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TECHNIQUES OF MOBILISATION: DIALECTIC DEVELOPMENT OF SHAREDNESS THROUGH VIRTUAL AND ON-THE-GROUND PRACTICESS

ABSTRACT

When demonstrations swept the Anatolian heartland in 2013, social media played a key role in disseminating drawings, songs, stories and physical protest practices in a virtual sphere. From a material culture and performativity perspective, this article explores the mobilisation of individuals and unpacks how mobilisation took place in a dialectical process in parallel with the creation of a cultural genre. This genre became a common denominator for the involved, and the article will describe how the different visual, virtual, humorous and physical manifestations as techniques had capacities that mobilised and sustained engagement in the protests.

KEYWORDS

Mobilisation, Material culture, Performativity, Diren, social movement, social media, virtual, humour, sensorial ethnography, cultural genre, netnography, cultural mobilisation, public protes.

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INTRODUCTION

The mobilisation of individuals into social movements has traditionally been discussed within the gaze of socio-psychological theories, paying scarce attention to the production of materials of visual, textual and narrative nature. (Johnston and Noakes 2005: 3; Klandermans 1984: 583) While later social movement theories of framing take into consideration the construction of meaning by protesters in their decision to join a movement, little focus has been given to the capacities of socio-material products and practices and how their relationally capacities influence individuals to join a cause. (Johnston and Noakes 2005: 2) In this article, I explore the mobilisation of protesters in an uprising through theories of material culture and performativity by analysing the relational capacities of materials and practices created in an uprising. The case of study here is the Diren uprising in Turkey in 2013. While the demonstrations spread across Anatolia, protesters shared pictures, drawings and stories through social media. Following the uprising on Twitter, Facebook and blogs, I noticed these socio-material manifestations and it struck me that these narratives, representations and accounts appeared to have capacities affecting protesters and the developing collective. This led me to explore how these materials had individual mobilising capacities, and how they played a role in the creation of a movement.

THEORETICAL VANTAGE POINT

The theoretical framework that informs this article is inspired by the socio-material turn in the social sciences. More specifically, this analysis draws upon writings about material culture, performativity and Actor Network Theory (ANT). The post-structuralist and post-Foucauldian approach is here used to explore how reality is shaped and performed through socio-material practises. It explores how spaces, objects, subjects, collectives and institutions through socio-material relations are differently enacted, and embedded with agency through multiple networks of relations. (Damsholt and Simonsen 2009: 14; Sandberg 2009: 51) Approaching the Diren movement through the socio-material gaze allows me to not only look at verbal articulations, but also to explore their context in understanding the cultural meaning of the body, representation, space, and socio-material practices of protesters, paying attention to the processual, relational and performative in materialisations.

Routines, practices and manifestations are thus seen as performances embedded with dynamic capacities that assist in understanding the construction of identities in the uprising. The performative approach also offers a constructive way of tackling the diverse empirical materials collected virtually and 'on the ground', as it considers the usages of social media as an integrated part of the social behaviour of the protesters in such a way that they cannot be distinguished from physical actions in the city space. Virtual media, according to the STS[1] scholars Mike Savage, Evelyn Ruppert, and John Law, thus takes part in the material and immaterial production and performance of the protests. (2010: 9)

The contribution of performance studies is also interesting in relation to protest movements, as writings on the theatrical performativity of rituals can assist in unfolding the transformative dynamics in collective performative events such as joint protest performances. (Mitchell 2006: 384)

In her paper "Being Moved", Danish anthropologist Tine Damsholt develops the concepts of *cultural mobilisation* and *subjectivization*. Damsholt describes a dialectic process between bodily performances, materials and patriotic discourses. With a focus on individuals, she accounts for how a collective, through a culturally preconditioned subjectivity of recognisable socio-material discourses, can be mobilised to take part in patriotic rituals and practices, and how the songs and bodily performances in the rituals through a dialectic subjectivization process construct them as both individuals and a collective. Focusing on emotional capacities, Damsholt describes how individuals become emotionally *moved* by the experiences in the subjectivization. This movement can take place in both an outward and inward movement, altering the individuals' cultural and social position to their surroundings, as well as their self-reflexive perception of themselves. She adds that being part of collective practices may create experiences of unity and belonging that can influence individuals to develop new perception and consciousness about the self. (Damsholt 2000: 30-32, 43) Inspired by Michel Foucault's discursive approach to changes, Damsholt points out that:

> Precisely because one can view the mobilisation as a subjectivization, they [individuals] are to be regarded as subjects who helped in various ways to alter the logic of the discourse through their practice and movement. (Damsholt 2000: 45)

[1] Science and Technology Studies.

