblages deterritorialize societies by the transgression of the order-statement form of expression. As in the quintessential Kafka example, Kosmos dismantle the strata in society through their communicative ability, which they produce through becoming-animal.

Becoming-animal enhances the possibilities and opportunities of the human, as demonstrated in Kosmos and Neptune's communication. Their communication is beyond the language, which is comprised of birdsongs, screams, deep breaths, howling, and snuffing akin to dogs. They scream birdsongs to each other, and the audience can effortlessly grasp that there is a love affair between the two. However, their behavior does not display a form of imitation. They only scream analogous to birds with human voices. It is not a birdsong, but a way to call each other. Their inarticulated voices are an apparatus to intensify the communication. For instance, when Kosmos calls Neptune with a bird-like voice, Neptune can understand that it is

him from tens of meters. It is a sort of communication style, combining animality and humanity in a manner that dissolves the boundaries between them. The viewers witness a more profound relationship than verbal communication. Their communication is the mutative desire that transmits over bodies. The animal becomings of both characters do not end by the process of becoming-bird; instead, they are in the various states of becoming-animal.

Erdem varies the illustrations of becoming-animal by forming different blocks of human-animal contemplation within the sequence that displays the encounter of Kosmos and Neptune at the apartment of Kosmos. When their eyes meet, they run to each other grappling as dogs and twittering similar to birds. There is no conversation, but only bird-like singing voices and breathing as dogs. Erdem prefers to demonstrate becoming-animal by embodiments as he directly refers to the core of the concept throughout the movie. His preference can be considered as an afford to highlight the concept. For instance, he grants animal abilities to his characters by the employment of flying. Kosmos draws lines, which make his and Neptune foot look like talons. Then, a sense of flight or abnormally rapid movement of Kosmos is conveyed to the audience. It can be said that the transgression of humanity is signified through this supernatural ability. Within this context, it is an illustration of becoming-animal becoming through the extension of the ability of movement and flying. Kosmos can be interpreted as in the state of “inhumanity ... experienced in the body” and affinity with the “zone of the proximity of animal molecule” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 273; 275). Kosmos transgresses to a liminal zone between himself and the bird. A bird, a dog, or a human is a molar entity, whereas Kosmos is molecular in every single part of himself. The aspect of molecularity provides him with the formation of the alliance, as depicted in the unusual romantic relation between Kosmos and Neptune.

Their love affair constructs such a form of expression that establishes a “nonlocalizable relation” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 293) independent from topological borders or corporeal boundaries or the reaction of the bigoted society.



Figure 1.1 A picture from the movie, *Kosmos*, which displays Kosmos and Neptune as communicating through howling and birdsongs (Erdem, 2009).

The Deleuzian theory presumes an endless change in society by the agency of various alliances. In *Kosmos*’ first declaration of his love for Neptune with compliments to her in the coffee shop, Yahya stubs out his cigarette on *Kosmos*’ hands. The bigotry of Yahya alters—which can be interpreted as the influence of becoming of *Kosmos* resulted as Yahya’s deterritorialization—being demonstrated by his help *Kosmos* when he runs away from the soldiers. *Kosmos* influences Neptune, Yahya, and the teacher most remarkably throughout the movie. As in the case of *Kosmos* and Neptune, the hierarchical structure of the society is de-stratified and deterritorialized by the changeability and fluidity of the new connections; however, reterritorialization in the direction of sedentary codifications is a possibility in the continuous flow of change is displayed in the next section.

3.2.3 Fluidity through Love among the Segmentation of the Society

Assemblages are the constellation of plenty of heterogeneous bodies. These bodies are coded to build territoriality (Smith & Protevi, 2018: para. 59). The codification also composes the order, which results in stratification in the constellated body. Some bodies stay outside the assemblages due to the segmentation and strata. Because of “the incompatibilities and dissonances to ... the same world”, the outsider bodies live beyond the codifications and threaten the stratification through their nomadic lines of flight (Smith & Protevi, 2018: para. 12). These nomads have a potentiality to deterritorialize the territory due to their ability of destratification of the segmentation. These bodies are also able to material form of assemblages, including human, non-human, action, and reactions, which are outside of the codifications and order; therefore, they comprise lines of flight.

The segmentation operates through representing differences (Deleuze, 2001b: 57-71). Deleuze and Guattari (2000: 212-218) underline that—in modern states—segmentation is “arborified”, “concentric”, and “overcoding”; thus, they locate molecularity and the lines of flight against the rigid structure of segmentation. The assemblage of State “attempts to totalize all ... agencies in the society” (Nail, 2017: 30). Throughout *Kosmos*, the town has been voting on the decision about opening the customs and border gates for trading. People vastly remain hostile against the neighboring country due to the nationalist reflexes, although they know that a positive result on the permission for a mode of free transport is pertinent to their commercial interests. The apparatus exists as an anti-production-machine for social assemblages as in this example. Outside of the territory is anticipated as a danger against the possibility of the reterritorialization of the sedentary codes. Therefore, the State is a restriction mechanism against fluidity by creating vertical connections; that is to say, hierarchies among assemblages. Consequently, the hierarchical and territorial

structure immensely obstructs people from building transversal relations with the outsiders of the codifications. Kosmos transforms some of the members of the town by his nomadic lines of flight, grounding upon his emancipated desire.

Segmentation of the society is a line of force utilized by the social apparatus to keep the hegemony. It yields hierarchy and vertical relations. Concordantly, Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 208) define the human as the “segmentary animal” whose “life is spatially and socially segmented” through economic, identical differences, and so forth. Deleuze and Guattari (2003: 29) posit that Kafka’s letters “are a rhizome, a network, a spider’s web” to indicate the ability granted through being “infected” by the insect, and he manages to de-segment the segmentation of the society. Becoming-insect induces Kafka to find a “world of pure intensities”, “the benefit of an unformed matter of deterritorialized flux” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2003: 13). His novels are the passages of being an expression-machine; therefore, Kafka influences the people from various segments by the agency of the novel medium.

Kosmos breaks the statement-order chain of the language and society by his lines of flight. Kosmos’ emancipated flow of desire allows him to form linkages people in the discrepant segments of society, along with animals. Kosmos exceeds the stratifications of the society, and as Colebrook (2002: 138) states, he opens “doorway after doorway, of crossing space, or borrowing or playing” the animal. In short, he de-segments the segmentation. For instance, his relation with Neptune is based upon expressive ability, and thanks to this form of communication, Neptune is able to understand “it’s Kosmos” when she hears a bird-like scream. Yahya changes his hostility against him and allies him when he is running away from soldiers. His oration-wise speeches grab the attention of the entire people in the coffee shop. Erdem

symbolically depicts his character's molecular linkages. Kosmos forms a molecular linkage with the person he heals. His method for healing is a representation of molecularity. First, Kosmos finds the diseased part of the body. Then, he licks, inhales, and imbibes them until he is out of breath. Afterward, he begins to cough and spit simultaneously. It is as if he inhales something invisible as harmful molecules or particles from the body. Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 272) accentuate that becoming-animal results in a "plunge into becoming molecular". Thus, his method for healing is a representation of his access to the molecular level and becomings.

Deleuze and Guattari (2000) attach importance to people with schizophrenia since they think that schizos are the group of society who are not mutilated by the Oedipal complex and are ready to set their desire free on behalf of becomings. Concordantly, schizophrenia plays the role of deterritorialization, and deterritorialization provides de-individualization from the social apparatus. Within this context, love becomes the desires that provide fluidity with schizos release. Thus, Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 296) view love as a way of forming linkages: "Making love is not just becoming as one, or even two, but becoming as a hundred thousand. Desiring-machines or the nonhuman sex: not one or even two sexes, but n sexes". Kosmos is characterized as a traveler-dervish who is also named "majnoon" in the Eastern culture, which is an Arabic word used in Sufi terminology that defines the people who become insane because of their (divine) love. Within this scope, Kosmos comes to the fore as a character who is closest to schizophrenia in Erdem's oeuvre along with Esma of *Singing Women*.

The flow of Kosmos' becomings root in his potentiality of love. Love comprises the essential line of flight of Kosmos in his process of becomings. His desire to love

demonstrates the transformative power that gives the potentiality of transgressing the boundaries characterized by his identity and subjectivity. Kosmos does not belong to conservative morals in terms of his view of the sexual and romantic affair, and he does not repress himself in making love—which is an act in the direction of desire for him. Concordantly, he has sexual intercourse with the recently arrived teacher, which can be considered as a way of forming linkages. Subsequently, the long take that displays the teacher's staring at herself in the mirror underlines a reconciliation with her corporeality and symbolizes the acceptance of her desire. It means the de-codification of codes because she experiences a relationship in the direction of her desire transgressing the conservative codifications. It is a deterritorialization of sedentary territoriality for the teacher, which is achieved through her linkage with Kosmos.

Love is Kosmos' powerful desire that is forced to be blocked by sedentary codifications. Kosmos develops a love affair with Neptune through the expressive ability he achieves by becoming-animal. On the other hand, his curing ability symbolizes his love for others. He becomes infected and experiences significant pain in the process of cure; however, his love for people without discrimination prevails over the anguish. Nevertheless, his understanding of love is not only sexual intercourse but a desire he shares with all people who are in need. Kosmos defines the labor as a limitation for human: "In this world, there is nothing for humans except eating, drinking and making himself fulfilled by their pleasure through his labor" (Erdem, 2010). Thereupon, he is asked what he wants; he says one word: "Love" (Erdem, 2010). Townspeople in the coffee shop humiliate him by saying derogatorily: "He wants a bedfellow" (Erdem, 2009). Although he has been criticized by many of the townspeople, he maintains to make connections with both urban people, such as

the commander's sister-in-law, by bringing medications to her, and the rural, through his healing ability. Against the view that classifies him as insane, the crowds begin to follow him. However, he retains his autonomous nomadism and outside life. Moreover, through his ability of expression along with the healing capacity, he is easily able to persuade the xenophobic nationalists that he is a safe person, and includes them into the group that listens to his wise talks. However, the influence of Kosmos on the settled codification ends up with the reterritorialization of most of the townspeople. Nonetheless, becomings of Kosmos erode and deterritorialize the territorial codification of the State. As a nomad within the exterior territory of the codifications, Kosmos becomes a threat to the apparatus of capture. Hence, he faces problems with the townspeople and the State as time progress.

3.2.4 Imperceptibility and Asubjectification in the Strata of the Society

The State segments society through the hierarchical stratification and codification, mainly through subjectification process at the individual level. Deleuze and Guattari (2000: 213) compare the social apparatus to vultures: “the detached object” of the social apparatus “hovers over each subject”. It functions through “lines of stratification and sedimentation” (Deleuze, 1992:165). The atomization and sedimentation perform through identity and subjectivity, which are courses of adaptation to the social norms. In short, codification works through subjectification because the codification is mainly transferred to individuals in the course of subjectification. This process is an obstruction on becomings since it works as a continuous reterritorializing-machine for deterritorialization. Kosmos demonstrates signs of oscillation between deterritorialization and reterritorialization. For signifying the pendulum movement, Erdem plays with the names. Kosmos introduces himself as

Kosmos when he finds love—within the sequence that he encounters with Neptune. In the aftermath of Yahya's reaction against the declaration of his love for his daughter, this time, Kosmos introduces himself with his given name, Battal. Yahya's help and Neptune's becomings display the influence of the exteriority on the deterritorialization; nonetheless, recodification is best represented through the teacher. When he goes to the apartment of the teacher to hug her, the teacher accuses him of being immoral because of the former intercourse. In other words, Kosmos' deterritorializing influence ends up with the reterritorialization of the teacher. Even the family, whose child Kosmos heals, blames Kosmos soon after the first complication. Hence, Kosmos faces the obstacles of conservative, settled values; he never introduces himself as Kosmos again as an outcome of reterritorialization of the sedentary values. As a traveler who does not belong anywhere, he is an outlandish stranger for the people with whom he establishes transversal bonds; and likewise, for the State, he is first considered as a lunatic or a majnoon. He, later, becomes a suspect, not for his stealing but his anomalous lifestyle. Nonetheless, the war machine of Kosmos is not able to be entirely captured; however, the ostracization of the codification of apparatus compels him to depart from the town or the territory. Even so, he initializes the process of transformation of Neptune and Yahya through his influence on them, his molecular movement and his becomings do not achieve a mass/revolutionary-becoming but act as an initiator for a few people's courses of transformation and emancipation from sedentary codifications. In this case, the townspeople are not able to be in the state of absolute deterritorialization because absolute deterritorialization provides the intensity and liberation to the greatest extent, which is entitled as "asubjectification" in Deleuzian lexicon.

Becoming-imperceptible is a mode of asubjectivity that abandons individuality.

Within this scope, becoming-imperceptible is “the immanent end of becoming, its cosmic formula” and experiencing the transgression of self, and a state of becoming-other (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 278). Overall, the limit of the deterritorialization is asubjectification that results in the imperceptibility. Becoming-imperceptible converts an individual into a pure multiplicity of immanence that continuously forms assemblages with the other multiplicities. It is the limit of becoming, which implies a molecular level that grants the unification of self and the other.

Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 254) define the “abstract machine” as a state of molecularity that transforms itself into the interconnectedness and flow in all constituents along with the animate and inanimate multiplicities of the universe. It is a form of singularity that embraces whole multiplicities. In addition to his molecularity, which is represented by the healing ability, Kosmos becomes imperceptible, an abstract machine at the end of the movie. He becomes an abstract machine which is yet real and individual, but his pieces, molecules are entering into an infinity of interconnected relations. The name, Kosmos is most probably chosen deliberately, since his situation is an asubjectivity, which allows launching a transaction and amalgamation with the cosmos and its all molecular constituents.

As Rosi Braidotti (2006a) states, becoming-imperceptible is a process that extends the affective constraints at the expense of a paradoxical cost: “the death of the ego—understood as social identity” and an “impersonal death” (p. 155). As an outsider, Kosmos already has loose bonds with the societal codifications; then, he loses his ties with his social identification through his fuse with the animality. At the end of the movie, he moves beyond and dispossesses the thresholds of subjectivity and becomes

so imperceptible that he merges with the rest of the other. Becoming-imperceptible results in a state of pre-subjectivity to come into an anonymous impersonality, a mode of existence that saturates and combines every form of life into itself (Braidotti, 2006a, p. 155). Within this scope, Erdem first substantiates Kosmos' state of becoming-imperceptible through his healing ability, wherein Kosmos almost swallows the disease from the body of the patient, while inhaling the invisible ill portion. Throughout healing, he feels the anguish of the patients, perhaps swallowing their disease. It is depicted as if there is an invisible passage between Kosmos and the patient. After he licks and/or swallows the ill portions, he begins to cough and spit with so much pain that he cannot stand up from the place he falls for a while. His depersonalization grants him to blend with the diseased person, fusing with the torment and sensibility owing to the imperceptibility of his identity. Such a portrayal of healing embodies his becoming-other, becoming-everything/everybody by melting within the other's body, a mode of intense state of interconnectedness with the ill person. He becomes a form of imperceptible singularity that amalgamates with the other people within an anonymous configuration. Kosmos' integration with the cosmos through impersonalization is most deeply illustrated in the climax of the movie, at the final sequence.

