REPRESENTATIONS OF MASCULINITIES IN THE POST-1960s TURKISH
CINEMA

by

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CINEMA

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ABSTRACT

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The changing paradigms of gender roles enable us to encounter with various representations of masculinity and femininity in different decades in the Turkish cinema. Focusing on the changing face of masculinity, and regarding the relation between masculinity and femininity, the analysis covers the approximately 45 years, a time phase remarked with changes which have sharply affected the microsocial and macrosocial levels of the society. Discussed within the western understanding of gender and masculinity theories, and through the socio-political environment of Turkey during the particular time period, the various representations of masculinity can be witnessed. The 1960s melodramas and the 1970s erotic films were followed by a rupture in the 1980s with the emergence of the women's films. A second rupture occurred in the second half of the 1990s as the men's films succeeded the women's films. The work of this thesis includes the analysis of the (re)construction of the hegemonic masculinities and the plurality of masculinities and the investigation of the existence and the evolution of a crisis of masculinity during the period in question.

Keywords: masculinity, femininity, gender, cinema, Turkey.

ÖZ

1960 SONRASI TÜRK SİNEMASI'NDA ERKEKLİK TEMSİLLERİ

Melis Umut

Görsel Sanatlar ve Görsel İletişim Tasarımı Yüksek Lisans Programı

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Toplumsal cinsiyet rollerinin değişen doğası, Türk Sineması'nın farklı dönemlerinde, değişik erkeklik ve kadınlık temsillerini karşımıza çıkarır. Erkeklik ve kadınlık arasındaki ilişkiyi göz önünde bulundurarark erkekliğin değişen yüzünü inceleyen bu analiz, toplumun mikrososyal ve makrososyal alanlarda sert değişimlere şahit olduğu yaklaşık 45 yıllık bir zaman dilimini içermektedir. Batıdaki toplumsal cinsiyet ve erkeklik teorileri çerçevesinde ve Türkiye'nin söz konusu zaman içerisindeki sosyopolitik ortamı göz önünde bulundurularak, erkekliğin değişik temsilleri incelenmektedir. 1960'lardaki melodramlar ve 1970'lerdeki erotik filmlerin ardından 1980'lerde kadın filmlerinin ortaya çıkmasıyla, erkeklik temsillerinde bir kırılma yaşanmıştır. İkinci bir kırılma ise 1990'ların ortasında ortaya çıkan ve kadın filmlerinin yerini alan erkek filmleriyle yaşanmıştır. Bu tez, söz konusu zaman diliminde, hegemonik erkeklik ve çoğul erkeklik kavramlarının (yeniden) yapılandırılması ve erkeklik krizinin mevcudiyeti ve gelişimini incelemektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: erkeklik, kadınlık, toplumsal cinsiyet, sinema, Türkiye.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

How have the representations of masculinities changed in the post 1960s Turkish cinema? Since gender is a social rather than a fixed construction, the evolution of this change cannot be separated from the social circumstances and technological advances of the period in question. This flexibility and dynamic notion of gender presents different types of masculinities during the approximately fifty years that this thesis covers. Accentuating the most typical masculine examples of each decade, we can witness how Turkish social, political, and economical spheres subtly and sometimes not so subtly affect notions of masculinity.

In order to understand the significance of the evolution of the representations of masculinities, a brief understanding of the sex and gender dichotomy is necessary. The shift from a singular understanding of sex to a binary one, the relationship between sex and gender has been influential since the 20th century in the Western philosophical context. Freud's psychoanalytical understanding of sexuality left no room for a necessary understanding of sex / gender distinction as what Freud's interest, the journey of the infantile into the adult heterosexuality, gendered fixed divisions in theories. However, approximately a half century later, Lacan's new perspectives on psychoanalysis opposed some of Freudian theory. Proposing phallus as a signifier of the sexual differentiation, emphasized the difference between femininity and masculinity on the basis of the imaginary relationship to the phallus. Another Lacanian difference between the two sexes is his notion of *jouissance*, results in the impossibility of the true heterosexual relationship. For him, phallic *jouissance* always fails men and a surplus of desire remains which cannot be fulfilled.[1] His theory is open to different concepts in the Turkish cinema. While some women's films of the 1980s reveal the

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[1] Jacques Lacan, *Feminine Sexuality* (New York and London: W. W. Norton), 137-48.

contradictory desires and needs of women and men, they reveal how a true heterosexual relationship is utopian. Also, the male homosociality appears as a mechanism which attempts to fulfill the surplus of desire through the commodification of women, especially in the 1990s men's films. Apart from his accounts on gender and sexuality, reading Lacan can enrich this thesis as his mirror stage theory has been influential for the film studies. The pleasure that the spectator experiences of wholeness resembles the Lacanian mirror stage in which the child's first illusion of wholeness occurs through his / her self-image in the mirror. The melodramas of the 1960s are mostly suitable to reading within this framework of the mirror stage as the identification of the spectator with the actor / actress of the film is one of the mechanisms of the melodramas.

The prevailing influence of psychoanalysis has been attacked in the postmodern era by various philosophers including Michel Foucault and Judith Butler. According to Foucault, psychoanalysis has become one of the institutions that categorize and medicalize sexuality, disregarding individual shifts and preferences.[2] Foucault perceives hegemony as not belonging to a particular group but rather an entity in itself which encompasses both the dominant and the oppressed groups.[3] Taking his theory as a starting point, the representations of the hegemonic masculinities and the plurality of masculinities reveal how these two different types of masculinities are affected by the hegemony, an entity in itself. From Butler's accounts, we can deduce how the question of agency has been reconstructed in the postmodern era as postmodernity tends to emphasize on the agency of the subject rather than taking the subject determined.[4] Whether the analysis of the representations of the plurality of masculinities has become possible in the post 80s Turkish cinema can be analyzed within Butler's context.

In order to understand the emergence and operation of the upcoming masculinity studies, the history and the critical points of feminist movement should be analyzed

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[2] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction Volume 1* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 119.

[3] Michel Foucault, *Power / Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972 – 1977,* ed. Colin Gordon (Essex: Prentice Hall, 1980), 156.

[4] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 3-44.

within its Western context. While modern feminism is rooted in the 18th century, the late 1960s sexual revolution reshaped feminist thinking. Feminist attacks on psychoanalysis and the attempts to recreate a new symbolic order through a new language have become one of the most influential feminist ideas of the time. Irigaray, a pioneer here, has analyzed the need of the capitalist culture to exchange women in order to operate. This exchange of women is held by the ho(m)mo-sexual monopoly which, in her sense, is not immediately practiced but rather socially mediated.[5] Her concept of ho(m)mo-sexual monopoly is useful in reading the erotic films of the 1970s because these films directly represent these kinds of ho(m)mo-sexual acts. The fictionalization of women, both in the women's films of the 1980s and the men's films in the 1990s, can be analyzed according to her theory.

Masculinity studies emerged as product and reaction to feminist theory with accusations to feminists for not defining the masculine position, definition of which has been one of the debateable issues. R. W. Connell's four approaches of the definition of masculinity, essentialist, positivist, normative, and semiotic, are widely used to describe masculinity.[6] Nevertheless, all four approaches define masculinity as an object, a definition of which gives a fixed and stable quality, contrary to the dynamic understanding of gender. However, all these differing approaches can be used in order to define personas within each decade in the Turkish cinema. While the attempts to find a universal definition of masculinity have been abortive, what the masculinity studies have introduced is the concept of the hegemonic masculinity and the plurality of masculinities that are open to different discussions. The work of this thesis is to unfold the changing paradigms of the representations of masculinities on the basis of the hegemonic masculinity and the plurality of masculinities. While the analysis of the hegemonic masculinity is possible in the post 1960s Turkish cinema, the analysis of the plurality of masculinities should be made in the post 1980s, the decade influenced by feminist movement and postmodern thinking, of which movements gave rise to the

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[5] Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which is Not One* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1985), 184.

[6] R. W. Connell, "The Social Organization of Masculinity" *The Masculinities Reader,* ed. Stephen M. Whitehead & Frank J. Barrett (Malden: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 2004), 30-4.

construction of the plurality of masculinities. The two questions that this thesis asks therefore lie at the heart of this discussion: how the representation of the hegemonic masculinity has changed in the post 1960s Turkish cinema and whether the representations of the plurality of masculinities have been successful.

Backed by the Western philosophical accounts on gender and masculinity, each decade is analyzed through the most characteristic of male personas of the time, regarding the social and political circumstances in that period. The melodramatic persona of the 1960s is the starting point of this analysis. The possibility of his constitution of the hegemonic masculinity is the main question while approaching him through the most characteristic qualities of the melodramatic genre, itself. While the main story of a melodrama is usually the romantic relationship between the man and the woman, the melodramatic persona is mostly faced with obstacles which he has to remove in order to accomplish his aims. However, the external obstacles are usually too great and prevent him being with his beloved. His sentimentality and melancholic behavior questions his appropriateness as an embodiment of the hegemonic masculinity.

While the significance of the cinema has lessened with the advent of the television in Turkey, erotic persona appeared in the second half of the 1970s. This persona differs from the others as his only chance to represent his masculinity is through sexuality, represented as a linear and a limited area. His representation is open to Irigaray's reading of ho(m)mo-sexual monopoly, as suggested. However, ho(m)mo-sexuality is not mediated through the homosocial relationships but rather through the judgment of the spectator in these films. Thus, the questioning of the hegemonic masculinity of the erotic persona is rather arbitrary.

The 1980s witnessed a rupture in the construction of the masculinities as feminist consciousness began to rise in the Turkish cultural context. Postmodern thinking also emerged and these two impacted the representations of gender roles. The so-called women's films had attempted to liberate woman and her sexuality. Despite some fruitful developments on the women's issue, they were also contradictory as they represented women through the male gaze. In the male directed women's films, the commodification of women had been represented, but this did not prevent the

masculine loss of power in the sense that these films also revealed the inner psychology and fears of men. The reconstruction of the hegemonic masculinity can be analyzed within this context. The possibility of the emergence of the plurality of masculinities also needs to be analyzed in this period.

The second rupture occurred with the emergence of the men's films in the second half of the 1990s. These films might be considered as a counter-attack to the feminist perception which has enabled the reconstruction of the masculine representations, a process also affected by the economical conditions of Turkey in that period. These effects resulted in the dominance of the masculine representations through several mechanisms, such as silencing the women or the rising emphasis on the homosocial relationships. These mechanisms matter as they are used in the reconstruction of the hegemonic masculinity. The changing face of the hegemonic masculinity needs a special consideration in this period. Do these films really, as Nejat Ulusay points out, represent a crisis of masculinity?[7] Or is the revelation of a crisis of individuality masked under the crisis of masculinity? The question of whether the plurality of masculinities could find a shelter in this period is also debatable. As a case study, the representations of homosexualities will be scrutinized in order to reveal the possibility of the construction of the plurality of masculinities.

As dealing with each decade separately might be insufficient in revealing the evolution of the representations of masculinities, three significant films compare and contrast the representations of masculinities: *Sevmek Zamanı* (Metin Erksan: 1965), *Bir Sonbahar Hikayesi* (Yavuz Özkan: 1994), and *Masumiyet* (Zeki Demirkubuz, 1997). How hegemonic masculinity has been reconstructed throughout the approximate period of time this thesis covers and whether the plurality of masculinities has been able to find a shelter within the parentage of the hegemonic masculinity is the work of this thesis.

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[7]Nejat Ulusay, 'Günümüz Türk sinemasında "erkek filmleri"nin yükselişi ve erkeklik krizi' *Toplum ve Bilim* (Vol:101, Fall 2004, İstanbul), 144-61.

CHAPTER I

THEORETICAL ACCOUNTS ON GENDER, FEMININITY AND MASCULINITY

i) Sex / Gender Dichotomy

The fact that gender is not a biological notion but rather a social construction is a recent phenomenon. Unlike the notion of sex, gender is constructed not only through biological aspects, but also through social positions such as race and class. It is the social implications that take the biological facts further and constitute the notion of gender. Because of the ambiguity and unnaturality of these social implications, gender is seen as flexible rather than a stable notion. The categorization of gender as masculine and feminine has been affected by this flexible and dynamic notion. For these reasons, there have been various approaches to the categorization of gender among the scholars.

Known as the pioneer of psychoanalysis, Freud's theories on sexuality have been influential on gender studies in the 20th century. Though he is misleadingly seen as the origin of the twentieth-century preoccupation with the importance of sexuality as Freud's knowledge of sexuality comes from the writings of Krafft-Ebing and the first generation of sexologists, his theories have been regarded as the starting point for the scholars throughout the decade. Through his emphasizing psychoanalysis, what Freud managed to suggest was the dangerous nature of 'the journey from an initial polymorphous perversity towards adult heterosexuality and fixed gendered divisions.'[8]

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[8] Jeffrey Weeks, Janet Holand, and Matthew Waites, "Introduction: Understanding Sexualities and Society" *Sexualities and Society A Reader,* ed. Jeffrey Weeks, Janet Holland, and Matthew Waites (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003), 3.

Freud had constructed his theories upon psychological behaviors. The Oedipus Complex has been one of the building stones in his theorization of the construction of sexuality and gender from the very early years of the childhood. The Oedipus Complex is rooted in the desire for the death of a rival, the parent of the same sex, accompanied by the sexual desire for the parent of the opposite sex.

> In that phase of children's libidinal development which is characterized by the normal Oedipus complex, we find that they are tenderly attached to the parent of the opposite sex, while their relation to the other parent is predominantly hostile. In the case of boys the explanation is simple. A boy's mother was his first love-object; she remains so, and, as his feelings for her become more passionate and he understands more of the relation between father and mother, the former inevitably appears as a rival. With little girls it is otherwise.[9]

Thus, in Freudian sense, a child is born with a fixed gender which is equated with his / her sex. His pre-determination of gender leaves no space for the flexibility and dynamics of the construction of gender. In his point of view, sexual and gender identity is based upon the knowledge of the body where both of the sexes come to identify with their same sex partner and femininity and masculinity are end results of a developmental chain.[10] This chain starts from the phallic phase which occurs at the same time with the Oedipus Complex. Before this phase, every child is bisexual and it is the sight of the presence or absence of the penis that paves the way to sexual differentiation.

> ...for both sexes, only one genital, namely the male one, comes into account. What is present, therefore, is not a primacy of the genital but a primacy of the *phallus*.[11]

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[9] Sigmund Freud, *Sexuality and the Psychology of Love; With an Introduction by the Editor Philip Rieff,* ed. Philip Rieff (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997), 184.

[10] Moria Gatens, *Imaginary Bodies: Ethics, Power and Corporeality* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 13.

[11] Sigmund Freud, *The Essentials of Psychoanalysis; selected with an introduction and commentaries by Anna Freud.* Translated by James Strachey. (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), 391.

In his accounts, phallus equates penis, the actual bodily organ which he perceives as the primal organ. Thus, for Freud, there is a strong relationship between masculinity and the femininity and the sexual organs.

> ...we speak of a person, whether male or female, as behaving in a masculine way in one connection and in a feminine way in another. But you will soon perceive that this is only giving way to anatomy or to convention. You cannot give the concepts of 'masculine' and 'feminine' *any* new connotation. The distinction is not a psychological one; when you say 'masculine', you usually mean 'active', and when you say 'feminine', you usually mean 'passive'. Now it is true that a relation of the kind exists. The male sex-cell is actively mobile and searches out the female one, and the latter, the ovum, is immobile and waits passively. (Freud 1986, 414)

The 'return to Freud' had been realized through Lacan's writings in the mid-20th century. Both building his theories upon and criticizing Freudian psychoanalysis, Lacan suggested new perspectives on psychoanalysis by emphasizing the strong linkage between psychoanalysis and linguistics. In his accounts, the meaning of the phallus is different than Freud. While for Freud, there is no difference between the penis and the phallus, in Lacanian understanding, phallus becomes a signifier of sexual differentiation. What it signifies is not an actual object but an imaginary one. In Lacanian sense, 'The phallus is the ultimate object of desire that we have lost and always search for but never had in the first place.'[12] Similar to Freud's understanding of the penis as the primal organ, for Lacan, phallus is the privileged signifier but a signifier of absence rather than an actual being. The other striking difference between Freud and Lacan can be found in their approaches to castration complex. While Freud revolved around the castration complex and whether or not someone 'has' or 'does not have' the penis, Lacan saw the castration as a symbolic process which involves the cutting off, not of one's penis, but of one's *jouissance* and the recognition of lack. A subject has two alternatives in order to represent this lack. In Lacan's accounts, while masculinity involves the pretence of having the phallus, femininity involves the *masquerade* of being the phallus. Therefore, in Lacanian sense, masculinity and femininity are not gained through biological aspects but rather their basis is on the imaginary relationship with the phallus. The phallus is imaginary so does it mean masculinity is also imaginary? The answer to this question has been analyzed by many

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[12] Sean Homer, *Jacques Lacan* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 57.

scholars later but in Lacanian sense, man cannot aim at being whole because of his relation as subject to signifier.[13]

Another important factor in Lacanian psychoanalytical system is the notion of *jouissance*. The notion of *jouissance* is complicated and is not directly translatable in English but can be defined roughly as 'pleasure *in* pain.' [14] Even though we cannot say what it actually is, we can experience it through its absence and insufficiency. For Lacan, femininity and masculinity are structures that are available to both men and women and thus, not related to one's biology. He thinks that what determines a masculine and feminine structure is the type of *jouissance* one is able to attain - what Lacan called phallic *jouissance* and Other *jouissance*.[15] Phallic *jouissance* is about failure and disappointment because it is based upon dissatisfaction which always leaves us wanting something or in other terms, which does not go without a surplus. On the other hand, Other *jouissance* is more abstract, something which cannot be spoken about. It is rather a complicated and an ambiguous issue but the significant thing is that both *jouissance* can be attained by women while men can attain either one or the other.[16]

The field of psychoanalysis has been enriched with Lacan's significant contributions upon Freudian understanding. While the influence of psychoanalysis was still prevailing, the institutionalization of psychoanalysis has been criticized in the postmodern era among scholars one of which is Michel Foucault. In his critics, confession is the basis of sexuality and a psychoanalyst is not different than a priest as they both constitute the authority. For him, the aim of the psychoanalyst is the standardization and medicalization of sexuality.

> By no longer making the confession a test, but rather a sign, and by making sexuality something to be interpreted, the nineteenth century gave itself the possibility of causing the procedures of confession to operate within the regular formation of a scientific discourse. (Foucault 1990, 67)

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[13] Lacan, 81.

[14] Homer, 89.

[15] Ibid., 96.

[16] Ibid.,104-5.

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Foucault suggests that the whole contemporary apparatus of sexuality is a historical invention. Unlike Freud, he argues that sexuality is not a permanent and transhistorical human essence but rather a modern invention. For him, sexuality is the domain which is constructed through discourse or language systems.

> In the space of a few centuries, a certain inclination has led us to direct the question of what we are, to sex. Not so much to sex as representing nature, but to sex as history, as signification of discourse. We have placed ourselves under the sign of sex, but in the form of a *Logic of Sex*, rather than a *Physics*. (Foucault 1990, 113)

According to him, sexuality as a historical and social construction is conducted through regulatory mechanisms such as law. 'There was no risk that sexuality would appear to be, by nature, alien to the law: it was constituted only through the law.'[17] By law, he means mechanisms such as prohibition or censorship. Apart from the mechanisms on the macro level, Foucault insists that the mechanisms working on the micro level are significant in generating sexuality. These mechanisms include the institution of marriage, motherhood, and compulsory heterosexuality. This means that sexuality and gender roles are created in an artificial sense rather than perceived as a result of genuinely intrinsic of the self.

Foucault's accounts on the historical construction of sexuality have enriched the feminist philosophers, such as Judith Butler, as it enabled them to theorize sexuality prior to culture. For Butler, there is a crucial difference between gender and sexuality which makes the gender neither the casual result of sex nor as seemingly fixed as sex. This affects the unity of the subject for this understanding of gender can cause a multiple interpretation of sex.

