

**REMEMBERING THE ASSOS INTERNATIONAL PERFORMING ARTS
FESTIVAL THROUGH THE ICONIC MEMORY OF HÜSEYİN
KATIRCIOĞLU:**

**READING THE RURAL-URBAN DIVIDE THROUGH GENDER, HUMOR
AND REFLEXIVE ETHNOGRAPHY**

by
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ABSTRACT

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Under the leadership of Hüseyin Katircioğlu, the Assos International Performing Arts Festival was held once a year between 1995 and 1999 in the village of Behramkale. Artists from various backgrounds lived in the village for three weeks, produced site-specific works and at the end of a three weeks production process presented their works/performances/plays to the festival audience including the inhabitants of Behramkale, the artists from Istanbul and other cities, and people from Çanakkale or other villages near to Behramkale. The festival was held in a village and with the collaboration of the villagers. Especially children, then teenagers and men, lastly women participated in the festival at various levels, including the production process of the works. In this thesis, I analyzed the festival memories of both the local people of Behramkale and the artists/organizers who participated in the festival. My intention in this analysis is to listen to the narratives of the artists about their experience of artistic activity in a village and to listen to the locals' narratives about their witnessing and collaborating to an art event in their living environment. In order to draw a fair picture of the artistic context of the festival, firstly, I tried to give a brief description of the emergence of contemporary performing arts/theatre in Turkey especially in the 1990s, the understanding of theatre of Hüseyin Katircioğlu, the art director of the festival and the content of the Assos International Performing Arts Festival. Subsequently, I analyzed the narratives of the artists and then the narratives of the locals. I conclude with two arguments. The first one is the implications of commemorating Hüseyin Katircioğlu, who died untimely in 1999, through the interviews. His iconic memory gives some clues to discuss his role between the rural&urban both during the festival and after the festival. The Second conclusion concerns the strategies of humor and laughter in the narratives of both sides in order to deal with the cultural gap between them during the festival and after the festival (during the interviews). Through tracing the sarcastic, humorous and joyful moments in the festival narratives, I discussed the notion of art/artists in the eyes of the locals, the concept of "villager" in the eyes of the artists as well as the gendered dynamics of memory. The last concluding remark is about the importance of the analysis of a performance arts case through cultural studies perspective benefiting from memory studies, reflexive ethnography and sociology.

ÖZET

ASSOS ULUSLARARASI GÖSTERİ SANATLARI FESTİVALİNİ HÜSEYİN KATIRCIOĞLU'NUN İKONİK HATIRASI YOLUYLA HATIRLAMAK:

KENT-KÖY AYRIMINI TOPLUMSAL CİNSİYET, MİZAH VE REFLEKSİF ETNOGRAFİ YOLUYLA OKUMAK

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Anahtar kelimeler: Gösteri Sanatları, 1990'lar, Türkiye, Bellek, İkon, Toplumsal Cinsiyet, Refleksif Etnografi

Assos Uluslararası Gösteri Sanatları Festivali 1995-1999 yılları arasında her sene Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu önderliğinde Behramkale köyünde gerçekleştirildi. Değişik alanlardan bir çok sanatçı 3 hafta köyde yaşadı, yere özgü (site-specific) işler üretti ve 3 haftalık üretim sürecinin sonunda işlerini/performanslarını/oyunlarını Behramkalelileri ve çevresinden gelenleri, İstanbul ve dünyanın diğer şehirlerden gelen sanatçıları kapsayan festival izleyicisine sundu. Festival, köyde ve yerlilerin de katılımıyla gerçekleşti. Özellikle çocuklar, sonra gençler ve erkekler, ve son olarak kadınlar üretim süreci de dahil olmak üzere festivale değişik seviyelerde katıldılar. Bu tezde, festivale katılan sanatçı /düzenleyici ve Behramkalelilerin festival anlatıları analiz ettim. Amacım, sanatçıların bir köyde sanatsal yaratım süreci ile ilgili anlatılarını, Behramkalelilerin yaşam alanlarında gerçekleştirilen bu sanatsal etkinliğe tanıklıkları ve katılımları ile ilgili anlatılarını dinlemektir. İlk olarak, festivalin gerçekleştiği sanatsal bağlam hakkında doğru bir izlenim için 1990'larda Türkiye'de çağdaş gösteri sanatlarındaki hareketlilik, Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu'nun tiyatro anlayışı ve festivalin içeriği ile ilgili kısaca bilgi verdim. Daha sonra, sanatçıların ve Behramkalelilerin festival anlatılarını analiz ettim. Sonuç olarak iki savda buldum. Birincisi, 1999'da zamansızca ölen Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu'nun söyleşiler yoluyla açığa çıkan ikonikleşmiş hatırası ile ilgili. Onunla ilgili ikonik bellek Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu'nun hem festival süresince hem de festival sonrasında kent ve kırsal arasında rolüne ilişkin ipuçları veriyor. İkinci sonuç ise aralarındaki kültürel farkla baş etme yolu olarak her iki tarafın da yine festivalde ve festival sonrasında (söyleşilerde) geliştirdiği mizah ve gülme stratejileri ile ilgili. İğneleyici, eğlenceli ve mizahi anlatıları takip ederek Behramkalelilerin gözünde "sanatçı" kavramını, sanatçıların gözünde "köylü" kavramını ve belleğin toplumsal cinsiyet dinamiklerini tartıştım. Son olarak, gösteri sanatları alanından bir örneği bellek çalışmaları, refleksif etnografi ve sosyolojiden yararlanarak kültürel çalışmalar perspektifinden okumanın önemini belirttim.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“Its main address being streets, in other words ‘public space’, street arts provide us with the closest contact we can find in the study of culture in daily life.” I explained my interest in street arts as a research project with these words in my statement of purpose for the Cultural Studies Master’s Program at Sabancı University. I was inspired both by the experiences I had in theatre (forum theatre and plays in open air) and also by my reading on the new political implications of public space in the metropolises of Turkey after the 1980s.¹ My general concern with public space stemmed from the discussion of capitalist urban culture by theoreticians such as Lefebvre (1984), De Certeau (1984) and Sennett (1993). Hence, to be able to observe the dynamics of public space at work, I intended to study a contemporary theatre/performing arts case which aimed to situate itself within the flow of people in a public space and which questioned the conventional relationship between art and its audience or play and routine.

With this intention in mind, I started to search for contemporary examples of theatre/performing arts on the street in Turkey. I was open not only to works that were finished, but also the ones in the process of experimentation or trial. However, it was hard to come up either with a contemporary example or an academic study on this topic². In Turkey, the relationship between theatre/performance arts and public space was examined neither by practitioners nor by theorists. The people I spoke to, mainly from theatre circles, could give only a few examples of street theatre/performance which were either hard to remember or recalled only by a few. There were some

¹ Some of authors who inspired me include: Nurdan Gürbilek (1992), Asuman Suner (2005) and Leyla Neyzi (2004).

² Beril Sönmez’s MA Thesis (2005) is the closest study, but it is about installations, not theatre. Another good example on the relationship between public space and an installation work is Çetin Sarıkartal (2001).

examples of political street theatre from the 1950s and 1970s, or some contemporary examples of happenings which did not continue.

In the midst of this inquiry, some theatre people³ advised me to talk to the artists who had participated in the Assos International Performing Arts Festival. According to them, I would find the essence of street art in the works of Hüseyin Katircioğlu, the art director of the festival. What is more, they believed that the festival was a perfect example of working in the open air. In this way, I started to follow the traces and stories about the Assos International Performing Arts Festival, which I had also heard about when I was a high school student. I was informed about the festival unfortunately through the death of the creator and art director of the festival, Hüseyin Katircioğlu. Katircioğlu died tragically at the age of forty-six in 1991 by accident while working on the construction of a performance arts center which was one of his projects. His untimely death was an utter shock for the theatre and performance arts world, as I remember from the special issue on Hüseyin Katircioğlu in *Tiyatro Tiyatro* Magazine. I knew that the Assos International Performing Arts Festival was organized by Hüseyin Katircioğlu in Assos and that all the spaces in the village were used for the purpose of performance. Even this limited information I had about Assos International Performing Arts Festival inspired me to conduct further research.

When I began to do some research, I learned that the Assos International Performing Arts Festival was organized for site-specific works which were produced throughout three weeks in Assos' archeological and historical atmosphere for four years, in 1995, 1996, 1997 and 1999. As this was the ideal method to work in full concentration we long dreamt of in university theatre circles, I felt a great curiosity about the realization of the festival. How did the artists come together in Assos? Why did they choose to work in Assos rather than Istanbul? What was the artistic motivation of the festival? Although these questions were quite meaningful to me, the festival seemed fitting to my inquiry of a research topic mainly because it took part in a village. Imagining the village as a dynamic part of the festival with its inhabitants provided the main source of excitement for me. I was wondering how local people and artists lived together for three weeks, how performances affected the flow of everyday life, and how local people viewed the festival. Through these questions, it would be possible to

³ Ayşın Candan, Kerem Kurdoğlu, Nadi Güler.

explore an art event through the dynamics of the space in which it was held and vice versa.

I conducted some interviews as a first step to have an idea about the accessible information on the festival. Although I did not expect that my method would depend on oral interviews, more specifically the memory of the festival, as the research continued I focused on the interviews more than the archival material. During these first interviews, I realized that there was an obvious eagerness to talk about the festival both because the festival experience was “unforgettably valuable” for the artists and organizers and also because there was the commemorative effect of talking about the festival and Hüseyin Katircioğlu. All these findings showed that *remembering* the festival had an importance in and of itself and brought the subject of this study into the field of memory studies. Because the festival memory was remarkably marked by encountering with the “other/”stranger” in the festival place, the festival could be analyzed as an instance of an art event in the public space of a village. Therefore, my search for a contemporary example of performing arts in public space resulted in the discovery of an exciting case which seemed forgotten in the public sphere, and I decided to study the Assos International Performing Arts Festival as my thesis project.

Interestingly enough, as soon as I offered this subject as my thesis project, I was questioned as to what my intention was in doing this study. Was my motivation a naïve and romantic desire to remember nostalgically? This question has echoed in my mind throughout my research and gradually helped to shape the main concerns of the study around my self-consciousness. I can easily say that memory dimension of the study and its expression through narratives helped me a lot in my endeavor to deal with this question. With each person, the remembering process signified a different personal attachment and world of meanings about the festival. Consequently, I was exposed to multiple ways to look at the festival. As I continued to listen, I realized that “the meaning of prenarrative experience is constituted in its narrative expression” (Ellis&Bochner, 2000). Hence, the opportunity to look at the festival through the notions of collective and individual remembrance gave a clearer distance from the festival, which I previously took very personally. By the end of the research, I realized that changes in my opinions and the simultaneous self-critique I went through were intrinsic to this study. Both the questions I asked in the interviews and the literature I engaged in were shaped according to this dimension of self-analysis.

Considering memory as “more inter-subjective and dialogical than exclusively individual, more act (remembering) than object, and more ongoing engagement than passive absorption and playback” (Lambek, 1996: 239), the first relationship of this research with memory that I will focus on is related to the commemorative function of remembering while talking about Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu. Edward Casey argues that commemoration is a kind of “intensified remembering through specific commemorative vehicles.” (2000; 218) According to Casey, one of these vehicles is the presence of others. In this sense, my role in the interviews I conducted can be seen as such a vehicle. Most of the time, I found myself positioned between my interviewee and Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu, who seemed always present. Sometimes, I even felt excluded from memories of this close friendship as they were so personal. Thus, I had to deal with commemoration in the interviews both among the artists and the local people of Behramkale in terms of understanding the emotional importance of these interviews for my interviewees. Also, this situation illustrated the centrality of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu in the festival memory to the extent that he could be seen as a central icon for all. Hence, the festival as my topic had to be reshaped around the memory on Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu’s persona and relationships.

Janice Haaken, in the introduction to her book, *Pillar of Salt* says: “since women have been more associated than men with emotionality, sexuality, and the body in Western thought, these more ‘primitive’ or non-rational aspects of life are more readily inscribed in the storytelling of women.” (1998: 12) In this sense, the relationship between gender and memory of the festival mattered a lot in my research especially and more obviously in the village. It was striking to see the different strategies of remembering between women and men in the village as well as the gendered themes of the festival memory. While silencing was dominant among the women, the memory of male participants was more open in some ways, such as while describing their personal relationship with Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu. On the other hand, a sense of humor accompanied to the silent and broken language of women which displayed the contentious relationship between rural and urban.

“It is in society that people normally acquire their memories. It is also in society that they recall, recognize and localize their memories.” (1992: 38) says Halbwachs. Accordingly, the narratives I encountered in my research were intricately linked to the different social environments they were emerging and speaking to. There were different understandings of self and consequently different understandings of narrative in the

village and in the city. According to Michael Lambek, memory is a self-representation and a symbolic practice as a result of the consciousness of the temporal and spatial existence of oneself (1996: 241). The variations I observed among the participants were related to the different ways they expressed themselves, which varied by place. While in the city, self-representation and narrating made sense to my interviewees, in the village, the reactions of the interviewees were more momentary, dialogical and loose in their exposition. From the relationship they had with Hüseyin Katircioğlu to the habit of talking through the memory, there were significant differences between the city and the village.

Quoting Fried, Micheal Hebbert states that “human memory and identity are rooted in bodily experiences of being and moving in material space” (2004: 581). In this sense, this research also provides a good example of how memories of the festival were embodied in place and bodily associations. When we consider that mythological, visual and site-specific works were performed specifically for the festival, it is not surprising that memories were composed of visual and spatial elements. At this point, the connection between place and memory gains importance in the case of Assos International Performing Arts Festival not only because it based its artistic style on site-specificity but also because the meaning of Assos differed among the locals and the artists. Here, we again see the collective memory and its strong connections with social networks of power.

Hence, benefiting from memory studies as a framework, the ways in which the festival experience is remembered by its participants will be the route through which the questions of this thesis will be explored.

The following chapter introduces the 1990s in Turkey in terms of the emergence of contemporary performing arts to provide a background for the contextual discussion of the Assos International Performing Arts Festival. This chapter also discusses Hüseyin Katircioğlu’s life and his understanding of theatre and provides a detailed description of the Assos International Performing Arts Festival.

Chapter three starts with a discussion of my expectations from this research. As a result of my encounter with a new network of artists, I also discuss the sources of my interest in art in relation to my theatre background and socio-economic position. The chapter continues with the discussion of the place Hüseyin Katircioğlu occupies in the memories of the artists. The different viewpoints about the centrality of Hüseyin Katircioğlu are also shown. Afterwards, the ways the artists and organizers narrate the

festival are scrutinized. The festival was narrated by the artists and organizers firstly in terms of place and in terms of how Assos with its historical and archeological atmosphere answered their need to create art works away from the metropolis. The festival narratives were vivid about the experience of creativity and collaborative work. Next, how the local people of Assos are situated in the artists' narratives is given a close analysis. Here, in the narratives of the local people, the issue of public space in the village and its formation through the gender roles and performances is revealed. The tension about the participation of women in the festival is remembered as the most challenging instance of the festival by the artists. Lastly, this chapter tries to ask about the ongoing influence of the festival on some of the artists whose narratives include the concern to build some connections between the festival experience and the present.

Chapter four analyzes how the people of Behramkale remember the festival. My entry into the field as a researcher is described briefly to show how most of my initial questions and assumptions did not work and that the conditions of the village ultimately directed the research. From the way the locals talked to me, to the way they jumped from one memory to the other, I encountered with different types of remembering and narrating processes in the village. As expected, the image of Hüseyin Katircioğlu constitutes the entry point for fieldwork in the village. I show how Hüseyin Katircioğlu is the explanation for everything for the local people. Another dominant issue that comes out among the narratives is the development of tourism in Assos in relation to the publicity of Assos through the festival. Subsequently, the memory of the festival consisting of the experience of performing or working together with the artists is looked at. The similarity between the artists' accounts was the game-like quality of being part of the festival. In other words, the absence of a decisive moment to take part in the festival was a common theme. Next, the locals' remembrance of the moments of performing in front of an audience is analyzed. These moments include their humorous stories of participating in the festival such as confronting something new, making mistakes in their part in the play or being watched by others. Also, these accounts reveal the interesting link the local people made between the "stranger" and the "artist". The interviews I conducted with the young people from the village who participated in the festival as children are also analyzed in this chapter. The value both the artists and the local people from the village placed upon children is discussed. The influence of the festival is discussed also in terms of gender roles. Almost all the narratives paved the way to the discussion of the intricate relationship between the structure of public

space/everyday life in the village and the festival. The narratives of local men full of gender concerns (to be courageous, to fulfill responsibilities in the public sphere), the difference between the accounts of young men and women in terms of the festival in their lives, led to the need to speak to the “non-participants” of the festival, the women. Their accounts are discussed in terms of self-censorship, their underestimation and sarcastic perception of their memories and their messages concerning their social roles. The festival memory becomes more complete and complex with the women’s silent and contradictory accounts. According to Norrick, “dialogue in oral history interviews offers particularly clear evidence that narrators are constructing rather than simply recalling past events.” (2005: 17) In this sense, I view the narratives of the local women where the dialogical and constructed aspect of memory was revealed most apparently.

In the fifth chapter, I conclude the thesis with two remarks. The first one is related to the centrality of Hüseyin Katircioğlu’s memory in the narratives of the participants. His iconic place in the accounts is firstly, analyzed in terms of its effect of reducing the violence of the unwanted memory which is the tragic death of Hüseyin Katircioğlu. Further, the dominance of the memory of Hüseyin Katircioğlu as the “perfect figure” of the festival is interpreted in terms of the unspoken and distanced relationship between the participants who came from the city and the local people of Behramkale. The role of Katircioğlu in this relationship seems to be vital in the sense that both groups could stay in the same atmosphere without “disturbing” each other’s way of living. I argue that through their relationship with Hüseyin Katircioğlu, the artists guaranteed their isolated environment of creativity free from any social context and the locals guaranteed their routine of living free from any foreign element to their culture. Hence, Hüseyin Katircioğlu was a “separator” rather than a “bridge” between the rural and the urban. Closely related with this distance between the two groups, my second concluding argument is concerned with the “humorous” attitudes of both the artists and the locals through which they protected their own position against one another although working together and thus veiled their intolerance and ignorance towards each other. For the artists, the issue of local people and for the locals the issue of performing/acting in the plays was always “funny”. Related to this, I argue that laughing can be seen as a common strategy for both sides to overcome or avoid the difficulty of interaction at critical points, not only during the festival but also during the interviews to avoid “difficult parts” of festival memory.

Yet, in spite of these “difficult times”, for both the artists and the locals, the interviews can be thought eventually to be a tool through which they spoke and reflected on the festival perhaps for the first time in the absence of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu. In this sense, through this after-effect of the festival it is possible to see a kind of seepage of communication between the village and the city which lives in the memory of the festival and it seems finally that the separating role of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu becomes the “mediating” one after the festival (and his death).

Lastly, I discuss the diversity of the issues that became visible through the memory of the festival and conclude with the importance of this research within the spheres of performance arts studies and cultural studies.

Methodology

Robert Stake differentiates an intrinsic case study from an instrumental case study with the intrinsic interest of the researcher as the departure point of the research in the former (1992: 437). Hence, this research can be seen as an *intrinsic case study* “developed according to case’s own issues, contexts and interpretations” (1992: 439) in the sense Robert Stake uses the term. The curiosity about the case, Assos International Performing Arts Festival, was the departure point of this research and all methodologies and analytical tools I used were chosen according to the needs of the case. For the reasons stated above, I decided to conduct interviews as my main methodology and focused on memories, although I also used the archival information available.

“Festivals are cultural artifacts which are not simply bought and ‘consumed’ but which are also accorded meaning through their active incorporation into people’s lives.” (1993: 208-209) says Jackson. Similarly, I tried to reveal the way the Assos International Performing Arts Festival was “incorporated into people’s lives” through how the participants remember and talk about it today. Hence, the narrative expressions determined the other fields of study that this research benefited from. These were performance studies, memory studies, sociology (of modernity, gender, public space) and ethnography.

My main methodologies are interviews and ethnography. The participants were interviewed under two groups including the local people of Assos and the artists together with the organizers who created the festival. In pursuing my fieldwork, I benefited a great deal from gatekeepers. Among the artists and organizers, Dilek

Katircioğlu (widow of Hüseyin Katircioğlu and the coordinator of the festival) provided contacts to the artists. In the first step, I met eleven people in Istanbul who participated in the festival; in the village, I conducted interviews with seven locals during May 2007. After these interviews, I wrote a paper about the Assos International Performing Arts Festival for a course on “Memory Studies” which I presented at the International Congress of Aesthetics in 2007 at METU. This presentation encouraged me to pursue this research for my M.A. Thesis.

Ultimately, I interviewed a total of twenty-one people from the artistic and organizational levels of the festival. In September 2007, I stayed for ten days in Behramkale village where I had the opportunity to do participant observation. In addition to the artists from Turkey and the local people of Assos, many people attended the festival from all around the world. I got in touch with one such participant via the internet and with another who has lived in Turkey for years.

In Assos, my gatekeeper was Ali Şen who was responsible in all four festivals for the organization in the village. He introduced me to the village. Yet I sometimes had difficulty in convincing locals, especially women, to talk about the festival. One way I tried to cope with their reluctance was the group interview. Or sometimes I just hung around in the village and talked to anyone I came across. Walking along the streets aimlessly, I could better feel the structure of space in the village. Also, this gave me the chance to meet even the most seemingly insignificant witnesses of the festival.

In all my interviews, I used a tape recorder. However, in the village, some people did not feel comfortable with the recorder, and some women totally rejected recording. I also used a video camera, recording some artists and locals. I video recorded with the permission of the interviewee and only after I felt sure about his/her comfort. My intention while using the video camera was two-fold: I thought that it would be useful to watch the videos of especially the group interviews to see the details that I might miss during the conversation. The second reason for camera use was bringing the locals and the artists together in order to discuss all the material together. I could not organize a meeting in Assos as I had planned. However, I showed the videos of the locals to the artists in Istanbul and we had very fruitful discussions. In addition to recording, I also wrote a diary regularly in the village. This diary helped me follow up the changes in my own perceptions and also came in handy vis-à-vis the challenges I came across later, during the writing process.

There is a rich archive about the Assos International Performing Arts Festival including newspaper articles, photographs, interviews with Katırcıoğlu, video recordings of the festival and festival bulletins. I could access these archives through the art directors of the festival and through Dilek Katırcıoğlu. As Dilek Katırcıoğlu opened the archives of the festival for me for the first time after Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu died, it was a challenging stage of the research both for her and for me. The most difficult aspect of the study for me was my intimacy and sincerity which became the main measure for the interviewees in sharing their feelings and memories about a painful loss for them.

Robert Stake highlights the “strategic decision” about the extent the complexities of the case should be studied in a case study. I must say that the most challenging and consequently structuring question of this thesis was how to select the issues that were most worth bringing forth among a great deal of issues and perspectives. As a result, the answer to the question of what we can learn from this single case changed continuously until the end of the writing process.

CHAPTER II

ASSOS INTERNATIONAL PERFORMING ARTS FESTIVAL

I. Contemporary Theatre in Turkey in the 1990s

A Performing Arts Magazine, *Gist*, asks the following question in the preface of its first issue published in 2008: “How many identifiable periods did performing arts in Turkey experience in the last twenty years?” (Gist 2008:1). The history of contemporary theatre in Turkey is difficult to write not only because it has a long one, but also because it depends so much on the unrecorded and spontaneous efforts of individual artists and groups. The first part of this chapter includes a short history of contemporary theatre/performing arts in Turkey benefiting from the interviews I conducted as well as the books written on this topic.

According to Nihal Geyran Koldaş’s unpublished article on the development of autonomous theatre in Turkey, the roots of what we call “contemporary” theatre today date back to the 1950s, when Turkey had just initiated a multi-party regime. The state-funded theatre was predominant until then. The 1960s were the years that witnessed, in the words of Dikmen Gürün, “an inflation of theatre” (1999: 33) as there was a remarkable increase in the number of Turkish playwrights and in the number of private theatre groups: Gülriz Sururi-Engin Cezzar Theatre, Dormen Theatre, Kenter Theatre, Dostlar Theatre, Ankara Sanat Theatre⁴ and Halk Oyuncuları. The leading names of contemporary and experimental theatre in Turkey, such as Mehmet Ulusoy, Kuzgun Acar, Metin Deniz, Tuncel Kurtiz, Ayla Algan, Ayşe Emel Mesci, Işıl Kasapoğlu, began their art lives in the sixties within these groups. These directors, players and art designers introduced the first contemporary adaptations of the classics as well as the first modern texts in Turkish (Adalet Ağaoğlu, Nazım Hikmet, Vasıf Öngören, Aziz Nesin) to the theatre audience in Turkey. The most influential art festival in the history

⁴ For further information about Ankara Art Theatre and other private theatres in Ankara between the years 1980 and 1990 see Ünal (1997)

of Turkish performing arts was held under the name “Erdek Şenliği” (Erdek Festival) by *Genç Oyuncular (Young Actors)*, one of the most prominent theatre groups in the history of alternative theatre in Turkey that was active between the years 1957 and 1963 (Alpöge, 2007)..

During this time, theatre started to be seen as a space of experimentation and also as a space of social contestation. Political theatre was initiated for the first time in Turkish theatre in those years.⁵ Sevda Şener argues that in the sixties, parallel with the political movements and acceptance of a relatively more democratic constitution in 1961, theatre had the opportunity to discover its own power to mobilize the masses (1999: 43). In 1966, Beklan Algan and Ayla Algan, who are among the most important pioneers of “contemporary theatre” in Turkey, established LCC Theatre School, the first private theatre school. However, many theatres were closed down while some players were forbidden from acting with the military coup of 12th September 1980. Martial law was in place all over the country four years after the intervention. In 1984, when *Bilsak*, an interdisciplinary initiative including seminar programs for photography, visual arts and theatre, was established by a group of intellectuals and artists, it became a dynamic center for independent and self-critical works in the midst of a huge silence and self-censorship prevalent in the society after the coup d’etat. In accordance with its manifesto, *Bilsak Theatre Workshop* played a critical role in theatre’s search for the new which was based on the priority given to self-reflection and self-critique (<http://www.bilsak.com/home/index.asp?w=pages&r=0&pid=35>). The first play of the group was Sevim Burak’s “İşte Baş, İşte Gövde, İşte Kanatlar”, which can be seen one of the most radical texts in Turkish literature in terms of its fragmented and self-enclosed structure. (Şener, 1998: 270) In this sense, *Bilsak* as an art initiative has invaluable importance for contemporary theatre in Turkey.

Hence, theatre in the 1990s in Turkey, under the umbrella term “contemporary” (*çağdaş*), exhibited a variety of new tendencies: blurring disciplinary boundaries, the collaboration of different subdisciplines, the adaptation of classical texts, conceptual dramaturgies, the integration of subjective (and political) motivations to works of art, a more self-reflexive understanding of theatre and the questioning of the hierarchy between audience and actors. The novelty of these tendencies is of course open to

⁵ Mehmet Ulusoy is a very significant name in this period. He established “The Research and Street Theatre” in 1968 in Turkey, but left the country in 1972. In Paris he created “Theatre Liberte”.

controversy. In the essay he wrote for Çağdaş Sahne Sanatları Buluşması 1 (Contemporary Stage Arts Meeting 1), Çetin Sarıkartal mentions that the terms “contemporary” and “interdisciplinary” turned out to be household terms that “explain” any stylistic work that has no dramaturgical, musical, visual, theatrical references but is a consequence of free associations. According to him, most of the works that are called “contemporary” are concerned only with “catching up” the avant-garde tendencies of the west without trying to use local dynamics. This criticism seems parallel to the critical reflections as to the apparently liberal ambiance of the 1990s which is marked on the one hand with economic liberalization and accommodation policies of Turkey to the “new world order”, and on the other hand with the intensified war between Kurdish guerillas and the Turkish army. According to Nurdan Gürbilek (1992), after the second half of the 1980s, Turkey witnessed the co-existence of a burst of expression and the violent suppression/marginalization of what is politically different. Hence, not independent from this ambivalent aura of the 1990s, in the terrain of contemporary theatre, there has always been the tension of disclosing what is being suppressed as well as celebration of emancipation from the “old”.

Keeping in mind the controversial aspect of “contemporariness”, I would like to point to the fact that all these tendencies emerged out of alliances among alternative and independent performing art groups which were institutionalized for the first time in Turkey, independent of state and private theatres. Most of the theatres which have a significant place in Turkish and international theatre circles today originated in those years. The source of the dynamism was the global networks and relationships as well as new liberal policies stemming from the country’s globalization policies (Bora, 2003). Many groups formed interdisciplinary alliances with one another and with international artists. In what follows, I will discuss three contemporary theatre groups and their arguments on “contemporariness”, all of which emerged in the 1990s in Istanbul⁶. Istanbul, as the heart of all these developments, played a central role in this process which is of particular relevance to my argument in this thesis. These discussions will, hopefully, give a brief idea about the concerns of the contemporary theatre environment in the 1990s which was problematized and directly addressed by the Assos International Performing Arts Festival.

⁶ See Aksoy and Robins (1994) for further reading on the changing cultural and political life in Istanbul towards a polarized and ghettoized structure in 1990s as a result of the attempt of positioning the city in to the new economic hierarchy of world cities.

I would like to note here the role of some university theatre groups in the formation of contemporary theatre in Turkey. Especially Boğaziçi University Actors (<http://odtuoyunculari.metu.edu.tr/tarihce.html>) and Metu Players played a significant role in the search for technique of contemporary theatre. Festivals held by IATP (IATG, Istanbul Alternative Theatres Days) and Odtü Tiyatro Şenliği (Metu Theatre Festival) pioneered the discussion of alternative theatre especially among university circles in the 1990s. The theatre, translation and research magazine, *Mimesis*, became the main source of translations of theatre theories such as Poor Theatre, Theatre of the Oppressed or Anthropology of Theatre, not only for university theatre groups but for more “professional” theatre groups. .

In 1991, with the leadership of Naz Erayda and Kerem Kurdoğlu, *Kumpanya*⁷ was established in an old building in Tarlabası, Beyoğlu. From the choice of locale (an old Armenian School, now called Istanbul Sanat Merkezi) to the texts they staged, they tried to “develop a different way of expression than preexisting notions of theatre in Turkey and to offer an alternative” (<http://www.kumpanya.org/giris.html>). The group staged their own texts or adaptations. According to Aysin Candan, the choice of “difficult texts” is the most important characteristic of contemporary theatre in Turkey (1999: 137). According to one of the leading members of the group, Kerem Kurdoğlu, “Because the modernist “teacher-student” hierarchy between audience and the artist had failed, Kumpanya tried to rebuild this relationship on an equal level with its audience.” (1999: 176).

The words of Nalan Özübek, the editor of the theatre journal “Theatre, Theatre”, summarizes succinctly the difference of *Kumpanya*: “You don’t feel like going to a theatre which is established by unknown people for unknown people, but like a guest going to the “play room” of *Kumpanya*.” (<http://www.kumpanya.org/giris.html>)⁷. Hence, the audience does not have to feel part of a well-defined institution of theatre, but merely witness the subjective process of a group by being there with them. I remember a similar astonishment when I entered ISM for the first time: a totally strange building more like a house than a theatre. This strangeness was not limited to the building, but to the squatter settlement district in the margins of the city. ISM was used by also *Tiyatro Oyunevi (Theatre Playhouse)*, another leading contemporary theatre group which was

⁷ For further the detailed information about the productions and workshops of “Kumpanya” between the years 1991 and 2002, see *Ne Bileyim Kafam Karıştı* (2002).

established by Mahir Günşıray and a group of artists from different disciplines of art in 1996 (<http://www.tiyatrooyunevi.com/anasayfa.html>).

