

CAPACITIES AND ILL HEALTH:
DELEUZIAN ETHICS IN *THE FLAME ALPHABET* AND *SICAK KAFA*

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Merve Şen, certify that

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ABSTRACT

Capacities and Ill Health:

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This thesis explores the possibilities that Deleuzian ethics offers—the investment in the body's capacities to enter affective and transformative relations, thus lead a response(able) life—as they become manifest in two contemporary novels revolving around language-related diseases: Ben Marcus' *The Flame Alphabet* (2012) and Afşin Kum's *Sıcak Kafa* (2016). In *The Flame Alphabet*, children's speech becomes poisonous for their parents, which causes pain and deformation in their bodies, whereas in *Sıcak Kafa* a memetic language disease—*abuklama*—causes people to talk in grammatically correct but semantically nonsensical ways. The diseases disrupt the flow of normalcy in life, thus revealing the suppressive power mechanisms in society, and transform not only the interrelations between the bodies, but also familial, social, and economic relations. In both novels, the employment of a subversive language as a disease signals an ongoing state of *becoming*, and opens unforeseen paths into diverse and mutually transformative relations to the world, and as such emerges as *an enterprise of health*.

Both novels foreground language exchanges, and experiment with an alternative use of language beyond conventional forms of communication and mere representation. The disease provides a perspective on the sickness caused by the oppressive power regimes in society. These novels pave a fertile ground to discuss ethics, as they refuse the normative conceptions of health imposed on people and propose an understanding of health associated with the body's capacity to act and affect as well as to respond and be affected.

ÖZET

Kudretler ve Marazî Sağlık:

The Flame Alphabet ve *Sıcak Kafa* Romanlarında Deleuzcü Etik

Bu tez, dille ilişkili hastalıklar etrafında gelişen iki çağdaş roman, Ben Marcus'un *The Flame Alphabet* 'i (2012) ve Afşin Kum'un *Sıcak Kafa*'sı (2016) üzerinden bedenin duygulanımsal ve dönüştürücü ilişkilere girebilme ve karşılık, etki üretebilecek bir yaşam sürme kabiliyetine yatırım yapan Deleuzcü etiğin sunduğu imkânları araştırmaktadır. *The Flame Alphabet*'de çocukların dili ebeveynleri için zehirli hâle gelerek bedenlerinde acı ve deformasyona neden olurken, *Sıcak Kafa*'da *abuklama* adı verilen bir hastalık insanların gramatik olarak doğru, semantik olarak ise saçma cümleler kurmalarına yol açar. Söz konusu hastalıklar hayatın olağan akışını sekteye uğratarken toplumda hüküm süren baskıcı iktidar mekanizmalarını ortaya çıkarır ve bedenlerarası, ailevi, toplumsal ve ekonomik ilişkileri dönüştürür. Hastalık olarak işleyen yıkıcı dil, iki romanda da devamlı bir *oluş* hâlini işaret eder ve dünyayla türlü ve müşterek dönüştürücülükte ilişkiler kurmanın beklenmedik yollarını açar. Böylelikle hastalık da *bir sağlık girişi* olarak kendini gösterir.

Bu iki roman da dilsel mübadeleleri önceler ve dilin konvansiyonel iletişim biçimleri ile salt temsiliyetin dışında kalan, alternatif kullanımlarıyla deneye girer. Hastalıklar, baskıcı iktidar rejimlerinin yol açtığı marazlara ilişkin bir bakış açısı ortaya koyar. İnsanlara empoze edilen normatif sağlık anlayışının reddedildiği, bedenlerin yapıp edebilirlikleri, etkileme ve etkilenme, karşılık üretme kuvvetleri ile ilişkilenen bir sağlık anlayışının önerildiği bu romanlar, etiği tartışmak adına bereketli bir zemin sunar.

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“The malady alone makes us remark and apprehend, and allows us
to dissect the mechanism of which otherwise we should know nothing.”

— Marcel Proust, *Sodom and Gomorrah*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, the possibilities that Deleuzian ethics offers will be explored through the examination of two contemporary novels revolving around language-related diseases; Ben Marcus' *The Flame Alphabet* (2012) and Afşin Kum's *Sıcak Kafa* (2016), respectively. In both novels, an epidemic disease transmitted through language exchange spreads almost around the world, and leads to a state of emergency, which imposes strict control systems, quarantine zones, and abusive relations in both novels. In *The Flame Alphabet*, children's speech becomes poisonous for their parents and physically hurts and deforms them; whereas in *Sıcak Kafa* a memetic language disease called *abuklama* causes people to talk in a grammatically correct but semantically nonsensical ways and threatens the established socio-political order.

The diseases transform the bodies, familial, social and economic relations in both novels. The state of emergency is declared both in local and global scale in order to fight with the disease and its effects. This seemingly tentative precaution reveals how the micro-domains like the body and family, and macro-domains like society are subjected to power that stabilizes and controls people, and blocks their capacities to act under the state of emergency in Rochester, America (*The Flame Alphabet*) and Istanbul (*Sıcak Kafa*) through the narration of the first person male narrators Sam and Murat. Measures taken in order to protect public health and order legitimize the current system that oppresses people; yet, they unveil the mechanisms of biopolitics, which governs individuals and society at large, as well as possibilities

of resistance. Both novels display how the bodies are governed, medicalized, digitized and quantified, and in turn how they respond to such acts.

In both novels, the way the protagonists' tackle with the diseases, and leave home either to flee or to find a cure, set the characters in motion and bring about several encounters that test and uncover characters' capacity to act. These journeys enable them to question the existing relationships and the social order, and in turn to resist them. Disease, then, goes beyond a mere biological condition and is converted into a mode of existence pertaining to resistance. Under these conditions, the question becomes a matter of life, and is articulated as such: How can one live a life? That is the question that lands us on an ethical ground in Deleuzian sense. Deleuze grasps ethics as the possibility of a life, of assessing the ways of being existed. Therefore, in order to answer the question how one can live, it becomes a necessity to look at the very moments and events that disrupt the predictable and dictated course of life first; in this case a certain period of time life is interrupted by a linguistically-driven diseases. Then, the quest evolves into an exercise of discovering the different possibilities of living.

Since, Deleuze's approach to ethics uniquely interweaves ethics with health that is the creation and the augmentation of the possibilities of action, and with literature that is the invention or the implication of modes of living, this chapter addresses the formation of Deleuzian ethics, and discusses its interrelation with health and literature before concentrating on the novels themselves, first.

1.1 An ethics of life

In an interview where he discusses Michel Foucault's views on "The Care of the Self" with Didier Eribon, Deleuze (1995) states that ethics is "establishing ways of

existing or styles of life” and opposes it to morality that “judges actions and intentions by considering them in relation to transcendent values” (p. 100). Instead of judgment that “prevents the emergence of any new mode of existence” (Deleuze, 1997a, p. 135) and transcendent values “that are turned against life” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 26), ethics operates through immanence and evaluation, and “assess[es] what we do, what we say, in relation to the ways of existing involved” (Deleuze, 1995, p. 100). Attaching itself to the vitality of life, ethics¹ is not bounded by norms and standards, and it traverses our acts, feelings, and attitudes, as they are reshaped in relation to every single encounter we have. Shortly, ethics examines and multiplies the ways in which we exist in the world.

As an ethics of encounters, Deleuze’s ethics is grounded in the evaluation of the immanent modes of existence in terms of mobility and relationality, and the invention of better ways of living through affective encounters, which augment or diminish our capacities to act to the extent they change the body’s relation to itself and its surrounding. Taking “mobility—movement, change, and flux—as its starting point” (Gilson, 2014, p. 80) and throwing away the necessities and imperatives that fall under the division of judgment, ethics concerns detecting affects, relations, and signs of an encounter. Since, a series of encounters render us either active by the virtue of increasing our capacities to enter new relations and to multiply them, or passive in the sense that it damages our existing relations and blunts the new ones. Ethics seeks to augment the former encounters in order to enhance one’s power to act. This power (*potentia/puissance*) corresponds to what gives strength and enables

¹ Since this thesis specifically focuses on Deleuzian ethics, from this point on, every use of the word “ethics” can be considered as Deleuzian ethics whether it is indicated or not, unless it is not stated otherwise.

an active and a better life, instead of a power (*potestas/pouvoir*) that will coerce, dominate and oppress it. All forms of power—both the one that is exercised on others, and the one acts, resists through—constitute the relation between forces that affect each other and are affected by each other, that is, they transform one another in different ways and scales. Ethics is never one-sided, it is always relational because “action always implies a contact” (Deleuze, 1978). Therefore, ethics focuses on relationality and reciprocity, and directs its attention to the study of the source and the domain of encounters that bring out power relations of domination or resistance; namely the body.

It should be noted that, although Deleuze discusses ethics on several occasions² it is not possible to talk about a systematic theory of ethics in his oeuvre. However, as several studies point out (Bouge, 2016; Jun and Smith, 2011; Smith, 2012) Deleuze’s affirmative and non-judgemental take on ethics mostly draws on Nietzsche and Spinoza. Nietzsche’s discussions of power and philosophy as a critical and creative practice, and his take of life as *will to power*, a synthesis of difference and relations between forces, influence Deleuze. The thesis especially takes into account Nietzsche’s impact on Deleuze in relation to the concept of health invested in the potentialities and the capacities of life in contrast to the state of things that are oppressive enough to prevent processes and relations. At the same time, it refers to Deleuze’s ideas on ethics developed in line with Spinoza who conceptualizes the body as a philosophical model. Deleuze’s ethics centers around Spinoza’s famous argument that “we don’t know what the body can do” (Deleuze, 1978). Capability,

² Examples can vary from Stoic ethics —“not to be unworthy to what happens to us”— in *Logic of Sense* to the discussion of Spinoza’s *Ethics* —organizing good encounters— in *Expressions of Philosophy* and *Practical Philosophy*, from creative and critical conception of power in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* to several interviews and writings in *Negotiations*.

here, refers to the body's "capacity for affecting and being affected" (Deleuze, 1988, p. 123), and is enacted differently in each contact. The body is defined by neither a form nor a function (p. 123), but instead, determined by the composition of its relations (Deleuze, 2005, p. 218). Our capabilities of seeing, hearing, saying, tasting, smelling, and feeling; that is, our sense of the world is constantly and unpredictably transformed in every encounter. Ethics, therefore, becomes the creation of a mutual life in flux created through the dis/connection of particular bodies.

Attributing mobility and fluidity to the bodies, Spinoza defines a body "in two simultaneous ways; dynamic and kinetic" (Deleuze, 1988, p. 123). The body is composed of relation of affects—to affect and being affected—(dynamic), and relations of motion and rest, of speeds and slowness (kinetic) (p. 123). Describing the body in terms of its capacities, instead of certain forms, norms or splits, Spinoza changes the traditional Cartesian view of the body that separates body and mind and attributes a primacy to the latter. Acquisition, widening or narrowing of one's capacities require considering the body's movements and its relations regardless of its given identity, and therefore, cancel out the presumed distinction between human and nonhuman as well. In that sense, it is not surprising that in *Practical Philosophy* Deleuze (1988) calls ethics ethology. As a subfield of zoology, ethology is the study of animal behavior. However, extending this definition, Deleuze describes ethology as "a composition of fast and slow speeds, of capacities for affecting and being affected on this plane of immanence" (p. 125). Immanence marks the present, the process and the experiential, and ethics, as ethology, entails a practice of paying attention to perceptions and actions of the body, alongside accelerations and decelerations, thresholds and variations between the bodily forces, because affectivity is generated through the interaction of several forces. Hence, an attempt to

understand the body simultaneously turns into a call to experiment, to discover, and to regenerate one's ways of living. Opening oneself to this quest, to any kind of contact, requires accepting and responding to all affectivities and forces; a responsibility towards a shared world. This angle is introduced by Deleuze in the form of a question in the last part of his discussion of ethology: "How can a being take another being into its world, but while preserving or respecting the other's own relations and world?" (p. 126). Affirming the materiality, dynamism and mutuality of life, ethics becomes a collaborative act of creation carried out with respect and responsibility.

Ethics invents the possibilities of a life that will contribute to affective and relational capacities of the body through encounters. The sustainability of the bodies' association with other bodies depends on the changes in their capacities that is the power of action, and on the extent to which these changes are negotiated. Therefore, the scope of Deleuze's ethics is determined by the possibility of a life that is revealed by the disruption and the questioning of the molar structure of society shaped by segmentarity and binaries, and dictated and controlled by power, through (micro) relations and connections that augment or diminish one's force of existing and power of acting.

In an interview in *Two Regimes of Madness* titled "Two Questions on Drugs," Deleuze (2006) mentions "vital experimentation occurs when any trail (...) establish[es] more and more connections and opens one to connections" (p. 153). He recognizes that such encounters could also entail danger and destruction to a certain extent. In that case, the question of "what the body can do" necessitates paying attention to micro (familial, ephemeral) and macro (social, economical, political)

mechanisms and processes that organize encounters, as well as the bodies' actions that respond them.

Deleuze (1995) proposes considering all these relations, affects, and their potentials through the lens of literature. For him, life and writing are inseparable from one another: "Style, in a great writer, is always a style of life too (...) inventing a possibility of life, a way of existing" (p. 100). Therefore, ethics explicitly exhibits itself in literature. Literature forms an ability to respond to the world with the world and through the world that is affective and relational. It stimulates different perspectives and enables one to evaluate the current conditions, to critique the existing norms, and thus, gives a possibility to transform relations and creates the possibility of an ethical life.

In his final work *Essays Critical and Clinical*, Deleuze (1997a) conceptualizes literature as a "passage of life" that "does not impose a form (of expression) on the matter of the lived experience (...) and goes beyond the matter of any livable or lived experience" (p. 1). Literature does not transfix, but rather it moves and crosses between and through bodies, styles and spaces. Embodying an ongoing state of "becoming", literature examines borders, interstices, and transformations in life, and appears as "an enterprise of health" through its ways and styles that connect us to the world.

Perceiving literature as health, to put it more correctly "a promise of a health to come" (Patton, 2012, p. 16), Deleuze envisions a peculiar kind of health through literature. Health, becoming affective and relational capacities, embodies everything that "resist[s] forces of territorialisation that limit these capacities" (Fox, 2011, p. 369), and therefore confronts what totalizes or closes life. It is extracted from what is too much for the author — "what [s]he has seen and heard too big for [her]"

(Deleuze, 1997a, p. 3). From *Nietzsche and Philosophy* to *Essays Critical and Clinical*, Deleuze associates authors and artists with clinicians and physicians. The artists and the authors examine phenomena, which can be considered as signs of what surround and dominate us, and detect an illness in the constellation of these signs, whose meaning always lies in the existing force of social order. Deleuze (1995) prompts to follow signs because they corresponds to power relations of control and resistance, and take part in the invention of “ways of living” and the “possibilities of existence” (p. 143). They are “the symptoms of life gushing forth or draining away” (p. 143). The author transforms the symptoms³ into a creative force in order to diagnose and heal the illness. In a world appearing as a set of symptoms whose illness merges with man (p. 3), literature renders problems, failures, and interruptions visible, and seeks ways in which we can turn them into possibilities to think and act differently.

