

THINKING SUBJECTIVITY IN THE
AGE OF INTERNET:
AFFECTIVE INTENSITY AS A POLITICAL TOOL

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ABSTRACT

Revolutionizing digital information and communication technologies of the past three decades urges us to rethink conventional understandings of place-based subject formation, territorialized polity construction and stable social movement organization. This thesis aims to rethink political subjectivity in the age of Internet by considering affective intensity as a political tool. The main question of the thesis is what role might intimacy—a relation of closeness and familiarity with another person—via the Web play in the realm of politics? In order to investigate this question the thesis looks into how communication between people through online social networks create *affective* intensities as a political tool, and how this political intimacy via the Web might provide us new imaginaries for a non-identitarian political life? The study examines two research cases: Gezi uprising in Turkey and women’s Twitter campaign #sendeanlat (“tell your story”) which was organized after the brutal murder of Özgecan Aslan. The thesis conducts online research on social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, and *affect* is mobilized as a sociological methodology. Besides it embraces an inter-disciplinary approach; the methodological point is underpinned by the political ontology of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, and by the works of Giorgio Agamben and Jean-Luc Nancy regarding contemporary debates around the concept of *singularity*. With the insight they provide, the study tries to think *nomadic* subjects of cyberspace as singularities that can escape to a political territory of non-identity, and non-belonging.

Keywords: political subjectivity, cyber-activism, rhizome, social media, affect, singularity

ÖZET

Dijital bilgi ve iletişim teknolojilerinde son otuz yıldır yaşanmakta olan hızlı gelişmeler bizi mekâna bağlı özne kurulumunu, mekânlaştırılmış siyasi yapıları ve sabit toplumsal hareket örgütlenmelerini yeniden düşünmeye zorluyor. Bu tez, tesir yoğunluğunu politik bir araç olarak ele alarak İnternet çağında politik özneliği yeniden düşünmeyi amaçlıyor. Tezin ana sorusu kişiler arasında İnternet yoluyla kurulan yakınlık ve samimiyetin politik alanda nasıl bir rol oynadığıdır. Bu soruya cevap aramak amacıyla çalışma, insanlar arasında çevrimiçi sosyal ağlar yoluyla kurulan ilişkilerin nasıl politik bir araç olarak düşünülebilecek tesir yoğunlukları yaratabileceğine ve bu durumun kimlik ötesinde bir politik yaşam kurgularken bize hangi imgeleri sunabileceğine iki araştırma konusu üzerinden bakıyor: Türkiye’deki Gezi İsyanı ve kadınların Özgecan Aslan’ın katledilmesinden sonra Twitter üzerinde başlattıkları #SendeAnlat kampanyası. Çalışmada Facebook, Twitter, YouTube gibi çevrimiçi sosyal ağlarda yapılan araştırmalardan yararlandı ve *duygulanımlar* (affect) teorisi sosyolojik metod olarak kullanıldı. Bununla birlikte, çalışma disiplinlerarası bir yaklaşımı benimsemekte; Gilles Deleuze ve Felix Guattari’nin siyasi ontolojisi ile Giorgio Agamben ve Jean-Luc Nancy’nin *tekillik* (singularity) konusunu temel alan güncel çalışmaları metodolojiyi destekleyecek şekilde kullanılıyor. Bu düşünürlerin sunduğu kavrayış ile, çalışma siber-uzamdaki *göçebe* (nomadic) özneleri kimliksiz ve aidiyetsiz bir politik alana kaçabilen tekillikler olarak düşünmeye çalışmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: politik öznellik, siber-aktivizm, rizom, sosyal medya, duygulanım (affect), tekillik

Dedicated to my mother...

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Research Cases and Questions

From the beginning of 2011, streets and squares across the world have become the site of massive demonstrations, strikes, occupations, riots and revolutions. The people in many countries have been rising up against the power of governments, corporations and repressive regimes. These global uprisings has started in Tunisia on 17 December 2010 when a street vendor, Muhammed Buazizi set himself on fire (died on 4 January) in protest of confiscation of his wares and humiliation that he was exposed by municipal officials. This act became a catalyst for the Tunisian Revolution by activating demonstrations and riots throughout Tunisia in protest of social and political issues in the country. Afterwards the uprisings had leaped to several other countries (Egypt, Iceland, Libya, Spain, United States, Turkey, Brazil, etc.) and people went out to streets to protest authoritarian practices of governments, unequal living conditions and increasing crises of capitalism. Protesters shared similar means of civil resistance acts, such as occupying,

demonstrations, marches, strikes, etc. On the other hand they had developed many other creative resistance practices. The crucial similarity of the uprisings was people's effective and intensive use of social media for the purposes of organization, communication and motivation. The effective use of social media tools such as Twitter, Facebook, personal blogs, YouTube etc. helped people to penetrate deeply into the social fabric and mobilize tens of thousands around the globe including many newcomers who have never been active before in social movements.

These uprisings have explicitly emphasized the fact that, as more people are able to reach and use information and communication technologies (ICTs) today, it is easier to construct an effective, independent and global platform for communication and organization via Internet. This fact also brought about a fundamental transformation in the structure and understanding of social movements and resistance practices. Presently there exist many researches on the role of new ICTs in the social movements, and it is possible to reach many statistical data which manifest that wider use of Internet technology strengthens democracy, increases citizen participation in social issues and plays an important role in the organization and spreading of protests.¹ This study acknowledges that new ICTs have provided people to

¹ For example, Philip N. Howard, and Muzammil M. Hussain's study of "The Upeavals in Egypt and Tunisia: The Role of Digital Media" (2013) examines the complex role of the Internet, mobile phones, and social networking applications in the Arab Spring and by making use of the digital data collected during and after the events they argue that: "The Arab revolts cascaded across countries largely because digital media allowed communities to realize shared grievances and nurtured

create new types of global protest and resistance practices – thanks to the Internet networks that render transnational many-to-many communication² and anonymity possible. The focus of the study is to investigate affective intensity as a political tool. The study suggests investigating new forms of “political subjectivities” around affective intensities –which I think as affective *territories* in cyberspace created by the accumulation of affect via various social media applications. In order to grasp an understanding of political subjectivity in cyberspace, the study firstly describes cyberspace as a relational-space, then examines two research cases: Gezi Uprising in Turkey and women’s Twitter campaign #sendeanlat (tell your story) which was organized after the brutal murder of Özgecan Aslan.

The first research case examines Gezi Uprising which started in 28 May 2013 in Istanbul and after turned into a country wide revolt against the authoritarian approach of the government ruled by The Justice and Development Party (AKP), its contested domestic and foreign policies, and the unbalanced use of police force. The catalyst for the protests was police’s brutal intervention towards activists who contest government’s decision about the demolition of the Gezi Park for the construction of a shopping mall as a part of the urban renewal project for Taksim area located in central Istanbul. A group of activists had started a sit-in protest in the park in order to stop demolition of

transportable strategies for mobilizing against dictators. Individuals were inspired to protest for personal reasons, but through social media they acted collectively.”

² In many-to-many communication, a session consists of group of users where each one of the members transmits its traffic to all other members in the group.

the trees; as they were sleeping in the park, at 5 o'clock in the morning, the police entered in the park, fired massive amounts of tear gas bombs, set the tents on fire and injured many activists. The news of this severe intervention of the police spread on Internet via social networks in a very short time and created a huge reaction, and finally the reactions turned into a country wide uprising. During the protests the wide use of social media was significant because people were dissatisfied with mainstream media's coverage of the events and aspect towards protests as it was distorting news in favor of the AKP government. After heavy critiques on media, more people have started to use social media tools to get "real" news about what is happening in the streets and why people are protesting. In this regard Gezi process was a milestone for realizing the importance of social networks to be used in social movements in Turkey, for the advantage of communication, mobilizing and increasing awareness of state's censorship on media.

The second research case examines a social media protest; the Twitter campaign with the hashtag #sendeanlat that has started by women in Turkey after the brutal rape and murder of university student Özgecan Aslan. On 13 February 2015, there was a shocking report in the newspapers that became the hot issue in a very short time. It was saying that a burnt body of a young woman was found in the country side of Tarsus, Mersin (a coast city in the south of Turkey). Then the details of the news came; the body was belonged to 19 years old university student Özgecan Aslan, who was reported missing for two days. According to news reports, on 11 February 2015, Özgecan took the

minibus with her friend to go to her home in Mersin. Her friend took off on the way, leaving Özgecan alone in the minibus. The driver changed his usual route and turned to a side road; he attempted to rape Özgecan, but she resisted by using pepper spray. Following this, he stabbed her multiple times, and beat her to death with an iron rod. He returned to Tarsus following the murder, and asked for help from his father and a friend. The three men burnt Özgecan's body together in a forest and cut off her hands, as Özgecan had scratched the perpetrator's face during the struggle, and they feared that his DNA would be identified on the fingernails (“Vahşice öldürülen Özgecan cinayetinin ayrıntıları ortaya çıktı,” 2015).

The brutality of the murder caused a public outrage across Turkey. Thousands of women staged protests in several cities on 14 February 2015, including Ankara, Istanbul, and Mersin – Özgecan’s hometown in southern Turkey (Girit, 2015). In addition, the women started an online media protest with the Twitter hashtag #sendeanlat (meaning “tell your story”). The hashtag received great attention on social media and women started to tell their thoughts, feelings and stories about their experiences of harassment and being woman in Turkey. More than one million tweets were shared with #sendeanlat hashtag, and it became the third most popular topic globally on Twitter. In the following days the protests went on; on 16 February in accordance with the popular hashtag "#Özgecanıçinsiyahgiy" ("wear black for Özgecan") on Twitter, many people (including celebrities) wore black and marched on the street with the aim of raising awareness about violence against women.

Through the examination of these research cases that I have shortly introduced, the study aims to contemplate around the following questions: What role might intimacy—a relation of closeness and familiarity with another person—via the Web play in the realm of politics? How does communication between people through online social networks create *affective* intensities as a political tool? How does this political intimacy via the Web might provide us new imaginaries for a non-identitarian political life?

1.2 Theoretical Framework

Revolutionizing digital information and communication technologies (ICTs) of the past three decades have created an effective virtual environment for political activists to communicate and to organize in a global scale. Emergence of online communities, social networks, political campaigning on Web and digital resistance practices (such as virtual sit-ins, hacking, e-mail bombarding etc.) urge us to rethink conventional understandings of place-based subject formation, territorialized polity construction and stable social movement organization. The main question of this thesis is what role might intimacy—a relation of closeness and familiarity with another person—via the Web play in the realm of politics? In order to investigate this question I look into how communication between people through online social networks create *affective* intensities as a political tool, and how this political intimacy via the Web might provide us new imaginaries for a non-identitarian political life?

To examine the research cases of the thesis I looked at social networking websites, such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube, and evaluated the shared items as bodies having capacity of creating affective intensities. Since the study makes use of online researches, firstly I examine cyberspace as a relational space by using David Harvey's studies on the topic of place, and review today's techno-economic paradigm that was termed as "informational capitalism" by Manuel Castells (2010).

Then the thesis discusses the formation of political subjects on Web by using the affect theory. Affect, communicated between human or non-human bodies, is understood as a passage (or transition) of forces, intensities and movements. In this respect the thesis thinks communication around a political issue via social networking as creating a *space of affect* in cyberspace and investigates how *affect* operates in mobilizing political subjects. In this debate the work of 17th-century Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza, and Gilles Deleuze's examination of Spinoza's work greatly contribute to the discussion. Further, Deleuze and Guattari's conceptualizations of "rhizome" and "nomad" in their *A Thousand Plateaus*, provide me useful tools to conceptualize political subjects on Web.

Finally, the thesis discusses if the political subjectivities mobilized around affective territories in cyberspace may open up a new way for a non-ideantitarian and non-representational politics. For this discussion the study makes use of the political and philosophical debates concerning the notion of

community among continental philosophers such as Maurice Blanchot, Jean-Luc Nancy and Giorgio Agamben over the past thirty years. Their discussion on the idea of community sought to form a new idea of community that challenges the understanding of community as related to the ideas of national, racial or religious unities. Henceforth they opened up the concept of community onto a broader ontological and political context to conceptualize a political “space” of being-together or living-together. Specifically I use Agamben’s conceptualization of *whatever singularity* that he developed in *The Coming Community*, and try to relate it with my previous discussion on the political subjectivities on cyberspace.

