

ISTANBUL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY ★ GRADUATE SCHOOL

**THE USE OF SOUND BY FEMALE DIRECTORS IN INDEPENDENT
CINEMA OF TURKEY**



M.A. THESIS

İrem Ece GÜLENSOY

The Department of Music

Music Programme

JANUARY 2024

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İSTANBUL TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ ★ LİSANSÜSTÜ EĞİTİM ENSTİTÜSÜ

**BAĞIMSIZ TÜRKİYE SİNEMASINDA KADIN YÖNETMENLERİN SES
KULLANIMI**

YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

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*Beni yetiřtiren ve her zaman yanımda olan
anneannem Asiye ve dedem Bedrettin BOYDAK'a.*



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January 2024

İrem Ece GÜLENSOY
(Clarinetist)



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THE USE OF SOUND BY FEMALE DIRECTORS IN INDEPENDENT CINEMA OF TURKEY

SUMMARY

The sound phenomenon has become an inevitable element of the cinematic narrative over time. In the cinema industry, which started with silent movies, the image has a superiority over the sound. With the introduction of sound into the cinema, the power of expression has been strengthened and sound has become an element that completes the image. Dialogues, sound design, music, sound and silence, their contribution to the narrative is invaluable. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between sound design and story in films directed by women with female leads. In this context, the connections between the emotional states of the characters and the sound world will be examined, and how the sound world of the film contributes to the story will be investigated. The scope of this study is to emphasize how important the subject of sound in cinema is in terms of expression. Independent films were preferred since independent cinema is an area where the director can freely express themselves without being affiliated with any institution. I was quite curious about the use of music, sound, dialogue and silence. Women directors were discussed mainly in an effort to increase the studies on women directors. Another important common feature of the selected films is that the leading roles are women. From the perspective of female directors, how the sound world of female characters is designed has been examined. The study examines further how selected directors use sound, silence, dialogue, sound effects and music in their films and how these elements contribute to the narrative of their films. Film sound analysis is can be used towards comprehension of film narrative and comparative analysis of different films.

The directors to be examined in the thesis are Ceylan Özgün Özçelik's *Kayı* (2017), Nazlı Elif Durlu's *Zuhal* (2021), Pelin Esmer's *İşe Yarar Bir Şey* (2017) and Yeşim Ustaoglu's *Tereddit* (2017). 2017) movies.



BAĞIMSIZ TÜRKİYE SİNEMASINDA KADIN YÖNETMENLERİN SES KULLANIMI

ÖZET

Sinema, her ne kadar görselliğin ön planda olduğu bir sanat dalı olsa da konu anlatımında ve duyguların izleyiciye yansıtılmasında ses kuşağının çok büyük katkısı vardır. Sesin sinemaya girmesiyle, sinemadaki anlatım gücü kuvvetlenmiş ve ses kuşağı sinemayı tamamlayan bir öge haline gelmiştir. Yönetmenler filmlerinde vermek istedikleri duyguları en az görüntü kadar ses ve müzikle de sağlamaktadır. Bunların yanı sıra yönetmenlerin kullandıkları efektler ve çekim mekanlarındaki doğal sesler de filmlerin tamamlayıcı öğeleridir. Bu ses kaynaklarının kullanımı teknolojiyle doğru orantıda gelişmiştir.

Bu çalışmayla sinemada ses konusunun anlatım açısından ne kadar önemli olduğu vurgulanmak istenmektedir. Filmin anlatım biçimine ve ses kuşaklarının kullanımına karar veren kişi yönetmendir. Gişe filmleri çeken yönetmenlerin bir takım kurallara uyması ve istediğini yapmakta özgür olamaması nedeniyle bu çalışmada bağımsız bir şekilde film üreten yönetmenler tercih edilmiştir. Çalışmanın kapsamını belirleyebilmek için de bağımsız film üreten kadın yönetmenlerden dört isim konu alınmıştır.

Çalışmanın odağına kadın yönetmenlerin alınmasının nedeni de kadın yönetmenler üzerine yapılan çalışmaların azlığındandır. Çalışmada bu konuya dikkat çekmek ve kadın sinemacılar üzerine yapılan çalışmaları arttırmak adınadır. Çünkü sinema sektöründe kadın yönetmenler hep ikinci planda kalmıştır. Sinema sektöründe bir avuç kadın yönetmen sesini duyurup iş yapmaya çalışmaktadır. Tanınmış, ünlü bir kişi değilse yüksek bütçeli filmleri çekebilmek için para bulmaları mümkün olamamaktadır.

Seçilen filmlerde önemli bir diğer ortak özellik ise başroldeki kahramanların da kadın olmasıdır. Çalışmada kadın yönetmenlerin perspektifinden, kadın kahramanların ses dünyasının nasıl tasarlandığı mercek altına alınmıştır. Bu çalışmada, seçilen her yönetmenin bir filmi seçilerek incelenmiştir. Film seçiminde yönetmenlerin günümüze en yakın tarihte çektiği filmleri tercih edilmiştir. Bu filmlerde yönetmenlerin ses kullanımını, sessizliği, diyalogu, ses efektlerini, müziği nasıl kullandığı ve bu öğelerin filminin anlatısına nasıl katkıları olduğu incelenmiştir. Film sesi analizi, bir film anlatısını anlamak ve farklı filmlerin karşılaştırmalı analizinde kullanılabilir analitik bir araçtır.

Çalışmada Türkiye bağımsız sinemasının dinamiklerini anlamak için, Türkiye'deki sinema tarihinin bağımsız sinema başlangıcına kadar olan süreci incelenmiştir. Bu inceleme, bağımsız Türkiye sinemasını anlamak için oldukça verimli olmuştur. Çalışmada, sinemanın ülkemize girişi ve gelişimi incelenmiştir. Bu inceleme sırasında, Türkiye sinema sektörüne kadın yönetmenlerin girişi ve ilk yönetmenlikleri araştırılmıştır. Filmlerinde işledikleri konulara bakılmıştır. Genel olarak kadın yönetmenlerde ve özellikle bağımsız sinemada, kadın yönetmenlerin, büyük oranda

kadın hikâyelerine odaklandıkları görülmüştür. Bu nedenle özellikle başrolünde kadın olan filmler bu tez için seçilmiştir.

Bu tezin amacı, sinemadaki ses kuşağının anlatıma katkısına ve bu kuşakların kadın yönetmenler tarafından kullanılma şekli ile tercihlerine dikkat çekmektir. Filmlerdeki kadın karakterlerin ses dünyaları incelenecektir. Bu inceleme yapılırken, sesin sinemaya girişinin tarihsel gelişimi de araştırılmıştır. İlk çıkışında sessiz olarak çekilen filmlerin, sesin sinemaya girmesi sonrasındaki gelişmeler ve ardından Türkiye sinemasındaki sesli yapımlar incelenmiştir.

Bu çalışma için seçilen filmler, yönetmenlerin özellikle son yıllarda çektiği yapımları arasından tercih edilmiştir. Bunun nedeni, eskiden ses teknolojisinin ülkemizde oldukça pahalı olması ve film bütçelerinin yetersizliğidir. Ayrıca film çekimlerinde ve ses kuşaklarının oluşturulmasında özellikle teknolojik gelişmelerin artmasıyla daha değişik çalışmaların yapılabilmesidir. Bir de bu filmlerin aynı dönemde çekilmiş olmasına dikkat edildi. Çalışmada aynı dönemde yaşamış karakterler tercih edilmiştir. Ortak sorunlar ve ortak bir dönemin anlatısı olması adına bu önemli bulunmuştur. Örneğin 90'lı yıllarda ve öncesinde çekilen filmlerde kadın karakterler orta-alt sınıfı temsil eder. 90'lı yıllarda çekilen bir filmde kadın karakterlere verilen önemle, son yıllarda çekilen filmlerdeki rollerin çoğunlukla farklılığı gözlemlenmiştir. Kadın karakterler için kalıplaşmış yargılar vardır. Son dönemlerdeki filmler daha çok ve başarılı şekilde kadın karakterleri ön plana çıkarmaya başlamıştır.

Çalışmada öncelikle bağımsız sinema alanının ülkemizde dikkat çeken ve bu alanda çeşitli festivallerden ödüller alan ve yurtdışında da bizi temsil etmiş ve ses getirmiş kadın yönetmenler belirlenmiştir. Bu yönetmenlerin başrolünde kadın kahramanları olan son filmleri tercih edilmiştir. Burada özellikle belgesel filmler çalışmamın kapsamı dışında kalmaktadır. Uzun metraj kurmaca filmlerdeki karakterin ses dünyasına odaklanılmıştır. Seçilen yönetmenler ve filmleri Ceylan Özgün Özçelik'in *Kaygı* (2017), Nazlı Elif Durlu'nun *Zuhal* (2021), Pelin Esmer'in *İşe Yarar Bir Şey* (2017) ve Yeşim Ustaoglu'nun *Tereddüt* (2017)'tür.

Bu filmlerin analizi yapılırken ses kuşağındaki diyalog, ambiyans, sessizlik, efekt ve müzik kategorilerine odaklanılacaktır. Öncelikle her film için ses kuşağının tabloları çıkartılacak ve ses dağılımı görüntülenecektir. Bu sayede yönetmenin ses kuşağındaki tercihleri daha ön plana çıkarılmış olacaktır. Ardından karakterin yolculuğu eşliğinde ses dünyasının buna katkısı incelenecektir.

1. INTRODUCTION

My education on music and sound engineering, following years of cinephilic immersion, unlocked a fascination with the nuanced world of cinematic sound, propelling me towards exploration in film sound studies. The biggest reason for this is the superiority of visual studies over sound studies in cinema. The difference is quite clear, especially for Turkish cinema. This study aim was to close this gap to some extent. My willingness to contribute to this field motivated me to begin this study.

After the Lumiere Brothers made their first paid screenings in Paris, it was understood that there was a profit motive in this business, and the cinema industry was formed in the 1910s. After that, Edison, Biograph Company and Vitagraph Company were established. Cinema industry rapidly became industrialized and commercialized. The rising cost of film production has led to a divide between box office films and independent films. Box office films, which are typically produced by major studios, have access to large budgets and can easily find producers. Independent films, on the other hand, often have to rely on smaller budgets and may have difficulty finding producers. Independent directors often apply for grants and other funding sources to help them produce their films.

In Turkey, independent cinema came to the fore in the 1990s (Sivas, 2011). After 1994, a group of young directors who made films with their own money, based on traumas or events that left traces in their own lives, entered Turkish cinema. Since they make films with their own money or sponsors, with the grants they receive from the Ministry of Culture, with the prize money they receive from festivals, the actors make films with minimalist features in terms of budget, location and subject. The way directors such as Handan İpekçi, Zeki Demirkubuz, Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Serdar Akar, Derviş Zaim, Yeşim Ustaoglu and Kutluğ Ataman followed while making their films caused them to be called independent (Boydak, 2006).

Independent directors have developed a unique style apart from their classical narrative styles. They do not work with classical production companies. These

directors fall outside the popular production format in that country and do not have the classic understanding of crew while making their films. Independent cinema finds its way with international support, awards won at festivals and international audiences.

Independent cinema has provided a space for female directors to express themselves more freely. As a woman myself, I am particularly interested in female directors due to the lack of representation in this field. In this context, I decided to take my research one step further and focus on films directed by women with female leads.

This study focuses especially on the films of female directors in independent cinema of Turkey with female lead characters. It was questioned to examine women's stories from women's eyes and how their sound worlds contribute to the character's journey and the film narrative. In the movie selection, especially the films of the directors from recent years were preferred. It has been questioned how much the directors care about the sound world while creating their films and how they edit it. The aim of this study is to emphasize how important sound is in the film narrative, as well as the image.

1.1 Aim and Scope of the Study

This study focuses on sound in cinema, which is called the seventh art. Especially Turkish cinema was examined. In this study visual expression and the sound world will be examined in parallel. Sound used in the movie can tell the audience many things, even the things wants to make them feel. Even sound can be given through emotion.

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between sound design and story in films directed by women with female lead characters, for the reasons I have explained above. In this context, the connections between the emotional states of the characters and the sound world will be examined, and how the sound world of the film contributes to the story will be investigated. The main purpose is to analyze the connections between the character's emotional state and the sound world in the film. While doing this, film sound analysis was performed. In cinema where visuals are dominant, listening to the movie provides a completely different perspective. While making this analysis, the character journey was also taken into consideration.

The purpose of focusing especially on female directors and female characters is to draw attention to female cinema workers in Turkey. It is the desire to highlight

women's stories. For this study, firstly, the history of Turkish cinema and the history of cinema sound were examined. Then, the films were examined along with character and sound analysis, and attention was drawn to the important points of sound in the narrative.

1.2 Methodology

In the methodology of this thesis, firstly, Turkish cinema history and sound history were examined, and then director and film selections were made as a result of a detailed examination. Created sound analysis charts of selected movies. In these charts, sound distributions can be seen in detail and it can be determined which element is used in the sound world and at what intensity. Then, after researching about the films, the general emotion and flow of events of the film were determined, accompanied by the main female character(s) in the film. An attempt was made to determine how the sound world supports this flow and the hero. To confirm these findings, an attempt was made to reach the film's directors, sound designers and musicians firsthand. Interviews were conducted with those who could be reached and agreed, and these interviews were included during the analysis as if they confirmed the findings. All interviews can be accessed in Appendix B.

1.3 Literature Review

Studies in this field are increasing day by day. First of all, my main source in this study is Especially Bordwell and Thompson's (2013) *Film Art* book has been very useful. Chion's Audio Vision book was used for sound analysis. Very detailed and different sources have been scanned regarding the history of cinema and film sound. Giovanni Scognamillo's (1998) *Türk Sinema Tarihi* book has been an important source used in the history of cinema. Nigar Pöteki's works are also important sources for Turkish cinema history. It can be examined in detail in the following sections. While making sound analysis, the mood of the character, the course of the story and the locations were taken into consideration. Sources, articles and theses on all subjects were scanned.



2. REVIEW ON THE HISTORY OF THE TURKISH CINEMA

2.1 First Productions in Turkey

Exploring the Turkish cinema, one may consider the 1914 film, titled *The Destruction of the Russian Monument at San Stefano* (*Ayastefanos'taki Rus Abidesinin Yıkılışı*) by Fuat Uzkınay, as the first milestone in the cinematic journey. Even though the debates about whether Uzkınay's film was actually shot or not persist today (since no footage of the film has survived), it is still regarded as the inception point of Turkish cinema by many scholars (Pösteki, 2004). Uzkınay's daughters (Mutena and Mualla) underlined that their father talked much about this movie. Acknowledging the challenging shooting conditions, they expressed that they were not able to see any films, including that of their late father, during his lifetime. According to Burçak Evren, who has done a lot of research on this subject, even if this movie was not shot, Uzkınay still maintains his title as the first Turkish Filmmaker by having shot his next movie (Scognamillo, 1998).

According to the historical course of traditional Turkish cinema, there are 6 feature or medium-length films and an unspecified number of documentaries between the years 1914-1921, between Uzkınay's *Ayastefanos* and Muhsin Ertuğrul's *A Love Disaster in İstanbul* (*İstanbul'da Bir Facia-i Aşk*). According to the available resources, the first themed movie was *Himmat Ağa's Marriage* (*Himmat Ağa'nın İzdivacı*), shot in 1916 and completed in 1918 (Scognamillo, 1998, p.39). In fact, prior to this film, the first thematic film attempt was made in 1916, titled *Leblebici Horhor* (*Horhor the Roasted Chickpea Seller*). However, this film could not be completed as the actors were drafted into the military (Scognamillo, 1998).

Muhsin Ertuğrul is a prominent director in Turkish cinema, with 30 films he shot between 1922 and 1953. These years are called "The Muhsin Ertuğrul Era" in Turkish cinema in most sources. Especially his film *Ateşten Gömlek* (1923) is important in two respects. Firstly, it was released on April 23, before the proclamation of the Turkish Republic. Secondly, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk encouraged Neyyire Neyir and

Bedia Muvahhit to star in this movie, who would become first Muslim female actors (Duruel, 2002).

The period between 1939 and 1950 is called the "Transition Period" in Turkish cinema by the cinema historians. It covers the period of Atatürk's death and İsmet İnönü's coming to power (Makal, 1991).

The Second World War also had significant effects on the Turkish cinema. During these years, young people who had studied abroad returned to their countries and worked on cinema. The war disrupted the film flux from the West and films to be screened were mainly from Egypt. With these films, the melodrama genre entered Turkish cinema (Er, 2003). In 1942, CHP applied to the Ministry of Internal Affairs for Egyptian films to be banned around Adana and Mersin, on the grounds that the interest in Egyptian films negatively affected the Turkish language and undermined love for Turks (Korkmaz, 1997).

Another important development related to World War II was the introduction of supervision in cinema. Following Germany's attack on the Soviet Union, at a time when the world was polarized and Nazi propaganda was seen as a danger, the "Regulation on the Control of Films and Film Scripts"¹ was adopted in 1939. Accordingly, the supervision of films was defined as the duty of the police affiliated with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. This control put censorship pressure on Turkish Cinema (Er, 2003).

The number of domestic productions has gradually increased since the 1950s. These are the years when Turkey experienced changes in social, economic, and political fields, which was also reflected in cinema. With the 1950 elections, the Democratic Party came to power alone, and the policies it implemented led to the birth of the popular cinema (Er, 2003).

The films shot in the following years were called Yeşilçam. It takes its name from the street where the shooting took place. Nijat Özön (2000) proposes two dictionary definitions for the term "Yeşilçam":

¹ Filmlerin ve Film Senaryolarının Kontrolüne Dair Nizamname

1. Turkish local cinema, taken from the name of the street where most of the production houses and their partners had their workplaces in Beyoğlu.
2. (in a derogatory sense) Cinema that produces films that are produced in a very short time, in the shortest way, by certain patterns, and based on exploiting the audience, for the sole purpose of profit. (p. 818)

On the other hand, Savaş Arslan (2011) describes those years in his book as follows:

While the army represented statist Kemalism, throughout the 1950s the Democratic Party (DP) represented a more populist path towards modernization and westernization, appealing to the conservative, Islamic identity of the people. However, despite its nationalism and moderate Islamism, it was the DP that promised during the Cold War that there would be a millionaire in every neighborhood and that Turkey would be created as a mini America under the auspices of the USA. After the 1960 coup d'état attempted to "restore order", the wave of liberalization initiated by the DP partially slowed down. Filmic narratives echoed these demands with social realist films about urban life, migration, as well as the melodramatic fantasy of vertical culture and class movement. Yeşilçam reflected the hegemonic power relations of the state, filmmakers, and the audience. (p. 99-100)

Turkish cinema is intertwined with the context of the nation's challenges and political landscape. When we look at the films after 1960, we see a shift in focus to social and political events, power changes, freedoms, and -of course- limitations. During the 1960s, business dominance prevailed in Turkish cinema. Anatolia was divided into activity regions and subregions. Cinema theater owners in each region determined the audience characteristics of those regions. Since they were in direct contact with the theaters, they knew the audience very well. However, since they were merely profit-seeking intermediaries, they did not have as much artistic concern as the producers. At that time, film production was done directly with advances given by operators. (Abisel, 2005) For these reasons, all production companies, artists, and employees, large or small, have become dependent on the wishes of the operators to a certain extent.

The foreign exchange shortage experienced in the country in the mid-1970s once again shook the producers, who began to adapt to color film production with their own

methods by taking advantage of every opportunity, re-establishing the cost advance balance (Abisel, 2005).

The coup d'état staged by the Turkish Armed Forces on September 12, 1980, is widely regarded as a critical juncture in Turkish history. As a depoliticization process began and the liberal economic policy turned everything into a commodity in the market, society changed rapidly and culture also became a commodity (Pösteki, 2004). For the first time after 1980, some subjects that were considered taboos began to be shot in Turkish cinema and young directors emerged (Pösteki, 2004). Factors such as insufficient in-house capital, the importance of commercial films, the economy, and the negative impact of television led to the determination of the expression styles of cinema until after 1980. A cinema language has emerged in which the individual is at the forefront, and women and their problems are examined (Evren, 1990).

The process of change and differentiation that started in the 1980s continued in the 1990s. While developments in economic and political fields deeply affected society; new formations suitable for the 90s were formed in the field of cinema (Pösteki, 2004). Turkish cinema, which had a traditional form of film production until the 1990s, met a new generation aiming to establish its own language (Evren, 1990).

By the 1990s, there was a crisis in cinema. The bond between the Turkish cinema and its audience was broken. Since the cinema could not renew itself, it lost its young audience to the American cinema (Pösteki, 2004). There were also movie theaters that closed. Most cinemas turned into bazaars. Some of them became smaller and even pocket cinemas. American films filled the space vacated by the local films.

Especially after 1994, two main developments stood out in the Turkish Cinema: The creation of audience-focused movies and the emergence of a new generation of filmmakers who were emulating from overseas. It is possible to say that there is hope for the new generation of filmmakers on the different path that Turkish Cinema has drawn for itself. These directors, such as Zeki Demirkubuz, Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Serdar Akar, Yeşim Ustaoglu, Derviş Zaim, Handan İpekçi, Semir Aslanyürek, have their own cinematic styles. Consequently, it is clear that during this period, Turkish cinema encountered two distinct categories of rising directors:

1. A generation that tries to create its own language and cinema characteristics, and does not even prioritize box office revenues.

2. A generation that considers the common taste of the audience by making popular films, a generation that prioritizes the box office revenues. (Pösteki, 2004)

The directors of the first group mark the onset of independent cinema in Turkey.

2.2 Definition and Basic Features of the Independent Cinema

As the production ceased with Yeşilçam's collapse after the 1990s, the directors needed to locate the film's source. Many new directors have been able to create films that take cinema seriously because productions are made by directors rather than producers (Teksoy, 2007, p. 83).

The Turgut Özal government's amendment to the Foreign Capital Law (1989) is another reason behind the emergence of the concept of independent cinema in Turkey. This law severely damaged Turkish cinema and gave American corporations control over the country's film distribution system. Warner Bros. and United International Pictures began operating commercially in Turkey as a result (Pösteki, 2012). Due to changes in the Foreign Capital Law and the increasing use of video and television, Turkish cinema became completely unpopular and faced a major crisis. The public gravitated away from local films, particularly after the Magic Box company founded Turkey's first private television channel, Star 1 (Sarı, 2017), which aired American films produced by major film studios. The public favored watching movies on legal or pirated video cassettes over going to theaters due to the rise in investments in both the video and television industries. There were local productions that drew sizable audiences despite all these developments. The pioneer of these films is "*Eşkıya (The Bandit/Outlaw)*" produced in 1996 directed by Yavuz Turgul and reached two and a half million viewers (Teksoy, 2007).

To escape the crisis, Turkish cinema began to build stronger ties with the government in 1991. Governments from the ANAP, DYP, and Social Democrats made long-term, low-interest loans available to promote the film industry (Pösteki, 2004). A copy of the films would be given to the Ministry of Culture archives on loan to be shown free of charge at festivals and cultural relations events. However, there were a few problems: Film projects also faced difficulties arising from the depreciation of state aid due to inflation. In cases where the budget was inadequate, some state aid would

be given for the films. Over time, these aids became problematic, impelling the Refahiyol Government to end them (Scognamillo, 1998).

Support for the movie theater was entirely overlooked as a result of the growing economic issues brought on by the changes in the government (Scognamillo, 1998). Financing was left to the producers, sponsors, television networks, and/or cultural support funds in the event that there was no or little state assistance. A crucial cultural support fund called Eurimages aims to establish and uphold a shared European culture in opposition to American film (Scognamillo, 1998). In actuality, the global cinema industry faces a financial challenge that must be solved. The film industry needs government support in nations other than the United States (Pöstecki, 2004). One of the conditions of Eurimages is that there are two more production partners outside the producer country (Pöstecki, 2004). This has also been a productive condition for other countries.

Financially, we see the following picture: State aid, sponsors, funds, TV channels, producers, and self-financing directors (Pöstecki, 2004, p. 161). The latter is the foundation of the independent film. Examining the fundamental ideas and definitions surrounding the independent film in this regard would be beneficial.

Nijat Özön (1982) defines the concept of an independent director as someone who undertakes the task of producing as well as directing or having complete freedom from the producer for this task (p. 29).

Tül Akbal Süalp (2003) defines independence in its simplest sense; "It means producing by more or less consciously opposing the dominant mode of production, the main production networks, or trying to stay outside of them, and carrying out its activities outside this network of relations." (p. 20)

The independent filmmaker phenomenon can be defined as "an act of cinema in which they wish to make a film by taking all the unintentional risks," according to Burçak Evren (Evren, 2003).

Based on these definitions, we can say that independent directors make films with free will and their own ideas, without being affiliated with any institution, without worrying about the box office, and or adhering to classical production processes.

Independent films aim to engage the audience, forging a stronger bond with them and encouraging engaged and interactive viewing, rather than viewing them as a captive

audience or a revenue stream. These are movies that try to establish a sort of public space by defining, debating, and connecting their qualities to issues that have been decided upon. In addition, it can be understood as films that women, laborers, local communities, or regions could access and were engaged in political, social, or environmental movements (Süalp, 2003).

The main features of independent cinema can be listed as below:

1- Independent directors who set their own working conditions in terms of content and budget;

Some independent directors work with producers. But what they did was interfere with the movie, they could work freely without any restrictions.

2- In addition to directing, some directors produce the movies they shoot.

3- Some directors define many job descriptions in film production themselves. Thiesedirectors write the script, edit, act as actors, and even act as cameramen for their films (Boydak, 2006).

2.3 Independent Directors in Turkish Cinema

Yeşilçam, which spent the early 1990s acting cynically and ineffectively in the face of the Majors' overwhelming pressure, adopted a multiplier, risk-averse policy of passing off the problems in the short term with state or other financial source financing rather than solving them rationally and radically. Under these circumstances, all of the traditional producers left the industry, and Turkish cinema ended up being produced by no one at all. Independent filmmakers who were not trained in the traditional Yeşilçam master-apprentice relationships, who did not require a classical producer, and who took all the risks to realize projects that were very different from the previous in terms of form and content emerged in 1993. These filmmakers, whose approaches to production differ as much as their films, came forth as the first truly "independent" Turkish film generation (Evren, 2003).

It can be said that among the new generation directors, the following names started independent cinema by developing their unique language: Zeki Demirkubuz, Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Derviş Zaim, Semih Kaplanoğlu, Handan İpekçi, Kazım Öz, Yeşim Ustaoglu, Semir Aslanyürek (Pösteki, 2004). They created their personal style, which

appealed to their own audience, and was on their way to becoming an "auteur"(Pösteki, 2005, p. 14).

Regarding the emergence of the concept of auteur, historically in America, the notion was that the producers could make the same movies, regardless of the director, as long as they complied with the rules, as per the studio rules created by Hollywood. According to this perspective, stars are the ones who make the differences in the movies; the director can only show her/his mastery in staging, because there is a scenario given to them. The auteur theory has demonstrated that films can exist outside this framework and that, even in the Hollywood system, a creative director can express his own personality, worldview, and distinctive qualities (Esen, 2002).

Independent filmmakers are not associated with any particular organization, school, or aesthetic. Traditional producers do not collaborate with independent directors. Their personal savings, sponsors, Eurimages, assistance, and other options like loans are the resources they use to make their films. They act freely and on their own to voice their opinions. They can win local and international awards at festivals, but this recognition frequently does not translate into box-office success. Their films are distinct, with a focus on the characters' inner lives (Pösteki, 2005).

2.4 Female Directors in the Turkish Cinema

Due to the social structure, women could not go to the cinema initially, but men could go to the entertainment venues to watch films. Women, on the other hand, became acquainted with cinema by entering mansions. It did not take long for people to get used to the cinema, and after a while, women also had the opportunity to watch it by drawing curtains or organizing separate sessions during screenings held in open areas (Özuyar, 1999). However, as mentioned in the sections above, Muslim actresses also appeared on the big screen with the movie *Ateşten Gömlek* in 1923. In 1949, the first female director shot her first film.

When looked at the history of world cinema, the first known female director is Alice Guy-Blaché who shot her first film in 1896 (Saticı & Sönmez, 2019). The first female director in Turkish cinema is Cahide Sonku. Her first film was *Fedakar Ana*, which she shot in 1949 (Saticı & Sönmez, 2019). In other words, when women started directing films in Turkey, world cinema was already a century ahead (Öztürk, 2004).

Cahide Sonku was followed by Nuran Şener and Feyturiye Esen. Feyturiye Esen founded the Hilal Film. She first started as a producer, but then also shot films (Yaşartürk, 2004). Bilge Olgaç, who directed her first film in 1965, continued to direct until her death. She made a living by directing. She took a break from cinema between 1975 and 1984 (Yaşartürk, 2004). Birsen Kaya, who founded the Ufuk Film in 1970, directed fifteen films between 1970 and 1975. Lale Oraloğlu, who founded the Alev Film in 1954, directed four films. Türkan Şoray, who shot her first film in 1972, did not establish a production company. Şoray mainly focused on the women living in the village, in her films *Dönüş* (1972), *Azap* (1973), *Yılanı Öldürseler* (1981). In the movie *Bodrum Hakimi* (1976), was, however, about an urban working woman. Years later, in 2015, she directed the movie *Uzaklarda* (Yaşartürk, 2004).

Many of the female directors in Turkish cinema before 1980. established their own production companies which indicates that they could not find producers for their films (Yaşartürk, 2004). A little earlier, in the mid-1970s, female audiences moved away from cinema. Although many factors have an impact here, it is important how the cinema industry is affected. The '70s were the years when male stars shined and stories based on male heroes were told. Producers realized the structure of the families and made films that suited the expectations of the male audience from the lower classes. (Abisel, 2005). According to Agah Özgüç's data between the 1950s and 1980, 4390 films were made. Only 52 of these films were directed by women., half of which belong to Bilge Olgaç. (Öztürk, 2004).

Nisan Akman is another female director, who shot her first film in 1984. Her films touched on women's problems. In 1987, Mahinur Ergun directed her first video film and subsequently directed feature films. Ergun's films were about women living independently. Canan Gerede wrote and directed her first film in 1991 (Yaşartürk, 2004). TRT also produced the first 3 films of Tomris Giritlioğlu, who previously worked as a producer and a director at TRT. Another important female director is Işıl Özgentürk. After working as a journalist for many years, she took her first step in cinema by co-screenwriting Türkan Şoray's movie *Yılanı Öldürseler*. After taking on the role of the screenwriter in Ali Özgentürk's films, she shot her first film, *Seni Seviyorum Rosa*, in 1991 (Yaşartürk, 2004). In 1990, Füzûzan and Gülsün Karamustafa shot their first movie *Benim Sinemalarım* which tells the story of a young girl living in a slum in Istanbul in the 60s and trying to survive the difficult living conditions.

This film, which is the directorial debut of F ruzan, one of the famous names of the literary world, and the painter G ls m Karamustafa, is the first female partnership in Turkish cinema (Url-1). Canan Evcimen Obay shot her first movie in 1994. Fide Motan shot films under the production of TRT as well, and she shot her first film in 1994. Biket İlhan, who was originally an English teacher and started working as an assistant to Feyzi Tuna in 1981, became involved in the cinema and directed her first film, *Sokaktaki Adam*, in 1995. In 1996, Sunar Kural Aytuna shot her first movie, and in 1998, J lide  v r and Necef Uğurlu shot their joint movie. Another Turkish director, Seçkin Yaşar shot her first film, *Sarı Tebess m*, in 1991, after working as an assistant to many directors such as Halit Refiğ, between 1979 and 1990 (Yaşart rk, 2004). Handan İpekçi, who started filmmaking by working as an assistant at TRT, shot her first film, *Babam Askerde*, in 1994. Director Yeşim Ustaoglu, who received her undergraduate education in the field of architecture, shot her first short film in 1984 and her first feature film *İz* in 1994. After studying sociology, Pelin Esmer co-directed many fiction and documentary films. Her first feature film was *Koleksiyoncu* in 2002 (Yaşart rk, 2004).

This review is centered on the first appearances of the mentioned directors and the timeline of their first productions, rather than a broad analysis of their complete filmography. When we look at the period between 1980 and 2000, the abundance of TRT-based directors can be noticed. At the time, TRT played a crucial role in educating and assisting a significant number of directors thus becoming a school. However, Ruken  zt rk (2004) stated in her book that TRT withdrew its support for these films produced for TRT after these were completed. These films could not be distributed and did not have the chance to be screened beyond festival contexts.

Directors who received support from TRT mostly made adaptations of novels. Those who did not adapt also directed the scripts of other directors ( zt rk, 2004). Another common feature is female ledscripts focusing on women's problems and relationships. To this day, this is valid. The historical trajectory of Turkish cinema brings the consistent fewness of female directors to forth since its early years. . There was a significant increase in the number of female directors in the 1990s and afterwards (Saticı & S nmez, 2019). As explained in the previous sections, the foundations of independent cinema were laid in the 1990s with the new generation of directors. In the 2000s and 2010s, a new female director emerged almost every year, who gained

recognition with various festival awards Çağıl Nurhak Aydođdu, Grkem Yeltan, Senem Tzel, Ahu ztrk, Zeynep Dadak, Merve Kayan, Aslı zge, Belmin Sylemez, Emine Emel Balcı, Andaç Haznedarođlu, Aysim Trkmen, Melisa nel, Esra Saydam, Nisan Names such as Dađ, Lusin Dink, Pelin Esmer, İlksen Başkar, iđdem Vitrinel, Belma Bař, Deniz Akay Katıksız, Filiz Alpgezmen, Elfe Ulu, Rezzan Tanyeli, Dilek Keser, Elif Refiđ can be listed as the female Turkish directors (Saticı & Snmez, 2019). There are directors of documentaries, short films, and television shows in the Turkish theater in addition to feature-length fiction film production, but they are not the focal point of this discussion.

This study particularly focuses on the period after 2015. The main reason is the technological proximity to today. It is also important to describe women of the same period, regardless of their social status. The list of female directors released between 2015-2022 can be seen in Appendix A. This data was taken from the Box Office Trkiye (Url-2). The list was compiled films from award-winning or widely-recognized directors who have contributed to the independent cinema. The focus was on films featuring female leads and their stories. At this point, how women are portrayed in Turkish cinema is also crucial. Ruken ztrk (2000) makes the following determination in her book *Sinemada Kadın Olmak*; No matter how advanced and sophisticated the art films are, women are confined to the space in their traditional sense and the negative qualities attributed to women throughout history are reproduced. Those who do this are male directors. There are sociological, psychological, and philosophical reasons behind this. Female directors, on the other hand, liberate their fellow women in their films and show their ways of struggle. These films expand women's private areas and do not present them with the dilemma of private/public life.