Although Deleuze (1997a) thinks of illness as a blockage, “a stopping of the process” (p. 3), he admits that illness constitutes a very special kind of rupture gaining us a perspective on health. In *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze (2006, 1962) recognizes that illness “narrows [one’s] possibilities and condemns [her] to a diminished milieu she can do no more than adapt [her]self” (p. 66). However, it also becomes a revelatory gesture of new capacities, and a will one can possess as one’s own. In *L’abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze* —an eight-hour long, televised interview

³ Symptomatology —a branch of medicine regarding the interpretation of symptoms/signs— has always been a part of Deleuze’s critical-clinical project starting from his 1962 book *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. According to Deleuze (1962), symptomatology “interprets phenomena, treat[s] them as symptoms whose sense must be sought in the forces that produce them” (p. 75). Drawing on Nietzsche’s take of philosophers as physicians and artists, he assigns a similar function to authors; that is to read the signs of sickness and to offer new possibilities of living as a cure. Therefore, Deleuze perceives symptomatology not only about health merely but also as “a question of art” as he further discussed in *Coldness and Cruelty* and *The Logic of Sense*.

with Claire Parinet—Deleuze (2011) follows this idea and articulates that “illness is not an enemy (...) something that sharpens the feeling of life (...) sharpens a kind of vision of life or a sense of life” (p. 68). What Deleuze means by health here, refers to the possibility of a life, which is not imposed on us. Literature brings about such becomings that “dominant and substantial health would render impossible” (Deleuze, 1997a, p. 3). Illness might separate us from certain powers, yet it is capable of “endow[ing] us with a greater capacity to attune to the differential forces of life” (Cull, 2011) and “open[ing] up new possibilities of feeling or bring[ing] about new capacities for acting and being acted upon” (Patton, 2000, p. 63). It is important to notice that Deleuze does not interest in refunctioning or reordering of society, instead he focuses on the possibilities of change; rhythms and intensities that are capable of transforming bodies, and thus relations.

1.2 The invention of health in a different sense

Focusing on the experience of illness becomes instrumental to conceive an ethical life. Since, digression from the body’s given form and qualities interrupts the habitual understanding of the world and brings about a new sense to think about the extent of power of the body. Disease narratives become significant in that sense, as they allow us to examine the ways in which, we experience life under new and different rhythms and intensities, and help us to (re)configure personal, social, political and economic domains. Similarly, in both novels, the disease—the issue of language exchange—facilitates political, social and economical relations as well as biological ones.

We see that language and disease play essential roles as material and affective forces in these novels. They unfold the immanency of bodies, since life

intertwines with the bodily existence. As body is medicalized, digitized and/or quantified, so does life. Therefore, this ill, linguistic breaking point in these societies, however bleak the image is, offers an ethical turn by creating spaces of encounter and resistance and negotiation. Disease builds barriers and puts limits, however, it also provides an opportunity to navigate through off limits too. The source of the disease (children, abuks) considered to be sick, toxic but also they are expected to be the cure of the disease—children are exploited to produce a vaccine, abuks are used as test subjects (same is true for some parents in *The Flame Alphabet* as well). The language is invalid, however an alternative language, a more engaged (non)vocabulary with the current events can be produced within this invalidity.

Taking its cue from Deleuzian ethics, the thesis proposes that this ethics presents itself with a two-fold gesture in the novels. For one thing, through the symptomatology of the societies, the symptoms that dominate people, which will be considered under the regime of biopolitics, that is how human life is managed, and controlled through certain mechanisms and strategies, are revealed. And the other is that a possibility of a life opens into discussion through the protagonists' actions and journeys, which create new and flexible mobilities through multiple encounters that enact an act of resistance based on relationality.

Both *The Flame Alphabet* and *Sıcak Kafa* engage with the circulation of language, and reengage language in its capacity to go beyond communication and representation. Both novels are affected and respond to the social, scientific, technological, and political changes in the 21st century, which both tend to serve dominant power structures and also to subvert them. The refusal of a normative and productive health imposed on people, and the insistence on the invention of a health that is associated with the capacities of the body to act, to respond and to relate pave

the way for discussing ethics in these novels. The thesis discusses the novels separately in the following chapters, and inspects the symptom of the diseases, the very “force that produces the symptom” (Deleuze, 1962, p. 75), that is the society both in micro (familial) and macro (institutional) scale, and examines whether this symptomatology and various encounters can sustain health and create ethics focusing on another conception of life, and if so, how. In Chapter 2, concentrating upon *The Flame Alphabet*, it examines that how the toxic language—both unsettles the established order and is threatened by it simultaneously—reveals power relations of domination and resistance in domestic and institutional spaces. In the novel, the toxic language arrives as a physical force that distorts the body, as well as a symbolic act that stigmatizes people. Being an asignifying, incorporeal force, language gains a sonic character, which has close affinities with *asignifying intensive utilization of language* of Deleuze and Guattari that abolishes representation and linguistic order, and pushes language into its limits. Sonority denounces the signifying and stabilizing use of language, bypasses meaning, and recomposes spaces, bodies and relations. The probability of ethics is searched in the interstices of the ill-language appearing as a possibility both to challenge the given social forms and subjectivities, and to reformatize them within a biopolitical and bioinformatical framework. Both language and the body in the novel are digitalized and quantified in response to the advances in the digital and information technologies. The employment of low-tech, homemade medical equipment and self-care techniques to ease or cure the disease introduces new relation and labor models discussed in connection with the concepts of *affective labor* and *machinic enslavement*. Although, this situation unfolds the new forms of control, reconfiguration of language and the bodily knowledge in relation to asignifying sound and digits and codes bring about a possibility to discover the

unseen connections with the world. Turning to *Sıcak Kafa* in Chapter 3, political and social repercussions of the current order that create a monotonous and passive life is analyzed, and then, the examples that open up the new possibilities of engaging with the world is explored. Like in *The Flame Alphabet*, language through *abuklama* quits to realize communication, and breaks off with the chain of order and command, and foregrounds affective relations instead. *Delirium*, that is the digression from signifying and semantic form of language pushes linguistic order into its limits and allows a different engagement with language beyond its rules and structures.

Destabilizing use of language disrupts the functionality of the social order, reveal the interrupted rhythm of everyday life, and rearrange the mobility and the relations of the body through *becoming* and *depersonalization* that blur subject-object positions, cancel hierarchical structures and bring about new connections. Therefore, this thesis aims to show that disease offers the possibilities of a life beyond oppressive power regimes and contributes to the extension of relational and affective capacities of the body in establishing new connections and multiplying the existing ones. Literature plays an integral part in the introduction of disease as health, since it allows the invention of a language that puts the existing relations into disequilibrium and opens up a different sense of the world.

CHAPTER 2

THE FLAME ALPHABET

In an interview with Adam Boretz for *The Millions*, where he talks about the genesis of *The Flame Alphabet*, Ben Marcus (2012, January 31) says, “I think of language as being tremendously potent. It causes deep feelings in us, so much so that its effects would seem nearly chemical, medical”. As an author whose “fiction might be understood as a question *of* and *to* language” (Vanderhaeghe, 2013, p.44), Marcus’ interest in the subject seems to overflow language’s representational mode and its regulating structure ordered by linguistics. Instead, he is more willing to participate in a line of fiction, which presents language as a materially and affectively realized praxis. Instead of imagining the world in a limited way by representing it according to the norms and structures of a certain order, language is there to capture the variety of feelings, sensations and actions, and to generate new ones. Therefore, writing is situated as an engagement, which is able to stimulate varied perspectives and to form new relations with the world, and thus literature appears to be a bodily and cognitive experience at once. Marcus’ association with language bears a close affinity with Deleuze’s take on literature, since both in Deleuze’s formulation and Marcus’ practice, literature never simply reflects the world, instead breaks away with representation, and the common and habitual use of language. Keen to push language towards its limits, and to “disturb and harm its conventional grammar and syntax” as Vanderhaeghe (2010) observes (p.18), by emphasizing its being a non-representational, material force throughout his literature, Marcus is known as skeptical about reducing the language to the level of symbols, metaphors and signifiers. Rather, he grasps it as a transformative force by relating it to the body, and

exploring its physical and affective capacities.⁴ Still, he recognizes the symbolic and representative power of language as well, and insists to keep those powers at his sight in order to reflect and problematize the conventional take of language, which fixes meaning and imposes social norms and obligations to stabilize its subjects.

Marcus compares this experimental mode of language to drugs in the same interview, and voices his curiosity about the perilous yet perception-changing possibilities of language. He wonders what an overdose would be, “what would happen if the drug of language was toxic to some people if taken in high doses?” (Marcus, 2012, January 31). This is the question, which encapsulates *The Flame Alphabet*, a novel in which an epidemic disease—language toxicity—strikes most of the world, and the children’s speech becomes lethal for their parents. Through toxicity, language asserts its own force and appears as a potential that is capable of changing one’s perspective.⁵ The life in the novel captured by the dominant social order, composed of the religious community that assigns duties to its subjects, and an autonomous institution whose ultimate aim is to obtain economic gain through the manipulation and exploitation of people. The disease does not only expose the arbitrariness of the productivity-based, hierarchical existing order but also challenges

⁴ Some of the experiments in Marcus’ earlier works involves playing with proper names (Vanderhaeghe, 2013), positioning language as the wind (in 1998’s *The Age of Wire and String*), and creating characters who are physically damaged by language as in the case of a father who is crashed through language (in 2001’s *Notable American Women*)—an idea led to *The Flame Alphabet* as it prompted Marcus to think about injuriousness of language more thoroughly (Tanz, 2012).

⁵ Marcus’ association of language with drug reminds the word *pharmakon*, which is both remedy and poison in Ancient Greek. Drawing on Plato’s *Phaedrus*, which compares writing to *pharmakon*, Jacques Derrida (1981) traces the meaning of the word, and writes that *pharmakon* simultaneously might be remedy, recipe, poison, drug, philter etc (p. 71). In its ambivalence and instability *pharmakon* captures a Deleuzian kind of health, which destabilizes and disturbs life, however through that disturbance enriches the possibilities of living by opening one to previously unknown or oppressed forces and sensations.

it by the disruption of the formal linguistic expression that is used to impose power, and the domestic life organized around that linguistic order. In this frame, despite its disruptive effects, illness appears as health, since the toxic language introduces divergent, asignifying and nonrepresentational language exchanges by unearthing the disequilibrium already present in the controlling and regulating linguistic material, and extends the forms and variety of the bodies' actions. Focusing on the symptoms, the experience and the discovery of the different ways of living enacts the ethical possibility in the novel.

In *The Flame Alphabet*, toxic language operates within physical, social and ethical boundaries that connect and separate people. The conventional account of language that categorizes, hierarchizes, signifies, and accordingly subjectifies and dominates is instrumentalized to keep the current social and economic order intact. However, toxic language in the novel, instead of being, what Shackelford (2014) points out as one of the characteristics of language, that is “a constitutive, opaque force in subject and social formations” (p, 32), challenges and unsettles the prescribed formations of habitual and social order. It is operational in the sense that it does not simply represent or inform but acts, activates and works within a network of varied forces and agencies; human, nonhuman, familial, social, technological, and economical. Language toxicity becomes a threat in a double sense: It is a threat for the dominant social order because it destabilizes the language that inflicts a dominating power over people, and thus deterritorializes subject positions. However, the healthy openings the toxic language render conceivable—the possibility of another expression or a way of life—is also under the threat, this time of reterritorialization. Throughout the novel, characters are still being threatened by the conventional, stabilizing use of words that empty genuine interaction and affect.

Besides, several practices to cure or soothe the toxicity recreate hierarchical relations, and reinsert people into the mechanism of signification and subjection.

The novel presents language as a physical force that hurts, dehydrates, and suffocates people. It physically affects the adult world organized around the fix linguistic codes and binaries as the physical deformation in the parents' bodies illustrate. All these physical actions that affect the bodies immediately are also symbolic acts, since the disease redistributes the social order by establishing a hierarchy between "certain people" (Jews, children) who are stigmatized as the "carrier" of the disease (Marcus, 2012, p. 30) and the people who are healthy in terms of their functionality in society. Language toxicity in that sense, both diagnoses the illness within the conventional language that stratifies people and discovers the potential in it by emphasizing the sonority of language that cannot be used or absorbed easily by power mechanisms. Language in the novel also responds to the rising digital and information technologies, in which language is recontextualized in the operations of the quantification and the digitalization of life. As the bodies become data in relation to domestic and institutional medical experiments conducted to heal the disease, the new forms of management unfold. However, the reorganization and the recirculation of the bodily knowledge through the abstract, nonrepresentational world of numbers and codes open the possibility of generating undetermined and unseen connections and relations with the world as well. During these experiments, relations of power are mediated through not only technology but also religious and social discursive practices. Language becomes a force directed at not only the materiality of the body but also its relations. In that sense, language in the novel is cast to stage several power relations of domination and resistance in different scales ranging from the quotidian and the molecular

depicted in the domestic space to the institutional and the molar as it is exemplified in the area of religion and science. This tension and the interplay between the forces embedded in language pertain, the first and foremost, to the body, which, in itself, epitomizes an *enterprise of health* with its openness to change and unforeseen relations. Here, health is not organized as “an order of the living”, but as a process, in which “an infinite play of forces, a ‘diversity of combinations’ of affects, events and relations in and for life” (Deleuze, 1988a, p. 131–132; Duff, 2014, p. 181) takes place and never settles.

In the novel, the toxic language is stripped of its symbolic value by gaining a sonic character. It creates a tension between signifier and signified as the language dismantles meaning and bypasses the generic, stabilizing use of language by operating outside its established framework. The sonority opens up a possibility to challenge the imposing linguistic order still in use by adults, and to form new relations to the world. Marcus’ gesture towards emphasizing the sonority of language, especially in the domestic space, allows him to explore the power relations and the production of knowledge and conventions more closely as the sonority bends the fixing quality of the conventional language. Sound disturbs, disintegrates and reconfigures spaces, bodies and relations. In this sense, the language in the novel exhibits a close affinity with minor language of Deleuze and Guattari, as *The Flame Alphabet* itself is a novel minor literature is at play. As they (2003) discussed in *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, sound “doesn’t act like a formal element; rather, it leads to an active disorganization of expression” (p. 28) here, as well. Sonorous material foregrounds intensity that destabilizes, decodes, and disfigures the oppressive character of language, and the stabilizing social systems. Expression, previously captured by a stabilizing or suppressive regime of signs, exceeds its

representative function as the linguistic expression is disorganized and loses its steadiness, and moves towards new understandings.

Despite its potential to destabilize the system, language in the novel is also instrumental in developing new forms of management and commodification of life in terms of quantification and computability. The introduction of low-tech, homemade biomedical and communicational equipment, data-gathering, testing and sampling processes of the linguistic material are all integrated into the flow of life and entangled with the interchanges between medical, informatic and economic networks. Therefore, new modes of understanding and circulation of life appear at the intersection of biology, digital technologies and economy. Discussing the politics and the poetics of language in the novel in relation to language's response to bioinformatic turn in "In Toxicating Languages of Bioinformatic Circulation: Poetics and Other 'Smallwork' in *The Flame Alphabet*", Shackelford (2016), explains how this biological and informational interests "facilitate the *biopolitical* quantification, management, regulation, and flexible articulation of what is, in fact, a 'political economy of subjects and bodies' (Thacker, 2006, p. 23)" (p. 152). Bioinformatic turn is marked by the interrelation between biology and informatics informed by the political and economic concerns as bioinformatics combines the informatic view of biology—statistics, data gathering—with the biological view of economic value—profit through the exchange of biological data and their digitization—(Thacker, 2006, p. 68; Shackelford, 2016, p. 152). Since life is constantly informed by and packed with informatics, biology and the digital technologies, even the reformulation of the dominant technics and practices might reproduce them at micro-scale, and in turn justify the existing modes of economic circulation and the politics of discrimination as a tool of power, as the novel suggests.

Foregrounding the (a)signifying, (bio)informational shifts in language exchanges and practices, this chapter assesses the possibilities of surpassing the established conceptions and practices of and through language by the employment of the “asignifying intensive utilization of language” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2003, p. 22), that is the abolishment of representation and linguistic designation from language, and also analyzes the bioinformatically-charged biopolitics’ participation in the domestic and the institutional life. In *The Flame Alphabet*, possibility of ethics appears within the network of forces that resist and dominate. The possibility of health is searched between the fissures of toxic language that cuts, interrupts and disturbs life. Since, the disease not only diagnosis the oppressing and controlling social order but also allows to set new connections with the world that will bend such an order. As Arslan (2020) states regarding ethics, only when “the direction of sense, approved, settled, and obvious, is erased”, “the landscape of ethics [can] come into sight” (p. 15) (see Appendix A, 1). Literature, as the novel manifests, renders the interruptions and suppressions in life visible by a concrete blockage that disrupts the usual, and the acknowledged flow of life, and therefore the possibility of another conception of the world becomes possible.