Indeed, the final sequence is the epitomization of the embodiment of becoming-imperceptible. In this sequence, Kosmos tries to heal the garrison commander's ill sister—most probably, she has a disease in the spinal tap—when she comes to visit him to take painkillers. The commander bursts in on them just as Kosmos licks and inhales her back; hence, he thinks there is sexual intercourse between the two. In addition to that, Kosmos runs away. While he is running away from the commander, he begins to cry as in the introduction of the movie. At the same time, nature, with all

its constituents inaugurate to lament along with Kosmos: sounds of screaming doves, stampedes of bird herds, curvetting horses, and cut-ins and cut-outs to ducks flapping out reify Kosmos' assemblages with the other. As a representation of becoming-imperceptible, Erdem depicts Kosmos as imperceptible insofar as the Kosmos suffers from his torment. Kosmos obtains the molecular level where he transgresses to the zone of undecidability with the ill people, animals, and finally, with the cosmos. Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 279) underline that "making the world a becoming is" finding "one's proximities and zones of indiscernibility where the Cosmos becomes an abstract machine". Kosmos—his name when he manages to form the assemblage with his love, Neptune—deterritorializes himself from his subjectivity by becoming-animal. As a result, he de-individualizes his existence and achieves the limit of becoming-imperceptible. Hence, this chapter interprets this final sequence as a part that Kosmos becomes an inseparable part of the cosmos; the universe becomes for him a molecular plane wherein he can "saturate, eliminate, and put everything into" his body, as Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 280) portray for becoming-imperceptible.

As applied to the final sequence, Erdem employs the shocking instants of the impulse-images through repetitive juxtapositions of human and animal faces in montage sequences. These sequences have vital roles in terms of emotive propagation and underlining the (meta)narrative themes. Erdem predominantly dwells on the concept of becoming-animal and chiefly applies the montage of the impulse-image by making montage sequences crucial in *Kosmos*. The next section discusses the montage regime of the movie in dialogue with the narrative themes.

3.3 Dispersed Impulse-Images in the Framework of the Time-Image: Becoming-Animal of the Montage

The impulse-image targets the animalistic drives; hence, it is named as the becoming-animal of the montage (Deamer, 2016: 203). Erdem utilizes the wide plans and long durational-cuts used in European arthouse cinema except for the montage sequences. From this point of view, the aesthetic approach of Erdem displays a changeable and errant aspect with regard to the creation of the affect: it weds arranged and planned shocks of the movement-image with the long takes of the time-image.

Notwithstanding that his montage demonstrates the aspect of the time-image in the general framework of *Kosmos*, Erdem, in reality, practices the transition form of the movement-image embosomed in the long takes of time-image. This section evaluates the image regime of *Kosmos*, as the reinterpretation of the impulse-image and displays the ties between the form and narrative.

Erdem builds his form by using long takes with the exception of montage sequences, which are comprised of a series of close-ups. These montage sequences are composed of impulse-images that address pure feelings, such as “visceral sensations, felt resonations, intensities”, as well as impressions (Ashton, 2006: 126). These close-ups interrupt prevailing long takes. As a general approach throughout *Kosmos*, Erdem keeps the distance from his characters; thus, he does not prefer zooming into them. Through the long takes, he gives space for the characters. He even does not use close-ups during critical dialogues or significant lines such as orations by *Kosmos*. He prefers shooting the listener characters as the talker to display the listening characters’ reactions and affections. His camera swiftly goes through various tracking shots of walking characters to catch their tension. Erdem approaches his characters with a distance because he wants to demonstrate the affections of the whole scene, not just the character with the line.

In Deleuze's image theory, the impulse-image and the affection-image have many commonalities that Deleuze classifies as the impulse-image within the cluster of the affection-image; however, the impulse-image differs from the movement-image by its fetishistic and emotional repetitions of the close-ups of the faces. Deleuze (1997: 125) underlines that "the impulse-image is the presence of impulses in the derived world, and idols and fetishes, the representation of fragments". The other difference is the influence created by these fetish shots: "An impulse is not an affect, because it is an impression in the strongest sense and not an expression" and "the affection-image" is "powerless to make it felt" (Deleuze, 1997: 98). Alternatively, the impulse-image produces an advanced effect by addressing the impression rather than affection. Concordantly, Erdem converts the face or face units of the same plans of the animals as the fetish objects or idols of the movie through the dispersed repetitions of these series of shots.



Figure 1.2 Erdem employs the close-ups of an ox face and even a horse face situated in a sculpture (Erdem, 2009).

Erdem juxtaposes long takes with the series of short, extreme close-ups on faces within the montage sequences. In these sequences, he repetitively uses the following shot of an escaping goose and the shots displaying knocking out an ox. He overlaps these plans with the screams of birds and neighs of horses. Above all, the close-ups of the eyes of an ox and a horse are predominantly combined with the human faces, which are the most recurrent elements of varying montage sequences. Concordantly, he applies the impulse-image by means of faces. Deleuze (1997: 98; 123) astutely indicates that the “quality of power” of the impulse-image discloses the force of the cut per se and the cut to which it attributes. Indeed, Erdem’s fetishistic repetition of faces both enhances the effect of the previous plan and yields unexpected shifts of emotions or actions between plans.



Figure 1.3 The image of the same ox is demonstrated with blood on its face in the slaughterhouse (Erdem, 2009).

The montage sequences of *Kosmos* have an autonomy whose contents are independent of the flow of the script. They produce interventions that may result in episodic narration; however, Erdem negotiates it by both matching them with the previous sequences and referring to the meta-idea. These sequences have a function of transition between different actions. Therefore, the montage sequences are “not a mere intermediary, a place of transition, but poses a perfect consistency and autonomy” as Deleuze (1997: 123) states. Overall, these transitions are linkages

between two separate scenes; additionally, they have independent meanings and autonomous functions per se.



Figure 1.4 The cut that demonstrates the escape of a duck is utilized after a series of emotional sequences and as a match with human's, such as the commander's sister-in-law hobbling (Erdem, 2009).

Erdem mostly creates impulses by various juxtapositions of impressive, highly dramatic series of annoying facial shots with long takes to produce an explicit and implicit meaning. Except for their direct shocking meaning, these sequences connote the themes of the meta idea. Erdem repetitively demonstrates the units of the animal faces to bolster the affection of previous sequences. The empowerment of tension and affection is his explicit aim. Furthermore, he demonstrates human faces after displaying the eyes of an ox or horse to connote the human/animal affinity, a reference to the themes of the meta-idea. As another, the eyes of the animals displayed with an annoying sound underline the anguish and affliction of animals living along with humans. To set a different example, the transitions from human faces to animal eyes, or the shots focusing on the animal flesh in the slaughterhouse, remark the proximity of the living things. Other recurrent transition sequences, which encompass the stampede of a duck, the ox that is knocked out to be slaughtered, and the animal eyes displayed on their own become fetish objects by perseverant

repetitions. These sequences are interventions in the continuity of the plot. Vis-à-vis the conventional approach to nooshock, these repetitive sequences portray a pattern of autonomy and act as privileged intervals by their relatively long durations as well.

Erdem draws a pattern of the montage sequences that sway between nooshocks and privileged intervals. He explicitly creates a direct, annoying impression that plays a role as Deleuze (1997: 128-129) defines for the impulse-image: “takes possession through guile, but violently, of everything that it can in a given milieu if it can, to pass from one milieu to another” to produce affect. The montage sequences are the series of shots that grant *Kosmos* such passages of transformation between emotions.

Concordantly, these sections act as the affect units in the movie with their direct denotations to the impulses which demonstrate features of nooshocks through their emotional intensity: for instance, an ox forcibly is brought to a slaughterhouse with the annoying horse neigh in the background and fall on the ground of the same ox. However, these series of shots also display a euphemistic meaning as in the case of privileged intervals by connoting the unthought within the thought of the meta-idea and by their prolonged durations with the usage of slow-motion: the dissolution of the zone between the human and animal is one of these meta ideas. Hence, montage sequences can be both theorized as shocking instants that explicitly give the message for creating affect and act as the privileged intervals with their veiled meanings.

Deleuze (1997: 123) posits that the impulse-image is the naturalist approach of montage. Naturalism signifies becoming-animal within the context of form utilizing the direct and pure effect of impulses on the animalistic drives. Deleuze (1997: 203) states that the impulse-image provides priority to “all differentiation between the human and the animal”; these images are “the human animals” since the faces used in

the impulse-image yield a zone of indiscernibility between man and animal. Overall, this approach is explicated as becoming-animal of the montage, since impulsive reactions are common in animals and humans (Deamer, 2016: 203). The impulse-image is the actualization of becoming-animal in the form of editing.

Erdem finds a way to convey a sense more potent than affection, which is the impulse. It signifies the drives of instincts. In the case of *Kosmos*, the transitions between animal and human faces yield a zone of liminality that blurs the distinction between the two. The liminality is exercised by the indiscernibility obtained through the extreme close-ups between animal and human faces. In a movie that deals with the concept of becoming-animal, Erdem's extreme focus on animals more than humans in these sequences is not a coincidence. While addressing the consequences of human/animal duality, Erdem implies that animal faces are definitive organs as faces of humans. The liminality employed by the sequences is supported by these close-ups.

Erdem's preference for long takes through most of the movie contributes a peculiar approach to the impulse-image. Through the long takes, he creates a close regime to the time-image. However, he also utilizes the montage sequences as nooshocks by their violent, highly emotional forms. In contrast, he employs the slow motions to apply the montage sequences as long takes. Erdem is able to cement a distinct influence in the same montage sequence by displaying the aspect of nooshocks and the privileged intervals. His form in *Kosmos* draws upon an indiscernible aspect from the view of Deleuzian theory. Hence, Erdem's approach to montage sequences is the unique exposition of the impulse-image.

The montage of *Kosmos* demonstrates the liminality between the movement-image and the time-image; therefore, it is hard to classify it. Erdem disperses the affect in

some sequences appropriate to the privileged intervals and predominantly uses long takes. As Deleuze (2001a) underlines, the montage of time-image interrupts the chain of images by generating a gap between them. Erdem's montage is in accord with the wavering editing in some parts of the movie. However, these long and/or wavering plans are completed by sudden and violent facial close-ups that produce nooshocks. The long shots and wavering editing resemble the form of the European arthouse cinema, but his style of montage is predominantly successive in dialogue with the movement-image. The montage regime of *Kosmos* consequently displays an intermediary aspect that is closer to the approach of the movement-image.

Correlatively, I contend that *Kosmos* is primarily a refined reinterpretation of the impulse-image. Erdem's montage in *Kosmos* presents a passage between the movement-image and the time-image, but as a last resort, this chapter classifies *Kosmos* within the context of the movement-image. The pivotal point of this assertion is the influence of the montage sequences. Although some of these sequences are prolonged with slow motions—as employed in the privileged intervals—their function is to mobilize the audience with their tension, violence, and high emotion for creating affect. Within this context, Deleuze (1997) argues that the affection-image—and the impulse-image as depicted in the cluster of the affection-image by Deleuze and Guattari—is the closest form to the time-image. Within this context, Erdem utilizes impulse-images for the affect to protect the aesthetical unity in *Kosmos*, wherein he uses the time-image in most of the movie.

The montage sequences are utilized as impulse units rather than giving space to audiences to delve into the euphemistic meaning. The referential organization of montage sequences is ascribed to the meta-idea rather than producing gaps for the

unthinkable. These sequences do not generate reproductive and subjective meanings but serve for the reflection of the director's thoughts. They are not for the creation of thoughts of the unthinkable but for emphasizing the superordinate meanings of the plots. Although Erdem's application is perplexing and liminal in form from the viewpoint of Deleuzian theory, it becomes unequivocal when evaluating this application with the aim of montage sequences. Thus, this chapter posits that Erdem creates a peculiar form of the impulse-image by playing in the form of nooshocks. As a result, Erdem achieves the harmony between form and narrative through the application of the becoming-animal of the editing.

3.4 Conclusion

The sixth feature film of Erdem presents a complex narrative about the concept of becoming, essentially becoming-animal. First, *Kosmos* illustrates the fluid and transformative aspect of becoming by the agency of the leading role. The paranormal healing power of the character is interpreted as a peculiar embodiment of the molecularity in Deleuzian sense. It is demonstrated that Kosmos experiences various processes of becomings, and in the end, achieves becoming-imperceptible. The theme of becoming-animal also opens the paths for the reminders of the zone of indiscernibility between the human and animal, which is propagated to the audience through the montage sequences.

As pertinent to becomings, it is explored that Kosmos has a transformative influence on the townspeople, which is depicted through his changing influence on Neptune and Yahya. Concordantly, Kosmos has a deterritorializing impact as the consequences of his connections and his pursuit of love. To depict the potentiality of reterritorialization, Erdem subtly illustrates the over-codification of Kosmos through

playing with his character's name—by writing a line that Kosmos calls himself Battal after his encounters with sedentary and fixed codes. The narrative analysis also demonstrates that Erdem stresses the pendulum movement of decodification and recodification and completes his leading role's becomings by the distinct portrayal of asubjectification and imperceptibility.

As the thesis posits in the introduction chapter, Erdem uses Deleuzian montage techniques in his cinema. The versatile montage approach of Erdem in *Kosmos* displays the features of the Deleuzian impulse-image embedded in the extended plans of the time-image. Concordantly, this chapter reveals that his form depicts a liminal portrait between the movement-image and the time-image, yet it is one step closer to the movement-image. This liminality emphasizes the interventions of montage sequences, essentially the close-ups on the faces. Erdem practices extreme close-ups in the limit durations that allow the perception of these cuts both as the nooshocks and the privileged intervals. The liminality of the montage creates a zone of indiscernibility and undecidability of the form. Even so, this chapter still postulates the montage as the impulse-image—which is classified in the cluster of the movement-image by Deleuze (1997)—due to the aims of the usage of the montage sequences. Overall, this chapter posits that Erdem prioritizes the narrativization of the concept of becoming-animal; in accordance with the plot, he applies the aesthetics of the impulse-image: becoming-animal of the montage. The next chapter scrutinizes the narrative and form of Erdem's third feature film, *What's a Human, Anyway?*. It explores the movie mainly through the perspective of Deleuze and Guattari's becoming-child.

CHAPTER IV: DETERRITORIALIZING THE SELF: BECOMING-CHILD AGAINST THE OEDIPALIZATION THEATER

4.1 Introduction

Erdem has been interested in gender problems, since the beginning of his cinematic career. He depicts his male characters as malevolent, ne'er-do-well, grumpy, vulgar, and abusive in almost all his movies, most notably in *What's a Human, Anyway*, *Times and Winds*, *My Only Sunshine*, *Jin* (2013), *Singing Women*, and *Big Big World* (2016). The characters of these movies are overwhelmed with the roles of masculinity. One of Erdem's narrative fortes is the methods of depicting male characters castrated by their parents or suffering from their gender roles. These characters mainly overcome the obstacles by becoming-woman, child, and their liberating role against sedentary codifications, such as Ali and Zuhul's transformation in *Big Big World*. Ali in *What's a Human, Anyway?* is one of these characters. He is a 39-year-old taxi driver (Ali Düşenkalkar) staying with his father at an apartment wherein his neighbors, friends, and family live closely. He has an accident at the beginning of the movie and loses most of his memory.

Meanwhile, İpek (Şenay Gürler), who is Ali's neighbor and a pregnant widow, needs some money and sells her precious and beloved ring to a jeweler. Keten (Turgay Aydın), who displays an interest to İpek, buys the ring to give as a gift to her. Similar to Ali, the dominance of Keten's parent has vanquished him, and he cannot gain his freedom. He lives with his mother, Neriman (Işıl Yücesoy), and works as her apprentice. While Keten and Ali's stories form the basis of the plot, Aytekin (Aydoğan Oflu), who is looking for a way to obtain a medical report that demonstrates his unsuitability for military service, enters the story. On the other hand, little Çetin (Ozan Uygun) has been trying to escape circumcision. When Neriman notices that her money is stolen, Keten and Ali react against their parents.