3. FILM SOUND

3.1 Review of the Film Sound History

Cinema is a branch of art in which image is superior to sound. However, since the silent film era, the image has always been accompanied by a sound. In the first movie screenings, some narrators interpreted the images on the screen and explained the meaning and content of the images to the audience (Nowell-Smith, 2003). At a time when political unrest and the economic crises were at their worst, the innovation of the sound film—speeches accompanied by music—saved lives. President Roosevelt's administration saw the greatest years for American film as more people chose to forget about their everyday problems (Teksoy, 2005).

Then the music stepped in. Initially, this music was improvisations played on the piano. Realizing that the music increases the effect of the film on the audience if it is chosen well, the producers emphasized the necessity of making special pieces of music for the film. To understand the impact of sound, it should be remembered that even during the silent film era, cinema was not silent, says Nowell-Smith (2003, p.249). The first film score was made by Camille Saint-Saens for the movie *L'Assassinat du Duc de Guise (The Assassination of the Duke of Guise)* in 1908 at the request of the Pathé brothers (Erdoğan & Solmaz, 2005). With the transition to synchronized audio dialogue in the late 1920s, cinema experienced a revolution. The beginning of this revolution can be considered as October 6, 1927, when Warner Bros.'s movie *The Jazz Singer* had its New York premiere (Nowell-Smith, 2003). *The Jazz Singer* served as the final sample that, by 1929, brought an end to the silent picture period and sent producers into a construction frenzy. At this point, realistic sound movies had become a reality. The concept of "talking pictures" had been under development for many years (Winter, 1941). Sounds were recorded with a vitophone (Erdoğan & Solmaz, 2005). It was not an easy transition to the sound movies, however (Figure 3.1). First and foremost, fresh investments were required, and those at the time totaled more than \$50 million (Teksoy, 2005).

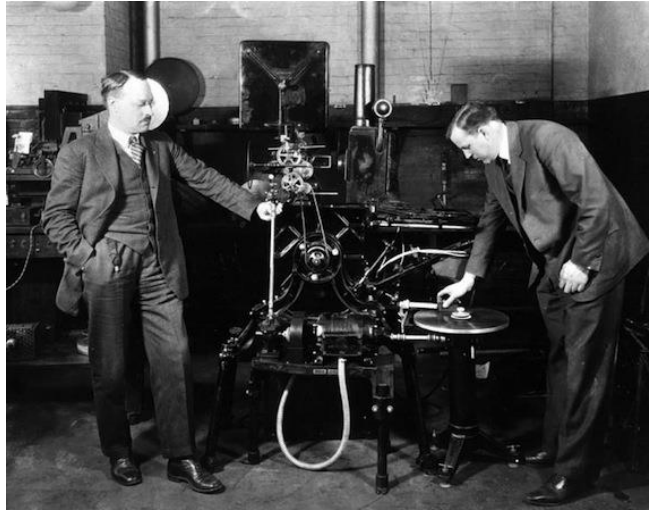


Figure 3.1: Vitaphone (Url-3).

In the first sound films, musical films were mostly seen as a genre. The main reason behind this is the onset of the economic crisis in the 1930s. In such an environment, the best way to attract the American audience to the cinema was considered to be entertaining films (Konuralp, 1998). Such musical films also pioneered in Europe. Even those who did not want to make musical films had to use songs and ambient music in their films.

Developments in technology over time have also affected the use of sound in cinema. In the early years, studios started to produce their own music because of royalties. Although the costs were high in the first years of its use, the emergence of the cassette and the invention of computer sound production and sound mixing streamlined the sound production and reduced the costs which also encouraged use. With each passing day, technology continues to evolve and affect the world of cinema.

Senior sound engineer Alan Blumlein worked at EMI's Central Research Laboratories (CRL) located on the Hayes manufacturing site. After The Gramophone Company and Columbia merged in 1931, he started working for the new company. Blumlein was irritated that a character's sound on screen could only be heard from a speaker on the opposite side of the room, after spending the evening at the movies with his wife. To solve this problem, Blumlein began working on a binaural (now known as stereo) system which is still in use today. He started by abolishing the idea that two loudspeakers represented the listeners' two ears and instead sought to recreate the features of the sound field including directional information. He then started working

on creating a complicated cut for the gramophone record that had two grooves that could be read simultaneously to play back the new stereo (Binaural) sound while also working with the mono records that were already in circulation (Url-4).

The importance of sound has grown significantly since stereo sound first appeared in motion pictures. Dolby company also developed "Dolby Stereo" and created a 4-channel soundstage. The company made their first big breakthrough in 1977 with the movie Star Wars. After all these changes and developments in sound, using sound has become an art. The use of sound, silence, music preferences, and even direction preferences have gained importance.

In Turkey, in the early years of the Republican Period, audiences who bought tickets to watch movies also had the opportunity to listen to one or two classical music concerts for free. (Erdoğan & Solmaz, 2005). The first sound film in Turkish cinema was *İstanbul Sokakları*, directed by Muhsin Ertuğrul in 1931 (Figure 3.2). The film also goes down in history as the first co-production in Turkey (Url-5).

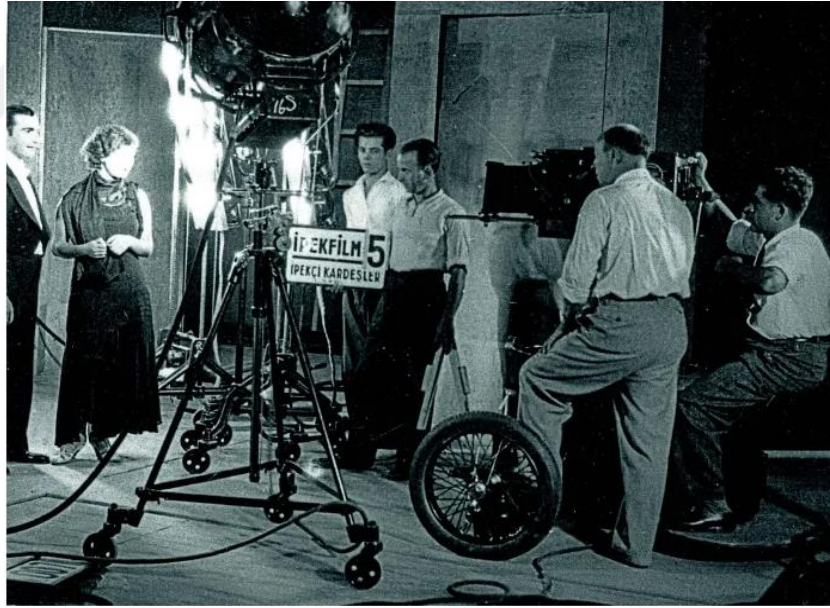


Figure 3.2: The set of the movie *İstanbul Sokakları* (Url-6).

Films that were initially shot with sound were later shot silently and dubbed over, due to economic and technical reasons. While dubbing the silent films, records, and Turkish music were also used for background music (Erdoğan & Solmaz, 2005). In 1951, the first synchronized music for a film was composed in Turkey. Nedim Otyam

composed this composition for the movie *İstanbul'un Fethi* directed by Aydın Arakon. This first attempt was made with a single microphone (Erdoğan & Solmaz, 2005).

3.2 Film Sound Analysis

Bordwell & Thompson indicate that sound is perhaps the hardest technique to study. People are used to tuning out most of the noises around them. In daily life, sound is frequently only a background for our visual attention since sight provides us with the majority of our information regarding the arrangement of the environment. In a similar vein, we refer to viewing a movie and being spectators or viewers: all expressions that imply the soundtrack are incidental elements. People have a strong tendency to consider sound to be only an accompaniment to the moving visuals, which are the true foundation of film (Bordwell & Thompson, 2008). *“To study sound, we must learn to listen to films”* (Bordwell & Thompson, 2008, p. 264).

Michael Chion did pioneering academic work on film-sound analysis. He also developed analysis methods. At this point, Chion's approach and categories should be remarked. Functions of sound according to Chion are as follows:

- **Unification:** This function emphasizes the binding or unifying of the flow image. Chion divided this function into three: First, it unites temporally by bridging the gaps in vision through overlaps in sound. Second, by creating an atmosphere as a framework that appears to encompass the picture, it also promotes cohesiveness. Third, non-diegetic music can bring the pictures together by casting them in a homogenizing stream or bath as it does not rely on the idea of actual time or location (Chion, 1994).
- **Punctuation:** This is a function just like punctuation marks in grammar. Chion says that the editor or the sound editor must take the initiative to employ sound punctually. They work with the noises forced on them or selected by them, deciding where to insert punctuation depending on the rhythm of the shot, the performance, and the overall mood of the scene (Chion, 1994).
- **Anticipation:** When watching an audiovisual sequence, the viewer either consciously or intuitively detects the start of a pattern (such as a crescendo or accelerando) and then confirms if the pattern continues as predicted. A

listener's perception is subtly affected by the expectation of a cadence that is created by musical form. The audience can feel the change in the image-sound band from the front. Subverting the expectation usually results in a more engaging experience. Sometimes, however, the anticipation itself is rendered so beautifully and perfectly that it moves us even when nothing goes as planned (Chion, 1994).

- Separation: Chion means separation with silence. Even in terms of technology, achieving silence is undoubtedly not easy. According to him, one cannot just insert a few inches of blank leader and break the audio flow. It would appear to the onlooker as a technical break. Every area has its own distinct quiet, which is why sound recording outdoors, in a studio, or an auditorium takes care to capture a few seconds of the "silence" unique to that location. If necessary, this background quiet can be employed later to support speech and provide the impression that the action is taking place in a momentarily silent location (Chion, 1994).

3.3 Categories for Analysis

This thesis will analyze sound in the following areas: effect, ambiance, music, dialogue, and silence. The examination will focus on how the voices mesh with the characters' psychological states. The reason behind their use of music and the characters' sound environment will also be reviewed concurrently. It is necessary to detail the basis on which a distinction is made in these categories. First of all, charts were created for each film so that the sound intensities used when examining the films could be seen more clearly. These categories will be explained more in detail to better understand these tables.

The difference between the Silence and the quietness will be explained in the charts. Silence represents a deliberate and truly absolute silence whereas quietness represents a quiet environment for the character. The category of quietness includes things like sitting quietly at home. However, it does not fit into the silence category because it has background noise.

There will also be charts on Dialog and Inner Voice. The dialogue section will elaborate on the diegetic dialogues between the characters, which are explained in

detail in section 3.3.2. Inner Voice is explained by Bordwell & Thompson as internal diegetic sound as follows:

The use of sound to enter a character's mind is so common that we need to distinguish between internal and external diegetic sound. External diegetic sound is that which we as spectators take to have a physical source in the scene. Internal diegetic sound is that which comes from inside the mind of a character; it is subjective. Nondiegetic and internal diegetic sounds are often called sound over because they do not come from the real space of the scene. Internal diegetic sound can't be heard by other characters (Bordwell & Thompson, 2008, p. 284).

Diegetic Music and Non-Diegetic Music categories will be clarified on the chart. diegetic music can be defined as the music that is included in the narrative and even heard by the characters. Non-diegetic music is the music used as the background of the film and heard only by the audience, on the other hand, which are exemplified in this thesis.

The last chart category will be the the Ambiance and Effect In addition to the following sections, within the scope of this study, it is necessary to explain well how these are evaluated. Ambiance means the sound world around the character. For example, if the character is sitting in a restaurant, there are the sounds of plates and cutlery, conversations at the surrounding tables, restaurant music, kitchen noises, waiters' footsteps, etc. These are sounds in ambiance. Effects are explained in detail in section 3.3.5 below. However, in this thesis, the sounds based on the character's movement are considered as effect sounds. For example, if the character sweeps and mops the house, these sweeping and mopping sounds are considered as effects. If there is television noise in the background, this can be considered ambient sound. Sounds created by sound design were evaluated under the ambiance category.

3.3.1 Silence

The use of sound and the selection of sounds became paramount after the silent film era. In the storyline of the film, preferences for silence are just as significant as those for sound. Furthermore, sound gives a new meaning to silence. In a movie, a quiet scene can build to an almost unbearable tension that compels the audience to focus on the screen and wait for any sound to appear (Bordwell & Thompson, 2008, p. 265).

The use of sound in movies will encompass every possible kind of silence, just as color film transforms black and white into gradations of color. It can also be said that silence is a very good example of the separation function, one of the functions identified by Chion.

3.3.2 Dialogue

The dialogues heard in the movie can be conversations, as well as the inner voice of the character or the voice of a narrator. Although most dialogues recorded during shooting can be re-recorded in the studio to provide adequate sound, other actors/actresses can be used for voice change (dubbing).

Dialogue quickly became popular after the transition to the sound film era. Dialogues are a simple way to explain a wide range of feelings, circumstances, and conversations. Although the dialogue is an important part of the sound, it is not as important as other titles in terms of the sound design because it mostly remains outside of it as over time, images and other sound elements became more and more effective at conveying the intended message without requiring as many words.

3.3.3 Music

Music plays a crucial role in the film narrative because it is the primary vehicle conveying a wide range of emotions to the audience and can be used to establish a mood or highlight a dramatic event (Gorbman, 1987). The rhythm, the melody, the harmony, and the instrumentation of the music can strongly affect the viewer's emotional reactions (Bordwell & Thompson, 2008, p. 273). Music can give additional information about the film, strengthen the emotional structure or the dramatic impact of a scene, emphasize equal ideas one by one, augment enthusiasm, provide continuity by connecting separate events and scenes, indicate people's personality and location. Music indicates the situation, the personalities of the people, and the place and time they are in. It can also reveal the psychological structure, connect uninteresting visuals, and draw attention to important points (Öngören, 1976).

Highlighting the significance of incorporating music in films, one could emphasize how challenging it is to encounter a film without music (Erdoğan & Solmaz, 2005). Music triggers emotions. Used in the opening credits, music informs the audience about the film and its genre. It can tell a lot about the place and the time. In summary,

the music used in the film directly contributes to the meaning and visuality of it. Composer Hanns Eisler indicates that film music has a magical function. Eisler explains "the magical function" as follows:

Music was introduced as a kind of antidote against the picture. The need was felt to spare the spectator the unpleasantness involved in seeing effigies of living, acting, and even speaking persons, who were at the same time silent. The fact that they are living and nonliving at the same time is what constitutes their ghostly character, and music was introduced not to supply them with the life they lacked but to exorcise fear or help the spectator absorb the shock (Eisler, 1947, p. 75).

According to Tony Thomas (1973), the music significantly accompanies the film in two important aspects. First, it creates the atmosphere, the ambiance of the place, the era, and the circumstances in which the story is set, whether historically accurate or geographically specific. Its second function is the color tone of the image/picture. The feeling of brightness or darkness in the scene also conveys the film's tension. It can also be used to create a strong or weak effect. For example, it may be the use of music that evokes the personality of the character in the film. This function is generally preferred in non-dialogue parts.

According to Pudovkin (1966), the role of music in the film is to create a subjective perception. While the image provides an objective perception of events, music provides a subjective evaluation of this objectivity. Mahmut Tali Öngören (1976) stated that it is not necessary to use music in every film.

3.3.4 Ambiance

Ambient sounds actually give us a substantial amount of information about the place without us realizing it. For example, even if it is a movie set indoors, the sounds coming from outside give us a lot of information about the place and historical time. The sounds that are not seen in the image but believed to be there are also included in the ambiance. For example, whether other tables or people or the general background can be seen or not, when the audience sees someone eating alone in a restaurant scene with sounds of a crowd talking in the background, they will understand that the setting is a crowded restaurant.

Chion mentions that the ambient sounds could be defined as the sound that permeates a scene and occupies its space. Examples of this are cases where the audience can hear church bells ringing or birds chirping without raising any suspicion about their identity or visual appearance. These can also be called regional noises as their persistent and widespread presence helps define a certain location (Chion, 1994).

3.3.5 Effect

Sound effect covers a very wide area. In his book, Öngören (1976) emphasizes that it should not be forgotten that the human ear distinguishes daily natural sounds from other sounds and selects them. The human ear pushes unintelligible sounds to the subconscious and only accepts understandable sounds. (Öngören, 1976). Sound choices and effects must be chosen with such an understanding. Effects also help separate sound and image from each other. For example, while looking at an image, it is possible to pay the same attention to a sound outside the field of view. Elisabeth Weiss describes the role of sound effects in creating “tension, atmosphere, and emotion”. She mentions that sound “can expand space, add depth, and locate us within the scene” (Weiss, 1995). In the analysis in this thesis, all sounds related to movement are examined under the effect category.



4. ANALYSIS

4.1 The Films Selected For the Analysis

During the film selection process, this study paid particular attention to Turkish women directors. This is primarily due to the fact that there are fewer studies in this field that concentrate on women compared to studies conducted on men thus intended to draw favorable attention to women directors. The study's primary focus was independent film. This is because, in independent cinema, it could be argued that the directors' preferences are most obvious and allow them to make far more creative choices. In the interviews conducted with Ceylan Özgün Özçelik and Nazlı Elif Durlu, both of them expressed their agreement on this perspective (Appendix B).

On the process of choosing the directors, particular attention was given that they were critically acclaimed and award winning in the field of independent cinema. The directors selected -in alphabetical order- are Ceylan Özgün Özçelik, Nazlı Elif Durlu, Pelin Esmer and Yeşim Ustaoglu. While selecting the films of these directors the ones that are closest to the present day were specifically chosen because of their accordance with the technological developments of present day in cinema. In to create further consistency, the years of the selected films were close to each other.

Another aspect, such as selection of films with female characters, was taken into consideration during the film selection process. In particular, it was requested that the voice world of female characters be examined through the eyes of female directors. The table below lists the films that met these criterias in alphabetical order by director name (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 : List of selected movies for this study. (In alphabetical order)

DIRECTOR	MOVIE	YEAR
Ceylan Özgün Özçelik	Kaygı	2017
Nazlı Elif Durlu	Zuhal	2021
Pelin Esmer	İşe Yarar Bir Şey	2017
Yeşim Ustaoglu	Tereddüt	2016

4.2 Ceylan Özgün Özçelik, *Kaygı*

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik was born in 1980 (Figure 4.1). She is an Istanbul-based filmmaker who studied law at Marmara University, but never practiced. In 2003, after having worked as a text writer at several TV stations, she started to produce, write, and host a TV show about cinema which ran for ten years. Between 2003 and 2015, she produced and hosted culture-art shows for TV and radio, and furthermore edited behind-the-scenes and award ceremony clips (Url-7).



Figure 4.1: Ceylan Özgün Özçelik (Url-7).

After having made three shots, she had written and directed her feature debut named *Kaygı/Inflame*, a psychological thriller about memory. *Kaygı* was premiered at Berlin International Film Festival's Panorama Special Section in 2017 and had screened at 40 more festivals worldwide, furthermore it won Luna Gamechanger Award at SXSW. Ceylan Özgün Özçelik and the film were covered by the international media outlets including Variety, Women and Hollywood, Tagesspiegel, ZDF and Politiken (Url-7).

Kaygı, starring Algi Eke, is a film about forgetting and remembering. It is a film that makes one question about social memory. In addition to the international attention received by the film, the director Ceylan Özgün Özçelik won the National Competition Special Jury Prize at Ankara International Film Festival in 2017, and Kerem Ardahan, Sıla Karaca won the best art director award. In 2018, it won the Best First Film and Best Music (Ekin Fil) awards at the Siyad Turkish Cinema Awards.

In an interview with director Ceylan Özgün Özçelik, she explained the origin story of the film as follows (Appendix B):

“Actually, it started with the question of what was in the place of the newly built shopping mall in Taksim. There are brand new apartments in my neighborhood, I don't remember what was there before. Then I ask a friend of mine, there used to be a basketball court. For example, I never remember. But what triggered this was definitely that shopping mall. Because I've asked so many people this. I asked so many people of so many different ages and no one really remembered. One of them said "I think there was a record store there somewhere", the other one said "I don't know what it was there" etc. but I don't want anyone to look on Google. Because our entire memory mechanism now consists of asking 'what was that' and picking up Google, and ultimately this scared me a lot. Because I pursued memory and the question of how far we can forget. As I said, I was definitely going to write something about the media. This main character will definitely be an editor in the media. Because editing and sound design are two very strange things to me and they are very intertwined. Because, for example, we design the sound while editing. Then, of course, something else happens in the sound design process, but we cannot think about the editing silently, let the door slam here, let that crowd scream non-stop here, now let's add a frog. We do these in the editing. So these are very intertwined things for me. But both editing and sound design are actually manipulation. -Because they are things that we cut and change and take away from reality, they are things that we give to the audience what you want them to see and hear. This was also the motto of the television channel in the movie: “What you see is true. What you hear is true.” In other words, there was a new world of news created in the editing. It is said that it is right for the audience to know and that they should know this much. Therefore, an editor, someone who plays with pieces, someone who actually manipulates pieces, I mean it as a profession, I am not saying that Hasret is like this, she opposes it anyway, but it was valuable for me that such a person was the first to reach the truth and remember it. In other words, someone who plays with images and sounds. Actually, I got the whole basis from here.

The subject of Sivas is as follows: I myself close my eyes and remember what is the earliest and first thing I remember on television, after all, because this film will definitely take place on television. And since I asked the question of how much we can forget, on television, I wondered if we can forget the massacres, I mean, all of these actually came one after another. So can we forget the massacres? Actually, we forget. Because, for example, Roboski was very new at that time. But then I saw a news headline about Roboski and I said: What happened with Roboski? Well, I had such a moment and Roboski was very new. So, when you look at the history of a country or the history of the world, every piece of land is full of massacres. All these massacres are data, so, for the brain, it is not such a thing. You know. This and that happened on this date because this happened there and then that happened. But all the massacres in the world have something in common, I mean, I didn't research all of them, but I researched the ones inside the country completely, and when I look at the ones outside, there is a commonality that most of them are state driven throughout the world. So I close my eyes and what do I remember? I remembered Sivas. The memory of the moment that I watched it on TV. I wasn't too-young, I was 13-years old, so I was able to comprehend what it meant and I remembered the moment when Aziz Nesin was hanged from the fire station's car. What did we do with my family, I can't see it at that moment, for example, what was my mother doing, what was my father doing? I don't remember at all. Did we do anything, went out to the streets or something? I don't remember any of this, but I do have that moment when I watched it on TV. I wanted to build something on that swinging moment and therefore on my own memory. In other words, Sivas as the symbol of massacres. But Sivas from a personal place too. So Sivas stands for both of these aspects. It seemed very symbolic to me because burning does not solely mean gathering many people in one place and burn them, but also it was trying to things these people represented such as; tradition, history, art, culture, everything.”she explained.

4.2.1 Synopsis of the Movie

References Second The main character of the movie *Kaygı* is Hasret. Hasret works as an editor on a television channel. She works in the documentary department and edits documentaries. From the first scene of the movie, we begin to see her as stressed, lonely and anxious, even among her friends. Hasret's mother and father passed away when she was still young. Hasret knows that her parents died in a car accident. But one day she decides to investigate the accident and cannot find any accident news about the day her mother and father died, neither on the internet nor in the archives of the channel she works at. Finding this as something suspicious, she starts to wonder, "Didn't they die in the accident?"

While thinking about this question and researching this matter, she switches from the documentary section to the news section in the channel. She reluctantly quits the documentaries he loved and starts working as a news editor. While editing the news, she witnesses how the news are actually manipulated. She is aware that the public is being manipulated. Management and channel managers are aware of the title under which the news is conveyed and how they want it to be conveyed. This new awareness triggers her to investigate the death of her parents even further.

Throughout the film, the name of the district and where the character Hasret lives is not mentioned. However, we see and hear a lot of construction on the road to her workplace and around her house. We even see that the building where Hasret lives will undergo urban transformation and she will have to vacate her flat. But she postpones this procedure until the end of the film. In the film, particular emphasis was placed on urban transformation and the endless constructions that are taking place in Istanbul.

Hasret begins to remember her past memories with what she hears and sees in the garden teahouse or park she goes to after work. One day, in a park area, she hears a sound coming from an imaginary flute, recognizing the sound, Hasret remembers a song that she has known since her childhood. In the same evening at home, she tells her boyfriend Mehmet about this flute and the sound it made. She mentions that she started to research about what happened to her family and believed that they did not die in a car accident. "I think there's something they're hiding from us, from all of us," she says. However, Mehmet says that this thought is paranoid. Even if it was such a big event, we can't all forget, so Mehmet starts to question whether we all forget. He

asks Hasret what she thinks she would find without knowing what she is looking for. Hasret says she thinks they even have control over the internet. Mehmet states that he is afraid of Hasret's thoughts.

Meanwhile, she is uncomfortable editing the news every day at work, arranging them according to the wishes of the management. She continues to go to the park every evening and to try to remember past memories. At home, she thinks about the memories that she is able to remember of her parents. She searches the chests, old items and old records in the house. She searches for the books and music sheets that belonged to her father, who used to play baglama. She looks at old photographs and drawings she drew as a child. She tries to meet his parents' old friends. During this period, she slowly begins to withdraw from her surroundings and stops answering her phone. Mehmet tells her that this situation is not getting better and that everyone is worried, but Hasret does not stop.

Over time, she starts not to show up at work. She stays at home all day to remember. Meanwhile, since Mehmet is out of town, they can only talk through online channels, but she mostly does not answer her phone. Her friend Gülay visits her at home and tells her that she is worried about her. But when she sees Hasret's condition, she gets scared of her and leaves the house before she can do anything. Meanwhile, the apartment attendant asks when she will vacate the house. She watches news and discussion channels on television at home all day long and listens to the manipulated news. She begins to hear sounds coming from inside the rooms and from the walls of the house. As her effort to remember increases, these sounds get louder and louder. She also begins to feel overwhelmed and constantly sweats at home. She describes this situation by saying the walls are sweating and the walls are very hot. Meanwhile, her boyfriend Mehmet makes a video call to Hasret and tells her that he is very worried for her and she needs to leave that house as soon as possible. But Hasret is not able to come out.

Finally, one day, she sees a picture of a fire in a place covered with wooden planks in the house and remembers everything. All the moments and memories we see throughout the movie coalesce together. In a park where she went with her mother as a child, a crowd was chanting "Burn! Burn!" We hear the crackling sound coming from fire. Meanwhile, Hasret experiences a very similar moment with fire in her own house, and she begins to suffocate inside the house. At the end of the film, she forces

herself out of the house and able to breathe outside, and the film ends there. Finally, we see an article regarding the July 2, 1993 Sivas Massacre case, and it is written that this case was dismissed in 2012 due to statute of limitations. It is revealed that Hasret also lost her family in this massacre.



4.2.2 Examining the Sound of the Film

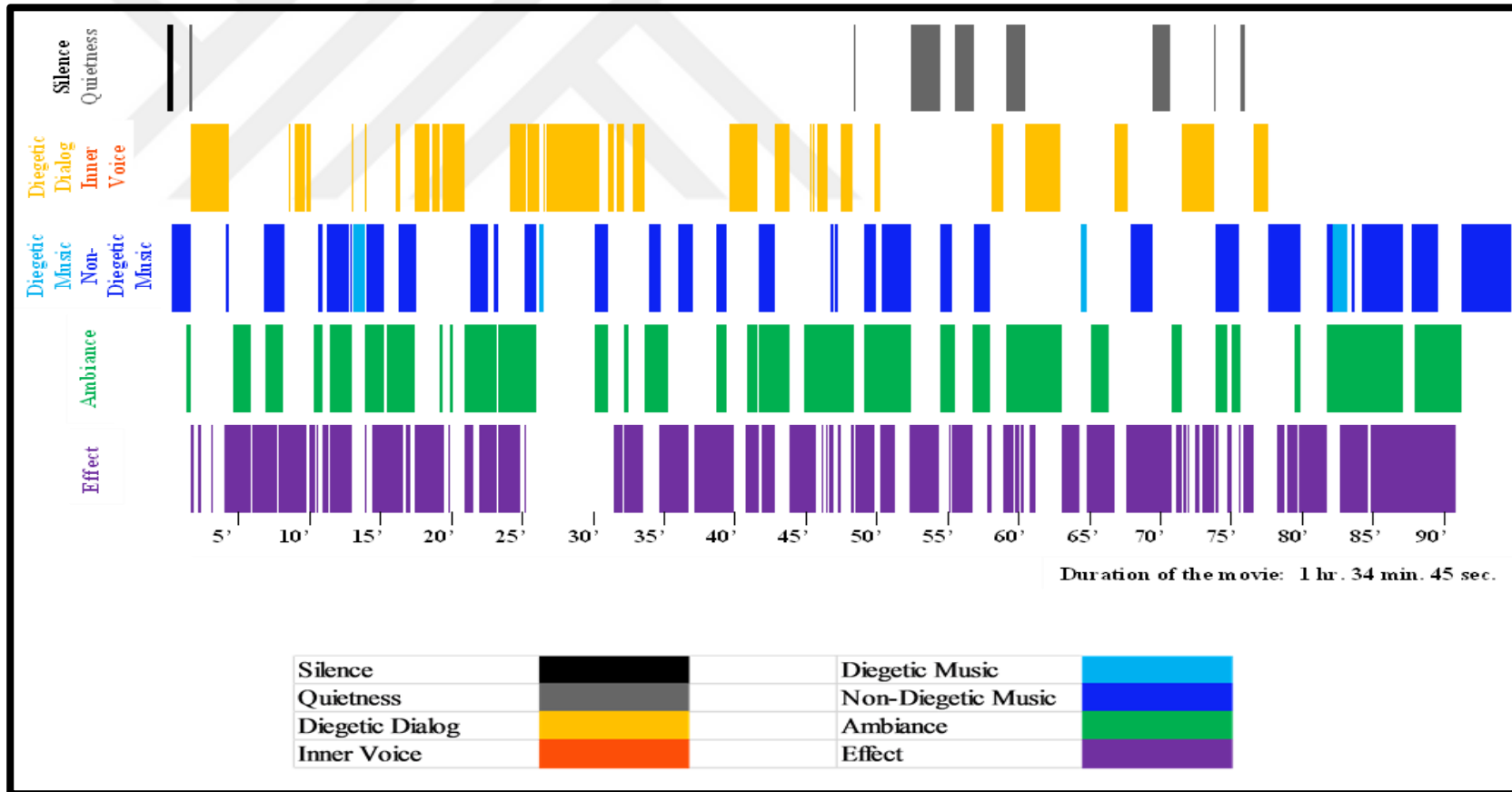


Figure 4.2: Sound Chart for the movie *Kaygi*.

For the sound analysis, a sound chart containing the general distribution of the sounds used in the film is provided above (Figure 4.2). The chart above is expected to act as a guide to deepen the analysis as well as functioning as a foundation to build the analysis upon.

As a matter of fact, the movie *Kaygı* starts with its music, which reflects the emotion of the film quite fittingly. It lays out the atmosphere of the film immediately upon hearing the notes. In our interview with dear Ekin Fil, the composer of the film's music, she interprets the atmosphere which was generally intended to be given in the film as "There was a world inside where I could interpret the dark and mysterious atmosphere as I wished." (Appendix B). The mentioned dark atmosphere is immediately evident in the general shooting tones of the film. Dark colors were preferred throughout the film, in order to support the color scheme, the weather outside was depicted mostly cloudy and grey. This atmosphere is constantly accompanied by construction sounds. In the interview with the director Ceylan Özgün Özçelik, She defined the general soundstage of the movie *Kaygı* as follows:

“*Kaygı* is a story that takes place with one woman and mainly in one place. But in the end, there are basically three voices that the woman hears. At its most basic, she actually hears the voice of the past. But she also hears the voice of today, and through today, she hears the voice of the future. And these voices are shaped like this: the –sound of- urban transformation when she stepped to the streets, the one we have become accustomed to today. So we assume that the constructions are finally finished, but they are not. ... The other voice is the destructive political power. The ruling political power that designs the citizens. The constant voice of power. The other voice is the voice of the media, which is also the tool of power and its most powerful tool.”(Appendix B).

In other words, construction sounds are used throughout the film, apart from the workplace scenes, reminding us of the urban transformation with constant constructions that have not been completed for years in Istanbul. In addition, our main character Hasret is depicted as constantly walking between construction sites in the scenes we see on her way going to-work. A successful world has been created here, both visually and audibly. In our interview with the film's sound designer, Fatih Rağbet, he said, "Ceylan, together with our friend Özgür, who made the film's sound

recordings, went to many construction sites where urban transformation took place during the shooting and recorded their sounds. We took those sounds and recordings and used some of them in sound design or creating the atmosphere (Appendix B)." All the sounds we heard were generated from the real construction sounds of Istanbul during the shooting.

It could be argued that Hasret is a character who struggles to remember. She is trying to find out whether her mother and father really died in a car accident. She works as a television documentary editor. But after her new placement in the news section, it is indicated that she witnesses that the news presented are manipulated, cropped and edited in the channel she works for. It is also important to draw attention to the slogan of the channel: "What you see is true. What you hear is true." But when Hasret realizes that the truth is edited her desire to remember and her feeling of not believing what is said increases. As her effort to remember increase, these sounds she hears would get louder and louder. As the audience, we accompany Hasret in the experience of hearing these voices. Whatever she hears, the audience hears as well.

From the scenes that are depicting Hasret at work, it could be understood that she is not working happily. On a specific scene that takes place at the 17th minute of the movie, her boss calls her and tells her that she has been displaced from her position as a documentary editor to news editor. Although, she openly protests this shift it does not change the outcome. Furthermore, she begins to edit the reality she never wanted, or even opposed, the way she wanted. From the sound world of the above mentioned scenes, it could be perceived that there is an intense mixture of atmospheric sounds and dialogues. The humming of human voices, telephone sounds, shoutingss and ventilation sounds were used as elements in the atmosphere.

Following the unfolding events in the work scenes, there is a scene that carries importance which is one where she encounters a dog while walking on the street after work (Figure 4.3). Time slows down and the start to hear the sounds of the wind and the dog's breathing. At the same time, the voices that the audience start to hear in the background are again the same voices of the day that Hasret was trying to remember in the past. This continuity act could also be seen the last scene of the film. In this scene, it is seen that she starts following the dog and comes to a park. Meanwhile, the audience we hear footsteps again and accompanied by tense music. Later scenes where she reaches the park, the tense slow-motion sounds and music end. It is replaced by

the sounds of birds, seagulls and crows. It could be argued that the crow sound that is deliberately used in this scene in order to evoke things that are not conceived as good. It is relevant to point out that this specific detail stands as an important common ground, because the sound of crows is used extensively in the other films that are examined under this study.