Another influential theatre assembly which was established to “search for and apply the contemporary” (<http://www.studiooyunculari.com/studio.htm>) was *Studio Oyuncuları* (Studio Players). It was founded under the leadership of Şahika Tekand in 1990 and has been also an education and research center for many theatre practitioners up to the present. The theatre drew up its curtain with Samuel Beckett’s “Happy Days” in 1993, and premiered other Beckett plays in Turkey. According to Şahika Tekand, one must perform a text/idea in theatre only if it is the only way to express it and for that reason, the search for what is “performative” in an idea/text is the underlying tenet of the group (ibid). Şahika Tekand talks about her understanding of the term “alternative” which focuses on the central importance of ethical and political motivations in the search for “why it is necessary to act”:

Today, consumerist culture emerged and anything that is hand-made is isolated from the system. This new consumerist person is hungry for newness and as soon as the new emerges it is taken into circulation by system. So there must be ethical, ideological and political motivations behind being alternative today; we must always face what is “new” and what is the reason to search for it. Unless newness does not emerge out of a necessity or an intellectual obligation, it is not possible for it to be alternative to the old. (1999: 148)

In the 1990s, institutional theatre was in crisis in many ways, including inadequate places to perform, insufficient budgets and autocratic policies concerning dramaturgy and text selection. (*Tiyatro Tiyatro* 1993: 14; 39) However, autonomous and contemporary theatre was also discussed in state theatre. Although it could continue for only one year, under the name of *Birim Tiyatroları* (Unit Theatre), some artists from the state theatre started to work on experimental texts and created alternative workshops⁸. Another example is from Şehir Tiyatroları. *Tiyatro Araştırmaları Laboratuvarı* (*TAL, Theatre Research Lab*), which was pursued by Beklan Algan and Ayla Algan, successfully became a school for many artists in today’s theatre world in Turkey. *TAL* also pioneered workshops with internationally famous theatre and dance artists such as Eugenio Barba and Erica Bilder (*Tiyatro Tiyatro*, 1995: 32; 35). .

⁸ According to my interview with Şule Ateş, another attempt to provide a space for creativity and experimentalism was *Tiyatro Odası* (Theatre Room) in 1989. Can Doğan, Can Başak, Arif Akkaya were the members of the group.

Another leading group of the 1990s which came out of the crisis in institutional theatre was *5. Sokak Tiyatrosu* (*Fifth Street Theatre*). Founded by Mustafa Avkıran, Övül Avkıran and Naz Erayda in 1995 in Antalya, *5. Sokak Tiyatrosu* has a meaningful history in terms of understanding the tension between State theatre and alternative initiatives. Its pioneering figure, Mustafa Avkıran, was a State theatre artist in Antalya at the time *5. Sokak Tiyatrosu* was established. He and a group of theatre artists chose to work in Antalya State Theatre as part of the transformation of State theatre⁹: to make theatre outside Istanbul, outside the metropole. Mustafa Avkıran says that their basic motivation was to establish an artistically autonomous group in Antalya (1999:154). However, they could not work as independently as they imagined. After three years, Mustafa Avkıran and some other players resigned from the state theatre and continued independent work in alternative places. For instance, a garage in Antalya was turned into a cultural center where in addition to theatre, various cultural and art events could be held¹⁰. In their own words, “*5. Sokak Tiyatrosu* prefers to question the power of theatre with its own experiences from within the definition of ‘Contemporary Turkish Theatre’” (<http://sozluk.sourtimes.org/show.asp?t=5.+sokak+tiyatrosu>). The claim “questioning power of theatre” clearly refers to power relations especially as they operate within state theatre. *5. Sokak Tiyatrosu* embodies detachment from the state both as a physical institution and as an ideological structure.

Hence, a search for an interdisciplinary, self-critical and non-conventional theatre marked the contemporary scene in Istanbul in the 1990s¹¹. When we look at today, the 2000s, it is possible to see a continuation with bigger initiatives, cultural centers and projects. Among them we can list Çağdaş Gösteri Sanatları Topluluğu (Contemporary Performing Arts Community), Theatre Dot, idans (which is the first international modern dance festival), Çatı Dans Stüdyosu (Çatı Dance Studio), Garaj İstanbul, Gist, Galata Perform. As a result, the dynamism of the 1990s played a crucial role in the

⁹ During the same time, *Diyarbakır* State Theatre was also established as an extension of the project of State Theatre to “reach Anatolia”. For a very striking essay of Işıl Kasapoğlu about his “frightening” experience in Diyarbakır as a theatre director from western Turkey, see *Tiyatro Tiyatro* 1994:30.

¹⁰ Today, Garaj İstanbul can be seen as a continuation of *5. Sokak Tiyatrosu* in İstanbul.

¹¹ For further information about the independent and alternative groups emerged in 1990s both in İstanbul and Ankara see Şener (1998).

current picture of contemporary performing arts and theatre in Turkey and in this sense, the Assos International Performing Arts Festival became the pivot around which many people with these concerns gathered.

II. Hüseyin Katırcıođlu

Hüseyin Katırcıođlu, the person at the center of this thesis as the art director of the Assos International Performing Arts Festival, created many artistic works and organizations until his tragic death in 1999. On the day of 3rd of November in 1999, he fell off the roof of an old factory while helping the workers repair the roof. This old factory located in Kasımpaşa in Istanbul was going to be a performing arts center as part of Hüseyin Katırcıođlu's own project. His untimely and tragic death shocked all who knew him (Hürriyet Gösteri, 1999, 215; *Tiyatro Tiyatro*, 2000, 99). In newspaper articles the news of his death was given with the title "he died for the sake of art." (Milliyet, 4.10.1999; Hürriyet, 5.10.1999). Today, in Assos, a small nursery garden is planted in his memory. Also, there is a café in Italy called "Hüseyin Café" which was opened by his friends from La Mama Theatre. In addition to the artistic directorship of the Assos International Performing Arts Festival, Katırcıođlu was also an associate of La Mama Etc, member of La Mama Umbria, Founding Director of YaDa Theatre in Istanbul, member of the Theatre Research Laboratory at Istanbul Municipal Theatre (İBŞT Tiyatro Araştırma Laboratuvarı Yönetmeni), member of British Actors Equity and member of IETM Mediterranean Committee.

Hüseyin Katırcıođlu was born in Istanbul in 1953. His mother Julia Katırcıođlu is English. His father, Muhtar Katırcıođlu, is a renowned map and menu collector and representative of the International Map Collectors in Turkey. The family lived in England for years where Hüseyin acquired his high school, college and postgraduate education. He graduated from Reading University Political Science Faculty in 1975. After graduation, he worked as a building contractor in Saudi Arabia and Assos. He then decided to go to East 15 Acting School in England, where he received his postgraduate certificate in theatre in 1981. Between 1981 and 1989, he performed as an actor in theatre, television and cinema in England in productions which included *King Lear* at the Royal National Theatre, *Antonius and Cleopatra* and *Hiawatha*, at theatres such as the Royal Shakespeare, Birmingham, Manchester, New Castle, and Southampton. He worked with actors such as Anthony Hopkins, Judy Dench, Ava

Gardner, Isabelle Adjani and Dustin Hoffman, and in production companies including BBC, Lucas Films and Highgate Pictures. When he returned to Turkey in 1991 he continued to work in international projects. For example, in 1992, he staged *Yunus* in New York. He directed *Giacinta* in La Mama Umbria in 1994. After 1991, he produced mainly in Turkey and in Turkish.¹² In an interview, in response to the question as to why he returned to Turkey when he was a successful actor and director in England, he says:

Turkey had an unusual energy at the beginning of the 90's. The Özal period still had its effects, the economy was active and there was liveliness in the country. There was optimism in the society. Actually it was such a nice period but it ended very quickly... we were born here, we have a responsibility. It is vain to complain about the ambiance. If you are looking for a new ambiance, you will set it up yourself (Milliyet, 17 February 1997).

According to his father, Muhtar Katircioğlu, Hüseyin Katircioğlu was fed up with the never-ending rivalry among Oxford and Cambridge alumni in England. Hüseyin Katircioğlu's own words "I am fed up with reflecting others' style" also imply a kind of escape from his previous theatre life in England. Apart from the reasons for his arrival in Turkey, he inspired many people in Turkey with his call for a "different ambiance". Şule Ateş, one of the artists I interviewed, told me that after she read the words of Hüseyin in the newspaper she waited enthusiastically to meet him:

Huseyin was just back from London. I saw his interview in Cumhuriyet newspaper. I read the interview and I said "Oh my god, he thinks just like me." I looked for him quite a long time. I called Cumhuriyet but I couldn't get him, then when I went to ISTA to their office for registration, he was there. Zişan Uğurlu introduced us and I said "I have wanted to meet you for a long time".

Hüseyin Katircioğlu motivated many people with his energy and eagerness to do theatre and to create his own theatre environment. What was particularly appealing to the people who worked with him was the novelty of the theatre he wanted to create. What did Hüseyin Katircioğlu understand from theatre? What kind of artistic path was he on? I will try to answer these questions starting with his words:

For me, theater is a game played by grown ups. The players play a game with the audience, contact them by this game and the audience join this game. Kids play to

¹² See Appendices.

get to know about the world and to learn. We play and our world view develops, changes and is questioned around this game. This is what theater is for me (*Tiyatro Tiyatro*, March 1992: 25).

As seen in the words above, the ritualistic and playful elements of theatre interested Katırcıoğlu. Accordingly, theatre is a kind of tool to question, develop and change our views about world. Here, one can see that there is not a worldview which was specifically addressed in Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu's words. When we look at the plays he directed or played in, we can see that he chose texts such as myths, folk tales, legends or contemporary stories written in the form of myth. In these texts, universal themes which focused on general concepts like "betrayal" or "being Turkish" were preferred as he aimed at universality in his theatre:

I am looking for a theater that everyone can understand, not only without a language limitation but also without a social class limitation (*Tiyatro, Tiyatro*, October, 1994: 52).

The quest for a universal language brought the break from some formalist features of conventional theatre such as the Italian stage. Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu always preferred "interesting/unsuitable" places to perform. Among his plays, *Ismene*, was staged at Taxim Night Park Disco, *Medea* by Patrizia Filia, at another night club, called *Twenty* (<http://www.milliyet.com.tr/1997/02/17/entel/entel.html>) and *Türk Olmak*, at the famous night club *Babylon*. In one of his interviews, Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu defined his aesthetic position as "being free from the norms of the past," (*Turkish Daily News*, 1995) which he tried to realize through questioning especially the actor-audience relationship:

What distinguishes theatre from cinema and television is the interaction between actors and audience. I think the Italian stage kills this interaction. So I do not think that I will stage a play on an Italian stage anymore. I like it when the audience can also move in the space together with the actors. (*Tiyatro, Tiyatro*, 1992: 14: 25)

The idea of bringing different artists and "non-artists" from different cultures together for each play was another aim of *YaDa Theatre* in the direction of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu. This "intercultural" model was taken from the way *La Mama* works in Italy. (<http://www.lamama.org/>) As a theatre artist who directed plays in *La Mama*, Hüseyin was enthusiastically supporting this idea of intercultural theatre.

The choice of different places and intercultural working style of *YaDa Theatre* was accompanied with an emphasis on visual and aural ways of expression in place of

verbal ones: “There is not much space for language in the theater that attracts me but there is for sound. Sound matters for me.” (*Tiyatro Tiyatro*, October, 1994: 52) In the last play he wrote, directed and played, *Türk Olmak*, Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu did not use verbal text. With caricaturized images he played the “stereotypical Turkish man”:

I want to reflect all rituals a Turk experiences from birth to death. It is a single player act. There is a table. There are speakers instead of plates. The sounds of eating, drinking and stuffing oneself. On the table are a moustache and a necktie on a cord. The sound of eating gradually becomes an “alaturka” rhythm. The man gets up from the table and just then six belly dancer costumes. Both Islamic worshipping like losing one’s conscious and rock together. I believe both meet the same need. A totally visual, wordless performance...¹³
(<http://www.milliyet.com.tr/1997/02/17/entel/entel.html>)

As can be seen from his description of the play, Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu chooses a symbolic language based on stereotypical images of “Turks’ experiences”. Through the symbols Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu chose, the life span of a Turkish man was ironically summarized. One of the participants of the festival talked about *Türk Olmak* as the only work of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu which she did not like because it was “kitsch”.

Apart from the plays staged in places other than theatres, Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu also directed plays in open air which he called “mass theatre” as an example for the realization of the idea of intercultural theatre. The central focus of this thesis, the Assos International Performing Arts Festival, was like a laboratory for Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu to experiment with “mass theatre” as he imagined it. He worked with the local people of Behramkale as well as actors and theatre artists from Istanbul and abroad in his mass theatre performances. In the first “mass theatre” experience, he directed the story of Troy at the ruins of Troy in Çanakkale. The work was pursued in collaboration with İstanbul Şehir Tiyatroları Tiyatro Araştırmaları Laboratuvarı (Istanbul City Theatre, Theatre Research Laboratory). The other mass theatre plays he directed and acted in the Assos International Performing Arts Festival were *Simurg* and *Sapho*.

¹³ Doğumundan ölümüne kadar bir Türk insanının geçirdiği bütün ritüelleri yansıtmak istiyorum. Tek kişilik bir gösteri. Bir sofraya kuruyoruz. Tabaklar yerine hoparlörler var. Yeme içme, tıkınma sesleri. Sofrada bir yay üzerinde bir bıyık ve kravat görülüyor. Yeme içme sesleri giderek alaturka ritim haline geliyor. Adam bir kalkıyor sofradan, altı dansöz kıyafeti. Zikirle rock bir arada. Bence zaten aynı gereksinimi karşılıyor ikisi de. Tamamen görsel, sözü olmayan bir gösteri...

Not only the theatre he wanted to realize, but also the value he attributed to the organized power of independent artists made Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu an important figure for contemporary theatre circles. He pioneered the establishment of an association called “İstanbul Sanat ve Tanıtım Vakfı” (Istanbul Art and Publicity Foundation), which brought together different artists from various spheres of the performing arts in Istanbul. He was also one of the leading figures of the first interdisciplinary art event held in 1994 at Yıldız Palace under the name “Ah Güzel İstanbul, 1. Disiplinlerarası Sanat Etkinliği” (Oh Beautiful Istanbul, First Interdisciplinary Art Activity) and also “1. Performans Günleri” (First Performance Days) which was organized by Disiplinlerarası Genç Sanatçılar Derneği (Interdisciplinary Young Artists’ Association).

For Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu, bringing independent artists and groups together to deal with financial constraints was the main problem in Turkish theatre. In 1996, one of the most influential theatre magazines of Turkey, *Agon*, started a discussion about “other theatre” (*öteki tiyatro*) which was used by the Istanbul International Theatre Festival Committee to refer to contemporary independent theatre. Various people wrote opinions about the issue and discussed “what is other theatre” and “who decides the groups that are other theatre?” Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu also contributed to the discussion with a relatively “hard” essay in which he invites everyone to focus on the economic problems of theatre artists. In his essay, he rejects all categorizations including “öteki tiyatro” or “alternative theatre” and says that the only term that would work for Turkish independent contemporary theatre is “züğürt tiyatro” (poor theatre):

The only thing common among theater groups which are intended to be grouped in a general classification is lack of money. Their works have been realized with unbelievable financial problems and perseverance and commitment that few people can appreciate. So, a term to cover them all could be “poor theater.”¹⁴ (Agon, February, 1996: 30)

Rather than joining the discussion on the discourse of contemporary theatre, Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu tried to attract attention to the economic situation of theatre groups and offered a new restructuring without state theatres. The state theatre was in a serious financial and artistic crisis and widely discussed among theatre circles in the 1990s (Agon, January-February, 1995) The Diyarbakır State Theatre was closed down in 1995

¹⁴ Genel bir sınıflandırılmaya sokulmaya çalışılan tüm bu toplulukların ve çalışmalarının tek ortak özelliği parasızlık. İnanılmaz maddi olanaksızlıklar ile pek az insanın takdir edebileceği bir inat ve özveri ile gerçekleştirilmiştir bu çalışmalar. Bu yüzden hepsini kapsayabilecek tanım “züğürt tiyatro” olabilir. (For the full text see Appendix D)

due to lack of funds (*Tiyatro Tiyatro*, October, 1995, sayfa 8) At the same time, the economic situation of private theatres and the establishment of an autonomous art council (*Tiyatro Tiyatro*, February, 1994: 14) were hotly debated issues. In one his unpublished essays, Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu argued that the state theatre should be closed down as it had completed its “enlightenment mission” which was a part of “the westernization project” of Turkish Republic. He believed that the state should support the autonomous restructuring of theatre groups:

The state has been proven ineffective in economy but seen necessary to support it rather than take part in it. The same is also true for art. Instead of adopting a Western understanding of Theater, it is time to develop our unique theater language and to compete in the front line in the world theater.¹⁵

Hence, he openly advocated the end of state theatre or more truly the end of “enlightenment” period of Turkey based on the imitation of the west. In his article, “Whither the project of modernity?”, Çağlar Keyder discusses the “demise of the developmentalist project” for Turkey in the 1990s which was accompanied with a sense of “lawlessness” and “lack of direction” (1997: 37). What Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu says about the failure of the state’s intervention in the economy is restated by Keyder in a sociological framework:

In a context where modernity was a conscious imposition by modernizers whose arsenal was the exercise of state power, the crisis of the state seemed to forebode the bankruptcy of the entire project (1997: 37).

However, according to Keyder, this failure goes hand in hand with the revival of westernization ideals:

Turkey’s relations with various international organs in Europe, particularly with the European Union, reached a turning point in the 1990s that required a clear enunciation of the goals of Westernization. (1997: 47)

¹⁵ Ekonomide artık devlet kurumlarının randımsız olduğu kanıtlanmış, devletin endüstriye destek vermesi gerektiği fakat birebir icra etmesinin hata olduğu kabul edilmiştir. Sanatta da aynı gerçek söz konusudur. Batı mantığında bir sanat ve kültür anlayışını oturtmak yerine, bu alanda kendi özgün tiyatro dilimizi geliştirip dünya sahnelerinde başabaş yarışmanın zamanı gelmiştir.

As “the world theatre” refers to “contemporary Western theatre”, the words of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu can be “enunciation of goals of Westernization” in the sense Keyder argues. And the private sector becomes the main actor in this changing picture of art. In accordance with the globalization of art and culture, it turned out to be both prestigious and profitable for wealthy individuals or companies to support art. (Emre and Orhon, 2005) For instance, Efes Pilsen is one of the first companies that started to regularly support theatre in 1990. Another important private initiative is Aksanat¹⁶ which has a building in Beyoğlu¹⁷ with a stage, exhibition hall and concert hall. In 1992, when Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu and other eleven artists from Turkey staged “Yunus Emre” in New York in collaboration with La Mama Theatre, Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu viewed this production as a good example of collaboration between the private sector and theatre:

We hope this project to be a beginning. We have shown here that with private and individual support, contemporary Turkish artists have been able to open to the world with contemporary works reflecting their culture and that this can be managed by individuals and independent organizations.¹⁸(*Tiyatro Tiyatro*, 1992: 7)

“To reflect Turkish culture through contemporary works” was the mission Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu who believed that an intercultural project of theatre should be aimed at. In this sense, the relations with the private sector as a mediator between a “global world” and “Turkish culture” have crucial importance. According to Pelin Başaran’s thesis on the subject, the philanthropic activities of a wealthy class are related to the import substitution industrialization model of the 1990s and to populist strategies

¹⁶ One of the first “art” events of Aksanat was the painting exhibition of Kenan Evren, the leading figure of Military Coup of 12th of September in 1980 and also the President of Coup period. His painter identity is always a matter of irony among people who suffered directly or indirectly from the coup. *Tiyatro Tiyatro*, Issue 30, October, 1993.

¹⁷ It is important to note here that almost all big corporations who support art and culture, invest their capital at Beyoğlu, a neighborhood which is in harmony with significant changes of gentrification in the structure of the city that has undergone through 1990s in the name of “transformation project”

¹⁸Bu projenin bir başlangıç olmasını diliyoruz. Artık özel sektörün ve kişilerin desteği ile çağdaş Türk sanatçılarının kendi kültürlerini yansıtan çağdaş yapıtlarla dünyaya açılacaklarını ve bunun özerk kuruluş ve kişiler tarafından başarılacağını göstermiş bulunmaktayız.

in the service of a productive and consumer society (142, 2007). In her valuable study, Bařaran argues that with the cultural turn in the post-1980 era, “everything was induced to culture and in place of economic welfare, culture and arts are on the agenda for the ‘betterment’ of the society” (144, 2007). Hüseyn Katırcıođlu’s words below attribute a similar role to contemporary art in the process of catching up with the world, which is obviously “western”: “If we want to be part of the modern world, we can only manage this via contemporary art works.” (*Tiyatro Tiyatro*, 1992: 7)

And the biggest project that he realized in Turkey, the Assos International Performing Arts Festival, has such importance for him. Being the originator and the art director of the festival, Hüseyn Katırcıođlu gave great importance to bringing the “contemporary world” and Turkish contemporary performing arts circles together in Assos where art became a matter of being within this diversity of cultures and in the magical atmosphere of Assos. Here are his own words about the meaning of the Assos International Performing Arts Festival for him:

I am fed up with rolling over in the past, imitation, reflecting others’ style. I want to be with artists looking for their own ways, artists who will give the future its shape. This is why Assos Festival is there. Because of this feeling, we are going to gather there. We are going to do the best we can!¹⁹

III. Assos International Performing Arts Festival: “The Festival of Tomorrow”²⁰

Assos International Performing Arts Festival, the first (and only) international performing arts festival in Turkey, was held for four years between the years 1995 and 1999, in Assos (Behramkale) in anakkale, under the leadership of Hüseyn Katırcıođlu. Despite receiving no public funding, this festival became a major arts event in the sphere of performing arts in Turkey. Artists from dance to theatre, from music to puppetry, from photography to video art lived together for three weeks in Assos and produced site-specific works either with their own groups or with the people they met at the festival. The actual festival was a presentation of the results of this three week site-specific work process.

¹⁹ For a full interview with Hüseyn Katırcıođlu about the festival see Appendix E.

²⁰ Hüseyn Katırcıođlu’s words about the festival. *Cumhuriyet Newspaper*, 7 October 1995.

Hüseyin Katırcıođlu surrounded himself with artists and organized the festival with these people for four years. In the festival committee there were Selçuk Gürışık and Çađla Ormanlar as art designers. Çiđdem Demir and subsequently Dilek Katırcıođlu were the coordinators of the festival. Ali Ően was the coordinator in the village, and Asiye Cengiz and Emel Eratlı were part of the production crew. These names constituted the core group while the number of people who supported the organization at various levels was much larger. Hüseyin Katırcıođlu invited performing arts groups and artists from Turkey (predominantly from Istanbul and Ankara) and from all around the world. He and the festival committee started to prepare for the festival months ago. The preparations in the village were done with the help and professional collaboration of the local people. The main financial contributor to the festival was Hilmi Selimođlu, who provided accommodation by reserving one of his hotels in the region, and served food for three weeks. Hence, the artists were hosted in Assos for three weeks and were able to produce their works without payment. Philips was the sponsor of all light and sound systems of the festival. Other than these two main sponsors, other hotels in Assos, some consolders and printing houses also supported the festival. Festival did not demand tickets for the performances.

The first festival was held on October 6-8, 1995. The participants included Aydın Teker, Levent Öget, Kumpanya, Işıl Kasapođlu and Yeşil Üzümler from Turkey, La Mama Etc, from New York and L'Outil from France.

The second festival was held on September 20-22, 1996. The participants included: Adnan Tönel, Arhan Kayar, Kumpanya, Ya Da Tiyatro, Çađla Ormanlar from Turkey, Atelier from Sweden, Blue Room from England, Di Beatico e Angelica from Italy, Lippincott Players from USA, Mustafa Kaplan, Sabine Jamet, Kamille Tchalaev from France and Theodora Skipitares from USA.

The third festival was held on 26th, 27th and 28th of September in 1997. The participant groups and the artists were: Arhan Kayar, Hüseyin Alptekin, 5. Sokak Tiyatrosu, Çađla Ormanlar, Ya Da Tiyatro and Behramkale children from Turkey; Chapel of Change from Australia, Diano Marto from USA, Emmets from England and Tanz-Atelier Sebastian Prantl from Austria.

The last festival, changing its title from “festival” to “activities”, was held in 1999, with three performances with the participation of Gamze İnceci, Mustafa Kaplan, Filiz

Sızanlı from Turkey and Yann Marussich from Sweden. The economic restrictions were the reason for the festival committee to turn the festival into an artistic event with only three activities. After this festival, the future of the festival was a source of major debate.

In the leaflet of the festival, Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu defined the basic aims of the festival with the following statement: “The Assos Festival aims to provide a working environment where artists from different cultural and disciplinary backgrounds can interrelate”. As I discussed in the first part of this chapter, the 1990s constituted the beginning of independent contemporary performing arts in Turkey. Therefore, Katırcıoğlu’s words above show that the festival would, first of all, contribute to the interaction between newly emerged independent contemporary performing arts groups and subsequently, to the interaction between Turkey and the world, as many groups from other countries participated in the festival. The international network of the festival was an indispensable part of this project in that for Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu, new and original works would only be possible as long as they are in contact with the world. Furthermore, his words in the invitation brochure encouraged joint projects between different artists from various backgrounds: “Strong contacts are forged among attending artists and a number of joint projects have developed in different parts of the world out of previous festivals.” Hence, this festival claimed intervention in the situation of performing arts in Turkey by stressing insistently the production process and international networks. Besides, the network that was aimed to be established between groups was only possible if they had been in an environment where they could share both working experiences and see each other’s works. Thus, “the working environment” refers to social, artistic and daily interaction. For this reason, the festival committee provided the conditions for housing the artists in one place for three weeks.

Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu’s words below give some opinion about the participants of the festival:

Groups that are not based on verbal expression, groups that perform their original works, and groups that try to create their own language, groups and individuals who have reached a professional eminence with such works can participate in the festival.

Thus, there is a special emphasis on openness to experimenting with one’s own artistic language and at the same time having a professional eminence as the criteria of

the groups invited to the festival. The basic material of the experimental works was the sites Assos was offering. Located high on a plateau above the northern coast of the Aegean Sea, Assos was the essential constituent of the festival's artistic conception. The location of Assos, its closeness to the land of Troy and to the Island of Lesbos, its history of conquests since 2000 BC, its architecture, its "traditional" community and the diversity of the sites around it such as the ruins, the temple, and the coast, all these features of Assos were emphasized one by one in the invitation brochure. The festival wanted the groups to experiment with an idea within the environment of Assos and produce a work for the festival.

Assos attracted and is still attracting a lot of people and groups for activities, events and meetings because of its historical and mythological atmosphere.²¹ However, the main difference of the Assos International Performing Arts Festival was that not only the geographical features of Assos, but the local people and the everyday life had a place within the concept of the festival. In the invitation brochure of the festival it is said that "the local people have adopted the festival as their own and therefore the visiting performers get invited to their houses, weddings..." Especially children, teenagers and men, and lastly women participated in the production process at various levels. Some just opened their garden to theatre rehearsals; some acted in the plays; some helped to sew the costumes and some permitted their children to take roles in the performances. This interaction between everyday life of the village and the people who came there for artistic production was seen as an indispensable part of the artistic vision of the festival. Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu's words below show that his understanding of art goes hand in hand with "the people and the life":

It is a recent idea that art is disconnected from the people and is esoteric. If you look back at history, art has always grown among people and is something crucial for the people. In fact, I regard this as normal. It would be abnormal for it not to be so. We are trying to draw attention to this abnormality with this festival. We carry art into life. (Quoted from a video records of the festival)

Katırcıoğlu underlines a kind of non-elitist attitude which goes hand in hand with the ritualistic element of art. In the words above, the separation between art and life is

²¹ Philosophy in Assos using the statement "philosophical discussion and dialogue in an informal and natural atmosphere" (<http://www.philosophyinassos.org/>), Homeros Reading Days is also another meeting held in Bozcada, very close to Assos (for a Turkish news about the activity see <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=160767>)

marginalized and their co-existence is celebrated as the inevitable consequence of the festival. The following words of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu more clearly explain what kind of ambiance was aimed at in the festival:

A festival should not simply mean going to a performance and then returning to ordinary life. You should feel the enthusiasm not only during the performance, but also when going to the performance, and after, when walking around; so throughout the day, you should live with art all day long. This is what we are achieving in Assos. For three days, the performers, the people, the guests and everybody live with these performances. (ibid)

Hence, the festival atmosphere that spread to the entire village is the most distinctive claim of the Assos International Performing Arts Festival. Here comes the difference of the relationship Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu had with Assos. Assos was the hometown of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu as he and his family lived in there in summers for years. His family was among the first people who moved to the village from the city. The Katırcıoğlu family is highly respected, which differentiates them from other urban people living in the village in the eyes of villagers. Not only respected but also loved, Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu was the closest member of this family to the local people. Hence, arranging the festival in a place he has been for years, Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu also shared with the locals the position of hosting the festival and this can be argued as the reason for his self-confidence and belief in the unification of art and everyday life.

What is more, this artistic claim of the festival found its realization in the performances of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu. Every year he directed a play in the village with the locals and the artists:

What seems almost absolutely significant is performing a play together with the locals every year. And this is managed. Rather, they are the most influential plays with the most diverse audience. (ibid)

In his words, the basic aim of the festival, to reach as possible as different people, was claimed to have been achieved in mass theatre performances. These plays were *Simurg* in 1995 and *Sapho* in 1996. All these plays were performed in the open air by using a large area in the village. *Simurg* was performed walking on a path going up to the hill of the village. On the way, the houses and the roofs were used and the audience followed/walked with the performers who were in costumes of various birds. *Sapho* was performed at the port of Assos by using the sea. As I mentioned above, Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu used mythological texts and stories most of the time and tried to abandon

verbal language as much as possible. The visual language was the language he preferred in his plays and advised other artists and groups to use. The most important reason for this preference was related to the audience that Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu aimed to reach. Among this audience were people from major cities of Turkey, local peasants and shepherds, and those from nearby cities such as teachers, civil servants and students. After listing the audience the brochure states: “The challenge to the artists therefore is to find a universal non-lingual language that can communicate with all!”

Hence, in the case of the Assos International Performing Arts Festival, I will discuss the claims of the festival by analyzing the memories of the participants both from the village and the city. What was the place of locals and everyday life in the festival? To what degree did the locals become a part of the festival process? Was the unification of art and life possible? What did it mean to pronounce this possibility as an artist? Keeping in mind that the festival constitutes a very unique example among the works of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu and addresses a group of artists, I will first analyze the accounts of the artists and then the accounts of the locals in the light of these questions.

CHAPTER III

HOW DO ARTISTS REMEMBER THE FESTIVAL?

***Professor:** Everything is tied to cotton thread in Turkey. Who knows, falling off the roof, many Mustafa Inan's have never come to their senses. Maybe they died even before birth.*

***Young man:** Who knows maybe many Mustafa Inan's, despite surviving many foreseeable and unforeseeable accidents, are worse than falling off the roof because of not knowing what to do.*

(Atay, 1975: 21)

The first person I met connected to the festival artistic community was Dilek Katircioğlu, the widow of Hüseyin Katircioğlu and the coordinator of the festival. She provided me with all the contacts to the other artists and organizers. The group of artists I met was heterogeneous. Among them were dancers, theatre artists, photographers, art designers, musicians and organizers including architects and graphic designers.