Throughout the movie, Erdem narrativizes young male characters against masculinity and oedipalization. The concept of oedipalization is represented by the derogatory and judgmental parental figures, such as Rasih and Neriman. Ali, Keten, and Aytekin are depicted as the men who suffer under the pressure of male codes. Women are displayed with negative characteristics due to their expectations from the male characters in accordance with sedentary codes, even though femininity is promoted throughout Erdem's oeuvre. Aytekin vacillates between decodification and recodification, similar to the teacher character in *Kosmos*. The transformation of Ali due to the amnesia influences Keten and Ali begins to undergo the emancipation from codification, mainly observed through his reaction against sedentary codes and his new friendships. This chapter posits that the processual change of Ali and his influence on his milieu is grounded on becoming-child, beginning with his the deterritorializing impact of amnesia.

Becoming-child is the double-edged state of becomings. With a reference to Spinoza, Deleuze (2001b: 162-163) states that children are the group that depends on the highest degree of external causes; hence, they have underlying amenability. From the Deleuze-Guattarian point of view, becoming-child has “two poles: those of capacity and vulnerability” (Fancy, 2018: 560) owing to the idea that deterritorialization toward childish aspects works against the reterritorialization of the molar, adult codifications. Hence, becoming-child means oscillation between decodification and recodification. *What’s a Human, Anyway?* portrays this oscillating movement by its two male characters: Aytekin and Keten. Whereas Keten displays reluctance toward the masculinity and adult personification, Aytekin conforms to the male roles at the end. The young male characters frequently sway between deterritorialization and reterritorialization because of the pressure of the women and their parents, who expect them to stay in the territory of masculinity. Within this scope, the movie revolves around the situation of male characters who are condemned into the molarity of the oedipalization.

Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 293) define becoming as “being in no man’s land”. Ali breaks through it by the protection and emancipation that amnesia provides for him; he contributes his milieu to move from molar to molecular, emancipate from masculine codifications to a certain extent. Within this scope, Erdem’s usage of amnesia parallels with Deleuzian thought on deterritorialization: “Becoming is anti-memory. Memories always have a reterritorialization function” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 324). Ali experiences a deterritorialization and enters a state of becoming-child against the codes and expectations of molar masculinity. However, in varying degrees, the sedentary schema compels Ali, Keten, and Aytekin to sway between two poles: deterritorialization and reterritorialization, molecular and molar, becoming-

child and being a man. This chapter scrutinizes the pendulum movement of the characters by looking at it from the perspective of becoming-minoritarian, woman, and child against the molarity of masculinity. Then, it appraises the montage regime of *What's A Human, Anyway?* as the becoming-child of editing.

4.2 Oedipalization, Masculinity and Becoming-Child

4.2.1 Becoming against Masculinity

What's a Human, Anyway? deals with the masculinity of oedipalized identities and displays the various problematic issues related to the blocking aspect of the oedipalization of desire. The process of subjectification is grounded upon the Oedipal complex and constitutes fixed, molar subjectivities. As stated by Deleuze and Guattari (2005), the social function of the Oedipus complex draws the preliminary boundaries to desire. It is the initializer of subjectification in compliance with social codification. Deleuze (1992:162) propounds one of the elements of social apparatus as lines of subjectification. Within this scope, subjectification functions as the process of internalization of the codes of the social apparatus because “we belong to social apparatus and act with them” (Deleuze, 1992: 162). Fixed and stable subjects are the closure and mutilator of desire in line with the State since they are produced by sedentary codifications of prevailing social apparatus. In contrast, the nonorganized flow of desire grants the opportunity of new openings and various possibilities of becomings.

As Deleuze and Guattari (2000: 375) underline, “every unconscious libidinal investment is social and bear upon a socio-historical field”. Accordingly, all the male characters in *What's a Human, Anyway?* are depicted as people with missing dreams or in the state of escapism under the pressure of social demand for masculine roles. As

of this point, the scoffing attitude of Neriman and Rasih toward their children becomes conspicuous.

Ali's father, Rasih is a medical assistant who wants to be a physician, and his repressed unconscious drives are reflected in the form of hypochondriasis. He is critical of Ali since Ali does not conform to actualizing Rasih's ambitions on him; he often repeats: "I've always told you that you should have been a medical doctor" (Erdem, 2009). Neriman does not confer any responsibilities to Keten within the scope of the profession. Consequently, Ali and Keten portrait an escapist attitude against the demands of life. Furthermore, they do not respond to any expectations within the context of the adult and masculine roles, mainly demanded by the female characters. Even 7- or 8-year-old Çetin is depicted with his dread of male formulations by his fear of circumcision. His fear of circumcision can be also interpreted as an escape from the codifications of maturity since circumcision corresponds with being a grown-up in Turkish culture. Concordantly, the strict bonds of oedipalization to masculinity, which freeze the processual flux of identity, is a prominent problem in the movie. As Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 324) underline, "Memories always have a reterritorialization function", and Ali's deterritorialization by amnesia creates a line of flight against the molarity of codes, which is demonstrated through his reaction against parental authority and his developing relationships outside his milieu.

Erdem is critical of masculine roles and abusive parents throughout *What's a Human, Anyway?*. His characters, which suffer from the pressure of the codifications, are minoritarians in terms of their social roles. In the same vein, Deleuze-Guattarian becoming-minoritarian is rending from the major codifications of masculine identities

(Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 291). In *What's a Human, Anyway?*, Erdem depicts Ali, Keten, and Aytekin as personalities indifferent to manly roles. The pressure of the masculinity converts them into blocked and handicapped people who cannot find congruence between their ideal self and real self; however, they can also be thought of as being on the verge of becoming-minoritarian because of their reaction to the expected masculine roles. Their passive and escapist attitude toward masculinity is processed with the opening sequence of the movie.

In the introductory sequence, Erdem edits a montage sequence, including cuts derived from the question, “what’s a human, anyway?”. First, Erdem demonstrates the radiography of a man’s skeleton. After that, the voice-over of Rasih—stating that “men are divided into two”—is replied by Çetin, Aytekin, and Ali respectively as such: “the men who are circumcised and those one who aren’t”, “the man who did the military service, and who hasn’t, yet”, and “the men who lost their mother, and the ones who don’t remember their dad” (Erdem, 2004). During the sequence, shots of the running legs of Aytekin and Çetin are displayed as if they run away from something. The representations of masculinity, such as circumcision and military service are so crucial in Turkish society that the former is appraised as the initiation ceremony to the manliness, which is celebrated in almost the same way as weddings and the latter is considered as the last duty of a man which should be done before marriage. As demonstrated in the beginning, through their escape from masculine initiation ceremonies, Çetin, Aytekin, and Ali do not follow the roles of the social apparatus. Within this scope, they should be accepted as the minoritarians.

Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 291) assess man as the majority par excellence, whereas the other social groups refusing the roles of masculinity and animals are on the side of

the minoritarians. The majority represents the stability, hegemony, and immutableness in the Deleuzian lexicon. Concordantly, masculine roles are promoted by patriarchal capitalism. Within this scope, Ali can be positioned in the passage between being minoritarian and becoming-minoritarian after his accident. The amnesia, which represents the absolute deterritorialization from codifications, shakes his stable identity. Amnesia grants Ali the commencement of the process of dememorization and destabilization. In addition to the emancipation brought by amnesia, he is in the state of becoming-minoritarian by rejecting the male roles of society. Ali does not display a macho, assertive character; instead, he depicts a profoundly emotional, sensitive, and cooperative portrayal. Despite his soft personality, Ali begins to oppose Rasih's pressure vigorously after the onset of the amnesia. Moreover, his avoidance of masculine narrative results in collating with the other minoritarians, such as Ketan and Aytekin, Ali's avoidance of the molar masculine codes underlines that he deliberately wants to remain in the nonconformist and minoritarian lines. In the deterritorialized plane of amnesia, Ali continues to transgress the thresholds of becomings by becoming-woman and child.

The way to becoming-child passes through becoming-minoritarian and becoming-woman. Concordantly, becoming-minoritarian and becoming-woman are conjoined, since "becoming-woman inevitably affects men as much as women" (Deleuze and Guattari, 2005: 291). In a way, the subject in the process of becoming is always 'man,' but only when he enters a becoming-minoritarian, he leaves his major identity. Furthermore, becoming-minoritarian is "a process of ever-changing identities" and a state of "nomadicism", which "functions by way of destabilizing" and decentralizing the identity (Krebs, 2005: 47). In other words, masculine codes must be deterritorialized to initialize the becomings. The minoritarianism of Ali toward the

social apparatus flickers his mobility along with amnesia. After the accident, Ali becomes capable of displaying both passive and active reactions to his father's pressure. For instance, he does not react to him when Rasih wants his medications in one of his high blood pressure crises. Furthermore, his new friendships with Aytekin and Ümit signifies his new linkages. Within this scope, his incongruence with the masculine norms destabilizes his identity and his milieu codified by patriarchal values. He passes from molarity to molecularity and from being to becoming by the deterritorialization that amnesia provides to him as discussed in the following part.

4.2.2 De-Oedipalization and Asubjectification against the Social Apparatus

Deleuze and Guattari (2000: 36) define man as pure desire, psychoanalysis mutilates the revolutionary power of desire by oedipalization. Thus, oedipalization cannot be evaluated within the family schema, but it is a lifelong process applied through the social apparatus of the prevailing ideology. Rasih's derogatory manner to Ali is a result of his conforming to the codification, and it leads to the Oedipal mutilation on Ali. Due to Rasih's disparaging attitude, Ali depicts the portrait of a man who wants to escape from the responsibility of life, in particular, before the accident.

Ali begins to react against his father's pressure and looking for new lines of flight after the accident, and Keten accompanies Ali at the end of the movie. Rasih is competitive against his son in ruling the home. His aggression to Ali, even in simple, daily life issues, is a result of the attempt to compete with him. Ali does not respond to these calls. Keten has to tackle a worse situation. He works for his mother as a tailor. He has been exposed to humiliations and mobbing of Neriman. She oppresses Keten to keep as her servant. Rasih's pressure on Ali is not only an intrafamilial

problem; it is a reflection of the social foundations of masculinity and the ideology behind it. Accordingly, not only Rasih but also the female characters of the movie are aligned with the social apparatus. For instance, İpek (Şenay Gürler) suggests to Ali that a woman desires a man with a better profession when she notices his love for Ümit (Arzu Bazman). As Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 324) underlines, “memories always have a reterritorialization function”; and in alignment with this statement, Ali’s anti-memorization acts as a deterritorialization and Ali’s passive attitude to life changes soon after the accident. Nevertheless, Ali’s reaction against masculinity should not be considered as escaping to the childhood or nostalgia, but his passivity acts as a form of resistance, being in the states of becoming-minoritarian and becoming-woman after the car accident. He utilizes the amnesia as an apparatus to achieve new linkages and becomings. Ali’s minoritarianism provides him with releasing the desire by the form of becoming-child by the influence of amnesia.

4.2.3 Absolute Deterritorialization through Amnesia in the Path of Becoming-Child

The social apparatus imposes molarity, fixity, competition, and segmentarity, rather than cooperation regarding the capitalistic demands beginning with the inner chamber of the nuclear family (Deleuze & Guattari, 2000: 38-42). Hence, subjectivity should be asubjectified to obtain linkages, flow, and becomings. Deleuze (1992: 162) estimates becoming-minoritarian as the beginning point for deterritorialization. Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 507) underline that a multiplicity is to have “bonds between fuzzy aggregates, in other words, multiplicities of the rhizome” through deterritorialization. In short, deterritorialization ushers multiplicities in to emancipate from parental and molar codifications. Ali’s situation is the complete annihilation of memories, which embodies the deterritorialization of Ali, to the extent of not being

able to remember his father. In relation to Ali's childhood, Erdem writes a scene wherein Ali does not even know how to button his shirt, and İpek accentuates this situation: "You've become like a baby" (Erdem, 2004). Ali's mind becomes a *tabula rasa* where everything is new for him. Furthermore, Ali is in a transformation in the direction of the outsiders of society. It is his line of flight for making connections with the several groups of society, such as taxi drivers in the coffee shop and students, such as Ümit. Ali, who is not demonstrated with any friends, but always in his father's environment, later strikes up a friendship with Aytekin and becomes active in his relationships, such as by displaying his love for Ümit. His growing relationships with segments of society dovetail with a deterritorialization that prompts his becoming-child.

Becoming-child is a creative and productive way of becoming with its flow against socially-constructed roles such as gender and subjectification. However, the liminality of children is always under the threat of molar parental figures. As Anna Hickey-Moody (2013: 273) states, children "live on an affective level that is lost to most adults". Deleuze and Guattari (2005) believe that children are molecular beings who are subordinated to and territorialized by their parents. The nuclear family is the first group that the child is exposed to the hierarchy, along with fixed sexual roles. Among the members of the nuclear family, children are in the transformative process of becoming. Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 294) remind us that the "child coexists with us, in a zone of proximity, or a block of becoming, on a line of deterritorialization that carries us both". Within this scope, an adult is a molar child; concordantly, asubjectification encapsulates the playful molecularity of becoming-child.

The most explicit becoming of Ali undergoes, is becoming-child, and Erdem demonstrates it through Ali's longing to childhood along with his playful attitude. Ali's yearning for his childhood, displayed mainly at the beginning of the movie, signifies his later state of becoming-child. The plot unfolds the reason for Ali's accident as his distraction; he sees a red ball in a tree, which is the same color as the one he played with during his childhood and loses control of his car. As aforementioned, in the initial montage sequence, Ali defines himself as in the group of "people whose mother passed away" (Erdem, 2004). Thus, it is not surprising that the person he remembers first is İpek as an expectant mother. Moreover, Rasih's pressure on him increases his yearning for his childhood.

Becoming-child is not the situation of imitating a child or regression to this period; however, these signs can be taken into consideration as Erdem's messages for Ali's mental state. Although Erdem uses explicit references to the childhood period, Ali's processual changes implicitly infer the state of becoming-child. Ali's playfulness and joy for life are about the contemplation of his childhood. Analogous to a child, he tries to understand the world from the beginning; everything around him arouses a surprising curiosity. He reflects this frisky joy in his relationships. Above all, he emancipates from the role conceived for a 39-year-old man. Becoming-child in Ali is the inversion of the subjectification of maturity by connection with the childhood; in other words, a payoff within the impasse of Oedipalizing mutilation.

The capacity of children in transformation is integral since they are not castrated by the pressure of molar entities and have the productive power of fluidity to the broadest extent. Ali prevails over the parental pressure by the jubilant playfulness and curiosity of becoming-child. Even his hand becomes a toy for him that is displayed in the

montage sequence in which he discovers his body parts. When Ali first sees the crowd on a ferry after the onset of amnesia, he is astonished by the number of people and their body parts. Most importantly, he is emancipated from the expectations of masculinity, his subjectivity is destabilized, and begins to overcome the parental and masculine pressure. In another scene, his father requests him to bring his medication during an exaggerated hypochondriac crisis—which can be interpreted as a test to understand whether Ali still loves him and obeys some of Rasih’s orders; however, Ali continues to play with his hands. He is relieved from the paternal anxiety. In addition to social fluidity, joy, and playfulness, his transformative influence on Keten displays the revolutionary power of becoming-child.

