

MASCULINITY AND HONOUR PERCEPTION: A CASE STUDY IN TEPEBAĞ  
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## ABSTRACT

### MASCULINITY AND HONOUR PERCEPTION: A CASE STUDY IN TEPEBAĞ DISTRICT ADANA-TURKEY

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This thesis basically aims to understand lower class men's experiences of masculinity and their perceptions of honor. How men construct their masculinities hold an important place in understanding gender inequalities. Men's relations with women will similarly help us understand what sort of masculinity is constructed in the society.

How do lower class, single men experience masculinity? How do they view the relations between genders? How does their perception of masculinity affect their approaches to values such as honor and reputation? An apparatus that determine and limit men's fields of power, "honor" is linked to woman's sexuality, however, as this thesis aims to put forward, honor is basically works as a sort of mechanism of social control developed by men among themselves on the body and soul of the woman. Perceived to be related to women, honor actually determines men's field of game and sets the social rules.

Class, culture and ethnicity are important lines of differentiation in the production of different perceptions of masculinity, and important factors in determining different perceptions on honor and reputation along with them. Here, the masculinity imaginations, approaches to gender relations and honor perceptions of lower class men have been attempted to be analyzed through the theory of hegemonic masculinity developed by Connel and the perspectives of the other authors who have contributed to the field.

**Keywords:** Masculinity, Hegomonic masculinity, Honor, Lower Class

## ÖZET

ERKEKLİK VE NAMUS ALGISI: TEPEBAĞ MAHALLESİ ÖRNEĞİ ADANA-TÜRKİYE

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Bu tez, temel olarak alt sınıftan erkeklerin erkeklik deneyimlerini ve onların namus algısını anlamaya çalışmaktadır. Erkeklerin, erkekliklerini nasıl inşa ettikleri toplumsal cinsiyet eşitsizliklerini anlamada önemli bir yerde durmaktadır. Aynı şekilde, erkeklerin kadınlarla olan ilişkileri de toplumda nasıl bir erkekliğin inşa edildiğini anlamamızı sağlayacaktır.

Alt sınıftan bekar erkekler, erkeklik deneyimlerini nasıl yaşamaktadırlar? Kadın erkek ilişkilerine bakışları nasıldır? Sahip oldukları erkeklik algısı “namus,” “şeref” gibi değerlere yaklaşımlarını nasıl etkilemektedir? Erkeklerin iktidar alanlarını belirleyen ve sınırlayan bir araç olarak “namus,” kadın cinselliği ile ilişkilendirilir. Ancak, bu tezin de anlatmak istediği gibi, namus, temelde erkeklerin kendi aralarında kadın bedeni ve ruhu üzerinde geliştirdikleri bir tür toplumsal denetim mekanizması olarak çalışmaktadır. Kadınlı ilişkili olarak görülen namus, aynı zamanda erkeklerin oyun alanlarını belirleyerek toplumsal kuralları ortaya koyar.

Sınıfsal, kültürel, etnik vb farklılıklar, farklı erkeklik algılarının ve beraberinde farklı namus ve şeref algılarının ortaya çıkmasında önemli faktörlerdir. Bu çalışmada, alt sınıftan erkeklerin nasıl bir erkeklik tahayyülü içinde olduklarını, kadın erkek ilişkilerine nasıl baktıkları ve namusla ilgili algıları; Connel'in geliştirdiği hegemonik erkeklik teorisi ve erkeklik çalışan diğer yazarların perspektifleri ışığında analiz edilmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Erkeklik, Hegomonik Erkeklik, Namus, Alt Sınıf

To my mother,  
To my sister Zeynep,  
And to women who are victimized to men's world

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The writing process of this thesis has taken me back to my old days. My experiences about masculinities and the roads which I passed appeared during my fieldwork. I would like to express my appreciation to my respondents who gave me this wonderful feeling. Their contributions to this thesis are unforgettable. This thesis has been a kind of journey for me and during these five months my respondents have become my companions. I always tried to understand them. But I have to confess that I was afraid of changing empathy to sympathy! Their story reminds me of how we have to live in such a terrible world.

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Research Problem

*“At bizim, avrat bizim, silah bizim şan bizim.*

*Namus belasına kardaş,*

*Yatarız, zindan bizim.”<sup>1</sup>*

*I grew up in İzmir in a slum area in which Kurdish and Gypsy (Roman) people live. As a man, I lead a life which is shaped by advantages and pains of being a man. In 2005 ,when I was working as a researcher in the study “Dynamics of Honor Killings in Turkey” , in the field I was a person who drunk weak tea with three cubes of sugar, did not prefer strawberry ice cream because of its color if I had ice cream outdoor, pretended to be serious and tough, and I was a young guy with stylish hair. I came from a family and district culture who respected women but did not consider women as equal to men. I was told a story in Urfa, and all my life was changed. It was a story of a woman who eloped in order to get married to her lover, and was killed violently when she was found.... Her family built a scrappy shanty house without any window in the courtyard of their family home and the woman was put there after she was found by her older brothers. They constructed a small wall in front of the door and this prevented her from breathing. None of the family members challenged this. For them, she had done a mistake and had to be punished. Her screams lasted for three days, when her screams stopped, the*

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<sup>1</sup> “The horse is ours, the woman is ours, the weapon is ours, the name is ours. For the trouble of honor, Here we stay, the dungeon is ours.”  
Cem Karaca’s song named “Namus Belası” (“Honor Trouble”).

*family was convinced that the woman died and when they entered the shanty house they saw her dead body. The woman strived for running away from the room and she scratched the walls like a cat ensnared in a plot. Her nail prints were still on the walls.*

*This experience has been a milestone in my own life. What is masculinity? What is honor? How can people become that much cruel? What kind of understating can legitimize this? Why people's lives turn to hell after they "lose their honor"? Which dynamics lie beneath that much strong phenomenon? Why men and women are being victimized in this men's poisonous world? What kind of a trouble is "honor"? How are those interrelated to masculinity? Those questions I had in my mind made me rethink gender relations and reconsider my former thoughts that were once a "norm"; I tried to reconstruct my own masculinity as much as I could. And then my life changed. I, as a son of a worker father and a domestic worker mother, came back to my own childhood during the field in the neighborhood that was so similar to the place I had grown up. I looked for the traces of my own childhood and adolescence. This thesis is thus also an inward journey.*

The primary aim of this thesis is to explore the masculinity experiences of single worker men and their perception of honor. What social codes are significant in the construction of masculinity? What kind of codes are integral parts of their lifestyles? It is a certain fact that perception of honor is interrelated with masculinity. Therefore, how masculinity experiences of lower class young men influence their perception of honor? This thesis principally examines those questions. It should be noted that women are settled as a subordinate gender identity in the construction process of gender codes. Perception of honor that beleaguers women's body and sexuality also designates the limits of power that is constructed among men. Men construct and reinforce property and power relationships through the perception of honor. Meticulously codified gender codes, apart from the biological sex, are being socialized to serve to this aim. Men and women go on their lives socializing through "common values". Common values like to be honored, honest and loyal determine the every

aspects of their social life. Male dominated culture shaped by masculine reason becomes the unique power and a “norm” and gradually is being naturalized. By appearing as unquestionable structure, it invades the mind and the language; besides, resistance strategies may turn out to reproduce existing order. This situation can be understood as introjection of the male domination into the individual minds. Without disregarding the idea that it may emerge as an essentialist approach in the analysis of masculinity values, I would say that masculinity experiences of lower class young men and their perception of honor depict more “tough” aspects of the masculinity. I consider this on the idea of “suppression of moral pains of material entities that cannot be possessed”. I observed this in my interviewees from Adana. Manhood and honor perception are their valuable assets and their identities are based on these. My interviewees emphasized that Adana is different from anywhere and even women in Adana are outspoken like men and brave women. On the other hand, although I abstain from disregarding the importance of individual and a class based reductionism, I think that similar economic and cultural capital lead to a common way of thinking. In this context, it is possible to talk about different masculinities and different honor perceptions.

Masculinity studies emerge out of the feminist studies’ interest on masculinity. Studies on differences of sex roles and gender are taken to be one of the first effects of feminism in the academic world (Connell, 1998:60). A comprehensive understanding of gender inequality is only possible through comprehending how the masculinity is constructed as well as examining oppressor-oppressed relation.

Instead of the theories on sex roles, thinking on gender as a structure where the social is gendered leads to a more mature understanding of “masculinity” and “femininity”, and above all the structure of masculine domination. The differences between women and men should not be perceived on a biological base. Masculinity and femininity are not ahistorical categories, but these are situations that exist and that are constructed historically within social and

cultural structures. The roots of this construction may be better understood when one thinks of property relationships and the division of labor within and outside the house throughout historical processes. More clearly, one is not born as male or female, one becomes a male or a female through many processes. In time, these situations that are accepted as “normal” and “what is ought to be” turn into a mechanism internalized and adopted by women, the suppressed sex, as well. I consider that it is important to realize that masculinity oppresses men (Atay, 2004) and honor harms men. It is well known that there are women and men who are uncomfortable with this situation.

Gender studies carried out so far have showed us clearly that we live in a “gendered sociality” in a male-dominated world. “Masculinity studies”, whose importance in the deciphering of the male dominant system is only too obvious, have not received the attention it deserves, especially in Turkey, although there are some studies in this field. But as much as an understanding of the ways the women are oppressed, it should be important to understand how men build and sustain this oppression and how they build the fields of struggle among themselves through the processes of power (Sancar, 2009: 16). Understanding these different meanings will help us decipher “masculine domination.” Bourdieu, who argues that there is a similarity between Kabyle society and modern society in terms of gender construction, mentions that masculine language and behavior patterns are engraved in and gender inequality is naturalized through this construction of gender (Bourdieu, 1965).

However, a recently more accepted discourse is that this structure of domination is not made up of a monolithic hegemonic masculinity, on the contrary there are different types of masculinity and these masculinities sustain the existing structure of domination through conflicting negotiations among themselves (Connel, 1995). In this context, “[s]ex is not a category that emerges with masculinity’s interrelationship with femininity, but at the same time a rational category pointing out that a man’s sex-based status can as well be

determined in his relationships with members of the same sex (Onur and Koyuncu, 2004: 34).

The form of masculinity defined by Connel as “hegemonic masculinity” signifies the form of masculinity idealized in the society. What is hegemonic here is not the one holding the majority. We observe that the form of masculinity practiced by the socio-economically lower-class men and the hegemonic form of masculinity are distinct (Connel, 2005). Some basic factors shaping identities, such as class, language, religion and ethnicity also shape masculinity and the individual expresses his masculinity through these factors. A middle class Turkish man and a lower class Kurdish man, for instance, might be thought around common interests as they are both men after all, however they experience completely different practices of “masculinity”. Similarly, in these examples the individuals may engage into different practices of power in their own worlds, or their own *habitus*, to borrow from Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 2001). For example a Kurdish man from lower class might oppress an unemployed Kurdish man from the same class or he may exercise violence at home, on his wife. Power relations among men are thus complicated. How much male or how much female an individual depends on the gender codes shaped within the social world, and the individual acquires herself / himself an identity through these codes. Men engage into conflicts of power among themselves, determined by the class they belong to and the status they hold. The same men collectively make up the structure of male domination by acting according to their common interests. There do exist men who perceive themselves outside of this process and who don’t want to be a collaborator in this process. However, according to some writers, hegemonic masculinity is not an ahistorical fictional structure, but on the contrary, it is historically so well integrated to the gendered nature of the body that not only men but also women –who are clearly oppressed by this mechanism and who are trying to develop strategies against it—engage into the reproduction of this oppression (Bourdieu, 2001:59).

In this thesis in-depth interviews were carried out with young working men from the lower class. A total of 14 men were interviewed face to face in this study. 12 of these were single, and the other two had recently got married. All interviewees are men aged between 18 and 32. I interviewed young men with at least 18 years of age and who see themselves as “*Adanlı*”. *Adanlı*, means a native or dweller of the province of Adana in the eastern Mediterranean region of Turkey; an “Adanian”, literally (the word is to be used in its Turkish original in this thesis). As I did my fieldwork in Adana, it was important for me that the men I interviewed defined themselves as *Adanlı*. All these young men regularly work in the private sector and generally they have to personally experience life in order to learn it. For my interviewees education does not play a crucial role in determining and transforming their lives. Young men who begin their working life by leaving their school constitute a particular lifestyle by trying and experiencing everything by themselves.

Class determines an individual’s position economically and culturally in a social structure. The class that one belongs to affects her / his way of life, habits and his / her perceptions on life.

This study was carried out through interviews with lower class men who have low socio-economic status. Masculinity has some distinctions within itself, and class and status are among the bases of such distinctions. In that sense an emphasis on class is important for this thesis.

According to Bourdieu, who has contributed theoretically with the concept of “social capital” alongside the economy-based concept of class, social capital comes to the fore among the factors determining an individual’s style of living. Economic, social and cultural capitals socially affect one’s life and these forms of capital gain their legitimacy through symbolic capital, functionally build the social structure and at the same time form the basis of class conflicts (Siisiäinen, 2000: 2). Social and cultural capital plays very significant role in the process of masculinity construction as well. Men’s construction of their masculinity is a

lifelong learning process including the adoption of masculinity values from their families and their social networks.

The concept of “*namus*”, roughly translated as “honor”, is crucial in attempting to understand the codes of masculinity. Honor is usually linked to women’s sexuality. The control of women’s sexuality is like an unwritten contract among men. And what is honor? What does it mean? Signifying absolute sovereignty on the female body, and more importantly, crystallizing a sort of “surpassing the limit” in men’s control and responsibility on women’s body and soul, where does this concept come from? Here is what Leyla Pervizat, a feminist activist, tells about the origin of the word “*namus*”:

On the other hand, the word *namus* (honor) is rooted in Old Greek word *Nomoβ*, a masculine word, although the Ottoman language took the term from, according to one source, Arabic, and to others from Persian. *Nomoβ* means that anything established, which is in habitual practice, use or possession, anything assigned, anything received by usage, custom, law, ordinance, a command, and a law or rule producing a state. It is derived from *nemo* meaning to parcel out, especially food or grazing to animals. In other words, *nemo* means a man’s land and the animal grazing on that land. (Pervizat, 2006, 297)

Honor is strongly linked to the norms of femininity and masculinity constructed in the society. According to the perception of honor, men and women have to live their lives in conformity with these norms. Although the term refers to a series of norms practiced by men among themselves, this concept has found a broad social ground. Honor has become a concept supported by women as well and brought to their own habituses. Honor gains different meanings depending on one’s gender. As Sirman explains, a man’s honor is understood through the women that he is responsible of, while a woman’s honor is understood through her sexuality:

The term connotes the ability of person to live up to the standards of masculinity and femininity as set by society. The difference in what honour entails for men and for women is the difference in gender. Thus in Turkey, a

dishonourable man is not trustworthy, and therefore unable to undertake his social responsibilities nor to control his own sexuality and that of the women he is responsible for. A woman's honour, by contrast, is linked only to her sexuality. (Sirman, 2004: 45)

For men honor denotes the fields that should never be transgressed, the codes of social life are thus set through prohibitions. Therefore a man's perception of honor is different from the perception of honor forced on a woman. For many men being honorable also means not stealing, not lying, not engaging into vagabondage, etc. While an honorable man is an honest man, "bringing bread to his home", i.e. taking care of his family's needs without harming anyone else's rights through stealing etc.; an honorable woman is one who has chastity, virtue ("*iffet*"). Any harm brought to a woman's honor damages the reputation or grace ("*şeref*") of the man "responsible of" her. The concept of reputation signifies a man's honesty and honor, while it is directly related to a woman's honor. For example, a woman who has a relationship with a man other than her husband has engaged into a dishonorable act ("*namussuzluk*"). The husband in this case is not "dishonored" ("*namussuz*") but his reputation or esteem is damaged, he is disgraced. Any sexually motivated act towards "a woman he is responsible of" forces the man to take a position. Society tends to be the party that desires such an act the most, as a man who does not act against this, one who does not punish such behavior is a "disgraced" ("*şerefsiz*") man in the eyes of the society. And a disgraced man should not even be greeted. The engagement of the people around into such expectations in an event not directly involving themselves is a result of the wish to conform with the unwritten contract among males: a man who does not punish such acts will set a bad example to others, he is perceived to be a threat to the environment as he acts "not conforming to the norms".

Although "honor" is seen as a universal phenomenon, the circle of women that a man is responsible of and has to control is larger in societies with wide and dominant relationships among kinsmen. The men in the family tend to feel responsible not only of the mother, sister, wife and daughter but also of the

sisters/daughters-in-law and aunts, cousins and other kinswomen. Any act engaged, any word uttered, or any clothing worn by a woman thus directly interests all the men in her family. This circle of responsibility may even be widened to include all the women in the neighborhood, village or society.

Honor may also take up different meanings according to class. Honor may not have the same meaning in all classes. The various perceptions of honor may well differ among high and low classes. Urbanization, family structures, cultural capital etc. also lead to diverse understandings on the concept of honor. So there is no single, monolithic perception of honor. Nevertheless the concept is important in all classes. It receives more emphasis in the lower classes of the society.

## **1.2 Contemporary Literature in Masculinity and Honor Studies**

Relationships of exploitation among men and woman have a deep historical structure. Discourses on masculinity and femininity have gained a new dimension through feminist studies. Sex explains sexual identities in a biological basis. Gender, on the other hand, treats sexual identities in their historical and cultural contexts and emphasizes how these identities are constructed by the society in time. Sociologically, studying how gender is formed helps understanding the construction of identities. The studies on how the masculine and feminine identities are formed beyond biological differences are still in the focus of feminist scrutiny. In my opinion, studies on masculinity should be given an important value since the understanding of relationships among men and women can be understood with these studies. And these studies should be much more on practises and expressions of men rather than studies on rhetorics. In recent years, following the warnings of Carrigan, Connel and Lee, sociology of masculinity has been built up on datas from fieldworks. (Carrigan, Connel and Lee, 1985).

According to Richardson, while heterosexuality idealized by hegemonic masculinity is understood like a natural, static and universal condition, just like

the whole of practices and relations institutionalized in the family, we can say that this is in fact a gender identity determined by social codes (Richardson, 1996:2).

Howson thinks that debates on masculinity have been marked by post industrial western terms which are related with transformation of gender politics in recent years:

“...this is primarily because in these cultures the impact of second-wave feminism has been acutely felt. For example, the feminist movement opened up and questioned, amongst other things, masculine relations, practices and identities which either directly or indirectly gave rise to various religious and secular based men’s movement, father’s right and support groups, pro-feminist and anti-feminist activists, gay and queer movements as well as plethora of literature, both of an academic and popular nature dealing with issues such as men’s emotions, relationships, work, parenting, media representations, power and crisis. . .” (Howson, 2006:2)

It is commonly accepted that masculinity studies have started with the theory “hegemonic masculinity” in academic area intensely in 1980’s. Since that time debates on masculinity have been risen all over the world. On the other hand, in Turkey we see that masculinity has been started to be discussed generally in 1990’s. As feminist movement has been more dominant in Turkey with studies on women, masculinity studies have not received adequate attention and scrutiny; however, especially in the recent years, feminist researchers have also emphasized that masculinity studies are important to understand the dynamics of violence against woman. What is more, this understanding is crucial to change the hegemony of men.

The theory of “hegemonic masculinity” has been a dominant theory in the masculinity studies for a long time. This theory is still used to evaluate masculinity studies by writers all over the world. Developed by Connel, the theory of hegemonic masculinity describes how a group of minority men form domination over women and other groups of men (black men, gays etc.) by

using masculine relations of power (Connell, 1998). According to Schippers, these are the major contributions of Connell to the “hegemonic masculinity” (Schippers, 2007:87). After the first formulation of the concept, Connell and Messerschmidt reformulated the concept of hegemony in a global level. They argue that hegemonic masculinity reaches a global level and that it can also be seen in all international institutions and organizations (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005).

Hegemonic masculinity defines the ideal man constructed by the dominant values and it builds its hegemonic culture through this ideal man. As Türk points out, hegemonic masculinity doesn't build this domination only through force. It also makes use of mechanisms of consent and persuasion. It contains its oppression through institutions such as the family, education facilities, military system, religion etc.

Hegemonic masculinity is a concept with a double function, formed not only to understand the domination on women by men, but also the relations of domination among different groups of masculinity. While external hegemony points to the process of institutionalization of the domination of women by men, internal hegemony refers to the dominations of a group of men over other men. Hegemonic masculinity doesn't work only through coercion or violence. The real value of this concept lies in the fact that it refers to the practices of persuasion and consent that function through culture and institutions in the relations of domination of men over women and over each other. (Türk, 2008:122; my translation)

With the critics on the concept of hegemonic masculinity<sup>2</sup>, Connell (1995) reviewed the concept and suggested that hegemonic masculinity reproduces

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<sup>2</sup> Donaldson (1993), questioning where homosexuality is placed against heterosexuality which is the main producer of hegemonic masculinity; Jefferson (2002), stating that masculinity is in a deep crisis in the neo-liberal world, bringing changes in work and family life; Demetriou (2001), arguing that hegemonic masculinity doesn't only act as the masculinity of whites but moves as a block made up of various masculinities to sustain patriarchy; and Hearn (2004), reminding that power is not exercised by all men but social relations and status also have important roles, have all made important contributions to the literature with these ideas that they have developed on the concept of hegemonic masculinity.

and strengthens itself through the interactions of various masculinities with each other. With the differentiations such as “subordinated masculinity”, “marginalized masculinity”, and “complicit masculinity”, he attempted at an analysis of masculinities separated by reasons related to class, culture, etc., nevertheless uniting in power (Connel, 1995).

Selek thinks that the hegemonic masculinity values are developed through military services. Through “leading a dog’s life” (“*sürünmek*”), the process of military service has an important role in the consolidation of male domination. Men think that they grow “mature” with the imposition of masculinity by the militarist structure, and they return to social life as mature men. Military service is the second step towards manhood, after circumcision (Selek, 2009). Şentürk also thinks that militarism is related to values of hegemonic masculinity and these two cannot be separated, and she points out that men have to submit to hegemonic masculinity values (like “solving” a problem with violence, etc.) during the obligatory military service in Turkey (Şentürk, 2009:91). Another writer who scrutinizes on how nationalism and militarism intertwine with sexism, Altınay (2004) analyses “the brotherhood of man” to show how hegemonic masculinity is constructed by placing “the motherland” and “the women” into same pot as values that should be “protected.”

The main critiques toward the concept of hegemonic masculinity are that this concept isn’t able to perceive different structures of masculinity and it can’t analyze thoroughly the relations between the diverse groups of masculinity. Although today’s societies are ones that the male dominant culture is prevalent, we should also see that this dominant structure goes on through relations of jppower that are conflicting and complicated within themselves. It will be more appropriate to think of a form of power that conflicts itself and at the same time hybrids itself, instead of a holistic male domination (Sancar, 2009).

In a study carried out by interviewing men from different classes and ethnic groups, Sancar shows how masculinity is reproduced in the discursive level.

Men live the masculinity they have taken from families and circles of friends<sup>3</sup> (Sancar, 2009). Coles states that as a part of their own life experience, men build up their own masculinities against hegemonic masculinity. While constructing their own masculinities men negotiate with hegemonic masculinity and form strategies, thus they build up a mosaic masculinity. In this sense men are not in a position to idealize the values of hegemonic masculinity in their daily lives (Coles, 2008).

However, while hegemonic masculinity refers to the culturally dominant ideal within the field of masculinity, there is a vast array of subfields located within the field of masculinity (e.g. the field of gay masculinity, the field of aged masculinity, the field of black masculinity) that have their own struggles over specific capital and result in a dichotomous relationship of dominant versus subordinate (or hegemony versus counter-hegemony) (Coles, 2008:235).

Moving from the fact that “masculinity oppresses men the most” and emphasizing a crucial point, Atay thinks that men have to produce power continuously and they themselves are also victims of their own power during this process (Atay, 2004).

On the other hand, Segal, who thinks that masculinity undergoes a historical process of change and different kinds of masculinities are forming, has tried to enter the men’s world and made a unique contribution to the literature by providing examples from arts and everyday life that show what male dominant power is. Segal also argues that the construction of masculinity is mostly related with the idea of gender dichotomy:

A “pure” masculinity cannot be lived without having something defined as its opposite. Nobody can be as man as this without violently opposing most of the basic human properties, the ability to be sensitive towards oneself and others, soft-heartedness, the ability to share other people’s feelings, the reality of fears

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<sup>3</sup> Duneier, writes on white-black men by using participant observation as a method in his book. Duneier gives us the friendship among men including respect, honour etc, with analyzing of masculinity (Duneier,1992) .

and weaknesses and the pleasures of being passive –all these, of course, are essentially “womenly.” (Segal, 1992: 151, my translation)

Even though he is criticized by feminists for drawing a pessimist picture, Bourdieu has developed a unique gender theory. Bourdieu says that the individual determines his daily life according to the necessities of the “habitus” he lives in, and the process of growing up is an important factor in this (Bourdieu, 1998). As an ideological condition masculinity permeates the everyday lives of men, thus the practices of daily life enables us to know a field where power is both constructed and reproduced. In a discussion of gender, Bourdieu talks about gendered bodies and puts the antagonism of women vs men to the center in all fields of social life. Through this antagonism the social structure is built; this is a very deep development and it reflects itself in languages as well, plus the ongoing division of labor among genders reproduces this situation:

If the sexual relation appears as a social relation of domination, this is because it is constructed through the fundamental principle of division between the active male and passive female and because this principle creates, organizes, expresses and directs desire –male desire as the desire of possession, eroticized domination, as eroticized subordination or even, in the limiting case, as the eroticized recognition of domination. (Bourdieu, 2001:21)

Women accept male domination in a way that they are not conscious of, but at the same time they are not forced to do so. Symbolic violence is a tool in this internalization. This power used in a symbolic way also confines men to themselves (Bourdieu, 2001: 49-52).

The author of a study on the position of women in monotheistic religions, Berktaý shows that religion is among the most important apparatuses that present men’s power over women as legitimate. As she works on the historical background and religious past of hegemonic masculinity, Berktaý (2000) states that the common point of all monotheistic religions is that they bear gender inequality in themselves. Making reference also to the metaphor of soil and seed

developed by Delaney (1991), Berktaş argues that women have an “inferior” position in all monotheistic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam).

On the other hand, the concept of honor which aims to control women’s sexuality and can actually be understood as a sort of “contract” among men, is a universal concept but it is found as a dominant value especially in Mediterranean societies (Tahincioğlu, 2010: 135). Fox studies on how women are controlled through oppression and she says that although there are some cultural differences here, this is usually provided in three basic ways; confinement, aiming to cut women’s relations with the outer world as a whole; protection, by which men interfere as the protective power in case women are allowed to have contact with the outside world; and finally, normative restriction, which, through women’s internalization of masculine domination, turn values such as “being a good women” or “clean women” into socially normative values (Fox, 1977). Through these values women are oppressed under men’s hegemonic pressure. I think that honor is a prominent value that intersects with all three of the mechanisms put forward by Fox, joining them together.

In Turkey, studies on honor tend to focus on violence towards women and its ultimate point, the honor killings.<sup>4</sup> It should be stated here that these studies are not enough. The main factors should be analyzed much more in detail in order to understand what underlies the perception of honor. Without understanding this perception, analyzing the honor killings will be quite difficult.

Peristiany thinks that values such as honor and reputation represent the hierarchical structure of gender inequalities in Mediterranean societies (Peristiany, 1966). Here it’s significant that the values present in one Mediterranean society are quite similar to those in others, including those in

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<sup>4</sup> Kardam’s work, “Dynamics of Honor Killings in Turkey” is a rare study based on a lengthy fieldwork of face to face interviews (Kardam, 2005). Some other studies on honor in Turkey are Koğacioğlu’s work where she relates honor killings to the naturalization of male dominant power (Koğacioğlu, 2007), Akkoç’s unpublished master’s thesis that dwell on honor crimes with the concept of security (Akkoç, 2007), and Mehmet Faraç’s work on töre killings in Şanlıurfa (Faraç 1998).

Turkey. These values don't only determine the relations among men and women, they form a collective of rules by dominating the general perception of a society. Mernissi writes on female sexuality and honor in Muslim societies and he argues that eastern societies have a different perception of sexuality (female sexuality is attributed passive roles in the West and active roles in the East) which also shapes the perception of honor (Mernissi, 2003). Abu Lughod, who studies honor and reputation in the Bedouin society through Arabic oral literature, also thinks that the traditional understanding of morality is based on these concepts (Abu Lughod, 1986). Again writing on the family honor in Arab societies, Dodd, too, states that family honor here is built on women's sexual purity and chastity. In this context the main factors determining the relations between genders are suspicion and jealousy, with the concept of "ird" being the "modesty code" (Dodd, 1973).

### **1.3 Contribution of This Study**

This study basically aims to contribute in the scholarly literature on masculinity in Turkey which is often mentioned to be quite poor. Masculinity studies in general attempt to bring attention to gender inequalities by focusing on how masculinity is constructed. I do think that understanding how masculinities are produced and reproduced is at least as important as understanding how women and femininities are oppressed.

In this study the lower class men are taken into focus. How the lower class males present themselves as men, in other words how they construct their masculinities, and how they perceive the relations between men and women, and what they think about honor is the subject of this study. Honor killings and violence against woman continue taking place although many legal arrangements regarding the issue are made. This is another sign to the degree of strength of the perception of honor. Attempting to understand this concept and perception, and on which motivations, grounds and thoughts men attach such importance to it gains significance in this context.

## 1.4 Methodology

This study focuses on being *Adanalı*. Many people think that Adana is a rather more “masculine” city in comparison to other places in Turkey. The courthouse of Adana is a familiar wording for many, with all the violence taking place between the plaintiffs and defendants and their family members in the corridors of this courthouse always busy with such events, many of which stemming from masculinity-related struggles or honor crimes.

Some of the young men I interviewed had been living in Adana for many generations, while some others had been there since the previous generation. All these men live in Tepebağ neighborhood. As mentioned above, the neighborhood is one whose residents are mostly from the lower class. All the respondents were employed at the time I interviewed them. Their ages, jobs, levels of education and short information about them are presented in a table in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

Voice recorders were used in all interviews. None of the respondents expressed any objections to the recorder, which was put in a visible place. I did all my recordings with the permission of the interviewees. Nevertheless I cannot say that the recordings were my only means to collect information from the field. For a period of about five months, I spend all my free time, especially the weekends, in the neighborhood. Through informal chats and discussions and through participant observation I learned and experienced a lot in the neighborhood. I sat in the parks and chatted with the youth, I went “near the water-water side”, the riverbanks that they frequented on Sundays. A tea house in a central place of the neighborhood was where I arranged my meetings for the interviews. Beside this, I gather information through the method of participant observation in there. I went to watch cock fights with the owner of the tea house and his son. I did many of my interviews with the young men working in the surroundings of the tea house, and I also used the snowball method to reach others, asking the respondents whether they had any friends

who might also like to be interviewed. The participant observations and face to face interviews were carried out in coordination.

It took 50 minutes to 3 hours time to do the interviews. Two of the interviews were interrupted because the respondents had to go, but we found the opportunities to meet again within a few days with these people. I did the interviews wherever the respondents wanted to do it. Some were done at their houses, some in the neighborhood park, some in the teahouse and some others on the roofs of their houses (people do live and sleep in the rooftops of their houses in Adana and many other towns in the south, because of the very hot weather). When I used the snowball method to arrange for the meeting I tried to get the general information about the person (his family, age, economic conditions, level of education etc.) before going to the interview. Similarly, I tried to freshen in my mind my readings on masculinity, before the interviews. These readings kept my interest to the topic alive during the interview. Still I tried to show myself as if I knew nothing at all on these matters. But in fact I myself as the interviewer have also grown up in a neighborhood quite similar to this one. In that sense many of the things told were actually familiar to me. In one of the interviews, for example, the respondent told me that when he went to the brothel with a group of friends they didn't sleep with the same women –“my friend can't shag into the woman I've shagged”—and that this is absurd, this way of thinking wasn't alien to me, because there was something like that in the neighborhood that I grew up in as well, our “elder brothers” (i.e. not true siblings but males close to you and older than you, still not as old as your father) told us about such things at those times. Nevertheless, I tried to create a feeling on the interviewees like “I'm telling novel stuff”, by listening to these actually familiar things with enthusiasm and curiosity as if I heard these for the first time. I do think that this attitude resulted in better interviews.

I tried to conduct my interviews by going through a semi-structured question sheet. But there have been times that I didn't follow the sheet. I preferred to ask questions freely with the natural of the conversation. I wasn't very concerned to

ask all the questions in the sheet, instead I tried to focus on the topics I found more crucial and tried to get more information about those. I tried to follow an order of topics throughout the interviews: general information about the person, then what he thinks about being men and women, masculinity and femininity, his related experiences and then questions about honor.

I didn't ask my respondents' names although I actually knew them, and told them that I would use pseudo names in my thesis and that they could thus feel relaxed about their privacy. They were pleased to hear this. Although no body objected to the voice recorder, I believe it still created sort of an anxiety which I could read in the eyes of a few of my respondents. In such cases I tried not to place the recorder right in front of people where it could distract them. I do think that they forgot about the recorder as the interview went by, anyway.

I didn't care about the shortness or length of the duration of the interview and instead I left that completely to the respondents. Although during the interviews they sometimes said things that were not related to the topic, I tried my best not to interrupt them. It can be said that I wrote all my arguments also in the light of participant observation.