As expected, the artists and the organizers of the festival explained the events surrounding the festival, the festival itself, and its importance to the community. I tried to listen to everything they told me just as I tried to collect as much archival material as I could. However, because the object of this research is not the Assos International Performing Arts Festival itself, but the processes of perception and memory which are triggered through remembering the festival today, I focused on the memory of the festival experience rather than on an exhaustive description of the event. For this reason, I did not read the archival material in detail until I finished the first tour of my interviews. My object was to hear about the festival in the way it would be conveyed by the participants.

Beginning with the first interview, I found myself amongst a different socio-economic group with whom I had not been engaged until this research. The theatre and performing arts circle that created the festival was from a different social environment from that of the university theatre circles I came from. It was interesting for me to

realize the significance of the disconnection between the Assos International Performing Arts Festival people/community and the university theatre circles which have had a very important place in the history of avant-garde theatre in Turkey.²² The university theatre circles I came from were totally absent in this community of artists. What is more, the disconnection was not only on the side of the festival community, but strangely enough, the university theatre groups were also unaware of the festival. I heard only one comment about the festival from a university theatre group. According to Kerem Karaboğa, his ex-group in the Boğaziçi University did not taking the Assos International Performing Arts Festival seriously and criticized the “intercultural” aim of the festival as an “illusion of elitist art”.

The wide spectrum of artists I met enhanced my vision of theatre and performing arts. Along with the disciplines of art such as photography, art design, video art, dance, theatre, performance arts, criticism and music, I also had the opportunity to meet people from various professions who worked voluntarily in the organization of the festival. Meeting all these people introduced me to the contemporary performing arts community. Some of them are the leading members of important centers and groups²³, some of them are well-known independent performing arts or theatre artists,²⁴ and some are members of production companies. However, more than an art circle (that I was waiting for impatiently), I felt that I was among individuals from a high socio-economic class. In other words, their life standards were more alien to me than were their understanding and practice of art. This realization opened a new dimension in the research which was the analysis of my relationship with theatre. What did I attribute to this research concerning my artistic expectations? Was I waiting for a big success story of an artistic event?

I thought that my “romantic” relationship with the theatre stage since my childhood had been broken in the university years through a much more direct engagement in theatre, also perhaps with the help of working in the production process and being involved in the discussion of theatre and organizing meetings for theatre

²² Mimesis, AGON, BÜO, ODTÜ Oyuncuları, ODTÜ Tiyatro Şenliği (METU Theatre Festival) were important groups and publications that came out of university circles.

²³ Garaj İstanbul, Tiyatro Dot, Hareket Atölyesi, Çatı Dans Atölyesi, IKSÜ, Semaver Kumpanya, Kum,pan,ya.

²⁴ Aydın Teker, Emre Koyuncuoğlu, Selçuk Gürışık, Sema.

groups. However, with this research, I realized that the early notion of art in my mind had not yet totally disappeared. I still preserved a romantic understanding of art/theatre and belief in the theatre's "magical world" which I thought could break one's boring relation to "real life". Such a success story was my expectation from the Assos International Performing Arts Festival. During my interviews with the artists, I realized that every social group or individual has its own perception of art and the promise of the Assos International Performing Arts Festival was for a certain social group of people who came from similar economic backgrounds. Consequently, I realized that my need for "magic" or "success" had its roots not in a universal truth of art but more truly in the conditions in which I have grown up, in other words, in the "real life" I wanted to escape. Hence, it was obvious for me that the way people engage in art is closely related to the socio-economic class they are in, or in Bourdieu's words, my "taste was the generative formula of life-style", which is the product of internalization of the structure of my social space (1984: 172).

Thus, the personal importance of this research for me implicitly came to the fore while I was listening to the narratives of the festival memory. In this chapter, the artists will be analyzed in terms of how they remember and narrate the festival today.

I. Hüseyin Katircioğlu through the Eyes of the Artists

The memory of Hüseyin Katircioğlu constituted a dominant part of my interviews with the artists. Without exception, all the artists I spoke to underlined firstly the indispensable role of the personal qualities of Hüseyin Katircioğlu in the realization of the Assos International Performing Arts Festival. There was a consensus that understanding the festival necessitated understanding the "uniqueness" of Hüseyin Katircioğlu. According to accounts of him, he was unique in terms of gathering more than one person's capabilities in his personality.

The first feature of Hüseyin Katircioğlu that was recalled by many artists was his concentration while being involved in anything. Dilek Katircioğlu mentioned that Hüseyin Katircioğlu was different in terms of "concentrating on his work rather than talking or complaining about it". This characteristic of Hüseyin Katircioğlu was mentioned by almost everyone to differentiate his way of coping with the things from "the Turkish way of coping with things" which was associated with "always

complaining, always talking about projects or making too much noise about future projects.” In Dilek Katircioğlu’s words:

Things would go bad but this wouldn’t affect him, for instance. When there is a problem, you go mad or the man on the phone insults you. Hüseyin would say “Ok, forget it now” and ask “what is the next”. He was always ready for the next one.²⁵

In a very similar manner, Asiye Cengiz talked about these characteristics of Katircioğlu in the following quotation:

He wouldn’t complain of anything. Maybe we admired this side of him most. He would never ask questions such as “why doesn’t the state support us, why do the villagers...etc.” He would just think about solving problems and make plans. “What is real” was more important for him than “What is right”. And as he acted in that way, he always put the right stones in the right place.²⁶

Hence, Asiye Cengiz explained this trait of Hüseyin Katircioğlu with his realistic stance. All the participants, even the ones who knew him for a short time, remembered Katircioğlu in terms of his positive way of approaching everything.

Another characteristic of Hüseyin Katircioğlu that was narrated by most of the artists was his sociability associated with his communicative character. In the beginning of my first interview with her, as an explanation of the “success” of the festival, Dilek Katircioğlu talked about three networks with which Hüseyin Katircioğlu had close relationships. These were the network of international performing arts circles, contemporary performing art and theatre artists in Turkey and thirdly, the local people of Behramkale. Especially, his being in the “same close and trustful distance” to a lot of different communities and people, from the locals of Assos to the international artists, could not be managed by anyone else, according to almost anyone I spoke with. Asiye Cengiz explained the “multi-lingual” character of Hüseyin Katircioğlu in these words:

Hüseyin knew the village headman and villagers since he was a child. Then he studied Theatre in London...but he never forgot who he was. As his mother was

²⁵ Hiçbir şeyin negatif gitmesi onu çökertmezdi mesela. Peki tamam, bu böyle mi gitti, sen orda deli olursun adam sana telefonda hakaret etmiştir falan, Hüseyin tamam şimdi bu sayfayı kapayalım, what is next diye hemen başka bir şeye geçerdi.

²⁶ Belki de en hayran olduğumuz tarafı da hiçbirseyden şikayet etmezdi, işte bu niye böyle olmuyo, devlet niye destek vermiyo, köylüler neden.. hiç öyle bir şey ağzından duymazdın Hüseyinin. O sadece bunu şöyle aşarım, şunu şöyle aşarım diye planlardı. “Doğrusu ne” üstünden değil de “gerçek ne” üzerinden hareket ederdi. O gerçek üstünden hareket ettiği için de doğru taşları doğru yerine koyardı.

English, he had an excellent English accent and he was a man who could say “İsmet ağa, bring them here” after saying something to the English actor with a perfect accent.²⁷

Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu was also remembered for his capability in almost every field of work. In Selçuk Gürışık’s vivid explanation:

He would cook *fırın kebab* with the octopus that fishermen didn’t like and give support to our rehearsal. Moreover, he would become a director, an actor or a costume designer suddenly to help us...²⁸

Hence, with his “westerner/non-Turkish” and rural/local personalities, with his communication skills, his ambition to realize his projects, his capability of organization, his practical intelligence, his successful theatre life abroad, his never-ending future projects, even his handsomeness²⁹ and his “non-Turkish” flexibility which enabled him to wear a pink shirt³⁰, with all these, the ‘unique’ personality of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu had to be explained and understood according to most of the artists I spoke.

On the other hand, according to some people, the very centrality of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu’s charming and charismatic personality for the organization of the festival constituted one of the biggest handicaps of the Assos International Performing Arts Festival. One of the women participants from abroad who had participated in two festivals complained about the self-centered and authoritative character of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu which she thought destroyed both the atmosphere and himself by not allowing anyone to share the burden of the festival. Although she was pleased with the festival in general, she also criticized Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu’s “macho” behavior. A woman from Turkey who worked in the festival for one year, after talking about the undeniable place of the festival in the performing arts sphere in Turkey, mentioned the

²⁷ Hüseyin Assosun köylüsünü muhtarını tanıyarak büyümüş. Sonra Londra okumuş, tiyatro okumuş...ama kendi olmayı hiç unutmamış, annesi de ingiliz olduğu için çok iyi ingiliz aksanıyla dönüp ingiliz oyuncuya bir şey söyledikten sonra, bu tarafa dönüp “İsmet ağa şunları getirsene” diye konuşabilen bir adamdı.

²⁸ Hüseyinin balıkçının sevmeyerek attığı ahtapottan fırın kebabı yaparak bizim provamıza destek vermesi o sırada ahçılıktan yönetmenliğe soyunması, yönetmenlikten oyunculığa geçmesi, oyunculuktan kostüm tasarımcılığna destek vermesi...

²⁹ In my interview, Asiye Cengiz mentioned that Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu was a handsome man, an acknowledgement strongly expressed by most women around him.

³⁰ In the same interview, Asiye Cengiz said that he was a man who could easily wear a pink shirt, a gesture which is considered “feminine” in Turkey.

conservative manner of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu. She claimed that in his work, Katırcıoğlu was not open to the criticism of others. These two narratives were unusual in the sense of expressing a different memory of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu and also in the sense of their distanced standpoint towards the festival in which they also took part. This one-person centeredness of the festival was also acknowledged by some theatre critics. In their article on the Assos International Performing Arts Festival, Ayla Kaplan, Selda Ergün Özdemir and Mustafa Sekmen stated that the “prophetic” aim of the festival to determine the course of performance art in Turkey could not be realized through the leadership of one person (*Tiyatro Tiyatro*, November, 1996). In their article, they suggested that rather than one person, a group of professionals from different spheres of art should have organized the festival.

However, for anyone I spoke to who knew him, remembering Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu in such a dominant way also had a significant commemorative effect. What is more, his tragic and untimely death undoubtedly influenced the way participants remembered the festival and Katırcıoğlu. It was especially difficult for some to speak, as they remembered their friend Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu with a deep sense of longing.

One last remark about the memory of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu in the accounts of the artists may be about the way Dilek Katırcıoğlu’s role in the organization of the festival was mentioned. Although they worked together for years, Dilek Katırcıoğlu was mentioned only towards the end of the interviews, with a few statements. If we remember the words of Dilek Katırcıoğlu that the festival was like their child, as the “family’s mother”, she was mentioned mainly in terms of her “collaboration” with and “support” for her husband.

II. Assos, an ancient Greek City

In parallel with the emphasis on place in the festival invitation of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu, the artists remembered Assos’s “inspiring” antique atmosphere. One of the participants from abroad, Monroe Denton, recalled that Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu invited him to Assos by saying that this was the place where Priam and his sons grazed their sheep. Hence, it was a conscious gesture on the part of the organizers to invite the artists to the land of Greek culture regarded as the origin of European civilization. All the artists felt that it was inspirational to create new works “in the cradle of Western culture”. In this sense, it can be claimed that the festival called the artists to an environment/ambiance

they already knew. It is not surprising that Assos, with its visual and magical pleasures, had an important place in the memories of the festival participants from urban areas. In their narratives, Assos appeared frequently with its “beautiful”, “magical”, “distinctive”, “impressive”, “breathtaking” or “inspiring” atmosphere. Monroe Denton, an American theatre critique who participated in the festival one year, makes a distinctive comment about Assos:

The visual spectacle of the sea and the rock cliffs invoke a unique sense of space. Assos strikes the visitor as very hard. It’s not the extraordinary magnetism which affixes the visitor to Delphi or Jerusalem, but an energy which skims the surface, at moments charging the soles of the visitor’s feet.

“The unique sense of space” Denton mentioned was rephrased by Asiye Cengiz, an architect who worked in all of the festivals as a member of the production team, with the words “sacred” and “energy”:

I think Behramkale is a sacred land. I don’t know if it is because of the philosophy done there for years but there is a fabulous aesthetic penetrating into the earth and the rocks and the insects there. Houses, barren nature... Actually, it is a different land, a peculiar mystery that Assos has. There is serious positive energy there. It is because of the localization.³¹

Thus, Cengiz defined a timeless experience which had nothing to do with change or movement but which was frozen forever. In her words, one can see that Assos was remembered firstly as if it was an uninhabited place with its “natural energy and aesthetic”.

Selçuk Gürışık, one of the art designers of the festival, explained the influence of the place on the people with the term “psycho-geography”. According to him, in all of the festival works one can trace the effect of the environment of Assos. According to Asiye Cengiz, “the nature was collaborating with the artists”: “Whenever somebody chose a spot for their performance and needed it, wind appeared, light appeared, the sea made wind.”³²

³¹ Behramkale bence kutsal topraklar. Orda senelerce felsefenin yapılmışlığından mı gelen bilmiyorum ama orda taş toprağa, börtüye böceğe sinen müthiş bir estetik var.evler, çorak tabiat...Başka bir taş toprağı, tuhaf bir esrarı vardır aslında Assos’un. Orda çok ciddi bir doğru enerji var. Lokalizasyondan gelen bir şey.

³² “Kendi gösterisi için yer seçen herkesin istediğı zaman ışık geldi, rüzgar çıktı, istediğı zaman deniz rüzgar yaptı.”

Hence, the artists should have just left themselves in the arms of the “nature” of Assos. What is more, this strong feeling of place was sometimes inexplicable for my interviewees. In the interview, Ceren Soylu made me feel how “special” the experience of Assos was for the artists. During our conversation, Soylu stopped several times and said that she could not express what was lived in Assos and added that one had to experience it to feel it. While this sensibility was not true for all the participants I spoke to, it was sometimes tiresome to listen to all these special and “inexplicable” accounts. I felt excluded from those special narratives. Some of them needed to learn whether I had been to Assos and had seen the beauty of its atmosphere. Actually, my first visit to Assos was for similar reasons, to escape from Istanbul to a beautiful place showing that I could understand them to an extent.

Hence, these accounts show that, as was stated in the article by Kaplan, Özdemir and Sekmen, the artists came to the ancient Greek village of Assos rather than the present-day village of Behramkale. In his book, *Colonising Egypt*, Timothy Mitchell talks about how for the westerner eyes with a map s/he already carries in his/her mind, “the Orient more and more became a place that one ‘already knew by heart’ on arrival.” (30: 1991) We can similarly conclude that Assos with its historical and mythological references was a place that was ready to be “grasped representationally.”

III. Collaborative Work

It is such a festival that, the moment you set foot in Assos, you realize that there is a festival there, a festival that everyone participates in. This is the first air that you breathe upon your entrance. And what caught my attention the most was as if everything was improvisation.³³

In the words of Sema, who participated in the festival as a singer, the feeling was one of “finding yourself in the midst of a carnival”. Similarly, most participants remembered the festival atmosphere through expressions such as “ritual”, “carnival”, “legend” or “fiesta”. The collaborative and collective way of working and creating was mentioned by many people in their accounts. In Sema’s words, it was “a festival that everyone participates in”. Sema’s words below illustrate that the festival was remembered through its “break with all hierarchies”:

³³ Öyle bir festival ki Assos’a adımınızı atar atmaz orda bir şenlik olduğunu, orda herkesin katıldığı bir şenlik olduğunun farkına varıyorsunuz. Girer girmez ilk kokladığınız hava bu. Ve benim en çok dikkatimi çeken sanki her şeyin doğaçlama olmasıydı.

There were foreigners in the process of decoration, locals also took part, there was a togetherness rather than hierarchy. And everyone was an actor in this togetherness. This was the beautiful side of it.³⁴

Likewise, Gamze İnceceli, a performance artist who worked with local women in the festival for the first time said that:

Everyone assisted each other's work. We used to look around if there was anything we could do for the other performance when our work for the day was finished. There was incredible sharing because there was support. The people of Assos who had nothing to do with you were there. Commedia d'el Arte was there. La Mama was there. There was consensus.³⁵

İnceceli, like Sema, described a "perfect togetherness". However, in this togetherness she put the people of Assos in a different place with the words, "who had nothing to do with you". Hence, in the ritual atmosphere that was imagined and remembered today by the artists, the people of Assos seemed to remain always "interesting" and "surprising". The basic motivation was to "stay with yourself" while at the same time to "leave yourself to the collective work as imagined", as İnceceli mentioned:

You continued to do something and then a wind came and things happened. There were a lot of things like that, rocks and the earth. Yet, you were not supposed to give up at that point. It was not based on a person. There might have been people who came to prominence, this happens everywhere, but it was not like that, the goal was to create collective works. You gave yourself over, you were left alone with yourself.³⁶

Zeynep Günsür, another dancer who participated in the festival with her group *Yeşil Üzümler*, mentioned "an ethics of working together" to explain what were the

³⁴ Kostumlerin hazırlanmasında ışıktta yabancılar vardı, yerli halk katıldı, sen oyuncusun sen müzisyensinde çok birliktelik vardı. Ve o birliktelkte herkes oyuncuydu. İşte ben daha çok şarkı söyliycem ben şunu yapıcım olmadı hiç. Güzel olan tarafı da buydu.

³⁵ Herkes birbirinin işine de yardım ederdi. Bugün benim çalışmam bu kadar, diğer gösteri için ne yapabilirim diye bakardık. Orda müthiş bir paylaşım vardı, çünkü destek vardı. Hiç senle alakası olmayan Assos halkı ordaydı, Commedia d'el Arte ordaydı, La Mama ordaydı, fikir birliği vardı.

³⁶ Yapıyodun, yapıyodun bi rüzgar geliyordu, neler oluyodu. Daha onun gibi neler vardı, taş toprak. Ama orda pes etmemek gerekiyordu. Kişi üzerine değildi. Öne çıkmış insanlar olabilir, bu her yerde olur, ama o değildi, amaç ortak işler ortaya çıkarmaktı. Kendini bırakmak vardı, kendinle baş başa kalmak vardı

most important gains of the festival for her. For instance, she said that they had to clean the field of its thorns and stones to be able to perform there. For her, this experience showed them the “meditative” effect of cleaning the field themselves: “there is a very ritualistic side to clean the space which you are going to create something in. There is a meditative part, as well.”³⁷ Hence, something very ordinary for the people of the village turned out to be “meditative” for the artists in their work. According to Günsür, the “success” of the festival had to do with the fact that it took place outside of Istanbul. Hence, like many others, she differentiates the experience of festival from artistic activity in the city.

According to the leaflet of the festival, “Assos International Performing Arts Festival is spontaneous, sensitive and dangerous.” Together with the collaborative and collective atmosphere of the festival, its openness to spontaneous works and experiments was also one of the issues that remained in the memories of the participants. One of the participants from abroad, the theatre artist Tom Morris, wrote that “there is an awful lot wrong with international theatre festivals, very often the concerns of the artists are forgotten when timetables and budgets are set.” He continued his essay by saying that Assos International Performing Arts Festival broke all bad habits of arts festivals by “gathering artists for a three week working period, and enabling all the work shown to be unique and responsive to the place and community.”(Daily Festival Bulletin, Neo-Athena, 1997) For many people, the ability to preserve a flexible area for unanticipated experiences was what made the festival successful. Monroe Denton in his article in the festival bulletin wrote that “Assos International Performing Arts Festival functions at its best as a festival of the contingent and the transient.” (Ibid) Hence, the festival atmosphere took its place in the memories of the participants as “the space of freedom and experiment.” Emre Koyuncuoğlu, the theatre/dance artist and editor of the daily bulletin of the festival, described this situation of openness to improvisation:

What Hüseyin did was bring together those independent artists, even for fifteen days, just stop, sit, think; there is nothing you have to do, your meal is here, you are enclosed in the space, your bed is here, there are two more artists. What do two artists do when they come together? They work. They talk twice; start twisting something in the evening, as it is their job, as it is their life style. And

³⁷ Orda bir şey yaratacağınız alanın dikenlerini temizlemenin çok ritüelistik bir tarafı var. Meditatif bir tarafı da var. (For the interview with Zeynep Günsür, see Appendix F.)

already incredible works came out, they turned into incredible things, enabled such a space, this space came into being. It became our space. We did not have a space before that.³⁸

Thus, the festival was remembered in terms of the space it offered to the artists that was free from any “daily concerns” and totally in the service of creative art. Koyuncuoğlu remembered the “independence” she felt as an artist. As a result of the “inspiring” atmosphere, some artists created their first interdisciplinary or site-specific works in Assos, and those creative moments were the most memorable. Çağla Ormanlar, one of the two art designers of the festival, told me that as an art designer she worked in the sphere of performing arts for the first time in the Assos International Performing Arts Festival. Another artist was Levent Öget who, as a photographer, made a site-specific installation at a historical bastion which included dance, photography and music. What is more, this space opened up through the festival experience seems to be continuing to inspire some artists for current projects. Two artists I interviewed told me that they still have some projects only for Assos. For me, this was important in seeing that the remembering and reflecting process stimulated the projects on their minds.

IV. Negotiation and Adaptation

What was the place of the local people of Behramkale within the “timeless and inspiring atmosphere of Assos” in the memories of the artists? On the part of the artists from abroad, the local people of Assos were remembered through their “hospitality and friendliness” which perfectly fit into the “sacred” land of Assos. Through the following quotation from Monroe Denton’s e-interview, one can understand the picture of the village on the mind of one of the foreign guests:

The volunteerism of the residents, the hospitality (inviting performers, etc, into homes and the mosque) spoke more eloquently than any performance. I remember the day after the audiences left, the store in Assos insisted on giving all the participants free ice creams—we would have gone there every afternoon, and

³⁸ Hüseyinin yaptığı şey o bağımsız sanatçıları bir araya getirip 15 gün bile olsa, dur otur düşün, hiçbir şey yapmana gerek yok, yemeğin burda, mekanda kapalıydın, yatman burda, iki sanatçı daha var. İki sanatçı bir araya gelince napa? İş yapar. İki defa sohbet eder, akşamleyin başlar bir şeyi burkmaya, çünkü işleri odur, yaşam biçimleri odur. Ve zaten inanılmaz işler çıkıyordu, inanılmaz şeylere dönüşüyodu, böyle bir alan sağladı, bu alan oldu. Bizim alanımız oldu. Ondan önce alanımız yoktu. (Interview, 30 November 2007. Beyoğlu, İstanbul)

the prices certainly were reasonable enough, but it seemed that the store owner, for whom this was most likely a financial stretch, wanted to give a series of gifts. There was a local shepherd who lent a mule to the Australian group. There was even a wedding that ended up being incorporated into the “festival” or at least we were all invited in to dance all night to the music.

Hence, as seen from the depiction of Denton, for him the village and the festival were in perfect cohesion. The weddings, which were deliberately announced by Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu to the artists in order to make the two cultures interact in the very moment “traditions” became visible, were seen by Denton as the best example of the incorporation of the everyday flow into the festival. About the “realistic” presentation of the orient to the western eye Mitchell argues that: “The more the exhibit drew in and encircled the visitor, the more the gaze was set apart from it, as the mind is set apart from the material world it observes” (1991: 9). In a similar sense, to witness the weddings and other celebrations may have had such an effect on the artists in terms of preserving her/his distance to the village.

Although it seemed to change after a while, similar to the account of Denton, the artists from Turkey remembered the unanticipated interventions from daily life as the “nice surprises” of the place. Some of the performances took their last shape through these “surprises”. For example, the leading member of *Beşinci Sokak Tiyatrosu* (Fifth Street Theatre), Mustafa Avkıran, talked about the old men who took part in their play “Antigone” in the following way:

The process of the inclusion of the old was incredible. For instance, once we had a rehearsal in the coffee house. We always scheduled the rehearsal after the prayer. They gathered in the mosque and prayed, then they came to the rehearsal all together. They were so cute.³⁹

Hence, the inclusion of the locals was considered “incredible” by Mustafa Avkıran, the director of the play, as if he did not expect their participation in the beginning. In this sense, they surprised him.

In another instance, one of the prominent modern dancers in Turkey, Aydın Teker, explained how she came up with the idea of her performance and how the performance, called “Sanatın Çocukluğu” (The Childhood of Art), paved its way through coincidences, interventions from the environment and the people around the site the

³⁹ Yaşlıların dahil edilme süreci olağanüstüydü. Bir kere kahvede gidip prova yaptık mesela. Mesela hep namazın sonrasına koyuyorduk çalışma saatlerini. Camide toplanıp namaz kılıyorlardı, sonra topluca çıkıp provaya geliyorlardı. Çok şekerdi hepsi.

performance was held in her article “Assos Yolu”. (2002: 192) She worked with some children from the village in this performance. In one of the rehearsals, while she and some children were working, some other children disturbed them and Aydın Teker asked these children if they wanted to act as well. This was how the children, who were outside the act, and were trying to disturb the children acting, also participated. Hence Teker, seeing the jealousy and desire to play in the sarcasm of the children, not only avoided a possible tension, but also permitted her performance to be a field of “peace” between the children outside the performance and the ones in the performance. She noted this instance as a step from which she also learned a lot in terms of “accepting the surprises into the play”. In the same essay, she wrote about another “funny” instance which was also remembered by many people as an example of “including the routine into the work”. On the day of the performance, she had to wait for the shepherd who also performed by passing with his flock of sheep across the bridge where the performance was held. As it was seen also in the case of “Antigone”, or in the performance of Aydın Teker, the schedules of the rehearsals and performances were arranged according to that of the locals. To wait for a suitable time was the first rule to work with them. The shepherd was late, because it took time for him to wash each sheep one by one before “performing”. This anecdote was remembered as one of the “funniest” stories of the festival by many people I interviewed. The funny thing for them was the way the shepherd took his walk along the bridge so seriously and cleaned his sheep one by one.

Hence, communication with the locals was something that was not taken into account before, but learned during the festival. According to Çağla Ormanlar, they borrowed the communication tools from Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu. In her words, their relationship with the locals was a continuation of the relationship of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu with the locals:

This communication came to us with him, like an apple falling from the sky and we didn't make great efforts to get it. We just acted as two equal sides, not as a manager or an administrator. We were sincere towards them, I talk about local people, and they answered us with the same sincerity. We, as the audiences and the people carrying on Hüseyin's relations, chose the way he followed for years and that already belonged to us.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Bu iletişim bize gökten bir elma gibi Hüseyinle düştü, ve çok da fazla bu iletişim için bir şey yapmadık, ne yaptık, iki eşit muhatap olarak yer aldık, yönetici ve idareci olarak değil, kendimizi onlara bıraktık, yerel halktan bahsediyorum, onlar da kendilerini bize

Hence, for Ormanlar, both the locals and the participating artists “left themselves to each other” without doing anything else as everything was done by Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu.

On the other hand, the influence of the artists on the local people sometimes became a matter of debate. Especially when the issue was children some tensions became visible for the first time between the locals and the artists. Each festival, an artist organized a workshop specifically for children, and at the end of the workshop, a performance was held. Çağla Ormanlar from Turkey and French dancer Sabine Jamet⁴¹ were the artists who mostly worked with children. Sabine Jamet continued to work with children for two more years after the festival ended and she still visits Assos when she comes to Turkey. She is the most remembered and admired artist among the children. However, in the interview, Ormanlar said that they had to persuade some families in order to work with the children. According to her, one of the families blamed the artists for “opening the eyes of their children to the outer world for a short period of time and in the end of the festival leaving them in their small world again”. While explaining this instance, Ormanlar was questioning their possible negative influences on the children. Hence, this was one of the questions derived from festival, from the local people and their everyday life as the “surprises” of the festival. Today, for some artists, not only the children, but also young people of the village who participated in the festival were affected negatively by the festival process. Because, in their most out-going ages, they emulated a life style that could not be pursued within the socio-economic conditions of the village. Ali Şen, who will be described in the next chapter, was one of the locals caught in-between, according to Çağla Ormanlar.

V. The Rules of Sharing Public Space in the Village: Gender Issues

The artists from the big cities of Turkey and from abroad were in the position of guests of the inhabitants of Behramkale village. It was challenging both for the guests

bıraktı. Biz izleyici olarak, Hüseyinin ilişkilerini devam ettiren kişiler olarak da Hüseyinin yıllardır izlediği ve zaten hayat görüşümüz olan yolu seçtik.

⁴¹ As she spent most of her time with children and sometimes with the families of the children, Jamet may provide a different memory of the locals than Denton did. Unfortunately I was unable to get in touch with her.

and for the hosts as the relationship between them was not a familiar one. The guests/artists were not there for tourism which is the familiar way of interacting with the “stranger” in the village for Assos. Plus, the artists were not like their “bad tempered and cold neighbors from the city”. In his words below, Selçuk Gürışık explained some of the anxieties of the local people concerning this new type of relationship:

They did not know us, who were we? They came from the city, are they going to make improper advances towards our daughters, are they going to steal from our house? Because there were some people, retired and so on, who came from the city and settled there and established their hegemony. When we showed them we were not like them, that we did not get drunk and shout, act out as “artists”, that we were respectful to one another as well, that there was not extravagant behavior though twenty people stayed in the same house, confidence awakened in them for us.⁴²

Hence, the conventional perception of an artist⁴³ who “drinks a lot and pursues an immoral life” among the local people had to be negated by the artists by showing that they were not “drunk” or “excessive in their behavior”. As Gürışık’s words show, a source of tension between the locals and the artists could have been the “excessive” behavior of the artists and any excess would directly threaten the “order” which was provided mostly by control over the women of the village. In other words, the rules of the negotiation between the “hosts” and the “guests” were determined according to the distance of the guests to the women/honor of the village. It was mentioned by most of the artists that they had to be careful (in the way they dressed, talked, walked) not to be

⁴² Bizi tanımıyorlardı, kim bunlar. Şehirden geldiler, kızımıza mı sulanacaklar, evimizden bişeyleri mi alacaklar. Çünkü şehirden gelip oraya yerleşip hegemoni kuran insanlar vardı emekliye ayrılmış falan. Onlardan olmadığımızı, bağırıp çağırıp sarhoş olup “sanatçı” davranışında bulunmadığımızı kendi aramızda da çok saygın olup, yirmi kişi aynı evde kalmasına rağmen hiçbir taşkınlığın yaşanmadığını gösterince, onlarda bize karşı bir güven uyandı.

⁴³ According to John Barish “anti-theatral prejudice” is based on three basic prejudices. These are; to show yourself in public space is immoral, the arousal of immoral emotions through theatre is provocative and thirdly, if actors are pretending well they are good deceivers at the same time (Güçbilmez, 2001). An anonymous saying that can be heard frequently in rural parts of Turkey, “art is the work of the devil”, stems from a similar type of prejudice. According to informal conversations I had with people from the village and people from my own environment, the term “going to the theatre” is used rather than “going to the bar” among men. Theatre and night clubs are linked because of the striptease shows of women. What is more, because the women in these bars display their body, these places are informally called “open open theatre” (“aç aç tiyatrosu”). Some of the people I spoke to from the village showed a theatre actor neighbor as a bad example of theatre actors’ life style; always drunk, pursuing an “immoral” night life.

disrespectful and not to exemplify an ‘immoral’ representation/performance of womanhood. Çağla Ormanlar expressed the sensitiveness of the situation clearly:

Let me say that we had a genuine relationship. It is like, “yes they are women but they are not quite like our women”. Yes, you are also treated like a sister but there is some sort of equation. I mean, townswomen go up a class higher than the women from the village. If you can establish the harmony... If s/he does not perceive you as “such a woman”... You need to act a little manly, not to be perceived as “such a woman”.. Having something done by being flirtatious should not even be a matter of discussion there. It is a situation that can easily be misunderstood, that can be responded to erroneously. It is so delicate.⁴⁴

Hence, it can be seen that the public space of the village in which the festival was held was marked by the absence of “womanhood”. As Ormanlar stated above, the women artists from Turkey had to be careful not to cause any misperception on the part of the locals about the artists in the village. However, it seemed to me from the memories of the locals, that this situation was not true for some women artists from abroad. Interestingly, these women artists from abroad were remembered with love and flirtation stories by some of the men from the village. However, when women artists from Turkey had to be engaged in anything regarding the local people, they had to be “a proper Turkish woman”.

