

RE-WRITING OF CITY-TEXT THROUGH AUDIAL

by

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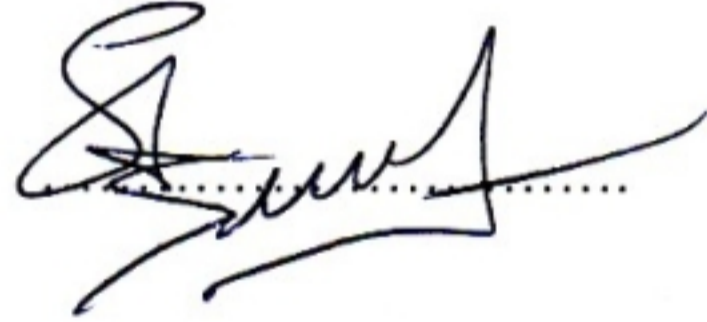


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ABSTRACT

RE-WRITING OF CITY-TEXT THROUGH AUDIAL

BİTECİK, Ü. DOĞUŞ

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This thesis investigates and argues for the new ways of experiencing the city through audial. In this context, sound environment of the city is considered as potential for new possibilities of urban experience. Simultaneously, borrowing from Roland Barthes, semantic reading of the city is used as a method to analyze the urban in all contexts. In other words, city-text is analyzed through sounds of the city and number of video/sound experimentations accompany this analysis both as subjects and objects of this study.

ÖZ

KENT-METİN'İ SES ÜZERİNDEN YENİDEN YAZMAK

BİTECİK, Ü. DOĞUŞ

Görsel Sanatlar ve Görsel İletişim Tasarımı Yüksek Lisans Programı

TEZ DANIŞMANI: CAN CANDAN

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Bu tez, şehri işiterek deneyimlemenin yeni yollarını araştırmakta ve irdelemektedir. Bu çerçevede, şehrin işitsel çevresi kentsel deneyimin yeni olasılıkları için potansiyel olarak düşünülmektedir. Aynı zamanda, Roland Barthes'in düşüncelerinden yola çıkarak, şehrin semantik incelemesi kentin tüm alanlarını analiz etmede kullanılmaktadır. Diğer bir deyişle, şehir-metin şehrin sesleri aracılığı ile analiz edilmekte ve bir dizi video/ses deneyi bu analize gerek nesne gerek özne olarak eşlik etmektedirler.

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Can Candan, for being a good friend, a patient professor and a role model at the same time.

To mom.

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INTRODUCTION

The tendency in Western culture, since Aristotle, has been to place sight first in a hierarchy of senses, followed by hearing and the other senses. This primacy of the visual, however, has not always been constant; in medieval Europe, for instance, hearing as the sense through which the word of God was perceived often displaced sight, and the ranking of the senses itself was a popular theme. In Alain de Lille's allegorical epic *Anticlaudiaunus* (1183), as related by Constance Classen, the senses are represented by five horses that pull a carriage carrying Prudence to Heaven. 'Sight is first in the shafts as the swiftest of the horses, followed by Hearing, Smell (enveloped in the fragments of flowers), Taste and Touch. The coach is unable to reach Heaven, however, so Prudence, persuaded by Theology, unharnesses Hearing and rides on to Heaven with him alone.' More recently, in *Notes sur le cinématographe* (1975), the film-maker Robert Bresson writes, 'The eye (in general) superficial, the ear profound and inventive. The whistle of a train engine imprints in us the vision of an entire station.'¹

Late 80's, Ankara². It is Sunday morning and sun is really shining upon us. Table is set up, tea is steeped, everything is ready for the perfect breakfast but one thing. Everyone is waiting for that sound to fill the air of the street. "Simidiyeeee!" And yet the simitçi³ comes and the morning is now complete. 2007, Istanbul⁴. It is one of those summer days and the city is about to evaporate. I have charged my iPod, transferred new songs which I have downloaded last night and am ready for the cacophony of the city. I am not waiting for that sound to fill the air of the street and pump the volume up before I get out. I walk in the streets with my headphones and everything seems complete with the music in my ears. I am the simitçi now, shouting silently in the street through my iPod.

The relationship between *visible* and *audible* has always been problematic in all senses, if one agrees to acknowledge that there is a relationship. Despite the fact that there are certain exceptional situations, like the one above, visible has always been dominant in this relationship where audible is always ignorable unless it is extreme. In other words, sound needs to be marginalized to dominate this relationship, however, these rare cases would be excluded because they are already extreme. In that sense, it may seem inconsistent to start with a quotation which already negates and shakes the ground that I will build my thesis on. The reason behind that is to show that I am neither

¹ Kruth, Patricia & Stobart, Henry, "Introduction", *Sound*, eds. Patricia Kruth & Henry Stobart, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 4.

² Capital of Turkey

³ Turkish word for simit (savory roll covered with sesame seed) seller.

⁴ The most crowded city of Turkey

the first nor the only one to stand against the dominance of visible in the name of audible. Countless number of arguments have been raised about this issue, many books have been written. My intention in getting involved in such a deep (-rooted) and over-discussed argument is that I will re-frame the issue in the context of urban-image and urban-sound. By doing so, I will try to elaborate on the issue in a more daily, everyday-life way and see if the argument of “the certainty, clarification and justification of reality through vision”⁵ that has penetrated our lives long ago by Western culture applies to urban life of contemporary people.

I am not planning to look for the reasons of this unbalanced relationship but it would be a good starting point to lay some background information for my subject by taking a very general look at different areas that this statement is already proved.

Lost voices: sounds from the past

So far as I know, no historian has ever listened to history, that is, listened to those who were listening, in contradiction to those who were not, in an attempt to deduce what might have been happening or about to happen as a result of the clairaudience of some and the deafness of others.⁶

With the sense of hearing, the presence of the contemporary at the historian's table has created not only resonance but also an excess of clarity about the past.⁷

When history is explored, it can be seen that there has been a great change in people's daily habits parallel to the shift from orality to literacy. They have mutated from sound making and absorbing life forms (speaking and listening) into silent creatures, scanners of written words, 'isolated readers in the linear world of text'.⁸ Print revolution is also crucial in the context of memory and remembering. Anonymous songs has become

⁵ Jay, Martin, “Introduction”, *Downcast eyes: the denigration of vision in twentieth century*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993) 7.

⁶ Schafer, R. Murray, Introduction, *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world*, (New York: Knopf, 1977) 4.

⁷ Schmidt, Leigh Eric, “Hearing Loss”, *The auditory culture reader*, eds. Micheal Bull & Les Back, (New York: Berg, 2003) 41.

⁸ Ibid. p.42

written solid historical evidents and simultaneously memory has started to be written instead of spoken. Words became printed objects more than spoken sounds, “things to be seen rather than voices to be heard”⁹. One lead to the other and ontology of memory transformed into visual rather than auditory. Now, I can read my grandfather's memoirs, I can look at a photograph of him, I can stare at his portrait made by a painter or a landscape of 50's Ankara made by him but I can never borrow his ears and listen to Adile Naşit at Şan Tiyatrosu¹⁰ in the 80's. In that sense, nearly all historians are deaf or ventriloquists of the past. This situation is not only valid for historians but it is also the case for any person who eventually has a memory of the past. I wonder if anyone will remember the voice of general Kenan Evren¹¹ declaring junta instead of his image on television.

However, music behaves surprisingly differently than other types of sound. The reason for that is the main elements of music: melody, rhythm and repetition. Last but not the least, repetition makes most of the difference. As Freud wrote in his essay 'Remembering, Repeating and Working Through', repetition may provide both access to memory and a resistance to it depending on the individual and circumstances.¹² Music, as a language of repetitions, has always been in this play involving memory as a leading actor. So, different from sounds occurring only once in ten years, like the voice of the general, music, especially recorded music, is repeated everyday, multiple times. Of course, the issue of recording sound/music could be introduced here but since it would lead us to whole another set of problematic subjects such as authenticity, I prefer not to explore this further.

affect/effect

⁹ Schafer, R. Murray, Introduction, *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world*, (New York: Knopf, 1977) 8.

¹⁰ Şan Theatre was the most active venue until it burned down in mid 80's.

¹¹ Leader of the September 12, 1980 military coup in Turkey

¹² Freud, Sigmund. (1914g). Errinern, Wiederholen und Durcharbeiten (Weitere Ratschläge zur Technik der Psychoanalyse, II). *Internationale Zeitschrift für ärztliche Psychoanalyse*, 2, 485-491; Remembering, repeating and working-through. *SE*, 12: 147-156.

It would be making the same mistake to attempt a reversal of this situation and establish a dethroning of the eye and a raising up of the ear which would only end up with the same hierarchic, oppositional convention that rely upon dichotomies. However, image, with all its great history in occularcentric West, thoughts build on its nobility of all other senses, papers written on its illusionary effects, comes, at the same time, with its own institutions and conventions. This situation reveals itself in the most obvious way through cinema. As Iain Chambers suggests, in his essay "Maps, Movies, Musics and Memory",

The potential ambiguity, and subsequent freedom, of the film and image is not denied, but institutional and economic pressures, even the ideological premises of factuality embodied in common-sensical understandings of the visual, rarely permit that promise¹³ to be.¹⁴

As Chambers pointed out, image/visual/visible is too much pre-determined, pre-defined, pre-mediated, pre-conceived that it is nearly impossible to create an *affect*¹⁵ with it. Most probably it is the effect that is created by image. A cognitive effect especially after television has penetrated every living room. One may argue that sound has a longer history in living rooms than image in the form of music, but then the ontology of image and sound has to be argued. Image, certainly, creates a freedom of semantic space but in the mean time it triggers an addiction mechanism that sucks in people who were exposed to it. But sound works its way through other, less used channels and ear is still a relatively virgin organ in spite of industrial revolution and its effects on daily decibel. Sound is simultaneous and temporary. You cannot see it coming. It just happens and vanishes quickly. But it never disappears. It flashes from memory and echoes to infinity. Sound is more of a feeling rather than a scenery to analyze and when analytic tools are taken away, then it becomes obligatory to find new ways of thinking about and interpreting the whole cultural, sociological, psychological and political habitus around us. As Bishop Berkeley perfectly puts it

¹³ However, experimental film and video are the possible candidates to fulfill that promise.

¹⁴ Chambers, Iain, "Maps, Movies, Musics and Memory", *The Cinematic City*, ed. David B. Clarke, (London: Routledge, 1997) 231.

¹⁵ Affects, according to Deleuze, are not simple affections, as they are independent from their subject. Artists create affects and percepts, "blocks of space-time", whereas science works with functions, according to Deleuze, and philosophy creates concepts.