### **1.5 Why Adana? Why Tepebağ?**

For many people, Adana has a different "image" from the other cities in Turkey. Adana, land of people famous for pugnacity and fierceness, is in the center of Çukurova region and surrounded by vast cotton fields.<sup>5</sup> In the early years of Turkish Republic, the people of Çukurova lived in the plateaus in summer and in the plains, in town centers in winter because of the humidity and hot weather.

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<sup>5</sup> Adana is a province in the South of Turkey, a depot of "the white gold", meaning cotton, famous for its fertile lands. Adana is the ninth biggest city by area in Turkey and fourth biggest in population. In the Eastern Mediterranean region, the province of Adana is surrounded with the provinces Kayseri, Kahramanmaraş, Gaziantep, Niğde, İçel (Mersin), Osmaniye and Hatay. Adana has been one of the first industrialized cities of Turkey.

The city center is by the banks of the river Seyhan, 30 km in to the land from the Mediterranean Sea. "Adana lies in the heart of Çukurova, a geographical, economical and cultural region that covers the provinces of Mersin, Adana, Osmaniye and Hatay. Home to approximately six million people, the region is mostly a large stretch of flat, fertile land regarded as one of the most agriculturally productive areas of the world." For further information, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adana>

This is still partially true for Adana. People go to the plateaus due to the extremely hot weather in summer time and return to towns in the beginning of autumn. It is possible to see that, compared to the other cities, masculinity is emphasized more in Adana and there's a city culture based on masculinity. Even when you read the essays on "Adana Man" on web, you can see that machismo is dominant in Adana.<sup>6</sup>

Famous poet Ahmed Arif says about daredevils man of Çukurova in one of his poems.<sup>7</sup> In the same vein, Yaşar Kemal, a famous Turkish author, writes about Adana and tells the stories of braveness and banditry that took place in this city in his great novels.

Then, what is the current situation in Adana, the land of the daredevils. We've all seen the case in which a husband harshly beat his wife and stabbed her while the police forces did not interfere since that was a "family problem" for them. We are so familiar with the violent cases which were taken to the Adana Court House where the percentage of those cases are higher than the average in Turkey. Men in Adana are perceived as "more men" than all other men. Moreover in the soap operas in TVs and movies, *delikanlılık*, bravery,

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<sup>66</sup> "Does not have words, but fights."

"Does not hesitate to get into a fight even when he knows that he will be beaten up."

"Drinks a big bottle of rakı at a sitting and is not influenced from this."

"Does not look at his friend's girl friend, and crosses out the person who does it."

"Is an expert on *delikanlılık*."

"Is not proud of his masculinity but makes other people be proud of his masculinity."

"When he is cheated on, he pulls the trigger."

"How dare a person can disturb a lady if there is an Adana Man there? It is impossible!"

<http://adana.sosyomat.com/etiket/adana-erkegi>

<sup>7</sup> My Çukurova,

Our swaddle cloth, our cerecloth,

Swarthy blooded and clean faced.

...

In the famous prisons of my Anatolia

Çukurova's people are prisoned the most,

Like showing his wound to his friend,

Like watering a pussy willow,

So hearty

So profoundly,

Singing ballads, swearing,

Is reserved to the daredevil from Çukurova...

...

masculinity are highly emphasized through the man of Adana. For example, in *Adanalı*, which is a TV serial broadcasted a couple of years ago, both of the leading roles, the police and the criminal were from Adana. They were keen on their honors, tough and severe and they never cried. Therefore, both of them were “men”, “from Adana”, “the men of the God”.<sup>8</sup>

Furthermore, Kurdish people who migrated to Adana from East and South East of Turkey, as a result of forced migration contribute to the structure of Adana. All of the interviewees said to me that they did not hate Kurdish people, however for them it was the Kurdish people who were responsible for the increasing rate of unemployment and criminals. It is possible to talk about a kind of ghettoization in Adana. While the Kurdish people live in the peripheral districts such as Dağlıoğlu, Şakirpaşa or Ova, migrant people from the countryside of Adana lived in districts which are again poor but close to the city center. Although the tension between these ethnic groups can be a topic of another research, I can still say it here that a culture of nationalism is on the rise in Adana.

Following this brief introduction about Adana, the reason for choosing Adana as a field work will be discussed. As it is already mentioned, Adana is famous for its masculinity. People who I contacted in city center as well as in the districts agree with this. They are proud of being from Adana and think that Adana is not similar to any other city in Turkey. In fact, I think this can be true for people who live in other cities and consider their home towns different from other cities, however, I realized that in Adana this was emphasized more. All of the men who I interviewed mentioned about the uniqueness of being from Adana:

*I think a person of Adana is in that way, “its water is strong and its people are honest”, it is said in that way everywhere. I mean in some lands it’s for sure that if a person comes to one’s door and begs “I am hungry”, no one would open his door and maybe they wouldn’t even give water; however, here, I believe that if a person*

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<sup>8</sup> “Adanalılık, Allah’ın adamıyık” (We are from Adana, We are the men of God) are words commonly used by Adana urbanites. When I asked it to an *abi* in the neighborhood, he told me that those words purport “Adana people has no feeling of fear except for the fear from God”.

*comes to a real Adanalı, he would even have you over for dinner. He would even share his dinner table and serve his dinner to you.(Kerim, aged 22) <sup>9</sup>*

Since all these features of Adana are identified with masculinity and bravery, this kind of perception is crucial for my research.

Tepebağ was a district which I could find people who considered themselves as “real people of Adana”<sup>10</sup>. Tepebağ, which was one of the oldest districts of Adana was so close to the city center that you could even walk. Since they regarded themselves as the real inhabitants of the city I preferred to hold my interviews there.

One of the reason for choosing Adana as a field was to test the strong perception that “Namus” is in the East, than the honour killings take place in East and this is the problem of the East.” In fact, I aimed to disprove this perception. Honour is related with the masculinity codes and independent from the geography, ethnic structure. Additionally, I aimed to examine the honour and masculinity perception of Adana. The narratives of young people, who claim that they are “from Adana” although they do not represent Adana, are quite important.

Now, this thesis has been organized as follows;

In the second chapter, I wrote on social codes of neighborhood. Each neighborhood as a bounded area has its own rules and own culture. Each neighborhood has its own memory and they maintain some shared values of their own. For instance, as the neighborhood is located nearby Seyhan River, the ‘water side’/‘suyun kenarı’ is perceived as a public space. Young people are drinking beer by looking at the river and couples are spending time at the ‘water side’. Young people from other neighborhoods are also coming to spend

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<sup>9</sup> “Ya bence şimdi Adana insanı bu böyledir, “su sert insanı mert” tir, her yerde de söylüyorlardır bunu. Yani bence harbi yani öz bir Adanalı, şimdi bazı memleketlere git kapıyı çal, de “acım” de, kapıyı bile açmaz, belki biri bardak su bile vermez, ama burada ben inanıyorum yani Adana’nın gerçek yerlisine git, akşam sofrasına bile alır seni yani. Sofrasına bile oturtturur, yemeğini yedirttirir.” (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

<sup>10</sup> Adana people see people coming from Adana’s villages as “yerli Adanalı” or “has Adanalı, gerçek Adanalı” while they do not see people coming from other cities as “yerli Adanalı” despite living long period of time in this place.

time at the water side. For instance, it is not same to hit on women in the 'water side' place and in the neighborhood. In general, girls and boys feel more open when they are away from their families. 'To take girls to water side'\ 'Kızı suyun kenarına götürmek' is a commonly used phrase among men. In this sense, it can be argued that while the neighborhood is a 'private space', the water side is a 'public space'. I argue that the 'shared honor perception' in the neighborhood creates and appropriate the neighborhood into a private space.

In the third chapter, I mention and discuss the dynamics of the relations within men. I attempt to understand and explore the ways in which masculinity codes are constructed and reproduced. Besides, I try to explore how they legitimize these codes over their 'habitus' experiences, limitations, perceptions. The effort to examine the power mechanisms within their men circles and across other men groups enabled me to notice the ways in which they represent themselves. Their definitions and descriptions of the 'ideal man' allow me to comprehend how they image themselves and their desire of different manhood states. It can be argued that their appreciation of being a '*delikanlı*'\adolescent man, being a tough and combatant man, being reliable and honest man gives hints about their imaginations of manhood.

In the fourth chapter, I concentrate on the men-women relations with a specific focus on how men develop a power mechanism in their relation to women. I try to comprehend the womanhood forms in their imaginations while they define the 'ideal woman', to whom they wish to get married. Moreover, I discuss the importance of virginity of women for men and the construction of the hypocrite masculine dominance. I tried to tackle with the masculine language constructed through the dilemmas like 'Dignified woman' versus 'Jester woman'. I attempt to indicate the diverse ways of the construction of the manhood within which certain behavior patterns are assumed to be appropriate for men but regarded as improper for women.

In the fifth chapter, in the last part of the thesis, I endeavor to examine the power mechanism in women-men relations through the honor perception. I

argue that honor is perceived as a border agreement among men. Therefore I may claim that honor has a significant place in the construction of manhood\masculinity. It can be argued that the men's responsibility and control mechanisms over women's sexuality designate women as subjects and men as the fighting men. In this context, I touch upon the concepts of honor\dignity and pride. Besides, I try to include the boundaries set for women. How should a proper woman wear, how should she act and behave in the public can be counted as example questions. Moving from the fact that it is not possible to talk about a universal and single perception of honor, I try to discuss and explore the honor perceptions of a group of lower class, young male workers.

## Chapter 2:

### GENERAL SOCIAL CODES OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

*Tepebağ Mahallesi*, Tepebağ Neighborhood is a very old neighborhood, among the first settlements of Adana, perceiving themselves as “Has Adanalı”, meaning “true native of Adana”, generally live here. Although there is quite a large population of Kurds in Adana, migrated to the city from Eastern and Southeastern regions of Turkey because of forced migration, they haven’t really settled into this neighborhood. Tepebağ can be seen as a central-peripheral neighborhood, being in walking distance to Küçük Saat and Büyük Saat, the very centre of Adana, the neighborhood is at the same time getting smaller and smaller. Some of the residents have moved to other places when their houses were damaged due to an earthquake, but most have returned to the neighborhood.

All but a few of the people that I have spoken have told that they were to vote MHP<sup>11</sup>. Three crescents and wolf figures, the symbols of MHP, are abundant in these streets. In the interior parts of the neighborhood, in addition to houses there are small shops such as pressers or textiles wholesalers. Moreover, these are interlocked to the houses. The youth that I’ve spoken to in the neighborhood defined themselves as nationalists. Many neighborhoods have their own codes, so does Tepebağ neighborhood. These are unwritten rules, but they haunt everyday life as many people know and practice them.

Masculinity can be seen as a collective of rules and practices constantly reproducing its codes within itself in the place where fiction and reality intersect, and thus updating itself. These rules are of course not written, these

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<sup>11</sup> MHP (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi- Nationalist Movement Party) has been making nationalist policies for nearly 50 years in Turkey.

are hegemonic codes that males somehow acquire, and many men tend to feel themselves better and safer when they obey such rules. The picture is more obvious, more visible for the working class men.

Tepebağ Neighborhood is a neighborhood populated mainly by workers from lower and middle classes. Women are not very visible in public places, they usually spend their time at home or visit their neighbors. We may talk about a state of femininity shaped through the understandings of men, a femininity determined by men. It is men who determine how women should live and women define their daily lives according to this. For example, when a woman visits her neighbors or spends her time close to her home, not getting too far away, this is appreciated in the neighborhood. But if she goes to the city center (*çarşı*), this is found reprehensible (*ayıp*).

## **2.1 The Field of the Neighborhood**

As everybody in the neighborhood know each other in some way or the other, a stranger's presence in the neighborhood is understood at the instant. I could get that from the way they looked at me as I went into the neighborhood or as I toured around on a Sunday. Because it is "their field" there, any stranger coming from outside is coded as a "foreigner" who is a threat, no matter how he dressed and looked like. Could I possibly be a thief, or an undercover policeman in search of somebody? Or, was I a man who would cause trouble in the neighborhood, like passing words to the girls; had I come here to meet one of the girls of the neighborhood? After that coding they all made their observations to get to know me, coming close to me with sometimes harsh and sometimes timid expressions on their eyes, asking who I am or who I'm looking for. In such cases what relieved them was for me to tell the names of those whom I had interviewed before, saying that I knew this and that person and just have come to wander around. Knowing somebody from the neighborhood and being a student meant that the danger was over. This reaction to a stranger was more of a curious interest in someone who's not from the neighborhood than a fear from a real threat. Thus I can't say that I've been nervous in the

neighborhood thinking that I'm in danger. I can only name a sense of mistrust resulting from not being a part of there and from the curious gazes of the people.

Although the neighborhood I studied was not one of the more dangerous ghettos of Adana, such as Kiremithane or Dağlıoğlu, anyone who came to the area from somewhere else, any outsider was noticed at the instant. Because the neighborhood is not too big and everybody know each other, it was normal for them to notice someone who's not from the neighborhood. Kiremithane Neighborhood is a place where use and selling of drugs is frequent, thus youngsters come here to buy drugs. Therefore when an outsider comes to the neighborhood he is immediately noticed, with a doubt that he might be the police. The perception that an outsider is a threat has resulted in an overall worry on security in this neighborhood. The situation in Tepebağ is not like that, because, although the use of drugs is quite widespread, it is not really sold here. Peddlers from other places come here and sell it, and according to the youth of the neighborhood, it would be found awkward had anyone from this neighborhood sold drugs here, they said they wouldn't tolerate such a situation for the purity and safety of their neighborhood.

A neighborhood in which drugs are sold is not seen as a clean neighborhood, this means there will often be police raids, quarrels and problems there. A neighbor's son who deals drugs will disturb the neighbors who see themselves as "clean families." This will upset the neighborhood relations. As the neighborhood has a homogenous structure with almost no immigrants from outside, everybody knows each other for years. As any inquietude would affect all the neighborhood, conditions such as drug-dealing, prostitution and theft are perceived as factors to disturb the neighborhood. When I asked about that to one young man who did drugs from time to time, he said "*Abi* [elder brother] using it is something else from selling it. In a neighborhood where peddlers live

there will be no peace, there'll be lots of dirtbags coming from other places, plus police raids every night."<sup>12</sup>

The same is valid in case a prostitute lives in the neighborhood. The young men of the neighborhood go to brothels or clandestine brothels. However they don't want a prostitute to live in their neighborhood because in that case "badness" will reflect into the neighborhood, the neighborhood will have no honor and the most importantly, their own mothers and sisters will be in at risk. This actually is one of the main anxieties of a lower class workers' neighborhood. Having a conduct disapproved by the society, such as prostitution, will be a source of inquietude for the neighborhood.

When I asked one of my respondents how he would feel if a prostitute lived in the same block of houses as him:

*Well, if a prostitute lives on the upper floor, either I move from that apartment or I ask them to move. Because what is a prostitute doing there? From the morning till evening, her house won't ever be empty. In a sense, time to time, she can suborn others. You know what they tell, "if you lie down with dogs you will rise up with fleas", it is something like that. That kind of women and men are both dangerous. For example, let's say there is a man on the upper floor, twenty girls come a day, well, people will misjudge that. People will feel uneasy, like that, it leads to the same result. (Recep, aged 20)<sup>13</sup>*

A man whose house is frequently visited by "girls" poses as threat as well. As it was put by the respondent, "if you lie down with dogs you'll rise up with fleas" ("üzüm üzüme baka baka kararır"). Such a situation is dangerous for the "honored" girls of the neighborhood, it will set a bad example for those girls.

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<sup>12</sup> *Abi*, now using and selling are different. There is no peace in the neighborhood where the drug dealers are living. The dirtbags comes to the neighborhood in addition to the police raids every night.

<sup>13</sup> Yani üst katta bir tane hayat kadını yaşasa, ya o apartmandan taşınırım, ya da onların çıkmasını isterim. Çünkü hayat kadının orda işi ne ki? Sabahtan akşama kadar evi boş durmaz ki hayat kadınının. Yani arada sırada başkalarının da aklını çelebilir. Üzüm üzüme baka baka kararır derler ya öyle bir şey. Hem kadının hem de erkeğin o şekli tehlikeli. Mesela diyelim üst katta bir erkek var, günde yirmi tane kız geliyor, e şimdi millet yanlış anlayacak. İnsanlar huzursuz olacaklar falan, o da aynı yola çıkıyor. (Recep, 20 yaşında)

The biggest threat here comes from the fact that men cannot maintain a controlling mechanism: men are considered ready, prone to be seduced any time, looking out for any movement from women, even if it is very slight. If a prostitute lives in the neighborhood, this may set out the “honored men” of the neighborhood, it may lead them to think badly. This in turn may bring uneasiness in the family, the well-working system in the family may be thus interrupted. It is in this sense that it is important to keep the neighborhood “clean”, not to have “dirt” spreading to the neighborhood. It is not the men who go to the prostitute, but the prostitute herself is on the target board.

The neighborhood has some manners. Those making pass at girls, disturbing them in unkind ways are considered “*edepsiz*”, ill-mannered. A man who thinks of his own mother or sister will not assault a girl, he won’t disturb her. Perceived as “not knowing oneself, impertinence” (“*kendini bilmezlik*”), is of course not wholly avoidable, but those who do make passes are mostly young children. When I asked about this to one of the interviewees, he said those youngsters are inexperienced yet, that they act foolishly out of ignorance and that they will not be doing such things when they grow up. The kids seen as inexperienced are 13-14 year-old secondary school kids that just enter manhood, unable to control themselves. In the family and in the neighborhood they aren’t perceived as responsible from anything, they aren’t considered fully men, thus they pose no threat to honor.

As explained just above, a man making passes will not be praised, he won't be respected. Just like the fact that a man setting eyes on someone else’s honor won't be respected by other men. Here the thoughtlessness of the man making passes at and sexually harassing a woman comes from the fact that he isn't thinking of his own mother or sister: when a man disturbs a woman he should be aware that he is actually disturbing a woman who is under the “responsibility” of other men, a man having such an awareness will not be harassing anyone, thinking of the women in his own responsibility. This is the motivation behind the phrase “don’t you have a mother or a sister?”

On the other hand, for an outsider to come and disturb a woman from the neighborhood is a definitely unacceptable case. "The honor of the neighborhood" is something to be protected, it is something that concerns everyone. The woman disturbed is the mother, sister or a relative of some man living in the neighborhood and in any case she is under the common responsibility of the men of the neighborhood. It is thought that a neighborhood man who says nothing against this will not say anything when his own mother or sister is harassed some other day, either.

For an outsider to attempt at the neighborhood's honor, to disturb it, such an event taking place within the borders of the neighborhood means to transgress those limits and this is something that needs courage. The main issue here is the outsiders attempt to transgress, to "violate" the neighborhood's own fields that they consider as their own "place" (*"mekân"*). The neighborhood is clean, no such thing takes place here. A foreigner to come here and attempt at such an act in a place where people live peacefully means a violation of the borders of the neighborhood. This is not only about disturbing a woman from the neighborhood. It is also unacceptable for an outsider to disturb a man from the neighborhood or to beat him. In such a situation, everybody already knows each other but even if a neighborhood man witnessing this event is not "close" to the person being attacked, he has to interfere into what's going on. The point here is rather not the person being beaten but that there is a threat from the outside. A person who doesn't intervene in such a case will both be called a "coward" and at the same time risks being left alone if in the future he himself is attacked. This, in turn, damages the "solidarity spirit" considered sacred in the neighborhood. Nobody can say "let sleeping dogs lie" (*"bana dokunmayan yılan bin yaşasın"*). Anybody can be under risk at any time and that sleeping dog might one day bite exactly the person thinking in that way. Therefore it is unacceptable for someone from the outside of the neighborhood to violate their place, to insolently "show off" (*"artistlik yapmak"*) or "roughneck" (*"dayılanmak"*) in here.

While it is unacceptable for a stranger to cause trouble, to show interest in the girls in the neighborhood, the young men of this neighborhood do similar things in other neighborhoods. This shows us that the neighborhood is accepted as a sacred place. As I have also witnessed from time to time, the neighborhood youth go to central places, parks and water sides in groups of three or five persons, to pick up a girl or to meet with their girlfriends on Sundays, but they don't let such things to take place in their own neighborhood. This hypocritical attitude that might be perceived as a field-struggle among men can be seen as something that takes place in almost all neighborhoods. Picking up girls, meeting a lover, kissing girls in parks are definitely not forbidden; what's forbidden is not the act in itself but the place that it occurs. The young men disturbing those who kiss in his neighborhood, thus trying to protect the neighborhood honor, does the same stuff himself in other neighborhoods. Or a man who doesn't want prostitution to take place in his neighborhood does this in other places. As similar motivations are present in other neighborhoods too, the youth usually prefer parks, cafes or water sides in common places, thought not to belong to anybody.

## **2.2 Culture of Solidarity Among Neighborhood Residents**

In contradistinction to many other neighborhoods of Adana, Tepebağ neighborhood is not one that receives immigration. Because many of the houses were damaged in the earthquake that took place in Adana in 1998, the earthquake victims from the neighborhood were given housing estates in the distant places of the city. Nevertheless they did not prefer to go there, complaining that there are no neighbor relations out there, they decided to stay in their own neighborhood by renting the houses allocated to themselves to other people.

The neighborhood population is made up of tradesmen and working class families employed in the private sector. Most families are nuclear families, but there are some who live with grandparents. Many families aren't very crowded, consisting of mother, father and three or four children. Enjoying a degree of

vivacity because of its closeness to the very center of the city, the neighborhood also has a culture of solidarity resulting from the relations between neighbors. People are either relatives and kin to each other, or they have that feeling of knowing each other really well as they have been living in the same neighborhood for long years. People attribute a special importance to the relationship between neighbors. Neighbors are informed about each other; if you can't find one at home, you can just ask the neighbor next door about him, he'll know where he's gone and when he'll be back.

*We have relatives in the neighborhood, kinfolks; beyond this, we have neighbors that we see as closer than family both in the good and the bad day, well, don't buy the house but have the neighbors, you will look to your neighbor; neighbor is the one you can't do without, he's your brother. (Zagor, aged 21)<sup>14</sup>*

The dwellers of the neighborhood act with solidarity and help each other as they usually have the same financial possibilities or impossibilities. They think that the solidarity that comes from poverty and the absence of things is always more powerful. This way of solidarity has something that makes people feel stronger. Especially among the youth in the neighborhood a culture of "living a privation all together" seems to be dominant, sourced in the poverty they have been experiencing. It is believed that those who have lived in privation have a stronger and steadier stance in life. A person who knows poverty is always tougher towards life. Because he knows poverty he won't be insensitive to the poverty of others, he can lend a helping hand to them. He won't hesitate to share or give whatever he has in his hands. This sense of solidarity is further strengthened through practices like sending units to the cell phone accounts of those who don't have airtime minutes or lending money to those in need.

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<sup>14</sup> "Mahallede akrabalarımız var, hısımlarımız, bundan başka iyi günde kötü günde, aileden öte gördüğümüz komşularımız, yani ev alma komşu al, komşuna bakacan, komşun olmazsa olmaz kardaş." (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

*Well, as she/he knows privation, she/he likes to help a person who is poverty-stricken. Because, she/he has also experienced that. But, somebody who hasn't experienced doesn't know what privation is. If she/he has a bread, she/he doesn't know how to share it. (Kerim, aged 22)<sup>15</sup>*

Lending money, not thinking about money, being generous are some properties of the people sharing “the same destiny.” The solidarity is similarly enriched with acts such as sending dinner to the poor neighbor, visiting the ill, or sending food to the house in condolence. A “reciprocal insurance” can be found in this sense of solidarity. In the helping each other among the neighbors we can see a motive to guarantee one's own future. A person who helps her/his neighbor will expect to receive similar help from her/him in the future; when there's someone sick or when there's condolence she/he will seek attention and help from her/his neighbors. Similarly, a person who lends money to his/her friend in the neighborhood might think of the borrower when she/he needs to borrow money one day.

### **2.3 Upper Classes: Relations with the Others**

It is known that sometimes there are discrepancies between the class that one belongs to and the class that she/he sees her/himself in. The young men that I interviewed definitely didn't see themselves as poor. When I asked how they found the economic conditions of their families in informal chats, they usually said stuff like “Thank God, we get on”. Three of them had unemployed fathers, the fathers of the rest were workers either employed in or retired from the private sector. Except for one person whose mother sold clothes in the market, the mothers of all respondents were housewives. Except two of them, my respondents stayed in houses that belonged to their families. Not having to pay rent is a great advantage and it may be viewed as a factor that improves the economic condition of the household. All my respondents worked in small

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<sup>15</sup> Şimdi yokluğu bildiği için yok olan bir insana da yardım etmeyi sever yani. Çünkü kendi de zamanında onu görmüştür. Ama yokluğu görmeyen bir insan yokluğu ne olduğunu bilmez. Bir ekmeği olsa paylaşmayı bilmez. (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

workplaces such as barbers, car repairs, print shop, etc. Except one that was a primary school graduate, the others were secondary school graduates or high school drop-outs. In that sense, in determining class position my respondents can be defined as lower middle class workers when the average household income, level of education and cultural capital are taken into consideration. Their relations with those from lower classes than themselves are more intense than those from higher classes from themselves. As there are poorer families in the neighborhood, they consider it their duty to help them. Although they don't really perceive themselves as poor, they see themselves as people "who know poverty, who have experienced poverty." I have not encountered any families below the level of poverty, all families can live off without one's help and because they all have been living in Adana and in this neighborhood for a long time, the number of families paying rent was also quite low.

Although physical and cultural contact with the upper class –the rich—,<sup>16</sup> as expressed above, this is rather resisted through solidarity and with a power that comes from poverty, instead of resulting in a cultural dissolution. While many dream of getting rich in easy ways; not being "light" like the rich, not being lax (being honored), earning ones bread through ones own efforts ("with the sweat in ones forehead") are ideas respected among the neighborhood youth. They often say that the rich don't enjoy the life that they live emptily. Contact with the rich often takes place on the trips taken after work or on Sundays. This contact should rather be seen as just "seeing" instead of a dialogue. But although they rarely get into any dialogue, this contact made in the luxurious shopping centers or through televisions and internet has resulted in a general perception on the rich. The rich people who are thought to have money but no peace of mind, and bound to unhappiness, are not envied, even though they belong to the class that the neighborhood youth want to join one day. I think this may be considered to be a sort of defence mechanism underlying the discourse that "the rich have money but they don't have peace of mind." The rich are perceived as people who

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<sup>16</sup> Necmi Erdoğan states that class differences in Turkey are thought in the axis of rich versus old, without going into further detail (Erdoğan, 2007).

don't have a peaceful family life, who are unhappy, living in a spiritually empty world because they value material life so much.

*You know brother, when you look to our youth, how nice, they play billiards, then, they make tournaments, they hold matches, they hold astro turf tournaments. People are poor but they have a colorful life. But you look at the rich, they have money but they have neither happiness nor anything else. Their families are all torn apart. You just see him, he's taken the car, wandering around. (Recep, aged 20)<sup>17</sup>*

For them the rich are people who don't think of the other world, who live only their day, paying no importance to their families, being lax and easy (“mezhebi geniř”). Many tend to think that “honor” has no meaning for these people and that they thus live for nothing. Being lax” is a term used for people who don't care about their honors and “let” their wives and daughters “be relaxed.” It is also used for “lax” women and the men who give free space to the women under his responsibility, who don't care what they do:

*Yet, some people think, some don't. It is the same with the rich, too. The man has set everything free, he doesn't give a hoot. (Kerim, age 22)<sup>18</sup>*

Some, on the other hand, thought that the perception of honor is the same in rich and poor, that there are individual differences rather than class differences dominant in the approaches to honor:

*It's all the same I think, all the same. Some are, you know,, well, it's shameful to tell, some are fagots, the fathers. They say “Whatever my daughter does, I don't intervene. It is up to her”, he says. There are people who say so. (Emir, age 18)<sup>19</sup>*

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<sup>17</sup> Yani abi bizim gençlere bakıyorsun ne güzel, bilardo oynuyorlar, ondan sonra turnuva yapıyorlar, maç yapıyorlar, halı turnuvası yapıyorlar. Hayat renkli geçiyor fakir olmasına rağmen. Ama zenginlere bakıyorsun ellerinde para var ama ne mutluluk var, ne bir şey var. Ailesi hepsi birbirinden ayrılmış. Bir bakıyorsun eline almış arabayı geziyor sağda solda. (Recep, 20 yaşında)

<sup>18</sup> Ama işte kimisi düşünür kimisi düşünmez. Zenginlerde de öyledir. Adam her şeyini serbest bırakmıştır, takmaz. (Kerim 22 yaşında)

Along with the fact that the class dimension is certainly a significant aspect, I approve of the perspective of the young man I have interviewed. The perspective of middle classes and upper-middle classes on violence against women and honor-killings indicates that this approach is much more accurate. The salience of honor as a practice of “solidarity” comprehensibly emerges when the notion of “honor” with patterns of power among men and codifications of violation of boundaries that go beyond unique class positions is taken into account.

It seems that in order to feel better in their relationships with the upper classes, the lower classes’ or the poor’s attributing extra significance to honor has turned into a means for standing upright. This way of relating of the poor to the rich is explained by Erdoğan in his study “States of Poverty” as such:

...Hence the poor-subordinate picture themselves as equipped with moral-humanistic values against the rich. In this sense, wisdom<sup>20</sup> has a key role in the poor-subordinate subject’s construction of him/herself and material misery becomes a weapon (“the weapon of the poor”) keeping him/her upright against inward misery... (Erdoğan, 2007:49, my translation).

In this context “honor” becomes the singular tool for the young worker men to feel good with: the poor don’t have a house, they don’t have a car but they do have honor. Recep dreams to be rich and live a nice life and wants to show off with the Honda motorcycle he’ll buy. As an example to this way of thinking, we may read what Recep said while he explained the relationship of poor people with honor:

*Honestly, honour is very important for the poor people, but the rich people can be the opposite. The rich people, they don’t think about the hereafter; when they*

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<sup>19</sup> Hepsi bir bence, hepsi bir. Bazıları ne bileyim hani söylemesi ayıp ibne olur, babası. Ne yaparsa yapsın kızım der, ben karışmıyorum. İşte kızımın bileceği iş der. Öyle diyenler de var. (Emir, 18 yaşında)

<sup>20</sup> Here we may add honor to wisdom. Or use “honor” instead of wisdom here, I think. Honor was seen as wisdom by the men I interviewed, and the values they used while listing the properties of a honored man or human could as well be read as the properties of a wise person.

*marry, they don't care much about virginity too, for them it's just something like a pleasure of 5 minutes. They don't give much significance to honour, but the poor sections have nothing at their hands, they no money, the only thing left at their hands is honour. That's all. Well, the rich has that, they have money, they have everything. (Recep, age 20)<sup>21</sup>*

I think that to say "honor" on its own has such a function is quite an essentialist (and functionalist?) approach, nevertheless I agree that in order to "be able to cease the inward pain of not being able to have the material strength" honor as a functional tool is a powerful weapon of the poor.

The development and enrichment of concepts such as honor and reputation in the world of the poor, and the poor people to live their life accordingly may be viewed as functional means to make this life more valuable. Because the poor have nothing to lose but their honor! Honor, for them, is the key to a decent life. It provides that they hold their heads high. While poverty is something that can be excused by saying "that's what we have in destiny", such an explanation is unthinkable when it comes to being dishonored. Poor people tend to measure and place each other according to their honors.

The poor don't see "richness" in its own right as "badness", but they stand in a place that excludes the values brought through "richness" and the behavior and living styles of rich people (Erdoğan, 2007, 50). The lads I interviewed and the other men that I spoke with in the neighborhood all wanted to be rich one day. Owning a fine car, having a house and family was the dream of many. And when I reminded them that they didn't have good opinions on rich people, many told me that it's the personality of the person that matters. Here again, their emphasis on the individual rather than the class suggested that their values wouldn't change if they became rich, that they would still "stay the same." The

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<sup>21</sup> Valla fakir insanlar için namus çok önemlidir ama zengin insanlar tam tersi de olabilir. Zengin insanlar sadece diğer dünyayı düşünmüyorlar, evlendikleri zamanda fazla kızlığa önem vermiyorlar, onlar için sadece 5 dakikalık bir zevk gibi bir şey. Onlar namusa fazla önem vermiyorlar, ama işte fakir kesimin ellerinde hiçbir şey yok, para yok, pul yok, geriye bir namus kalıyor ellerinde. O kadar yani. Zenginler de o var yani, para var, her şey var. (Recep, 20 yaşında)

argument that material things doesn't change or shouldn't change you is an argument frequently emphasized by poor people. When I reminded them of the phrase "money corrupts a person", they just parried the subject with expressions such as "it won't corrupt us *abi*."