The nomadic movements are anti-hierarchical constellations that search for the “intermezzo”s within a trajectory which endlessly mobilizes nomads (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 380). It has a revolutionary stand against sedentary codes and molarities as in the reaction of Ali and Keten against masculinity. It is apparent that Ali and Keten are not originally nomads like Kosmos. However, their behavior is pertinent to nomadic thinking after emancipation from masculine codifications, since they inaugurate to transgress the stable and institutionalized entities illustrated by their families throughout the movie. Their autonomous attitude against the problems beginning with Ali’s amnesia yields transformation in their milieus.

Through the nomadic influence of Ali, Keten displays the creative potentiality of becoming-child by releasing his desire, and by reacting against oedipalization. Keten, in most of the movie, is depicted as a dependent personality on his mother. Neriman is the employer of the Keten, but he has no rights, including receiving a wage. When it is said that Keten is a good tailor like his mother, Neriman objects by saying, “for

him, it will take a long time to be a good tailor.” (Erdem, 2004). Keten begins to display rebellious behavior, particularly on the issues about İpek, his love, and masculine codifications. Love becomes Keten’s nomadic war machine that explores an exterior territory indifferent to the parental limitation. Throughout the sequence where all the main characters are having dinner together, the conversation comes to the point of persuading Çetin to undergo circumcision. The butcher, Neriman, and İpek repeat the common discourse that relates circumcision with manliness: “you will be a man”. When İpek claims that circumcision is a simple and easy operation, Keten objects to the impositions of masculinity.

Similar to the state of Kosmos, the most potent line of flight for Keten is love that he does not care about reciprocity. In other words, his desire is only for desiring but not to be loved by İpek. As Stark (2012: 101) traces from Deleuze and Guattari, love “is a becoming only one” who is “no longer ... be anybody”, an overwhelming of subjectivity and personality. Love provides for giving the opportunity of deterritorializing the subjectivity, making it imperceptible as in the case of Kosmos; however, Keten focuses on the desire in its own right, and do not care about the interchange. Keten buys an expensive ring for İpek, and Ümit asks him whether the ring belongs to his girlfriend; he replies to her with “my beloved” (Erdem, 2004). Unlike Kosmos, his situation does not carry an aspect of imperceptibility, but for him, love is an apparatus of mobilization, joy, rebellion, and fluidity against oedipal subjectification and his mother. It is a way of turning back to a childhood in which his desire is not mutilated. Within this scope, Keten’s contemplation of the childhood period is not the demonstration of the attitude of a child, but a return to the flow of a desiring-machine by releasing from molar codifications.

The nomadic movement embraces the creativity of the lines of flight, which is covered by the relationship between Ali and Keten. Ali becomes the catalyst for becoming-child by the confiscation of the ring. First, he takes the ring and claims that it is an heirloom of his mother. Ali pushes the limits of Keten, which results in his rebellion against the molar blocks represented in the personality of his mother. Keten pursues his love; he takes the money which Neriman hid and buys the ring with which İpek is obsessed. Followingly, the last sequence summarizes the creative resistance of Keten and Ali against the Oedipal schema. Keten displays his reaction most harshly throughout the plot asserting that he has his share of that money because of his labor. Then, he begins to climb to the tower of a water cistern while yelling, “Mommy, I’m scared!”. Ali accompanies him: He also climbs to the top and starts to shout the same words. It is a way of overwhelming the fear and condemnation, a movement away from sedentary codes, which provide them with the dare in an environment where their mother and father are together along with the other characters of the movie.

However, as David Fancy (2018: 560) indicates, becoming-child is a vulnerable state of becomings; in other words, reterritorialization back to the codification may occur rapidly in comparison with the adults. *What’s a Human, Anyway?* utilizing the possibility of reterritorialization through the character of Aytekin. Aytekin is depicted as a man compelled to conform to the norms; nevertheless, he is altered by Ali. Aytekin works in an amusement park, a most probably intentional reminder of childhood by the auteur, and his biggest ambition is to receive a report officially accepting his unsuitability for military service. His effort is as childish as his general attitude during the movie. Although he is eager to embrace the codes of childhood, his environment expects male roles from him. For instance, when he talks about his fear of the military service, his girlfriend solaces him: “Don’t scare. You will be a man”

(Erdem, 2004). It cannot be asserted that Aytekin experiences a child becoming; however, even his escapism to childhood is pervasively attempted to be reterritorialized. As the movie progresses, he fails to receive an exoneration report, and he is enlisted for military service. He begins to serve the army; thereupon, he sends photos that indicate how he is a fearless, self-assured, and outstanding soldier. In this respect, the vulnerability of becomings, essentially becoming-child, against the reterritorialization of codification, is underlined by Aytekin—an oxymoron to the portrayal of Keten. The Aytekin's territorialization in masculinity also corresponds to the situation of corporeality within masculinity. In addition to masculinity, Erdem discusses other themes and meta-ideas through particularly in the montage sequences, which are analyzed through the next chapter.

4.3 Creation of the Becoming-Child of the Montage

4.3.1 Introduction

What's a Human, Anyway? is a milestone for Erdem's cinema, since he explores how he can create a diversifying whole through particularly montage sequences the first time in his oeuvre. Erdem plays with the time perception of the audience by the back and forth movement in time. He surprises the audience and forms nonlinear linkages between cuts through playing with cinematic time. While displaying future events, Erdem turns back to the past. He demonstrates Ali's treatment in the hospital about the thirtieth minute of the film after the accident at the beginning of the movie. Then, he cuts to Rasih's effort to remind Ali of the past. Concordantly, he plays with the time of the movement-image, as Deleuze writes (2001a: 29-30): "composition, the assemblage (agencement) of movement-images" are employed "as constituting an indirect image of time". These transitions entail various nonlinear assemblages between cuts. Moreover, the auteur creatively uses montage sequences to imply the

upcoming scenes. The quintessential example is the introductory montage sequence. This sequence relays the primary themes of the movie, including masculinity, human/animal binary, and character development. To illustrate, Erdem demonstrates the legs of a child escaping, and later it is unveiled that the plan is a shot of Çetin while he is running away from circumcision.

Additionally, Erdem uses the “sound bridge” montage form. Sound bridge montage is a conventionally applied method to refer to the upcoming scene by recording the sound of this part in the former frames (Beaver, 2015: 247–248). However, Erdem uses the method, unlike the prevailing usage. He even records the entire sound of the relatively long, upcoming sequence on the former sequence, or he juxtaposes the decisive sound of a distant scene with the currently playing plan to refer to later events. For instance, a donkey’s bray, which is repeated many times in various plans, is used as a cliffhanger for the following scene that reveals how the accident happened since the donkey and its bray are displayed near the crashed car in the upcoming plans. The productivity of the montage technique leads to a more derivative explication of the plot. Above all, the complete independence granted to the montage sequences dismantles the movie into its episodic parts, while protecting the collectivity and assemblage.

The montage applied in *What’s a Human, Anyway?* is a transgression of the limitations of continuity editing. The production of a collective, autonomous, episodic, nonlinear continuity is dissimilar from the direct, successive organizational schema of continuity editing. In addition to the nonlinear and episodic continuity, Erdem’s montage yields irrational gaps of disconnected spaces, “an unlocalizable relationship” of cuts, the unlinking and relinking of irrational intervals, as Rodowick

(1997: 50; 203) defines the time-image: entailing a “unity in multiplicity”. As Erdem disassembles the form, he embodies his themes within the narrative. For instance, he substantiates the form by dismantling the human body into its parts by his close-ups and displays what is under the skin with x-ray radiographs. While using the affection-image, he does not use the dismantling close-ups of faces, as Deleuze (1997) assumes; however, Erdem dismantles the body parts of characters by uncommon extreme close-ups in the same sequence with the accompaniment of a voice-over. For instance, Erdem juxtaposes various people’s body parts of people with Ali’s voice-over in a surprised tone, saying: “there are so many eyes, there are so many ears, ..., there are so many noses, teeth...” (Erdem, 2004). Erdem deconstructs and reconstructs Deleuze’s theory about the affection-image as he reinterprets the basic conventions of the continuity editing.

Within this scope, the first assertion of the section is that Erdem produces an approximating form to BwO in *What’s a Human, Anyway?* through the way, he approaches montage. BwO is opposition to formed, organized, and stratified bodies (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 159). The body, in this case, may articulate every hierarchical organization, including the human body. The BwO operates as a type of anarchic hierarchy-twister against the imposition of the organism that “forms, functions, bonds, dominant and hierarchized, organized transcendences” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2000: 8). Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 4) posit that a BwO “is continually dismantling the organism, causing asignifying particles or pure intensities to pass or circulate”. Accordingly, Erdem’s montage sequences encapsulating dismantling body parts are analyzed throughout this section.



Figure 2.1 Erdem juxtaposes different body parts in the same montage sequence (Erdem, 2004).



Figure 2.2 Erdem juxtaposes the legs of his characters, Çetin and Aytekin, with an x-ray image (Erdem, 2004).

Erdem attempts to construct the disorganization of the organism in the form through the montage and montage sequences he applied during *What's a Human, Anyway?*. Consequently, what Erdem constitutes is a BwO in film form by destroying the hierarchy between shots and narrative structure. The BwO presents an entire entity that has dynamic organs, “assuring continuous connections and transversal tie-ins” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 166). The montage sequences destabilize the classical linear editing of the movie by giving autonomy to these sections and making assemblages with other shots. Erdem forms nonlinear, even transversal relationships among the plans and time within a playful montage technique.

The second assertion of this section is that the montage style of the Erdem depicts a unique application of the affection-image. His approach should be identified as the “becoming-child of editing” in regard to the affinity between the impulse-image—which is called as the becoming-animal of the editing by Deamer (2016: 203)—and the affection-image. As Patricia Pisters (2003: 151) underlines, there is a closeness of the children’s world to the idea of becoming-animal. Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 14; 257) assess becoming-child as prioritizing fluidity, particularly like the notion of becoming-animal. In addition, they parallel the affinity between two notions of becoming through Sigmund Freud’s Little Hans⁵ case (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 257-265). Whereas Freud diagnoses Hans’s anxiety against horses as the castration anxiety, Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 257-265) posit that Little Hans does not have a disorder, but he is in the state of becoming-horse according to the philosophers. This affinity between two notions of becoming also reflects on the montage regimes appraised in the same cluster by Deleuze: the affection-image and the impulse-image.

If the impulse-image is classified as the becoming-animal of editing, I suggest classifying the affection-image as becoming-child of editing due to its fluid position. When Deleuze (1997: 88) defines the affection-image, he depicts a series of images close to the montage sequence: The affection-image “both a type of image and a component of all images”—which is a definition similar to the Erdem’s utilization of montage sequences. Despite that he uses conventions of the continuity editing throughout the movie, Erdem produces the becoming-child of montage since he creates a playful, fluid, and transformative method of the affection-image through montage sequences analogous to the desire’s fluid position in becoming-child.

⁵ Little Hans (Herbert Graf) was a five-year-old boy when Sigmund Freud diagnosed his fear of horses as a signifier of the castration anxiety and Oedipus complex. Freud utilized the situation of Little Hans for the development of his theory on infantile sexuality. Freud published a summary analysis of Little Hans in a paper entitled *Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-year-old Boy* (1909).

Concordantly, Erdem's montage in *What's a Human, Anyway?* illustrates a portrait of becoming-child due to his application of the affection-images through montage sequences into the linear editing. He creates playful and versatile interstices through these sequences and plays with the time perception of the audience while dismantling the unity of the form, which is elaborated in the next chapter.

4.3.2 Approximating a BwO in Montage

The becoming-child of montage portrays a unified assemblage, whereas it also attempts to produce a fluid organization of a BwO that dismantles the meaningful bodies into its parts and puts emphasis on divergent montage sequences. These montage sequences create an impression that is independent of the plot. When Deleuze and Guattari state that, Little Hans' issue is a becoming-animal rather than a discussion of an Oedipus complex, they underline that Little Hans puts no meaning on the organs according to their function, but considers them in an anorganismic way that elaborates them one by one independently (as cited in Pisters, 2003: 152). Along the lines of this statement, Erdem dismantles the organs of the continuity editing; he edits the movie closest to the form of BwO by deforming the entity and creates transversal linkages between "latitudes" and "longitudes" of shots with jumps in time by producing a dynamic unity. For instance, Erdem demonstrates the upcoming events of the plot in some parts of the movie, without implying by visual effects that it is a flashforward. Once, he displays Aytekin's medical examinations for the enlistment; then, he cuts to a plan where he is driving in İstanbul. After a while, Aytekin's letter from the military service is read with his voice-over. In short, Erdem plays with the narrative time and continuity by his creative approach to montage in *What's a Human, Anyway?*.

Vis-à-vis his oeuvre, the montage sequences that Erdem utilizes during the movie have almost complete independence and convert the form into a BwO within the limitations of the film form. Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 158) underline that “the organs are not its (the BwO’s) enemy, the enemy is the organism”. Erdem’s style of montage is not an entire dis-organism; however, it is an attempt to push the limits of the film form. The BwO is a limit; Erdem approaches the boundaries of the BwO through montage, whereby creating a whole while scattering it through the advanced autonomy of the montage sequences, as well as destroying the hierarchy between shots. For example, his montage sequences do not act as linking passages between two different plans. They also do not play the role of highly dramatic units that empower the influence of the preceding shot and the next shot, as in the case of *Kosmos*. The hierarchy between the montage sequences and the preceding/following shots is broken. Whereas these montage sequences are employed as supporters to the narrative and meta-idea among Erdem’s oeuvre, in *What’s Human, Anyway?*, these series of shots have almost complete independence within the continuity editing. Erdem creates transversal assemblages between cuts through scattering, dividing and cutting the movie in various parts through the interventions of montage sequences; thus, *What’s a Human, Anyway?* approximates the aspect of BwO. Although it protects its structure as a whole, as compared to a BwO, *What’s a Human, Anyway?* is pertinent to the concept of the BwO, since a BwO is against the organization of the organs but not linkages of them. The BwO does not refer to an organless existence but seeks for the assemblages of multiplicities. Erdem approaches such a coalescence by both giving independence to cuts and creating a cooperative association among them through montage.

4.3.3 Deconstruction and Reconstruction of Deleuzian Editing

Forms: Becoming Child of Editing

When considering the impulse-image as the becoming-animal of the montage, this chapter posits that the montage of *What's a Human, Anyway?* is the becoming-child of editing due to its playful reinterpretation of the affection-image, as well as the nonlinear and transversal montage. Erdem inverts the structure of the affection-image in the montage sequences and utilizes the form as the apparatus for the production of intervals and playing with the narrative time. Principally, Erdem frames his structure through the incoherent temporal gaps derived from nonlinear montage and its false continuity, which is achieved by his approach to the cinematic time. This editing technique creates an episodic narrative owing to the interruptions of the montage sequences.

The uniqueness of montage sequences converts *What's a Human, Anyway?* into a sample of becoming-child of editing. There are no repetitions of montage sequences in contrast with the usage of montage sequences in *Kosmos*. Each of these series of shots is created with different methods. For instance, in some of them, Erdem prefers voice-overs with a donkey bray and combines the plans of various people and a dog's foot. In the following section of this sequence, under the voice-over of Ali, he uses close-ups on various organs of the people in the crowd of the streets. In some of the montage sequences, he shoots Ali on his own, trying to sleep in the bed or in a sequence where he tries to understand the movement mechanism of his hands. Some of the montage sequences are edited by jump cuts and with cut-in and cut-out of the different characters. Most significantly, the flow of the montage sequences is fragmented by the plans which are pertinent to the continuity. The most important

parts about these sequences are their independent aspect from the continuity of the plot.