As expected, it was more and more difficult when an artist wanted to work with local women or on a topic concerning women. In this sense, one of the most challenging works was Gamze İnceceli’s performance called “Birer Kaşık” (One Spoon for Each). The idea of this performance came out of the very need of Inceceli to directly intervene in the situation of the women in the festival:

There was only one thing that bothered me in Assos. Everyone was participating in some way, the sheep, the kids... Only the women gathered and watched behind the rocks. Somehow, they could not come and watch the performances in comfort. This was always in my mind, that we might do something about the women.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Harbi ilişkimiz vardı, öyle diyeyim. Tamam bunlar karı ama bizim karılara pek benzemiyo gibi bir şey. Tamam bacı muamelesi de görüyosun ama bir tür eşitlenme de oluyor. Yani şehirli kadın köylü kadından bir kademe daha sınıf atlamış oluyo. Uyumu sağlayabiliyosan. Seni tırnak içinde görmüyosa... Tırnak içinde görmemesi için de biraz erkek gibi davranman gerekiyo. Cilvelerle birşeyler yaptırma hikayesi falan hiç söz konusu olmaması gerekiyor orda. Hemen yanlış anlaşılabilen, yanlış davranılabilen bir durum. Öyle hassas ki.

⁴⁵ Beni rahatsız eden bi tek şey oldu Assos’ta. Herkes bi şekilde katılımcıydı, koyunlar, çocuklar. Sadece kadınlar hep toplanıp, kayaların arkasından izlerdi⁴⁵. Bir türlü oraya

The challenging part of the performance was to convince the women to participate. Very few women from Assos accepted the offer. Half of the women in the performance were from another village, Bektaş. Because Hüseyin and Dilek Katırcıoğlu knew women from Bektaş and because they knew that the women of Bektaş were more open to performing in public, they invited these women to İnceci's performance. İnceci described the process of inclusion of the women from Assos to the performance using the word "miracle":

The participation of the women was a miracle. It was not that we went to the women, told them about what we were doing and asked for their participation.. It took us two weeks of negotiation with them and their husbands to convince them.⁴⁶

Hence, the women who wanted to participate had to get permission from their husbands. Cooking was at the center of the performance:

Then I pondered about what I could do. What could be the way to bring out women, which of course could not be related to dance. We thought to do something with cooking. We thought of doing something by mixing the local herbs and local food with world cuisine.⁴⁷

In the performance, the women cooked various foods in a way they never tried before and presented them to the audience. The insistence of İnceci on a topic that did not resemble "performance" but cooking from everyday life was "to reach the women". Hence, it can be claimed that a negotiation took place, in the very endeavor to find a convergence point between the demands of the artists and the rules of the locals.

As mentioned by Gamze İnceci, artists could contact the women only through their husbands. However, there is an interesting case which I want to mention here in

gelip oturup rahat rahat izleyemezlerdi gösterileri. Bu benim hep kafama takıldı. Kadınlarla ilgili bişey yapsak diye.

⁴⁶ Kadınların katılmaları mucizeydi. Kadınlara gidip de biz böyle bişey yapıyoruz katılır mısınız gibi bişey yoktu orda. İki hafta boyunca o oyuncu olarak çalışan kadınları Dilek ve ben kocalarıyla konuşup konuşup anca öyle ikna ettik.

⁴⁷ Sonra napabilirim diye düşündüm. Kadınları ortaya çıkarmanın yolu ne olabilir, bu tabi dansla ilgili olamazdı. Yemekle ilgili bir şey yapalım dedik. Orda yetişen yerel otlarla, yemeklerle dünya mufaklarını karıştıralım bir şey yapalım dedik.

that it shows the consequences of a possible direct involvement of women in the festival. Here is the story of Asiye Cengiz:

Also, my name is Asiye Cengiz. They saw my name in the back of the festival program. Something big had happened in the village. Because there is Cengiz Restaurant just right to the primary school. The first name of its owner is also Asiye and her surname is Cengiz. Seeing the acknowledgements part in the program, the youth of the village went and came down on her saying; “Aunt Asiye, look you are acting in the festival too, you became famous. What is this?” We came to eat Turkish ravioli there, every festival. Later, I went to visit Asiye Cengiz. She approached it like she could not have anything to do with such stuff. Even in Assos, it was not welcome for a woman to drop her work and be occupied with such things.⁴⁸

In her article arguing that men represent the state within the village, Nükhet Sirman also states that for the village women “representation is not part of their gender definition and if they behave in this fashion too openly they will have to face criticism and loss of status” (1990: 48). In accordance with Sirman’s argument, the “comic” side of this story expresses the serious danger of appearing in public space for women of the village. When I spoke to Asiye Cengiz, who lives in Behramkale, and asked her if there was any interesting memory that she remembered, she said that there was nothing to tell while at the same time she and her son looked at each other and smiled. Hence, it is possible to say that the silence on the side of local women still continues, and this issue will be discussed further in the next chapter. What is more, for similar reasons, the local women were absent in the festival narratives of artists. In other words, they continue to obey the rule of appearing in the public space in Assos in their narratives: not to touch the women.

⁴⁸ Bi de benim adım Asiye Cengiz. Bu festival programının arkasında teşekkürler bölümünde benim adımı görmüşler. Köyde büyük bir şey olmuştu. Çünkü tam İlkokulun yanında cengiz restoran var. Onun da sahibinin adı Asiye soyadı Cengiz. Ordaki teşekkürler bölümünü görüp köyün gençleri gitmişler, “asiye teyze bak sen de festivalde oynuyomuşsun, meşhur olmuşsun. Bu ne böyle “diye onu sıkıştırmışlar. Ben her festival gidip orda mantılar yer olduk. Ben Asiye Cengizi ziyarete gittim sonra..o “gidin benim işim olmaz böyle şeylerle” gibi yaklaşmıştı. Çünkü hani işi gücü bırakıp bir kadının bunlarla uğraşması çok da şey karşılanmıyordu Assosta bile.

VI. What Remained from the Festival Experience?

By referring to the theoretical framework in Victor Turner's *The Ritual Process* (1982) Monroe Denton stated that "Assos was the area of testing boundaries." (Denton, 1997) The influence of the festival for most of the artists can be related to a similar feeling of losing the boundaries of their activity of art. In the interviews, some artists especially mentioned that they experienced their most important "lesson" in terms of confrontation with an unfamiliar community in the Assos International Performing Arts Festival. Working in a rural area was something most of them had not experienced before. Hence, the festival provided an opportunity especially for the artists from Turkey to "have an idea about the life in a village". Obviously, this shows how big the gap between the "elite art circles of big cities of Turkey" and the life in a rural region of Turkey remains. According to Tanil Bora, the tension between the rural and the urban is open to fruitful reflection most of the time (2005: 63). For him, this tension should be taken into consideration and should be paid attention to in order to build more constructive relations with the "other" for both sides. It seems controversial to what extent the artists built their projects departing from this tension in the festival. Still, I would like to note some of their remarks about the effect of the festival experience on their lives.

Gamze İnceci, as she directed a performance that took off from the locals directly, talked about an obligatory change in her artistic views:

For instance, I would want to make the eating performance more aesthetic. And I had to shatter that, but a totally different aesthetic came out. It was about cleansing yourself from yourself, then finding something in you, and creating out of that. It is very hard to express.⁴⁹

Today, to express this "change" in the direction of the work seemed difficult to İnceci. Perhaps this difficulty shows that the experience could not be placed anywhere in the current life of the artist. It stayed at the place it emerged. Another artist, Emre Koyuncuoğlu, mentioned the continuity of "what she learned for the first time" in Assos. She talked about the Assos experience as the one where the artists, including herself, who work with/in the place today made their first works:

⁴⁹ Mesela ben yemek performansını çok daha estetik yapmak isterdim. Ve tamamen o şeyimi yıkmak zorunda kaldım ve ortaya bambaşka bi estetik çıktı ama. İnsanın kendinden arınp tekrar kendinde bişeyler bulup ordan bişeyler çıkarmasıydı. İfade etmek çok zor.

We are doing spatial art. I worked in İzmit, Sinop and Diyarbakır. These are all continuance of that period and culture. Because this is a culture. Actually, this culture, going to a place, sensing the atmosphere in the right way and making an effort to do something for there, has come into being in Assos.⁵⁰

With these words, Koyuncuoğlu puts Assos in an important place in the history of performance arts in Turkey. Similarly, two art directors of the festival, Selçuk Gürışık and Çağla Ormanlar, talked about how Assos International Performing Arts Festival helped them to break their unfamiliarity with the rural. While Ormanlar used the term “mass media/communication” to explain what she learned in Assos, Gürışık showed his doctoral research about the makers of felt in rural areas of Turkey as the continuation of the ways of interaction he discovered in the festival while working with the locals:

I got out of the usual way; it gave me another kind of universality. I became a nomad. This nomadic feeling was not blowing the horn of every place and bursting that car’s horn. However, we felt the responsibility of smelling each place you went to and giving back the psychology and interaction which that place created in you. It enabled us to have some impulses such as feeling more empathetic, not to censure the existing culture, not to look down on it, trying to understand it and doing something with it . If I hadn’t done Assos, I couldn’t have worked with the felt makers of Konya.⁵¹

Hence, although they were the hosts of an international festival, artists from Turkey also learned a lot from their guest position. Working with the local people was one of the most pronounced experiences of the artists in terms of meeting with the rural.

Today, the relationship of the artists with Assos does not reflect any relationship with the village. They either have a nostalgic motivation to go to Assos, as the place still is “where Priam gazed his sheep”, or they prefer not to go there anymore. Interestingly, the most important reason not to want to see Assos is because they think

⁵⁰ Mekansal işler yapıyoruz, İzmitte, Sinopta, Diyarbakırda işler yaptım. Bütün o dönemin kültürün devamıdır. Bu bir kültür çünkü. Bir mekana gidip, orayı doğru algılayıp oraya doğru iş yapmaya çabalama kültürü aslında Assosta birlikte oluşan bir şey.

⁵¹ Yoldan çıkmış oldum, başka bir evrensellik getirdi bana. Göçer oldum. Her mekanda o mekanın düdüğünü çalıp o arabanın kornasını patlatmak değildi bu göçer olma duygusu. Ama gittiğin mekanı koklayıp o mekanın sende yarattığı psikolojiyi ve etkileşimi geri verme sorumluluğunu yaşadık. Daha fazla empati duyma, var olan kültürü kınamama, küçümsememe, onu anlamaya çalışma, onla birlikte bir şeyler yapmaya gitme dürtüsü kazandırdı. Eğer ben Assosu yapmasaydım Konyanın keçecileriyle çalışmazdım.

that Assos became a very tourism/profit centered village. To see the village as such makes some of the artists frustrated and upset. The following quotation from Çağla Ormanlar reveals the difference between her opinions about Assos today and how it was during the festival years:

Assos has become a place where people rip off everybody and increase the prices although the goods aren't high-quality... I live in Küçükkuyu. I go Assos one or two times a year if that. I hate it now. As it was the ideal place of my youth, maybe I can't endure seeing a ravioli house in every corner and their efforts to rip you off.⁵²

As seen from Ormanlar's words above, there is a clear disgust in her emotions about the village. It is obvious that tourism broke the romantic image of the place for the artists who participated in the festival. This situation is hardly unexpected. According to the accounts of the artists, the increasing economic interest of the locals in the festival was one of factors that accelerated the economic crisis and ended the festival. When the local artisans tried to earn more and more by increasing the prices (of hotels, food, parking), especially after the second festival at the time when the audience of the festival had increased, the already existing economic problems of the festival were multiplied. Hence, the romantic and the frustrating memories went hand in hand; both of which had nothing to do with the people of Behramkale directly, but either with their perceived "passive participation" or "greed for money". As a result, it is very difficult to talk about a "fruitful tension" between the rural and the urban in the sense Bora (2005) suggests.

⁵² Assos da öyle bir yer oldu ki, gelen gideni kazıklamaya çalışan ve aslında o kalitede olmadığı halde fiyatlarını çok yükselten, harcayan... Ben şimdi Küçükkuyuda yaşıyorum. Bütün bir yaz bir ya da iki kere gidiyorum ya da gitmiyorum. Nefret ettiğim bir yer oldu benim. Gençliğimin idealist yeri olduğundan belki tahammül edemiyorum, her köşe başında mantıcı olmasına, seni söğüşlemeye çalışmalarına tahammül edemiyorum.

CHAPTER IV

HOW DO THE LOCALS REMEMBER THE FESTIVAL?

But the new, as you well know, never arrives in an ideal form; it is always material. Therefore, its truth and necessity are always shabby, annoying, disappointing. The new either goes unrecognized or, by talking about it, people drag it back into their old habits.

(Pasolini, 1968)

As discussed in the previous chapter, the most distinctive aspect of the Assos International Performing Arts Festival was the fact that it took place in a village where the social life with all its routine went on. In this chapter, I will first introduce the socio-economic and geographic features of the village and subsequently discuss my fieldwork.

The village of Behramkale⁵³ (Assos), located on the northern coast of the Aegean Sea, is perched on a rock outcrop three hundred meters above the sea, with a steep two kilometer road down to a small harbor. The village is made up of flat-roofed stone houses with winding cobbled streets in-between. Currently, the population of the village is 686. The village has a headman (*muhtar*), who runs the affairs of the settlement. There is a primary school which provides education up to third grade. It is a rural community (administratively part of the city of Çanakkale), with olives and sheep as its main source of income. In the ancient bay below, most of the historic warehouses have been restored to make up small hotels, bars and restaurants. Hence, tourism is a major source of income for the village. Until the second half of the 1990s, tourism was in the hands of non-locals. However, after this date, tourism was also pursued by the inhabitants of Behramkale and they either sold their stone houses or turned them into hotels, building “modern” homes for themselves in the outskirts of the antique village.

⁵³ Because the local people use the Turkish name Behramkale predominantly, in this chapter, I will use “Behramkale” to refer to the village.

In addition, the agricultural products (such as olives, olive oil, and thyme⁵⁴) and handiwork done by the local women are sold to tourists in the streets of Behramkale. Today, most of the tourists coming to Behramkale are from Turkey while in the 1980s they were from abroad. The atmosphere of Behramkale not only attracts tourists seasonally; some tourists from cities have also settled in Behramkale and live there year-round. Hence, the population of Behramkale consists not only of local people, but also of people from cities.

During years the Assos International Performing Arts Festival was held, the local community was just starting to engage in tourism. Most of the villagers worked in agriculture and animal husbandry. In these terms, a distinct change has occurred between the time the festival was held and that of my fieldwork.

Before conducting fieldwork in the village, I had been in Behramkale only as a tourist for a few days and I did not know anyone from there. Therefore, to pursue fieldwork in a village I did not know was the most challenging part of this research. In order to meet the people who I got to know through the artists I interviewed, I went to Behramkale two days before I started my fieldwork. Ali Şen from the village, who had worked in all the four festivals as the technical coordinator and as an actor, introduced me to the other locals. I met Ali Şen in the village *kahvehane* (coffeehouse), which is the only public place (along with the mosque) in the village for men. Ali Şen came with Celal Sidar and Bayram Bilgin, who had also acted in the plays Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu directed. While introducing my research to them, I explained “thesis” and “cultural studies” in different terms. Instead of “thesis,” I said that I would write a book on the Assos International Performing Arts Festival. After I told them the name of my department, I explained that Cultural Studies is a department like Sociology. However, my identity as a psychologist (as my major in college was psychology) was the best explanation for my professional position, as psychology always makes more sense to ordinary people than sociology or cultural studies.

During my first visit to the village, I was with my parents as they had driven me there. In the first interview in the *kahvehane*, they participated in the conversation. My parents’ presence helped me in terms of not being alone in my first encounter with the villagers. Not only being alone, but also being a single woman was a challenge in a place where public space is organized according to the non-existence of women. The

⁵⁴ One of my interviewees from the village said to me that it was Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu who advised the villagers to make small packets of thyme and sell it to the tourists.

presence of my parents created an image of a “family” in which I was “the daughter.” Hence, the conversation could begin with “family matters” such as the origin of the family, the occupation of the father of the family and the relation of the family to Behramkale. For the two days I stayed in the village, I met seven people. For my fieldwork, I stayed ten days as a guest of these people I met during this first visit.

While introducing myself and my interest in the Assos International Performing Arts Festival, I benefited from some ethnographic techniques. First of all, I made sure to explain to the villagers that I had not been to the festivals. Since rural people tend to act as if urban people always know more than them, this information was important in terms of showing clearly that they were the ones who would inform me about the festival.

However, the question of whether I was going to continue the Assos International Performing Arts Festival or organize another festival in Behramkale interested the local people more than anything else about me. Some people mentioned that they would support any initiation of a festival in Behramkale. The locals not only asked about my intentions with respect to organizing a festival but also wanted to know if I was going to do something practical for the village. This is probably why they asked if I had invited my professors to Behramkale. On the other hand, these questions also show that they were more interested in something concrete and familiar than an academic project. Hence, the first thing I learned about the opinions of the locals on the festival was that they supported its continuation.

In his article, “The Invisible Theatre of Ethnography: Performative Principles of Fieldwork,” Quetzil E. Castaneda argues that “performativity of fieldwork is the ontology of fieldwork”(1997: 98) Castaneda stresses that because of the very risk-taking nature of experimental ethnography, it has to displace the disciplinary dichotomies, such as backwards and modern or objective and subjective. While pursuing my fieldwork in Behramkale, I had the opportunity to observe the risk-taking dynamics of fieldwork in a similar sense. As the fieldwork continued, I had to change some of my attitudes and expectations regarding the direction of the fieldwork.

Throughout my fieldwork in the village, I was face-to-face with different processes of memory, remembering and engaging in conversation. Some locals did not accept to talk to me, while some of them said that they did not find what they remembered meaningful. In addition, the interviews I could conduct in the village did not continue very long while most of the interviews with the artists lasted at least two

hours. It was difficult in the village to concentrate on one topic and continue to talk at length. Rather than flowing in one direction continuously, the narratives of the locals mainly consisted of leaps, interruptions and curtailments. Therefore, most of the time, my prepared questions did not work as the locals did not answer my questions directly. Rather, they answered starting with a word or a statement they chose from what I said or from what they intended to tell. For these reasons, I could conduct the most fruitful interviews on the street, or while my interviewee continued doing other work during the interview, such as daily chores. Hence, it was important for me to stay in the village and conduct participant observation.

Among the narratives about the festival, there were two issues which appeared frequently in most of the accounts of the locals. These were “the benefits of the festival in terms of Behramkale’s publicity” and “the love and admiration for Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu.” On the other hand, the moments of remembering the festival in a more “affective” and “personal” way included memories of the “funny” moments from the performances and their rehearsals, the moments of witnessing something new or strange for them, or the moments of “improper” situations.

This chapter analyzes the festival memories of the local people eight years after the last festival. Following the perception and memories of the artists, studying the memories of the locals constitute the most important aim of this research.

I. Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu, the Unfinished Project of Behramkale

Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu and his projects for the village constituted the most frequent narrative I encountered in the village as it is almost impossible to separate the festival experience from the memory of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu. For me, the surprising thing in the village, which was different from the artists, was the emergence of the memory about Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu at unexpected times during our conversations. For instance, to my question referring to how the festival was explained to them and how they decided to participate, Süreya last name⁵⁵, one of the villagers who had taken part in all four festivals as an actor, gave the following answer:

We, as villagers, love Hüseyin *abi* (older brother) very much. He came as a child for the first time. The first strangers coming here were his parents. We say

⁵⁵ For interview with Süreya Yılmaz see Appendix J.

“stranger” to the ones who are not from the village. We see Hüseyin abi as a villager. We can die for him. I wish he were alive and could hear us. He was a very rich person; he would drink rakı with us, and eat from the same plate with us. It was a pleasure for us to help him.⁵⁶

With this answer, it was obvious that Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu meant more than the festival experience for the local people and the interview continued necessarily with Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu. The first thing that Süreya needed to say was that they see Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu as someone from the village although he is a “stranger” (*yabancı*) coming from the city⁵⁷ and what is more coming from abroad. Not only as an outsider but also as a “very rich person” his closeness to the local people is fascinating for Süreya. It seems that Katırcıoğlu’s “friendship in spite of his high economic class” seems to be the very reason for the passionate love/admiration of the locals for him to such extent that Hüseyin deserved to be died for. With the words, “We can die for him. I wish he were alive and would hear us.”⁵⁸, Süreya announces his feelings of love in the most extreme way by using the opportunity of being interviewed which brings the effect of speaking to an imagined audience. This was also one of the commemorative moments when I found myself positioned in between my interviewee and Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu.

In the narratives of the locals, not only Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu himself, but also the Katırcıoğlu family appeared always with their “difference” from the other outsiders in the village. In the following quotation about Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu’s mother, it can be seen that the Katırcıoğlu family is, despite being an aristocratic family, admired because of their respectfulness towards the “traditions” of the village. In Süreya’s words:

⁵⁶Biz Hüseyin abiyi çok severiz, köylü olarak. Çocukken gelirdi ilk. Yabancı olarak ilk gelenler annesi babası.. Yabancı deriz köyden hariç olan... biz hüseyin abiyi köylü olarak görürüz. Yaşasaydı da duysaydı, biz onun için ölüme kadar gideriz. Çok zengin biriydi, oturur bizle içki içerdi, aynı tabaktan yemek yerdi, ona yardımcı olmak bizim için bi zevkti.

⁵⁷ Local people call the people who moved to the village from the city “stranger” (*yabancı*). If we consider that the difference of the village community from the urban community is the fact that the village is composed of people who know one another, the “stranger” in the sense the local people of Behramkale used the word makes sense. People inhabiting Behramkale are divided into two; the ones from the village and the ones from outside the village.

⁵⁸ Yaşasaydı da duysaydı, biz onun için ölüme kadar gideriz.

I have never seen such a decent woman. All my neighbors are foreigners, I mean from Istanbul. I have never seen her with a bikini or improper clothes. They are such a decent family.⁵⁹

As is clear from the words above, the Katırcıođlu family is accepted since they fit perfectly into the “proper family picture” drawn by the narratives of the villagers. Moreover, the mother of the family, Julia Katırcıođlu, has the central place in this picture. She is originally from England. Again, because of her nationality and socio-economic position, her properness becomes more valuable in the eyes of the villagers. Another villager, Ayşe Ően⁶⁰, remembers the Katırcıođlu family through Julia Katırcıođlu and her “morally good” behavior:

The ones today [people from the city who settle in the village] just say “hi” and that’s that. But she [Julia Katırcıođlu] was different. She once said, “I never swam at the pier.” You see how she would always adapt to the villagers...She is a foreigner, ok...just in case that would be regarded as bad. She would also say: “I never say a word to a man when I’m on the street.” Their sense of decency also differed.⁶¹

Hence, listening to a woman speak about Julia Katırcıođlu shows how the control mechanism of moral values through the “morality of woman” works in collaboration with men and women in the village. In the way she talks about the Katırcıođlu family, Ayşe Ően compares them to other outsider families in the village. Furthermore, the displeasure with the current neighbors is revealed in the interview by commemorating both Julia Katırcıođlu and Hűseyin Katırcıođlu. Another quotation from the same interview concerns the father of the family, Muhtar Katırcıođlu:

Muhtar *Amca* (uncle) is a bit harsh, but...They were really good neighbors. We used to be in the livestock business. We would dump the excrement. Then we

⁵⁹ Ben o kadar terbiyeli bir kadın gűrmedim. Benim sađım solum her tarafım yabancı, yani İstanbullu, komşularım. Ben onu ne mayolu gűrdűm, ne açık elbiseli gűrdűm. Çok terbiyeli bir aileydi

⁶⁰ For interview with Ayşe Ően see Appendix I.

⁶¹ Őimdikiler [Őehirden gelip kűye yerleŐenler], tamam merhaba merhaba ama, o [Julia Katırcıođlu] daha bir baŐkaydı. Hayatta dedi bana, ben iskelede denize girmedim. Yani kűylűlere uyuyodu bak nasıl... Yabancı aslında da.. Ayıp olur diye.. Bir de yola çıktığım zaman hiĐbir erkeđe laf atmam derdi. Onların gűrgűsű yine baŐkaydı.

would say to Muhtar Amca that it smelled bad, he would answer, “Son, this is a village, if you don’t like it, don’t come here.”⁶²

It was noteworthy that the only recollections of the Katırcıoğlu family were of their “consistency” with the village’s way of living. Hence, it is clear that the Katırcıoğlu family were not “strangers” in the sense that they accepted the village in “the way it was” without trying to manipulate its rhythm. What is more, they took part in the flow of daily life with the locals. As is seen in the quotation above, even something like a bad odor that disturbed the locals was not troubling for Muhtar Katırcıoğlu.

Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu’s friendship in many spheres of everyday life was also narrated frequently by the locals. In the words of Süreya, Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu was someone among them “who drinks alcohol with young people, who prays, who makes the traditional food, *keşkek*, with the villager, who plays football...”⁶³ Ali Şen, one of the locals who participated in all four festivals as the coordinator and also as an actor, talked about their football friendship with Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu to explain how close they were:

We were neighbors, we would play football and he was the captain of the team. He would also support the team financially and also tactically. Since he would hang out with us (he would also play football well) we had a close tie.⁶⁴

The memory of football appeared in most of the narratives of the local men. The leadership of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu on the village’s football team was mentioned by most of the men to show how their relationship with him went beyond the festival. It seems to me that the expression of Ali Şen “since he would hang out with us” is important in terms of stressing both the difference of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu from other “strangers” and also his “sameness” with the local people. In his article entitled “Taşraya İçeriden

⁶² Muhtar amca biraz katıdır ama.. Çok iyi komşulukları vardı. Biz eskiden besicilik yapardık. Sığırların bokunu dökerdik. Muhtar amcaya derdik ki çok koku oluyo, o da derdi ki, burası köy, kabul etmeyen gelmez oğlum, derdi.

⁶³ Gençlerle birlikte içki içen, amin diyen, köylüyle birlikte keşkek çırpan, futbol oynayan...

⁶⁴ Hüseyin Katırcıoğluyla ve ailesiyle komşu olmamız, hem futbol takımında beraber, o hem oynardı hem takımın başında başkanlık yapardı, bi de maddi manevi katkı sağlardı, bizle beraber takıldığından bi de futbol oynadığından, iyi de futbol oynardı, onun için aramızda bir ilişki gelişti.

Bakmak Mümkin müdür?” (Is it Possible to Look at Rural from Inside?), Şükrü Argın argues that “taşra” (the rural) is resistant to any “gaze”. According to him, “taşra” poses according to the gaze; it actually hides itself while showing itself and it never lets any gaze intervene into its private sphere (2005: 273). It would not be incorrect to think of the “gaze” here as “the stranger” which appeared in the narratives of the local people of Behramkale very often. Hence, in the expression “since he would hang out with us” one can see the self-assurance of Ali Şen that Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu was not someone who looked at the villagers from outside but who was inside, as if the class difference disappeared. Apparently, when the issue is football, the companionship of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu gains more and more importance as football corresponds to a very special sharing among men that has its own emotions and language.

Hence, through his understanding, respectfulness and sharing “everything” with the locals, Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu differs from other urban people the locals called “entel maganda⁶⁵” (intellectual yoke) who humiliate the villagers and try to establish their own domination in the village, according to Süreya’s way of using the phrase. As I mentioned previously, Behramkale attracts a lot of people who not only go there on holiday but choose to live there. This means that the locals have permanent “entel maganda” neighbors. Among them are also some artists from different spheres of art, such as the state theatre, ceramics, and music. Hence, while talking about Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu, the locals compared him with those artists still living there, or the ones who come to Behramkale for holiday every year. In the following quotation from the group interview, Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu’s difference is underlined also in terms of his position as an artist. In Süreya’s answer to my question about whether he would let his children engage in theatre activities, how Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu was different from other artists was revealed:

Even though we are a family, a family in working, I can’t put my child into a friend’s hands who is like a hippy. His external appearance isn’t important but I can’t give my child to a person that moves around as alcoholic and drinks beer at the time of Moslem call. Do you understand what I talk about? Hüseyin Brother would take care of them, don’t misunderstand me...He would play football with us. Everybody trusted him. I can put my child into his hands if he is a man in that type..⁶⁶

⁶⁵ From the group interview in the kahvehane in Behramkale. Süreya uses the term “entel maganda” for the urban people who behave in a way humiliating to the villagers.

⁶⁶ Biz ne kadar da şey olsak, şey aileyiz, iş güç halindeyiz. Bir hippy tipindeki arkadaşta da çocuğumu emanet edemem. Tipine bakıp konuşmicam ama piyasada alkolik gezen, büyük küçük demeden bi ezan okunurken birayı çekenin yanına da vermem çocuğumu.

Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu was remembered in terms of his “peaceful relations with everyone.” In addition, as it is clear, “everyone in the village” means “the men of the village.” What is more, it mentions specifically “the men who can play football well.” Ironically, the notion of artist⁶⁷ in the minds of the villagers shows itself in a dichotomy of “drinking alcohol while ezan is called” and “being in peace with everyone in the village.” The dichotomy derives its motivation from the moral values promoted in the village at every step in everyday life and ignores some other examples of artistic activities pursued in the village, such as by İnci Kuloğlu. İnci Kuloğlu is a woman from Bursa but who has lived in Behramkale for twenty-six years. She worked in the festival especially with the children and she tried to continue her activity with children for two years after the festival ended. However, although she did not give up her work for a long time, her works were rarely talked about among the locals, and only in terms of being an “unsuccessful attempt at imitating Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu.” Hence, the notion of artists among the locals is one that coincides with an ideal personality which finds its perfect realization in Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu. His personal charm and charisma were the ultimate explanations for his “uniqueness.” The idealization of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu goes hand in hand with a distanced respect which can be traced in the admiring expressions of the locals. In the words of Ahmet Emin, the carpenter who helped in the organization of the festival:

Everyone agrees on this, he would make something out of nothing. He was hard-working, had skill and was swift. There was peace in Assos, good talk, when he sat here, everyone would gather around him.⁶⁸

A very strong expression, “to create something out of nothing,” was one of the statements that also the artists expressed about Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu. This is such strong praise that it puts Hüseyin into the position of almost a holy being. Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu was praised and respected in the village for his enthusiasm for working almost to the point of self-sacrifice. One of the memories expressed by many people, both in the

Anlatabildim mi? Hüseyin abi onlara çok dikkat eden biriydi, bak yanlış anlama... Hüseyin abi bizle futbol oynardı. Herkesin güvenini alırdı. O tip insan olursa veririm.

⁶⁷ For further discussion about the notion of art in the village see Chapter III, page, 36, footnote 81.

⁶⁸ Herkes bunu der, yoktan var ediyordu. Öyle bir emek. Becerikliydi, atikti. Huzur vardı Assosta, muhabbet vardı, buraya oturduğu zaman herkes başına toplanıyordu.

village and the city, was of the day Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu welded a car that would be used for a performance. While welding, he did not use glasses to prevent his eyes from the high heat and he severely damaged his eyes. This instance, seen as an “heroic” example of how Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu was dedicated to his work, was told to me by many people, including Dilek Katırcıoğlu, artists, the young people in the village and the local women. Hence, his mood of devotion seems to have motivated people to work with him. This is why the word “bulaşmak” (transmit), was used several times by a lot of people to express the effect of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu’s excitement on his environment.