1.3 Thematic Outline

Geometry and topology is crucial to all of Deleuze’s thought. Deleuze develops this quasi-mathematical approach to philosophy primarily in his works on Leibniz and Riemann. The concepts of *rhizome*, *nomad*, *fold* derived from this approach, and the political ontology that offers are used in this study, and the spatial and topological fashion of Deleuze’s thought, together with Guattari’s, that underlines connectivity and continuity inspired the way that the thesis conceives of political subjectivities. Thinking cyberspace as a relational *rhizomatic* space consisted of networks that tie subjects together; I examine online social networks’ potentiality to create *affective* intensities as a political tool.

The thesis is constructed around three main themes; Governance, Resistance and Singularity. These themes are thought to be *folded* upon each other, and what we find when they are *unfolded* is the point that the study aims to conclude. These themes are studied in three separate chapters. “Governance” chapter examines the exercise of control on cyberspace from two perspectives; infrastructural governance and affective governance. While the former discusses the restrictions and surveillance on Web by looking at Internet legislation and Internet regulation practice in Turkey, the latter investigates how affect operates in this control mechanism. “Resistance” chapter firstly puts forth political subjects as *nomads* who accumulate around a particular zone in cyberspace (not in ordinate but in anarchic ways), and create an affective zone that operates as a mobilizing force for collective body. Then it examines the two research cases of the thesis which are “Gezi Uprising” and “women’s Twitter campaign #sendeanlat”. “Singularity” chapter interrogates if the political subjectivities created in cyberspace which are discussed in the previous chapters may lead us to a new understanding of politics that goes beyond representation and identities. For this purpose, this chapter reflects on the contemporary debates around the concept of *singularity*, and especially on the works of Giorgio Agamben and Jean-Luc Nancy. These philosophers use the concept of singularity to think about a community without essence, i.e. a community that is not determined through belongings and identities. With the insight they provide, the study tries to think nomadic subjects of cyberspace as

singularities that can escape to a political territory of non-identity, and non-belonging.

1.4 Methodology

This study conducts online research on social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and affect is mobilized as a sociological methodology. Besides it embraces an inter-disciplinary approach; the methodological point is underpinned by the political ontology of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, and by the works of Giorgio Agamben and Jean-Luc Nancy regarding contemporary debates around the concept of *singularity*.

The reason that the study uses a theory of affect is that it enables us to think subjectivity in terms of movement, affect and body. Affect is a concept that was primarily used in the philosophy of Spinoza and that came to prominence in the works of Deleuze. In *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*. Deleuze (1998, p.123) states that for Spinoza “a body in its individuality” is defined by its affective capacities: “... a body affects other bodies, or is affected by other bodies; it is this capacity for affecting and being affected that defines a body in its individuality.” Then, a body is defined by its “affective capacities”; a body cannot be defined by its forms, organs or functions, and it can never be defined as a subject or a substance. This understanding requires thinking bodies in terms of connections and relations (a body is always in relation with other bodies), and it may be used as a methodological basis for a research that conceives bodies in terms of affect (Coleman, 2008, p.91).

This study follows this methodological approach to affect, because “thinking bodies in terms of connections and relations” is compatible with the understanding of bodies in cyberspace which are structured in a networked and relational fashion. The online research in the study uses websites of Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. For the examination of research cases, I followed Twitter hashtags, searched Facebook groups, read comments and watched related YouTube videos. I avoided using statistical data analysis or discourse analysis of the contents that I have examined; instead I approach each data as a body with its affective capacities in order to grasp an affective territory that they constitute by connecting with each other.

CHAPTER 2

GOVERNANCE

The growth of technologically mediated information, and wide use of digital information and communication technologies have brought about new concepts to be discussed for understanding contemporary societies. For example, information economy, post-industrial society, informational society, network society, the information revolution, informational capitalism, network capitalism, and the like, have been debated concepts over the last several decades. The early best known works on these topics include French sociologist Alain Touraine's *La Société Post-Industrielle* (1971), and American sociologist Daniel Bell's *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society: A Venture in Social Forecasting* (1973), which had popularized the notions of "post-industrialism" and "post-industrial society".

The post-industrial society is marked by a transition from a manufacturing-based economy to a service-based economy. In other words, post-industrial society refers to late 20th century society of technically advanced nations, based largely on the production and consumption of services and information instead of goods. Both Bell and Touraine divide the modes of

development historically as pre-industrialism, industrialism³, and post-industrialism. In his three volume book *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture*, Manuel Castells presents “informationalism” as a new mode of development. For Castells, “informationalism” is a new mode of development shaped by the restructuring of the capitalist mode of production in the end of twentieth century. It is interrelated with the expansion and innovation of capitalism. Castells (2010, p.18) argues that, the process of capitalist restructuring undertaken since the 1980s was the most decisive historical factor shaping information technology paradigm, henceforth the new techno-economic system can be characterized as “informational capitalism.” Castells (2010, p.70) put forth the following features as the characteristics of techno-economic paradigm:

- Information is its raw material.
- All processes of our individual and collective existence are directly shaped (although certainly not determined) by the new technological medium.
- Any system or set of relationships using these new information technologies uses *networking logic*.
- It is based on *flexibility* (organizations and institutions can be modified, and even fundamentally altered, by rearranging their components).
- *Specific technologies converge into a highly integrated system*, within which old, separate technological trajectories become literally indistinguishable. (Thus, micro-electronics,

³ Industrialism is principally thought in two axes; industrial statism and industrial capitalism. Statism and capitalism refer to the modes of production.

telecommunications, opto-electronics, and computers are all now integrated into information systems.)

Informational capitalism processes in a global scale, but societies reacted differently to such processes according to their specific history, culture, and institutions. Therefore, it is not proper to refer to an “informational society” that implies a uniformity of social forms everywhere under the new system. However, Castells (2010, p.20) states that we can speak of an “informational society” by characterizing its common fundamental features: firstly informational societies, as they exist currently, are capitalist (unlike industrial societies, some of which were statist) and secondly, we must stress the cultural and institutional diversity of informational societies.

The above characteristics of techno-economic paradigm give us the reasons of why today corporates and governments are willing to control the flow of information and communication. By controlling the information that flows through networks created by new technological medium, states are able to control the behaviors and actions of people (by tracking information, restricting access to information, etc.), or corporates are able to increase their profits (by estimating customer behaviors etc.). For example, it is revealed that U.S. government’s National Security Agency (NSA) is watching all U.S citizens with a system called the PRISM / US-984XN. The PRISM program collects a wide range of data from social media systems (Google, Microsoft, Facebook, Apple, Yahoo, YouTube, Skype and AOL) (Suede, 2013). This means that the NSA is able to see everything you share through Facebook,

Google Talk, Skype chats, Apple etc. Also it is argued that the NSA can turn on your cellphone or laptop's video camera and microphone without you knowing.⁴ In addition, Facebook or Google are also collecting personal user information and sharing them with third party vendors in order to improve their advertisement targeting.

On the other hand, in some countries (especially where mature democracy practices do not exist), the surveillance on Net leads to serious human rights violations. In Turkey, we witness websites being banned without valid reasons, people being arrested because of their tweets or Facebook posts and many being confronted with various legal punishments. For example, in 2012 three young people were arrested with the charge of being a member of Redhack⁵ (that was accepted as a terrorist group by the government) although the only evidences were pictures of some socialist revolutionists which were found on their computers. At the end of the juridical process the three defendants were found not guilty and released, however they had been stayed in prison for nine months.

This chapter focuses on how governance operates in cyberspace. Firstly, I will put forward what is meant by cyberspace and how to work with it

⁴ "Big Brother is Watching You" – Cover Your Webcam, the NSA Can Turn it on Without You Knowing. (2013, December 10). Retrieved May 27, 2015, from <http://www.globalresearch.ca/big-brother-is-watching-you-cover-your-webcam-the-nsa-can-turn-it-on-without-you-knowing/5361069>

⁵ Redhack, formed in 1997, is a Turkey based hacker group, having Marxist and socialist political view.

as a research field. After, I will discuss the governance on cyberspace with the research cases introduced in the previous chapter. The discussion on governance is divided into two dimensions: infrastructural governance and affective governance. The former dimension intends to cover how governance physically operates in cyberspace, such as surveillance on Net, blocking Internet connections, restricting access to certain websites, legal investigations accusing Internet users, etc. The latter dimension intends to examine how online reactions and responses shared in social networking web sites affectively govern people.

2.1 The Cyberspace

The term “cyberspace” was coined by science fiction author William Gibson, first in his 1982 short story *Burning Chrome* and later in his 1984 novel *Neuromancer*. After that, the word became prominently identified with online computer networks. Cyberspace is now defined as “the notional environment in which communication over computer networks occurs.”⁶ Jos de Mul (2010, p.2) describes cyberspace as “post-geographical space” and “post-historical time” and states that the newness and the strangeness of cyberspace make it hard to understand this new area. In order to comprehend what cyberspace is, I will firstly discuss the concepts of “space”, “time” and “place” which play an important role in the understanding of cyberspace.

⁶ Definition of cyberspace in English. Retrieved May 27, 2015, from http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/cyberspace

2.1.1 The Space and Space-Time

The notion of space is used in many different contexts, therefore it is hard to give a generic definition of it. David Harvey suggests an understanding of space in a tripartite division which consists of absolute space, relative space and relational space. Since I find this categorization plausible, I will start with Harvey's (2006, p.271) explanation:

If we regard space as absolute it becomes a 'thing in itself' with an existence independent of matter. It then possesses a structure which we can use to pigeon-hole or individuate phenomena. The view of relative space proposes that it be understood as a relationship between objects which exists only because objects exist and relate to each other. There is another sense in which space can be viewed as relative and I choose to call this relational space – space regarded in the manner of Leibniz, as being contained in objects in the sense that an object can be said to exist only insofar as it contains and represents within itself relationships to other objects.

He explains these categories as the following (Harvey, 2006, p.271-275):

The *absolute* space is the space of Newton and Descartes; it is fixed and it is usually represented as an immovable grid convenient to standardized measurement and calculation. Geometrically it is the space of Euclid; socially it is the space of private property and other bounded territorial designations such as states, city plans, urban grids etc. And it is a space of individuation; it puts forth people as separate individuals.

The *relative* space is the space of Einstein and geometrically it is non-Euclidean. Following the ideas of Gauss (who firstly established the rules of non-Euclidean spherical geometry), Einstein pointed that all forms of measurement depended upon the frame of reference of the observer. In this formulation it is impossible to understand space independent of time; so it is a necessary shift of language from “space” and “time” to “space-time”(or spatio-temporality). But in Einstein’s schema time remains fixed while it is space that bends according to certain observable rules.

The *relational* space is the space of Leibniz. This view holds that space and time cannot be separated from the processes that define them; it implies the relationality of space-time, and the idea of internal relations. An event or a thing at a point in space cannot be understood by appeal to what exists only at that point. It depends upon everything else going on around it to define the nature of that point. Therefore measurement becomes more problematic in a world of relational space-time.

Harvey (2006, p.275) states that the space may both be absolute, relative, and relational; one can choose one of that modes of the space depending on the perspective of the research. This study on the political subjectivity on Internet requires a relational mode of approaching space-time. Because Internet is defined as consistently growing *networks of networks* that consist of millions of private, public, academic, business, and government networks, linked by a broad array of electronic, wireless, and optical

networking technologies. The territory of cyberspace is not fixed; its structure is unsteady and there are infinitely many combinations of wandering through networks and reach at different destinations. Hence, the study takes Internet environment as a relational space, and the attributes of the relational space in terms of connectivity, access, network etc. will be discussed in the following sections.

2.1.2 The “Placeness” of Space

So far I have discussed how to approach to the notion of “space”. Space defines a wider territory of work and its attributes are defined by the approaches and perspectives of the research. The territory of cyberspace is characterized by network and movement. The spatial quality of cyberspace is about network, and the motional quality is about data flows. As discussed above, the cyberspace should be approached from a relational space-time perspective. The notion of “place” manifests a sense of experience, thus the following discussion deals with the experience of being “online” and the sensual attachment to cyberspace (such as how digital settlements can evoke a place-like sense). Firstly I will discuss the notion of place, and then embrace it with the experience in cyberspace.

The origins of the discussions about the concept of place go back to Greek philosophy. Plato developed the notions of “chora” and “topos” as the origins of existence and the process of “becoming”. Everything that exists needs a place in order to be existed. For Plato, “becoming” is a process that

involves three elements; that which becomes; that which is the model of becoming; and the place or setting for becoming. Chora implies both extent in space and the thing in that space that is in the process of becoming. While chora refers to a place in the process of becoming, topos refers to an achieved place (Creswell, 2009). Both chora and topos imply limited places. In Plato's philosophy the idea of place was in a central importance, however in the following periods the notion of place lost its importance in philosophical discussions. It was in the early twentieth century that the concept of place reemerged as a central philosophical interest. Particularly in the works of German philosopher Martin Heidegger, the concept of place was significant (Heidegger took the notion of chora as the place where the "being" is actualized). For Heidegger "to be" was "to be somewhere". He used the German term "dasein" (that means "being there") to refer to the experience of being that is peculiar to human beings. Human existence is existence "in the world". This idea of being-in-the-world was developed in his notion of "dwelling". Dwelling describes the way we make the world meaningful; the way we exist in the world. In this context, for example "dwelling in a house" is not just to be in it spatially; it is to belong there, to have a familiar place there.