2.1 The physics and the chemistry of language

In *The Flame Alphabet*, a speech fever strikes the country, and language emerges as concrete, physical, chemical force. Rather than mediating communication, informing, or regulating; it constantly imbalances by “crush[ing]” (p. 4), “squeeze[ing] the chest and the hips”, “bend[ing]” (p. 5), leaving “dried out and saltless” (p. 16), causing “facial smallness, lethargy, a hardening under the tongue that defeated attempts at speech” (p. 52), hair loss, and difficulties in breathing. The

house of a Jewish family of three, the novel's narrator Sam, his wife Claire and their daughter Esther living in Rochester, New York, is also impacted by the disease as Esther posits a threat for both of her parents' health. Any letter Esther writes "looked like a fat molecule engorged on air, ready to burst", her vowels "defaced into animal drawings", her voice sounds with "a noxious mineral content" perhaps "can be frozen or crystallized" (p.11), her words feel "oily" (p. 39), and all of which physically disturb and wound her parents.

Another threat arises for the family when LeBov—a trained toxicologist who is specialized in "the toxic properties of language" (p. 109) and the director of the private research lab Forsythe⁶ publicizes that toxicity, "virus, menacing to the old" (p. 19), is "flowed from Jewish children" (p. 13). While fields and forests—any venue that could be roughly bounded by fencing—are assigned to the quarantine zones for children and health officials counsel seclusion, people leave the town, and Forsythe runs an "optional alleviation" program for children to be kept safe yet away from their parents. As time goes by, all modes of communication have become contagious as voice remains lethal them all. Continuing with their religious practices as Reconstructivist Jews in a small hut in the forest, Sam turns their home kitchen into a laboratory; cooks medicine, conducts a series of biochemical and linguistic experiments, and devices gadgets for protection and a possible treatment following the orders of their rabbi.

⁶ Lebov's name and his association with linguistics recall William Labov, the pioneer of variationist sociolinguistics linking the language change to social stratification. While Marcus seems to be influenced by Labov, especially by his employment of statistical analysis and quantitative methodology, it can be also noted that Labov's emphasis on the heterogeneity and the continuous and inherent variability of language also influenced Deleuze and Guattari as their reference to him in "The Postulates of Linguistics" of *A Thousand of Plateaus* indicates.

The toxic language in *The Flame Alphabet* is unrestrainable. It is anything but the language in conventional sense; that is the language “impos[ing] power relations through its grammatical and syntactic regularities, its lexical and semantic codes (...) in support of the dominant order” (Bouge, 2010, p. 170). According to Marcus, this conventional organization, which presumes that language is coherent and in balance only “encourage[s] a severely limited way of regarding the world and its properties,” as well as “determin[ing] what we consider rational” (1998, p. 25). As a Deleuzian kind of author knowing that “language is, in fact... a system by its nature far from equilibrium”, Marcus acknowledges that “language is constituted by all sorts of heterogeneous currents in disequilibrium with one another” (Deleuze, 2011, p. 99). That’s why, coherence, semantic integrity and lexical definitions are all undermined in Esther’s language. Her letters are molecular and her words are lubricant, since language is imagined as a chemical body of various relations of molecular bonding and parting. It is always materially present and belongs to here and now. Even the conjunction “like” relating anything Esther writes to “a fat molecule engorged on air” is not simply a metaphor. Rather, it is an expression of becoming in the sense that both Esther’s body and the technology of writing enter into a composition with a molecule. An unpredictable movement is enacted between different bodies as the coordinates of the bodies change. *Molecular*-body and *molecular*-writing mark a territorial shift in relation to unconventional organization of language by undermining the given definition and categories regarding human and non-human entities.⁷

⁷ As Deleuze and Guattari (2005) asserts in *A Thousand Plateaus*, “a micropolitics of perception, affection, conversation” (p. 213) is at play in molecular. Its fluid character destabilizes the stabilizing, controlling and the dominating state of molar practices and settings that constantly intersects. Molecular always marks a line of flight, and is transformative, since in it “there is always something

Instead of composing words and sentences to mean, understand, control or to regulate, language in the novel is disintegrated into its elements—words, letters, sound—by circumventing the linguistic order and its borders, and immediately acts on the body; “whispering”, “shouting” “scribbling”, they all have sickening affects (Marcus, 2012, p.11) beyond measure (p. 4). Any semantic destination is canceled, and sonorous quality of language becomes the very surface, in which meaning is arrested. There is no way of taking orders or acting upon a preconceived value or judgment, because language does not build up anything but a sequence of intensity run by asignifying, affect-driven sounds. Any utterance by Esther disturbs the soundscape of the house: a speech “designed not particularly to communicate but to alter the domestic acoustics” (p. 12). As the sound vibrates across space and among the bodies, it “crushes” or “bends”, and renders language into a series of *sonic disturbance*,⁸ which Deleuze and Guattari (2003) calls “asignifying intensive utilization of language” (p. 22) in their conceptualization of minor language drawing from Kafka’s writings in *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*. Language draws its line of flight from signification and hierarchies as it “stops being representative” (p. 23) and ceases to mean something. It doesn’t matter whether Esther sings love songs to her parents, or coos melodies of affection (Marcus, 2012, p. 20), language she speaks still hurts her parents no matter what. Language has already “move[d] towards its extremities or its limits” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2003, p. 23) by the equalization of

that flows or flees, that escapes the binary organizations, the resonance apparatus, and the overcoding machine: things that are attributed to a “change in values,” the youth, women, the mad, etc.” (p. 216).

⁸ I borrow the term from Ronald Bouge’s (2003) evaluation of Deleuze and Guattari’s discussion of minor language in *Deleuze and Literature*. Bouge employs the term to define Deleuze and Guattari’s citation and detection of “the strange asignifying sounds that recur” in Kafka’s diaries and writings (p. 103).

sound and action. Any sound she utters does not communicate or mean something, instead causes transformation in the bodies of her parents. Although it is stripped of its linguistic function and equipped with intensity, language still is not free from power relations and is always a marker of asymmetry, as its physical manifestation exposes in the novel; “the acoustically delivered word was simply violating” (Marcus, 2012, p. 226), or “half-words and astringent syllables (...) produced a low-grade menace” (p. 57).

Sound, however, also seems capable of setting a series of affect in motion at once. It resonates with us as it “invades”, “impels”, “drags”, “transpierces” us (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005, p. 348). And through this unsettling, corporeal act, sound increases one’s capacity to respond to the world, which surrounds her. All these actions expose that the bodies, “which are forces, nothing but forces” (Deleuze, 1997b, p. 139) that constantly interacts with the world, and remind that the body itself is attuned to more capacities to respond and act not by itself or as an obligation but through its connections. That’s why, the constant tension between the major language, “the power (*pouvoir*) of constants”, and the minor language, “the power (*puissance*) of variation” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005, p. 101), plays a vital role in the operation of the disease. Divergence from the linguistic material bypasses the order and signification. Language remains there not to represent or override a certain power but to flow and produce affect in its all ambiguity, instead. And, this residue becomes a marker of the established claim for power, as well.

Any time Esther “launche[s] a campaign of sonorous gibberish” (Marcus, 2012, p. 57) language moves towards the line of non-sense in terms of meaning and linguistic regularities, however, it also acts “in the direction of deterritorialization” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2003, p. 19)—an essential vector of minor language. Words

lose their sense because as Deleuze (1990, 1969) explains in *The Logic of Sense*, they lose their power “to draw together or to express an incorporeal effect distinct from the actions and passions of the body” (p. 87). Sense is lost because sound that constantly slips away from systematization and stabilization cannot be separated from a bodily action. When Esther opens up her mouth, what spills out of it cannot be defined as words anymore, but rather as “something that was causing a chemical disruption” (Marcus, 2012, p. 38).

While the sonorous quality and the capacity of the sound intensify the experience of the moment and resist a directed, formulated experience or any definitive meaning, children’s association with the threat and their responses exemplified by Esther carries a parallel resistance to the normalcy/normativity of the society. The capacity of children to unsettle the apparent world is efficiently explored in the novel as they keep introducing a “sense of fluidity and pliability to language” (Shackelford, 2016, p. 163) through their “oily” use of it. Children, described as “cluster” or “pack” —a concept characterized by Deleuze and Guattari (2005) in terms of the “impossibility of a fixed totalization or hierarchization” (p. 33)—address an impersonality that ruptures any signifying project. Emphasis on the “proximity”, “grade” or “frequency” of children’s language constantly draws a line of flight from a discussion of identity, and instead, foregrounds singularities according to Tynan (2012) that “captur[e] both personal and collective forces at once” (p. 153), and leads a series of *becoming* in the interstices of minorized language.

The “minor treatment of formal language” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005, p. 104) that opposes hegemonic use of language is specifically underlined by Esther’s contempt of any linguistic convention:

Esther abhorred all the functional vocal prompts one bleated in order to stabilize the basic encounters, to keep them from capsizing into awkward fits of milling and hovering. Hello and good-bye and thank you to strangers; good morning and how are you. These phrases were insane to her. She would pick the simplest rituals, the most basic behavior that people keep in their back pockets and whip out without a fuss, and wage dark war against them, scorning us mightily for caring about the exchange of niceties. (Marcus, 2012, p. 34)

She despises the simplest rituals repeated automatically or stock phrases without emotion or substance due to their stabilizing effects. Unlike adults like Sam who are comfortable with “hello” and “good-bye” as they allow to “enjoy other people in textbook abstraction, without the burden of intimacy” (p. 27), Esther couldn’t grasp the artificiality of these relations. Any conversation including stereotypes or formulas sounds as a threat for her as it might end up with the control of speech, thinking and action, and with disconnectedness. She scorns “the exchange of niceties” because she is aware that “niceties” obscure the asymmetry of language and the power imbalance between the speaking parties. Therefore, she refuses to comply with common courtesy as a resistance to subjugation. Similarly, a simple word like “sweetie”, presumably a reflection of love, is enough to nauseate Esther in its insincerity: “There’s a lie right there. You think that a generic endearment will somehow show how you feel toward me (...) How many people use that exact word to hide what they feel? It’s like you’re throwing up on me, actually. I feel like you just threw up on me” (p. 102). A “generic endearment” is simply a hollow signifier that narrows down the intensity of relation by trivializing it. However, Esther’s pulling it to the side of non-sense both unveils the pretentious of the established language practices, and paves the way of an affective encounter through the asignification of language. Although, sense as meaning gets lost, similar to what Colebrook (2002) asserts in her discussion of sense in Deleuze, the word’s

deterritorialisation produces another sense in terms of the transformation of the bodies (p. 60) here. Esther's reaction to language, her grasping of language as nausea accompany the sonorous power of the disease and show the dynamism of language and its being part of a physical, chemical process. The toxic language interferes with the world as it enhances a synesthetic vision and amplifies the intensity of the bodies at the expense of unsettling the major language, and thus the subjectivities language ascribes.

The discordance between the adult world embodying exploitative and normative practices of language and the toxic children who destabilize this language constantly challenges, and attempts to reformulate the existing world. As an unforeseeable and an unexpected force, child appears as a figure that rejects stepping in the world of adults. Rather, her power takes its force from the outside of language and of knowledge that organize and stratify the world, and she short-circuits the habitual flow of life. In the spirit of an *enfant terrible*, Esther interrupts and disturbs her parents' conception of the world made up of conventions, rituals and laws, and differentiates herself from the pattern of the family relations by refusing anything ritualistic or cliché. When Sam asks how she is after she turns back home, Esther immediately riots; "you can't tell that by looking at me?" (Marcus, 2012, p. 34). Since, she is there and they are face to face, this creates an immediacy that cannot be reduced to prescribed linguistic practices—"How are you?", "I am fine, and you?", "Fine." And, that's it. It is incomprehensible for Esther to ignore the materiality of relationship, and the responsibility of paying attention and acting accordingly. The use of language for merely "gathering information" (p. 34) is strongly opposed by Esther, because she is aware that what language does to enact and to convey relation of forces in the first place. The novel continuously reminds that the habitual and the

domestic exchanges of language are inseparable from such forces. Language is not something we simply make use of and communicate through but a force we are exposed to and affected, it is dynamic, collaborative and relational, therefore we are (respons)able to respond. In that sense, Deleuze and Guattari's (2005) assertion that "language is a political affair before it is an affair for linguistics" (p. 140) can be considered as one of the undercurrents in the novel.

According to Deleuze (2006) , relations of forces that determine affects are stabilized when they are integrated into a system (p. 75). Family, being an elementary system itself, plays a crucial role in the integration to and the functionality of a larger system, which works through the (re)production of functional and acceptable individuals. The notion of family is produced and run by certain laws and orders, which stabilize and stratify people according to certain identities and subjectivities for utilitarian purposes. The disease, however, disintegrates the system at multiple levels. Both the register of the sound and Esther's perception of language are there to problematize the given definition of the family, and reconfigure the social values and hierarchies in the domestic space. Appearing as an *event* that brings forces, relations, actions and affects together in unpredictable ways, language ruptures the structure of family relations, and overturns the representation of father, mother, and child figures. In similar to the fluidity of her voice, Esther refuses to be recognized in definitive ways. She objects to be framed into a certain group or to be categorized as something definite, and instead stretches linguistic and behavioral conventions into a line of variation.

Children's unique position, that is being outside the order of society yet, becomes noteworthy in the novel. Since, through her lack of experience, a child might draw adults to a point at which "everything one wants to count as important

loses its value, all identities, statues and titles are rendered useless” as Yücel (2012) claims in his discussion of child figure in cinema (p. 86) (see Appendix A, 2). In that sense, children become the critique of the order as their transgression of the law can render adults’ visual impairments towards the system visible in the narrative surface.

Esther resists any orientation towards certainty, and the accumulation of knowledge that can set a particular identity. That’s why, she strongly objects to them when her parents want to celebrate her birthday:

Esther wanted us to promise that we’d not talk about the birthday, not mention her age, absolutely not remark on how she’d grown up or changed or stayed the same, not reference what she was *supposedly like* as a baby, since *why would I want to know*, she’d asked, *what you think you used to think of me?* She claimed such a detail was an obscure statistic, a piece of information that *future corpses*—her phrase—stored in their bodies as a charm...“Even now,” she said. “It’s happening right now. Years from now you will have distorted this moment, which is an awful moment, into something nice, and you’ll badger me with that memory until I agree, which I’ll only do to make you stop talking. You are professional distorters, incapable of simply seeing a situation for what it is.” (p. 101-102) [*Italics in the novel*]

A rigid sense of time—time of being a baby or a grown-up—and a certain claim about self—you were like this and that—are both rejected by Esther as they form subjection at the expense of capacities and singularities. Firstly, she rejects being overcoded, that is to be totalized, integrated, hierarchized and finalized (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005, p. 41), in terms of her body, since although the body ages, ageing and growing are incorporeal transformations⁹ that insert themselves into the actions of the bodies (p. 81). Besides, she protests against the words and visions, which determine her agency and strictly draw the territories of her relation with the world. Evading preconceived ideas that can pass judgment and ascribe her a previously

⁹ Deleuze and Guattari (2005) conceptualizes “incorporeal transformations” in *A Thousand Plateaus* and discuss how the expression of statements and order-words in a society attributed to the bodies, that is language affects the bodies, actions and passions as in the example of an accused who transforms into a convict through the judge’s sentence (p. 80).

determined space to act, she refuses to be integrated into familial conventions. Esther's discomfort with her pointed childhood carries a close affinity with her discontent with the concept of memory. Talking about childhood from the perspective of adults (her age, her growing-up) establishes a linear connection between the two states, and marks childhood as merely a step for reaching to adulthood. The past is referred to as a piece of information to address a future direction; its knowledge can be known and uttered by adults only. Therefore, in its abstraction, the remembrance of the things past is "seen in hindsight from a future" and becomes "embedded in a controlled pattern of significance" as Deeds Ermarth (1992) states in her discussion of the past and subjectivity (p. 25). Memory appears "off-limits" for Esther since she is physically injured anytime she is asked to remember something she can no longer recall such as skating (Marcus, 2012, p. 102). Cherishing a self that is already gone is incomprehensible for her. It is equal to the "incapab[ility] of simply seeing a situation for what it is" (p. 102). Memory is limiting in the sense that it gives a sense of continuity, determines the coordinates of one's identity.