During my fieldwork, one of my prepared questions concerned whether the villagers had reacted negatively to any activity or performance during the festivals. In my opinion, moments of conflict would provide a good many clues about the boundaries of everyday life and artistic activity in the village. Surprisingly, the question was not answered in the way I expected; the answer was simply a repetition of the trust local people had in Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu. Here, Süreya answered my question regarding the reaction of the village to the performances:

Since we got used to these things thanks to Hüseyin *Abi*, there was no reaction from the village. Ok, they didn’t get what the festival was all about, because they would understand it when they read about the content, but because Hüseyin *Abi* was there...⁶⁹

Thus, the presence of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu was sufficient to prevent any problems. Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu was seen in the village as the ideal friend from the city first, and second, as a respectful artist who devoted himself totally to the work in which he was engaged. He was perceived as well-behaved and remembered also as a “leader”. In the words of Süreya, “We did our best to do the things that were shown to us.”⁷⁰ The “student” attitude of the villagers towards Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu became visible in a “dominant-subordinate” relationship. In the following words, Bayram Bilgin, another villager who had a role in all of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu’s plays, claims that there was no

⁶⁹ Biz bunlara Hüseyin abinin sayesinde alıştığımız için köyden hiç bir tepki gelmedi, tamam festivalin konusunu anlamadılar, çünkü içeriğini okursa anlıyordu, ama Hüseyin abi olduğu için...

⁷⁰ Bize gösterilen neyse biz en iyi şekilde yaptık.

one who would reject Katırcıođlu: "You see, whoever you ask, whatever he wanted; there was no one who wouldn't do it."⁷¹

Bilgin tried to explain an "endless trust and obedience" felt among the locals towards Hüseyin Katırcıođlu by reinforcing his claim with two repetitions, "whoever you ask" and "whatever he wanted". Another interview I would like to draw attention to was conducted with Ali Ően. In the following remark, he mentions "respect" or "trust" to explain his motivation in the festivals. To my question with regard to whether he had hesitated in acting, he answered in the following way:

I trusted myself. It was also fun. Besides, people expected things from me and they said I could do it. I mean I had no other chance when they said I was physically, mentally right, you see. I experienced this also when I was a soldier, you have to do it. You can't say no. It's out of the question.⁷²

Quite distinct from previous accounts, after mentioning his self-confidence and the enjoyment, Ali Ően stressed his sense of obligation to accept the role that was chosen for him in order not to disappoint those people he worked with. Ően remembered his obedience in the military service while explaining the responsibility he felt towards the people who had asked something of him.⁷³ It can be claimed that theatre was something new like the military. It was also a challenge and a way of proving his "skills" or his "manhood".

The confident accounts of the inhabitants of Behramkale about their relationship with Hüseyin Katırcıođlu, and consequently, with the festival, were also expressed about the end of the festival and the possibility of additional projects if Hüseyin Katırcıođlu had not died. It was striking to see the confidence among most of the villagers that the festival would have continued if Katırcıođlu had lived. They believed

⁷¹ Köyde kime sorarsanız sorun, ne isterse istesin hüseyin abinin istediđini yapmayacak insan yoktu yani...

⁷² Güveniyordum kendime. Hem eğlenceliydi. Bir de yani karşıdaki insanlar bişey bekliyorlar senden, bunu sen yaparsın diyorlar. Yani hem fiziksel olarak, hem zihin olarak sen yaparsın, sen uygunsun dedikleri zaman başka şansın da kalmıyor yani. Bunu şeyde de yaşamıştım, asker olduğum zaman da yaşamıştım, kesinlikle sen yapacaksın, hayır dediğinde ben sevmiyorum falan dediğinde olmaz.

⁷³ It is noteworthy to underline the importance of military service in the lives of rural men in terms of its meaning to go out of the village for a long period of time, for most of them for the first and only time in their lives.

that the festival was improving professionally. I listened to the accounts of many villagers of the projects Hüseyin Katırcıođlu had in mind for Behramkale and the festival. Süreya told me about the future projects in the following way:

As for the light, it wouldn't be by this and this company, for example, he would give Ali Sen the light and the transportation, and me the relations. He would say, "You should at least earn money". But unfortunately, this didn't become realized, he couldn't make it, but it was in his plans.⁷⁴

The management of the festival by the villagers was one of the future projects of Hüseyin and Dilek Katırcıođlu. However, for Dilek Katırcıođlu, due to serious economic problems, the future of the festival had become controversial.⁷⁵ What is noteworthy above in the account of Süreya is how clearly he expressed the things Hüseyin Katırcıođlu had in mind. Hence, in the village the sense of trustworthiness Hüseyin Katırcıođlu projected to the local people was not limited to the things they did together but also the plans that could not be realized. This shows that the festival, which was seen as "the project for the betterment of Behramkale," never disappeared in the minds of local people. For Ali Şen, the main motivation of the local people to participate in the festival was to support an activity that would serve as publicity for Behramkale. This was also reflected in the words of Süreya, "everything was for a better Behramkale." Similarly, another villager, Ahmet Emin said that he loved everyone who contributed to Behramkale, so he liked Hüseyin Katırcıođlu. Even among the young people who participated when they were small children, the boom of tourism during the festival years constituted an important place in the narratives of the festival. This was very important for most of the local people since the festivals took place at the end of the summer, which meant the extension of the tourist season for one month. The expectation of the local people concerning the continuation of the festival was also evident in the invitation they made to me to start a similar festival in the village.

⁷⁴ Işık da bilmem ne şirketinin değil de, köyden biri alacaktı onu Mesela Ali Şene ulaşımı ve ışığı veriyodu, bana da köy içinde iletişimi verecekti. Hiç olmazsa siz de para kazanın derdi, ama olmadı işte. ulaşamadı oraya, yoksa tasarımımda vardı.

⁷⁵ Before announcing the end or the continuation of the festival, Hüseyin Katırcıođlu died. However, he and his friends were discussing alternative ways to solve the economic problems of the festival. One of the solutions was to end the festival in Behramkale and search for another place to continue (From the interviews with Emre Koyuncuođlu and Dilek Katırcıođlu).

Since most of the locals linked the end of the festival to the death of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu, this expectation and trust of villagers about the continuation of the festival also resulted in a big disappointment and shock when Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu died suddenly in a tragic way. Perhaps this sudden death is responsible for the ambiguity of the feelings which swung from passionate love to a distanced respectfulness or from a deep sorrow to an uncertain furiousness. When the issue came up of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu and his death, these emotional tides appeared also in the narratives of the artists and organizers. As all these narratives show, Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu himself had a unique effect/meaning which goes beyond the narratives of the festival memory. In this sense, he functioned as an icon. As Stier states, icons are “the vehicles for construction of memory and the public sense of the past” (2003). Hence, the image of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu, as the first and the strongest thing I came across in the memories of the local people can be seen as an icon that creates that kind of “public sense” in the festival memory of the local people. This icon enabled many people to participate in a common narrative of the festival and also to continue to keep Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu alive with his projects for the betterment of Behramkale.

In what follows, I will focus on more personal and affective instances of memory among the people of Behramkale.

II. Everywhere was a Stage

a. When did the Play Begin?

It wasn't necessary to try to convince. It was enough for them to listen to Hüseyin in the coffeeshop. When it was said “let's do this,” they all said alright.⁷⁶

From the beginning of this research, I was curious about the language the artists used to convince the local people⁷⁷ to participate in the plays actively by taking roles, or helping in the production process. Did the artists describe the content of the plays or

⁷⁶Valla pek bir şey anlatıldığını hatırlamıyorum. Hiç iknaya gerek yoktu. Zaten Hüseyin'in gidip kahveye konuşması yeter bunun için. Hadi şunu yapıyoruz, dediğinde 'tamam' diyorlardı.

⁷⁷ In this part, “local people” refers to the men of the village who participated in the festival. The women did not take part as much as men, and they will be discussed in the next section.

methods of the rehearsals to the locals first? Did it take time for the locals to decide to take part? These questions were never answered as the local people's engagement in the festival was part of their dialogue with Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu in the way Dilek Katırcıoğlu stated above. With "local people" I am referring mainly to the male population of the village. The female population was reachable only through the approval of their participation by their husbands, fathers or brothers. For children, the parents became the mediators between them and the artists who wanted to work with children. Hence, it would not be inaccurate to conclude that all local participants found themselves in the midst of a festival about which they had no idea before. In the environment of the festival, everyone but Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu was unfamiliar to them. Not only the "strangers" who stayed in the village for three weeks but also the theatrical and performance activity was new for the village. Until the Assos International Performing Arts Festival, no play or performance had been performed in the village.⁷⁸ Hence, taking part in this festival in some way, the local participants had experiences that they had not imagined or anticipated before.

I persistently asked the people I spoke to in the village whether they knew the stories of the performances they acted in. The answers varied from person to person. Ali Şen answered that if the local participants knew, most of them would not accept acting because of some "inappropriate" issues dealt with in the plays.⁷⁹ To my question regarding whether these "inappropriate" topics were not a problem for him, he replied that their "inappropriateness" did not matter to him since he knew that he would not be easily influenced by reading or acting something with which he did not agree in three weeks (throughout the rehearsals). In other words, he stated that although he was acting, he was at the same time cautious not to believe what he performed. There seems to be a possible insecurity in his attitude. The ironic detail in his account was the way he differentiated himself from rest of the local participants. While he mentioned that the local people would not agree to act if they knew the topics of the play, he at the same time claimed on their behalf that they would not have agreed. This kind of elitism may

⁷⁸ Bayram Bilgin expressed this information with the words, "We saw cinema, but we did not know what theatre was."

⁷⁹ The mass theatre plays Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu chose were "Simurg," "Sappho" and "There was the Word in the Beginning." Sappho was based on a lesbian love, while the third one was based on four sacred books.

have come from his closeness to Dilek and Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu more than anyone else in the village. In the interview, Ali Şen also talked about how he was invited by Dilek and Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu to Istanbul to live there, but that he chose to stay in the village. There was a tone of regret in his voice when he mentioned that invitation, which showed ironically that he was influenced by the festival more than anyone else.⁸⁰

Corresponding to Şen's words, among the local participants I spoke to, the stories of the plays were remembered very little. However, I encountered this, too, with the accounts given about the topics of the plays. To my question regarding whether he remembered the story of "Simurg,"⁸¹ Süreya answered in a very fragmented way. He said:

All the birds begin the journey. Was it to take the beauty of Simurg? In the end they understand that Simurg does not exist. Because the topics are from mythology...We...⁸²

As seen above, Süreya did not remember the overall story about the most spectacular show of the festival in which he had taken part, even though he did remember his own part in a very detailed way. Similarly, the same question was answered by Bayram Bilgin in the following way:

I think Simurg is about finding yourself, he looks in the mirror, realizes his self. It had such a theme. We would read it for hours. We couldn't understand a word.⁸³

⁸⁰ Çağla Ormanlar mentioned that Ali Şen exemplified the villager who remained in-between the urban life and rural life after the festival ended.

⁸¹ "In Attar's Conference of Birds, all the birds gather to begin a quest for the fabulous bird Simurgh, the King of Birds. The bird Hoopoe, symbolizing inspiration, tells all the birds of the existence of Simurgh, who lives far away, beyond seven valleys. Many of the birds make excuses and decide not to make the journey; eventually a group of birds makes its way across the seven valleys, which are: Search, Love, Mystic Apprehension, Detachment, Unity, Bewilderment, and Fulfillment in Annihilation. After many trials and tribulations across the seven valleys, only thirty birds finally reach the court; at first they are turned back, but then finally admitted. The crucial moment depends on a pun: 'Si' means thirty, 'murgh' means birds, and hence si-murgh literally means thirty birds." Payam Narbaraz, "Simurg – A Persian Fairy Tale." <http://www.whitedragon.org.uk/articles/simurg.htm> put this in biblio

⁸² Bütün kuşlar yola çıkıyorlar..simurgun güzelliğini mi almak için..en sonunda simurgun olmadığını anlıyorlar..şimdi mitolojiden olduğu için konular..biz..

⁸³ Simurg kendine bulma anlamında heralde, aynaya bakıyo, özüne dönüyo.öyle bir teması vardı..Saatlerce okurduk onu bi kelime anlamazdık...

Bayram Bilgin's words "he turned to his very essence" summarizes the story of Simurg, which can be read as a spiritualist text in terms of its philosophical message. However, he mentioned that they did not understand one word from the text. The text for them just consisted of the role of the bird they performed. Along with fragmented and summary-like accounts about the plays there were also "inaccurate" ones. One participant I spoke to gave me an account of a play that was very different from the original story line. Nizamettin Doğruluk is a middle-aged man living in Behramkale for years who took part in the play "Antigone" by *Beşinci Sokak Tiyatrosu* (Fifth Street Theatre). In this play, a group of old men acted as the chorus and they threw some texts in their hands into the air. When I asked whether he remembered the story of the play and the importance of his role, he said the following:

They didn't tell us the story, they gave us the stuff. They gave us paper, we read them. I mean we read the play. You see, I don't remember much, because it was a short thing. We threw it towards Mytilene Island. So, it was like a protest for the recapturing of Çanakkale having to do with the liberation day of Çanakkale.⁸⁴

It was the first time I had been told the subject of the play, but, contrary to the Nizamettin Doğruluk's reply, I knew that it could not have had anything to do with the "celebration of Çanakkale's independence day". Indeed, the topic was not about Çanakkale according to the interview I conducted with the director of the play, Mustafa Avkıran. However, the self-confidence of Nizamettin about the topic was very striking as he tried to repeat the "dramaturgical message", "the victory of Turks in the war with Mytilene Island." While Behramkale was promoted by the festival committee especially with its antique name "Assos" (the mythological name instead of Mytilene Island), it is obvious that the land of Behramkale for the people living there had nothing to do with Assos as "the neighbor of Lesbos Island" or Greek culture but with Behramkale as the "fortress of the victory against the Greeks" who are the "eternal enemies of Turkish people" in the discourse of official history in Turkey⁸⁵. Here, Anderson's basic premise that nation as an "imagined political community and imagined as both inherently

⁸⁴ Bize hikayeyi anlatmadılar, bize bir şey verdiler. Kağıt verdiler, onları okuduk biz. Oyunu okuduk yani. Hatırlamıyorum yani fazla bir şey, çünkü çok kısa bir şeydi. Biz Midilliye doğru attık ya.. O kağıtları Midilli'ye doğru atıyoduk, onlar Çanakkale'nin kurtuluş günü dolayısıyla bir protesto gibiydi yani.

⁸⁵ See Millas (1991) for an article about the enemy-oriented nationalist discourse towards one another in the textbooks both in Turkey and Greece.

limited and sovereign” (1991: 6) finds its expression ironically at the moment of performance which meant nothing to the locals but only the part throwing papers towards Mytilene Island. In this sense, the suitability/availability of nationalist discourse in the locals’ search for a familiar meaning within the structure of a totally alien performance may be seen parallel to the role of nationalism stemming from a search for a meaning in an unfamiliar environment of modern world. (Keyder, 1993: 11) As a result, the artists’ fantasy of timelessness in Assos as the cradle of Western culture exists alongside the local people’s fantasy of a fixed Turkish national history. And these different identifications with the same place became possible through “*lieux de memoire* that are mnemonic devices for national narratives, shared values and putative hopes for the future.” (Osborne, 2001: 3)

b. “When Things Become Serious”

We were laughing, joking, chatting. ..What is happening, brother? Tapping wood all day long... Who would look at these things? When it became evening we would go. Instead of sitting at the coffeehouse, we went...⁸⁶

In his words above, Bayram Bilgin, who acted in three plays directed by Hüseyin Katircioğlu, talked about his first confrontation with theatre rehearsals. The first feeling Bayram Bilgin had about the rehearsals was the weirdness of doing the same thing - tapping the wood in this instance- repeatedly for hours. Bayram Bilgin could not take the things they did in the rehearsals seriously and did not believe that they were worth watching. His point that they went to rehearsals instead of “sitting and chatting in the village coffeehouse shows something very important in terms of their motivation for participating in the rehearsals. It was a “harmless” leisure time activity for them in the beginning. We can find in the feeling of Bayram Bilgin’s a sarcastic perception of a play as a frivolous and childish activity which, according to Johan Huizinga, has its roots in the way of thinking of life as being divided into a dichotomy of the serious and non-serious (2006: 26). And once they found themselves at the non-serious side of the dichotomy, they enjoyed the situation by laughing at each other and the whole thing. Here, laughter, perhaps, became a way of feeling comfortable in an intellectual atmosphere which was totally strange for them. In this sense, laughter functioned as a

⁸⁶ Gülüyoduk önce, napıyoz biz, tap tap akşama kadar tahta vuruyoduk, noluyo abi..iktir kaktır birbirimize muhabbet olsun, bunlara bakan da olmaz, kim bakacak, öyle hevesine gidiyoduk akşam olduğu zaman..kahvede oturacağımıza gidiyoduk..

liminal act, when the tension between their everyday rituals and play became apparent. In other words, through laughter, they could cope with the uneasiness of the situation and pass from play to their ritual of joking with one another. However, their attitude changed when the play was to be staged or, in Süreya's words, "when things became serious":

When things became serious, we were better experts than the artists. We urged each other on...we wouldn't make mistakes, for we had memorized everything, but there might be excitement.⁸⁷

Süreya did not only mention engaging into the play in a more "serious" and self-controlled way; he was also proud of this situation as they were "more expert than the artists." This comparison was also mentioned by Cemal, who had acted in three plays directed by Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu:

Of course, sometimes he would say, "you cannot do it, you cannot act," but then he would come and we would hug each other. However, he would shout more at the foreigners. Since they were professionals, he criticized them by saying that they were not even as good as the children or the villagers.⁸⁸

According to Cemal, this was one of the funniest stories about the rehearsals directed by Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu. He remembered the rehearsals through Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu's relationship with the other artists as this was another enjoyable thing to observe at the rehearsals for Cemal. And what he remembered was their "success" in comparison to the artists. Though mixed with a feeling of inferiority, showing itself with the words "as much as the villagers", it is ironic that there was still a sense of pride in his narrative. Perhaps, this pride and demonstration of the "expertise" had to do with male dominance revealed for his interviewer, me as a young woman. When I asked Cemal how he felt during the play "Sappho," his favorite play, he answered in the following way:

⁸⁷ Biz onlardan [sanatçılardan] usta olduk iş ciddiye binince. Birbirimizi uyarıyoruz falan...yanlışımız olmaz da, ezberledik çünkü, ama heyecan olabilir.

⁸⁸ Hüseyin abi bazen 'ya yapamıyorsunuz, bilemiyorsunuz' derdi, sonra gelirdi, kucaklaşırdık..Ama yabancılara daha çok bağırdı, onlara, bi de profesyonel oldukları için, "çocuklar kadar köylüler kadar yapamıyorsunuz" derdi.

To tell the truth, I had difficulty with the Vikings... I was seasick as the boat rocked and there were waves, as usual. . As we were the Viking soldiers, we should not be afraid but ... of course, we pretended not to be...⁸⁹

In this example, fear of the sea was dominant in his memory of the play. Recalling the account of Ali Şen about the obligatory side of participating in the festival like being in the military, Cemal also talked about “pretending not to be frightened.” It seems that he felt he had to prove his masculinity and courage. However, this time, the personal concern was mixed with the demands of the role. Not only because he did not want to break the flow of the play, but because it would not be “right for a soldier” to be frightened, he had shown great effort not to be defeated by his fear. Hence, on the one hand he experienced a strong identification with his role, while on the other he was almost totally out of the play with his own concern, “to survive on the sea.”

A similar example given by Ali Şen was “Simurg”, which was one of the “mass theatre” performances directed by Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu. The most vivid memory about the festival for both the artists and the locals was the play Simurg as it was a very big visual show stretched over a long path up the hill. While “the wind of Assos” was remembered as “the magic of Assos” by some of the artists, here, in the narrative of Şen, the wind appears with its danger of death:

I acted as the head of the birds. There was a stone on that hill, I had to climb it, I was on the highest stone there. The wind was unbelievable, I felt like I would almost fall off. Below was almost 30 meters of rock. I was saying to the guy on the other side that I was going to fall and I also prayed for it to end. I had a really difficult time.⁹⁰

Hence, what he remembered most about his role was the frustration of having to stop. Neither Ali Şen nor Cemal talked about how it felt to play a role, but rather the possibility of not being able to continue in their role. In other words, rather than the moments of acting or performing, the moments of exiting during the performance or rehearsal were remembered. The instances of anxiety like those or the accidental

⁸⁹ Vikinglerde [his role in Sappho] zorlandım..deniz beni fazla tutar biraz, sandal sallandıkça, dalga var tabi.. Vikinglerin askeri olduğumuz için orda korkmak biraz şeydi ama...

⁹⁰ Simurgda kuşların başı olarak oynadım. O tepede bi taş var, ona çıkmam gerekiyo, orda ben en yüksek taştayım. inanılmaz da bi rüzgar var, işte aşağıya ne zaman düşücem diye bakıyorum artık, aşağısı da nerden baksan bir 30 metre falan kayalık. Karşımdakine de diyorum ki, her an düşebilirim, bi yandan da bitmesi için dua ediyorum. çok zorlanmıştım.

instances were the funniest stories they told. In addition, there were also the instances of confronting something from “outer life” which also broke the “illusion of play.” When I asked whether it had become a problem for them to pursue their daily life while working for the festival, Bayram Bilgin told a small story:

The streets were all like a festival area. The stones were painted red, small stones were gathered together on the roads, the weeds were covered with fish net...I had a bird thing on my head...our sheep gave birth that day, we had to take it to the village. I was in front of my father in that way. [With the costume] He’s 60 years old; he never saw such a thing... He said, “What’s that on you?” Such instances occurred often. He asks, “What are you doing?” But they laughed as well.⁹¹

Bayram Bilgin’s emphasis on the necessity to continue daily work tells a lot about the festival in the intersection of everyday business and artistic activity. One foot of the locals was always in their work; this constituted the main tension of participating in the festival for them. Hence, not only the psychological and physical obstacles during the performances, but also the flow of daily life with all its normal affairs became a source of the comings and goings between “illusion” and “disillusionment” for the locals. Looking at the festival brochure again, it is important to remember the claim made by Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu of the impact the festival had on illusion: “For the first time in Turkey, completely detached from daily life, the audience is lost in the performances.”⁹² It may have been true for the audience who came from Istanbul to Assos, but obviously the local participants did not “completely detach from daily life” as they were in the midst of their daily life.

On the other hand, in the narratives of Süreya, it is possible to observe the enthusiasm and passion about acting. Even his way of telling me about the festival was very funny as he sometimes showed what he wanted to tell by acting or uttering his lines from the plays. In this sense, he was one of the favorite “local players” among the artists. Many artists remembered Süreya with his enthusiasm and love of acting. The

⁹¹ Sokaklar falan her yer festival alanı gibi. Taşlar kırmızı boyalı, küçük küçük çakıl taşları toplandı yollara, çalılar boyandı ağlarla, balıkçı ağlarıyla.. benim de kafamda da bi kuş şeyi var.. O gün koyun doğurmuş bizim, traktörle koyunu köye getirmemiz lazım. gitcez alcaz koyunu, bi yandan da işi de devam ettirmek gerekiyo. ben o şekilde babamın karşısına çıktım. Tabi adam 60 yaşında, görmemiş böyle bir şey hiç..”ne bu haliniz” dedi. Böyle karşılaşmalar oluyo mutlaka da... napıyorsunuz diyo ama onlar da gülüyo...

⁹² Türkiye’de ilk kez izleyici günlük yaşamdan tamamen koparılarak gösterilerin içinde kaybolması sağlanıyor.

quotation below illustrates that the enjoyment of acting is central to his festival memory:

For instance, I was peacock in Simurg, attraction of peacock... He gave us a saying of him and asked us to memorize that. But his purpose of saying that was to memorize by likening it to peacock. He sewed our clothes with Selçuk and Çağ; in the meantime I gave the necessary thing to peacock, we came, for example from here, by walking, and called the people around there. We came by attracting them with the song “My eyes, wake up and get rid of the gloom...”⁹³

This devotedness was something that Süreya wanted to show at every opportunity. He, like in the festivals, wanted to tell his acting experience enthusiastically. Here, we can reconsider the effect the interview has on the interviewee, getting him to speak to an imagined audience and to present himself again and again. It was also noteworthy that his desire to tell his love of acting disappeared only once while he was answering the question about his children’s possible participation in theatre in the future.⁹⁴

c. To Be a Child during the Festival

Another participant group from the village was the children between the ages of 7 to 15. For many people I spoke to, the most important benefit of the festival was its influence on the children which introduced them to the theatre and performance arts by giving them the opportunity to take part in plays designed specifically for them. Some of the artists and organizers advised me to talk with the children in the village if I was searching for permanent traces of the festival. According to them, the children were “the fruits of the festival.” Çağla Ormanlar, who worked with children the most, said that their dream was to see some of these children as future theatre actors and perhaps to have the festival continued by them.

I was able to conduct interviews with five children, all of whom asserted that they had encountered theatre and the performance arts for the first time in their life with the

⁹³ Mesela Simurgda, ben tavuskuşuydum, tavuskuşunun cazibesi.. Bize bir sözünü verdi, bunu ezberleyin. Ama ezberleyin derken, Bunu tavuskuşuna benzeterek süsleyeceksin derdi yani. Selçukla Çağla bizim kostümlerimizi dikti, ama ben tavuskuşuna gereken şeyi verdim, mesela şurdan yürüyerek geldik, halkı da çağırıyoruz. “Uyan ey gözlerim Kasvetten uyan...” şarkısı ile beraber halkı da çekerek geliyoruz.

⁹⁴ See the first interview quotation on page 5.

festival. Today, two of them are pursuing theatre at the universities they attend. One of these young people, Semra Erol, stated that through the festival they did not only participate in the arts but also had their first international friends and met with other cultures from around the world. Two girls, Elif Balsara and Gönül Kaplan⁹⁵, were sent to Paris by the festival committee as the guests of Sabine Jamet and Kamille Tchalaev who participated in the festival from France. After the year Gönül and Elif visited Paris, two children from France visited Behramkale and stayed with them. The most striking memory of Gönül about their friendship with these French children was the moment she learned that one of the girls was Muslim. She said that it was both surprising that someone from Europe would be Muslim and that it also made her happy since she felt closer to the Muslim girl. Today, the way these five children talked about the festival was similar. All of them always described their memories with a smile on their faces. In Gönül's words, everything was like play for them. She also added that the memory of the festival was about to disappear just like other childhood memories. When I asked whether they were influenced by the artists, most of them said that they admired Sabine Jamet as "she was a perfect dancer" and they enjoyed also being with Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu. Moreover, when they came together for the group interview, they recalled how they envied each other and sometimes batted around the costumes or the roles. It was exciting for them to talk together about the most enjoyable moments of plays and rehearsals. The most colorful and interesting instances, such as the snake costume, the songs they sang or the excitement of being watched by their parents, were recalled one after another.

What was interesting was the more romantic way the male participant remembered the festival. Kamil Şenavcu, now 23 years old, mentioned repeatedly the economic benefit of the festival to the village and his regret that it had ended. However, as our conversation continued, he recalled more often the "creative moments" he experienced during the rehearsals and the plays. While he was talking about the performance, he also remembered the plays he "invented" in his childhood and tried to explain how creative he was in his childhood. On the other hand, when I spoke with Semra, Gönül and Elif who all study at university, they were not as emotional as Kamil Şenavcu. Their attitude was more related to their view from today rather than a nostalgic return to the festival years. Gönül Kaplan and Semra gave examples from their

⁹⁵ For the full interview see Appendix H.

current university theatre experiences. Hence, Kamil Şenavcu, as a responsible young man who pursues his family occupation in Behramkale, differed in his position. For him, the Assos International Performing Arts Festival was remembered in a more nostalgic manner, as a longing for his “creative” childhood that he could not experience later.

Hence, the festival memory of young people was lively and colorful except for their sadness about the death of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu. The loss of Katırcıoğlu seemed to affect them importantly in the sense that they lost the idol of their childhood. They also linked the end of the festival or the absence of any artistic activity in Behramkale to the death of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu.

d. Sensory Memory at Work

When we consider the site-specific and the non-lingual characters of the works that were performed at the festival, it is not surprising that the memories are mainly composed of visual and spatial elements. Especially, the “mass theatre” performances were mainly based on mythological stories and symbolic way of expressions. They were performed within a space in which performers appeared together with the audience rather than appearing on a stage or a platform. Accordingly, it can be claimed that no single person’s gaze was enough to capture every gesture or every moment of the “mass theatre” performances. The point was to be there as a part of the performance. In the words of Bayram Bilgin, this involvement can be seen clearly:

He used all the streets for Simurg. For example when people are coming this way , there is a different sense of visuality about that house, a different sense of movement, even we were looking at it. On the other side, somebody is doing something else and everything, in turn, unites.⁹⁶

In his words, “even we looked at it”, Bayram Bilgin mentioned both his actor and spectator positions during the performance. In this sensory horizon he explained, he, as the actor, was also the audience of his performance. Here, we can also observe the transformative effect of performance functioning as an apparatus in the production of sensory memory. Hence, parallel to the argument of Brower that “sensory memory is a precognitive store that maintains sensory information in its original state until it can

⁹⁶ Bütün sokakları kullandı Simurgda. İnsanlar mesela burdan gelirken o evin üzerinde başka bir görsellik var, orda başka bir hareket, burda başka, biz bile bakıyoduk, karşı taraftaki de başka bişey yapıyo, hepsi bütünleşiyor.

be perceptually processed”(1993: 21), we can also conclude that sensory memory is performative. In order to understand better the spatial dynamics of sensory memory of the festival narratives, the article of Michael Hebbert, “The Street as Locus of Collective Memory” (2005), may provide an insight. In his article, Hebbert assumes that “the very process of remembering grows out of spatial metaphors of connection and topography.” (2005: 581) In addition to the visual elements in the festival memory, most of the locals I spoke to told me about the plays in which they acted by showing me the places around us, or at least by mentioning the orientation of the place where the play was performed. Süreya told about Simurg in the following way:

He appeared in front of the Dolunay Hotel, he told his lines. I was in camouflage, followed the shortcut and got ready at my position. They walked down singing and I faced them. I had to leave the crowd when they were calling out to gather the people. I took the shortcut and got my position. Then we waited for the partridge to take his place.⁹⁷

Like Süreya’s way of explanation, the locals frequently used words like “there” (“orda”), “at a place like that” (“şöyle bir yerde”), “until here” (“buraya kadar”), “we climbed” (“tırmandık”), “we walked” (“yürüdük”), “we went up” (“çıktık”). Hence, the experience of performance was remembered mainly in terms of physical action and spatial location and by means of bodily memory. These accounts seem also important in terms of showing locals’ unfamiliar engagement in their everyday environment. As Bayram Bilgin’s account about his encounter with his father during the rehearsal, the way they moved and located in the space through the performances changed the way they saw the space, too. In Lefebvrien terms, space as a social category and a means of production (Lefebvre, 1996) can be exemplified in the festival experience of the inhabitants of Behramkale.

