Documentary as Autoethnography: A Case Study Based on the Changing Surnames of Women

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Abstract
In the autoethnographic research method, researchers analyse their own subjectivity and life experiences, and treat the self as 'other' while calling attention to issues of power. At this juncture, researcher and researched, dominant and subordinate, individual experience and socio-cultural structures can be examined. As an emerging researcher and filmmaker I have made the seventeen-minute documentary *Yok Anasının Soyadı* which is defined as a form of self-narrative that places the self within a social context. The interdisciplinary nature of this enquiry highlights the link between surnames and identity, which is a crucial human rights debate, and also focuses on the feminist quote "the personal is political".

Keywords: Autoethnography, documentary, human rights, identity, personal is political, surname.

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Introduction

> I shall speak about women's writing: *about what it will do.* Woman must write herself: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies—for the same reasons, by the same law, with the same fatal goal. Woman must put herself into text—as into the world and into history—by her own movement
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> (Cixous 875).

In 2008, when I was planning to write a statement of purpose for an MA degree application, one of my friends tentatively warned me—after witnessing my enthusiasm—that I could not study self in an academic context. In the impulse of the moment, I could not remember Meister Eckhart's well-known words that "a human being has so many skins inside, covering the depths of the heart. We know so many things, but we do not know ourselves" (Allen 33) or La Fontaine's "He knows the universe and does not know himself" (Slater 164) or Yunus Emre's "Knowledge means to know yourself, heart and soul / If you do not know yourself / You will have to study to find out" (Eryaman 59). In short, although I could not respond then, my friend's comment failed to convince me and triggered the momentum to delve into the subject.

In 2012, at the very beginning of my PhD journey in Communications, it all recurred in the same way. In the *Inquiry of Knowledge* course, we, as students, were tasked to discuss our prospective PhD theme, to select a methodology, and to contribute the factual and theoretical knowledge of communication discipline. Thankfully, I had already researched a topic while making my documentary and wanted to go further with it. For that reason, I wrote in my academic paper that I would like to research women's changing surnames in Turkey; as a starting point, and a case study, I would like to use my own personal experience. In the meantime, I questioned the aim of the scientific research: is it about knowing oneself better, or rather about knowing more about something outside the self?

After spending a huge amount of time with books, suddenly something beautiful happened: I came across a methodology called autoethnography. In an overview concerning the methodology, autoetnography was described as:

> […] autoethnography is an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyse personal experience in order to understand cultural experience. This approach challenges canonical ways of doing research and representing others and treats research as a political, socially—just and socially—conscious act. A researcher uses tenets of autobiography and ethnography to do and write autoethnography. Thus, as a method, autoethnography is both process and product (Ellis, Adams, Bocher 273).

Autoethnography allows me to frame my values within the academic setting. My panoramic research (Eco 10) includes fundamental chapters featuring surname change, methodology, theory, documentary and communication. The first chapter is about surname change, mainly in Turkey: How do human beings experience the surname change issue in terms of the protection of equal legal, social and economic rights? The second chapter's focus will be the method, autoethnography, where the

researchers analyse their own subjectivity and life experiences, and treat the self as 'other' while calling attention to issues of power. I will also be investigating the method through such questions: Why does someone want to study her / him own self? How will someone collect the data about the self? How will s / he manage the interpretation process? What will be the outcomes? In the third chapter, my focus will be the theoretical framework, mainly depending on feminist theory, while viewing the personal as political and giving voice to 'other'. Hence, the cinema of 'me' has been transformed into collective expressions of identity. In the last chapter, I will strive to set a relationship between what I did in my documentary and the possible effects in the communications discipline, where the capacity of digital media has the power to change the political game. In other words, social media challenges traditional media and increasing accessibility has made the Internet a creative hub that connects people with others who have the same goals.