The ideas of Heidegger were influential for humanistic geographers who developed the notion of place in 1970s. The notion of place developed in that period combines three elements (or dimensions) of place; location, locale and sense of place. Location can be thought as coordinates, i.e. absolute points in space. Locale refers to settings where every day-life activities take place (for

example homes, offices, vehicles where social interactions structure values, behaviors etc.). Some locales are tied to locations but this is not necessary; for example vehicles or Internet chatrooms do not have fixed locations. And finally, sense of place refers to meaning associated with a place; the feelings or emotions that a place evokes (Agnew, 2011).

The question to be discussed here is how can we talk about “place” in digital or virtual settlements? Since I acknowledge cyberspace as relational space-time, it is not proper to discuss “location” in virtual places; it is a concept that is convenient to use in absolute spaces, because in Internet networks one cannot assign a fixed position to define a location. On the other hand, “locale” may imply unfixed and changeable settings. For example, in digital or virtual settlements websites, chatrooms, Facebook etc. may be thought as virtual locales. The idea of locale is tied to the sense of place. Sense of place may be thought as the feeling of being somewhere that invokes a relationship with the world. In Heidegger’s ontological argument, it is the experience of “being”. Human existence is only experienced in the way we exist in the world. So understanding how we experience the world is at the center of the discussion about the place. In the following section I will focus on the experience of being in cyberspace.

2.1.3 Being Online

The term “online” simply indicates a state of connectivity to Internet. The expression of *being online* indicates the condition of being “inside”, being “connected”. When we are online, where are we exactly? We are not in a physical place; in online settings the communication and other activities are achieved with the help of technological devices that are interconnected in a huge web of networks. A message we write is sent to the receiver (who is in a remote point) with digitally coded “data packages”, and we receive messages in the same way. Or when we download files of documents (videos, music, books, etc.), the data digitally flows to our computer from a distant server that we connected. These and alike activities of digital communication connect us with distant points in networks and enable us to produce a sense of being somewhere, and experience digital settlements as a place.

Online communication technologies connect the Internet users with each other in a global scale. For example when a Facebook user creates an account, she adds photos or videos on her personal page, makes a friends list, writes on her “wall”, visits other friends’ pages, etc. These kinds of activities in online settings make it easier to produce a sense of “belonging” in cyberspace. Internet presents an online environment that makes communicating with people, spreading ideas, getting news, creating virtual communities and many other things possible. These aspects of Internet make its users to conceive themselves as belonging to a “world” that is not bounded

with physical borders which operate in “real” world. This phenomenon illustrates the cosmopolitan nature of the Internet and is manifested with the term “online citizens” who do not express themselves as citizens of a particular state, but as citizens of the world connected with online networks.

However, ordinary Internet users leave “traces” when they are online. Since each device participating in a computer network (that uses the Internet Protocol for communication) has an Internet Protocol (IP) address, it is possible to determine the connections between devices. That means one can detect which websites a user visited in Internet, with whom the user chatted, which servers the user connected etc. Most of the widely used websites such as Google and Facebook save and track the users’ IP addresses in order to predict Internet users’ behavior, and they share this information with governments or with other corporations. Therefore the problem of privacy on Net emerges as a critical issue that concerns all Internet users. The next sections examine how governance is operated in cyberspace.

2.2 Infrastructural Governance

It is widely argued that information and communication technologies (ICTs) create virtual public spaces that strengthen people’s democratic participation and freedom of speech. On the other side, some argue that ICTs serve the states perfect surveillance and control tools. If an Internet user does not apply a special effort to protect her privacy (such as using some VPN tools or software that provide privacy on Net), all her movements on Net are

theoretically observable. This fact may cause users to develop paranoid feelings as if they are being watched, and may lead them to practice self-censorship. This condition resembles the idea of Panopticon which is a type of institutional building designated by Jeremy Bentham that allow a watchman to observe inmates of an institution without the inmates being able to tell whether or not they are being watched. In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975), Michel Foucault used Panopticon as a metaphor for modern “disciplinary” societies. The Panopticon –the constant possibility of observation – creates a consciousness of permanent visibility as a form of power on people. In this respect, Internet may be thought as a platform that states desire to keep under control in order to discipline societies.

Yet, states do not only observe people on Internet, they ban the access to some particular information and content that they accept inconvenient and they collect the personal data of people in order to accuse them of online crimes. Especially in countries governed by authoritarian regimes, these restrictions cause serious censorships and violations of human rights. For example, People's Republic of China owns the world's most extensive Internet control system, known as Golden Shield project. In this project, Internet users are forced to give their personal identification numbers in order to access many websites, any comments written in web forums are monitored by Chinese Internet police force (whose number is more than two millions) and web sites that include any of the prohibited words are immediately closed to access. For example a Chinese Internet user probably finds nothing on Net about the

Tianamenn Square protests. This is an extreme example but it illustrates how governments can use their power to control the access to Internet. Recently in Turkey, the government have legislated some controversial laws that regulate the use of Internet that are criticized for deepening the censorship in the country. In the following I reflect on the situation of Internet usage and regulations in Turkey.

2.2.1 Internet Usage in Turkey

The Internet in Turkey has been available to the public in 1993, and since then the number of Internet users has been on a consistent increase. According to Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK) statistics, the ratio of regular Internet users for 2014 is %53.8, while it was % 48.9 for 2013. Also the ratio of houses that have Internet connection has been increased from %49.1 to %60 in 2014 compared with the previous year (“Hanehalkı Bilişim Teknolojileri Kullanım Araştırması,” 2014). And according to Google’s research %92 percent of Internet users in Turkey use social media applications (“Türkiye, sosyal medya kullanımında dünya lideri,” 2014).

This high ratio of Internet and social media usage in Turkey has brought about fundamental changes in the way information flows in society; in other words the way how people reach information, and how they spread information has dramatically changed. The structure of Internet makes it easier to reach information, to share ideas and knowledge instantaneously without restricted by physical distances, and to connect with people in a global scale.

This quality of Internet and the rapid increase in the use of social media applications such as Twitter, Facebook, and other social networking websites have also challenged mainstream media practices. People who do not believe the neutrality and independency of media have chosen to use alternative media practices in order to be informed. For example in Turkey, the massive amounts of censorship and disinformation by the mainstream media during Gezi Park protests caused an enormous increase in the number of social media users. According to a research, the number of Twitter users in Turkey increased to 10 million from 1.8 million after Gezi Park protests, and the number of tweets during the protests was more than 100 million (Banko and Babaođlan, 2013). In addition to Twitter, other social networking websites were intensively used by protestors during the Gezi Park protests, for the purposes of sharing information, organizing protests and creating solidarity activities. Responsively the government tried to slow down (and sometimes cut down) the Internet connection (in the areas where the protests become intensive) in order to prevent people to organize themselves. Also some AKP supporters were broadcasting false information and provocative news on social media in order to disorient protestors and to decrease the reliability of information on Net.

After Gezi protests, the government has taken up a more restrictive and prohibitive attitude towards the regulations of Internet. In Turkey, The Presidency of Telecommunication (TIB) is responsible for these regulations. TIB was established in 2005 with the purpose of controlling the content of communication via telecommunication. Some of the tasks that TIB is

responsible for are; monitoring the content of Internet publications, restricting the access to inappropriate content on Internet, blocking the websites that are prohibited by judges or courts, determining the identity of people who publish inconvenient content on Web and reporting them to the prosecution (“Başkanlığın Görevleri,” 2015). In the last few years the AKP government have had a more prohibitive and restrictive attitude to Internet. The government has expanded the scope of authority of TIB in order to control the Internet. In the next section some examples of Internet restrictions and prohibitions in Turkey will be discussed in order to draw a picture of legislative situation that governs cyberspace.

2.2.2 Restrictions and Surveillance on Net: Internet legislation and Internet regulation practice in Turkey

In Turkey the law governed by the Law No. 5651 was legislated to regulate and control the content of Internet in 2007. At first, the law intended only to block inconvenient contents (that involve materials of inducement for committing suicide, sexual abuse of children, facilitation of drug abuse, providing detrimental drugs, obscenity, prostitution, providing place and opportunity for gambling, and crimes against Mustafa Kemal Atatürk), however after that the law has brought about applications that restrict people’s right to be informed, or that accuse people for their activities on Net. The content that is inconvenient with the law can be denied to access in two ways;

by blocking domain name or by blocking Internet Protocol (IP) address⁷. By 10.04.2015 the number of websites that are blocked by the law is 77382 (“Erişime Engellenen Websiteleri,” 2015). And according to the Twitter Transparency Report, 328 removal requests out of 376 that Twitter received in 2014 worldwide was from Turkey (“Twitter şeffaflık raporu: Türkiye sansürde dünya 1'ncisi,” 2015).

These facts illustrate government’s prohibitive attitude towards Internet, and the government is willing to deepen the censorship on freedom of expression on the Internet with the Law No. 5651. Blocking websites is one dimension of the government’s control on Net. The other dimension is accusing people of sharing their comments or ideas that government accepts inappropriate. For example, in the period of Gezi protests, 29 people are prosecuted in İzmir for their tweets that abet people in crime. The tweets they shared were about calling ambulance, calling people to join protests, sharing wireless Internet passwords, etc. They were taken into custody in June 2013 by police who raided their houses at the night time (“Gezi Parkı Direnişi: Nedir? Nasıl Başladı? Kim Ne Dedi?,” 2015).

After Gezi protests, the prime minister and other governmental officials had continually expressed their ideas about closing down the access to Twitter. Finally after Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's furious speech about

⁷ Since May 2009, TIB does not announce the statistics of the websites that are blocked, and do not reply any information request about the statistics.

Twitter a day before, on 20.03.2014 access to Twitter in Turkey was blocked by TIB after the decision of Public Prosecutor of Istanbul (“Ve Twitter kapatıldı,” 2015). Besides recently there are numerous ongoing trials that charge people because of their tweets, which are accepted as insulting the president of Republic. Between August 2014 and March 2015, 236 people were investigated for "insulting the head of state"; 105 indicted; eight formally arrested. Between July and December 2014 (Recep Tayyip Erdogan's presidency), Turkey filed 477 requests to Twitter for removal of content, over five times more than any other country and an increase of 156% on the first half of the year (“The problem with insulting Turkey's President Erdogan,” 2015).

2.3 Affective Governance

Recently it has been claimed that since the mid-1990s there has been an “affective turn” in the humanities and social sciences. Although interest in affects has been always a topical issue in the history of philosophy, the philosophical tradition of affect became more focused in the twentieth century, through the work of philosophers such as Merleau-Ponty, Deleuze, Guattari and Foucault. In this period the growing interest in the work of 17th-century Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza resulted in a re-examination of the ontology of political subjectivity. Ruddick (2010, p.22) states that in many contemporary approaches to the constitution of a new political subject, the emphasis on the connection between joy and empowerment (the argument that

we organize encounters to maximize joy) has become cornerstone (for example, Hardt and Negri's insistence on the productive potentials of multitude and immaterial labor). The question of what fear and joy do in mobilizing political subjectivities is in the center of the discussion about framing contemporary political subject. In this study I am particularly interested in the affect created in the Internet environment via social media applications and how it operates in mobilizing people to act (or not to act). For the conclusion of this chapter, firstly I set forth what is affect then I discuss its political reflections with emphasis on the concept of *encounters* borrowed from Spinoza.

2.3.1 What is Affect?

There is no general agreement about the definition of affect; it is often defined according to disciplinary requirements. To start with, I prefer Seigworth and Gregg's (2010, p.1) definition which is explanatory for the phenomena of affect that is discussed in this study:

[...] there is no pure or somehow originary state for affect? Affect arises in the midst of in-between-ness: in the capacities to act and be acted upon. Affect is an impingement or extrusion of a momentary or sometimes more sustained state of relation as well as the passage (and the duration of passage) of forces or intensities. That is, affect is found in those intensities that pass body to body (human, nonhuman, part-body, and otherwise), in those resonances that circulate about, between, and sometimes

stick to bodies and worlds, and in the very passages or variations between these intensities and resonances themselves.