III. Fear of Appearing on the Stage: Local Women

In her article about women living in rural areas, Arzu Çur argues that the widely-accepted moral statement “Kadının yeri evidir” (“A woman’s place is in the home”) is

⁹⁷ Burda Dolunay pansiyonunda oraya çıktığı, orda sözlerini söyledi, tekrar arkadaşlar gelirken ben kamufle oldum, burdan aradan gittim, yerime hazırlandım. Ondan sonra şarkıyla geldiler, ben çıktım karşlarına. Ayrılıyorsun kalabalıktan, onlar halkı çekiyo çünkü, ben kesitmeden geçip yerime oturdum, öyle öyle taa kekliğin yukarı kadar çıkmasını bekledik.

literally valid for the women in the countryside (2005: 124). According to Çur, “the house” in rural areas is the ultimate space/shelter of woman as she continuously plans to escape from there, but disturbed by the male gaze on her ugly or beautiful body, returns to the house as “the safest” place she can be in (2005: 129). In this sense, it can be said that the Assos International Performing Arts Festival had an “unsafe” atmosphere for the local women even more than the usual “insecurity” of the public space as mentioned above by Çur. The reason for this “insecurity” was the existence of too many “strangers” in the village. One of the local women I spoke to said that her husband did not let her go to every performance because there were many strangers in the village. When I asked her husband why he did not let her, he said:

Well, I could have overreacted but we were newly married at that time and we were jealous. There were a lot of people in the village at that time. Everyone has this kind of instinct.⁹⁸

While the men of the village participated in the festival at various levels and times, the women were “protected” from it, as seen in the quotation above. Thus, the shared feeling of “the village as a huge stage” by many people both from the village and the artists was not the case from the perspective of the women. In that the “huge stage” was occupying the public space in accordance with its rules which were the absence of femininity and performance of manhood. Hence, the statement “the village as a huge stage” was true for the ones who were already the actors of the public space in the village. This very hugeness of the stage resulted in “stage fright” among the women who remained the audience of it.

The result of this was not only that local women did not participate in the festival, but the rules of the public space based on the deprivation of womanhood determined the way the women artists behaved during the festival (chapter III, p. 9) For similar reasons, my female identity was not an advantage for me while talking to the local women; what is more, perhaps my position of being a “stranger” and “alone” increased their silence. Sometimes, they did not trust me and said nothing but that the festival was nice; most of the time, they did not tell me what they remembered as they did not find it worth telling. This attitude of women was tiring and disappointing for me while at the same time their resistance made me more curious about their opinions.

⁹⁸ Tamam belki aşırı gitmiş olabiliriz de yani, o zamanlar yeni evliydik, kıskanıyoduk o zamanlar yani. Bir sürü insan vardı köyde. Bu herkeste, insanların içgüdüsünde vardır bu.

Hence, all the accounts were important for me as I tried to spend time with some of the women in order to provide the conditions for an informal conversation. Rather than sitting to speak about the festival only, all the women I interviewed were doing handiwork or housework during our conversation. Some of them did not want me to record the conversation. Most of the time, I found the women in their houses or on the street in front of their houses. Some of women were selling handiwork in the street and some of them were in their workplace such as a restaurant or a hotel. Other than these places, places where they live or where they work, there is no public space for women unlike the coffeehouse for the men.

Most of the women I spoke to gave very short answers to my questions about what they remembered about the festival. Apparently, their intention was to finish the conversation quickly. The quickness and clearness in their statements was pointing to their unwillingness to answer and even to their will to get rid of my questions. However, the things that were said briefly gave me some clues to understanding the resistance they had about recalling their memory of the festival. For instance, one old woman said that “Men know, men... They went, they enjoyed day and night.”⁹⁹ or another woman said “I do not like to visit so much. I saw very little...”¹⁰⁰ In their article “Learning to Listen”, Anderson and Jack see “meta-statement” as one of the ways to be able hear the voice of the interviewee instead of one’s own preconceptions. They say, “the meta-statements inform the interviewer about what categories the individual is using to monitor her/his thoughts, and allow observation of how the person socializes feelings or thoughts according to certain norms.” (2006: 139) In a similar sense, these statements of local women were pointing to some social categories to monitor their thoughts and feelings. For instance, their insistence in mentioning that they had not enjoyed the festival can be interpreted in terms of the confirmation of the social norm that enjoying or wandering around was something bad or wrong for a woman in the village. Or their addressing the men (not specific persons but the men in general) for the answers to my questions may show their self-censorship to express their feelings even in the absence of men during the conversation. Here, the gendered dimension of memory reveals in parallel with the following argument of Leydesdorff et al: “The intertwining of power and memory is very subtle and it reflects both the particular areas of power which

⁹⁹ Adamlar bilir adamlar... erkekler gezdi tozdu, gece gündüz gittiler...

¹⁰⁰ ben o kadar sevmem öyle gezmeyi. Azıcık gördüm...

women and men hold in everyday life, and the various levels of public discourse.” (1996: 8) Nevertheless, after a while the power embodied in silence in the discourse of women showed itself in parallel the argument Sirman used to explain the active role of women in the village: “a village is known by its women”. (1990: 102)

Three of the four women with whom I could conduct relatively long interviews were involved in the festival through their male relatives, namely, their husband, father and son. Fahriye Demirel, who helped to sew the costumes at one festival, was involved in the festival through her father’s mediation between the artists and herself. When I asked her about the importance of the festival in her life, she smiled and answered that it was very exciting for her because she got to sew all day and night with the artists in the same place and then go “out” to see the performance. With “out,” she referred to the venue of the performance, which was about three or four kilometers from the village. The experience of meeting different people and to be able to see different places was the most important impact on her as she also stated that she was unable to participate in the second, third and fourth festivals after she got married.

Secondly, I spoke to Ayşe Şen, a fifty-five year-old woman who had partially participated in all four festivals. Her son, Ali Şen, had been the coordinator of the festival within the village. So, his mother, Ayşe Şen, got involved in the festival sometimes. Not only her son but her neighbors, the parents of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu, led her to get involved. She told me about the Katırcıoğlu family more than the festival. As mentioned in the second and the third chapters, the respectfulness of the Katırcıoğlu family was widely talked about among the local people. Ayşe Şen made bread for the guests of the festival and she helped in sewing. “They asked, we did it”¹⁰¹ said Ayşe Şen while explaining her involvement in the festival. With this statement, she mentioned the demands of the festival people rather than her own wish to participate. Like the women who needed to say that they did not enjoy the festival, Ayşe Şen underestimated her personal involvement. Interestingly, when I asked if she had gone to see any performance, first, she said “no” and then continued with the plays she saw:

We didn’t go out much. We just did once. The English played something there and made a show, we took part in it. And once they performed in the school garden,

¹⁰¹ İstediler, yaptık.

we went there. A man lied down, a bride waited at his head, then he stood up and 1000 years went by...And once Ali was a bird.¹⁰²

It can be said that the conversation started with silencing censorship as the common strategy for most of the women. Although she started with “we went once”, she talked about three plays and what is more, she did not attempt to correct herself. The beginning of the conversation was enough for her to continue in any direction.

Another thing that attracted my attention in the narrative of Ayşe Şen was that she remembered the scenes and plays about similar topics, such as family, kinship or womanhood. Like the ones in the previous quotation, the following play she remembered was also about family issues:

The play by the English was great. Somebody left his children on the mountain or something like that, looked for them all the time and then found them. Once broke the mirrors of a car...We didn't understand their talk but when we watched, we did. And once they had a play on the castle with a bride. It was also very fine.¹⁰³

She interpreted the familiar scenes and issues according to their compatibility with village life and once she recalled the images of family and womanhood, she stated that the plays were beautiful. Besides the gendered character of the festival memory, also the strong influence of the plays on her was revealed in this account of Ayşe Şen. Perhaps, she did not expect such strong feelings from herself.

The statement that “We didn't understand what they spoke but still we did when we watched”¹⁰⁴ showed the pleasure she received from watching the play. Hence, the act of “watching” is central to the experience of the festival for most of the women. This centrality of watching the festival by women was expressed by the frequent usage of the word “bakmak” (looking at) instead of “seyretmek” (to watch). For instance, Ayşe Şen said “We didn't understand what they spoke but still we did when we watched.”¹⁰⁵ or

¹⁰² Çıkmıyorduk. Bir defa gittik. Orda İngilizler, bişeyler çaldılar, gösteri yaptılar, ona çıktık. Bi kere de okul bahçesinde yaptılar, ona gittik. Adam yattı, gelin bekliyo başında, bi kalktı, bin sene olmuş..Ali (oğlu) kuş olmuştu bi kerde...

¹⁰³ O İngilizlerin oyunu çok güzeldi, çocuklarını dağda mı bıraktıysa naptı, hep onları aradı, sonunda çocuklarını buldu, arabanın camlarını falan kırdıydı..konuşmalarını anlamıyoz da, izleyince gene anlıyoz, bi de kalede gelinli bi oyun yaptılar, o da çok güzeldi.

¹⁰⁴ Konuşmalarını anlamıyoz da izleyince gene anlıyoz.

“the whole week, everyone looked at it”. [the festival]¹⁰⁶ In the village routine, “bakmak” (“looking”) also signifies the act and the desire of observing. It is the daily routine and “leisure activity” of especially women to sit in front of their houses and to look at the street while chatting and perhaps knitting at the same time. In the sense that it preserves in itself the desire “to see something different,” the act of “bakmak” was also the main way of women’s engagement in the festival.

One of the women, who had taken part in the performance “Birer Kaşık,” by Gamze İnceci, was Azize Şenavcu. Her husband, Tahir Şenavcu, helped in all four of the festivals and she was involved through her husband. When I went to her house to introduce myself and ask for an interview, she was making dough in the garden of her house. At first, she did not pay much attention to me. She said that there was nothing she could tell, and even if she told anything it wouldn’t be worth listening to. I tried to explain to her that everything she said would be important for me, but it was only when I asked for permission to go in the house to sit near her and chat that she accepted. When we entered the house, she continued her work, to roll the dough thin. After I told her about myself, my family, my school and the city I live in, she also began to speak more. And gradually, she tried to recall her festival experience. The most vivid memories she told was from the performance “Birer Kaşık.” First, she explained how she had cooked and prepared the food she was responsible for. When I reminded her that they went to bazaar for shopping, she told how they had tried to find peppers that were the same size and laughed. During our conversation a few times, she stopped and said that her daughter was small in the festival years and for this reason she had been unable to participate in anything else. As Ayşe Şen and other women continually stressed - that they had not enjoyed the festival or they did not like going out during the festival days- Azize Şenavcı’s emphasis on motherhood carried a similar concern of the need to show that she had not become fully a part of the festival at any time. When I asked her about her feelings during the performance, in front of the audience, first she said she had been excited and later recalled that she had also been irritated by the crowd gathered around them. Perhaps in line with the connection Ali Şen made between the military and the festival, performing was the obligatory part of the work for Azize Şenavcı. It was striking for me to hear how Azize Şenavcı was bored during the

¹⁰⁵ Bizim köyün kadınları gitmese bile, bakmaya gider oyunlara.

¹⁰⁶ Bir hafta devamlı ona [festivale] baktı herkes.

performance while I was expecting to hear about the excitement of the moment more. Hence, in this instance cooking, something she does everyday, was not something to display to other people in a public space for Azize Şenavcı.

We can say then that the memory of the festival was highly dependent upon the gender roles of the participants. After my interviews with the male participants in the village coffeehouse or in the restaurants and bars of the hotels they work and my interviews with the women in the houses and in front of the houses, it was impossible not to feel the big gap between the lives of women defined within the boundaries of the house/family and the lives of the men in the public space. In a village which derives its main income from tourism, the conservatism of women was striking to me. However, this was the way the village both pursues its routine and escapes foreign influences. In this sense, the women's presence in the house and absence in the public space seem to guarantee the protection of the never-changing culture in the village¹⁰⁷. In other words, the houses in which women wait function as the fortresses of the village against the "threats" (city people or foreign tourists with their immoral life style).

On the other side, with their cautious attitude, their silence, their contradictory statements and the way they looked at (*bakmak*) the festival, local women's narratives seem to reveal a constitutive element of the festival memory. It was interesting to see the change in their mood and language during the interviews. Sometimes the same statement consisted of two different feelings or opinions. We can say that their observations were revealed sometimes in the way the interviewee also did not expect. That these are women's accounts is not insignificant. On the contrary, this illustrates that "not only a narrative identity, enmeshed in a family history, and a society, but also an individual identity with a characteristic voice" (Norrick, 2005: 6) is constructed through the very opportunities of the oral interview. Subsequently, their broken language points to another formation of meaning about the perception of the festival in which humor seems to be the main tool. In the way they narrated their memories, for instance their views about the participation of men in weird costumes or the appearance of women performers in the coffeehouse of the village, was always accompanied by a sense of humor which became really sarcastic sometimes. For example, both Ayşe Şen and Azize Şenavcı talked about the "backwardness of themselves as local women"

¹⁰⁷ See Sirman (1995) for a discussion of the mobility of villager women among other women in the village as a strategy to strengthen their position within the patriarchal conditions of family life.

throughout our conversations. They were, seemingly, making fun of themselves. However, it was very possible from their sarcastic manner that they were giving voice to my possible thoughts, as a “modern liberated woman researcher”, about their backward situation. In other words, they were showing me the short way to conclude my research in the village in the sense that the women in Behramkale were backward and philistine and did not understand anything from the festival. In this sense, the humor which stemmed from the silence among women can be considered as the most serious threat/criticism to the discourse of the festival as an “art event for all.”

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

I. Discussing the Research with the Interviewees

With Dilek Katırcıođlu, I looked at all the archival material of the festival. After the death of Hüseyin Katırcıođlu, she opened his documents for the first time for me, for this research. We reorganized some of the documents and photos and watched each cassette one by one to be sure of its contents. It took a whole day to finish the work. Towards midnight, she mentioned the presence of Hüseyin Katırcıođlu. I had met her many times, but this was the first time I heard from her something to the effect that Hüseyin Katırcıođlu was accompanying us.

Another day, an artist I had visited at her house drove me back to my home. On the way, we were talking not only about the festival, but also about daily issues. After a short silence, she said; "What if Hüseyin had not died; he would have been our neighbor and you would not be doing this study."

Of course, they did not mean to affect me or the research negatively. On the contrary, they were sharing their sincere feelings with me. It was understandable that the situation was affecting them more than they let on during the interviews. Nevertheless, when I heard those words, I felt that I could not carry the burden of the memory of Hüseyin Katırcıođlu and I wanted to disappear into the air immediately. The pain of remembering Hüseyin Katırcıođlu was such that it either excluded or totally ignored my presence. But the *raison d'etre* of this study became clearer at the same moment I felt excluded and I, therefore, could not evaporate. Reconsidering my position as a researcher, I was interested in hearing about the festival from the artists and the inhabitants of Behramkale, in the expectation of having the opportunity to discuss the

festival through the differences and commonalities of the memories between these two groups. Hence, my study would still be meaningful if Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu lived and if there were no archival material on the festival.

As I tried to demonstrate in chapter three, the festival memory of the artists consists mainly of the recollections of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu and the independent, isolated conditions of working/creating in Assos. Although in some of the narratives the artists questioned their relationship with the locals, the locals have little part in their narratives and most of the time were treated as the “surprises” associated with place. The issue of locals differentiated the interviews from the archival material which was composed of essays/interviews about the artistic aspects of the festival. Subsequently, I came to believe that the research would be incomplete if I did not conduct fieldwork in the village. I was in expectation of hearing the “voice of the street”. However, when I went to the village, I was met with an attitude of indifference by the locals. Why was I wondering about their opinions and memories? What could they say? They advised me to speak to the artists rather than to them. In other words, in the village, I encountered the justification for and appreciation of the grand narrative of the festival which was accessible through the archival material. It took time to convince the people of Behramkale (and simultaneously myself) that I was there to listen to them. As discussed in chapter four, the memory of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu and their gender-based relationship with Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu was always at the center of the local men's narratives. Their interest in the economic contribution of the festival went hand in hand with their stress on the protection of the culture of village which was provided by assuring the distance of women from public space/festival. Besides, the humorous accounts of the festival came from their recollections of performing and watching.

By the end of my fieldwork, I decided to share my interviews with the villagers with the artists and organizers. I wanted to conclude the research with a discussion triggered by the reactions of the artists to the local peoples' memories. Hopefully, paying attention to the festival memories of the local people would enhance the possibilities of reconsidering the festival as an artistic project. Such a confrontation might also change the focus of the discussion from exhausting recollections of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu to a fruitful reflection on interactions with the people of Behramkale. Hence, I presented a brief summary of my findings in the village together with a video

of some of the interviews with the locals. However, contrary to my expectations, most of the artists and organizers did not find anything new or interesting to discuss in the locals' narratives. Some of them said that they already knew the people of Behramkale and that to speak to them was not a must as they did not understand anything about the festival. What is more, one of them criticized me for taking the local people far too seriously. According to her, it was obvious that the artists did not go to Assos to enlighten the local people but to produce art, so, the focus of the research should be the artists. One of the artists agreed with a villager's statement that the local people either emulated the high socio-economic life style of the artists or reacted to these "modern free people" by totally rejecting them. Another artist questioned their disconnection with the local people in the present. As a result, my attempt to bring the narratives of the locals to Istanbul was met either with indifference or with pessimistic accusation. What is more, I was even criticized for searching for "enlightened people" in the village or for not understanding that the people in the village cannot comment on the festival.

Perhaps I could not express myself in the meeting. However, as I mentioned previously, I was not looking for utopian change in perceptions of the local people. Similarly, I was measuring neither the success nor the failure of the festival. To record the traces of the festival in the memories of the people living in Behramkale was relevant to the aims of the study in terms of listening to the ordinary witnesses of the festival/event. Concerning the power of naïve knowledge, I agree with Michel Foucault that "it is through the re-appearance of local popular knowledge, these disqualified knowledges, that criticism performs its work." (82; 1980) In this sense, I believe that the fragmented, "incorrect" and disqualified (by both themselves and by the artists) testimony of local people has the potential to activate a critical and constructive reflection on the experience of festival. I hope this study will open a space for this kind of critical discussion.

II. Conclusion

*and pretending to mention something inconspicuous,
at every chance, with a latent boast,
of a wealthy relative in a distant city
they speak.*

Şükrü Erbaş

The most marked conclusion of this research is the dominance of the memory of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu in the festival narratives of both the locals and the artists. This is mostly because his death was still difficult to accept for many people not only because he died untimely but also because his death itself is like a joke for many people in the sense that it is unbelievable that someone like Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu died by such an unlucky way. As he still continues to move his friends with the way he has gone, it is not weird that the interviews turned into the sites of commemoration of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu throughout my research. Most of the time, I felt the need of people to project their still enduring astonishment and anger towards his death during the interviews. As the interviewer, I was the vehicle of this projection. Some people I spoke to said to me that it was extremely difficult for them to speak about Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu especially for an “objective academic work”. Almost all interviewees in the city said in the end of the interviews that they were so anxious in the beginning while in the village there was a deep sorrow for his death. If we consider Casey’s argument that commemoration may function as a way of coping with the fact of ending itself (2000: 255), we can easily say that the difficulty to speak about him in the interviews was dealt through turning them into commemoration of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu in the first place. However, the dominance of his memory cannot be explained only with this need to cope with the reality of death. In the way the interviewees wanted “to prolong the ending, giving to it a species of after-life” (2000: 256), there seemed to be other motivations which gave the most important clues of understanding the role of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu between the rural and urban communities.

After the stressful times of the narratives, Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu was still the basic memory about the festival. All the narrators stated that his closeness to both sides made the realization of the festival possible. In other words, both sides asserted that it was trust in Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu that made the locals accept the guests and

convinced/enabled the artists to work in the village. Hence, the question that will lead to the first conclusion of this thesis is the question of why both the locals and the artists needed Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu to be in the festival. What was the role of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu? Did they need him to communicate with one another still during the interviews while talking about each other? What kind of trust did Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu guarantee them? Probably the answer is related to the "uniqueness" of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu again. If we recall the accounts about him, he is irreplaceable with anyone. He appeared in the accounts with his genius, his creativity, his virtuosity in acting, his handsomeness, his ability of communication, his modesty and simplicity, his practical intelligence, his views on the autonomous theatre, his search for a new language in theatre, his experiments on mass theatre, his sensitiveness to the needs of production rather than exhibition in performing arts, his perfect English and Behramkale accent, his future projects, his never-ending optimism and ambition to work. Everybody I met needed to explain his "unique" personality before talking about the festival. Hence, by looking at the way participants of the festival talked about him and how his image triggered the narratives about the festival, Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu may be thought as an icon of the festival memory. If we consider icon in the way it "creates an immediate and effortless connection to particularly significant historical moments and opens up spaces which would otherwise remain inaccessible" (Brink, 2000: 141), it can be more easily grasped that the iconic availability of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu became the main mnemonic device to effortlessly reach to some "inaccessible spaces" in the festival memory. The most important one concerns the relationship between the rural and the urban. The difficulty of this co-existence was explained with the bridging role of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu which was formulated easily with his iconic memory.

However, instead of bridging, he seems to be a separator between these two communities. Today, the reason why he is recalled so often unveils the gap/disconnection between the city people and the rural people, which became visible with the untimely disappearance/death of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu. In other words, he appeared as the "nobody" between the two sides, which means he was the non-existing relationship between the urban and the rural people. Then, we can turn to the reasons of the disconnection between the two sides. In the narratives, it can be easily seen that the rural people and the people came from the cities became always cautious towards each other and minimized the possibilities of encountering in the absence of Hüseyin

Katircioğlu. This situation may be understood better through the analysis of the “risks” of interaction between them.

For the village, a serious threat from the artists was felt towards their social and cultural habits of living. The protection and the continuation of the cultural life during the festival were guaranteed through a one-on-one relationship of each man with Hüseyin Katircioğlu. Hüseyin Katircioğlu, as a heterosexual man, could engage in all decision making processes in public space in the village (from football to the village coffeehouse). The festival was one of the works of Hüseyin Katircioğlu which "should be supported," according to the locals. Thus, nothing was different/threatening in the relationship with Hüseyin Katircioğlu. The only difference was his socio-economic level, which was not considered as a "real" threat. On the contrary, as mentioned in the chapter four, this difference increased the credibility of Hüseyin Katircioğlu in the eyes of the locals. He, as a rich man, was an exception with his respect for the cultural life of the village. Here, there is a parallel between the dichotomy between cultural life and economy and that between public space and private space. As if they can be separated, the economy is thought to be the matter of men who deal with it in public space, while the beliefs and the values in cultural life should be protected by the immobility of women. Hence, the richness of Hüseyin Katircioğlu was not a difference; it was a positive aspect of their culturally assured friendship.

What is more, in the accounts of the villagers, the urban remained as the ultimate destination without doing injustice to their local values. In this sense, their accounts are evidence of the desire for and strong emulation of the high standards of living of the urban middle class. Both the pride in protecting their cultural life from foreign threats and the longing for the possibility of being closer to a group of people from a higher class are expressed in the memories of the villagers. Yet, these ambivalent feelings of desire and insecurity were the feelings of the male population. As discussed in the part on women participants, the female population had a different position. They watched the festival without participating actively and they developed a sense of humor about everything they witnessed in the festival which can be interpreted as a strategy to protect their position within the boundaries of house or boundaries of what was supposed to be the culture and private sphere in the village.

For the artists, any close contact with the locals was threatening, too. This time, the threat was directed to the creative work. As was seen in the narratives of the artists, their primary interest in Assos was to create freely. Although they were affected by the physical and social conditions of the village, their notions of art did not change as “western culture” stood as the ultimate model in this notion. So, their artistic power constitutes/produces an obvious difference between the local people of Behramkale and the artists. In the accounts of the locals, the phrases like “we could not understand even we watched”, “because we are villagers...” or “you cannot learn the festival from us” show how this artistic power was internalized not only by the artists but also by the locals. In this sense, I would agree with Bourdieu that "ideology of creativity serves only to mask the forces of social determination" (Dunn, 1998; 88). Hence, it would not be incorrect to conclude that Hüseyin Katircioğlu acted as a separator between the artists and the locals so that the artists could continue/protect their ideology of creativity. In other words, he was bridging between the hosts and the guests to translate these sensibilities to both sides more than to introduce them to one another.

Hence, in parallel to their distance during the festivals, the locals and the artists may have pursued their ignorance toward one another during the interviews through their overemphasizing Hüseyin Katircioğlu’s memoir. However, the opportunity to articulate on the festival via interviews may be analyzed as a mediator role of Hüseyin Katircioğlu’s memoir after the festival. For most of the participants, these interviews were the first instances of speaking about the festival in another context. Hence, after a while, this situation also created the opportunity to see it in a new way and perhaps allowing mediation between both sides in the absence of Hüseyin Katircioğlu. Artists’ reconsideration their current relationship with the locals and the locals’ trial to remember the artists one by one with me was worthy to note here in terms of illustrating the significance of “narrative memory which comes about in a cultural context in which the past makes sense in the present, to others who can understand it, sympathize with it, or respond with astonishment, surprise even horror.” (Bal, 1999: x) In this sense, the memory about the Assos International Performing Arts Festival appeared to be part of the present hopefully through the curiosity, astonishment, and sympathy aroused in the interviewees by the research.

The second question that will bring us to another concluding remark of this thesis is the question of what the locals and the artists laughed at during the interviews. For both sides, there was always an issue that was found humorous. For the locals, the stories of acting or performing were told with accompaniment of laughter and the artists were recalled with a sense of humor especially by women while for the artists, the locals were the source of humor.

The humorous recollections of acting had much to do with notions of theater and acting for local people. As seen in the interviews with the locals, the most enjoyable memories were the ones about the mistakes of actors, the moments they fell down or the moments they forgot their lines in the play. They felt most comfortable while explaining these moments. The stories of "failure to act" or "falling out of the play" were giving idea about the motivation of the local people as the "non-actors" of mass theatre experiments of Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu. As discussed in the chapter three, the notion of art in the village has close connections with the immoral act of exhibiting oneself to the voyeuristic gaze. So, my first interpretation is about the possibility of the failure stories to be success stories for them. In other words, every time they explained that indeed they did not act in its full sense, they also avoided the pejorative associations of acting. While the women needed to state more than once that they did not enjoy the festival, the men likewise mentioned their failure stories to show that they were not involved in the festival as much as they seemed. In addition, this can be thought of as a way of dealing with the new situation/atmosphere they found themselves in. Within this intellectual and artistic language, they laughed at everything. One of the participants, Fahriye Demirel, told a story about their laughing at everything. One day, Selçuk Gürışık fell down in the house where women were sewing costumes. After he fell, he turned to the women and said: "Laugh now! You laugh at everything whether necessary or unnecessary. If you want to laugh, laugh now." Hence, this moment confirms laughing as a language developed among the local people in an atmosphere that is totally strange to them. Selçuk Gürışık's statement shows the extent to which he was disturbed by this strategic language of the locals. On the side of the local women, the "non-participants" of the festival, we see humor as their strategic tool to take a distance to the festival community and reproduce their common language among themselves. As discussed in chapter four, in the appearance of self-mocking about their "backwardness", the local women replied always with a sense of humor to my questions. Their indifference to any "foreign" and

consequently “concerning men” issue was so strong that they were the most challenging interviewees of the research.

When the issue was the local people, the artists and the organizers always found something to laugh at in their memories. For instance, Süreya made everybody smile as most of the people remembered him with his "childish" and "dynamic" energy to act in the plays. Or when I asked about the local women and their participation in the festival for the first time, two artists I was speaking to looked at each other and just laughed. Another time, an artist talked about how "funny" and "nice" the local people were as they were believing in the performance as if it was really happening. She explained that they swam in the sea in a performance and disappeared after a while. The local people who were watching the performance waited for the two actors who disappeared in the sea until they returned to the coast and some of them hugged these two actors in the happiness of seeing them again. This funny story was at the same time carrying a sense of shame concerning the local people as it reveals the cultural gap between the artists and the local people. In his article called "Taşraya içeriden bakmak mümkün müdür?" Şükrü Arın says that "the gaze of the center towards the periphery is the ‘ashamed’ gaze crushed under the gaze of another center, the gaze of the west."¹⁰⁸ (289; 2005) Hence, the intellectual always reflects the tension of being watched by the western gaze to the rural people who imitates her/him. Meltem Ahıska, who discussed this dubious and problematic relationship between with the modernization actors in Turkey and the west in detail in her book *Radyonun Sihirli Kapısı*, argues that “the impact of West was not just a movement of modernity in time and space, but was a performance for the imagined Western audience.” (2003: 362) Hence, the humor in the artists’ accounts may be one of the places this ambivalent “performance for the imagined Western audience” became visible. In other words, humor becomes the way to deal with a disturbing moment, the moment the urban people are disturbed by the "bad copies" of themselves embodied in the rural people. Always feeling watched by the western gaze, the intellectual knows that s/he is not the original one to be emulated by the rural people. As

¹⁰⁸ Merkezin taşraya bakışı, başka bir merkezin, batının bakışı altında ezilen "mahçup" bir bakıştır.

a result, laughter was the common way for both sides to cope with the situation, in which their intolerance to each other became visible.¹⁰⁹

The presentism of remembering reveals the needs, the desires, and the imagination with both conscious and unconscious reactions of the interviewees at the same time. Because the festival is still found meaningful by many people I spoke to and even I could not speak to, this research led to a lot of discussion points: the need for commemoration, the established notions of art both for artists and “non-artists”, the contentious relationship between the rural and the urban in Turkey, the need to learn about the Assos International Performing Arts Festival in terms of its importance in the sphere of performing arts in Turkey and the performative reproduction of gender roles through the interview process itself. The diversity of issues this research raised is both its advantage and disadvantage. For me, the advantage was the ability to observe the connections among many perspectives such as urban-rural relationship, memory-gender relationship or performance and memory relationship. The diversity of the issues was also the disadvantage of the research. First of all, among these issues, the memory of loss was a big challenge in itself and I had not calculated the extent of its influence. Hence, other issues have the risk of remaining as secondary ones. Connected with this situation, the research took the risk of ignoring the individual differences within the groups by using the “locals-artists” division throughout the thesis.

In my understanding of dependence of cultural dynamics on power relationships, social structures that are formed through performances of identities, the discourse of cultural and artistic field that has intricate relationships with the economic, political and cultural conditions of its environment, I owe much to the interdisciplinary and critical approach of cultural studies. I understand interdisciplinarity in the sense Erdoğan formulates with “not to position against the disciplines of study but to reconsider their forgotten, repressed and lost aspects/traditions in a new context¹¹⁰.” (2003: 49) I hope this thesis brought performance arts/theatre studies and cultural studies together in such a fruitful way through analysis of a concrete case, the Assos International Performing Arts Festival. I see this thesis as a critical contribution to create a space where the

¹⁰⁹ See Passerini (1979) for a discussion of the strategic use of humor in oral history narratives within the context of fascism.

¹¹⁰ Translation from Turkish is mine.

motivations of creative and independent theatre and performance arts can be discussed and questioned from a wider perspective benefiting from the sociological and cultural analysis of artistic field in the context of Turkey. Hopefully, in the space opened up by cultural studies perspective; theatre and performing arts will find new ways of “questioning the power of theatre”, not limiting itself only with theatre/performance arts practice and practitioners, but a broader and interactive environment including social science, universities and cultural analysis theoreticians/practitioners. On the other hand, in the space opened up by performance arts/theatre studies/practice, cultural studies can benefit a lot from the observation of the dynamics of audience-actor relationship as well as the artistic and political engagement in the ordinary life, which is the main object of analysis in the study of cultural studies. In this sense, this thesis may provide a moderate example that illustrates how the power dynamics embedded in social relations such as gender issue or the tension between the urban and the rural are part/matter of artistic activity. Lastly, the contribution of this research to my conception of arts/theatre is invaluable for me. I hope through using the opportunities of reflexive ethnography, I could integrate my observations in a constructive way to the arguments of thesis.