> If gender is the cultural meanings that the sexed body assumes, then a gender cannot be said to follow from a sex in any one way. Taken to its logical limit, the sex / gender distinction suggests a radical discontinuity between sexed bodies and culturally constructed genders.... When the constructed status of gender is theorized as radically independent of sex, gender itself becomes a free-floating artifice, with the consequence that *man* and *masculine* might just as easily signify a female body, as a male one, and *woman* and *feminine* a male as easily as a female one. (Butler 1999, 10)

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[17] Ibid., 113.

Butler's notion of the sexed body is similar to the construction of the mechanisms in the Foucaldian way of thinking. According to Butler, the category of sex, from the very start, is normative. This resembles Foucauldian *regulatory ideals*. What Butler means is that the gendered bodies are the productions of the mechanisms of sex. In Butler's words:

> ...'sex' is an ideal construct which is forcibly materialized through time. It is not a simple fact or static condition of a body, but a process whereby regulatory norms materialize 'sex' and achieve this materialization through a forcible reiterization of those norms. That this reiterization is necessary is a sign that materialization is never quite complete, that bodies never quite comply with the norms by which their materialization is impelled. Indeed, it is the instabilities, the possibilities for rematerialization, opened up by this process that mark one domain in which the force of regulatory law can be turned against itself to spawn rearticulations that call into question the hegemonic force of that very regulatory law. (Butler 1999, 236)

The prominent criticism of Butler is the arbitrariness of the connection of sex and gender and how the regulatory mechanisms work to maintain the socially accepted connection for the operation of the society.

ii) Selective Feminist Perspectives

Feminism has sprung into the everyday life in the late 1960s and the early 1970s but its traces can be found back in the late 18th century. The revolutionary zeal which was caused by the French Revolution in 1789 also had given rise to the modern feminism through the works of feminist writers, such as Mary Wollstonecraft. Her book titled *A Vindication of Rights of Woman* was published in 1792 and is seen as the foundation of modern feminism.[18] This book is a critique of the education available for women and the assumptions surrounding marriage and family life. Her assumption that marriage for financial dependency was nothing less than a legalized prostitution was

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[18] Susan Osborne, *Feminism* (Harpenden: Pocket Essentials, 2001), 7.

one of her most radical ideas of the time.[19] In the 18th century, literature was seen as the medium for women to speak. The novelists such as Mary Hays, Maria Edgeworth and Jane Austen were dealing with "Woman Question" in their novels. Their subject matters included concerns about marriage, motherhood, and family life and sometimes rape and prostitution.[20]

The foundation of modern feminism occurred in the late 18th century and by then, it revealed itself through the feminist writings and some activist movements and campaigns such as the British women's suffrage campaign which began at 1867 and lasted for sixty one years.[21] Nevertheless, these early activities and campaigns operated on the macro-political level as they were about the gaining of rights and freedom on the social sphere. However, in the mid-1950s, the face of feminism had changed with the sexual revolution and the shifting emphasis from high politics to low politics on everyday life. In fact, the new emerging feminist studies of heterosexuality identify the physical body as a social site. Thus, the feminist theory of the 18th century and the 19th century had become old fashioned for its tendency to explore the woman's body in its privacy. The tendency to leave feminine sexuality as hidden, fragmented and alienated was defeated by the scientific developments that enabled women to have control over their bodies. As Angela Davis points out, birth control which includes individual choice, safe contraceptive methods and abortions when necessary is a fundamental prerequisite for the emancipation of women.[22]

The new technological developments and the new trend of low-politics made an impact on feminist studies. One of the things women feminists and scholars reacted was the influence of psychoanalysis. As Gayle Rubin points out that the battle between psychoanalysis and the women's movements was legendary.

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[19] Ibid., 11.

[20] Ibid., 13.

[21] Ibid., 20.

[22] Angela Yvonne Davis, *Racism, Birth Control, and Reproductive Rights* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 303.

The child is thought to travel through its organismic stages until it reaches its anatomical destiny and the missionary position. Clinical practice has often seen its mission as the repair of individuals who somehow have become derailed *en route* to their 'biological' aim. Transforming moral law into scientific law, clinical practice has acted to enforce sexual convention upon unruly participants. In this sense, psychoanalysis has often become more than a theory of the mechanisms of the reproduction of sexual arrangements; it has been one of those mechanisms. [23]

What Rubin mentioned was not only the impacts on females but at the same time on gay males and even heterosexual males.[24] In her accounts, psychoanalysis has become a mechanism such as Foucault's *regulatory discourses* and the standardization and generalization of sexuality had left little room for individuals to pursue their sexuality according to their desires. In order to dismantle the apparatus of sexual enforcement, a critique of psychoanalysis was needed especially on the women's side. As Rubin points out there was no distinctive theory of feminine development in psychoanalysis until the 1920s. There was 'Electra' complex which was thought to be a mirror image of the Oedipus Complex described for males.[25] The main difference between two complexes was the change of the love-object occurred in the Electra complex as the little girl had to change her love-object in order to become a heterosexual woman.[26]

This theory was debated among upcoming feminist scholars who found Freud's explanations for female sexuality insufficient and arbitrary. As Rubin points out, in Freudian sense, feminine development could no longer be taken for granted as a reflex

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[23] Gayle Rubin, "Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality" *Social Perspectives in Lesbian and Gay Studies: A Reader,* ed. Peter M. Nardi & Beth E. Schneider (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 125.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid.,126.

[26] The first love-object of the male is the mother, because it is she who feeds and tends him, and she remains his principal love-object until she is replaced by another which resembles her or is derived from her. With the female too the mother must be the first object, for the primary conditions of object-choice are the same for all children. But at the end of the girl's development it is the man – the father – who must come to be the new love-object; i.e. as she changes in sex, so must the sex of her love - object change. (Freud 1997, 187- 8.)

of biology but rather, it had become something problematic. Freudian psychoanalysis tries to explain the becoming process of a woman rather than the real nature of a woman.[27] Luce Irigaray might be mentioned as another scholar objecting to Freudian psychoanalysis and proposing ideas towards the construction of another symbolic order.

> Freud does not see *two sexes* whose differences are articulated in the act of intercourse, and, more generally speaking, in the imaginary and symbolic processes that regulate the workings of a society and a culture. The "feminine" is always described in terms of deficiency or atrophy, as the other side of the sex that alone holds a monopoly on value: the male sex. (Rubin 1998, 127)

Irigaray problematizes Freud's taking the female sexuality for granted. For Irigaray, Freud takes the female sexuality as he sees and accepts it as a norm and bases the women's sufferings, symptoms and dissatisfactions on women's individual histories without regarding the linkage between women's pathology and a certain state of society. She objects to Freud's domination of women to the law of the father. To give an insight about the law of the father, some points need to be mentioned. In Freudian sense, it is the father who forbids the child from realizing its unconscious wish to sleep with his mother.[28] Lacan, afterwards, proposed that the father does not need to be an actual father but can be an absent or a dead figure. In Lacan's understanding, the law of the father is associated with the prohibition of incest and the instigation of symbolic law.[29] The important thing here is the relation between the law of the father and the language. In Lacanian sense, as the law of the father serves as a principle of differentiation and separation, it is in fact the law of language. For Lacan, we are born into language through which the desires of others are articulated and we are forced to articulate our own desire.[30]

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[27] Rubin, 127.

[28] Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo: Some Points of Agreement between the Mental Lives of Savages and Neurotics*. Translated by James Strachey (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960), 143.

[29] Homer, 57.

[30] Ibid., 44.

For Irigaray, language is one of the mechanisms of masculine monopoly. She does not confront Lacanian notion of language which emphasizes that language is the prerequisite to enter the symbolic order. But she focuses on the necessity of the change in language for women to gain their subjectivity.

> If we keep on speaking the same language together, we're going to reproduce the same history. Begin the same old stories all over again. Don't you think so? Listen: all around us, men and women sound just the same..... If we keep on speaking sameness, if we speak to each other as men have been doing for centuries, as we have been taught to speak, we'll miss each other, fail ourselves. Again... Words will pass through our bodies, above our heads. They'll vanish, and we'll be lost. (Irigaray 1985, 205)

Irigaray thinks that women never speak the same way. While men tend to talk in a linear and rational way, women's speech is full of ebbs and flows. What a woman emits is flowing, fluctuating and blurring.[31] This difference in speech and writing between men and women create a lack of communication. For this, language should be reconstructed in order to (re)place women into the subject position. Since the language is constructed in a phallocentric way in which unity of the phallus dominates the multiplicity of female sexuality, a way to allow this multiplicity should be created.

iii) Key Concepts on Masculinity Studies

It has been argued that feminist studies have left the concept of masculinity unstudied. Masculinity had been approached as the unmarked term in Lacanian sense which did not necessitate to be (re)defined as it was perceived to have been defined in an unchanging nature. The emergence of masculinity studies can be linked to feminist theory which was highlighted in the end of the 1960s. In the short run, it was constructed to deal with the surplus that was left by the notion of feminist thinking. This surplus was created through the exclusion of men as feminists attempted to create

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[31] Ibid., 112.

a new order which included women as subjects. In short terms, masculinity studies have emerged as product of and reaction to feminist theory.

An emergence of research into men and masculinities can be witnessed in the last two decades. According to Stephen M. Whitehead and Frank J. Barrett, in the 1990s, over 500 books had been published on masculinity studies. Also, in the USA, there are at least fifty universities offering specialist programs in the subject.[32] Judith Newton indicates that the 631 titles listed under the subject heading "masculinity" on amazon.com shows that in 1999, Amazon's male-authored and edited books outnumbered female-authored and edited books about three to one.[33] One of the main motivations of this increase is the feminist practices as has already been mentioned. As one of the direct consequences of feminist thinking and practices has been to expose and highlight the power, position and practices of men, by explicating the continuing inequalities between women and men, it has paved way to masculinity studies.[34] Taking its lead from feminism, masculinity studies is dedicated to analyzing what is conceived to be an implicit fact that the vast majority of societies are patriarchal and it had been on the advantage of men to enjoy more than their share of power, resources, and cultural authority.[35] Yet the upheaval in sexual politics in the mid-1960s paved the way to a small "man's liberation" movement in the 1970s among heterosexual men. With the emergence of "personal is political" motto, also gay men became to get politicized

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[32] Stephen M. Whitehead and Frank J. Barrett, "The Sociology of Masculinity" *The Masculinities Reader,* ed. Stephen M. Whitehead & Frank J. Barrett (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), 1.

[33] Judith Newton, "Masculinity Studies: The Longed for Profeminist Movement for Academic Men?" *Masculinity Studies & Feminist Theory,* ed. Judith Kegan Gardiner (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 177.

[34] Whitehead and Barrett, 3.

[35] Rachel Adams and David Savran, "Introduction" *The Masculinity Studies Reader,* ed. Rachel Adams and David Savran (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 2.

and gay liberation politics came into the scene which called into question the conventional understanding of what it is to be a man.[36]

What is it to be a man? For most of the scholars such as R. W. Connell, a man is defined in contrast with woman. According to Connell, while all societies have cultural accounts of gender, not all have the concept of masculinity. What he means is that the notion of masculinity does not exist on its own but rather it is inherently related to femininity. For him, a culture needs to treat women and men as bearers of polarized character types in order to have a concept of masculinity. To analyze masculinity on its own, there needs to be a polarization of femininity and masculinity.[37]

Connell gives four main strategies to understand masculinity. One of his approaches is the essentialist approach which uses a feature to define the core of masculine, and hang an account of men's lives on that feature.[38] The belief of essentialism is that things have invisible core properties and these give the thing its identity or nature, distinguishing it from other things. For this reason, essentialism is based on categorization and generalization. However, is it not critical to generalize things according to some man-made categories regardless of the unique features that the subjects have? To give a simple example of essentialism's working hand in hand with masculinity studies, Freud's notion of masculinity can be taken into account. Freud equated masculinity with activity in contrast to feminine passivity. He, also, equated masculinity with the possession of the penis and the femininity by the lack of it. What about the men who have been castrated? Are they not masculine? The other weakness in this approach is that: what is to be chosen to define as masculine? Can there be a universal feature that all essentialists will agree upon? This is the main dilemma about essentialism. While it is rather impossible to find such a feature that can be found in every men who are considered masculine, the other weakness in this

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[36] Tim Carrigan, Bob Connell, and John Lee, "Toward a New Sociology of Masculinity" *The Masculinity Studies Reader,* ed. Rachel Adams & David Savran (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 99.

[37] Connell, 30-1.

[38] Ibid., 31.

approach is that it disregards the psychological effects and the behavioral differences in men.

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Another approach is the positivist approach which defines what men actually are. This is a biological approach in which anatomy is proof of being a man. The basis of this approach is the masculinity / femininity scales in psychology. Connell defines three difficulties here.

> First, as modern epistemology recognizes, there is no description without a stand point. The apparently neutral descriptions on which these definitions rest are themselves underpinned by assumptions about gender.
> Second, to list what men and women do requires that people be already sorted into the categories 'men' and 'women'.
> Third, to define masculinity as what-men-empirically-are is to rule out the usage in which we call some women 'masculine' and some men 'feminine', or some actions or attitudes 'masculine' or 'feminine' regardless of who displays them. (Connell 2004, 31-2)

He indicates that the necessity to use the words 'masculine' and 'feminine'. If these words were not needed, the words 'men's' and 'women's' would be enough for usage.

The third approach Connell explains is the normative approach which defines what men ought to be. According to this approach, different men approach the standards to different degrees. For instance, if we are to take the toughness, one of the main characteristics of masculinity, how many men could approach to toughness of Eastwood or Bogart who are considered to display the norm of toughness in an exaggerated way? Where do the other man stand? Are they to be considered unmasculine? What about the gay men? 'How do we assay the toughness needed to resist the norm of toughness, or the heroism needed to come out as gay?'[39]

The normative approach creates a masculinity ideology. The problem arises because this imagined ideology imposes upon men to fulfill their masculinities according to its very standards. These rules may vary according to different scholars but what they have in common is the avoidance of the feminine features, the emphasis

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[39] Ibid., 33.

on toughness and aggression and fear and hatred of homosexuals.[40] Thus, homophobia turns out to be a common feature of normative masculinity. By excluding the homosexuals, it makes homosexuality necessitate a third category apart from masculinity and femininity. Thus, normative approach, based on exclusion rather than inclusion, is insufficient as the standards it puts are unattainable by the vast majority of the male population.

All three approaches are on the level of personality as they are dependent upon a certain feature or characteristic. The main problem or paradox arises on the choice of that certain feature or characteristic. The final approach Connell gives is the semiotic approach which has been very effective in cultural analysis. By semiotic approach, Connell means the definition of gender on the basis of symbolic differences in which the masculine and feminine places are contrasted and masculinity is defined as non-femininity. In the semiotic opposition, masculinity is the unmarked term and is the place of the symbolic authority because it is the phallus which is perceived as master-signifier. In this sense, what defines femininity symbolically is lack.[41]

Semiotic approach's definition of the woman as lack has important consequences in psychoanalysis, femininity studies and masculinity studies. Lacan's theory of 'Woman does not exist' can be read on the basis of the semiotic approach. In Lacanian thinking, the woman does not exist or that she is not-whole.

> Just as the phallus is an' empty' signifier – it is a signifier of lack and has no positive content – the sign 'woman' has no positive or empirical signified. There is no universal category of women to which the sign 'Woman' refers. (Homer 2005, 102)

What Lacan mentions is not a real lack or incompleteness but rather a symbolic lack. He indicates that in the *real*[42], nobody is missing any organ and thus, there is no such

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[40] Ronald F. Levant, "The New Psychology of Men" *American Psychological Association*, Nov-Dec 1997 [education directorate on-line]; available from http://www.apa.org/ed/men.html; Internet; accessed 7 October 2006.

[41] Connell, 33.

[42] In Lacanian sense, *real , imaginary , symbolic* is the triad that is used to define psychoanalytical orders. In this triad, *real* refers to the phase that exists before the

thing as a feminine lack. But in order to place her in the *symbolic order,* a woman is defined by lack as the *symbolic* order is based on language system of which the *transcendental signifier* is the phallus. Furthermore, in Lacanian sense, phallus is also described as a "lack". Thus, the language system that is subordinated by the symbolic order is based upon a lack and constituted in a negative sense.[43]

> The phallic signifier is, so to speak, an index of its own impossibility... the phallus is not simply lost but is an object which gives body to a certain fundamental loss in its very presence.[44]

According to Connell, these four approaches are significant as they may all be used to define masculinity. Nevertheless, all defines masculinity as an object. Therefore, they create a sort of abstraction by placing it as an independent and free-floating object which is close to any shifts and changes in the social sphere. Consequently, there arises a necessity to analyze masculinity through gendered relationships. Connell believes that the principle of connection can provide a successful reading of masculinity. In his regards, no masculinity can arise except in a system of gender relations and masculinity cannot be understood and analyzed disregarding its relationship with women and with other men, as well.[45]

One of the breakthrough concepts of masculinity studies is the notion of the hegemonic masculinity. However, the notion of hegemony cannot be used to understand how masculinity is constructed in a period of time as it does not indicate spontaneous pushing and pulling between ready-made groups. Nevertheless, hegemony refers to a historical situation and a set of circumstances in which power is won and held. Some constructions are necessitated for the constitution of hegemonic masculinity one of which is persuasion that can be achieved through commercial mass media, advertisements and publications. Another construction is the division of labor which

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mirror stage which corresponds to the imaginary phase. *Real* is that which resists symbolization absolutely.

[43] Lacan, 162-70.

[44] Slavoj Zizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London: Verso, 1989), 157.

[45] Connell, 33.

necessitates the social categorizations of tasks as either "men's work" or "women's work". Final construction is the state through its involvement in the negotiation and enforcement of the hegemony. The prohibition and criminalization of hegemony can be given as an example in order to understand this apparatus.[46] Here, Foucauldian way of thinking on hegemony should be recalled. In Foucault's understanding, hegemony creates a negation on two sides; the weak ones that are subjected to hegemony in all its destructive power and the strong ones that are perceived as the controllers of hegemony. In Foucault's words:

> One doesn't have here a power which is totally in the hands of one person who can exercise it alone and totally over the others. It's a machine in which everyone is caught, those who exercise power just as much as those over whom it is exercised... Power is no longer substantially identified with an individual who possesses or exercises it by right of birth; it becomes a machinery that no one owns. (Foucault 1980, 156)

Foucault's understanding of power or hegemony can be related to Lacanian notion of phallus which represents an empty signifier. In both, there is the pretending of possession. Thus, the concept of hegemonic masculinity comes with misconception in the first sense. In order to overcome this, there are several (re)-formulations of the concept in the western thinking. In some western approaches, hegemonic masculinity requires certain features such as heterosexuality, economic independency, ability to look after his family, rationality, ability to overcome his emotions and having no inclination to anything that is considered as feminine.[47] But this understanding of hegemonic masculinity is an ambiguous mixture of Connell's four approaches; essentialist, positivist, normative and semiotic.

According to Whitehead, hegemonic masculinity, gender order and patriarchy create an 'absent subject' who is exposed the fundamental weakness.

> For despite their allusion to resistance and agency, critical structuralist perspectives ultimately subsume the individual (subject) under a cognitive, strategic and assured deployment of power by rational actors, individuals who are themselves somehow excluded from the ideological forces 'they deploy'.

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[46] Carrigan, Connell, and Lee, 114.

[47] R. Alsop, A. Fitzsimon, and K. Lennon, "Theorizing Gender" (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002), 141; quoted in Kurtuluş Cengiz, Uğraş Ulaş Tol, and Önder Küçükural, 'Hegemonik Erkekliğin Peşinden' *Toplum ve Bilim* (Vol:101, Fall, 2004, İstanbul), 55.