Affect is then communicated between human or non-human bodies; it is a passage (or transition) of forces, intensities and movements. Spinoza thinks “body” in terms of movement and rest; a body is defined by its *capacity* to enter into relations of movement and rest. The capacity he spoke of refers to a power (or potential) to affect or be affected. Brian Massumi (2002b, p.212) explains that, “These are not two different capacities – they always go together. When you affect something, you are at the same time opening yourself up to being affected in turn, and in a slightly different way than you might have been the moment before. You have made a transition, however slight. You have stepped over a threshold. Affect is this passing of a threshold, seen from the point of view of the change in capacity.” Affect is not the same thing with personal emotions; emotion is a very partial expression of affect. Affect “... is all attached to the movements of the body that it can’t be reduced to emotion... which is not to say that there is nothing subjective in it. Spinoza says that every transition is accompanied by a *feeling* of the change in capacity. The affect and the feeling of the transition are not two different things. They’re two sides of the same coin, just like affecting and being affected.” (Massumi, 2002b, p.213)

In a political agenda Massumi (2002b, p.212) says that “affect” is the word he uses for ‘hope’. For him, affect is “a way of talking about that margin of manoeuvrability, the ‘where we might be able to go and what we might be

able to do' in every present situation.” This, points to a way of thinking affect in an ethical and political frame, since becoming aware of the affective forces that mobilize our behaviors may change and expand us; it tells us where we might go and how we might live our lives.

2.3.2 The Politics of Affect

Affect, as discussed above, is communicated between human or non-human bodies and it is a transition of forces, intensities and movements. It is not easy to express in language what is shared between bodies via affect (even sometimes it is an unnoticed force); however reflecting deeply on the movements motivated by affect may be explanatory to understand how we act within the world. In this study I am particularly interested in the affect created in the Internet environment via social media applications and how it operates in mobilizing people to act (or not to act). In cyberspace we encounter many bodies (messages, texts, videos, pictures, comments), some bodies are articulated around a particular subject. I call this kind of accumulation in cyberspace an “affective territory”. Affective territory has a power to affect and to be affected (it can be altered or expanded or diminished through time), and its forces and intensities change ceaselessly in time and space. How do affective territories operate in mobilizing political subjectivities? For instance what is the role of fear, joy, or anger in the collective body’s activities? Manuel Castells (2012, p.162) provides an example from Occupy Wall Street demonstrations in 2011 in New York: “The September 17 demonstration on

Wall Street, with the subsequent occupation of Zuccotti Park, was followed by several demonstration in New York, in spite of the police making hundreds of arrests under several pretexts. The more the police resorted to repression, the more the images posted on YouTube of these actions mobilized protestors. Solidarity with the occupiers came from many quarters.” In this case, police oppression did not discourage people, but it caused mobilizing people after it had created an affective territory in Internet via social networking. In Gezi uprising we witnessed a similar phenomenon; the significant amount of the protestors had joined the protests after they had seen police’s brutal attacks, and seventy percentage of them had learnt this fact via social media (“Gezi Parkı direnişçilerinin yarısı polis şiddeti olduğu için eyleme katıldı,” 2013). Thus in a similar fashion, the violence to the protestors that spread over Internet via social media was the cause of affective force which had mobilized people to act with solidarity with the protestors.

On the other hand, governments, contemporary capitalism, and mainstream media use the force of affect in order to suppress people by orchestrating affective sequences such as startle, terror and anger. For Gibbs (2002, p.338), “... what is co-opted by media is primarily affect, and ... the media function as amplifiers and modulators of affect which is transmitted by the human face and voice, and also by music and other forms of sounds, and also by the image ...” Social media also allow creating affective territories in cyberspace in order to discourage people for struggling against unequal, unjust and violent practices of the power. How they create those affective territories

to diminish the resistance? The answer is interwoven with many other control and discipline practices of the power, nonetheless reflecting on *encounters* may provide us some explanation about it.

2.3.3 Encounters

... when we encounter an external body that does not agree with our own [...], it is as if the power of that body opposed our power, bringing about a subtraction or a fixation; when this occurs, it may be said that our power of acting is diminished or blocked [...] In the contrary case, when we encounter a body that is agrees with our nature, one whose relation composed with ours, we may say that its power is added to ours [...], and our power of acting is increased or enhanced. (Deleuze, 1988, p.27-28)

We come upon these *encounters* in any moment in our lives; they make us think, feel, react, decide, etc.; in other words they govern our behaviors. These may be encounters with anything; a person, things, ideas, images, sounds... They affect our power of acting in a positive or negative way. While some encounters diminish our power of acting, some increase it; Spinoza calls the former “bad encounters”, and the latter “good encounters”. For Spinoza, there is no Evil and Good, but there is bad and good. All the phenomena that we group under evil, illness and death are bad encounters, and good encounters agree with our nature. A good individual (i.e. free, rational, or strong) strives to organize good encounters and combine her relations with the ones that are compatible with her and thereby to increase her power. A bad individual

(servile, foolish, or weak) is the one who contents to undergo the effects of her encounters but wails and accuses the effect undergone does not agree with her and reveals her impotence (Deleuze, 1988, p.22-23).

This argumentation brings us to the core of our discussion; how affective governance operates in diminishing people's resistance to suppression. An individual needs to organize good encounters in order to be free and strong. Submittal to bad encounters makes individuals weak and servile. Therefore suppression and discipline mechanisms produce bad encounters and impose them to people in order to make them slavish. In this way, people become passivized and they lose the power to act for being *good*, i.e. free and strong.

In this regard, we can argue that the affective territories in cyberspace, which impose fear, nervousness, panic, anxiety, or alike senses on people operate in the same fashion. For example War on Terror campaigns that has started after 9/11 attacks or anti-Islam propagandas create such affective territories that instill fear and anxiety into the people. These invoked feelings make people to think they are under a constant risk of terrorism, and in the end cause them to submit to their government's requests and even to disclaim their civil liberties. On the other hand, they invoke feelings of hate and hostility towards Muslims, and lead to discrimination and violation of human rights.

Henceforth, social media comes to be an effective tool to manage affective governance on cyberspace as it becomes a widely used medium for

communication. However the individual has the power to overcome suppression and to be free and strong; she can do it by organizing good encounters, by being aware of the affective forces that governs her, and by making relations that increases her power. This is a purely ethical task of one's own, always demands the individual's awareness. In order to enhance the power to act, for Spinoza, humans should collaborate with one another (Ruddick, 2010, p.24). And with this enhanced power provided by the *multitude* a collective resistance to power may be thought.

CHAPTER 3

RESISTANCE

“Where there is power, there is resistance.”

— Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality 1: An Introduction*

The origins of computerized activism go back to the pre-Web times, the mid-1980s. For instance, the first version of PeaceNet, a network of peace activists, was established in the United States in 1985. PeaceNet enabled political activists to communicate with one another across international borders. Yet, computerized activism remained at the margins of political and social movements; it was not until the spread of the Internet use in the (early to mid) 1990s and until the emergence of the graphical browser (in 1994 and 1995) that radical Internet activism flourished. Today, in the post-Web Internet phase (Web 2.0)⁸ there is widespread use of these media forms by political activists and groups all over the world.

⁸ Web 2.0 describes World Wide Web sites that emphasize user-generated content, usability, and interoperability.

Acknowledging that institutions of power were shifting from physical locations to virtual locations, many internet groups and collectives (of political activists and artists) have emerged in the 1990s which led to a significant rise in cyberspace activism. Critical Arts Ensemble (CAE) is one of the earliest examples of these collectives. Formed in 1987, CAE's focus has been on the exploration of the intersections between art, critical theory, technology, and political activism, in an effort to move beyond conventional place-based political activism. In 1996, CAE published a book *Electronic Civil Disobedience and Other Unpopular Ideas*, which issued a call for the development of electronic civil disobedience (ECD). A common form of ECD is DDoS attacks coordinated against a specific target, also known as 'virtual sit-ins', which are announced on the Internet by activist groups. For example Electronic Disturbance Theatre's (EDT) virtual activism campaign in support of the Zapatistas in 1998 was a milestone in ECD protests. They launched a software tool called Floodnet that constantly reloaded a targeted website (often that of the Mexican President) and bombarded it with requests in order to slow it down. Floodnet also automated the production of messages from the targeted site. For example, someone targeting a webpage would see messages reporting a failure to find a page on site, with the automated message reading something like 'no human rights found on server' or 'no democracy found on this server.' In the same year a young British hacker known as "JF" entered into 300 web sites and placed anti-nuclear messages by changing and adding HTML code. This was the biggest political hack of its kind and after then there were

numerous reports of web sites being accessed and altered with political content.

Today we come across these kinds of political acts, hackings and leaking of secret information of states more frequently as the Internet being used more widely. Also we witness wide use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in social movements and mass protests.⁹ This study aims to investigate how social media that gather together diverse participants around common concerns create affective zones and how the *affect* relates to an increase and decrease in the collective body's capacity to act. For this end, the study draws attention to the Gezi Park uprising and the social media action on Twitter with the #sendeanlat hashtag after the murder of Özgecan Aslan in order to grasp the appearances of a politics of affect. Before I examine these cases, initially in the first section I will discuss the political subjectivity in cyberspace.

3.1 Political Subjectivity in Cyberspace

3.1.1 Subject, Body and Collective Body

René Descartes (1596-1650) is acknowledged as the first “subjectivist” thinker in modern philosophy; with the proposition “cogito ergo sum” he put forward a thinking “subject” (distinct from the external world) as the only

⁹ For example, in recent global uprisings such as Arab Spring, Occupy movements, Gezi Park protests Internet was the main communication and organization tool used by protesters.

certain foundation for knowledge. Since this proposition perceived to form a foundation for all knowledge, it liberated philosophy from theology and became a fundamental element of Western philosophy. For Descartes the subject is something that thinks, hence this idea presupposes the existence of a subject distinct from the external world (a distinction between the knower and what is known). Modern thinking is used to think this way; for example scientists recognize themselves as researchers who find the truth in outer physical world. Or language creates the perception that there is an “I” that perceives, speaks, likes etc. as an independent “thinker”.

Martin Heidegger rejected the distinction between subject and object; his concept of *Dasein*, – that refers to the experience of “being” (that is peculiar to human beings) – suggests a different approach for our understanding and interpretation of the world. *Dasein* is “a way of being involved with and caring for the immediate world in which one lived, while always remaining aware of the contingent element of that involvement, of the priority of the world to the self, and of the evolving nature of the self itself.”(Childers and Hentzi, 1995, p.70) *Dasein* is neither a subject, nor the objective world alone, but the coherence of “Being-in-the-world.”

Gilles Deleuze’s thinking of the subject shares a similar approach with Heidegger’s in the way that he also criticized the modern understanding of subjectivity which always gives the experience to a subject. As mentioned above, for Descartes “cogito ergo sum” expresses that while everything is open

to doubt, the one who doubts (who experiences) cannot be doubted; the subject who thinks is the ground for certainty. Deleuze rejects that subject is an ultimate foundation of thought; we have created an “image of thought” because we have no longer external foundations such as God or the Truth. For Deleuze, the subject is just one more form of transcendence. Colebrook (2001, p.74-76) explains this form of transcendence as the following: In order to explain how the subject is constructed as a ‘plane of transcendence’ Deleuze describes the formation of the “cogito” as a philosophical concept. Descartes’ “cogito” (which means “I think”) assumes that there are experiences and that these are given to one who thinks. It does not consider that the “I think” might be one effect among others in a ‘swarm’ of experiences. Deleuze says that concepts cannot be ultimate foundations. When I begin with the question, “What can I know?”, I have already differentiated an ‘I’ from a world that I *then* strive to know. We might say that there just ‘is’ experience, without subjects or objects, inside or outside. It is from experience that subjects are formed. There is perception, and it is from this perception that a perceiver is formed. This perceiver can then go on to form an image of itself as an ‘I’ in relation to some outside or transcendent world.

Thus, for both Heidegger and Deleuze, subject is not a separate being; it should be understood with its relation to the world. This also brings out the questions of “how do we know” or “what do we know?” On the other hand, in psychoanalysis knowledge domain contains the “unconscious”. Freud articulated the concept of unconscious as a hypothesis in order to explain

various psychic facts that escape from consciousness. Psychic apparatus that are empirical and observational are used to explain knowing and subjectivity. Subject is constituted in a domain of psyche.

Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory "Oedipus complex" indicates a desire for sexual involvement with the parent of the opposite sex and a sense of rivalry with the parent of the same sex. These feelings and ideas are repressed and unconscious and the Oedipus complex occurs in the phallic stage of psychosexual development (ages 3–6). According to Freud, this is a crucial psychological experience that is necessary for the development of a mature sexual role and identity. When considered in terms of forming subjectivity, this theory argues that the subject is produced in a specific set of familial and social relations in the culture, and the key contributing factors to the production of subjectivity are the gender relations and sexual identifications of child's environment (Mansfield, 2000, p.31).