In *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari (2005) assert that "memories have always a reterritorializing function" (p. 294), namely that they invest in subordination and act in compliance with a given form or social expectations. Seeing the child as a site of potential for acting in variance, however, they bring about the notion of *becoming-child* "as opposed to the child we once were, whom we remember or phantasies, the molar child whose future is adult" (p. 294), and they associate becoming with anti-memory. Esther's insistence that memory is "off-limit" evokes a similar call. She resists orientation towards certainty, the accumulation of any knowledge or data that can set a constant subjectivity by the oppression of

varieties. In contrast to childhood memories' "virile majoritarian agency" (p. 293), Esther rules out any assumption or anticipation about herself by canceling the tyranny of such phrases like "you used to be..." and goes against to the linear, progressive idea of time by foregrounding immediate encounters, and the experience of the moment. A child is becoming who she is not by hearsay but action, in mobility. The hierarchical line between a child and an adult tends to be rendered indiscernible through Esther's resistance, since her actions cancels the roles of father and mother, and the established order between the worlds of adults and children.

While the toxicity of language creates a fluidity that can trouble the order of language by inscribing new capacities to the body in terms of action, that is the reconfiguration of familial and interpersonal relations, the novel addresses that language, as Bouge (2016) claims, is at the same time a "complex network of practices, institutions, tools and materials imbued with relation of forces" (p. 20) in DeleuzeGuattarian sense. Language, the building block of communication, a vital element that establishes life not only is disrupted in the novel, but also caught up in the traffic between life, language, informatics and computation. Language that realizes familial and social knowledge and subjectivities redirects the participation in life in terms of the quantification of the body and language. Toxic language in the novel, as Shackelford (2016) asserts, becomes instrumental to "biopolitical efforts to promote and maintain proscribed forms of familial and biomedical normativity on behalf of the social body's 'healthy' reproduction and labor" (p. 164). In the last chapter of the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, "Right of Death and Power of Life", Foucault (1978) refers to a power shift starting within the half of the 18th century when the transformation of the sovereign power that lets live and makes die has turned into another kind of political power, which is biopower, that focuses on

the maintenance of life and the proliferation of it instead. Biopower targets “the administration of bodies and the calculated management of life” (p. 140) through two basic forms that is the disciplining of the individual body, and the regulation of population. Achieving this, numerous techniques and norms concentrating on the body are determined during the 19th and 20th centuries, and thus, life and politics are beginning to be shaped by institutional and medical models. Despite Foucault’s imprecision about the terms, and their interchangeable use, it can be said that biopolitics, working on the terrain of biopower, refers to these strategies and techniques that address the bodies and life. When we talk about biopolitics today, it appears that these strategies and techniques increasingly merge with the advancements in technology and genetics. Discussing the biopolitics’ operations in 21st century, Rose (2007) claims that the investment over life “turn[s] individual and collective lives into information and knowledge,” and gives opportunity to “intervene” on them (p. 53). What we call power today not only “qualif[ies]... appraise[s], and hierarchize[s]” (Foucault, 1978, p. 144) but also quantifies, measures and optimizes. Rose explains that biopolitics turns its attention to *molecularization* of life, which is about visualizing life at the molecular level—nucleotide bases, transporter genes etc.¹⁰ He claims that this molecularization reorganizes “the gaze of the life sciences, their institutions, procedures, instruments, spaces of operation and forms of capitalization” (Rose, 2007, p. 44), so does the life surrounded by them.

¹⁰ According to Rose (2007), the current exercise of biopolitics, which is shaped in relation to technological and biological advancements, computational and quantifiable power of devices and profit-driven economic strategies follows a 4 other pathways with the *molecularization* of life, which are *optimization*—preservation of the optimal state for a best possible future, *subjectification*—reorganization of the relationship between individuals and medical authorities and people’s turning into somatic individuals—, *somatic expertise*—the new ways of managing one’s somatic existence—and *economies of vitality*—economization of human life and human value— (p. 6).

In a similar vein, the novel deploys a biopolitical frame extended in the light of bioinformatic and technoscientific changes. A series of domestic and institutional practices to lessen the effects of the disease or to find a cure are either in development or already at use. These attempts also manifest the intervention in life in order to manage it through its transformation into information and statistics. As life is “reconfigured through information and code” and found “in the social bodies of knowing and manipulating innovated life forms”, and “in the institutional bodies of governance”, “‘proper’ ways of living together” are recomposed today (Tamminen & Deibel, 2019, pp. 1-2). Although such a conception of life brings about new mobilities and circulations, the fact that it is expressed and promoted through totally functional and profit-driven terms; “through the language of utility and exchange value” (p. 2), what is defined as a good life or health becomes an obligation to maximize one’s capacity to function and to produce well. In the novel, sound, word, pulse are all data (Marcus, 2012, p. 46), life itself also turns into data, and becomes a component of software language and information technologies through a series of experiments conducted on the bodies in respect to its language capacities. The intricate relation between potentialities of language and its disabling mode is displayed through the operations on and of language that reconfigure domestic and social spaces, and relations. Toxic language puts into play the multidirectional flow between the body, technology and economics as it mobilizes a power to act as well as a power to be act upon.

2.2 A laboratory life

2.2.1 Domestic (micro)politics

In *The Flame Alphabet*, Sam organizes the domestic life around a series of devices and techniques, all of which are developed and/or used in order to cure the disease, if not, temporally soothe its effects. Over the course of the novel, the scope of Sam's role as an amateur scientist extends from the amateur experiments conducted in the kitchen-turned-lab in the house to inspecting and analyzing Esther's vocal patterns, and from scriptural work held in Foresythe's institutional laboratory to the invention of a letter that will abolish the disease. The life in the novel is indiscernibly entangled with technology and work as Sam's "occupying himself with unending stream of menial tasks" (Martin, 2017, p. 170) suggests. The novel—starting in the middle, as Sam and Claire prepare to run away from Esther—opens up with a glimpse of this entanglement, with a long sequence of technological equipment Sam huddles together in a hurry.

I stashed field glasses, sound abatement fabrics, and enough rolled foam to conceal two adults. On top of these I crammed a raw stash of anti-comprehension pills, a child's radio retrofitted as a toxicity screen, an unopened bit of gear called a Dräger Aerotest breathing kit, and my symptom charts.

This was the obvious equipment, medical gear I could use on the fly, from the car, at night. (...) My secondary supplies consisted of medical salts and a portable burner, a copper powder for phonic salting, plus some rubber bulbs and a bootful of felt. Eye masks and earplugs and the throat box that was functioning as the white noisery, to spew a barrier of hissing sound over me. Tucked into the outside pouch, for quick access, I placed a personal noise dosimeter, hacked to measure children's speech. I wanted to be able to hear them coming.

In my pocket I carried the facial calipers, even if by now finer measurements weren't required. You could perform the diagnostic just by looking. (Marcus, 2012, p. 3)

The inventory of gadgets and medical supplies, which shuffle the mundane and the technical, material and the body, and introduce a new vocabulary to everyday life,

intends to bring a temporary solution that will regulate or isolate the disease. It seems that materials directly act on the body, and techno-materiality and the biological materiality of the body are intertwined. The investment in technology changes the way we communicate, as it also “transforms the way we experience the world, our connection to it, and the place we inhabit in it” (Arslan, 2020, p. 35) (see Appendix A, 3). Personal striving for survival and health transform the body’s relations not only to itself but also to its surrounding as the mobilization of different kinds of materials—glass, fabric, foam, salt, cooper—and the becoming-apparatus of the body—earplug, throat box, eye masks—manifest. While the abundance and the meaninglessness of it erase the significance of the equipment, its asignifying qualities in terms of proximity, volume and intensity are foregrounded. Since, the existence and the commonality of the medical gears activate informational exchange and circulation related to the conditions of and the protection from the toxicity without providing any understanding of it but definitely by creating an affect in the life of the family.

Sam calls these “techniques to keep [one] alive, at large” (Marcus, 2012, p. 18) smallwork. Smallwork he deploys according to the instructions he receives at their synagogue hut in the forest, entails amateur experiments like cooking speculative medicine, boiling drugs, testing inhalers (p. 70), gathering blood, hair, saliva samples from Esther and Claire, repurposing of objects as in the case of the retrofitted radio as a toxicity screen or the utilization of aerosol monitor with data-logging, rearrangement of the house by installing certain gadgets like soundproof barrier and speech-blocking baffles (p. 60), and woodwork like building a speaker to the hut. Within the interrelated network of everyday life, science, and religion, Sam’s practice of health is not only informed by medical methods and technology but also

reformulates them by the act of domestication. Both technology and medical procedures are customized as they are domesticated. Sam's daily practice, his interventions in the family life recall Rose's conceptualization of *somatic individual*, that is the individualization of risk and management as individuals "who experience, articulate, judge, and act upon [themselves] in part in the language of biomedicine" (Rose, 2007, 26) take the responsibility of their own health. According to Rose, this act goes hand in hand with *somatic ethics*, which is related to the values that conduct life. Beginning with their nutritional care, Sam starts to develop the alternate modes of keeping the family moderately healthy; "We assessed our self-care and charted our intake. On principle we ate the better foods" (Marcus, 2012, p. 19). He initially applies a method to curtain the presence of Esther's sonorous attacks. What Sam terms as clouding refers "the strategic inattention one needed to practice around children" (p. 18). Soon, however, his methods are systematized as his instructed smallwork begins. The sermons are transmitted through an underground cable in the hut, and later begin to carry striking similarities with Lebov's take on the disease. They address Sam's somatic individuality by providing a guideline of methods and techniques for protection, and constantly encouraging him "to take matters into [his] own hands" (p. 18). Although Sam takes the responsibility of his own body, as well as that of the family and puts a personal effort at play by his homemade practices of testing, gathering, measuring and medicine, the novel unfolds that this do-it-yourself (DIY) mode of self-care is actually part of a larger network; a network that is composed of a religious community/profit-driven research lab in this particular case.

Health, in this sense, is never merely a matter of well-being but a question of entanglement in the novel. Sam is not only responsible to his family but to his religious community as well. However, the fact that responsibility requires

reciprocity is easily undermined when relations turn into relations of dominancy as responsibility switches into obligation. Health's appearing as a mode of production, and the living body's figuration through informatics bring a mode of life that reconfigures subjectivities and offers different ways of living. Sam's somatic individuality is a conclusion of the social and religious practice he inhabits as a husband/father and a Jew, and it is a part of a process of subjection and subjectivation, that is the integration to communal and religious spaces.

Since, there is no approved official treatment or cure for the toxicity, a transition from medical to homemade remedy models easily occurs. Sam himself appropriates not only the methods of official medical practices but also their language. He mobilizes the kitchen equipment—kitchen counter, furnace, mortar—and repurposes the kitchen as lab, where he conducts “ambient air quality tests”, examines “sediment s of speech” (p. 54), prepares tonics, blends “anti-inflammatory tablets” and “atomized powder”, mills “an arsenal of water-charged vitamins” (p. 71). He talks about applying “the standard collection of protocol for poisoning, testing”, or writing “prescribed escapes from the home” (p. 55) for Claire and himself. At a time when “the medical tests, when [people] sought counsel, c[ome] back clear, the numbers low and dull” (p. 15), and it is impossible to get any insight from medical authorities as “the doctors shoo [patients] out” (p. 15) and “experts [has] been demoted”, “eager amateurs” (p. 146) like Sam, who has been advised to take matters into their own hands frequently, take the stage. In a novel, which is about work as much as the disease (Martin, 2017, p. 170), solutions and treatment is customized in both senses; it is personalized, becomes an “habitual practice” as the old French derivation *costume* from Latin *consuetudo* “habit, usage, way, practice, tradition, familiarity,” (Online Etymology Dictionary, n.d.) suggests; and it is also

capitalized, as the word customer from Medieval Latin *custumarius* "a toll-gatherer" (Online Etymology Dictionary, n.d.) implies.

Sam's flexible labor, which marks his active participation in work, and engages in the inventions of new technologies and the mobilization of the existing ones, redirects the function and capacities of space and objects, and mutually affects and transforms the relations in the family. Sam's medical efforts—an unpaid, emotionally-invested labor involving entrepreneurship—promulgate a form of *immaterial labor*. As it is theorized and discussed by Lazzarato, Negri and Hardt in relation to capitalist economy, immaterial labor creates "knowledge, information, communication, a relationship, or an emotional response" (Hardt & Negri, 2004, p. 108). "Immersing in the corporeal, the somatic" (Hardt, 1999, p. 96) Sam's practice, that is the language-oriented, data operations concentrating on the informational content of the bodies possess the family life. He produces unfinished and unconventional products, which are constantly modified, works through subversion of established practices by hacking and domesticating, none of which are proper to be incorporated to the capital in circulation. In Sam's eyes, Esther turns into almost a data, which can be measured, calculated. Sam makes her recite foreign words, numbers, letters, takes samples from her speech both recorded and written; keeps a "language archive" of his daughter "singing, laughing, yelling, whispering, arguing, speaking, making up words", and packs everything in a folio bag (Marcus, 2012, p. 4) to study them when it is necessary. This is a vital part of the smallwork Sam occupies himself with. He does not only engineer a home system but also documents it. During his attempts to keep the family life in balance and mildly toxic, Esther becomes a "pure, scientific ambition" (p. 20) for Sam. This applies to Claire as well. Sam begins to see her as a test subject and does not hesitate to make her try his

homemade drugs or examine her bodily changes with a lamp on his hand. Insistence on the knowledge of the incomprehensible generates techniques and strategies of dealing; yet, the desire to know and to have power to overcome discloses the implicit violence of such an act as well. Engaging in informatics mediated by sermons in the hut and technology at home, Sam tries to obtain necessary information to prevent or soothe the disease, and in the meantime, becomes both the manufacturer and the user of statistics. These personal, domestic attempts deterritorialize the official and established practices of knowledge and power. However, his treatment to his family, and the impact of the transmission in the hut and his later actions at the Foresythe simultaneously introduce the possibility of reterritorialization. Despite the Jewish guidance, Sam improvises most of his work, devices unofficial techniques of calculation, computation and testing without a rational decision-making process, however, he never figures out how to interpret “the opacity of the vast data he amasses” (Martin, 2017, p. 173). Any attempt to convert sound into data—an asignfying source—in order to make sense and to take the control of the disease is backfired, since the implicit asignificance, indeterminacy of the disease allow neither to control or to grasp but only to relate, and to affect and be affected. Therefore, not knowing how to identify or to negotiate the data he gathers constantly unsettles Sam. His practice’s obscurity in terms of meaning, and its exceeding representational order bring about new potentials of conceiving the bodies and relations. Digital, asignfying language of power undercuts the existence of a centralized figure, and instead, power becomes a series of relations that affects the capacities to be, to act, and to endure.