Sounds are as close to us as our thoughts and by listening we may be able to perceive the relationship between subject and object, inside and outside, and the public and private altogether differently.

And this difference may also lead us to re-think the problematic relationship between image and sound where they act together and not against each other.

image and sound with small letters

I mean, by shewing, that this lat[t]er of *Hearing*, is capable of all those improvements which the sense of *Seeing* has received from Art; besides many more advantages that the *Ear* may enjoy, by the help of our Doctrine, above the *Eye*; all which moreover will be of as great benefit to mankind, as any thing that *Opticks* has yet discovered, if not of greater; which, with some other preeminences that it has upon another Score, will happily render *Acousticks* the nobler Science of the two.¹⁶

To achieve such a relationship, one should de-capitalise the letters of image first and it would be a way to start from the beginning of this prioritization. Plato's cave is the ultimate thought this whole occularcentric order has been primarily founded on but, most of the time, it is forgotten that Plato's cave is not only an idea that floats in a universe of abstraction but it also implies a space. A space that has a volume. However, prisoners of this space is always said to suffer from the shadows but it is easily forgotten that they were troubled not only by the flickering images but also by the echoes. Historians and philosophers have somehow, and repeatedly, happened to forget (ignore?) this particular piece of knowledge but it is a reality to face: image and sound were *already* accompanying each other.

From ancient Greece to the 21st century, Micheal Foucault is still one of the most dominant figures of post-structuralist thought and his famous critique of power is again

¹⁶ Boyle, Robert cited in Schafer, R. Murray, *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world*, (New York: Knopf, 1977) 38.

based on scopic surveillance regimes of the west. Foucault used Bentham's panopticon¹⁷ as a metaphor of transparency of vision where the prisoners are always visible to the guardians of the institution. However, Foucault's description covers only *one part of the picture*¹⁸, 'the uncritical embracing of which represents the reading of the past through the epistemological lens of the present.'¹⁹ We tend to see what we want to see most of the time but walls have ears. Bentham's panopticon was also an auditory surveillance machine in which, through a series of listening tubes inspired by Dionysius of Syracuse²⁰, at some points of observation, guardians could not only see everything that was done, but through a remarkable acoustic design, they could hear everything that was spoken, even if it was whispered. This whole situation can be adapted to today very easily by using the cellular phones because it is, now, officially accepted that any government can, and should if necessary, listen in on the phone calls of an individual any time it wants.

In other words, aural and visual are always connected one way or another through some channels but it is crucial for my purposes to see how the relationship between them functions in the context of the urban. In order to be able to discuss such a relationship, first I will introduce the notion of *soundscape*, discuss its definition and historical development through time. I will start with natural soundscapes, then pre-industrial soundscapes and lastly, I will mention (post)industrial soundscapes. Then, I will elaborate on the perception of the city-image through city-sounds in which I will mention the concept of reading the city as a textual material followed by the "city as a film set". As for the final chapter, I will make connections between my research and my

¹⁷ The Panopticon is a type of prison building designed by English philosopher Jeremy Bentham in the late eighteenth century. The concept of the design is to allow an observer to observe (*-opticon*) all (*pan-*) prisoners without the prisoners being able to tell if they are being observed or not, thus conveying a "sentiment of an invisible omniscience." In his own words, Bentham described the Panopticon as "a new mode of obtaining power of mind over mind, in a quantity hitherto without example."

¹⁸ It is so ironic and pathetic that one cannot escape from dominance of vision even if s/he tries to critique it because it has already infiltrated through our daily or academic use of language in such a way that it is as natural as a blink of an eye(!).

¹⁹ Schmidt, Leigh Eric, "Hearing Loss", *The auditory culture reader*, eds. Micheal Bull & Les Back, (New York: Berg, 2003) 52.

²⁰ His name, or rather his ear, survives eponymously in the famous S-shaped grotto that resembles the cochlea of the human ear in enormous proportions. The cave is about 64 meters long and 21 meters high with a narrow, uniform channel a few meters wide at the top. (Schafer 40)

audio-visual projects which I will use, also, as case studies. And while discussing these subjects, I will, intentionally, use some words in a grammatically wrong manner, where this alteration of language helps me articulate my points better. These alterations will be explained in the footnotes when each one of them were used for the first time.

I. URBAN SOUNDSCAPES / INDUSTRIAL SOUNDSCAPES

1. An overview of *soundscape*

“The soundscape is any acoustic field of study. We may speak of a musical composition as a soundscape, or a radio program as a soundscape or an acoustic environment as a soundscape. We can isolate an acoustic environment as a field of study just as we can study the characteristics of a given landscape. However, it is less easy to formulate an exact impression of a soundscape than of a landscape. There is nothing in sonography corresponding to the instantaneous impression which photography can create. With a camera it is possible to catch the salient features of a visual panorama to create an impression that is immediately evident. The microphone does not operate this way. It samples details. It gives the close-up but nothing corresponding to aerial photography.”²¹

A soundscape is composed of things heard, not seen or touched, and this particular characteristic highlights the disadvantage in the historical perspective. While we may have numerous photographs taken, maps drawn, portraits or landscapes painted at different times in history, we have almost nothing in the name of soundscape. So, we cannot talk about the history of this field even when we make an attempt to introduce the subject. It is certain that Murray Schafer is the most dominant figure (and maybe the only one considering the modernist scholars of those times) of soundscape studies, if there is one. He overcame the obstacle of a-historicity by a very deep analysis of western literature and by sparing a very huge amount of time for traveling around the world and collecting samples with a groups of researchers. He established a project called The World Soundscape Project (WSP) in the late 60s and early 70s at Simon Fraser University, Canada. This project had an initial intention to draw attention to the sonic environment through courses and workshops held on campus but as the time passed, the project grew both in objective and coverage. WSP has resulted in two small

²¹ Schafer, R. Murray, Introduction, *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world*, (New York: Knopf, 1977) 9.

educational booklets, *The New Soundscape* and *The Book of Noise*, plus a compendium of Canadian noise bylaws. After that, a great number of young composers answered Schafer's call for joining the project and it became a living organism in itself. Besides the direct outputs, such as recordings, books, radio programs, WSP has led many projects, papers, compositions and most importantly, this project opened people's ears to the world. In that sense, WSP can also be seen as a milestone for sound studies because it has opened the ears of musicians and sound theorists, too. As for now, 'ambient music' is accepted as a genre and actually living its golden years within the music industry with the help of technology and it is obvious that the academy produces more theoretical texts about soundscape, directly or indirectly, than it was before. That is to say, World Soundscape Project can be said to be very successful. Nevertheless, Schafer's most inspiring book *The Soundscape* was a result of this project and I will use this study as my main reference text throughout this section.

Before going into an analysis of soundscape, there are three simple features of soundscape that Schafer used in order to understand it. These are *keynote sounds*, *signals* and *soundmarks*. Keynote is actually a musical term, which is the fundamental tone of a particular song, although the musicians may modulate around it. Keynote sounds do not have to be listened carefully but they form a "ground" for the "figure" to give the figure its outline and mass and without the ground, the figure becomes shapeless, indefinite. The keynote sound of a soundscape is created mostly by geographical conditions of that particular area. It is low in pitch and could be forgotten easily. However, signals are lead singers of the soundscape orchestra. They are figure rather than ground and listened consciously. Any sound can be listened consciously, and so any sound can become signal but, for sake of consistency in discourse, it is better to accept the common values in fundamental concepts. Schafer has derived the term soundmark from landmark and it refers to "a community sound which is unique or possesses qualities which make it specially regarded or noticed by the people in that community". Great fields of boiling sulphur in New Zealand can be very good example for a soundmark.

2. Murray Schafer's analysis of soundscape

After briefly covering the key concepts and history of soundscape studies, now, I will introduce Schafer's analysis of soundscape. Relying on Schafer's thoughts and system of analysis. However, there will be parts where I will approach his determinations critically but in general, I will stick to his book *Soundscape*.

i. Notation

The dilemma of conventional musical notation today lies in the fact that it is no longer adequate to cope with the meshing of the worlds of musical expression and the acoustic environment, which I have already identified as probably the most significant music-fact of our century, or at least one which must be grasped by the acoustic designer of future soundscapes.²²

There are two descriptive methods for discussing sound: one can either talk or draw about sounds. "verba volent scripta valent". Inevitably scholars and professionals had an urge to graphically represent aural facts, however this task is not that easy to accomplish because of the complex structure of a *sound object*. Sound object (*l'objet sonore*) is a term invented by the composer Pierre Schaeffer in middle 1940s. Schaeffer defined a sound object is an acoustical "object for human perception and not as a mathematical or electroacoustical object for synthesis". Sound object can be considered the smallest self contained particle of a soundscape and, by doing that, we, now, have access to an analyzable particle so that it suggests a beginning, middle and end. Schafer named these parts as attack, body (or stationary state) and decay which I will not get into details. The problem of this abstraction of sound is lack of spatiality. Schaeffer defined a sound object as a laboratory specimen, completely detached from surrounding and the object that it is originated from. Inevitably, this approach is in a contradiction with the very definition of soundscape in the context of contextuality. Schafer finds an easy solution and simply changes name to *sound event* as the word event is defined as "something that happens at a given place and time a phenomenon located at a single point in space-

²² Schafer, R. Murray, *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world*, (New York: Knopf, 1977) 123.

time". This term also implies a society which also fits best to soundscape definition. However, Schafer could not go further for a solution in soundscape notation or maybe he did not²³ because he was aware that no matter how precisely one can represent sound by visuals, something will always be missing.

ii. Classification

All classifications are fundamentally artificial but information needs to be classified in order to be analyzed. By analyzing the soundscapes, one can see similarities, contrasts and patterns in between and move to deeper arguments and discoveries using these taxonomies. There have been attempts to adapt acoustic and psychoacoustic classifications for soundscape. The most important ones are classification according to:

physical characteristics which has variables as duration, frequency, grain and dynamics.

referential aspects which will allow sound theorists to comment on the function and meanings of sounds. This category has main variables as natural sounds, human sounds, sounds and society, mechanical sounds, etc.

aesthetic quality which is a study of the very subjective effects of sounds on individuals.