Figure 4.3: The scene where Hasret and the dog encountered for the first time.

The scene where her boyfriend Mehmet comes home and Hasret tells Mehmet about this whole effort to remember. She mentions that she went to the park after work and remembered a song she used to know. This specific scene serves to the director on a personal level. In the interview with Ceylan Özgün Özçelik (Appendix B), the director reveals that her father actually wrote this song for her when she was a kid. Because they forgot this song, she gathered her whole family together one evening and managed to remember it together. In fact, it could be seen that this effort to remember has always existed during the creation process of this film. Again, in the interview with Özçelik, she states that she constructed the relationship between Mehmet and Hasret as follows (Appendix B):

“... I chose to position Mehmet as her close friend and actually like a spectator. Because Hasret is starting to discover things. I'm having a nightmare, what's going on, I'm constantly having a nightmare, I'm digging up things about my past, and Mehmet is actually the audience there. In other words, a close friend who asks her all the questions the audience can ask. Likewise, Mehmet or other

friend figures we see suddenly disappear. So Mehmet doesn't say anything other than "yes, close that house, get out of that house. ”

Özçelik also states that she specifically avoided a love story for this film. Indeed, it could be seen that in the film, when Hasret talks about her nightmares, her worries, and her effort to remember, Mehmet says that she is very paranoid. In the following scenes, he says that he is worried about her and thinks she needs psychological support. However, his actions stays in these words, he does nothing further. This situation is especially emphasized in the sound world in the 30th minute of the film. In the scene where Hasret is talking and Mehmet is listening to her nightmare, suddenly the sound becomes muffled, music and sound design come into play and he is not actually listening to her. In the same conversation, Hasret says that she is constantly sweating, that she is extremely sensitive to sounds, and that she can even hear the sound of her sweat. She also says that she constantly heard sounds similar to construction sounds when she was at home, and when he went and asked the neighbors, she learned that they did not hear them. At this scene in the film, the audience understand that the voices that are heard at home are in Hasret's mind.

A closer analysis suggest that the music used in the film is more electronic-based, unlike the music types that are generally used in Turkish cinema. Ekin Fil, the composer of the film's music, explains this situation as follows: “Ceylan is a director who is very open to innovations. I think that's mostly why we were able to dive as deep as we could. As for the sound, I benefited from the convenient world of electronic tones and synths. I think this brought an alternative to the general perception” (Appendix B). As stated during the interview, Director Özçelik mentioned that she did not want to use music in the film at first. She made the sound design very well and deep and wanted there to be no need for music (Appendix B), but then she decided that there is a need for music in the film. They started working with Ekin Fil upon the suggestion of the sound designer Fatih Rağbet.

Özçelik: “... Ekin had made some music and sent it to me without my request. Without really listening to the music, we put it on the scene where it was needed. It was so beautiful. It's not something that was made for that place. How did Ekin do this? Fatih only sent one page of synopsis. So he didn't even send an image. She did it with a one-page synopsis, the synopsis of *Kaygı*, and we were shocked. How can she understand this soul so well?” explains it this way. Then they started working with Ekin Fil.

Delving into details, while watching the film, one cannot distinguish the music and sound design. It means that a special world has been created that is so intertwined that it is quite difficult to distinguish. In the interview with sound designer Fatih Rağbet, he said the following about this subject:

“Ceylan did not want to use music at all, but as a result, *Kaygı* was a film with the presence of music from the beginning to the end. ... In the end, I think the sound design and the music matched each other very well. So they completed each other. This is a very happy thing for me. Because I think we didn't go above music in any way at that time. Or the sound design of music. I actually think they fit together very well” (Appendix B).

Examining the second park scene in the film, it could be seen that while Hasret is walking in the park, she first becomes uncomfortable with the men watching her. In that scene, there are music and atmospheric sounds in the soundtrack such as wind and footsteps. Further into the scene, it is seen that there is a group of men running towards her. These men are running with sticks in their hands. Immediately afterwards, the scene changes to birds flying on the tree branches. One can argue that the use of crow sounds in bird sounds would be perceived as striking. Hasret starts to remember moments from the past again. In the scene, the audience hear and see a hand reaching out to her through the smoke, a face, and again the dog and the dog's breathing sounds and a torch. The scene depicts that she stayed in the park until dark that day. Then she is again exposed to fictional news. As seen, she expresses that she does not want to continue being a part of this editing and tells her boss that she wants to return to documentary edit, but her boss does not accept. She starts not going to work in the following days



Figure 4.4: She listens to the floor, searching.

In the following scenes, it could be seen that she continues to go to the park and begins to examine the memories and chests inside the house. It is visible that she remembers memories of her mother and father from inside the house and sees them from time to time. She further examines the paintings and photographs made at home. On this scene, the audience witness her loneliness in the house (Figure 4.4). In the scene, she tries to reach out to her father's friends through the phone numbers found in his notes, but she still cannot get an answer. In terms of timing, in the beginning of the second hour of the film, the audience would see Hasret mostly at home. The effort to remember begins to increase. Ekin Fil interpreted the sound world of Hasret as follows: "Hasret's world represents both a lot of faded memories and the very living and vivid world of a woman who does not want to allow this disappearance. Cities that never complete and are always being rebuilt, the conversations and voices of friends who talk but can never offer a real helping hand; Media that constantly produces manipulation and in contrast to all this, an inner world centered around a never-ending suspicion "(Appendix B). As seen in the film, one of the friends who cannot lend a helping hand is the character of Gülay. Director and screenwriter Özçelik made the the following remarks about the character of Gülay:

"When Asiye Dinçsoy's character comes and visits Hasret, she sees what a bad situation she is in. At first she gets angry and wonders what she is doing in this house. But then she slowly begins to fear her. Because she thinks she's losing her mind and says 'call me' on her way out the door. It's actually like her call. She has to grab her arm and pull her out. So, although such words are small symbolisms, for me they also represent the people left to burn in that hotel in

Sivas, because no one could reach those inside. ... nothing that we think will make us feel safe is safe, and no one is safe, even in their 'safe house' in quotation marks. And no one extends that hand to her. Only she can really do something. That's why her alone time was so valuable to me. If a lesser symbolism is desired, this is true even for us today. We've all felt truly alone, hurt and soul-damaged, only to find that we don't have even the slightest source of motivation left. We have gone through periods. Weeks turned into months. It happened to me too. But I don't know what about, say, a help message that goes further than everyone else. And I'm sure there were people I failed as friends with.” (Appendix B).

At this point, it would be right to indicate that the sound design was also used to serve this narrative. In the scene when Gülay enters the house, Hasret does not hear her, she only hears a ringing (in the ear) sound. Further into the scene, Gülay gets angry with her and wants to take her to the doctor. Hasret asks her if she smells the burning (Figure 4.5). She says that she thinks the curtains would catch fire and the walls are hot. Gülay also begins to fear Hasret because of these behaviours. Hasret also asks her to leave and Gülay leaves in fear.



Figure 4.5: Where she smells the burning.

In this scene, Hasret begins to listen to the walls and floors at home. She hears voices and the audience hear these following voices with her; her father's baglama, her mother's voice, their conversations, the flute her mother played. It could be suggested that these sounds also play a huge role in the process of remembering memories (Figure 4.6). Ceylan Özgün Özçelik stated the following about remembering memories through sounds:

“Actually, from my own personal experience, I was remembering a song my father wrote at that time. My father wrote me a song like ‘I had a little bird, I loved it very much...’ Then I gathered the whole family. Do you remember this song that my father wrote? One of them remembered a sentence, the other remembered a sentence, and so on, so we put the pieces together as a family. And then it occurred to me, that family, her family already comes from a folk song tradition, and since it was a childhood song they made for her, it might be that song that revived the memory. You know, in the sense of digging into the past, and this is exactly where the massacre took place, in Sivas, on July 2, 93, they were sitting in a park, playing the flute, singing this song, and actually everything started at that time. Here someone starts walking from here. Some slogans and all that dirty noise. I thought how right it would be if all this sound of death, the sound of killing, the sound of burning came to life with a song. In other words, in terms of what Sivas represents. Because there were artists there, first of all. But yes, sound, for example, comes before smell or visual memory for me about Hasret. So she always remembers by sound. Well, the sound of power actually leads to the voice of the patriarchal group at that time. Therefore, all of these feed each other (Appendix B).”

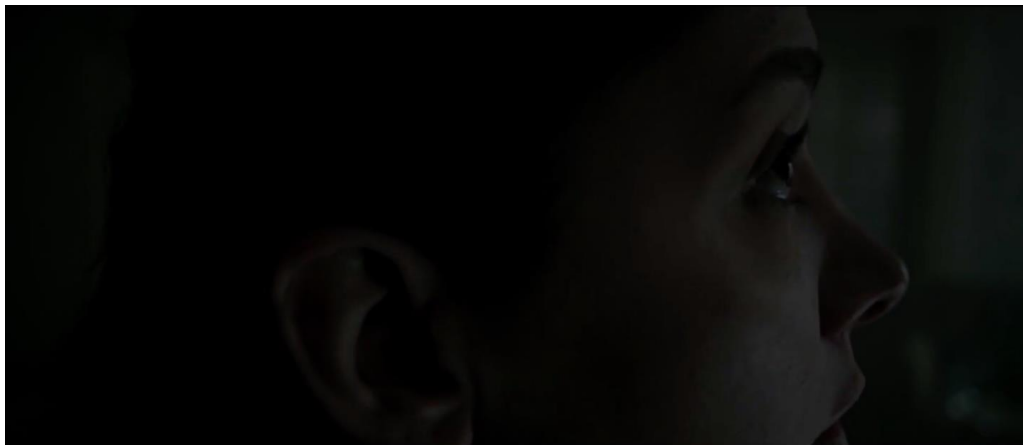


Figure 4.6: The walls are sweating.

In the last scene of the film, when she finds a fire in the house, she fully remembers that day. For the sound design here as indicated in his interview, sound designer Fatih Rağbet requested the sound recording of the crowd and slogan sounds during the filming (Appendix B). In this scene, it could be argued that Hasret actually remembers that day when she was at home and lives a simulation of that day her at home. She tries

to leave the house because she can't breathe, the yellow light falls on the floor and starts flashing and the audience see the fire effect. The audience also hear the crowd and the fire in the sound band and the music also accompanies this moment. The audience hear the men shouting and running along with the sounds of dog's breathing. In this seen, the audience witness her attempts to leave the house, and when she throws herself out, out of breath, the sounds of sirens accompany the quiet street. The film ends with this scene, and the audience see a text regarding the Sivas Massacre. Özçelik makes the following remarks regarding this point:

"...How does memory awaken?' Since it is a film that pursues the question, *Kaygı* can evoke with many things in the memory. That is, by touching, smelling, but most importantly, hearing. And what impressed me a lot and made me think that I needed to work with a very good sound designer was this: While I was researching Sivas, Demet Işık, one of the survivors, had a sentence like this in the judicial process, she said: "I heard the fire." I heard the fire. The sound of the fire is unlike any other effect. This was very powerful to me and I knew we needed to do some deep work on how we could create the fire effect. So how can we instill fear, other than by showing fire like this? Hearing this fire. In other words, the fear caused by hearing the fire (Appendix B)."

In conclusion, it could be suggested that *Kaygı* is a film, written based on hearing the sound of the fire which is used as a symbolism for the Sivas Massacre. This strong symbolism indicates that the sound design has played a big role in the narrative. Ceylan Özgün Özçelik, mentioned earlier that she started thinking about the sound design from the very beginning of the project. This approach of the director is evident this with her narration in the film. It could be important to acknowledge the contributions of successful sound designer Fatih Rağbet and musician Ekin Fil where both of them became a great team and managed to create very successful sound world for the film.

4.3 Nazlı Elif Durlu, *Zuhal*

The director Nazlı Elif Durlu was born in Ankara in 1979. She completed her undergraduate and graduate studies in Cinema and Television Sciences at Utrecht University in the Netherlands. Between 2005 and 2008, she worked as a screenwriter on various films and television series projects in Los Angeles. In 2009, she shot her first short film, *Güven Bana*, for which she wrote and directed the script (Url-10). She

participated in many national and international festivals with this film and received various awards from these festivals. The short film script called "Almost" was shot in 2010 under the direction of Hany Abu Assad and was included in the film Unutma Beni İstanbul, which consists of seven short films (Url-11). This film was also screened at many international festivals (Url-10). Her other short films, which she wrote and directed, *Sonra* (2012), *Düldül ve Bülbül* (2013), were also screened at domestic and international festivals.

The director Durlu completed her first feature film, *Zuhal*, which she wrote together with Ziya Demirel, in 2021 (Url-8). The film had its international premiere at the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival. In the film, Durlu focuses on the story of Zuhal, a middle-class urban woman. (Url 9) Nazlı Elif Durlu was the only female director in the 58th Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival National Feature Film Competition (Url-11). Nihal Yalçın, who played Zuhal at the Antalya Film Festival, received the Best Actress Award from the festival. Seyfi Teoman won the Best First Film, Best Screenplay and Best Editing awards at the 2022 41st Istanbul Film Festival. She wrote the script of the film *Ela ile Hilmi ve Ali* together with Ziya Demirel (Url-11). *Zuhal* was screened in the international competition of the 20th Festival del Cinema Europeo (European Cinema Festival), which took place in Lecce, Italy, between 12-19 November 2022. The film won the Best Screenplay Award and the FIPRESCI (International Critics Circle) Award. Also in the 10th Accessible Films Festival, the film won the National Feature Film Competition with the Best Screenplay Award (Url-10).

Nazlı Elif Durlu (Figure 4.7) currently gives lectures on film reading and film production at the Cinema-TV Department of Istanbul Bilgi University and continues to work on her new project (Url-8).



Figure 4.7: Nazlı Elif Durlu (Url-9).

4.3.1 Synopsis of the Movie

The synopsis of the film is described as Zuhale, the main character, as a woman who works as a lawyer and belongs to the middle-upper class. Initially, the story begins when she starts hearing a cat sound coming from outside her house. The first opening scene of the film opens with the doorman listening to the cat at home. Based on the statements of the director and screenwriter Nazlı Elif Durlu, she wrote this film inspired by a true story. As a friend of her told her about hearing a cat's voice and this was the director's starting point. However, it could be suggested that the rest of the film leans into fiction.

In the interview with director Nazlı Elif Durlu, she made the following statements on this matter:

“The starting point was actually a story I heard. But then, of course, the shaping of that story is a different process. It is changing. So the starting point is that a woman hears a cat sound and no one else hears it. But what kind of woman is this woman? What are the things she actually struggles with in life? What does this film tell, who does she encounter with? Of course, the plot of

the whole story has evolved far beyond the story I was told. So we discovered it in that writing process. But on the other hand, we can also think that what I say we discovered is that we discovered how to reveal the issues that preoccupy me. It was a long process. So the writing part took too long (Appendix B).”

In order to answer these questions, it could be suggested that this film actually narrates the struggle of a woman. In this narrative, she hears the cat sound which no one else in the apartment hears. The character begins to investigate and listen to her neighbors one by one and goes to some people's houses and listens to others from the door as the story unfolds. Further into the narrative, it is revealed that no one can find a cat in their home, there are neighbors she suspects and moreover she is even caught on the security cameras in the apartment building listening to the doors, and finally her neighbors question her about this at the apartment meeting where they voice their doubts about their safety. On the other side of the narrative, the children start to make fun of her and she starts to be treated like a crazy person. In the mid part of the story, while looking for the cat, she falls into the gap in the apartment and her foot gets injured.

Due to the conflict described in the earlier scenes, it is concluded that she has a disagreement with her neighbors, following this line, her mother comes and makes her cookies and asks her to take them to the neighbors and apologize as the story progress. However, it could be said that there is not enough evidence to draw a conclusion about the relationship between the mother and Zuhail from the dialogue between the characters. In addition, the narrative indicates that Zuhail also has a boyfriend who is far away. The audience witness them talking on the phone or video calls, but cannot see him next to Zuhail throughout the film. The audience watch Zuhail from the perspective where she is in her own home and alone. In the very beginning of the story, her boyfriend gives Zuhail a bedside table as a gift which is visibly does not fit in the house and throughout the scenes, the bedside table sits in the hallway for days until the cat is found, waiting for the rescue teams to arrive.

It could be emphasized that another important character in the film is Emel, played by Şebnem Keskin. Emel's character is described as Zuhail's neighbor from the neighborhood. In her storyline, every evening, she hits the cars parked on the street and sets off their alarms at night. From the narrative, it could be concluded that she uses this action as a way to attract attention and show her reaction. Towards the middle

of the film, Zuhail learns that they are colleagues however, Emel has retired. In a scene where Emel starts urinating in the middle of the street while looking at Zuhail, Zuhail gets scared and runs away from her.

In the scenes, the general environment is described with neighbors who cry like they're making cat noises, who have babies, and whose house is full of cat figurines and the doorman's daughter drew pictures of cats at home and hung them on the wall. Under the light of this description, she suspects the neighbors yet she cannot find any evidence. In the scenes of her boyfriend and Zuhail, it is visible that the boyfriend doesn't do much other than ask what the situation is and isn't supportive and Zuhail cannot sleep at night, she cannot go to work due to the condition of her foot, she is tired and sleepless. On a deeper analysis, it could be suggested that no one believes her, she tends not to believe anyone either, and she doubts herself. In a scene where she goes into the nightstand that her boyfriend bought and starts crying there, further into the scene her boyfriend calls at that very moment, but she doesn't tell him anything and pretends to be at work. The scene continues with the door ringing and the doorman comes where he says that his daughter also heard the cat in the empty flat. Zuhail doesn't believe it at first, but then they go to the empty apartment. This part of the scene could be considered as a pivotal moment, they convince the real estate agent, who always talks at home, to remain silent upon the girl's request and the characters start listening to the cat's voice. After a few minutes, the cat actually meows through the wall.

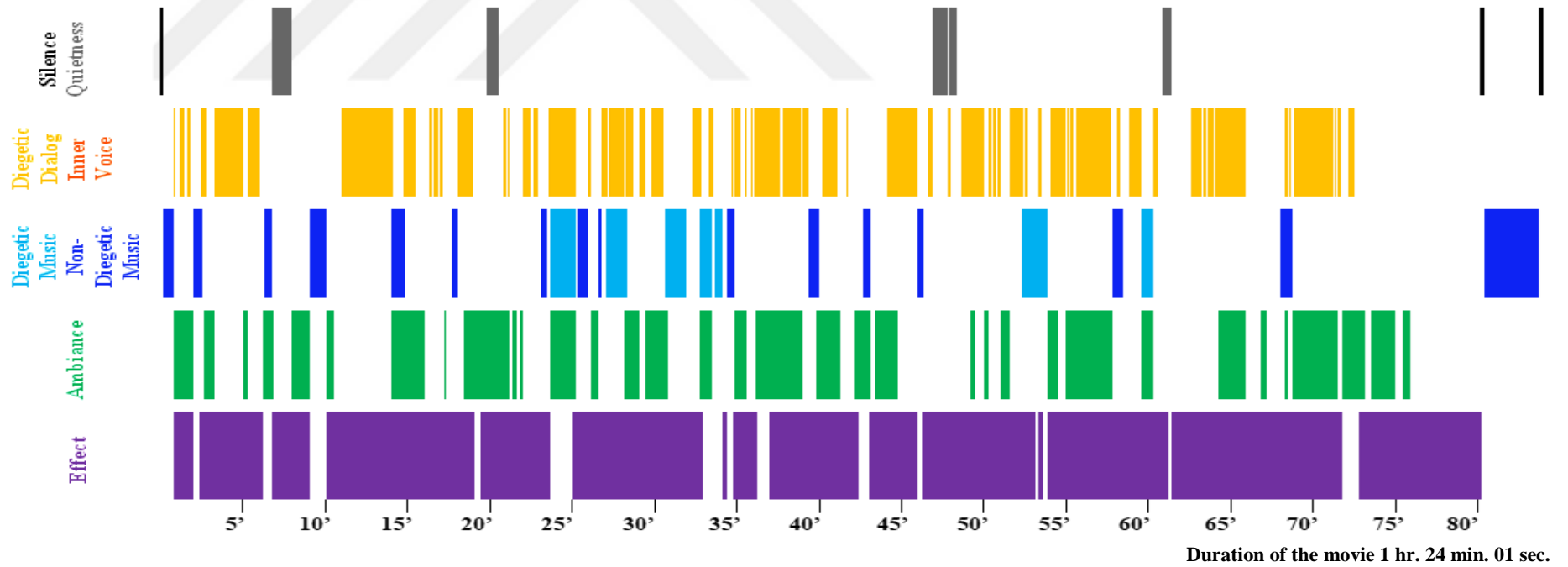
In the following scenes, the cat is located, the fire brigade and apartment management are called. However, when the fire department said the wall had to be broken to get the cat out, all the neighbors objected. The real estate agent says that the homeowner should be notified, the manager says that the walls should be examined in detail, and the majority opposes. In the same scene, Zuhail goes home and the craftsmen have arrived to dismantle the nightstand and replace it. Both cases were solved on the same day which could be considered as a fundamental resolve moment in the story. In the evening scene, Zuhail sees the fire brigade leaving from the window.

In the last scene of the film, it is described as at night she hears the cat's voice again, and simultaneously the character Emel hits the cars parked on the street below and sets off their alarms. After hearing this, it could be argued that Zuhail's character experiences a breakthrough, she takes a hammer and enters the empty apartment where

the cat is stuck, by breaking the balcony window. She breaks the wall with a hammer and takes the cat out of the wall and hugs it. The film ends with this moment as its final scene.



4.3.2 Examining the Sound of the Film



Silence		Diegetic Music	
Quietness		Non-Diegetic Music	
Diegetic Dialog		Ambiance	
Inner Voice		Effect	

Figure 4.8: Sound Chart for the movie *Zuhul*

For the sound analysis, a sound chart containing the general distribution of the sounds used in the film *Zuhal* is provided above (Figure 4.8). The chart above is expected to act as a guide to deepen the analysis as well as functioning as a foundation to build the analysis upon.

As could be understood from the chart, the film begins with music dominated by percussion instruments and the text flows. The music stops in the beginning of the first scene. As depicted in the scene, Zuhal and the doorman listen to the cat sound that Zuhal says she heard (Figure 4.9). However, this time the cat doesn't meow and Zuhal says she can't hear it either. In the next scene after the doorman leaves, music starts again while the name of the film appears in the screen. It could be argued that the type of music used in this scene aims to be humorous upon first hearing it. In addition, there is also use of music that aims to create suspicious feelings. In the interview with director Nazlı Elif Durlu about the music of the film, she made the following explanation:

“Music was quite a difficult process. At first, there was music that we used in the editing. It had to create the feeling we created in it, because it was music used in another film, and it had to be different. I think this was a bit of a challenge for musicians. We constantly searched for ways to verbally express the question of exactly what we want to do. In the end, we had a page of writing that was both abstract and concrete. It was like this: 1- It should be music that will make you want to be a detective, 2- It should be playful, it should have a bit of humor in itself, 3- It should create the feeling of a cat like this walking on the piano, just imagine a piano, etc. Of course, I don't know how this sounds for musicians, but our musicians really created something that really touched my heart. I am so happy (Appendix B).”

Again, regarding the music, in an interview with the film's sound designer Fatih Rağbet, he made the following explanation:

“Zuhal's music is much more minimal, much more classical, like the jazz of the 60s. I don't mean simplicity in a bad way. It was something very naive and very selectively done. That's why I think her music is so successful. I can't remember the names of the guys who made this music, I think it was the first thing they did. I think it was a very appropriate music that suited the film. It

was a very appropriate music in terms of its limit and dosage. As workmanship. And it didn't get in the way of the sound. The sound did not actually get in the way of the film. Music too. That's why I think Zuhul is a very good example (Appendix B).”



Figure 4.9: The first scene of the movie – Zuhul and the Doorman and listening to the cat.

In scenes of the next morning, the servicemen bring a bedside table into the house. Zuhul is also talking on the phone with her boyfriend. Her boyfriend sent her this nightstand, but it doesn't fit in the house. Her boyfriend on the phone also intervenes with the servicemen, but the servicemen say that they can only dismantle the bedside table and replace it, they do not have the necessary toolbox with them. They will say they will fix it tomorrow and leave. In the next scene of the same day, Zuhul hears the cat's voice while she is in the toilet and stops for listening to the cat. It could be seen as an important scene where the audience, accompany Zuhul's hearing experience and always hear the cat next to her.

The character of the boyfriend is not visible to the audience throughout the film, he only exists as a voice through conversations online or on the phone. It could be argued that this aspect of the character is intentionally chosen as a metaphor. On this subject, the director Nazlı Elif Durlu said the following in our interview:

“Her boyfriend works abroad. He always says he will come, he will come. He just doesn't come. I always say this: There are two things in the film, not only in appearance but also in sound: A boyfriend and a cat. And you know, we always ask a question about reality, which is more real here? There was the

question of whether the cat is more real or the boyfriend. We can say that the boyfriend cannot fill his place completely. In other words, Zuhail has no place in his life. This is a gift from her boyfriend that was previously on the nightstand, either by phone call or by sending a gift. And the bedside table that doesn't fit in the house. This is a relationship that tries to exist but doesn't actually exist, so we can't call it a real relationship. I think it is a relationship that increases Zuhail's loneliness rather than reducing it (Appendix B).”



Figure 4.10: Zuhail listens to the cat while sitting in toilet.

In the narrative, Zuhail begins to question the cat's whereabouts (Figure 4.10). She starts by asking her neighbor across the street, but gets no answer. She looks into the apartment spaces, examines the gaps through the apartment windows, but cannot find it. In a scene, at night while she was sleeping, she heard the cat again and loses her sleep (Figure 4.11). Then it moves, it is the window creaking from the wind. It is revealed that this squeaking sound is very similar to the cat sound she heard and she gets up and examines it in the next scene. Sound designer Fatih Rağbet said the following about this scene: “There was a scene where Zuhail was sleeping. She wakes up in the middle of the night. The door was changing with the wind, “Should the squeak of the window turn into a cat sound or not?” There is such a thing in between, trying to do it. These are small details but annoying. In other words, these were the places I enjoyed (Appendix B).” In this scene, Zuhail goes out to the balcony after losing sleep. Just as she was about to fall asleep on the balcony, her neighbor, the character Emel, set off the alarms by hitting the cars parked on the street. Zuhail feels uncomfortable

on the balcony and walks in and hears the cat's voice again. Then she hears the sound of her next-door neighbor making love and is torn as to whether it resembles cat or not. Further into the scene, she puts her ear to the wall and starts listening to them and to hear more clearly, she takes a tea glass and leans it against the wall and starts listening (Figure 4.12- Figure 4.13). However, she decides it isn't the cat and suspects it might be in the empty house in the building. In later scenes, she manages to enter the flat with the real estate agent who is representing that flat. She and the doorman Yavuz look for the cat everywhere, but they cannot find it.



Figure 4.11: She is suspicious of the gap of apartment.



Figure 4.12: She listens to the walls.



Figure 4.13: She listens to the walls with tea glass in order to hear better.

After this scene, Zuhall is seen working at home with her assistant. Her assistant's phone rings and she asks permission to talk on the balcony. When she opened the door on her way to the balcony, it could be heard that there is a sound of a crow used in the scene, which is a previously mentioned common ground among the three films. At that moment, Zuhall hears the cat's voice again and then asks her assistant if she heard it too, but realizes that she didn't hear it either. At the scene at night, she watches the cat documentaries continue to search for the cat in the apartment. It is mentioned in the narrative that she can only sleep at night with sleeping pills and this fact becomes a reason further in the narrative for her to not wake up on time and lose a case at work to another lawyer.

In the upcoming scenes, she starts visiting her neighbors' flats. First, she goes to the house of the apartment manager Mr. Berkay and his wife Ms. Fazilet. In interviews with sound designer Fatih Rağbet and director Nazlı Elif Durlu, they said that they have carefully considered the sound of each house. When we enter this house, there is an old couple and they are listening to an old song on an old radio. In the scene, the window is open, Ms. Fazilet waters the flowers, birds chirp. Mr. Berkay tells Zuhall not to leave the apartment door open, a cat can enter even if there is no cat. He says that it is forbidden to have a cat in the apartment, but they are suspicious of the lady in the apartment who has divorced with her husband. Then Zuhall goes to the mentioned apartment.

In this apartment scene, the house is depicted with full of cat figurines and pictures. There is a teenage girl and a primary school age boy at home. The inside of this house

is quiet, at first we only hear the street noise from outside. Then the little boy passes through the living room and we start to hear the sound of the block flute. The mother at home is painting the wall. When Zuhail comes, she continues to paint, she convinces her by saying it will be very good for her and makes Zuhail paint. In this scene, Zuhail asks about the cat figurines and even goes to the toilet and looks around the house, but there is no cat. In the following scene, she knocks on the door of another neighbor who listens to loud music, but no one opens the door. She also looks at the garbage in front of the door and looks for signs of the cat. But she still can't find it. The sound world in Zuhail's own house is generally silent. Neighbors' voices are heard from time to time. The piano exercise sounds are audible from time to time which could be considered as an example of how silent Zuhail's apartment. It could be argued that the alarm sounds on the street and of course the cat's voice could be considered as a stable constant for Zuhail's apartment's sound world.

In the scenery of the next day, Zuhail is at the apartment meeting. From the conversations, it could be understood that she is not someone who attends many meetings. However, she was specifically summoned because she was caught on camera listening to a neighbor's door. The neighbours show Zuhail the footage and tell her that there is no cat in the apartment (Figure 4.14- Figure 4.15). The man in the bugged flat also voices his concerns about the safety of his family. Zuhail says that she is a lawyer and they should not be afraid. Then the apartment manager tells her that she is very tired and Zuhail leaves the meeting. Just as she was leaving the door, another neighbor named Ozan claimed to have heard the cat. He invites her to have coffee at his house and listen to the cat, but Zuhail immediately understands his intention.



Figure 4.14: While watching the footage in the apartment meeting.

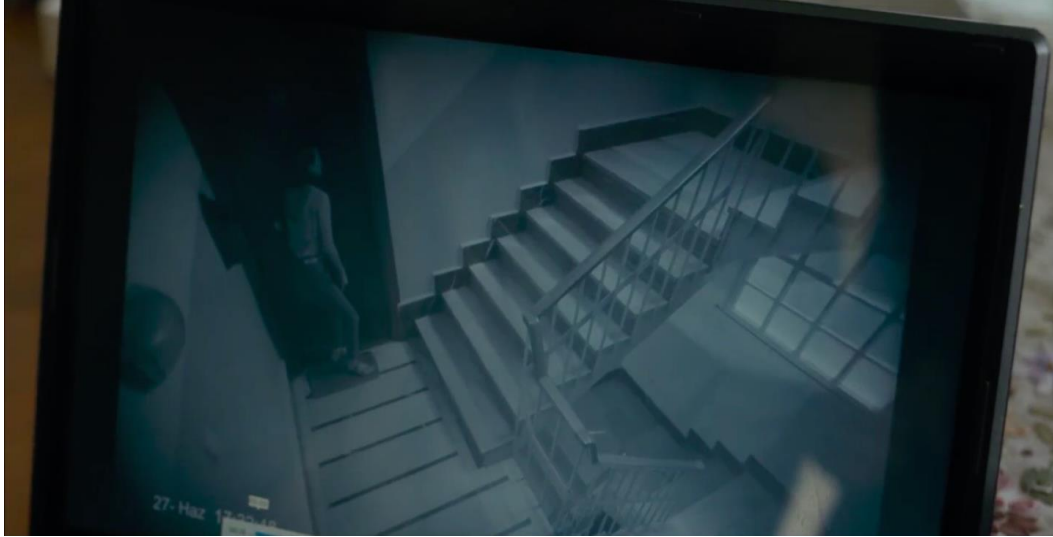


Figure 4.15: The footage shown in the meeting.

In the scene of the evening, while looking for the cat in the apartment, she falls down and injures her foot. Apartment attendant Yavuz's little daughter finds her and they immediately take her to their home and dress the wound of injury. In the scene, Zuhale looks at the cat picture hanging on the refrigerator which leads her to suspect the little girl. The next day, her mother comes to her house in the morning. Saying that she needs to keep good relations with her neighbors, she bakes cookies to take to the neighbor whose door she was listening to in previous scenes. In the following scene, there are two babies in the house where Zuhale brings cookies. And a mother who is very tired of these babies opens the door. She puts her baby in Zuhale's arms and goes to her crying baby inside. They put both babies to bed, sit on the armchairs in the room, facing each other, and fall asleep to the lullaby "*uyusun da büyüsin*" from YouTube (Figure 4.16). Nazlı Elif Durlu explains this scene in our interview as follows:

“That whole scene is a little bit like a scene of two women getting closer to each other. On the one hand, Zuhale lives a very isolated life, and because of this cat sound, she enters other houses and witnesses the lives in other houses. We can say general, even if they are very different from themselves, and we can say that we witness that each woman struggles with a different problem in her own way. There too, that neighbor is very different from her, but neither of them can sleep and it was interesting that they shared that moment. I mean, I think that scene summarizes the whole film a little bit. Moment of intimacy (Appendix B).”



Figure 4.16: Zuhall sleeps while listening to the lullaby.

In the scenes of the next day, she meets with Emel on the street. Emel sets off the car alarms again and leaves food for cats on the street. Emel wants to tour with Zuhall in order to get to know her, Emel starts by introducing herself that she was an administrative judge and is retired. Zuhall cannot believe that they are colleagues. Nazlı Elif Durlu explains her interaction with this character as follows: “She is also Zuhall's colleague. But on the other hand, she is the character that Zuhall is most afraid of turning into. Because she is a character that cannot be considered normal. And for me, it's one of Zuhall's last encounters before she finds the cat, and I think she encounters the most frightened version of herself there. But then she gets courage from this (Appendix B).”

In the scene where she goes to another neighbor's door, she is sure that they have the cat. Although they do not open the door at first, she persistently rings the bell and the crying neighbour opens the door. When she enters, she realizes that the owner's cry carries a great amount of resemblance to the sound of a cat meowing. It could be understood from this seen that both the audience and Zuhall think that that voice comes from this woman. Fatih Ragbet said the following on this subject:

“Because Nazlı wanted something like that. Because there were things that were important to Nazlı, such as a cat voice or a human voice? Because something like this happens there, does Zuhall think that a human voice is a cat voice, or is it really a thing? So, it was actually something that was done at Nazlı's request. There were sounds of such a couple running around in the

opening of the film. But is that the sound of making love or not? Nazlı had a wish to make it stay in between like this. It was done based on that. Yes, it was an interesting idea that came to my mind now. So, of course, there are Nazlı's ideas and the director's ideas. Finding out what director wants and doing something accordingly (Appendix B).”