Consequently, complex gendered power relations are reduced to an 'oppressor-victim' dualism, in which multiple subjectivity and self-identity processes are made invisible by the power of political categories of gender and sexuality and their ideological and material forces.[48]

But contrarily, it is the 'absent subject' in Whitehead's analysis that makes a significant contribution to the development of theories that retain recognition of multiplicity and difference. Here, Whitehead refers to Foucault's understanding of power which has a symbiotic relationship with resistance, both of which maintains the concept of the discursive subject. This discursive subject, a social and historical construct, is fragmented and decentred but at the same time enabled by the circularity of power in the social order.[49]

> The body remains the primary point of subjectification by regimes of power, but it is now understood by Foucault to be marked and created as a subject (and thus categorized as an individual) by these very same dynamics. Thus the symbiotic relationship between power and the subject is revealed both in the individual's subjection to those 'laws of truth' that constitute various discursive regimes and in the simultaneous marking and identifying of the subject as an individual – an enabling, positive moment of (self) creation. (Whitehead 2002, 101)

Though the relationship between hegemonic masculinity and the plurality of masculinities might be considered as opposing each other, they necessitate each other which resemble the oppressor / victor dualism in Foucaldian understanding. As mentioned, hegemony is a machine in which everyone is caught which blurs the oppressor / victor dualism. Also, as the self-identification of hegemonic masculinity necessitate the plurality of masculinities and vice versa, it might be concluded that the symbiotic relationship between hegemonic masculinity and the plurality of masculinities is inevitable in theory.

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[48] Stephen M. Whitehead *Men and Masculinities: Key Themes and New Directions* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002), 99.

[49] Ibid., 101.

CHAPTER II

Representations of Masculinities between the 1960s - 1990s in the Turkish Cinema

i) 1960s: The Melodramatic Persona

The dominant genre in the 1960s Turkish cinema was undoubtedly the melodramas. Despite that melodrama emerged before the 1960s, the time phrase between 1965 and 1975 was the golden decade for melodramas. Critics such as Özgüç or Scognamillo approach the trend of melodramas differently. While some points out that the production is at the peak and the number of spectators is increasing gradually, some, including Nijat Özön, perceives this decade as a dark decade, considering these films cheap and only constructed as the opium of people.[50] The fact to keep in mind is that in this time period, the films were shot primarily considering the preference of the spectators.[51] In the period, there were large numbers of spectators enjoying the melodramas and accordingly many films were shot in this genre.

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[50] Dilek Kaya Mutlu, "Yerli Melodramlar ve Ruhsal Boşalım" *Türk Film Araştırmalarında Yeni Yöelimler 1,* ed. Deniz Derman (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayınları, 2001), 111.

[51] Agah Özgüç, *Türlerle Türk Sineması: Dönemler / Modalar / Tiplemeler* (İstanbul: Dünya Kitapları, 2005), 243.

In Dilek Kaya Mutlu's analysis, melodramas necessitate two features; simplicity in the narration and the mechanisms that act as the opium for the spectator. If the historical facts of the 1960s are taken into consideration, the significance of this genre could be seen. The Military Coup took place in 1960 and its effects were visible in social life throughout the decade. The effects of unstable social conditions doubled with the collective paranoia could be felt in these melodramas. Tragedies of innocent people were regarded as the opium for the spectator because crying over the tragedy of a melodrama actor or actress could easily make the spectator forget about his / her sorrows. The mechanisms used to numb the spectator can be listed as identification, binary oppositions, obstacles and bodies in pain.[52]

Before going further, it is better to remind the relationship between Lacan's mirror stage and the theory of spectatorship in order to understand how the spectator responded to these melodramas. In Lacanian sense, a child is born with a sense of incompleteness, a lack. During its life, there is the constant struggle to fill this lack which can never be accomplished. The solution to compensate for this failure lies at the consolation with imaginary solutions, such as idealized images of itself as complete.

> The child's first illusion of wholeness is the mirror and the sense that 'that must be me'. More profound is the mirror provided by the mother who 'reflects' a particular identity back on to the child. The mirror image is a kind of mirage, a narcissistic self-idealization, a **misrecognition** because the imagined 'real' is always, in fact, unattainable.[53]

The pleasure that the spectator gets is similar to the mirror stage. The spectator gets a chance to experience, at least temporarily, an imaginary wholeness by accepting images which are misrecognition.[54]

Mirror stage is a crucial factor in explaining the Turkish melodramas. Mutlu's first mechanism, identification, is directly related to the mirror stage. Identification with

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[52] Mutlu, 118 – 9.

[53] Patrick Phillips, "The Film Spectator" *An Introduction to Film Studies Second Edition* ed. Jill Nelmes (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 143 -4.

[54] Ibid., 144.

the actor or the actress or in other words, the stars, is one of the basic mechanisms of the cinema. Christian Metz indicates that this identification process with the actor is based upon the identification with the *actor as 'star'* rather than the part.[55] When we look at the stars of the period, we see the *jön*s [Jeune premier] such as Ayhan Işık, Kartal Tibet, and Ediz Hun and the actresses such as Belgin Doruk, Fatma Girik, Türkan Şoray, and Hülya Koçyiğit. These are some of the bodies that make the identification process easier for the spectator as they are young, handsome, and beautiful. John Ellis argues that the basic definition of a star is his / her entering into subsidiary forms of circulation and feeding back into the future performances.[56] Turkish melodramas best fit the star system as the actors and the actresses generally have similar roles in different films. This makes the identification process easier for the spectator as it leaves no room for a surprise factor. The identification of the male spectator mostly occurs with the *jön*, often represented as the hero of the story, having a romantic affair with the leading actress. He is the protagonist of the film and this is sometimes backed by his own narration over the film. For instance, in *Hıçkırık* (Orhan Aksoy: 1965), Kenan (Ediz Hun) tells his own life story as a narrator. The dominance of the *jön* is also supported by his physical appearance because an actor should be handsome and well-shaped in order to be entitled as *jön.*

There are several mechanisms that are open to the analysis of masculinity in Turkish melodramas. These mechanisms can be categorized as through the men's suffering, through their relationship to women and through their relationship to the other men and the society. Male suffering differentiates than the female one because most of the time, the basis of the female suffering is the external factors such as a bad husband or the obstacles in being with the beloved one such as a fatal illness. Even though men could have similar problems that are caused by external factors, the major difference is that women do not have to prove anything regarding their gender, except some passive qualities such as chastity. However, on the men's side, they are constantly expected to do something to prove their masculinity. They are defined through their

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[55] Christian Metz, *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1977), 67.

[56] John Ellis, *Visible Fictions: Cinema: Television: Video*, rev. ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 91.

deeds because they are the ones to be regarded as the heroes of the story. The concept of the hero in the Turkish melodramas is similar to the same concept in the Greek tragedies. In both, there is the linkage between the hero's actions and the misfortunate events and the tragedies that are about to occur. In order to be the hero, they mostly have to pass a stage of anti-heroism in the Turkish melodramas.

Heroism vs. anti-heroism is a challenge which nearly every *jön* has to pass. The analysis of the structure of some films can reveal this concept more clearly. One way is starting directly from anti-heroism and paving way to heroism. *Avare Mustafa* (Memduh Ün: 1961), based on Orhan Kemal's novel named *Devlet Kuşu*, is a good example for this kind of structuralization. In the first phase of the story, Mustafa (Ayhan Işık) is depicted as a drunk and an unemployed man who does nothing but drinks at nights and comes home while letting out a yell. Then, he is been employed by the help of the rich girl who has fallen in love with him. Oppressed by the insistence of his close friends and his family, he leaves the girl he loves, Aynur (Fatma Girik), and marries the rich girl, Hülya (Çolpan İlhan). However, he finds himself enslaved within his marriage as he cannot go anywhere without the permission of his father-in-law who supports Mustafa and Hülya financially. Not withstanding the oppression anymore, he decides to return to his normal life, to his ex-girlfriend and ex-buddies which he had to abandon when he got married. The heroism takes place in the last scene. Hülya, who is still desperately in love with Mustafa, is about to die because of her sorrow. Her father visits Mustafa and asks him to visit her daughter just for once. He offers them money. Even though they are desperately in need of money as they want to run a new business, he does not accept the money saying that he cannot sell his humanity and accepts to visit Hülya. Despite all his bad deeds and traits depicted during the film, he becomes the hero in the last scene.

Another kind of structuralization is the loss of the heroic traits. In *Kırık Hayatlar* (Halit Refiğ: 1964), based on Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil's novel, we encounter the tragedy of Ömer (Cüneyt Arkın). Ömer is a rich doctor who is happily married to Perihan (Belgin Doruk) and has two daughters. Their lives change when they move to a rich neighborhood. In the neighborhood, high class people are living leading a free life in which polygamy is not unethical but a standard way of life. From the very start, Perihan has bad feelings about what to come. Ömer takes it as a womanly paranoia and jealousy

but this foreshadowing does not deceive us. In an atmosphere where marriage does not constitute an obstacle for having an affair, Ömer soon starts to see Gülşen, a free and a flighty girl. His relationship becomes spoilt by Perihan's suspicion about his cheating on her. Perihan learns about the affair but this tragedy is not the only one they face for their little daughter is about to die because of leukemia. In the end, the loss of their daughter unites them together again and he is forgiven by his wife and is back in the monogamous world.

There is another kind of structuralization in which the hero never gets the girl. In *Hıçkırık,* Kenan is in love with Nalan (Hülya Koçyiğit) who had been brought up as brothers and sisters. As she seems to take him as a brother, he can do nothing but keep his devotion a secret for twelve years. Nalan's marriage with İlhami makes Kenan fall in despair. After years of bottling up his feelings, Nalan learns his impossible love for her. However, her marriage with İlhami and being diagnosed tuberculosis makes it impossible for them to get together. Nevertheless, her death is the uniting factor as they come together in the last scene where she dies. Even though he could affect the girl by his deep devotion to her, he could not have her in the end due to the external factors he could not remove.

In most of the melodramas, the main tendency of the *jön* is to found him a family and live happily ever after. This is the collective consciousness of the society because the imposition of getting married is institutionalized in every level of education. Thus, getting the girl is a collective desire for heterosexual men and the male spectator can easily identify with the actors in melodramas who end up united or reunited with the women they love. In Mutlu's point of view, love is the ultimate factor for identification in melodramas.[57] For most of the time, the main story is the impossible love between the actor and the actress, and the significance of masculinity lies at how he deals with the external factors and the obstacles while trying to reach his beloved.

The other mechanism Mutlu talks about is the binary oppositions. One of the most significant features of Yeşilçam cinema is its dependence on binary oppositions. The

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[57] Mutlu, 118.

notion of binary oppositions is critical in structuralism. It is a pair of theoretical opposites which structuralists consider as a powerful tool for explaining the fundamental structure of human thought, culture and language. In the Saussurean sense, a binary opposition is the means by which the units of language have value or meaning; each unit is defined against what it is not.[58] Pairs such as woman / man, life / death, and presence / absence constitute the binary oppositions. In Mutlu's analysis, binary oppositions are significant as they are a strong indicator of the ending of the film and guide the spectator through their feelings about the characters throughout the film.

> Yerli melodramlarda genelde, filmin sonuna dek iyiler iyi, kötüler kötü kalır. Bu sayede film, seyircide iyilerle kötülere dair hislerin, karmaşaya yol açmadan belli bir yönde birikimini sağlar. Böyle bir durumda kötülerin cezalandırılması veya iyilerin ödüllendirilmesiyle seyircide üretilecek duygusal ve ruhsal etki daha kuvvetli olacaktır. (Mutlu 2001, 118)

The most common binary oppositions in the Turkish melodramas are good / bad and rich / poor. Even though the former mostly stays the same throughout the film, the latter is likely to change. The hegemonic masculinity is constructed on goodness and richness but *jön*s are depicted as poor men mostly. This means that one of the struggles for him is to have money which in the end means having the phallus because money is one of the most significant phallus substitutes. What is important in the melodramas is the strategy that men follow in order to gain money.

In most of the films, the leading man is not a bread winning type. In *Avare Mustafa,* Mustafa is a rogue man who is unemployed and drinks a lot. In *Sabahsız Geceler* (Ertem Göreç: 1968), Salih (Kartal Tibet) is also an unemployed and an alcoholic man who is supported by his family. Most of the time, the solution is found in marrying a rich girl and living as an *içgüveysi*[59] in the girl's house with her parents. In *Avare Mustafa,* Mustafa marries Hülya even though he is in love with Aynur. In *Sabahsız Geceler,* Salih's father Nafiz tells him how he has become an *içgüveysi* in Salih's mother's parents' house. In *Kırık Hayatlar,* Ferruh is accused by his wife, Şükriye, that he gained his welfare by his father-in love's richness.

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[58] Frank D. Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* ed. Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye (London: Duckworth, 1983), 118-9.

[59] The translation of *içgüveysi* is the man who lives with his wife's parents.

> Şükriye: Babam seni zengin etti, adam etti.
> Ferruh: Ben de sana unutamayacağın geceler yaşattım, ödeştik.

All these men are accused of selling their bodies and treated as kind of gigolos by their wives and even the parents of their wives. In both Mustafa and Nafiz, we sense their enslavement in the house they live as an *içgüveysi*.

Even though being an *içgüveysi* is an insult for a man, these men are encouraged to be one by their relatives or friends which is clear in Mustafa's case. His family members insist on his marrying Hülya, as well as his two close friends. The oppression is so much that he decides to marry the girl. However, afterwards, he cannot get away as he is forced to supply everything his family members want from him. In this context, he is challenged by a crisis. This is an example of the difference of the perception of masculinity on macrosocial and microsocial levels. While his living as an *içgüveysi* is perceived as one of the insulting features of masculinity by the society, it can be an accepted and even an encouraged state of being on the microsocial level.

The third mechanism is the obstacles that should be challenged and overcome in order to reach the happy end. If there is the happy beginning, the problems and the obstacles are to happen in a short period of time. For example, if there is a happy couple in the beginning, it is likely that they are going to depart for some reason in a time.[60] Some obstacles are not to be challenged, though. One of the most popular obstacles was fatal illnesses such as tuberculosis in the Turkish melodramas. Tuberculosis and such fatal illnesses mean that the happy end is unattainable. However, external obstacles such as bad stepmothers or bad husbands are likely to be challenged and overcome by the deeds of the *jön*s. In this regard, the solution of the external obstacles is directly related to the deeds of the actors.

The last mechanism Kaya talks about is the bodies in pain. In her own words:

> Yerli melodramlardaki tüm anlatılarda bastırılmış, kısıtlanmış, acı çeken vücutlar sergilenir. Acılar genelde sevgiliden ya da çocuktan ayrı kalmaktan kaynaklanır ve buna yol açan nedenler ekonomik farklılıklar, toplumsal normlar, namusa, şerefe ilişkin yanlış anlamalar, veya körlük, sakatlık gibi fiziksel kusurlar

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[60] Mutlu, 118.

olabilir. Karakterlerin acıları alkol, uyuşturucu, berduşluk gibi göstergelerle vurgulanır.[61]

The usage of alcohol is a common feature of the melodramas. For instance, Kenan (Ediz Hun) begins to consume alcohol to forget his impossible love for Nalan (Hülya Koçyiğit). Consuming alcohol is usually seen as a prescription for forgetting the sorrows and the pain. The other revelation of pain is the maudlin voice and crying. This feminine attribute can be found in most of the actors in the melodramas. These rather feminine features make the analysis of masculinity inappropriate according to the normative approach. As explained in the first chapter, one of the most significant features of masculinity is the avoidance of feminine features and toughness in the normative approach. The melodramatic persona mostly does not possess these features. This also makes it hard to read masculinity in the semiotic approach. Even though melodramas are based on binary oppositions, the feminine / masculine dichotomy is not strongly emphasized in the melodramatic characters for these reasons.

The basis of the melodramatic genre is the caricaturization which reveals itself in every aspect of the film, including the events and the characters of the film, affecting the representation of masculinities. The melodramatic guy is like a caricature, restricted in his own area, with his excessive characteristic features; either being the ultimate good or the ultimate bad. His deeds are important but there is not so much alternative that he can do because he is stuck in the limits of the ethical boundaries defined by the spectator's expectations. The period in which melodramatic genre was highlighted constituted of the fictitious men and the fictitious women, as well as the fictitious good and the fictitious bad. Therefore, far from depicting the general panorama of the society, melodrama is a boring repetition as the spectator encounters the very same features and the characteristics and is hardly surprised. However, this is one of the mechanisms of the spiritual discharger maintained through the identification process Mutlu talks about.[62]

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[61] Ibid., 119.

[62] Ibid., 111-20.

In short, melodrama is the genre that maintains the representation of one of the most unproductive plurality of masculinities. The representation of the hegemonic masculinity lies at the heart of the identification process which constitutes the genealogy of the genre, itself. As the hegemonic masculinity is constituted in terms of the binary oppositions and the ethical boundaries, there is no reality effect but rather there is the effect of the spiritual discharger on the spectator. The representations of masculinities are illusionary which make them no more than caricaturization.

ii) 1970's: The Erotic Persona

The end of the 1960s witnessed a tremendous uprising in the universities. Starting by the 1968s, these uprisings have become more important with the social uneasiness, and the insouciance, and the wrong political decisions of the governments paving its way to the 12 March 1971 Military Memorandum. Talas indicates that the period between the March 1971 and 12 September 1973 was a semi-fascist regime which restricted the syndication activities, collective bargaining and the strikes.[63] This restrictive regime had lasted till the election in 1973, resulted with the victory of the Republican Socialist Party ruled by Bülent Ecevit. Apart from the polarization on the political and social levels, there is another crucial factor Hasan Bülent Kahraman talks about; the encounter of the Turkish society with television.[64] With this new fashion, cinema started to lose its hegemony as the mechanism of entertainment. As a follow up, the cinema business had to find something to attract the attention of the spectator. The result was found in the erotic films which prevailed during the second half of the 1970s.

The first example of the erotic films is *Beş Tavuk, Bir Horoz* (Uysal Pekmezoğlu: 1974). Though the first films were more likely to be called erotic-comedy films, the

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[63] Cahit Talas, *Türkiye'nin Açıklamalı Sosyal Politika Tarihi* (İstanbul: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1992), 222.

[64] Hasan Bülent Kahraman, *Cinsellik, Görsellik, Pornografi* (İstanbul: Agora Kitaplığı, 2005), 203.

upcoming films were different in context. In 1979, the first so-called pornographic film, *Öyle Bir Kadın Ki*[65] (Naki Yurter: 1979) was shot. During this time period of five years, there is sort of a deconstruction of the past as the naivety of the melodramatic films had diminished and been overridden by the cheap nudity and eroticism these films offered to the spectator. An important differentiating factor of these films from the melodramas was their attempts to break the distinction between the good girl / bad girl dichotomy. This brings the freedom in the pursuit of sexuality for the characters in these films mostly live their sexuality without any borders, ending up with the creation of the phallic women as well as the phallic men.[66]

The opposition between feminine and masculine has been deconstructed in the erotic films. However, the feminine / masculine dichotomy is not the differentiating factor in the melodramas as mentioned as the main story is constituted through love and romanticism and the aim is to make the women fall in love with the *jön*. This is the traditional representation of the masculine activity and the feminine passivity. Nevertheless, the features such as the maudlin voice and the melancholic behaviour of men are against the definition of masculinity in the normative sense. In the erotic genre, this dichotomy is also not clear but this time it is the feminine part acting like the opposite, the masculine as women are also represented as active (masculine) on the surface. In other words, the representations of femininity are modified and women are represented as having a masculine desire. However, this is just an imitation of the masculine desire because in this imitation, there lies the submissiveness of the femininity for the female desire which serves to realize the masculine desire.

> Woman, in this sexual imaginary, is only a more or less obliging prop for the enactment of man's fantasies. That she may find pleasure there in that role, by proxy, is possible, even certain. But such pleasure is above all a masochistic prostitution of her body to a desire that is not her own, and it leaves her in a familiar state of dependency of man. Not knowing what she wants, ready for anything, even asking for more, so long as he will "take" her as his "object" when

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[65] This film is taken as the first pornographic film in the Turkish cinema by most of the critics including Agah Özgüç and Giovanni Scognamillo. To open a paranthesis, there is no hardcore depiction of copulation and no male and female genitalia (except the pubic area) in sight.

[66] Giovanni Scognamillo and Metin Demirhan, *Erotik Türk Sineması* (İstanbul: Kabalcı Yayınevi, 2002), 12.

he seeks his own pleasure. Thus she will not say what she herself wants; moreover, she does not know, or no longer knows, what she wants. (Irigaray 1985, 25)

In these films, there is no place for the multiplicity of the female desire in Irigaray's understanding. For Irigaray, female desire is different than the masculine desire because 'woman has sex organs more or less everywhere'[67] and it cannot be compared with the phallic desire which constitutes the one. This imitation of masculine desire in women's body is a challenge against masculinity through several mechanisms.