However, these categorizations never seem to interact with each other and this isolation has always been resulted in non-satisfying conclusions. Schafer brings a meta-classification which works much more efficiently in my opinion. He suggests four categories of classifiers:

1. Physicist and engineer dealing with acoustics,
2. Physiologist and psychologist dealing with psychoacoustics,
3. Linguist and communicator dealing with semantics,

²³ "A couple of years ago I was invited to speak at a symposium on transportation noise, organized by U.S. Government. For several days so forth, illustrating their work with an ambitious array of slides and charts. Not a single sound was ever played as illustration. When I spoke, I began by reading back a catalog of visual metaphors for sound from the researchers' own speeches: "you can see from the next slide that the sound has decreased in intensity" -that kind of thing. The shock of realization for those present was strong. Today acoustics is merely a science of sightreading". (Murray 128)

4. Poet and composer dealing with aesthetics

of sound. This classification of classifiers does not say anything that helps soundscape historians, but it surely shows a general picture of the situation which will be more helpful for the later parts of this paper.

iii. Perception

Auditory space has no favoured focus. It's a sphere without fixed boundaries, space made by the thing itself, not space containing the thing. It is not pictorial space, boxed-in, but dynamic, always in flux, creating its own dimensions moment by moment. It has no fixed boundaries; it is indifferent to background. The eye focuses, pinpoints, abstracts, locating each object in physical space, against a background; the ear, however, favours sound from any directions.²⁴

It is not surprising not to encounter information about the perception of sound as much as vision considering the bias of Western culture. There have been several studies about the perception of sound but most of it got stuck in the limits of perception as a mechanical phenomenon. These attempts to explain the perception of sound by excluding it from the context of a subject that perceives were fundamentally wrong anyway. However, hearing is not a physical phenomenon of wave propagation, it is also sensory and perceptual. There have been a great interest in aural perception within psychology in the past ten years. The key term is “psychoacoustics” which is the study of subjective human perception of sound. Since there has not been any concrete study about psychoacoustics before the late 20th century, and psychoacousticians had first tried to make analogies with visual perception and came up with a few common terminologies that can be used both for the visual and the aural. Figure-ground relationship was the most obvious of these and, as I have mentioned before, has nearly one-to-one meaning. However, visual studies have also borrowed the concept from psychology. According to gestalt psychologists, figure is the focus of interest and ground is the setting or context. A third component has later been added to these, *field*, meaning the place where the observation takes place. If figure corresponds to the signal or the soundmark, the ground to the ambient sounds around, then field is soundscape

²⁴ Carpenter, Edmond, cited in Schafer, R. Murray, *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world*, (New York: Knopf, 1977) 157.

itself²⁵. However, the terms may coincide in such a beautiful way, there are still lots of differences in practice, which will be getting into too much detail. Another concept that has been borrowed from visual perception is perspective. There have been huge discussions about perspective and perspectival paintings of western art. Just as perspective focusing is unique to western art, the organization of music along various dynamic planes is special to western music. Just as objects are ordered in perspective painting, depending on their distance from the viewer, so musical sounds are ordered by means of their dynamic emphasis in the virtual space of soundscape. This approach is very problematic in the sense that it is still very difficult to define what is sound-space, how it is defined in terms of spatiality.

Now that I have discussed the basics of soundscape, I will move on to context based soundscape analysis.

3. The pre-industrial soundscape (from rural to urban)

There are two great milestones in human history: the change from nomadic to agrarian life, occurred about ten thousand years ago, and the transition from rural to urban life, which has begun not so far from today and still continuing. As this later transition occurred, towns have transformed into cities, and consequently, there have been very sharp changes in soundscape of human settlements. One has to imagine the general picture of pre-industrial soundscapes in order to get a better understanding of today's soundscape. So, I will talk about the soundscapes of pre-transition and transition in this short chapter.

²⁵ Schafer, R. Murray, Introduction, *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world*, (New York: Knopf, 1977) 9.

i. The natural soundscapes / The rural soundscapes

Before getting into any subject that involves human factor, I want to mention the world without humans and its soundscapes shortly. First, there are sounds which non-living things make, namely water, wind, earth sounds. These, most of the time, make the ground ambient sounds of the natural soundscapes. Figure sounds of the natural soundscapes are made by living things in general. I call these the natural soundscapes, however Schafer prefers to call *the sounds of life*—sounds of life that we tend to forget easily in the cacophony of urban life. Birds are, obviously, the most dominant sound-makers of the natural environment and they have been subject to all kinds of research or creative process from Wagner to Rumi. The vocalization of birds have often been studied in musical terms and results of these studies have often been tried to relate it to human language. However according to Schafer:

Despite these similarities, it is obvious that to whatever extent the birds are deliberately communicating, it is for their own benefit rather than ours that their vocalizations are designed. Some men may puzzle over their codes, but most will be content merely to listen to the extravagant and astonishing symphony of their voices. Birds, like poems, should not mean, but be.²⁶

What is more important in the case of birds, as well as many other animals, is that they establish property lines and fences by using their voice long before church bells and the *ezan*²⁷. I should return to the territorialization by acoustics later in this paper. Another significant figure of natural soundscape is insects. They are labeled as the most irritating sounds of nature. Bees and cicadas are the most famous ones. Classical literature is full of references to cicadas as is oriental literature. Schafer, again, is the best reference and he points out:

They occur in the *Iliad* and in the works of Hesoid. Teocritus says that the Greeks kept them in cages for their singing ability, and this practice is still common among the children of southern lands. In *Phaedrus*, Plato has Socrates tell how the cicadas were originally men who were touched by the muses so that they devoted their lives to singing and, forgetting to eat, died to be

²⁶ Ibid. 33.

²⁷ Muslim call to prayer.

reborn as insects. In Taoism, cicadas became associated with *hsein*, the soul, and images of cicadas are employed preparing a corpse for burial, to assist the soul in disengaging itself from the body after death.

The importance of cicada in the soundscape of the South can easily be understood from these limited examples. One important feature of insects is that they form a flat-line in soundscape which is thought to be non-existent before the electrical revolution. In addition to birds and insects, there are a group of individual sound makers like roaring lion, howling wolf or laughing hyena as carnivores; howling monkey of South Africa and chest drummer gorilla as primates.

When transition from the nomadic to agrarian life occurred ten thousand years ago, there have been changes in soundscape, too. Since people started to stay in a place rather than being in motion all the time, they had the opportunity to discover, plan and build much bigger and stable tools for farming purposes. As the size of the tool gets larger, the noise that is produced by them gets larger. So, these tools surely have brought their own soundmarks. Another soundmark of the period was the horn which has come down to us from the hunt. "The horn that transpierces the gloom of the forest wilderness with heroic and bellicose tones"²⁸. The hunting horn presents us with a sound of great semantic richness. On one level, its soundmark provides a code which all hunters understand and on another level, it takes "a symbolical significance, suggesting free spaces and the natural life of the country". Another sound of similar character but totally different meanings was post horn. Schafer quotes from an anonymous Austrian writer that "It had a very significant meaning in European scene at that time. It touched all the strings of the human heart: hope, fear, longing and homesickness—it awakened all feelings with its magic".

Lastly, in discussing the transition from the rural to the urban soundscape, there is one term that needs to be cleared since it is one of the major attributes of pre-industrial soundscape: hi-fi. Hi-fi is abbreviation for high fidelity. It is often used for home stereo

²⁸ Schafer, R. Murray, *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world*, (New York: Knopf, 1977) 47.

systems but actually it is a more broader term that can also be used for soundscape. A hi-fi soundscape is one in which discrete sounds can be heard clearly because of the low ambient noise level. In a hi-fi soundscape, background and foreground can be distinguished easily²⁹. The country side is generally more hi-fi than the city; night more than day; ancient times more than modern. There is, so to say, a perspective in hi-fi soundscapes and this is the very reason that we experience distant hearing in the countryside most of the time.

ii. Sounds of time

During the fourteenth century, with the technical invention of the period, the church bell and the *ezan* have had a new company, the mechanical clock. Until then, time has always been measured silently with water clocks, sand clocks and sundials. From then on, time has been flowing in rhythm and this has had a great significance for soundscape, both urban and personal soundscape. It is the sounds of mechanical clocks and church bells filling the city air. Time is no longer relative, it is always been set and this is being reminded to people every second. Ticking has sliced daily time into fragments. It is not a simple day anymore, it is a rhythmic series of ticktocks and people have to fill the gaps in between. Time is always running in modern days and the clock (bell) always punctuates this fact audially. In other words, the clock is the very spokesman of modernity.

iii. Sounds of night

I go to bed after midnight, jaded and restless from the dissipation of the day—I start every hour from my sleep, at the horrid noise of the watchmen bawling the hour through every street, and thundering at every door; a set of useless fellow, who serve no other purposes but that of disturbing the repose of the inhabitants.³⁰

²⁹ Schafer, R. Murray, Introduction, *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world*, (New York: Knopf, 1977) 8.

³⁰ Smollett, Tobias, cited in Schafer, R. Murray, *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world*, (New York: Knopf, 1977) 62.

Watchmen were the most significant sources of sounds of the night with the curfew bells in eighteenth century European town³¹. It is almost designed to disturb people because there was curfew nearly every night for a period and everybody knew that but the authorities insisted on reminding the curfew every single night. This was a successful attempt to repress people using sound by authorities and I shall return to this later. However, this situation is not something that we are not acquainted to, considering the soundscape at night in today's cities. According to municipalities, it is the perfect time for cleaning the city from day's dirt, for maintenance and construction work to take place which results in nights as noisy as day time. But if that was not the case, nights were originally hi-fi moments of the day. After the town settled down for the night, the soundscape became hi-fi. You can hear a cab rolling down the street from one end to the other for a long time. However, that's not the case with the city-image. When all the lights go out at night where literally no light left, perspectival space vanishes into darkness of the city. When there is nothing to see, visual perspective can be said to be approximately zero but as the city gets hi-fi at nights, ironically, sonic space becomes perspectival. In other words, sonic and visual spaces have a reverse relationship in the context of perspective. Just like we have street lighting at nights, municipalities making all city maintenance works in order not to disturb the so called daily life but by doing so, at the same time, they keep the city loud enough at nights so that people will not get that uneasy, uncanny feeling of silence. Or the peace of silence.

v. Street criers

A town crier is a person who is employed by a town to make public announcements in the streets. The crier can also be used in court or official announcements. As the name implies, criers make announcements with their voices and sometimes they use a bell in addition to the vocal. Street criers were used very frequently in Europe from the 16th century until today. Of course, it is not used that frequently nowadays. Actually, street criers have completely vanished as they were used in the 16th century but modern times

³¹ In Persian towns curfew was also announced, but the sounds were different. Most of the time, king's band and *muezzins* (chosen person at the mosque who leads the call) were used to announce curfew at night.

has its own criers. For example, in Istanbul *Hurdacı*, *zerzevatçı*, *simitçi*³² are the obvious examples of urban street criers. One of the fundamental differences between two generations of criers is repetition. Criers of old times would rarely repeat an announcement, while *simitçi* shouts exactly the same every day. This difference makes a big difference in terms of semantics of sound. Old ones were recognized by their voices no matter what the announcement was and every town has its own individual crier. However, there are lots of *hurdacı*s passing through every street of the city but there is one phrase that every *hurdacı* uses in order to be recognized. It is not about individuals anymore. All *hurdacı*s are one and they collect valuable refuse. This situation can easily be read as a micro scale condition of modernity. Another fundamental difference is the connection of criers to the authority. While old ones were salaried employees of the government, today it is more of an unofficial business.