Upon the completion of the first hour of the film, in the scenery, Zuhall tries to push the bedside table towards the corridor, but it doesn't work. She then goes into the bedside table and stays there for a long time, crying. When her boyfriend calls, she acts as if everything is fine and she is at work. At this point, it could be suggested that both Zuhall and the audience doubt themselves on reality. Then in the next scene, the door rings and the doorman Yavuz comes and says that his daughter heard the cat and he heard the cat too. Even though Zuhall doesn't believe it at first, she goes after them. They say the cat was in the empty apartment. In the next scene, they all go to the empty apartment together. The real estate agent opened the door again. They look everywhere but can't find it. The little girl says that if everyone stays quiet, the cat will meow. Zuhall silences the real estate agent who is constantly talking on the phone. They all listen silently together. Just as Zuhall and the audience are about to give up, a cat's voice is heard. The sound is coming from inside the wall. It could be said that this scene represents a pivotal moment in the film (Figure 4.17- Figure 4.18).



Figure 4.17: Everyone silently listens to the cat.



Figure 4.18: The meows from inside the wall.

As the scene unfolds, the fire department comes and says that they need to break the wall. But all the neighbors object and an argument ensues. The apartment manager says an investigation should be done, the real estate agent does not want any damage to the house, and the fireman says that the cat will smell very bad if it dies. Zuhall cannot stand this conflict and goes to her house and finds the servicemen waiting for her at her door. They came to dismantle the nightstand and assemble it on site. In the next scene, she sees the fire brigade leaving from the window. In the scene at night, she wakes up again to the sound of alarms coming from below. She immediately gets up, takes a hammer and enters the empty apartment by breaking the window from the balcony. Then she pierces the wall with a hammer and takes the cat out of the wall and hugs it. The film ends here on this moment. Nazlı Elif Durlu made the following remarks about this last scene: “We actually have a sound-related detail from the film. She hears alarm sounds while lying in bed before going to break the wall. So, we can say that she hears sounds that remind her of Emel's character, and she gets some strength from that. You know, the character that inspires, no matter what people think, I don't have to act normally as they think (Appendix B).”

In conclusion, it could be argued that this film contains multiple metaphors such as the cat voice representing that no one believes in women, toxic male neighbours, a boyfriend whose voice we only hear, etc. A special sound world was created and accompanied this narrative along its stages. A separate sound world has been created for each character's home. In addition, it would be important to emphasize that there is a function of the sound that is not traditionally perceived is used, which is the provability element. This could be further explained, if a cat comes and knocks over a

flower pot, this incident could be proven with the evidence, however, a sound of meowing does not constitute a stable and reliable evidence. About this function, Nazlı Elif Durlu explains: “Yes, I thought it would be something uncatchable. That's why it makes it something much more mysterious. ... I think the fact that he was uncatchable always excited me (Appendix B).”

4.4 Pelin Esmer, *İşe Yarar Bir Şey*

Pelin Esmer, is a writer and director of fiction and documentary films, she studied sociology at Boğaziçi University and later on attended Yavuz Özkan's Z1 Film Workshop (Figure 4.19). She worked as an assistant director in documentaries and fiction films, and later on founded her own film company, Sinefilm. She started making independent films in 2001; She shot the films *Koleksiyoncu*, *Oyun*, *11'e 10 Kala*, *Gözetleme Kulesi*, *İşe Yarar Bir Şey* and *Kraliçe Lear*. The documentary film *Oyun* (2005) had its international screening at the San Sebastian Film Festival. It was screened at more than fifty festivals around the world and received multiple awards, including the "Best Documentary Director Award" at the Tribeca Film Festival (Url-13).

It is important to mention that her first fiction film, *11'e 10 Kala* (2009), was one of the six projects selected for the Cannes Film Festival Cinefondation. Esmer completed the script of her film here. *11'e 10 Kala* was screened in the official selection of the San Sebastian Film Festival, received multiple international awards, and was released in Turkey, France and Germany. Her second fiction film, *Gözetleme Kulesi* (2012), which opened at the Toronto and Rotterdam Film Festivals, was screened in many countries and in five different states of the USA as part of the Caravanserai Program. Her third fiction film, *İşe Yarar Bir Şey* (2017), was deemed worthy of the FIPRESCI best director, best screenplay and best actress awards in Turkey, as well as the best screenplay award at the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival. Pelin Esmer, who was invited to Berlin by the DAAD Artist-in-Residence Program in 2018, developed the documentary film *Kraliçe Lear* (2019) during her attendance. *Kraliçe Lear*, which premiered at the Sarajevo Film Festival, continued its journey in festivals abroad and was deemed worthy of the Yılmaz Güney Award and the SİYAD Cüneyt Cebenoyan award at the Adana Altın Koza Film Festival in Turkey. Pelin Esmer, who was invited by the Camargo Foundation to the artist residency in Cassis, France, in the fall of 2019,

started working on her new fictional film project there and currently continues to carry her project (Url-13).



Figure 4.19: Pelin Esmer (Url-14).

4.4.1 Synopsis of the Movie

Pelin Esmer's description of the film on her website states the following:

“Why would someone like Leyla go to a high school reunion dinner? And take an overnight train to get there. After all, she hasn't been to a single one for the last 25 years... What is Canan, a student nurse, doing on the train? Reluctantly going to an interview for a nursing job when she would like to be an actress instead. And Yavuz? He spends all day lying by the window watching the passing hawkers, horse carriages and people. He is waiting for Canan, or maybe Leyla, or maybe a executioner and a poet who meet on a train one night. (Url-16).”

As Pelin Esmer expressed in her interviews, this film was born with the sentence "How about making a film about a woman poet" by Barış Bıçakçı, the co-screenwriter of the film (Url-21). The film's story is about a woman named Leyla, who is actually a poet. The film begins with the inner voice of the character Leyla (Figure 4.20). That voice actually starts by talking about the meal in the last scenes of the film and what will be discussed there. It could be understood that she is guessing, but at the same time she also knows. According to the narrative, after 25 years, Leyla decides to go to Izmir by

train to meet her high school friends. The first scene of the film opens at the train station. While waiting for the train at the station, she meets Canan and her father. Her father says that Canan is going to a job interview and asks if she can keep an eye on his daughter. Leyla accepts. In this scene, it is visible to the audience that Canan is disturbed.

In the next scene, the train journey begins. Leyla reads a lot of books and watches out the window. As the scene unfolds, her thoughts and inner voice became audible so that the audience is able to accompany her voice, follow her train of thoughts with her. That evening, while Leyla is sitting in the dining car of the train, Canan also comes and they sit across from each other and order food. Later in the scene, two women traveling on the train, they sit next to each other and start chatting as there is no room left at another table. They ask each other about their professions. From this interaction on the scene, it could be understood that Canan is a nurse and her dream is to become an actress. Leyla reveals that she is a lawyer. From the phone call Leyla have made, it is revealed that her boyfriend is an actor. Later in the scene, during the conversation, Canan tells about an incident that happened to an acquaintance of hers at the hospital, a man who was paralyzed from the neck down asked his doctor friend to kill him. However, his friend could not achieve this. After telling this incident, the old woman sitting at the table agreed with the paralyzed man. Leyla starts asking questions in the conversation.

The scene of the next day, she learns that Canan went to that paralyzed man to kill him. She asks her questions and tries to protect her. That night she learns all the details and makes a decision. She will also go with Canan. However, Canan opposes this and does not accept her stance. In the next scene, after the train stops in the station, Canan gets scared and doesn't know what to do. She gets into the same taxi with Leyla and asks her to stay with her until she gets in. In a later scene at home, when she rings the bell, she gets very scared. Leyla says she can go upstairs and check if it is the right flat. She comes in and Yavuz recognizes Leyla as soon as he sees her. He says she is a poet that he has been following since her first book. Leyla is afraid at first because she is recognized. Then she calls Canan. Later on the trio start a very sweet conversation and Leyla says they can come again tomorrow. Yavuz also accepts this invitation.

In the night scene, Leyla goes to dinner with her high school friends. All the conversations she described at the beginning of the film and predicted would happen. The audience overhear her friends' conversations and gossip among themselves. The next morning scene, they go to Yavuz's house again, the audience hear their conversation, but the scene is not fully visible, instead the focus is shifted to the landscape out of the window. The scene shifts to Leyla and Canan leaving the building and the film ends on that moment.

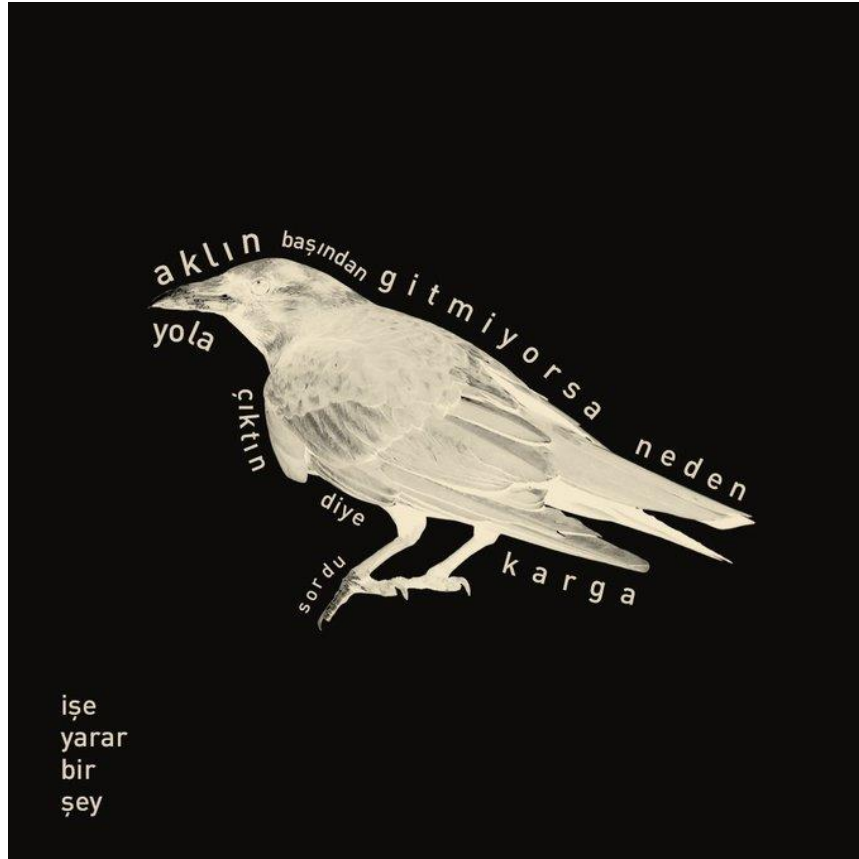
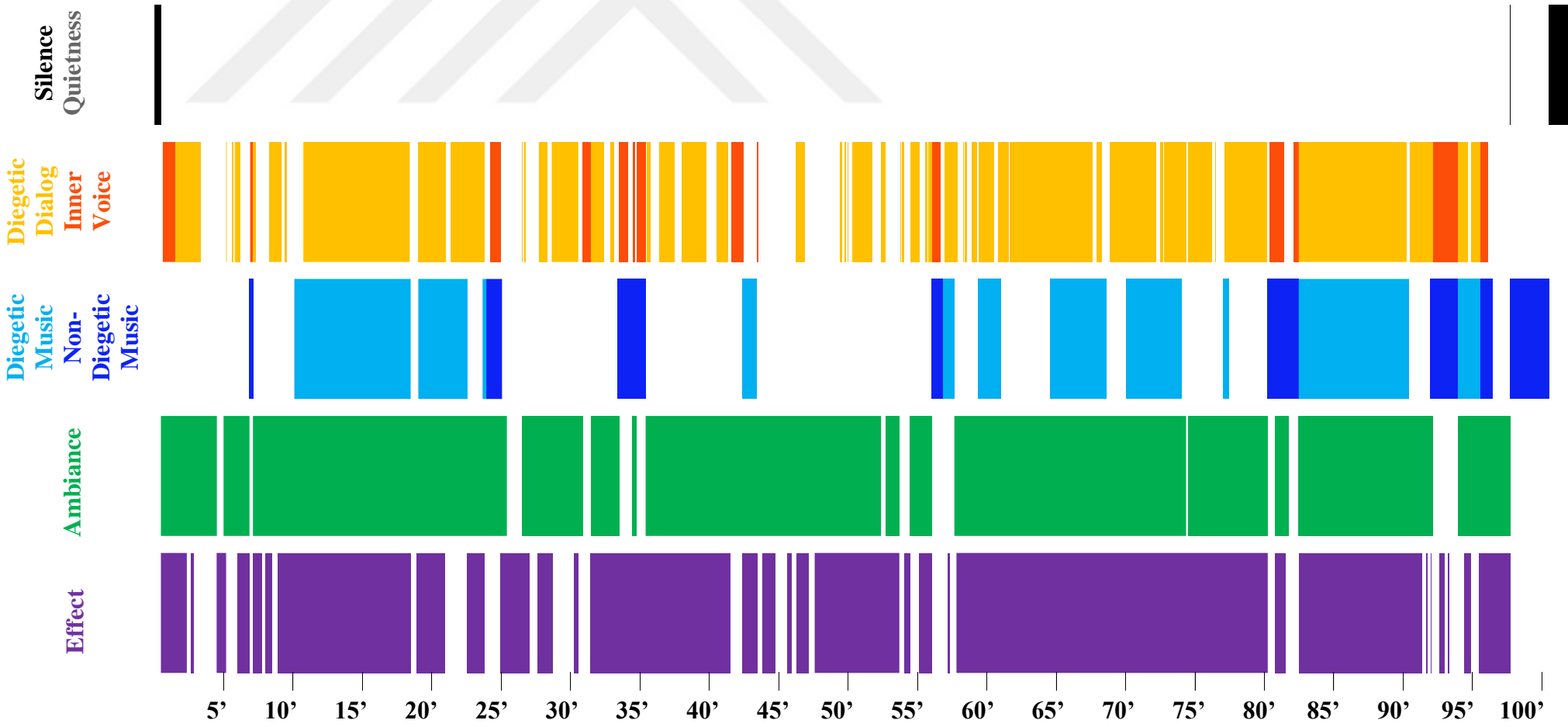


Figure 4.20: A poster of the movie with a crow (Url-17).

4.4.2 Examining the Sound of the Film



Duration of the movie: 1 hr. 42 min. 20 sec.

Silence	Black	Diegetic Music	Cyan
Quietness	Grey	Non-Diegetic Music	Blue
Diegetic Dialog	Yellow	Ambiance	Green
Inner Voice	Orange	Effect	Purple

Figure 4.21: Sound Chart for the movie *İşe Yarar Bir Şey*.

For the sound analysis, a sound chart containing the general distribution of the sounds used in the film *İşe Yarar Bir şey* is provided above in the same structure as the other films (Figure 4.21). The chart above is expected to act as a guide to deepen the analysis as well as functioning as a foundation to build the analysis upon.

The film begins with the image of a clock and Leyla's inner voice. From the first scene, what will happen in the dinner scene is revealed to the audience. Furthermore, since the film starts with a visual of a clock, it could be concluded that it is used as a metaphor about time, cycles and order. The fact that she can predict everything in a certain cycle and her predictions on what will happen stands as a supportive element to time metaphor. Moreover, it could be perceived as she is trapped in the cycle and order. At the end of the film, it is revealed that she accepted this journey because it was a train journey, as her friends said. Although they explain that it is to collect material, she interprets this as something romantic. During this scene, the character Leyla is walking from inside the station to the outside and only her footsteps are heard. The moment she walks out the door, the atmosphere starting to emerge and Leyla returns to the present in a way and begins to watch what is happening around her.

Leyla sees Canan, whom she will soon meet, helping a newlywed couple take photos. Canan, who is holding a frame for them, says that her hands are showing in the photo, but the photographer says he will delete them. Then the photographer tells the couple who are not actually smiling to smile. It could be argued that this scene is used as a metaphor based on fake memories and fake smiles. In the following scenes, Leyla, Canan's father and Canan sit next to each other on the bench. Canan's father entrusts his daughter to Leyla. From the conversation here, it is revealed that Leyla went in the sleeping car and Canan went in the couchette car, which reveals that Leyla belongs to a higher economic class than Canan. On the scene where the train arrives, they get on the train and the journey begins. In the scene, the rails are seen while the name of the film appears, the separate rails intersect. In fact, the stories of two different women

intersect in the narrative of the film which is in line with the visual of rails. It is known that in this film, director Pelin Esmer specifically asked cinematographer Gökhan Tiryaki to shoot the reflections. In the film, Leyla's reflection in the glass is scene in the majority of the scenes on the train (Url-22). In this context, it could be suggested that reflections could be used as a metaphor between reality and abstraction. In the first scene on the train, Leyla sees a young man drawing a crow figure with spray paint through the window. The policeman coming from the front sees the child and wants to warn him, but cannot blow his whistle. She looks behind him with a smile. As in other films, there is the common element of crow visible here as well with a slight difference that, the visibility of the crow is not limited with sound but extends with visuals throughout the film.



Figure 4.22: Leyla sees the young man.

In terms of the symbolism behind the crow, it could be argued that it carried multiple meanings in the narrative (Figure 4.22). Firstly, La Fontaine's tales, the crow is actually the narrator and we watch the events through the eyes of the narrator in the film, Leyla. Secondly, the crow is known a scavenger, an animal that eats “useless things” which may represent those things in the movie. Thirdly, in Turkish culture, the meaning of the crow comes from a belief among ancient Turkish culture that it carries the souls of the deceased to the other world. However, generally the crow symbolizes bad luck and death. In this film, it could be claimed that this crow figure is in a place that can include all of the above meanings.

Since the majority of the film takes place on the train, and the train sound is constantly in the sound world. It is important to point out the sound transition during compartment changes which is well executed. In the scene, Leyla is reading Gülten Akın's book *Kırmızı Karanfil* in the dining car while drinking beer. The train stops at a station.

Leyla looks outside and her inner voice becomes audible again (Figure 4.23). She begins to poetically describe what she saw on the glass. This is the moment where the first music in the film takes place, which is a single solo cello sound. A sound accompanying Leyla's thoughts. In the film, Leyla's inner voice is given a large space which could be understood from the "inner voice" color in the sound chart provided at the beginning. In the scene where Leyla is lost in her thoughts, the waiter comes and pulls the curtain, warning her of a stone that may hit the glass, however, in reality it is clear that he didn't want them to see a woman drinking beer from the outside. Leyla also understands this and after he leaves, she gently opens the curtain and continues to watch outside.



Figure 4.23: Leyla watching outside (Url-15).

In a scene, Leyla enters the toilet, she sees a crow figure on the wall and draws a background underneath with her lipstick that allows the crow to land somewhere (Figure 4.24). That evening, while Leyla is watching the outside in the dining car, Canan comes to the dining car to eat and sits across from Leyla. They order food together. In the conversation, Canan tells that she went to a job interview and Leyla continues by telling that she went to visit her friends. In fact, she is going to a dinner organized by her high school friends for the first time in 25 years. At that moment, her phone rings and from her conversations it is revealed that she is talking to her boyfriend and that he is also an actor. From their conversations after the phone call, it becomes

clear that Canan also has a boyfriend, but they live in distant cities. In this scene, diegetic music accompanies the environment with a music reminiscent of a light tavern atmosphere with instrumental melodies along with train sounds in the background. Later in the scenes, since only the seats next to Canan and Leyla are empty, two more women come and sit with them. It is revealed that the old woman is a singer and the young girl next to her is a dancer. The director introduces these two characters to the narrative in a very sympathetic way. From the rest of the conversation, it is understood that Canan wants to be an actress. She tells that her boyfriend doesn't support her and her family doesn't know about it yet.



Figure 4.24: The crow that Leyla saw in the bathroom and make it land with her lipstick.

In the scene Leyla gets up to go to the toilet again, sees a balcony outside from the window while waiting in line. First, a woman comes out to smoke on the balcony and then a man comes out and brings a blanket to her back so that she won't get cold. Leyla watches them with a smile again. During this moment, although the train sound very muffled, it is still there, and the audience can hear the conversations of those on the balcony. Back at the table, Canan explains that a man who was paralyzed from the neck down asked a doctor friend of his to kill himself. But his doctor friend said he couldn't do it. He tried to make an expedition but was unsuccessful. This story caught Leyla's attention and she started thinking about it and asking questions. "Someone can only ask for this from someone they love very much, and that person cannot do it because they love them very much," says Leyla. Canan agrees with her view, Then Leyla asks for the rest of the story. Canan says she doesn't know and at that moment

the train stops and the lights go out. Another train passes quickly and its noise is audible. The sounds of plates, forks and general restaurant sounds accompany the atmosphere. In the next scene the happy birthday song comes on and the reason for the lights being turned off becomes clear. A deeply diegetic music comes into the scene.

In the next scene, the cello plays again. This cello is accompanied by the ticking of the clock and Leyla's inner voice again and nothing but these sounds, there is no train sound and the audience is inside Leyla's head. Thinking about this story in her mind, she dreams in a poetic language and meanwhile drawing with pencil. Upon the ending of this scene, train sounds start again and Leyla is back to her reading Gülten Akin's book again. Meanwhile, the train stops. She gets up and looks outside. Leyla sees Canan outside and sees her going somewhere in a hurry. We hear the noise of people outside and the sounds of dogs. Meanwhile, on the train, an old man drops his apples from a bag next to Leyla. It is known that the apple has a symbolism with multiple meanings in cinema and it could be suggested that it was included in this narrative on purpose. Later in the scene the train moves and Leyla is lost in her thoughts. Leyla sees Canan coming in and she goes to her and they talk while watching outside (Figure 4.25). Canan says she is thinking of returning and Leyla realizes. "You're going to the man who wants to die, aren't you?" she asks. Canan remains silent and accepts, then Leyla asks for all the details and does not want Canan to be harmed. Through the details, it is revealed that the name of the person who wants to die is Yavuz, and the name of his doctor friend is Hüseyin.



Figure 4.25: The moment where Leyla realizes the matter, seen through the reflection.

It is worth mentioning the character names and their meanings are also important in films. The meaning of the name Leyla means beautiful woman with black hair and dark night. The name Canan means a devoted or loved woman, the name Hüseyin means free, free and small, beautiful lover and lastly the name Yavuz means tough, strong and tough. In fact, it could be seen the name choices tell a lot about the characters represented in the narrative.

Leyla looks out the window again and gets lost in her thoughts. Again, the audience accompany her thoughts and as soon her inner voice starts, the train sound stops. It's kind of like we're leaving that reality at that moment. Then she asks Canan many questions. The medicine she will use, how she will administer it, who will handle the death report, etc. She doesn't want her to get hurt. She even calls the doctor who will issue the death report, Hüseyin, and asks him to confirm it thoroughly. At that moment, she sees the boy on the train drawing a crow with spray paint outside, smiles slightly and gets lost in her thoughts again. Meanwhile, the audience hears the sound of the train and the cello again which is always accompanies Leyla's inner voice. About the crow and the boy, Yavuz and Canan, the train breaks down and they wander around the area at night. The boy who drew the crow drawing something on the wall with spray paint comes to the screen again. Meanwhile, in the sound world, there are street sounds, wind howling and distant dog barking. Then Canan and Leyla sit in a village coffee at the end of their wandering. In the scene when a politician enters the café to chat with the people there, Leyla says "the atmosphere here is bad" and they leave. The boy is drawing a crow again as they pass by that wall.

The train is repaired and Leyla's inner voice starts again, this time accompanied by a muffled train sound. When her thoughts are finished, the man sitting at the back table of the dining car singing the folk song "Ah Bir Ataş Ver". Leyla also sings along to this folk song. The train passes through tunnels. Throughout these tunnels, we see Leyla's reflection in the glass and her inner reckoning accompanied by train sounds and train whistles and a great amount of reflection was used in these scenes. Finally, this showdown ends with the crescendo sound of the incoming train, and the sentence "I'm coming with you", echoing both in Leyla's mind and in real life. Canan does not accept this and wishes she had not told her. As the scene progress, Leyla comes out of the compartment, the sound of the train slows down, there is a sunny and beautiful sea view from the window, Izmir and the sounds of the sea and seagulls.

In the next scene, the audience see them through a window. In traffic, Leyla looks for a taxi and Canan gets in the taxi. Meanwhile, there are street sounds, traffic, horns and people's footstep.

When they arrive at Yavuz's house, Canan asks Leyla to wait until she goes upstairs. Finally, Leyla is the one who goes up and looks. Canan gets scared and waits downstairs. Yavuz is very surprised when he sees Leyla. At Yavuz's house, there are the sound of the sea and the crowd outside. The house is quiet. The only sound heard in the house is the ticking of the clock. The same clock was ticking while Leyla was thinking about Yavuz on the train before. It is important to point out that this clock is a deliberate and a wise choice. Yavuz recognizes Leyla and tells her that he has been following her since her first book. Leyla is both surprised and afraid. Leyla's inner voice speaks again, she answers her first book from within herself and is again accompanied by a non-diegetic cello sound. Later in the scene , Leyla begins to hear this cello narratively and asks where this music comes from. Yavuz states that his neighbor upstairs is a cello teacher. In fact, the voices that emerge while dreaming of Yavuz fall into place under this context with the cello and the ticking of the clock. Yavuz starts talking about her poems and asking questions. At that time, Canan comes up, Canan arrives, the sound of the clock becomes much more clear. Leyla wants to go, but Yavuz asks her to stay a little longer. At that time, Canan wants to give her friend's letter to Yavuz. However, Yavuz says "poets love letters" and asks her to give the letter to Leyla. Meanwhile, we hear the cello teacher's voice from upstairs (Figure 4.26). Canan is surprised to learn that Leyla is a poet and says, "You said you were a lawyer?" she asks. However, Yavuz replied, "Poets do not say that they are poets when asked about their profession."In this scene, it is learned that Yavuz is also an engineer.



Figure 4.26: The first moment Leyla hears the sound of the cello diegetically.

At that moment, a crow comes to the window. Yavuz is surprised when he sees the crow. Because he says that the woman working for him drove him away and he never came back. He mentions that crows do not stay at places where they feel danger (Figure 4.27). Leyla also says that the crow may have felt that she was harmless. When talking about more daily things, the clock sound decreases considerably. In this case, it can be said that the voice reminds of the last minutes and death. Yavuz says that Leyla went there out of curiosity, seeing a person die is a big thing, and poets are curious. Leyla, on the other hand, states that she is not wondering from afar, she is experiencing it too, and is affected by it. Meanwhile, the cello is heard again, muffled as if it were coming from upstairs. Yavuz tells that he needs influence to write. Leyla responds by saying, "I couldn't stand it any other way." Yavuz asks how Leyla became a lawyer, to which she responds: "To make a living". She says she wants to be a lawyer and do "something useful". We hear the name of the movie for the first time here. Yavuz asks: "Isn't it useful to write poetry?" Canan says acting won't work either. Yavuz responds to these by saying: "Of course it is not like nursing". Pelin Esmer said in her interview (Url-23) that she often compares herself to her friends who are doctors and thinks that she is not as beneficial as them. In fact, this is where the movie got its name from.



Figure 4.27: The figure of the crow coming to the window can be seen before the audience can see him.

In the rest of the scene, we understand that Yavuz follows Leyla to her interviews and that he is very good at hearing her. Meanwhile, we continue to hear the cello. The squeak of the rocking chair in which Canan is sitting also increases the tension in the environment. While the cello instructor upstairs is mentioned, everyone looks up and we see the reflections of the water hitting the glass upstairs (Figure 4.28). The cello sound is visualized with these reflections. Just as the cello piece ends, we hear the clock ticking again. This sound is also accompanied by chair squeaking. Then, they start talking about Cortazar's story, *A Yellow Flower*, while Canan prepares the needle. Again, the clock sounds decrease and the cello begins to play. Leyla asks, "Should we come again tomorrow?" and Yavuz says okay. He asks, "Today is not enough, do you want to do something useful tomorrow?" as clock sounds increase. Although Canan is worried, they leave. Again, plenty of reflections and lights accompany us along the road and at the hotel.



Figure 4.28: Reflections of the cello.

When she leaves for dinner, he looks at Yavuz's apartment from a ferry window. After landing, we look at his apartment and see the cello instructor upstairs through the window (Figure 4.29). We also hear the sound of a cello, which is also non-diegetic. Then comes the dinner scene. The camera starts showing the people at the table one by one. During every conversation, we stop and hear what they are saying. Meanwhile, diegetic tavern music accompanies us in the sound world. We hear restaurant noise and the hum of people in the background. Throughout the movie, we hear all the dialogues that Leyla guesses. A friend of hers starts reading Leyla's poem after which we finally see Leyla. While the poem is being read, we suddenly begin to hear it with her inner voice. Leyla is again accompanied by the sound of the cello. In the narrative, we see Canan and Leyla while white tulle curtains are flying. There are cinema commentators who interpret the wind as the hand of God (Url-24). Tulle curtains are flying also in the poem Leyla reads. Then suddenly both Leyla's voice and the sound of the cello reciting poetry are heard along with the deep sound of the clock. We see Leyla and Canan leaving behind a flying white tulle curtain. Meanwhile, we continue to listen to their conversations. Leyla turns and looks behind her. Canan does not look at all. When they disappear from the picture, the cello falls silent and we are left with the sounds of the seagulls, the sea, and the crowd. Then the texts start flowing. While the texts are flowing, we hear the single cello sound we always hear, this time as a duo cello.



Figure 4.29: Leyla stares at the cello instructor as she leaves for dinner.

It can be said that in this successful film, both the sound designer Cenker Kökten, and director Pelin Esmer did an excellent job. Even the details they used in the sound tell a lot and it is a film where sound is used in detail. Director Pelin Esmer also states in many interviews that she attaches as much importance to sound as image and that she is very happy that this is understood by the audience.

4.5 Yeşim Ustaoglu, *Tereddüt*

She was born on November 18, 1960, in Sarıkamış. She studied architecture at Karadeniz Technical University. While she was studying at Karadeniz Technical University, she received an architecture scholarship and went to Austria. There she carried out her studies in performing arts. After returning home, she completed her master's degree at Istanbul Yıldız Technical University, Department of Restoration. She worked as a reporter while he was a student in Istanbul. Firstly, her short films; She received awards from various festivals with her films *Bir Anı Yakalamak (Catching a Moment)* 1984, *Magnafantagna* in 1987, *Düet (The Duet)* in 1990, and *Hotel* in 1992. She shot her first feature film, *İz (The Sign)*, in 1993. She shot the movie *Güneşe Yolculuk (Journey to the Sun)* in 1998 and won many national and international awards. In 2003, she shot *Bulutları Beklerken (Awaiting the Clouds)*, the script of which was based on the stories of her own hometown. In 2009, she met the audience with her fourth feature, *Pandora'nın Kutusu (Pandora's Box)*. With this film, she won awards at many national and international festivals, and the film was screened. In 2012, she appeared before the audience with the movie *Araf (The Purgatory)*, which was shot as a co-production between Turkey, France, and Germany. Although she preferred to work with amateur actors, especially in her first films as she generally focused on

identity issues, she worked with professionals in her last two films, 2012's *Araf*, and 2016's *Tereddüt (The Doubt)*. (Url-18).

Since Yeşim Ustaoglu started her cinema career in 1984, she has made a total of ten productions, including four short films, six feature films, and one documentary. Yeşim Ustaoglu was the director, producer, and director of the movie *Tereddüt*, which is the subject of this thesis (Figure 4.30). The film, starring successful names such as Funda Eryigit, Ecem Uzun, Mehmet Kurtuluş, Okan Yalabık, and Serkan Keskin, received awards from many festivals at home and abroad. The film premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival.



Figure 4.30: Yeşim Ustaoglu (Url-19).

As she stated in our interview, for Yeşim Ustaoglu (Appendix B), the issue of sound has always been important. In fact, after her first short film experience, she started shooting dialogues with sound. She also says that she may be one of the first directors to try this in a feature film in Turkey (Appendix B) to the extent that, in the movie *Araf*, she used the rhythm of the last song as the rhythm of the factory sound throughout the movie and made a reference to this music (Appendix B) Watching her films, it is clear that she valued sound, but also used many details that could not be easily caught.

4.5.1 Synopsis of the Movie

The movie *Tereddiit* begins with tense music, muffled wave sounds, and wave images. Nature and waves are very important for this movie for they accompany the moods of the characters. After the waves, we see the character Şehnaz who is a psychiatrist. Her husband Cem works in Istanbul and she goes to İstanbul to see him on weekends. On weekdays, we see them talking via video. Then, we see Elmas, a child bride. There is a significant age difference between her and her husband. She is at home all day and does household chores, takes care of her sick and elderly mother-in-law who lives in the flat across. When her husband comes in the evening, the family has dinner at her mother-in-law's.

Elmas's husband loves Elmas in his own way. We see that he is trying to be nice to her by buying her gifts, but we can still say that he is a cold person. He tries to hide her from everyone and does not want her to leave the house. Elmas watches her peer in the building across with admiration. She looks up to her freedom. She does not love her husband or mother-in-law and she is unhappy. She always looks through the windows of other apartments.

Meanwhile, although Şehnaz's marriage seems perfect from the outside, she also has own problems. Her husband Cem is a narcissist and porn addict. Şehnaz is disturbed by this situation, but she tries to solve it without expressing it. She constantly tries to attract Cem's attention. Meanwhile, we see that the sea and nature accompany the characters depending on their mood. Meanwhile, Şehnaz and Cem act as if they are very happy when they are together or with friends.