III. For Further Study

The Assos International Performing Arts Festival is a rich and beneficial example of working in public space and encouraging interdisciplinary work parallel to current contemporary trends in performance arts. Especially the risk-taking aspect of it in terms of a voluntary based organization makes the festival still a source of interest which also points to the lack of such performing arts festivals in Turkey. The only comparable example is Erdek Şenliği, which was held between the years 1958-1964. So, a fruitful research may be a comparative study of the Assos International Performing Arts Festival with the Erdek Festival. Erdek Festival differs from the Assos International Performing Arts Festival in terms of its content and political motivation, and these two resemble one another as they were both theatre-based organizations, encouraged the participation of local people and preferred a festival place outside Istanbul. This sort of study may also show the associations between the alternative theatre community of the 1960s (as the first examples of contemporary theatre in Turkey) and the 1990s also in terms of different relationships they developed with the rural. Furthermore, such study

would open space for a constructive articulation of political and artistic motivations in contemporary performing arts/theatre in Turkey.

The fieldwork in the village may be conducted for a longer period and in a more concentrated way. A further research may examine in more detail the relationship of the people of Behramkale with performance and theatre by looking at notions of theatre in the village. The old people may be interviewed vis-à-vis their childhood experiences of traditional village theatre. Thanks to a longer fieldwork, more in-depth analysis of memory narratives and strategies may be traced.

APPENDIX A

List of Works of Hüseyin Katırcıođlu

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Yönetmenlik ve prodüksiyonluk çalışmaları:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1998 LA MAMA E.T.C. - New York | The Cat & The Moon (Yönetmen) |
| 1998 YaDa TİYATRO - ABD ve Avrupa | Sünneli (Yönetmen / oyuncu) |
| 1998 AİLELER - İsviçre ve İtalya | Mother Goddess (Yönetmen) |
| 1997 YaDa TİYATRO - Assos | Çıcc Söz Vardı (Yönetmen) |
| 1997 1920 - İstanbul | Meslek (Yönetmen / oyuncu) |
| 1996 DACIS - AKM Performans Günlüğü | Sofra Sarış (Yönetmen / oyuncu) |
| 1996 YaDa TİYATRO - Assos | Safo (Yönetmen) |
| 1996 LA MAMA E.T.C. İstanbul | Oedipus (Prodüksiyon) |
| 1995 BM HABİTAT 2 KONFERANSI | Kapanış Gösterisi (Yönetmen) |
| 1995 ASSOS FESTİVALI | Sünürg (Yönetmen) |
| 1995 XOTANGE, Almanya/Türkiye | İluziyonsuzluk (Yönetmen) |
| 1994 LA MAMA UMBRIA İtalya | !! Glândini Defi Carvi (Yönetmen) |
| 1994 ÇEKÖL VAKFI | Karlamalar (Yönetmen) |
| 1994 BAKIRKÖY BELEDİYESİ TİY. | Bir Yaz Evi (Yönetmen) |
| 1993 YaDa TİYATRO / TAL | Truva Öyküsü (Yönetmen) |
| 1993 İSTAV | Yerebatan Kıracı (Yönetmen) |
| 1992 LA MAMA E.T.C. New York | Yunus (Prodüksiyon-dramaturji-oyuncu) |
| 1992 ÇAĞDAŞ BALE | Vurga (Yönetmen) |
| 1991 ÇAĞDAŞ BALE | Duvar (Yönetmen) |
| 1991 YaDa TİYATRO | İsmene (Yönetmen) |
| 1991 İTİ - İm. Th. Intl. Conference | İllustrasyon Tiyatro Atölyeleri Yöneticisi |
| 1987 İSTANBUL ŞEHİR TİYATROLARI | Hiavata (Yönetmen) |

APPENDIX B
Curriculum Vitae of Hüseyin Katurcioğlu

HÜSEYİN KATURCIOĞLU

Atika, Galipolun, Cad. 1469, Kuzeyli 0700, İstanbul (Tel: 00-90212) 949 2032 Fax: 90 (0212) 212 25-6

Artistic Director of the ASSOS FESTIVAL
Associate of LA MAMA NYC, NEW YORK
Member of LA MAMA EMERITA
Founding Director of YADA THEATRE
Member of the THEATRE RESEARCH LABORATORY at the ISL. MUNICIPAL TH.
Member of BRITISH ACTORS EQUITY

Work as a director:

| | |
|--|---|
| 1978 ADELIFER - Zurich | Lord Godwin |
| 1977 Yada THEATRE - Bursa Festival | 1. The beginning there was the word |
| 1977 Yada THEATRE - Istanbul | 1. Seven |
| 1976 Yada THEATRE - Bursa Festival | Supper |
| 1976 UNITED NATIONS HABITAT CONFERENCE | Living Company |
| 1975 Yada THEATRE - Bursa Festival | Stanza |
| 1975 KOLANTO, Germany/Italy | From the beginning to the end |
| 1974 LA MAMA EMERITA, Italy | 1. founding the City |
| 1974 THEATRE FOUNDATION - Turkey | 1. Celebration |
| 1974 BAKIRKÖY MUNICIPAL THEATRE - Istanbul | 1. In the Summer House |
| 1973 CONTINUITERONS (ALLEY) - Istanbul | 1. Kiss |
| 1973 Yada THEATRE - Bursa Festival | 1. A Foreign Story |
| 1973 ISLAY - Antalya (Near a Island) | 1. Water Round |
| 1972 LA MAMA NYC - New York | 1. Venus (Co-Producer & Assistant) |
| 1972 CONTINUITERONS (ALLEY) - Istanbul | 1. 1977 |
| 1971 YADA THEATRE - Istanbul | 1. James |
| 1971 THE CONGRESS - Istanbul | 1. International directors Who exchange |
| 1971 ISPARTI MUNICIPAL THEATRE | 1. If twelve |

Acting work over the last few years:

THEATRE

| | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| LA MAMA NYC, New York | Titus | Edie Brubaker |
| LA MAMA EMERITA, Italy | Ginetta | " |
| CONTINUITERONS (ALLEY), | London Production | Sarah Maudslayi |
| Burma | Princess | Susan Clark |
| ROYAL NATIONAL THEATRE, | Anthony & Cleopatra | Sir Peter Hall |
| London | King Lear | David Hare |
| | Clifford | Michael Bogdanov |
| BIRKENHEAD THEATRE, London | Aspiners & Kaphernus | Rob Walker |
| ROUNDHOUSE, London | Hadra | Charles Marlowe |

We had in Turkey with the National companies as well as with the Open Stage, Larkine & Son, A.C. and repertoire theatres as Birmingham, Manchester, Newcastle, Southampton

TELEVISION

| | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| BBC | From the Port - 1,2,3 | John Durrant |
| | Richard III | " |
| | De Witt | Sarah Maudslayi |
| LUCAS FILMS | Young Justice | Alan Bennett |
| HIGHWAY PICTURES | There... | Dick Dale |

STAGE

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------|------------|
| LYE | Dark Cysta | Jim Henson |
| HANSON THEATRE | The Duponts | Frank Co. |
| COLUMBIA PICTURES | John | Elizabeth |

Worked with artists such as: Charles Hopley, Dustin Hoffman, Walter Matthau, Fanny D. Steiner, Paul Satterfield, Jess Haddock, Judy Duch, Isabelle Adjani.

APPENDIX C

Brief Chronology of Hüseyin Katırcıođlu

GENEL ÖZGEÇMİŞ

1950 doğumlu

1969'da İsviçre İhtisatçısı

Genelçe İngiliz High School for Girls, İstanbul

Level: Intermediate, S.L.C. level, S.T.C. level

Üniversite: King's College London, BA in Politics (1975)

Theater: East 15 Acting School, Postgraduate Certificate in Theatre (1981)

1975-1990 : Süreli Arabistan'da Assosiyasyonun arkeolojisi ve inşaatçılığı

1981-1983 : İngiltere'de Tiyatro Öğretimi

1981 : Türkiye'de Aktör Eğitimi

1981-1989 : İngiltere'de Tiyatro, Film ve Televizyon alanında profesyonel oyunculuk

1986-1988 : Assosiyasyonun arkeolojisi

1990-1996 : Türkiye Televizyonunda yapımcılık ve yöneticilik

APPENDIX D

The text of "Poor Theatre" (Züğürt Tiyatro) written by Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu

İlgi: Sayın İnönü Bayramoğlu

ZÜĞÜRT TİYATRO

Bu yüzden avant gard, deneysel, öteki, alternatif gibi terimler benim için pek birşey ifade etmiyor. Tiyatro kuramcısı değil de uygulayıcısı olduğumdan terminoloji ile anlam pek iyi değil. Genelde sanatçılar sanatlarını uygulamaları için bu çalışmalarını değerlendirir, etiketler, sınıflandırır. Çalışmalarım kendi çalışmalarına yakın bulduğum sanatçılar var. Benim genelde özgün yapıtlar üreten, dile ve klasik tiyatroya mekânlarına bağımlı kalmayan, kendi anlatım tarzını arayan sanatçılar oluyor. Fakat benzerliğimiz burada bitiyor.

Bir alternatif sınıma çalışmıyorum. Öteki olmak gibi bir sorumluluğum da yok, pek birşey denemediğimi de söyleyemem. Öteki olduğumu hiç sanmıyorum, "öteki" ancak ötekilerden biri olabilir. İdea sadece içinden gelen tiyatroyu yapıyorum. Bu devamlı olarak karşılıklı konuşan insanların anlatım aracı olarak kullanmayı, bir yazının aktarım aracı olmayı, Avrupa tarihinin çok kısa bir döneminde kullanılan bir sahnelenme biçimine buğış kalmayı, John, Pierre, İvan vb gibi adları olan başka kültürlerdeki insanların sorunları ile uğraşmayı, maaslı mensur olmayı, veya toplumun belirli bir sosyal kesimini güldürmeyi içermiyorsa beni sınıflandırmak zorunda değilsiniz.

İyi kotasız bir Çekhov (ki son yıllarda en güzel örneği yukarıdaki tanımların yakıştırılmaya çalışıldığı Tiyatro Fil tarafından gerçekleştirildi), 19. yüzyıl mantığında iyi kotasız bir Shakespeare, Marlowe, Racine, Corneille, Lope de Vega, Calderon (kendilerini "klasik" tiyatroyun temel direği sayan kuramsal tiyatroların çoğunu tanımadığımdan hiçe şüphelendiğim) yapıtı izlemek bana büyük keyif veriyor. Klasik çalışmaların da bir önemi, bir değeri vardı, fakat sabah 1990'da İstanbul'da atan bir yönetmen olarak o nazıt düşünmek, ondan yola çıkmak bana daha çekici geliyor. Bu tavır birşeyi red ettiğimden değil, birşeyi benimsediğimden ibari geliyor. Bir tiyatro sanatçısı eğer alışılmışın ötesinde bir yaratıcılık gösteriyorsa, buna benzer bir kalıba sokmak zorunda değiliz.

Neye alternatif? Kurumlaşmış tiyatrolar altından kalkacak oyuncu ve yönetmen kadroları olmadıktan sonra klasikleri nerdeyse hiç sahnelemiyoruz. Bu yüzden bunu yapmak Türkiye'de alternatif veya öteki olabilir. Kurumlaşmış tiyatrolarda başlayan "alternatif" hareketler kurumlara rağmen, kişilerin özverileri ile gerçekleştirilmiştir, ve bu kişiler kurumlardan dışlanmışlardır. Devlet Tiyatrolarında Birinci Tiyatro yok, Mustafa Avkıran yok artık, hataları Devlet'in tiyatrosuna değil, kendi tiyatrolarını yapmak oldu. Pekala bir sanatçı kendi

sanatını yapmazsa, bu sanat alanında neyi Anacak zâhne olabilir. Sizi gördü takdirçiler NZZ.

Genel bir sınıflandırmaya sokulmaya çalışılan üste bir toplulukların ve çalışmaların tek ortak özelliği parasızlık. İnanılmaz maddî olumsuzlukları ile pek az insanın rakdâ edebileceği bir sanat ve özveri ile gerçekleştirilmeye çalışılmaktadır. Bu yüzden hepsemi kapsayabilecek tanım "zâğârî tiyatro" olabilir.

Elindeki verilere göre geçen yıl Devlet Tiyatroları Devlet'ten 832 milyar lira almış, "âzel" tiyatroları ise 17 milyar almış. Bu kıyaslamaya diğer tiyatroları DT karşısında zâğârî ötesi konumuna getirir. Bunların arasında ticarî bir bir kaygıya yer vermeyen topluluklar ise herhalde "mega zâğârî" tanımına layık. Koca bir ziyafet almış bu çekirdeğin özel tiyatrolar arasında nasıl paylaşıldığının kavgası neden odur haber anıyamıyorum. Bu ziyafet vapurları ile ayakta durabilen sanatçılar arasında adilen dağılmadıkça, Türkiye'de ancak bir Devlet dâresi bir Belediye ve kurumlar ile ayakta durmayı çalışan bir zâğârî sanatçı takımı olabilir. Bu ortamda da biriken alternatif öncelikle vs vsyi, bir sanat evlemi olarak tiyatroyun da varlığını bahsetmek zor. Ancak birtakım debelenmelerden ve hürseye rağmen bu debelenmelerden çıkan tek tek başarıdan söz etmek mümkündür. Bir Türk tiyatro sanatçısının önündeki seçeneklere bir göz atalım:

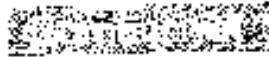
- Bir kurumun görev buraya memurluk yapabilirsiniz. kırk yılda bir, sistem gevşer de belki birşey yapabilirsiniz ümidi ile yaşarsın. Her zaman için memuriyetin ve devletin gereksinimleri, sanatın ve sanatçının gereksinimlerinin önünde tutulur.
- Ticarî tiyatro yaparsın bazı alışılmış kâğıtlar çerçevesinde, belirli bir sosyal üstredden seyirci çekebilecek oyunlar sahnellersin.
- Keadî içinde tiyatroyu gerçekleştirir. Kendi özgün çalışmalarını yaparsın. Fakat zorunda olarak başka işlerde çalıyın yaşamak için para kazarsın. Bu yüzden bedenini ve sesini yeni ufuklar açabilecek teknik düzeye geçirecek çalışmalar için zaman ayıramazsın. Kufandaki dekorları, efektleri gerçekleştirecek donanımları maddî olumsuzlıklardan dolayı alamazsın. Dâmi bir mekânın olmadığından orada burada tıca minnet çalışmalar yaparsın.

Bu yüzden Türkiye'de sanatlar üzerine tartışmayı gerektirecek kadar önemli bir tiyatro olayı yoktur. Bu konuda da ancak bu sanat dalına yapılan kayda değer maddî yatırımların Kafkasque boyutta absürd kullarını yerine, verilen paranın sanatsal karşılığının beklendiği bir düzenlenmenin olması ile getinebilir. O güne kadar da bu biçimse tartışmalara ara verip, gücümüzü bu oluşumu sağlamaya harcamayı öneriyorum.

Saygılarımla,

APPENDIX E

Interview with Hüseyin Kattırcıoğlu by Emre Koyuncuoğlu



YERİNDEN YERİNE İKİ DÜNYA

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... gelişimine katkıda bulunan...
... katkıları için teşekkür ederim...

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APPENDIX F

Interview with Zeynep Günsur

11 April 2007, Wednesday, Yıldız Technical University, İstanbul

Z: Biz zaten Hüseyin'le tanışıyoruz Assos Festivali başlamadan önce ve hep iletişim halindeydik. O bizim yaptığımız işleri takip ederdi. O zamanlar *Yeşil Üzümler* olarak çalışıyorduk bir arada. Biz de onu takip ederdik. Hüseyin zaten çocukluğunu Assos'da geçirmiş bir insan, yöreyi çok iyi bilen, insanları tanıyan, köylüleri tanıyan ve orada tanınan bir insandı ve de daha merkezin dışında, alternatif gerçekten alternatif olan oluşumlara ilgi duyan bir insandı. Dolayısıyla bu festivali tamamen kendi imkanlarıyla başlattığı zaman hepimiz çok heyecanlandık ve sanırım ilk festivale gittik biz *Yeşil Üzümler* olarak, yanılmayayım onun tarihlerine bakarım, ama ya ilk ya ikinci. Ben ilk diye hatırlıyorum. 1995, evet ilk festivale gittik. Her bakımdan çok etkileyici ve bence çok önemli bir oluşumdu. Kamusal sanatta da bence çok iyi bir örnektir. Çünkü birincisi hazır işle gidip orada işimizi sergilemiyorduk. Oraya gidiyorduk, herkes anlatmıştır, birlikte kalınıyordu, üretiliyordu. Orada birlikte kalınırken, herkes kendi işleri üstünde çalışırken de birliktelikler doğuyordu. Yabancı sanatçılar da biliyorsun geliyordu. Böyle ortak bir atölye çalışması olması çok önemli. Aslında herkesi besleyen oradaki işlerin içine nüfus eden bir yöntem. Çünkü orada çok basit ama yeterli fiziksel koşullarda kalıp, herkes kendi işinin yaratım aşamasında ve tekniğinde de çalışarak üretiliyordu. Zaten mekan açısından inanılmaz bir yer Assos. Farklı alanları, farklı mekanları istediğimiz gibi seçebiliş o mekanlarda çalışma olanağının olması zaten başlı başına bir avantajdı. Artı mekan çalışmasının yanına bir de bu atölye çalışması ekleniyordu. Farklı sanatçılarla ortaklaşa işler üretme imkanı doğabiliyordu. Bunlar çok önemli şeylerdi. Sonra tabii ki festivalin içinde birebir çalışan köy halkı çok önemli. Fiziksel anlamda çalışmanın ötesinde sanatsal olarak seyircisinin büyük çoğunluğunu onlar oluşturuyordu. İlk sıralara gelip böyle yer kaparlardı. Hani başta tabii bir çekingenlik olmuştu. Ama o ilk festivalin içinde bile atlatılmıştı. Zaten seneler birbirini izledikçe çok değişti. Sanatçı olarak festivalin içine dahil olmaya başladılar. Çocuklar ve gençler özellikle. Şimdi bazı çalışmalar direkt onlara dönük oldu. Çok hoş çalışmalar çıktı hatırlıyorum. Fransız bir ekip vardı, Sabine, mesela, gelip gitti senelerce oraya. Dolayısıyla böyle her anlamda bir ortaklaşma söz konusuydu. Mesela *Yeşil Üzümler*in yaptığı bir çalışmayla ilgili bir anım var. Onu anlatayım. Biz üç farklı çalışma gerçekleştirmiştik o sene. Bir tanesini de hemen Behramkale köyünün çıkışında, Assos'a inmeden önce bir tarlada yapmıştık. O tarlanın sahibi; işte biz burayı seçtik hani çalışabilir miyiz filan diye konuşulurken birazcık mırın kırın etmişti. Hatırlamıyorum nedenini. Fakat sonra izin verdi. Biz girdik tarlaya. Hatta çok diken doluydu. O dikenleri temizledik önce. Böyle büyük de bir alan. Hiç unutmuyorum. Bir günümüz o dikenleri temizlemekle geçmişti. Sonra gösteri yaptık. Çok severek yaptık. İşte mekan açısından çok etkilemişti bizi orası falan. Gösteri bitti. Ertesi gün başka bir gösteri için köy meydanından yukarı doğru çıkıyoruz. Macun satıyordu o tarlanın sahibi. Macun tavlası vardı renkli. İşte o bizi tanıyor biz onu tanıyoruz filan, dedik macun alalım sizden, bize o macunları hediye etti. "Siz" dedi "çok çalıştınız bizim tarlada. Bu da bizden olsun". Hiç unutmuyorum hepimizin gözleri dolmuştu. O an çok etkileyici bir andı hepimiz için. Güzel hikayeler hatırlıyorum hep bunun gibi. İşte o köy gençlerinin Hüseyin'in işinde büyük maskelerin, kostümlerin içinde... "Simurg" hareket eden bir işti. En son tapınakta bitiyordu. Oradaki halleri... işte aşağıda bir abi taşımada yardımcı oluyor, onunla olan o iletişim, bütün bunlar tabii bizim için özeldi.

Ö: Siz kendi işinizi biraz daha anlatabilir misiniz? nasıl çalıştınız, nasıl geçti?

Z: Nasıl geçti? Dans tiyatrosu tarzında, aslında çok disiplinler arası bir çalışma biçimimiz vardı bizim. *Yeşil Üzümler* olarak. Her şeyden yararlanıyorduk yani ses, metin, beden, dans hareket, tiyatro, gerektiğinde görsel, video film. Orda daha çok mekanla çalışmayı tercih ettik. Bizim için çok etkileyiciydi mekan. Ve bir işte, Deniz Altınay'ın işinde bu tarlayı kullandık. Tamamen boş bir tarla. Üçü de hareket tiyatrosu tarzında işlerdi. Emre'nin işinde sahili kullandık, kumsalı. Onun görüntüleri var. Benim işimde de sahilde Assos'un en sağ iskelesi, onun önünde bir kayık. İskele ve kayık beraber kullanıldı, artı deniz. Çünkü arada bir denize düşülüyordu. Aslında tamamen bir denge çalışması gibi bir şeydi. Metin de vardı. Bedensel fiziksel bir denge çalışması. Kullandığım metin de benim hayatımın içinden seçtiğim bazı bilgilerdi. Mesela tıbbi test sonuçları vardı metnin içinde. Kayık çok sallandı. Assos zaten bilirsin çok sallantılı ve rüzgarlı bir denizdir. Kayık insanlar içinde hareket ettikçe çok sallanıyordu. Daha çok kayığın konturlarını kullanıp performansçıların dengeyle ilgili hareket çalışmalarından geliştirmiştik çalışmayı. Seyirciyi de tamamen o iskelenin etrafına almıştık. Öyle bir çalışmaydı.

Ö: Gittiğinizde hiç aklınızda yoktu di mi? Oraya gidip mekanı..

Z: Oraya gitmeden önce aklımızda en azından kullanacağımız metinler ya da belli kurgular vardı. Ama işler tamamen orada şekillendi. Zaten işin güzelliği de oydu. Bir atölye çalışmasıydı hepimiz için, zaten biz öyle çalışıyorduk *Yeşil Üzümler* olarak. Her zaman o atölye çalışmaları bizim için çok önemliydi. Ama orada bir de üstüne başka sanatçılarla iletişime geçtik, ortaklaşa çalışma imkanı doğdu. Yani illaki bir işi ortaklaşa üretmek gerekmiyor ama orada beraber yaşayarak herkes kendi işiyle ilgili sohbet ediyor, fikir beyan ediyor zaten bu bile aslında ortak platform yaratıyordu. Dolayısıyla hani bizim için çok hoştu tabii o tarz bir çalışma.

Ö: Hiç kimse dışardan birisi sizinle dans etmedi di mi?

Z: Hayır fakat Sema ses performansı ile bizim işlerden bir tanesine katıldı. Emre'nin işine. Çok da güzel oldu.

Ö: Karşılaştığınız zorluklar? Gündelik hayatta karşılaştığınız direnç noktaları...

Z: Fiziksel olarak tabii zorlayıcıydı. Çünkü herkes kendi işiyle ilgili yolculuk ediyor, hem taşınacak şeyleri taşıyor, fiziksel olarak çalışmanın içinde bir efor sarf ediyorsunuz, biz aynı zamanda da performansçıydık çünkü. Dolayısıyla fiziksel müthiş bir yorgunluk. Bir de tabii açık hava, oksijen, nefis güzel yemekler, besleyici falan, herkes saat 9 30 ta pestil gibi oluyordu. Ama akşamları da çok keyifli geçiyordu. Sohbet, muhabbet yemekten sonra. Sonra ölü gibi yatılıyordu. Sabah erken başlanılıyordu çalışmaya. Tabii birçok iş olduğu için hep böyle bir takım çizelgeler yapılıp hani bu işin şu eşyası şuraya taşınacak şu saatte, provasını burada alabilir. O zaman provaya gitmek için işte bu saatte buradan çıkmak lazım. Geriye tekrar kamyoneti göndermek lazım ki diğerinin..

Ö: Bu arada bunları da siz yapıyorsunuz..

Z: Tabii, devamlı böyle yani imece usulü birbirine de destek atarak hani benim provam var bu saatten bu saate işte ben şurada olmam lazım hayatta bunu değiştiremem gibi bir

durum olmaması gerekiyordu. Bazen olanlar da vardı, öyle yaklaşanlar da, ama festivalin doğası böyle bir şey değildi. Dolayısıyla herkes birbirinin içinde kendi işiyle diğerlerinin işinin teknik olanaklarını da ortaklaşa kullanarak bunun için çaba harcayarak yani bambaşka bir atmosfer kuruluyordu. Biliyorsundur işte terzi atölyeleri kuruluyordu. Bütün işlerin kostümleri orada yapılıyordu. Hüseyin'in ve Dileğin bütün ailesi çalışıyordu orada yani dolayısıyla hakikaten zaten başka tür bir yaklaşım söz konusuydu. Köylülerle ve köyle ilişki de bunun içine katıldığında tam böyle bir resim çıkıyordu ortaya. Gerçi mesela festivalin 2., 3. senelerinde, özellikle aşağıdaki otellerin festival zamanı fiyatlarını arttırmaları gibi şeyler de söz konusu oldu, yani kötüye kullananlar da oldu festivali ama bu da insan doğasında var zaten.

Ö: Yani sadece sponsorlukla gidiyor olmasının da getirdiği kaçınılmaz sonuçlardan biri. Orada devlet ya da yerel bir yönetim desteği olmuş olsaydı belki çok daha iyi gidecekti.

Z: Ama bunun yanında sanatçılara her sene otelini açıp yemeklerini yapan insanlar da vardı. Yani ikisi beraber gidiyordu. Benim için her zaman çok özel bir yeri vardır Assos festivalinin.

Ö: Oyunlara gelen tepkilerden aklınızda kalan bir şey var mı?

Z: Bir kere İstanbul'daki bir festivale gidermiş gibi gelmiyordu seyirciler. Seyirciler için de bir deneyim alanı oluşturuyordu çünkü. Köylüler, çevre yerlerden gelenler oluyordu otobüslerle minibüslerle; artı İstanbul'dan sırf bu festival için gelenler oluyordu. Onlar hem tatil hem sanat izleyicisi gibi... özellikle İstanbul'dan gelenlerin her zaman çoğunluğunun bu tarz çalışmalara açık olmaları gerekiyordu. Zaten bunu seçip de gelmek böyle bir şey. Dolayısıyla çok tanımlı, kategorize edilmiş sanat biçimlerini değil de farklı, daha çok anlamı oluştururken kendi gözünden de bir şeyler katacağını bilerek geldiği için seyirci ve onun için de bir yolculuk olduğu için, ayrıca o mekanlara gidebilmesi için devamlı hareket halinde olması da lazım. Hani hafif trekking, dağcılık falan da işin içine giriyordu seyirci açısından. Buna açık bir seyirci olduğu için tepkiler genelde hoş oluyordu. Bizim işlerimiz mesela, *Yeşil Üzümlerin* o dönemde yaptığı işler öyle hemen anlaşılacak işler değildi mesela. Ama seyirci bunun için çaba harcıyordu. Kendi anlamını yaratmak için çaba harcayan bir seyirciydi. Tabii bu çok önemli bir şey. Ama festivalin doğası gereği zaten böyle bir seyirci oraya geliyordu.

Ö: *Yeşil Üzümler* en çok hatırlanan işlerden, gruplardan biri. Evet, sorduğumda en aklınızda kalan işler diye insanlara. Zaten H.K.'nın da festival için kullandığı şey hani dünün ya da bugünün değil yarının festivali gibi bir şey söylüyor. Yani öncü ve değişik işlere yer vermek, onları uluslararası alandan da bulup getirmek, Türkiye'de yeni bir alan açmak. Assos yere özgü iş anlamında ilk değildi herhalde *Yeşil Üzümler* için değil mi?

Z: Biz zaten hep mekanla ilişkili düşünüyorduk, çalışıyorduk. Hayır. İlk değildi. Ama çok örtüştü tabii. Hem bizim sanat yapma, ve hayatta durma biçimimizle çok örtüştü. Hem de zaten beden, mekan, metin anlamında hep karşılaştırmalı çalıştığımız için daha önce de farklı mekanlarda farklı işler üretmiştik. Onunla da çok örtüştü.

Ö: Köyde kadınların seyirci ve katılımcı olarak konumu hakkında bir şey var mı aklınızda kalan?

Z: Var. Başlarda biraz daha çekingen davranırlarken belli bir süreç içinde bir kere çok iyi seyirci olduklarını ben gördüm. Mesela bir mutfak performansı, Gamze İnceci'nin yaptığı, orada direkt katıldılar. Kadınıyla, çocuğuyla, genciyle, yaşlı erkeğiyle herkesin aslında bu anlamda katılımcı olduğu yerel halkın belki de tek festivaldir Türkiye'de.

Ö: Peki dönüp baktığınızda hani keşke olmasaydı dediğiniz, o bahsettiğiniz o bazı grupların, oranın mantığını değil de kendi çalışma..

Z: Evet, bu biraz şeyle alakalı. Yani onlar da sonuçta Hüseyin'in davet ettiği gruplardır. Mutlaka o deneyimden onlar da bir şey almışlardır. Bazen de bazı işler çok mükemmeliyetçi olmak zorunda. O yüzden ortak yaratım platformuna, orada yaratmaya uygun değil. Yani işin kendisi uygun değil. Orada yapılacak fazla bir şey yok. Ama zaten onlar da tek tüktür. Festival içinde iyi işler de çıkmıştır. Onlar gelip tamamen konsantre olup kendi işlerini yapıp gitmek durumunda, işin doğası gereği öyle kalmışlar. Orada bir mekan çalışması olarak mesela önemli olmuşlardır. Keşke olmasın dediğim bir şey: valla keşke her senesine sanatsal olarak katılsaydım diyebilirim. Her senesine katılmadım çünkü. Keşke Hüseyin'in böyle ani ölümü olmasaydı. Çok daha büyürek, çok daha gelişerek devam edebilecek bir festival olduğunu düşünüyorum. Türkiye'de, dünyada alternatif güzel bir festival olurdu diye düşünüyorum. Keşke diyebileceğim bunlar var.

Ö: Benim bunu sormamın nedeni hani oradaki ufak tefek aksaklıkları da ya da ne bileyim gündelik hayata dair böyle zorlukları da biraz anlayabilmek.

Z: Yani kolay bir festival değildi, fiziksel olarak zorlu bir on beş gün geçiyordu. İnsan çok yoruluyordu. Ama işte diken temizlemenin, mesela, bütün bir gün yapacağınız, bir şey yaratacağınız alanın dikenlerini temizlemenin çok ritüelistik bir tarafı var. Meditatif bir tarafı da var. Şimdi bunun hazzını yaparken anında algılamıyorsunuz. Üstünüzde onun enerjisi kalıyor. Ve bu çok önemli bir şey.

Ö: Yoksa o bir yük....

Z: Onu öyle görüyorsanız zaten oraya gelmeyin. Orada olmayın. Ama orada oluyorsanız bu tip şeyler, bu tip zorluklar aslında hep müthiş de artılar getiriyor insana.