Of course, there were unofficial street criers back then, too: street musicians. Unlike the church bells and official street criers, street musicians have been recognized as a threat by the professors and practitioners of one or another type of arts and sciences, because they claimed that they have been interrupted, harassed, worried, driven nearly mad by street musicians. Since they were forming a relatively wealthy and strong society which can directly effect on government, this group has started the first noise abatement campaigns with manifestos. Early noise abatement legislation was selective and qualitative, contrasting with that of the modern era, which has begun to fix quantitative limits in decibels for all sounds. Schafer writes “while most of the legislation of the past was directed against the human voice (or rather rougher voices of the lower classes), no piece of European legislation was ever directed against the far larger sound—if objectively measured—of the church bell, nor against the equally loud machine which filled the church's inner vaults with the music, sustaining the institution imperiously as the hub of community life—until its eventual displacement by the industrialized factory”. According to Schafer, by 1960, the only Europe city in which street criers could still regularly be heard was Istanbul³³.

³² Turkish words for junk collector, greengrocer, simit (savory roll covered with sesame seed) seller, as commonly used.

³³ Schafer, R. Murray, *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world*, (New York:

4. The Industrial Revolution and The (post)industrial soundscape

After giving some background information about the pre-industrial soundscape, it is now the right time to get into the industrial and post-industrial soundscape. Industrial revolution had the greatest effect on technological improvement. This improvement brought more complex machines that made accountable amount of sound, most of which have been labeled as noise without a doubt. However, these noises have happened to accumulate until they became the major element of soundscape and, now, it is nearly impossible to ignore them. In this chapter, as I move on to urban life step by step, I will mention effects and causes of industrialization and urbanization on soundscape.

i. Birth of lo-fi soundscape

In direct contradiction to hi-fi soundscape, which I have introduced early in this paper, lo-fi soundscape has no relationship that can be analyzed in terms of gestalt principles. In a perfect lo-fi soundscape, there is no figure, which leaves the definition of ground meaningless, so it is just like listening to a crowded area from very far away. You cannot hear a singular voice but all voices. It becomes meaningless but when you concentrate it is possible to catch a dialog, however, it will take seconds to fade away and leave you with a huge incomprehensible *noise*. Noise is an important keyword to keep in mind especially while discussing (post)industrial period, which I shall return later. As above, lo-fi soundscape is the structural opposite of hi-fi soundscape but there are many differences in the effects and results of these soundscapes categories, as well. Most importantly, lo-fi soundscape has been literally invented by human beings, unlike hi-fi soundscape which is already a given. The lo-fi soundscape was introduced by the Industrial Revolution and was extended by the Electric Revolution³⁴ which followed it.

Knopf, 1977) 66

³⁴ With the increased speed in the transmission of electricity, The Electric Revolution extended many of the themes of the Industrial Revolution and added some new effects of its own such as storing and amplification of sound, the electric cell, the storage cell, the dynamo, the electric arc light. It was during this period that the electric power station, the telephone, the radio telegraph, the phonograph

The principal technological changes which affected the soundscape included the use of new metals such as cast iron and steel as well as new energy sources such as coal and steam. The mechanical clock was an early sign that led to the typewriter(1714), iron wheels for coal cars(1755), cast-iron rails(1767), steam engine as the prime mover(1781), the threshing machine(1788), the signal telegraph(1793), and the hydraulic press(1796). An audially imaginative reader will imagine³⁵ the changes in the soundscape which were composed by these new orchestral elements. With the industrial revolution, as figure-ground relationship in soundscape has almost become unnoticeably small and this caused a new soundscape to emerge which has signal-to-noise ratio³⁶ close to one and it is no longer possible to know what is to be listened to. There was no perspective anymore in soundscape and this change, as an analogy to visual domain, did not receive a warm welcome neither. Intellectuals and scholars of the period were the ones to complain.

[Whip-cracking makes] a peaceful life impossible; it puts an end to all quiet thought... No one with anything like an idea in his head can avoid a feeling of actual pain at this sudden, sharp crack, which paralyzes the brain, rends the thread of reflection, and murders thought.³⁷

It would be an under-reading of this reaction if we naively assume that a working man simply wishes for peace of mind, because intellectuals imputed the fault to lower and middle class without hesitation. It was the workers who made disturbing sounds all day long, not the capital owners. In the end, as a strategy for repression which can be applied to anything, disturbing sounds had been categorized by laws and after that, noise abatement campaigns had spread all over the world to “protect intellectuals”.³⁸ However, these were temporary *solutions* to the *problem* and can only be applied in

and the moving picture came into existence. (Schafer 88)

³⁵ The domination of visual gets more obvious in cases like this. There is no substitute for “visualization” in sonic terms and the best word to use instead is “imagine” which is already an etymological relative of “image”.

³⁶ Signal-to-noise ratio (often abbreviated SNR or S/N) is an electrical engineering concept defined as the ratio of a signal power to the noise power corrupting the signal. In less technical terms, signal-to-noise ratio compares the level of a desired signal (such as music) to the level of background noise. The higher the ratio, the less obtrusive the background noise is. (Wikipedia)

³⁷ Schopenhauer, Artur, cited in Schafer, R. Murray, *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world*, (New York: Knopf, 1977) 69.

³⁸ Schafer, R. Murray, *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world*, (New York: Knopf, 1977) 70.

very small portions of the world in today's conditions.

Birth of lo-fi soundscape has also effected music significantly. After the era of labeling noise as a mere disturbing sound had passed, musical minds heard different things in noise. Noise has been promoted to be a potential musical entity.

ii. Sounds of technology / power

For twenty-five centuries Western knowledge has tried to look upon the world. It has failed to understand the world is not for beholding. It is for hearing...Now we must learn to judge a society by its noise.³⁹

As I have mentioned, technology is the primary cause of lo-fi soundscape dominance and some symbols of technology, like train, factory, and automobile have very distinctive sounds. These sounds have been labeled as noise since their invention but after a time, especially after they have started to be used in the arts, movies and music, they have been acknowledged as sounds themselves. Eventually, the noises of modern industrial life swung the balance against those of nature, something which Luigi Russolo had pointed out in his manifesto *The Art of Noises*⁴⁰ right before the First World War. Beyond that, noise started to become a power apparatus on people's hands (eg. Harley Davidson Motors), however, it can be observed that this power was transferred from natural sounds like thunder, volcano, storm. It is needless to say that when power is exercised in any context, it arouses the very instinct to dominate the powerless and establish authority. When sound power is sufficient to create a large acoustic profile, we may speak of it as being imperialistic. For instance, a man with a loud speaker is more imperialistic than one without because he can dominate more acoustic space. A man with a shovel is not imperialistic, but a man with a jackhammer is because he has the power to interrupt and dominate other acoustic activities in the vicinity. A more concrete

³⁹ Attali, Jacques, cited in Introduction, *The auditory culture reader*, eds. Micheal Bull & Les Back, (New York: Berg, 2003) 1.

⁴⁰ Russolo, Luigi, *The art of noises*, (New York: Pendragon Press, 1986)

and contemporary⁴¹ example would be the upcoming parliamentary election in Turkey and its effects on urban life. Every party has a corner in city squares and the more loud they shout the more vote, they think, they will collect. They have dominated the urban space both visually and acoustically. After all, cannons would never have been used in warfare if they had been silent.

iii. The flat line

It is the horizontal line in graphic sound level recorder and all machines share this important feature in different scales, for they create low-information, high-redundancy sounds. They may be continuous drones (as in a generator); they may be rough-edged, possessing what Pierre Schaeffer calls a 'grain' (as in mechanical sawing); or they may be punctuated with rhythmic concatenations (as in weaving machines) but in all cases it is the continuousness of the sound that is predominant. Despite the continuous stridulation of certain insects like cicadas, there are no flat line that is naturally produced neither a line in space. The flat line is artificially continuous and it has no sense of time, just as there is no sense of perspective in lo-fi soundscape which is the most obvious result of the flat line sounds. As the electricity is provided, machines will never stop producing a flat line but in nature, sounds are born, they live and die. This loss in the sense of time is actually contradictory to one of the first mechanical devices: the mechanical clock. On one side, constant ticking of clock, continuously reminding us the flow of time but on the other side, a background noise that acts as a black hole for life. Reason for that is the velocity of movement. Either mechanical clock or radiator fan makes radial motion but the fan's velocity is so high that it is impossible to hear any detail (the attack, the body and the decay). It is constant murmur of technology. Henri Bergson once asked how we should know about it if some agent suddenly doubled the speed of *all* events in the universe? And he replied immediately, we should discern a great loss in the richness of experience. Even as Bergson wrote, this was happening, for as discrete sounds gave way to flat lines, the noise of the machine became "a narcotic to the brain"⁴².

⁴¹ 22.07.07, Istanbul, Turkiye, 2 weeks for governmental elections

⁴² Schafer, R. Murray, *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world*, (New York:

II. CITY-IMAGE THROUGH CITY-NOISE/CITY-SOUND

Now I will do nothing but listen...
I hear all sounds running together, combined,
fused or following,
Sounds of the city and sounds out of the city, sounds
of the day and night....
Walt Whitman, *Song of Myself*

As I have introduced and elaborated on the post-industrial phase in the context of soundscape, it is now the right time and place to associate these thoughts with urban environment. Until now, I have just mentioned urban as a sound producing machine, but it is also an image producing machine. There are countless ways of describing urban-image but I will use it somewhere between the architectural, spatial, tactile, everyday experience of the city and the limitless representation of it created by film and video. Where the eye engages in a haptical rather than simply optical mode of perception. In Deleuze's words, it is such a situation where 'sight discovers in itself a function of touching that belongs to it and to it alone and which is independent of its optical function'.⁴³ Since this description of urban-image is the closest to my projects as I see it, it will also help to set a common ground which I will return to in the last section where I explain my project.