The British anthropologist Daniel Miller, who has established his name in material culture studies, also describes a process defined by a dialectic of mutual creation. A key point outlined in his book "Stuff" is that the *matter* we construct, material as immaterial, a come to define and objectify us as we relate to them and become dependent on their capacities. (Miller 2010: 42,114) To describe the characteristics, dynamics and effects of the dialectical process in a collective, Miller uses the term*cultural genre* to present a collective socio-material discourse or technology, which dialectically is constructed through the materials, self-reflexive individuals and the collective. (Miller 2010: 114–118) A cultural genre spans across virtual and physical, or online and offline behaviour through various communication technologies. (Miller 2010: 121)

METHODOLOGY AND FIELD

On Monday May 27, 2013, a group of environmental activists commenced a pacifist sit-in protest in Gezi Park behind Taksim Square in Istanbul, Turkey. (Singer 2013)[2] They protested the partial demolition of the park as part of a grand renovation and gentrification plan[3] for the pivotal square in the city. The removal of one of the few remaining green spots in the city centre would make way for what was perceived as yet another luxurious mall in an area where gentrification of spaces in the city already was alienating original residents. (Letsch 2011: 5) The sit-in attracted little attention in Turkish media, but as police attempted to remove the protesters with tear gas and pepper spray, reports of the police crackdown, and particularly the violence towards peaceful protesters, spread in pictures and words via social media. By Friday the 31, thousands of people had joined the initial dozen activists when the police launched an early morning crackdown to remove the protesters from the park. Despite attempts to halt telecommunication, pictures of the growing demonstrations and videos of the violent crackdown appeared on Twitter and Facebook. Word of the unrest travelled fast and far, and by nightfall 90 demonstrations took place in up to 60 cities across the country. (Berlinski 2013; Zeynalov 2013) From the afternoon on May 31 to the early morning June 1, activity on social media was exceptionally high, with the hashtags[4] #direngeziparkı (resist Gezi Park), #occupygezi and #geziparki (Gezi Park) having been tweeted two million times. (Tucker 2013)

[2] This account of events in Istanbul illustrates the initial atmosphere of eruption, unrest and protests as observed by me via Twitter, Facebook and through talks with acquaintances and as presented by international reporters in Turkey.

[3] Video of the Taksim renovation project: *www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=-QLA9xjQxAI8*

[4] A hashtag is the hash symbol (#) followed by text, symbols or numbers embedded in messages. It functions as a reference point. By including a hashtag in a message, individuals link to previous hashtags or create new ones. (Cunha et al. 2011: 58) Hashtags are often used in reference to a topics or places.

On Twitter and Facebook, extreme stories circulated describing the actions of the police as atrocious. High estimates of casualties were proclaimed but soon turned out to be false. Pictures showed the public spaces in Istanbul and Ankara city centre as battered, the ground covered with tear gas capsules and glass, and homemade barricades at road intersections. In videos, civilians were seen struggling with the effect of gas and being hit by high-powered water cannons. Tweets communicated information on makeshift locations for medical assistance, shelters from gas in mosques, and where to find cell phone charging stations. Twitter's capabilities, by default being an open micro blog accessible from handheld smartphones, allowed protesters to make use of the medium whilst in the protests. In the hands of the protesters, it was both a tool for sharing text, images, jokes and videos as well as a handy tool resembling walky-talkies. Transmitting information between protesters about the position of police units, and fielding calls for medical and legal assistance, it became an important communication technique in a country where sixty-nine percent of the population between eighteen and twenty-nine uses social networks, and where forty-nine percent of the young people with smartphones use it to access social networks. (Pew Global Attitudes Project 2012) Over the following weeks, the uprisings continued in multifaceted forms across the country, slowly losing momentum in the cities, until in late July they entirely faded from the streets and public spaces. Centrally located parks became sites for dwelling, organisation of events, coordination between protesters in different cities and civic initiatives. Like waves, the protests grew in magnitude over the weekends, paralleled by a rise in police crackdowns, and diluted as the protesters returned to everyday obligations in the daytime during the weekdays.

In Ankara, demonstrations also began on May 31 and followed a similar trajectory. When I arrived in the city on June 18, the number of people on the streets had reduced, but protesters still dwelled in the public Kuğulu Park where daily clashes between protesters and police occurred. The gates to the field were opened to me through previous professional and educational engagements in Turkey. I attended university for a year in Istanbul, and later worked in the diplomatic community in Ankara. Relationships created at these times, much time spent around the country and cultural, historical and linguistic knowledge, permitted my quick access to the two fields.