Figure 2.3 Ali discovers his hands. Erdem mostly uses jump cuts among the plans gathering the sequence (Erdem, 2004).

Erdem bestows almost complete independence to the montage sequences. The potentialities of the affection-image create an affect that is “outside of place-time coordinates, a singularity in its uniqueness and its ‘virtual relations’” (Deleuze, 1997: 147). In other words, the singularity of the images also brings forth the independence of the image and the affect it produces. The impulse-image is repetitive, fetishistic, and fragmentary, differing from the unique singularity of the affection-image. Erdem does not use a repetitive montage sequence in *What's a Human, Anyway?* contrary to *Kosmos*. Each montage sequence is unique and independent during the plot. *What's a Human, Anyway?* differentiates itself among Erdem's oeuvre by the entire independence of these series of shots. Substantiation of the meaning in the montage sequences supports the autonomy of these series of shots. Contrary to *Kosmos*, Erdem does not use montage sequences in *What's a Human, Anyway?* to bolster the influence of the previous cut or subsequent shots; however, the independence of these sequences sparks off the supportive themes and intensifies the motifs of the movie.

For instance, the answer to the question of “what’s a human, anyway?” is answered by Çetin as “people who are circumcised or are not circumcised” (Erdem, 2004).

The style of usage of the montage sequences allows Erdem to play with the constituents of the Deleuzian film theory. Whereas Erdem covers the impulse-image within the surface of the time-image in *Kosmos*, *What’s a Human, Anyway?* applies the classical continuity editing with a differentiated version of the affection-image. Erdem edits the emotive images, in a way that the audience can sedately watch because he prolongs the durations of cuts and records voice-overs on the sequences in order to prioritize the intellectual messages of these sequences along with the agitating functions. These shots also play the role the movie’s affect units by their annoying influence through the choices of images such as the close-ups on x-ray graphs and the flesh in the butcher’s shop. Accordingly, these shots are the reinterpretation of nooshocks of the affection-image, despite their durational similarity to the privileged intervals of the time-image. These series of shots do not target the affect mechanisms as compared to the application in the time-image whatsoever. Instead, these montage sequences are a rhetorical apparatus of the plot which transmits the thought in an explicit form. Erdem discusses the zone of indiscernibility between the human and animal, the relationship between control on body and masculinity, and the question of “what’s a human, anyway” in his style through these series of shots. Overall, like in the general approach in the movement-image, particularly in propaganda cinema, Erdem does not use the conventional form of nooshocks; instead, he transfers his thought through overt, dispersed, and divisive montage sequences within the successiveness of the continuity editing.

Erdem creates a multilinear and self-reflexive narrative by playing with the narrative time. His approach is differentiated from the time-image since his distortion of time is based on the back and forth movement in narrative continuity. He creates the privileged intervals through the jumps and produces multilinear linkages between shots. He destroys the narrative curiosity by foretelling the intervals of montage sequences. The montage sequences dispersed into the movie compose a form that folds onto itself. The self-reflexivity invites the audience to the playfulness of becoming-child. Erdem applies a whimsical formula in the sole comedy movie among his oeuvre by surprising the audience with the episodic, multilinear, frisky montage, and keeping the viewers posted as if the auteur is the oracle of his movie. From this point of view, the Turkish auteur constructs a form overlapping with the child becoming, since becoming-child is self-reflexive with its aspect of contemplation of the self with childhood. The back and forth movement of the plot is so sudden that the movie still surprises the audience, even if some of the cuts inform about the later developments of the script. It is the playfulness that is achieved by producing a montage form recurrently folding itself by the alterations in time. The frisky and joyful self-reflexivity brings the form and content together in the line of becoming-child.

In *What's a Human, Anyway?*, Erdem converts the montage sequences into a meta-image implying the subthemes of the movie, and it bestows on him the opportunity to re-interpret the affection-image. Throughout *What's a Human, Anyway?*, Erdem constitutes montage sequences as emotion units, as well as references to the meta-ideas of the movie. Vis-à-vis *Kosmos*, the montage sequences display an aspect that is more independent from the film, and the privileged intervals produced by the montage sequences are not dispersed for agitating the emotions of the former or

following series of cuts. Using this formulation, he accords with the necessities of nooshocks of the movement-image. However, the auteur undisputedly applies the continuity editing interfered by the affection-image throughout *What's a Human, Anyway?*; and this experimental approach initializes his distinctive approach to editing through the montage sequences.

Erdem uses agitative and emotive shots in the montage sequences, such as close-ups of x-rays and animal flesh. These series of shots are close to nooshocks in terms of content. Nooshocks are the instruments of supporting or directly referring to the themes and thought. According to the conventions and precedents, nooshocks are customarily used as emotional units that make inroads to thought. For instance, the mother who is shot in the eye while trying to protect her baby in Sergei Eisenstein's *The Battleship Potemkin* (1925) contains quintessential examples of nooshock, as stated by Deleuze (1997). It is a form of agitative propaganda (agitprop) against the Tsarist regime. Erdem uses relatively wild or highly emotive images, such as animal flesh, x-ray graphs, and escaping people, as well as animals pertinent to the conventions of the nooshock. However, these sequences do not carry intensive tension due to their extended temporality. It can be inferred that Erdem does not target emotions to produce thought, but he directly addresses the thematic messages, such as his view on the zone of indiscernibility between the human and animal. Erdem tacitly conveys his messages by wild or agitative sequences throughout *What's a Human, Anyway?*. For instance, the demonstration of the escaping legs of Aytekin with a voice-over mentioning the people who completed the military service directly displays the negative aspects of masculinity. In another section, overlapping Aytekin's legs with the running dog of Neriman is a reminder of the similarity between man and animal. Even though these sequences are emotionally influential,

they do not aim at agitative shocks. The content and messages of the montage sequences make *What's Human Anyway?* a diversified and aberrant approach to the continuity editing.

Erdem plays with the classical understanding of the affection-image by differentiating the nooshocks to the thought units; instead of an emotive and shocking part. He also utilizes the affection-image as an apparatus for playing with the linearity of continuity editing. His nooshocks resemble the privileged intervals of the time-image with the long duration of the cuts. Correspondingly, the montage sequences indicate complete, indivisible wholes due to their unified durational approach. However, contrary to the privileged intervals, these sequences do not create a derivative environment for thought with their direct messages. These series of juxtaposed images perforate the flow of the plot. By the montage sequences, he suddenly transgresses the classical narrativization and places overlapping cuts, such as mentioning the organs of a man, or his circumcision, or death. Erdem is not propagandist but is inclined to communicate with his audience, even directly. Thus, in *What's a Human, Anyway?*, Erdem connotes the meta-idea straightforwardly, instead of using meta-ideas as implicit and agitative propaganda tools for thoughts. Through demonstrating upcoming events, then resuming the narrative, such as he did in cutting to Aytekin's forthcoming military service, Erdem plays with time, not within the shot but with the abrupt, nonlinear connections between plans.

Erdem alters the temporal approach of the continuity editing by the montage sequences. Accordingly, he creates his hybrid regime by the reinterpretation of the Deleuzian theory. He consolidates dismantled affection-images through montage sequences in which the parts comprise larger wholes by the thoughts with which they

are infused. The dispersion of the movie with the autonomous interstices of ideas helps him to consolidate a disorganized montage. The approach to the time of the movement-image is defined as “between the shot” by James Goodwin (1993: 174-176), which evokes the time perception of Chronos—the heterogeneous commensurability of time. Whereas the time of the image of *What’s a Human, Anyway?* is entirely congruent with heterogeneous time, Erdem finds a way to distort the time perception by recurrent abrupt and sudden transitions of dispersed montage sequences. These montage sequences are also a method to twist the time to build a false continuity that is contrary to the conventions of the movement-image. “Interstitial time” produced through multilinear editing creates a unique approach to false continuity editing. False continuity provided by the montage sequences gives Erdem the space to create a playful self-reflexivity.

Erdem deconstructs the basis of Deleuzian image taxonomies by hybridizing the conventions. Within the Deleuzian context, *What’s a Human, Anyway?* intermingles the continuity editing with the affection-image. Thus, this chapter classifies the montage regime of *What’s a Human, Anyway?* as a reproductive application of the affection-image, since it embraces the prioritization of the close-ups within the framework of successive editing. Furthermore, *What’s a Human, Anyway?* is propounded as the becoming- child of editing owing to its playful, productive, and derivative flow achieved by the flexible reinterpretation of the affect apparatus of the two main Deleuzian image taxonomies.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter intends to study *What’s a Human, Anyway?* from the perspectives of oedipalization, masculinity, and transformation against the parental authority. This

chapter makes use of becomings, particularly becoming-child, as an apparatus to understand the narrative and editing approaches of *What's a Human, Anyway?*. As is common throughout Erdem's oeuvre, the movie depicts the male characters as problematic and frustrated personalities overwhelmed under masculine roles. However, dissimilar to his general approach, Erdem, for the first time, displays the female characters as also responsible for the problems due to their conformist expectations from male characters. The Turkish auteur characterizes young male characters as dependent and bewildered with their lives due to the results of oedipalization and masculine codifications, and this chapter makes use of the concept of becoming-child in order to demonstrate Erdem's characters' way of de-codification against masculinity.

This chapter argues that the amnesia of Ali is introduced as an initializer for the transformative process of himself and that of Keten; however, the potentiality of deterritorialization of his milieu is limited, like in *Kosmos*. Although Ali's desiring-machine fails to display a considerable influence on the characters he makes connections, there is an observable alteration in Keten's attitude. Ali and Keten owe their mobilization to deterritorialization and its enactor, love. Love provides them with the desire or emancipation of their desire from codifications. It is the catalyst for their paralyzed bodies devastated by manly roles. Concordantly, Aytekin is written as an antithesis to them who complies and conforms to the masculine roles. After he enters the military, he is demonstrated as internalizing the process of reterritorialization. Through the characters of Keten and Aytekin, Erdem compares being versus becoming, molarity versus molecularity, stability versus fluidity, and the double-edged characteristics of becoming-child: vulnerability and capacity.

This chapter argues that the form of this narrative is an inventive reinterpretation of the Deleuzian image theory. Erdem protects the within the shot temporal approach common in the movement-image; however, he plays with the time by abrupt overlaps, horizontal jumps. He juxtaposes the series of montage sequences that divide the flow of narrative as he did in *Kosmos*. In *What's a Human, Anyway?*, these montage sequences comprise affection-images, since they consist of the close-ups of emotion units; however, these series have a distinctive function from the affection-image. Erdem uses them predominantly as thought units serving the plot's meta-idea, unlike Deleuze's theory, which underlines the affection. Through examining the montage sequences, this chapter explores that Erdem also builds a form of BwO in the limitations of film form. This approach causes Erdem to become the oracle for his movie, who tells the upcoming developments of the plot.

As the second indication, this chapter posits that Erdem creates a form that reinterprets the classical continuity editing and the affection-image by pushing their boundaries. Thanks to the peculiar form, he joyfully plays with the montage and narrativization of his movie, which is the only film classified as a comedy in his oeuvre. Within this context, the playfulness, self-reflexivity, and affections provided by the montage regime's distinctive temporal and aesthetical approach spark off the idea of this chapter that entitles the form of *What's a Human, Anyway?* as a specimen of the becoming-child of editing.

CHAPTER V: BECOMING-WOMAN AND BECOMING- IMPERCEPTIBLE WITHIN THE METAFICTIONAL NARRATIVE

5.1 Introduction

Erdem's eight-feature film, *Singing Women* is predominantly interpreted by critics as the most unconventional, experimental, and eclectic movie in Erdem's oeuvre, which is also an arduous experiment for the audience as film critic Dennis Harvey (2013: para.1) from *Variety* states that "even die-hard fans of distinctive Turkish auteur Reha Erdem may find their patience stretched by this ponderous island-set tale". The film gathers plenty of themes and plot details: desperate men searching for relief with the female characters they harass and abuse, animals' fatal epidemic, masculinity, political references to the 1980 Coup D'état⁶ in Turkey, as well as time—which is directly discussed in the parts of the voice-over (Halit Ergenç)—and the destiny of humans. This chapter elaborates on this convoluted film focusing on the transformation of Adem and nomadic attitude of Esma from the perspective of

⁶ With the 1980 Coup D'état in Turkey, The Turkish Parliament was dissolved, the Constitution was revoked, all political parties were shut down and their assets were seized. The results were 650,000 people taken into custody, 230,000 people put on trial, 7,000 people demanded the death penalty; and 300 people died in prison, including 171 as a result of torture ("Turkey's 1980 Coup Facts", 2012).

Deleuze-Guattarian concepts of becoming-woman, becoming-imperceptible, and the Deleuzian view on masochism.

Singing Women is the story of a group of people living on an island which been evacuated because of an expected earthquake. Most recently, the horses on the island have been dying because of an epidemic. The last group of people living on the island consists of a bad-tempered affluent Mesut (Kevork Malikyan), his loyal maid Esma (Binnur Kaya), and the closest friend of Mesut, the elderly doctor (Vedat Erincin). Mesut's son, Adem (Philippe Arditti), develops a fatal disease. Later, Adem arrives at the island and wants help from his father. However, he is an idler, briber, and a crook who has ruined his marriage; thus, Mesut is very angry with him. Adem's flight-attendant wife, Hale (Aylin Aslım), who is on the verge of divorce, also comes to the island due to her husband's disease. Esma opens Mesut's door to a very young waif, Meryem (Deniz Hasgüler), and the doctor develops romantic feelings toward her. Meryem's abusive ex-husband (Tugay Mercan) enters into the story as another good-for-nothing and loafer male character, whereas the groom, who is the adoptive brother of Esma, Emin, the groom (Nebil Sayın), tries to heal the horses in the meanwhile.

Esma and Adem illustrate opposite poles in processual flows. Esma is depicted as a lunatic or female healer-dervish, like the leading role of *Kosmos*, and a seer talking about a disastrous future. Erdem reminds us of Jîn with Esma's red scarf, which is eminently analogous to *Little Red Riding Hood* walking in the forests with reflecting some of the features of *Kosmos*. Similar to *Kosmos*, Esma plays a miraculous role in *Singing Women* by resurrecting Adem after his death in the middle of the movie, yet unlike *Kosmos*, Erdem depicts Esma as a devoted and esoteric believer. Although Islamic esoterism is a common motif throughout the Turkish auteur's oeuvre, the

Sufistic approach to time and apocalypse in the voice-over's parables and Esma's prayers are so much prioritized for the first time as one of the primary themes of the movie. Moreover, he designs an almost black character first time among his oeuvre—which evolved to the white—with Adem for the first time. Hence, Adem is the climax of his negative masculine characters. Through this character, Erdem questions oedipalization and masculinity; and grants him an entire fluidity by deterritorialization. This chapter investigates his self-hatred behavior and alteration after his resurrection, according to Deleuze's view on masochism, Deleuze-Guattarian oedipalization, and becoming-imperceptible; furthermore, it scrutinizes Esma, Meryem, and Hale through making use of the concept of becoming-woman. After the narrative analysis, this chapter analyzes the editing technique according to essay film aesthetics and Deleuzian time-image.

5.2 Rebellious Resurrection against Molarity: The Prayer of Adem

5.2.1 Paternal Authority, Oedipalization, and Self-Hatred in Adem's Case

Erdem tackles the paternal authority again with *Singing Women* after *What's a Human, Anyway?*, *Times and Winds*, and *My Only Sunshine*. Patrilineal and patriarchal pressure, which is the result of the social apparatus and oedipalization in the Deleuzian lexicon, is a common theme in Erdem's oeuvre, including this movie. In one of his interviews, Erdem says that “we have experienced these negative conditions in Turkey, as a result of the men who cannot overthrow their fathers” (Bostan & Akyurt, 2010). Erdem depicts the results of oedipalization with the relationship between Mesut and Adem throughout *Singing Women*.