In *Anti-Oedipus*, which is the first volume of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's collaborative work *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Deleuze and Guattari criticize this subjectivity formation, as the title *Anti-Oedipus* points out the critique of psychoanalysis and the Oedipus complex. Their broad argument is that psychoanalysis contributes to the capitalist formation of subjectivity by reproducing institutive structures of capitalist reproduction. Yet they do not totally reject psychoanalysis, they attempt to transform

psychoanalysis with a critical practice that they call “schizoanalysis”¹⁰, in order to attach the whole domain of social and historical factors into the field of psychoanalytic explanations of behaviors and cognition. Thus Deleuze and Guattari’s thinking opens a new path to think subjectivity in a different way than formal constitution of subjectivity. The rhizome and nomad concepts – which they suggested in the second volume of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*– and Deleuze’s early political ontology provide us effective tools to conceptualize subjectivity in cyberspace.

Now I want to explain what the concepts of “body” and “collective body” refer to as I will mention them throughout the study. I use “body” in a Spinozist meaning: Deleuze (1988, p.123) explains in *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy* that for Spinoza “a body in its individuality” is defined by its affective capacities: “... a body affects other bodies, or is affected by other bodies; it is this capacity for affecting and being affected that defines a body in its individuality.” Then, a body is defined by its “affective capacities”; a body cannot be defined by its forms, organs or functions, and it can never be defined as a subject or a substance. This understanding requires thinking bodies in terms of connections and relations (a body is always in relation with other bodies), and it may be used as a methodological basis for a research that conceives bodies in terms of affect (Coleman, 2008, p.91). In this study the

¹⁰ Schizoanalysis draws on Marx and Nietzsche for its critique of Freud and oedipal psychoanalysis. Theoretically Deleuze and Guattari refuse to separate political economy and libidinal economy; in fact they want to integrate them (it is capitalism that creates a rupture between them). In this sense, psychoanalysis reproduces and strengthens the separation of individual from the society, and schizoanalysis tries to handle this problem.

bodies in cyberspace which are structured in a networked and relational fashion are conceived by their capacity for affecting and being affected.

In recent studies of the politics of ontology, the conceptualization of “collective body” in the framing of the political subject is also inspired by the works of Spinoza. Negri and Hardt’s conceptualizations on the productive potentials of the multitude and immaterial labor (2000, 2004) and Hardt’s *passional social assemblages* (1995) are based on their readings of Spinoza. Negri and Micheal Hardt’s definition of “multitude” does not refer to “the people”, it refers to many individuals acting anonymously in a networked agreement and this social structure contains the potential for true democracy. The multitude’s ability to communicate and collaborate allows it to produce a common body of knowledge and ideas and in this way to develop a platform for democratic resistance to Empire¹¹. Ruddick (2010, p.41) argues that Negri and Deleuze have divergent mobilizations of Spinoza’s affect and the role it plays in the reconstitution of the contemporary political subjectivity:

Negri focuses on the current conjuncture of forces’ and the role that affect plays in the postmodernism of contemporary capitalism, operating already at the level of the social body but not in any ways at the level of the body itself. Deleuze suggests a delineation of combat emerging in a rather more cramped space of politics, a terrain in which one is forced to invent or create new

¹¹ Hardt and Negri use the term “Empire” to indicate a new political order of globalization. It is different from the imperialism of European dominance and capitalist expansion in previous eras. Rather, today’s Empire draws on elements of U.S. constitutionalism, with its tradition of hybrid identities and expanding frontiers.

possibilities out of necessity. At the very least it suggests we need to reflect on all that limits and bounds our politics, that we need to leave the comfort zones of our traditional arenas of operation and venture onto less stable terrain, where a new thought, new practices and a new world become possible.

The assemblages, in Deleuze's view are not limited to labor or to human combinatorials. Assemblages constituted in cyberspace are composed of multiple interacting bodies and organized in diverged media forms. In this study "collective body" denotes to such assemblages in cyberspace and "affect" relates to an increase or decrease in the collective body's capacity to act. The study argues that assemblages in cyberspace create "affective zones" that form a force of affect, and investigates how the force of affect is utilized by social movements to increase collective body's capacity to act.

3.1.2 Cyberspace as "Rhizome"

The concept of "rhizome" was introduced by Deleuze and Guattari in their *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980) — which is the second volume of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, the first being *Anti-Oedipus* (1972). Rhizome is a botanical term which means a modified subterranean stem of a plant that is usually found underground, often sending out roots and shoots from its nodes. Deleuze and Guattari used this term as a philosophical concept to depict "multiplicities". Deleuze took the concept of multiplicity from Riemann and Bergson and developed it before *A Thousand Plateaus*. In *Difference and Repetition* (1968), he opposed substance theory (which from Aristotle to

Spinoza, operates with the One-Many dyad) and in his metaphysics he replaced “substance” with “multiplicity”.¹² Broadly speaking, “multiplicity” was developed as an opposition to One-Many dialectic:

[M]ultiplicity must not designate a combination of the many and the one, but rather an organisation belonging to the many as such, which has no need whatsoever of unity in order to form a system. The one and the many are concepts of the understanding which make up the overly loose mesh of a distorted dialectic which proceeds by opposition. (Deleuze, 1994, p. 182)

In this regard rhizome concept was thought as an a-centered multiplicity. Rhizome contests with an arborescent¹³ conception of knowledge – that models western thinking (it is hierarchic and it works with vertical and linear connections). Instead rhizome is anarchic, and works with planar and trans-species connections. Rhizome can be thought as a labyrinth or a structure of subterranean passageways with the following properties; it has neither beginning nor end; there is no center or periphery; it is a structure of passages that it is not clear which place of the labyrinth will take us to the next. It does not have straight and direct paths; it is a system of shortcuts and detours. In the introduction part of *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari (1987, p.7-9) outline the following characteristics of rhizome:

¹² In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze’s aim was to develop a metaphysics — adequate to contemporary mathematics and science— in which the concept of multiplicity replaces that of substance, event replaces essence and virtuality replaces possibility.

¹³ It means resembling a tree in form and branching structure.

1 and 2. Principles of connection and heterogeneity: any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be. [...] A rhizome ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles. A semiotic chain is like a tuber agglomerating very diverse acts, not only linguistic, but also perceptive, mimetic, gestural, and cognitive: there is no language in itself, nor are there any linguistic universals, only a throng of dialects, patois, slangs, and specialized languages. [...]

3. Principle of multiplicity: it is only when the multiple is effectively treated as a substantive, "multiplicity," that it ceases to have any relation to the One as subject or object, natural or spiritual reality, image and world. Multiplicities are rhizomatic [...] [and they have] neither subject nor object, only determinations, magnitudes, and dimensions that cannot increase in number without the multiplicity changing in nature (the laws of combination therefore increase in number as the multiplicity grows). [...] An assemblage is precisely this increase in the dimensions of a multiplicity that necessarily changes in nature as it expands its connections. There are no points or positions in a rhizome, such as those found in a structure, tree, or root. There are only lines. [...]

4. Principle of asignifying rupture: against the oversignifying breaks separating structures or cutting across a single structure. A rhizome may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines. You can never get rid of ants because they form an animal rhizome that can rebound time and again after most of it has been destroyed. Every rhizome contains lines of segmentarity according to which it is

stratified, territorialized, organized, signified, attributed, etc., as well as lines of deterritorialization down which it constantly flees. There is a rupture in the rhizome whenever segmentary lines explode into a line of flight, but the line of flight is part of the rhizome. These lines always tie back to one another. That is why one can never posit a dualism or a dichotomy, even in the rudimentary form of the good and the bad.

5 and 6. Principle of cartography and decalcomania: a rhizome is not amenable to any structural or generative model. It is a stranger to any idea of genetic axis or deep structure. A genetic axis is like an objective pivotal unity upon which successive stages are organized; a deep structure is more like a base sequence that can be broken down into immediate constituents, while the unity of the product passes into another, transformational and subjective, dimension. This does not constitute a departure from the representative model of the tree, or root—pivotal taproot or fascicles [...] The tree articulates and hierarchizes tracings; tracings are like the leaves of a tree. The rhizome is altogether different, a map and not a tracing. Make a map, not a tracing. [...] What distinguishes the map from the tracing is that it is entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real. The map does not reproduce an unconscious closed in upon itself; it constructs the unconscious.

If we consider the above characteristics of rhizome in relation with cyberspace phenomena, we may see many analogical links between the organizing structures of rhizome and networked systems in cyberspace.¹⁴

¹⁴ There are some writers who had applied Deleuze and Guattari's rhizomatic principles to the Internet. For example, in *Rhizome@Internet* (1996), Hamman examines rhizomatic principles –connection, heterogeneity, multiplicity, asignifying

Cyberspace is a virtual settlement in which communication over computer networks occurs. In a network, a computer can connect with any other computer. Information circulates through network lines in an anarchic way; there are no settled rules or hierarchies to define the flows of information. Networks can expand and recede; it is an a-centered, dispersed and open system with multiple ports of entry. The routes and linkages in Internet are not stable, they constantly change. The users on the Internet create a map by browsing webpages, instead of tracing over predetermined routes. In the following, John Marks (2006, p.195) explains how Internet functions and develops in ways that correspond closely to the six principles of the rhizome:

At the most straightforward level, the Internet has no central point of organisation and no precise point of origin, although it can arguably be traced back to an experiment called the ARPANET in the late 1960s. Like the rhizome, the Internet is best thought of as being composed of lines rather than points, and in principle these lines are connectable in infinite ways. The use and development of the Internet does not refer to a preexisting programme, and the individual user can navigate their way around the Net by means of hyperlinks in a way that cannot be predetermined or predicted by an editor, author or librarian. As well as there being no model or blueprint for the Net, no clear boundaries can be drawn that would indicate where it begins and where it ends. It is a multiplicity, in the sense that it is a network of networks, the dimensions of which are continually

rupture, cartography and decalomania—by giving concrete examples from the Internet, and concludes that Internet is rhizomatic,. Another example is Landow's *Hyper/Text/Theory* (1994) that applies rhizome model to hypertext theory.

proliferating and undergoing transformations. In this sense the Internet is, notwithstanding the increasing corporate colonisation of cyberspace, a ‘flat’, immanent rhizomatic structure: it is, apparently, a ‘smooth’ rather than a ‘striated’ space.

How does thinking cybespace as a rhizomatic model contribute to our discussion on *Resistance*? I think in order to proceed, we need to borrow one more concept from Deleuze and Guattari, which is the concept of “nomads” (also “nomadology” or “nomadism” terms are used). In *The Deleuze and Guattari Dictionary* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013), the definition of *nomad* is “the proper name of an agent who not only inhabits, but territorializes, (im)mobilizes, or constructs smooth space by means of consistent independence from specified points and localized, stratified domains” (Young, 2013) Deleuze and Guattari used the concept of “nomads” and “nomadology” to think through a state of being that resists the hierarchy of centralization. Thereafter their concept has given inspiration to many other studies. For example, Rosi Braidotti’s nomadic theory that engages with Gilles Deleuze, Michel Foucault and Luce Irigaray, aims of to develop and evoke a vision of female feminist subjectivity in a nomadic mode. In this study, I use the notion of nomad to refer to the Internet users, who move in the smooth, nomadic-rhizomatic zones of deterritorialized spaces of cyberspace. Nomads are associated with smooth, rhizomatic, nonlinear spaces. For political ends they do not organize themselves in a hierarchical way; they are organized collectively and anonymously. To conduct a cyber-protest, nomads are accumulated around a particular zone in cyberspace (not in ordinate but in

anarchic ways), and create an affective zone that operates as a mobilizing force for collective body. Affect is created by nomadic subjectivity in cyberspace, which is comprised of countless anonymous individuals who connect to the Internet from indeterminable and changeable points.

3.2 Gezi Uprising

An e-mail from an activist mailing list dropped into my e-mail box at 27 May 2013 which was saying that “Urgent call! There are bulldozers working in Gezi Park, those who are around go to the park, some friends are already there.” It was nearly midnight and the other day I learnt that fifteen people stayed in the park until the morning in order to guard the park. At 28 May, more people gathered in the park, they stayed there all day and in the night they set up their tents in the park. The activists were contesting government’s decision about the demolition of the Gezi Park for the construction of a shopping mall as a part of the urban renewal project for Taksim area located in central Istanbul. Hence the activist decided to stay in the park in order to stop demolition of the trees when bulldozers come. As they were sleeping in the park, at 5 o’clock in the morning the police entered in the park, fired massive amounts of tear gas bombs, set fire to tents and injured many activists. This severe intervention of the police spread on Internet via social networks in a very short time and created a huge reaction, and finally the reactions turned into a country wide uprising against the authoritarian approach of the government ruled by The Justice and Development Party (AKP), its contested domestic and foreign policies and the unbalanced use of police force.