Utilising social relations that predated the fieldwork had both benefits and risks. Following friends into the field online as offline, it provided access and allowed for unique insights to emotional movement, rationales and heartfelt thoughts on the events. To have a prior knowledge about the field and the informants positioned me in a beneficial, authoritative manner to contextualise the materials and bring out implicit meaning from informants' statements that otherwise may have remained hidden. My friends and acquaintances' considerations about the uprising let me to observe unexpected and disruptive moments. At the same time, it presented a number of apparent complications to access the field through friends, as I had to walk a thin line balancing the role as researcher with our usual pattern for interaction, while being attentive to the fact that I was becoming entangled into the field more than I might have preferred. (Davies 2002: 81; Ehn and Löfgren 2010: 114; Walsh 2006: 270) My presumptions about friends and acquaintances could misguide interpretation and analysis, and I have therefore tried to balance my own understandings of their statements and let the material speak for itself. (Venturini 2010: 260; Clifford 1988: 43) John Law (2009), Donna Haraway (1988) and James Clifford (1986) to name a few, argue that ethnographers must leave the myth of objectivity and instead present reflexive subjective partial truths to describe the field and their position in it. Entangled in the field, I will use the first person form to position myself in relation to the materials, hopefully, without presenting too much 'noise'. (Law 2000: 7)

The empirical materials for this article were collected online from May 31 to June 25, and at sites in Ankara between June 18 and June 25.[5] The data presented here primarily consists of stories, pictures, tweets, jokes, and caricatures collected via netnographic fieldwork online and on social media. The access to relevant online spheres and social media was founded in my prior familiarity and understanding of the field, existing Twitter and Facebook profiles and contact to informants in Istanbul and Ankara. (Rokka 2010)[6] The materials from the multi-sensorial and multi-sited fieldwork in Ankara were collected by observations, participation, and interviews. (Pink 2009:8) The latter fieldwork consists of twelve in-depth interviews, numerous informal interviews and conversations with strangers and acquaintances, observations and participation in activities in and around the park. The netnographic and onsite fieldwork overlap in time, are intertwined, and influenced each other.

[5] Collecting empery was not absolutely confined to these periods. Familiar with some informants, I collected data both before and after the two set fieldwork periods. Therefore the two approaches to collecting materials overlap, as I for instance received information and followed informants virtually before arriving in Ankara.

[6] Online fieldwork here refers to monitoring and collecting of data through social media and the internet. (Davies 2007; Rokka 2010)

To contextualise and give meaning to the gathered materials collected online, they will be framed by quotes and stories from the informants in Ankara and Istanbul or when such are lacking, by stories collected by me before, after and during the fieldwork. (Sunderland and Denny 2007: 115)

I will refer to the nationwide demonstrations as the Diren Movement, though much suggests that the uprising examined here will go down in the annals of history as Gezi[7]. (Hurriyet Daily News 2013b). Diren is an emic term used by informants to describe the uprising during the fieldwork. Diren translates to 'resist', a call frequently used during the protests.

MOBILISATION AND SHAREDNESS

Inspired by Damsholt and Miller's ideas of *cultural mobilisation* and *cultural genre,* I explore the visuals, music and practices produced and shared during the uprising, considering how they in a relational manner took part in the mobilisation process. By clustering the different forms of manifestations as a cultural genre, I argue that in confluence they constructed a frame of reference for those involved in protests. The material and immaterial cultural genre framed the protests and became an evasive foundation for the individuals and the collectives that in a dialectical process developed with it. This arbitrary genre developed in a reciprocal subjectivization process through cultural mobilisation. What I describe in the following is thereby both the cultural genre as well as the dialectic mobilisation process through which it was created. To present the materials and enable and illustrate the analysis, I have identified motifs that are characteristic for the materials. The motifs are: *mimicry*, *visuals*, *fraternity* and *humour*. As the motifs are constructed groupings, they are not to be seen as separate entities but as interconnected themes and mobilisation capacities.

MIMICRY

In "The Location of Culture", Homi K. Bhabha elucidates how mimicry can both disrupt authority as well as disclose ambiguity. I intend to use his ideas on mimicry to discuss how protesters seized statements and actions from the media and authorities and turned them into emic terms. They thereby infused old words with new meaning, and I suggest this was part of the process that created a shared vocabulary among protesters. (1994: 88)

[7] Gezi Park was the site for the first demonstrations in Istanbul.

Çapulcu, a Turkish noun for vandals or looters, is an illustrative example of how protesters used mimicry and humour in the protests. In a speech on June 1, the Prime Minister used the derogatory term and belittled protesters as "*a few çapulcus*". (Harding 2013) Protesters quickly began to use it as an emic term and incorporate it into songs, drawings and used it as part of their names or as an honorific title on social media profiles. The term appeared on posters, in videos and in the public media. During my fieldwork in Ankara, protesters proudly proclaimed that they were *çapulcus* when I told them I was writing about the protests, tacitly indicating they were proper participants of the protests and relevant for me to interview. As protester was juxtaposed to *çapulcu*, as a verb *çapuling* was juxtaposed with protesting.