Z: Hani o fırtına tarihleri de vardır ya bellidir o fırtına tarihleri. Şans eseri ona denk geldi Simurg. Nasıl bir fırtına! Behramkale'nin yokuşundan çıkarken o rüzgarın da ayrı bir görüllüğü vardı. Koskoca kıyafetler, masklar falan, müthiş görüllük hatırlıyorum. Kuşlar... işte metinler pek duyulmadı rüzgardan ama zaten çok görsel bir tiyatroydu. Çatıların üstündeki danslar zaman zaman. Uzakdoğu kökenli ama Amerika'da yaşayan dansçı birisi vardı erkek. Onun dansını hatırlıyorum. Çok etkileyiciydi. Zaten o böyle bir yolculuktu. Seyirciler de o şeylerle beraber tapınağa doğru ilerlemiştik. Ve öyle bitmişti festival. Fırtınayla bitmişti... zaten her şeyi özetleyen de bir şeydi aslında.

Ö: Seyirci olarak gittiğinizdeki fark nedir? Seyirciyi zorlayan bir festival çünkü bu. Ne kadar açık da olsanız ya bir dakika diye de yadırgayabileceğiniz..

Z: Ama işte öyle bir şeyi arayarak, isteyerek de gidiyorsunuz seyirci olarak da. Hani işte tepe tırmanıp, taşların üstünde oturup, o mekanda yaratılan büyüü görmeye gidiyorsunuz. Dolayısıyla seyirci olarak da ben çok keyif almıştım.

APPENDIX G
Photograph of Local Women



Photograph: Levent Öget
Two women from Behramkale who are watching the performances and chatting.

APPENDIX H

Interview with Gönül Kaplan September, 2007, Behramkale

Nasıl çalışmalar yapıyordunuz?

Gönül: Bütün çocuklar okulun bahçesinde toplanıyoduk. Sonra hep beraber nerde çalışma varsa oraya. Çok eğlenceli oluyodu bizim için de. Oyun gibi geliyodu bize. Çocuk olduğumuz için. Köprünün altına gidiyoduk mesela. Bütün kostumlerimizi onlar ayarlıyolardı. Jimnastik gibi şeyler yapıyoduk, çalışmalarımız oluyodu belli günlerde, o evde hiç eşya yoktu, boştu, çok ilgileniyorlardı yani bizle.

Sanatçılardan etkilenir miydin?

Sabine'in danslarını unutmadım, onları hatırlıyorum. Bir de en son okul bahçesinde minibüs patlatıldığında birisi bi dans yapmıştı, onu hatırlıyorum ama çok net değil. Hüseyin abi her şeyin en iyisi olsun isterdi zaten. O arkadaki en güçlü insandı zaten.

Evde yine bir gün çalışmamız vardı, herkes sırt üstü yatıp bacakların kaldırıyordu, ben de o gün kot pantolon giymiştim, arkadan dikiş yerleri battı, yapamıyorum, üzülyorum yapamıyorum diye. Sonra işte Sabine geldi noldu dedi, söyledim, kot pantolonum böyle, yapamayacağım ben dedim. O da “yok öyle tembellik” dedi, bana kendi kıyafetlerinden vermişti, “şimdi çalış” demişti. Ondan sonra devam etmiştik çalışmaya.

Farklı bir gösteriye gidince bizim ağzımız açık kalıyodu, “aa napmışlar, nasıl yapmışlar” diyoduk. Mesela tünel kazdıkları bi gösteri vardı. Alttan tünel kazmışlardı, ikisi de giriyo, kayboluyo meğer altta tünel varmış. Sonra su dolu minibüse giren abla çok etkilemişti bizi. Bi de tabi camın kırılması. Bi de ışıklar gözümüzü alıyodu, bütün spotlar bize çevrili. İyi tabi bir taraftan seyirciyi görmüyosun. Heyecanlanmıyosun.

Bize en anlaşılır dilde anlatıyolardı çalışmaları. Dansçılara falan çok imreniyoduk, hatta belki seneye bize de öyle rol verirler diye heves ediyoduk. Belki ters gitmeseydi bazı şeyler, ben inanıyorum ki festivalde oynayanların bir çoğu tiyatro bölümünü seçerdi. Ben ondan sonra tiyatro bölümüne girdim lisede. Üniversitede girmedim artık, resim de zor, çünkü zaman ayıramadım. Ama isterdim, böyle devam etseydi çevremiz daha değişik olurdu.

Fransaya gittiniz siz Elifle ikiniz. Nasıldı?

İnci ablayla Fransa'ya indiğimizde orda Sabine karşıladı bizi, bilmiyordum ben, sürpriz oldu tabi. Jelibonlarla falan karşıladılar. Çocuktum yani. Orda da yine Sabine'lerde kalmıştık. Fransayı çok net hatırlıyorum. Domuz eti olur diye çekiniyoduk biz, bize ayrı yemekler söylüyorlardı, bizimle çok ilgileniyorlardı. Zaten fransa sanat şehri, binalar da çok eskiydi, bize de bi daire kiralamışlardı, orda Elif'le jelibonlarımızı saydığımızı hatırlıyorum.

Şu an fransız arkadaşlarımı hala merak ediyorum. Ablam bile fransadan söz açıldığında “aa Schenez napıyo acaba şu an” diyor. Sürekli konuşuyoruz, fotoğrafları var.

APPENDIX I

Interview with Ayşe Şen
Eylül, 2007, Behramkale

Sen neler yaptın festivalde?

Ayşe Şen: İşte festival sırasında ekmek istediler, un aldı onlar, biz de yoğurduk, yaptık, fırında pişirdik..börek yapıverdik..Çağla ve Asiye ile yemek yapmıştık..

Hiç gösterilere gitmiyor muydun?

Ayşe Şen: Çıkmıyorduk. Bir defa gittik. Orda İngilizler, bişeyler çaldılar, gösteri yaptılar, ona çıktık. Bi kere de okul bahçesinde yaptılar, ona gittik. Adam yattı, gelin bekliyo başında, bi kalktı, bin sene olmuş..Ali (oğlu) kuş olmuştu bi kerede..

Ona gitmedin mi?

Ayşe Şen: Gittik ama çok kalabalıktı. Yol kenarlarından bakıyoduk biz. Yaptılardı, bilmiyorum ki...

Sanatçılarla aynı ortamda bulunuyo muydun?

Ayşe Şen: Yok, yemek yapıyoduk, götürüyorlardı..

O İngilizlerin oyunu çok güzeldi, çocuklarını dağda mı bıraktıysa naptı, hep onları aradı, sonunda çocuklarını buldu, arabanın camlarını falan kırdıydı..konuşmalarını anlamıyoz da, izleyince gene anlıyoz, bi de kalede gelinli bi oyun yaptılar, o da çok güzeldi.

Kadınlar çok katılmadı heralde...

Ayşe Şen: Bizim kadınlarımız hiç öyle şeylere katılmıyo. Hala da öyleyiz. Başka yerlerde televizyonlarda görüyoruz, köyün kadınları çıkıyo, şarkı söylüyo, bizim kadınıımız asla onu yapmaz, katılmaz da nedense.. yani otellere işçi diye bile gitmiyolar. Otellerde çalışanlar hep dışardan gelirler. Ama şimdi şimdi onu da yapmazlardı, yukarda sergi açıyolar.. eskiden çok ayıplıyorlardı, gittikçe biraz biraz açıldı. Bizim köyün kadınları gitse bile bakmaya gider oyunlara..

Bir hafta devamlı ona baktı herkes, köprü yanlarına falan gidemedilerse de buralara gidildi, görüldü, sezon yeniden tekrarlanıyodu..

Kadın sanatçılar sizle konuşmuyo muydu?

Ayşe Şen: Yok, sokulan oluyodu da, öyle çok konuşan olmuyordu.

APPENDIX J

**Interview with Süreyya Yılmaz- Bayram Bilgin ve Celal Sidar
Eylül, 2007, Behramkale**

Size nasıl anlatıldı bu festival, katılmaya nasıl karar verdiniz?

Biz Hüseyin abiyi çok severiz, köylü olarak. Çocukken gelirdi ilk. Yabancı olarak ilk gelenler annesi babası.. Yabancı deriz köyden hariç olan.. biz hüseyin abiyi köylü olarak görürüz. Yaşasaydı da duysaydı, biz onun için ölüme kadar gideriz. Çok zengin biriydi, oturur bizle içki içerdi, aynı tabaktan yemek yerdi, ona yardımcı olmak bizim için bi zevkti.

Nasıl çalıştınız?

Geceleri çalıştık. Biz akatlıydık. Akatlılar truvalıları yeniyor...ilk provalarda ritm tutuyoduk. Biz bunu şamata olarak görüyoduk, ama truvaya gittiğimizde profesyonel oyuncular gibi oyun oynadık..ilk sordukları soru hangi tiyatrodan oynuyosunuz du. Biz de behramkale gençliğiyiz derdik..

Diğer sanatçılarla ilişkileriniz nasıldı?

Egeli olduğumuz için biz sıcakkanlıyızdır,...

Simurg'a nasıl çalıştınız?

Ona da işte geceleri çalıştık, gündüz çünkü koyunumuz, sığırımız, traktörümüz var...bizim zamanımız akşam ezanıyla başlar, gece ilerleyen saatlere kadar..

Mesela kuş rolünde oynama için ne çalıştınız, beden, ses?

En iyi öğrenen zaten bizizdir. Biz kıvrakızdır, dans vardı orda. Ben oyunu çok severim..roman havasını falan.. Hüseyin abi gözünde canlandırdı, yakıştırdı, bize rol verdi sonra..bana keklik verdi mesela..

Sonra ismini hatırlayamayacağım ama denizde yaptık bir tane, safoda ben kurtarıcı olarak..dansçı bi bayan vardı, hintli, Mustafa Kaplan'la beraber..bizim için bir zevkti, Hüseyin abi olsaydı Assos biraz daha Assos olurdu.

En zevkle oynadığınız hangisi?

Truva..ilk göz ağrısı..bi de onda çok daha fazla prova yaptık. O yıl çok acı ve çok tatlı yılımızdı. Köyümüzde tam festivalin başlayacağı zaman 17 yaşında bi bacımız kanserden öldü.

Dans da ettim dedim, dansı daha çok sevdim...

Oyun havalarını çok severim. Ama bize gösterilen neyse biz en iyi şekilde yaptık. Mesela kamillerin fransızların şeyinde, bana bi kere dediler, sabrine gibi dans edebilirmisin. Ben bi baktım, şöyle bi şeyler yapıyo, (gösteriyor..) bale gibi..ben dedim, tamam yaparım, hiç provasız..bi kere çıktım kalenin üstüne orda oynadım..

En çok truvada çalıştım dediniz...

Evet zaman daha çoktu hem de acemiydik..

İlk çıktığınızda ne hissettiniz.?

Biz köy gençleri olarak gülyüzlüyüzdür, biz kıkır kıkır gülüyoruz, insanları karşımızda bi görünce “aa bu iş ciddi galiba” dedik..Asiyeler falan da bize bakıyomuş sürekli, gülceklermi acaba diye. Biz onlardan usta olduk iş ciddiye binince. Birbirimizi uyarıyoruz falan...yanlışımız olmaz da, ezberledik çünkü...heyecan olabilir, en iyi şekilde yapmaya çalıştık ve yaptık da..

Oyun sırasında aklınızda kalan bir şey var mı?

Şimdi bizim akatlar güçlü olduğumuz için yöremizin harmandalını en iyi şekilde biz oynayacağız, truvalılar da başka şeyler yapacak.. İlk karşılaştığında Nadi “aaah” yapıyo, bizim başımızdaki aahh yapmıyo, en son akşam nadi yapmadı, o yaptı. Şaşırdık yani...bozuntuya vermiyosun, tekrarı yok. Mesela küçükler vardı, 9-10 yaşında..doğum anını canlandıran.. karıncalar sarmış,toprağa yatıyorlar, yerdeler ya, esas ölüyüm, seyirciler anlamasın diye, kıpırdamamak için, elleyemiyoz süreya abi diyo yani..o kadar kaptırdık kendimizi. Bize soruyolar, hangi tiyatrodasınız diye, biz de valla 20 gündür çalışıyoruz...

Simurgun güzelliği neydi?

Köyü dolaşması..bu festivalin özelliği yerinde olması..sahnede değil, her yer sahne. Mesela okulun bahçesini kaleler var, biz hem oyuncuar şarkı söyleyerek seyirciyi takip ettiriyoruz, getiriyoruz, hemen bir arkadaşımız seyircilerin arasından bi çatıya çıkıyor, biz devam ediyoruz, sonra ordan eskiden bizim küllük dediğimiz yere çıkıyor biri..bi de manzara ve yer olarak seçiyodu hüseyin abi köyü bildiği için..sonra sokaklardan öyle öyle, en sonunda keklik..”kekliğim düz ovada...”onu..

Peki Simurg’da köyde dolaşırken sokaktakilerin tepkileri nasıldı?

Biliyorlar. Belki başka biri yapmış olsaydı, yadırgayabilirdi ama hüseyin abi olunca..bizim köy alışık. Yabancılar geldi mesela, köy meydanında 20 akşam prova yaptılar. Mesela çobanlarla yattılar, damda kaldılar. 20 akşam burlarda çalıştılar. Alışık olduğumuz için bize yabancı gelmiyo..

Bütün hikayeyi anlattı mı?

Mesela diyo ki burda bu olsa nasıl olur, başka yer var mı diye sorar.. Hüseyin abi 12 ayın 8 ayı veya 6 ayı burda olurdu..

Simurg’u nasıl anlattı size? aklınızda kaldı mı? bütün kuşlar yola çıkıyorlar...

Bütün kuşlar yola çıkıyorlar..simurgun güzelliğini mi almak için...en sonunda simurgun olamadığını anlıyorlar..şimdi mitolojiden olduğu için konular..biz..

Safo’yu hatırlıyor musun?

Evet, ama neresini hatırlıyosun diye sorarsan, hindistanlının dans zamanı Hüseyin abinin çıkamayıp da davula vururken denize düştüğü anı hatırlıyorum. Dansa başlayacak, biz gelmeye başlaycaz açıktan sandallarla.. çıkımıyo bi türlü, ama akıllara sakat, seyirci var. Limandan izliyolar, biz açık denizdeyiz..ha Hüseyin abinin bi işi varsa zamanında gitcen.. onun konusu da zincirlenen bir kadın mı, bi bayanı kurtarmaktı, biz onu götürdük zincirlerle falan da.. sözümüz olmadığı için.. görsel sadece... o yüzden aklımda kalmıyo tam.. Selçuk Gürışık tasarımcı, çok güzel kostümler yaptı.. çok değerli bi abi..

Safo'ya nasıl çalıştınız?

Daha zordu. Yabancıların daolmasıyla..biz orda çok az bi köy gençliğiydik.o zaman bizi hep beraber değil de böldü..artık profesyonel olduk, 3. 4. oyun olduğumuz için..Mesela biz orda şen olarak geliyoruz, darbuka çalmayı öğrendik..birimiz zil..borazanlar vardı..kusura bakma kaba konuşuyoruz ama ismini bilmiyoruz ki..

Siz Safo'da oynadınız mı?

Bayram: Hayır, Truva'da..şimdi Truva'yı filme çektiler ya..onu izliyince daha iyi anlıyoruz..Biz olayın ne olduğunu bilmiyoruz ya.. sadece anlatıyor bize, işte akalılar var, şu var diye..mekan yok, sadece düz bi alanda prova yapıyoruz..bütün alan tiyatro sahnesi derdi..

Siz daha önce oynadınız mı tiyatrodada?

Bayram: Hayır, köy çocuğuyuz biz..bi truvada bi simurgda oynadım. Bütün sokakları kullandı simurgda. İnsanlar mesela burdan gelirken o evin üzerinde başka bir görsellik var, orda başka bir hareket, burda başka, biz bile bakıyoduk, karşı taraftaki de başka bişey yapıyo, hepsi bütünleşyo..

Süreya: Şimdi bize tahtadan kılıçla yaptık. Nerde biliyo musun, camin altında bi ev var, orda yukarda kuş oynuyo biz de aşağıda kılıçla dans ediyoruz, ama profesyonel tiyatrocular bile oynayamaz..gündüz çalışıyoz gece prova..

Bayram: Akalılar ve Truvalılar karşı karşıya gelirdik..Ayla Algan bi taraftan arya söylüyo, askerler bi taraftan savaşıyo, güzellik yarışması oluyo, çoban paris falan orda, herkesin bölümü var. Nadi güler geldi bi anda nara attı...iki karşı tarafın savaççısı savaş yapacak. –ben işmdi filmi izleyince daha iyi anladım- orda hiç nara atma falan yoktu normalde.. Nadi nara attı, bu sefer ben de baktım onun bağirtısına nara attım. Hüseyin Katırcıoğlu, “işte bu ya işte bu..çocuklar bunu bile becerdi, aferin size..o bağırınca sen de bağırırdn, helal olsun sana anladın işi” dedi. Çok güzeldi.

Süreya: şimdi truvanın filmi var ya. Ondan da güzel oldu.yerinde çekiyo, yapmacık hiçbirşey yok. Makyajdı ıvırdı, zıvırdı hiçbirşey yok. Sadece kostümlerimiz var, ayakkabılarımız bile kendi doğal ayakkabımız.

Bizi kim izleyecek diye sormuyor muydunuz kendinize?

Bayram: Şimdi biz zannediyoduk ki bunlara gelen melen olmaz,numara yok gibi geliyodu gülüyoduk önce, napıyoz biz, tap tap akşama kadar tahta vuruyoduk, noluyo

abi..iktir kaktır birbirimize muhabbet olsun, bunlara bakan da olmaz, kim bakcak, öyle hevesine gidiyoduk akşam olduđu zaman..kahvede oturacađımıza gidiyoduk.. ama reklamını güzel yaptı..

Süreya: Şunu da söyleyeyim, Hüseyin abi kendi maddiyatıyla.. Truvada ilk olarak kokteyle biz hüseyin abinin sayesinde gittik. Yemeđimizi falan yiyip gittik. Yük olmak istemiyoz..bi gittik salamın üstüne küük küçük şey koymuşlar...

Bayram: kürdan al ye kürdan al ye bitmiyor, doymayız, biz alışmışız halil ibrahim sofrasına..

Çalışmalarda sanatçılarla nasıl anlaşıyordunuz?

Hüseyin abi bizim tiyatrocı olmadığımızı bildiđi için, yükü ne kadar kaldırabileceğimizi de bildiđi için çok da üzerimize gitmedi..

Vazgeçen oldu mu hiç?

Oldu, yoğunluktan vazgeçen oldu. Kendi işlerinden dolayı.. akşam biraz dinlenmek istiyö. Bi de artık ben bu işi yapıcım, devam edicem, bırakmamam lazım bilincine vardığın zaman, mutluluk duyduğün zaman o işten devam ediyosun. Ama işi çıkan oluyodu mutlaka tabi..

Normal kıyafetlerinizle mi çalışıyordunuz, yoksa eşofmanla mı gidiyordunuz?

Yok yok, normal kıyafetle..beden çalışması spor gibi yapmıyoduk da ritm için çalışıyoduk tabi..

Bayram: 250 metrekare alanın içinde prova yaptık, araziyi bilmiyoduk, asker nerden gelecek, nerde savaşcak, 1 saatin içinde bize anlattı burdan inceksiniz, şurdan geliceksiniz.

Süreya: Tabi, burda prova yaptık, asıl oynayacağımız yeri hiç görmedik. bi de zaman da çok önemli, günün batımına kadar, gün batıyo oyun bitiyö...bir saat içinde...Amerikalı çocuk bile gösteride vardı. Rüzgar iktirdiđi için bezleri, bezin tümünün açılması lazım aşağıya kadar, çocuk doğacak aşağı kadar açılınca..."no problem" diyo, biz yukardan duyuyoz onları, ama işin ciddiyetini aldığımız için gülmüyo, eskiden gülüyoduk.

Köyde yürürken Simurg için tanıdıklarınızla göz göze gelince konsantrasyonunuz bozulmuyö müydü hiç?

Süreya: yok yok hiç..

Bayram: valla benim babam öyle şeylere hiç ilgi duymazdı. O gün koyun doğurmuş bizim, benim de kafamda da bi kuş şeyi var..traktör var, o traktörle koyunu köye getirmemiz lazım. Sokaklar falan her yer festival alanı gibi. Taşlar kırmızı boyalı, küçük küçük çakıl taşları toplandı yollara, çalılar boyandı ağlarla, balıkçı ağlarıyla..ben o şekilde babamın karşısına çıktım. Tabi adam 60 yaşında, görmemiş böyle bir şey hiç.."ne bu haliniz" dedi. Prova yapmadan önce hazırlanırken kıyafetler üzerimizde,

babam la konuşuyoz, gitcez alcaz koyunu, bi yandan da işi de devam ettirmek gerekiyo. Böyle karşılaşmalar oluyo mutlaka da... Onlar da gülüyo...napıyorsunuz diyo ama...

Önceden tiyatro hakkında ne düşünürdünüz?

Bayram: valla tiyatro hakkında hiç bir şey düşünmüyordum. Film çevirenler oluyodu, işte tarık akan, “suyun öteki yanında falan. Bölüm bölüm film çevirenler oldu. Sinemayı gördük de, tiyatro nasıl bişey bilmiyoduk.. bizi burdan götürürlerdi, figüran lazım oldu diye de..kazıda çalışan işçi rolünü oynardık, ordan atla eşekle geçen köylü rolünü oynardık falan..alıştık aslında böyle şeylere..

Şimdi tiyatro duyduğunuzda...

Daha sıcağız tabi..Bi de bilinçli olarak da bakıyoruz, tabi..

Süreya: 93’ten beri çok farklar oldu. O zamana kadar hiç böyle bir şey olmamış.. Şimdi bizim köy, kadirga, iskele değişiktir, örf ve adetimiz bile değişiktir.. sahille köy arasında fark var. Bizim eşimiz gelip de buraya oturmaz (kahveyi kastediyor) O özelliğimiz de vardır.

Kadınlar oynamadı hiç değil mi?

Süreya: Hayır, arka planda Selçuk abiye yardımcı oldular, dikişte mikişte falan.. Ama sanatçılar bir ay harıl harıl çalışma..ayla algan bi kuruş para almadı..dilekle burda tanıştılar, muratın burda özlemle tanıştılar, parlama yılı.. Turizmin sezonunun da sonuna rastladığından hareket getiriyordu.

Peki ilk senesi ile son senesi arasında fark var mıydı, bir düşüş oldu mu sizce?

Bayram: Daha yükseliş vardı..devam etseydi şu an çok büyük festival olacağı ışığı vardı, müthiş olacaktı..

Süreya: Ya inanırmısınız, simurg oynuyoruz ya, kuyruğun arkası belki sonuna denk geliyodu oyunun. Çünkü oluk oluk insan akıyodu. Bi de burda bitiyö mesela yarım saat sonra başka bi yerde var.. hadi oraya gidiliyo..zamanları gösterilerin bizim kahvenin camına asılırdı.

Bayram: Bi de en son sinevizyon yapardık.

Süreya: Festivali gösteriyodu, hep alkış alkış, sonra da gece kutlamaya kadirgaya...

Siz nasıl hatırlıyorsunuz?

Celal: Heyecanlı oluyordu, çalışmalarda herkes elinden ne geliyosa onu yapıyodu, Hüseyin abi de bizi teşvik ediyodu, “çok iyi oluyo, bunu gerçek bir tiyatrocü bile yapamaz” diye bizi teşvik ederdi.

Süreya: Gaz yapmasını da iyi bilirdi.

Celal: Mesela müzik olarak çalışırken de kendi özel tasarımları vardı, onları çalışıyordu..mesela tenekelerden müzik yapıyordu..değişik bir atmosfer, bi sürü insan gelmiş izlemeye.. işte görevimi yapabilecekmiyim diye endişe oluyor tabi..

Bayram: Saatlerce ses çıkartıyolardı. Ben dinliyodum, bi yerden tuhaf bi ses geliyo ama ne bu. Onlar o şeyin havasına göre ses bulmaya çalışıyorlardı. Sonunda da buluyolardı..işte bu ses buraya gider. Arya gibi süşünün mesela, o tempoda, sözle değil de havayla, ritmle uyguluyolardı..

Süreya: Truva'da göğsümüze vurarak ritm tutuyoduk mesela. Öğrenmek için 3-5akşam ritm tuttuk.. Ama bunu burda yapmadık, taşlarla yaptık önce..sonra göğsümüzde yaptık.. ritm vuruyoruz, çocuk doğuyor..en son siyahlar içinde –kötü ya- paris doğuyor..

Celal: Köylü insanı cahil dersin, ama eline bir şey verince insan, becermeye uğraşiyor yani.

Süreya: Mesela japonlar o akdar ilerledi diyodu, bir harmandalı ritmini bulamıyor diyodu..valla bulamıyo, orgta harmandalı ritmi yok..

Bayram: O dijital şey harmanadlının ritmini yakalayamıyo, davul ve zurnanın verdiği şeyi yakalayamıyo..

Süreya: Bizim köyde dilsiz ve sağır biri var. O bile ritm tuttu, onla oyun oynadık biz.. – hüseyinden sonra..-Hüseyin abi bizi havaya sokmasını bilen biriydi. Geliyodu bi ay iki ay önce, seneye falanca oyunu oyncaz,,sen şu rolü oynayacaksın..”tamam hüseyin abi, diyoduk hemen.

Bayram: köyde kime sorarsanız sorun ne isterse istesin hüseyin abinin istediğini yapmayacak insan yoktu yani...

Süreya: mesela maçlar olur ya köyler arasında, hüseyin abi tak istanbuldan gelirdi, maçta oynardı bizle. Formamızı sağlar, düğün olur ona gelir, mesela köyde düğünde sokak sokak gezersin, bi yere oturursun, bi rüzgar gelir, mantının yoğurdu kapkara olur,ama Hüseyin abi onu bizle verdi.. sarhoş ya..”bunun diyodu şeyini yapcaz, mitolojik tarafını oynayacağız.” Simurgu öyle anlatıyodu...damardan giriyodu...

Bayram: Simurg kendine bulma anlamında heralde, ayanaya bakıyo, özüne dönüyo.öyle bir teması vardı.. Saatlerce okurduk onu bi kelime anlamazdık..

Süreya: Bana gelirdi, ezberledin mi.. Ezberledim abi derdim. Okurdum... “öyle olmaz” derdi, tavuskuşu kibardır, şöyle yapacaksın derdi..bi kere göstereyim tamam onu yapıyoduk biz. Mesela keklik, omuzdan oynayacaksın. Şöyle şöyle oynayacaksın derdi..

İzlediğiniz diğer oyunlardan sizi en çok etkileyen hangisi?

Bayram: Valla şimdi hepsi gösteri sanatı olduğundan sokak sokak. O an için onu yaşıyon, ona bir yorum da getiremiyon..

Süreya: Yarım saat gösteri için iki gün tünel kazdırdılar, yövme verdiler. Mesela o gösteride bayan ve erkek yarı çıplaktı. Ve hiçbir şey olmadı.

Süreya: Mesela bazen geliyodu, ne anladın diyolardı, iki tane kuş öttü diyoduk, öyle kaptırmı...sanatçıya bile soruyosun da, aslında hiçbirşey anlamıyo...

Bayram: Ya anlamak için değil de o andaki şeyi yaşamak, o anda oluyo ve bitiyö, o anda doğal bi yeri geziyosun, taş evden bi anda her yerde oyun, o anda oynanıyo ve bitiyö.

Süreya: Hangi anne baba çocuklarını hiç tanımadığı kişilere teslim eder de tiyatro çalıştırır. Çocuklar okuldan çıkıyolardı, köprü altına çalışmaya..

Sonradan tiyatroyla ilgilenen oldu mu hiç çocuklardan?

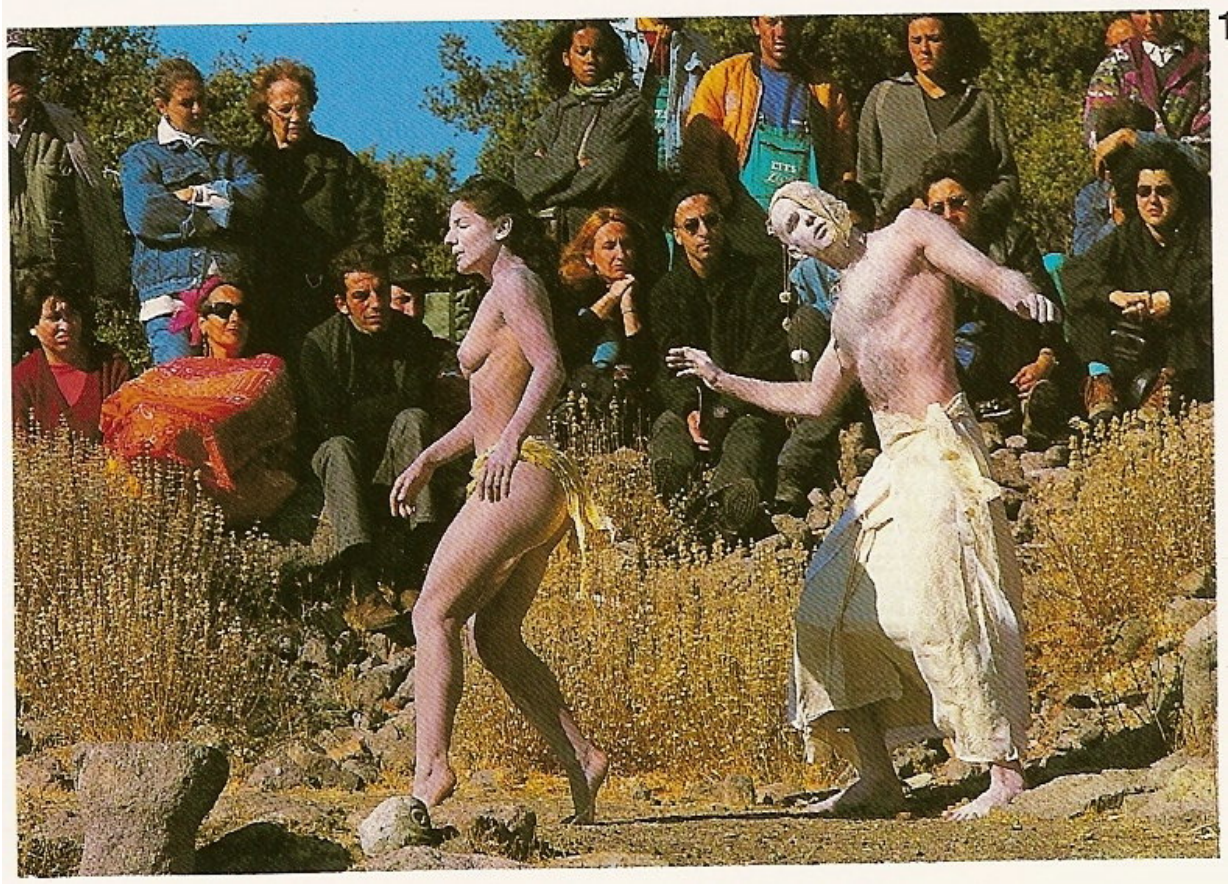
Bayram: Yok olmadı. önayak olan olsaydı..

APPENDIX K
Photograph from *Simurg*



Photograph: Levent Öget
From the Performance of *Simurg* with huge costumes and puppets.

APPENDIX L
Photograph from *The Sleeping Water*



An image from *The Sleeping Water* by Australian group Chapel of Change. For more information see, http://www.chapelofchange.com/theatre_u.html#uyu

APPENDIX M
Photograph of Hüseyin Katircioğlu



Hüseyin Katircioğlu, with his costumes for the performance “Sapho”.

APPENDIX N

Photograph of *Sanatın Çocukluğu* by Aydın Teker



Photograph: Ayşegül Fevzioğlu, retrieved from *Gist 2*.

The children and Sarah Smallwood are on the historical bridge in Behramkale for Aydın Teker's performance *Sanatın Çocukluğu* which was referred at the pages 41 and 42.

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