In contrast with his other movies dealing with masculinity issues, here he depicts a young character, the son of Mesut, Adem, as an evil and good-for-nothing person who bribes, cheats on his wife, and steals her jewelry. Moreover, Mesut is one of the most authoritarian and derogatory father figures in his filmography. For instance, when Esma voluntarily boils an herbal tea for Adem to cure him, Mesut shouts at his recently arrived, ill son to dictate the rules of the house. Nevertheless, his main aim is not to ensure the discipline in the home; it is instead a reminder of who is the ruler of the territory. Additionally, Mesut frequently yells at Adem, saying, “I am ashamed of you!” (Erdem, 2013). It can be considered that Mesut satisfies his sadistic drives through his son. This chapter expounds on the relationship between Mesut and Adem through sadomasochism.

Deleuze characterizes sadism in *Masochism: Coldness and Cruelty* (1991b:59) as the mimicry of the parental oppression: “the paternal and patriarchal theme undoubtedly predominates sadism”. As Mesut’s harsh behavior to Adem can be evaluated as sadistic, Adem’s ignominious and despicable attitude can be considered within the scope of sadomasochism. Deleuze (1991:22) contradicts the idea that reduces masochism into the enjoyment of pain, and he (1991:61) bonds masochism with the redistribution of paternal functions. Within this context, Adem’s disgraceful behavior is reversing Mesut’s behavior to himself and also reacting to him with his father’s attitude. For instance, Adem’s infamous act in his job can be interpreted as both taking acts of revenge on his father, who helped Adem to find a job, and a masochistic act seeking for a self-punishment. As Deleuze (1991) posits, masochism is the aberration of familial desire, which is deviated by oedipalization. Desire becomes an apparatus of self-punishment due to the pressure of social and familial tool in

masochism, as in Adem's case. Adem's deviated desire signifies his self-hatred as mimicry of his father's attitude.

Deleuze (1991: 91) astutely observes that masochism is parodied when reduced into enjoying torment and pain; it has complex and subtle meanings; and searches for the reasons of masochism. Deleuze (1991: 58-60) accentuates the role of authority figures such as mother and father in rebellious behavior and refers to Theodore Reik's (2011: p. 145) sentences: "The masochist exhibits the punishment but also its failure. He demonstrates his submission certainly, but he also shows his invisible rebellion, demonstrating that he gains pleasure, despite the discomfort". In other words, the rebellion exhibited at the expense of agony and discomfort is eminently pleasurable, since it is a way to release desire despite its wickedness. Within this scope, Adem's behavior in *Singing Women* is different from the prudent thefts of Kosmos, which are mainly collected for the indigent, because Adem displays an uncontrollable capability of desire. However, his desire is deviated and turns into an apparatus of punishment. In conjunction with his deviated attitude, Adem is designed in the framework of provocative, exaggerated, theatrical acting by Erdem. In such gesture and mimicry, he is depicted as participating in an intentionally offensive act against the external world and himself.

In *Singing Women*, oedipalization can be explained through the relationship between Adem and his father. Deleuze and Guattari (2000: 51) define oedipalization as "familialism" because they think that the molarity of family enslaves desire in alignment with social apparatus. Oedipalization is the reason for the problem of malignancy in Erdem's oeuvre as in *Singing Women*. Within this context, Adem's malice against his wife, his father, and his boss is a rebellious behavior against

parental acts; oedipalization and parental pressure result in self-hatred, and even masochistic behavior. Adem victimizes himself with the (self-)destructive behavior as mimicry of his father and a reaction to him. Nevertheless, his disease also becomes a way for him to confront his father. His confrontation is not limited to the familial schema; however, Adem also reacts against the other characters' conformism to the social apparatus after his resurrection.

In general, older male generations symbolize the majoritarian molarity in Erdem's movies; however, with *Singing Women*, Erdem depicts a character looking for revenge with Adem. However, his revenge is also toward himself and the characters demonstrating conformism to the social apparatus. As Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 106) state, "there is no becoming-majoritarian; the majority is never becoming". In other words, majoritarians carry fixed and molar features. In *Singing Women*, Erdem represents the molarity through Mesut and the doctor as in the group that represents stable identities. In this case, Adem has similarities with Kafka's Josef K., who is not able to find the exit in *The Trial* (1925) within a blockade; he searches for the lines of flight through self-destructive rebellion attacks.

5.2.2 Revolutionary-Becoming through Destructive Rebellion

Throughout his filmography, Erdem writes many malicious and criminal characters, including a rapist (*Jîn*), a thief (*Kosmos*), a smuggler (*My Only Sunshine*), and a guilty character who runs away from the crash after a fatal traffic accident (*Big Big World*). Among these characters, Adem is remarkable with his self-destruction that ensues his subsequent problematic actions: bribery, stealing his wife's jewelry—even if she always gives money to him—cheating on her, and so on. His malice only exists to cause harm—mainly, harm to himself. He acts as if he takes his revenge on his father,

but mostly, it is on himself. Despite its harshness, Mesut's criticism of him is similar to Rasih's of Ali; however, Adem displays odd and harmful reactions, unlike Ali. His attitude is complex and even masochistic within his ambivalence, displaying a reaction against authority figures, as well as directly against himself.

Adem displays the most sudden transformation in the movie. His malignancy against authority figures, such as his father and his boss, becomes a line of flight against authority, and it provides him with fluidity in the flow of becomings. Adem develops not only disobedience but also attacks the authority figures. For instance, he dresses up in his father's clothes and adds: "these clothes should be mine since my dad's death is expected to occur before me. However, I will die sooner; therefore, I'm using my right to the legacy" (Erdem, 2013). According to his concept of "carnavalesque", Mikhail Bakhtin (1984) states that antique carnivals have a function of reversing the authority through the mimicry of rulers. In Adem's example, there is a Bakhtinian parodic act decentralizing the center because it has a transformative behavior toward sedentary schemas, an act to threaten the power in line with Deleuze's (2006) emphasis on the ironic replay of the authority figure in masochism. Adem overthrows the authority figure, or even imitates the authority. He rejects the patriarchal dominance of manliness in a peculiar fashion. Adem's behavior against parental figures results in the destabilization of identities, which is noticeable in the transformation of Mesut later in the movie.

The self-destructive malignancy of Adem is the deviation of desire while searching for becomings, which can be evaluated through Deleuze and Guattari's (2005) views on addiction. As Atte Oksanen (2013: 57) deduces from Deleuze and Guattari, alcohol or drug addiction are used to enable the production and emancipation of desire

through altering and damaging the body. Adem ambivalently tries to overthrow the pressure due to the expectations on him, and also taking out the revenge on himself. The doctor and Mesut do not want to leave the island as a signifier of their molar authority since they do not want to lose their territory. Adem underlines the territoriality that assimilates him to the parental codifications when he reacts: “I said that I am the son of my father” (Erdem, 2013). In Adem’s situation, self-destructive behavior is a deviant method of releasing the desire against the blockade of the territory and its rulers. Adem displays the fluidity of his desire to some extent, despite its deviation. His reaction accentuates his search for the fluidity of his desire; however, it deviates into a malignant plane because of the pressure of the authority. From this standpoint, Adem’s disease is both a signifier of his misery and an initializer to the becomings. His disease can be interpreted as a line of flight, along with his torment, dispersed almost all of his cells. After the diagnosis, Adem’s molecular transformation in the Deleuzian lexicon begins. He goes back to his hometown and begins to confront his father. In other words, his disease becomes the initializer of his search for the reaction against and emancipation from authority.

Adem’s unknown disease can be considered as a metaphor for his asubjectification. The illness is the catalyst of the face-off with his father. During his illness, he also confronts his father as such: “Should a father behave like this?” or “Don’t worry. I won’t die at your house!” (Erdem, 2013). Furthermore, he accentuates his grieved childhood, prevailing ever with its all experiences: “I am so weak ... Childhood is akin to the sky. It is always right there” (Erdem: 2013). As the disease grows, his rebellious words correspond to the torment of his father: “I am a product of ... my dad ... I am full of wounds” (Erdem, 2013). Throughout the movie, no one tells what the disease is, and no valid treatment is applied, with the exception of some tests. But as

amnesia's role in *What's a Human, Anyway?*, this disease becomes a wake-up call for Adem to change and react appropriately. His death leads to a revolutionary transformation in Adem and molts for a new existence after death.

5.2.3 Resurrection for Becoming-Imperceptible

Despite that Deleuze-Guattarian concept of becoming-imperceptible is the limit of a processual flow, Erdem yields a revolutionary change in his character after his death. Adem swiftly arrives at the last stage of becomings, becoming-imperceptible, through a miraculous resurrection. If Adem's stand against the parental pressure is considered as his afford to emancipate the flow of desire, it can be posited that Erdem employs rebirth as an illustration of absolute deterritorialization, which is also signified by the agency of amnesia in *What's a Human, Anyway?*. As each day passes, Adem's health conditions go into freefall. Throughout the disease, he solidifies his reactions against the doctor and his father, whereas he feels intimate with Esma, Hale, and Meryem, who are demonstrated as the victims of male violence throughout the movie. After he completes his face-off, he suddenly dies. As Kosmos does to the patients, Esma holds Adem and shakes him. She faints, when Adem resurrects.

Erdem does not follow the Deleuzian steps of becomings by the miracle of resurrection; however, this resurrection can be characterized as an absolute deterritorialization, which leads to becoming-imperceptible. After the resurrection, Adem underlines his relief and depicts an entirely different portray: "I feel like freed from tones of burden" (Erdem, 2013). During the short period he lives after the resurrection, he completely immerses in one thing: the other's misery. As Braidotti (2006a: 155) states, becoming-imperceptible is a process that extends the affective constraints at the expense of a paradoxical cost: "the death of the ego—understood as

social identity”. It is pushing the limit of the intensity of becomings by converting the body into a BwO, a disorganized, asubjectified, and impersonal state. It is a mode of becoming at the edge that erases the distinction of the self and others within a sense of “becoming-everybody/everything, making the world a becoming” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 280). If we consider his death as a bodily signifier of his imperceptibility, his attitude after death becomes crystal clear. After the resurrection, Adem becomes in a state of intensity, which converts him into having a compassionate, sensitive, and constructive mode. He exhibits abnormally cooperative behavior as if he would like to break the constraints between himself and others. He goes out to find that woman, who is displayed several times throughout the movie crying with a photo of his son—most probably a “Saturday mother”⁷—to share her agony. Subsequently, he meets the woman with a photo of her lost son. Here he says: “I see. They harmed him as well” (Erdem; 2013). Within the context of becoming-imperceptible, seeing does not represent a paranormal feeling ability, but an extension of affection that blurs the boundaries between the self and the other. After that, he goes to the forest and encounters an ill, wounded horse, and says: “I spent my time with rambling words. I remained blind to your soreness” (Erdem, 2013). He touches the horse’s wounds, which carry epidemic germs. Then, he lays down next to the ill, wounded horse, and Erdem’s camera angle dissolves the distinction between the two. Subsequently, Adem encounters the ex-husband of Meryem en route who is lying on the ground, drenched in blood. First, he takes him to a restaurant and orders lunch for him; then, he gives all his money to him.

⁷ This woman figure evokes the sitting protests of a group of mothers gathering 12 PM every Saturday at Galatasaray (district). They carry the photos of their beloved ones who were believed to be murdered by official or unofficial state forces during the era of 1980 Coup D’état and the OHAL period of 1990s.

Adem forms linkages with people through what he knows the most: sorrow. Similar to Kosmos, he aims to heal people; accordingly, his method to obtain the cure is sharing the other's agony and anguish. After Adem states the vast extent of his grief by saying "So many wounded people, animals, and so many wounds" (Erdem, 2013), he demonstrates his will to sympathize with the human and nonhuman beings: "Wasn't I able to feel any of them!" (Erdem, 2013). He supposedly feels the entirety of the agony and affliction of the other. Within this scope, Adem's state is a mode of becoming beyond the ego, an "impersonal death", which "links the act of suppressing" his "failing body" as Braidotti (2006b: 16) states about becoming-imperceptible.

As Braidotti (2006b: 146) defines becoming-imperceptible, Adem's subjectivity is against the disastrous pain and truth of life, in a mode of suicide or euthanasia that translates into the refusal to lead a degraded existence. Braidotti (2006b: 234) thinks that "the impersonality of life is echoed by an analogous reflection of death"; in conjunction with her statement, Erdem has Adem die soon after his revolutionary change. Adem's imperceptibility is different from Kosmos; rather than carrying a healing capacity by swallowing the illness, he bridges through the agony with the living things. Within this scope, Erdem prefers to demonstrate his character's imperceptibility by the agency of his disease and death. In the only apocalyptic film among his oeuvre, Erdem, concordantly, characterizes becoming-imperceptible by centering the anguish through the palliation of the pain by the agency of his character.

5.2.4 Nomadic Assemblages by Expressive Intensity: Esma and Meryem

Esma comes to the forefront with her religious and believer aspects in *What's a Human, Anyway?*, which is depicted most strongly in Erdem's oeuvre. Similar to Kosmos, she demonstrates dervish-like features besotted with the love of Allah. Although she uses the word Allah many times, she is not depicted as a person strictly in the conventional reverences and rules of Islam; instead, her devotedness, piety, and "taqwa" (a word underlines the fear of Allah) are remarkable. Deleuzian thought rejects all transcendental ideas, such as religion; yet, her situation also implies becoming-other through her nomadic position within the society because she is thought of as a harmless insane like a majnoon.

Esma is portrayed as a lunatic, low-class woman earning her life as the housekeeper of Mesut, who can be defined as a minoritarian in exile on a remote island. She demonstrates transformative power through her minoritarianism. According to Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 106), being a woman by itself indicates a subset of the minority. Additionally, Deleuze and Guattari accentuate the importance of becoming-woman for all humankind: "Women ... are a minority, definable as a state or subset; but they create only by making possible a becoming over ...; this is a becoming woman affecting all of human, kind, men, and women both". Also, Esma's ostracization from society due to her insanity makes her flow in the direction of nomadic linkages.

One day, Esma finds a young waif, Meryem, living alone in the forest. She brings the girl home and gives her bed to Meryem. She is a nomad who inhabits the place that she gnaws and belongs to nowhere after she divorces her husband. Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 387) presume nomads as "the numerical elements of the war machine" in the sociopolitical context despite the majority's pressure on them. Erdem

displays this pressure as male violence. Meryem lives in the forests when Esma finds her since she is regularly beaten by her ex-husband. Furthermore, she finds a job at a patisserie after the divorce; this time, the employer wants her to show her breasts to him. Nevertheless, Meryem finds a job as the assistant of the doctor and secures her position on the island. Throughout her relationship with the doctor, Meryem gradually diminishes his severe pressure by completing the emotional emptiness of him.