The American pop song "Party Rock Anthem" with the chorus "*Everyday I'm shuffling*" by the group LMFAO was altered to "Everyday I'm Chapulling", and during demonstrations, protesters would joyfully jump up and down as in a concert or club setting while chanting the song.[8] In interviews, I asked informants to explain what a *çapulcu* was and how they would describe the new meaning. Deniz, a 28-year-old man who was active in planning activities in Kuğulu Park told me that it required protesting or resisting in the public:

> The people that don't stay in their houses and who try to make this civilian movement in parks, in streets. They are protesting ... Tayyip[9] wants us to stay in our houses, he doesn't want any protests, he is against protesting, he is against our basic rights. (Deniz)

Necat, who opposed violent protests and tried to convince other protesters not to build barricades and throw rocks, defined a *çapulcu* as anyone who resisted:

> Necat: I don't know, he, the PM, basically, he used it to define all the people who are protesting so it must be a good thing.
> ...
> Interviewer: Who is a çapulcu? What does a çapulcu do in the new meaning?
> Necat: Just, anyone who opposes the government, the current government, like those ideas [the government's ideas]. It doesn't matter if they are opposing it in a peaceful way or in a more aggressive way. (Necat)

[8] In this video on YouTube the practices of chanting and dancing is captured to the tunes of "Everyday I'm Shuffling" (*www.youtube.com/watch?v=-j5s0yuPPw9Q*)

[9] Protesters usually referred to the Prime Minister by his middle name instead of his more commonly used surname Erdoan.

Özgür, a 19 year old male student of political science who dwelled in the park, proudly said:

> Çapulcu? Haha! Us, you see. All of the people in Kuğulu for example and Kuğulu, and now [those] who are in the streets. (Özgür)

Melis, a young female theatre student, only took part in pacifistic forms of protesting associated *çapulcu,* with: "*Those who fight for their freedom.*" (Melis)

The above descriptions show how the new shared meaning of *çapulcu* became a positive emic term referring to involvement in the uprising. The articulations furthermore describe the self-perception of the protesters. Three weeks into the protest, *çapulcu* was defined broadly and inclusively without specific references to political standpoints or specific practices of protesting. By mimicking and re-articulating the authorities' disdain, the informants appropriated the authorities' reactions to them while constructing the cultural genre through shared reference and emic vocabulary.

Pictures and video had a salient role in Diren, where they were perceived as valid accounts of events contrary to text, which experience quickly showed could carry exaggerations and lies. Pictures and videos were therefore seen as validating information and shared widely online. On May 31, the following picture and others similar to it was shared on the internet. The picture compares the two TV channels, CNN International and CNN Türk, and shows how CNN Türk was airing a documentary on emperor penguins while CNN International was reporting from protests in Turkey.

FIGURE 1: FLEISHMANON 2013

The visual comparisons illustrated the lack of news coverage by local traditional media. While the media's self-censorship prompted an outcry of indignation from observers and protesters, it also incited creative responses, such as the drawing below, portraying the paradox that the protest was not aired on CNN Türk while it was aired on the international sister channel.

FIGURE 2: (THE DRAWING DISPLAYS THE IRONIC SITUATION AS PERCEIVED BY PROTESTERS: EVEN ON THE NORTH POLE IT WAS POSSIBLE TO SEE THE PROTESTERS WHILE THEY WERE NOT AIRED IN TURKEY.) (IBIKOGLU, ARDA 2013)

Stories circulated about people who, jokingly, had called TV stations not airing the unrest. Some of these were recorded and posted online to the amusement of protesters. In Ankara, Susan, a woman in her mid-twenties who was working for an international NGO in the capital, retold two such stories:

> [To] CNN Türk they said: "Well I was actually out protesting the other day and so I missed your penguin documentary, I was just wondering when you were going to air it next because I, I missed the beginning of it. Are you gonna wait for the next big mass people protest or do you have a date for it exactly?"
>
> And someone else called Kanal D and was like: "Just wanted to let you know that there's a massive protest going on in Taksim right now", cause they weren't showing it, and he [the TV station's telephone operator] is like ... "I understand your concern", so he [the caller] is like: "Oh no, it's no concern I just thought you guys didn't know, I was calling to let you know." (Susan)

The marching penguins from CNN Turk's coverage turned into an iconographic symbol and was, in the same

manner as *çapulcu,* juxtaposed with a protester. The picture below is an example of how the penguins became an iconographic depiction of the protests. The picture is taken from a tweet. It is a page in a leftist caricature magazine showing known scenarios from the protests illustrated with penguins.