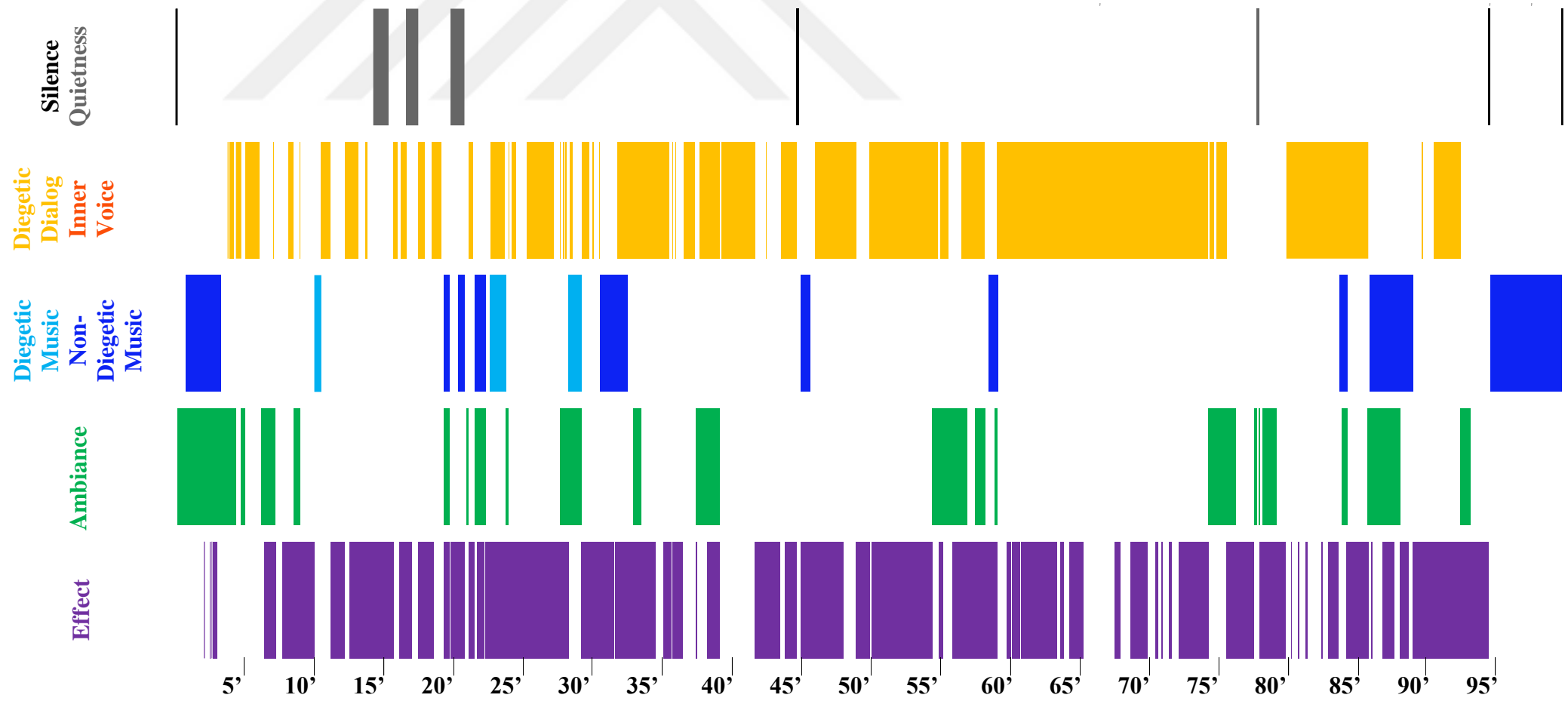
One morning, neighbors find Elmas on the balcony, and the police and ambulance are immediately notified. Elmas is taken to the hospital where Şehnaz works at. First of all, the character Umut, played by Okan Yalabık, examines her, but due to her psychological state, he also calls Şehnaz. That night, Elmas's husband dies due to gas at the house. Her mother-in-law also dies from an overdose of insulin. Because of this situation, the police wait for her to be well to take a statement.

Şehnaz begins to get closer to Umut. She goes to his house, has dinner and stays with him. During these days, the weather is always stormy and the sea is wavy. While Şehnaz is treating Elmas, she also confronts herself. She begins to question the relationship she is in. Finally, after Elmas explains all her traumas to her in a nervous

breakdown, Şehnaz tells her husband that she wants to separate. Her husband, who seems very modern, does not want her to leave the house. He does not leave her home all night until the morning. But in the morning, Şehnaz leaves the house. We see her driving in the car with the sun shining on her face. She cries but also smiles. This is how the movie ends.



4.5.2 Examining the Sound of the Film



Duration of the movie: 1 hr. 39 min. 43 sec.

Silence	Black	Diegetic Music	Cyan
Quietness	Grey	Non-Diegetic Music	Blue
Diegetic Dialog	Yellow	Ambiance	Green
Inner Voice	Orange	Effect	Purple

Figure 4.31: Sound Chart for the movie Tereddüt.

The first scene of the movie is very important as it begins with waves (Figure 4.31). Throughout the film, the weather, nature sounds and the sea are used as if they were living beings. When our characters are calm and happy, we see birds chirping and a sparkling, calm sea; When our characters are in a troubled mood, we see a wavy sea and stormy weather. This scene is accompanied by music based on stringed instruments. We can describe it as tense and slightly sad music. In our first scene, we see wavy sea and cloudy weather. When the camera opens a little more, we see Şehnaz watching the sea from the window and then taking a photo of it. Şehnaz is a psychiatrist. In the very next scene, we see her get in her car, drive through a town, and reach the hospital. When she arrives at the hospital, the music ends and we begin to hear the hospital ambiance. Meanwhile, we first see the scene of Okan Yalabık. Although his name is not mentioned in the movie, we learn from the roll-caption at the end that his name is Umut. He is also a doctor in the same hospital. We see Şehnaz watching the sea a lot. In the evenings, she video chats with her husband Cem, who is in Istanbul.

Then we see Elmas. After seeing her husband off to work from the balcony, she looks around and lights a cigarette when she makes sure no one is there. She hides it from her neighbor when she goes out to the balcony, so we understand that she smokes secretly. Meanwhile, the weather is cloudy and we hear crows. Then, she enters and moves to the flat across whereher mother-in-law lives in. She gives her an insulin injection and goes back to her apartment to start doing her chores. She sweeps the floor and makes the sheets. Silence prevails in the house. This silence actually emphasizes Elmas' loneliness. Elmas wears a headscarf at all times and does not take it off even when she is inside the house. Her husband seems to hide her from everyone. He buys her a gift and protects her from her mother. Meanwhile, Elmas always watches the

happy families and happy peers in the apartments across through the windows. In the evenings, when she is in bed with her husband, she always prays silently, "Please God, please let him not be with me." Meanwhile, we hear the sound of a detail that we will see later in the sound world. The small window of the bathroom bangs with the wind. Meanwhile, Şehnaz goes to Istanbul to see her husband. She often catches him watching porn. The sound world of this house is also generally quiet. We hear a fireplace and a cat. In her dream, Şehnaz sees the waves lifting her bed and the building filling up. Here, it can be said that Cem's character feeding a cat is a symbol of his ungratefulness.

In the next scene, we see Elmas bringing food to her husband's workplace. Burhan İlkılıç, who analysed the movie, likened this scene to the story of *The Little Red Riding Hood* (Url-20). Elmas has a red headscarf on her head. When she enters her husband's shop, we see that he sells hunting equipment, thus likened to the story of the hunt and the hunter.

After this scene, a bright scene begins with very sweet and calm music. The sea is calm, the weather is sunny and there is a smile on Elmas' face. She lights a cigarette. Birds chirp. In the scene where she returns home, it is dark, there is no music and we hear crows. Meanwhile, Şehnaz and Cem cook together and prepare the table. We hear diegetic and enjoyable music in the background. The next day, Şehnaz goes to Cem's workplace to make a plan and waits in his room until he is done. We hear the sounds of rain coming from the window in the room. There is also a siren sound. The weather is cloudy and overcast.

That night, while Elmas is having dinner with her husband and mother-in-law, we hear the sounds of thunder from outside. They chat and gossip while eating. In addition to the sound of plates and forks, we hear the deep sound of the television. Her mother-in-law hints that they should have children. Her husband gets angry at his mother for sending Elmas to bring groceries during the day and tells her not to ask Elmas to go out, and that he would do this before coming home. From this, we understand that he does not want his wife to go out. When they go back to their house, the thunder sounds continue. Elmas is praying again on the bed. She prays to God, saying, "Please do not let him come and want me tonight." At that moment, the window opens due to the storm and is forced to close it.

Şehnaz and Cem are at a party that night. We see them dancing in a club-like place. Immediately afterward, we hear the sounds of Elmas' pain while her husband is having sex with her. Her husband tells her to throw coal into the stove and goes to perform ablution. Again, we hear the sound of thunder and the banging of the window in the bathroom. Her husband tells Elmas to perform ablution too. So she goes to the bathroom and closes the window. We hear the sounds of the beads hung at the top of the window.



Figure 4.32: The Bathroom Window.

In the next scene, it is morning, and there is dramatic music. We see her neighbor across the street calling out to Elmas. When the camera pans, we see Elmas there, unconscious and cold. At this moment, we hear a bell sound, even though we do not see it in the image. When I asked her about this sound in our interview Yeşim Ustaoglu indicated that she was referring to the small bells in the previous window: "You place the objects there and animate their sounds. You know, it was a strange silence, and after a while, we left it in the bathroom for no reason and an incredibly strange situation. Oh, what happened, now the police. Of course, they are the very small elements that create that tension (Appendix B)."

The sound of the crows are heard after this scene. Suddenly the police arrive, while we see the curious looks of the neighbors through the reflections on the balcony glass, we also encounter reflections in this movie.

Elmas is brought to the hospital by an ambulance. Doctor Umut wants to examine her and asks questions but receives no response. She does not allow him to examine her. Umut calls Şehnaz and they perform the examination together. In the next scene, Şehnaz tries to talk and communicate with Elmas but Elmas does not talk much. Then we see Umut and Şehnaz by the sea. Although the weather is not sunny, it is bright and the sea is quite wavy. In fact, we can say that it reflects Şehnaz and her ebb and flow. Meanwhile, they discuss Elmas' situation.

In the next scene, we see Şehnaz and Elmas in a session in Şehnaz's room. These scenes are very silent except for the dialogues. We hear Şehnaz's calming tone and Elmas' shy and timid answers. From the conversation here, we understand that she is angry with his mother and father. That evening, Şehnaz cooks dinner for herself at her home in Istanbul and eats it in front of the fireplace, accompanied by raki. We understand from these dinner scenes that she prefers raki and Cem prefers wine. Cem comes home after Şehnaz sleeps. He says let's sleep and carries Şehnaz to her bed. Şehnaz wakes up a little later with a sound like a scream and cannot see Cem next to her. When she looks up, she sees that he is watching porn again. There is also dramatic music. When she sees this, she can not stand it, puts on a stylish nightgown and goes to Cem. She turns off the computer, puts it aside, and they make love. Then Cem goes into the shower and when Şehnaz is left alone on the couch, she starts to cry.

The next day at the hospital, an inspector asks Elmas, "Did you kill your husband and mother-in-law?" Elmas has a nervous breakdown and screams, not letting anyone near her. Şehnaz comes immediately and calms her down. After she calms down, she cries. She explains that her husband and mother-in-law smelled very bad, that her husband did not give her money, that they cast a spell on her, and even though she made the sheets but nothing satisfied them. Elmas learns that her mother is coming, but she does not want to see her.

The next scene takes us to a very peaceful, bright lakeside. At first, we see the reflections of Umut and Şehnaz in the water (Figure 4.33). Umut introduces himself by saying, "This is my little paradise." This scene is accompanied by bird and seagull sounds. Şehnaz is happy here and the nature reflects upon this. They talk about Elmas' situation again. Then they drink raki together and Umut makes barbecue. Meanwhile, their conversations are accompanied by the sounds of seagulls and the barbecue.

In the next scene, we see Elmas in the hospital and a beautiful and bright sunlight comes from the window behind her (Figure 4.34). Here, in our interview with Yeşim Ustaoglu, she conveyed a very special sound detail as follows:

“I would like to give an example of a plan from *Tereddüt*. Because it's simple but I think it's so powerful. There she is, alone in her room after being taken to the hospital, depressed. There we see such a setting in the hospital, the shot with a very nice light in the background. I think it's a plan we use a lot in our work. Now she is a woman, a girl, alone in that room and in a post-traumatic process. While imagining that room's sound, instead of the sound coming from outside, instead of any other sound that could come from outside - a plane passing by, I don't know, any sound you can put - the sound coming from a radiator even though it is not visible in the scene as it is behind her, you know, these are the things that sometimes happen when we are left alone. There is a beeping noise, something muffled. You know, when you imagine this, you create an image that coincides with that child's psychological world. For example, there was such a thing there. It was something that had been on my mind from the very beginning. This is how impulses work when writing. So by imagining it...Those notes are exactly what I was trying to express, you can imagine it. In other words, when you write that plan, you have notes and images in your mind, and you write by thinking imaginatively. In such a case, you create a scenario without informatics, or explaining it through a dialogue. (Appendix B)”.

In the continuation of this scene, Elmas has a small nightmare while lying on the bed. She is running around and playing with her sister and her sister starts screaming and searches for her mother in a hurry, but when she finds her, she cannot approach her mother and she has a pupil in her hand. The sound designs accompanying this nightmare are very strong and successful. The scene ends there.



Figure 4.33: Umut's Little Paradise



Figure 4.34: The Scene with the Sounds from the Radiator

In the next scene, we see Şehnaz talking to Elmas in her room. Elmas tells her about the nightmare she had the day before. She says that the pupil in her hand was hers. Şehnaz asks her to revive her dream by standing up. She asks her to choose objects for her house in the village, for herself, for her younger sister, and for her mother. She chooses boxes for the house in the village, a watch for herself, and a red pen for her sister wearing red. She chooses a red rose with thorns for her mother. She compares her mother to a thorn. She says that when she was 13 years old, her mother told her that she had the good fortune to get married on a day she returned from school. In this scene, Şehnaz helps Elmas confront with her mother, using the psychodrama method and makes them talk to each other. Elmas holds her mother to responsible and seeks and answer. We understand that she is waiting for her mother to tell her to come back home and to her . She doesnot want what happened to her happen to her sister.

In the next scene, we see Şehnaz and Umut watching the sea together at Umut's house. The sea is very wavy, the weather is overcast and cloudy. They are happy and even play with the waves. They run into the waves screaming and laughing. They are happy, but it is a turbulent period for Şehnaz. In her conversations with Elmas, she also makes comparisons with her own life. That night, she cheats on Cem with Umut. She feels better with Umut than with Cem. She also cries next to Umut. On the following morning, the sea is calm and the weather is foggy. Şehnaz wakes up and goes to the balcony and we hear birds chirping and seagulls squawking. At that moment, the phone rings and Cem calls. Şehnaz says there was a storm and everything was cut off.

Then, we see Elmas and Şehnaz talking again. Şehnaz learns that Elmas's legal age was raised so that she could marry early. Meanwhile, silence reigns in the room again. We only hear the dialogue. Şehnaz reminds her of the storm that evening. At that moment, Elmas begins to remember the sounds and images of that night. We hear crow sounds and see Elmas on the balcony. Elmas starts to explain everything. She explains that she ran to the balcony. In the next scene, we see Şehnaz looking out the window and thinking, accompanied by sad and hesitant music. She watches the wavy sea from behind the white tulle curtain. The weather is dark and the sea is wavy. Even though their lives and statuses are different, Şehnaz has discovered that she had a lot in common with Elmas. She also has a nightmare that night and wakes up to a wavy morning. She takes a walk by the sea. Music still accompanies the waves. The unification function (Chion's) of music is used here. As the scene continues, atmospheric sounds decrease and we only hear the music. The same music this time connects Elmas and her neighbor friend to the music-listening scene in the hospital. Then the music does not stop again and the tension in the music gradually increases. We again see Şehnaz looking out the window. While watching, she accidentally cuts her finger with the paper in her hand. As the music ends, we see Şehnaz and Cem in Istanbul. There is tension between them. Cem cooks and they eat and drink wine. They never talk. The house is silent except for the sound of plates, forks, and the fireplace. Cem finishes his meal and as he gets up, he takes the plate that Şehnaz was still holding in front of her. Şehnaz stands up angrily. She takes the plates from Cem's hand, throws them on the floor, and says "That's enough". She tells Cem to stop playing. Cem says that she is the one playing games. He tells Şehnaz that she was the one playing games on the night of the storm. Şehnaz tells him not to come at her and tells him that their

relationship is over. They fight. Cem says that neither of them will get out of the door of the house. The educated architect we see throughout the film destroys the image of a decent man and forces Şehnaz back into the chair as she tries to get up. This continues until the morning. In the morning, when Cem falls asleep, Şehnaz manages to escape. She wakes up to a sunny day and we heard birds chirping. She gets in her car as shecries. Sunlight hits her face. She cries, but she also laughs. We only hear the road noise behind the crying sound. Then she stops crying and with her last hesitant look the movie ends. The roll-caption begins to flow along with the music.

The meanings of the names here tell a lot. Şehnaz means coy, coquettish and Elmas means diamond, very dear and precious. Cem means ruler or king; and Umut means the feeling of confidence arising from hoping, hope, or the person or thing that gives this feeling.

The sound world of this film, designed by Guido Zettier and operated by Bruno Tarriere, develops and transforms together with the characters. Yeşim Ustaoglu's detailed sound installations also show that sound has been considered and deemed important. Antoni Komasa-Lazarkiewicz's music, which reflects the emotions very well, also achieves considerable success in the film.



5. CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this thesis is to examine the sound world of female characters of female directors in independent cinema of Turkey and to close the gap in the numerical scarcity of sound studies in this field. It is an examination of this in parallel with the character journey through film sound analysis. Throughout the study, image, story and sound were examined in parallel.

When we look at the history of Turkish cinema, this cinema journey, which started in 1914, has progressed under the influence of social events and political developments, as in the rest of the world. Wars also affected cinema greatly. Female actors first entered the cinema by Atatürk's order. As of 1949, female directors also started to make films in our cinema. We can say that after the Yeşilçam period, independent cinema of Turkey started with the new generation of directors. The reason why this thesis focuses on independent cinema is that directors can make much freer decisions in independent cinema. This idea was also confirmed by the directors themselves in the interviews (Appendix B). They stated that they were much freer in independent cinema than in mainstream cinema and that they could freely make the decisions they wanted. They agreed that the biggest challenge in making an independent film in our country is the budget.

When we look at sound in cinema, we see that the history of cinema, which actually started with silent films, needed sound even during the silent cinema period. During the silent film period, films were shown with narrators and/or some sort of musical accompaniment such as piano, drums, orchestra and etc. and later with piano accompanists. After sound films began to be shot, sound became an indispensable part of cinema. Sound, which has at least as much narrative value as the image, unfortunately does not attract as much attention as the image in our country. Even looking at the number of studies done on it proves this. Closing this gap is one of the study's other goals.

A two-stage approach was used to select films in line with the research objectives. The first step involved identifying female directors who met certain criteria, such as having directed a feature film with a female lead within a specified time period. The second step then focused on selecting individual films based on their thematic interest and potential to illuminate the relationship between sound design and storytelling. It was

intended to focus especially on recent films. The main reason for this is that technological development is in its latest state and is accessible. Another reason is that since the analysis will be carried out specifically on the characters, it is desired that it belongs to the same period and the same years. For example, the social problems and women's struggles in 1996 are quite different from the situations in 2017. For this reason, firstly, the films and their directors in the past 6 years were scanned (Appendix A), and then the independent films were focused on. Among these directors, those who won awards and whose films attracted attention abroad were preferred. The selected directors were, in alphabetical order, Ceylan Özgün Özçelik, Nazlı Elif Durlu, Pelin Esmer and Yeşim Ustaoglu. After the directors were selected, recent films were looked at and films with a female lead actress were selected. The films selected in order of director are *Kaygı* (2017), *Zuhal* (2021), *İşe Yarar Bir Şey* (2017) and *Tereddüt* (2016).

The reason why we want to focus especially on female lead characters is to look at women through women's eyes. In our interviews with the directors of the films we could reach on this subject (Appendix B), we were asked whether female characters were particularly preferred. While writing this question, Ceylan Özgün Özçelik automatically stated that the name of the character came from her heart as a woman and that she aimed to tell about women in her films. To the same question, Nazlı Elif Durlu stated that she did not set out specifically to be a woman, but she thought about being a woman and as a result, *Zuhal* was formed. Yeşim Ustaoglu answered this question as follows (Appendix B):

“...I haven't made a movie without understanding the other characters. But I'm bored with the minds of our female characters, in Turkish cinema and in general in world cinema, who are always on the sidelines feeding their stories, if they have a problem, it's always the problem of these men, but women can't think of anything, they don't have any problems other than being tortured. I'm so tired of movies like that. In this respect, I do not want to throw a stone at anyone now. We need to ask this question to the men who keep women in their side without understanding it, before asking the question of the female director. Why do these women have no mind, no character? Why can't you do it? So we're talking about something half-crippled then. It is necessary to explain the person. Human. Women, men, children, queer. Human. As long as we cannot explain him as a main character and a side character as someone who comes

from this social status or that social status, one side of him will always be crippled. In my cinema, yes, I am very happy to choose the main character, or at least the protagonist, as a woman, but I also think that I should think of the others as characters that need to be at least as much as she is, that need to be well-prepared, understood and explained, and I try to do this as well. I think this is also very important.”

In fact, as can be seen from this answer, unfortunately, we cannot say that female characters are handled very deeply in the films of male directors in our cinema. That's why, especially in this study, we focus on the sound worlds that accompany the stories of female characters through the eyes of female directors. Kelly and Robson (2016) stated that although women constitute half of the world's population and they buy half of the movie tickets in most countries, the stories presented by this most powerful, most popular and most expensive medium are generally directed by men.

When we look at their films and meet with their directors, we see how much they care about sound in their films. In each film we choose, the sound world as well as the image and story are considered. It is also possible to find commonalities between the films. For example, when we look at the films *Kaygı* and *Zuhal*, we see female characters who live alone and whose boyfriends are far away. Neither of them is listened to by their friends or family. They both want to seek and find them after different questions. Fatih Rağbet, the sound designer of both films, said the following on this subject (Appendix B):

“Both are two women who have difficulty communicating and no one listens to either of them. Nobody tries to reach her and they don't listen. But as big as the world of sound is in *Kaygı*, that is, in my opinion, as a language of using big sound, it is also a completely minimal sound in *Zuhal*. So, it is Ceylan's choice there, and actually it is Nazlı's choice here. She wants that language. When we look at the general sound world and the visual aspect of the film, it is much more minimal.”

When we look at the movie *Zuhal*, we see a more minimal sound world and more entertaining music. This music perfectly reflects Zuhal's minimal world. We encounter well-crafted minimal sounds in her soundscape. We hear all the sounds with her and we also start to doubt with her. In the movie *Kaygı*, we see a larger sound world and electronic-based music. Sound design and music are chosen to be very close and

intertwined. This interweaving is actually a reflection of all the events that happen in the background of our lives. In my opinion, the sound world reflects this complexity and interweaving very well. We also accompany the voices in the character's head. Again, we can call a common sound in the world of voice the sound of a crow. Additionally, in both of the movies, we see two characters listening to the wall. While Zuhail searches for the source of the voice she actually hears, Hasret tries to make sense of the voices she hears in her head due to her effort to remember. In addition, great attention was paid to the construction sounds, scene transitions and transitions in the movie *Kaygı*. As Fatih Ragbet said in his interview (Appendix B), even though we do not see Hasret's hair flying when the wind blows, we can hear her voice. With such details, things that are not in the image can also be added to the narrative with sound (off-screen sound). The movie *Kaygı* is a great example of this. The reason I look at the common features here is not to seek a common language, but to draw attention to common tendencies in the sound world. Each film has created very successful sound worlds for its own narrative. In all films, the emotions and character journey that the story aims to convey progress in parallel with the sound. The sound world also tells as much as the visuals. The aim is definitely not to make comparisons.

In my opinion, the electronic-flavored music in the film *Kaygı* fits the spirit of the film very well and also reflects the inner world of the character to us. The sounds that she hears throughout the film and the increase in the intensity of these sounds are, in my opinion, a sound world that has been skillfully used and created, which also includes us in the character's journey. Notably, the rhythmic presence of construction sounds underscores the film's exploration of identity construction and societal pressures, suggesting a continuous process of internal and external transformation.

From my point of view, the music in the soundscape of the film *Zuhail* is used to cast doubt on the viewer as well. This auditory strategy unfolds in several layers. Because, the sounds emanating from Zuhail's neighbors and their resemblance to cat sounds both increase her paranoia and blur the line between objective observation and subjective experience by involving the viewer in this questioning process. The music's ambiguity in form and origin serves to cast doubt on the viewer's perception of reality. At the same time, very enjoyable choices have been made. However, the most impressive sound element in *Zuhail* lies in the emphasis that sound is something that cannot be captured.

When we look at the films *İşe Yarar Bir Şey* and *Tereddüt*, they are stories told with two female characters. In both of them, we can observe the impact of the lives that intersect at the beginning of the film. The biggest difference here is that in *İşe Yarar Bir Şey*, since lives intersect during the journey, we cannot witness the characters' own homes and the sound world of the place they live. The only character we can see in his house is Yavuz. The details in its sound world are also very deep. The diegetic cello sound and the cello teacher upstairs are a very important detail. The clock ticking in the background increases as the executioner Canan reminds him of the needle, and decreases as he talks to Leyla, which is also a very important and well-thought-out detail. In general, the train sounds and compartment transitions in the film were also thought out in detail. In addition, although the crow sound is not very dominant in this movie, the crow visual appears throughout the movie.

In my opinion, the film makes very important emphases on time and clocks. A film that starts with a clock, the increasing ticking of the clock when the executioner reaches his victim. Although this ticking of the clock may not catch our attention while watching, I think the remaining time is very well emphasized. Another detail I caught is that, in the last scene of the film, Yavuz wants to look in the mirror. In the mirror, we see his bearded face. However, we had seen the woman working next to him shaving him through the glass the night before. Here, we can also see a beautiful detail about time.

Coming to the sound of the cello, I think the loneliness of the cello sound actually emphasizes Leyla's loneliness. In my opinion, this melancholic music, which has always accompanied her thoughts from the beginning of the film, represents her throughout the film. When she meets Yavuz, we are actually able to hear her thoughts and herself physically with this unexpected meeting. She expresses her ideas, her poetry emerges, and Canan also learns. Although I interpret the cello sound in this way, I think that sound still maintains its mystery.

In Yeşim Ustaoglu's movie *Tereddüt*, we can hear the sounds of the characters' own homes and living spaces. We can especially see that the loneliness of the Elmas character is emphasized with silence. Another nice detail that emphasizes loneliness is that Yeşim Ustaoglu says in her interview (Appendix B) that she emphasizes the sound of the radiator pipe in the hospital. Again, especially in the description of Elmas's world, bird sounds accompany her mood. We hear crow sounds especially when

coming home and during the home scene. Another sound emphasis in the film is made with the sounds in the houses. We hear silence in Elmas's house or the sound of soap opera and television in her mother-in-law's house. At Şehnaz and Cem's house, meals are served accompanied by foreign music and wine or raki. There is a class difference between Elmas and Şehnaz. Likewise, in Pelin Esmer's movie *İşe Yarar Bir Şey*, there is a class difference between the characters.

In my opinion, the natural sounds used in the film *Tereddüt* contribute greatly to the film's narrative. Using nature and sound to reflect the inner world of the characters is a way to confirm their thoughts for the viewer as well. The string music used in the film, in particular, is a good choice in my opinion to enhance the emotions, feeling of being trapped and hesitant emotions in the film.

Analyzing all these details, we see that the crow's cry, which is a common denominator, is a detail that we generally do not notice much when watching movies. However, I think this sound is a sound detail that makes us feel that something bad will happen or is coming in our subconscious. In the movie *İşe Yarar Bir Şey*, it of course also appeals to different meanings in terms of image.

When we look at all the films, we see that music is not used as much as in mainstream films. Again, for all the films, as a result of the analysis, it was observed that the sound world was considered and constructed at least as much as the image. Women's stories in all films are also fictionalized in depth. It has been observed and confirmed through interviews conducted with them that all directors attach great importance to sound. It was seen that Pelin Esmer, who could not be interviewed in this study, mentioned this issue a lot in her previous interviews. It has been concluded that the sound, which is the main question of this study, is used consciously and thoughtfully by female directors in the expression of female characters in the independent cinema of Turkey, which serves the image well.

In conclusion, this study examined the films *Kaygı* (2017) by Ceylan Özgün Özçelik, *Zuhal* (2021) by Nazlı Elif Durlu, *İşe Yarar Bir Şey* (2017) by Pelin Esmer, and *Tereddüt* (2016) by Yeşim Ustaoglu, all of which have female leads. This examination revealed that the soundscape of these films accompanies the protagonist's journey and reflects their world like doubtful, hesitant, searching, gloomy, anxious. . The study also sought to draw attention to the use of sound in cinema.

Considering future research avenues, replicating this analysis across the entirety of each director's filmography, encompassing all character representations, presents a promising avenue for further exploration. Additionally, expanding the scope to encompass a broader spectrum of sonic elements beyond the current focus would enrich the understanding of sound's multifaceted contributions to cinematic narratives. By diversifying and potentially multiplying the research and analysis points, future studies can delve deeper into the intricate interplay between sound and meaning within the realm of film.





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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: List of Films

APPENDIX B: Interviews



APPENDIX A

List of Films

2015 - Total: 136 movie, 15 of them directed by women

- 1- Toz Bezi - Ahu Öztürk
- 2- Ana Yurdu - Senem Tüzen
- 3- Tepecik Hayal Okulu - Güliz Sağlam
- 4- Çekmeköy Underground - Aysim Türkmen
- 5- Nefesim Kesilene Kadar - Emine Emel Balcı
- 6- Vesvese: Cin Tuzağı - Sümeyya Kökten
- 7- Evlenmeden Olmaz - Yasemin Erkul Türkmenli
- 8- Mustang - Deniz Gamze Ergüven
- 9- Azap - Dilek Keser, Ulaş Güneş Kacargil
- 10- Hannas: Karanlıkta Saklanan - Oya Köksal, Kamil Aydın
- 11- Aşk Nerede - Semra Dündar
- 12- Uzaklarda Arama - Türkan Şoray
- 13- Pırdino Sürpriz Yumurta - Günay Köker
- 14- Aşk Olsun- Neslihan Yıldız Alak, Murat Serezli
- 15- Bir Varmış Bir Yokmuş - İlksen Başarır

2016 - Total: 135 movie, 17 of them directed by women

- 1- Kasap Havası - Çiğdem Sezgin
- 2- Bana Git De - Handan Öztürk
- 3- Değiştir Bakalım- Eda Fatma Gürbüz
- 4- Yemekteydik ve Karar Verdim - Görkem Yeltan
- 5- Yarım - Çağıl Nurhak Aydoğdu
- 6- Dedemin Fişi - Meltem Bozoflu
- 7- Kötü Kedi Şerafettin - Ayşe Ünal, Mehmet Kurtuluş
- 8- Her Şey Aşktan- Andaç Haznedaroğlu
- 9- Kaçma Birader - Murat Kaman, Defne Deliormanlı
- 10- Çok Uzak Fazla Yakın - Türkan Derya
- 11- Tutmayın Beni - Semra Dündar
- 12- Tereddüt - Yeşim Ustaoglu

- 13- Mel-un - Zehra Özarslan Çelen, Ayşen Kurç, Fevzi Altunbulak
- 14- Yitik Kuşlar - Aren Perdeci, Ela Alyamaç
- 15- Oğlan Bizim Kız Bizim - Semra Dünder
- 16- Sol Şerit - İnci Balabanoğlu Ahıska
- 17- Sekerat Son - Şeyda Şen

2017 - Total: 144 movie, 11 of them directed by women

- 1- Toz - Gözde Kural
- 2- Seni Gidi Seni - Sibel Tunç
- 3- Nefrin - Gülşen Güner
- 4- Yağmurlarda Yıkansam - Gülten Taranç
- 5- Kaygı - Ceylan Özgün Özçelik
- 6- İşe Yarar Bir Şey - Pelin Esmer
- 7- Kedi - Ceyda Torun
- 8- Aşk Uykusu- Nisan Akman
- 9- Bir Nefes Yeter - Yasemin Erkul Türkmenli
- 10- Nane ile Limon: Kayıp Zaman Yolcusu - Günay Köker, Çağrı Cem Bayraklı
- 11- Acı Tatlı Ekşi - Andaç Haznedaroğlu

2018 - Total: 172 movie, 18 of them directed by women

- 1-Elim Sende - Banu Kaptanoğulları
- 2- Batlır - Stare Yıldırım
- 3- Deliha 2 - Gupse Özay
- 4- 3 Vakte Kadar - Özlem Kayhan, Volkan Gültekin
- 5- Cebimdeki Yabancı - Serra Yılmaz
- 6- Hemşire - Dilek Çolak
- 7- Borç - Vuslat Saraçoğlu
- 8- Fındık Veresiye - Fatema Khawari
- 9- Tutsak - Beyza Çimenot
- 10- Selfi - Hülya Avşar
- 11- Paçi: Av Sanatı - Elçin Elgür
- 12- Misafir - Andaç Haznedaroğlu
- 13- Güvercin - Banu Sıvacı

- 14- Tut Yüreğimden Anne - Burçin Aydın, Bülent Aydoğan
- 15- Benim Adım Ossman - Banu Kaptanoğulları, Vedat İnce
- 16- Bırakma Beni - Aida Begic
- 17- Cici Babam - Meltem Bozoğlu
- 18- Bizim Köyün Şarkısı - Tuğçe Soysop

2019 - Total: 143 movie, 14 of them directed by women

- 1- Kalpten Gerdanlık - Sultan Nil Turan
- 2- Onun Filmi - Su Baloğlu, Merve Bozcu
- 3- Bağcık - Görkem Yeltan
- 4- Hasbihal - Kemal Yılmaz, Elife Özker
- 5- Kader Postası - Çiğdem Bozali, Elif Akarsu Polat
- 6- Güven - Sefa Öztürk
- 7- Siddah - Funda Tırpan
- 8- Cin Deresi "Müsfer" - Duran Gebeş, Gülçin Yıldız, Bora Altınışık
- 9- Kraliçe Lear - Pelin Esmer
- 10- Jinna: Karabasan - Ebru Delibaş
- 11- Ölü Yatırım - Neslihan Yıldız Alak
- 12- İblis Esir-i Beden - Hira Evren Işık
- 13- Sibel - Guillaume Giovanetti, Çağla Zencirci
- 14- Can Dostlar - Tuğçe Soysop

2020 - Total: 58 movie 6 of them directed by women

- 1- Aether - Ruken Tekeş
- 2- Kovan - Eylem Kaftan
- 3- Feride - Zeynep Çamcı, Ali Yorgancıoğlu
- 4- Zengo - Şahan Gökbakar, Müge Manuş
- 5- Aşk Tesadüfleri Sever 2 - Ömer Faruk Sorak, İpek Sorak
- 6- Gamonya: Hayaller Ülkesi - Tuğçe Soysop

2021 - Total: 75 movie, 5 of them directed by women

- 1- Bir Nefes Daha - Nisan Dağ

- 2- Bilmemek - Leyla Yılmaz
- 3- ılgın Ortak - zgür Selvi
- 4- Milyonda Bir - Semra Dündar
- 5- Azra - Beyza Şenel

2022 - Total: 177 movie, 10 of them directed by women

- 1- Cin Perdesi - Rabia Cemre Kaya, Mert Kara, Fuat Başarılı
- 2- Hawar 2 - Raziye Sultan
- 3- Sihirli Orman: Peri Kraliçesi - Sahavet Ahsen Kaçulu
- 4- Klondike - Maryna Er Gorbach
- 5- Rüzgargülü - Meryem Beyza Er
- 6- Bana Karanlığını Anlat - Gizem Kızıl
- 7- Bir Dilek Tut - Meta Akkuş
- 8- Zuhâl - Nazlı Elif Durlu
- 9- Maric - Ebru Delibaş
- 10- Kaptan Pengu ve Arkadaşları 2 - Nurullah Yenihan, Pelin Tuğçe Şen

APPENDIX B

Interviews (In alphabetical order)

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik Interview (2.11.2023 / Moda)

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Ms. Ceylan, I will hold an interview for this thesis at Istanbul Technical University, Center for Advanced Studies in Music, which I will use in my own thesis, and if you allow me, I will put it in writing.