They thought that money can't change human relations, that even if they became rich they would still be the same. It seems possible to see this view as an innocent resistance towards change. The reason why the workers who have migrated from Turkey to Germany don't want to adapt to the life there but try to stay the same, why they want to take the western technology but not the morals of the west, they all have a place in this context. Although they know that money changes the relationships between people, it is significant that poor people don't want to lose the values in which they feel "peaceful and clean", that they don't want to lose the decent values they perceive as their own. The cliché line of movies, "the poor but proud young man", also signifies such a situation. Poverty is a pest, yes but it doesn't mean being dishonored. Poverty is identified with concepts like being proud, dignified and honored. Thus the poor people have a better moral strength to resist the cruelty of the material world. If these concepts are taken away from the poor, this will create a disaster in his world. He will do whatever he can to regain the lost honor. These concepts stand as the taboos in the poor man's world, like a religion. It is unthinkable that people without material strength can accept to lose their honor. Because it is these concepts that let a poor man keep his head high in the world of the rich.

### Chapter 3:

#### SOCIAL CODES OF MASCULINITY IN MEN'S HOMOSOCIAL RELATIONS

Things told about an ideal man include the statements about how the working class masculinity in the neighborhood is constructed. How should a man behave, how should he look at life? What should a respected man do to live up to that respect, and what should he avoid doing? Answers to these questions make up the social codes of masculinity. As masculinity is a constant process of showing and proving oneself, none of the men I interviewed were men like they said they were, they were just trying to be so. Masculinity can be viewed like a struggle that goes on for a lifetime; a man should be ready to be questioned and challenged throughout his life, and to fulfill the expectations on how much a "man" he is. In this context the ideal man is the man who should do something all the time. It's not enough to be born a male. You have to put effort to become a man.

Atay who states that masculinity is a condition that has to be reproduced all the time, gives the example of a "a pinned barrel" to symbolize that men have to constantly reproduce the power they exercise (Atay, 2004:24). While masculinity forms a relationship of domination with people who aren't male or who aren't men enough, it actually brings the biggest harm to itself. "Masculinity oppresses men the most" (Atay, 2004).

Society imposes different roles to men and women in daily life. Men and women tend to act according to these roles. This seems to be the only way to provide that an individual isn't found strange and she/he isn't excluded from the social structure she/he belongs to. Some properties used to define men, such as being strong and successful, mean praise when they are used for a woman; but when, on the other hand, properties like sensitivity, softness etc. that are used to define women are used for a man, this may be humiliating or degrading (Cengiz, Tol and Küçükural, 2004:58). We often see that while properties attributed to

men are perceived to be positive, those attributed to women are perceived to be negative. This is another situation that points out to gender inequality. Connel argues that gender roles are deep and comprehensive, that they have a structural place that overwhelms the individual and that there won't be any change in roles as long as these structural factors prevail:

The idea that masculinity is the internalized male sex role allows for social change and that was sometimes seen as role theory's advantage over psychoanalysis. Since the role norms are social facts, they can be changed by social process. This will happen whenever the agencies of socialization- family, school, mass media, etc. -transmit new expectations. (Connel, 2005:23)

What happens if a man doesn't fulfill the roles expected from him? If I think of the neighborhood that I carried out the interviews for this study, I can say that this will be a disaster for that man. As the masculinity experienced in the neighborhood is strict and visible, a man who would act contrary to this, i.e. a man who isn't quarrelsome, who is tender and gentle or doesn't smoke or use alcohol etc. will have difficulty in finding himself a habitat. The network of friends will perceive him as a "lacking" and "incomplete" individual. Doğu, one of my respondents, told me in shame that because he is gentle and physically weak, he was sometimes beaten and they made fun of him. A man who doesn't act like "a true man" will experience oppression in the neighborhood.

How should an ideal man be? How should he act? While sharing their views on how a man should be, my respondents mostly spoke about the prohibitions. A man who complies with the things that shouldn't be done is "a man like a man" ("*adam gibi adam*"), an ideal male. What are the things he shouldn't wear? What shouldn't he say, what should he be careful with? Where does the road to masculinity pass from? I can't talk about a general point of agreement among the young men I interviewed but I can say they had some common thoughts. While these youths construct their own masculinities the social environment in the neighborhood is seen as one of the main sources. Boys enter the process of

constructing their masculinities by imitating the behavior of elder males at home and in the neighborhood.

In this chapter I will first dwell upon the expected behavior of a man in general and then, through my interviews, I will try to explain how a man's relationships with his friends and other people should be.

### **3.1 How Should the Ideal or Real Man Be?**

An ideal man shows himself with his clothing and his acts. It's not important how he dresses, but it's important that he does *not* dress like a woman, he does *not* have long hair like a woman. As having long hair and using earrings are attributed to women, a man should avoid these. Men who do these are firstly made fun of, they are thought to do these things out of affectation (*özenti*). Men who go on doing such acts of "affectation" run the risk of being excluded from their company of friends. Other men stigmatize them as someone who "spoiled themselves."

*Yes there are, abi. Putting on earrings, for instance. I think this suits womanhood, they grow their hair, like girls. That's how it is.*

#### ***Why do they ever do that?***

*To look better to girls. And then there's affectation, to go and wander around with girls.<sup>22</sup> (Ali, aged 22)*

A man should also be austere, he shouldn't laugh too much, he shouldn't engage in saucy acts. Maturity is among the most virtuous behavior that a man should have. A man who isn't so is perceived as a buffoon ("*soytarı*"). First of all, a man should never make everybody laugh at him. A man who ridicules himself, who plays a fool ("*maskara olmak*") in an environment is not approved and is not liked.

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<sup>22</sup> Abi var, mesela küpe takması. Bence bu avratlığa yakışır, saç uzatıyorlar, kız gibi. O şekilde yani.

#### **Neden öyle yapıyorlar ki?**

Kızlara daha iyi görünmek için. Özenti var bir de. Kızlarla gezmek tozmak için.

*...Well he shouldn't act in those funny, saucy manners, he just shouldn't be so, he shouldn't do buffoonery.<sup>23</sup> (Emir, 18 yaşında)*

İmam, a religious youth I interviewed, told me that he didn't approve men who made binges and rakishness, that he found these wrong. Men who drink alcohol and hang out with women can't set an example to the society as they are showing bad behavior. A man should first of all be a good example to his surroundings. A good Muslim man should take these into consideration.

*I don't like going on the booze for a single man also, boozing. I mean he goes to a woman, and then the other day he goes to another woman. Or, he goes and drinks alcohol with his friends, well I'm against alcohol from the beginning anyway but even if he's single if he's having alcohol I don't appreciate that. You know, I saw men having beer in the middle of the night on the street, whether you're single or married, this is wrong (İmam, aged 23)<sup>24</sup>*

An ideal man is a man in his right mind (“kendini bilen”). This comes up as a wisdom, a virtue. A man in his right mind means a man who is conscious of his limits. Everything he does should have a measure, a limit. If not, he will be disgraced in the environment (“ortama rezil olur”), he will be a fool. A real man is not the one who uses his power in an unlimited way, but the one who uses it in control and in place. He shouldn't have infinite self confidence and he shouldn't feign manliness for nonsense. He should be able to stop himself when necessary. Such a man will both be able to control his relations with other men and he will not give a bad image to the surroundings. A man who tries to control all of his acts in everyday life is under an enormous pressure in this sense. This pressure comes both from the society and from the man himself. The social structure that the man lives in expects such a control from him. And the man,

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<sup>23</sup> . . . İşte böyle gülünç şımarık davranışlarda bulunmayacak, olmayacak yani, soytarılık yapmayacak.

<sup>24</sup> Bekar biri için de alem yapmasını hiç sevmem, alem. Yani bir kadına gidip bir gün sonra başka bir kadınla. Veya arkadaşlarıyla beraber içki içer, ya ben içki içmeye baştan beri karşıyım da yani, bekar da olsa içki içse ben onu hoş karşılamam yani. Yani ben adamlar gördüm, gece yarısı sokakta bira içiyorlardı, bekar olsun, evli olsun yanlış yani. (İmam, 23 yaşında)

naturalizing this pressure, feels a need to control his acts even when he's alone with himself.

In a life lived not to allow anybody to speak ill of one's manhood ("*erkekliğe toz kondurmamak*"), a man lives under constant observation of himself. A man who lives under pressure expects the same from others, and thus the pressure becomes reciprocal. The normalization and naturalization of the pressure in everyday life in this way makes it harder to see this pressure and this becomes a lifestyle. "Playing the game according to the rule" becomes the main philosophy of man: man is a man if he doesn't deny what he's said, if he doesn't swallow his words; word once spoken is past recalling ("*söz ağızdan bir kere çıkar*"), whatever is the price of that word.

*Well, abi, suppose you're having your beer in company, you should drink only as much as your body takes it. You shouldn't push your capacity harder. You shouldn't show up with manhood by saying I'll drink even more and then get fucked up completely. A human being, a man also, when appropriate, should tell himself to stop, he should have this characteristic in himself. This kind of stuff. First things first, a man should be bland. He should weigh his word when he speaks. He should know the sentences he speaks, he shouldn't deny his sayings even if it's wrong. This kind of stuff. (Kerim, aged 22)<sup>25</sup>*

"Spoiling oneself" ("*kendini bozmak*") is also not approved in a man. What does it mean to spoil oneself? A man who isn't austere and serious, who has ridiculed himself to everybody (*kendini millete madara etmiş*), who has made a fool of himself is seen as a man who has spoiled himself. The man who has left the track drawn for him by masculinity, a man who acts outside of the naturalized codes of masculinity is a man who has spoiled himself.

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<sup>25</sup> Ya şimdi abi bizim mesela ortamda içki içiyon, yani bünyenin aldığı kadar içeceksin. Aldıktan sonra kendini zorlamayacaksın yani. Erkeklik yapıp ben bunu da içerim deyip ondan sonra götü başı dağıtmayacaksın. Bir insanda bir erkek de yani bence yeri geldiği zaman kendini dur diyebilmeli, bu özelliği kendinde gösterebilmeli. Bu tür şeyler yani. . . Bir erkek ağırbaşlı olmalı ilk başta. Konuştuğu kelimeyi tartmalı. Konuştuğu cümleleri bilmeli, ağzından çıkana, yanlış bile olsa inkar etmemeli. Bu tür şeyler yani. (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

A man who has spoiled himself is also seen as a man who has become womanly (“kadınlaşmış”). As, in the eyes of men, gossiping, speaking a lot, being emotional etc. are coded as behavior specific to women, a man who acts as such is thought to be “acting like a woman” (“karı gibi davranan”) and a man who’s spoiled himself.

A man is also evaluated through his relations with other men. A man who doesn’t fulfill the promise he made or a man who doesn’t pay his debts back is also coded as a man who’s spoiled himself. A man has to play the perfect person, when thought in this way men do have a hard job and maybe life takes the revenge of the power they had in this way (Atay, 2004) and at the same time makes this power impossible (Sancar, 2009) But, as stated above, because this way of relationship and these codes of behavior are socially naturalized, these contradictions lose visibility and become a lifestyle.

*First of all a man shouldn’t spoil himself. An then, in the daily life, he will not make passes on woman, he will not clown. (Faruk, aged 20)<sup>26</sup>*

Being chatterbox, talking a lot, being saucy and chewing gum are also perceived as specific to women. A man should avoid engaging in these acts.

*You know what, I don’t like a man being loudmouth. I don’t like a man being spoilt. I don’t like their chewing gum and blowing their bubble gums. Then, what else I don’t know, I don’t like such things for a man. (Halim, aged 23)<sup>27</sup>*

*Brother, now, some people has illness, a person has to chew gum, isn’t that so? For his/her swallowing. Yet, no matter what happens, if you chew gum soundly here, among everybody, not everybody will like this. For example, they can say “Why do you chew gum, man, like those women?”. Then, I don’t know, if a man behaves like*

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<sup>26</sup> En önce bir adam kendini bozmayacak. Ondan sonra günlük hayatta kıza laf atmayacak, soytarılık yapmayacak. (Faruk, 20 yaşında)

<sup>27</sup> Valla bir erkeğin geveze olmasını sevmem. Şımarık olmasını sevmem. Yolda sakız çiğneyip de patlatmalarını sevmem. Ondan sonra ne bileyim bu tür şeyleri sevmem bir erkekte. (Halim, 23 yaşında)

*a woman, he shouldn't talk too much, he should speak shortly but to the point. This is what comes to my mind. (Samet, aged 22)<sup>28</sup>*

A man should stay away from womanly gestures. These don't suit a man. A man is a man if he is able to preserve his stiffness to a degree. A very polite man is also not approved. Being soft and gentle is related to womanhood, and being hard and strict is related to manhood.

*Look, first of all, a man behaving coquettishly is not welcomed here. For example, a short time ago, man with a girl just passed from my shop, the girl calls him "little darling". If you are like this in Adana, you'll attract everybody's attention. This is not appreciated at all. Maybe this is politeness for him. Well, maybe he is not, excuse me, a fagot, but he is too polite, for me that's unfavourable. (Özer, aged 31)<sup>29</sup>*

*Brother, what I know ia that a man like a man shouldn't be gossipy like a woman, he will not bandy about, he will be a man. He will be quiet, he will be serious. When you do these the rest comes along anyway. (Samet, age 22)<sup>30</sup>*

Another thing that spoils a man is drugs. He should stay away from drugs such as cocaine or heroine. Alcohol may be used, but this should have a degree. Many of the youth I interviewed in the neighborhood were either using marijuana in the present or they used to use it before. As marijuana according to them was a type of drug that is in fact no different from cigarette and that they can quit anytime they want, they didn't see it very harmful. Plus, the users of alcohol and drugs also said that these would better not be used. But whatever was used, it should have a limit and it shouldn't be exaggerated. Among the young men I

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<sup>28</sup> Abi şimdi kimi insanlarda hastalık vardır, insan sakız çiğnemek zorundadır değil mi? Yutkunması için. Ama ne olursa olsun burada herkesin ortasında cak cak sakız çiğnersen herkesin hoşuna gitmez. Ne sakız çiğniyorsun lan o karılar gibi derler mesela. Ondan sonrası ne bileyim bir erkek kadını hareketler yapması, çok konuşmayacak, az konuşacak, öz konuşacak. Bunlar geliyor aklıma yani. (Samet, 22 yaşında)

<sup>29</sup> Bak şimdi bir erkeğin en başta kırımması bizim burada hoş karşılanmaz. Mesela az önce benim dükkândan geçiyorlar kızla erkek, kız buna minnoş diyor. Şimdi sen Adana'da böyle olursan, sen herkesin gözünse batarsın. Hiç sevilmez. Belki ona göre bu kibarlıktır. Hani belki afedersin top değildir ama çok kibardır, bana göre ters. (Özer, 31 yaşında)

<sup>30</sup> Abi benim bildiğim erkek adam karı gibi dedikoducu olmayacak, laf götürüp getirmeyecek, adam olacak. Suskun olacak, ağır olacak. Zaten bunları yapınca gerisi de geliyor ya. (Samet, 22 yaşında)

interviewed, the prevailing idea was that as long as it is the place and time a man can try and taste everything. But he will only save himself from being ridiculed if he does these in an appropriate time and place, this is the only way to do it without spoiling oneself. A man who can't set that "limit" ("ayar") to himself will lose. This is a like a test. To quit this habit or to limit it with his will when the time comes will bring reputation to a man.

*Now, basicly, he shouldn't drink alcohol, I drink alcohol but he shouldn't drink alcohol, even if he drinks, he should drink limitedly. I mean he shoudn't do such prohibited things. Say cocain, say heroin, he shouldn't use these. A self-conscious person doesn't do these anyway. (Mehmet, aged 29)<sup>31</sup>*

*Brother, marijuana is also smoked, fag is also smoked, heroin is also used, yet, everything should be done in the appropriate place and time. I don't do anything that harms me, that's not right. As it is told, in this world, in this life, you should taste everything. Ha, if it burns your tongue, you will quit it, you won't bring that to your mouth again. If it tastes sweet, you'll go on, that's how it is. This is the condition of life. (Kerim, aged 22)<sup>32</sup>*

Although in the discursive level they were against alcohol and smoking, all my respondents were smokers and all except for the religious one also used alcohol. When I asked why, their answers were usually like "it's not right but we still do it, we don't use too much, well we are Muslim but we don't pray either." I think that this discrepancy between what they found right and their practices in life has a class base. Living life through experiences, these young workers, with the affect of the lack of cultural capital they have, don't hesitate to do the things that they find bad. They prefer to quit it after personally experiencing its harms. Those who have quit doing drugs have quit it or started using less of it after doing their military services. They experience this in accordance with the

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<sup>31</sup> Şimdi en basiti alkol almamalı, bun ben alıyorum ama alkol almamalı, yani alıyorsa da kısıtlı almalı. Yani böyle yasak şeyler yapmamalı. Kokain olsun, eroin olsun bunları kullanmamalı. Kendini bilen bir insan bunları yapmaz zaten. (Mehmet 29 yaşında)

<sup>32</sup> Abi şimdi esrar da içilir, cigara da içilir, eroin de içilir, ama her şey yeri ve zamanında yapılır. Ben kendime zarar verecek bir şeyi yapmam doğru bir şey değil yani. Derler ya, dünyada, bu hayatta her şeyin tadına bakacaksın. Ha dilini yakıyorsa bırakacaksın, bir daha ağzına almayacaksın. Tatlı geliyorsa ona devam edeceksin, böyle bir şey. Yaşama şartı bu. (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

phrase “you should know to quit it when the time comes”. Emir, who drinks beer in the park with his friends in the evenings and keeps a pack of cigarettes with him, didn’t hesitate to say that he is actually against these.

*For example, I don’t know, he should dress nicely, well, he shouldn’t smoke, he shouldn’t drink alcohol, he should be well mannered.*

***Why are you against alcohol and cigarette?***

*Brother, smoking is harmful to health, it stinks, when you kiss your girlfriend, it’s stinky. Your girlfriend turns away from you. But if you don’t smoke, if you are mannered, if you are serious, that’s better...(Emir, age 18)<sup>33</sup>*

But among my interviewees, one young man who described himself as a believer had a more responsible stance in life in contradiction to the other young men. He also looked at life from a place more naïve and more sensitive than the others. Instead of trying and experiencing the things that are bad for the individual, he acted upon what he learned and observed, and he interpreted his life in this way. This young man who frequents the tariqa followed by his family, lived his life with the advices he takes from his family and his tariqa. Nevertheless he also said that he had learned to smoke from his friends at the high school and he was unable to quit it, but he wanted to quit.

*For example, now, you look at the man in front of you, when I say it harms, don’t understand this as only beating somebody, for example smoking harms you, alcohol harms you, other things harm you. Think like that, we move accordingly, I interpret myself accordingly, that’s what I can say. The others all have their names, this one doesn’t. (İmam, age 23)<sup>34</sup>*

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<sup>33</sup> Mesela ne bileyim, güzel giyinmeli, ondan sonra sigara içmemeli, içki içmemeli, terbiyeli olma yani.

**Neden içkiye sigaraya karşısin?**

Abi sigara sağlığa zararlı, pis koku veriyor, sevgilini öpünce pis koku veriyor. Sevgilin senden uzaklaşıyor. Ama hani içmesen, terbiyeli olsan ağır olsan, daha güzel. . . (Emir, 18 yaşında)

<sup>34</sup> Şimdi mesela şimdi karşındakine bakarsın, zarar veriyor derken illa dövmek anlamayın yani, mesela sigara zarar verir, içki zarar verir, başka şeyler zarar verir. Öyle düşünün, ona göre hareket ediyoruz yani, ben ona göre kendimi yorumluyorum, öyle diyeyim yani.Öbürlerinin hepsinin adı var bunun yok. (İmam, 23 yaşında)

This young men who took the prophet as his example in his lifestyle told me that he built his life on the principle of not harming anybody. He said he didn't like the neighborhood he lived, that he didn't have good relations with the youth in the neighborhood and that they were "spoiled."

*Man, firstly, should be a man of his word. First of all, as a man, and as a woman too, you should know how to speak in a good way, this is relevant for the woman too. For men, he will be close to society, he won't be too harsh, he should have a soft speech, we are always giving our Prophet as an example, but, well we can't be perfect humans, yet, we are trying to take examples from him, a person should be like him, in any case you just can't be like him, it is enough even if you are like half of him. Well, we are trying to be like him for humanity, we do our prayers, our things, thank god we do, as long as you don't harm somebody, whether you're a man or a woman, it's nothing. (İmam, aged 23)<sup>35</sup>*

I should state that this young man doesn't represent the neighborhood. Among my respondents he was the only one trying to follow religious practices, the other men don't live in this way. To my information there's no tariqa house in the neighborhood. It's mostly the old men who go to the mosque. Although the youth are respectful towards the values of religion they didn't fulfill most of their religious duties.

When a man enters different places such as the work environment, home and neighborhood environment, he shouldn't act in the same way in all of these. A man should know to adapt to all kinds of environments he enters. This is how he should determine his relationships with others. Survival in daily life depends on this for a man. He has to be able to behave suitably with respect to each different person he communicates with, has to be able to shift his acts according

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<sup>35</sup> Erkek bir defa sözünün eri olacak. Bir defa güzel konuşmasını bileceksin erkek olarak, bayan olarak da yani, bayan için de geçerli bu. Erkek için topluma yakın olacak, çok da sert olmayacak, yumuşak sözlü olacak, işte hep Peygamber Efendimizi örnek veriyoruz ama yani dört dörtlük insan olamayız ama biz ondan örnek almaya çalışıyoruz, bir insan onun gibi olmalı, onun gibi olamazsın zaten de, onun yarısı gibi olsan da gene yetiyor. Yani insanlık için onun gibi olmaya çalışıyoruz, namazımızı kılıyoruz, şeyimizi, yapıyoruz Allah'a şükür, birine zarar vermediğin sürece erkek de olsan bayan da olsan şey olmaz yani. (İmam, 23 yaşında)

to them. This should both be a life strategy and it is also the key to success. But the property to be able to adapt to every environment he enters does not mean that the man should be acting according to the environment. A man who acts according to the environment isn't perceived as a man who has a personality: a man doesn't change his color in every surrounding he comes to, like chameleon; he only keeps in step with his environment. This is actually a very thin line. A man who knows to climb down and change his tune when necessary, should also know to be as strong as a lion when it comes to issues that are related to his personal dignity (*haysiyet*). This thin line which directly interests the man's prestige makes him condemned lifelong to the question "how should one behave at which place." He has to live his life with a constant threat of being sacked out of the men's world. Masculinity is like a deposit consigned to him. He always has to be young with the young and old with the old ("*küçükle küçük büyükle büyük olmak*"). A man never really loses his rawness, he's never fully "cooked".

*Now, of course a man shouldn't be sluggish, yet, he shouldn't be the tough guy either, you know they say tough guy; in some places a man should be sluggish but, in some places he really should assert himself. I mean he should fit in to the environment. For example, if somebody shoulders me as I'm walking on the street, I don't have to be a lion against him. Well, all in all there is the language, god has given me a language, I should solve it with the language. Maybe at that time, that person is suffering from something terrible, perhaps he's nervous at that time. At that time, he was consigning to perdition that he came into the world, at that time something else has happened, or he has some projects in his mind. But when it comes to issues like honor, bread, reputation or pride, in any case, all men, all guys should be the lion. For his own bread. He shouldn't let anybody take what is his right from him. (Kerim, aged 22)<sup>36</sup>*

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<sup>36</sup> Şimdi tabii bir erkeğin sünepe olmaması lazım ama taş fırın da olmaması lazım, hani taş fırın derler ya, bir erkek bazı yerde sünepe olabilir ama bazı yerde de kendini göstermeli. Yani her ortama ayak uydurmalı. Mesela yolda yürürken biri bana omuz attığı zaman ben ona aslan olmak zorunda değilim. Hani sonuçta dil var, ha kurban olduğum Allah bana bu dili vermiş, ben bu dille çözmeliyim. O an belki o insanın başından çok kötü bir şey geçmiştir, o an sinirlidir. O an dünyaya geldiğine lanet ediyordu, o an başka bir şey olmuştur, kendi kafasında projeleri vardır. Ama namus ekmek şeref,

Having “the doors to dialogue” open at some places and closed at others is, I believe, related to fields of power. A man’s power is measured with his reputation and his personal dignity. The doors to dialogue are closed against serious threats to a man’s power. But a man is expected to be tolerant in ordinary, everyday matters, he should have the doors to dialogue open in such issues.

How should a man’s relations with other men be? What kind of attitudes should he stay away from? What kind of a sociality construction do men live in? What are the types of relations that are important to them? My respondents dwelled especiall on these particular issues. These issues were dear to their existence, the vital issues that they could never do without. I find it relevant to list these issues under different titles here.

### **3.2 Man Should be *Delikanlı***

*Delikanlılık* is a situation specific to men. It is a man’s relations to other people that determines whether he is a *delikanlı* or not. And who is a *delikanlı* man? He is the man who keeps his words, who isn’t afraid of anybody, who is courageous and generous and who never chokes a friend, etc. The young men in the neighborhood thought of this within the concept of *efendilik* when they defined themselves as *delikanlı*. For instance, they didn’t see themselves as quarrelsome *delikanlı* but as a trustworthy *delikanlı* man who keeps his promises. *Delikanlılık* is at the same time specific to the youth. Literal translation of the word is to have your blood (*kan*) running wild (*deli*, meaning “crazy”); thus you don’t call an old man *delikanlı*. Though the properties of *delikanlılık* are not open to references about age, it defines strong and stouthearted men who aren’t afraid of anything.

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haysiyet gibi bir konuda illakine her erkek her adam aslan olmalıdır yani. Kendi ekmeği için. Kimseye kuruşunu yedirmemelidir. (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

Instead of a simple expression of manhood, *delikanlılık* may also be perceived as a socio-cultural identity to understand cultural codes. (Işık, 2001: 122)

The *delikanlı* man sees this as an identity to himself because in this world where “everything is going corrupt”, he thinks he represents courage, fearlessness (“*bıçkınlık*”), chivalry (“*mertlik*”) and nobility. *Delikanlılık* can be read as a form of existence in lower class masculinities and Işık views this as a “sign of the efforts to form “a moral identity” by becoming a sort of adhesive in the fields that modern practices and discourses cannot take hold of” (Işık, 2001:125). Here is what Işık says in defining an ideal type of *delikanlılık* that he has collected from texts of popular culture:

*A delikanlı is honest, he speaks truth, he supports the oppressed, he’s the expert of opinions, he attributes no importance to money, he shares, he values humanity and the spiritual, he accepts the social hierarchies, he is proud of his masculinity, he supports violence, he gives orders, he is not open to discussion, he is almost a representative of a divine being. (Işık, 2001:128, my translation)*

A *delikanlı* man is no fickle, he keeps his promises and pays his debts. Even if he can’t pay, he will certainly state this frankly. It is also expected for someone lending money to be generous enough not to make this a problem for anyone, because if there is someone in need, help *should* be provided. Nevertheless it is also expected for the borrower to pay his debt. A person who doesn’t pay his debts back is considered not “loyal” to his words, so friendship with him is ended. By not being loyal to his debts he has done the greatest taint (“*ayıp*”) to himself, he is the one who’s lost. Kerim’s experience sums this up very well:

*When such a thing happens I get angry with myself in the first place. The mistake is not his, it is yours I say. The simplest example is, a friend of mine once asked to borrow some money from me. “I’m going to go to Antalya, there’s an issue, there’s something to do”, he said. He said “I will give it back a week later”. Then he called from there and said “I can’t come back, send me money”, I sent him money for the ticket, he spent that too. He told me, “buy me the ticket”, then he came with that*

*ticket. Then I didn't make this any issue, I didn't talk about it, a person who ascribes himself would know to give it back. I thought he doesn't have it today, he doesn't have it tomorrow. And then I crossed him out. And that's how it ended. I mean this is a fickle person, as I said before, this is the difference between the fickle and delikanlı. He doesn't have it now, as I say, fickle; delikanlı, I mean now the subject is money, if he doesn't have it now, he should come and say "my friend I promise you for the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month but now I don't have it." He has to say that I mean. If the person gave you 100 tl or 150 tl he gave it according to himself, he apparently didn't counted on that money. If you say so, he would respond "brother, it doesn't matter. You'll give it when you have it" He would make this favor. But if you turn your back and run away, if you hang up the phone and do this and that, then he would say "look at that asshole guy, we gave him 150 lira, he turns his back, he doesn't greet me, he turns his head when he sees me, he runs away I mean". You should do this delikanlılık everywhere, not only for the matter of money, in shopping, in business, this is what I mean." (Kerim, 22 years old)<sup>37</sup>*

A person not loyal to his debt will be excluded. He has not been able to realize the goodness done to him and thus has acted "flabbily". "Gevşek olmak," "being flabby" means not to be man enough. A man who can't control himself and who can't keep his word is a flabby man. A man is expected to control himself firmly in accordance to the rules that determine his life for a lifetime.

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<sup>37</sup> Ya öyle olunca ilk başta kendime kızıyorum. Hata diyorum onda değil sende diyorum. En basit örneği mesela bir arkadaşım zamanında borç istedi. Antalya'ya gidecem gelecem, bir mevzu, iş var dedi. Bir hafta sonra vereyim dedi, ondan sonra ordan aradı, param yok gelemiyom dedi, para gönder dedi, bilet parası gönderdim, onu da yedi. Dedi bilet al, biletle geldi, ondan sonra, ben mevzusunu yapmadım zaten, kendine yakıştıran insan onu getirip vermeyi bilirdi. Ben de dedim, bugün yoktur, yarın yoktur. Ondan sonra üstüne bir çizik attım. Öyle gitti. Yani bu kaypak insan, demin de dedim ya, delikanlı ile kaypağın arasındaki fark bu yani. Şimdi yoktur adamda, diyorum ya kaypak, delikanlı, şimdi konu para mevzusu olduğu için yani bir adamda yoktur, ha gelir der ki, ya "ayın başında yirmisinde verecem." Ayın yirmisinde yoksa, gelip demeli yani, "ya kardaş ayın yirmisinde ben sana söz verdim ama yok. Bunu demeli yani, zaten o karşıdaki kişi insan o yüzeli iki yüz milyonu vermişse kendine göre vermiştir, illakine o paraya güvenip vermemiştir sana. Sen öyle desen o da der yani sana, "kardeş canın sağolsun. Olduğu zaman ver." O güzelliği yapar. Ama arkasını dönüp kaçarsan, telefonu kapatırsan şunu bunu yaparsın, "lan" der "gevşeye bak, yüzeli milyon verdik, arkasını dönüyor, suratımıza selam vermiyor, beni gördü mü kafasını çeviriyor, kaçıyor gidiyor yani. Bu delikanlılığı her yerde yapacaksın, sadece para mevzusunda değil, bir alışverişte olsun, bir işinde olsun, demek istediğim o. (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

Seeing himself as the most *delikanlı* man of the neighborhood, Zagor defined “*delikanlı*” as such:

*To be delikanlı, what does it mean to be a delikanlı? I mean “deli” (mad), “delikanlı” (“maddblooded”), is the person who speaks the truth, delikanlı man says the truth. Delikanlı man doesn’t lie, delikanlı man engages in his business, delikanlı man doesn’t steal, delikanlı man is decent, delikanlı man is evident by everything he does, by the way he sits and talks, by his dressing, he is evident by everything. By his relation with his friends, by the way he backs his friends, or the way he doesn’t let others talk behind his friends’ back. (Zagor, 21 years old)<sup>38</sup>*

The “*delikanlı* man” in this sense refers to the ideal man. There’s nothing negative in this definition of the *delikanlı* man. Both in his outfit and in his behavior he is a “proper” man. “The wild flow of his blood” comes from his youth.

*Abi, delikanlı means, there is your palm and there is the back of your hand. Delikanlı means, I mean, you didn’t choke on anybody, you didn’t stand anybody up, you didn’t choke him when there was a problem. Then he puts the word in for example, for example if I stood behind him if I didn’t let him down when I heard a problem of his, he says Kerim is a delikanlı man, for example if I had done a favor for him, I give an example, he says “look at him, he is delikanlı man”.<sup>39</sup>*

Something that often occurs to ones mind when defining the *delikanlı* man is a reference to violence; being open to resort to violence and seeing this as a solution. This was not something that I observed among the young men I

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<sup>38</sup> Delikanlı olmak, delikanlı olmak ne demektir? Yani deli, delikanlı, doğruları konuşandır delikanlı adam, delikanlı adam doğruları söyler. Delikanlı adam yalan söylemez, delikanlı adam işine gücüne bakar, delikanlı adam hırsızlık yapmaz, delikanlı adam düzgündür, delikanlı adam oturuşuyla konuşmasıyla her şeyiyle bellidir, giyinmesiyle falan, her şeyiyle bellidir. Arkadaşlarıyla olan ilişkisiyle, arkadaşlarına sahip çıkmasıyla, veya arkadaşları için başkalarına laf konuşturmamasıyla. . . (Zagor 21 yaşında)

<sup>39</sup> Ya abi şimdi delikanlı demek yani bir elinin avucunun içi var, bir de dışı var. Delikanlı demek yani, şimdi bir insanı yolda bırakmamışındır, bir yere giderken satmamışındır, bir mevzu olmuştur satmamışındır. Arkandan der mesela, şimdi o ben onu n bir mevzusunu duyduğumda onu satmadıysam onun yanında durduysam derki Kerim delikanlı adammış der, mesela ben ona daha önce güzellik yapmışsam, bir de örnek veriyorum bak hele delikanlı insanmış derler. . . (Kerim 23 yaşında)

interviewed. For them being *delikanlı* was, beyond being tough and quarrelsome, a form of identity accepted as honesty and not choking ones friend. The type of *delikanlılık* that involved toughness and violence was not an identity approved among the neighborhood youth. Such a *delikanlılık*, according to them, is both shallow and it brings “trouble”.