In recent years, the discomfort has grown with the government's contested policies in many fields such as urban development, environment, culture, health and neighborhood relations. Additionally, government's restrictive policies on the freedom of expression, rising oppression towards non-conservative and secularist segments of the society and serious intervention to legal infrastructure have caused different segments of the society to react strongly against AKP. Therefore, Gezi uprising united many people coming from different backgrounds and struggles; worker unions, various left-wing organizations, anarchists, Çarşı (the supporter group of Turkish football team Beşiktaş), Redhack, (a Turkish hacker group known with its oppositional attitude), LGBT (the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual solidarity movement), Anti-Capitalist Muslims, Kemalists and many others had been at the forefront of protests. It was this characteristic of the protests that made Gezi uprising such an unordinary and singular event. The people occupied the park and Taksim area for more than one week and the park turned into a *commune* where people had created kitchens, health centers and libraries, and they had created a solidarity practice that had never been experienced in Turkey's political life before. People from all social segments could act together without bringing political, religious or ethnic identities to the forefront and they learned the importance of co-existing with differences and viewing these differences as a plurality of views. Moreover, the social cohesion was carried to public forums, which initially started in Gezi Park and then spread to central parks in many cities, and which continued for some

months. The forums having an open dialogue environment enabled a practice of direct democracy and bottom-up peace process in the society, and showed that a broad scale citizen consensus and social cohesion could be realized by these kinds of practices.

During the protests the wide use of new media was significant because people were dissatisfied with mainstream media's coverage of the events and aspect towards protests as it was distorting news in favor of the AKP government. After heavy critiques on media, more people have started to use social media tools to get "real" news about what is happening in the streets and why people are protesting. According to a research, the number of Twitter users in Turkey increased to 10 million from 1.8 million after Gezi Park protests, and the number of tweets during the protests was more than 100 million (Banko and Babaođlan, 2013). Many park forums have created online communities via Facebook groups in order to increase the resistance for the purpose of sharing forum notes, publishing daily bulletins and discussing suggestions and opinions for organizing workshops, meetings and activities.¹⁵ Gezi uprising have found echoes throughout the globe; solidarity protests in support of people of Turkey held in many cities around the world and Gezi protestors received worldwide solidarity and support messages via Internet. To give some examples; global hacker group Anonymous published a support video on YouTube ("Anonymous #opTurkey", 2013), well known scholars and

¹⁵ Cihangir Park Community, Resist Kadıköy Community, Resistance People and Freedom Platform are some of the online communities formed during Gezi uprising and are still actively being used.

artists including Noam Chomsky, Slavoj Žižek, Patti Smith shared their solidarity messages.

People had also used social media in order to coordinate help and urgent needs, to provide instructions for getting medical help and finding safe zones and to document police brutality. In the first days of the Gezi uprising, Social Media and Political Participation Lab at New York University released a research titled ‘A Breakout Role for Twitter? The Role of Social Media in the Turkish Protests’. According to this research, in Gezi protests Twitter was being used to spread information about the demonstrations from the ground: “Unlike some other recent uprisings, around 90% of all geolocated tweets are coming from within Turkey, and 50% from within Istanbul. [...] In comparison, Starbird (2012) estimated that only 30% of those tweeting during the Egyptian revolution were actually in the country. Additionally, approximately 88% of the tweets are in Turkish, which suggests the audience of the tweets is other Turkish citizens and not so much the international community” (“A Breakout Role for Twitter? The Role of Social Media in the Turkish Protests,” n.d.). However this research or similar ones do not tell us *how* the use of social media forms new kind of subjectivities on Internet. As I try to understand political subjectivities in cyberspace from an affective perspective, my discussion bears witness to my own observations in Gezi protests in Istanbul and uses data which is based on my own online research.

One noticeable character of social media posts and tweets was that they contained strong sense of humor and cleverness. On social media people adopted humor and satire as an effective means of expressing their feelings and ideas. It was same for wall writings and stencils which were consistently shared via social networks. I list some examples of them below (“Creative Graffiti and banners from GeziPark protests”, n.d.) :

My phone does not connect to internet, twit for me too please

Let your pinky toe hit to leg of the table Tayyip!

Courage is contagious

If it's a girl Rennie, if it's a boy Talcid!

Tayyip deleted us from his Facebook

Toma¹⁶ or not Toma. That is the question

My butt has gotten thinner, thx police

Tayyip come, water is so nice

We have a relation with TOMA for 8 days, it's getting serious.

Problem is not 3 or 5 trees. Problem is 1 wood!

Pepper is calling you!

Imagine there is no Tayyip

CNNTurk , be last to know

¹⁶ Toma is the name of an armored police vehicle with water cannon used for riot controls.

I could not find what to write, but you know anarchy or something

I think the attractive and humorous contents shared in social networks have greatly contributed to the creation of a virtual affective territory that tie people together and empower solidarity. It seems to me that the uprising was an emotional blow up, and it was mostly the affective atmosphere that mobilized people for joining protests. It is hard to define that affective atmosphere, however –as far as I observe –excitement for solidarity and unity, pleasure for helping each other, joy and hope were the most powerful emotions felt by protestors. On the other hand, the affective atmosphere was so intense that it virtually paralyzed the daily lives of people. During the uprising in Istanbul, like many of the protestors, I was working in day time and after my shift I was going back to join protests. However, during the work time it was hard to concentrate on my work as I was checking Twitter and Facebook pages in every five minutes to see what was shared. Beside my curiosity about what was happening, the driving force for this act was pretty much emotional. The same thing was true for people who were not even joining protests. A friend of mine, who was abroad in Gezi protests period, told me that he was on the Internet almost all day following the events, watching videos and reading social media posts in an excited mood. Although physically he was not in the protests, he was virtually attached to the affective territory of the protests. He was repeatedly telling that he is very upset about not being in the protests to experience the *feeling of revolution*.

Respectively, Castells (2012, p.219) notes that, social change involves an action (individual and/or collective) that, at its root, is motivated emotionally. For example enthusiasm powers purposive social mobilization. For Castells (2012, p.219-220), “Enthusiastic networked individuals, having overcome fear, are transformed into a conscious, collective actor. Thus social change results from communicative action that involves connection between networks of neural networks from human brains stimulated by signals from a communication environment through communication networks. The technology and morphology of these communication networks shape the process of mobilization, and thus of social change, both as a process and as an outcome.” Hereby, the Internet networks that provide a non-hierarchic, horizontal and interactive organization come to be a communication environment that transmits not only information but also the emotions, feelings and enthusiasm, which construct the *spirit* of the movements.

3.3 Women’s Online Protest via Twitter: #SendeAnlat (“Tell Your Story”)

On 13 February 2015, in the newspapers there was shocking news that became the hot issue in a very short time. It was saying that a burnt body of a young woman was found in the country side of Tarsus, Mersin; a coast city in the south of Turkey. Then the details of the news came; the body was belonged to 19 years old university student Özgecan Aslan, who was reported missing for two days. According to news reports, on 11 February 2015, Özgecan took

the minibus with her friend to go to her home in Mersin. Her friend took off on the way, leaving Özgecan alone in the minibus. The driver changed his usual route and turned to a side road; he attempted to rape Özgecan, but she resisted him by using pepper spray. Following this, he stabbed Özgecan multiple times, and beat her to death with an iron rod. He returned to Tarsus following the murder and asked for help from his father and a friend. The three men burnt Özgecan's body together in a forest and cut off her hands, as Özgecan had scratched the perpetrator's face during the struggle, and they feared that his DNA would be identified on the fingernails (“Vahşice öldürülen Özgecan cinayetinin ayrıntıları ortaya çıktı.” 2015).

The brutality of the murder especially caused a public outrage across Turkey. Thousands of women staged protests in several cities on 14 February 2015, including Ankara, Istanbul, and Mersin – Özgecan’s hometown in southern Turkey (Girit, 2015) and in the following days the protests went on. The day after the funeral, the hashtag #SendeAnlat (“tell your story”) began to trend on social media and women started to tell their thoughts, feelings and stories about their experiences of harassment and being woman in Turkey.¹⁷ More than a million tweets were shared with #sendeanlat hashtag, and it became the first most popular topic globally on Twitter. On 16 February in accordance with the popular hashtag “#Özgecanıçinsiyahgiy” (“wear black for Özgecan”) in Twitter, many people (including celebrities) wore black and

¹⁷ The campaign was launched by İdil Elveriş, who is a scholar in Istanbul Bilgi University.

marched on the street with the aim of raising awareness about violence against women.

The tweets under #SendeAnlat hashtag included women's thoughts, feelings and stories about their experiences of harassment and being woman in Turkey. For example, the women wrote that they have to "text a cab's plate number to a friend if they must travel alone by cab," and that "sometimes they order food for two if they are alone at home to make sure the delivery guy doesn't understand she is alone at home," or that "if there are only two people in a bus and someone gets off the bus, they also get off the bus with that person, even if that stop is a long way from their destination or not." One of the most commonly stated expressions was that women used to be afraid of speaking about the harassment, but now they feel encouraged to tell their stories and reveal the harassers. Some celebrities in Turkey, such as Beren Saat, a famous Turkish actress, wrote via Twitter about sexual abuses they have faced through the years. Saat recalled running from school after a child "showed me his erect penis" and the time a drunk broadcasting manager "grabbed my butt during the TV channel's celebration night."

For years, feminist movement in Turkey is trying to politicize the crimes against women by stressing the importance of making those crimes visible to public and encouraging women not to conceal rapes or harassments. Because, the government's policy of violence against women is based on depoliticisation; it tries to reflect each murder of women as isolated incidents

(although six women were killed daily in Turkey), and tries to suppress women with public speeches that express claims that “women and men aren’t equal and equality should not be a goal for women”(by Erdoğan), that “woman’s primary career is motherhood” (by the government’s health minister). The media also supports this attitude to women with the language they use in giving the news about violence against women. The media’s extremely patriarchal discourse, blaming women for wearing miniskirts, going out in late times, provoking men, etc.¹⁸, causes women to stay silent about those crimes and finally it depoliticizes the violence against women.

One way to re-politicize this issue is bringing a counter discourse to public sphere. With this campaign women created an affective zone of politics via social media that composited multiple interacting bodies around a common concern. The women told that they are not going to stay silent anymore; they will struggle to stop the violence against women. It is possible to observe that as a politics, the affect have created strength feelings of struggle and solidarity between women. After the Twitter campaign many other actions held by women to increase the struggle and strengthen women discourse. The website “sendeanlat.com” is built in order to archive the tweets of #SendeAnlat campaign and maintain women’s sharing about harassment. In Yıldız Technical University women placed a display board in the campus for revealing the harassers to maintain the social media campaign in their

¹⁸ Some examples may be found in <http://www.cinsomedya.org/> which is an online platform for struggling against sexism in media and for revealing sexist discourse used in media.

university campus. Women are motivated to talk about the violence that they are subjected to and social media provides a platform to share it publicly. For example, after being harassed by a deliveryman of a restaurant which she had ordered food, the woman shared her harassment story on her Facebook page and made a call to people to share it in order to reveal the harasser. Afterwards the issue spread on social media, and the restaurant being targeted to negative reactions had to announce that they fired the deliveryman and apologize from the women (“Tacizde sınır yok: Kadın müşteri, kuryenin tacizine uğradı, ifşaedip boykota çağırıldı,” 2015).

CHAPTER 4
SINGULARITY

“How not to search that space where, for a time span lasting from dusk to dawn, two beings have no other reason to exist than to expose themselves totally to each other- totally, integrally, absolutely- so that their common solitude may appear not in front of their own eyes but in front of ours, yes, how not to look there and how not to rediscover "the negative community, the community of those who have no community"?”

— Maurice Blanchot, Unavowable Community

That being is absolutely being — with — this is what we must think. With is the first mark of being, the mark of the singular plurality of the origin or of the origin within the With.

— Jean-Luc Nancy

This final chapter aims to question if the political subjectivities created in cyberspace which I discussed in the previous chapters may lead us to a new understanding of politics that goes beyond representation and identities. For this purpose, I reflect on the contemporary debates around the concept of *singularity*, and especially on the works of Giorgio Agamben and Jean-Luc

Nancy. These philosophers use the concept of singularity to think about a community without essence, i.e. a community that is not determined through belongings and identities. With the insight they provide, I will try to think nomadic subjects of cyberspace as singularities that can escape to a political territory of non-identity, and non-belonging.