Echoing what the toxicity creates in the first place, that is the asignfying use of language through the disintegration of the given, formulaic language into a sonic entity, Sam’s unofficial, data-driven operations open up the indeterminate capacities

of the body, which is the nexus of relations of power and knowledge. Labor, which addresses language and the body, has an impact on both the exercise of power—relations of domination and resistance—and the production of subjectivity. Being contemporaneous with the age of informatics and digitalization, the novel reflects the confusion of living in the age of an intense entanglement between bodies, information and technology, and thinking beyond the signifying realm and social subjectivities. In relation to this, the novel draws a more fluid form of subjectivity in the sense that data-based and statistical operations are all part of an asignifying flow people also becomes a component part. Information does not mean or represent anything, but instead generates a series of actions over others' actions. As informatics concerns people as inputs and outputs there are no distinction between the radio transmissions in the hut and the speech of Esther or Claire's bodily reactions to toxicity, as well as Sam's efforts, which is a combination of a series of samples, data and statistics. Human body is increasingly shaped and determined by its connections with other bodies (informatics, technology). This deterritorialized flow that cancels out the given codes and definitions related to the bodies and social positions introduces a new mode of subjectivity, which works through affects, asignificant components and a series of operations. Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari's discussion on the production of the capitalist mode of subjectivity, Lazzarato (2014) defines such a subjectivity escaping hierarchical social relations as *machinic enslavement*.¹¹ In this mode of subjectivity, human subjectivity is

¹¹ Unlike the word of machine and enslavement suggests in the first place, *machinic enslavement* neither simply objectifies nor oppress, instead, it potentially disintegrates the settled forms of subjectivity and the relations of subordination. Deleuze and Guattari assert that *machinic enslavement* "integrates human activity and information technologies in order to produce an augmentation of deterritorialized flows of value" (Bueno, 2017, p. 752).

assembled with machinic subjectivity and people are considered as a cog in the machine, so there is no distinction or binary opposition between human and nonhuman or subject and object. People are not individuals but dividuals, that is they don't belong to molar level—certain classes or social roles— as in the *social subjection* but instead they are a component part of mechanical, technological, social assemblages, since mechanical enslavement operates at the level of affections, percepts, desires and asignifying signs. Sam's practice combines both of these subjectivities test one's capacities to act. Since, he is both the consumer, producer of certain mechanisms and social formations, and also a constituent of these mechanisms. The novel, however, never chooses a side between the oppressive mechanisms and social subjection, and mechanic enslavement, yet still, manages to mark the tension between the two and also their inseparableness as Sam's homemade medical work and his labor in Forsythe suggests.

2.2.2 Institutional (macro)politics

As Esther becomes a growing threat for their health, Sam and Claire decide to escape from home, however fall apart at the beginning of their run, and Sam finds himself at the autonomous biomedical lab Forsythe as being a part of the drug trials and the human experiments to find an antidote. “Endless supply of test subjects” (Kum, p. 214), named as volunteer or language martyr (p. 164) as Sam calls them appear in Forsythe. Since, making people believe in things is an “elementary strategy control” (p. 215) in Forsythe, people soon or later find their way there and participate in

experiments either to get back to their families with a cure or to find their children there or to get something that will be useful for them as in the case of drug addicts. Children photos showing their well-being are circulated as currency to convince parents to stay in Forsythe and follow the orders given to them. Economization of life infiltrates into the air surrounding the institution in every sense. In the facility divided into two wings, recovery and research, everyone is kept under surveillance, yet researchers are paid a lot of attention as their appetites—how they eat, rest, entertain—are constantly regulated to keep them healthy (p. 173). It becomes clear later in the novel that Lebov who spreads misinformation about the source of language toxicity in the first place, also hacks the radio transmission in the hut, and redirects and manipulates the Jewish teachings for drawing people to his institution for economic interests and power. Lebov's ultimate aim is to develop a vaccine called "child's play" by extracting blood from children in order to immunize himself and the people who are privilege enough to pay. Sam strongly disagrees with this desire, however at the end he yields to it due to its soothing effects on the body, which allows him to hear things without getting sick.

As Lebov's intrusion to Sam's life results in his arrival to Forsythe, Sam spends some time in the recovery wing after his arrival first, and then is transferred into research wing. When he starts to work in the research wing, he encounters a different kind of smallwork there. In the office, Sam's technical and medical shift is altered into a scriptural shift. Instead of medical equipment or "the raw materials for a chemical kit" he occupies himself at home, he finds "paper and makings of a lettering kit", various kinds of pens and inks, and "a scroll of self-disgusting paper that allow[s] [one] to see only the script character [one] presently read[s]" (p. 166) in the office. While the act of reading is broken "into its smallest parts, keeping

understanding at bay” (p. 166) through every gadget in the room, the act of writing, the vital element of language that is the letters are transformed into the subjects of experiment as well. Taking the resources in the office as a cue, Sam experiments with alphabet, with the way it is produced and distributed. It can be suggested that Sam’s sonorous encounters in in the house, asignfying sound’s bodily impacts form the basis of his experimentation with the alphabet. At this point, not only his shift transforms but also the idea of work replaced with the idea of process through his labor. He works through letters, blends them, designs scripts, plays with the saturation of types, tries out different background and surfaces through papers “baked, bleached, soaked in lye”, or made of cotton, linen, wool (p. 170), recreates historical texts via encrypting letters in order to see if concealment could reduce the toxicity (p. 184); overall he distorts the established sense of alphabet. Alphabet, a system that regulates the relations not only between people but also between people, reading and writing technologies and language is opened to different senses and affects through this interaction; an alphabet not to see or hear only but to touch, to smell as well. Through its continuous recreation and rearrangement at the intersection of different agencies, alphabet ceases to be static or standardized. Instead, its force and the relations of power it involves; that is the ways in which, knowledge and information made (in)visible, circulated manipulated or rendered manageable become the issues surrounding Sam’s efforts on alphabet. This long gesture towards the conceptualization of alphabet in the novel reminds that alphabetization that “is the expression of spoken sounds in consistent graphic form, a primary mode of understanding and rendering speech in quantifiable terms within natural languages” (Shackleford, 2016, p. 164) and also naturalizing writing, itself is not really natural as it easily considered but a technology we engineer with specific

rules and guidelines that will stratify, homogenize. In that sense, attempting to design an alphabet as a cure reveals how alphabet is a part of the pedagogic project of the society that will create healthy, productive and functional individuals.

In the novel, language constantly breaks up with its linguistic conventions and the representative qualities as it goes beyond language by being an incorporeal, asignifying force. The novel's emphasis on informatics and its relation to bodies prioritize innumerable cooperation and ongoing exchanges between different bodies, materials, technologies, and communities. In an age, even the biological existence is attached into informatics and digitized, how to respond to and get a response from our surrounding, and how to relate to ourselves and to the world become vital questions, the novel attempts to explore. Especially emphasis on the sonority of language, and the nonhuman, nonsubject centered encounters and practices that change the scope of labor open up the possibilities of multiplying connections and gaining new capacities to act and to respond, however these possibilities are never openly favored as the novel recognizes that every deterritorialization requires a (re)territorialization to exist and to resist.

CHAPTER 3

SICAK KAFA

In the first essay of *Essays Critical and Clinical*, “Life and Literature”, Deleuze (1997a) asks, “what health would be sufficient to liberate life wherever it is imprisoned by and within man?” (p. 3). His answer, which traverses the rest of the book concentrates on delicate health—illness—that activates the invention of new visions and connections through literature. Since, decomposition or destruction of major language, reconfiguration of senses and experiences in writing are able to capture a possibility of life people are unable to discover in the daily course of their lives due to physical, social, and political constraints or obligations.

Afşin Kum’s *Sıcak Kafa*, a novel in which a mimetic language disease called *abuklama* spreads around the world shares a close affinity with Deleuze’s approach to literature.¹² Language in the novel, similar to the toxic language in *The Flame Alphabet*, ceases to communicate or create chain of command, and instead, directly addresses the bodies and transmits affects and intensities between them. People who are contracted to *abuklama*, namely *abuks*, speak grammatically correct, yet semantically senseless ways, and quickly transmit the same speech manner to anyone who listens them. *Abuklama*’s departure from signifying, meaningful language puts

¹² According to Deleuze (1997a), “delicate health”, a vital component of *enterprise of health*, goes beyond the physical and biological good health of writer and stems from what “[s]he has seen and heard of things too big for [her], too strong for [her], suffocating things whose passage exhausts [her]” (p. 3). Literary product is inseparably attached to the age and the social milieu it is written. In that sense, it is significant that Kum’s novel is published only five months after OHAL (the state of emergency) is declared in Turkey in 2016. Although in an interview, Kum states that the idea of the disease came from a much earlier time—from the zombie movies he watched—, and the novel is introduced by its publisher as science fiction, *Sıcak Kafa*’s relation to the current realities of the country cannot be overlooked. It should be noted that within the two years Kum has finished his novel, Turkey witnessed the several cases of the violation of freedom of speech and protests, as well as the event like the early elections and the presidential election, Soma Disaster, 2016 Turkish coup d’état attempt, and of course post-Gezi protests.

language into variation of affects and forces and offers another engagement with language outside its rules and structure. Also, *abuks* copy each other's gestures and actions in such a way that once an *abuk* takes an action, suddenly a group of people starts to mime the same ungraspable action. The unpredictable scope of the body's activities and its dynamism brings about new capacities to act. Within the deficiency of knowledge regarding the disease, it is speculated that the duration of contamination of *abuklama* is 6 minutes—this information is found so fashionable and even influences a discussion program of the same name— however no one really knows how *abuklama* has emerged in the first place and under what conditions it can be controlled and stopped. One thing that is clear about the disease is its contagiousness. *Abuklama* communicates from body to body by direct or meditative contact, as the medical use of the word contagion suggests (Lerup, 2016, p. 1).¹³ Therefore, the uncontrollability and the relational nature of the disease mark it as a threat for the social order. In a society health is conflated with norm and productivity, destabilizing impact of language and unforeseen activities of the bodies prevent the order from functioning properly. Addressing the worldwide cases as well, the novel particularly focuses on the disease's repercussions in Istanbul where the state declares a state of emergency. The state organizes an isolating and passive life for its citizens enclosed by a controlling body of rules through its executive organ SMK¹⁴ (Salgınla Mücade Kurumu - The Epidemic Management Committee).

¹³ Not only face-to-face contacts but also a speech mediated through TV can trigger the disease. In the novel, the president of North Korea who immediately shuts down the country after the first *abuklama* news, however when he decides to address to the nation on *abuklama*, he transmits the disease to whole country since curiosity get the better of him and while following every coverage about *abuklama* he contracted to it himself just before the speech.

¹⁴ Establishing as a healthcare organization in the attempt of preventing the spread of the disease and finding a cure, SMK turns into an authority figure whose power is unquestionable in the current order. The committee does not hold accountable for any of its actions. Neither police not the military can intervene its activities.

ARDS (Acquired Reasoning Deficiency Syndrome), colloquially known as *abuklama*, is held responsible for the state of emergency, and consequently for the quarantine zones and the strict security measures. In the city, under the watch and the domination of SMK, an out-of-touch, out-of-contact publicity is promulgated. Every thought and action is preset, if not, is closely watched. People are advised to wear headphones and avoid eye contact in public, and they are asked to stay away from “the things that promote the mind to work in unexpected ways” (p. 19) (see Appendix B, 1) such as reading. Various living spaces other than “the gated communities and offices, the shopping malls, and the network of metro and highway that connects them together” (p. 47) (see Appendix B, 2) are abandoned by the authorities, as they have no significant contribution to economic circulation. Although the TV gives the impression that life goes on all the same in the large part of the city, what is implied here is the functionality of the places that can sustain money exchange merely. Since one can easily fulfill the need of consumption contact-free, via magnetic cards and barcodes only; “there is nothing to worry as long as goods are delivered to the supermarkets” (p. 47) (see Appendix B, 3). Public spaces permitting different encounters like parks and squares, on the other hand, are already left to their own fates. Even cats are rounded up on the grounds as “they trigger small talks among strangers” (p. 117) (see Appendix B, 4). This environment in which “the people are afraid of talking to each other” (p. 11) (see Appendix B, 5) keeps them under constantly under control by limiting their interactions and almost banning their right to speak. The disease interrupts life as *abuklama* threatens the biological and physical integrity of bodies, however, the real threat in the novel is presented as the oppressing social order, since what suspense life is appeared to be the demarcating power mechanisms in the first place.

In that sense, the interruption of *abuklama* gives literature the opportunity of pondering upon an ethical life, and thus being an *enterprise of health*. In the novel, the promise of health is not about *abuks*' getting better and everything's going back to its usual order. Rather, projecting a Deleuzian sense of health, the novel tends to reveal the new capacities of relating to the world, which can be considered as a health of *becoming*. The disease allows talking about such *becomings* "dominant and substantial health would render impossible" (Deleuze, 1997, p. 3). While dominant and substantial health refers to the field of experience those who are in power define and categorize, the notion of disease as interruption gives the opportunity of "regenerating the experience" (Massumi, 2015, p. 129) as one's own. The destabilization of the conventional language through semantic irregularities reconfigures the body and its relations, and opens onto the new possibilities of engaging with the world under different rhythms and intensities.

In line with Deleuze's conception of literature *Sıcak Kafa* enables a consideration of ethics—the possibility of a life—through its experimentation with language, and with the encounters this language provides. This chapter discusses the control regime and techniques of the arbitrary decision mechanism (SMK), and its non-proportional coercive power that dominates and suppresses one's capacity to act first, and then analyzes the ways in which *abuklama* draws a line of resistance to map new relations and connections by the affective, asemantic use of language.

3.1 A symptomatological pursuit of health

Abuklama uncovers how the current order captures one's experience by precluding the encounters that will increase or decrease one's capacity to act, and thus, reveals the interrupted rhythm of life possessed by the coercive power of SMK. This

revelatory aspect of the disease allows us to discern between power relations and the possible flows of life as it diagnoses the symptoms. Since life “indicates new possibilities, and it continuous, only when it is hardened and digresses from its substantial form” (Karadağ, 2016, p. 67) (see Appendix C, 1).

From the very beginning, we witness how the limits and the measures of the bodily mobility are determined by the state power. SMK warns the citizens by stating, “if you’re outside, you have to be inside a vehicle. If you’re out and walking, you have to move fast towards your target. You can’t go for a walk around here” (Kum, 2016, pp. 9-10) (see Appendix B, 6). Although it is unclear “whether *abuks* can drive motor vehicles or not”, the contribution to economy renders drivers and their relatives free from *abuklama* charges. Walking, on the other hand, is an economically inadequate activity; therefore it has to be regulated. Unlike driving, one is required to justify herself while walking. The conditions of quite a daily experience—what kind of gesture one needs to adopt while walking—are predetermined through a set of instructions; if you walk you have to move fast, you cannot hesitate or pause. The changing rhythms of the bodies are reduced to a single rhythm as it is homogenized. The order marks the street as a space of regulation by intervening the capacity of movement. This is crucial, because walking is one of the simplest ways of interaction with the surrounding. Through the actions of the feet responding to the texture of the ground, sight and sound, or to another being—through a series of affects, that is to say—one recognizes oneself and its environment, and thus transforms oneself or is transformed accordingly. However, organizing and directing the body according to certain rules and a limited set of movements produce only passive momentums, and decrease one’s capacity to respond and to act.

In the novel, the disease becomes a concrete and a somatic force. The state, on the other hand, oppresses the possibilities of this material force by defining two binary experiences—that of *abuks* and *non-abuks*—and establishing this distinction as given. Defining the body, health and the acceptable citizen, the state takes its power from this binary. In order to keep its power intact, it refuses the experiences outside its own frame and the capacities can be awakened through different affections. Instead, it attempts to regulate the encounters that will activate such experience: “Control your curiosity, don’t listen. Don’t pay attention. Don’t take any risks. Even in the tiniest doubt, let the authorities know. After their evaluation, everything will be clarified, anyway” (p. 14) (see Appendix B, 7). However, it is not true. Since neither a person nor an institution including SMK wants to communicate with someone as long as to be able to diagnose *abuklama* at the expense of their health. Besides, SMK is not obliged to explain anything to the citizens, who notify them about the *abuk* threat, and even more, is authorized to put any person who is considered to be an *abuk* to quarantine zones without any clarification. Under this obscurity, SMK keeps the threat constantly visible. However, in order to render its dominance active and perpetual, SMK also has to create the sense that they are fighting the disease and it is indeed surmountable. The new state order is empowered by the very threat it is supposed to suppress. The state inflicts hope and simultaneously keeps the epidemic threat alive, so the system can produce the sources it will exploit. The state cannot accept the termination of the danger, because its sole power is tied to that; “a government, which makes security its highest priority against a great threat, is open to use all its apparatuses to prevent the questioning of its power, and hence to corruption in the most general sense” (p. 93) (see Appendix B, 8). As Baker (2011) expresses in “Spinoza Kitabı: Ethica'nın Sırrı” [“Spinoza

Book: The Secret of Ethics”], neither the absolute fear nor the absolute hope makes a state endurable; the working formula is the mixture of cravings and emotions. Any state power can exist only through stirring affections in the body (Baker, 2011, p. 67) (see Appendix C, 2). That’s why, in the TV programs and the news that the state has taken important steps and *abuklama* will be taken under control soon. Although this information barely coincides with the actual course of events, it is a working strategy to keep the citizens in confusion between fear and hope, so they can easily be overpowered.