One of these mechanisms is the construction of heterosexual order through social ho(m)mo-sexuality in Irigaray's sense.

The law that orders our society is the exclusive valorization of men's needs / desires, of exchanges among men. What the anthropologist calls the passage from nature to culture thus amounts to the institution of the reign of hom(m)o-sexuality. Not in an "immediate" practice, but in its "social" mediation. (Irigaray 1985, 171)

The representation of women in the erotic genre can be analyzed within Irigaray's understanding. According to Irigaray, women are represented as the stock value on the market and there is the constant exchange of women. This exchange of women is the hom(m)o-sexuality in its social context. In the erotic films, there is the constant attempt to prove masculinity through social ho(m)mo-sexuality. [68] This requires an imaginary phallus, the tool of the imaginary hegemonic masculinity. Men are constantly expected to prove their masculinities through the women, regarding the other men. However, these other men are the imaginary men, a ho(m)mo-sexual group which acts cooperatively as the hegemonic masculinity in one body. As Michael S. Kimmel dictates:

Other men: We are under the constant careful scrutiny of other men. Other men watch us, rank us, grant our acceptance into the realm of manhood. Manhood is demonstrated for other men's approval. It is other men who evaluate the performance.[69]

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[67] Irigaray, 28.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Michael S. Kimmell, "Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame, and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity" *The Masculinities Reader* Ed. Stephen M. Whitehead and Frank J. Barrett (Malden: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 2004), 275.

In these films, ho(m)mo-sexuality is not empowered with homosocial environment which creates a sort of identity crisis for men as there is no strong characterization of the men in these films. The aim is to seduce the spectator rather than to narrate a story and therefore, there is usually no depiction of men in social life. Apart from the erotic scenes, we usually do not see men in the social sphere. They are not mostly depicted in men's places like *kahvehane* or *birahane* and they do not have so much encounter with other men who will judge their performances. Thus, the judge turns out to be the spectator of these films. Therefore, the spectator has two main parts; to identify themselves with the actors (through fantasizing the women on the scene) and to act as a judge for the masculine performance of the actor. These tasks are unified in one main part; judgment of his masculinity as the spectator himself.

The judgment process turns out to be fake and illusionary as there is not the real and genuine sexuality as in real life but on the contrary, sexuality is represented in a linear and a limited area and there is no place for experimentation left. The limitedness of the erotic depiction is because erotic entertainment is a mechanism based on normalization process.[70] This normalization process is realized through allowing the most agreeable fantasies. When we look at the couples in these films, they are mostly suitable, regarding their social condition and age. There is also the emphasis on the heterosexual copulation. Men and women are gendered in the most suitable and agreeable way as men hunt women and women are ready for men's seduction. However, this creates a restriction on people's behavior and fantasies. Shere Hite indicates that pornographic depictions impose an ideology on men's sexual feelings and behavior which differentiates the nature of their true sexualities because while claiming to represent nature, pornography imposes an ideology of how men should behave in their sexual lives.[71] What is expected from a man is to give sexual satisfaction to the

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[70] Bernhard Roloff and Georg Seeblen, *Erotik Sinema Cinsellik Sinemasının Tarihi ve Mitolojisi* (İstanbul: Alan Yayıncılık, 1996), 83.

[71] Shere Hite, "The Image of Men in Pornography: Man-as-Raging-Beast//The Uncelebrated Beauty of Men's Sexuality.A Reality Check" *Hite Research International*, 2005 [database on-line], available from http://www.hite-research.com/artmeninpornography.html; Internet; accessed 14 November 2006.

woman because as the genre necessitates, the male spectator watch the movie to see how the woman gets satisfied by the actor. The achievement to satisfy women is so strong that we encounter this aim even in the rape scenes. In *İntikam Kadını* (Naki Yurter: 1979), Zerrin Doğan is raped by Kazım Kartal. In this scene, he says to her 'Come on, feel something, enjoy it.'

The emphasis on heterosexual relationships leaves no space for homosexuality. Male homosexuality is out of question in these films. However, lesbianism is depicted in an unnatural way, given as a fantasy. In *Sevginin Bedeli* (Naki Yurter: 1975), a lesbian tailor seduces Dilber Ay, explaining that as her husband is out of town most of the time, she feels lonely and likes to make love with beautiful women. Another lesbian scene is in *Öyle Bir Kadın Ki*. Two girlfriends make love and afterwards, they have sexual encounters with various men. Lesbianism is depicted as a fantasy for the spectator in these films. As Agah Özgüç points out, these lesbian scenes cannot be analyzed in the context of eroticism and sexual aesthetics as they are not related to the plot or the characters in the film and there are no psychological or social connotations, represented as patchworks within the film.[72] These kinds of patchwork scenes are followed by heterosexual relationship of the woman in the lesbian scene because lesbianism is agreeable if the woman is still in the heterosexual matrix. For example, in *Sevginin Bedeli*, Dilber Ay is getting married even though she has made love with her tailor. This is tolerated because Ay does not reject the male hegemony as she marries a man in the end.

The representation of sexuality emphasizes machismo and submission in these films. In this simple context which is far away from eroticism, the spectator is placed as a passive voyeur.[73] Jill Bennett points out that while porn is intended to promote action, the desire to grasp the other body cannot be fulfilled and there is always the surplus that

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[72] Agah Özgüç, *Türk Sinemasında Cinselliğin Tarihi* (İstanbul: Parantez Yayınları, 2000) 165-6.

[73] Scognamillo and Demirhan, 233.

cannot be satisfied by the porn itself.[74] Thus, experiencing porn is dreadful for the (male) spectator as it leads the spectator to fantasize himself in the shoes of the actor, without having an actual satisfaction.

In this imposed and constructed area, there is no place for impotency or any sexual failure because it is taken for granted that men are ready for sexual intercourse anytime when they have gotten the chance. Men are imposed to be strong in sexual life as well as in other areas so impotency is a crisis for men and when a man does not perform well in sexuality, he gets the feeling of being paralyzed and considers himself as a half-man. This traumatic incident becomes a nightmare if other people learn about it. The reason for this condition is that impotency has been considered as a social problem, rather than an individual one. In Yaşar Çabuklu's analysis of the impotency in men, we can follow the evolution of impotency as a social phenomenon. He points out that with the Sexual Revolution, the linkage between pleasure and reproduction have become widened. Another innovation of the phase was that sexual dysfunction started to be perceived as something measurable in the laboratory environment.[75] Even though this softening perception towards impotency makes it more tolerable on the macrosocial level, the fear and anxiety about it has been still prevailing on the microsocial level.

Though impotency is not a subject in the Turkish films, it can sometimes be tolerated in the erotic-comedy genre. In *Tokmak Nuri*[76] (Ragıp Yılmaz Atadeniz: 1975), we witness how a man is affected when he becomes impotent. The leading actor Sermet Serdengeçti is obsessed with women and a voyeur. For his luck, his voyeurism ends in sexual intercourses with different women. While everything is going well for him and he keeps on wandering around women like a sex machine, everything turns upside down as he cannot get his erection despite a beautiful woman's (Nur Ay) hitting on him. His failure makes Nur Ay tease him by telling him "What kind of a man are you?"

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[74] Jill Bennett, "Leaving Nothing to Imagination: Obscenity and Postmodern Subjectivity" *The Rhetoric of the Frame* ed. Paul Duro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 247.

[75] Yaşar Çabuklu, *Bedenin Farklı Halleri* (İstanbul: Kanat Kitap, 2006), 126.

[76] It is also known as *Tok Nuri.*

This question depresses him so much that he commits suicide. After he is rescued, he realizes that he is no longer impotent and returns having sexual adventures. However, the question of the film explains the overall symptom of these films: What kind of a man are they?

iii) 1980s: The Neurotic Persona

The face of the Turkish cinema has changed sharply in the 1980s with the Military Coup which took place on the 12th September of 1980. Before the Coup, Turkey witnessed a tremendous polarization between right and left wing politics. The chaotic environment was also fuelled by the university uprisings and the demonstrations held on the streets. The solution was the Military Coup which had aborted the democracy and its dimensions for the upcoming three years. The madness of the erotic comedy films also stopped in this period. The new trend was the *arabesque* films which can be perceived as a variety of the melodramas. Another tendency was the so-called women's films which were affected by the feminist thinking.

Nejat Ulusay points out that masculinity was gradually losing its power in the 1980s Turkish cinema.[77] One of the reasons for this is the emergence of the so-called women's films. The women's films have different layers because it does not constitute a genealogy of its own but commonality lies in their emphasis on the social and sexual freedom of women. According to Atilla Dorsay, 1980s was the era of neo-eroticism as sexuality was no longer given as dehumanized and abstract but rather represented as more lively and humane. This perspective enabled women to live their sexuality according to their own choice and desire which in turn made them shift from object to subject positions.[78] For sure, the attempts to (re)place women's positions and the

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[77] Ulusay, 148.

[78] Atilla Dorsay, *Sinema ve Kadın* (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2000), 217.

changing perception of women have affected the construction of masculinity in this period.

Regardless of the 114 films he had directed in various genres, Atıf Yılmaz is mostly known as the director of the women's films. It was *Mine* (Atıf Yılmaz: 1982) that had started his reputation on the subject. Türkan Şoray is the leading actress of *Mine* in which she plays a different character than her previous films. Known as the possessor of Türkan Şoray's rules, she was a star who never kissed and made love in her films. But in *Mine,* she is a woman who lives her sexuality more freely than before. Having no affection for her husband Cemil (Selçuk Uluergüven), an arrogant man lacking sympathy for his wife and even forcing her to have sex with him, Mine falls in love with a writer, İlhan (Cihan Ünal), who has recently come to the small village that Mine and her husband live. Despite her marriage, all the villagers have a crush on Mine who is the most beautiful and the discreet woman in the village. Annoyed from the constant harassment and the ignorant people with whom she cannot find any subject to talk to, Mine finds İlhan interesting because of his intellect and emotional attitude. On the night that four villagers attack her house aiming to rape her but cannot accomplish their aim, she goes to İlhan's house to make love. Her making love with İlhan is the expectation of the villagers who want to prove her impurity. However, what makes her more impure is her choosing İlhan, an outsider who reveals a different type of masculinity from the rest of the village. His intellect, combined with his sentimentality, makes him unacceptable in the villagers' point of views as they constitute the macho type of masculinity.

Mine is significant as it reveals a new understanding of femininity and masculinity or gender in short. There are various significant points in the movie. First of all, the unhappy marriage of Mine is doubled with the sexual harassment of her husband as he rapes her in order to get satisfaction. Her husband's rape and the metaphorical rape of the villagers as she is under the constant scrutiny of them reveal the commodification of Mine's body. A villager says to Cemil: 'Since you possess the most beautiful woman in the world, you are the greatest.' Masculinity is constructed upon possession and the notion of *'at-avrat-silah'* [horse-woman-gun] is still prevailing in the village. However, it is İlhan who reveals a new understanding of masculinity.

There arises the plurality of masculinities, different than the hegemonic masculinity in the communal sense of understanding.

Secondly, a new type of sexuality is presented to Mine by İlhan. He does not try to possess her but she is surrendered by his books and his thoughts. Sexuality on the basis of sharing rather than possession reveals the dichotomy of the understanding of sexuality by men and women. One of the concerns of feminist thinking has been the transformation of sexuality in practice. It was Irigaray who has laid special emphasis on the misunderstood feminine sexuality which permits women to find pleasure almost anywhere in her body. 'Her sexuality, always at least double, goes even further: it is *plural.*'[79] Contradictory to the linear structure of male sexuality which has been perceived as phallus oriented, women do not need to have penetration in order to have pleasure in Irigaray's understanding of female sexuality. What she needs is the touch, to be caressed, a kind of sharing based on compassion. İlhan is a man who penetrates into Mine's soul and mind rather than her vagina. This is a shift in the common understanding of male sexuality and is different than the erotic films of the previous decade for in the previous films, there is the illusion of understanding sexuality as phallus oriented and no freedom of female sexuality which is taken as the imitation of male sexuality. The compassionate sexuality is seen in the melodramas even though there is no explicit sign of sexuality most of the time. However, the caricaturization of events and characters do not allow any free space for both sexualities in that genre. In *Mine,* we see real people with real desires. Mine is a cryout of female sexuality which has been tried to be enclosed by the masculine construction of sexuality and a voice for the allowance of the plurality of female sexualities as well as the plurality of masculinities. It is the Other *jouisance* in Lacan's account that Yılmaz is keen on to depict.

The depiction of communal rape on female sexuality by the force of hegemonic masculinity is the main motive in most of the women's films. In Atıf Yılmaz's films such as *Adı Vasfiye* (1985) and *Hayallerim, Aşkım ve Sen* (1987)*,* rape is conducted through framing women with male voice. Narration of women by a male author is a common feature of these films. In *Adı Vasfiye,* we encounter the life story of Vasfiye

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[79] Irigaray, 25.

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(Müjde Ar) through four men's explanations which do not correspond to one another. In one account, she is a challenging woman, in another she is the object of desire, a kind of prostitute. We cannot be sure which one is true but rather the narration enables us to create a woman out of four stories as Vasfiye never speaks and explains her story in her own voice. She is the woman that does not exist in Lacanian terms. By being never whole, never complete, she becomes a male fantasy that is constructed and reconstructed by the manly eye. *Hayallerim, Aşkım ve Sen* is also constructed upon a similar theme by Yılmaz. The film is about Coşkun's (Oğuz Tunç) love and devotion to a famous actress Derya Altınay (Türkan Şoray). In his dreams and fantasies, he lives with Nuran (a character from a melodrama that Derya Altınay plays), and Melek (a flighty character played by her). The dichotomy of good woman and bad woman or woman to get married and woman to sleep with is depicted through these two opposite characters. However, Derya Altınay, herself, is genuine and is not to be enclosed within these binary oppositions. As Coşkun gets to know her better, he faces what is behind these two characters that have been shaped in his mind for many years. However, not relieved with what he saw in her, he aims to write a script in which she will be the leading actress in order to frame her according to his own preferences.

In both of these films, there is the rape, not in the physical sense but rather in a metaphorical sense as women are deconstructed into pieces like a puzzle game but different than the puzzle games, they are never completed or made whole again but rather have been reconstructed according to the male preferences which reveal their inner feelings and fears. For instance, as an orphan who has never seen his own mother, Coşkun embraces Nuran as his mother. Nuran's son dies in the melodrama called *Yavrum* and in his mind, he replaces himself as his own mother. In his fantasies, Nuran always comes with a birthday cake to celebrate his birthday which rather symbolizes Coşkun's maternal feelings for her. Melek is Coşkun's fantasy but she is a fantasy woman, satisfying Coçkun in a metaphorical way. The figure of mother and prostitute has been tangled in his mind, a new phenomenon in Turkish films. Vasfiye is also raped by men who she has been with because her life is deconstructed in these men's stories. Influenced by their inner feelings and fantasies, these men recreate a woman that they want to have. As the male narratives recreate a woman in their imagination, these recreations enable the male spectator to recreate their own versions.

The women's films constitute a threat on masculinity for several reasons. Firstly, influenced by the feminist thinking and postmodernity, the construction of gender roles have been reshaped. The rise of postmodernist thinking corresponds to 1980s in Turkey. The effects of both the 1980 Military Coup and the postmodernist thinking resulted in the fragmentation of the society. In this environment, there is the strong polarization on both macropolitical and micropolitical levels. On the micropolitical level, the restructuring of the gender roles is inescapable. The attempts to subjectify women necessitate resubjectification of men. As David S. Gutterman indicates, 'a common critique of the postmodern subject is that by sacrificing stability and unity one also sacrifices agency.'[80] The notion that the transcendent subject's being a precursor to agency is deconstructed by the postmodern thinking and what gains importance are the process and the content of the constitution of the subjects which reformulate the discourse that produces the subjects. In Judith Butler's words:

> We may be tempted to think that to assume the subject in advance is necessary in order to safeguard the agency of the subject. But to claim that the subject is constituted is not to claim that the subject is determined. On the contrary, the constituted character of the subject is the very condition of its agency.[81]

The result is that while hegemonic masculinity is threatened by this new mode of thinking, the plurality of masculinities becomes possible and highlighted. 'Indeed, postmodernism's focus on instability, multiplicity, and contingency, as well as its subsequent celebration of difference, provides an extraordinary basis for interrogating the cultural scripts of normative masculinity.'[82] Within this framework, new type of masculinities can find a shelter while the old notion of understanding of hegemonic masculinity loses its significance. However, it does not mean that there is no hegemonic masculinity anymore but rather it means that hegemonic masculinity should interrogate

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[80] David S. Gutterman, "Postmodernism and the Interrogation of Masculinity" *The Masculinities Reader,* ed. Stephen M. Whitehead & Frank J. Barrett (Malden: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 2004), 60.

[81] Judith Butler, "Contingent Foundations: Feminism and the Question of 'Postmodernism'" *Feminists theorize the political,* ed. J. Butler and J. W. Scott (New York: Routledge, 1992), 12; quoted in David S. Gutterman, 'Postmodernism and the Interrogation of Masculinity' *The Masculinities Reader,* ed. Stephen M. Whitehead & Frank J. Barrett (Malden: Blackwell Publishers Inc., 2004), 60.

[82] Gutterman, 61.

and have a kind of individual pact with the plurality of masculinities in order to survive. The 1980s Turkish cinema has encountered the emergence of this phenomenon.

The second impact of the women's films on masculinity is that while these films tend to reveal the female sexuality and the inner psychology, it also does the same on the male's side, resulting in the creation of the neurotic persona of the decade in question. Naming these men as the neurotic persona makes clear in the analysis of *Medcezir Manzaraları* (Mahinur Ergun: 1989), based on the passionate relationship between Zeynep (Zuhal Olcay) and Erol (Kadir İnanır). As an educated and an indepdendent modern woman, Zeynep desperately falls in love with her boss, Erol, a peculiar man with his instability and unpredictability. As Zeynep falls in despair as she cannot be sure if they are in a real relationship or having a sexual affair, her friend and old lover, Ümit (Yılmaz Zafer), a psychologist, prevents her from having a nervous breakdown. Erol and Ümit are two different kinds of men, placed on the opposite poles of the masculinity scale if there is any. While Erol is the masculine type, active, aggressive and a boss, Ümit is more feminine, passive, calm psychologist. While the former is constantly breaking Zeynep's heart with his instable attitude, the latter has a deep devotion to Zeynep. The poor psychological condition of Erol is revealed through Ümit's analysis of him as a psychologist.

> Ümit: Erol Ersoy. Bir bankanın üst düzey yöneticisi. Başarılı, hırslı. Tavırlarında ve gözlerinde herşeyin sahibiymiş gibi bir hava var. Ve çok büyük bir korku. Bu korkuyu korkutucu tavırlarıyla gizlemeye çalışıyor.

In the end, Erol's diagnosis is put forward by Ümit; he is a manic-depressive.

> Ümit: Bir manik depresifle birliktesin.... Ayrıca davranış bozuklukları da taşıyor. Kabalığı, alkol bağımlılığı, taşkın cinsel eğilimler, şiddet...
> Zeynep: İyileşebilir değil mi?
> Ümit: Tabii ,teşhis doğrulanırsa ilaç tedavisiyle kısa sürede iyileşebilir.

The neurotic guy of the 1980s is embodied in Erol. It is ironic that he is played by Kadir İnanır who has been the representation of masculinity in the Turkish cinema. With his rules known as *Kadirism,* he is believed to 'have written the book of masculinity.'[83] The very features of him had not constituted a problem before but in this

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[83] It is translated as 'Erkekliğin kitabını yazmış'. It is a kind of slang usage in the Turkish cultural context meaning that he is the perfect man, totally appropriate with the codes of hegemonic masculinity.

film, his masculine features have been treated as an illness which has to be cured. He is the neurotic guy who hides his fear from everyone with some hyper-masculine attitude like sexual aggression and drinking excessive alcohol. The normative definition of masculinity is on the crisis and in this postmodern era, there arises the tendency to interrogate between different types of masculinities as explained in Gutterman's analysis. This interrogation takes place with the emergence of the plurality of masculinities as opposed to the hegemonic masculinity. Nevertheless, this reconstruction in the masculine roles results in the appearance of the neurotic persona of the decade.