FIGURE 3: THE ABOVE EXAMPLE OF THE APPROPRIATION OF ÇAPULCU AND PENGUINS SHOWS HOW THE DISTRUST AND DESPAIR OVER AUTHORITIES, MEDIA AND POLITICS WERE RAPIDLY MIMICKED BY PROTESTERS, AIRING THEIR PERCEIVED ABSURDITY. THE PRIME MINISTER'S USE OF ÇAPULCU AND THE ACTIONS OF THE MEDIA WERE THEREBY RE-VALUED AND NORMALISED INTO A NEW SHARED UNDERSTANDING. (BHABHA 1994: 86,91)

VISUALS - RE-ENACTING RESISTANCE

With a focus on visuals, I intend to show how - online as well as offline - there was a tendency for protesters to visually depict events, stories and people. Through the analysis I suggest that the sharing of these visuals in a sense re-enacted these events, while adding new meaning to them. Following a semiotic approach, I describe how the images, both as icons and signs, continually conveyed a non-static cultural meaning to protesters. (Sunderland and Denny 2007: 111) By using the phrase *re-enactment,* I aim to show how the proliferation of visuals and practices created meaning and performed manifold

new realities. These new realities were re-enactments of events – thus, through memories, the visuals became layered with meaning from prior re-enactments. As an example of a visual that, in a dialectic process, was embedded with collective and individual meaning, I will here focus on *DuranAdam*.[10]

DuranAdam was a peaceful protest first performed in Istanbul on June 17. One afternoon, a man (who later turned out to be a performance artist) began standing outside Gezi Park on Taksim Square. He stood silently facing the Atatürk[11] Cultural Centre adjoining the square. Initially he stood alone, but as time passed others joined him in standing, in what he later explained was an impulsive protest. Over the following days, news of the protest form spread. The traditional media, which by now was reporting on Diren, showed videos of civilian police officers looking through the man's backpack, as well as reported on how people spontaneously had come to stand with him before they were all removed or disbanded by police.

Visual illustrations of DuranAdam, as seen below, were quickly produced and shared, and DuranAdam became a performance conducted in groups and individually. In Kuğulu Park in Ankara, one of the first sights that greeted me was six people standing doing the DuranAdam. I lingered, and watched as they finished. Some clapped each other on the back in support and started talking while they receive a short applause by some of the people around them. On other occasions around the city, I spotted individuals standing, finishing their protest by walking on without drawing a reaction from their surroundings.

The DuranAdam was a bodily practice of protest involving senses and emotions. Talking about the DuranAdam with Emin, a software engineer in his mid-twenties, he told me that when he came across people in the city doing the DuranAdam, he would halt and join for a while before moving on. This could happen repeatedly, and he noted that he found it somehow meditative; suggesting the performance had capacities that moved protesters in a bodily and emotional manner. The silence and tranquillity of the practice was in stark contrast to the loud sounds, turmoil and noise of the demonstrations and contained elements of ritualization, particularly when conducted collectively and choreographed in the public space.

[10] DuranAdam directly translates into standing or stopped man. (İz et al. 1992) Informants translated Duran Adam to “the standing man”.

[11] Mustafa Kemal Atatük was the founder of the Turkish Republic

These visualisations of DuranAdam, shared via the internet and in the public space, were an empathic and symbolic re-enactment of the initial DuranAdam performance, and, as other protesters began to perform DuranAdam, their individual bodily experiences were carried in the meaning of visuals. The graphic illustrations of DuranAdam thus became connected to practices on streets and parks, and carried collective and individual experiences. The example of DuranAdam is illustrative but also unique in its exhaustiveness. Most visuals were not related in the same degree to such extensively repetitive, sensorial and bodily performances.

FRATERNITY

It was characteristic of the segments of Diren I had access to, to highlight the collaboration of diverse and opposing groupings during the protests. Ethnic minorities and LGBT members stood side-by-side with ultra-nationalist[12], a political group usually hostile to the aforementioned manifestations. Opposing football fan clubs joined forces, and individuals in traditionally socially-objectionable positions (for example, thieves) were accepted on an equal footing with socially-acceptable categories such as housewives and students. This inclusion and fraternity of segregated segments of society was applauded by informants with the sharing of images and narratives signifying the inter-citizenry relations.

The above picture was widely shared across the internet and referred to as an example, and sometimes proof, of how individuals from different parts of Turkish society literally fought side-by-side.

[12] Toplumsal Olaylara Müdahale Aracı. Police vehicle with high-powered water cannon used frequently during the uprising.

I have collected the picture from the Turkish STS scholar Zeynep Tufekci's blog (Tufekci 2013). She describes the scene that took place in Istanbul during the first or second week of protests:

> Running from the police in this picture are two youths, holding hands, one carrying a flag from the Kurdish BDP party and another an Ataturk (Kemalist) flag (ideologies that almost never speak to each other, or at least kindly). At the corner, another man makes the "wolf" sign that is traditional to ultra-nationalist Turks. To be honest, had I not seen, interviewed in, and experienced Gezi myself, I'd be trying hard to figure out if this was Photoshop. One can't help by feel incredulous by such scenes in Turkey. (bracketing done by Tufekci) (Tufekci 2013)

Tufekci expresses incredulousness due to the unlikely situation of these political groups collaborating, and it is reminiscent of how protesters expressed their surprise and subsequent delight of these groups cooperating.