Pursuing its own perpetuity, the state interferes in and infiltrates into the daily life of its citizens through the precautions and laws. The tools of security are used to prevent people from questioning the position of the authority. This organization disenables people and leaves them uninformed because they are conditioned to act in obedience on the basis of effects injected by SMK, instead of gaining knowledge through their own experiences. The law in the novel bears similarities with the law Deleuze (1988) criticizes in *Practical Philosophy*, that is the law “does not provide us with any knowledge...At worst, prevents the formation of knowledge. At best, it prepares for knowledge and makes it possible” (p. 24). Knowledge corresponds, here, not to experience but to a chain of command. People experience a passivity that prevents them from attaining active affections. The existence of SMK carries the society into a system of judgment; both in the domain of law enforcing the law in the name of security and also in the social domain, which inflicts moralizing attitudes on its subjects. In an environment, nobody, including the authorities, has the adequate knowledge on the disease; several people are forced to act according to the consequences the current order imposes on them. Since, morality marginalizes the bodies’ actions, and makes people doubt each other and estranged them from life. In

the novel, a subjectivity composed of judgments is established, as well as a passive, vulnerable, and a monotonous life.

The novel's protagonist Murat Siyavuş leads such a life. While working in a team searching for the cure of *abuklama*, he contracts the disease. Yet, somehow, he gets well. Worrying that SMK might imprison him, and subject him to experiments in order to understand the reasons behind his healing, Murat hides from the committee. He secludes himself in his mother's flat in a gated community and spends his days on a passive mode—lying on the couch and watching TV. He sees almost no one unless he has to. Sharing the same house, he is even disconnected with his mother. Murat explains that everyone including himself continues to live the cowed and the passive life SMK forces upon them because they don't have power for anything except staying alive: "We want to believe that some people have a grasp of things and take care of the issue because we don't have power to be concerned with anything but ourselves" (p. 15) (see Appendix B, 9).¹⁵ Taking its strength from the powerlessness of people—their incapacity of acting and changing—SMK justifies its actions over people, and passes these actions as the law. Here, the power establishes itself, in terms of the modern state power Baker (2011) depicts, by "translat[ing] the bodies' true capacities to act into an arbitrary language of authority" (p. 40) (see Appendix C, 3). The authority legitimizes its actions and language via the promise of overcoming the disease; the information regarding the citizens' health, which is "everything is for the public and on behalf of them" is popularized among people

¹⁵ Another epitome of this self-centric life, in the novel, is Murat's scientist friend Özgür. Although he claims that he is experimenting with drugs to find a treatment, he is actually working on a mixture that will replace pain with pleasure to make money out of it. People comply with the current conditions as long as they are able to sustain their lives one way or another. In the novel, it becomes an open-ended question whether "what matters is merely staying alive as long as possible", or not? (p. 134) (see Appendix B, 10).

through media. The state brings all the TV channels together under the same roof. They are all located in the same campus—a pandemic-free zone—no one is allowed to leave. A counter-quarantine space is created, in which health is taken under quarantine. The news is distributed through indirect sources (television news helicopters) and people who are supposed to transmit the true and objective news are nothing but a bunch of puppets in the hands of the state. The substitution between the realities of TV and the daily life confuses people because TV creates a simulation of life through the lens of the state. Murat voices this confusion by stating “I can’t separate the life on TV from the real one” (p. 62) (see Appendix B, 11). Therefore, when TV says that life flows at its normal pace outside the quarantine zones, this only feeds the false hope. Because in reality, the outside is full of ambulances, police sirens and people who are waiting or preparing for a riot. This confusion alienates people from their own experiences and diminishes their power of acting. Inexperience and the exposition to passive affects, which spring from the lack of knowledge about the events drag people into a kind of “sadness” that is diminution of one’s power of acting according to Spinoza (Deleuze, 1978). This disconnection with life makes submission to the authority easier. Since the bodies cannot find the opportunity to connect to the world and to respond it, they easily lend themselves to oppressive power.

The state of emergency legitimizes this order that saddens people as it narrows the body’s movements and its space of mobility throughout the country. As Agamben (2002) asserts a state of emergency marks the "point of disequilibrium between public law and political fact". Similarly, in the novel, the state of emergency manifests the conflict between the authority’s desire of permanence and the sustainability of the public life through the spreading of the disease. According to

Agamben (2002) “the state of emergency tends more and more to present itself as the dominant paradigm of government in contemporary politics”, which is a notion that is quite similar to *Sıcak Kafa*. In the novel, SMK designates its own legal system, and the so-called temporary order gradually turns into a way of life. While the biopolitical mechanisms that define the body in terms of norms and productivity optimize and govern life in the name of security, biopolitical notion of “the administration of life” becomes to be associated with the explicit right over death in the novel. Murat listens to a discussion program on TV. A congressman from Movement Party talks about how to deal with *abuk* people as Siyavuş simultaneously responds to the congressman’s speech:

“Why do we separate the large territories of our cities as quarantine zone, and feed the disease, indeed, by taking food to those places?” Yes, that’s right, why? “This disease is a calamity brought into our nation.” Yes, that’s true, but not only our nation. “We cannot appeal to medical research anymore. We can go nowhere with humanist approaches.” I couldn’t agree more. “They have no use but to satisfy our enemies.” Can’t say that I give credit to this “our enemies” rubbish but, if he says so, I won’t offend my congressman with this. “I travel everywhere around Anatolia, talk to our people, and they say ‘my mother is also sick, and my brother, my son, but for the salvation of the nation, let them be sacrificed.’” Then, the question [of the host] follows: “So, you say let exterminate all the patients?” “No, I don’t say such a thing,” he says but that’s what he means actually. (Kum, 2016, p. 21) (see Appendix B, 12).

The authorities extend their right over life by defining the acceptable body, which can be easily controlled and suppressed. Through the discourse of “the continuity of the nation/state” and they make citizenship an issue of health. It is suggested that *abuks* be exterminated, because they cannot be assimilated or integrated into the society as functional citizens with their uncontrollable language and the unforeseeable affects their bodies produce. According to the state’s discourse, the disease deterritorializes the notion of being a citizen, even more of being alive. Since ill people are constantly ignored, their identity is rendered non-identity; non-citizen,

non-human, so they are considered as one body, which is always disposable. In that sense, they remind Agamben's *homo sacer*, who is reduced to "bare life" and can be killed with impunity according to Roman law. Bare life (*zoe*) is included to the politics by its exclusion, which also determines the lines and the borders of the policy SMK adopts. The quarantine zones, as in Agamben's example of camps, mark the spatial distribution of politics; these are the zones of disintegration and the suspension of space, time and the law (Yardımcı, 2012) (see Appendix C, 4).

People are constantly under the threat of being sent to quarantine zones; SMK has the right to keep any people under surveillance for an indefinite time and this can easily turn into imprisonment in a quarantine zones. The committee can lock people up to rehabilitation centers, however, those places are not different than quarantine zones either. As the time goes by, disposability in the quarantine zones begins to spread throughout the city. Similarly to the camp being "the space that is opened when the state of exception begins to become the rule" (Agamben, 1998, p. 167), the quarantine zones become widespread as the laws and regulations are tightened. Since, no one wants to get in touch with an *abuk*, it becomes possible for several non-*abuk* to be mistaken with *abuks*, and being left in quarantine zones. This so-called temporary situation—exceptional suspension of life—leads to a permanent way of life, as the bodies of citizens "[are] caught up in a system of constraints and privations, obligations and prohibitions" (Foucault, 1995, p. 11). Through the perpetual state of suppression and passivity, exception becomes the norm. The people in the quarantine zones marked as the owners of bare life "whom all men act as sovereigns" (Agamben, 1998, p. 82). The language of the congressman unveils the mechanics that organize society. Throughout the novel, similar thoughts circulate around the public, informed by the codes of state and military; people talk of letting

abuks to destroy each other (Kum, 2016, p. 115), take military precautions, or form *abuk* demolition teams (p. 168). Biopolitics' formulation of "in order to guarantee life suppressing some life" (Foucault, 2003, p. 253) echoes among people, and the major oppressive power relation easily replicates itself in different scales, and thus sustains its coercive power.

Surrounded by such an environment, Murat becomes one of those sovereign figures as he thinks about the proposal of the "final solution" of the congressman. He considers that in a world where communication does not exist, some lives can be indeed dispensable, and does not see any harm in the extermination of *abuks*. Rather than thinking about the real reasons of the confinement of the society, and possible ways of communication, he internalizes the authorities' words and law. The order that imprisons him also convinces him that he can protect his own life only by the disposability of some other lives.

3.2 The possibility of a life in the lines of resistance

The novel, however, sees a life underneath this expendability. *Abuklama* dissolves given(ness of) relations, frees language from the structure and significations by revitalizing it in a more fluid way. Unlike the popular view in public, *abuks* communicate, and even more, their communication highlights new ways of engaging with the world. *Abuks* are capable of unleashing an unseen relation of forces and blending the existing ones differently. The narrative, first, probes the possibility of a life by diagnosing the symptoms of a world that the relationships of dominancy shapes and prescribes. The diagnosis implies that the existing order cannot be maintained as it is, and this act simultaneously paves the way for positioning the disease as a possibility that will bring the ethical intervention.

Discussing the power of speech act in *A Thousand Plateaus*' fourth plateau "Postulates of Linguistics", Deleuze and Guattari (2005, 1987) coin the expression of "incorporeal transformation" drawing upon Austin's "performative utterances". According to Deleuze and Guattari who see language first and foremost as a social act, expressions transform bodies socially and positionally. As they remark "the atypical expression constitutes a cutting edge of deterritorialization of language" (p. 99). Therefore, language and body extend beyond their given limits. In that sense, the language of *abuklama* proposes a different way of connecting with the world as it makes the dominant language dictated by the authorities *delirious* [*delirer*]. The encounters with *abuks*, and the encounters the disease make possible, allow the experience previously monopolized by SMK to be regenerated and shared.

In *Essays Critical and Clinical*, Deleuze (1997) discusses that any delirium¹⁶ that creates a claim in regard to "pure and dominant" is a disease, while it becomes "the measure of health" when undermines dominations, and "resist[s] everything that crushes and imprisons" (p. 4). As the language in the novel stammers and destabilizes the habitual use of language, it disrupts the existing relations of domination, and illustrate that another way of relating to surrounding is possible. That's why, delirium not only reveals the power mechanisms, but also offers practices that will resist such mechanisms. It is in delirium literature finds the ultimate aim that is "to set free th[e] creation of a health or th[e] invention of a people, that is, a possibility of life" (p. 4). Delirium provides a life because it creates alternative modes of existence. That's why, instead of talking "the" people, who are

¹⁶ The word "delirium" in Deleuze's philosophy is translated into Turkish as "sabuklama", which is used interchangeably with "abuklama".

separate or significant individuals, Deleuze (2008) maps out the possibilities of multiple life by bringing the indefinite “a” to the fore. Delirium leads to a depersonalization as it opens new ways of feeling, thinking, and acting. The process of becoming is “stripped of the confining specificity of definite article *the*” (p. 57). A people are not territorialized, or subjugated; instead, they wait to be produced. They are “missing” because they don’t exist; lives “not lived or liveable” in Deleuze words, until the author invents them, or again borrowing from Deleuze’s terminology, fabulates them.

People to come that is the creation of different possibilities of life, is actualized through fabulation, which is about myth-making and story-telling. Deleuze takes this term from Bergson who perceives it negatively; since he defends that fabulation forms social rules and forces groups to obey those rules. However, unlike Bergson, Deleuze sees a potential in this story-making (Bouge, 2010, pp. 99-101). Invention of people gives voice to “a collective assemblage”, calls out minor people, those inferior, dominated (Deleuze, 1997a, p. 4), and thus, literature becomes a “collective assemblage of enunciation” of minor people.¹⁷ Deleuze’s notion of assemblage “deals with those forces that unmake and make territories” (Livesey, 2010, p. 18). They generate new realities and significations as they are interested in affective and material encounters that are blocked by the major forces. Deleuze seeks the meaning of life not in individual subjects but rather in entanglements of human

¹⁷ Deleuze and Guattari talk about two types of assemblages, namely mechanic assemblages of bodies and collective assemblage of enunciation. The latter transforms the body through incorporeal transformations by changing the sense attributed to the bodies. Enunciation is collective because according to Deleuze and Guattari (2005) “there is no individual enunciation” (p. 79). Collective assemblage of enunciation “accounts for the impersonal and social nature of language” (Porter, 2009, p. 12) for them.

and nonhuman forces of different intensities.¹⁸ Affect becomes instrumental here, since it is “a prepersonal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to another and implying an augmentation or diminution in that body’s capacity to act” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. xvi). Affect opens up the formula of life in Deleuzian sense: always relational, direct and immediate.

When the existing language is interrupted, constituting language with different ways and interactions, and establishing life around different percepts and visions becomes possible. The semantic world of *abuklama* opens into a similar kind of health in its unfamiliarity and unpredictability. In *Sıcak Kafa*, disease ceased to remain as a disease solely, and creates a potential of health through the use of language as delirium.

Earlier in the novel, Murat is waiting in a market queue, when the old woman waiting before him speaks: “You don’t sacrifice friction impulse to cylinder hate, I hope” (Kum, 2016, p. 14) (see Appendix B, 13). The old woman immediately is taken by the security forces, while Murat is thinking that he has no curiosity at all about what the old woman means, because he knows and accepts that curiosity is one of those feelings he has to get rid of. Since, the old woman’s words are outside of Murat’s sense of the world, they almost sound like a foreign language to him. This estrangement comes from the delirium’s being minor.

¹⁸ Similarly Cameron Duff (2014) points out that Deleuze’s ethics of encounter is an assemblage rather than being an isolated entity: “...encounters draw together an array of bodies, spaces, affects, relations and signs, the human and the nonhuman, and so any practice of the encounter must evaluate as many of these forces as possible in determining the consequences of a given encounter for a body’s health and wellbeing” (p. 180).

Through delirium, a new language within language is created, and language tends toward an “asyntactic,” “agrammatical” limit (Deleuze, 1997a, p. lv). Coming into contact with its outside, language flees from the given order and it experiences a kind of formlessness that stretches the ways of thinking. The language produced through *abuklama* is the minor mode of language, which can be described as the deterritorialized version of the normative, major mode of language; a “creation from a norm” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 105). We see that *abuklama* is not independent from the existed vocabulary; no one gets *abuklama* in Japan all of a sudden (Kum, 2016, p. 67). Besides, an international research group that blocks some parts and functions of the brain in order to understand the working principle of the disease observes that there are no physiologic or hormonal changes in an *abuk*’s brain during the act of speech; the brain activities of an *abuk* is no different from the regular brain activity of a healthy person (pp. 17-18). Therefore, it can be suggested that the infected language’s delirium exists in, and through, major language. However, minor language situates itself as opposed to “all symbolic or even significant or simply signifying usages of [major language]” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2003, p. 19). That’s why, the old woman’s words sound meaningless. Through minorization, language comes into contact with its outside as it flees from the “symbolic” or “metaphoric” in the given order. In *abuklama*, words lose their significations and experience a kind of formlessness that unfolds the different ways of thinking.