1. What is in a Surname?

How do women experience the surname change issue in terms of the protection of equal, legal, social and economic rights? To begin with, I started to think about this question in a larger context when my surname was changed without my consent after my marriage. One day I realized I had two diplomas, each with a different name on it; however, both those people are me. Visually, my name has multiplied like an amoeba: Hande Çayır, Hande Aydın, Hande Çayır Aydın. From this visible sign, people around me—for example, civil establishment—have gained the apparent right to talk about my personal life in the public sphere.

Afterward, I remembered the feminist quote 'personal is political', started my own research, and found out that women in Turkey are required to change their surname when they marry and divorce. If they would like to continue using their ex-husband's surname after a divorce, they need to get permission from both the ex-husband and the state. Because of this unfair policy, some women have appealed to the ECHR and subsequently the ECHR is requiring the Turkish government to pay an indemnity. Thus, the link between surnames and identity is a crucial human rights debate. The media portrays this issue as one that is currently being solved. However, after my visit to the Turkish Grand National Assembly, I came to the conclusion that the process is not moving forward at all.

Legally, women in Turkey have two options after marriage, either they have to abandon their first surname and take their husbands surname, or alternatively they have to use both surnames. There is no option to keep their 'own' surname, which again actually comes from another man, their father. In the end, for example, my surname became Aydın instead of Çayır and the whole story began. My writing and films have been published with the surname Çayır. Then, I was legally named Aydın. I did not know what to do. It was such a schizoid case. My identity became multiplied and I have stuck with Hande Çayır Aydın in case of emergency. Some people know my professional Çayır identity; legal partners have to meet with me as Aydın. The similar case triggered the example of *Sybil: The classic true story of a woman possessed by 16 separate personalities* (Schreiber, 1) classified as non-fiction and was a bestseller.

More and more, men have the right to take their surname back after a divorce, which is what happened to well-known Turkish TV personality Serap Ezgü in 2010[1] (Milliyet 1). Did this affect her economically? Has the forced surname change been a barrier for her career? How can this happen to a public figure? How does this reflect in contemporary media sources such as newspapers, advertising, television and cinema? These questions surfaced as readily as my anger. As Goffman says in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, "When an individual appears in the presence of others, there will usually be some reason for him / [her] to mobilise his / [her] activity so that it will convey an impression to others which it is in his interests to convey" (4).

The very first case from Turkey was that of Ayten Ünal Tekeli's, which yielded positive results in 16 October 200. Ayten 2 Ünal is a feminist lawyer and her clients know her by her first surname. In the meantime, because any change in her surname could create inconvenience, she applied to the court. When Turkish Civil Law declined her case, she applied to the ECHR, and the result was positive. From that day on, she did not have to use the second surname legally.

After the Ünal-Tekeli case, women in Turkey started to apply to the ECHR for their surname rights. Asuman Bayrak was one of those women who called herself a businesswoman. Focusing on Bayrak's narrative in my documentary, I saw that she made a difference in women's lives with the innovative choices in the face of this imposition:

> I got married in 1992. When I got married, I had to tick a box on the form in order to use my own surname with my husband's. I didn't do it. In any case, I never thought about changing my surname. However, I guess five or six years after my marriage, a thief entered our office and stole all my identity cards. Until that day I have never changed my surname. I didn't feel it was necessary. I thought, if I don't change it, it remains as it is. But when I went to apply for a new identity card, I could see that my surname was gone and had been replaced with my husband's surname. I called my lawyer about it;

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[1] Serap Ezgü is a well-known TV announcer who has a career of more than twenty years with the name "Ezgü"; the audience know her with the surname of Ezgü. When she and her husband made the decision to divorce, as the rights protect the husband, the husband took her marriage surname from her with a court decision in July 2010. Now she is called Serap Paköz, which is totally a new name.