For the instances that being *delikanlı* is synonymous with being quarrelsome, one of my respondents thought that *delikanlılık* is synonymous with being a “psycho” (“*psikopat*”). The discourse of *delikanlılık* that followed from the mafia kids shown in movies and TV serials was understood as being troublesome by this young men and this wasn’t good for a man.

***Well then, what does it mean to be delikanlı?***

*Abi nobody can be delikanlı, no one is delikanlı.*

***Why?***

*I mean, do you want to be psychopat? You can’t be. Why would you be? It is enough to behave yourself. Why would you be delikanlı I mean? Don’t mind others’ business, that’s it.*

***You for example, would you call yourself delikanlı?***

*I wouldn’t abi, I mean I don’t interfere with anyone, and they shouldn’t interfere with me either. Why would I be delikanlı? (Emir, 18 years old)<sup>40</sup>*

A popular TV character of recent years, Polat Alemdar was not seen as a role model for the youth I interviewed. They found him “too unrealistic” as a *delikanlı* prototype. Though they said they followed the serial with enthusiasm, they thought that working, earning their daily bread, staying away from trouble

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<sup>40</sup> **Peki delikanlı olmak ne demek?**

Abi hiç kimse delikanlı olamaz yani, hiç kimse delikanlı değil.

**Neden?**

Yani, ya psikopat mı olmak istiyorsun? Olaman. Niye psikopat olacan ki? Düzgün davran yeter. Niye delikanlı olasın ki yani? Kimseye karışma, bu kadar.

**Sen mesela kendine delikanlıyım der misin?**

Demem abi, yani ben kimseye karışmam, onlar da bana karışmasın. Niye delikanlı olayım ki? (Emir, 18 yaşında)

but not letting oneself be oppressed were more important and that this was the identity that one should have.

### **3.2.1 Man Should Not Betray His Friend**

All of my respondents put an emphasis on relations between friends when they were defining an ideal man. The youth in the neighborhood was rather not in the habit of staying and spending time at home. Most of them went out after dinner and spent their time in the park or on the streets. So they attribute a special importance to relations among friends. On Sundays which is the only day off for many of them, they spend time together by wandering around in groups. Those who have bikes tour in the neighborhood, many people go to the only park in the neighborhood or to the riverside, drinking beer at nights. The young men seem to be content with this situation, they find the friendship relations among themselves to be warm and intimate:

*In the evening we get up and go to the coffeehouse, the birdman's coffeehouse, we drink a cup of tea. We sit down and play cards, well with friends our environment is good, we have fun, we make a commotion, we drink alcohol. At times, we go near the water to catch fish at the evenings, well we've got all sorts of different environments. For me, the youth, well the youth, is something to be lived. (Kerim, age 22)<sup>41</sup>*

A good friend is closer than a brother, and thus an ideal man should never ever choke a friend. Choking a friend doesn't suit manhood. A man who chokes a friend is called "untrustworthy" and "characterless" by other men. A true friend also doesn't ridicule his friends in "company" ("ortam"), he won't engage in acts that his friend wouldn't approve.

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<sup>41</sup> Akşam kalkarız kahveye gideriz, kuşçu kahvesine, bir çay içeriz. Oturur, batak oynarız, yani arkadaşlı ortamımız iyi, gırgır yaparız, şamata yaparız, içki içeriz. Yeri gelir, suyun kenarına gideriz balık tutmaya akşam, yani her türlü farklı ortam yani. Bence gençliği gençlik yani, yaşanır yani." (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

*...For example, I tell you a friend in no way chokes a friend, for example a friend in nowhere ridicules his friend...(Zagor, age 21)<sup>42</sup>*

As, in contradiction to middle class manhood, my respondents lived and learned life by personally experiencing it, they said they learned how a man should live from life itself and by experiencing it in the surroundings of friends. When do you understand that a friend is a good friend? If he doesn't choke you (in Turkish the word "satmak" is used for this, literally meaning "to sell"), if he's still with you in hard days, than that's a good friend. As quarrels and fights often took place among the young men of the neighborhood, they said "you better see who's a friend especially during a fight". Men's relationship of friendship among themselves is different from their friendship relations with women. Men who act politely when there are women around may go rude when they are alone as men. The man shares a sort of common destiny with another man. They have to act in solidarity and watch over each other. A man who swindles ("yamuk yapmak") a friend is bound to be excluded from the circle of friends.

*...The life teaches, life conditions. You enter an environment with that friend. You have a subject matter, is that ok? You handle that subject matter, he doesn't choke you. At such a time you say my friend is a man like a man. You learn, you get to know him. After a certain time and distance, you get to know each other. (Kerim, aged 23)<sup>43</sup>*

*I am not a harsh man, yet if my friend calls me telling that there is fight, I immediately go there, in all conditions. Well it happened like that, I don't just say it. I go in any case. (Emir, aged 18)<sup>44</sup>*

*Anything happens, well it is not important that a big thing happens, we sit with friends there, something happens. Well, for example, somebody comes and says*

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<sup>42</sup> . . .Mesela arkadaş arkadaşını hiçbir şekilde satmaz diyim sana, mesela arkadaş arkadaşını hiçbir ortamda rezil etmez. . . (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

<sup>43</sup> . . . Hayat öğretiyor, hayat şartları. O arkadaşınla ortama giriyorsun. Bir mevzun oluyor tamam mı? Mevzuya giriyorsun, satmıyor seni. O zaman diyorsun işte adam gidi adammış arkadaşım diye. Öğreniyorsun, tanıyorsun onu. Belli bir zamandan mesafeden sonra tanıyorsun yani birbirini. (Kerim 23 yaşında)

<sup>44</sup> . . .Ben sert değilim, ama bir arkadaşım da beni çağırırsa derse ki kavga var, hemen giderim her türlü yani. Oldu yani, olmadı değil. Giderim her türlü. (Emir, 18 yaşında)

*“we will take this from you”, well he tells (he takes the recorder at his hand), we can’t give our friend that time. Or, fifty people come to beat (him), we just can’t let them beat our friend. (Zagor, aged 21)<sup>45</sup>*

What matters here is to show that you don’t leave your friend in under circumstance. This can be viewed as a form of solidarity among young men. A man who isn’t afraid of fighting is respected by other men. In a foreign environment one trusts his friend the most, it is the friend that one relies on.

*For example, I tell you a friend in no way chokes a friend, for example a friend in nowhere ridicules his friend, he never gives away a deficit of him, he realizes it, as they come eye to eye, he says “ok”, “I understood brother, all-right the friend is telling the truth”...For example, a friend doesn’t swear to a friend, this rule should be applied to everybody. It should be the rule of the general, do you know the meaning of friend (“arkadaş”), well, “back” (“arka”), “the one I back” (“arkadaşım”), “the person who backs me” (“arkamdaki insan”), it means “stone” (“daş), “buddy” (“dadaş”), it means “sibling” (“kardaş”). Friend. Friend means it’s better than the brother, well, he says “ I count on this man, he is my friend”, while telling this you shouldn’t be (disconfident), you will be sure of yourself (Zagor, age 21)<sup>46</sup>*

As a man trust his good friend in any environment, he can even entrust his “honor” to him, he knows that his friend will not look bad at his honor and he will not abuse this.

*Abi, I think a person that you call a man, should be able to come with you to all environments, he shouldn’t choke you anywhere, whether in a fight or any other*

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<sup>45</sup> Herhangi bir şey olur, yani önemli değil büyük bir şey olmasına, arkadaş arkadaş oturuyok şurda, bir şey olur. Yani mesela biri gelir der ki “biz bunu senin elinden alacak” der yani (kayıt cihazını eline alıyor), biz o arkadaşımızı veremeyiz o zaman. Veya elli kişi gelir dövmeye, biz o arkadaşımızı dövdüremeyiz. (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

<sup>46</sup> Mesela arkadaş arkadaş hiçbir şekilde satmaz diyim sana, mesela arkadaş arkadaş hiçbir ortamda rezil etmez, onun açığını vermez, ayıkır, göz göze gelsinler, “tamam” der, “anladım kardeş, eyvallah doğru söylüyor arkadaş”. . . Mesela arkadaş arkadaş küfür etmez, bu kuralın herkese uygulanması lazım. Genelin kuralı olması lazım, arkadaş ne demektir bilyon mu, yani “arka”, “arkadaşım”, “arkamdaki insan” yani “daş, dadaş” yani “kardaş” . Arkadaş. Arkadaş demek kardeşten de üstündür, işte der, “ben bu adama güveniyorum, arkadaşım bu benim” derken böyle şey olmuca, emin oluca kendinden. (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

*issue, he shouldn't choke you. Those sort of things. He should always stand with you, you should trust him, for example if you can entrust your honor to him, if he has given you this trust, he is a man like a man. He should be honest, he should stand with you. That's enough. (Ali, age 22)<sup>47</sup>*

My respondents tend to spend more time with their friends than with their families. Masculinity itself is also consolidated and strengthened in this company of friends. In Turkey sexuality itself is rather learned from friends. Men who share their sexualities in puberty through stories and sexuality-related jokes told to each other later strengthen this process of learning by telling each other about the women they had sex with. Men tend to go to brothels first with their friends. For men, the friend stands for the source of information on sexuality (HÜKSAM, 2003).

Homosocial places that men hang out in groups (sports halls, billiards and games halls and coffee houses) are known as places where masculinity is produced. (Demren, 2007; Polat, 2008) These places are seen as a school of life, men continue their lives through the things they learn here.

### **3.2.2 Man Should Not Look at the Girlfriend of a Friend**

My respondents expressed that they found it extremely wrong to show interest to the girlfriend of ones friend or to have any emotional or sexual relationship with her. This is a taboo among friends. A man doesn't look at the girlfriend of his friend. His friend's girlfriend is considered to be like a sister to a man. Men don't bring their girlfriends to their own circle of male friends. Even if they do, looking with bad eyes at that girl, to show interest to her is considered disreputable. Moreover, a man can't be with a girl who had previously been the girlfriend of a friend from the same circle. This is also considered disgraceful (*ayıp*). It doesn't suit a man.

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<sup>47</sup> Abi bence erkek dediğin senle her yere, her ortama gelebilmeli, seni hiçbir yerde satmamalı, kavgada olsa başka bir şey de olsa seni satmamalı. Onun gibi şeyler işte. Hep yanında durmalı, güvenebilmelisin, mesela namusunu emanet edebiliyorsan, bu güveni vermişse sana adam gibi adamdır o. Dürüst olsun, yanında dursun. Bu yeter yani. (Ali, 22 yaşında)

*No, papa, how come? She is a sister, even if she comes, she is not glanced at. I don't know, for example I don't have anything to do with a girl with whom my friend has hung out with. That's not possible. I can't go and say "did you fuck her?" You can't ask. Or "did you kiss this girl". That's not possible brother, in a circle of friends. (Zagor, ages 23)<sup>48</sup>*

What was told by one of my respondents clearly summarizes the relations between men and women in the circle of friends. Even if there are no relations, a woman who ever enters a man's circle is considered to be "his" woman.

*The first day we went, there was a male friend with me, I said "girl, are there any other girls with you, there is male friend with me, well they can keep company with each other", I said. "Ok" she said, she called one of her friends. Well, anyway, we hung out, and so on. The next day, we trysted. We went again, this time there is a friend with me, but not the same friend we went before. Then, when the girl heard this, she was going to bring the previous girl again. I said to the girl "another friend dealt with her yesterday, the male friend who is going to come with me today is not that friend." "Not that one, bring another girl" I said. "Ok" she said. She brought another girl. Well, thus and so. Actually, the friend with me doesn't know that girl, but I know. How can I give that girl to my friend? Yesterday, she was hanging out with another person. No way, it won't suit us. The girl tells me "What's the odds?", "No way" I said, "it matters a lot". Even if I know that she's not serious (about the relation), I can't do this. This is it. This is what we've learned. (Fuat, aged 20)<sup>49</sup>*

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<sup>48</sup> Yok baba olur mu ya? Bacıdır o, gelse bile bakılmaz. Ben bilmiyorum, mesela benim bir arkadaşın gezdiği bir kızla benim bir daha işim olmaz. Olmaz ki artık. Şimdi gidip de diyemem ki "sen bunu siktin mi?" diye sormazsın ki? Veya "sen bu kızı öptün mü?" Olmaz kardeş, arkadaş ortamında olmaz. (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

<sup>49</sup> Gittiğimiz ilk günü yanımda bir erkek arkadaş vardı, kız dedim yanında başka kız yok mu, erkek arkadaş var yanımda, hani onlar da beraber takılırlar dedim. Tamam dedi, bir tane arkadaşını çağırdı. İşte neyse takıldık, ettik. Ertesi günü tekrar randevulaştık. Tekrar gittik, bu sefer yanımda bir arkadaşım var ama o gittiğim erkek arkadaş değil. Ondan sonra kız a bunu duyunca, kız da bir önceki kızı getirecekti tekrar. Ben de kıza dedim ki o kızla dün başka bir erkek arkadaş ilgilendi, bugün benle gelecek olan erkek arkadaş o değil dedim. Onu değil başka kızı getir dedim. Tamam dedi. Başka kızı getirdi. Öyle yani. aslında o kızı yanımda arkadaş tanımiyor ama ben biliyorum. Ben o arkadaşıma o kızı nasıl vereyim? Dün başka biriyle takılmış. Olmaz yani, yakışmaz. Kız ne fark eder? Diyor bana, olur mu dedim çok şey fark eder. Ciddi bakmadığını bilsem de bunu yapamam. Böyle yani. Biz böyle gördük.

### ***Is it the same at the brothel?***

*Of course brother, for example we went, we went to a house. We went, we sat. We've got joints, we've got alcohol. After a while, I told friends "this one is mine". Everybody came one by one, took one (woman), this is what we did, but, to take the same woman one after another, no way out, that's strange. It is not right to do this. (Faruk, age 20)<sup>50</sup>*

This stands like another unwritten contract among lower-middle class worker youth. Nobody can have an interest in a friend's woman. This doesn't change in the clandestine brothels. This unwritten contract in this sense defines the fields of power among men. It can also be read as a male solidarity, a sort of masculine brotherhood; this must be why looking at the girl friend of a friend is like an incest taboo where the woman is considered as ones sister.

### **3.2.3 Man Should Keep One's Word**

***"A man you call a man keeps his words, a man you call a man is a delikanlı"***<sup>51</sup>

Keeping your word is one of the main determinants of being a man. A man who doesn't keep his words is not trustworthy. If you make a promise you should be loyal to it whatever the price is. If not, you can never have a reputable place in the society as a man who doesn't keep his promises. The young men I interviewed attributed great importance to keeping ones words in the relationships among themselves. Keeping the word functioned like a litmus paper in the relationship between two men.

*A man should be man of his word first of all. First of all, you should know how to speak well as a man. (İmam, 23 years old)<sup>52</sup>*

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<sup>50</sup> **Randevuevinde de öyle mi?**

Tabi abi, biz gittik mesela, eve gittik bir tane. Gittik, oturduk. Cigaralığımız var, alkolümüz var. Biz zaman sonra arkadaşlara dedim, "bu benim". Herkes sırayla geldi bir tane aldı, öyle oldu ama tek kadına sırayla girmek, bu olmaz ki, tuhaf bir şey. Bunu yapmak doğru değil. (Faruk, 20 yaşında)

<sup>51</sup> "Adam dediğin sözünde durur, adam dediğin delikanlı olur", Cansever, (Arabesque singer)

*Brother, I do find promises very (important), once a person makes a promise he should do it. Word comes out from the mouth only once. What did you tell me? You said "I will come at 18.30 for the interview". You came at 18.30, that's it. But if you don't come at 18.30, that means you did me wrong. (Zagor, 21 years old)<sup>53</sup>*

*A man should be honest first of all, he should never lie, he should keep his word. (Recep, 20 years old)<sup>54</sup>*

A man who doesn't keep his promises shows who he really is in this act, this also determines his place in the society. Keeping ones promise is about ones dignity. The phrase "*söz namustur*", "promise is honor", aims to show that a reputable man should keep his word.

### **3.2.4 Man Should Be Tough and Quarrelsome In the Right Place at the Right Time**

Among the neighborhood youth, there were ones that are tough and quarrelsome as much as ones that did not find this right. Being quarrelsome ("*kavgacı*") was of course seen as a property that a man should have, but only in one condition: to be so in the right place and in the right manner. When his bread is taken away, when his honor is defamed ("*namusuna dil uzatmak*"), when his friend is attacked or when somebody says anything bad about his family, a man should get tough, show his power and teach people their places. In such attacks against a man's field of power, the man's violent reactions are seen legitimate, the violence he exerts in such a case is approved and the man is respected. However, a person constantly creating tension around with an unnecessary nervousness, not hesitating to fight for minor reasons and bringing

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<sup>52</sup> ...Erkek bir defa sözünün eri olacak. Bir defa güzel konuşmasını bileceksin erkek olarak. (İmam, 23 yaşında)

<sup>53</sup> ...Kardeş ben söze çok şey yaparım, söz verdi mi bir insan yapacak. Söz ağızdan bir kere çıkar. Sen bana ne dedin? "Altı buçukta geleceğim" dedin "görüşme için." Altıbuçukta geldin, eyvallah. Ama altı buçukta gelmezsen sen bana yanlış yapmışsındır. . . (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

<sup>54</sup> Bir erkek öncelikle dürüst olmalı, hiç yalan söylememeli, sözünde durmalı. (Recep, 20 yaşında)

restlessness to people will be seen as someone who hasn't matured yet and these acts of his will not be approved.

I can say that almost all my respondents, even the ones who seemed calm were in a state of anxiety. Many related being nervous in general to masculinity, it was as if a man should be nervous by his nature.

Those who didn't have a quarrelsome nature also said that they could turn a place upside down when necessary;

*I am usually calm but I have an aggressive side too, when I am pissed off I make a mess I mean. I do not interfere with anybody, nobody interferes me. (Emir, 18 years old)<sup>55</sup>*

Zagor who views the moment of fight as a moment of leaving humanity, was like living that moment again as he was telling about a fight he had. He was saying he was a nervous and restless person. He told that he lost control of himself and lost his mind during the fight. Here it should be told that this situation of "loosing oneself", "having lost his mind," "having lost control of himself" when men get nervous, are among the foremost of the pretenses men use to legitimize their exercise of violence.

*They were inside, the doors were closed, I just hit the glass, my hand went all into the glass, the glass was all mess, but you don't realize it at that moment, I was going to die. They took me to hospital for blood loss. You can just think what I did to the driver in the front, I smashed him, when I was going out from the car, I was hitting his face, my hand is inside the glass, the glass is inside my hand, I was hitting his face. **(he is showing his punch, he has a horrible impression on his face, it is like he is living the moment again)** I told him "if I hit your leg, they can cover it, you wear pants and it doesn't figure, but the scar should not ever go away from your face, look just like this, each time you look at the mirror **(he pretends as if he is looking at the mirror, turning his face to left and right)** you'll remember Zagor, I'm gonna smash your face in" I said, now wherever he*

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<sup>55</sup> Genelde sakinimdir ama asabi yönlerim var, kafa attı mı iyi bir dağıtım ortalığı yani. Kimseye de karışmam, onlar da bana karışmaz. (Emir, 18 yaşında, bekar)

*would go, they say "look they took his face" they'll say. What if you hit him from his leg? He would still walk, maybe a little lame, they would say "his leg hurts", he would say something else, he would pass it off and it would not show up. (Zagor, 21 years old)<sup>56</sup>*

My religious interviewee İmam said that when he gets nervous instead of showing this nerve he adopted the idea "he who gets up in anger, sits down with a loss" and resorted to other methods to pass that moment of nervousness:

*Of course when I get angry I say to myself "is this the way it should be?" but you say it on your own. I do not express it outside I mean. That's how I am. My face is a little down but nothing else. I do not shout or yell I mean. I don't get angry too much I mean, I would either go out or I watch TV or I look at the computer. Our prophet had said " when you get angry perform ablution and pray, the anger will calm down", when you do something it goes out, it goes out from your brain.(İmam, 23 years old)<sup>57</sup>*

Sancar relates that there are many studies showing that lower class men are nervous because of their financial situation and she says that these men put the blame of their failures on others to get rid of this nervousness (Sancar, 2009:103). However the young men I interviewed in the neighborhood used violence as a survival strategy, (böyleyse çok sık kullanılması gerekmez mi? bunu anlat filizi hoca) they didn't resort to it in an unceasing fit of hatred. The

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<sup>56</sup> İçerdeydiler, kapılar kapalıydı, bir tane vurdum böyle cama, elim böyle komple cama girdi, hep camlar mamlar batmış ama işte o dakika ayıkmyon ki, ölecektim. Beni hastaneye kaldırdılar kan kaybından. Artık yani o öndeki şoförü ne hale getirdiğimi düşünebilirsin yani. Paramparça ettim resmen, o arabanın içinden çıkarken, suratına vuruyorum, cam içinde elim, camlar böyle elime girmiş, suratına suratına, suratına suratına vuruyorum, **(elini yumruk yapmış, nasıl vurduğunu gösteriyor, korkunç bir ifade var yüzünde, o anı yaşıyor gibi gene)** dedim ona "ayağına vurursam kapatırlar, pantol giyen gözükmez, ama yüzünden o iz gitmesin olum, bak böyle işte, aynaya her baktığında **(ayna bakarmış gibi yapıyor, sağa sola çevirerek başını)** Zagor gelsin aklına, façanı bozarım senin" dedim, ha şimdi o gittiği her ortamda derler ki "İlan bak hele façasını almışlar" derler. Ama ayağından vursan ne olacak? Gene yürün, hafiften aksatın, "ayağı ağrıyor" der, başka bir şey der, geçiştirir, belli olmaz. (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

<sup>57</sup> Tabi şimdi ben de öfkelendiğim zaman diyorum kendi kendime "ya bu böyle olur mu?" ama içinden diyorsun. Ben dışıma pek yansıtmam yani. Öyleyimdir. Surat biraz asık olur ama şeyi olmaz. Pek bağırıp çağırmmam yani. Çok sinirlenemem yani, sinirlendiğim zaman ya aşağı inerim, televizyona ya da bilgisayara bakarım. Peygamber efendimiz demiş zaten "sinirlendiğiniz zaman abdest alın, iki rekat namaz kılın, o öfke diner" der, bişeyler yaptığın zaman zaten o şeyinden çıkıyor, beyninden çıkıyor zaten. (İmam, 23 yaşında)

main philosophy was to avoid fights as long as it possible, but not to run away from any fight once it starts. This can be linked to working at some place, although they perceived themselves to be from the lower class. At times that they didn't work the family functioned like a sort of social security, as they didn't cut their ties with their families. Two young men who lost their jobs in the period that I conducted the interviews told me that they were taking pocket money from their fathers.

### **3.2.5 Man Should Be Able to Earn the Daily Bread**

Working means "being able to earn the daily bread" and thus it is held sacred. To work somewhere and to earn money comes foremost among the duties expected from a man. A man who doesn't work is seen as one who has the potential to do all sorts of harm. A man who has a job and earns his money in a canonically lawful (*helâl*) way has a reputable place in the eyes of the society.

In my interviews the act of "working" had a very sacred place in its own right. A man who works is a man who's no vagabond, taking the responsibility of his family. A man who earns his daily bread will also bring peace to his family.

Working rules becoming more flexible in the form of society described as "post-industrial", and the service sector taking over the "heavy industry" resulted in a change in the modern codes of masculinity. Although this change didn't result in a difference in the dominant male gender regime, it did result in some changes in the construction of masculinity itself (Sancar, 2009). Nevertheless, for my interviews I can say that this construction still prevails: employed men are still working in full-time jobs and for these young men who come from the poor working class families looking after the family is still the most important, primary duty of the man. It is also the prior condition of being dignified as a man. Sancar emphasizes the importance of working, for the propertyless men who have nothing to sell but their own labor:

They gain a respectful status when they become the head of a family by providing for it on which they can establish authority, and this becomes the

most common strategy of manhood construction. One of the most important reason for the men without property to consent to sell their labour in any condition of labour market, is the fact that they run after the “men’s priority” without caring for the class based exploitation relations, which they can only hold by working (earning money). Class (un)consciousness which renders a man without property, to be willing to sell his labour in any condition, is experienced in fact as a “manhood necessity”. By this way, by passing with success the exam of “earning the bread”, a man will be able to make himself accepted as a man by the community, and he will be able to become a “man” by reaching to a position where he can own a woman and children. (Sancar, 2009: 63-64, my translation)

In addition to this, when man works, the division of labor in the family continues. The ideal form of family is imagined as a father who is employed, a mother who is a housewife, plus the children. An unemployed father will inevitably cause restlessness at home, even if the mother is working; after all the society has given *him* the duty of bring the daily bread and he doesn’t or he can’t do it. It is known that in Turkey such cases don’t bring transformation in household chores, in working class families a women earning money by doing cleaning at other people’s houses still has to do the work of her own home too.

*I am responsible of bringing the bread into that house. And she is responsible of cleaning and organizing. As they say, the female bird builds the nest, it means she will take care of the house and I will take care of her. In short, this is what I mean. (Kerim, 20 years old)<sup>58</sup>*

“Yuvayı dişi kuş yapar”, meaning “men make houses women make homes” (literally, “the female bird builds the nest”) is a widely known phrase that explains a lot. It points to the form of family where the man works outside and brings the daily bread and the woman deals with the house work and looks after the kids. My respondents said that especially when there are children in the

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<sup>58</sup> “Ben o eve ekme getirmekle mükellefim. O da o evi temizleyip çekip çevirmekle. Diyorlar ya, yuvayı dişi kuş yapar, yani o yuvaya bakacak, ben ona bakacam. Demek istediğim bu kısacası. (Kerim, 20 yaşında)

family it is not right for a woman to work. This will be discussed in the next chapter.

If a man cannot earn the daily bread, this means that he cannot fulfill his duty as a man. Working, whatever the circumstances are, is like a proof that the man is leading a “honorful” life. There’s no such thing as unemployment: a man can work in any job if he wants to work. His duty is to look after his family even under the hardest conditions. The figure of “the father who sends his kids to school and brings bread home” in the most desperate conditions is often brought to us in movies and TV serials as the honored and reputable father.

*Abi, there is this fact, there’s plenty of bread to the one who works, there’s no such thing that there’s no bread. Money used to be inside the mouth of the lion, now it has ran to the tail, you have to put your hand in and take the bread out. I mean if you can’t do anything, you’ll get a brush and some polish, and you’ll polish shoes. Nobody dies of hunger in our country. Every man, every guy should be a lion I mean. For his own bread. He shouldn’t let anybody take what is his right from him. (Kerim, 20 years old)<sup>59</sup>*

The man who spends his life with the effort to win the bread does not involve in bad things because he’s busy with his job. A man shouldn’t betray the place he works, the places he earns his bread from (“*ekmeğini yediği yer*”, literally means “the place he eats the bread of”). And he should do all self-sacrifice to feed his family, he should be as strong as the lion if necessary. As, in the society, a man’s value is measured with the job he has and with his economic status related to this, an unemployed man also experiences the process of “demasculinisation” in Sancar’s words (Sancar, 2009:102).

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<sup>59</sup> Ya abi şimdi şöyle bir şey var, çalışan insana ekme çok, yani ekme yok diye bir şey yok. Ekme önceden aslanın ağzındaydı, kuyruğuna kaçmış, elini sokacan çıkaracan. Yani hiçbir şey yapamıyorsan eline bir fırça al, bir boya al git ayakkabı boya. Kimse açlığından ölmemiş bizim memlekette. Her erkek her adam aslan olmalıdır yani. Kendi ekmeği için. Kimseye kuruşunu yedirmemelidir. (Kerim 20 yaşında)

But it is also observable that for the shantytown youth being working somewhere is not as sacred as it used to be; getting rich in a short way, being courageous and plucky, and the idea “earn your money, no matter how” are becoming more and more widespread. In the visits I made often to the neighborhood, how the rich became rich, how they earned their wealth in who-knows-what ways was always an issue of speculation among the neighborhood youth. Some dreamed of being rich from the shortest way, while others in a lethargy they’ve been trapped in at this early age said that life had no meaning and this is just a world of profits. A young man I chatted near the water said, “*abi* working is fine, okay, but it has no value, the world is fucked up now.”<sup>60</sup>

While elbow grease (“*alın teri*”), money that’s been honestly earned (“*helal para*”), and putting effort (“*emek vermek*”) had an importance place as discourses among the neighborhood youth, some did have questions in their minds about these values. These young men who see other men get rich around them also dream of becoming rich in short way. The obligatory respect they feel towards “the man with money” leads them to think in this way. One of the young men I chatted in the park had said “*Abi*, if you’ve got money, in these days they will respect you even if you’re a pimp.” Although they define this rapidly materializing world as “a world fucked up” (“*âlem göt olmuş*”), this youngsters do want to be a part of it.

### **3.3 Man Should Keep Away from Homosexuals**

Homosexuality is seen as a taboo in the neighborhood. People told me that they knew no homosexuals in the neighborhood. None of my respondents had any homosexual friend. Some accepted homosexuality with respect but didn’t want to have homosexual people around them, some, on the other hand, hated homosexuals and saw them as “dirt” (“*pislik*”). Such a hate towards people that one hasn’t even touched; where does this hate come from? While the things taught to you and shown on TV have their effects, the formation of your identity

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<sup>60</sup> “*abi çalışmak iyi güzel de kıymeti yok, alem göt olmuş artık.*”

through the “other” also has an important place in the construction of men. Homosexuals, women and minority groups are like buildingstones in the construction of hegemonic masculinity.

...Another property of masculinity is that, like other identities, it is formed by the constitutive others. In other words, the man constructs himself through the absent others... When men come together they homogenize their masculinities through degrading jokes and talks about those who are not from their sex. This also shows itself as homophobia, hostility against women and avoiding anything that is coded as womanly; in extreme cases it reaches hatred towards homosexuals. (Cengiz, Tol, Küçükural, 2004:58, my translation)

With a Freudian approach, we can think that both a woman and a man is present at the same time within an individual, and that sex is formed through the oppression of one of these by the other, and in this context such an attitude towards the homosexuals can be thought as an expression of the “womenliness” that man carry inside themselves, even though it looks like an act against this minority group (Segal, 1992:42). Homophobia is one of the widespread diseases in Turkey. But it seems to me that attributing this disease to “the oppressed womenliness” in oneself is a rather easy way. Although I accept that there might be such a connection, I do think that in the construction of masculinity, creating the self through the other has a very important place. Womenliness takes a lot away from masculinity. This is among the greatest fear of man because it is about existence itself. Gays, the group of men oppressed the most by men, are the ones considered to be traitors (Segal, 1992). With this hatred towards the “traitors”, men tend needing to emphasize their heterosexuality which is the idealized form of masculinity.

My respondents tried to control their fears of homosexuality by saying “God has created them as such” (“Allah öyle yaratmış”). A very widespread sort of view was “let them do whatever they want, as long as they should stay away from me” tolerance. I could observe in my respondents all sorts of false cliches

accepted in the society. One such widespread cliché is that gays are not like that because they want to, but they are a sort of victim of fate:

*Anyway this is the way he is, is what I want to say; that guy is like that, he is created like that by God. I mean, those fagots don't become fagots because they wish to be. There might be also the ones who become fagots in time. But this comes from birth. Would anyone say "come on do this to me" with his own will? This comes from God but no one approves it. You wouldn't approve either. (Önder, 29 years old)<sup>61</sup>*

*I say that it's his taste. What can I say? It's his personal life. I can't say anything. But I don't want them to be my friends. They shall live their own lives. There are women who like women, what can you say? That is what she likes. (Halim, 23 years old)<sup>62</sup>*

This intolerance towards gays pushes to the limit of hatred in some young man. It's possible to form a link between tolerance and power. The individual or the society keeps the right to hate those that it tolerates for now. One of the biggest important of the hatred towards homosexuals is that a homosexual man is perceived to spread this "dirt" around him and thus threaten the given codes of masculinity.

*I hate them, yes. I don't find it right, I don't want them to be in my environment, what is he doing there? For example, he comes, and you are with a friend, and he does something to him, wrong things. Here comes trouble. (Ali, 22 years old)<sup>63</sup>*

***Emir, I want to pass to another subject, what do you think about homosexuals?***

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<sup>61</sup> Neyse o öyle dicem ama o adam da öyle, Allah tarafından öyle yaratılmış. Diyecek bir şey yok. Yani bu top olanlar isteyerek olmuyor. Zamanla top olanlar da vardır. Ama doğuştan gelen bir şey. İsteyerek kimse "hadi bana bu yapın" der mi? bu Allah tarafından olan bir şey ama kimse de hoş karşılamıyor. Sen de karşılamazsın. (Önder, 29 yaşında)

<sup>62</sup> Onun zevki derim. Ne diyeyim. Kendi özel hayatıdır. Bir şey diyemem. Ama arkadaşım olmalarını istemem. Kendi hayatlarını yaşasınlar. Kadınlar var kadınlara ilgi duyuyor, ne diyebilirsin ki. O da ondan zevk alıyor demek ki. (Halim, 23 yaşında)

<sup>63</sup> Onlardan, nefret ediyorum evet, doğru gelmiyor, ortamımda olmasın, ne işi var. İcabında gelir, bir arkadaşın vardır yanında, gider ona şey yapar falan, yanlış şeyler. Sonra al başına bela. (Ali, 22 yaşında)

*You mean boygirl by homosexual?*

***I mean he or she likes people of his/her own sex, it might be either woman or man.***

*Assholes, they are assholes aswell. I hate them. He doesn't like to be a man, he switches to woman. And then she opens her legs to anybody, I don't like them, assholes. I don't hang out with them, one day one of them came by me, he said let's do it, I guess he had it (his penis) cut. I sent him away, I reported him to the police, police brought him to police station (Emir, 18 years old).<sup>64</sup>*

One of my respondents avoided commenting on homosexuals and said that didn't he think anything about gay men, what mattered was to take care not to be in the same environment with them. This young man who didn't say that he hated homosexual men preferred to other them with the idea "let them be away from me." A young man thinking that gays should be listened to and that they have a structure for themselves, but at the same time being afraid to make friends with a gay man is underlied with the same fear again: the fear that the dirt will spread on himself and his life will turn inside out.<sup>65</sup>

*Abi, I don't think anything about them. You should hear his situation from himself, apparently he has his own nature law for himself. I can't comment on him in any way.*

***If you hear that one of your friends is homosexual, what would you feel? What would you think about him?***

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<sup>64</sup> Peki Emir, başka bir konuya geçmek istiyorum, sen eşcinseller hakkında ne düşünüyorsun?