CHAPTER III

Representations of Masculinities in the post 1990s Turkish Cinema

i) Socio-political Background of the Post-1990s

1980s was a milestone in the construction of masculinity due to the emergence of feminist movement and postmodern thinking in Turkey. The former has been reshaped with the second feminist movement that started approximately in the second half of the 1980s in Turkey. The feminist campaigns held during the last years of the decade were chaotic in the sense that they were not institutionalized. The 1990s witnessed the institutionalization of feminist movement with the help of project feminism and lobbying. While the 1980s was a period of rising consciousness, the 1990s emerged as a turning point when the retreat from the streets was followed by several kinds of institutionalization such as the construction of the women's centers in the universities and the publication of feminist journals. Fed by the postmodern thinking, the emphasis of feminism started to be assumed the identity based politics which had been made possible for the emergence of the minority groups such as Kurdish feminists, Muslim feminists, and lesbian feminists. Provided a shelter within the parentage of postmodern thinking, the fruitful heterogeneity in the society prevailed during the 1990s, when compared to the homogeneity of the 1980s.

Backed by the institutionalization and specification of the feminist movement in the 1990s, the location of the feminist activities changed from public to private,

meaning that the street campaigns were transformed into domestic visits held in terms of project feminism. Within these projects, the visits to male places such as beer houses were held which enabled the male participation.[84] This action rather irritated men as their homosocial places and sexuality was being occupied and questioned, respectively. While the former will be analyzed thoroughly on the basis of homosocial places in this chapter, the latter needs special attention on these pages. While questiong the sexuality of women on the basis of their chastity or virtue is banalized in the Turkish cultural context, when it comes to women questioning the men's sexuality, men become angry. As Bourdieu indicates, the suppression of women is an irreplaceable appreciation in the construction of masculinity.[85] Therefore, the construction of masculinity is based on two somewhat contradictory acts; the masculine suppression of women and the masculine longing for appreciation by women. If masculinity is constructed upon these two contradictory features, questioning men's sexuality by the project feminism troubles men as the dialogue deconstructs the mechanism of women's appreciation. No more acting as the ego developer mirror for the men, women become to constitute a threat for the masculinity.

The second wave of feminism is a production of postmodern thinking, becoming more and more significant in the 1990s. This line of analysis makes the identity crisis inevitable for masculinity as it emphasizes the construction of the identity rather than taking it for granted. In Hasan Bülent Kahraman's words:

> Postmodernite yeni bir özne keşfinin peşindedir. Bu özne, kimlik kavramıyla eşzamanlı olarak etkinleşir. Postmodernite, modernitenin öngördüğü tanımlanmış ve sonul olan bir kimlik düşüncesinden uzaklaşır. Kimliğin bir süreçlenme olduğunu varsayar. Kimliğin oluşumu kendisinden daha önemlidir.[86]

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[84] Gülnur Savran, "The Second Wave Feminist Movement in Turkey (with special reference to the 80's and the 90's)" (speech given at Sabancı University, 29 November 2006).

[85] Pierre Bourdieu, "Eine sanfte Gewalt. Pierre Bourdieu im Gesprach mit Irene Dölling und Margareta Steinrücke", *Ein alltagliches Spiel. Geschlechterkonstruktion in der Sozialen Praxis* ed. I. Dölling and B. Krais, 204 -226; quoted in Hilal Onur, and Berrin Koyuncu, '"Hegemonik" Erkekliğin Görünmeyen Yüzü: Sosyalizasyon Sürecinde Erkeklik Oluşumları ve Krizleri Üzerine Düşünceler' *Toplum ve Bilim* (Vol:101, Fall, 2004, İstanbul), 35.

[86] Hasan Bülent Kahraman, *Postmodernite ile Modernite Arasında Türkiye: 1980 Sonrası Zihinsel, Toplumsal, Siyasal Dönüşüm* (İstanbul: Everest Yayınları, 2002), 19.

The traditional values of the Turkish cultural thought make it difficult to accept the formation of the new identity in terms of the modern and the western values. The western / eastern dichotomy, prevailing in Turkey, had always problematized the construction of the gender roles. Nevertheless, the escape was always found in the reconstruction of the hegemonic masculinity within the paradigm of the changing dynamics of the certain period. Due to the blurry distinction between the eastern and the western values, the new features of Turkish masculinity have mostly been imposed upon the men in the Early Republican period. However, it was mostly the turmoil of the following years in the macropolitical levels that had affected the construction of gender roles.

The feminist issue at hand and the postmodern thinking have been possible with the unfolding of the new political values shaped by Turgut Özal. If we are to choose two notions from Özal's governance, these should be depoliticization and consumption. His ideology which aimed to construct 'the state for the citizen' began a certain kind of liberalism.[87] The liberal economy's emphasis on consumption created new micropolitical values. In Baudrillard's point of view, consumption cannot be thought just within the economical values but rather analyzed within the mediums, sexuality, and the body.

> Sexuality is 'at the forefront' of consumer society, spectacularly overdetermining the entire signifying field of mass communications. All that is presented there has about it a conspicous sexual vibrato. Everything offered for consumption has a sexual coefficient. At the same time, of course, *it is sexuality itself which is offered for consumption.*[88]

In Hasan Bülent Kahraman's accounts, the body has been abstracted and virtualized at the end of the 20th century. From the 1990s until now, technology has been creating new luxuries and so-perceived necessities for manhood through genetic, cosmetic and

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[87] Ibid., 90-1.

[88] Jean Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures* (London: Sage Publications Ltd, 1998), 143-4.

aesthetic interventions which encourage people to consume more and more.[89] This consumption is also backed by the successful advertisements, due to the emergence of private televisions. Apart from the advertisements, what the private televisions have brought to the scene is the television serials which have lessened the significance of the cinema as a medium of entertainment. In Gönül Demez's analysis of masculinity, in the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s, television type of masculinity is a virile type; men are represented as mostly clumsy and in need of a woman. According to her, Muhsin (Erdal Özyağcılar) in *Şehnaz Tango* and Temel (Erkan Can) in *Mahallenin Muhtarları* exemplify this type. However, the patriarchal values which have lost its significance in this period have succeeded with the re-accentuation of these values at the beginning of the 2000s. The modern *ağa*s and the guardian and protector type of men have been on the rise in this conjuncture. She gives the examples of Haluk (Tamer Karadağlı) in *Çocuklar Duymasın* and Seymen Ağa (Özcan Deniz) in *Asmalı Konak.*[90] In her own words:

> ...dönüşmüş ama ataerkilliğini kaybetmeyen köy ağaları, mafya babaları erkekliğe sahip çıkmak ister gibi geri dönmüşlerdir. Bu erkekler geleneksel Türk erkeğinin tüm olumlanan özelliklerini taşıyan ama modern erkekler olarak karşımıza çıkarlar. Bir anlamda birden bire değil de dönüşerek ama değişen kadın karşısında sahip olduğu saygınlığı ve otoritesini yitirmeden dönüşen bir erkek modeli olarak medyada boy gösteriyorlar.[91]

The most promising medical invention for male sexuality was certainly Viagra. If the contraceptive pills of the late 1960s have caused a sort of freedom for female sexuality, Viagra became a sort of regenerating factor for male sexuality at the end of the 20th century. Hasan Bülent Kahraman reads Viagra as a revenge of the contraceptive pills which aimed to liberate women's sexuality. In his own words:

> Viagra'nın çıkışıyla birlikte 1960'lardan bugüne kadar gelen ve kadının özgürleşmesine dönük adımlar açıkça bir kesintiye uğruyordu. O küçük mavi hap yeniden erkeklik 'iktidar'ını kuracaktı ve bu '*doğum kontrol hapı*'nın intikamını almak anlamına gelecekti. Nasıl o hapın çıkmasıyla birlikte kadın-erkek ilişkileri

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[89] Hasan Bülent Kahraman, *Postmodernite ile Modernite Arasında Türkiye: 1980 Sonrası Zihinsel, Toplumsal, Siyasal Dönüşüm*, 239.

[90] Gönül Demez, *Kabadayıdan Sanal Delikanlıya Değişen Erkek İmgesi* (İstanbul: Babil Yayınları, 2005), 157-8.

[91] Ibid., 158.

geriye dönüşü olmayan bir sürece girmiş, kadının özgürlüğünde önemli bir adım atılmış idiyse bu defa da aynı şey erkekler için denenecek, onların, her şey bir yana, önce kendi gözlerinde yitirdikleri 'iktidarı' yeniden kazanabilmelerine fırsat doğacaktı.[92]

The invention of these pills had attempted to erase the attacks of the sexual revolution and the feminist thinking on male sexuality. The invention of Viagra reconstructs hegemonic masculinity which started to lose its function in the last decades. Viagra is a strict answer to the emotional and the virile features of masculinity that have been accentuated by the feminist discourses and the postmodern thinking. It is an attack on the plurality of masculinities which is attempted to be re-sheltered in an umbrella of the hegemonic masculinity as Viagra aims to re-standardize male sexuality. Laura Mamo and Jennifer R. Fishman's analysis of Viagra talks about this standardization of male sexuality:

> The dominant model of male sexuality relies on notions of omnipresent sexual desire. The traditional script of male sexuality is that men always *want* sex – desire is never the problem. The script of the techno – assisted erection with Viagra follows and reinforces a similar script. Viagra 'works' because desire is taken to be unproblematic for the male user. In other words, Viagra is only a techno – assisted erection not techno – implanted desire. Although the physiological understanding of Viagra is that it *only* works if a man is sexually aroused, there is never any question that this will be the case. That is, this 'ability' is constructed to mean not the ability to be sexual per se, but the ability to penetrate. Both the assumption of desire and erasure of alternative sexual acts, expressions and manipulations that are part of Viagra's script reflect hegemonic ideas of sex and male sexuality.[93]

The new medium that enabled people to construct new identities was the Internet. With the advent of the Internet during the 1990s, virtual men emerged who found a free space to reconstruct their identities and masculinities but the fact that the cyber space is constructed upon consumption limits the representations of masculinities as these virtual men tend to construct their masculinities according to the general preferences. While rejection is just a click ahead, what the men do to prevent this occasion is to represent themselves as objects of desire by representing their sexuality visually

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[92] Hasan Bülent Kahraman, *Cam Odada Oturmak* (İstanbul: İnkılap Kitabevi, 2002), 21.

[93] Laura Mamo and Jennifer R. Fishman, "Potency in All the Right Places: Viagra as a Technology of the Gendered Body" *Body and Society* (Vol: 7 No: 4, December, 2001, Sage Publications), 23.

(through web-cam) or in speech. Thus, the Internet is one of the mediums that reconstructs masculinities in the post 1990s.

ii) Representations of Masculinities in the Men's Films

According to Asuman Suner, the decline of the Turkish cinema which had begun at the end of the 1970s and prevailed during the 1980s still existed in the beginning of the 1990s. However, in the middle of the 1990s, the Turkish cinema was revitalized. With the young directors directing their first films, the Turkish cinema has gained another perspective.[94] These young directors have initiated the notion of auteur cinema in Turkey.[95] Emphasizing individual experiences and disregarding the general taste of the society, the successful works of the directors such as Zeki Demirkubuz, Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Serdar Akar, and Derviş Zaim had revealed the still prevailing male authority in the Turkish cinema.

Nejat Ulusay's analysis of the men's films such as *Eşkıya* (Yavuz Turgul: 1996)*, Ağır Roman* (Mutafa Altıoklar: 1997), *Gemide* (Serdar Akar: 1998), *Laleli'de Bir Azize* (Kudret Sabancı: 1998), and *Mustafa Hakkında Herşey* (Çağan Irmak: 2003) reveals the very masculine construction of these films. According to him, these men's films which succeed the 1980's women's films indicate a new crisis of masculinity. In these films, women are somehow excluded; the emphasis is on the relationship of the male buddies or the father and the son.[96] The most significant concepts of the men's films are: fatherhood, women's betrayal, silenced women, and the homosocial relationships.

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[94] Asuman Suner, *Hayalet Ev: Yeni Türk Sinemasında Aidiyet, Kimlik ve Bellek* (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2006), 23.

[95] Though, we cannot say that these are the first auteur directors in the Turkish cinema. Starting from Metin Erksan, the Turkish cinema has encountered various auter directors. However, what differentiates here is that the period is known to be the period of auteur cinema in Turkey.

[96] Ulusay, 144.

Fatherhood is a prominent metaphor in the men's films. As Ulusay indicates, most of the time, the homosocial relationship between the buddies resembles the one; father and son. He gives the examples of *Eşkıya* where Baran (Şener Şen) is acting as a father to Cumali (Uğur Yücel) and *Gemide* where the captain (Erkan Can) represents himself as the father of his crew. One of the most significant examples is *Komser Şekspir* (Sinan Çetin: 2000) in which real fatherhood is at stake. Cemil (Kadir İnanır) accuses his father for determining his fate throughout his whole life.

> Cemil: Sayende polis oldum. Küçükken bayramlıklarımı, kızımın ismini, oturacağım evin nerede olacağını bile sen seçtin. Fakirin serveti çocuktur derler. Ama sen bu servetin değerini bilemedin baba. Sen benim nüfus kağıdımdaki baba oldun. Bundan öteye gidemedin.

Cemil, furious at his father's authority, tries to be a succesful father for his own daughter Su (Pelin Batu). After her illness is diagnosed as leukamia, he attempts to fulfill her dream which is to be an actress. For this, he sacrifices everything, even his reputation, by crossdressing as a drama queen. This is important for it is Kadir İnanır, known by his rules of Kadirism (see chapter II) who appears as a transvestite on the screen. In this film, his appearance in women's clothes for his daughter's sake reveals the changing perceptions of masculinity.

A striking example of fatherhood can be found in *Babam ve Oğlum* (Çağan Irmak: 2005). In the triangular relationship of the father – the son – the grandson, this time we encounter a man who has not obeyed his father like Çetin in *Komser Şekspir*. Despite his father's insistence to be an agricultural engineer, Sadık (Fikret Kuşkan) becomes a journalist and leaves his homeland. The chaotic environment in the city caused by the Military Coup of 1980 creates a tragedy for Sadık who loses his wife while she gives birth to his son, only to be succeeded by Sadık's fatal illness and his return to his homeland to put his son Deniz (Ege Tanman) into his family's hands. While Sadık's father Hüseyin Efendi (Çetin Tekindor) is still offended by his son's behavior, he finds it hard to accept his son and his grandson but in the end, it is the death of his son that makes him forgive him. The profound relationship that starts to exist between the father and the grandson substitutes for the long-ago love that has faded between the father and the son. These films exemplify the dichotomy of the son

that rejects growing up and the father who does not want to abdicate his authority over his son that Umut Tümay Arslan discusses.[97] In fact, this rejection necessitates a tragedy to be overcome like in *Babam ve Oğlum* and *Komser Şekspir*. The father and the grandson or the granddaughter relationship can also be a recipe. For these reasons, we can say that fatherhood is mostly given a melodramatic quality as the representation of fatherhood is mostly accompanied by the obstacles and tragedies.

Real fatherhood mostly comes with a bias in the Turkish cinema. While a father is trying to impose his hegemony over his son, he cannot reveal the love and respect to his son in a healthy way. Thus, father substitutes emerge as a guide. Both Baran in *Eşkıya* and the captain in *Gemide* portray these father substitutes. As Nejat Ulusay indicates:

> Artık, oğullarının hayatını düzene koyan Hulusi Kentmen benzeri tatlı-sert babalar ya da biraz hovardalıktan sonra doğru yolu bulup çabucak babalarına benzeyen oğullar kalmamıştır. Oğullar, kendileri için iyi bir model oluşturamamış gerçek babalar yerine, *Eşkıya* ve *Oyunbozan*'da olduğu gibi idealize edilmiş simgesel babalara, yetimliklerini unutturacak dostluklara sığınır.[98]

For this reason, the name of the father is embodied in another person or thing that acts like an authority over his imaginary son. As Umut Tümay Arslan indicates, 'the father is represented either as an excess or a lack in Turkish films.[99]' Either constitutes a threat for masculinity. While the former means too much authority which makes assuming male identity difficult, the latter indicates that a substitute, preferably older and more experienced than the man in question, is necessary in order to fill this gap.

Another significant concept emphasized in the men's films is women's betrayal. Women's betrayal, not a new phenomenon in the Turkish cinema but now is envisioned through the male experience of infidelity in the men's films. In *İtiraf* (Zeki Demirkubuz: 2003), we encounter Harun (Taner Birsel) and Nilgün's (Başak Köklükaya) story. After a suspenseful period of time, Harun finds out that his wife cheats on him for no obvious reason. The fact that Nilgün was married to his friend,

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[97] Umut Tümay Arslan, *Bu Kabuslar Neden Cemil? Yeşilçam'da Erkeklik ve Mazlumluk* (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2005), 207-8.

[98] Ulusay, 152.

[99] Arslan, 34.

Taylan, and has cheated Taylan with Harun makes him paranoid and this paranoia becomes reality as he finds about the truth. In the film, there is no emphasis on Nilgün or her action but the total emphasis is on the reaction of Harun to this incident. Nilgün's betrayal is just surface issue for it makes Harun to face up to Taylan's parents about his death. The truth that he did not cause Taylan's suicide does not prevent his going to their house to confess. The result is his dismissal from their house by saying 'Go and get rid of your sin in another place.' In this turmoil, he commits suicide but upon his decision, he calls his buddy Süha (İskender Altın) to be rescued. In this betrayal film, the woman disappears from the screen and we encounter the relationship of Harun and his buddies, Taylan and Süha. The former, driven to death, and the latter, as a savior, constitute a more significant part in Harun's life. His guilty conscience for Taylan's death is so great that he even forgives Nilgün's betrayal and in the end, we see him proposing to Nilgün, who is pregnant by the way, to go to Diyarbakır with him.

Üçüncü Sayfa (Zeki Demirkubuz: 1998) is another women's betrayal story from the same director. This is a tragedy of a man who finds himself in a conspiracy planned by the woman he loves. İsa (Ruhi Sarı) is a third class actor whose biggest ambition is a leading film role. His life is ruined because of the theft of fifty dollars. Accused of stealing it, he is beaten and threatened to be killed. Bothered by this incident, he writes a note and puts the gun on his temple but cannot pull the trigger as the doorbell rings. It is the house owner who has come to ask for his unpaid debt, a final action which drives him crazy and so İsa kills him. This time the savior is a woman for it is Meryem (Başak Köklükaya), his next-door neighbour, who effaces the traces of the murder. Not knowing that all the murder traces were erased by this woman, he begins to like her even though she is married to a man who beats her frequently. Exploiting his murder of the house owner, the admiration he has for her, and backed up by the scenario that her husband used to force her to be a mistress for the house owner, Meryem asks İsa to kill her husband. At first he is unwilling to abet in the murder she had planned but cannot say no. However, her husband is stabbed for his gaming debt before İsa could accomplish the plan. After Meryem's disappearance (without leaving a note to İsa), he sees Meryem with the son of the house owner and understands that she had a long lasting relationship with him. Shocked with what he had learned, he goes out and we hear a gun fire. What Demirkubuz depicts in *Üçüncü Sayfa* is a prolonged suicide story. All the incidents that İsa has lived throughout the film just extend the suicide he

intended to commit in the beginning of the film. Demirkubuz's gynphobic approachment, revealed in *İtiraf* and *Üçüncü Sayfa,* is a common feature of the men's films as Nejat Ulusay points out. In his own words:

> Kadınlara yönelik düşmanlık, fahişelik rolünün biçilmediği durumlarda, kocalarını ya da sevgililerini aldatan, onlara ihanet eden *femme fatale*'lar aracılığıyla ortaya çıkar. Gerçekten de, dönemin erkek filmleri arasında kadınların profesyonel anlamda fahişelik yapmadığı ya da kocalarına ve sevgililerine ihanet etmediği farklı bir örnek bulmak neredeyse imkansızdır.[100]

Mustafa Hakkında Herşey is another striking example of the men's facing up to his past through the women's betrayal. Leading a comfortable and luxurious life, Mustafa (Fikret Kuşkan) seems to have a satisfactory marriage with his wife, Ceren (Başak Köklükaya). Learning that Ceren was having a secret affair with a taxi driver before she died in a car accident shatters everything in Mustafa's life. With this incident, the brutal man who gives the sack to anyone he wants in the office turns out to be a miserable man who cries on the hospital ground. Mustafa is a contradictory man for he is stuck between western and eastern values, despising the latter ones. However, it is ironic that the man that Ceren cheats on him is a lower-class man, belonging to a group that Mustafa detests. Nevertheless, more important result of the incident is Mustafa's facing up to his past because this event causes him a trauma that belongs to his childhood. The compulsion of the human psyche to repeat traumatic events over and over again is embodied in Ceren's betrayal on Mustafa. Kidnapping the taxi driver, Fikret (Nejat İşler), to his country house, Mustafa finds himself in a peculiar relationship with him. As Nejat Ulusay points out, his story, in fact, is his search for the relationship that he could not have with his father. For him, the kind of homoerotic violent fantasy between Mustafa and Fikret is Mustafa's revenge from his father who has left him alone with his mother and spastic brother years ago.[101] It is also a confession to himself and his mother that it was he who had killed his brother when he was a child. In Mustafa's traumatic journey, Ceren's betrayal is used only as a metaphor.