The relationship between urban and cinematic space has always been an issue right from the beginning of cinema. Cinema's (re)production of visual and sonoral sensations

Knopf, 1977) 79.

⁴³ Deleuze, Gilles, cited in Schafer, R. Murray, *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world*, (New York: Knopf, 1977) 36.

can neither be equated with nor reduced to their representation. It is not a one way relationship anymore and it has never been. City and cinema have always been mutual partners, giving and taking from each other. If I may go one step further and add Baudrillard's opinions about this matter: "The American city seems to have stepped right out of the movies. To grasp its secret, you should not, then, begin with the city and move inwards towards the screen; you should begin with the screen and move outwards towards the city."⁴⁴ He conceptualizes cityscape as screenscape. Although I use film/video as a medium to represent the city, my approach to this relationship is not that extreme. However, I think that city and film are in a perfectly balanced relationship where they both use themselves as a source for progress. Walter Benjamin remembers the moments when sound tape does not come in and film reel winds alone in the cinema. He says that "there is a thinness, a lightness and a kind of estrangement about seeing without sound. It offers surface without depth, appearance without resonance."⁴⁵ In other words, image is a mere 2-D surface without sound and sound creates atmosphere, it gives depth, sense of a non-visual perspectival space. While image is figure, sound becomes ground and this is a mutual relationship. A situation that figure is mixed with ground, cannot be separated. Reconsidering Fran Tonkiss's thoughts about image without sound through urban-image and urban-sound.⁴⁶ We somehow can tolerate image without sound but what would be a city with no sound?

1. City as a film set

i. Cinematic cities

Where is the cinema? It is all around you outside, all over the city, that marvelous, continuous performance of films and scenarios.⁴⁷

City has always been somewhere in scripts. Whether as background or as a character

⁴⁴ Baudrillard, Jean, *Simulations*, (New York: Columbia Press, 1983) 23.

⁴⁵ Benjamin, Walter, cited in Tonkiss, Fran, "Aural Postcards: Sound, Memory and the City", *The auditory culture reader*, eds. Micheal Bull & Les Back, (New York: Berg, 2003) 303.

⁴⁶ Tonkiss, Fran, "Aural Postcards: Sound, Memory and the City", *The auditory culture reader*, eds. Micheal Bull & Les Back, (New York: Berg, 2003) 309.

⁴⁷ Baudrillard, Jean, *Simulations*, (New York: Columbia Press, 1983) 13.

in the film but it is always there. It has been utopian and distopian subject of representation from *Metropolis* (1927, Fritz Lang) to *Blade Runner* (1982, Ridley Scott). A perfect space for chases to take place, to dance in the rain or for long walking shots. Has it received the respect that it deserves? No, the city has certainly been understated and understudied in film theory⁴⁸. This must be a habit inherited from early days of the cinema where most of the films were shot in studios. David Clarke makes the situation more clear:

So central is the city to film that, paradoxically, the widespread *implicit* acceptance of this importance has mitigated against an explicit consideration of its actual significance. Indeed, those film theorists who *have* sought to place the city in the foreground have been widely regarded as making an innovative argument.⁴⁹

City has always been there, waiting for the cameras to record and it could be hard to see what is already there for a long time.

ii. Framing the city with the eye

No matter how many films one has seen, after sometime spending time in a movie theater, people start to imitate that –so called– perfect life on movies. This has also been a subject matter in many films. Returning to Baudrillard: reality is something that is created by images. Images are *more real than the real* itself.⁵⁰ In this context, everything can be a tool for this conversion of reality into image and image into reality. As Martin Jay has written, 'scopic regimes of modernity has infiltrated through our lives' so that we may turn everything into a tool for using image as a pleasure object.⁵¹ The trigger could be our repressed desires, TV shows, movies or anything. However, it is controversial that it is only *the image* beneath this mechanism.

⁴⁸ Clarke, B. David, Introduction, *The Cinematic City*, ed. David B. Clarke, (London: Routledge, 1997) 5.

⁴⁹ Ibid. p.3

⁵⁰ Baudrillard, Jean, *Simulations*, (New York: Columbia Press, 1983) 42.

⁵¹ Jay, Martin, Introduction, *Downcast eyes: the denigration of vision in twentieth century*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993) 12.

The scopic drive, the 'subject' that constitutes and projects its 'object' and seeks to render all transparent, scientific, clinically apprehensible and mastered – herein lies the uncanny proximity of medical and media discourses – is invariably intent on grasping being and time, turning life into an exemplary instance, an abstraction, an ever-ready 'standing reserve' of meaning. The image, for all its potential ambiguity, tends towards the potential consolation of a semantic full stop. It is sound that ultimately disturbs ocular regimes and returns images to the pleasure surfaces, to the liberty (and limits) of the making, masking and masquing of representations.⁵²

As Chambers has put clearly, sound, particularly melodic music, has a great role in this spectacularization process. Without sound, as mentioned before, image is a mere 2-D surface but as long as sound is introduced to the image, it becomes an object of desire much faster regardless of its content. However, sounds alone are glanced, not gazed in the city⁵³, when they accompany the city-image, city-image suddenly becomes *objet petit a*⁵⁴. And yet, I am talking about the reproduced image of the city by recording devices. There is also a *real* image of the city which we experience every day and night with our eyes. An image that we can bump into, walk on, or lean against. An image we can touch. A tactile image. What happens to the image with sound when the definition of image is expanded like that? I would like to suggest that nothing changes relying on Micheal Bull's research on personal stereos and my own experiences. He describes the situation as:

This look is an aestheticized look in which the narcissistic orientation of the looker predominates. The engagement with the visual becomes real with the added 'beautiful background' to heighten the visual component of experience. In doing so the experience becomes phantasmagoric (Benjamin), a spectacle (Debord). (...) When an auditory look is focused it often appears to be an aestheticized one.⁵⁵

I claim that walkman helps people to imitate movies in everyday life. As Martin Jay has said, 'scopic regimes of modernity has infiltrated through our lives' so that we may turn everything into a tool for using image as a pleasure object. Walkman has already turned into an accompaniment for eye to act as camera frame. Most of walkman users,

⁵² Chambers, Iain, "Maps, Movies, Musics and Memory", *The Cinematic City*, ed. David B. Clarke, (London: Routledge, 1997) 233.

⁵³ Tonkiss, Fran, "Aural Postcards: Sound, Memory and the City", *The auditory culture reader*, eds. Micheal Bull & Les Back, (New York: Berg, 2003) 307.

⁵⁴ In the psychoanalytic theory of Jacques Lacan, *objet petit a* (object little-a) stands for the unattainable object of desire. It is sometimes called the object cause of desire. Lacan always insisted for it to remain untranslated thus acquiring the status of an algebraic sign.

⁵⁵ Bull, Michael, *Sounding Out The City*, (Oxford: Berg, 2000) 137.

as Micheal Bull pointed out, use personal stereo as a guide to the eye. In fact they are in search of the best soundtrack of that particular space and time. It is an effort to achieve filmic experience in the street.

2. Listening the city / Hearing the city

Cities, after all, insist on the senses at the level of sound. It is easier and more effective to shut your eyes than it is to cover your ears. Ears cannot discriminate in the way eyes can – as with smell, hearing puts us in a submissive sensuous relation to the city. And yet we glance at sounds in the city, we don't gaze.⁵⁶

Listening to the city and listening to music in conventional ways are two very different practices. In fact, the question is not listening to the city but it is rather listening to lo-fi soundscape. Lo-fi can be analogous with early abstract paintings and the reactions that they were subject to. It does not have a narrative structure and its signifier is very vague, sometimes absent. Everything is present all at once. So, it does not require an event or an action to listen, it is a state of mind. When it is relocated in the context of urban, situation is not different. There could be some fluctuations in micro scale but it is a big flat line that city produces as a machine. Besides, one may end up hearing nothing if s/he tries to listen to the city as a musical piece because listening to the city is simply having an ear for the city. You do not do it consciously, it is a state of auditory awareness. However, it is obvious that new methods must be invented for listening out the urban orchestra since that state of awareness has rarely been activated until now. I suggest personal stereo as a new method in urban listening experience and will elaborate on that later.

Auditory experience of the city also has a connection to geographical experience of the city. Bruce Smith argues that attention to sound helps us orient the physical landscape in time⁵⁷. In this sense, an attention to sound helps put the city in motion and

⁵⁶ Tonkiss, Fran, "Aural Postcards: Sound, Memory and the City", *The auditory culture reader*, eds. Micheal Bull & Les Back, (New York: Berg, 2003) 305.

⁵⁷ Smith, R. Bruce, "Tuning into London c.1600", *The auditory culture reader*, eds. Micheal Bull & Les Back, (New York: Berg, 2003) 130.

alerts us to how places change as they are animated by sound. Sound and movement are closely related in the navigation of urban experience. The use of personal stereo or car hi-fi are good examples of the ways in which people try to control their experience of moving to and through cities.

3. Audial simulations and walkman

However, personal stereo has gone beyond being a tool for controlling the urban experience and already replaced it. Personal stereo *is* an urban experience now and this reminds me of Baudrillard's thoughts on TV and contemporary life. In his inspiring essay, Baudrillard discusses how images and signs have relations to our contemporary society and how they have replaced reality by which he means the experience of reality as I interpret it. He frequently uses television and television image to support his argument, stating that "the dissolution of TV into life, the dissolution of life into TV" is what's happening in this contemporary era we live in.

A truth which is no longer the reflexive truth of the mirror, nor the perspective truth of the panoptic system and of the gaze, but the manipulative truth of the test which probes and interrogates, of the laser which touches and then pierces, of computer cards which retain your punched-out sequences, of the genetic code which regulates your combinations, of cells which inform your sensory universe.⁵⁸

Borrowing from Baudrillard, I think the relationship between walkman and urban soundscape bears resemblance to TV and life pair. This similarity begins, beforehand, in the form of recorded and live music. As in the TV images, recorded music schizophonicly⁵⁹ replaces live music. Music listening experience is no more temporary, simultaneous and unique but it is just anonymous. Now, CDs and mp3s are the ultimate instruments and home is the concert hall.

Originally all sounds were originals. They occurred at one time in one place only. Sounds

⁵⁸ Baudrillard, Jean, *Simulations*, (New York: Columbia Press, 1983) 47.