Eşcinsel dediğin yani erkekkız

**Yani kendi hemcinsinden hoşlanıyor, kadın da olabilir, erkek de.**

Pislik, onlar da pislik. Nefret ederim. Erkek olmayı sevmiyor, kıza geçiyor. Ondandır gelene gidene veriyor, onları sevmiyorum, pislikler. Onlarla da takılmam, o gün yanıma gelmişti biri, erkekkız, dedi şey yapak, kestirmiş galiba. Neyse, ondan sonra gönderdim yanımdan, polise şikayet ettim, polis hemen karakola götürdü. (Emir, 18 yaşında)

<sup>65</sup> Selma Aliye Kavaf, Minister of state responsible from the family, had said "homosexuality is an illness, it should be cured." In a country where a minister thinks in this way, it shouldn't be surprising that people also think in similar lines. <http://www.t24.com.tr/haberdetay/113694.aspx>

*What I would think, I would send him away in two minutes, I would cut connection, it would be over I mean. I mean even if I talk to him, I would keep my distance. I would treat him differently. I wouldn't let him in my environment, I would have nothing to do with him. (Kerim, 22 years old)<sup>66</sup>*

The discourse of hatred that is developed through homophobia sometimes leads to acts of violence. It is thought that this violence comes from the name of manhood (“*erkekliğin şanından*”). The gays, transvestites and lesbians that are perceived as “creatures” who should be beaten wherever he/she is seen, and should be reacted against in case he/she ever enters their environment, pose a serious threat to the power relations formed by men, even if they don't do anything, just because “they are so.”

***What about homosexual men, what do you think about them? Did you ever have a friend?***

*No abi, what do I have to do with such a person? Those people transfer, gay man becomes tranvestite after a while. They have it in their genes. Once, we took one to our car, we thought he was a woman, and then we realized that he was a transvestite. We fired him from the car and he attacked us. It is contrary to our environment . They live as they want, as long as they are not in my environment. (Faruk, 20 years old)<sup>67</sup>*

Gays, both an object of fear and an object of curiosity, lead to a serious confusion in these heterosexual men:

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<sup>66</sup> Abi onlar hakkında hiçbir şeyi düşünmüyorum. Vallaha şimdi onun durumunu adamın kendinden dinlemek lazım, demek ki onun kendine göre bir doğa kanunu var yani. Ben onun hakkında bir yorum yapamam.

**Duysan ki bir arkadaşın eşcinselmış, ne hissedersin? Ne düşünürsün onun hakkında?**

Ya ne düşünürüm, iki dakikada yol veririm, elini ayağını keserim benden, olur biter yani. Yani o insanlarla muhabbet ediyorsam bile mesafemi korurum yani. Daha farklı davranırım. Ortamıma sokmam, işim olmaz. (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

<sup>67</sup> **Peki eşcinsel erkekler hakkında ne düşünüyorsun? Hiç oldu mu arkadaşın?**

Yok abi, öyle bir insanla bizim ne işimiz var abi? O insanlar işte dönüyor, gay adam bir süre sonra travesti oluyor. Genlerinde var. Bir ara aldık biz böyle arabaya kadın sandık, bir de baktık travesti çıktı. Kovduk arabadan, o da bize saldırdı. Dövdük falan. Bizim ortama ters. Yaşasınlar kafalarına göre, benim ortamımda olmasınlar yeter. (Faruk, 20 yaşında)

*First of all, they are not men, they are not women either. There comes up a very wrong situation. He both does it and he has it done (he laughs). The other day, I saw a homosexual there, I didn't know what to do. I mean what should I call, woman or man, having long hair with make-up, breasts are all straight. Then, I am sorry, no hip, nothing. Well, I was quite afraid. (Recep, 20 years old)<sup>68</sup>*

Discourses on homosexuality are even harsher in male groups where masculinity is strict and visible. Homosexuality stands in a place that undermines the perception of masculinity idealized in men's minds. This disturbs men very much. Even the men who approach homosexuality with "tolerance" are afraid of having contact with gays and being friends with them. This mentality that sees homosexuality as a disease, prefers to keep itself clean by excluding gays. Gays in turn hesitate to come out and be visible (Durgun, 2010) with the fear of being excluded or violently attacked.

### **3.4 Man Should Love the Young and Respect the Old**

Respect has an important place in a man's relationship with other men. The concept of respect brings a limit to the man's infinite power and provides that there's peace among men themselves. As much as being brave and *delikanlı*, the premise "you've got to know your place" ("*haddini bileceksin*") is also seen as a means for limiting the man's field of power and getting his act together. Being rowdy is not something anyone can just do. Power has no limits and there's always some other men more powerful than one. If a man seeks respect from his surroundings through power, notoriety or *delikanlı* acts will certainly be hit one day with "a blind bullet". That "blind bullet" shall be fired from the gun of a man more powerful than himself.

*Abi, I don't think that's necessary, just work and mind your own bread.  
There is no one better than you then, being delikanlı is there to a certain*

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<sup>68</sup> Onlar bir kere erkek değiller ki, kadın da değiller. Çok yanlış bir durum çıkıyor ortaya. Hem yapıyor, hem yaptırıyor. (gülerek) . Geçen gün şurada bir eşcinsel gördüm yani ne yapacağımı şaşırdım. Yani kadın mı erkek mi diyeyim artık, saçı uzun makyaj var, göğsünde hiçbir şey yok, dümdüz. Ondan sonra af edersin kalça yok, bir şey yok. Çekindim yani çok. (Recep, 20 yaşında)

*extent, the end is certain for everybody I mean. If you jump too high, one day a blind bullet will come and find you. (Ali, 22 years old)*<sup>69</sup>

Respecting the powerful and the one older than you, not “jumping” too much (“*çok zıplamamak*”) is another rule that a dignified (“*ağırbaşlı*”) man should follow. Respect felt to a man is a result of him being “*efendi*” (gentleman). What does it mean to be *efendi*? A man winning bread for his family and minding his own business is an “*efendi*” man who should be respected. The *efendi* man is the man who doesn’t fight unless necessary and who keeps away from drugs. A man who respects the ones older than him, who is calm and quiet but who thunders and roars when necessary is coded as an *efendi* man.<sup>70</sup> The young men saw the *efendi* as a man who has reached a certain degree of maturity. They thought military service had an important place in acquiring that maturity. They thought that military service was a mechanism that killed the fire of youth in one and turned men into “*efendi*” individuals that conform to the society. The man who became more silent after the military service, and who got married after finding a job was seen as an *efendi* man.

Respect to the elder has an important place in the neighborhood. A man younger in age should show respect to those older than him. In an interview that I conducted in the neighborhood park, in the beginning of the interview, two people older than the respondent started to constantly make fun of him as they overheard us – I later had to politely ask for them to leave. They made fun both of the girlfriend of my respondent and of the answers he gave. Still he

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<sup>69</sup> “Abi öyle bir şeye gerek yok bence ya, çalış ekmeğine bak. Senden iyisi yoktur o zaman, delikanlılık bir yere kadar, herkesin sonu belli yani. Çok zıplarsan bir gün kör kurşun gelir bulur seni yani.” (Ali, 22 yaşında)

<sup>70</sup> On the other hand, I understood it rather more thoroughly that masculinity is not about age, that it’s a form of presence that constantly has to be proven, when I witnessed the relationship of Doğan and his brother. Although his brother was three years younger than Doğan, he just showed up in the middle of the interview and said “what are you talking about? I want to listen too, he doesn’t know these stuff,” and it was surprising that this received no reaction from Doğan. His brother had somehow scared him. The illness that Doğan had when he was young left him weak and feeble. He was a “failure” in playing the role of masculinity. This power of the younger brother over the elder was one of the rare examples I have seen.

never objected to any of these. He just couldn't say anything because they were older than him. We can't possibly speak of pure respect here, it was sort of a situation of not being able to say anything, mixed with fear. Only after they went away could my respondent tell me "I've got respect, they're older than me but what they've done is disgraceful (*ayıp*)."<sup>71</sup>

Respect mechanism goes on in a vicious cycle similar to that in the military. On her study on men's experiences in military service, Pınar Selek tells about men's hierarchy of respect. During the military service the senior (*usta*) soldiers make the novice (*acemi*) soldiers do all the work, while the novices feel a respect mixed with fear towards them, yielding to this power with no great objections and waiting for the day that they themselves will be seniors (Selek, 2008).

The basis of such a respect is fear. Men respect to other men who are elder or stronger than themselves, but we can say that what underlies this respect is in fact fear. In the interview at the park that I related right above, if the men who made fun of the interviewee were younger than him he would immediately react to them and say his word. But he just couldn't say anything because the men to be older than him was a source of fear. In this sense it seems more realistic to talk not about respect but about a fear besmeared in respect. Calling the fear as respect may be seen as one of the apparatuses of self-defence of the individual.

Although a culture of "being gentleman", "being sedate, dignified" is dominant in the neighborhood, Zagor, who perceives himself as such a person but is seen by the other young men of the neighborhood to be "dangerous", showing an unreliable character, created a feeling of fear in the places he went. The other young men didn't actually respect Zagor, but they couldn't dare talking out of place in his presence. When I asked them what they thought about him after Zagor went away, they said stuff like "he's not a gentleman, the path he takes is not a right path, how long can you go with alcohol and alcohol? Maybe he'll get

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<sup>71</sup> "Saygım var, benden büyükler ama yaptıkları ayıp."

better when he goes to the military". Zagor, on the other hand, thought of himself to be a *delikanlı*. He said that he's a nervous, irritable person. But his use of drugs, not hesitating to take alcohol, changing jobs all the time and often being unemployed because of that, being aggressive and nervous, resulted in his being coded as a "looser" in the eyes of other young men: such a man doesn't end up in a good place.

The men I interviewed were people who lived their lives by personally experiencing everything, rather than learning from the experiences of others. I could summarize their main philosophy as "experience everything but have a limit in all." What matters here is that a man shouldn't be a slave to what he experiences.

*Abi you shall smoke but you shouldn't be the slave of it. I've smoked since I was 9 years old, up until this age. But I didn't feel its absence not even for once, I didn't get addicted to it. I just won't be. Even if they'd give me trillions, I wouldn't get addicted to it. Believe me abi, they gave me sacks full of it but I still didn't get addicted. The neighborhood I grew up in is Şakirpaşa, we came here later on, I mean you shouldn't become addicted, to nothing. You should taste everything and if there's any harm you should make way for it, whoever whatever it is. (Kerim, 22 years old)<sup>72</sup>*

Hence a man sees no drawbacks in trying things but when he feels that the thing he tries is doing harm to him he shouldn't be addicted to it, he should know how to get rid of it. This thing could be a material as well as a human being. One shouldn't hesitate "to live" in all fields of life, seeing and experiencing things for oneself will mature him as long as he doesn't get addicted to it. When one reaches a point of addiction, those who stay as addicts, those who don't know to set themselves a "tune" are men with weak wills.

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<sup>72</sup> Abi içecen de esiri olmayacaksın. Ben dokuz yaşımdan bu yaşıma kadar içtim. Ama bir gün de aramadım, müptelası olmadım. Olmam da. Bana trilyonlar verseler olmam. İnan bana abi, çuvalla önüme döktüler, gene de onun müptelası olmadım, benim esas yetiştiğim mahalle Şakirpaşa, biz buraya sonradan geldik de, yani müptela olmican, hiçbir şeye. Yoksa her şeyin tadına bakacan abi, eğer zarar geliyorsa yol verecen, kim olursa olsun ne olursa olsun. (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

As a result of their class position, the young men of the neighborhood prefer to experience many habits and behavioral codes by themselves, instead of getting educated by the earlier generations or through the existing cultural capital. This code suits the phrase “we’ve learned most things through living it.” Living through experience of course has its limits too; for example the neighborhood lads don’t really find strange the use of drugs, they might find it strange if this habit is not abandoned when it reaches that “place and time.” Smoking joint (“*ot içmek*”), even “pilling” (taking drugs in pills, “*haplanmak*”) when comes its time, are things that an adolescent can do, but it is not nice to be addicted to these, to be a slave to it. Taking alcohol is similarly something that a *delikanlı* man can do, the lads in the neighborhood can gather in the neighborhood park and have some beer after work. Although the neighborhood folk doesn’t approve this, they attribute this “to their ages” and turn a blind eye to it.

Whatever the form is, the individual tends to have a fear of being excluded from the group or community he is a part of. Those who don’t comply with the unwritten codes experience such a fear of being excluded or kicked out of the group. That’s another one of the rules of the neighborhood. A youth in the neighborhood lives in the way that the neighborhood life makes necessary in order not to be turned into a clown of the neighborhood, not to be excluded from the circle of friends there. He shows a dignified, gentlemanly, honored, loyal-to-his-word personality, able to defend himself, not choking a friend off, etc. In order to have a respected position a man should especially avoid immature and childish act, he shouldn’t behave simply and stupidly. A neighborhood man to engage in “immoderate” (“*aşırı*”) behavior is found odd in a similar sense. A man who fights and quarrels with everyone, creates disquiet, acts badly towards the ones less powerful than himself and steals will inevitably be excluded from the neighborhood and isolated by his friends on grounds that he’s no gentleman. It’s not possible to speak of a single “environment” (“*ortam*”) among the men of the neighborhood. It’s rather more accurate to speak of groups of males who intersect but have different environments. An unemployed man using drugs and alcohol, for instance, will be known by the youth of the

neighborhood, they will greet him but won't hang out a lot with him. A man responsible of taking care of his family and another man who doesn't have responsibilities don't share the same environments.

*Abi our enviromens are certainly different. Why will it be different? Because, he can go to bed at 3 or 4 a.m. and wake up at 12 or 1 p.m. as he doesn't work. But I am a person who works. I stand awake till 10 or 12 p.m. and wake up at 6 o'clock. That's why I mean, otherwise it is not that our enviroments are different. Working is compulsory for me I mean, I have a home, I have people to look after I mean, I have a sibling, I have a mother, I have a father. He has to work as well, -he quit his job- but he hasn't started as he's to go to the military service. (Kerim, 22 years old)<sup>73</sup>*

This respondent told me that he was close friends with someone from the neighborhood working in a textile workshop across the place the respondent works. The hierarchy of age is also important in the forming of intimate relationships among the youth of the neighborhood. Those young men who have done their military services usually have closer bonds with each other. Men who have experienced more or less the same things and have ages closer to each other can form a group among themselves. Men who think that they have "matured" by doing their military services perceive themselves as sedate and responsible.

Then the *delikanlı* men pass to *efendilik*. Here we see an oscillation between *delikanlılık* and *efendilik*, which goes on "in harmony" through the use of man's control mechanisms. Not a man who fights all the time but one who fights "when comes the time" is the man praised in the neighborhood. The man who's not afraid to do drugs but also not an addict, the man who's not an alcoholic but is able to knock down one big bottle of *rakı* when the time comes, the man who's

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<sup>73</sup> Abi şimdi ortamımız illakine farklı olacak. Niye farklı olacak? Şimdi o çalışmadığı için gece gider 3-4 te yatar, sabah saat 12-1 de kalkar. E ben çalışan bir insanım. Ben saat 10'a kadar 12'ye kadar orda oturum, sabah altıda kalkarım. Onun için yani, yoksa ortam farklı diye bir şey yok yani. Şimdi benim çalışmam mecbur yani, evim var, bakacak insanlarım var yani, kardeşim var annem var, babam var. Onun da çalışması lazımdır da, -işten çıktı- o askere gidecek diye boşlamıştır. (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

fearless but who is also capable of loving the young ones is the ideal man. This is one of the basic unwritten rules of the neighborhood: “everything has a limit.” A man should be able to tune himself when comes the place. He shouldn’t use his power in an uncontrolled manner, he should also know to accept the existence of men more powerful than himself and respect them. A man in the neighborhood should know to blend *delikanlılık* and *efendilik* in harmony and act “in accordance with the situation.” The presupposition that there exist another man who will “bring down” the one who constantly crows and shows off functions as a sort of control mechanism among the neighborhood men. This attitude is summarized in the phrase “don’t crow so much, there’s God greater than you.” A man who wants to be respected has to know to respect those elder than him. “Being respectful and *efendi*” are aspects that don’t humiliate, but on the contrary, exalt men. A man who has no respect to the elder ones doesn’t deserve to be respected.

Respecting old people also has an important place in this context. The phrase “he’s a man in your father’s age, you can’t raise your hand to him” is the result of such a thinking. While a man is capable of physically exercising power over men very much elder than him, he doesn’t prefer to do that; beating or hurting an old man or speaking against him doesn’t suit an *efendi* man. A man who acts so shouldn’t forget that in the future he will also be old and lose his power.

Respect to mother and father again has a very important place. Whatever they do, mothers and fathers are still, always ones mother and father. A father or brother who beats a person is never raised hands at no matter in what conditions.

*I mean the people of our Adana, as I said before, respect their elderly people, and they love their minors. For example an İstanbul child talks sharply to his father but here he refrains to say something even to his older brother, let alone his father. It is like that here, he can’t just talk sharply to his older brother, but for example he is someone who is as strong as a lion towards the strangers I mean. Out of respect. An older brother can stop his younger brother by pronouncing two*

*words, he can stop him with the words going out from his mouth I mean. Our people are like that, when he says to stop, when he says don't do that, he stops. Both because of growing up in the family and because of the issue of privation and wealth. Because they should support each other, when they don't have support, they are beaten. (Kerim, 22 years old)<sup>74</sup>*

Youth attribute a great importance to what their families think about critical issues such as work or marriage. Father has an important place in their lives as a figure of safety and fear. In the off-the-record chats that I had with my interviewees, as they told me about their relations with their fathers they said they both loved and feared their fathers. They told me that a father has a respectable place whatever he does. The elder brother also deserves respect – though not as much as the father--, as a figure who is placed in the father's position. My respondents –except the one whose father was alcoholic-- said they saw their fathers as a role model. They expressed that they wanted to be like their fathers and marry women like their mothers.

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<sup>74</sup> Yani bizim Adana'nın insanları, demin de dedim büyüğünü bilir, küçüğünü seven insanlar yani. Mesela bir İstanbul çocuğu döner babasına laf söyler ama bizim burada laf söylemeye çekinir abisine, bırak babayı. Bizim bura böyledir, abisine bir şey diyemez ama dışarıdan birisine aslan kesilebilen bir insan yani. Saygıdan dolayı. Bir abi, bir kardaşa dur dediği zamanda iki kelimeyle yani o ağızdan çıkan kelimeyle durdurur yani. Bizim insanlarımız böyle, yapma dediği zaman dur dediği zaman durur. Çünkü hem ailede yetişme, hem yokluk varlık konusundan. Çünkü birbirlerine destek olmak zorundalar, destek olmadığı zamanda zaten kötüye yemişlerdir beline. (Kerim 22 yaşında)

## Chapter 4:

### SOCIAL CODES OF MASCULINTY IN GENDER RELATIONS

A woman has to be in certain attitudes in men's view. What kind of attitudes should a woman have? All men whom I interviewed have nearly the same opinion about the attitudes women should have or shouldn't have. It is clear that married women live a more unbearable life than single women. In other words they have much more responsibilities. But at the end, all women –ideal women- should live in accordance with strict rules which are set up by men. Interestingly these rules are accepted by all the society and become “natural laws” which organize all the daily life of society.

In this chapter I will first dwell upon the expected behavior of an ideal woman in general and then, through my interviews, I will try to explain how single and married women's relationships with other people should be.

#### 4.1 How Should an Ideal Married Woman Be?

From the perspective of men, a married ideal woman, first of all, should obey her husband and family. Women should follow their husbands' orders and should never challenge him. An ideal woman is an ideal mother at the same time. In my interviewees' description of the ideal woman they generally put emphasis on motherhood.

*Against her husband,... assume that man returns from his work... if the woman has not prepared the meal yet, she is not an ideal woman. If she does not raise her children then she is not an ideal mother. If she is throwing away her children, then it's not good. (Ali, aged 22)<sup>75</sup>*

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<sup>75</sup> Kocasına karşı mesela adam işten gelmiş, yemek hazırlamıyorsa eğer, bu ideal bir kadın değildir abi, ideal bir anne değildir, çocuklarına bakmıyorsa, çocuklarını atıyorsa o zaman da olmaz. (Ali, 22 yaşında)

Zagor considers his mother as an ideal woman. His mother is both loyal to her family and maintains proper relations with the neighbors.

*I haven't seen a woman as ideal as my mom. For example, ideal woman should have good behavior as her sitting behavior and posture, she has some distance from others around her... if you go home and find the meal has been ready, she is already an ideal women. If her house is clean, her children are properly and if she is decent and cares for home, thinks about her children and spends money properly ...if she has not inflicted damage, then she a proper woman. A woman who is doing her duty, she is a proper woman. (Zagor, age 21)<sup>76</sup>*

What is expected from a woman is respect for her husband. This respect should be rooted in fear. A woman who is not afraid of her husband can do everything. This respect reminds women of their limits. The woman who properly respects her husband is a desirable woman. House keeping, cooking and child care are the other qualifications that a woman is expected to have. Women who cook well and keep their house clean are praised. Women are considered as responsible for any problems with children and in such a situation it is considered that women do not take care of the children properly.

A woman's place is only her house. The woman, who fulfills her role given to her within her house –which is the only place provided to her—, is the ideal woman. Socialization other than gathering with neighbors is not regarded as proper for married women.

*For example, I am the husband of the woman. She has to behave properly to me, be respectful. When I say "don't go to somewhere", she shouldn't go, I mean. (Emir, age 18)<sup>77</sup>*

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<sup>76</sup> Yani ben annemden idealini görmedim. Misal veriyorum, ideal kadın oturmasıyla kalkmasıyla, seçtiği komşularıyla, tuttuğu arayla, veya akşam eve geldiğinde yemek pişmişse o bir ideal kadındır zaten, yemeğini yapmışsa, evi temizse, çocukları düzgünse, efendiye, evine bakıyorsa, çocuklarını düşünüyorsa, o parayı düzgün harcıyorsa, kocasını hiçbir zaman zarara uğratmıyorsa, o düzgün kadındır, görevini yapan kadın düzgün kadındır. (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

<sup>77</sup> Mesela ben kocasıym kadının, düzgün davranmalı bana, saygılı olmalı, ben bir yere gitme dediğimde gitmemeli, yani öyle." (Emir, 18 yaşında)

*Firstly, there should always be an environment of respectful. Woman will do what she has to, and then she will ask from her husband according to what she's doing for him. (İmam, age 23)<sup>78</sup>*

*An ideal woman has to be at home, dude. She has to cook properly, deal with her duty and make her husband happy. This is the woman, I think. (Kerim, age 22)<sup>79</sup>*

Contending herself with less is another feature of an ideal woman. Regardless of a woman's living standards, she is supposed to be satisfied with what she has. It is expected from women to approve the idiom that "Enough is as good as a feast". The woman, who does not complain about her family's living standards and contends with what she has, is seen as the ideal woman.

*Brother, a woman must be "efendi", honest and honorable. She should do with less. This is important. The one who cannot do with less, there is no comfort. If there is no comfort at home, anything may happen. There may be a murder. (Faruk , aged 20)<sup>80</sup>*

*How can I say, brother? She will eat what she has found. If she accepts that...this is it. (Ali, aged 22)<sup>81</sup>*

Some of my interviewees mentioned the role of the generation gap and said that the new generation is grown up as spoiled and disrespectful and now the women are not like their mothers. While the interviewees were defining the ideal women, they gave their mothers as examples. Since they encode their mothers as women who bring up many children, who don't resist against their husbands' violence, and who "properly" respect their husbands, the interviewees expect the same features from their wives.

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<sup>78</sup> Ya bir defa saygı ortamı her zaman olacak. Kadın yapması gerekeni yapacak, eşinden ne istiyorsa ona göre isteyecek yani. (İmam, 23 yaşında)

<sup>79</sup> İdeal bir kadın evinde olmalı abi, doğru düzgün yemek yapmalı, işine bakmalı, eşini mutlu etmeli. Kadın budur bence." (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

<sup>80</sup> Abi bir kadın efendi, dürüst olmalı, namuslu olmalı. Aza kanaat edebilmeli. Bu önemli. Aza kanaati olmayanın huzuru da olmaz, huzur olmayan evde her şey olur, cinayet de işlenir." (Faruk, 20 yaşında)

<sup>81</sup> Abi şimdi nasıl diyim, ne bulduysa onu yiccek. Kabul ediyorsa o şekil yani." (Ali, 22 yaşında)

*Look at our girls, say they're at the age of 20, they don't behave according to their age. I don't compare my mother with that young girl. My mother wakes up at 6:30 in the morning and prepares breakfast for my dad. I am married, my wife doesn't wake up. And, I don't say "wake up" to her either. She also works and I am working too. But, what happens? Assume that she prepares the breakfast and sends you to work. This is more beautiful, I think. You won't go out of the door alone, she will send you off. (Önder age 29)<sup>82</sup>*

*They are raised so pert, I think. Very pert. They don't face any absence, they have money. But when you look at the past, no one has been raised like that. She wakes up at 5 in the morning and prepares breakfast for you. She cares for her children and helps you. The women these days, when you get up at 8 in the morning and ask for a tea, they just say "go and do it yourself". (Mehmet, aged 29)<sup>83</sup>*

In all her acts, a woman should be concerned about her husband. Since the honor of a man is represented through his wife, any gossip about her will directly affect her husband. Therefore, the woman should be very careful and organize all her life after marriage according to her husband.

*When you say she should be free, well nobody chains anyone from the foot, everybody is free, every person is free. One shall enjoy freedom, one should live it and know it. When it comes to woman it's like she has to think five times, my brother, she has to think at least five times before acting. "What will happen if I do this? Will anything happen to me? Will there be any words about me? Would anyone say something against my husband?" After all a man is a man. He shouldn't think as much as a woman, whatever happens, it's not the end of the*

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<sup>82</sup> Bak şimdiki kızlarımız, şöyle diyim 20 yaşındaysa mesela, o yaşa uygun hareket etmiyorlar. Benim annemle o kızı kıyaslamam. Benim annem sabahın altı buçuğunda kalkıyor, babama kahvaltı hazırlıyor. Ben evliyim, benim eşim kalkmaz. Ha kalk da demem. O da çalışıyor ben de çalışıyorum. Ama ne olur? Ama ne olur kalkar, kahvaltını o hazırlar, seni o gönderir. O daha güzel bence. Sen kapıdan çıkıp gitmeyeceksin, o seni gönderecek. (Önder, 29 yaşında)

<sup>83</sup> Çok şımarık yetişiyorlar bence. Çok şımarık. Yokluk görmemişler, paraları da var. Ama eskiye bakarsan kimse öyle yetişmemiş. Sabahın beşinde kalkıyor sana kahvaltıyı hazırlıyor. Çocuklarına bakıyor, sana da yardım ediyor. Şimdikiler sabah sekizde kalkıyorsun, bir çay yap desen, git kendin hazırla diyor. (Mehmet, 29 yaşında)

*world, he's a man after all. But, if a woman does something, is it the same? These are the conditions of life, the conditions of nature... (Kerim age 22)<sup>84</sup>*

Here, what is expected from the woman is to sacrifice all her life to her husband. Gender inequality is normalized in this way and legitimized in the eyes of men. A man represents himself through his wife. Since the woman is under the responsibility of her husband, her behaviors will affect her husband. Since a man does not have such a concern, the idea that “whatever a man does is okay” (“*Erkek ne yapsa yeridir*”) is dominant.

## **4.2 Interrelation between two Sexes**

In this part of this chapter, I will analyze the restrictions men wish to bring in issues about gender relationships in the light of the interviews. It seems that men always have some limits when they think or act on gender relations. Gender equality can be possible, for instance, as long as when women know her limits.

### **4. 2. 1 The Limits of Relations with Girls**

Men see the girls in the neighborhood as their own “honor” and they don’t look at them with “an evil eye”. They see the girls of the neighborhood as “honored” girls. They think that “our neighborhood is a clean neighborhood.” On Sundays, after coming together and taking their personal cares (making their hair, putting on good clothes etc.), they go to other places, which are usually the busy streets of the city. These avenues and the banks of the river Seyhan –the youth of the neighborhood call it the “near the water”—are considered the common area of everybody and making passes or proposing relationships to women there are therefore perceived to be natural. It is thought that the girls coming to

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<sup>84</sup> Ya özgür olmalı derken zaten kimse kimsenin ayağını zincirle bağlamış değil, yani herkes özgürdür, her insan özgürdür. Yani özgürlüğünün tadını çıkaracak, yaşayacak bilecek. Kadın için şöyle, bir şeyi yaparken beş defa düşünecek kardeşim, yani bu şeyi yapamadan en az beş defa düşünecek. “Ben bunu yapsam ne olur? Başıma bir şey gelir mi? Laf gelir mi? Kocama laf gider mi?” Yani erkek sonuçta erkek. Ya işte onun kadar düşünme hissine kapılmamalı, olsun abi ne olursa olur, yer yerinden mi oynayacak, erkek adam sonuçta. Ama kadın yaparsa öyle mi? sonuçta hayat şartları, doğa şartları bu yani. (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

these places also want such stuff. Looking with evil eyes to the girls in the neighborhood doesn't suit a "*delikanlı*" young man, and this has two reasons. First of all, in a place that everybody knows each other, a woman that he will set his "evil eyes" on might be the sister or another relative of one of his friends from the neighborhood. Attempting at such an act is a wrong done not to the woman he looks with evil eyes, but to the man responsible of her. Secondly, that woman is the common honor of the neighborhood. She shouldn't be exposed to any threats from within. A man looking with evil eyes at a woman from his own neighborhood risks his own family as well; "if you look at the neighbor's wife, then he'll look at yours too" is the dominant way of thinking here.

"Looking with evil eyes" was a phrase used often by the men I talked to in the neighborhood. It is used to express an approach perceived to have no emotional background, wholly "focusing on sex". "Thinking seriously" –not thinking with a focus on sexuality—about a girl from the neighborhood is considered normal behavior. There are young people in love with each other, hoping to get married one day. These relationships are carried on secretly; having a relationship in front of all eyes will disturb the girl's father and brothers. Here are the words of a man who nevertheless had a relationship known by everybody in the neighborhood, while the girl's family still turned a blind eye on the relationship:

*But, I don't have a relationship. I love. And also, I don't kiss a lot. When I want, I kiss only one time. Actually, in fact kissing is also not right according to our religion. But, what can we do? We think seriously, that's why. (Emir, aged 18)<sup>85</sup>*

Having premarital sexual relationship is to "play" with the girl. This is not approved by religion either. Because that girl is not "*sahipsiz*" ("without owners"), after all. A man engaging into such an act is violating not only the woman but the power of the men who feel themselves responsible towards her

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<sup>85</sup> Ama ilişki yaşamıyorum ki ben. Seviyorum. Bir de ben o kadar çok öpmüyorum, canım istediği zamanlarda bir kere öpüyorum, ama o da aslında yani öpmek de olmaz da dinimize göre, olmaz yani. Ama ne yapalım, biz ciddi düşünüyoruz diye, onun için. (Emir, 18 yaşında)

as well. Emir, the youth mentioned above, tells the following about a man who doesn't think "seriously":

*For example, if a girl has an intercourse and then if the boy doesn't marry her, I mean there's no way that they'll let him live. They'll just kill him. (Emir, aged 18)<sup>86</sup>*

The friendship among a man and a woman can have no ground other than having a sort of emotional relationship. It is unthinkable for unmarried women and men of the neighborhood to have any kind of social interaction. Neither men nor women are perceived independently from sexuality. On the one hand honor is always brought to the foreground, on the other hand the company of a woman and a man can only end up in bed. This is not seen as a contradiction in itself. But it is understandable when you think of it within the mechanisms of control and responsibility of men as a whole on women. Both men and women are uncontrollable beings. They cannot enter into any kind of sharing, any relationship other than sexuality. This is why these men so much "devoted to" their honor, so sensitive about their relationships with women are at the same time finding something related to sexuality in everything.