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: Okay.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Thank you.

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: Welcome.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: First of all, what would you like to say about independent cinema in Turkey?

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: It's a very broad question. So in terms of sound or in general?

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Being an independent filmmaker in general, being in Turkey...

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: So, of course, being an independent filmmaker in Turkey is a bit challenging in terms of producing films. It has many wings. The most important of these is the economic wing. Because there is not much funding space. So, we are actually dependent on the Ministry of Culture in general, as independent cinema. Because what we call independent cinema already means this; It's a system where big companies don't put money into it. More precisely, it is a system that is not built entirely with the money of big companies. For example, BKM, TAFF, it is happening with these companies, Warner Bros. Think like. They put in the money and the film is shot and you are not looking for any extra funding. But in independent cinema, you continue to apply to various sources such as the Ministry of Culture and the funds so-called overseas funds, and in the meantime, if your budget is, for example, 3 million, a process begins in which you start saving those 3 million in order to shoot that day. This is a very troublesome process. Because you cannot apply and be selected everywhere, and even if you are selected, we can receive monetary rewards from some of them. It is a system that takes a very long time. Of course, you are not standing idle in the meantime. You continue to work, audiovisual, everything with your actors. You

draw the film frame by frame. At least that's how the process works for me. So, that waiting part is actually good for me, but it probably isn't good for my producer, because since the country's economic situation is constantly changing, the budget of the film may have increased to 5 million by the time you save that money. Because the actors' salary change, as you know, expenses change. Everything changes, including the cost of a board the art department will use or something the costume department will use. Anyway, let's say you somehow found the money and were able to make the film, and then it was a bit challenging for us. Because we have no such thing as a vision guarantee. For example, if I talk about a few years ago, I define it as before the pandemic. Until before the pandemic, independent films still had a chance to be released in Turkey. But with the pandemic, that chance disappeared. Because people don't watch films in movie theaters that much anymore. During the pandemic, people retreated to homes and now only come together at festivals. This affected not only the independent but the mainstream as well. Of course, very few, far fewer films are released in the mainstream now. They meet the audience at home by selling mostly digitally. What makes us uneasy is that we are starting to feel like we have to be selected for a festival abroad. Because if you don't get selected, the film gets lost a little bit. I mean, at least being in any A-class festival abroad makes the film a little bit, let me say marketing, in quotation marks, these are very nice expressions, these are not the terms I like very much, but it helps the film to attract attention a little bit. Therefore, what does a festival do to an independent film? It attracts the attention of the local audience and also attracts the attention of the audience around the world. And so you start traveling from country to country, from festival to festival, and meeting the audience in the halls. It acts as an intermediary for this, but again, you can meet a maximum of 150 to 400-500 people in audiences in each country you visit. So, when you look at these numbers, they are actually a sign of sadness for independent cinema, and ultimately MUBI embraces you in the world in general. Although in America, Amazon also embraces independent cinema very much, but in Turkey you are a little more limited in this regard. You can hold private screenings with *Başka Sinema*. These are a few cities, generally big cities, and you can meet the audience in a few cities as well. I'm talking about after the pandemic. Since the chance of a release has decreased a lot, you will finally meet the audience on MUBI. Anyway, when a film comes out, old cinephiles have generally moved on to a world like this: "We'll watch it on MUBI anyway, it will definitely come to MUBI one day." This is a bit sad. If we need to

approach this in a contextual sense, leaving aside the economy, again due to the route of the Ministry of Culture, it is affected a little, of course, and sometimes you may self-censor. So we have two scenarios, one of which says more contradictory things. You get a little scared and postpone it until later, I don't know when, but you try to come up with your project that wanders in what we previously called a safer area, doesn't say things too directly, and takes a little less risk. Or with your smaller project, for example, with 2 people in a house. Again, this is something that actually undermines the imagination. Because I actually want to shoot a film called 18+ with a ready script, but since its budget is approaching 25 million, I have to shelve it in today's conditions. It's an economic problem, for example. That's why I'm currently writing a smaller story that takes place in a single location. So, of course, these things always affect our imagination a little bit in independent cinema in general. In other words, our filmmaking practices are changing in terms of content, considering both economics and censorship. Of course, especially in the last 10 years.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: You last said that you were having financial difficulties. Well, wouldn't it be easier for you to shoot your films with a producer? Or why don't you prefer this?

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: So, we actually do it with the producer, but what we call producer is divided into many different things. It's like this all over the world. In fact, when you go to America, the person we call an independent filmmaker is actually the person who finds the money, just like in Turkey. A person who seeks and finds money. The person who applied for those funds. The person who tries to choose the right funds for the film, for the project. So what we call the right fund is actually a little bit like, for example, did you do anything specific to human rights? Are you telling our immigrant story? Searching for and finding what could fund that immigrant story. Because sometimes there may be places that fund this genre, there may be places that support more female filmmakers, LGBT, there may be places that focus more on orientalist issues. In fact, there are more orientalist focused approaches. That's why our job gets a little difficult. Because what is expected from us is generally a cinema for those funds. For example, if you are a woman from the Middle East, you have certain codes. So, there are already some setbacks like they don't want to see something from you that a woman in France can do. Therefore, the job of the producers is actually difficult in this sense. What are they looking for in Turkey? So I can say this based on

our own practices. For example, we started a project called The Witch Trilogy. '13+' was a short film, '15+' was a feature documentary, and '18+' would be its final leg. A fictional feature-length, fantastic dark comedy. And we had financial difficulties as we entered 13+. But how did we find it? We did it like this, we shared the script with Tülin Özen and Özge Özpınır. They put in small amounts of money and that's how we were able to go on set. Likewise, the studio where we shot the film was on the Ümraniye plateaus, the owner of which provided it to us free of charge. He also provided us with a lot of things that were included in the art budget, like walls and so on, that we used to make a lot of films, for free, and people got a little less than they were supposed to get, but as I said, this was before the pandemic. Because before the pandemic, there was a situation like this in independent cinema: The crews were working half-time. So there was a feeling of let's make a good film. Therefore, he was ready to receive half of the money he received in a TV series, not the money he received in a big blockbuster, a mainstream film, or the money he received in an advertisement, and they did so. But after the pandemic and the recent economic situation, this is no longer possible for teams. So, if a person receives 20 thousand liras per week, you can very hard reduce it to a maximum of 15 for independent workers. And not everyone says it's okay. Because serious rents are being paid now.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes unfortunately.

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: And we can't expect that from people, that's why we're trying to find that money. For example, something like this happened in 15+, the post-production process of 15+ overlapped with the pandemic. It took a long time and after a while we got stuck with the VFX guy's money and the colorist with the money. We have come to the point of not being able to pay the salaries of our staff, that is, our teammates in the post production. Therefore, they also had to take jobs. They added advertisements, bought a lot of stuff, and the film stopped. When the film stops, you really become distant, because it takes a long time to make an independent film, for many different reasons, as I said. And then my producer made a system like this in Armağan, again like in our 13+, this time with more female actors and fewer numbers. I mean, many female actors, from Burcu Biricik to Ece Dizdar to Damla Sönmez, supported many female actors with ten thousand liras each and covered the money of our friends whom we could not pay in post-production. So we were able to finish the film with at least no debt, but I'm not sure if this is sustainable. Because the point of

'no debt, that's great' prevents what we do from being a profession. Because we also need to earn money. I'm not talking about something like that, it's not about living in Etiler. In other words, something needs to be left to the producer and the director in order for us to understand that what we are doing is a profession. This never happens. Therefore, there is always talk about how we will solve these problems. So it is also talked about in the industry. Although there are people who solve this in this way, I don't know, Netflix is the executive producer of some paid projects. Then he goes again and does 1-2 independent ones. There are people who try to solve it this way, but it may not work for everyone. Because that system is also a bit harsh. It's a system that also plays with your psychology. Therefore, it may not be good for everyone because it has a different spirit than that of the independent, which is more comfortable, sweeter, where everyone clings to each other, and we are doing something good here. Some people try it once or twice and then abandon it.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: The reason why I focused especially on independent cinema was so that directors could make decisions a little more freely.

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: Yes, exactly.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Can you say that you work more freely and comfortably?

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: I can say for sure because I tried the other thing too. So, at one point, I was a part of something digital for about 8 months and I saw that I couldn't do it. Because there is so much intervention and all that intervention becomes like, well, you are looking for a puppet, then something like that happens. I think our commercial director friends can do it better. Because those who come from the advertising department have already done something on customer satisfaction, you know, when a brand is making an advertisement for any X brand the general manager of that brand comes to you and says, "Should we shoot the hand too?". In fact, what we call completely digital's logic is ninety percent like this. Therefore, you know, there is always a voice, voices right here next to your shoulder. Well, you can say okay to this and do something because, for example, if I were okay with this, maybe I could go towards a money for 18+. I could go to a place where I could deposit money myself. After working for a long time, it wasn't possible with a TV series like that, but I didn't want that. Because it is a state of freedom and co-production. Because it's not just something that undermines the director. It also undermines the costume designer. It

also undermines the actor. Because it also interferes with how the actor plays. In other words, they were also concerned about what to wear and how to wear their hair. Therefore, it is not called cinema anyway because cinema is a team effort. You know, TV series production, that's something else, but, you know, cinema is a team effort, that's the best part of it. Together, you create a world, you say it should be green here or whatever, but it is your team that puts the whole puzzle together. Therefore, the team becomes a common area where, with the team's creativity and exchange of ideas, the players can do their job and you can do your job, too. Of course, his comfort comes from freedom. Frankly, I would rather live in my 1+1 sewer-smelling Kadıköy apartment than have that freedom taken away from me. So I'm happy.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: So what is it like to be a female director in this industry? So, are there any difficulties or advantages?

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: I'm not sure if it has many advantages for Turkey. But of course there are many difficulties, but also as a director in this industry. I think it is in every branch. I mean, I know that female actors have a harder time because there is unequal pay distribution, even the slightest thing says 'this is a crazy woman'. For example, if you have any negative opinion about something, it comes back to you like 'this one is already crazy'. This is the same for directors, actors, I don't know, the art director. Actually, it is like that for everyone. I had a hard time making my first film at first. I mean, various verbal harassments both on the set and while I was shooting the shorts before my first film. So, after witnessing both the actors and this when "Kaygı/Inflame" opened in Berlin and had such a great festival journey, at the point where I started to have a little more say and react, I actually tried to create a safe space. This does not mean that men cannot enter here, but of course we work with men as well, but I started to appoint more decision makers and department heads from women, and I always continued like that. This will be the same in my 2 upcoming films. So the cinematographer, art director, costumes, music are all women. And fiction too. After that, it gives you something more, how can I say it, working with so many smart, funny and good women makes you feel at ease in many ways. Because no matter what, when I worked with many, I don't know, male cinematographers, I witnessed them trying to dictate things, thinking they know better than you, ignoring, making you invisible, devaluing your work, all of these. Of course, there are men who do not do this, we

continue our way with them, you know, with our teams. But there are many of them. So it's officially ossified and settled.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Okay, I want to come towards the sound a little bit.

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: Okay.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: At what stage do you start thinking about sound when planning the films you will shoot?

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: First stage.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes, it is very evident in *Kaygı*. Especially during the character creation process, their moods, the house they live in, and costumes are usually the first things that are considered. But in this character creation process, how much of a role does the character's voice world play in your plans?

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: That's exactly how I start. Actually, I think about the place first. So even before the character, where does this happen? Because space defines many things. The place actually defines the sound. So when we code it as if you look at this street, it's quiet, where only the people here live, opposite that school, the space starts to draw the whole world at once. Then a character begins to wander around that place. Then I try to go somewhere with the sounds he hears and his mind. So in general it's really always like this. This is also the case in my recent films. Before *Kaygı* there was a short film I made called *Adil ya da Değil*. It was a psychological thriller. And there I actually tried to do an essay of *Kaygı*. This is visually and audibly. A film that has nothing to do with *Kaygı* in terms of subject matter. But can I do this genre, how much can I reveal the sound worlds in the characters' minds, how is this, how does this system work? How do you work with a good sound designer and see how the language of the camera and the sound interpenetrate each other? So I had the chance to experience this in that short film. That's why I made the post production process so long. To understand these things thoroughly. Later, when we came to *Kaygı*, certain voices were already writing, including the script. Because it is not possible to create a scenario without them. *Kaygı* is a story that takes place with one woman and mainly in one location. But in the end, there are basically three voices that the woman hears. At its most basic, she actually hears the voice of the past. But she also hears the voice of today and, through today, she hears the voice of the future. And these voices are shaped like this: the -sound of- urban transformation when she steps onto the street,

the one we have become accustomed to today. So we assume that the constructions are actually finished, but they are not. We've become so accustomed to them, that we don't hear them anymore, but we were hearing them when I was writing *Kaygı*. As soon as we stepped out onto the streets, there was construction all around us in 2013 and 2014, and the sound of a city that was constantly being destroyed and rebuilt. It's a voice. The other voice, that destructive power. The ruling political power that designs citizens. The constant voice of power. The other voice is the voice of the media, which is also an instrument of power and the most powerful instrument, and this is where I come from. I mean, they always say something in cinema, and I believe it very much: Start from where you know. I worked in media for 14 years. I worked mostly in news channels, so it was good for me to start from where I know. Because you write much more easily, you shoot much more easily. The news channel in that film is the news channel I work for. Therefore, I did not have any difficulty in writing the sounds of that place. In other words, I could clearly remember the sounds I heard from room to room, from corridor to staircase, and therefore, since it is a film that pursues the question 'how does memory awaken?', *Kaygı* can evoke with many things in memory. That is, by touch, by smell, but most importantly by hearing. And what impressed me a lot and made me think that I needed to work with a very good sound designer was this: While I was doing the Sivas research, Demet Işık, one of the survivors, had a sentence like this in a hearing, during the judicial process, I may not remember it exactly word for word right now, but it was this: She said: I saw the fire. No, she said, "I heard the fire." I heard the fire. The sound of the fire is unlike any other effect. This was very powerful to me and I knew we needed to do some deep work on how we could deliver the fire effect. So how can we instill fear, other than by showing fire like this? Hearing this fire. In other words, the fear caused by hearing the fire. In fact, I define *Kaygı* as an organic horror film. We don't actually see anything supernatural inside, but we see our daily fears and anxieties, and the main thing that enabled this was the sound from the very first moment in *Kaygı*. Those were the voices she heard as the places changed. They were the voices in her mind. Her aim was to make the audience share in that mind, after she was locked at home with the voices in her mind. First, going from place to place with her, but then being trapped in that house with her. That place was already Madımak Hotel. So her mind was Madımak Hotel and hearing about it. Those crackling sounds and the approaching fire. And Fatih Ragbet, our sound designer, was working with Eli, with Eli Haligua. He read the script from the

beginning, we hadn't even shot it yet. So he started thinking about ideas. Then, we worked with our sound recordist, Özgür Özden, with whom we recorded sound during normal shooting, which we call location sound, and I worked with them for a very long time. I'm still working with Özgür, but unfortunately Fatih and Eli went abroad, so we ended up working with them in these new films I made. Özgür, me and Fatih came together and how many things we will create with effects later, how many things need to be taken in the venues, so Fatih had listed very well the things he would ask Özgür to take in the environment. Because everyone had time before shooting. That's what I said, because we were waiting for that funding process and I'm building the whole team early. I mean, I don't wait, you know, sometimes something like this happens, let's shoot it and then we'll look at the colorist, I don't know what to do and then I don't know what... No, they should be involved first. I know everyone, I mean who will work in this film? Because it is also very important at the point of passing. Sometimes the colorist actually has an idea about something. And you can actually do what your cinematographer and lighting chief tells you would be great if it were something like this. Because if this is teamwork, it should be like this. What were we talking about?

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Sound. At what stage did you plan the sound?

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: So we plan from the very beginning. But that doesn't mean anything; We plan everything like this. But then, when we sit down, we start trying a lot of things. So it was the same with *Kaygı*. In many scenes, we turn off a lot of things and leave them alone, sometimes we leave the places where we put 30-40 sounds alone, yes, only the paper was better here, let's actually turn off the steps, let's turn off the breaths, let's turn off that thing in the background... We did these a lot. So it was a very long process. The next short film I made at *13+* was almost that long. Because *13+* and another film that I'm making now, *Hiçbir Şey Normal Değil*, will be released soon, these films had nothing, *15+* is the same by the way, we had a location sound, but they were very foley-like. And so all the sounds were made at the table. This was done on the table and not in terms of effects, a lot of organic sounds were recorded and added later, but you know, *15+* is a film without dialogue anyway. Its whole world was later on sound design, so we worked on sound for almost 6 months. Just for a short film. Likewise, the process went the same way in others. In both *15+* and *Hiçbir Şey Normal Değil*, decision-making processes took place at a crazy table. But planning

everything from the very beginning is still very comforting. So knowing what you need and how to proceed.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Well, I know the origin story of *Kaygı* from your previous interviews, but how was the formation process? How did the subject come about? I guess it started with Demirören Shopping Mall?

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: Yes, it started with that. Actually, it's not Demirören Shopping Mall. Oh yes, it started with Demirören AVM. Pardon. It started with what was in the place of this shopping mall.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes.

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: Exactly. I still don't know what happened there by the way. Actually, everywhere was changing. Everywhere around me. I don't use the word Demirören very much. That's why I was surprised. By the way, I usually say there is a shopping mall there, anyway. There are brand new apartments in my neighborhood, I don't remember what was there before. Then I ask a friend of mine, there is a basketball court. For example, I never have one. But what triggered this was definitely that shopping mall. Because I've asked so many people this. So I asked a lot of people of different ages and no one really remembered. One of them said "I think there was a record store there somewhere", the other one said "I don't know what it was there" etc. but I don't want anyone to look on Google. Because our entire memory mechanism now consists of asking 'what was that' and picking up Google, and ultimately this scared me a lot. Because I pursued the question of how far memory can go and how far we can forget, and as I said, it was certain that I would write something about the media. This main character will definitely be an editor in the media. Because editing and sound design are two very strange things for me and they are very intertwined. Because, for example, we design the sounds while editing. Later, of course, something else happens in the sound design process, but we cannot think of the editing silently, let the door slam here, let that crowd scream non-stop here, now let's add a frog. We do these things in the editing. Therefore, they are very intertwined things for me. But both editing and sound design are actually manipulation. Because they are the things that we cut and change and take away from the truth, they are the things that we give to the audience what you want them to see and hear. This was also the motto of the television channel in the film: what you hear is what you see. In other words, there was a new

world of news created in editing. It is said that it is right for the audience to know, the audience should know these things, the audience should know this much, and therefore an editor someone who plays with the pieces, someone who manipulates the pieces, I mean it as a profession, I am not saying that Hasret is like this, she opposes it anyway, but for me, the first thing that such a person reaches the truth is for her to remember. it was precious. In other words, someone who plays with images and sounds. And I actually got the whole basis from here.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: How to get from there to Sivas..?

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: Well, I arrived in Sivas like this, I closed my eyes and remember what is the earliest thing I remember on television, because this film will definitely take place on television. And since I asked the question of how much we can forget, on television, I wondered if we can forget the massacres, well, all of these actually came one after another. So can we forget the massacres? Actually, we forget. Because, for example, Roboski was very new at that time. But then I saw a news headline about Roboski and I said: What happened with Roboski? Well, I had such a moment and Roboski was very new. So when you look at the history of a country or the history of the world, every piece of land is full of massacres. All these massacres are data, so for the brain it is not such a thing, you know. It's not like, knock, knock, knock, this happened on this date because this happened there and then this happened. But all the massacres in the world have a commonality, I mean, I haven't researched all of them, but I have researched the ones in the country completely, and when I look at the ones outside, as a result, there is a commonality like most of them are state-led, that is, around the world. So I closed my eyes like that and what do I remember? I remembered Sivas. The memory of the moment that I watched on TV. I wasn't too young, I was 13 years old anyway, so I was able to comprehend what it meant and the moment when Aziz Nesin was hung from the fire station's car came to my mind. I don't remember at all what we did, the family at that time, I can't see it at that moment, for example, what was my mother doing, what was my father doing? Did we do anything, went out to the streets or something? I don't have any of these, but I do have that moment when I watched it on TV. I wanted to build something on that swinging moment and therefore on my own memory. In other words, Sivas as the symbol of massacres. But Sivas from a personal place too. So Sivas is both like this. Burning means gathering many people in one place and burning them, not just those people

because many things they represent; It seemed very symbolic to me because it was trying to destroy tradition, history, art, culture, everything.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Well, in your film "Kaygı/Inflame ", Hasret remembers memories through sounds. The flute she played with her mother and her father's baglama . What does remembering these memories through sounds mean to you?

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: Actually, at that time, I was remembering a song my father wrote, from my own personal experience. My father wrote me a song like "I had a little bird, I loved it very much." I also remember we recorded it on a tape, but I could never find the tape. Then I gathered the whole family. Do you remember this song that my father wrote? One of them remembered a sentence, the other remembered a sentence, and so on, so we put the pieces together as a family. And then it occurred to me that family, her family already comes from a folk song tradition, and since it was a childhood song they made for her, it might be that song that revived the memory. You know, in the sense of digging into the past, and this is exactly where the massacre took place, in Sivas, on July 2, 1993, they were sitting in a park, playing the flute, singing this song, and actually everything started at that time. Here someone starts walking from here. Some slogans and all that dirty noise. I thought how right it would be if all this sound of death, the sound of killing, the sound of burning came to life with a song. In other words, in terms of what Sivas represents. Because there were artists there, first of all. But yes, sound, for example, comes before smell or visual memory for me in terms of longing. So she always remembers by sound. Well, the song leads to something else, the voice of power actually leads to the sound of the patriarchal group at that time. Therefore, all of these feed each other.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Well, your musical preferences in the film are also very interesting. How did you make your music choices? In one of your interviews, you say that you never thought of using music before, but then it seemed very suitable and you used it.

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: Because actually, I really didn't want to, we were always talking about this with Fatih, I mean, let's create such a sound band that in this sound band, here's the sound of the drone etc., I don't know what, yes, but, you know, the sound of the ruling political power the sound of the city, the sound of that construction, all that inside the house. Let's create the sound of turning into Sivas, turning into

Madımak, and use them like music. That's why you can't separate people, is there actually music in this film or not? Is this a trick of the sound design, the sound track? In other words, they do not understand where exactly it changes and where it transforms. Let it be a situation like this from start to finish. But Fatih insisted that we should use music. He was talking about a friend of his at work called Ekin Fil. By the way, I listened to a few of Ekin's music. But then I told Fatih that these are very depressing music that make me want to commit suicide, these are not possible. He said, "She doesn't do things like that anyway, so just leave it alone, give me permission, I'll send her something and let her do it." I said no, I don't want it. Then he didn't listen to me, she made something for me. But I didn't listen. I was so convinced that there was no music, there would definitely be no music. Then, while we were working with my editor, somewhere, that is, in a scene, I heard Hasret appear on the television channel. There will be a scene where she walks and something key will happen. Her mission is changing and as she slowly moves towards a stage where she realizes how much the news world is actually a system that re-edits the past and shapes the present in its own way, there was definitely a need for music on that walk. It's electronic music. And here's what we'll do, I said, Fatih sent me some music, I didn't listen to it, but he had his friend Ekin make it. I said, "If you want one, let's put it on." We put it on without really listening to the music. It was so beautiful. It's not something that was made for that place. How did Ekin do this? Fatih only sent one page of synopsis. So he didn't even send an image. She did it with a one-page synopsis, the synopsis of *Kaygı* and we were shocked. How can she understand this soul so well? Because, for example, I am a very serious John Carpenter fan. Especially in terms of their music. In other words, although I have great respect for his cinematography, his personality, and his personality as a filmmaker, for me he almost comes after his personality as a musician. Because he creates very powerful music, and what I like more is the effect that those music evokes, rather than the scenes she sets, that is, just as Demet Işık said: not seeing the fire, but hearing the fire. Just as fire is unlike anything else, the sound world John Carpenter creates has a much stranger effect on me. I mean, I go in and out of thousands of different moods. You know, there are moments that take you from worry to uneasiness, from fright to great fear, to terror. And therefore, in the music she made, I felt that exact spirit, something approaching that spirit, and it fascinated me, and then we immediately got together with Ekin. She watched the film, and then I mean, I don't remember doing anything in particular: I need this scene, I don't need

that scene. I didn't set out to say, "Watch it, because I don't have that kind of world in my mind, I want music on this stage or I want music on that stage." So just watch it and see what happens. I only have music in mind for the pre-credits. Then she would always come back from doing something and say, "While we were working with Fatih on sound design, I'm stopping by, I did something today, on a stage." She was coming and showing us on stage. And so we were finishing.

My editor, Fatih, and I were watching it together those days. And we were really doing a world that only concerned input and output volume adjustment, that is, mixing. Because each time Ekin felt exactly what that scene needed and did it. It was truly an incredible process for me.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: How nice.

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: Afterwards, we still worked together with Ekin on everything. Except for one episode of the TV series that I shot for seven percent. That was because we already had certain friends. They are also very good, by the way. But we came to a situation like this with Ekin: I say 'gak gak' here, she does it, I mean she understands the thing, you know, she understands my language because I don't have that much command of the language of music, for example, I say like 'übüğ übüğ', she does that. Sometimes we even work from the front. What I mean sometimes, I mostly explain it to her with my visual drawings, etc., and location photographs, before we go on the set. It will be like this, it will be like that, the language of fiction is like this and so on. Sometimes she gives us 3-4 demos. It is also very useful for us. Because, for example, sometimes my cinematographer seems to put on that music and shoot, we experience such things. We experienced this a lot, especially in the documentary. It was very good for us to move with Ekin's music in both documentaries.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Super. Actually, you have answered this question a little bit, but I wanted to ask about your selection process regarding the music in your films. How was this process until you met Ms. Ekin? So, firstly, choosing musicians, how was your music preference?

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: Since Ekin and I met right away on my first feature, we got along very well together. For example, for *13+*, which we shot after that, here is *Ankebut*, we made 2 shorts together, there was already an extreme mood in *Ankebut*, there was a chaotic, very fast editing suitable for the experimental route there. The

image changes every second, the images intertwine together. A strange serenity but cacophony was also needed that would give that chaotic status but at the same time take us into the nightmare of our main character, Nağme, who is a real person anyway. Because when Nağme went out on the street, no one could hear or see her. No one understood that violence. At the same time, the street she came out of was violence itself. Therefore, we needed something strange that would combine both serenity and cacophony. She set up something like that for us from start to finish. From 1st second to the end. For *I3*, I only had the music clearly in my mind for the finale. So the witch was born because it was there for the first time for me. In the first film of the witch trilogy, the witch was born in that finale, and I wanted music that would become stronger and dominate with her in the place where she was born in the finale. Again, she did it before shooting, so we gave it to her on set while we were shooting it, and we gave it to her while we were rehearsing. Our actor also got used to it. What kind of choreography will it be? Because her timing was important. The scene would continue while the Roll Caption was running. Therefore, its size and everything was very important to us. It was music that had to be ready during shooting. It was one piece of music, so that was for sure. For *I5+*, while I was doing research, I was spending time in the places where 2 women, Aylin and Havva, lived, and of course I was also spending time with their children. And I was going to the places they talked about. And then, even before the shooting, I was writing to Ekin. What I feel. So today, we sat down with Havva's daughter Zeynep, and she said like this. Of course, it is very painful. There is a complete pain and so, you know, *I5+* for me it was always like: I hope I can complete this process without getting agitated. Because after a while you lose things...

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Objectivity?

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: Definitely. These are because you are in that reality because it is the reality of that place, and it is not reality, it is a very painful reality anyway. Therefore, where should I stand and where should I not lead to agitation? Because on the one hand, Aylin and Havva are both very smart and definitely do not see themselves as victims, I don't see them either, they don't see them in the film, but going to her is such a knife edge, it's only a matter of time. Therefore, not allowing this in music and not allowing this in fiction was a big issue and a test for us. And I was writing to Ekin about the things I felt and talked about during my meetings or trips at

work, or the things we talked about during my visits to them. According to her, Ekin was making themes about Havva, about her daughter, about Havva herself, about Samandağ, where she felt happier, and about Belen, for whom she felt very trapped. Or in the same way, Aylin was going for a more beautiful motive in Diyarbakır. Aylin because she loves Diyarbakır very much. Since Istanbul was a nightmare city for her, she was going to a more nightmare world of melodies. But of course, all of these are intertwined, the spirit of the film, how can I say it, is not melody like this again, but it changes suddenly when I get dragged into their spirit, because both Aylin and Havva were very changeable. So, while they are crying like this, they greet you with something completely different because they don't like crying. She could suddenly imitate someone or tell a joke, and her moods would change a lot. The music was shaped like this. But before that, for example, I have a musical before *Kaygı*. My short musical. I didn't show it to anyone. There were normal already known nineties songs there. Here are short songs like Oya Bora's *Seni Bana Yazmışlar*, Barış Manço's *Kara Sevda* 9/8 rytmically, Klips ve Onlar's *Halley*, etc. We have such an entertaining short with a novel atmosphere, but it's not something I really want to see. Therefore, there was still music at that time, but there were existing music.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: So, in the sound design phase of the film, how involved are you in this process? How much do you care about your sound designer's ideas and decisions during your creation process?

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: It goes like this, actually it's always been like that for me. I think I've worked with 5 different sound designers so far. In fact, most of them were Fatih and Eli in many projects. But in general, I always did this, talk first. And bringing the sound designer and sound recordist together. Definitely in general, I couldn't do that in a film just and at the end of the day, prepare voice notes. These voice notes can sometimes be 50 pages long, but it is not like this, let's hear this in the third second of the first minute, let's hear this in the seventh second of the first minute. So it's always based on the mood inside, what's in my head is here. I actually tried to do this, and look, this will actually appear in the color, so actually, we'd better avoid those sounds here. For example, some of these. Just sounds we should avoid. Some of them here, you know, we definitely see it hitting the table, but we have to muffle that knocking on the table, that sound, because that's something. Sometimes there are notes in these that I am so specific about, but there are also things that I don't think it would be right

for us to use and that I don't think will be good for the spirit of the film, or here we hear this and that sound, but I think we could use this and maybe make it seem like it's hitting the walls, here's something, something... Actually, I normally write long notes that lead to mixing as well as sound design. But then we, my sound designer is looking at everything, reading those notes. Then we sit down with him and talk: I thought something like this, I did something like this. At first, he definitely works alone. You know, he does something in the first 5 minutes. Then he shares it with me and we start building something from it. Then this process continues a little bit like this. Then we move into a process where we work completely side by side. So, we all work together, we look at it together again with a clearer eye, or here we actually turn on the footsteps, but the correct thing is to turn off the footsteps and say that we disrupt the breathing, or let's read this upside down, let's try it. Again, there is a final process where we review everything, second by second, channel by channel.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: So, how much cultural elements are included in the sounds you use?

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: By the way, in addition to the previous question, let me also say this: I would definitely invite my musician to the sound here, because she is another fresh eye and Ekin can have a lot of influence on things. So there are things that happen where we say, oh yeah, we never thought of it that way. By the way, let me add that too. I think that's a nice thing too. It comes 2-3 times at different stages.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: How important are the cultural elements in the sounds you use, that is, those that are more evocative of Turkish culture, and how much importance do you give to this issue in your films?

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: So Turkish culture is a broad concept.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes.

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: Of course, my films are local, so when you look at them, there is a *10 Saniye* that hasn't been released yet. Of course, *10 Saniye* is like this, it takes place in a school with two women. For example, it could have taken place in Latvia, it could have taken place in the Netherlands. Frankly, I don't see it as very local. But other than that, for example, *Kaygı* is the film here. Doesn't this mean, for example, my director of photography was Polish, when my director of photography accepted me, he told me this: the state is everywhere, the media is media everywhere,

massacre is massacre everywhere and there is. On the one hand, of course, there is such a universality, but on the other hand, what we call Sivas is something that belongs entirely to this place, and I read a process where I went back to Pir Sultan to write it. In fact, I have read about Sivas for almost centuries, until the Timur period. Well, this is the same with the witch trilogy, violence against women is everywhere. And after the pandemic, it increased especially in the north, it also increased in France, it also increased in Italy. In other words, a woman was being raped every 5 minutes in America. It was always like that, it still is like that. So, violence against women is not something specific to here. But Aylin, Havva, Diyarbakır, Hatay... These cities are the cities of this place. Therefore, you are doing something with the codes here again. And this is important to me in the scripts I write. The *10 Saniye* I mentioned is not my script anyway, which will be released soon. What I said is that we can adapt it anywhere, everywhere. Therefore, since I normally start from the location, I proceed based on the codes of the country. Yes. And I am trying to tell something about the political past of the country, about a certain period, through today. But I am also telling about the past and therefore the culture of the country, culture is a very broad concept that actually covers all of them, I think it is the right word, it feels like I am telling something and I will continue to tell them. In other words, since I have never been able to think independently of space, it means culture in space. In other words, what we call Anatolia today is already a giant excavation area in itself. While we have something like this, there is no point in going and, I don't know, translating it into another culture. Because of course we do this, we have data in our heads and it is not full of codes for every city. We have a working process. For example, I will now shoot my new film in Diyarbakır. I sat down and looked at Diyarbakır for a month. Because when we went with *15+* and were shooting in Diyarbakır, a place there left a mark on me, and this means that a culture there left a mark on me, and I couldn't break away from there. I need to shoot something in this location. It was already spinning in my mind, by the way, I shot the location a little bit and recorded it, and yes, it passes from there, the other one happens like this, so something like this happens at the beginning of this film, and something like this happens at the end, so I set it up for 10 days. Now I need to fill it in. So, since I was not born with Diyarbakır codes, I am in the research. But yes, I find it important and valuable to explain this culture and I will continue to do so.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: I read in an interview that you recorded construction sounds in Mecidiyeköy, especially in the film *Kaygı*, before shooting the film.