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[100] Ulusay, 154.

[101] Ibid.,153.

In the men's films, female betrayal is not centered around women but rather the effects of it upon men become more significant. Why the woman cheated on her husband is either secondary or absent, unlike the women's films 1980s which focused on why the woman cheats on her husband or lover. What matters most in the men's films is the trauma of the men that is led by his wife's or lover's betrayal. In the men's world, the women's betrayal is silenced. The deed of the woman becomes a metaphor and the betrayal is enlivened in the men's unconscious or through his homosocial relationships. Betrayal does not only cause a crisis of masculinity but also, a crisis of individuality most of the time.

The actual silencing of women in the men's films also exists as Nejat Ulusay indicates:

> Erkek filmlerindeki en çarpıcı metaforu, konuşmayı reddeden ya da yabancı oldukları için bilmedikleri bir dilde konuşamayan kadınlar oluşturur. Kadınları anlatılarından büsbütün kovamayan filmler, böylece onları en azından 'dilsizleştirmiş' olur. (Ulusay 2004, 154)

The silencing of women is not a new phenomenon in the Turkish cinema. Berivan (Melike Demirağ) in *Sürü* (Zeki Ökten & Yılmaz Güney: 1978) resembles Keje in *Eşkıya*. While Berivan's dumbness is traumatic response to her three children's death as she gives birth, Keje refuses to talk as she had to leave her beloved one and married reluctantly another man. All these female tragedies result in literal silence which gives them their damned representation. The prevailing tendency to represent silenced women in the Turkish cinema increased in the 1990's men's films. Ulusay gives the examples of the foreign women who cannot speak because of their lack of Turkish: The Chinese tourist, *Herşey Çok Güzel Olacak* (Ömer Vargı: 1998)*;* the Russian, *Balalayka* (Ali Özgentürk: 2000); the tied up Romen, *Gemide* (Serdar Akar: 1998) and *Laleli'de Bir Azize* (Kudret Sabancı: 1998) are the examples of the silencing of women.[102]

We encounter a metaphorical way of silencing of women in *Bekleme Odası* (Zeki Demirkubuz: 2003). Ahmet (Zeki Demirkubuz) is a director who tries to write a scenario based on Dostoyevski's novel *Crime and Punishment* but is uneasy for he cannot write as he wishes. We see his uneasiness in the claustrophic atmosphere of his

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[102] Ibid., 154 – 5.

living room most of the time. Throughout the film, he sustains relationships with three women. In this film, women talk but Ahmet's apathy silences them. The first woman, Serap (Nilüfer Açıkalın), cannot abide his insensitivity that she suspects that he is seeing another woman. When she asks this, only Ahmet's silence assures her that there is someone else in his life. The second woman, his assistant Elif (Nurhayat Kavrak), tells him that she is thinking of returning to her ex-boyfriend Kerem, but again his apathy drives her crazy. We just see the clues of his relationship with Sanem (Eda Toksöz) but the past two incidents foreshadow the future of his current relationship. This time silencing the women is accomplished through ignoring them as if they do not exist. Nejat Ulusay indicates that this kind of gynophobia is a response to feminist thinking.

> Feminizm kadınlara erkek normlarını dayatan kültürel temsil sistemini bulandırmış, dolayısıyla, erkeklerin faal eyleyenler olarak idealize edilmiş temsillerine ve kadınların pasif elde edilme nesneleri ve erkek prestijinin sembolleri olarak temsil edilmesine dayalı erkek cinsel kimliğinin de bulanmasına yol açmıştı. Bu nedenle bu dönemin erkek filmleri yüksek düzeyde özkorumacı bağlanma ve nihai olarak, kadınlara yönelik açık bir öfke ile damgalıdır.[103]

The above quotation also relates to homosociality, one of the significant concepts in the men's films. In Hilal Onur and Berrin Koyuncu's analysis of hegemonic masculinity, we encounter with eight different milestones of masculine socialization. These are the entity of the exterior world which is marked as the men's world, the mechanism of the usage of the domestic values which are mostly the products of the women, silence, solitude, rationality, constant supervision position, violence, and physical distance.[104] These milestones can only be legitimized with the homosocial relationships, the very feature of the existence of male hegemony. Homosociality has two dimensions; physical and symbolic. Physical homosociality excludes the women from the men's social space and symbolic homosociality argues that ethical boundaries, political views, and other value systems should be made between the same sex members. This rather creates a sort of freedom for men.

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[103] Joane Nagel, "Masculinity and nationalism: gender and sexuality in the making of nations", *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* (21:2, March); quoted in Ulusay, 157.

[104] A. Heiliger and C. Engelfried, "Sexuelle Gewalt: Mannliche Sozialisation und potentielle Taterschaft" (Frankfurt: Campus, 1995), 75-78; quoted in Onur and Koyuncu, 38.

> ...erkeklerin özdenetiminin asgaride tutulduğu ve kadınlarla ilişkide zorunlu düşündükleri etik ve erotik davranışlar göstermekle yükümlü olmadıkları bu "özgür" alanların gerçekleşebilmesinin, kadının dışarıda tutulmasına bağlı olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Homososyal erkek birlikteliklerinin, kadınları bu dünyadan dışlamalarına tekabül eden birinci işlevine ek olarak, ikinci işlevleri, erkeklerin bu topluluklar içinde karşılıklı olarak kendilerinin dünyaya ve topluma bakışlarının normalliğini ve doğruluğunu tekrar tekrar ortaya koydukları ve meşrulaştırdıkları alanlar olmalarıdır. Homososyal topluluklar sayesinde, erkekler, giderek zayıflama eğilimi gösteren hegemonik pozisyonlarını, hala varmışcasına algılamaya çalışırlar. (Onur and Koyuncu 2004, 39-40)

Thus, homosociality is a reaction against the attack of the feminist movement and postmodern thinking, both of which have affected the understanding of hegemonic masculinity. Though homosociality is not a recent phenomenon as it has always been one of the concepts of the construction of gender, the representations of the homosocial places have been slightly changed in the Turkish cinema in the recent years.

The most common representations of homosocial locations are *kahvehane* [coffee house]*, birahane* [beer house]*,* and *pavyon* [cheap night club] in the Turkish cinema. While the first two totally exclude women, the latter has another dimension. Even though there are no such written rules that women cannot enter these places, we rarely see women there. In *Arabesk* (Ertem Eğilmez: 1988), Müjde (Müjde Ar) is escaping from her marriage ceremony in her wedding dress after being raped by several men, she goes into a *kahvehane* to ask how she can get to İstanbul. Upon this question, all the men start to unzip their trousers saying that '*Gösterelim anam.*' This rather exaggerated scene reveals the unwritten rules of prohibition of the women's entrance to the homosocial places. As Nejat Ulusay dictates:

> ...erkekliğin abartılı halleri onun daha fazla tehdit altında olduğunu gösterir ve bu durum eril olmama korkusuna dayanır. Başka türlü ifade edersek, sürekli bir erkeklik vurgusu ve erkekliğin tezahüründeki aşırılık, yeterince erkek görünememe kaygısına dayalı bir kırılganlığa işaret eder.[105]

Physical homosociality enables men to construct their masculinity through qualities such as excessive swearing and consuming porn in order to overcome this fear and virility that Ulusay talks about. In *Gemide,* we encounter such a location, a *birahane* where all men watch porn. This enactment, which aims to establish

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[105] Roger Horrocks, "Masculinity in Crisis" (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 89; quoted in Ulusay, 160.

heterosexual desire in its essence, is intensified through the excessive swearing which mostly humiliates women and the homosexuals.

> Küfürlü konuşma, cinselliği fallus düşüncesi etrafında ve yalnızca erkekle ilişkilendirerek tanımlar... "anlatıcısına, izleyicisinin de cesaretlendirmesiyle bir kadının baştan çıkarılmasına dair bir fantezi sunar" "Erkekliğin bu versiyonunda erkekler, kadınlar hakkında konuşmak ve hep birlikte, heteroseksüel arzunun önüne geçen bir erkekler arası bağı teyit etmek suretiyle kadınlar üzerinde hakimiyet kurar." (Ulusay 2004, 160)

As Nejat Ulusay also points out, swearing demonstrates the heterosexual desire but contradictorily enough occurs through the humiliation of women. While this act reveals that sexuality is perceived as belonging to the hegemony of men, it also proves Lacan's notion of the impossibility of the sexual relationship.

> Phallic jouissance is the jouissance that fails us, that disappoints us. It is susceptible to failure, and fundamentally misses our partner... (dis)satisfaction that always leaves something wanting is precisely what Lacan calls phallic *jouissance* and defines the masculine structure. A masculine structure is characterized by turning the Other into an *objet a*, and mistakenly thinking that the object can fully satisfy our desire. It is essential to keep in mind here, though, that phallic *jouissance* is not male in the sense that only men can experience it; it is experienced by both men and women and is defined as phallic insofar as it is characterized by failure. (Homer 2005, 104)

Here, *objet a* represents lack but is not about the absence of a specific object but merely the lack, itself. For Lacan, there is no such thing as a sexual relationship because masculinity and femininy represent two non-complementary structures. 'In a sense, we always miss what we aim at in the other and our desire remains unsatisfied. We can never be One.'[106] Thus, swearing which intends to humiliate and create a fantasy of the women at the same time exists to overcome this deficiency. In *Gemide,* the captain narrates a sexual relationship with a woman to his crew. None of the crew can know whether it is real or a fantasy. While listening to his story and smoking a joint, we hear their orgasmic sounds of arousal by the captain's storytelling. This fantasy of the captain becomes collective fantasy of the crew. In *Kader* (Zeki Demirkubuz: 2006), a similar incident occurs where Bekir (Ufuk Bayraktar) explains the copulation between Uğur (Vildan Atasever) and him to his buddies while they are smoking a joint. As an audience we know that this copulation has never been realized. These two examples imply the significance of the heterosexual fantasy and the heterosexual relationship in

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[106] Homer, 106.

the homosocial environment. While there is always the surplus of desire left unsatisfied in the heterosexual relationship because of the existence of two non-complimentary structures Lacan talks about, this surplus which cannot be satisfied by the act, itself, becomes something to consume in the homosocial relationships between men. The act might be real or the fantasy of the narrator but the collective fantasizing of women is one of the features of the construction of masculinity by the manhood.

Another homosocial place that is widely used in the Turkish cinema is *pavyon.* *Pavyon* is rather different from the former two for it does not exclude women at all and, on the contrary, requires their presence. *Konsomatris* [b-girl] works in *pavyon* by encouraging the men to spend money on beverages while flirting with them. This woman is Irigaray's woman on the market. According to Irigaray, 'the circulation of women among men is what establishes the operations of society, at least of patriarchal society.'[107] Thus, *pavyon* is an important location on the creation of the economics of gender. What differentiates these *konsomatris* women or the women on the circulation in general is their masquerade of possessing the phallic jouissance. As a complement, these women realize collective male fantasy in *pavyon* and serve for the homosociality in the end.

Pavyon has always been an important location in the Turkish cinema because it represents the miserable state of living for both sexes. When a man is unable to have an ordinary life, meaning that marrying a girl and having children, or else when a man is abandoned by his wife or lover, *pavyon* becomes a kind of sanctuary where he can forget his troubles for a couple of hours. But in the end, it is expected that he will return to a normal life in which he forms a family. It is mostly true for the melodramas and the arabesque films of the previous decades. But in the men's films, *pavyon* can mean different things. In *Masumiyet* (Zeki Demirkubuz: 1997) and *Kader,* both of which are based upon Bekir's deadly love for Uğur, Bekir follows Uğur everywhere as she moves from city to city as her lover, Zagor, is replaced in jail. Uğur mostly works in *pavyon*s and Bekir starts to act like her pimp. Uğur is unattainable for Bekir in spite of their physical closeness. While there is no sexual relationship in both films, Bekir watches Uğur act as a prostitude so he shares her with various men. Being stabbed or beaten by

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[107] Irigaray, 184.

different men does not kill his love for her and in the end, he commits suicide. In *Masumiyet* and *Kader, pavyon* becomes a sort of maelstrom for him. Rather than serving as a sexual medium, *pavyon* deconstructs his masculinity via his endless rejection by Uğur.

In the recent men's films, homosocial locations are represented as maelstroms from which there is no turning back. The lost men such as Bekir in *Masumiyet* and *Kader* or the captain and his crew in *Gemide,* who have not been able to gain what they want in life or more correctly, what the society wants for them, find themselves in these maelstroms such as *kahvehane*s or *pavyon*s. Here, they are unable to fulfill their desires which always lead to surplus. Both Bekir and the captain solve this dilemma by creating a fantasy, collectized by other males. As Bekir talks about how he had made love with Uğur to his friends and the captain the anonymous woman, both men sort of reveal that they have not found what they are looking for on the basis of sexuality. Thus, the communications in these homosocial locations serve for the orgasms that they have not been able to achieve.

The analysis of masculinity in the recent men's films reveals us the threat faced by hegemonic masculinity. Threatened by the emphasis on the plurality of masculinities, hegemonic masculinity needed to be reconstructed, but the men's films were unable to do so. The exaggerated depictions of masculinity through qualities such as excessive swearing or gynophobia reveal these men's fear of losing their masculinities. Furthermore, the targets of their anger, women and homosexuals, deserve cultural attention as their roles have also changed. The silencing of women, as discussed above, and maltreatment of homosexuals have direct relationship to the changing paradigms of masculinities. Therefore, the homosexuality issue needs a special focus in order to see the relationships between heterosexual and homosexual masculinities.

iii) Representations of Homosexualities

Connell's semiotic approach (see chapter I) defines masculinity through a system of symbolic difference in which masculine and feminine places are contrasted. Masculinity is defined as non-femininity. In this system, masculinity cannot be thought without a system of gender relations. Masculinity is defined by the processes and relationships through which men and women conduct gendered lives.[108] In this attempt, relationships between men are significant. As Michael S. Kimmel points out, men are under the constant careful scrutiny of other men and manhood is demonstrated for other men's approval. In Kimmel's accounts, masculinity is a homosocial enactment which I explained above. This homosocial enactment lies at the heart of homophobia, which is not a personal trait or a state of soul but rather a collective attitude related to homosocial enactment. The roots of homophobia lie at the pre-oedipal stage where the little boy is still identified with the mother. As he sees the world through his mother's eyes, what he sees in his father is a combination of awe, wonder, terror, and desire. This homoerotic desire has to be repressed in order to be a heterosexual man and homophobia is a repression mechanism, a sort of mask that covers the fear that men have. Homophobia is the fear that other men will unmask men and reveal that they are not real men. Thus, this fear is challenged in every homosocial relationship among men.[109]

What does homosexuality mean in Turkey? Does it have a unique definition or is there plurality of homosexualities within the society? According to Hüseyin Tapınç, there are four basic models of homosexuality or homosexual relationships in the Turkish cultural context: 'the masculine heterosexual', 'the masculine heterosexual and

[108] Connell, 33.

[109] Kimmell, 275-7.

the feminine homosexual', 'the masculine homosexual and the feminine homosexual' and 'the masculine gay'. According to him, the masculine heterosexual is defined homosexual through his participating in mutual masturbation.[110] For excluding any penetration in an oral or an anal way, this man considers himself heterosexual because penetration lies at the heart of homosexuality in the Turkish cultural context.

The model of 'the masculine heterosexual and the feminine homosexual' should be analyzed with the dimensions of activity, passivity, and mutuality for the sexual behavior is constituted of masturbation, oral sex, and anal intercourse. In this model, the role modeling of the heterosexual relationship constitutes the masculine, active inserter and the feminine, passive insertee. While the former regards his sexuality as heterosexual, the latter is regarded as homosexual. This role division reveals how the concept of homosexuality is understood in the Turkish culture because homosexuality is linked to oral / anal penetration. The active inserter is regarded as heterosexual because what he does is within the codes of masculine pleasure and serves his heterosexual needs.[111]

The third model constitutes 'the masculine homosexual and the feminine homosexual'. In this model, there is also the masculine, active homosexual and the feminine, passive homosexual. The difference of this model from the former one is that the definition of gender roles lies on the basis of sexual orientation instead of the gender roles. What is at stake is that there is the performativity of gender roles similar to the former model and the heterosexual context. However, the reaction of the society to the masculine, active homosexual model is different than the other two.

> ...the masculine, 'active' homosexual can still keep his place in the men's world so long as he 'announces' his 'activity' in social encounters. Yet, this does not suggest that being an 'out' 'active' homosexual is valued in Turkish society. On the contrary, he is subject to the devaluation of society in the final instance as well, but this devaluation differs in both degree and kind from the one *the homosexual* is subject to. (Tapınç 1992, 46)

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[110] Hüseyin Tapınç, 'Masculinity, Femininity, and Turkish Male Homosexuality' *Modern Homosexualities: Fragments of Lesbian and Gay Experience,* ed. Ken Plummer (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 40.

[111] Ibid.

The fourth model is a recent phenomenon in the Turkish society. In this model, there is no sharp distinction between the masculine, active and the feminine, passive but rather it regards itself as new construction of masculinity. These gay men call themselves as real men. It is no wonder that this new momentum has sprung through the urbanite, educated men. This new trend resembles the Western institutionalization of homosexuality.[112] With their own codes, they try to create themselves a space, be it through gay cruising places such as gay pubs or technology such as gay chat rooms on the internet.

After a brief analysis of these four models of homosexuality in the Turkish culture, we can analyze the evolution of the representations of homosexualities in the Turkish cinema. The representation of homosexual men has always been linked to the concept of homophobia in the Turkish cinema. The first homosexual appearance was based on the *efemine* characters which usually appear in the erotic comedies of the 1970s.[113] These are mostly caricatures for entertainment, mostly the men deviants and the excluded. For example, in *Tokmak Nuri*, while Sermet Serdengeçti is running from the husband of his girlfriend, he gets stuck in a house with two homosexual men. These men like him and make a pass at him which makes him run even faster than before. This shallow appearance always necessitates *efemine* behaviour as well. These men are depicted as speaking effeminately and wearing exaggerated clothes that make them look like women. Sermet Serdengeçti's running from homosexual men reveals his fear. The Turkish proverb says "90% of manhood is defined by escaping"[114]. Escape from what? Escape from homosexual men or the possibility to be unmasked by other men? In these kinds of erotic comedies, we encounter the tension of homophobia. Even though, they are laughed at, they are also considered as *sissies* who should not have any homosocial relationship.

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[112] Tapınç, 46.

[113] Özgüç, *Türk Sinemasında Cinselliğin Tarihi,* 329.