In “Postulates of Linguistics”, Deleuze and Guattari (2005) discuss that language is charged with power relations; it is not made to communicate but “to be obeyed and to compel obedience” through the “semiotic coordinates” it imposes on people (p. 76), it is constitutive. Similarly, in *Sıcak Kafa*, the language functions in

the same way, through a series of instruction: “Control your curiosity. Don’t listen. Don’t pay attention” (Kum, 2016, p. 14). Language made of *order-words*, with Deleuze and Guattari’s denomination, harbors judgment, and draws people into the domain of morality by turning the expressions and actions into the elements of obedience. Being a force itself, language intervenes in our actions, participates in the production or the transformation of other forces. Minor language, on the other hand, as a differential force of language, contains a dynamism that flees from this dominancy and order. Since, through minorization, language stops being representative (Deleuze & Guattari, 2003, p. 23). Minor language is not representative because it doesn’t necessarily aim to mean something; rather it operates affectively. This more affective and intensive communication model challenges the imposing state of language, which is mostly about order and structure. Language in the old woman’s words does not include any personal pronouns, and thus escapes a specific mode of address. In such an affective and immediate communication, human experiences like “impulse” and “hate” can be used in the same sentence with the natural forces such as “friction,” or the nonhuman entities as “cylinder”, because language “move[s] toward its extremities or its limits” (p. 23), and opens up to new *becomings*. Murat cannot respond to the old woman within the habitual semantic patterns, because he is detached from the given rules of language and deterritorialized from the position he is accustomed to. At this point, he has to activate or generate different semantic codes; think physics, mathematics and the daily together, transversally. Since the established use of language becomes dysfunctional, language arrives at an affective and a relational state.

While the disease creates its own semantics, it includes non-verbal ways of communication as well. People in the deaf-mute school also catch the disease (Kum,

2016, p. 154), for instance. It opens new possibilities of sense-making into discussion by highlighting the different senses and intensities. Never being a “fixed constant position” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2005, p. 106), minor operates through different rhythms. This idea of language can also correspond to Kristeva’s conception of semiotic language, which focuses on inner drives and rhythms and thus, refuses the stability of the subject constructed by the social and the patriarchal condition of the language. The semiotic illustrates itself within the symbolic, just like the minor language that can “exist only in relation to a major language” (p. 105) by constantly deterritorializing it. Literature intervenes in the world through language by playing with the variations of it and bringing a different set of signs than those of the dominant one.

The capacities of acting and leading a different life indicate themselves through the relations evolving around the disease. Realizing that nothing is under his own control, Murat accepts the imposing order of SMK and avoids taking any risks by remaining within the frame SMK draws, until he falls in love. At the beginning of the novel, Murat sees a woman, Şule, who is reading a book in a bus stop and is immediately attracted to her. This woman who reads without fear, and doesn’t wear headphones amazes him as Murat compares her “indifference” with his “desperation” (Kum, 2016, p. 10). She reminds him a world, which is lived differently: “Once there was another world and he was a different person” (p. 10). Through this encounter, he realizes and articulates the weakness he possesses. However, at this stage this recognition is inadequate for expressing any potentiality for action. Later in the novel, the pair runs into each other in a metro station and Şule saves Murat from the patrol of SMK. As the number of their encounters and the time they spend together increase, Murat’s passive and negative attitudes towards life

transform. He agrees to risk his life by participating the experiments with *abuks* in an autonomous laboratory because Şule, the daughter of the laboratory's executive Fazıl bey, truly believes that their research might have an impact on the course of events. Murat leaves his reluctance and skepticism aside, and decides that in a world he can trust no one, the best thing is to trust in one's feelings, and therefore he chooses to stay with Şule. The affect Şule awakens in him leads him to question the meaning of a life without taking any risks. Instead of running away from the research team and living without knowing his fate, he chooses to spend time with them and be included to "the possibility of inventing something that can stop the world's going upside down" (p. 134) (see Appendix B, 15) even though it can end up badly. Embracing the force of love Murat accepts life both with its goodness and badness. Praising "the strength she gives to him" (p. 146) (see Appendix B, 16), Murat tells Şule that he is not afraid of talking to *abuks*. Thanks to her, he "holds on to life more" (p. 146) (see Appendix B, 17). This empowerment transforms his powerless self, who is concerned only with himself before (p. 15). Including someone else to his life, and responding to her concerns enable Murat to operate beyond the passive subjectivity he is interpellated. At a time all thoughts and actions are determined by the power (of the state), the power of acting and the force of existing merge, and open Murat to experience as the act of love disorients him. Love, as an immanent force, strikes a blow to the control wall he is surrounded. And thus, a passage from the world of impositions to the world of possibilities appears. In a world, not taking risk is presented as the prior condition of survival; the acceptance of risk proves to be the inseparable part of relating to the world.

In that sense, it would be valid to say that the disease composes some relations as it decomposes some others. That's why when Deleuze (1996, 1988-89)

states that disease “gives a vision of life”, he envisions a “life in all its force”, whether it is positive or not. *Abuklama* does not only interfere with language and the life enveloped by it but also provides an opportunity to reorganize this language and life. It becomes a force that forms new relations and connections, and improves the power of the body in those encounters. This two-sided affectivity that *abuklama* creates manifests itself in one of the dialogues Murat engages in during the experiment:

“How are you?” “Fine, fine. But it would be better if it was a bit more direct.”
 “What do you mean? This meeting?”
 “Yes.”
 “But, isn’t it already direct? We’re sitting and talking face to face.”
 “Its being unmediated does not mean that it is direct.”
 . . .
 “I don’t understand if it is you who speaks or the helmet.”
 “I speak, it’s just an helmet.”
 “A helmet is not just an helmet.”
 “Don’t heed the helmet, please, talk to me about...”
 “People who didn’t heed the helmet were disqualified by evaporating...”
 “Are you happy of being here? Living in this garden?”
 “This is not a living place.”
 “But... There are trees and plants in the garden. Insects, worms... There are living entities. You are (here).”
 “This place gets heavier. As it gets heavier, it wrinkles the city. And because of this wrinkle, regrets become more unbearable. That’s why we keep itching.”
 “Do you have a itching problem?”
 “I don’t. But you have, I guess.”
 “It’s because... Well, the helmet makes me itchy a little, since I’m not used to it.”
 “We can’ get anywhere without heeding the helmet, do you now?” (Kum, 2016, p. 159-161) (see Appendix B, 18)

Murat wears a cooler helmet for protection because he suffers from partial chronic hyperthermia that alarms him with his warming head when he engages with activities that activates his mind in unpredictable ways. Yet, the helmet constrains him and blocks his communication instead of protecting him. This sequence creates a small model of the current state of Murat and the society. They are trapped by the very

mechanism that is designed to protect them. In appearance they seem alive like the garden, however, the life gets heavier more and more as they are oppressed by the order. Deterritorializing and unbounding himself from the given conditions and the “discursive constraints imposed by dominant expectations” (Arrigo et al. 2005:9), Haluk invites Siyavuş to participate in a more direct and an immanent communication. Therefore, instead of making nonsense, his words recontextualize the present; sense and nonsense become the co-constitutive of one another. Constant invention of semantic variations disturbs and decomposes the dominant language. In the language that semantically “stutters”, words cannot attain their given meaning, therefore major language, and the major order are destabilized. Through “stuttering”, language defined by constant terms and relations appears in bifurcation or disequilibrium (Deleuze, 1997a, p. 108). When his own words left him immobile, the heat of Murat’s body is increasing and his head is getting warmer due to the intensity of the encounter. Heat, as another force, is intermingled with the force of language and reduces the equilibrium of Murat’s body. It wouldn’t be wrong to suggest that thermodynamics—the study of heat and energy—steps in, here: as soon as the heating enters the scene, it creates a disorder, and deterritorialize the existing order. It leads a reconfiguration of the body and its actions. Difference in temperature provokes an unsystematic flow of movement and thought. As it continues and is amplified, it acts in a way Querrien, Petcou and Petrescu (2013) discuss in terms of heating and the second laws of thermodynamics; “the molecules” that compose the scene “continue to produce new configurations and agencies” (p. 270). This scene illustrates how the body is entwined with its environment; that is the body is composed in its relations as Deleuze suggests via Spinoza. Murat reacts to this encounter that disagrees with him by itching. His body attempts to reorganize and

navigate itself in response to disorder generated through certain affects. Healthy-body of Murat transforms into a sick-body, his major-body becomes the minor-body. Therefore, language-*becoming* highlighting this transformation anticipates health, as well. This encounter—and assemblage of major and minor languages and affects—paves the way for other *becomings*.

After this brief but intense encounter, Murat imagines himself as a fish in his dream. This image of *becoming-animal*, the body's exceeding its own borders, finds itself a place in Murat's thoughts and speech throughout the novel; he "wanders around corners like a mouse" (Kum, 2016, p. 10) (see Appendix B, 19) going back to his mother's flat, imagines the old woman in the supermarket "spending her short life like wild animals, trying to find her daily meal" in the quarantine zone (p. 15) (see Appendix B, 20), associates his passiveness with "a bird waiting its death" (p. 28) (see Appendix B, 21), likens humans to foul creatures (p. 33), catching an *abuk*'s eyes, he resembles his look that of a hyena (p. 47), fears that if humans cannot be distinguished from insects (p. 64), and he finds himself "sweating like a pig and itching like a chimpanzee" (p. 161) (see Appendix B, 22) during the encounter above. Although it sounds negative at first sight, these expressions present another composition of self, which is the possibility of coming together around the notions of vulnerability and disposability. An alliance is formed through these notions. The potential hidden in the level of metaphor, which is actually a metamorphosis *yet to come* comes in sight when Murat imagines the disintegration of his own body. Deleuze and Guattari (2003) perceive the act of *becoming-animal* as the "ensemble of states (. . .) grafted onto the man insofar as he is searching for a way out" and "a creative line of escape" (p. 36). It signifies a life that can fracture territories, and thus can be unfold beyond the authority's will. The body in the need of getting rid of

the borders and categories it is situated attempts to contact its surrounding, thus “to flee (...) creates life (Deleuze & Parnet, 2007, p. 49). This possibility of a life/ethics that prioritizes the relationality and the diverse experiences takes its strength from *zoe*—the unity of the bodies reduced to bare life. *Zoe*, here, refers to Rosi Braidotti’s (2013) “the non-human, vital force of Life” (p. 60). The disease with its inclination to the impersonal¹⁹ and nonhuman, carries a similar force in itself.

Disassociating the words from its known contexts and bringing them together under different circumstances, *abuklama* appropriates “delirium”’s attempt of depersonalization. One of the patients Murat talks to during the experiments, Haluk, calls him “armut” (pear). Realizing that “armut” is an anagram of his name, Murat is stumped by this logic showing that the difference between him and the fruit is merely a matter of sorting. *Abuklama*, here, dismantles the signification of the name and denounces the hierarchical organization imposed on life. After this rupture, Haluk describes himself as “the blowing thing” (“esen şey”), and thus, recognizes himself not as a subject but as a force, the wind. This gesture towards impersonality leads us to the notion of *becoming-imperceptible* Deleuze (1997a) reckons as “life” (p. 26). In her article “Deleuze and Beckett Towards Becoming-Imperceptible”, Žukauskaitė (2015) explains that “becoming-imperceptible means to disorganize the body, to dismantle the system of signification and to erase the subject and subjectivity” (p. 66). As “a passage from one state to another, an increase or decrease of intensities and powers” (p. 66), *becoming-imperceptible* stimulates a life that addresses transformations and changes, and multiplies the connections that will lead active

¹⁹ In *Essays Critical and Clinical*, Deleuze (1997a) associates this gesture with literature directly: Literature “exists only when it discovers beneath apparent persons. The power of an impersonal” (p. 3).

affections. The body is not defined by its organs anymore, instead it is described by its organization, by the assemblages it forms as it escapes from determination. Delirium breaks down “the opposition between the one and the many, the individual and the collective” (Tynan, 2012: 177) as it displaces the unitary subject “I”. It resists to be reduced to a certain individual or a human subject. Here, life is expressed through a nonhuman force. *Zoe*, as an “indistinguishable way of existence” (Baştürk, 2018, p. 130) (see Appendix C, 5) situates life onto a plane perceived not through human-animal or nature-culture divides but through relations and collectivities, instead. Refusing being down as a certain subject, Haluk demonstrates the ability of adopting such a life as he is affected by *abuklama*.

After a while Murat have another dream in which he is itching in an unbearable way. Wanting to get rid of the itching, he gets rub with a bath-glove, however, as the glove touches it, his skin is peeled and a dark green, metallic colored tissue akin to reptile skin emerges underneath. As the human skin is flayed and transformed, the itching relieves and he calms down. When he wakes up, Murat caught *abuklama*, again. This passage from what is constant and dominated to what is variable and relational transforms him into a Deleuzian body, which extends beyond human: “[The body] can be an animal (...) it can be a linguistic corpus, a social body, a collectivity” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 127).

The entanglement of *abuklama* and *becoming-animal* dissolves the categories of healthy, sick, human, nonhuman and the binaries between them. At the end of the novel, ethics finds its place in the narrative through ethology, and a life composed of relations and affects emerges.²⁰ According to Deleuze (1988), ethology, a subfield of

²⁰ In his lecture on Spinoza in 21 December 1980, Deleuze states that we recognize ethics under the name of ethology today. <https://www.webdeleuze.com/textes/190>

zoology that studies animal behavior, corresponds to “defin[ing] bodies, animals, or humans by the affects they are capable of” (p. 125), and therefore rules out the dominance of a categorized and bounded self. Since, things are evaluated in terms of “the relations of speed and slowness, of the capacities for affecting and being affected” (p. 125). A similar transformation is observed in the quarantine zones, which have lost their function. The new forces and the relations replace the disintegrated power of the authority. While *abuks* are spreading all around the city by breaking and canceling the quarantine zones, not only *abuks* and *non-abuks* but also human and nonhuman intermingle. When Murat and Şule meet in Taksim Square, they encounter a celebratory scene, in which all *abuks* gather together and forms a collective, an assemblage. The invention of Deleuzian health, a “possibility of life” finds a great resonance in this “event”. This scene can be rightfully called “event” here in Deleuzian sense because being impersonal, event is “the potential immanent within a particular confluence of forces” (Stagoll in Parr, 2010, p. 90). Similarly in the Taksim scene, through becomings that several encounters assure, *abuks*’ lives that are reduced to bare life gain a generative force. Unlike Agamben’s vulnerable and always under the threat bare life, the novel obtains Braidotti’s *zoe*-centric worldview that “flows across species” (2013, p. 103). A possibility of life opens up a “possibility of recomposition of communities” (103). The square brims with “people, cats, dogs, crows, doves, mice, ants and bacteria” (Kum, 2016, p. 186) (see Appendix B, 23). The scene introduces an event in Deleuzian sense, which “flows through, enacts and possibly undoes, people and things” as Alan Ingram explains

(2019, p. 52). A *zoe*-induced *becoming* and its variable and intense force capture and proliferate the life that is used to be in the authorities' orbit.

Being part of this event, Murat witnesses how the city burns down and imagines how everything will merge into the earth and all ceilings will sink into blue (referring the sky). These successive becomings make him think that "it will remain no other conjunction longer than 'and'" (p. 187) (see Appendix B, 24). This emphasis on AND, especially its being one of the last statements in the novel, is particularly important because AND, as a conjuncture, is capable of refusing any hierarchical relationships and is able to assure that nothing can be reduced to one another.²¹ Working like an assemblage, it introduces "diversity, multiplicity, the destruction of identities" (1995: p. 44), with Deleuze words; a continuous becoming. It becomes the proof that life is not pre-determined but rather is immanent in its relationality.

Sıcak Kafa draws on the disease to characterize an issue of power and underlines the conflict between the society that is deprived of its own capacities and the state power (SMK), which renders the state of emergency a permanent way of life in order to strengthen its own power. Reproducing this tense and questionable coexistence on the plane of literature paves the way for new visions about the problems, limits and possibilities. Ending the novel with the victory of *abuks*, the disease affirms the possibility of envisioning ethics through the crack *abuklama* opens through the interruption of life. Semantic ambivalence of *abuklama* unsettles the social order, however, through this, it uncovers the pressure points and the

²¹ Deleuze (1995) explains this in an interview, "Three Questions on *Six Times Two*" on Godard in *Negotiations* as such: "AND is neither one thing nor the other, it's always in between, between two things; it's the borderline, there's always a border, a line of flight or flow, only we don't see it, because it's the least perceptible of things." (p. 45)

arbitrariness of the existing power and disrupts its capability to stabilize and govern people.