[2] The applicant, Ayten Ünal Tekeli, is a Turkish national, born in 1965 and living in İzmir. After her marriage on 25 December 1990 the applicant, who was then a trainee lawyer, took her husband's name pursuant to Article 153 of the Turkish Civil Code. As she was known by her maiden name in her professional life, she continued putting it in front of her legal surname. However, she could not use both names together on official documents. On 22 February 1995 the applicant brought proceedings in the Karşıyaka Court of First Instance ("the Court of First Instance") for permission to use only her maiden name, "Ünal". On 4 April 1995 the Court of First Instance dismissed the applicant's request on the ground that, under Article 153 of the Turkish Civil Code, married women had to bear their husband's name throughout their married life. An appeal by the applicant on points of law was dismissed by the Court of Cassation on 6 June 1995. The decision was served to the applicant on 23 June 1995. By one of the amendments made to Article 153 of the Civil Code on 14 May 1997, married women acquired the right to put their maiden name in front of their husband's surname. The applicant did not prefer that option because, in her view, the amendment in question did not satisfy her demand, which was to use her maiden name alone as her surname (http://www.aihmiz.org.tr/?q=en/node/98).

she said not to accept any documents. So I didn't, and for two years I carried a paper that replaced my stolen ID. I didn't know what to do. I got so angry. Later, with my husband's consent and his witness and with my business partner, we appealed to the court. Asuman Bayrak is known as Asuman Bayrak in a business context, so her surname must not change. However, even though the judge was a woman, she decided against me. Then we appealed to a higher court. Again the decision was against me. In any event, this process took four or five years. During that period, I lived without any identification. I couldn't go abroad, I could not do anything. However, eventually I had to retire. So legally we had to divorce. So we did, but we live together. In order not to change my name, we had to get divorced but we still live together. When we were opposed in Turkey, we appealed to the ECHR. That took four or five years; last year in October we finally got a decision in our favour. However, there are two cases before mine in Turkey, and at the moment the government does not recognise the decision of the ECHR. So if I get married again, the Turkish government will again change my surname. But I am determined to fight against it to the bitter end. Now, the ECHR is requiring the Turkish government to pay an indemnity. So we are waiting for the results of that process.

(*Yok Anasının Soyadı / Mrs. His Name*, 2012)

Among other things, does taking on a man's surname after a marriage empower one? As one could always be certain of who the mother of a child was, it might serve for another objective. From that point, a study called *What's in a name? The significance of the choice of surnames given to children born within lesbian-parent families* can be examined, as it focuses on family practices and boundaries. Biological mothers' roles in naming—sperm bank—babies question the structure of heterosexual family decisions, and the question arises: Are homosexual family structures possible with their own parameters, or are those the only copies of the current system? Homosexual sex does not involve procreation, but only desire; because there are two penises or two vaginas, which make a baby impossible, as is also mentioned in Lee Edelman's work *No Future: Queer Theory and Death Drive*. Consequently, in other words, in this system, there is no future, no generation, and no surnames at all.

The heterosexual family institution is also questioned by Talat Parman's article *Merhaba Bebek Merhaba Aile: Bireyin Doğumu ve Adlandırma (Hello Baby Hello Family: An Individual's Birth and Naming)* as follows:

> The very first method to humiliate people, even make them non-human, starts with namelessness. If you erase people's names, then you make them invisible. Even in the Nazi concentration camps, it is the absolute reason that people have no names but numbers on bracelets (translated by me 15).

2. Methodology: Autoethnography

Simply put, *auto* means self, narrator, I; *ethno* means others, communities, cultures, they, we, society, nation, state; *graphy* means writing, and the process. To put it in other words, autoethnography is a qualitative research method that focuses on self study, where researchers are using data from their personal life stories as a means to understand society. In their article entitled *Autoethnography is a Queer Method*, Stacy

Holman Jones and Tony E. Adams collected some of the more provocative "too" examples mentioned above, as follows:

> Autoethnography and queer theory are both also often criticised for being too much and too little—too much personal mess, too much theoretical jargon, too elitist, too sentimental, too removed, too difficult, too easy, too white, too Western, too colonialist, too indigenous. Yet at the same time, too little artistry, too little theorising, too little connection between the personal and political, too impractical, too little fieldwork, too few real-world applications (e.g. Alexander 2003, Anderson 2006, Atkinson 1997, Atkinson and Delamont 2006, Barnard 2004, Buzard 2003, Gans 1999, Gingrich-Philbrook 2005, Halberstam 2005, Johnson 2001, Kong, Mahoney and Plummer 2002, Lee 2003, Madison 2006, Owen 2003, Perez 2005, Watson 2005, Yep and Elia 2007) (Nash and Kath 195).