Erdem depicts the representative of the sedentary codes as Mesut along with the doctor. Within this scope, Erdem's positioning of Meryem near the doctor becomes prominent. At the beginning of the movie, the doctor keeps his imperious and grumpy behavior against Meryem—like everyone who is 'hierarchically' inferior (the younger, the poor, the female), according to him. To illustrate, he warns her with a loud but distant voice when he sees that Meryem takes a break during the work hours. However, Meryem already understands that the doctor's rigid behavior has both sadistic and masochistic aspects, and she genially warns him: "Don't behave so harsh to yourself" (Erdem, 2013). Within this scope, it can be inferred that Erdem assesses power as a signifier of molarity that influences, firstly, the power-holder negatively. Meryem's compassion is so powerful that the doctor gradually softens, and he proposes to her. The alteration of the doctor is correlative with the thoughts on nomadism of Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 357-359), in which they underline that nomads have an erodible and transformative influence on the sedentary codifications of their nearby society.

Deleuze and Guattari (2005: 88) define two types of assemblages: machinic assemblage and the collective assemblage of enunciation. In order to understand this thought, the emphasis on the machine should be understood. Every system is a

machine for Deleuze and Guattari (2005), including the human body. For instance, a living thing is a desiring-machine, “which is a fragmented aggregate whose parts do not constitute a unified whole” (Yu, 2013: 203), and which “is in constant variation and ... transformation” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 82). As a consequence, every system is an incomplete accumulation. The collective assemblage of enunciation is the “abstract machine” that is composed of “semantic or pragmatic” diagrams in the context of “micropolitics of the social field” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 7). It connects a language to “a set of statements” that develops from the social interactions between a machine and the abstract machine” (Yu, 2013: 203). Machinic assemblages are characterized and directed by the enunciative assemblages—a collective assemblage of enunciation. Concordantly, a language or a way of communication purified from the order-statement structure comprises the foundational adaptation apparatus for the collective assemblage of enunciation.

Considering that Erdem prefers to narrate the politics of daily life in *Singing Women*, it becomes conspicuous why he illustrates the majoritarians, nomads, and minoritarians, as well as the stable beings and the states of becoming. As a nomadic form of connection, Esma’s relationship with Meryem can be considered as a collective assemblage of enunciation due to their language developed through bird-like screams and nursery rhyme-like words. Within their communication, Esma plays the role of the abstract machine, and changes the form of communication with Meryem, can be considered as a machine. Esma develops this kind of connection with Meryem, then Hale then joins them. The nomadic form of relation induces them to create an expression form that only they understand analogous to the situation of Kosmos and Neptune. The communication form between Esma and Meryem commences with repetitive rhyme-like dialogues. After or during each rhyme, they

move similar to birds by opening their arms around their sides, and they sing akin to birds. These bird-like sounds are also a way to call each other. It is a different method of communication that does not include a hierarchy of commands or statements. As Deleuze and Guattari (2005: xii) state, nomadic thought and enunciation “does not immure into itself in the edifice”; instead, it has a creative flow targeting the exteriority, even the outsiders; the social obligation is rooted in the structure of hierarchy that creates the statement-action links. Language becomes the apparatus of order, the signifier of hierarchy and/or judgment (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 87). In the expressions of both Mesut and the doctor, this type of structure is eminently visible as the authority figures of the movie. Mesut’s words to Esma and Adem involve statements, rants, and shouts, as well as orders as the doctor exercises them on Meryem.

The enunciative assemblages cannot wholly direct the social life since assemblages comprise the relationship, movement “between molecules or particles, capacities to affect and be affected” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005: 261). Within this context, Esma’s capacity of affect consists of an assemblage with Meryem; as a result, they create a line of flight against the dominant fixity of language. Esma generates a minoritarian form of expression to form assemblages along with her friend. Forming assemblages and linkages emphasize mobility, interchangeability, and multiplication among different strata; in short, social fluidity and change in the Deleuzian lexicon.

From this point of view, Esma is already in the state of becoming-minoritarian and -woman, which can be deduced from her expressive ability and linkages with the outsiders as herself. Within this context, her miraculous behavior, which resurrects Adem is open to discussion. It may be considered as an illustration of molecularity as

in the case of Kosmos character since Esma performs healing like the similar rituals with Kosmos—holding and hugging the whole body with a feeling of exhaust after curing. However, at the end of the movie, she, somehow, becomes the target of Mesut, who thinks that this “insane” woman killed his son. Although Mesut demonstrates the signs of change and even deterritorialization with the convalescence of Adem, he reflects the attitude that he used to. While he is chasing Esma the night Adem dies, he opens the electrical generator, which had malfunctioned, and it causes a massive fire that influences the entire island. Rather than the expectant earthquake, the fire of authoritative molarity brings the apocalypse.

The camera focuses on Esma throughout the montage sequences that indicate, mostly, time and Allah by the accompaniment of verses of the voice-over. From a different view, the partial relevance between the theme of becoming-imperceptible and the Sufistic degree, “fenafillâh” enacts the voice-over’s recurrent emphasis on time and Allah. The imperceptibility is close to the highest Sufistic degree, fenafillah, which indicates a type of termination of the ego, similar to asubjectification, within the belief, melting the love of the other and Allah (Gölpınarlı, 2000). When a Sufi obtains this limit level, s/he is able to work miracles, such as curing and bilocation—perhaps an explanation for the resurrection.

Despite that Deleuze and Guattari’s philosophy exclude all sorts of transcendental thought, including religions and God, the correlation between fenafillah and becoming-imperceptible can be an explanation of Erdem’s emphasis on Allah throughout the movie, which requires yet further analysis. This approach may be interpreted as contradictory; however, *Singing Women* does not display antagonism;

but rather a peculiar, and even eclectic character design, plot, and aesthetics from Deleuzian point of view.

Erdem uses direct statements and messages of a voice-over recurrently dispersed in the movie by interferences in the flow of the plot. Aesthetically, Erdem follows the time-image in conjunction with the metanarrative with a divergent approach to the montage sequences. By creating a meta-narrative through this montage sequences, he converts the movie an essay film and generates an eclectic form in harmony with the narrative. From this point on, the next section discusses the form of *Singing Women*.

5.3 Becoming-Other of the Time-Image: An Essayistic and Fragmentary Approach

5.3.1 Decentering the Time-Image

Becoming-other is irrevocable state of being for all sorts of becomings since it gives way to transformation, fluidity, and flow. This concept implies the destabilization of fixed identities and decentering the centers to the periphery. Therefore, I would like to apply this concept to the aesthetics of *Singing Women*, due to this movie's notion of approaching the aesthetics of the time-image to a peripheral form, essay film conventions. Erdem employs an essayistic montage embosomed in the aesthetics of the time-image throughout *Singing Women*. He achieves this sort of form through direct statements and messages of a voice-over recurrently dispersed in the general framework of long takes. As the eclectic, convoluted, and complicated narrative, *Singing Women* embraces postmodernist features in its form. Aesthetically, Erdem reconciles the essayistic form with the aesthetics of time-image in conjunction with the multiple layers of his narrative.

In terms of form, becoming-other defines the time-image in terms of completeness and independently meaningful plans. Constantine Verevis (2005: 44) makes the following argument about Deleuze's understanding of cinema: "film as multiplicity, a phenomenon simultaneously oriented toward a network of reproductive forces, which make it a-signifying totality (a 'being-One), and equally toward a network ... that facilitate the connection and creation of an encounter (a 'becoming-Other)". Becoming-other realizes itself in the montage by multiple, transversal, and rhizomatic connections among plans, whereas the movement-image constraints the imagistic relationships in the succession of the shots.

Even though the general framework of time image prevails throughout the movie, Erdem's imagistic approach forms a different structure from the time-image through enigmatic voice-over sequences. Throughout *Singing Women* movie, he employs long takes with stable camera usage. Even in the montage sequences, he does not apply fast editing juxtaposing many short shots. The tempo follows slow durational temporality in dialogue with the plot that directly discusses time by the agency of the montage sequences. These sections comprise verses about individual time discussed through a voice-over.

The montage sequences, intentionally or not, indicate a Deleuzian approach to time in terms of content and form. As common throughout his oeuvre, Erdem's approach to montage sequences is not about tightening long periods up in short series of plans, but the creation of metanarrative constituents refers to some metanarratives, such as Islam and Sufism. For instance, the first one of these voice-overs says:

"Allah has expanded the souls of some of His servants with the enthusiasm and love of seeing Himself. That is why their hearts are filled with crystal-clear purity of the love of Allah. Time is in the service of them" (Erdem, 2013).

The messages of these series of shots are euphemistic and referential, and have apparently weak ties with the plot; therefore, they transform into semi-independent interrupters of the script that deform the flow of the unity. However, in such a thematic eclecticism, the interventions of the time-image by essay film aesthetics is reasonable. Erdem uses the voice-over parts in a postmodernist approach, and these sequences have a function to discuss on the metanarrative about Sufism and time.

The voice-over sequences are produced in the mode of pure optical-sound images and close to the interval-ist approach of the time-image. These sections create their privileged and autonomous spaces within the movie. The meanings of voice-over sequences are eminently implicit and enable the active participation of the audience in the thinking processes. For instance, the voice-over saying,

“The footprints that I leave forcibly with my sick and injured body may appear to you in a delicate and serene harmony. And when I am immoderately struggling in life, my soul may leave some pleasant traces to the hearts. Oh! I wish I could measure my time through the echoes of these traces” (Erdem, 2013)

has no direct relationship with the plot except for Meryem’s cut, demonstrating her hardship with carrying water demijohns. Furthermore, these voice-over sections are aberrantly wavering among the unity of the plot on the surface. Along with messages of the verses, voice-over sections perform a robust influence on the audience along with the apocalyptic atmosphere created by sound design and imagistic approach. Accordingly, these parts can be interpreted as privileged intervals, which mobilize the thinking mechanisms; however, prioritization of these sequences overturns the approach to intervals.

The time-image applied throughout the general framework of *Singing Women* with some resonances; however, this image regime does not meet the demand of the

eclecticism of the convoluted plot and the strictly connotative and referential narrativization produced through the verses. Hence, Erdem utilizes the aesthetics of essay film to open up new forms for various themes. Overall, the metanarrative recurrently indicated compels Erdem to find a divergent application of the time-image fed by the montage sequences.

5.3.2 Essayistic Eclecticism

Erdem applies montage sequences in *Singing Women* entirely different manner from *Kosmos* and *What's a Human, Anyway?* regarding the complex narrative of this movie. The Turkish auteur generally utilizes a few cuts—mostly three different plans—throughout these sequences, including voice-overs. These cuts are relatively short; even in the longer montage sequences, Erdem still uses a few shots. Erdem uses voice-overs six times, with one at the beginning and at the end of the movie; and the rest of the series of shots bifurcate the film in five episodic parts, which can be summarized as: first, the diagnose of Adem's disease; second, Adem's return to his father's house; third, the growing relationship between Meryem and Esma, as well as Meryem and the doctor; fourth, Adem's conflict with his father and the exacerbation of Adem's disease; Adem's death, resurrection and his death again. The verses of the voice-over follow the narrative with hidden implications. In each interval, a deep voice tells a parable about time and Allah accompanied by an epic melody and the startling sounds of nature. The gloomy and inexplicit message overlaps with the dark, disastrous atmosphere. The aesthetics of montage sequences is consistent with the current dark apocalyptic imagistic approach and the time-image. Despite the interferences, these sections constitute a contrary framework to the interstitial approach of the time-image.

Erdem's aesthetical approach demonstrates a peculiar interpretation of the time-image, which is culminated by the essay film conventions through the voice-over montage sequences. Notwithstanding that Erdem's emphasis on these parts is conspicuous, these montage sequences do not correspond with the conventional approach to the privileged intervals. The privileged intervals become prominent within the gaps which emerge from the aberrant editing. The temporal completeness and indivisibility contribute independence to these plans. In addition to the aesthetical approach, the euphemism in the content of these sequences grants the audience the opportunity to reinterpret these plans. Hence, these sequences produce plenty of meanings by their independence and contextual meaning in line with the concept of the time-image. However, according to the conventions of the time-image defined by Deleuze (2001a), privileged intervals are not explicitly highlighted by the director; in contrast, the subjective perception of each consciousness in each view deduces these intervals.

Within this scope, the voice-overs of *Singing Women* are analogous to the Brechtian alienation effect⁸ with eminently remarkable focuses by the agency of the interrupting verses akin to sermons. Although Erdem inexplicably euphemizes these messages on time and Allah, he also separates these sequences from the normal flow to grab his audience's attention. As the movie progresses, the riveting messages are partially deciphered by their relations of Esma's destiny; however, it protects its euphemism. Even though inexplicability opens space for the reproduction of thought, this type of formulation strays from the approach of privileged intervals; it is yet dictating content

⁸ Alienation effect, also called a-effect or distancing effect, German *Verfremdungseffektor* V-effekt, is an idea central to the dramatic theory of the German dramatist-director Bertolt Brecht. It subsumes the use of techniques designed to distance the audience from emotional involvement in the play through jolting reminders of the artificiality of the theatrical performance ("Alienation Effect", n.d.).

and fragmentary form. Through the form that interrupts the plot with the metanarrative, *Singing Women* approximates to an essay film.

The voice-overs contribute to an essayistic approach to *Singing Women* in terms of content and form. The verses propound the thesis of the movie, like a thesis play conveys its audience, regardless of whether these lines are explicit or euphemist expressions. They become the agency of direct communication of the auteur with the audience as if he is an actor who breaks the fourth wall. The complexity and eclecticism of *Singing Women* require such a form. Hans Richter, who coined the concept of the essay film, states that “the film essay enables the filmmaker to make the ‘invisible’ world of thoughts and ideas visible on the screen (as cited in Alter & Corrigan, 2017: 14); therefore, breaking the fourth wall is widespread in the essay film genre of fiction film. Throughout the movie, Erdem displays two distinct narrative lines, and intersect at the end and demonstrate the exact bonds between narratives as the destiny of Esma and Adem. The narrative line consists of voice-overs as recurrent fragments in the continuity of the plot. The verses told by the voice-over are from a book that the groom reads—this silent character represents the voice-over. Although they traverse with the main story at the end, they carry uncertainty in the meaning as the function of the groom in the plot. The essayistic form feeds the complexity of thought in *Singing Women* and vice versa. Thus, the complicated nature of the narrative compels Erdem to use montage sequences approximate to those in essay films. In other words, the postmodernist story opens up space for an innovative aesthetical approach.



Figure 3.1 The groom character reads the parables of the voice-over sequences (Erdem, 2013).

The metafictional montage sequence, which may be assessed as the groom's voice of the conscious, contribute a postmodernist style to *Singing Women*, along with the form because postmodernist narratives come to the fore through the aspects of metafiction, intertextuality, referentiality, playfulness, and fragmentation (McCaffery, 1986: xv.) As demonstrated in one sequence, the groom character reads the verses. However, he does not have a dominant role in the main flow of the story. Only in one scene, he almost kills Adem, when Adem enters his house secretly while approaching to read this book seen in the picture. Accordingly, he is the narrator, also shown in the story, and fragments his story with wise verses. Thus, the movie has two narrators; one is Erdem, who narrates the main story; and the other is the groom who utters the meta idea; in other words, the narrative becomes metafictional through the groom character. The groom character also dissolves the constraints between the two stories by being in the story simultaneously and blurring the cinematic realism. Moreover, Erdem's complex story, which embraces referentiality and intertextuality—through allusions to time, destiny, and late Turkish politics—provide a postmodernist approach. Erdem narrativizes this in line with the fragmentary form.