[114] *Erkekliğin 10'da 9'u kaçmaktır.*

The first narration of a gay story occurred in 1980. In *Beddua* (Osman F. Seden, Melih Gülgen: 1980), Bülent Ersoy plays a homosexual singer which resembles her own life story as this film was shot a life before her having sex reassigment surgery. Thus with his lipstick on his lips and white fur, he portrays a rather *efemine* appearance. His story was based upon his kidnap and rape as a child. As Agah Özgüç points out, this film is not a realistic depiction of homosexuality, but tries to break the taboo by setting the plot on homosexuality.[115]

Another important film about homosexuality is *Acılar Paylaşılmaz* (Eser Zorlu: 1989), the relationship between the father (Kadir İnanır) and his gay son (Kerem Tunaboylu). When Kadir İnanır learns about his son's homosexuality, he slaps him on his face. His frustration with his son concludes with a rather happy ending similar to Yeşilçam films. In the end, he believes that his son's choice is about his being nurtured without his father.[116] The tendency to link homosexuality to a psychological problem is a general phenomenon in the Turkish films. In both *Beddua* and *Acılar Paylaşılmaz,* homosexuality is explained through a traumatic incident or lack that occurred during the childhood. These shallow explanations tend to reveal homosexuality as a problematic issue rather than a personal choice. In both films, the explanation is simple: the gay men represented have become homosexual by the rather pitiful external factors.

The 1990s and 2000s Turkish cinema offers diverse approaches to homosexuality. Even though the homosexuals are portrayed as *sissies* and the tendency to problematize homosexuality still prevails, there are also attempts to normalize homosexuality. Before proceeding to normalization attempts of homosexuality, the changing face of the *sissie*s should be analyzed.

Lola and Bilidikid (Kutluğ Ataman: 1999) is one of the provocative gay films in the Turkish cinema. Even though the film takes place in Germany, the main characters are Turkish immigrants. Lola (Gandi Mukli) is a transvestite who had to leave her family because of her sexual orientation. She makes her living working as a belly

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[115] Ibid., 330.

[116] Ibid., 331.

dancer in a transvestite pub. Her small world is oriented around queer people such as her boyfriend Billy (Erdal Yıldız) and İskender (Murat Yılmaz), a gay gigolo. Her world changes when an unknown brother, Murat (Baki Davrak), introduces himself to her. Murat is also having some sexual problems as he hides his homosexuality. The effects of the clash of sexualities are doubled by clash of cultures. In this homophobic and xenophobic world, we encounter the tragedy of Lola.

The film's setting is at the gay cruising places such as public toilets, parks and transvestite pubs. We also encounter the female prostitutes in Osman's abortive attempts to "make out of a man" of Murat. In *Lola and Bilidikid,* we encounter a sexualized city. As Henning Bech puts forward, the city is fundamentally sexualized and that modern sexuality is essentially an urban one.

> There is the excitement of the amount of *supply and abundance, opportunity and freedom.* This is not merely related to the external wealth of mass, and sensory flutter, but also to the inner, potential freedom from 'being oneself' connected with the anonymity and noncommittedness of urban relations.[117]

In the film, public toilets are the ultimate places to consume sexuality. It is in these underground toilets that homosexual men, who cannot risk of revealing their homosexual desires by leading explicit homosexual relationships, engage in paid oral sex to fulfill their desires. In this aspect, both Billy and Murat are prostitutes who are getting paid by serving these men. They are not different than the prostitutes on the street. In these homoerotic encounters, they are the objects of desires of anonymous men.

Even amongst the gays, there is a diversity in the perception and construction of masculinity on the basis of exclusion. Billy is a macho character who sees himself as heterosexual rather than gay. His macho character is backed up with his masculine clothing. He does not have the sissy apperance but rather, with his leather jacket and masculine walk, he looks like a heterosexual man. He insists on Lola to have an operation so that they can marry.

> Billy: We can't live together like these German fags. We just have to live like normal people. Like husband and wife. Just like a normal family. I come home and you're there. But there's just one problem. Right. Guess who then?

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[117] Henning Bech, 'Citysex: Representing Lust in Public' *Love and Eroticism,* ed. Mike Featherstone (London: Sage, 1999), 219.

Lola: Why not you then, dammit? You're so crazy about a family.
Billy: (laughs) Because I'm a man, you're not.
Lola: I don't mind wearing a wig for the rest of my life but that's it.
Billy: Don't fool around, Lola. I'd sooner kill you and myself. If I have to, I'll cut your prick off.

In this regard, he replaces himself in Tapınç's second model of homosexuality because of Billy's insistence of basing his relationship with Lola on a heterosexual matrix. Despite his love for Lola, Billy is, at the same time, ashamed of his heterosexual friends' reactions for his relationship. When he encounters one of his friends on the street, he does not introduce Lola and does not say a word when his friend warns him about not to be seen so much with Lola. In fact, his attitude against Lola is not that much different than that of Lola's brother Osman. As *Lola and Bilidikid* says, Billy and Osman are two of a kind. Billy and Osman are the most problematic characters because their lives are based on two major dichotomies which are Turkish culture vs. German culture and heterosexual vs. homosexual. What they choose to do to overcome this problem is to abandon their origins, both sexual and national. Billy warns Murat not be gay.

Billy: You're not gay, are you? Listen, if anyone asks you, deny it. Life as a gay isn't worth living. I bet that in a year you'll have a wife. As long as you don't offer them your ass, everything will be okay. You haven't already, have you? Don't even think about it. A man is a man. A hole is a hole. No matter what you put in it. *Kestaneyi çizdirme, tamam mı?* Never be a hole.

Osman seems to have the same mentality by not being the hole but rather being in a hole of his own making. In the end of the film, Murat tells Osman that his rejection of Lola was not because Lola was queer but that Osman was queer. It should not be a coincidence that in the end of the film, these two homophobic characters are the ones who kill. While Osman kills his own brother, Lola, Billy kills the guy whom he suspects murders Lola. These "two of a kind" characters represent the collective homophobia in the society. While having some homosexual encounters and relationships, their fear of losing their masculinity leads to their tragic ends.

Though not based upon homosexuality directly, *Ağır Roman* and *Yazı Tura* (Uğur Yücel: 2003) have some minor homosexual characters which give homosexuality a different shape. In *Ağır Roman,* Salih (Okan Bayülgen) is the macho type who tries to

act like *kabadayı* [bully] in the poor and weird district where they live. When he discovers that his buddy İsmail (Küçük İskender) is gay, he is rather disappointed.

> Salih: Tüh, ulan insanın kan kardeşi tekerlek olur mu be? Şansa bak.

In *Yazı Tura*, Cevher (Kenan İmirzalıoğlu) is the macho type of guy who encounters with his gay brother, Teoman (Teoman Kumbaracıbaşı), whom he has never seen before. A similar dialogue occurs between him and his father.

> Cevher: Git askerde savaş kulağın sağır olsun. Dön, tam büfe açacakken deprem olsun, amcan ölsün, şu olsun bu olsun. Derken bir de Yunanistan'dan abin gelsin, o da erkek mi karı mı belli değil ya.
> Father: Ağzını topla, o senin abin.
> Cevher: Böylesine abi değil abla derler baba.

While Salih is disturbed when İsmail offers himself, so is Cevher by Teoman's kiss on his lips. However, a tragic incident occurs that makes Salih and Cevher saviors of İsmail and Teoman: Salih rescues İsmail from fire while Cevher rescues Teoman from three men who are beating him, Cevher murders. The striking similarity between these two films is their basis on the dichotomy between machismo and homosexuality. While homosexuality is treated as an illness by these macho types of guys, their acceptance of the issue occurs through the tragedy that the homosexual character faces. Becoming a sort of hero for them, these macho types of guys reconstruct their masculinities..

In *Yazı Tura*, masculinity is given an ill character as Teoman links his homosexuality to his lack of his father's love.

> Teoman: Babamı çok özlüyorum... Üst katta oturan yaşlı bir adam vardı. Beni çağırıp bana masallar anlatırdı. Bir gün çıktım yanına, oturdum kucağına. Babam gibi kokuyor. Sonra hep çıktım yanına, oturdum kucağına, başımı yasladım göğsüne. Bir gün kaydı bana. Bilmiyorum çocuğum ben o zaman, zannediyorum hayat böyle. Ben ibneyim, sen erkek tamam mı?

The dialogue between Teoman and Cevher reveals the two defective attitudes towards homosexality. Problematizing homosexuality on the basis of its origin and the self-reflexive manner of the homosexual in question to perceive himself as a 'faggot', backed by the homophobic attitude of the heterosexual men, do not allow the emergence of the representation of the masculine gay type of homosexuality as is suggested as the fourth model of homosexuality in Tapınç's analysis.

If any Turkish director that has broken the pact with the hegemonic masculinity and represented masculine gay type of sexuality, it is Ferzan Özpetek. Directing his

films in Italy (where he has been living for a long time), he has opened the room for the gay masculine type of homosexuality in his films *Hamam* (1997) and *Cahil Periler* (2001). Özpetek's first films have an orientalist approach which enables him to represent Turkey and mostly İstanbul poetically. His representation of homosexuality is also somewhat poetic. In *Hamam,* he narrates a story of an Italian guy, Francesco (Alessandro Gassman), who discovers his homosexual tendency on his visit to İstanbul. Intending to sell a house inherited from his aunt, he comes reluctantly to İstanbul. In this adventurous journey which enables him to encounter with the exotic symbols of İstanbul, he discovers a place called *hamam* (Turkish bath). Upon an old guy's guidance who says that 'You must enter the *hamam.',* he finds himself in a rather erotic environment occupied by half naked men. Surprised to hear that he is also inherited an old *hamam* from his aunt, he becomes fascinated by the notion of *hamam.* It is at *hamam* that he has his first sexual encounter with Mehmet (Mehmet Günsür). Forgetting his marriage with Martha, who comes to visit him in İstanbul and discovers his homosexual relationship, Francesco continues his relationship with Mehmet. In his films, Özpetek tries to depict homosexual desire in an aesthetic form. Together with *Cahil Periler* which takes place in Italy with mostly Italian characters, they constitute the most significant examples of homosexuality on the basis of the normalization of the issue. Özpetek can be regarded as the only Turkish director who depicts homosexuality without defaming character.

Though the attempts to represent homosexualities were significant in the post 1990s Turkish cinema, they were affected by the prejudiced understanding of homosexuality which still prevailed in the Turkish cultural context. In the Western context, there is the emphasis on the gay masculine representation of homosexuality; in Turkey only one director, Ferzan Özpetek, could represent this type of homosexuality in his films and it is not surprising that he has been living in Italy. The harsh representation of the homosexualities on the basis of homophobia and xenophobia in *Lola and Bilidikid* and the challenging story of *Yazı Tura,* based on the dichotomy of *machismo / homosexuality*, revealed the tendency to perceive homosexuality as a sexual problem rather than one of orientation even amongst the homosexuals, themselves. Thus, the neccessary interrogation between hegemonic masculinity and the plurality of masculinities was abortive on the basis of homosexuality in the Turkish cinema.

CHAPTER IV

The Evolution of the Representations of Masculinities through an Analysis of Three Films: *Sevmek Zamanı*, *Bir Sonbahar Hikayesi*, **and** *Masumiyet*

i) On Women, Love, and Sexuality

Most Yeşilçam films cannot be thought apart from the romantic relationship within the story. The expectation of the romantic relationship is usually the driving force for the spectator to go to the theatre. It is also a mechanism of identification process as it enables the spectator to identify himself / herself with the actor / actress of the film. As love is a cultural phenomenon, the meaning of love and sexuality varies from culture to culture and even in the microsocial groups within the same culture. When we compare the melodramas with the women's films and the men's films of the future generation, we can see how masculinity has been affected by the changing cultural paradigms and lifestyles. This change can be witnessed through the relationships of Halil (Müşfik Kenter) and Meral (Sema Özcan), *Sevmek Zamanı* (Metin Erksan: 1965); Can (Can Togay) and Zuhal (Zuhal Olcay)[118], *Bir Sonbahar Hikayesi* (Yavuz Özkan: 1994); and Bekir (Haluk Bilginer) and Uğur (Derya Alabora)*, Masumiyet* (Zeki Demirkubuz: 1997).

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[118] As there are no names of the characters mentioned in the film, the characters are referred with the names of the actors and the actresses.

In the narration of *Sevmek Zamanı*, we encounter the impossibility of the love between Halil and Meral through the melodramatic structure, constructed upon binary oppositions. In this film, it is the *poor / rich* dichotomy that pulls Halil and Meral apart. Foreshadowing about their separation, Halil does not want to believe that he is in love with the girl but insists on saying that it is the portrait that he is really in love with. His self-reflexive manner is one of the things that detach *Sevmek Zamanı* from the classic melodramas of the period. But it is the existence of the melodramatic elements in the plot and the characters that enable us to analyze Halil as the melodramatic persona of the 1960s. Apart from the *poor / rich* dichotomy, there is also the *Western / Eastern* dichotomy, enriched by the former one. While Halil prefers to listen to Mustafa playing the lute in his leisure time, Meral prefers to go dancing or shooting with her wealthy friends. An impact analysis of the film reveals the *eastern love / western love* dichotomy also. As falling in love with a portrait is a common feature of the Turkish Folk Literature, Halil's obsession with Meral's portrait is rather a representation of the eastern love with its naïve, transcendental, and sentimental qualities. Contrary to Halil's naivety, Meral's love is more worldly as she reveals her sexual and emotional desires openly. This opposition between Halil's transcendental love and Meral's carnal love, which reveals they have contradictory desires, needs, and expectations in life, makes their relationship impossible.

The melodramatic persona of the 1960s is sentimental, and romantic, and does not reveal his libidinal state. His mystical love for the woman exceeds the woman herself and gains a reality on its own. The melodramatic persona is mostly defeated by the obstacles and the external factors, due to the very structural features of the melodrama. Nevertheless, facing the obstacles and the problems, he mostly remains silent. Halil's silent reaction towards Meral's marriage reveals his agony he faces inside. Despite the agony and the sorrow of the unattainable love, he never gives up his feelings because being in love is a constant state of mind of the melodramatic persona.

The narration of *Bir Sonbahar Hikayesi* is also based on dichotomies but contrary to *Sevmek* Zamanı, the gender roles are shifted as it is Zuhal who is in pursuit of the emotional love while Can is in search of the worldly desires and fantasies. Seemingly suitable for each other on the basis of their social status and educational background, these two characters want totally different things in life. Influenced by the American

culture where he had his doctoral education, Can is the liberal type of guy, obsessed with possession whereas Zuhal is more concerned with emotions, spirituality, and the social problems of the time. This duality is enriched with the sexual problems of the couple. While Zuhal is into sentimentality and romanticism, Can's higher libido irritates Zuhal most of the time. Whenever she wants to talk to him, he wants to have sexual intercourse with her instead of talking. Zuhal's understanding of sexuality is relevant with Irigaray's understanding of sexuality, based upon 'touch' while Can's sexuality is phallus oriented. Lacan's theory of the impossibility of the true heterosexual relationship is also relevant in this context. In its essence, the theory is about the two non-complementary structures of femininity and masculinity which always leaves a surplus as neither part can fulfill their desires as they wish.[119] Can tries to satisfy this surplus of desire with his mistress, Sinem (Sinem Üretmen) while Zuhal tries to satisfy her need for emotionality with a student who admires her. However, these extramarital affairs do not gain the satisfaction they long for. The whole film is based on the *female / masculine* dichotomy as the contradictory needs and desires of two sexes lead to their unhappy and unsatisfied lives.

Both Halil and Can have fetishistic attitude towards women. While Halil has a fetishistic character as he falls in love with a portrait, Can has commodity fetishism which affects his relationships with women as he inclines to see women as a commodity. Halil is insistent of loving the portrait rather than the woman. Can, not considering attention to Zuhal's need of compassion, says to her:

> Can: Önemli olan nelere sahip olduğumuzdur sevgilim. Daha ne istiyorsun? Ayrıca cinsel doyuma da ulaşıyorsun.

His carnal lust is combined with his obsession with possession which always leaves him unsatisfied. Unsatisfaction is a common feature of these both characters as both Halil and Can cannot accomplish their desires. As both characters do not trust the subjects, they stick to the objects, instead. Their inner fears of dispossession adhere to their obsession with possession. The other similarity between them is their obsession with the women's image rather than the women, themselves. Halil buys a dress-stand with a wedding dress on it. In his imagination, it represents Meral in her wedding dress. Can buys expensive dresses for Zuhal and insists on her wearing them. He tries to

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[119] Homer, 104.

reshape the woman that lives in his imagination. Both characters are keen on the imaginary women than the real women, themselves. Their love transcends the women in the flesh. But Can's attitude towards women is different than the melodramatic persona of the 60s. The erotic films of the 1970s followed by the women's films in the 1980s have reshaped the representation of both genders. Can, with his treatment of women as a commodity, is the result of this evolution in the Turkish cinema. Asuman Suner points out that the women's films emerged in the 1980s were directed by the male directors.[120] According to her, these films played an important role in the liberation movement of the women as it enabled women to pursue their own sexuality and reveal their sexual desires. However, at the same time, women were framed by the male gaze which commodified and objectified the women in question.[121] Therefore, the opposition between the tendency to liberate women on the basis of their sexuality and subjectivity and the prevailing authority of the masculine gaze had contradictory impacts on both genders. The semi-liberated women caused the emergence of the confused and uneasy men, represented as more greedy and unsatisfied than before. Can is an example of this kind of insatiability. Though *Bir Sonbahar Hikayesi* cannot be categorized as a women's film, it is a significant product of these films, highlighted a decade before this film was directed. The impacts of the women's films on masculinity could be witnessed in Can's character. As mentioned, in the women's films, the linear and limited representation of sexuality that of the erotic films of the 70s paved its way to a more genuine representation of sexuality and the desires and fantasies of both genders started to be represented more openly. Can, with his masochistic fantasies and keenness on dirty talking, is the product of this evolution. However, this openness resulted with insatiable men, having contradictory feelings and needs which ended in the objectification of women. Therefore, it is not surprising for Can to objectify the two women in his life. Zuhal, maintaining him his prosperous social status with her virtuous and successful standing, and Sinem, promising him to fulfill his desires and masochistic fantasies, are nothing more than commodities in Can's life.

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[120] At this point, she excludes the directors such as Bilge Olgaç, Nisan Akman and Mahinur Ergun of the period. But she points out that the most famous directors of the women's films were males.

[121] Suner, 294-5.

The advent of the men's films in the second half of the 1990s unmasked the fake understanding of sexual liberation on both genders. Bekir's unattainable love for Uğur is an example of this unmasking. Despite the physical closeness of these two characters, Bekir can never have Uğur. Unlike Halil whose impossible love is due to external factors such as *poor / rich* dichotomy and Can whose unhappiness is caused by the clash of interests and needs, Bekir's story is more pitiable as Uğur is in love with another man, Zagor. Bekir and Uğur have been brought up in the same district unlike Halil and Meral and they also seemingly have similar kinds of tastes and needs unlike Can and Zuhal. Thus, the narration of the film is not based on the dichotomic structure like the previous two films in question. The dichotomic structure of a film creates easiness on the characters as it enables them to think that the happy end is reachable if the external obstacles are removed or if not, there is always a way to overcome the problem. Both in Halil's and Can's case, this is true as they find a solution to cope with their problems. Halil finds the solution by insisting on loving the portrait instead of the woman, herself and Can finds a mistress to satisfy his needs which cannot be satisfied by his wife. In both cases, they attempt to guide their own lives following the most suitable and safe options they have. However, in Bekir's case, it is totally different as he chooses the most hazardous and destructive path by following the woman he loves who is desperately in love with another man. Bekir's love has a kind of destructive feature as his love guides his life in a negative way. Enslaved in his obsessive love for Uğur, Bekir finds no way to pursue his life according to his own preferences and perceives to have no option left other than following Uğur everywhere she goes.

In the world of *Masumiyet* in which love is represented in a destructive and unpleasant way, Uğur's being a prostitute is another issue. The woman that Bekir cannot have has an exchange value on the market. Men come to the *pavyon* or the hotel in order to have sexual intercourse with her. While Bekir sometimes has big quarrels with her, he cannot prevent anything as he is just a silenced figure in Uğur's life. Asuman Suner thinks that men have been represented as the 'negatively constructed subject' in Demirkubuz's films.