As an academically-recognised methodology[3], autoethnography follows a social scientific inquiry, and has been expected to be analysed in a broad sense of socio-cultural context. Conjointly, connecting the personal to the cultural is also affirmed in the pioneers', Ellis & Bochner's and Reed-Danahay's, writing. To put it in another way, in grounded everyday life, autoethnography explicitly works against traditional approaches and conventional academic critics and disciplines. By doing so, marginal experiences—usually the invisible ones—are represented while focusing on fluidity, subjectivity, responsiveness, transformation and contribution. Researchers understand and analyse themselves as well as society by the help of autoethnography, which is also a researcher and reader-friendly method. Thus, sharing the output leads to transformation and to the development of cultural sensitivity.

3. Feminist Theory

This is not only about my story; women throughout Turkey's history have resisted these identity issues. For example, in the topic of surnames, I came across an author, Cahit Uçuk[4] (1911-2014), who never changed her surname, even after four marriages. She admired and followed the work of Halide Edip, and reacted to the surname situation in Hürriyet newspaper on 18 January 2003, as follows:

> [Uçuk] likes Halide Edip most. […] However, Edip's signature changed after a marriage, and she signed as Halide Salih. One year later, she would be Halide Edip Adıvar. […] She thought that since Halide Edip was a well-known author and she thought that there was no need for this surname change at all (translated by me).

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[3] Autoethnographic output is being published in numerous academic contexts, including but not limited to Qualitative Inquiry, the Journal of Advanced Nursing, the Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, the Journal of Sociology, the Journal of Career Development, Cultural Studies, the Journal of Transformative Education, The Journal of Men's Studies, and Public Relations Inquiry. In addition, 1361 pages are listed while searching for autoethnographic articles on the Sage Journals homepage, and each page includes 10 articles, which means there are 13,610 published articles on Sage alone.

[4] http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/koca-soyadi-alan-halide-edipe-inat-cahit-ucuk-oldu-122589 (13 June 2016)

As first-wave feminism focused on women's voting rights, that is to say legal rights and issues of equality, Cahit Uçuk's demand is an understandable one. Fatma Aliye (1862-1936), for example, acquired the surname 'Topuz' after the surname law came into effect. According to Yaraman's book *Elinin Hamuruyla Özgürlük / Freedom with Women Hands*[5] in 1890 Fatma Aliye also signed her translation book *Meram* (Volonté by Georges Ohnet), with the name 'A Woman' (67). Behice Boran (1910-1987), an active politician, author and sociologist, was known for being fired from the Academy because of her views and was the first Turkish woman socialist member of Parliament who never deviated from her first surname after marriage. According to an anecdote, the head of a meeting called her 'Hatice Tatko Boran' instead of Behice Boran, where Hatko[6] was her husband's surname; the subsequent fallout was so intense that the person in question was disciplined by a superior. Boran was adamant about never using her husband's surname.

Another instance of a surname issue from this period is Şükûfe Nihal (1896-1973), who wrote an article for a newspaper at the age of thirteen regarding women's education rights, at a time when women were rarely seen in newspapers. Although she married twice, she never used anything other than her first surname, and preferred to be called either Nihal or Şükûfe Nihal[7]. Furthermore, Firuzan[8] (1932-…) never used a surname as author. The actress Melek Kobra[9] (1915-1939), on the other hand, used four different surnames even though she only lived to the age of 24. Initially she used 'Sabahattin', her father's surname. After the Surname Law went into effect, the family took on the surname 'Ezgi'. She then married Ferdi Tayfur and became Melek Tayfur. When her journal was discovered after her death, however, she had signed all the entries 'Melek Kobra', a name that she had chosen.