4.1 “Being Singular Plural”

The term *singularity* comes from mathematics. In general, a singularity is a point at which an equation, surface, etc., diverges towards infinity or becomes degenerate.¹⁹ In mathematics singularities refer to the points where the mathematical objects are not well-behaved (i.e. we can't define them for those points). In physics, for example black holes are defined as singularities. The word “singular” means something that is extraordinary, unique, and strange. Thus when we talk about singularities within the world (or life), we mention of an *event* that differs from ordinary events or processes; at singularities something extraordinary and unusual happens. For Deleuze (1990, p.103), “Singularities are the true transcendental events...Far from being individual or personal, singularities preside over the genesis of individuals and

¹⁹ “When we say something is degenerate, it means that it is the limiting case in which a class of objects changes its nature. Once it changes its nature, it usually belongs to another simpler class. For example, let's consider the class of rectangles. You can construct infinitely many rectangles of different sizes. But once you make the length equal to its breadth, it no longer remains a rectangle. It actually becomes a square! Here, we say that the square is a degenerate case of a rectangle. As we can see here, the class changed its nature and now it belongs to a simpler class i.e. the class of squares.” (Retrieved May 27, 2015, from <http://prateekvjoshi.com/2014/02/07/what-is-a-singularity/>)

persons; they are distinguished in a 'potential' which admits neither Self nor I, but which produces them by actualizing or realizing itself.”

In this view, for example World War II, Holocaust, atomic bombing, are singular events; that means they are so extraordinary that they change the direction of history (they are like turning points or breaking points in the course of the history) and they bring about important outcomes. In philosophy, singularity is discussed with its relation to individuation and subjectivity. Holland (2006, p.70) explains that, “Intrinsic to the notion of a singularity is the principle that a common or shared property cannot serve as the basis of the individuation of X from all that is not-X: if I share the property of being over six feet tall with anyone else, then that property cannot, in and of itself, serve to individuate either me or that person. A singularity, the being-X of that X that makes X different from all that is not-X, cannot therefore unite X with anything else. Precisely the opposite: X is a singularity because it is not united to anything else by virtue of an essence or a common or shared nature.” For example, I cannot make a set of “Holocaust” – that will include the events that have same properties with it – because there is only one and singular event of Holocaust. Another example, I have the property of “being Turkish”, in common with millions of people. If I define myself as Turkish, that would be an ordinary categorization; it is not an individuation or singularity. Therefore “being singular” means; not being defined as “Turkish”, “Communist”, “Muslim” etc. but being determined through the totality of all possibilities.

How can we speak of a 'we' or of a plurality, without transforming this 'we' into a substantial and exclusive identity? The question of our being together in contemporary society is one of the main themes in Jean-Luc Nancy's works. In the preface of *The Inoperative Community* Nancy (1991, p. xxxix–xl.) says that his question is 'how can the community without essence (the community that is neither "people" nor "nation", neither "destiny" nor "generic humanity," etc) be presented as such?' The fundamental argument of this book is that the logic of being absolute (detached, distinct and closed; being without relation) is contradictory because "the absolute must be the absolute of its own absoluteness, or not be at all" (Nancy, 1991, p.4). Hence the logic of absolute implicates the "absolute" in a relation, in other words "without relation" cannot be involved in absolute. With this argument Nancy (1991, p.4) asserts that the metaphysics of the subject –the individual absolute for itself— cannot be achieved, and 'Being "itself" comes to be defined as relational, as non-absoluteness...' This is what Nancy argues as *community* and he defines *ecstasy* as the ontological impossibility of absolute immanence and impossibility of individuality. Hence ecstasy is understood as "placing the individual outside of herself" where one can be opened up to community as a singular being.

As a politics, how the idea of singularity may provide us a different basis for the construction of subjectivities? It forces us to rethink the concept of "belonging"; how do we belong to a group, a community, a party, a nation? For Holland (2006, p.71), "This politics will start from the realisation that our

criteria of belonging are always subject to a kind of chaotic motion, that our cultures have always told us an enabling lie when they denied this, and through this denial have made possible the invention of nation-states, tribes, clans, political parties, churches, perhaps everything done up to now in the name of community.” Thus, in order to talk about “a new kind of politics” beyond identities and representation, we need to reconfigure the political subjectivities; rather than constructing a set of individuals gathered under a common property, banner, name, flag, etc. we have to create possibilities of “singularities”. I argue that gatherings on online settlements, may offer a model for singular subjectivities.

As I have discussed in the previous chapter, the Internet functions and develops in ways that correspond closely to the six principles²⁰ of the rhizome set out by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*. In the rhizomatic structure of cyberspace, the nomads who gather together for a particular political concern create affective territories collectively and anonymously. The “subject” of the affect is anonymous, undeterminable and nomadic. The Gezi uprising was a *singular event*. It has created affective zones not only in streets, in squares and in any resistance areas, but also in the cyberspace via social networking websites. The affect spread over globally by surpassing the physical boundaries. It mobilized a huge amount of people even if they were in the center of the resistance or out of the country. The people who define

²⁰ These six principles are; connection, heterogeneity, multiplicity, asignifying rupture, cartography and decalcomania.

themselves as nationalist, anarchist, revolutionist, Kemalist, communist, anti-capitalist etc. and people who do not define themselves with such categories had acted together around the “affect” of what many protesters had called as “Gezi ruhu” (“the spirit of Gezi”), and hereby they could go a step further than a politics based on identity and representation. However, after some point tension between identities had showed up itself and destroyed the “spirit” of resistance. I have witnessed such an event of tension in Abbasağa Park in Beşiktaş during Gezi forums. The forum started with small talks in order to determine the “agenda topic” of that night’s discussion. A group of attendants who were from Youth Union of Turkey (TGB)²¹ was insisting on to support defendants of Sledgehammer (Balyoz) Coup Plot trial²² and organize a solidarity action (with all the components of Gezi Movement) in front of Silivri Prison where their court will be held. They were arguing that the trial was not conducted justly, and it was AKP government’s effort to discredit the government’s opponents, so that Gezi movement should join to the protest against government’s unjust judgement process. Many other attendants was opposed to this idea, and claimed that this was not agreeable with the spirit of Gezi Movement. As others took the stage for speeches the tension increased and turned into a physical fight between TGB supporters and “others”. Some attendants left the forum after announcing that they will not join the discussions again since they had been pervaded by identity fetishism. Thus the

²¹ TGB is a Kemalist organization founded in 2006.

²² Sledgehammer (Balyoz) Coup trial that started on 16 December 2010, accused hundreds of commanders and military officers (who were jailed in 2010) for plotting a coup against the government of prime minister Tayyip Erdogan.

possibility of producing a creative political environment has been lost in the beginning.

This event illustrates that maintaining an experience of a non-identitarian politics is extremely difficult, because the belongings and identities are always ready to intervene in these experiences. I think the advantageous that Internet may provide for the non-identitarian political practices is mostly related with the anonymous qualities of cyberspace. In the following, I go on to the discussion on singularity with an emphasis on the anonymity provided by the online settlements.

4.2 The Politics of Anonymity

The contemporary debate on “the idea of community” revolves around the works of three continental philosophers; Jean-Luc Nancy’s *The Inoperative Community* (1991), Maurice Blanchot’s *The Unavowable Community* (1988) and Giorgio Agamben’s *The Coming Community* (1993). The main argument of the debate is that Western conceptions of community, togetherness and belonging are misguided –and they have become linked to ideas of national, racial, religious unity—, therefore they should be redeveloped in the purpose of finding new articulations of a community without “inclusion”, “exclusion”, “identity”, etc. While both Blanchot and Nancy approach the question of community from the Heidegger’s perspective of *Mitsein* (being-together), Agamben takes a different path that leads to the contradicting aspect of the logic of belonging, identity and representation. In *The Coming Community*,

Agamben uses the set-theoretical results, i.e. paradox of set membership discovered by Bertrand Russell (which demonstrates the paradoxical status of the totality of language itself) to conceptualize *whatever singularities* and the possibility of a non-identitarian politics. I think Agamben's account of community of *whatever beings* may be associated with online gatherings that inspire new forms of political subjectivity and of struggles for social change, —which are not delimited by identity fetishization and fixed spatial coordinates but rather fostered by opportunities of anonymity and supraterritoriality (Scholte, 2007.) provided by the Internet.

The problematic aspect of the *self-reference* in language is at the center of Agamben's discussions of the "coming community" and the possibility of a rearrangement of political life. Livingstone (2009, p.297-299) argues that; the implications of the disproof of Frege's "universal comprehension principle" by Russell (i.e. the Russell's paradox) in Agamben's text point the way toward a reconfigured political life, grounded in a radical reflective experience of language. Universal comprehension principle holds that for *any* property nameable in language, there is a set consisting of *all* and *only* the things that have that property. Russell's discovery was that general possibility of self-membership contradicts universal comprehension principle: "For if the comprehension principle held, it would be possible to define a set consisting of all and only sets that are *not* members of themselves. Now we may ask whether *this* set is a member of itself. If it is a member of itself, then it is not, and if it is not a member of itself, then it is" (Livingstone, 2009, p.299). With the logic

of this set-theoretic paradox, semantic and epistemic paradoxes can also be produced.²³

Agamben (1993, p.9) uses the paradox of *self-reference* as the potential of a community of singulars, arguing that an individual cannot be defined in terms of a summation of individuals under the universality of a concept:

The fortune of set theory in modern logic is born of the fact that the definition of the set is simply the definition of linguistic meaning. The comprehension of singular distinct objects m in a whole M is nothing but the name. Hence the inextricable paradoxes of classes, which no ‘beastly theory of types’ can pretend to solve. The paradoxes, in effect, define the place of linguistic being. Linguistic being is a class that both belongs and does not belong to itself, and the class of all classes that do not belong to themselves is language. Linguistic being (being-called) is a set (the tree) that is at the same time a singularity (the tree, a tree, this tree); and the mediation of meaning, expressed by the symbol \in , cannot in any way fill the gap in which only the article succeeds in moving about freely.

Livingstone (2009, p.309) explains that if we attempt to describe the “linguistic being” (singularity) of a particular thing, or its capability of being-named, we will find that this capacity itself is “unnameable” as a result of Russell’s paradox. Hence, individual’s belonging to a universal set where it can be named leads to a paradoxical non-belonging of the name itself. In

²³ For example, the famous ones are the antique *liar paradox* (“this sentence is false.”), or the *paradox of knower* (“This sentence is not known by anyone.”)

Coming Community, Agamben (1993, p.71) states that these set-theoretical paradoxes are the same problem ‘(...) that Kant in his letter to Marcus Herz of February 21, 1772, formulated in the question: "How do our representations refer to objects?" What does it mean to say that the concept "red" designates red objects? And is it true that every concept determines a class that constitutes its extension?’ Agamben’s example clarifies the discussion: The thing in question is not the word “shoe” in its acoustic or graphic form, it is the shoe in its being signified by the term "shoe". The difficult thing is to distinguish a shoe from its beingcalled-(shoe), from its *being-in-language*: if the word “shoe” was something other than the shoe itself, then it would not be able to express the shoe.

Agamben (1993, p.74) thinks that Aristotle’s characterization of the relationship between the Platonic idea and multiple phenomena can resolve this problem: ‘According to their participation, the plurality of synonyms is homonymous with respect to ideas (*Metaphysics* 987b10).’ For Aristotle, synonyms are entities that have same name and same definitions, and homonyms are entities that have same name but different definitions. Members that belong to a set characterized by a common concept are synonyms become homonyms if considered with respect to the idea. “Thus the single horses are synonyms with respect to the concept horse, but homonyms with respect to the idea of the horse-just as in Russell's paradox the same object both belongs and does not belong to a class” (Agamben, 1993, p.74) The homonymy of multiple synonyms is Agamben’s conception of *whatever*: “*Whatever is singularity*

insofar as it relates not (only) to the concept, but (also) to the idea. This relation does not found a new class, but is, in each class, that which draws singularity from its synonymy, from its belonging to a class, not toward any absence of name or belonging, but toward the name *itself*, toward a pure and anonymous homonymy” (Agamben, 1993, p.75).