*But other than this, you can't go out as a man and a girl together. Friendship is also not possible. A girl and a man can't be friends if it is not serious...after that, what happens? When a man and a woman are together, it ends in the bed. Isn't it true? (Emir, 18 yaşında)<sup>87</sup>*

*Now in a male society, you say delikanlı man, I mean there's one person that a man looks seriously and there's another one that he looks for fun. This is true for all men. This topic is not changing according to Istanbul's men and Adana's men. This is not the topic, I mean. Each men have some experiences with some girls for three or five days, he lives with her in a pink world. But if he really wants her (wants to marry), he doesn't even talk to her, she directly sends (somebody) to*

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<sup>86</sup> Şimdi mesela kız ilişkiye girerse ve oğlan evlenmezse o kızla, yani her türlü yaşatmazlar burada. Öldürürler ya çocuğu. (Emir, 18 yaşında)

<sup>87</sup> Ama onun dışında gezemezsin kız ve erkek olarak, arkadaşlık da olamaz, kızla erkeğin arkadaşlığı da olmaz, ciddi değilse. Sonradan ne olur, ateşle barut yan yana durmaz. Doğru değil mi? (Emir, 18 yaşında)

*knock on her door (to ask her family to marry the girl). I mean, in here if one really loves, (this is what he does). (Kerim, aged 22)<sup>88</sup>*

The behavior of a man thinking seriously will not be the same with that of a man having “fun” with the girl. A man who doesn’t want any “bad event” to take place will go directly to a girl’s “door” to “want” her (in order to get married with her) from her family, without even having a dialogue with her. Otherwise the relationship you have isn’t serious, it’s just something for a few days. Even though it is known that a woman perceived to be “just for a few days” is also the honor of some people, there’s nothing the man can do if the woman is “*bu yolun yolcusu*” (lit. “a passenger going that direction”, used to mean “loose woman”), if she herself wants things to be so. The men I interviewed have openly told me that they wouldn’t want to marry such a woman: a woman to get married with can never be a “simple woman” that everyone sleeps with.

#### **4.2.2 An Ideal Woman Should Not Talk with Stranger Men**

My interviewees cannot imagine a social life for their girlfriends. A woman shouldn’t establish a friendship with a man except for his boyfriend. She shouldn’t meet with other men or even if she does, she would meet them when she’s together with her boyfriend. My interviewees are explicitly against their girlfriends to have male friends and freely meet them. A woman’s friendship with men is an extreme threat, no matter what the characteristics of the relationship are. Here, this is not a mistrust towards their girlfriends, but a mistrust towards the other men. However, I think that the fundamental distrustfulness relies on the lack of self-confidence. Men experience such relationships with women as a process of reciprocal distrustfulness:

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<sup>88</sup> Ya abi, şimdi erkek toplumunda delikanlı insan diyorsun da yani şimdi bir insanın kendine göre gerçekten baktığı vardır, bir de alaya baktığı vardır. Bu her erkek için de geçerlidir yani, bu konu yani İstanbulluyla Adanalı konusu değil yani. Mevzu o değil yani. Her insan yani her erkek gelişine birileriyle illakine üç beş günlüğüne yaşar onla, toz pembe yaşar onla. Ama gerçekten şey yapıyorsa, (evlenmek istiyorsa) zaten gider direk kızla konuşmaz bile kapısını çaldırır. Yani bizim buranın insanı gerçekten seviyorsa (bunu yapar). (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

*I want her not to talk to men. Or, for example, if she's to go somewhere, I expect her to make me know about it. If she will meet with her girl friends, that's okay. But if she'll talk to a man or meet a man, whatever the consequences, I won't permit that. (Ali aged 22)<sup>89</sup>*

*No, abi, how come? If she is serious with me, she won't be in a conversation with anyone else. No way, I swear to god, if I see such a thing, I'll really get mad. That day, there was a guy in the neighborhood, it's said she talked to him, and I told her "you're never gonna talk to him again, you won't even salute him," and that's it. She said "ok, I won't speak to him." I've checked her, she really doesn't speak to him anymore. She said ok. ( Emir, aged 18)<sup>90</sup>*

Moreover, having a contact with ex-boyfriend is impossible. In the case that a man is known and trusted by the husband, the wife might be permitted to see him. In the case the ex-boyfriend is already known, meetings would be possible after letting him know.

***Isn't it normal for her to talk to male friends?***

*Her ex-boy friend?*

***No. for example normal male friends.***

*If I also know him. I must have already trusted him, if I'm letting him talk to my wife. Otherwise, he can't even step in (to my home). (Recep aged 20 )<sup>91</sup>*

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<sup>89</sup> Erkeklerle konuşmamasını isterim. Ya da mesela bir yere gidecek, haber vermesini beklerim. Kız arkadaşlarıyla toplu bir yere gidecekse tamam, ama mesela bir erkekle konuşacaksa, buluşacaksa, ne olursa olsun izin vermem. (Ali, 22 yaşında)

<sup>90</sup> Yok abi olur mu? Eğer benle ciddiye hiç kimseyle muhatap olmayacak, benden başkasıyla konuşmayacak. . . Sakın, valla görürsem çok kızarım. O gün mahallede bir tane erkek vardı, konuşmuş, dedim ona bir daha selam de vermeyecen, konuşamayacan dedim, bu kadar. Tamam dedi, konuşmam. Kontrol ettim, konuşmuyor gerçekten. Tamam dedi. (Emir, 18 yaşında)

<sup>91</sup> **Erkek arkadaşlarıyla görüşmesi normal değil mi?**

Eski sevgilisi mi?

**Yok, mesela normal arkadaşı?**

Ya şimdi onu ben de tanıyorumdur zaten, ona güveniyorumdur ki karımla konuşturuyorum. Öyle olmazsa adım bile atamaz. (Recep, 20 yaşında)

What men demand is the will to be aware of everything if the woman will have her own relationships. Because what women say would always be incomplete, men's responsibility is to fill those gaps.

*. . .if she does something without informing me or if she does anything secretly, there must certainly be something bad under it, if not she would do it when I'm present. She should speak when I am also there, and I'll support her. Whatever she says, I would add my words to it. Who ever it is, if she's right we'll defend her rights, we'll defend it together. But as I just said, there should be no poaching. That's the issue, I mean. It's something that comes from the family. ( Kerim aged 22)<sup>92</sup>*

In the case that a woman is in a relationship with a man, having her own individual relationships with other men are considered to be too much. Women are seen exactly as a property of a man, even in the case that this is only a romantic relationship without any marital ties. When the couple gets married, the situation becomes worse. Any sort of contact of the woman with any man is a source of doubts and distrustfulness. The life that is imagined for a woman is by no means different from the life in hell in prison.

#### **4.2.3 Sacred Virginty: An Ideal Woman Should Not Have Any Sexual Relationship before Marriage**

One of the spheres on which the gender inequality is apparent is sexuality and the problem of 'virginty' that is rooted in sexuality.

For the men in my fieldwork, it is "unacceptable" that a woman can have sexual intercourse before marriage. A woman is expected to reserve her "virginty", which is the most important relic in her, to her husband. In the men's world, what is the reason of this importance of virginty? While men are expected to have sexual experience before the marriage, why is it perceived as guilt when

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<sup>92</sup> . . .Zaten benden habersiz veyahut da benden saklı bir şey yapıyorsa zaten bunun altında bir bit yeniği vardır, e yapan kız benim yapsın. Benim yanımda konuşsun, ben de arkasında olayım. Ne diyorsa üstüne beş kelime de ben katiyim söyliyim. Kim olursa olsun, haklıysa hakkın savunak, beraber savunak. Ama demin dedim ya cıvıklık olmamalı. O tür bir mesele yani. yani bir de aileden gelen bir şey. (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

women have sexual intercourse before marriage? From the perspective that regards women as property, a man is the only owner of a woman. The fact that the “hymen” which doesn’t have any important role in biology has a culturally important role can be related to the power relations in men’s world.<sup>93</sup> Hymen, which is negligible in terms of its biological function<sup>94</sup>, is regarded as one of men’s discipline and control mechanisms over women’s body. A woman to have sexual intercourse before marriage is regarded as dishonor by her family, and this situation is also considered as a serious power loss of the family over the woman. Losing virginity out of wedlock appears as one of the main pretenses of honor killings and violence against woman, signifying the beginning of a woman’s life turning to hell (Kardam, 2005). Gürsoy states that the “hymen” gained importance in the transition period from the matriarchal period in which women occupied a higher social position to the patriarchal period in which women’s sexuality was under control (Gürsoy, 2003).

My interviewees said that the woman that they’ll get married should be a virgin. Faruk doesn’t expect from his girlfriend to be a virgin but expects his wife to be so. It can be suggested that virginity is important for men in terms of marriage.

*When there’s a brand new car, would you like to use a second hand one? It’s as simple as that, abi. They (girlfriends) can be so (not virgin), after all I won’t take them as wife. It’s just flirting. Eventually we are man as a man here, you see, it’s a matter of needs. (Faruk, aged 20)<sup>95</sup>*

Women who have sexual intercourse before the marriage are treated as a “second hand car” and this summarizes men’s approach to virginity. A woman

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<sup>93</sup> Women are subject to familial discipline on the significance of hymen before marriage. Throughout the society most people are committed to preserve this ‘valuable’ relic. Women are coerced to avoid any kind of sexual intercourse before marriage, upon the idea that it is not favorable for their own life. <http://www.kizlikzari.com.tr/genc-kizlara-uyarilar.html>

<sup>94</sup> For the biological structure of hymen in detail and its nonfunctionality in woman’s body, [http://www.e-jinekolog.com/kizlik\\_zari.html](http://www.e-jinekolog.com/kizlik_zari.html)

<sup>95</sup> Sıfır araba varken ikinci el arabaya binmek ister misin sen? Bu kadar basit abi (**kız arkadaş için**)“Onlarda olabilir ya, nikahıma almayacağım için. Flört maksadıyla zaten. Erkek adamız şurda abi, anlarsın sen, ihtiyaç meselesi. (Faruk, 20 yaşında)

who's not a virgin is perceived as a "used" woman.<sup>96</sup> Men prefer "pure" women rather than the ones who "lost" their purity.<sup>97</sup> While sexual relation before marriage is considered as necessary for men, it's guilt for women.

While the majority of my interviewees have had sexual intercourse before marriage, they consider this totally unacceptable for women. They don't see any contradiction in this perception, moreover this is the natural law in human life for them.

***Can a girl have sexual relationship before marriage?***

*No abi she can't. An honorable girl won't do that.*

***But men can do? Look, you did have sexual relationship before marriage?***

*Men can do.*

***Why is it like that?***

*Well abi, say that I will have a relationship with a girl, suppose she's a virgin, you can understand if she is a virgin or not, don't you? But that girl can't understand whether a man is a virgin or not. Men don't have such a trouble. You, as much as you want—there's nothing that shows he did but once a girl has intercourse, the next man understands it. He'll say you've had intercourse before. So a girl only has one go. That's what I think, but everyone can think differently. ( Samet, aged 22)<sup>98</sup>*

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<sup>96</sup> Having sexual relationships and getting experienced in terms of sexuality before the marriage is almost a must for men. "Milli olmak" is not used for men who have sexual intercourse with his wife but is used for the men who have sexual relations before the marriage. In this sense, "Milli olmak" turns into be a rituel for men.

<sup>97</sup> In of conversations with men in the park of the district, one the young men told aabout the virginity that: "Abi, would you eat dirty fruit that falls dawn? You would not. Everybody wants to eat fruit from the tree, clean fruit." This was impressing in the sense that he refers to the "dirtiness" in his narrative.

<sup>98</sup> ***Evlenmeden önce ilişkiye girebilir mi?***

*Yok abi giremez, namuslu bir kız bunu yapmaz.*

***Erkekler yapıyor ama? İşte sen evlenmeden ilişkiye girmişsin işte?***

*Erkek yapabiliyor da.*

***Neden böyle acaba?***

Within the perspective that provides an unlimited freedom for men in terms of sexuality and extremely limits sexual freedom of women, if a woman has a sexual intercourse it is very simple to understand it. However, this is mainly based on the idea in which women are seen as properties. A woman belongs to her husband only.

Sexual intercourse for men is seen as legitimate as well as necessary; on the contrary, for women it is regarded as “dishonor”.

*Well actually you shouldn't. Because you won't marry her. If you have a sexual relation, then you have to marry her. She will also put pressure on that. That you have to take her. Now, for men going to a brothel is normal. It is better when he is experienced. You know, they say some guys just sit in their first night, some do some things. (Önder, aged 29)<sup>99</sup>*

Within the mentality of masculinity which considers the honor as its own asset, women's sexual intercourse out of wedlock is a threat against the power of masculine mentality. When I asked whether it is “injustice” for them that a woman cannot have extramarital sexual intercourse while this is not forbidden for men, they told me that it is completely natural. For the majority of the interviewees having a hymen is a part of creation. Furthermore they said that if a woman has even once a sexual intercourse it can be easily recognized whereas this is not the case for men.<sup>100</sup>

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*Valla abi şimdi ben bir kızla ilişkiye gireceğim, diyelim ki bakiredir, sen onu anlarsın değil mi bakire olup olmadığını, ama o kız erkeğin bakire olup olmadığını anlayamaz. Erkeğin öyle bir derdi yok yani. sen istediğin kadar, ilişkiye girdiğini belli eden bir olay yok ama kız bir ilişkiye girdi mi ikinciye erkek onu anlar. Sen daha önce ilişkiye girmişsin der. Kızın bir kerelik hakkı var yani. Benim düşüncem o, herkes farklı düşünür de kendisinde göre. (Samet, 22 yaşında)*

<sup>99</sup> Yani aslında girilmemesi gerekiyor, çünkü evlenmeyeceksin. Sen ilişkiye girersen o kızla evlenmek zorundasın. O da baskı yapacaktır. Onu alman lazım diye. . . Şimdi hani erkek gitmesi, kerhaneye gitmesi normal. Deneyimli olması iyidir sonuçta. Hani derler ya gerdekte kimisi oturur, kimisi bir şeyler yapar. (Önder, 29 yaşında)

<sup>100</sup> Artificial hymen produced in China that emerged in Antalya saliently indicates how they are significant for men. <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalDetayV3&Date=7.7.2011&ArticleID=1055450&CategoryID=77>

*...No, no, I mean it's the core of, that's the core of girlhood, papa, to have it after marriage. You get married first, and only then (you can have sex). And you see, that's why they've put it, they've put that membrane over there. That's the aim of that membrane, it's like a seal, only you can open it, no one else can. The person she'll marry will open that, I mean the person that she will always be together, for a lifetime, only he can open it. (Zagor, aged 21)<sup>101</sup>*

The seal metaphor has a crucial role. A married woman should be “opened” for the first time by her husband, just like a sealed letter that is to be opened only by the recipient. This “seal” shows the chastity of a woman and whether she has been “opened” or not. A woman who has premarital sexual intercourse is seen like a casual letter which can be “opened” by everyone. This contract made by men turns into a solidarity among men. A man, who “deflowered” a woman to whom he hadn’t considered to get married, now has to get married to her. The man who “unseals” the woman owns her. If he doesn’t get married to her, by the same token it is considered as a “betrayal” to the future husband of this woman. Therefore, my interviewees told that they abstain from having sexual intercourse with girls that they “only hang out” with.

Zagor thinks that getting married to a woman who is not a maiden is unbearable for a man. He even thinks that such a marriage cannot be sustained.

*Of course brother. Think that she have had fifty men, ten men, twenty men...then you take her and claim her as a wife, how can that be? There is nothing as “never” but you shouldn't be that lax. There is no base in such a marriage. (Zagor age 21)<sup>102</sup>*

Although a man wants to have sexual intercourse, when he takes his affair as a “serious” one, he hesitates to have sex with the “serious” girlfriend. The

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<sup>101</sup> . . .Hayır, hayır, yani onun özelliği, kızlığın özelliği o zaten baba, evlendikten sonra. Evlen, barklan, ondan sonra. Ha bak onu, onun için koymuşlar ha, o zarı oraya. O zar onun içindir, o işte bir mühür, onu sen açabilirsin sadece, kimse açamaz. Evleneceği insan açar. Yani hep ömür boyu beraber olacağı insan açabilir. . .”(Zagor, 21 yaşında)

<sup>102</sup> Yani tabi abi, gitmiş, elli kişiyle, on kişiyle, yirmi kişiyle birlikte olmuş, ondan sonra gel onu avrat diye oturttur. Olur mu yani? olur, olmaz diye bir şey yok ama yani o kadar da geniş olmamak lazım. Temeli olmaz o evliliğin. (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

prominent reason for this is the fear of getting into trouble. A man can predict the price of this act. Another reason for avoiding sexual intercourse is to protect his girlfriend. He knows that if they don't get married, nobody will get married to a woman who's not a virgin, therefore he abstains from causing such a trouble for his girlfriend. Emir, who does not want to go far in terms of sexuality with his girl friend, thinks that his approach protects his girl friend and also it suits a man better:

*"No, I am not so insisting on girls. I even don't kiss too much. It's enough for me if she's near me. There is no sexual relationship, we just sometimes talk about it, that's all. So, none of that (sex). That's something for the shameless, anyway. No way, that won't suit me. That won't suit manhood. Now, if I fuck her, that's not good.*

### ***Why doesn't it suit manhood?***

*If we can't marry, then it will be a problem. It's not nice. No one wants to marry with her. And also, she is not "allowed" to me. (Emir, aged 18)<sup>103</sup>*

In this game among men, women are no more than objects. Getting married to a woman who is not a virgin becomes a prominent fear for men. So, men make a contract: Keeping away from "honored women". Men, who are afraid of getting married to a non-virgin woman, with the discouragement of this fear stay away from having sexual intercourse with a virgin woman. A man, who has sexual intercourse with a woman that he will not marry, thinks that this might "ruin her life" ("*hayatını yakar*"). Since this woman won't be able to get married

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<sup>103</sup> "Yok, yani ben kızın fazla üstüne gitmem yani. Fazla da öpmüyorum yani. onun yanımda olması bile yetiyor bana. Yani cinsel ilişki yok, ha konuşuyoruz zaman zaman, o kadar, bitti. Yani o iş yok. O iş zaten terbiyesiz işi. Olmaz yani, bana yakışmaz. Erkekliğe yakışmaz. Şimdi o kızı siksem, olmaz yani." (Emir 18 yaşında)

### **Neden erkekliğe yakışmaz?**

Abi şimdi olmazsa hani evlenemezsek sorun olur yani. Yakışmaz. Kimse almaz o kızı bir daha. Bir de helalim değil." (Emir, 18 yaşında)

anymore, because of the man's respect for the woman he doesn't want to do this to her. If he does, the woman is ruined.<sup>104</sup>

*"I haven't thought about it. Sometimes when I think of something it happens to me. So, we'd better not talk. I don't want to think of such things. On the other hand, I think of these things. I say if I do that act to one of my girl friends, what if some one else has done the same thing to the wife I am to marry. Thinking about that, I don't do that to anyone... No, I mean we had it but, how to say, we didn't fully intertwine. From the surface, French style..." (Samet, aged 22)<sup>105</sup>*

It is the women who are expected to be aware of the importance of virginity most and to notify men that their relationship is a "serious" one. Women should inform men beforehand that they are not "clean" in order to avoid being sent back to their fathers' house after the marriage. If a woman acts like this, that means she acts in a honored way and doesn't bring shame to her husband. Since a woman can't "lose" her virginity on her own and the act usually involves a male partner, this hypocritical approach once again reveals the awful face of the structure of male domination.

*You have asked a very important question. If she turns out not to be a virgin, that will bring question marks to your mind. With whom did she have a relation before me? Apparently she's not clean. You start thinking on how many people she had relations with. Thus I would send her back to her father's home right away, and plus if a woman preparing to get married is a reputable one, if she thinks of herself, she will tell about all these conditions to her husband anyway. Or to her fiancée. (Recep, aged 20)<sup>106</sup>*

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<sup>104</sup> In one of the conversations in the same park, one of the young men said that "Abi, first and foremost, you should not do wrong to a girl, it's hard for her. Would you prefer that the same happens to your sister? No, you wouldn't."

<sup>105</sup> "Valla abi hiç düşünmedim. Şimdi bazı şeyleri düşününce hep başıma geliyor. O yüzden hiç konuşmayalım bence. Düşünmek istemiyorum böyle şeyleri. Bir yandan da bunları düşünüyorum abi, şimdi ben çıktığım kızlara aynı o hareketi yaparsam ya ben evleneceğim eşe de başka biri yapmışsa diyorum. Onu da düşünüp yapmıyorum hiç kimseye. . . Yok abi yani oldu da tam böyle iç içe girmedik diyelim. Yüzeysel, Fransız usulü." (Samet, 22 yaşında)

<sup>106</sup> Abi çok önemli bir soru sordun, bir kere kız bakire çıkmazsa senin aklına bazı soru işaretleri gelir. Bu kız benden önce kimle birlikte oldu, bu kız temiz değilmiş. Acaba benden önce kaç kişiyle birlikte oldu diye düşünürsün. E öyle olunca tabi ki hemen babasının evine yollarım, ki evlenecek bir kız eğer

It was very impressive that one of the interviewees told me that his girl friend told her the “truth” and she did not deem herself worth her boyfriend. In this case, the woman, who “really loves” acts in an honored way. Since a woman who has a sexual intercourse before the marriage feels her self as she “lost her purity”, she feels obliged to say it to the man. A woman who really loves should inform her boyfriend about her “deficient and faulty” situation. Otherwise, this “truth” upsets and disturbs the man. The man who thinks that other men have touched his future wife before him would lose all his respect for his future wife. For a warranted marriage, a woman should declare this to her future husband. Women feel themselves as if they lost “their purity”, or that they are “worth of their husbands” imply that these values are also internalized by the women. The fact that warnings about the “virginity” are done mostly by mothers also show this.

*Before marriage, it can't be. Since I love her, I can't ruin her. When one loves then he will just not do it. Once it happens, how can I ever compensate for this? I can't live with that guilty conscience. What if we can't get married, what will happen then? I once had a girl friend, 19 years old. She was a student. Then we had quite a close relationship. I told her, “tell me.” She asked “if I am not a virgin, what would you do? Would you look at me in a different view?” I asked how it happened. With your will or not? She then said it didn't happen by her will. Then, abi she falls into a trap, she somehow does it by her own will. Then, I said to her that if you love me, you have to keep yourself away from me. Then she left me, I thought she probably didn't see herself as worthy of me. (Faruk, aged 20)<sup>107</sup>*

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şerefliyse, kendini düşünüyorsa, evlenmeden önce bütün bu şartların hepsini kocasına anlatır zaten. Nişanlısına diyelim. (Recep, 20 yaşında)

<sup>107</sup> Evlenmeden önce olmaz abi, sevdiğim için onun günahına giremem. Seven insan onu zaten yapamaz. Benim başıma geldi, onun vebalini nasıl ödeyebilirim ki? Yaşamam ki o vicdan azabıyla ben. Tut ki evlenemedik, ne olacak? Abi benim kız arkadaşım ardı, kız 19 yaşında. Okuyordu kendisi. Sonra baya bir samimi olduk. Ben dedim söyle, dedi ben bakire olmasam ne yaparsın? Farklı gözle bakar mısın? dedi. Bir kere dedim bu nasıl oldu? İsteyerek mi? istemeyerek mi? Ondan sonra dedi “istemeyerek oldu.” Ondan sonra abi bu kız bir tufaya düşüyor abi, isteyerek yapıyor bir şekilde. Dedim eğer sen kendin beni seviyorsan senin kendini uzaklaştırman lazım benden. Kız sonra bıraktı beni, kendini bana layık görmedi ki demek ki diye düşündüm. (Faruk, 20 yaşında)

The issue of “virginity” clearly shows how masculine mentality depicts a hypocritical- way of thinking. Masculine mentality considers sexual relation as an “experience” for men and “losing purity” for women. An “impure” woman has no right of getting married as well as of loving a man. For such a woman, it is the end of her life. Women suicides, which were frequent in Batman several years ago and also not unusual in other parts of Turkey (Halis, 2001) can be regarded as a product of such a mentality.

### **4.3 Women Should Obey the Traditional Gender Roles**

In this part of this chapter, I will analyze the gender roles of an ideal woman in minds of men. An ideal woman should obey some gender roles to adjust to the men’s world. Woman has to live according to rules of which have already been put by the men. All these rules also can be perceived as restrictions in woman’s life.

#### **4.3.1 An Ideal Woman Has to Be Serious**

In order not to regret, a man should choose his would-be wife very carefully. One of my interviewees told that before the marriage, a man should investigate the woman’s family and in order not to get into unwanted situations, he should calculate this properly.

*When you lost your honor, it’s better if you die. In order not to face such a thing, before marriage you should search for the girl you will marry, that’s it. What kind of a girl? Is she dignified? Or is she a jester? According to those answers you will marry her or not. Assume that she is going around, she rises up against her family... this is not our type. Girls should stay at home and do cleaning. That’s all. (Ali, aged 22)<sup>108</sup>*

“A jester girl” was an expression commonly used in the district that I held my interviews. A clown or a jester is a person who entertains people. It symbolizes

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<sup>108</sup> Namus gitti mi hayatın biter abi, yaşama daha iyi. Şimdi böyle olmaması için bir evlendiğin zaman kızı araştırıp soracan, netice bu yani. Nasıl bir kız? Ağırbaşlı mı? Soytarı mı? Ona göre evlenirsin onla. ... Abi geziyor tozuyor, anne babasına karşı geliyor, bu şekilde. Yakışmaz yani. kız kısmı dediğin evinde oturur, evi temizler. Bu kadar. (Ali, 22 yaşında)

inferiority and banality. It is far from being serious. However, a woman should not be inferior and banal, she is expected to know how to be serious. One of her aims in her life should be preventing any gossips about her, as those gossips would destroy the honor of the family. If she doesn't do so, she harms the male members of her family and forces them to do unwanted things. Here, the family is consecrated. Attributing "purity" to the family is realized through the women of the family. If the women of a family are honored, then the family is also honored and pure. In a family, while a male member who harrasses, gives harm to his neighbors, friends, has bad habits and hangs out with girls can be sometimes a hero or sometimes a naughty boy who has some temporary misbehaviors, a daughter who does the same things is stigmatized as the black sheep of the family. In this sense, all the behavior of a daughter should be controlled, and gossips about the family honor should be prevented. She mustn't hang out with men, she mustn't behave like a "jester". In brief, a girl has to know how to live in a honored way and preserve herself for her future husband.

*For example, a girl has seen a boy and she likes him, but she'd better not walk hand in hand with him near the water. Well actually if a man takes a girl by the water, that means there's nothing in that girl, he doesn't love that girl seriously. Believe me about that, he doesn't love her. (Kerim, aged 22)<sup>109</sup>*

"Going by the water" (i.e. near the river) is itself a very bad thing independently from what might happen there. It shows the "looseness" of a girl, it shows that she's lax.<sup>110</sup> More importantly it shows that she doesn't take the relationship

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<sup>109</sup> Ya mesela şimdi kız onu gördü, ondan hoşlanıyor ama yarın tutup da el ele suyun kenarında gezmesin. Yani zaten o erkek alıp da o kızı suyun kenarında gezdiriyorsa o kızda bi iş yoktur, ciddi sevmiyordur yani. İnan buna sevmiyordur. (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

<sup>110</sup> Avoiding the image of "a loose woman", a woman's self-representation of herself as a serious woman is also reflected in gender relationships among modern, urban and well-educated individuals. A woman "who plays the one who's hard to get" is in a much more valuable position in the eyes of men. Such kind of thinking which wouldn't be directly associated to the notion of honor, in fact serves to the same perception. Commonly used idioms like "the one who runs away will be chased" ("kaçan kovalanır"), "play the hard-to-get" ("kendini ağırdan satmak"), or "treating [a lover] like a dog" ("köpek çektirmek") are also widely used among urban and well-educated women although those words apparently seems to represent a different way of reasoning. However, I believe that these practices reflect a similar way of thinking. Such games of strategy, whether they result in a romantic relationship or not, indicate that this perception prevails in many women's way

serious and she doesn't really love. The prominent reason for having suspicions about a girl who can easily go to where she is invited is the possibility that she has experienced the same thing with other men. Women are tested in the men's world in order to understand whether she's a chaste and proper woman or not. A man should not get married to a woman who fails in these tests. A girl who goes to wherever she is invited is considered as a girl who is not planning to preserve herself for her future husband. A woman is supposed to have a pure past. Here, a man who invites a girl to near the water is not disapproved; this hypocritical approach also shows that honor codes are male-centered, that women are subjects and men are objects in the men's world.

*I just look at it now, if the girl's a clown, you also can hit that girl. But, if she's a dignified girl, for example when you want to go somewhere with her and she doesn't want to come, if she says "first we'll get married and then we can go around", then you understand that she's dignified, that she won't bring dirty to your honor. But some are like jesters. She asks for a date, although you don't ask, she calls you. You have your fun with those girls, you just ahng out with them. (Ali aged 22)<sup>111</sup>*

*A young girl should go to school and come back, well she shouldn't have roving eyes. Some girls stroll around with their friends or go to parks on the pretext of going to school. Now this park right in front of us, all the girls and boys in the high school come to this park of ours. Whatever they do, you just see it all. Well, when people see those scenes, would they ever say "my daughter should go to school"? Then they make propagandas saying "let's send the girls to school". How can you send girls in this way? The girls are perverted actually. And the girls just don't behave properly! ( Recep aged 20)<sup>112</sup>*

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of thinking. A woman who immediately says "ok" to a man is being coded as a "woman easily acquired" in the eyes of men.

<sup>111</sup> Yani şimdi şöyle bir bakıyorum şimdi, hani soytarıysa bir tane de sen vurursun, ama ağır başlı kızsaa, mesela bir yere giden diyon kız senle gelmek istemiyorsa işte diyor evlenelim öyle gezelim diyorsa anlarsın ki ağırdır, namusa leke getirmez, ama kimisi böyle soytarı gibi. O seni çağırıyor, sen çağırmasan bile çağırıyor. O kızlarla eğlenirsin, takılırsın. (Ali, 22 yaşında)

<sup>112</sup> Genç kız dediğin okula gidip gelmeli yani, öyle gözü çok fazla dışarıda olmamalı. Bazıları var, derse girme bahanesiyle arkadaşlarıyla geziyor, parklarda geziyor. Şimdi şu karşıdaki parka, lisede ne kadar kız erkek varsa hepsi geliyor bizim parka. Ne yapıyorlar, ne ediyorlar hepsini görüyorsun zaten. E

*Brother, they have to be proper, they shouldn't get involved with men. As the saying goes: the joke of man and woman ends in the bed. No matter how much they feel friendly—we do have friends and acquaintances, papa, they say "dude the girl is literally a bitch", "she obviously says come and fuck me" say our friends. This man does not tell this out of the blue! There's truth in it, there should be some truth in it, at least a little bit, even if we say that all these men are telling lies, there must be some truth in this. I mean, a person should be serious in his/her posture, even if a little bit. A girl also has to be serious, just as a man has to be serious, a girl should be so too. But of course they are a little bit more fragile, they're weak, that's why I can't say anything to them, for a fact. (Zagor, aged 21)<sup>113</sup>*

*A woman, first of all, what you call a woman or a girl has to be serious. This is my opinion. If a woman, a girl is not serious, everyone speaks behind her wherever she goes, "look she's such and such, she acts loosely, she behaves lax", etcetera. If it's a boy it's different, but for a girl seriousness is very important. Honesty is important for girls. I mean, when she's walking on the street, she has to go head foremost. She shouldn't raise her head and look around as she walks. (Kerim, aged 22)<sup>114</sup>*

A man does not prefer to get married to a girl who can easily accept to stroll "by the water" on the first date. A woman with whom a man wants to get married is not the same with the woman with whom the man entertains himself. If that girl is already familiar with these kind of affairs and if she also wants this, a man can

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şimdi millet o görüntü gördükten sonra benim kızım okula gitsin der mi? Ondan sonra propaganda çıkarıyorlar, "haydi kızlar okula" .E böyle nasıl kızları okula göndereceksin? Kızları bir kere yoldan çıkarıyorlar yani. Kızlar da normal durmuyor ki!" (Recep, 20 yaşında)

<sup>113</sup> Kardeş düzgün olsunlar ya, erkeklerle fazla haşır neşir olmasınlar. Yani ne demişler? Kadınla erkeğin şakası yatakta biter. Ne kadar arkadaş olursa olsun, bizim var baba arkadaşlarımızdan, tanıdıklarımızdan, diyorlar "lan kız orospu lan resmen" diyorlar, "resmen gel beni sik diyor kız abi" diyor arkadaşlar, yani şimdi bu lafı bu adam kendi kendine konuşmuyor ki! Bir doğruluk payı var, illaki var, ufacık da olsa var, yani hepsini yalan atıyor desek illaki şu kadarlık bir şey vardır. Yani insan birazcık da duruşuyla ağır olacak, kız dediğin ağır olur ya, erkek nasıl ağır olcaksa kız da ağır olacak. Ama tabi onlar biraz daha narin oluyor, hafif oluyor, şey oluyor, onun için yani bir şey diyemiyom yani işin açığı. (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

<sup>114</sup> Bir kadın ilk başta kadın dediğin kız dediğin ciddi olacak abi, benim görüşüm böyle yani. ciddi olmayan bir kız bir kadın nereye gidersen git arkasından konuşurlar yani. işte bak şöyle, böyle, sulu sulu hareket yapıyor, cıvık cıvık hareket yapıyor falan diye. Erkek çocuğu olsa farklı olur ama kız çocuğunda ilk başta ciddiyet önemli. Dürüstlük önemli. Yani yolda yürürken ilk başta kafasını önüne eğip de yürümeli. Kafasını kaldırıp sağa sola bakarak yürümemeli. (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

have a sexual intercourse with her. If the woman is not a serious one and does not fulfill her role as a “serious woman,” a man can have sexual intercourse with her with no hesitation.