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: Yes, I record a lot of sounds, and by the way, I record them everywhere, because there are very strange sounds. I make sounds in the cave you enter, that is, in the cave I went to for touristic purposes, or I can hear very strange sounds in a place where I went on summer vacation, or in Ayvalık, where I lived for a while, I recorded so many sounds. Because announcements were made in the morning. "Dear people of Ayvalık, etc." and it was so strange. Also, the initial vibration of the megaphone is female, and then the tone of that woman's voice. That woman's tone somehow contained an interesting enthusiasm even when she was giving the news of a funeral. I think sound says a lot, I mean a lot. It also says a lot about culture. It also says a lot about how you feel. There is such a thing as body language, which contrasts with a sentence coming out of your mouth, for centuries. However, although I find body language very powerful, I also think that we reveal a lot of things with voice. By the tone of your voice.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: I also want to ask something, about the relationship between Hasret and Mehmet. Because they have a relationship, but actually we see Hasret alone and at home. We are here with a more introspective story of his. What can you say about their relationship? How did you construct it?

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: I structured it like this: I didn't have a love story in my mind in the film anyway. Because at its core, Hasret is not losing her mind, this is not a crazy woman's film, but there is a past that she has carved out. This is both her own past and a social past based on her own past. Not like a detective trying to make something forgotten, but like you and me. Because I never wanted Hasret to be a thing that appeared on the news channel and said, "We must find the truth!", so she is not such a character. They seem like too many slogans to me. In other words, without turning this character into a slogan, without distracting attention from the film itself, because the film already takes the phenomena we call urban transformation, media, and power and tries to create a memory story, and since it tries to establish something between times, let me also add a love story to it. "Kaygı/ Inflammation" is really prone to turning into a soup from the very beginning. I would lose everything there. That's why I chose to position Mehmet as her close friend and actually like an audience. Because Hasret is starting to discover things. I'm having a nightmare, what's going on, I'm constantly having a

nightmare, I'm digging up things about my past, and Mehmet is actually the audience there. In other words, a close friend who asks her all the questions the audience can ask. Likewise, Mehmet, Gülay played by Asiye Dinçsoy, or other friend figures we see suddenly disappear. So Mehmet doesn't say anything other than yes, close that house, get out of that house. In fact, when Asiye Dinçsoy's character comes and visits Hasret, she sees how terrible she is. At first there is anger, she asks what are you doing in this house, but then she slowly starts to be afraid of her. Because she thinks that she has changed and lost her mind, and when she leaves the door for the last time, she says call me. It's actually like her call. She needs to take her from there by her arm and take her out. So, even though these types of things are small symbolisms, for me they also represent the people left to burn in that hotel in Sivas, because no one could reach in. So actually there were a lot of phone calls. When you look at big state things at that time, there was a left-right coalition, I think Sivas is an example that clearly shows that there is no left or right. That's why having a coalition was very valuable to me at that time. In other words, nothing that we think will make us feel safe is safe, and no one is safe, even in their 'safe house'. And no one extends that hand to her. Only he can really do his own thing. That's why it was very valuable for me to leave her alone. This is true even for us today, if we want symbolism on a smaller scale. We have all experienced moments when we felt so alone and wounded and soul-damaged, that we truly did not have the slightest source of motivation left. We went through periods. We lived for weeks and months. It happened to me too. But I haven't received any help from anyone that goes beyond asking what's up and what you're doing. And I'm sure there were people for whom I could not fulfill that duty as a friend. So, for me, it is the direct audience. Mehmet, who asks questions, wants to help, expresses this with his words, but is not actually there and does nothing.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Well, at one point in the film, actually in the places where I think Hasret first started to remember, we hear a horse sound. What do we represent for you?

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: It represents the Land of White Horses for me. But there too, it's actually something I still don't want to fully open up. It's something I want to leave to the audience a little bit. But I make Hasret listen to a documentary there. Hasret is actually trying to do something about her own land, primarily as a documentary editor. She is trying to do something about her home, and maybe in this way she starts to understand her mother and father. But the documentary she listened to is also

manipulative. We are playing with reality there too. In fact, the sentences you hear there in the Land of the White Horses scene are not real, they are again manipulative, so we do not actually hear much of the truth in the film. All the things we hear, namely news, documentary audio, everything are voices trying to manipulate her. Except for the voices of her mother and father.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: So, from a woman's perspective and as a woman, do you have a purpose to understand or explain women and...?

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: Of course there is. Based on this.

İrem Ece Gülensoy:...where does this stand in your own cinema? I will say but...

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: Well, my cinema is based directly on this. Well, when I start writing a character, I'm talking about the main character. When I write a character who takes charge of the story, she inevitably comes to me as Ayşe or Fatma. So obviously it never comes as Ali, Ahmet. It's not something like this, I'm not saying it from a place like "I'm a woman and I can describe the best woman." Actually, it comes from there instinctively. So, little by little, the same thing started to happen when we were building a team in this business. I think of Sıla, Ekin, Selda, Şöhret, so I don't think of Hasan or Hüseyin. Because I really find women much more of a puzzle, much more complex, much more interesting. I must confess. Therefore, such a flow of consciousness arises directly while telling the story and bringing the storytellers together. So I always go to women.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Thank you very much, that's all my questions. Is there anything you would like to add?

Ceylan Özgün Özçelik: Thank you very much, well done.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Thank you very much.

Ekin Fil Interview (November 2023 / via mail)

İrem Ece Gülensoy:What would you like to say about the world of sound and music in Turkish cinema?

Ekin Fil: Since films are mostly shot within limited budgets in Turkey, the field of sound design has been somewhat relegated to the background. But music always has its place despite all kinds of impossibilities. It is obvious that the sound track in cinema is an issue that cannot be ignored when the dramatic contributions of the sound track to the film are evaluated, as well as the developing technology. I think it is partly for this reason that we have started see more careful work on the subject of sound in cinema in Turkey in recent years.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: What is your process for creating/composing music for a film?

Ekin Fil: I find it helpful to talk to the director. I try to understand the story. I would like to decide with the director what kind of perspective we will present. In fact, it wouldn't be an understatement to say that I try to deliver what is expected of me without ignoring my own emotions..

İrem Ece Gülensoy: In our interview with Ceylan Özgün Özçelik, the director of the movie *Kaygı* , she said that you made your first music for this movie with only a one-page synopsis. When they placed this music in a random scene, it fit perfectly. How could you understand this world so well with just a one-page synopsis?

Ekin Fil: In fact, since I like to wander in uncanny, mysterious and dark atmospheres in my own solo works, the world I understood from Ceylan's synopsis did not seem strange. I think my job became easier when there were places I liked to be involved in.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: The music of the movie *Kaygı* is very interesting and actually a part of Turkish cinema. A type we are not used to. How did this process go for you?

Ekin Fil: *Kaygı* is my first film music work. There was a world inside where I could interpret the dark and mysterious atmosphere as I wished. Ceylan is a director who is very open to innovations. I think that's mostly why we were able to dive as deep as we could. As for sound, I benefited from the useful world of electronic tones and synths. I think this brings an alternative to the general perception.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: In general, did you create the music in this film to highlight an emotion, an event, or just to accompany the atmosphere?

Ekin Fil: Actually, I can say that we used it for both situations. As she tries to delve deeper into her longing memory, we see her becoming more disconnected from life. The film has a parallel sound world. Especially in the second half, much more diluted

melodies and more atmospheric rhythms were designed to coincide with the times when Hasret became increasingly lonely.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: What emotions did you aim to highlight most when creating your music for the movie *Kaygı*?

Ekin Fil: I can say the moods such as unknown, tension, uncanny, loss and finding, loneliness...

İrem Ece Gülensoy: What can you say about the character Hasret?

Ekin Fil: While Hasret experiences the power of forgetting that can lead to self-loss, on the trail of the unknown extending from her own memory to the collective memory, she does not refrain from exceeding these limits. She is a strong person. She doesn't give up.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: What does the sound world of the character Hasret represent to you?

Ekin Fil: Hasret's world represents both a lot of faded memories and the very living and vivid world of a woman who does not want to allow this disappearance. Cities that are never complete and are always being rebuilt, the conversations and voices of friends who talk but can never offer a real helping hand; The media that constantly produces manipulation... and in contrast to all this, an inner world centered around a never-ending suspicion...

İrem Ece Gülensoy: What can you say about being a woman in this community? (challenges/advantages)

Ekin Fil: Maybe it creates a little more curiosity, like what did this woman do... Other than that, believe me, it is no different from other sectors.

Fatih Rağbet Interview (27.11.2023 / Online)

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Welcome and thank you again for accepting us. I will use this meeting in my master's thesis at Istanbul Technical University, Center for Advanced Studies in Music. If you have your approval and permission.

Fatih Rağbet: Of course, why not? I approve.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Thank you. So my first question is, how long have you been designing sound for films and what made you decide to start this business?

Fatih Rağbet: How long has it been? I think it was either 2003 or 2004 when I first started working in the feature film industry, that is, in the cinema industry in Turkey. I can't remember exactly. It's been a while. I think the first movie I worked on was *Gönül Yarası*. It was Yavuz Tuğrul's movie. I started working there as an assistant, but before that I was still dealing with sound. I was in the branches of sound, more in the advertising world. It's a pretty old time, of course. But after I became interested in cinema, that is, after I started working as an assistant with the first *Gönül Yarası*, I decided to switch completely to the cinema industry. It was a long and tiring process for me, and it still is. It's a tough thing because making sounds and sound design. It is an area that is generally always left behind. It's an area where not always enough time is given in production. For example, while an editing process is a long process, sound is always given very limited space, on the contrary to an editing process that takes 5-6 months or even a year, maybe even longer. Unfortunately, this makes the scheduling difficult. I mean, there are a lot of conditions, of course, the reasons for this are open to debate. Maybe this is due to the production directors' decisions or financial concerns. And if I talk about Turkey, unfortunately, the budgets are always low because it comes last financially. I don't want to say it's always like that, but it's mostly like that. I hope. But it is changing, I believe it is starting to change now. I think that the use of sound has moved to a different area in Turkey. So back in the day, yeah, I think we're still a little bit behind. I myself feel like we are still behind in terms of the use of sound in Turkish cinema. But is it progressing? Yes, it is. It seems better than before.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: I understand.

Fatih Rağbet: I started off a bit negative, but?

İrem Ece Gülensoy: No, no, actually, I can say that it's exactly what I want to hear. Because when we actually start meeting with directors, we start by talking about independent cinema and cinema in Turkey. That's why it was so similar.

Fatih Rağbet: It's an even bigger problem, especially in cinema. I understand that very well too. Because the production process, the pre-preparation and then the shooting and post-production time period of the films we call "independent", which

we call "art house", are really a very difficult process for both directors and producers in Turkey. I mean, it is the same abroad, but it is really difficult in Turkey. It is so difficult to make a film, given the time or funds or things left over from the mainstream cinemas that we call "mainstream". It is a very big and painful process, especially for directors and producers, and it requires a lot of effort and trouble for them. I understand them too.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes unfortunately. So what do you pay attention to when doing sound design?

Fatih Rağbet: Preferably, before starting a movie, if I talk specifically about a movie, if we have been in communication before shooting, I would like to read the script with the director. That is, before shooting. Because I want to start imagining what it is, what kind of world it is, and talk to the director about how we will bring it to a place. My preference is always this way. But if you ask how many times you have achieved this in your professional life, it is not very many. This is something like that, but of course it happened. For example, one of the films you chose, *Kaygı*, is Ceylan's film, we met Ceylan while she was in the first rough script, before the script even started shooting. Through a mutual friend. Afterwards, I can say that we turned from colleagues to friends during the production process of the film. She is a very close friend of mine and a person I love, and I respect her cinema and narrative language very much. I mean, of course, all the directors I have worked with, but Ceylan has a special place in my heart. Because she really cares about sound and has a different understanding of sound as a language of use. What do I pay attention to? It's actually about how to serve the story. I mean, I actually think about what could happen in the story, and then I exchange ideas with the director about the world of sound. I exchange ideas, talk, discuss and experiment with what could happen. We do. This is what happens. So there are a lot of basic things like how can we serve the character in the story, where sound is sometimes intense or not, or using silence.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: So how are your dialogues with directors shaped during the sound design process?

Fatih Rağbet: How does this take shape? Well...

İrem Ece Gülensoy: So what I really want to ask is, do they clearly express to you what they want and expect it, or are there areas where you can contribute?

Fatih Rağbet: Is happening. In fact, when we watch a movie together and come together when the movie is in a rough-cut state and the editing process is not yet finished, we watch the movie together, or watch it remotely, or watch it together online, and think about what we can do with the movie, what could happen. There are really simple questions, for example. The most basic things take place in a house, for example. Where is this house, where should it be? Here I am asking, is it in Nişantaşı, Gültepe or Çeliktepe, or by the Bosphorus, where it is, that is, we are inside the house, but if we do not see much outside, we should think about where it is or as if it is where it is, what should we hear from the outside world? I talk to the director about how it should be shaped, the period, how much we should/shouldn't hear human voices passing by, and I try to understand the world in director's mind so that I can start to shape it accordingly. How to convey tension or fear or all those emotions, where we should underline them, and whether the director actually wants something big when using sound there, or whether he wants to use it in a completely minimal way and make it feel very light to the audience. All of this actually comes out after conversations with the directors. Of course, I also have suggestions. So I'm coming with suggestions, we're coming. So, we thought a little bit about what we could use there, what could it be, that tension or emotion, how can we convey all those emotions, how can we give it to their voices, these processes change with each film.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes. So can you compare this to the mainstream, movies and independent films? So how much can you be involved in mainstream films or how much can you be involved in an independent film? Does this make any difference?

Fatih Rağbet: Actually, there is, albeit a small one. So actually there is a big difference, maybe I wouldn't say small. Mainstream movies are a bit of math. In fact, the movies we watched there were a little bit, of course, I don't mean that the mainstream movies were bad, but the quality, the sound quality or the work done. But we all know it's just a little bit of math. Two main characters loving each other and staring at each other. Here they are, just a little bit like a television series. That is not to say that they are bad, it is just like that in the world. We are in such a world. So mainstream? This is the period of romantic movies, for example, especially romantic movies come in winter. Both in America and Turkey. This is all to attract a math audience. The difference between them is that independent work is longer and more difficult. I don't mean this in a bad way. More detail, how much more can be given,

putting all those things a little more selectively, mixing, balancing... Of course, along with all of these, one of the most important elements in films, along with sound design, is the use of music. Music, both made by musicians and composers, has a significant impact on the film, the sound, and the world of the film. This is no small thing. We can say that it is almost equivalent to sound. Because then something like this happens, if you work with a musician, you need to be in communication with that musician. At some point, it has to coincide with the sound we make. Yes, we can say how far we can go, but it also needs to have integrity with a voice. Or it may be necessary to make the sound according to the music. To revise. Or it could be the other way around. But mostly his voice.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: After we transitioned to the sound cinema era, that is, after sound entered the cinema, silence actually started to gain a greater meaning. So that started to become a choice, too. How would you define silence as a sound designer?

Fatih Rağbet: There was actually a musician who was like, what was this thing? Was it in the 60s or 50s? I might as well be throwing it. I think John Cage had a concert called The Voice of Silence. First there somehow doing it.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes, 4.33?

Fatih Rağbet: If I remember correctly, it was like he was doing something, going to concerts and standing around doing nothing and everyone was in such shock.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes, 4.33, just at the piano with movements, exactly.

Fatih Rağbet: Yes, just like that. In other words, using silence as an element, there are actually many examples of this in cinema. I don't know if I can give an example in Turkish cinema. For example, the first thing that came to my mind was, what was the name of the movie? Was Fargo directed by the Coen brothers? They had a movie. There's a serial killer on the highway. Not a serial killer, but a hired killer. He was killing people with something, like that movie. It seems to me like the movie that uses silence best, the movie that uses silence as an element, as sound design. I wouldn't say it's the best, but it's one of the most successful movies I've ever watched. Also as a world of sound. So using silence is an interesting thing. On the one hand, this may actually vary depending on the film and the director's preference. Many examples can be given. I love, too. It's an element I want to use. The sudden collapse of silence adds

a dynamic. Silence is also a design. Using silence as design is also something I do sometimes, if the directors agree.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Well, let's talk about movies a little bit. Can you tell us a little about the sound design process of the movie *Kaygı*?

Fatih Rağbet: I can say that *Kaygı* was one of the films with the longest sound production I have worked on. It was long because it was based on sound. So, since we first talked to Ceylan, it was about using the silence. Because there is silence and there's the claustrophobia situation . And trauma. It is something that is experienced, in fact, it is a trauma that we all experienced. The Sivas Massacre. We actually made *Kaygı* by conducting many experiments such as the character hearing voices, fire, being set on fire, etc. It was long because we tried many things with Ceylan. I was trying one more thing, she decides. It happens or it doesn't happen. We were having a lot of discussions about it. So this is not in a negative way, it is an argument about the scene of the movie. Another thing that I like is actually getting the director's opinion about her and understanding what she wants. What she says is right about her is sometimes wrong, or what I say is right, of course, may not be right. The *Kaygı* was like this. I don't know if you talked to Ceylan when we first started *Kaygı*, but...

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes, yes we talked.

Fatih Rağbet: At first, Ceylan did not want to use any music.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: It was like that, then I guess it happened because of you forced it.

Fatih Rağbet: It's not by my own force, it's just a little bit of my thing, I wouldn't say I don't force it...

İrem Ece Gülensoy: No, no, I meant it in a positive way.

Fatih Rağbet: Yes, she had such a decision. She didn't want to use music at all, but as a result, *Kaygı* was a film in which music was present from beginning to end. And in my opinion, I haven't watched it for a long time, of course I don't know, now I need to take a better look at it. At the very end, I think the sound design and music matched each other very much. So they completed each other. Because when I listened to it, as far as I remember, it was like: is this music or sound design?

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Exactly, yes, it really makes you feel it.

Fatih Rağbet: This is also a very happy thing for me. Because I think we didn't go above music in any way at that time. Or the sound design of music. I actually think they fit together very well. But of course, my musician friend Ekin Fil also has success here. Because it was her first feature film experience. It was the first movie she worked on. And she really believed in this painting incredibly, so I think so. She composed very, very good compositions. So her workmanship is really good there. Because when we came together in sound, we matched very well, but of course she also tried many things. Actually, it comes down to trial and error. In that sense, *Kaygı* was like that. I mean, the sound in everything has gone out of its way, along with a lot of music.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes yes. What you really mean is, "Is there music or sound design here right now?" There are many dilemmas while watching. Ms. Ceylan had already said that she wanted to create it. Thank you very much indeed again.

Fatih Rağbet: Thank you. How nice, it makes me happy to hear this.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Well, you have actually interpreted the sound world of the film *Kaygı* a little bit, but I would like to ask a little more about the character. How did you construct Hasret's sound world? So, more character specific?

Fatih Rağbet: So actually it was something like this, when I first read the script and when we first talked with Ceylan, I mean when we talked with my director friend, there was something like this about Hasret, I mean, in the movie, we are not talking about just one thing. Hasret's experience of the trauma she experienced in her childhood is, in a sense, urban transformation rather than the loss of her parents, having to move from where you live in the city, you know, with urban transformation, it is something that is constantly happening in Istanbul, Turkey. For example, it happens here too, it's something that happens everywhere. Urban transformation means that you are thrown out with the growth of that city. If you have a little money, you are in that ring, otherwise you are going outside the ring. In fact, Hasret lived like that too. I mean, Hasret was going through a lot of things. She is in an urban transformation, she is exposed to mobbing at work, she has difficulties communicating with her friends, and no one listens to her. So it's not like they don't listen, they ask, but they ask superficially. Actually, it's still valid today, I don't remember how many years it's been since I made *Kaygı*, I guess it's been more than 5 years, but it's still the same thing.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: 2017

Fatih Rağbet: 2017, wow, it's been 6 years, right? Yes. So I think the same thing still applies. While we were doing this, we did not name the place where Hasret lived. I mean, it doesn't have a place, or rather, Ceylan didn't name it. This place was not given a name like Tophane or Tarlabası. But she lives in a place where there is an urban transformation, and at one or two places in the movie, as far as I remember, the apartment manager comes and says "when are you going to leave, everyone else has moved out" etc., but she stubbornly stays there. In fact, the reason she can't get out is that she can't get out of there, and on the other hand, her mood isn't good either. Where the woman lives. And there, the sounds she heard, the sounds of urban transformation, were entering the house like this, here are the sounds of construction, demolition, garbage truck sounds from time to time, constantly inside something. There were also some sound design things we did about the walls at that time. So it was a bit of a dream or somewhere in between.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes, she said "the walls are sweating", but in fact, it is not a sweating sound like that, but you have made a very special design there.

Fatih Rağbet: Oh yes! At one point it's like "go-outt, go-outt", yes. She said the walls were too hot. There's a camera somewhere in there, I can't tell you the technical name, I'm a little ignorant about those things related to images, something coming from the walls or actually it was all about how to create a claustrophobia in *Kaygı*. The walls, that is, the sounds, coming at her and being alone. Muffling the voices. Actually, Hasret gets distracted from time to time, for example, she had a friend, I don't remember the character's name, but her boyfriend was saying...

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Mehmet.

Fatih Rağbet: It was Mehmet, wasn't it? Yes, Mehmet. Mehmet is coming. They were sitting with him and having a conversation, but while she was explaining something, his voice went out, something happened, she got choked up, there were many things like that. Or maybe there was a park scene. She suddenly hears something like the sound of a flute in the park. She gets up at a sound and gets startled. But we don't understand where it comes from. Even though it wasn't there, we did something by blending things together, using the wind and highway sounds. But when we actually look at it, there is no hair at all, it moves in the wind, it doesn't look like that, but we used it. For example, that's sound design. A fact that does not exist. Something that

doesn't actually exist is pretending to be real and making the audience believe it. Or in a better way, it is to try to convince them.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: So how did you study the locations in the movie *Kaygı*? There were especially sections where you recorded sound. Ms. Ceylan, more precisely, said that she had previously recorded sound in Mecidiyeköy. For urban transformation.

Fatih Rağbet: Yes. I mean, we didn't actually record in that sense. Our friend who did the sound recording of the film, I think his name was Özgür. During the shooting, Özgürs and Ceylan went to many construction areas where urban transformation was taking place and recorded their voices. We took those sounds and recordings and used some of them in sound design or atmosphere creation. But this is something I do, or rather, it's not something I do, it's something I do in all the films I work on. Something is being done, this is called white track in terminology. I'm making a sound reservation: "İrem's house" or "İrem Ece's house", "the room tone of the room", they record the sounds coming from outside. If they record it, of course. It doesn't work either way, but I definitely try to use them during the production process of the film because it creates a natural sound. But in *Kaygı*, we did something like this, together with my business partner Eli Haligua, we went to *Kaygı*'s house, Hasret's house, where the shooting was shot, and recorded something technical. We went with a microphone and a speaker and recorded the reverb of the room. We also used these for; almost more than 60% of the movie, maybe more, took place inside the house. We tried to use real reverb in the film's foleys, while making foleys and mixing them. That's how we used it. I remember now, I didn't mean her house.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Also, Ms. Ceylan said something, I think you sent Eli Haligua the voice recordings that you specifically requested in some places. So, I guess you had a communication like "I want the real sound recording of this place?"

Fatih Rağbet: The shooting of the film, for example, here is something like this: One of the benefits of reading the script of the film in advance is as follows; During the shooting, I reached out to our soundman or director or assistant director friends, or the soundman or sound recordist, and asked for long sound recordings for, for example, the final scene of the movie - speaking for *Kaygı*- the scene with the crowd. So we wanted to. Here is "Burn! Burn! Burn!" Even though we didn't hear them saying "burn burn burn" in real terms, each of them was heavy, we bent them and twisted them etc.

We went through a lot of processes. But we always wanted to make long recordings of those crowd sounds there. We used all of them. This is one of the great advantages of reading the script in advance. There will be a crowd here. "Can you please record some long crowd sounds, shouts, crowd, murmuring?" "Whatever it says in the text." To text, of course. Or rather, the story.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Super. So, can you tell us a little about the sound design process of the movie *Zuhal*?

Fatih Rağbet: In contrast to *Kaygı*, *Zuhal* is a more minimal film. There's a whole other world of sound. There we have our female hero again. How beautiful. But there is a sad story there for me too. Because we are talking about a female character who cannot communicate with anyone and whom no one listens to. Unfortunately, like Türkiye.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes.

Fatih Rağbet: Both are two women who have difficulty communicating and no one listens to either of them. Nobody tries to reach him and they don't listen. But as big as the world of sound is in *Kaygı*, that is, in my opinion, as a language of using big sound, it is also a completely minimal sound in *Zuhal*. So, it is Ceylan's choice there, and actually it is Nazlı's choice here. She wants that language. When we look at the general sound world and visual aspect of the film, it is much more minimal, everything is more like this. Similarly, to ask what and how we would hear, Nazlı from the front, along with Anna Maria Aslanoğlu, one of the producers of the film, and Eli - my business partner; Again, we did it together, watching for a long time and taking notes. And there were actually quite a lot of studies on what that cat would be like, what the cat's voice would be like. It was such a long process. Actually, *Zuhal* is also a long process.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: I also heard that you have always preferred the same cat's voice.

Fatih Rağbet: Yes. Because we tried to keep the same cat voice in the same way, not as a different sound, but with a little change, that is, not as a completely different tone. There was also a place where little children, mischievous children, were using an app to annoy Zuhal. Something like this happened there too, by making the sound a little more digital and changing it.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Oh, is that the same cat sound? I didn't think I would be the same.

Fatih Rağbet: We did that too. In *Zuhal*, the sound world was more minimal. In a neighborhood, it is actually an above-middle class neighborhood, that is what it looks like when you look at the people of the world. There is an apartment attendant, should I say everyone is a bit elitist? So a little more upper middle class. There is an apartment relationship, but no one in the apartment is with anyone else, everyone is in a separate world. There is a couple in a house, they listen to rock music but they are never home. There's someone having a baby. I mean, after you watch the movie, I feel like I'm telling you about the movie, but it's like a separate world of sound in each person's home. When she entered the old couple's house, maybe it was a very cliché thing, but hearing the sound of the cuckoo clock there, coming from an old radio, that old wooden radio, I think it was *Seyyan Hanım*, I can't remember, was playing something like a tango. And paying attention to them, there was a naughty, mischievous child that disturbed Zuhal. When she went to his house, his mother was painting and the child was playing the flute. That's it, little by little... For example, we did something like this there, and in *Zuhal*, for example, apart from the ideas we developed jointly, we could hear the sound of piano in one or two places, especially in *Zuhal*. It was coming from above or somewhere.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes, there was something like the sound of practicing the piano, the sound of exercise.

Fatih Rağbet: Yes, someone is exercising, something like that. For example, this was something we found. So, of course, we decided by listening together with the director. We used something like that there.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: And something was very strange: The cry of one of the neighbors sounded very similar to a cat's voice.

Fatih Rağbet: Because Nazlı wanted something like that. Because there were things that were important to Nazlı, such as a cat voice or a human voice? Because something like this happens there, does Zuhal think that a human voice is a cat voice, or is it really a thing? So, it was actually something that was done at Nazlı's request. There were sounds of such a couple running around in the opening of the movie. But is that the sound of making love or not? Nazlı had a wish to keep it in between things like this. It was done based on that. Yes, it was an interesting idea that came to my mind now. So, of course, there are Nazlı's ideas and the director's ideas. Finding out what you want

and doing something accordingly. There was a scene where Zuhal was sleeping. She wakes up in the middle of the night. The door was moving with the wind, "Should the squeak of the window turn into a cat sound or not?" There is such a thing in between, trying to do it. These are small details but challenging. I mean, the places where we were dealing with pleasure, I mean, the places where I was dealing with.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: So, how did you design the sound world for Zuhal's own character?

Fatih Rağbet: Zuhal, in fact, in the same way, where is the location, what can be heard about where it might be? It's not a very crowded place. What do you hear from time to time? Of course, there was something there, so what do we hear? Is there a lot of traffic or little traffic? Because Zuhal also goes out a lot, Zuhal also lives at home and we do not see her going out much. She is a lawyer, but we never see her outside world. Her assistant was coming to her house.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes.

Fatih Rağbet: There had to be a limit there too. It was something that was decided together with Nazlı there too. We are doing something. Like, "It's a little too much, let's reduce it a little, let's color it a little." There was a character who was constantly hitting cars and running away.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes, played by Şebnem Sönmez.

Fatih Rağbet: There are the fears and there are the alarms... There had to be a limit to these too. Will it appear suddenly or will it strike from time to time? What could be the sounds coming from Zuhal's upper and lower neighbors? There, I did a little something and made Nazlı listen to it, and we decided together and discussed it again. Because we need to decide together what and how much. After all, I, as the sound designer, have to express my opinion along with the director of a film. Not everything I do is right, nor is everything she says right. We need to decide together. It needs to be shaped like this. For example, *Zuhal's* music is much more minimal, much more classical, like 60s jazz. This is not to denigrate it, I don't mean its simplicity in a bad way. It was something very naive and very selectively done. That's why I think her music is so successful. I can't remember the names of the guys who made her music, I think it was the first thing they did. I think it was a very appropriate music that suited the movie.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes, yes, it is very enjoyable and entertaining to listen to at the same time.

Fatih Rağbet: Yes. It was a very appropriate music in terms of its limit and dosage. As workmanship. And it didn't get in the way of the sound. The sound did not actually get in the way of the film. Music too. That's why I think *Zuhal* is a very good example.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Okay, that's it for my questions. Is there anything you would like to add? For any two movies?

Fatih Rağbet: Oh, thank you for being in contact. Thank you for communicating.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Thank you

Fatih Rağbet: I also wish you success on your thesis.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Thank you very much, thank you. I also wish you success in your professional life.

Fatih Rağbet: Anytime if there's anything I can help with.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Thank you very much, thank you.

Nazlı Elif Durlu Interview (12.11.2023 / via Zoom)

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Welcome, Ms. Nazlı. I will use this interview in my master's thesis at Istanbul Technical University Music Advanced Research Center. If you allow, I will publish it in written form in my thesis.

Nazlı Elif Durlu: OK, I have permission, thank you.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Thank you. First of all, what would you like to say about independent cinema in Turkey?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: My start in cinema did not come from a place where I wanted to do independent cinema, but I guess that because my taste as a viewer was towards independent cinema, the films I made became an example of independent cinema. So, I think very interesting films are being made in Turkish independent cinema and I am happy to be a part of it. I answered like a politician, but because it was such a general question. Can you elaborate a little more?

İrem Ece Gülensoy: So what I'm actually wondering is, how do these funding processes work? So you decided to make an independent film, and then how do you find the financial means for it?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: Yes, it is a very difficult process. I can say that it takes a lot of time, effort and contains a lot of disappointments. As far as I understand, independent cinema is generally produced with the help of funds all over the world. Outside of America. First of all, we apply for funds from the Ministry of Culture. We did not skip this with *Zuhal*. We applied at any stage, that is, in the scenario, in production, and in post-production. Apart from that, we apply for funds abroad. We were able to get support from there, albeit small. I can say that it requires a lot of dedication. First of all, the writer/director must be able to spend a lot of time and endure the uncertainty of "will it happen or won't it happen?" After that, we have to work with limited resources. At the same time, I can say that it requires the dedication of the entire team. That is, from the producer to the director of photography and the actors. We can also find investors who support independent cinema. We also had investors in *Zuhal*. So, I can say that our co-investors also contributed. It is Effort and dedication in summary.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Well, the reason why I particularly focused on independent cinema was that directors could make decisions more freely. In every sense and also because I focus more on sound. You also shoot your films independently. Can you really say that you are freer?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: I can tell. So, as far as I understand, we generally do not work for a single client. I really want the audience to watch it. Of course, I want to reach as many people as possible. But we are not working with box office concerns. I can say that this is also a liberating thing. Of course, in my opinion, in every created work and everywhere, are you 100% free? I don't know. On the one hand, you want to be understood. You want to be accepted. You may have different fears in places like Türkiye. But as far as it goes, yes, I think I'm free in comparison.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: If you are not a producer in independent cinema, it is actually difficult to find a producer. As I understand from your previous interviews, your producer Anna Maria was involved in the production process of *Zuhal* very early because she is a friend of yours. What advantages did you find in finding your producer early?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: It was definitely so much. So it's nice not to be alone for once. You believe in something. Having someone else believe in you and having someone you trust is, above all else, perhaps the most valuable thing. Because people can get lost in that uncertainty, and when you have a team like that, I don't really know how to do it without one falling down and the other rising. That's why it was so valuable. Did we start working together because we were friends? I can say that we progressed at the same time. So we actually learned to do this together. Maybe we can say that we became friends by working together. Of course, we knew each other before. There is that side to this.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: So, what are the difficulties of being a female director in this industry? So, are there any difficulties, conveniences or advantages of being a woman and being in this sector?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: Nowadays, it is said that it has advantages, but I cannot agree with this. So, I think making a movie is a very difficult job in general. Filmmaking in all forms is not just independent cinema, by the way. You always have money problems that you constantly struggle with, no matter what your budget is. The more time you have, the more time crunch you have. That's what I said, uncertainty always exists. You work with a very large team, and communication with them may not always be that easy. That's why we need to say this whether we are men or women. It's not easy for anyone. But as a woman, I guess it may take a little longer to convince someone. We endured this in parallel with *Zuhal's* subject in some interviews with my producer Anna Maria. I think it is necessary to be resistant to that belief and those slightly suspicious approaches. And in my opinion, it's always about believing in yourself. As a woman, this is something that is more valuable and requires more effort. From a more internal place. Since you are generally raised to be doubted or asked to be invisible - even with good intentions - making a film usually means putting yourself out there and saying "this is what I think, this is who I am". I can say that it took me a while to find this strength.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: So, when you are planning the films you will shoot, even if it is a short film, at what stage do you start thinking about sound?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: I try to start thinking at the script stage. Actually, I think in the scenario. Since *Zuhal* was already based on a voice, I thought about it from the very

beginning of the script. Because we are describing a character who listens. You can't just dismiss her as "she listens and doesn't hear cat sounds". There was always the question, "So what does she hear when she doesn't hear the cat sound?" Since it takes place in an apartment building, we thought about what she could hear, and other characters were created based on what she could hear. Or vice versa: sometimes other characters were created and we thought about what sounds there were in these houses. On the other hand, the other characters do not hear the cat's voice, so what do they hear? What sound prevents them from hearing this sound? We actually thought about these questions from the very beginning of the scenario. With my co-author Ziya.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Well, during the character formation process, their moods, the house they live in, the clothes they wear and their professions are discussed first. How much do you include sound in this creation process? In general, that is, both in *Zuhal* specifically and in general?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: As I just said, maybe before how they dress and what their houses look like, what is the sound in these houses. Because there is a baby in one family and a teenager in the other house. They were also created with sound in mind. Just like the sound of a baby crying is similar to the sound of a cat meowing. Of course, I don't remember whether it first came from here or not. There were always things related to sound in my short films. But *Zuhal* is entirely based on this.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: How was the creation process of the movie *Zuhal*? I read in a previous interview that you were inspired by a true story in a circle of friends. Can you tell us a little about the production story?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: Yes, so the starting point was actually a story I heard. But then, of course, the shaping of that story is a different process. It is changing. So the starting point is that a woman hears a cat sound and no one else hears it. But what kind of woman is this woman? What are the things she actually struggles with in life? What does this movie tell, who does she encounter with? Of course, the plot of the whole story has evolved far beyond the story I was told. So we discovered it in that writing process. But on the other hand, we can also think that what I say we discovered is that we discovered how to reveal the issues that preoccupy me. It was a long process. So the writing part took too long. Of course, since the financing takes a long time, I can say that it changed shape by going back to my writing and looking back now.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: What does the kitten sound represent to you in your movie *Zuhal* and why did you choose to use the kitten sound in particular?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: What does it represent? The whole movie is a little bit too. So it has a lot of meaning. We can also say that it is *Zuhal's* own inner voice at one point. We can also say that there is a need to establish a connection somewhere. By the way, it would have made more sense for the kitten to have gotten stuck while pulling. We shot it from a place like that. Then of course, that sound, the sound we used in post-production was not the voice of that cat. It was the sound of another cat. The sound was chosen very meticulously, and we used different vocalizations and meowing patterns of the same cat throughout the film.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: So cute.