⁵⁹ The Greek prefix schizo means split, separated; and phone is Greek for voice. Schizophonia refers to the split between an original sound and its electroacoustical transmission or reproduction.

were then indissolubly tied to the mechanisms that produced them. The human voice traveled only as far as one could shout. Every sound was uncounterfeitable, unique. Since the invention of electroacoustical equipment for the transmission and storage of sound, any sound, no matter how tiny, can be blown up and shot around the world, or packaged on tape or record for generations of the future. We have split sound from the maker of the sound.⁶⁰

Personal stereo extends this situation one step further. There are two levels of simulation: spatial and audial. Spatial simulation is a result of audial simulation. It is the whole city that replaces concert halls and it is the music that replaces urban soundscape. There is one project that deserves attention here: Sonic City⁶¹. Sonic City is an interactive sound generation software which uses both body-related input (heart rate, arm motion, speed, pace, compass heading, ascension/descent, proximity to others/objects, stopping and starting) and environment-related input (light level, noise level, pollution level, temperature, electromagnetic activity, enclosure, slope, presence of metal). This complex set of data is being transferred to the software, which simultaneously creates a sonic composition according to pre-determined algorithmic rules and sends it back to the user of the mobile device. Sonic City is interesting in the sense that it enables citizens to reflect on the interaction with the city surrounding them. Contrary to the conventional personal stereo experience, Sonic City suggests a more complex and joint relationship between urban soundscape and the musical composition in the earplugs. This way, the interactivity between the city and the citizen can be perceived and appreciated more clearly. However, this relationship is always there and is in process anytime and I claim that there is no need for such algorithms to make us realize that we are transforming the city as it transforms us. But, through a dystopian frame of reference, it would not be absurd to say that we, as citizens, need machines to help us experience the city around us and this project is an appropriation of such a state. Besides, these shifts in perception opens up new ways of experiencing the city and I will elaborate on these ways through the context of city-text.

⁶⁰ Schafer, R. Murray, *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world*, (New York: Knopf, 1977) 99.

⁶¹ Sonic City. 2007. 07 August 2007 <<http://www.viktoria.se/fal/projects/soniccity>>.

4. city-text

i. Reading the city as text

Semiotics is always associated with visual form of analysis but Barthes' semiologic interpretations of urban space using a metaphor as sound, not simply as noiseless signs, opened a whole new ways of analysis. Barthes' approach that carry the city beyond its mute language of architecture is very liberating in the sense that it opens many possibilities to read the city through city-text, urban planning through textual analysis.⁶² Literary representations of the city - the so-called city-texts - emerged as particular expressions of eclectic identity models. As Gelley⁶³ maintains, the category of city-text usually provides a manifold answer to a series of questions, all pointing up to the process of textual representation and its levels: "Who writes the city? How are we to define and classify the city-texts? What kind of disciplinary and thematic criteria are in play - formalist, historical, political, aesthetic, impressionist?"⁶⁴ What I intent to do in this section is not getting into literature and urban planning but stay focused on sound and simply substitute the word 'text' with 'sound'. By doing so, sound becomes something readable and writable and city becomes both something to read and write.

Not listening in the city makes spaces smaller, tamer, more predictable. The pretence that you do not hear – a common conspiracy of silence – in this way is a response, passing as lack of response, to the modern city as a place of strangers. Some people, though, sound stranger than other; certain voices jar to certain other ears. The immigrant, it has been said, is *audible*, and indeed those forms of race thinking that cannot bring themselves to speak of skin often are happy to talk about language.⁶⁵

Speaking the same language is always the first requirement of assimilation. However, city, most of the time, does not allow that kind of change and remains as a *polyglot* machine in which differences remain audible and translations incomplete. The

⁶² Barthes, Roland, "Semiology and the Urban", *Rethinking Architecture*, ed. N. Leach, (London: Routledge, 1997) 45

⁶³ Gelley, Alexander, "City-Texts: Representation, Semiology and Urbanism", in *Poster Mark* (ed.), *Politics, Theory and Contemporary Culture*, Columbia U.P.: 237-261.

⁶⁴ Spiridon, Monica, *Spaces of Memory: The City-Text*. 2007. 07 August 2007
<http://www2.lingue.unibo.it/acume/sb/Spiridon_Spaces_of_Memory.htm>

⁶⁵ Tonkiss, Fran, "Aural Postcards: Sound, Memory and the City", *The auditory culture reader*, eds. Micheal Bull & Les Back, (New York: Berg, 2003) 304.

modern city, in its confusion of languages and tongues, is, in fact, a multilingual text that beholds every and each characteristics of languages but sums up to be a new language in itself. In order to be able to read this text, as in primary school, first one has to speak it which is a loop actually, because city-text has the same writer and reader. If one can write it, s/he, by default, should be able to read it. So citizens are the natural readers/writers of city text and this naturality does not bring hierarchy indeed. It comes with an openness to other in its many accents. It is another abstract version of what Barthes wrote of the city as 'place where the other is and where we ourselves are other, as the place where we play the other'⁶⁶.

ii. re-Writing by walking

The act of walking is to the urban system what the speech act is to language or to the statements uttered. At the most elementary level, it has a triple "enunciative" function: it is a process of *appropriation* of the topographical system on the part of the pedestrian. (just as the speaker appropriates and takes on the language); it is a spatial acting-out of the place (just as the speech act is an acoustic acting-out of the language); and it implies *relations* among differentiated positions, that is, among pragmatic "contrasts" in the form of movements (just as verbal enunciation is an "allocation," "posits another opposite" the speaker and puts contracts between interlocutors into action).⁶⁷

What would be if I make De Certeau's analogy between the hand and the feet instead of the mouth? Would it still be valid? Would it be weird if I claim that the city is a paper and we are the pens on it, writing every day by walking? I do not think it would, because the same problematic situation that De Certeau mentioned is present for the act of writing and the written text. At first isolated in the area of written communication, the walking act turns out to find its similarities but what happens when the writing hand makes an exception to the rule and disregard the grammatic and syntax rules. Or what happens when the writing hand cannot find a rough paper around and start taking notes on the corners of a book? Does the analogy still hold its validity? I would argue that it does, because the city is an already written text book. It has been written by architects and engineers long ago. We, as city dwellers, have only the power to scratch the spaces

⁶⁶ Barthes, Roland, "Semiology and the Urban", *Rethinking Architecture*, ed. N. Leach, (London: Routledge, 1997) 47.

⁶⁷ Certeau, Michel de. *Practice of Everyday Life*, (California: University of California Press, 1984) 93.

between words. Scratches that has a life of a butterfly. Everyday, we re-write, re-walk those spaces and city becomes city with those traces that we leave behind. In fact, we can see the city as a huge *mystic writing pad*⁶⁸ which, like the chalk board, can record an infinite amount of material while always remaining "new." However, unlike the mystic writing pad in which the traces are perceptible only on the wax surface below the plastic, city cannot hide the scars.

iii. Writing by walkman (Audial graffiti)

Walking is the most common way of writing on the city, without noticing most of time, but it is not the only way. There are two more ways that I would like to mention here. One is, the more obvious, to write with video/movie camera through the act of recording. This mode of writing is not simultaneous in the sense of graffiti. It is rather a retrospective type of writing where city is re-written during the montage. Of course, decisions are made during the shooting as the selection of framing, composition, movement, filters, focus, depth of field, etc. but the writing which I am referring to is more about the time-image. It is the distortion in the urban-time that concerns me and it is all in the hands of the editor. In that sense, it is the mode that needs a recording device and involves more than one person most of the time. However, in a second type of writing on the city, one only needs a player. A music player that is portable enough to carry while walking through the city. Personal stereo is the common name used for portable music listening devices, such as portable CD players, portable cassette players, portable mp3 players, that I see as a writing tool itself. This type of writing also has a performative side apart from the bodily performance of walking. It is a performance of

⁶⁸ Mystic writing pads are children's toys consisting of a thin sheet of clear plastic which covers a thick waxen board. The user can write on it with any pointed instrument, even a fingernail. The tip of the stylus presses through the sheet of plastic and makes a faint indentation in the wax below which appears as a dark trace through the plastic. When the plastic sheet is lifted away from the surface of the waxen tablet beneath, the dark traces disappear; the pad is clean again, like a blackboard just wiped off. This is its "mystic" or magical quality. For Freud, all means of mechanically supplementing the memory suffered from one of two drawbacks. Permanent means of recording, like paper, can only be written on once--they quickly become filled and need to be further supplemented. The alternative (eg: a chalk board) is infinitely receptive, but only if one erases the previous inscriptions. The Mystic Writing Pad, however, represented an admittedly imperfect but illuminating example of how the psyche itself records material. Like the chalk board, it can record an infinite amount of material while always remaining "new."

the mind, I might say, that is in progress here which is created by the temporality and simultaneity of the writing experience itself. Also, performance creates unique conditions each and every time which will be further discussed in the following sections.

Citizens' use of their personal stereos transforms their experience of space for sure which does not necessarily mean that the walkman listener is entirely cut off from the urban environment. Rather, a new balance is created between what s/he hears and travels through. Thibaud argues that this leads to a 'derealization' of urban space achieved through the technical possibilities and consequent mediations of the walkman as a sound equipment. Unsettling the relationship between sound and vision produces new ways of experiencing the city. While new ways of experiencing the city are discovered, consequently, new ways of writing the city-text are also discovered because you never walk the same way, where the architecture remains same. Each and every day, another music accompanies you and your steps move with music.⁶⁹

Using a Walkman in public places is part of an urban tactic that consists of decomposing the territorial structure of the city and recomposing it through spatio-phonic behaviors. Double movement of deterritorialization and reterritorialization. This new urban nomad is here and there at the same time, transported by the secret rhythm of his Walkman and in direct contact with the place he's walking through. The bounce in his step, the variations in his stride and the unexpected change of his daily route explain at times his imaginary drift but always brings him back to where he started. 'All music of the body is music of the body of the earth' affirms Daniel Charles (1979). Musicalisation of the step and sonic rhythms go together.⁷⁰

"Musicalisation" is an important issue considered in the context of writing on the city. Until now, I have conceptualized the act of writing and comment on that abstraction but there is a literal way of writing on the city: graffiti. Graffiti artists use the whole city as a gallery space and the city walls as their canvas. At first sight, the perfect equivalent of graffiti in sonic domain would seem to be the street music. However, the

⁶⁹ Music, as dance, as carnival, as rave, as ecstasy, draws us out of our assigned social space into a sublime place. It permits a transitory exit from the dance floor to the trance floor, thereby shortening the passage and facilitating the access to an elsewhere that had meant becoming a member of spectacular subculture, an aesthete, or else completely 'dropping out' into an alternative life-style.