#### **4.3.2 An Ideal Woman Should Not Work**

Women’s participation to the labor market is not preferable. According to the men I interviewed, there were various interpretations about women who take part in labor market. Firstly, work experience means inclusion to the social life and that would result in being open to the various threats of the men’s world. Women’s encounter with men in the working sphere brings up several threats. For this reason, if a woman is allowed to work, what she does as work becomes another issue to be considered and the “security” of working life is taken into account. Secondly, there’s a fear from the woman’s liberty once she has achieved her economic independence. A woman who stands on her own feet becomes a threat that would gradually undermine men’s absolute power as she now has the potential to give up the total obedience to her husband. One of the reasons that women fail to leave their husbands despite severe violence against themselves is that they don’t have economic independence. The fear of poverty with her children that she may experience if she divorces is one of the primary reasons why a woman doesn’t take action.

Men I interviewed declared that they certainly disapprove of their wives’ participation to the labor market. Here, the will to be the unique bread-winner of the household is the major reason that lies beneath those statements. Man is the bread-winner who does not make his wife dependent on anyone else. This role is, in some sense, a responsibility. Because this is the role given to men in the socialization process, women’s participation to the working life appears to be undermining this perception.

We observe a similar understanding that a woman’s working would disturb the balance in the family in the findings of Filiz Kardam and İlknur Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu in a study on masculinity and violence:

Married young men, whose education was usually below high school level, have a stance closer to their families in terms of their approaches to these issues. In addition to the fact that they don't mention such concerns, in conformity with the generally accepted approach in the society, they say that "a woman should know her womanhood and a man should know his manhood", accepting to have women's lives related to the private sphere and men's lives related to the public sphere. Their own lives are also organized according to this, from the choice of the spouse to the division of labor in the house. Thus they say that it complies with the customs and traditions that women's lives are limited to the house, bringing up the pretext that the environment is bad as well. Some statements on this issue show that in case women "don't know their places" and disobey the rules set by men there will be disquietude and even a base for violence. (Kardam and Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu, 2010)

The man sees himself useless when he becomes the one who "makes his wife work". Such kind of a man loses his own respectability as well.

*I think, there is no problem in it. But, if she is married, her husband has to care for her, that's a must for him, I mean. Personally, if I get married, I won't make the wife work. (Ali, aged 22)<sup>115</sup>*

*Well of course if you trust her she should work. But, apart from trusting your wife, you need to trust men. If you don't trust the men, then she can't work. I mean, she shouldn't work in an environment which is not trustworthy. I'll check the environment, I'll check it specially, without having them notice it, I'll go there from time to time, or I'll ask something. I'll understand from the way he speaks and then I'll say, "don't go." "Stay at home, I will give you what you would earn there. I will give it to you, without you working at all, I'll give you a salary. (Zagor, aged 21)<sup>116</sup>*

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<sup>115</sup> *Şimdi bence onda bir sorun yok, ama şimdi evliyse eğer kocası ona bakmalı, buna zorunlu yani. Ben şahsen evlensem çalıştırmam yani avradı. (Ali, 22 yaşında)*

<sup>116</sup> *"Yani şimdi güvenirsen çalışmalı tabi, hanımına güveniyorsa. Ama hanıma güvenmekten başka, erkeklere güvenmek lazım, erkeklere güvenmiyorsan çalışmayacak. Yani güvenmediğin ortamda çalışmaz, bakarım ortama, hususi, hiç ayıktırmam, giderim ufak ufak, veya bir şeyler sorarım, o insanın konuşmasından anlarım, derim ki gitme ağam derim. Otur, ben sana ne kazanıyorsan veriyim. Ben sana vereceğim, hiç çalışmadan ben sana maaş vereceğim. (Zagor, 21 yaşında)*

*No, she should be a housewife. Men should work. If she goes to strangers' work, men may rack sack. That won't do. For a woman, working is dangerous at these times. (Doğan, aged 18)<sup>117</sup>*

*Abi, in other cities, when a woman says I'm married, men would stop disturbing her, there would be distance. No one looks at her, then. But it's not like that here. Here, if a woman has three children, let alone being married, men still look at her. (Recep aged 20)<sup>118</sup>*

While determining the division of labor at home, they think that women should certainly stay at home as their primary responsibility is rearing children. Women are responsible of taking care of the children, including their moral education. The mention of a woman to work, it simultaneously evokes the image of a careless mother. To a young man whose mother was working, I asked who was is responsible of the housework at their home and he told me that the housework is his mother's responsibility as well. As a matter of fact, in the case that a woman does work outside home, she is still responsible for the rearing of children. Nevertheless, women's participation to the working life still constitutes threats for men.

*I would say "Don't work. I mean, (she can work) until we have a child, but, after we have a child, I would say "you don't work any more". I would get angry at her, I would do lots of things. (Emir, aged 18)<sup>119</sup>*

This young man I interviewed takes this issue carefully into account. He defines such kind of a situation as a really bad situation by saying that "God forbid" although he openly states that he may have to make his wife work in the future.

### ***In your opinion, should a woman work?***

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<sup>117</sup> Yok ya, ev hanımı olmalı. Erkekler çalışmalı. El işine gitse şimdi adamlar sulanabilir. Olmaz yani. Bir kadın için çalışmak tehlikeli bu zamanda." (Doğan, 18 yaşında)

<sup>118</sup> Abi şimdi başka illerde normal bir kadın evliyim dediği zaman bırakırlar, araya mesafe girer. Kimse bakmaz bile, ama burada öyle değildir. Burada kadın evli değil de, üç tane çocuğu bile olsa gene bakarlar. (Recep, 20 yaşında)

<sup>119</sup> "Çalışma derim, yani çocuğumuz olana kadar, ama çocuğumuz olunca artık çalışma derim, kızarım, her türlü yaparım." (Emir, 18 yaşında)

*Brother, we'll say no now and then it will happen to us tomorrow. We can have difficult times. God forbid, she may have to work. I mean if we've got financial difficulties at home, she may work for a while.*

***Can she work wherever she wants?***

*Of course abi I need to know. I can't say "she'll bring me some money no matter in what means". I'm obliged to know what kind of an environment she works in. (Samet, aged 22)<sup>120</sup>*

Moreover, it is not possible of a woman who works without permission of his husband. A woman who works without his husband's permission is truly a disobedient one and can be severely punished. In this sense, she is strictly subject to his husband after marriage. She has no right to make her own decisions.

*No it can't be like that. I will show my anger then. (Emir, aged 18)<sup>121</sup>*

*Abi she just can't work. Then, she'll return to her father's home if that's what she wants. There's no other way. (Ali, aged 21)<sup>122</sup>*

*I think neither our people and nor I can bear such an act. If she'll choose to work without informing (me), I guess a punishment would await her.*

***How?***

*Like violence or in words... it may take different directions. (Kerim, aged 22)<sup>123</sup>*

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<sup>120</sup> **Peki bir kadın çalışmalı mı sence?**

Abi şimdi yok deriz, yarın bir gün başımıza gelir. Zor günler geçiririz. Çalışması gerekir Allah korusun. Yani evde maddi yönden sıkıntı varsa geçici olarak çalışabilir yani.

**İstedığı yerde çalışabilir mi peki?**

Tabi abi bilmem lazım, bana para getirsin de nerden getirirse getirsin olmaz. Hangi ortamda çalıştığını bilmekle yükümlüyüz yani. (Samet, 22 yaşında)

<sup>121</sup> Yok olmaz öyle, o zaman kızgınlık gösteririm yani. (Emir, 18 yaşında)

<sup>122</sup> Abi çalışamaz ya, o zaman babasının evine gidecek, madem böyle diyor. Başka bir şey yok yani. (Ali, 21 yaşında)

<sup>123</sup> Ya şimdi ben de bizim insanlarımız öyle bir şeyi kaldıramaz bence. Habersiz çalışma gibi bir seçenekte bulunursa ceza çeker gibime geliyor.

**Nasıl yani?**

Şiddet olur, laf olur. Farklı yerlere gider konu o zaman. (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

Women's participation to the working life is a serious threat for the men's conformity. Women should definitely stay at home. A woman who has her economic independence is a threat for a man. In this case, it is thought that a woman acquired the right to speak for herself. Because the bread-winner role is the primary responsibility of men, sharing this responsibility with women undermines the "masculinity" of men. Moreover, a man staying home while her wife is working lacks respectability in social life. On the other hand, for a woman to acquire her own economic independence and stand on her own feet is perceived as a threat not just for the family but against the whole society. (Berktaş, 2000:124)

#### **4.3.3 An Ideal Woman Has To Do All works of Home**

According to the gender roles theory, women and men have different sets of tasks and responsibilities. While men are responsible to earn money for the family and children, the tasks of women are to raise children, cook, and do the household chores. The traditional phrase "men make houses women make homes" ("Yuvayı dişi kuş yapar") has a similar meaning with the mention above.

My interviewees told me that though they supported a shared life, they don't accept to share the tasks on an equal basis at home. One of the interviewees stated that except for the household tasks that would "disturb" himself ("huzurunu kaçırarak"), he would like to help housework. This was one of the most democratic comments on the issue.

***Ok. For house works, do you label some works as "this is certainly a woman's duty"?***

*In fact, everything should be shared, that's what I can say.*

***For example, do you wash the dishes while helping your mom?***

*If it is time, you can also wash the dishes. Look I'm not married now, it's easier said than done. If I marry, for example if she's sick or she has to do something else, then I'll do it, no problem, I won't say anything.*

***No, I mean, during normal conditions?***

*I can do cleaning, for example. (He laughs slightly). I mean, I can do anything that wouldn't disturb me.*

***Washing the clothes for example, could it be disturbing for you?***

*It might be (he is smiling). Well, actually, since I'm not married it's wrong for me to comment on this. After marriage, it will develop with the marriage, and how it will develop, that's what time will show us. I won't be afraid to be called a "henpecked husband". Would a man like a man do ironing? Why not? Now, they say life is to be shared, we are both in the same world. When you die, you'll go to the same place, the place you go is no different, you'll either go to heaven or to hell. If woman does bad things, if you don't fast and pray, if she rebels against God, then she'll go to hell, God forbid. (İmam, aged 23)<sup>124</sup>*

Some tasks, like washing dishes and doing the washing are not assumed to be men's works. These are "disturbing" tasks for men. Even those who think that life is a shared experience, avoid some of the household tasks. While the household tasks for men are the ones that are considered heavy, laborious and need mastery, the women's tasks are in general about the cleaning of the house. Since the main task of men is to earn

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<sup>124</sup> **Peki ev işleri ayırımında "bu kesinlikle kadının görevidir" dediğin bir iş var mı?**

Her şeyi paylaşmak lazım aslında, öyle söylüyüm yani.

**Bulaşık yıkıyor musunuz mesela annene yardım ederken?**

Yani yeri gelince bulaşık da yıkanır. Bak şu anda ben evli değilim, bekara karı boşamak kolaydır derler, ya ben evli olsam yeri gelir hastalanır mesela, işi vardır. Ben o zaman yaparım, amenna, hiçbir şey demem yani.

**Yok yok normal koşullarda diyorum.**

Valla temizlik yapabilirim mesela. (hafifçe gülüyor). Yani huzurumu kaçırmayacak her şeyi yaparım, öyle söylüyüm yani.

**Mesela çamaşır yıkamak huzuru kaçırır mı?**

Valla kaçırabilir.(gülüyor) ya bir de evli olmadığım için yorum yapmam da yanlış olur. Evlendikten sonra o evliliğe göre ilerleyecek, nasıl ilerleyecek onu zaman gösterecek. Ha kılıbık denilmekten korkmam yani. Erkek adam ütü yapar mı? Niye olmasın? Şimdi hayat müşterek derler, sen de aynı dünyadasın, o da aynı dünyada. Öldüğün zaman ayın yere gideceksin, gideceğin yer farklı değil, ya cennete gideceksin, ya cehenneme gideceksin. Ha bak kadın kötü işler yapar, orucunu tutmaz, nazmını kılmaz, Allah'a isyan eder haşa, cehenneme gider." (İmam, 23 yaşında)

money for the household, he refuses to help household tasks especially with the pretext that he is tired with his day job. In a world where women belong home and men belong to outside, this sort of example is seen as legitimate.

*Actually, papa, if the work is of the kind for a man, I'll do it, I'll light the stove, there's not such a rule that it's certainly the woman who should do it. But, I just won't wash the dishes. I don't even want to think about it. Above everything, I will never help with cooking. I won't even think about it. If she doesn't know to cook some food, I'll teach it but then I won't interfere. I will show it only once, I won't think of a second time.*

***Why don't you think about it?***

*Oh papa we get so tired working until evening, and then I'll come home and cook? Could there be such a thing? Would you do it if you were me? Tell me the truth, you work until the evening, and then you come home and cook. Is this possible? Man, what does she do all day? Is she waiting there for me to cook? (Samet, aged 22 )<sup>125</sup>*

Zagor and Kerim think that there's a clear cut distinction between 'women's tasks' and 'men's tasks'.

***What are the women's tasks then? Especially those that are exclusively women's task?***

*Cleaning, dish washing. Looking after the children, cleaning, watching TV. That's what I know. Or, going out and shopping. That's what I know.*

***What's a man's task?***

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<sup>125</sup> Valla ben baba erkeğin yapacağı işse yaparım, soba yakarım, yani illa kadın yakacak diye bir kaide yok. Ama oturup da bulaşık yıkamam yani. Öyle bir şeyi ben düşünmek bile istemiyorum. Hele hele ben yemek konusunda gidip de yardım etmem yani. Aklımın ucundan geçmez. Ha bilmez, ben bilirim de yani, bilmediği yemek varsa öğretirim sonra karışmam. Bir kere gösteririm, ikinciyi düşünmem.

***Neden düşünmezsin?***

Ya baba akşama kadar anamız ağlıyor, eve gelip de ondan sonra yemek mi yapıyım ya? Böyle bir şey olabilir mi ya? Yani sen olsan yapar mısın? Harbiye harbiye konuş, akşama kadar çalış, ondan sonra gel eve yemek yap. Böyle bir şey var mı ya? Lan o ne yapıyor akşama kadar? Beni mi bekliyor yemek yapmak için?" (Samet, 22 yaşında)

*Man's task is to earn money. Paying the electricity and water bills, buying shoes and clothes. Dealing with loans and credits. (Zagor, aged 21)<sup>126</sup>*

*I am responsible to bring bread home. She is responsible to clean the house and do the household chores. As they say, "men make houses women make homes", she will look after the home and I will look after her. In short, this is what I mean. (Kerim, aged 22)<sup>127</sup>*

The division of labor is taught to men before he gets married. One of the interviewees told me that his single sister who is a university graduate has to do the house tasks because she is female. He believes that these works is against the men's nature.

***I see... I want to ask something about home. Who does the housework in your family?***

*Abi, no lies, when I was in primary school my elder sister... for me to leave the house, I mean when it's cleaning time they, my sister and my mother would send me out. But now we've grown up, we've got a beard. Now, when we are to eat if there is no salt on the table, I say "sister, bring the salt". If she doesn't bring it, I'll get angry.*

***You mean you'll be nervous?***

*I would complain about her to my mom, how come she doesn't bring it? She says "go bring it yourself". I say "you go, you are the girl in this house, you have to do it."*

***Doesn't she work?***

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<sup>126</sup> **Kadın işi dediğin ne var o zaman? Kesinlikle kadın işi?**

Temizlik, bulaşık. Çocuğa bakmak, toz almak, televizyon seyretmek, odur benim bildiğim. Veya dışarı çıkıp alışveriş yapmak. Odur benim bildiğim.

**Erkeğin görevi ne?**

Erkeğin görevi para kazanmak. Elektrik ve su faturasını yatırmak. Ayakkabı almak, kıyafet almak. Borca girmek, harca girmek. (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

<sup>127</sup> Onun görevi tabi, ben o eve ekmeğ getirmekle mükellefim. O da o evi temizleyip çekip çevirmekle. Diyorlar ya, yuvayı dişi kuş yapar, yani o yuvaya bakacak, ben ona bakacam. Demek istediğim bu kısacası. (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

*No, she doesn't, she's studying at the university. I say "you're the daughter in this home, you have to do it and it's simple as that." She says "Why don't you ever do it." OK I do it when it's the place. One day my sister had gone to a wedding of my uncle's family. I, my mom, my dad and my elder brother were at home. I did set the table and bring the bread. That sort of stuff. I mean I do it. But, when my sister is at home, how can I do that? When it's crowded at home with guests, I help, I do a little of the work. But to the extent of cleaning up the table and bringing the plates, I won't do that.*

### **Why don't you do?**

*Abi I can't see it suitable to myself, I have a beard. And also, not doing work is in the nature of manhood. I am working here until evening and this doesn't disturb me and it will disturb me to move two dishes? No. But when there's a female at home, I say why should I be doing work? (Samet, aged 22)<sup>128</sup>*

I believe that this long quotation perfectly exemplifies the ways in which the roles of manhood and womanhood are constructed during socialization. Men are raised as 'man' in the family and therefore they behave accordingly. Men who work outside wait for service at home. As it can be seen in the example, even to take salt from the table is disturbing for men. It is apparent that the masculine dominance is internalized.

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<sup>128</sup> **Anlıyorum, peki evle ilgili bir şeyler sormak istiyorum, ev işlerini genelde kim yapar sizde?**

Abi ben ne yalan söylüyüm, ilkokulda ablam dışarı çıkmam için, yani temizlik zamanı annemle temizlik yapacaklarında beni dışarı kovarlardı. Ama artık büyüdük, sakalımız çıktı. Şimdi sofraya oturacağımız mesela sorada tuz mu eksik, "abla tuz getir" derim. Getirmezse kızarım yani.

#### **Sinirlenir misin yani?**

Anneme şikayet ederim, nasıl getirmiyor ya? "sen kendin al" diyor bana. Git sen bu evin kızısın yapmak zorundasın diyorum

#### **Ablan çalışmıyor mu?**

Yok, çalışmıyor. Üniversitede okuyor. Sen bu evin kızısın, yapmak zorundasın, bu kadar basit diyorum. Diyor ki bir gün de sen yap. Tamam ben yapıyorum yeri geldiğinde. Ablam gitmişti bir gün dayımgilin düğününe. Annem baba abim varız. Sofrayı seriyorum, ekmeği getiriyorum. Böyle şeyler yapıyorum yani. ama ablam varken nasıl yaparım ki? Kalabalık misafir geldiğinde de yardım yaparım, ucundan tutarım. Ama o derece sofrayı kaldır, tabakları getir yapmam.

#### **Neden yapmıyorsun?**

Abi yakıştıramıyorum kendime, sakalımız çıkmış. Şimdi bir de erkekliğin doğasında var iş yapmamak. Ben burada akşama kadar çalışıyorum, bu zoruma gitmiyor da evde iki tabak kaldırıncaya mı zoruma gidecek? Yok. Ama evde bayan varken yani bana niye iş düşsün diyorum ya! (Samet, 22 yaşında)

#### 4. 4 Perception of Kin Marriage

Although kin marriages have had a tendency to decrease in previous years, those marriages still prevail (Tezcan and Coşkun, 2004). The primary reasons underlying kin marriages are avoiding the distribution or loss of property and land, and preferring as a bride a woman already known to the family. However, along with the increase in the level of awareness we can speak of a decrease in kin marriages. Several factors like the fear of births with disabilities, cultural values and urbanization facilitated the upcoming concern on the kin marriages. The men whom I interviewed stated that they didn't have any positive attitudes towards kin marriage.

*I think it'd very wrong. Because, you know, when you have a baby he may be disabled, and you know, she's your aunt's daughter, you see her as a sister. Can it be? No. (Recap, aged 20)<sup>129</sup>*

My interviewees were concerned about the risk of births with disabilities. Those who stated positive attitudes towards kin marriage conditionally stated that they should not be grown up together with the woman they would marry. Those interviewees noted that their own parents have also made a kin marriage, and they didn't believe that the risk of birth with disability is a considerable possibility. We can also note that religious beliefs play a considerable role in such kind of thinking.

##### ***Would you marry with a relative?***

*I can marry. If she is a proper girl. But if I haven't seen her too often, I mean if we haven't grown up together. For example if my mother goes and asks, it will be if it is to be. But, in other ways she's like my sister. I can't go and try to make her love me. My mom should go and speak first.*

##### ***Aren't you afraid of any risks of disability?***

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<sup>129</sup> Bana göre çok yanlış. Çünkü yani ne bileyim bu hani çocuk doğarken sakat doğuyor, mesela teyze kızı, ona kardeşin gibi bakıyorsun, olur mu ki olmaz? (Recep, 20 yaşında)

*No. my father is also a relative (of my mother). If it happens, it comes from God, everything is from God. If it happens, it may happen to everyone. (Emir, aged 18)<sup>130</sup>*

My religious interviewee İmam, on the other hand, said that he wouldn't make such a marriage as there are no marriages among relatives in the family line of the prophet.

***Would you consider marrying a relative of yours?***

*No, I wouldn't really consider marrying a relative. But, as it's God who determines the destiny, I'd better not to say anything about it.*

***What are you thinking about kin marriage? Are you positive about it?***

*No. I don't think positively about kin marriage.*

***Why?***

*That's what comes to my mind. As there aren't much kin marriages in the prophet's family line, that's what we follow. We live according to that. (İmam, aged 23)<sup>131</sup>*

Zagor sees that kin marriage is like a headache. He sees that kin marriage restricts the freedom of a man. The fear of accountability to the wife's family in a kin marriage and "keeping his mouth shut" in troubling times are the major

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<sup>130</sup> **Sen akrabarla evlenir misin?**

Evlenirim yani, düzgün bir kız olduktan sonra. Ama yani o kızla fazla muhatap değilsem, yani beraber büyümediyse, yani benim annem mesela gidip konuşacak, olursa olur. Ama diğer yönüyle bacım gibi. Ben gidip sevdiremem kendimi, gidip annemin konuşması lazım önce.

**Sakatlık falan olma tehlikesi korkutmuyor mu?**

Yok , benim babam da çünkü akraba. Olursa Allahtan, her şey Allah'tan. Olsa herkese olur yani. (Emir, 18 yaşında)

<sup>131</sup> **Akrabayla evlenmeyi düşünür müsün?**

Yok ya, ben pek düşünmem akrabayla evlenmeyi. Ya bir de kaderi Allah belirlediği ben bir şey söylemiyim onla ilgili.

**Ne düşünüyorsunuz akraba evliliği ile ilgili olarak? Olumlu düşünüyor musun?**

Yok, pek olumlu düşünmüyorum ben.

**Neden?**

Ya öyle geliyor aklıma. Peygamber soyunda da pek akraba evliliği olmadığı için biz de o şeye göre gidiyoruz. Ona göre yaşadığımız için. (İmam, 23 yaşında)

reasons of his objection to kin marriage. Because he understands his wife's family as an authority, he is against kin marriage.

***Your mother and father aren't relatives. But what do you think about kin marriage?***

*Brother, kin marriage, I never consider that I mean. I personally, I mean in my own name I have examples to think about that, but I think, brother, it's just not possible when you live so close, ass to ass, you understand, I give an example. For example you've got married to your uncle's daughter, or your aunt's daughter, whatever. She's both you aunt and your mother-in-law, you've loved her as an aunt, you don't know how she is as your mother-in-law. What if she acts badly like a mother-in-law to me? What if they say "why you make our daughter unhappy?", you can't say anything, they are your relatives, or you just can react, they're your relatives. Your uncle, for example, is your half father. What can you say to this man? What can you say if he says "why did you hurt my daughter, man?" Say that he comes to you seriously, if she was someone else's daughter, I would say "brother, your daughter did such and such wrongs, this and that," but if you say this to your uncle, how can you respond if he just says "didn't you know this before?" What if he says "why did you marry her then?" No, such a thing cannot happen in our family, we're against kin marriage anyway. Children are born in different shapes. Not all of them of course but about fifty percent of them are born properly and fifty percent are, mentally, disabled, I mean I can't say disabled of course it's what God gives you. But now, there is modern technology now, "it's kin marriage, your bloods don't concur, how would your child be with this person?" (Zagor, aged 21)<sup>132</sup>*

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<sup>132</sup> **Annen baban akraba deęillermiř ama sen ne dūřünüyörsün akraba evlilięi ile ilgili olarak?**

Kardeř, akraba evlilięi, hiębir zaman yani ben dūřünmüyorum. řahsım, yani ben kendi adıma bunu dūřünmek için örneklerimiz var, ama řöyle dūřünüyorum göt göte olmuyor kardař, anlıyon mı yani, řimdi örnek veriyorum. řimdi örnek veriyorum amcanın kızıyla evlenmiřsin, veya halanın kızıyla veya teyzenin kızıyla. Hem teyzen hem kaynanan, sen onu teyze olarak sevmiřin, kaynanalıęı bilmiyon. Ya bana kaynanalık yaparsa? "sen bizim kızımı niye üzdün?" diye çıkarırlar önüme, biřey diyemen akrabadır, veya karřılık veremen akrabadır. Amcan mesela babanın yarısı, řimdi bu adama ne dicen sen? "sen benim kızımı niye üzdün lan?" derse ne dicen? Ciddi ciddi karřımha çıktı geldi, ha bařkasının kızı olsa derim ki "kardeřim kızınız böyle yanlış yaptı, budur budur" ama amcana desen "bilmiyor muydun lan?" derse ne dicen? Niye evlendin o zaman derse? Olmaz, bizim ailede de öyle řey olmaz zaten, akraba evlilięine karřıyız biz zaten, çoluk çocuk yamuk yumuk oluyor, yani herkeste

Kin marriage can be understood as a cultural phenomenon. Men who have family members with kin marriage are more prone to the practice of kin marriage while the others are more cautious. The risk of birth with disability are widely known and admitted. Divorce is also rarer in kin marriages, and men's responsibilities to his wife's family increase slightly. All these factors bring a decrease in kin marriages.

#### **4.5 The Limits of Gender Equality**

One of the principal successes of masculine hegemony is that it provides a biological explanation as an ideologically legitimate basis for gender inequality. Ongoing discourses on gender inequality rigorously designate how the power structure of hegemonic masculinity is constructed and sustained. This process precedes the "naturalization" of inequality and human beings psychically evolve into a gender system where women are weak, men are strong and they are not equal. Dispensation of the gender roles is also constituted in this way. What women and men can do is strictly determined and the social structure is constructed over this basis. Women's domesticity and men's bread-winner role is a product of such a mentality.

Feminist studies that rely on the idea that biological sexes cannot be easily defined prefer to use the notion of gender rather than sex and argue that gender inequality does not directly refer to biological basis but to cultural forms (Sancar, 2009: 176, Berktaç, 2004:3). They argue that the way of thinking that results in gender inequality is a social product of the culture of hegemonic masculinity. Berktaç emphasizes the historical roots of gender inequality and indicates the "incredible success" of masculine hegemony:

For a long time –and in most of places, still- women failed to benefit from human rights equally. In terms of density and form, this inequality varies from

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olmasa da hemen hemen yüzde elli düzgün doğuyor çocuk,yüzde ellisi de yani ya zihinsel ya engelli yani diyemem tabi ya Allah vergisidir, ama şimdi moderen bir teknoloji var "lan akraba evliliği işte, yani kanınız uyuşmuyor, bu insanla çocuğunuz ne olabilir yani?"

society to society, from period to period but never essentially changed. Patriarchy and male domination achieved a rigorous “success” and is articulated to various social structures from then on Mesopotamia. And in this “success”, male-dominated character of ideology and culture, patriarchal definitions and behavioral patterns which have been rarely questioned –or improperly questioned that is not represented in “history-writing”- played a very crucial role. The most constant and the most resistant patterns produced by patriarchal societies are being represented in “masculine” and “feminine” identities and their aspects that define their relationships and behaviors. (Berktaş, 2004: 2, my translation)

I tried to understand the perceptions of men I interviewed on the issue of gender equality in the scope of how they perceive feminist movement, apart from the questions of gender inequality. Are men and women equal? When you ask it like that, my interviewees always responded, “Yes They Are”.

*Everybody is equal I think. Atatürk has also made a statement that men and women are equal. (Ali, aged 22)<sup>133</sup>*

Instead of getting answers that remained only in words, it made better sense to follow how these young men perceived women’s struggle and women’s movement. Young men I interviewed stated that men and women are equal but then they added that the most important dimension is that a woman should be *efendi*. Their answers are salient examples of how they perceive the woman who claim their rights:

*. . . However, some of them exaggerating. They do some demonstrations. I don’t want my wife to go there and hold a placard. You go and hold the placard, then you come home and get beaten again. (Samet, aged 22)<sup>134</sup>*

*What I’m thinking about them? I think they are prostitute. I don’t even look at them. What are women rights? What will bring apart from inquietude? In Turkey,*

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<sup>133</sup> Herkes eşittir yani bence. Atatürk de açıklama yapmış yani, kadın erkek eşittir diye. (Ali, 22 yaşında)

<sup>134</sup> . . . Ama bazıları çok abartıyor. Hani eylem yapıyorlar. Ben eşimin çıkıp da orda pankart açmasını istemem ki. Sen orada pankart açıyor, eve geliyon bir daha yiyon dayağı. (Samet, 22 yaşında)

women and men are already equals, what's about rights here? The government has already declared that, it's said you are equal. For example, if I have a wife and if I beat her, if she makes a complaint about me, they will come and put me in prison, that means we have equal rights. And what is it that they protest about this? They are speaking for nothing. (Kerim age 22)<sup>135</sup>

I think they're doing very wrong. Because men and women are already equal now. If a man and woman argue on the street, nobody says anything to the woman, because she's a woman. Thus women and men are equals. In fact, they also have unequal sides too. For example, in some places, they are not equals. In some places women are oppressed a lot, they are beaten too much. I can't say anything against those who are beaten, they are right. But I think in today's conditions, the number of women who are beaten has decreased. A husband can deal with it without beating, anyway. If a man can frighten his wife with just a glance, there's no problem. A glance is enough. There should be no beating. Because when I was young I remember my mother was beaten a lot by my father, once he even threw a gas bottle over my mother. Then I remember he broke a stick like that on my head. (Recep, aged 20 )<sup>136</sup>

Here, we can clearly see how they legitimize violence. A young man like that, who has witnessed his mother's exposure to violence thinks that "brute violence" is not a favorable practice but he thinks that he is not exactly against violence. He thinks that "hard looks" which can be defined as psychological violence can "discipline" women as well. Although one out of five women in

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<sup>135</sup> Onlar hakkında ne mi düşünüyorum, onlar hakkında sürtük diye düşünüyorum. Gözümü çevirip bakmıyorum yani. Kadın hakları nedir? Huzursuzluktan başka ne verecek? Türkiye zaten kadın ve erkek eşittir yani, bunun hakkı makki yok ki? Bunu devlet açıklamış yani, "eşitsiniz" demiş, ya mesela benim hanımım olsa ben gidip dövsem onu, gidip beni şikayet etse beni cezaevine alırlar, yani eşit haklardayız. Zaten bunun neyini protesto ediyorlar ki? Boş boşuna çenelerini yoruyorlar yani.(Kerim, 22 yaşında)

<sup>136</sup> Bence çok yanlış bir şey yapıyorlar. Çünkü zaten şu anda kadın ve erkek eşit. Yani sokakta bir erkek kadın tartışsa kadına bir şey demezler, karşıdaki kadındır çünkü. O yüzden kadın erkek eşit. Gerçi eşit olmayan yönleri de var yani, mesela bazı yerlerde eşit değildir. Kadını çok ezerler bazı yerlerde, çok dayak yerler. O dayak yiyenler için sözüm yok onlara, haklılar. Ama bu normal günümüz şartlarında dayak yiyen kadın sayısı azaldı bence. . .Zaten bir koca dövmeden de halledebilir. Eğer bir bakışıyla kadını korkutabiliyorsa sorun yok. Bir bakış yeter. Dayak olmasın hiç. Çünkü ben küçükken hatırlıyorum annem baya bir dayak yemişti babamdan, hatta babam bir keresinde anneme tüp fırlatmıştı. Ondandır sonra benim kafamda şöyle bir tane sopa kırıldığını hatırlıyorum babamın. (Recep 20 yaşında)

Turkey are exposed to emotional violence (KSGM, Domestic Violence against Women Report, 2008:52) for men, giving a “stern look”, which is regarded as a tool for disciplining woman, is not a type of violence.

Regarding women’s rights activists as “sluts” have an important role here. Since “slut” describes women who roams around, who doesn’t have an “owner”, hangs out with men and has sexual relationship with men freely, this expression is aimed to humiliate and degrade women’s rights activists. These women are presented as tackling with nonsense stuff and struggle for empty aims. What else could a woman who doesn’t stay in her house and goes out be called?!