The narrative of disease allows corroding and surpassing the limits of experience and of the body drawn by the dominant power, and approaches to the possibility of a life composed of new connections and positions, which is freed from any subject position that can be governed and oppressed. Ethics reveals itself in the analysis of the disposability of a society convinced of establishing a passive and unconnected life, and in the possibility of resistance appeared through the connections this disposability triggers.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

In both *The Flame Alphabet* and *Sıcak Kafa*, a language disease unsettles the established order of life, which generally stabilizes and dominates people by ascribing certain social roles to them in their relations ranging from the familial to the economic. Through toxic language and *abuklama*, in the two novels respectively, language gains an active and material force, which directly acts on the bodies and forces them to respond to their surroundings in such a way that neither can maintain the conventional forms of language nor act in accordance with their normative subject positions. While the dominating power regimes in the novels intervene and violate domestic and social life in the name of security, stability, and health—a discourse that serves to justify the exercise of power—another conception of health outside the hierarchical and constraining order of society is offered by the very disorders in question.

In both novels, health emerges as a network of relations, affects and events, a multiplying and creative entanglement of bodies and the surrounding. A series of encounters between bodies and technology extend one's capacities to affect and to be affected. These encounters enable previously unrealized ways of communication and interaction for people in varied ages and from different social, cultural and economic backgrounds. The circulation of the ill-language and the language-oriented practices disrupt the normalcy of life, and thus reveal the normativity, exclusivity, and domination of the current order. This revelation paves the way for Deleuzian ethics in the sense that the diseases present the possibilities of a life that will surpass this order by contributing to the extension of relational capacities of the body through

multiple encounters. This new prospect of health in the novels undermines human-centrism and subject-objects binaries, and prioritizes multidirectional, affective relationships between humans, domestic space and the digital and medical technologies. In line with this ethical approach, both *The Flame Alphabet* and *Sıcak Kafa* seek to reconfigure the existing ways of perceiving the world and to create new forms of engagement with it.

In the novels, ethics is explored as a two-fold gesture. The diseases diagnose the biopolitical mode of governance, which manipulates, suppresses, stabilizes and controls the bodies. Simultaneously, however, a series of encounters, which create new and flexible mobilities that will activate the possibility of a life take the scene through protagonists' actions in domestic and institutional spaces. In both novels, the social order promises and prioritizes a normative health that foregrounds the productivity of individuals. People are rendered incapable of attending life in full force, that is they are prevented from discovering "what a body can do", not necessarily because the disease narrows down their capacities of action but rather because their capacities are controlled and restricted by certain rules in the first place. The disruption of language that puts all the existing relations in disequilibrium brings healthy openings to life that will extend the body's scope of activity and proliferate the occasions of acting and being acted upon. Therefore, the diseases in the novels provide a perspective on another kind of health, which can be called ill-health. As Nick J. Fox (2012) asserts in "The Ill-health Assemblage: Deleuze, Guattari and the Sociology of Health and Illness"²², ill-health situates beyond the

²² The "ill health" in title of the article influenced the title of this thesis.

physical and biological health of the bodies and is defined in terms of the body's widening capacities to affect and being affected, to resist and transform its relations.

This health is discovered in the novels through the minor language that draws a line of flight from the fixing and stabilizing major language. In both novels, linguistic regularities and expressions lose their steadiness. As language arrives at an intensive and affective state, it opens into new understandings and visions towards life. In *The Flame Alphabet*, language breaks apart with its symbolic and representative value as it gains a sonic character. Language "moves towards its extremities or its limits" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2003, p. 23) by its asignifying use, and through this gesture not only language but also subjectivities and familial and social relations language realize are deterritorialized. Digitization and the quantification of life and language add another dimension to the asignificant and nonrepresentational use of language, since the practices and relations this mode of life addresses both undermines the dominating power regimes and maintains the possibility of reproducing them. Ethics in the novel puts into play through this tension. It should be also noted that by putting language into the circulatory regime of the digital world, and concentrating on the biological material's transformation into data, *The Flame Alphabet* directly engages in and responds to today's socio-political and technological world. This timeliness renders the novel especially significant for the studies of contemporary literature. Since, the novel opens a line of inquiry for thinking the ethical potentials of the today's world through literature in a way only few literary works do. In *Sıcak Kafa*, on the other hand, the habitual use of language is suspended through the nonsensical semantic of *abuklama*, which brings about *delirium* that pushes language into its limits. As language semantically stammers and approaches its "asyntactic," "agrammatical" limit (Deleuze, 1997a, p. lv), the bodies are forced

to respond their surrounding in different ways. While the novel manifest how biopolitics configures the domestic and social life, the disease reconfigures life by encouraging people to establish more diverse and affective connections with the world beyond the certain roles they are ascribed to. These connections open one into such *becomings* that cancel out the distinctions between human and nonhuman and bring about transformations that will disfigure the existing order. In that sense, literature appears as an *enterprise of health* through the ways in which it connects people to the world.

When language stutters, disintegrates, and meaning and representation cease to be an integral part of the narrative world, literature becomes an enterprise of aesthetics as well. The narratives are also infectious for the reader as the ill-languages act on and complicate the reading activity itself. The reader, especially of *The Flame Alphabet*, is left uncomfortable and disoriented by the force of language like the characters in the novels. This affective engagement throws the reader into the world of the novels directly and leads a departure from the habitual reading practices that more or less expect comprehension and causation from a text. The unconventional use and production of language, however, trouble the relationship between language and meaning, and transform the words into affects and meaning into senses. The style of writing is bended in such a way that it disseminates in different and unforeseeable directions, and the landscape of what is seen, heard and sensed constantly changes as it changes the ways and manners through which we exist in the world.

Drawing on Deleuze's inextricably intertwined ideas about literature, health, and ethics, this thesis was an effort to discover the texture of this ever-changing landscape, triggered by a curiosity regarding the reflection of today's world in

contemporary literature. The arguments presented in this thesis could have been analyzed through different theoretical lenses as well, some of which are already manifest in Deleuze's ideas that traverse this thesis. The novels' conception of the world as a complex network of forces that cut across human-nonhuman, mind-matter dichotomies could open up discussions within the scope of posthumanism, new materialism, system, and actor-network theories, whereas the understanding of disease and health in the novels could contribute to the discussions in medical humanities. And even more, the reconsideration of informatics in relation to the digital and biomedical age could intersect these discussions with perspectives from digital humanities. Nevertheless, in accordance with the arguments in the thesis, thinking about the two novels in relation to Deleuze was essentially important for two reasons. For one thing, such an encounter could offer a small contribution to the rising scholarship on the relevance of Deleuze's ethical philosophy for literature. And also, Deleuze's philosophy of affects and *becomings* has the potential to point out the significance of literature in opening vistas into ethical, relational ways of being and engaging with the world. In the highly fraught and polarized social, economic and political climate of today's world, the consideration of literature as a mode of health could help to diagnose the world we live in—forces that dominate and resist—and facilitate the ways of negotiation with it.

APPENDIX A

QUOTATIONS IN CHAPTER 2 IN THE ORIGINAL TURKISH

1. Doğru bulduğumuz, yerleşik ve apaçık olan anlam istikâmetinin silindiği yerde ortaya çıkıyordur etiğin manzarası. (Arslan, 2020, p. 15)
2. Sizin o güne kadar biriktirdiğiniz tüm değerleri, edindiğiniz tüm statüleri, bir çırpıda, zahmetsizce hiçesayabilir. (Yücel, 2012, p. 86)
3. İletişimi değiştiren teknolojik gelişmeler, bu dünyayı tecrübe etme biçimimizi, bu dünyayla kurduğumuz bağı ve bu dünyada ikamet ettiğimiz yeri de değiştirir. (Arslan, 2020, p. 35)

APPENDIX B

QUOTATIONS FROM *SICAK KAFA* IN CHAPTER 3 IN THE ORIGINAL TURKISH

1. ...aklı beklenmedik şekillerde çalışmaya teşvik eden şeyler. (Kum, 2016, p. 19)
2. Güvenlikli siteler, güvenlikli ofisler, alışveriş merkezleri ve bunları birbirine bağlayan metro ve otoyollardan oluşan bir ağ. (Kum, 2016, p. 47)
3. Mallar süpermarketlere gelmeye devam ettiği sürece sorun yok. (Kum, 2016, p. 47)
4. Konuşmayan insanlar arasında ayaküstü sohbetleri tetikliyor diye. (Kum, 2016, 117)
5. İnsanların birbiriyle konuşmaya korktuğu. (Kum, 2016, p. 11)
6. Dışarıdaysanız, bir motorlu taşıtın içinde olmalısınız. Dışarıdaysanız ve yürüyorsanız, hedefinize doğru hızlı adımlarla ilerlemelisiniz. Buralarda yürüyüşe çıkılmaz. (Kum, 2016, p. 9-10)
7. Merakınızı kontrol altına alın. Dinlemeyin. Kulak vermeyin. Kesinlikle riske girmeyin En küçük bir şüphede yetkililere haber verin. Yetkililer gerekli değerlendirmeyi yaptıktan sonra, zaten her şey ortaya çıkacaktır. (Kum, 2016, p. 14)
8. Düşünürseniz, büyük bir tehlikeye karşı güvenliği birinci öncelik haline getirmiş devlet, güvenliği sağlamak için elinin altında bulunan araçları, iktidarının konumunun sorgulanmasını engellemek için kullanmaya, dolayısıyla en genel anlamıyla yolsuzluğa son derece açıktır.” (Kum, 2016, p. 93)

9. Birilerinin konuya hâkim ve olaylarla ilgileniyor olduğuna inanmak istiyoruz çünkü bizim kendimizden başka bir şeyle ilgilenmeye mecalimiz yok. (Kum, 2016, p. 15)
10. Tek mesele, kalabildiğin kadar uzun süre hayatta kalmak mıdır? (Kum, 2016, p. 134)
11. Televizyondaki hayatla gerçek hayatı birbirinden ayırt edemiyorum herhalde. (Kum, 2016, p. 62)
12. *“Biz neden şehirlerimizin koca koca bölgelerini karantina bölgesi diye ayırıyoruz, bir de oralara yiyecek götürürken resmen hastalığı besliyoruz?”*
Evet, doğru, neden? *“Bu hastalık milletimizin başına sarılmış bir beladır.”*
Evet, sadece bizim milletimizin değil tabii ama bu da doğru. *“Biz artık bu hastalığa karşı tıbbi araştırmalardan medet umamayız. Artık hümanist yaklaşımlarla bir yere varamayız.”* Aynen katılıyorum. *“Milletimizin düşmanlarını sevindirmekten başka bir işe yaramaz bu.”* Bu, milletimizin düşmanları zırvasına da prim verdiğimi söyleyemeyeceğim ama bunun için milletvekilimi kıracak değilim, o öyle diyorsa öyledir. *“Ben Anadolu’nun her yerini dolaşıyorum, milletimizle konuşuyorum, diyorlar ki ‘benim de annem hasta, kardeşim hasta, oğlum hasta ama bu milletin kurtuluşu için feda olsun’ diyorlar.”*
Bunun üzerine soru geliyor: *“Yani siz bütün hastaları imha edelim mi diyorsunuz?”* *“Hayır, öyle bir şey demiyorum”* diyor ama aslında onu demek istiyor. (Kum, 2016, p. 21)
13. İnşallah sürtünme dürtüsünü silindir nefretine kurban etmezsin. (Kum, 2016, p. 14)

14. Bana, bir zamanlar başka türlü bir dünyada başka türlü bir insan olduğunu hatırlatması. (Kum, 2016, p. 10)

15. Dünyanın baş aşağı gidişini tersine çevirecek bir icatta bulunma olasılığı. (Kum, 2016, p. 134)

16. Senin bana verdiğin güç sayesinde (Kum, 2016, p. 146)

17. Yaşama daha çok tutunmuş haldeyim. (Kum, 2016, p. 146)

18. “Nasılsınız?” “İyiyim, iyiyim . Ama biraz daha dolaysız olsaydı iyi olurdu.”

“Neyi kastediyorsunuz? Bu görüşmeyi mi? “Evet.” “Ama dolaysız değil mi zaten? İkimiz karşılıklı oturmuş konuşuyoruz.” “Aracısız olması dolaysız olduğunu göstermez.” [...] “Siz mi konuşuyorsunuz, başlık mı konuşuyor, anlamıyorum.” “Ben konuşuyorum. Başlık, sadece bir başlık.” “Başlık asla sadece başlık değildir.” “Başlığa takılmayın lütfen, bana şeyden bahsedin...”

“Başlığa takılmayanlar buharlaşarak elendiler. Biz, burada kaldığımıza göre, başlığa takılmak zorundayız. Bunu sizin daha iyi bilmeniz lazım.” [...] “Burada olmaktan memnun musunuz? Bu bahçede yaşamaktan...” “Burası yaşayan bir yer değil.” “Ama... bahçede ağaçlar ve çiçekler var. Böcekler, solucanlar... Yaşayan varlıklar var. Siz varsınız.” “Burası gittikçe ağırlaşıyor. Ağırlaştıkça da bu şehri buruşturuyor. İşte bu buruşukluk yüzünden pişmanlıklar daha katlanılmaz oluyor. Ondan kaşınıp duruyoruz zaten.” “Kaşıntı probleminiz mi var?” “Bende yok. Ama sizde var galiba.” “Benimki şeyden... Yani başlık biraz kaşındırıyor, alışık olmadığım için.” “Başlığa takılmadan bir yere varamayacağınızı gördünüz mü şimdi?” (Kum, 2016, p. 159-161)

19. fare gibi kuytulardan bir yol bulmaya çalışırken. (Kum, 2016, p. 10)

20. kalan kısa  mr n , vah i hayvanlar gibi, g nl k yiyeceđini bulmaya  alı arak ge irecek. (Kum, 2016, p. 15)
21.  l m  beklemeye ba lamı  bir ev ku u. (Kum, 2016, p. 28)
22. domuz gibi terler ve  empanze gibi ka ınırken. (Kum, 2016, p. 161)
23. Meydan; insanlar, kediler, k pekler, kargalar, g vercinler, fareler, karıncalar ve bakterilerle dolup ta ıyordu. (Kum, 2016, p. 186)
24. “Ve”den uzun bir bađlacımız kalmayacak. (Kum, 2016, p. 187)

APPENDIX C

OTHER QUOTATIONS IN CHAPTER 3 IN THE ORIGINAL TURKISH

1. Yaşam ancak katılaştığı, gerçekleştiği formun dışına çıkma imkânı bulduğunda yeni imkânlarını gösterir, yani devam eder. (Karadağ, 2016, p. 67)
2. Salt korku üzerine inşa edilen bir devlet yaşayamaz. Aynı şekilde salt umut vermek üzerine inşa edilmiş bir devlet de öyledir. Tutkuların ve duyguların karışımı ise Spinozacılığın esas inceleme nesnesidir...herhangi bir iktidar, bedenlerde herhangi bir duygu uyandırmaksızın kendini var edemez. (Baker, 2011, p. 67)
3. İktidar... gerçek yapıp etme kudreditini (potentia) keyfî bir “yetke” diline tercüme ederek (potestas) iktidarını oluşturur. (Baker, 2011, p. 40)
4. Kamp, Agamben’in kuramsallaştırmasında, belirli bir siyasal düzen içinde geçerli olan mekânın, zamanın ve yasanın çözüldüğü/askıya alındığı, dolayısıyla çıplak hayatın ortaya çıktığı yerleri betimlemek için kullanılan bir kavramdır. (Yardımcı, 2012)
5. zoe mefhumunun...“ayırt edilemeyen” bir var-oluş biçimi olarak ele alınması gerektiğini düşünüyorum. (Baştürk, 2018, p. 130)

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