In Kuğulu Park, Susan retold a story of inclusion and fraternity to me. The story was set in the first week of protests in Istanbul, in the centrally located neighbourhood Beşiktaş. The event described in the story, and an accompanying video, had spread through social media and so I was familiar with the story when Susan told it. The narration is included here because the sharing and the comment attached to it played a role in a process of constructing a collective narrative of Diren. In my words, are here how Susan narrated the events: Beşiktaş, a central neighbourhood in Istanbul, saw fierce clashes for two to three days in a row in the first week of protests. One day, protesters hijacked a yellow crane, which they used to chase the intimidating TOMAs[13]. In Beşiktaş the legendary hooligan gang Çarşı, supporters of the football team Beşiktaş, had been in charge of the protests in their home turf. As a large crowd gathered around the crane, Çarşı made a call for car-thieves to step forward. Three did so and together they unlocked and turned on the crane. A crane-driver was then requested from the crowd and one such stepped forward and took control of the vehicle. The result was the crane chasing a TOMA, which was recorded on video and shared online.

After the story was told, someone listening to Susan added that at any other given time people would have despised a car-thief. Now, people included them (and their skill) in the collective. The story illustrates how informants saw the protests as a existing outside normality, where novel relations between citizens could take place as the traditional rules and boundaries in society were broken down. (Ehn and Löfgren 2010: 118) Narratives can be telling for how we perceive of ourselves and further the image we wish to develop and project of ourselves. (Sunderland and Denny 2007: 134) The story indicates how the protesters considered the breakdown of societal barriers crucial, and shows how repeated sharing of the story helped perform a narrative in the cultural genre. This focus on the Turkish society as inclusive was also emphasised in a video from the first week, in which the police and protesters are shown to be collaborating. The video was shared via Twitter with an accompanying text introducing it in a positive manner.

In the video,[14] police in combat uniform stand opposite a group of protesters sheltered behind barricades while they together chant a national football anthem. Fans typically sing the tune during football matches. On both sides of the stadium fans chant the colours of their team in tandem.

[13] Toplumsal Olaylara Müdahale Aracı. Police vehicle with high-powered water cannon used frequently during the uprising.

[14] The video of the police and protesters chanting can be accessed via: *www.youtube.com/watch?v=CvgaAh-0qpOw&feature=-youtube_gdata_player* (accessed June 13, 2013)

This video starts with the protesters singing the first part of the song; they then call out the colour 'red' which is answered with 'white' by the police, which again is answered by 'red' by the protesters.

The police and the protesters thereby together chant the colours of the Turkish flag. The video and its positive reception display a sense of patriotism as a shared denominator that transgresses police and protesters differences. It illustrates how the protests were perceived as inclusive to all Turkish citizens, even the police.

By praising the chant and sharing stories of inclusion and fraternity, the young protesters contested the conventional perception of Turkish society as disjointed and polarised. With the examples of citizens coming together idealised in pictures, videos and stories they performed political dreams for the Turkish society (Damsholt 2000: 32)-

HUMOUR

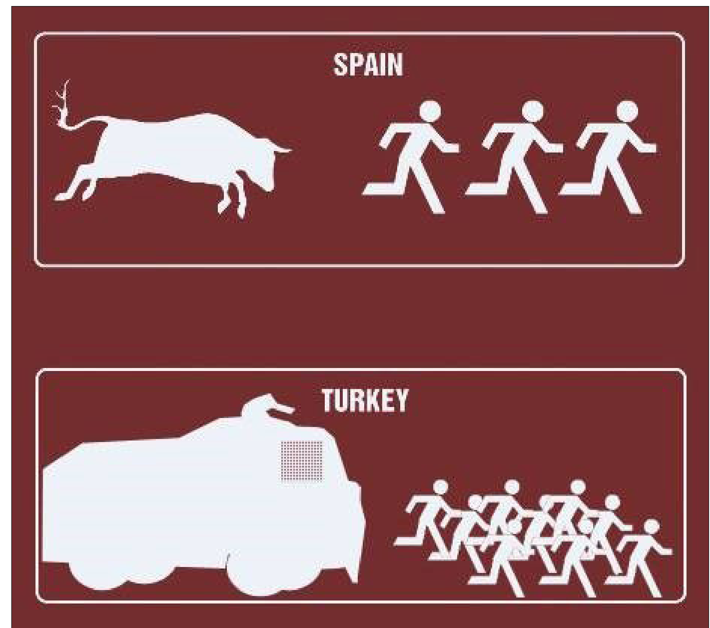
Many manifestations created during the protests were pervasive with humour. Artistic and creative jokes, caricatures, videos and pictures presented the protesters, police vehicles, politicians and events in a comedic manner. Marty Branagan (2007) and Chris A. Kramer (2013) point out that humour, in ways different from other protest forms, can entice engagement and be an entry-point for an otherwise disinterested or unengaged audience. Kramer clarifies that:

> The humor draws the audience in, since they are interested in what the wit has to say, if only at first for the entertainment value. (Kramer 2013: 639)

The previous image comparing CNN International and CNN Türk broadcasts visualises the felt incongruence of the lack of coverage by domestic media. The second picture, illustrating the protests being viewed, not in Turkey, but from an ice-covered pole, humorously ridicules the situation while also reflecting genuine unease with the apparent censorship.

These visuals, steeped in sarcastic humour, are in themselves a form of protest. Their non-physical, visual and humorous form are in contrast to spiteful political statements and violent protests. They may therefore have provoked sympathy for protesters and appealed to individuals who did not identify themselves with demonstrations and clashes with police.

The two images below convey the felt absurdity about the relationship between citizens and the state during Diren. The police, ideally a protector of its citizens, are presented as the enemy. The first illustration plays with a comparison of Turkey and Spain, two states where people voluntarily run in the streets. By juxtaposing the game-mode in the festive tradition of the Encierro in Spain, where citizens are chased by bulls, with Turkish citizens chased by TOMAs, the image is tacitly humorous while it deflates the severity of the physical crackdown. In the second image, a TOMA and a barricade are seen in the videogame "Super Mario World". This image associates the protests with the game, while also expressing fraternity, as Mario and his traditional "Super Mario World" enemies are seen in opposition to a TOMA, thus representing the union of traditional enemies also described in the stories above.



The picture below appropriates an event happening in relation to the protests. On June 11, a group of lawyers were arrested for taking part in the protests and assisting protesters. (Hurriyet Daily News 2013a) The event prompted a wave of new demonstrations and this visual representation. The drawing exposes the incongruity of a detained individual requesting legal assistance while the lawyer is also being detained.

The illustration references an important pillar in the judicial system, where the detained must have access to a lawyer, though in relation to the arrests the judicial system appears dysfunctional. The image implicitly expresses the inconsistency between how the judicial system is expected to function and the reality during Diren. During the time of my fieldwork in Ankara, a manipulated picture of TOMAs circulated on social media and the internet.

The picture prompted laughter from informants, who presented it to me as it punctured the terror of TOMAs and ridiculed the police.

FIGURE 8: (TOMA 2013)
TEXT HEADING (BROWN): CHOOSE YOUR ISTANBUL TOMA TEXT HEADING (WHITE ON PINK): WHICH ONE IS YOUR TOMA?
1. OTTOMAN TOMA
2. GREEN TOMA
3. CLASSIC TOM

The text style and colours call to mind a page in a teen magazine, and with the colourful illustrations of the TOMAs the frightful vehicle is scorned. The above picture is of a manipulated advertisement for deodorant, exemplifying another type of humour used in the protests. It reflects in an absurd manner the amount of gas the protesters experienced, and how they transformed it to something emic and ordinary. This further deflated the experience of pepper spray and tear gas by transforming it to a mundane everyday routine, such as applying deodorant. By juxtaposing the usually extraordinary situation of physically confronting police, and dealing with tear gas and pepper spray with an everyday routine the protesters deflated the violent response of the police.

As Branagan points out, the resistance, through humour, endures the violence. The comedic form prevents the authorities from ‘winning’:

> Indeed, protest through humor is more than mere words, since it can instil a sense of freedom in the oppressed, but also act as a sign of defiance against the oppressors, signifying that the oppressors have not won. (Branagan 2007: 646)

By reacting to hardship with humour, the physical superiority of the authorities was punctured. The humorous responses came through an epistemological shift where the intellect became supreme to the physical power of battle gear and police vehicles. This form of reaction was persistent throughout the three weeks I studied Diren closely.