As an author, Nezihe Muhiddin[10] (1889-1958) preferred not to use her husband's surname during her literary career; Muhiddin is her father's surname. Likewise, anchorwoman and journalist Jülide Gülizar (1929-2011) did not use her father's surname 'Göksan', instead creating the surname 'Gülizar' to sign her work. As she says with her own words in Özlem Bayraktar's work *Ekranda Bir Kadın Olarak Kendine Yer Açmak (To Gain Ground on the Screen as a Woman)* "A lot of women artists change their surname when they get married. When they divorce, it changes again. This reduces their reputation to zero when they announce their new name" (152). When she became popular, people maliciously called her father by her surname, which made her father quite angry. Her father's reply is meaningful in this respect: Dear wife, tell your daughter Jülide that she does not use my surname; but don't give her surname to me (153). Author Sevgi Soysal (1936-1976) also used different surnames in her career, such as 'Nutku' for her first book *Tutkulu Perçem* in 1962 and 'Sabuncu' for her second book *Tante Rosa* in 1968. Ayşegül Yaraman emphasized the following in the article *Sorunları mı Sorumluluktan, Sorumluluğu mu*

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[5] The book is signed as Ayşegül Yaraman-Başbuğu, and at the time it was asserted that this was the first conscious double surname usage in Turkey.

[6] http://www.amargidergi.com/yeni/?p=1880 (11 June 2016)

[7] http://www.amargidergi.com/yeni/?p=2060#more-2060 (10 June 2016)

[8] http://www.enternasyonalforum.net/3653-post1.html June 2016)

[9] http://www.ucansupurge.org/yazdir?2C368827BCA87463C97E24B51D0B9212 (10 June 2016)

[10] http://www.lacivertdergi.com/portre/ornek-kadinlar/2014/12/30/kadin-haklarina-adanmis-bir-omur-nezihe-muhiddin (11 June 2016)

Sorunlarından: Kadınlık Durumu, Kadınlık bilinci ve Sevgi Soysal / Femininity Condition, Femininity Consciousness and Sevgi Soysal:

> Sevgi Soysal never used the surname she was born with. She acquired three different surnames from different men and published her work under these different surnames. Both her life and work document the specific period of time in which there are contradictions where the woman is both the witness and the accused. There are traces of women's struggles that have happened before. […] In her short life, Sevgi Soysal used four different surnames, and this legal situation mirrors the struggle of the '80s in which women sought to use their father's and husband's surnames together. They later got that right, and in 2000, women struggle to have the option not to change their surname at all (translated by me).

Singer Müşerref Akay was also initially known by the surname 'Tezcan'; however when she divorced, she was forced to give up the surname, because her ex-husband did not want her to keep it. Although the system and some husbands insist on giving a new surname to a woman when she gets married, they take it back when the agreement goes downhill. I even personally know a clerk who conspired to protect surname unions, and deliberately did their job as slowly as possible. Turkish Airlines[11] is another example of pressure to unite family names, with a campaign in which partners travelling under the same surname receive a discount of 20%. Furthermore, some of my female friends have very long surnames or masculine ones that they would like to change; however, I have also seen double-barreled surnames like Hanzade Doğan Boyner or Ümit Boyner Sabancı, where the Doğan, Boyner and Sabancı families' surnames represent not only a personal decision, but also a combination of very famous families, statures, and brands. What is the function of a surname, then?

The same logic applies when it comes to foreign surnames. For example, Turkish artist Hande Ataizi married Benjamin Harvey, a foreign national, and became Hande Harvey. As 'Harvey' is an international surname, newspapers wrote that it was very attractive: She is so lofty![12] On the other hand, in popular media, we saw a famous woman, Seda Sayan, who had relationships and marriages with younger men, which threatened the hegemonic system. She never changed her surname. On one hand, bestselling writer Elif Şafak prefers to use her mother's name as a surname. On the other hand, we know the lawyer and sociologist Nermin Abadan-Unat[13] with two surnames. At the age of 93, professor Nermin Abadan-Unat brought the issue of double surnames to the court, asserting that it was problematic to pass through airports in order to attend conventions, meetings or symposiums. 'Abadan' is her surname, which was acquired from her late first husband. In her court filing she noted the following:

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[11] http://www.sabah.com.tr/ekonomi/2015/11/12/thy-yuzde-20-soyadi-indirimi-yapiyor June 2016)

[12] http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/hande-harvey-cok-havali-oldu-23204154 (5 June 2016)

[13] http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/56575/iki_kocasinin_da_soyadini_istedi.html (20 June 2016)

Invitations from abroad create a distressing problem, in that 'Nermin Unat' and 'Nermin Abadan Unat' are the same person, but I cannot prove it. To solve at least this issue, I would like to use my two husbands' surnames together (translated by me).