Nazlı Elif Durlu: There, too, we followed a path such that the audience should hear as much as *Zuhal* hears.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: The musical choices in the film are very interesting. How did you make your music choices? They are so much fun.

Nazlı Elif Durlu: Thanks. Yes, music was a very difficult process. At first, there was music that we used in the editing. It had to create the feeling we created in it, because it was music used in another movie, and it had to be different. I think this was a bit of a challenge for musicians. We constantly searched for ways to verbally express the question of exactly what we want to do. In the end, we had a page of writing that was both abstract and concrete. It was like this: 1- It should be music that will make you want to be a detective, 2- It should be playful, it should have a bit of humor in itself, 3- It should create the feeling of a cat like this walking on the piano, just imagine a piano, etc. Of course, I don't know how this sounds for musicians, but our musicians really created something that really touched my heart. I am so happy.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Great. So, do you have a selection process for musicians in your films? If so, how does this develop?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: Yes, I'm having a hard time finding an answer because we went through a process where we tried and it didn't work. It was actually a process of trial and error. It was also done in a short film of mine before. Then, an original score was made for another movie I made. By the way, the first people I went to did a job that I

was very pleased with on the first try. But yes, what kind of process does it take? It took a bit of trial and error.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: So, how much are you involved in the sound design phase of the film and how much importance do you give to your sound designer's ideas during your creation process? How much space do you give?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: I attach great importance to it. It is very important, I think everyone's ideas in the team are very important. Making a movie is like that. It is very comforting that there are many creative people in places where you are not enough and together you can solve problems and improve something that is good. That's why I care so much. But at the same time, I can say that I was really involved in *Zuhal*'s process, especially since it was a process that started from the script. I was present at all the choices of those sounds, the levels of the mixing, all of them.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Do you use cultural elements in the sounds you use, that is, symbolic sounds that evoke Turkish culture? Or how important is this?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: We don't do this consciously, but I think I've definitely done it unconsciously. For example, this is not cultural, of course, but since it is a metropolitan narrative, Istanbul, horn sounds, dogs barking at night, alarms, you know, car alarms that continue throughout the movie. This is cultural. I'm thinking, I can't find it, I don't know. I mean, there must be something like that on purpose in Turkish culture. I didn't make such conscious choices at any stage of the film. But I think it inevitably exists.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: *Zuhal* is actually a woman belonging to the middle-upper class, which is unusual in our cinema. How did this choice of yours take shape?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: I think this is a class that I know a little better. Since it is my first film, I think you are inevitably telling about people you already know, worlds you feel close to and know. It happened like that. This question comes up a lot, and when it comes to this question, it seems like it's not done on purpose in Turkish cinema, so I didn't think I should do something like this. I never even thought about it. So it's a very spontaneous thing.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Although *Zuhal* has a boyfriend, we actually witness him at home and alone throughout this story. She only meets with her boyfriend online or via video. How did you construct the relationship between *Zuhal* and her boyfriend and how would you define it?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: Yes, her boyfriend works abroad. He always says he will come, he will come. He just doesn't come. I always say this: There are two things in the movie that are present not only in appearance but also in sound: a boyfriend and a cat. And you know, we always ask a question about reality, which one is more real here? There was the question of whether the cat is more real or the boyfriend. We can say that the boyfriend cannot fill his place completely. So Zuhal doesn't have a full place in his life. This is a gift from her boyfriend on the nightstand that came before, by phone or by sending a gift. And also the nightstand that doesn't fit in the house. A relationship that tries to exist in that way but doesn't actually exist, so we can't call it a real relationship. I think it is a relationship that increases Zuhal's loneliness a little, rather than decreasing it.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: My personal experience in this movie was a little like this; at first, of course, I believed in Zuhal because I heard the cat's voice and I thought, "Yes, there is a cat, but where is it?" But as I progressed and no one believed it, there were so many problems with the neighbors, when the children called her crazy and the music made that association, I actually became a little alienated from the character, wondering if Zuhal could not hear this and was just making it up, but in the end, of course, I saw it and then I felt that I was wrong and felt sad. I also criticized myself. So what did you actually want to question here? What was your opinion?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: As I said, the fact that we hear cat voices as much as Zuhal was actually such a choice. In other words, he put the audience both in front of and behind Zuhal, that is, the audience knew neither more nor less than Zuhal. They knew exactly as much as Zuhal, and I think it depends on the audience's own personal perspective whether to believe it a little bit or not. But on the other hand, your experience is not alienation from Zuhal, we can even say that it is the same experience as Zuhal. Because at a stage, Zuhal starts to question whether I really hear it or whether I shouldn't say what I hear. I think you probably started questioning it at that stage.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: So, did you have any intention of making the audience question this? So have you ever wanted to be left with the dilemma of whether the cat sound actually exists?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: So, as I said, sometimes if Zuhal heard it but the audience didn't hear it, or if the audience heard it but Zuhal didn't hear it, it seems like this question

would be more relevant. Also, there is nothing in the whole movie, there is no narrative like something is happening inside Zuhul's head. There is no such subjective expression. That's why I had the intention that whenever Zuhul was in doubt, the audience would be in doubt, too.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: In the movie, we also witness the nights when Zuhul is restless and cannot sleep. Almost the only time she sleeps peacefully throughout the movie is the sound of a lullaby while the baby at her neighbor's house is sleeping. What does this sound symbolize for you and why did you choose this particular one?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: That whole scene is a little bit like a scene of two women getting closer to each other. On the one hand, Zuhul lives a very isolated life, and because of this cat sound, she enters other houses and witnesses the lives in other houses. We can say that we highlight the stories of everyone, especially women in general, even if they are very different from themselves, and we can say that we witness that each woman struggles with a different problem in her own way. There too, that neighbor is very different from her, but neither of them can sleep and it was interesting that they shared that moment. I mean, I think that scene summarizes the whole movie a little bit. Moment of intimacy.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: I had thought of something more like this, you know, we sleep most comfortably in our mother's lap, I had thought of a more connotation like home, womb, etc., ?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: Maybe there are things like that, but they are not things I do deliberately.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Can you tell us a little about the character Emel, played by Şebnem Sönmez? Because she uses car alarms to make her voice heard.

Nazlı Elif Durlu: Yes. Yes, she is also Zuhul's colleague. But on the other hand, she is the character that Zuhul is most afraid of turning into. Because she is a character that cannot be considered normal. And for me, it's one of Zuhul's last encounters before she finds the cat, and I think she encounters the most frightened version of herself there. But then she gets courage from this. We actually have a sound-related detail from the movie. She hears alarm sounds while lying in bed before going to break the wall. So, we can say that she hears sounds that remind her of Emel's character, and she gets

some strength from that. You know, the character that inspires, no matter what people think, I don't have to act normally as they think.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: So, as a woman, do you have a purpose/interpretation to understand or explain women from a woman's perspective? And where does this stand in your own cinema?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: I think this is something that really happens inevitably. I never consciously thought that now I am a woman, so I will look at women and talk about women. But I think, I mean I think in general. I also think about what it means to be a woman. What are the common points? What are the things that differentiate? While we were creating *Zuhal*, we tried to build those women by thinking about what her life would be like if she had made different choices in other houses. And despite the difference in class and life choices, I think about what is common or not common. I can say that because I think about it, it inevitably appears in my work.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Especially after the movie, I thought: sound is actually a bit of an abstract concept at some points. So yes, we can perceive it with one of our five senses, but for example, if that cat had broken Zuhal's flower pot, it would be able to prove this much more easily. But she can't actually prove it because he only hears her voice. Have you considered this function of sound?

Nazlı Elif Durlu: I thought yes it would be something uncatchable. Definitely. Yes. That's why it makes it something much more mysterious. They always say something, so it's hard to understand by the way. It also varies a lot depending on your viewing conditions. It's a bit of a challenge in a movie. Because, of course, the image quality varies in a cinema, in a cinema with very good sound quality, in a cinema with less good sound, in an open-air cinema, on television, on a laptop, in all of them, but sound is something that affects the environment you watch in a lot. I discovered this later, with some trepidation, when the film came out. But I guess the fact that it was uncatchable always excited me.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Thank you very much, that's all my questions. Is there anything you would like to add? Or what do you want to say?

Nazlı Elif Durlu:No. Thank you, good luck.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Thank you very much.

Yeşim Ustaoglu Interview (07.12.2023 / via Zoom)

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Welcome Ms. Yeşim, thank you very much for accepting the interview. First of all, I will use this interview in my master's thesis at Istanbul Technical University, Dr. Erol Üçer Center for Advanced Studies in Music. What if you have permission?

Yeşim Ustaoglu: Of course. I give my permission.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Thank you. You are actually one of the first representatives of the independent director generation in Turkish cinema. What can you say about independent cinema and independent directing in Turkish cinema?

Yeşim Ustaoglu: Of course, Turkish cinema has its adventure that of over a century, and within that adventure there is a truly precious history. Many great directors have emerged from that history. It had a great infrastructure. It has had turbulent periods like always and everywhere. There is also a Yeşilçam culture, but the first film that should come to our mind when we say independent cinema in our country is 'Umut'. I think it was Yılmaz Güney's first release in the 1970s. And this film is a real milestone in a sense. But after the coup period, in the 1980s and before that, including the pressures and difficulties on art in the period before the coup, the place where Yeşilçam evolved, of course you have researched it. Behind it, we, as very young people, while growing up, perhaps when you were our age, and when we set out into our lives, we are actually very different from you, while continuing my architectural education, there was a passion, a desire that I could not keep myself away from, a desire to make cinema. I also did this in my own way, in my own world, that is, one of those who started a cinema that finds and researches its own language, style, and forms of expression, which we call auteur cinema. This is true. And in spite of everything, in spite of all the lack. In those days, in the mid-1980s, I was actually making short films while working as an architect. I will seem to have entered the subject immediately, but for example, I began to understand how big a problem the sound problem in Turkish cinema is and how serious a problem sound is outside of visuals. This is actually an area I have been thinking about, including filming films with sound. I may be one of the first directors to start shooting long-form cinema with sound. I had already tried this in shorts. When I started to learn step by step how to close my gaps, how to learn, and what sound is like. Of course, the next step was to

understand the meaning of sound. Just as visuals carry a figurative narrative, so does sound. I also have something to do with a sound that comes to that point. I opened the chapter for you. But in the 1990s, I also became one of the representatives of the generation that is now called auteur cinema and independent cinema in the world of that world that I actually dug with my own hands in the 1990s.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes, actually you said it yourself, I think you started shooting your films with sound after your first short film. I guess after the short film experience you also starred in?

Yeşim Ustaoglu: Yes, I will tell you about that.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes actually I want to ask that. What was that experience like, and how did you decide on it?

Yeşim Ustaoglu: As you said, I played in the film myself, and I was very young. I was learning a lot of things by trial and error, such as understanding the camera and how it works, making a camera storyboard with the script, and understanding the inputs and outputs of the camera. There were also a lot of things that I shared with my closest friends from that period, including Uğur (İçbak), who was also the cinematographer of the film. We had done a lot of work ourselves, of course with a very small budget. As you can imagine, we didn't live in a digital world like the present. We were recording our sound on quarter-inch tapes with perforated tapes on editing tables, including the editing system. Of course, no one had even considered shooting sound at the time. I used to go to the Cinema-Television Center a lot, watch movies, and get a lot of support from them, but it was like, we're going to start a sound film, and we need a sound there. There wasn't such a habit in Turkish cinema's long-form films that had come to that day. I didn't know it would be so expensive either, I made the first film with my own hands. I was inventing how to make a dolly and so on, I was learning everything, and how important sound is... Naturally, we put the camera and shot. I played too. Of course, you are talking, but there is nothing to record the sound. Then, when I entered the studio, Ara Güler, the late, plays my father. I play his daughter, Demet Ongan, she was someone I knew, let's call her an amateur. Sarkis Baharoğlu was Ara's assistant. We were four people. There was also a little girl who played my childhood. We played and went, we shot in 2-2.5 days. Then we will edit in the studio, no sound. There is no sound, so what are you going to choose footage

based on? We looked at them like the best photo, it looks better, I don't know what. But you don't hear the sound, you don't hear the emotion. Anyway, we also made a dry silent montage. We locked the montage then entered the studio. Everyone will voice themselves in their own way. Of course, Ara didn't come, we had someone from the theater voice him. I thought I would voice myself, but I can never concentrate on the studio because of laughter, I laugh incredibly, I collapse when I open my mouth. We can't go there again. That day I decided. This is a nonsense. This is not possible. Anyway, Tilbe Saran came. She was very young at that time, so we asked her to leave the theater. I think Tilbe made me talk. I gave up. I said I can't do this. She made a Tilbe and I was laughing at him her in the background, so they didn't let me into the studio. Anyway, the movie came out, and at that time it received an award from IFSAK. Later, with *Magnafantagna*, when the dust got on me and I decided to continue making short films or cinema indispensably, even though I was working as an architect and illustrator, the primary question when starting *Magnafantagna* was: Now directly. We will bring sound and sound into this business. After that, of course, what does sound editing mean, what does mixing mean? You wouldn't believe how arduous a job it is to make perforations from quarter-inch tapes, step by step, on an analog table, by inserting a new perforation for each effect and each dialogue. But at least we were able to do our audio editing. I learned a lot from there. Of course, nothing is perfect, for better or worse. People learn while doing. After that, I learned step by step that with each step, it was another step for me to learn, to learn what sound effects meant, to learn what sound editing meant. Including Foley, that is, all kinds of effects. Of course, first of all, producing a clean, smooth and sane sound was not our priority at that time. My priority, when we start making feature films, is 100% accurate sound. I think we may have done little or nothing at all. Thomas Balkenhol is also a great editor at the same time. He is a doyen, he worked on that sound and also edited it. We did it in Germany and so on. I participated in many projects with Thomas.

After that, *Güneşe Yolculuk* was where I questioned everything from every angle and tried to understand, and that sound has a structure as an artistic meaning; In *Güneşe Yolculuk*, I began to learn that there is not only quality sound recording and effects, but also a concept of equal rights, at least half of it, that gives meaning to the image that lives and speaks there. Our sound designer, whom I met during that process, was Mica Zajs from Belgrade. It was war time, both for us and for them because of the

Belgrade war, we did the next mixer with recorder Bruno Tarriere from France. So, we worked with Mica a few times later and became very close friends. But Bruno is a very valuable person that I have never abandoned and continue to work with in every film. And he came into my life with Journey to the Sun as a person from whom I learned a lot and added a lot to me.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Actually, they have asked this question before and you don't like it very much in your interviews, but what would you like to say about being a woman in this industry? So, what would you like to say about women's cinema? For Turkey?

Yeşim Ustaoglu: We were with Ceylan and Eylem yesterday. We discussed the same thing again. *Tereddit* screened I guess you know?

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes, yes, I followed but unfortunately I couldn't come.

Yeşim Ustaoglu: So while we were waiting, we talked about similar things. It is important to distinguish this: creation has no gender. We must first consider that participation in social life is a system problem today. Yes, this is a system problem. We have been fighting against a very patriarchal system for centuries, including very patriarchal western societies. Yes, female director, yes a little positive discrimination. Of course, I am very angry about all of this. I think this is a system problem and needs to be equalized now. Creation, courage, doing a good job, and style have no gender. You may encounter a system that targets you. I don't think dealing with this coincides with making an inference based on female director sensitivity or femininity. But I also acknowledge how important the struggle of the whole world is for femininity, women's and children's rights, for all people who have been subjected to discrimination. Of course, we need to discuss this endlessly.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Of course.

Yeşim Ustaoglu: This is what the system doesn't like.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: In general, at what stage do you start thinking about sound when planning the films you will shoot? In other words, during the character formation process, their moods and the place they live are generally considered first. But how does sound get involved in your creative process?

Yeşim Ustaoglu: To be honest, I am the kind of writer who thinks about sound from the first sentence. I am not saying that I wrote *Güneşe Yolculuk* like that. That's where

I came from. As a director who has been experimenting with sound for many years, I have always been looking for the power of associations in how images are created, and the power of visual images to create associations in our minds. I have also created a language that emphasizes the importance of sound for this purpose. I am a director who writes from the beginning, thinking about how important sound is in the inner voice, the psychological environment, and everything that affects us psychologically at that time. I start to create atmospheres, find locations, and feel the design of what kind of sounds can be in the moments of silence according to sound from the script writing. I also write small clues about them and attach great importance to them during shooting. Of course, you can also take advantage of sound banks during recording, but sometimes you can make extremely creative recordings on set in terms of sound. Then, when the post-production stage of this work comes, I start to work with the people who design the sound, placing everything that comes to my mind in there for each plan, scene, and sequence after locking the visual image with the material we have and other materials we can use from the outside. Let me give you some very small examples. I don't know, they may not come to mind, but when these things happen, the audience may not actually understand them at that time, but they affect their subconscious or perception. For example, I will give an example of a plan from *Tereddüt*. I think it is very strong because it is simple. After falling to the hospital, she is alone in her room in a depressed state. We see her there in the hospital and in such a plan. I think we use this plan a lot in our works. Now, there is a woman, a girl, and an ongoing post-traumatic process alone in that room. While she is imagining the sound of the room, instead of the sound coming from outside, instead of any kind of sound that can come from outside, you can put a sound coming from a radiator pipe, which is not visible behind, even though it is sometimes the things that happen when we are alone. It would be a muffled thing. When you imagine this, you create an image that overlaps with the psychological world of the child. For example, there was such a thing there. It was something that I had in mind from the very beginning. In fact, that's how the impulses work when you write. You imagine it with that imagination, with those notes that I was trying to say exactly. In other words, when you write that plan, you have notes and images in your mind, and you write by thinking imaginatively. In such a case, you create a scenario without informatics, rather than explaining it through dialogue. I tried to give you an example. When we watch all my films one after the other, how the sound is designed and mixed, we actually see all these games, all these designs, of

course we need to watch them under good conditions. We work in good conditions. In the cinema it comes from, this sometimes happens or doesn't happen. It somehow escapes us, but at least we saw it to our satisfaction in its first screening. Also when shown in good conditions. Even though it depends on the conditions of the cinemas where the audience can watch it, it's not that bad anymore. Our projections were worse in the past. Now we can think that it is a little more renewed in digital.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: In particular, you have used nature, the Black Sea, and weather conditions very actively in your film *Tereddüt*. You even say this in an interview: "The Black Sea itself accompanies the characters' emotional states in every way and the sea also turns into a living being." Of course, this is accompanied by sounds. How did you plan the design process for this again?

Yeşim Ustaoğlu: Although I will not say anything different from before, you can observe this from *Güneş Yolculuk*. The fact that the first shot of *Güneş Yolculuk*, the opening shot, starts with the transportation of a coffin as a reflection in the water is actually not a coincidence, the silence and death issue of water. The movie starts like that, I don't know if you watched it recently... It also always establishes a relationship with water. The theme of death with water. And this is in almost all of my films, the theme of death, that thin line between life and death, and maybe even since *Magnafantagna*. This is my caption. After my friend's death. After I grasped the meaning of life and death, I felt like I understood what the thin line was. I used such a writing. I have always been this, probably one of my neurotic sides throughout my life. So one of my obsessions. It was very strong in *Güneş Yolculuk* as well, and of course, when you want to send someone to death with such a design and such a scene, and then bury them in water, you start designing what its sound will be like. Those bird sounds, the birds coming there in the last scene, they are not a coincidence. We put a lot of effort to bring them there, the directions we made behind the man directing them to this side, the directions we made, we were able to bring the bird in nature to the top of the coffin, etc. Of course, this is what I am trying to say, so over time, this sometimes with our groping, sometimes with our loves. You see how everything you do starts to settle in so strongly, so densely over time and starts to think more consciously. So, of course, you will perceive that the cinema of concentration, the cinema of suggestion, the cinema of images has become well-established, and that this cinema, when we think of it as images -including sound- actually has a very strong but economical

language, and the importance of sound in this sense, of course, in *Tereddüt* and in my films after that. This process, of course, as I was saying, is to create quality sound, to have very good foley, very good effects, to give sound a meaning, to give sound a soul, beyond the fact that the dialogues are well-shot. Just as you give a soul to the space, the space is not there just because it is a space, a place, a space; it also has a spiritual one that serves the existence of the character within it, the story that is happening there, for example, the image of water as a liberation, the image of the sea as a liberation, or the images of the sea that calms down and gives peace, or think of *Araf*, that is, seeing the character behind the water in all those reflections, while telling the story of a love in an ambiguous relationship, the loneliness of a girl who tells the story of her love and passion for a man who will never come back, when you start to think about it with the reflection in the water and the sound that works with it, you don't really need much talk. Image-based narration is something like this. With the design of Mahur disappearing in a mirage phenomenon like in *Araf*, which is also a relationship with water, in a mirage in the water, you create an image that you know will never come back. There is no need for two words, that is, where was this man. He won't come. The important thing is to be able to tell it. These are things that I think about with great pleasure, that I can see while thinking, that I desire to do to the end, for which I find the necessary lens, camera and space, I design the sound according to it, then the importance of mixing in sound design and mixing studio, I can put the concept of subjectivity called subjectivity on the table. Sound can also have its own subjectivity. For example, you can also tell the emotion that the character is experiencing. You can create a subjectivity when you start to put not the sound coming from outside, but the sound he hears and feels and perceives. You can consolidate it, for example, I can give an example from *Pandora*, when Güzin gets out of the car, that is, the relationship with her lover that is no longer working. We shot it in Mecidiyeköy in an incredible noise. When she was walking in the crowd and noise, we actually turned that sound into a humming sound in her brain, very consolidated, centered, and took it only inside her, out of a space coming from outside. It was coming from here (shows her head). We had turned it into a suffocating sound, we had taken it very centered, left right 5+1. Very centered. We are also in her mind with her. These are extremely technical things, on the other hand. But somehow you start to get familiar with that technique. Likewise, there was something similar in *Güneşe Yolculuk*. When Berzan said he would go to Van, one day he said he would go to him. The music there is also very consolidated

and subjective, centered. It's just a voice he hears in his head. It can be thought of as music, even when analyzed technically. People are starting to get a little confused about these, too. It's starting to feel it. Of course, in this sense, it should be done with a very creative mixer, that is, a mixer who knows cinema very well and has strong creativity. I experienced what this means while listening to it with Bruno. When I started learning, I continued with great enthusiasm. We always worked together.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: So, speaking of music, how are your choices of music and musicians shaped in your films?

Yeşim Ustaoglu: It's not different at all. Oddly enough, in my new film, which I haven't started shooting yet, so I won't say too much, there is a lot of sound and music, contemporary music. A new sound design that includes new contemporary music, sound, and artificial intelligence. Interestingly, I always thought that the sound in Turkey was always weak, but in recent years, I have been very pleased to see that young sound engineering, sound design, electronic music, code, software, etc., are now starting to grow in this field. I follow what is happening here and abroad because I am curious. Both because there are many things I am very curious about and for the new project. While I was thinking about how much this field has developed in Turkey, you called me about it and I was surprised. Oh my God? I mean, that's good, I'll talk to Ece. So, in a good way, including this digitalization, the fact that the boundaries and areas have completely disappeared, on the one hand, in the use of the tools we have in art and creation, I observe that there is a very serious movement, dynamism and creation in Turkey, and I am also building relationships with such people. This makes me very happy, especially in terms of my relationship with the younger generations.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Well, especially in your movie *Tereddiit*, you use less music and generally we witness the characters and their loneliness through silence. In other words, just as the use of sound is important, the use of silence is also important.

Yeşim Ustaoglu: Yes.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: When they are alone at home, we witness them again with their silence. Can you explain this choice a little?

Yeşim Ustaoglu: Let me tell you, let me tell you a little bit with a joke on myself. A retrospective was held on MUBI recently, so I digitized all the copies after a long time and watched them again after years. Oh my God, I put a lot of music! Oh my, it does

not know how to be cut. I was overwhelmed. I will not edit these sounds again, even though Aydın's music is very valuable, but it is music to sleep and wake up. I was very uncomfortable. So, music, music should be used as a tool for help. There is no need for it actually. The film has its own atmosphere. But we got excited. This enthusiasm is such a thing, unconsciousness is such a thing. We put them in for fun, I laughed a lot at myself.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: You deleted these music in new versions?

Yeşim Ustaoglu: No, I didn't work on it, maybe I'll get my hands on it one day. But I laughed a lot, I had a lot of fun. Ah ah again again again... There is also a lot of music in *Güneşe Yolculuk*, but it is perfect music. From local local music, from Civan Haço, to Bülent Kor's magnificent music. I think we used it a lot, but it fits well with the film. It fits well with the spirit of the youth. But after that, we didn't talk about a woman who actually went crazy by hearing voices, for example, *Bulutları Beklerken*. She starts to go crazy by hearing those voices coming from behind. There is also a story there. When we started to tell the story of Ayşe and Mehmet, I became aware of how those economical sounds serve the image, not help it, as I was trying to say just now. This awareness began to sit in me in *Bulutları Beklerken*. I worked with Michael Galasso, the late, on that film. He did something very beautiful with those strings, very economical, very little. And unfortunately, it was his last work, and then we lost Galasso. He was a very good musician. After that, in *Pandora (Pandora'nın Kutusu)*, for example, it was almost like a sound effect. For example, I'll give you a little hint, when Murat goes to see his grandmother in the hospital, he looks out the window, and then he'll be taken away. When we look at it with music, a viola that works with her steps. It was the woman's inner state, you can hear a cello moving with her steps. That exit is also heard strongly later. So, when you start to hear these motifs, you need to do something like this only for that sequence, you need to put something like this. I don't know, for example, in *Araf*, I'm giving examples, but when she turns around for the first time after Mahur leaves and sees him, we always look at our daughter from behind, Zehra. There is also an elliptical narration there. With that elliptical narration, a music that walks with her emotions, telling how much fear, excitement, and anxiety the woman is actually in with the interruptions. So, the music, in all of my films after that, was again in a small amount, very economical, and only as much as it should be there. We worked with Marc Marder, he is a great musician. He is also from France.

He is a very experienced person. Then with Antoni Komasa in *Tereddüt*. Only what it should be and what grasps the spiritual state and only as much as it should be in that sequence. At that time, for example, I was dreaming of making music that worked with the example sound samples I mentioned, such as the pipe sound and the inner voices. A beautiful example came to my mind: As *Araf* was shown again recently, I was refreshed. While watching it with students and other professors, for example, it ends in a prison at the end, and I actually wanted to finish it with a rhythm of Ömer Faruk Tekbilek, starting with a rhythm and then continuing, except for Marc's music. It has such a rhythm (shows by clapping her hand), I took this rhythm, and I placed the factory of Karabük, the iron and steel factory, which is heard everywhere in the film, "duff duff" from the very beginning.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Oh I get it. Super.

Yeşim Ustaoglu: At the end, as he moves towards the plan with that "duff duff", it is actually Ömer Faruk Tekbilek's rhythm. I carried it there. We made a design. It's a sound we hear all the time, while passing in front of or on the far side of the factory in one way or another, while doing this or that, every time we enter Karabük, and while passing the shuttle service. At night, it is like a factory working 24 hours a day, even if we are at home, it comes from somewhere far away. These are things that I do with so much pleasure. If only we could do this and design it. The design is actually a bit like this. I feel like I gave you good examples?

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes, thank you very much. Well, you have actually learned a lot about sound design and it has been in your plans and script from the very beginning. So, how much importance do you give to your sound designer's ideas in the final stage of the film?

Yeşim Ustaoglu: I attach great importance to it. I mean, I tell them what I have in mind, they all take notes. But I also want to listen to what they will bring me. After all, you open hundreds of channels. Aa no, close this, this is less, this is more... But of course I would trust their creations and designs. If I am working with a creative person. But I convey everything that comes to my mind to them. They already listen to me at the beginning. I also listen to it every week after work starts. They show me sequence by sequence. There are times when I say it should stay, sometimes we say we will throw it in pre mix. I give some credit to the need for the openings and closings, the

balance of the sounds with each other to be worked out very well, so that the mixer's job is easier, but I am also open to suggestions from their own creativity. There are also beautiful things that I accept with pleasure, especially from young people, that I never thought of, "aa this is very good, this should stay, it is very beautiful." I don't know, for example, it came to my mind from *Pandora*, but we are always talking about *Tereddüt*, but for example, every house had a sound. Every house had its own sound. Güzin's, Mehmet's, Nesrin's, but the last time we actually went to the village, Nusret lady's village house, that rustling, rustling stove pipe, shutters, boards, çınçınlar that move by themselves from the wind... It had its own sound, for example. We made it like a percussion. We made it crackle and it is also subject to copyright. That sound designer can put it in his own laboratory, but he cannot put it without my permission when he wants to use it for someone else. Because it is a specially designed design.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Well, the same sill situation is actually present in *Tereddüt*, Elmas's bathroom.

Yeşim Ustaoglu: Yes.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: And even that evening, when Serkan Keskin tried to be together again by force, the sound of that window sill was heard and then she went and closed it.

Yeşim Ustaoglu: Of course, when a person is in a slightly neurotic state, when something he knows can become a beautiful thing again, you can see how valuable something you have done is, and you can see how effective it can be and use it again in later places while reinforcing it in other sounds, such as the sound of a storm. Because it's a natural sound.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: There is another sound I want to ask about, it is about *Tereddüt*. On the morning Elmas was found, the morning the police came and took her, we hear a bell on the balcony, but we do not actually see the bell in the video. In what sense did you use this as a sound again?

Yeşim Ustaoglu: The moment when her friend called her from the balcony?

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Yes. There was also something like a bell hanging on the window. Did you mean to reference him?

Yeşim Ustaoglu: Yes, it's his voice. Now that you say it... You place the objects there and animate their sounds. You know, it was a strange situation in that silence, and after a while, we left it in the bathroom for no reason, and an incredibly strange situation happened. Oh, what happened, now the police. Of course, they are the very small elements that create that tension.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: So, do you aim to use special sounds that evoke Turkish culture in the sounds you use, generally in all your films? Or does this never occur to you?

Yeşim Ustaoglu: So I use all the local elements in the places I go. So I listen to the sounds of the priority place first. So, Karabük has a sound, Karasu has a sound. For example, in *Güneşe Yolculuk*, even the sound of the call to prayer in the places we go, everything has a sound, you hear it in your own loneliness while studying it there, living there, writing if you want, I do sometimes but. The sounds you hear there can also be impressive. Including local, local folk songs, all regional sounds, shouts, cries, women's voices from afar. Language is also dialect. So it is also a part of it. It is important for me that the local voice is spoken correctly. It is also a part of it, frankly.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Well, my last question is that we generally see female characters in leading roles and important roles in your films. Do you have a purpose or comment here, such as understanding and explaining women from a woman's perspective? And where does this stand in your own cinema?

Yeşim Ustaoglu: So it is a dominant thing, but it is important not to understand that I am telling women but not men. Men too, that is, my male characters, all of them, Berzan, Newruz, Mehmet, the other Mehmet, Murat, that is, the other Mehmet in *Pandora*, his relationship with his father, Olgun himself, his father, I did not make a film without understanding these characters equally with Zehra, Arzu, that is, in the sun, men are in the lead, as a matter of fact. Like the relationship between Ayşe, Nil, and little Mehmet, his relationship with his boyfriend Cengiz, I did not make a film without understanding everything very well and the other characters. But I am tired of the fact that our female characters, both in Turkish cinema and in general world cinema, are always on a side, on the side, feeding their stories, if they have a problem, it is always the problem of these men, but women also have a head that can't think of anything, their troubles are nothing but suffering. I am also tired of such films. In this respect, I do not want to throw a stone at anyone now, that is, everyone. This question

must also be asked to the men who keep women aside without understanding them, before the question of the female director. Why do these women have no mind, no character? Why can't you do it? So we are talking about a half-crippled thing then. It is necessary to tell the human. Human. Woman, man, child, queer. Human. As a main character and as a supporting character from this social status to that social status, as long as we cannot tell, one side will always be crippled. In my cinema, yes, I really enjoy choosing the protagonist, at least the protagonist, as a woman, but I think I should also think of the others as characters that need to be as much as her, to be cooked, to be understood and told, and I am trying to do this. I think this is also very important.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: Thank you very much, that's all my questions. Is there anything you would like to add?

Yeşim Ustaoğlu: No. Write, let's draw. Put it down on paper and I'll look at it when I read it.

İrem Ece Gülensoy: OK, thank you very much. Thank you for your time.

Yeşim Ustaoğlu: You're welcome. Goodbye.



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