Furthermore, humour appeared to have a sort of therapeutic effect for protesters. In the above tweet, the writer explains how he refrains from terminating a black fly, since he now knows how it feels to be gassed. I came across the tweet as my primary gatekeeper Lara, a woman in her mid-twenties who worked in the diplomatic community, started crying with laughter when she saw it. The tweet was retweeted 5628 times, a relatively high number during the protests, and this fact, together with Lara’s reaction, left me wondering if it did more than entertain. The humour and laughter, along with the realisation that others shared the same feelings and experiences, appeared to relax her and create a space for dealing with distress in a therapeutic manner. The same may be suggested for the passive protest of DuranAdam, which to Emin facilitated a form of recreation in a meditative manner. (Navaro-Yashin 2002: 25; Damsholt 2000: 32) Humour was also embedded in songs written or rewrit-

ten during the protests. Old tunes with new lyrics were shared online, such as a rewriting of Erdinç Erdoğdu's cover of "Enjoy the Silence" by Depeche Mode to "Enjoy the Teargas (Chapulation Song)".[15]

During the song, the singer describes a romantic relationship between the Prime Minister and the people of Istanbul in a witty manner, mentioning events from the protests as well as political events from the AK Party's reign. The song ends with the singer demanding a divorce from the PM on behalf of Istanbul's citizens.

Just as humour can attract attention towards a purpose, both Branagan and Kramer point out that humour also can attach individuals to a cause and sustain involvement. Following their argument that humour is internalised and appealing to individuals in various ways, we may find part of an explanation as to how the protests engaged such diverse groups and individuals. Additionally, the effects of humour may also assist in understanding how Diren sustained momentum during the summer. Activists engaged in demonstrations with a wide range of activities can sustain their commitment longer, and they are less prone to burn-out and loss of interest due to the diversity of practices within the protest (Branagan 2007: 472,479).

The logic in the humorous genre was experienced by protesters as impermeable against the authorities. The epistemological shift to some extent disregarded and obstructed the physical force of the authorities, and thus the authorities could not win. By ridiculing and deflating, for example, the gas and the TOMAs, the humour instead empowered the collective and satiated the cultural genre. The jokes and images were created in response to the authorities, possibly sometimes even for the authorities, but in an inward manner they further became influential. According to Sunderland and Denny: "*Identity stories are narratives - stories we tell ourselves about ourselves...*" (2007: 134).

The stories about the protesters and the authorities depicted in above cultural products narrate an identity of the protesters and the Diren movement. The jokes, visuals and songs made sense to protesters as they recognised events and experiences in a shared net of references. The references were part of the dialectic process, which developed the cultural genre that protesters shared and could relate to across their differences.

[15] This links to the song on YouTube www.youtube.com/watch?v=hkUO942mGi4 (accessed May 30, 2016)

DISCUSSION

The aim of this article was to unfold the multi-modal and multi-sensorial materials and practices produced during the early days of Diren and show how they had mobilising capacities. Damsholt points out that engaging all senses in cultural mobilisation can be perceived as a technique for the intensification of a mobilisation process. The multiple-sensory experiences in the demonstrations (visuals through videos and pictures, audio in chants and songs, odours from gas, the noise of thousands of people demonstrating, humour, diverse practices of protesting and exposure to physical force) may have created a totality of sensorial experiences, intensifying the mobilisation and saturating the cultural genre with meaning acquired through multiple senses. (Damsholt 2000: 42; Damsholt 2008: 58) Emotionally, protesters were moved through repetitive individual and collective practices. The choreography of performances, such as DuranAdam, made Emin feel meditative, and repetitive singing and chanting may have planted physical as well as emotional movement within the individuals. As protesters 'lent their bodies' to practices, the individuals may, through their experiences, have developed new perceptions and consciousness about themselves as çapulcus. (Damsholt 2000: 31,42)

Recognisable references to felt experiences, such as the tweet that left Lara crying in laughter, further subjectivised and mobilised the individuals, making them feel part of a collective. The texts, narratives, auditory forms and visuals, through virtual sharing and repetition, became integrated into individual identities, engaging and shaping both individuals and collectives. The examples brought forth here, such as DuranAdam, the chanting of "Everyday I'm Chapulling" and sharing jokes, are examples of individual and collective bodily practices which spread online and offline, symbolically constructing a collective united across geographies and social differences. (Damsholt 2000: 42) Exposing individuals to the protests in a virtual sphere that was tightly interwoven with other social and physical activities in the cities, social media – as a communication platform – may have further intensified cultural mobilisation through online proliferation, co-facilitating the intensification process. (Law, Ruppert, and Savage 2010: 3) The dialectic process of subjectivization was 1) a cultural mobilisation, and 2) the construction of a cultural genre that strengthened the collective spirit. The manifestations, practices, and events, which were shared swiftly online

and offline, facilitated the relatively rapid development of a specific cultural genre in Diren. This shared cultural genre provided the diverse protesters with shared vocabulary and references. Exploring the development of a cultural genre and outlining its particularities offers part of an explanation to how opposing and estranged groups co-existed in Diren. The swift production of the genre, including practices and language, immediately allowed for a sharedness among protesters that might otherwise be estranged to one another, and in the cultural genre a new set of cultural and social conventions were constructed. The cultural genre thus bridges the manifestations and practices performed and proliferated virtually and in the parks and street of Turkey.

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