As a traditional act, in many societies, women usually take on the husband's surname after marriage. History tends to be the story of husbands / men and the agreement all starts with name destruction. One is not born with those surnames, but later becomes Mrs. Hemingway or Mrs. Engels or even Mrs. Richard Dalloway, which enables a critical perspective upon the past. In short, hegemonic discourses erase women's voices, lives, rights and even their habits and names.

On the other hand, feminist / writer Mary Wollstonecraft kept her first surname after a marriage and signed papers as 'Mary Wollstonecraft femme [or wife of] Godwin' in 1797 (Mitzi 160); meanwhile Mary Macarthur and Violent Markham were elected for Parliament with their first surnames (Agnes 226). Also, Helena Normanton, the first female barrister in England, got her passport in her first surname in 1924 (Mossman 451). Moreover, as our names are symbols for our identities and personal integrity, Lucy Stone, a 19th century American woman, signed papers as 'Lucy Stone (only)', which can be considered as strong statement for that time period (Bysiewicz and Gloria 598).

Apart from patriarchal customs, there are a lot of reasons for accepting a new surname: Being a married couple, rejection of a father's surname or an attempt to create a new identity, feel close to a husband's surname, or bond to children. Whatever the reason is, first of all, it is an issue with a heterosexist perspective, which assumes that men-men, women-women relationships do not surround us; this is not the reality. Historically, names have been used to oppress people and taking on a husband's surname was a gesture of erasing identity. For example, black people left their African names when forced into slavery. It has been asserted that African-Americans have no knowledge of their family naming traditions. Thus, the last name reflects a heritage that has been conditioned, although "having their names and absolute identities totally taken away upon enslavement left African American slaves almost clueless as to who they were, where they came from and what purpose they served in the earth other than that of abject slavery" (R. Muhammad 27).

Furthermore, slaves had to take on their owners' name, which is another example of dominance over others via the imposition of surnames. Likewise, as it is stated in the article *The Long-term Effects of Africa's Slave Trades*:

There were a number of ways of identifying the ethnicity or 'nation' of a slave. The easiest was often by a slave's name. Slaves were often given a Christian first name and a surname that identified their ethnicity [e.g., Tardieu, 2001]. As well, a slave's ethnicity could often be determined from ethnic markings, such as cuts, scars, hairstyles, or the filing of teeth [Karasch, 1987, pp. 4–9] (Nunn 7).

4. Spreadability

Participatory culture argues that power on online participatory platforms includes open-endedness (Ganaele 91). In a networked culture, we spread information—consciously or otherwise—via social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Friendster, MySpace, YouTube channels and game clans. In my case, I have consciously made the decision and produced a documentary, which is telling my story as well as others', with a visual communication and cultural studies background. It is worth sharing with others, as everybody has a surname, where it created an environment in which people spoke up, and in some cases changed their opinions. Spreadable media[14] focuses on cultural practices, and discusses why sharing is an effective tool or creates a domino effect. Digital media, which I used frequently during my documentary's distribution process, provided a reimagining of social and political participation. For instance, Henry Jenkins, Sam Ford and Joshua Green use terms such as 'spread', 'spreadable' or 'spreadability' to define media circulation, and this concept assists our collective conversation.