Although Erdem applies the time-image in the general framework of the movie, *Singing Women* is the most divergent example according to Deleuzian image theory among the selected movies with its essayistic and postmodernist approach. Erdem produces the affect different from the conventional method of the time-image in *Singing Women* if the voice-over sequences are considered as privileged intervals. He is loyal to the time-image within the general framework throughout the movie; however, instead of using the form, he tries to flicker the thought by the euphemistic narrative. It can be posited that voice-over sequences constitute an essayistic approach to the technique of privileged intervals that highlights the narrative affect. As these verses are an apparatus for the audience to solve the enigmatic structure and tailor the various separate events of the different lines of narratives; they embrace references to the Sufism, holy scriptures, time, and Allah. However, the privileged interval is a technique that bolsters the subjective perceptions of the audience; rather than the director's dictation. Although the imagistic approach of the montage sequences is pertinent to the time-image approach, Erdem's montage sequences stress the verses rather than affection due to the direct messaging. In other words, these sequences are not for evoking unthought within the thought; however, they are complementary and constituent parts of the metanarrative on time and destiny. Although these voice-over sequences contribute similarity to the time-image in terms of aesthetics, they create affect through the underlined content; therefore, the messages of these sequences prevail over the aesthetical approach. Hence, Erdem experiments with unconventional and interrupting cuts within the general framework of the time-image in *Singing Women*.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter immerses into the concept of becoming, particularly becoming-imperceptible in order to contextually and formally analyze Erdem's most unconventional, arduous, and euphemistic film in which he eclectically touches on several themes. It basically elaborates on the character of Adem's becoming-imperceptible; and his self-destructive behavior from the Deleuze's point of view on masochism. In contrast with Ali of *What's a Human, Anyway?*, Adem's oedipalization is analyzed as the catalyst of his (sado) masochistic behavior. Within this scope, masochism is studied in the form of self-destruction—in compliance with Deleuze's analysis—departing from the approach that constrains it into pleasure taken with sexual harm. Adem's rebellious attitude and face-off beginning with his disease are considered as a form of deterritorialization because of the complete change in his behavior. Adem's problem of malignancy is diagnosed as the perverted desire against his father representing the fixity of the paternal figure, and his disease represents the possible results of the deviated flow of desire. The resurrection of Adem is evaluated as a form of absolute deterritorialization—as in the same role with amnesia in *What's a Human, Anyway?*. Adem achieves the state of becoming-imperceptible as a result of his complete change after deterritorialization.

This chapter scrutinizes Esma and Meryem as the characters who are in the states of becoming-woman due to their eroding influence on the masculine authority and transgression of order-statement formulation of languages like Kosmos and Neptune do in *Kosmos*. Esma and Meryem are assessed regarding their ability to form assemblages by their peculiar way of communication and their influence on the fixed identities, such as the doctor and Mesut. As two nomads, they find a method to emancipate from the order-statement structure of the language. Against the masculine

authority around them, they are defined in the state of becoming-minoritarian and woman.

This chapter argues that Erdem applies the time-image in a movie where he discusses time as the metanarrative in harmony. Moreover, the usage of the becoming-other of the montage, the time-image, is pertinent to the central theme of the movie, becoming-imperceptible. From this point of view, this chapter elaborates that the Turkish director yields a harmonic whole in terms of content and form, according to Deleuzian theory. Furthermore, through the agency of the montage sequences, the Turkish auteur creates an episodic and fraying formulation to propagate the complex narrative. However, his approach to the privileged intervals diminishes their influence.

This chapter observes that Erdem produces the unthought within the thought through the euphemistic content rather than the structure of montage. The formulation of privileged intervals is contrary to the imagistic approach of the time-image. The time-image yields affect through the images that are infused with time located in the gaps between the wavering montage. Although Erdem is structurally in the borders of the time-image, he tries to generate affect through the euphemism of the verses like a postmodernist novel. It results in a montage that merges the time-image with the essayistic voice-over. Hence, this chapter posits that in *Singing Women*, Erdem constitutes an eclectic whole in both narrative and form.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

This thesis discusses the three chosen films from Erdem's cinema—*Kosmos*, *What's a Human*, *Anyway?*, *Singing Women*—in dialogue with Deleuze and Guattari's concept of becoming. It mobilizes the applications of the various states of becomings—becoming-animal, child, and women—via form and content the movies in question. The main aim is to explore the similarities and divergences between Deleuze-Guattarian concepts and Erdem's cinema. The reinterpretations of the Deleuzian concept of becoming are mostly detected within the form throughout the investigation of these three films. Throughout the chapters, the significance of montage sequences in Erdem's selected films comes to light due to their influence on form and narrative. Within these three movies, this thesis deduces that Erdem utilizes these montage sequences as references to the metanarrative and an apparatus to peculiarize the aesthetics and form in various ways.

Subsequent to the introduction, which encompasses the aims, objectives, and methodology of the thesis, the second chapter aims at defining Deleuze's terminology developed along with Guattari and highlighting the rhizomatic connections among these concepts, such as the states of becoming, rhizome, BwO, nomadism, the war

machine, and oedipalization, as well as the movement-image, the time-image, the impulse-image, and the affection-image. This chapter sheds light on the following close reading parts through these concepts, along with the deduction of the relationship between Deleuzian concepts and imagistic thought. Throughout the chapter, it is argued that Deleuzian concepts are tied to his film theory via the concept of becoming. Grounding upon these concepts, three sections of close readings inaugurate with Erdem's sixth feature film, *Kosmos*.

The film analysis chapters begin within the third chapter analyzing *Kosmos* due to the wealth of material this film presents. It is the salient example in Erdem's oeuvre that manifests divergent patterns of becoming by the agency of a traveler-dervish character with supernatural powers within a quasi-fantastic narrative. The thematic diversity formed around becoming-animal, segmentation, war, and love is assessed in conjunction with Deleuzian philosophy and cinema theory. This chapter primarily propounds that Erdem applies the theme of becoming-animal to the form and montage of the movie. He narrativizes becoming-animal by primarily his leading role, Kosmos. Beginning with the name of the leading role, Kosmos, Erdem applies a symbolist approach to the movie. From this point of view, *Kosmos* comes to the fore through its metaphors along with becoming-animal and imperceptible of this extraordinary leading role.

Within this context, this chapter interprets the supernatural healing ability of Kosmos as a metaphor corresponded to molecularity, Kosmos' abnormal rapid movement, and communicative ability as a metaphor of the concept of becoming-animal in Deleuzian lexicon. It also associates Kosmos' state of becoming with Kafka's portrayal of becoming-animal through his writings, such as *Metamorphosis* and his animal stories

by Deleuze and Guattari. Concordantly, the third chapter elaborates on the extraordinary and abnormal features of the leading role as a representation of becoming-animal and molecularity.

This chapter mostly analyzes the montage sequences regarding the form because montage sequences are the integral and versatile apparatus of Erdem for both narrative and form throughout *Kosmos*. For instance, he connotes his stand against animal/human binary between the human and animal by interrupting the plot through montage sequences. Erdem uses the same images for different situations; this chapter approaches these repetitive shots as an approach to fetishizing these images. Drawing upon Deleuzian cinema theory, the analysis of montage deduces that these wild, emotive, and repetitive shots identify the movie within the cluster of the impulse-image, which is classified in the schema of the movement-image, despite the general framework of the time-image surface. These sequences redound to constitute a metanarrative that reacts against the zone of indiscernibility between the human and animal while narrating becoming-animal throughout the film. This thesis explores that Erdem dances among image regimes and themes through his transformative approach to montage sequences as he does in *Kosmos*, and Erdem first commences to utilize montage sequences with *What's a Human, Anyway?* to variegate his aesthetical and narrative structures.

The fourth chapter analyzes *What's a Human, Anyway?* within the framework of becoming-child. It examines that Erdem metaphorically corresponds amnesia with the idea of absolute deterritorialization and uses it as a mobilization tool to narrate the transformation of his leading role, Ali. This chapter also traces the narrativization of becoming-child by means of its two characteristics: its vulnerability and creative

potentiality in conjunction with the contrasting stories of Keten and Aytekin.

Diverging from *Kosmos*, Erdem constitutes the movie upon several characters who can be investigated through this dichotomy: those who conform to the codification of masculinity and those who do not. Drawing upon this opposition, the fourth chapter demonstrates that Erdem positions masculinity and familial pressure as a molar obstacle against becoming-child. This chapter posits that throughout the movie, Erdem declares the reasons for the evilery of his male characters as the process of oedipalization and parental authority—which results in masculine codification. The close reading of *What's a Human, Anyway?* extrapolates that he presents de-oedipalization by means of deterritorialization and becoming-child as the antidotes of masculinity.

This chapter examines *What's a Human, Anyway?* as a self-reflexive, incurvated storytelling within the aesthetical scope of the affection-image. The auteur plays with the movie and the plot in an environment where he invites the audience to playfulness. As this chapter proposes, he obtains this by the usage of the montage sequence and multilinear way of editing. It is inspected that Erdem uses montage sequences in *What's a Human, Anyway?* in three functions: conveying the thematic ideas, reconstruction of the temporality, and performing as affect units. As he does in *Kosmos*, Erdem gives messages by fragmenting the plot through these sequences; however, this time, in an explicit and direct way. These are varied series with no repetitions, unlike the employment of these series of shots in *Kosmos*. As a result, his approach is neither fetishistic to the image. Despite that the themes of the narrative such as masculinity are inferred throughout the montage sequences, emotive influence comes to the fore through the aesthetical preference. These sections also have independence in the plot through their interrupting content, and they are promoted

through slow motion; therefore, this chapter classifies them in the cluster of affection-image.

In the general framework, *What's a Human, Anyway?* employs between the shot approach, which yields affect through the successiveness, unlike *Kosmos* and *Singing Women*. The movie subsumes a revived approach to nooshock and continuity editing. Although Erdem creates a complicated form in dialogue with the narrative, this thesis classifies the film as a playful and transformative exercise of the affection-image, since the close-ups of montage sequence create affection through their emotive usage. This playful approach is bestowed by the dismantling of the successiveness and linearity of the montage by back and forth movement in time.

The fifth chapter focuses on *Singing Women* from the perspective of becoming-imperceptible. This chapter elaborates that Erdem utilizes resurrection as a way of absolute deterritorialization and mainly adapts the outcomes of masculine codification through a malignant and self-hatred male character, Adem. Adem converts into an opposing role after his death, and he connects people through sharing their agony within a constructive, helpful, and benevolent attitude. This chapter interprets his state as a way of becoming-other through sharing the anguish. Among the eclecticism of the movie, this chapter selects to analyze the transformation of this character from the Deleuzian point of view on masochism and becoming-imperceptible, as well as positioning Esma character in the framework of becoming-minoritarian, and -woman.

Editing is also eclectic in compliance with the thematic abundance in *Singing Women*. This chapter deduces that Erdem generally utilizes the time-image with a fragmentary approach provided by voice-over sequences throughout the movie. These sequences enrich the narrative and contribute an essayistic film approach to the movie.

Therefore, this chapter relates the editing technique with thematic eclecticism. As a result, this chapter posits that Erdem creates an intertextual and metafictional narrative by the agency of the fragmentary approach to the time-image; from this point of view, *Singing Women* can be evaluated as a postmodern film as a whole. To find the coherent form for the content, Erdem once again peculiarizes the aesthetical approach in the framework of the Deleuzian image theory.

The hardest part to decipher Erdem cinema from the Deleuzian point of view is classifying the montage regimes Erdem employs. Erdem does not classically perform Deleuze's image theory. He finds creative ways of reinterpretations of the approach. For instance, in *Kosmos*, he produces a montage form oscillating between the time-image and the affection-image. The affection-images mainly used during montage sequences are utterly pertinent to the Deleuze's description except for their durations. A longer duration means less (shocking) influence on the audience, particularly as compared with the conventional approach to the nooshocks. In addition, the affection-image is a subdivision in the cluster of the movement-image; nevertheless, Erdem also employs classical continuity editing and long takes, which are conventional in the time-image. This creative and even eclectic methodology is expanded in detail, and it is considered that the movie ought to be classified as a divergent method of the affection-image, a brand-new exposition of Deleuzian theory. This innovative approach to montage, essentially through the utilization of montage sequences, begins with *What's a Human, Anyway?* in Erdem's career.

Erdem's narratives in all these three movies are pertinent to be viewed by the agency of the various states of becomings. These narratives are coherently applied to the film form by montage and an imagistic approach. Montage sequences are the decisive

factor to differentiate the method of imagistic practices within all three films. Three divergent methods explored throughout the thesis, which are the employment of the affection-image, the impulse-image, and a combination of the time-image with essayistic form—despite the resonances with Deleuzian formulations—hinge upon the montage sequences. As a recapitulation, the thesis propounds that the primary tool to adapt the form to the narrative is the variations of montage sequences in Erdem's cinema. Thus, Erdem has a versatile, divergent, hybrid, and even eclectic approach to the form which he shapes in conjunction with the narrative. The approaches to montage diverge according to the narrative; however, they yet can be evaluated in the Deleuzian framework. He incorporates various Deleuzian theories of form peculiarly and creatively.

This thesis approaches Erdem's selected three movies from the Deleuzian concept of becoming since he displays the potentiality of change with many innovative methods. It finds that Erdem mostly uses metaphors—those of which can be related to Sufism as well—to depict becoming, molecularity, and transformation, such as granting his characters the ability of flying, healing, and expressive ability. The transformation of the individuals through varied degrees and reasons are the dominant theme within these chosen movies, which are analyzed, mainly according to becoming-animal, woman, and imperceptible. When taking the limitations of cinematic narrative into consideration, Erdem's metaphors, particularly about miracles, are thoroughly outstanding and fruitful, which may make inroads to the interpretations of becomings.

The paranormal narrativization in Erdem cinema is first analyzed and explained through a theoretical ground by this thesis. The limitations of Deleuzian film close readings are also expanded through correlating the similarities between some

Deleuzian concepts with Sufism, particularly necessary to explain *Kosmos* and *Singing Women*. In addition to the integrated approach to Erdem cinema deriving from one concept, this thesis opens up surfaces for new discussions on some concepts of Sufism and the Deleuzian theory, which require further studies.

Furthermore, Erdem expands his narrative themes through the allusions to the meta-ideas in montage sequences. For instance, Erdem demonstrates the slaughter of an ox throughout these sequences in *Kosmos*, wherein he discusses becoming-animal. The meta-ideas and metafiction in Erdem movies and its bonds with form are utterly decisive factors to appraise Erdem's cinema. Nevertheless, the connections between his multilayered narrative and his form are not correlated, yet in the academic environment. This thesis is a first attempt that presents the relationship between the concept of becoming and Deleuze's image theory, as well as Erdem's approach to Deleuzian concepts by combining them with Sufistic themes.

Defining Deleuzian imagistic classifications through the concept of becoming is another innovative analysis of this thesis. The third chapter scrutinizes the relationship between the concepts of becoming-animal and the impulse-image through the close reading of Erdem's *Kosmos*. Then, the fourth chapter demonstrates the correlations between becoming-child and the affection-image through the close reading of *What's a Human, Anyway?*; and the fifth chapter discusses the time-image through the concept of becoming-other. In addition to displaying three stages in Erdem's cinema through an analysis structured upon montage sequences, the correlative approach is a renewal in Deleuzian close readings.

Hence, this thesis differentiates itself from other studies on Reha Erdem's cinema through its comprehensive approach, wherein the narrative and editing of the films are

analyzed based upon a milestone concept, becoming. Until this thesis, narrative and montage in Erdem's cinema have been investigated from various perspectives, including a Deleuzian narrative analysis of Fatih Değirmen; however, this thesis presents an integrated Deleuzian study. Furthermore, montage in Erdem's cinema is first evaluated through Deleuze's cinema theory. In editing analysis, this thesis grounds upon montage sequences; it is an innovative technique throughout the aesthetical studies on cinema.



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