⁷⁰ Thibaud, Jean-Paul, "The Sonic Composition of the City", *The auditory culture reader*, eds. Micheal Bull & Les Back, (New York: Berg, 2003) 330.

most important aspect of graffiti, that gives its power to get you out of daily routine for a while, is its immediacy in my opinion. In case of street music, there is also a performance present which is a big obstruction for getting out of routine because of its corporeality, no matter how unexpectedly street musicians position themselves. However, sound comes to us in more immediate ways than the image and this immediacy is much more powerful if the source is not visible, signifier of the sound is absent. In that sense, personal stereos supply this immediacy much more powerfully than street music. This immediacy is a very close one to thought. The bond between memory and sound is much more concrete than image and memory as Benjamin, one of the philosophers that worked on image mostly, stated that “hearing is a sense of memory”.⁷¹ Both sound and memory comes to us in most immediate and unseen ways that it is nearly impossible not to relate them. Sound and memory both manipulate and reproduce themselves. One sound recalls a particular memory. That memory recalls another sound. That sound suddenly jumps into another detail from the past and this cyclical relationship is carried to the limits of memory.

Our access to memory is through language through the traces inscribed on the page, our bodies, and in the auditorium in which we speak and listen. Not only do we recall our past in music, but the very techniques that permit us to return there, recordings, are a form of inscription, of writing. In *The Aesthetics of Recorded Sound*, the contemporary Japanese critique Shuhei Hosokawa writes: 'It is not by chance that incipient devices such as the phono-graph and grammo-phone were all given names derived by “sound” and “writing”'.⁷²

Having mentioned the connections between sound and memory, I would like to get back to the analogy of the *mystic writing pad*. The city is a huge mystic writing pad, as I have mentioned, a mystic writing pad that works through sound but the writings are erased before they have been written. Or there is only invisible ink in pens. Personal stereo listeners invisibly write onto the street but this is no different than writing to our memories. In that sense, *audial graffiti* is absolutely personal and there is no spectator other than the writer her/himself.

⁷¹ Benjamin, Walter, cited in Tonkiss, Fran, “Aural Postcards: Sound, Memory and the City”, *The auditory culture reader*, eds. Micheal Bull & Les Back, (New York: Berg, 2003) 303.

⁷² Tonkiss, Fran, “Aural Postcards: Sound, Memory and the City”, *The auditory culture reader*, eds. Micheal Bull & Les Back, (New York: Berg, 2003) 305.

In this context, there two new media projects which I would like to mention: Sonic Graffiti⁷³ and tunA⁷⁴. Sonic Graffiti is a multi-dimensional project which involves audio, visual and urban space and in the context of dimensionality, it is the closest one to my project. It is simply an apparatus attachable to graffiti spray cans which provides musical experience to both creators and audiences of graffiti. As the graffiti artist sprays paint onto the surface, simultaneously a musical composition is sprayed to the same surface. Audio data is encoded onto the wall and it continuously broadcasts to its surrounding area. However, coverage area of the graffiti is proportional to its visual size, that is it loses power radially taking visual graffiti as its center of propagation. As for the audience, there is a receiver apparatus which can be attached to a personal stereo device. This way, one can both look at and listen to the graffiti while wandering in the city. This project may seem to bear a resemblance to *audial graffiti*. However, working principles of these two concepts are quite different. Sonic Graffiti is much more active and tangible compared to audial graffiti. It needs a performance to be created and exercised. On the other hand, audial graffiti is a more experiential concept and needs no creative action. It is passive and non-performative in that sense. Besides, it cannot be spectacted neither visually nor aurally which is the fundamental difference of these two projects. On the other hand, tunA is more revolutionary for the discourse of personal stereo experience. This project can be described as a tool to make every personal stereo listener a small scale radio station. It is an application on mobile music listening devices which enables users to share their playlists with people in the vicinity. This project lets people “feel” the surrounding bodies and appropriate the presence of others in urban space. It is important for me because tunA totally changes the fundamental discourse of personal stereo experience, which is individuality of the experience. Personal stereo experience is not “personal” anymore with this project, it is shared, it is semi-public.

iv. Unique personal films

Audial graffiti is not the only case that personal stereo turns an experience which is

⁷³ Sonic Graffiti. 2007. 07 August 2007 <<http://www.chiayinglee.com/SonicGraffiti/>>

⁷⁴ TunA. 2007. 07 August 2007 <<http://web.media.mit.edu/%7Estefan/hc/projects/tuna/>>

generally public, into a very personal one. As I have mentioned earlier, most of the personal stereo listeners tend to use it as soundtrack to life⁷⁵. Mobile music listening experience suddenly turns into a directing experience and dramatization of everyday life is created and accompanied by the music. This whole experience of walkman listening suddenly turns into a small one person movie. A movie which has one director, one editor, one sound designer and one viewer which is the same person for all. It all happens in a blink of an eye, literally. As most of the dramatic structures, this one also needs actors and actresses which immediately turns citizens' gestures into acting. Thinking of everyone in the streets is playing for you but at the same time knowing that it is all accidental. Being in the place and role of the camera and letting everyone/everything be a part of your narrative. In fact, it is very thought provoking that identification theories used for cinema, which are based on the spectators' gaze identified with the camera, are proved in a case that cinema is not the subject. It is second derivative of cinema that actually creates the sense of identification or *imaginary cinema* should I say. In other words, cinema cannot create the identification effect that it claims but cinema's effect on the viewer does. Ultimately, personal stereo user lets public actors project into him/her mediated through his/her montage. This projection, as in a movie theater, works in two ways. As they project into you, you, as personal stereo user, project on the city. If I go a little further in imagination, I come up with a city full of projector headed people washing all over the city walls, squares, monuments, cars, buses, themselves, streets, mosques, churches with their self and desires which is again closely related to the analogy of mystic writing pad. Only this time it is writing through audio-vision.

⁷⁵ Bull, Michael, *Sounding Out The City*, (Oxford: Berg, 2000) 128.

MY PROJECT: experimentations

It would be appropriate to start by explaining the title of the project. Experimentation is a crucial word for me. I use the Turkish word *deneme* and experimentation is the best translation I could provide. It is important for me because it does not imply a conclusion or an end. Process is as important as the result in experimentations. Despite its close etymological relationship with experiment, I prefer to concentrate on its another relative: experience. Experience in two ways: one is my experience of making experimentations and the other is the very experience of the city. First one is rather second degree but second meaning is very important for me because immediacy of experience comes with errors in perception and interpretation which is much more valuable than the scientific distance of an experiment. However, each of my *experimentations* are completed experimental video works at the same time and the tension between being an experimentation and a completed work of art should always be kept in mind while watching and listening them.

I would like to continue to elaborate on my process in order to explain the relationship between the written and audio-visual material. At the beginning, writing was my priority and I have concentrated on conceptualizing and integrating the readings into my work, which was much more focused on personal stereos. During my research, I have also started to make some experiments using the video camera and music. These experiments started to map their own route somehow independent of what I have planned during conceptualization and that route was diverging from personal stereo experience. One, and the most important, reason for that was the impossibility of visually representing the personal stereo experience. Eventually, every experiment was a film and films have made almost every experiment with image and sound for about a century. Every reading of sound-image was already pre-determined. Besides, the image

in personal stereo experience, as I have mentioned before, is rather a haptical one. It was ontologically not possible to achieve the experience of *musica mobilis* via sound and video, so I have started to study the possibilities of the video medium.

One obvious question here would be why I chose video as a tool to represent personal stereo experience in the first place? There are thousands of new possibilities revealed through new media technologies, as the projects introduced in the previous section attest to, or there exists a more experiential area called installation art. In order to answer that question, it would be best to return to the discussion in the introduction of this paper. I have started the discussion by laying the ground for vision's prioritization among the senses, especially over hearing. This issue has been elaborated for long years and what I have intended to do is to look at the same landscape through the frame of urban-image and urban-sound. While doing that, I had to find a way to equalize the relationship between sound and image. Simply not using image, and creating only audial pieces, would be one easy and most obvious solution, however, I did not choose that route because that would be losing the contact with image which is not my intention. Image is a very strong medium to communicate with but it has been fetishized and idealized so much that I wanted to use it in a more neutral way. Instead of a total avoidance, I wanted to use image to attack image, and, by image, I use two meanings. First is the one that has long been imposed on us by visual arts, film, television, literature and all products of occularcentric thought of the Western civilization. A more abstract and general meaning of vision which, nowadays, has evolved into computers⁷⁶ and occupy most of daily time. The second is the urban-image that has been created by both film and photography. The conventions of urban-image, I should say. Urban-image is so biased and has pre-determined effects that it refers to a lot of things but urban anymore. So, one of my aims in the project is to find new ways of representing urban as moving or still image and I will elaborate on this later.

⁷⁶ The fact that I have been and still am using a computer to write this thesis, edit video and sound, find urban soundscapes all around the world, read on-line resources, etc. could be seen as an irony of my whole point. When I thought about this retrospectively, I have realized that I have been following the same method which I have used for image. Using image to attack itself.

As I have justified using video as a medium, the project started to evolve into a more general subject. If we accept that personal stereo is a sub-soundscape of a more complex one which is urban soundscape then I could say that the project has got less specific. However, I was still using the same medium, video, and there was still a problematic issue of city-image standing right in front of me. In this context, first decision was to approach the city as an observer. I set the conditions of the shot, namely; time of the day, framing, lens, movement, point of view, focus, etc. and after setting those variables to fixed values, I welcomed all surprises of the city. People, vehicles, animals, ferryboats, construction site, wind. I let the city perform its daily routine and while doing that I manipulated the events by standing in the middle of the whole cacophony as each citizen did continuously. Standing in the middle of the city and citizens, observer and manipulator, writer and reader of city-text, I, therefore, had the unreserved *contact* with “the metallic pleasure of the city”⁷⁷ with my camera and microphone. I chose an important spot in the middle of the city which has a totally subjective significance for me to start my experimentations. My intention was to find a way to represent the urban-experience and I needed an abstraction of experience to convert it into visual material because I have experienced the ontological impossibility of realistically representing an experience through film. Experience is defined as the “knowledge gained by repeated trials”⁷⁸ and this definition has been an anchor point for me to build a visual regime for my experimentations. Repetition has a long philosophical history but the one I am interested is Deleuze's conception of repetition. According to Deleuze, repetition involves elements, or singularities, which multiply, or reflect each other. Repetition may be variable, and thus may include difference within itself. Preservation, on the other hand, is an invariable form of expression, which has a sameness rather than a difference in its mode of presentation. What I intended to achieve through repetition could not be described better and one of the best representations of repetition is cycle. So, I fixed the tripod and recorded a number of full lateral circles taking tripod as pivotal point. This was my raw footage in many ways as I have discussed above but it was surely not the repetition that I was after.