My research offers a way of conceptualizing social media, as a system of elements using both digital and traditional media, and highlights a case study of efforts to reach a significant audience. Keeping in mind that in a world where "one-third of teens share what they create online with others, 22 percent have their own Web sites, 19 percent blog, and 19 percent remix online content" (Jenkins 3), with one click, I could communicate with almost anyone I wanted to, and very quickly. During that sharing process, people around me from Generation Y advised that I should only send the link to professionals. I did not listen to them because I agreed with Henry Jenkins, Sam Ford and Joshua Green, who say in their book entitled *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture* that, "our message is simple and direct: if it doesn't spread, it is dead" (18). To this extent, in this 'Selfie Age', my documentary and its relation with participatory culture can be considered rather sophisticated 'mesearch', where the Internet and its power are growing day by day. Thus, I created my documentary four years ago; now we have a variety of recording apps such as Snapchat or Scorp, using moving images as a core element. Four years from now, communication and its forms will become totally different; however, one thing will be left the same: expression.

Plus, Tami Spry, an autoethnography expert and keynote speaker of one our conferences, came with us to the karaoke bar. Besides, Spry wrote an article entitled *Call It Swing: A Jazz Blues Autoethnography*, and my new academic friends were interested in music, mostly jazz. During that evening, they were singing different kinds of music, and performing to a high standard, but I refrained from participating. It occurred to me that expression with passion could be taken as a whole, not only in a karaoke bar, but also in academic work. While watching those impromptu performances, I decided that I was not going to be some random academician. If I cannot sing on the night after a conference, then what is the meaning of life?

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[14] *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture* is a book written by Henry Jenkins, Sam Ford and Joshua Green, in which they discussed the term. Thus, "Henry Jenkins (1992) coined the term 'participatory culture' to describe the cultural production and social interactions of fan communities, initially seeking a way to differentiate the activities of fans from other forms of spectatorship" (19).

Years passed, and in 2016, I suddenly found myself in a jazz course conducted by Sibel Köse, a very experienced prominent jazz musician known not only in Turkey but also internationally, and the story of my musical journey is currently under construction. Hence, finding my way started with a camera as the instrument of expression, but even now that a microphone has taken its place, the truth remains that storytelling is storytelling. That night in that karaoke bar, I did not know that I had already instinctively used a specific form of singing method in my documentary, which included some non-verbal sounds. Afterwards I realised that me-search and me-construction have always been under way, and are an open-ended process. Within myself, there are numerous pieces of me who are talking to each other, and those selves are passing the fantastic ball to each other every day, at any moment. In a nutshell, my documentary and my research process have, after a few obstacles, brought new opportunities. This, in turn, has created a totally new world for me, which these days is filled with joy and laughter.

Conclusion

This practice-led documentary-thesis, which gave me the opportunity to gain both academic and inner vision, pushed forward the desire to understand my own decisions and acts as an emerging researcher and woman to be carried through in an independent world. I suggest that shifting women's position in society does not start from changing the law but traditional patriarchal mechanisms in society. It starts with individuals simply saying no to change their surnames, or their oppressive fathers, husbands or bosses—whatever the authority is. It also starts with offering uncanny academic methods for PhD research, such as autoethnography, with continuity in performance-based acts, with deconstructing the given methods, learning jazz, with regaining a certain freedom in singing, and with spreading the message to a community. By doing that, I offer that we are becoming myopic to mainstream ideologies and our open-endedness will be influenced, where, at that moment, the discipline is not important: it can be an autoethnographical documentary, unusual methodology, a theory around the margins like feminism, a participatory culture that creates collaborative interrogation so as to explore self in the presence of others to gain a collective understanding of their shared experiences and knowledge. The goal is to evolve and shift the acceptance of fluctuating self as a social subject in those auto + ethno (method), scat + ensemble (jazz), personal + political (self), individual + collaborative (participatory culture), and me + you (documentary) spheres, in which we tell our stories that reflect our own experience as a critical self-reflexive discourse, while adding our emotions in detail, and focusing on ourselves as researchers. At that point, the private inevitably becomes public, and it is a process that bridges the autobiographical, personal to cultural, social and political. I believe that eventually—given the possibility of spreadability and circulation of meaning—my story became y(ours).

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