As stated above, Nancy argues that being “itself” is defined as relational, as non-absoluteness. The “being” of individual relates (connects) to the world with language. Generally we are inclined to think that what lie behind the expression of language are the things themselves existing self-sufficiently –and independently from our existence. However, distinct things are possible only through language as a power of negation. That is, for example there is ‘a cat’ in front of me is possible only by means of our ability to negate a singular thing in order to make ‘a cat’ out of it (Haase and Large, 2001, p.60). Similarly my own existence depends on my ability to speak about myself. Hence the “being” of the individual exists only with ‘the relation with others’ which rests to the common use of language. Therefore, one cannot claim to be an un-relational, immanent subject.

We are born into a world in which things and words have been already linked to each other, and as we learn how to speak about them, we constitute an illusion of ‘reality’ of things. Likewise, when one learns to speak about herself – by making sentences starting with “I” –, she creates an illusion of the “speaking subject” that is distinct from the rest of the world. However, what is

nameable, so what is thinkable was already there. What is thought, spoken or written is solely an ‘anonymous mumbling’ and “I” disappears in it. Then, to understand individuality by means of this anonymous character of subjectivity withdraws individuals from searching for an essence that gathers them under a particular identity, and in this context a possibility of a non-identitarian politics, without inclusion or extinction may be thought.

The meaning of the word *anonymous* is “without a name” or “nameless”. An anonymous community, by definition, is a gathering of people who are anonymous; who are not named and hence who are not expressed as members of a definable set. Anonymity of members challenges the conventional understanding of subjectivity construction, because they cannot be categorized as “something” (e.g. as Muslim, as communist, etc.), and they cannot be defined by any belonging to a common identity. Hence the individuals stand together in their *being as such*, as discussed in Agamben’s conception of whatever singularities: “In this conception, such-and-such being is reclaimed from its having this or that property, which identifies it as belonging to this or that set, to this or that class (the reds, the French, the Muslims) – and it is reclaimed not for another class nor for the simple generic absence of any belonging, but for its being-*such*, for belonging itself.” (Agamben, 1993, p.8-9)

In the first years of the Internet, anonymity on Net was more practicable than today. According to Lovink (2014, p.39), “The first internet

generation, well protected by the walls of academia, chose a random user name and the outcome was a wild hippie culture played out on Usenet and bulletin board systems. Early cyberculture was driven by a shared desire to become someone else.[...] The hedonistic dot.com excesses at the turn of the millennium were over by the 2001 financial crisis and 9/11 attacks. The war on terror aborted the desire for a serious parallel "second-self" culture and instead gave rise to a global surveillance and control industry." The growing surveillance and control industry provided a "safe" Internet for e-commerce, e-government and cloud data storage applications by protecting web users from the threats of wild Internet (such as viruses, spam, online fraud etc.) (Lovink, 2014, p.39). The personal data of users are stored and shared by commercial institutions, governments, police and social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. It can be argued that today Internet has made people's life easier since the people are using the internet more to manage their lives (managing finances and accessing health or local government information etc.). However "losing anonymity" makes people more vulnerable to the repression and control mechanisms of governments.

Of course it is still possible to stay anonymous on Net with the help of VPN²⁴ tools that provide an encrypted connection between your computer and a server, or virtual machine programs that creates a virtual "wall" that prevents any data from crossing over to your physical computer. Using these techniques

²⁴ VPN is acronym for Virtual Private Network that enables a computer to send and receive data across shared or public networks.

requires some sophisticated computer and network knowledge and for this reason still the large percentage of web users do not use them. Besides, many web users use their real names in their social network accounts. So how can we conceive the anonymity in Internet as a politically rewarding phenomenon? As I have stated many times throughout the study, the advantageous of social networking is its potential to gather countless of bodies regardless of the constraints of physical limits and by this way to create affective territories around a political concern via Twitter hashtags, Facebook groups, etc. For example, in the online protest against Özgecan Aslan's murder more than a million tweets were shared under the hashtag "SendeAnlat". The collective body makes the individual identities insignificant. But it has the power to change individuals' lives by increasing awareness of women rights or increasing motivation for struggling against the problems of women in the society. So we cannot talk about an individual anonymity but the anonymity of the affective force that mobilizes the collective body. Thinking political subjectivity in this way gives us a chance to imagine a non-identitarian and non-representational politics. In the following section, I discuss what a politics of non-identity mean and how it challenges the dominance of conventional political practices.

4.3 Towards a Politics of non-Identity

In the light of abovementioned discussions on singularity and anonymity, in this section I want to try to address a politics of non-identity in

relation to the emerging affective intimacies in the rhizomatic structure of cyberspace. The politics of identity includes a large and complex analyses and discussions, and simply rejecting the idea of identity from the realm of politics would result in overlooking the issues related with the demands of minority identities (such as the right to self-determination and self-affirmation) and social conflicts on the question of recognition. Although liberal capitalist democracies affirm and praise multiculturalism, this is a governmental strategy to manage the minority immigrants. For example, Cecilia Dinerstein (2014, p.31) argues that in Latin America, “Multiculturalism emerged as a counter-paradigm to control indigenous resistance since the demand from the indigenous for the right to selfaffirmation and self-determination together with the right to communal property of the land became part of the international agenda of the UN and other organisations, and new policy frameworks informed by the idea of diversity emerged to integrate this demand into the nation-state policies.” On the other hand, Nancy Fraser (2003, p.22) states that although the recognition struggles differ from one another, “...as today’s politics of recognition is reifying group identities, it risks sanctioning violations of human rights and freezing the very antagonisms it purports to mediate.” Therefore, many distance themselves from identity politics; some rejects recognition struggle as “false consciousness” and propose to enhance cultural struggles altogether, and some propose to re-prioritize class over gender, race, and ethnicity (Fraser, 2003, p.22).

The political subjectivity that I tried to outline throughout the study goes beyond any kind of politics of identity –whether majority or minority. Any conceptualization of “identity” brings forth the ontological questions of “belonging” and “representation”. Keith Robinson (2010, p.199) explains that, for Deleuze, representation, ontologically is premised on an “image of thought” that subordinates difference to identity; and any “identity” is constructed in relation to an abstract standard that represents “nobody.” Then, “Overcoming the political ontology of representation thus requires not merely an inversion of the dominant identity but a complete break with the model of identity itself and a dismantling of the image of thought that underpins it.” What can replace the model of identity in contemporary politics? That model should open up a space of politics that is capable of eliminating identity and emptying the meanings of universal “pure”, “origin”, “authentic”, etc. Looking for an origin that will be the unifying property of a community paves the way to nations, religious and ethnic communities which are problematic formations in today’s politics. As I discussed earlier, singularity opens up new imaginaries to conceptualize subjectivities that are not determined by identities or belongings to particularly defined communities.

What is challenging for sovereign power is not “new identities”, because the state can recognize any identity, and for states this is a way of controlling those groups who seek to be recognized. In Agamben’s words; “What the State cannot tolerate in any way, however, is that the singularities form a community without affirming an identity, that humans co-belong

without any representable condition of belonging (...) the possibility of the whatever itself being taken up without an identity is a threat the State cannot come to terms with” (Agamben, 1993, p.93). What is challenging for sovereign power is a struggle that falls into the outside of representation.

Finally, how these non-representational political practices come into reality? The ground for such a political life is considerably slippery; any political gathering without confirming an identity is temporal as it always has the risk of being oppressed by identities and belongings. So it seems that affective force that mobilize people does not provide a long-term opportunity, it is like a flash in the pan. Because affective territories change quickly, people are distracted by many things in their lives. For this reason, Hakim Bey’s concept of Temporary Autonomous Zones (T.A.Z.) –which describes a socio-political tactic of creating temporary spaces that elude formal structures of control – may be thought similar with the mobilizing force of affective territories created in cyberspace in its emphasis on temporality. Hakim Bey (1991) put the relation between TAZ and the Web as the following:

The TAZ has a temporary but actual location in time and a temporary but actual location in space. But clearly it must also have "location" in the Web, and this location is of a different sort, not actual but virtual, not immediate but instantaneous. The Web not only provides logistical support for the TAZ, it also helps to bring it into being; crudely speaking one might say that the TAZ "exists" in information- space as well as in the "real world." The Web can compact a great deal of time, as data, into an

infinitesimal "space." We have noted that the TAZ, because it is temporary, must necessarily lack some of the advantages of a freedom which experiences duration and a more-or-less fixed locale. But the Web can provide a kind of substitute for some of this duration and locale--it can inform the TAZ, from its inception, with vast amounts of compacted time and space which have been "subtilized" as data.

In this explanation Bey acknowledges that information-space may be a temporary autonomous zone, however today as the communication and information technologies being used widely by the majority of the informational societies, their political implication in the framing political subjectivities is going beyond creating temporary tactics for political actions. In many aspects the cyberspace phenomena is contesting with the conventional understandings of assemblages and togetherness, and as I tried to put forth it is producing strong imaginaries for a new politics of non-identity.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

After the 1990s the information and communication technologies (ICTs) have been developed in a rapid fashion, and brought about a new paradigm of informational society in order to define a post-industrial society. The techno-economic system of informational society is characterized by its flexible structure that works with a networking logic and that uses information as its raw material. In this paradigm, control over ICTs has been a great interest to governments and capitalist institutions, and cyberspace has been subjected to their surveillance and restriction practices. On the other hand, cyberspace has served to the activists as an online communication and organization platform to increase the resistance against the authoritarian practices of governments and contemporary capitalism.

Herewith, acknowledging cyberspace as a politically conflicted space of power brings about the necessity of reconsidering conventional understandings of place-based subject formation, territorialized polity construction and stable social movement organization. In this respect, this thesis aimed to investigate new imaginaries for political subjectivity that has emerged in the realm of cyberspace, and to contemplate around the following questions: What role might intimacy —a relation of closeness and familiarity

with another person—via the Web play in the realm of politics? How does communication between people through online social networks create affective intensities as a political tool? How does this political intimacy via the Web might provide us new imaginaries for a non-identitarian political life?

In order to investigate these questions, the thesis was organized in three thematic divisions; Governance, Resistance and Singularity. Respectively these themes examined how cyberspace is governed; how resistance operates in cyberspace; and how the political subjectivity created in cyberspace might provide us new imaginaries for a politics of non-identity.

The key debates were hold around the discussions of *affective intensity*, *affective territory*, *cyberspace as rhizome* and *singularity*. Affect theory, that understands affect as a passage (or transition) of forces, intensities and movements which are communicated between human or non-human bodies, served this study to think bodies in cyberspace with their capacity to affect and to be affected. In this respect, the thesis conceived accumulation of bodies around a political issue in cyberspace —that is created via social networking— as an “affective territory”, and it considered “affective intensity” as a force to mobilize political subjectivities to act (or not to act). For Spinoza, encounters in our life may affect our power of acting in a positive or negative way and to be a good individual (i.e. free, rational, or strong) one has to organize good encounters. To increase the power of acting one also needs to combine her relations with the ones that are compatible with her. In other words, for

Spinoza, humans should collaborate with one another in order to enhance the power to act.

This argumentation has brought us to the discussion of collective resistance in cyberspace. Here, Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of *rhizome* and *nomad* were utilized to conceptualize political subjectivity in cyberspace. The six characteristics of rhizome (connection, heterogeneity, multiplicity, asignifying rupture, cartography and decalcomania) can be thought similar with the networked systems in cyberspace. In addition, the Internet users can be thought as nomads, who move in the smooth, rhizomatic zones of deterritorialized spaces of cyberspace. Nomads are associated with smooth, rhizomatic, nonlinear spaces. For political ends they do not organize themselves in a hierarchical way; they are organized collectively and anonymously. To conduct a cyber-protest, nomads are accumulated around a particular zone in cyberspace (not in ordinate but in anarchic ways), and create an affective territory that operates as a mobilizing force for collective body. Affect is created by nomadic subjectivity in cyberspace, which is comprised of countless anonymous individuals who connect to the Internet from indeterminable and changeable points.

Finally, the thesis reflected on the concept of *singularity* in order to question if the political subjectivities created in cyberspace which have been discussed in the previous chapters may lead us to a new understanding of politics that goes beyond representation and identities. The works of Giorgio Agamben and Jean-Luc Nancy on the concept of singularity

were utilized in this discussion, in order to think nomadic subjects of cyberspace as singularities that can escape to a political territory of non-identity, and non-belonging. In the end the thesis aimed to show that this reconfiguration of political subjectivity can reveal new imaginaries for a politics of non-identity as it surpasses the conventional subject formation that gathers individuals under a common property, flag, name, party, etc.

Yet, it is quite difficult to maintain the political experiences of non-identity, since belongings and identities always stand ready to intervene in these practices. Henceforth, a politics of non-identity that is inspired by new forms of subjectivities that are shaped in cyberspace always demands the individual's awareness of the affective forces that govern her acts; and individual's endeavor to create possibilities of singularities.

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