⁷⁷ Sontag, Susan, cited in Schafer, R. Murray, *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world*, (New York: Knopf, 1977) 187.

⁷⁸ Online Etymology Dictionary. 2007. 07 August 2007
<<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=experience>>

So far, I have explained my motives behind using this particular medium and this particular visual regime. As for the soundtrack, it has been an easier process than the production of image-track because I knew what I wanted and after a few modifications, it clicked into place. What I have wanted was to switch figure-ground roles of image and sound, and consequently, discover a new way of perceiving the post-industrial urban life. I had a very strong sound tool for my purposes: urban soundscape. A tool that is cinematographic but non-narrative most of the time. At the beginning I had a few experimentations mixing urban soundscapes and studio recorded music but I decided not to mix them together because the points of intersection were growing much more complex and it was not working for my purposes to get that complex in the soundtrack. However, I have used musical compositions to make a contrast with soundscape in the context of audial perspective, in other words, hi-fi and lo-fi sounds, and reveal another, more dramatic, experience of the city out of that contrast. Also, I have used non-urban soundscapes to make abrupt changes in the atmosphere and get something out of it. In order to get into more detail of the soundtrack, I believe, I need to elaborate on my experimentations. By commenting on my experimentations, I do not intend to explain them, rather, my aim is to make my own points out of experimentations. After all, I hope experimentations shall speak for themselves.

At the beginning, I was wandering somewhere in between my previous focus, on personal stereo and urban soundscape. This state of ambiguity is reflected on my first experimentations as well. In experimentation 02, on the image-track, there is a very slowed down version of my raw footage, which I have mentioned above, of Kadıköy⁷⁹ square. On the soundtrack, there is a reversed minimal musical composition⁸⁰ and Kadıköy soundscape that is equally slowed down with image-track. Kadıköy soundscape is very slowly fading into musical composition throughout the sound-video. This experimentation was the one where I have started to understand the impossibility of representing the personal stereo experience and decided to abandon music use with the soundscape, because, no matter how I mix them together, there has always been a

⁷⁹ Kadıköy is one of the major municipalities of Istanbul, Turkey.

⁸⁰ Arvo Pärt . "Für Alina." Alina. ECM, 2000.

dominance of music. Dominance was not only on the soundscape but also on the image. The image immediately gets into a dramatic mode and becomes cinematographic. Of course, slow motion also has such an effect but music has such a power that the image nearly becomes its slave. One might say that this was exactly what I have wanted, to attack image, but, as I have said before, my aim was to achieve this using the image itself. In this particular example, it is the uncanny feeling that is revealed by soundtrack and it was too filmic for my objective. However, I have continued experimenting with the soundtrack in order to achieve a more industrial and lo-fi one. Experimentation 04 was the first in which I used different soundscapes consecutively and fading into each other. I worked on transitions for this one because very different soundscapes bear resemblance to each other through very different contexts. These resemblances make very smooth transitions and very different intersections possible. Through these transitions and intersections, I tried to achieve a sound montage that cannot be linked to each other narratively but gives a general sense of post-industrial state of civilization through soundscapes. Namely, I used urban motorized vehicle soundscapes, television soundscape, war soundscape, train soundscape and bazaar soundscape. My argument was not to represent the modern condition of humanity through five or six soundscapes but make the lo-fi dominance of post-modern soundscape more clear. However, in the image-track of this experimentation, I have used too many visual effects and this excessive use of visual effects have attributed an over-significance to the image, which was against my purpose. Besides, the long black sections eliminated the repetition effect that I was after. I had the intention to give a sense of turning around the same point infinitely, and out of that, represent repetition but it did not work as I imagined it.

Until now, I have used *moving* image in conventional ways to get *in touch* with the city. No matter how many effects, montage tricks I applied to the raw footage, there was always something wrong with that image. It was the pre-determined, pre-defined, pre-mediated, pre-conceived, pre-coded affects of image which I needed to escape to find a new language, however, I was standing right in the heart of those codes while trying to escape from them. So, in experimentations 05 & 06, I came up with neither a moving nor a still image of the city. This image was somewhere between video and photography, and this tension between still and moving image, I believe, creates the

very impression of the urban which I was looking for. This stitched 360 degree panoramic image was composed of still images that was actually exported from the raw footage. In other words, this is a still image created from a moving image and in that sense every moment of this still image is consecutive but never the same moment. So, this image captures both time and space in motion and preserves them. It captures time in the velocity of people, vehicles, animals and other moving objects. A half-ghost tramway; two people without the lower part of their bodies; a flag with a half flying, another half static; a half-bus half-cab hybrid vehicle; people walking through ghost vehicles. These are all the consequence of both camera and them moving relatively. This, I read as a very good visual representation of writing on the city by moving on it, leaving traces on it. It captures the space in the stillness of the architecture. While everything is moving in the city, architecture is always still, creating enclosed spaces for people to live inside, standing with all its monumental existence. No matter how much time passes between individual shots of a panoramic photograph, architecture always forms stitching points, lines, surfaces and these elements ultimately create a visual representation of urban space. And this, I read as the visual representation of pre-written city-text. So, we, as citizens, write on urban-space by urban-time. This image also allows infinite number of perfect repetitions but in these two experimentations, I failed to notice this opportunity and create only one full cycle. However, *experimentation 05* serves as a good proof of what is written in the previous paragraph about the image regime, when compared with *experimentation 02*. Although; I discovered a better language to communicate visually, I had not reached the point where image loses its dominance and leaves the stage to sound. As for the soundtrack, other than minor changes in cross fades, there is no major change, so my statements above is valid for these ones, too.

So far, I experimented with image and sound and somehow I could not manage to send image to the ground, make sound the figure and achieve all of these without involving a master/slave relationship. One final touch would yield into the relationship which I want for my experimentations. This final touch was to repeat the full circle many times. In *experimentation 08*, as the spectator turns around the city, the repetition transforms figure into ground but singularities and differences in each repetition still do

not allow image to disappear completely.⁸¹ Finally, I had the reverse but non-hierarchical relationship between sound and image. Image was floating behind the sound and soundscapes were getting us into spaces while image remained in the same space. This clash of spaces attributes new meanings to both the urban space and the spaces implied by soundscapes. One of these attributes is creating public and personal (hi)stories. Since urban soundscape is, mostly, perceived as a crowded type of sound, it has the power to create a sound-scene or a sound-space of a more general view. It can explain the current situation of a society in five minutes. This power allows viewer/listener to go beyond what is heard and begin to imagine what could be happening out of the frame. At the moment, viewer/listener starts such an imaginative mind flow and spaces created by both sound and image start to be transformed, public/personal stories start to be created as well. This situation can be observed frequently in the case of personal stereo use as I have mentioned before. Music becomes an ultimate tool to turn look into gaze and urban-space into a pleasurable surface where every event, every image on the surface is loaded with dramatic meanings. *experimentation 08* provides an example of these situations through soundscapes and a musical composition. This is my own personal way of re-writing the city-text

Cycle is one way of repetition but, needless to say, it is not the only way. The whole system of modernity is, somehow, built on repetition. Indeed, the city is full of repetitive patterns. Cobblestone, new housing complexes, traffic lines, road barriers, windows and so on. Repetition can be seen everywhere in the city. In *experimentation 08*, I created a repetitive pattern from scratch and build the whole structure on that, however in *experimentation 09*, I let the ultimate symbol of modernity, *train*, to be my reference point. Train tracks have a linear repetitive pattern which is fundamentally different from cyclic repetition. Linearity always has a greater degree of freedom for sudden changes because it does not imply an infinite loop and it is this linearity, I intended to use in this experimentation. As the train goes faster and faster, tracks become perfect metaphors for flat line introduced by the industrial and electric revolution. After a point, all sense of velocity vanishes into repetition and that is where the relationship between sound and image starts to balance. As the image-track starts a repetitive pattern, sound-track mimes

⁸¹ Deleuze, Gilles, *Difference and Repetition*, (London: Continuum, 2004) 38.

the original soundscape of the train. This mimetic relationship is again based on repetitive patterns but this time in soundscape. However, this repetition is much closer to the *discursive repetition*⁸² in music. Different than musematic repetition⁸³, which is “the simple repetition of precisely the same musical figure”, discursive repetition is both repetitive and non-repetitive, just like in Deleuze's explanation of repetition. A repetition that is open to changes of any kind just like my conception of linear repetition. In this context, sound and image (and train) tracks bonds very strongly to create new meanings in this experimentation. Another issue that has to be mentioned concerning this experimentation is sound editing. Until now, I used smooth transitions between different soundscapes by making good use of similarities emanated from non-perspectival nature of urban soundscape, however, in *experimentation 09*, I chose to use cuts between soundscapes. The reason for that was to break the linearity effect created by the image-track and alienate the viewer/listener from the image for a second to avoid cinematic identification. Also in this experimentation, I used non-urban soundscapes like African tribe ritual and an army of cicadas stridulating. While listening to this experimentation, one also should keep in mind that the cicadas are one of the lo-fi soundscape creatures which is found rarely in nature.

Compared to the original raw footage, there is a fundamental difference in *experimentation 10*. This was shot late night where there is literally no movement in that particular area of the city although there are potentially moving objects in the surrounding. The tension in the image, caused whether it is moving or not, is much stronger here because there are nearly no clues indicating motion, such as people, vehicles, animals, even construction is not active. Building on top of this tension, I used hi-fi soundscapes rather than lo-fi to perpetuate the situation also in the soundtrack. This could be an example of perspectival contradiction of day and night. While visual perspective vanishes in the night, audial perspective returns.

⁸² Middleton, Richard, cited in Deleuze, Gilles, *Difference and Repetition*, (London: Continuum, 2004) 38.

⁸³ Ibid. p.38

CONCLUSION

This thesis has encouraged me to start a journey. It made me remember my personal soundscape history all the way from my childhood to the present. While a process of remembering and re-evaluating continues on one side, on the other side, I searched for the ways of writing the city-text in several contexts. If the viewer/listener of my *experimentations* experience the city in different and new ways, they have served this purpose appropriately, I believe. However, this journey does not end here, just like the experimentations. As I have mentioned the motives behind this title, the most important connotation is that it does not imply an end. So, I will continue with these experimentations and try to find new ways of writing city-text through different mediums.

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