> Seçim yapan, karar alan, harekete geçen, olaylara yön veren etkin özne konumunun aksine, "negatif olarak kurulmuş özne" edilgen, kendini silen, olaylar tarafından yönlendirilen bir konumu ifade eder. (Suner 2006, 187)

Bekir cannot be strictly regarded as a negatively constructed subject as he makes self decisions such as leaving his family back and following Uğur everywhere she goes. Nevertheless, whenever he is with Uğur, he becomes passive and acquiesces to everything she does or says. In Asuman Suner's account, Yusuf is the ultimate example of the negatively constructed subject. Showing no sign of zealot for anything, including his murder of his sister's lover, he seems like acting his part in a scenario that has been written for him. His passive attitude and submissiveness is also witnessed in his reluctance to go out of jail. When it comes to partake in the small and destructive world of Uğur and Bekir, he also reveals his submissiveness, obeying everything they tell him. For Suner, Yusuf's only active part occurs when he tells Uğur that he loves her and proposes her to begin everything anew. However, in this active attitude, he reveals the impossibility of what he says and acts defeated from the very start. [122]

Bekir's and Yusuf's acceptance of their defeat can be contrasted with Halil's fear of being defeated. Halil's insistence on loving the portrait which will look at him lovingly and compassionately forever is due to his inner fear of being defeated. Can also has the fear of losing. He says to Zuhal:

> Can: Kaybedenler ve kazananlar vardır, ben kaybedenler tarafında olmayacağım. Kaybedenler kaybetmekten başka seçenekleri olmadığını kabul etmek zorunda kalacaklar.

Can's fear can be differentiated from Bekir's, Yusuf's, and Halil's on the basis of its social connotations. Can treats Zuhal as a commodity, one of his possessions, maintaining him his social status. He suppresses his longing for being with a prostitute by having a secret affair with Sinem. However, his masochistic fantasies he performs with Sinem are unacceptable for his social status. Therefore, Zuhal, who seems virtuous and has a successful career, is a valuable commodity that guarantees his social status. Can does not want to lose Zuhal but is it so in Bekir's case? *Masumiyet* ends with Samuel Beckett's famous lines:

> Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better.

Bekir does not afraid of losing because he is self-aware that he has already lost and surprisingly, he does nothing to rescue himself from the turmoil he is in. In Halil's case, his self-awareness of losing Meral causes him to take precaution in his life by choosing to love the portrait instead of the woman, herself. However, his attempt is also abortive

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[122] Ibid., 188.

as he cannot stop loving Meral which drifts him into despair in the end. In Can's case, he tries to act genius in order to keep up the social status he has gained in a short period of time. Nevertheless, he cannot satisfy his needs and desires. Bekir and Yusuf are different as they are drifting in a turmoil from which they cannot save themselves and more significantly, they seem as if they do not want to save themselves.

Asuman Suner indicates that, some film theoreticians, such as Turim and Krutnik, are keen on reading *film noir* as men's melodramas. In both melodramas and *film noir*, the narration is based on an external incident, combined with the visual and psychological atmosphere that reveals the subjectivity of the characters. In both genres, characters are directed by the transcendental powers and desires and act according to them. Suner suggests that *Masumiyet* can be categorized as a dark melodrama as the film is based on the relationship between the *femme fatale* and the man who is affected by the woman's deeds which destruct his life. Following this argument, could we say that the masculine representations in the men's films are similar to the melodramatic persona of the 1960s? Despite the similarities between these two representations, there are widely differences between them, rooted in the forty five years period which is the work of this thesis.

The naive dreams and desires of the melodramatic persona of the 1960s cannot be found in the masculine representations of the so-called *dark melodramas*. If we are to analyze the evolution of the representation of masculinity in the post 1960s on the basis of sexuality, we encounter a transition similar to an ordinary sexual growth of a human being. The melodramatic persona of the 1960s is the infantile as he represents a state of mind with naive needs and desires without any explicit sexual connotations in them. All he longs for is the love of the woman he admires but separation is likely to occur due to the external factors which he cannot prevent. Left powerless due to these factors, he is the 'negatively constructed subject' who is directed by other people and other external factors. The erotic guy of the 1970s represents the adolescence with his strong accentuation on sexuality and eroticism. Like a teenager who has started to live his sexuality recently, the erotic guy is keen on having as many sexual relationships as he can have. The men of the 1980s women's films represent the adulthood, a phase that requires a steady sexual life. This kind of sexuality, not just based upon quantity, is more qualified, open to different kinds of fantasies, and therefore, more mature. The

men of the post 1990s men's films represent the senescence, the phase in which men, cognizant of sexuality in its every aspect, returns to the state of the 'negatively constructed subject' in which he does not try to prevent anything upcoming. The cognizant state of mind differentiates the men in the post 1990s from the melodramatic persona of the 1960s.

As a last remark, I want to analyze the crisis of masculinity on the basis of men's relationship with women, love, and sexuality. According to Nejat Ulusay, the turning point is the 1980s as it was the decade that men's hegemony started to be weakened. [123] One of the reasons for this decline was the feminist thinking that has paved way to the women's films in the 80s enabling the reconstruction of gender roles which resulted in the revelation of the male sexuality and inner psychology more openly and played a significant role in the reconstruction of hegemonic masculinity. Nevertheless, the women's films also had a contradictory nature as they perpetuated the commodification of women through men's gaze. Thus, the loss of masculine hegemony cannot be linked to the advent of the women's films only. According to James Heartfield, it is the capital that plays a crucial part on both genders.

> Masculinity theories do appear to be telling us something about a loss of power that matches their real condition. But it is wrong to see this loss of power as a loss in relation to women. Rather it is in relation to capital that men and women alike have lost authority.[124]

This argument reveals how masculinity crisis is tried to be linked to the micropolitical levels, disregarding the macropolitical circumstances. The reconstruction of hegemonic masculinity and the possibility of the interrogation between different types of masculinities surely have been effected by the postmodern thinking and the feminist movement. However, more drastic effects on both genders have occurred on the economic level. Can's character is shaped by the liberal thinking which Turgut Özal imposed upon the society in the 1980s. His wishful thinking of possessing everything he desires is the product of this political environment. Therefore, it is not surprising that the rise of the men's films correspond to the time after the economic crisis of 1994

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[123] Ulusay, 148.

[124] James Heartfield, "There is No Masculinity Crisis", 2002 [journal online]; available from http://www.genders.org/g35/g35_heartfield.html; Internet; accessed 29 November 2006.

which was realized under Tansu Çiller's government. The silenced women and the unsatisfied men of the last two decades have been the products of this environment. Confused by the feminist movement and crushed by the economic adversities, there arises the crisis of individuality which masks itself under the name of the crisis of masculinity on the male side. The crisis is gendered as it has different impacts on both genders. Nejat Ulusay indicates the linkage between the crisis of existence and the crisis of masculinity.

> Varolmama korkusu kadınlarda da vardır; ancak erkeklerde, erkek olmama korkusuyla birleşir ya da bu korkudan doğar ve bunun aracılığıyla ifade edilir. Erkekler, hiçlik, var olmama, ölüm duygusu karşısında panzehir olarak erkeklik mitini ve sembolizmini harekete geçirir. (Ulusay 2004, 160)

The tendency to silence, swear and humiliate women of the males in the men's films of the decade in question is a revelation of this crisis of individuality. This crisis of individuality, doubled with the cognizant state of mind, ends with the morbid relationships between men and women, creating a devotion to homosocial relationships.

ii) On Men and Homosociality

Foucault's concern on friendship is strongly linked to homosexuality and homosexual desires but yet he is also curious about the man-to-man relationships as a matter of existence.

> How is it possible for men to be together? To live together, to share their time, their meals, their room, their leisure, their grief, their knowledge, their confidence? What is it, to be "naked" among men, outside of institutional relations, family, profession and obligatory camaraderie? It's a desire, an uneasiness, a desire-in-uneasiness that exists among a lot of people.[125]

According to him, it is the peculiar combination of desire and uneasiness that gives man-to-man relationship its meaning. In most of the homosocial relationships between heterosexual men, this desire-in-uneasiness is not taken as a sexual desire but rather there are different entities that replace this desire. It is mostly the existence of an imaginary or an actual woman that maintains suppression of this desire, lessening the

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[125] Foucault, Michel. *Foucault Live: Interviews, 1961-1984.* ed. Sylvere Lotringer; trans. Lysa Hochroth and John Johnston. (New York: Semiotext(e), 1996), 309.

affects of the uneasiness that men might feel towards each other. This is strongly linked to the legitimization of the heterosexual desire in the homosocial relationships (see chapter III). This point will make more clear in the analysis of the homosocial relationships in the three films in question.

In *Sevmek Zamanı*, the dichotomic structure of the film represents two kinds of homosocial relationships. The relationship between Halil and Mustafa and the relationship between Başar and his buddies can be analyzed within the paradigm of the *eastern / western* dichotomy. Mustafa plays the lute while Halil drinks *rakı* and gazes at Meral's portrait. Contrary to this eastern understanding of entertainment, Başar and his buddies go shooting and dancing. Apart from this shallow representation, there are inherent qualities that give these relationships their dichotomic features. The naive and the pristine relationship between Halil and Mustafa is also backed by the eastern ethical values that they share in mind. Believing in the eternity and the sanctity of love, these two buddies have mystical values that result in their quiet and peaceful relationship. Başar's relationship with his buddies is represented as a commotion when compared to Halil's and Mustafa's relationship. Keen on worldly delights, Başar and his buddies have ephemeral state of minds when compared to Halil's obsessive behavior about Meral. Their urban and luxurious entertainment style is the representation of their western ethical values which result in their devotion to sexuality rather than love and mysticism.

Mustafa, older and more mature than Halil, represents the father figure for Halil with his guidance of Halil's life by giving him advices to follow the girl Halil loves. Sharing Halil's sorrows and happiness, Mustafa acts as the care giver for Halil. He is also the authority Halil obeys because it is Mustafa who insists on Halil's realization of his love for Meral and helps him to turn his fetishistic love for the portrait into a conservative love for the woman in the flesh. One of the features of the homosocial relationships is the legitimization of the heterosexual desire. Mustafa legitimizes Halil's desire as he makes him think that it is the woman, herself, rather than the portrait that Halil is in love with. By this, he tries to guide Halil's sexuality according to the accepted social values.

Can's relationship with his buddies, who are his colleagues at the same time, reveals Can's liberal state of mind. Keen on winning everything he desires, his buddies are just mediums who appreciate his being genius in work life as he constantly gives them advices about how to win more. His cheating his wife with one of his colleagues' wife also reveals the feckless bondage with his buddies. By having a secret affair with Sinem, he both cheats on his wife and his colleague. For him, his colleagues are also commodities as the women in his life. When he is faced with the troubles in work life and has to quit his job, his careless attitude towards his colleagues and keenness on saving himself, without considering about the careers of his friends, reveals the ephemeral understanding of his relationships. The only authority in his life is money and career and the so seemingly buddies in his life are nothing more than mediums, maintaining him prosperity and wealth.

The dichotomic structure of homosociality of the melodramas are followed by the secret homosocial bondage in the 1970s erotic films and the women's films in the 1980s, revealing Irigaray's theory of hom(m)o-sexual monopoly. According to her, the society is based on exchange of women, realized through hom(m)o-sexual relationships which are perpetuated in its social mediation rather than in an immediate practice.[126] This kind of hom(m)o-sexual bondage reveals itself in Başar's attitude towards Meral.

Meral: Halil'i unutamam Başar.
Başar: Orası belli olmaz. Bak birkaç gün beraber olalım, unutur gidersin o adamı.

In the erotic films, this bondage becomes more clear as there is the constant sharing of women. The so-called women's films are the continuation of this secret bondage among men. The villagers' attitude towards Mine in *Mine* (Atıf Yılmaz: 1982) and the fictionalization of Vasfiye's story by four different men in *Adı Vasfiye* (Atıf Yılmaz: 1985) is a depiction of this hom(m)o-sexual bondage as a social mediation. This competitive manner is also clear in Can's attitude as he shares Sinem with his colleague who has no idea about this secret affair. In the men's films of the 90s, this hom(m)o-sexual bondage among men had changed slightly.

The main theme of *Masumiyet* is the hom(m)o-sexual bondage in Irigaray's sense. Uğur, working as a prostitude, loves a man, Zagor, disregarding Bekir's love for her.

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[126] Irigaray, 171.

When Bekir commits suicide, Yusuf replaces him, inheriting his love and other feelings towards Uğur. One of the striking features of this bondage lies in the uncompetitiveness of Bekir's behavior when compared to the women's films of the 1980s and also *Bir Sonbahar Hikayesi*. Bekir, having a cognizant state of mind, knows that he can never replace Zagor. Therefore, there is no competition between him and Zagor. He sometimes has quarrels about Uğur's going out with different men to have sexual intercourse but cannot prevent her from going but the competitive feature of the hom(m)o-sexual bondage cannot be found in Bekir's behavior. Yusuf's replacement of Bekir is also non-competitive in the sense that his main role is to fill the gap that has been left by Bekir in Uğur's life. This rather peculiar hom(m)o-sexual bondage between Bekir and Yusuf starts ironically as a father – son relationship. Yusuf, as an obedient child, follows everywhere Bekir goes, misleadingly perceiving Bekir as the father figure. Bekir, revealing Yusuf a different kind of life he has never seen before, is the authority for Yusuf. However, it is the hotel keeper, Mehmet (Doğan Turan), who acts as the father figure for Bekir. Whenever Bekir is drunk or high, he takes care of Bekir and puts him in bed. This contradiction ends as Bekir commits suicide and Yusuf inherits everything Bekir has, including his attitude, his role and his love for Uğur. Even this inheritance reveals how Yusuf perceives Bekir as a father figure as he grows up just like Bekir.

Nejat Ulusay thinks that the recent men's films represent masculinity in a rather unpleasant way.

> Bu filmlerin kahramanları genellikle kendini ifade edemeyen, ruhsal olarak ölü, başarısız, saplantılı, paranoyak, saldırgan, iktidarsız, küfürlü konuşan, depresif, suç işleyen ve suçluluk duygusu içindeki erkeklerdir. Erkek şovenizmi ve silah fetişizmi erkek filmlerinin dikkati çeken özelliklerindendir. Yeşilçam yapımlarındaki Boğaz yalılarının, konakların, apartman dairelerinin, taşradaki akraba çiftliklerinin ya da tek odalı yoksul evlerinin yerini bu filmlerde farklı mekanlar almıştır. Otel odaları, gemi, karakol, mağaralar, sokaklar (İstanbul, New York) bu filmlerin erkek kahramanlarının neredeyse bütün bir anlatı boyunca barındıkları yerlerdir. Bu yersizlik / yurtsuzluk duygusu, erkek kahramanların kendilerine bir baba, bir dost arama çabalarıyla örtüşmektedir. Kadınların dışarıda bırakıldığı bu filmlerdeki erkekler ailesizdir, güvensizdir, garibandır. (Ulusay 2004, 160)

From his argument, we can deduce how the homosociality has lost its competitive nature. Men, seeking to find a father figure or a buddy in order to find a support, have started to perceive homosocial relationships as a shelter.

Another reason for the slight change occurred in the representation of the homosociality is due to the silenced women. The gynophobic nature of these films necessitates the homosocial bondages as gynophobia is to be realized through collective masculine bondage. Yusuf's dumb sister reveals the secret and hazardous homosocial bondage between Yusuf and his sister's husband as his sister's extramarital affair leads Yusuf to kill her lover and shoot his sister in the mouth which ends with her dumbness. Another significant example is *Gemide* where the crew of the boat rapes the dumb Romen girl. The excessive swearing and the humiliation of the women both of which are common features of the men's films create harsh homosocial bondage between these men. Men necessitate this harsh homosocial bondage in order to justify their heterosexual desire. It can also be interpreted that men need to reveal the heterosexual desire in order to mask their desire-in-uneasiness Foucault stated. Homosociality cannot be thought apart from the existence of women, be it either real or imaginary. Thus, the devotion to the homosocial relationships in the recent men's films can be linked to the morbid relationships between men and women

The devotion to the homosocial relationships is also the result of the crisis of individuality. The reason that it reveals itself through excessive masculine behavior is the remasking of the crisis of individuality under the crisis of masculinity. If the excessive masculine behavior is unmasked, the naive longing for a buddy of these men can be revealed. Bekir and Yusuf see no point of leaving their tragic lives and continue without knowing what to do. They are naive or as the title of the film, *Masumiyet*, refers they are innocent. If the homosocial relationships are compared with the previous decades, the cognizant state of mind can be witnessed as homosociality comes as a necessity in these films. The dialogue that the captain has with Kamil (Haldun Boysan), held in order to convince Kamil to stay on board summarizes the cognizance of the necessity of the homosociality in the recent men's films.

> Kaptan: Burdan ayrılırsan ne olacak? Burda iyi kötü buranın en akıllısı sensin. Ya dışarda? En cahili sen kalacaksın. Burda iyi kötü adamların var, yemeğini pişiren, bulaşığını yıkayan, emirlerini dinleyen. Ya dışarda? Sen emir dinleyeceksin. Sen başkalarının adamı olacaksın. Biz bu yerin dibine batasıca kakalakta birbirimize bağlıyız. Senle ben dışarda ne yaparız?

What these men can do outside becomes a vital question for the men in the men's films. What has changed sharply in these films is the keenness on the homosocial

relationships, regarded as the only shelters for men in order to overcome their uneasiness in life.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has attempted to explore various representations of masculinities in the post 1960s Turkish cinema. The two main questions posed are how the representations of hegemonic masculinities have been changed throughout these years and whether there have been successful representations of the plurality of masculinities. While analyzing this, the thesis has evolved around the subject of the crisis of masculinity and its dynamics. The outcomes of the analysis have revealed how masculinity has been affected by the social, political, and economical conditions in Turkey. The strong relationship between these conditions and the perception and representation of masculinities is not surprising at all as gender is a product of the macrosocial and microsocial environment of a certain society. However, what is significant here is how masculinities reacted towards these changes.

1960 - 1980 was rather a stable and steady period as neither the melodramatic persona of the 1960s nor the erotic persona of the 1970s had faced an open threat against their masculinities. This does not mean that these two personas constituted the ideal position of manhood, though. The former with his naive, sentimental, and rather feminine attitude and the latter with his greedy and lustful attitude constituted two opposite poles of masculinity far from the general preference of masculinity in the Turkish society. But neither these personas nor the spectator felt so much uneasiness about these representations.

The first rupture that occurred in the 1980s was a combination of the rising feminist movement, postmodern thinking and the economic conditions, all of which increased the importance of the concept of individuality in Turkey. While women's films tended to liberate women's sexuality, they also caused the commodification of

women, a result which also affected in turn masculinity as the men in these films sustained a kind of hegemony over women. This was the time that the pervailing gynophobia started to reveal its face as well as the hegemonic masculinity started to be accentuated. However, it was the liberal consciousness of the time that had a promising effect on men. The tendency to possess and consume more misled men and the crisis of masculinity did not reveal its face openly in this environment.

The second rupture which occurred in the middle of the 1990s had more drastic effects on masculinity. The awakening from the liberal dream was backed by harsh economic conditions. While the feminist movement lost its strength, the crisis of masculinity also started to reveal itself through some symptoms such as silencing, swearing, and humiliating the women and a keenness for homosocial relationships. The exclusion of women had led to morbid relationships between the two genders and the homosocial relationships necessitated the justification of the heterosexual desire because of the homophobic nature of masculinity. The rate of the commodification also increased the objectification of women which had started to reveal its face a decade ago. These combined effects had created maelstroms for men from which they saw no point of escape. While men were afraid of losing their hegemony, what they intended to do was to create enclosed hegemonies through their homosocial relationships. In this environment, there has been no successful interrogation between the hegemonic masculinity and the plurality of masculinities as there is the pervailing paranoia to be unmasked as not real men. Women have also been affected as healthy heterosexual relationships have become impossible since the men have tended to have more brutal and machoistic attitude towards women.

The overall analysis reveals that the crisis of masculinity was at its peak in the post 1990s Turkish cinema. But this crisis is not particular to masculinity but rather a symptom of the crisis of individuality. The solution does not lie in the exclusion of women and the devotion to homosociality which fuels the existing crisis but rather it is suggested there should be a pact with femininity which will also enable healthy heterosexual relationships which might lessen the effects of the crisis of individuality for both sides and result in easier and self-confident representations of masculinity.

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