Zagor thinks that men and women cannot be equal and being a woman provides a satisfactory basis for this inequality in its own right. A woman is a woman and it follows from this fact that she cannot be like men, she cannot lead her own life like men. Zagor’s utterances explicitly indicate the cultural basis of gender inequality:

***But nobody says this for men. Men can also do bad things. In fact the worst things are usually done by men, you know.***

*A girl has something absent in her, that’s why.*

***What is that missing thing Zagor?***

*That she’s a girl. Being a girl is an absence itself. Have you ever seen girls sitting to form a circle of friends as girls and women? Girls and women roll joints and smoke it, have you ever seen such a scene? You haven’t. Or, have you ever sat and drunk with your sister? Have you ever done drugs together? Or have any father and daughter ever had any environment of smoke and drinks together? But, the man drinks alcohol with his father when it’s the place. He hits the booze with him, he can go to women or girls with his father. They wander together. (Zagor, aged 21)<sup>137</sup>*

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<sup>137</sup> **Ama erkekler için demiyorlar bunu hiç? Erkek de kötü bir şey yapabilir, hatta en kötü şeyleri erkekler yapıyor genelde biliyorsun.**

Kızın ekşiği var işte, onun için.

Gender inequality presupposes the woman's self-awareness of her own restrictions in the way that she should know her own place. How come a "restricted equality" is possible? This equality is rigorously insignificant. Where should a woman stand? A woman is supposed to accept to show unlimited obedience and respect. Under such circumstances, can we speak of equality?

*I think men and women are equal, but there's no problem as long as the woman knows where she should stand. (Faruk, aged 20) <sup>138</sup>*

Here, it is crucial to see the perspective on which the belief of gender equality is based. Believing in gender equality can't go further than a common sense in the discursive level. A woman whose behavior isn't approved by her husband is excluded from the field of gender equality and reminded her limits. A woman is supposed to arrange herself and her behavior according to her husband and family. If she doesn't do so, she is punished and disciplined. For instance, women who go out or struggle for women's rights although she is supposed to stay at home are considered as "sluts" or "stormy petrel". Women are free and equal to men in a circle which is drawn by men. This circle, approved by men, is nothing but the house.

Emir, who legitimizes the idea that a woman should obey her man and should follow what he says on religious commitments, thinks that gender inequality would result in discontent. He refers to Koran for gender inequality and gradually enjoys the ideological conformity of his own belief:

*No, it can't be. Women and men can't be equals. Woman has her own place and man has his own. Woman has to be fond of man. I mean she has to be the woman of her house. For example, I watch in some serials: woman says you can't interfere*

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#### **Eksiği nedir Zagor?**

Kız olması. Kız olması başlı başına eksiklik. Sen kızların oturup da böyle karılı kızlı ortam yaptığını gördün mü? Karılar, kızlar, cigara sarıp, yapıştırıp içiyorlar. Gördün mü öyle? Görmedin. Veya kız kardeşinle oturup içki içtin mi? Cigara takıldın mı? Veya baba kız oturup bir cigara mığra, içki ortamı yapmış mıdır? Ama erkek babasıyla yeri geliyor, oturuyor, içiyor. Alem de yapıyor, kariya da gidiyor, kıza da gidiyor. Geziyor, tozuyor. (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

<sup>138</sup> Kadın erkek eşittir bence ama kadın durması gerektiği yeri bildiği sürece hiçbir sorun yoktur. (Faruk, 20 yaşında)

*with me, although they are married. "You can't interfere with me, I will do what ever I want" she says, "if I want I will even work". This is wrong. I mean it is written in the Holy Koran: girls should be dependent on men, they should obey whatever men say. (Emir, aged 18)<sup>139</sup>*

A married woman mustn't tell her husband anything like "you can't pry into my life". If she doesn't get the consent of her husband and consult him, her behaviors aren't acceptable. Men try to sustain this situation also by referring to the religion. Considering the patriarchal feature of monotheistic religions, this kind of a discourse is not a surprising one.

Hegemonic masculinity structure that legitimizes itself through various cultural, economic and religious references is not only limited to men's mentality. Women are also victims of this way of thinking; their social position is determined under this system. Male-dominated structure is structured by virtue of women's support as well. Such a gender inequality wouldn't proceed with women's disapproval. Hegemonic masculinity generates "masculine domination" through articulating women to its power net. Masculine domination persists since it is also internalized by women. Women try to survive by developing some strategies to resist to patriarchy (Kandiyoti, 1988). However, masculine domination's power which pervades bodies and language prevents the abolition of suppression of women.

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<sup>139</sup> Yok, olamaz. Kadın erkek eşit olamaz. Kadının yeri ayrı, erkeğin yeri ayrı. Kadının erkeğe düşkün olması lazım. Evinin hanımı olması lazım yani. Mesela bazı dizilerde izliyorum ben, diyor ki sen bana karışmazsın diyor, bak evliler. "Sen bana karışmazsın, ne yaparsam yaparım" diyor, "istersem çalışırım da" diyor. O yanlış. Yani Kuran-ı Kerim'de yazıyor bu, "kızlar erkeklere düşkün olması lazım, her dediği sözden çıkmaması lazım. (Emir, 18 yaşında)

## Chapter 5:

### ON THE PERCEPTION OF HONOR AND REPUTATION IN MEN

As can be clearly seen from many studies done on honor ("*namus*"), the perception of honor is linked to patriarchy. Thus the concept of honor is of great importance for those trying to understand the codes of masculinity. Although the definitions of honor in the minds of man differ from person to person, they tend to link it to sexuality of women in their minds. Nevertheless it is difficult to find a common, single definition for honor. This study deals with the ways honor is perceived by lower class worker men, instead of attempting to find a definition for the concept. It is crucially important to understand what kind of a place this concept, the sake of which murders are committed, has in the worlds of men.

It is known that this concept is shaped through women's body, aiming to control it, but it is also used in other fields in life, in the place of some other values. We know that honest and brave people who keep their words are called "honorable people" ("*namuslu*") – this calls the figure of a man in many minds. Bourdieu emphasizes this aspect of honor in his study on Kabyle society, stating the importance of concepts such as "honesty", "well-manners", "esteem" etc. for honor (Bourdieu, 1965).

Although, as stated above, we have no aim as to define it, in my opinion, honor can be defined as the crystallized form of the power and control mechanisms that men, in a collective and mutual act, construct on the body and soul of women they feel responsible of. Men themselves are also trapped in this control mechanism.

In Turkey, honor tends to be interlinked to female sexuality. Women are expected to be honorable, ie. not to have any relationship with men before marriage and not to have sexual relations with any men other than their

husband when married. This indicates a contact among men themselves, on women's bodies. Through mechanisms of control and responsibility, men tend not to find suitable the extramarital and premarital relationships that they do find normal for themselves. In that context, if we assume that the partners in the sexual intercourse are "a man and a woman", the man is also found faulty in a rather muffled fashion. But this condemnation (*ayıplama*) of the man is not perceived as a "filthiness" on his honor. With this aspect, honor controls the behavior of men as well: a man shouldn't have sexual intercourse with a woman that he will not marry, he shouldn't "ruin" her "virginity", her "girlhood" (this is the literal translation of the phrase "*kızlığını bozmak*", meaning deflowering) and thus spoil her life. Although this seems to be an insult towards the woman, it actually targets the men who are responsible of her. It is an attack to their power. Men live in a constant state of anxiety with the fear of encountering such a situation. My aim here is not to put men into a position of victims, but I want to point out that gender inequality is a dirty game entrapping men as well.

The phenomenon of honor in people's minds extends to a vast spectrum. It is related to sexuality and virtue for women, who would be condemned as dishonored and un-virtuous if they have extramarital relationships, while a man who has extramarital relationships is not found "dishonored" although he is not approved for this act. Such a man may be accused of not taking care of his household or being Casanova –which is sometimes a praised by other men—but he will not be accused with being dishonored. But when a women engages in such a relationship that's perceived as an insult, a violation to the man's honor and reputation. Man's position and reputation is evaluated in relation to the sexualities of women he is responsible of. Their honor, on the other hand, is evaluated on their own attitudes in life, like being honest, doing his job properly, not swindling, etc. This duality may be perceived as a double standard fueling gender inequality. It also drags many men into a world of lies and deceits. Viewing sexuality only from their own side in a rather schizophrenic way, men see women as the only guilty party in acts that involve a male partner, such as the "losing" of a woman's virginity, extramarital pregnancy or prostitution, and

because of this relations between men and women are based on lies and deceits (Mernissi, 2003: 113). It is more consistent to expect that a man who wants the woman he'll marry to be a virgin is a virgin himself as well. However, according to an old Turkish proverb, sexual intercourse is "filth in a woman's face, henna in a man's hand" ("*kadının yüzünün karası, erkeğin elinin kınasıdır*") (Cindoğlu, 2003:116).

A man's perception of honor also summarizes his approach to relations between men and woman; as it is directly linked to how women are perceived, honor reflects gender inequalities very well. Seeking honor "in between a woman's legs" indicates a fictive ground, where the basic problem is to consolidate power by controlling women's and men's bodies.

Honor as a means of power has legitimacy not only in the minds of men but also in those of many women. In a qualitative study, *The Dynamics of Honor Killings in Turkey* (Kardam, 2005), the interviewees, most of them not clearly defining honor, nevertheless stated that it is "important", "more important than everything else" and even "the most important thing in one's life." These answers are given by some of the female interviewees of the study. The culture of male dominance as a form of ideology pervades throughout the society and masculine domination is adopted by women as well as men.

My respondents defined honor first and foremost through the female body in general. The concept was defined through a list of the things that a woman should *not* do. Her engagement with any sexual act disapproved by the society, or any rumors of such an act, and most importantly, such an act to be known by other people, was defined as "dishonor". It was also stated that honor is different for men, i.e. a man who has extramarital relationships is not dishonored, as explained above. A responsible man who takes care of the women whose honors he "owns" ("*sahip çıkmak*") is a honored man. A man who successfully directs his control of women is a reputable man.

Reputation or esteem (“şeref”) is another important concept. The expected behavior of man is to claim the women under his responsibility (mother, sister, wife, kin, etc) and when this honor is violated by other men, to give punishments. Such a behavior makes a man reputable or disreputable (“şerefli” or “şerefsiz”).

***Is it any relationships with reputation and honor?***

*Yes, it is. If you lost your honor, everybody say you dishonest.” (Ali, aged 22)<sup>140</sup>*

Thus it can be stated that “a woman’s honor is a man’s reputation.” A man is not considered by the community to be a person of esteem and reputation if a woman of “his” ever acts dishonorably. Abdul Salam who writes on honor killings in Egypt, explains as such:

If a woman behaves properly, the men of her family or her tribe have honour, (sharaf), while they are affected by shame if she misbehaves. A judgment that a woman has behaved badly does not necessarily involve some sexual deed on her part; laughing too loud in a public street, or enjoying talking to a male stranger might be enough for a judgment that a woman has compromised her good repute (*ard*) (*name, good repute*), bringing punishment. (Abdul Salam, 2005: 140)

The situation is no different in Turkey and among the men I interviewed. Any act engaged by a woman directly interests her husband, father, brothers and relatives. Thus the woman lives under an enormous oppression throughout her life. She is forced to think of her “family” first, before every move she makes.

Abu-Lughod also mentions the parallelism between honor and reputation. A true man is the man who successfully takes the responsibility of the women in his family:

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<sup>140</sup> ***Peki bu şerefın namusla bir alakası var mı?***

*Var abi. Mesela şerefsiz derler sana namusun kirlendi mi. (Ali, 22 yaşında)*

. . . Honour and modesty are dialectically related establishment of family or lineage honor. A family has honor when its men are “real man” embodying the ideals of Bedouin society, including supporting and protecting their dependents, and the women and the dependents are modest, deferring to the their providers and thus validating these men’s claims to the their high position in the hierarchy.<sup>141</sup> If the man fails, their women lose honor, and if the women or other dependents fail, the man lose honor. Thus all members are responsible for the honor of all those with whom they identify as kin.” (Abu Lughod, 1986: 166)

Abu Lughod says that a bad act by the man results in the woman to lose her honor; however, considering my fieldwork and interviews it isn’t possible to make such a statement for my respondents. The woman is a passive side of this equation. The wife of a man who sleeps with other women is not found strange in the society, they only pity her. There’s no such condition that she loses her esteem in this case. Whatever mischief the man does here, he does it to himself. Nobody will call his wife “unreputable” or “dishonored”. However, whatever the woman does, it interests the men around her.

In the male-dominant society which both creates and feeds from gender inequality and thus exists hegemonically, men position themselves according to women’s sexuality and determine their fields of power: a man shouldn’t look at *someone else’s* (another man’s) woman or have any sexual relationship with her. This unwritten contract is an agreement of brotherhood among men and its violation creates a serious threat to the society. A woman and/or man who violates this contract is punished for being a threat to social structure. Those who conform to it empower and continue the masculine dominant structure of inequality.

Men’s wish to find a virgin woman to get married to indicates a sign to interpret this unequal structure. Studies on virginity (Mernissi, 2003; Cindoğlu, 2003) clearly show the link between honor and virginity. As a man expects his wife to

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<sup>141</sup> “Kadın, adamı rezil de vezir de”, “a woman can both ruin a man and she can make him a vizier”, points to this hierarchy.

be a virgin when she marries, he ignores the fact that it is another man who has “violated her virginity”: the person who has to “protect” virtue is not the man but the woman. It is the woman who has to defend her honor, and this is where the phrase “if the female dog doesn’t flick her tail, the male can’t do anything” (“*dişi kuyruk sallamazsa erkek bir şey yapamaz*”) comes from. This hypocritical structure that puts the blame on the woman is visible in other honor-related issues (dress codes, socialization etc.).

Although, as stated above, a honorable man is someone who acts honestly in social life and doesn’t set his eyes on other people’s honors, it should be emphasized that all such definitions involve power games among men. While women’s honor is limited to her sexuality-related acts or ways of communication with men, for men this is evaluated with what they do or what they don’t do in social life as a whole. A man is dishonored only when he violates the honor or the field of power of other men.

Honor as a concept occupies such a broad space in our minds that we can use the words “honored” or “dishonored” for almost every thing: a politician who tells the truth is “honored”, a liar in turn is “dishonored”. This might be read as an extension in the meanings of words, but actually stems from the relationships of power and property among men.

In addition to the ways that honor is defined and their relation to masculinity, this study also dwells upon what is thought on other honor-related topics and upon how unwanted conditions will be reacted to. Honor in Turkey is a married man’s wife in the first place. But the other female relatives are still his honor too. Although he has got married and started his own family, he still sees his unmarried sister as his honor.

Here we see a relationship of power and property through the concept of “ownership.” A woman is never seen as “disowned” at any part of her life. Whatever her marital status, whether married or single, she is seen as a “property” of men at all times. While she’s seen as the property of her father,

brother, --and, in some cultural forms, her relatives--, moves to the ownership of her husband when she gets married. Life is whatever her husband says.<sup>142</sup> There's no free space for the woman in such a social form. This relationship of property legitimizes violence towards women, including the murders committed with the pretext of honor. In this sense, women's liberation can only be possible with the demolition of such an understanding of ownership in the first place.

As my respondents put it, with the legitimization provided by this relationship of ownership, as long as he breathes a man is responsible of his honor and lives for it.

*So all three of these (mother, sister, wife) are your honor, as long as you live, as long as you are alive, as long as you breathe. (Zagor, aged 21)<sup>143</sup>*

*One just can't live without his honor. He's like dead. He won't be any different from a dead man. (Halim, aged 23)<sup>144</sup>*

In a lifelong responsibility a man feels a need to establish a control over the women that he sees as his honor: an uncontrolled woman might engage into an unapproved sexual act and this will result in the loss of esteem on the man's side, there's no meaning even to live after this point. This phrase, "living has no meaning" ("*yaşamamın bir anlamı kalmaz*") was a phrase that I have heard before in other studies that I've participated in. What does it mean that a person is no different from a dead man? Pitt-Rivers defines honor as the individual's value in the society he lives in. "Honor, therefore, provides a nexus between the ideals of a society and their reproduction in the individual through his aspiration to personify them" (Pitt-Rivers, 1977:1). The individual's self-

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<sup>142</sup> Familiar statements like "I don't know, my husband knows" ("*Ben bilmem beyim bilir*"), "he's your husband, he can love you or beat you" ("*Kocan o senin, sever de, döver de*") point to the fact that women are seen like their husbands' property.

<sup>143</sup> Yani bu üçü de (ana, bacı, eş) senin namusundur, yaşadığın sürece, yaşadığın süre, nefes aldığın sürece. (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

<sup>144</sup> Namusu olmasa yaşamaz ki insan. Ölü gibidir. Ölüden bir farkı olmaz. (Halim, 23 yaşında)

positioning is shaped through the respect that the society feels towards him. This is why honor is so crucial to one's existence.

“Honor, therefore, provides a nexus between the ideals of a society and their reproduction in the individual through his aspiration to personify them.” (Pitt-Rivers, 1977,1)

Now we have honor and reputation as a true sign of masculinity. While honor or virtue may be conceived as quite a widespread, even universal phenomenon, the reason why it is found so important in the Mediterranean societies is because women are historically seen linked to the land in these cultures of agricultural economy, according to some writers. In that sense a woman is seen to be no different from a man's land (Delaney, 1991). Although there are differences like class, cultural capital and the region, in this society woman is basically accepted to be in man's responsibility and control. With a rough analogue, this may be seen like private property ownership, just like the land, the women belong to the men of their native family before marriage and their husband's family after marriage. Though the mechanisms of control vary from region to region or even within a single region, the control of women is similar to the control of the land: like the borders to land, women also have limits, and any threats against the borders calls for a reaction (Delaney, 1991: 40). These reactions also vary according to many factors; there are reactions like leaving the woman, divorcing, or “cleaning the filthy land” (killing). In this process of punishment men may also be killed.<sup>145</sup>

### **5.1 How do they define Honor?**

One of the most important things that attracted my attention throughout the interviews was that when I asked negative questions there was an increase in

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<sup>145</sup> In a study on honor crimes and “family values” that I have also participated in (Kardam, 2005), a man from Black Sea Region that I interviewed in Istanbul had said “honor is not just in the East, in the East they kill the woman, but we kill both the woman and the man, we are more honored.” The interviews I made for this study show that men not only try to control women through the concept of honor, but the concept also controls their lives as a whole.

the fruitfulness of the answers I got. For example, when I asked “what does honor mean?”, the answers were rather simple and short, but when I asked “what does dishonor mean ?” the replies were more different, more varied and more detailed. This might be related to the fact that honor is rather perceived through prohibitions. As honor in general includes rules that shouldn't be violated and norms that shouldn't be transgressed, the people's minds also work like this.

As another example for regional differences on the perception of honor, again in the study on the dynamics of honor killings (Kardam, 2005), we had observed that in Şanlıurfa it is dishonor for a woman to have relations with a man other than her husband, but this also included an unmarried girl to run away from her parents' home. However in the interviews I made for this thesis, it was not considered a dishonor for a girl to run away from home; honor of woman was not “filthy” if she had run away in order to get married to a man she loved. This may be attributed both to regional difference and to different relations with kins. A common point, on the other hand, was a woman to have sexual intercourse before getting married or to have such a gossip around.

It is also possible to think that different levels of education result in different perceptions of honor, but the basic perception is still the same. In a study on the perceptions of honor and sexuality carried out in Ankara with university students, the rate of men perceiving honor through the honor of women were found to be low. However, violence with the pretext that honor is violated was approved more by the male students than the female students (Işık, 2008).

A man wants his wife to be with him and only him; he wants to be the only one cultivating his land. Just like the land whose borders are set and who's closed to others, a woman “owned” by (i.e. had intercourse with) other man is not desired. The pasture of common use is condemned here, because you can never know who used it and how (Delaney, 1991: 38).

A woman might similarly want to have her husband only for herself, but the society doesn't really perceive a man who has relations with other women in the same way with a woman who has relations with other men. This is "the dirt in the hand" ("elinin kiri")<sup>146</sup>, while it means that a woman's honor is dirty now and she will be cursed and punished for this.

*"If a man deceives, [his wife], this would not be dishonorableness. At most, they would divorce, I mean, if the wife cannot manage it, they would divorce" (Ali, aged 22)<sup>147</sup>*

*"Abi, if a woman is both married to a man and sleep with other guys, would you be happy with this situation? Of course not. Because a man asks for only one thing that his wife is loyal to him. I mean, his wife asks for the same thing. She would not like his husband to sleep with other women. This is the way rooted on humanity's nature. Those people, I think, are not human. I mean those who are married and sleep with other people. This is certainly wrong. Those things, I mean the honor, are so strong. I think honor is so serious notion." (Recep, aged 20)<sup>148</sup>*

In Turkey there is this widespread opinion that the concept of honor becomes stronger in the East of the country. Killings with the pretext of honor that appear in the media usually take place in "the East" or are committed by "Eastern" men, and words like family council (that is responsible of taking the decisions to kill with the pretext of honor), Urfa and *töre* (mores) consolidates

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<sup>146</sup> I believe that proverbs, idioms and common phrases of a language reflect and create peoples perceptions. These expressions with historical backgrounds are, I think, are the reflections of common reactions to lived experiences in social memory. This is a reciprocal process, the act legitimizes the phrase and the phrase legitimizes the act. Widely used expressions such as "*kadının namusu erkeğin şerefidir*" ("the honor of a woman is the reputation of a man"), "*kızını dövmeyen dizini döver*" (literally, if you don't beat your daughter you'll beat your own knees in sorrow, meaning "spare the rod and spoil the child", but not the child, the daughter only), "*erkeğin orospusu kadından beterdir*" ("the whore man is worse than a woman") are examples to this context.

<sup>147</sup> "Ya şimdi erkek aldatsa da namussuzluk olmaz, çok çok nasıl olur, ayrılırlar yani karı koca, ha karı bunu şey yapamazsa yani ayrılırlar."

<sup>148</sup> "Şimdi düşünsene abi bir kadın hem biriyle evli olsa, hem de başkalarıyla birlikte senin hoşuna gider mi? Gitmez tabi. Çünkü bir erkek sadece bir şey ister, o da karısının sadece kendisinin olmasını. Yani karısı da aynı şeyi ister. Kocasının başkalarıyla birlikte olmasını istemez. Bu insanoğlunun yaradılış şeklidir. Zaten bunun dışına çıkanlar da bana göre insan değildir. Hem evli olup hem de başkalarıyla birlikte olanlar. Çok yanlış bir durum. Zaten Doğu'da da çok güçlü oluyor namus. Namus çok önemli bir kavram bence. (Recep, 20 yaşında)

such opinions. As Kardam's work (Kardam, 2005) shows that people also attest to the perception that crimes committed for honor are rather related to the East as suggested by the expression "Eastern people are fond of their honors" ("*Doğu insanı namusuna düşkündür*"). This produces an idea that this is the concept and problem of "others".<sup>149</sup> However "honor killings" are not foreign to the people living in Western Turkey; for many people in Turkey killing someone for one's honor is "understandable". The murderers who have killed "for honor" are seen as "victims of fate" in prisons.

It requires no witnesses for a man to kill his wife with the accusation that she had a relation with another man. It is very common for the man to act upon a doubt, a few words or some rumors. Here we can also talk about the social pressure on men. When there are such rumors about a woman, people don't even give greet to the man who doesn't "clean" his honor, everybody will be talking about him ("*milletin ağzına düşer*"), meaning everybody will talk about him:

*"Yes, it's right. If you lose your honor, you are useless. You turn out to be the one talked about by everybody." (Doğan, aged 18)<sup>150</sup>*

Stirling, after studying various communities, points out that a honorable man is perceived as someone strong, efficient, silent and exceptionally self-confident. As social relationships are based on honor, a man is forced to "clean" his honor. A man who kills a woman who is thought to have done something bad hasn't committed a "passion murder", but he's done that as a duty to protect his family and lineage. Because men are not categorized upon what they themselves do, they are categorized upon what their wives do (Stirling, 1969:124).

I definitely agree with Stirling. Men's categorization through the women they are responsible of also legitimizes and reproduces the relationship of property.

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<sup>149</sup> A very good example is from one of the newspapers of Turkey, *Hürriyet* by Ertuğrul Özkök, <http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/haber.aspx?id=4577424&yazarid=10>

<sup>150</sup> Doğru, öyledir. Namus gitti mi işe yaramazsın artık. Milletin ağzına düşersin. (Doğan, 18 yaşında)

A man's life gains its meaning through the women he owns. We can see this as a miserable situation. Man winning or losing his honor upon the women he owns is the victim of anxiety throughout his life. In this sense a woman is a threat in the men's world. This threat is minimized through the methods of oppression on the woman's body and soul, and this becomes a game a voluntary game among men. This game played within the structure of male domination, while presenting the man as powerful and virile makes the man the victim of his own power. The woman, seen as an object in the men's game, in this sense become the subject from another point of view, and thus she threatens the man's power as long as she breathes.

On the other hand, dishonesty in general is perceived as dishonor. But this is only valid for men. If a woman is not honest in the sense that she tells lies or she steals, this doesn't mean that she's dishonorable. Again, a woman's honor was only related to sexuality.

*"We are living for our own honor, brother! We lead our lives to avoid people's talking about us. There is not only one way of dishonorableness, I mean, a man who does not pay his debts is a dishonored man as well. If a man does not keep his promise, he is dishonored. An honored person is the one who keeps his promises. I mean, if a person does any sort of wrong thing, he is the one dishonored; am I right brother? I mean, whatever bad things he does, he is dishonored, how can he dare to steal other people's assets?" (Zagor, aged 21)<sup>151</sup>*

Such an understanding of honor again indicates codes and contracts among men. A money lent is lent to be taken back. If a man who isn't loyal to his debt is called "dishonorable", this is because what he does is against the "drill" ("racon") of masculinity, or social rules in a broader sense. In his relations with other men, a man has to be considerate, he has to respect the other men and be

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<sup>151</sup> Biz namusumuz için yaşıyoruz kardeş. Biz kimseye laf söyletmemek için yaşıyoruz. Şimdi bir de namussuzluk bir tek öyle değil, mesela borcunu vermeyen adam namussuz adamdır, örneğin benim görüşüm. Sözünü tutmayan adam namussuz adamdır, namuslu olan adam sözünü tutar, namussuz adam yalan söyleyen adamdır, yani var ya kötü ne var ne yok hepsini yapan insan namussuz insandır, doğru mudur kardeş? Yani kötü olarak ne yaparsa yapsın, namussuzdur, sen başkalarını aldığı şeyi çalmaya ne hakkın var ya? (Zagor, 23 yaşında)

careful not to humiliate them. It is like a rule that a person should be loyal to his debt. Such a link is possible when one thinks that the word “*namus*” (honor) comes from the root *nomos* which means rule: stealing someone’s property is called a dishonorable conduct, and a woman’s body is also perceived as a man’s property. Thus bad behavior such as telling lies, not being a man of his words, stealing and cheating are also explained through concepts like honor and esteem:

*“Abi, for example you are in debt to a person; if you are delaying this, saying that ‘come here tomorrow’, this is by no means different from dishonesty, those kind of behaviors does not suit [a man]. I mean, your words will have no weight in anyplace anymore, you just can’t go anywhere to get a job, people won’t hire you, they won’t trust you. You’ve failed to give trust to people.” (Ali, aged 22)<sup>152</sup>*

*“Reputation, I mean, of a person in all circles, is his respectability. Who is disreputable? I can give you an example, a person who works properly is a reputable person. There is a movie of İlyas Salman and Şener Şen called Banker Bilo. In this movie, İlyas Salman is a reputable person, you can write those things from this movie”.(Zagor, aged 21)<sup>153</sup>*

Concepts that are indiscernible from each other, like reputation, esteem, honor (*onur*) and dignity (*haysiyet*) are all used when the historically constructed unwritten contracts are violated. Although many of these seem gender-free, it is obvious for the native speakers that “a reputable woman” (“*şerefli bir kadın*”) sounds awkward. These concepts are identified with men and masculinity.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Abi mesela bir yere borcun var, işte adamı sallıyorsan yarın gel, bir gün gel, bu şerefsizliktir bence, yakışmaz bu hareketler. Yani bir daha hiçbir yerde sözün geçmez, mesela bir yere gidip iş alamazsın, adam vermez sana güvenmez. O güveni verememiştir kimseye.” (Ali, 22 yaşında)

<sup>153</sup> “Şeref yani bir insanın her türlü ortamda yani şeref, saygınlıktır. Şerefsiz kimdir? Örnek veriyorum sana, düzgün çalışan adamdır şerefli adam. Hani film var ya, İlyas Salmanla Şener Şen’in. Banker Bilo, o filmde İlyas Salman şerefli adamdır, o filmde yola çıkarak yazacaklarını yazabilirsin yani.” (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

<sup>154</sup> This is just like the discourse that God has no sex. They say “*He*” has no sex, and we imagine *him* as a man, as a father. (In Christianity he is the “Father”, in Arabic, the “official” language of Islam which has gendered pronouns, God is referred to in the masculine pronoun.) The male-dominant culture makes some masculine or male-specific concepts seem gender-free in daily usage, thus naturalizing them. We should interpret this as an enormous success. Some concepts shaped in the minds and worlds of men are turned into genderless concepts in the language, with the use of

The phrase “reputable woman” sounds awkward because there’s nobody that the woman is responsible of and the woman doesn’t represent herself through the man. The deposit entrusted to the woman is *her* honor and this honor is related to *the man’s* reputation.

My respondents often used honor (*namus*) together with these concepts:

*“Well, when we say honor, it’s not to intend at the forbidden, to get on with one’s job, not to look around, to be dignified, to be reputable, to do the things when it is necessary. Well, this sort of things, honor is everything! Everything in one’s life is honor, I think”. (Kerim, aged 22)<sup>155</sup>*

“Doing what’s necessary when necessary” perhaps comes as the first and foremost among the codes that a man should comply with. This is a must of being a proper person as well. When an individual’s life is seen as a collection of social rules and codes that should be followed, the codes on what should and shouldn’t be done at what time also organizes a man’s life and minimizes the threat of power conflicts with other men. “Stealing” another man’s woman is dishonor, such as stealing another’s property, and this is harshly punished as it is seen as a violation of power.

As the violation of honor is about women, anything they do in everyday life, from what they wear to how they move, might be understood as a message to men, providing sexual “satisfaction” to men. In this sense a woman should always be careful:

*“Abi, honor is about women, she shouldn’t have eyes on men, I mean, if she loves someone she should be serious about marriage, she shouldn’t have sexual relationship [before marriage]; if she does, such kind of stuff is dishonorable. She*

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ideological apparatuses (school, family, religion etc.) that actually belong to the dominant male culture. Thus these concepts are successfully written into the understandings of the society.

<sup>155</sup> “Ya şimdi namus denince harama uçkur çözmek, işinde gücünde olmak, sağa sola bakmamak, haysiyetli olmak, şerefli olmak, gereken şeyi gereken yerde yapmak. Yani bu tür şeyler namus, her şey ya. İnsanın hayatındaki her şey namus demektir bence.” (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

*shouldn't wear short clothes because all men would look at her. They'll get satisfaction.”(Emir, aged18)<sup>156</sup>*

Women are taught and advised not to dress and act in a way that would “satisfy” men. As even a very innocent behavior can be misunderstood by men with “bad intentions”, the woman should protect herself from getting into such a situation. When thought in this way, it is the women who determine the power fields, reputations and honors of men. A man’s honor and esteem is in a woman’s hands in this sense.

## **5.2 A Person Lives with His Honor? : Honor as a Form of Existence**

In studies on honor, it is often told by the respondents that there’s no meaning in life without honor, and a honored life is the best form of life that a man can lead (Kardam, 2005). Such statements were repeated in my study as well. Codes that organize social life are crystallized in the concept of “honor.” This makes social oppression really strong. The sentence “one lives with his/her honor” (“*İnsan namusuyla yaşar*”) has become a statement known and approved by most people. A man who doesn’t “own” (“*sahip çıkmak*”) a woman that he feels responsible of faces a sort of isolation from the society. It’s like he has only two options: either to flee from the region, or to enact a harsh punishment. A person who’s honor is gone is “no different from dead”:

*“Yes, it’s right. If you lose your honor, you are useless. You’ll fall to people’s mouths [become someone talked about by everybody].” (Doğan, aged 18)<sup>157</sup>*

*“People look with an evil eye. They even do not respect him, he would have no reputation. He is like someone dead”. (Halim, aged 23)<sup>158</sup>*

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<sup>156</sup> “Namus abi kadınla ilgili, hiçbir erkekte gözü olmayacak yani seviyorsa evlenme konusunda ciddi olacak, ondan sonra ilişkiye girmeyecek, ilişkiye girerse namussuzluk oluyor, böyle bunun gibi şeyler işte. Kısa, açık giyinmeyecek, çünkü bütün erkekler bakar. Tatmin olurlar.”(Emir, 18 yaşında)

<sup>157</sup> Doğru öyledir. Namus gitti mi işe yaramazsın artık. milletin ağzına düşersin. (Doğan, 18 yaşında)

<sup>158</sup> Ya insanlar kötü gözle bakar, hem de toplumda insanlar ona saygı duymaz, o adamın şerefi olmaz. Ölü gibidir yani ha. (Halim, 23 yaşında)

Issues related to honor provide abundant material for gossiping for many people. If we think of the human as a social being, “falling to people’s mouths/tongues” is the beginning of a process of full isolation from other people. You can understand how strong a sanction this is if you think that nobody speaks to you in a village where everybody knows each other. However, this doesn’t come to say that a person who commits a “honor crime” “in fact doesn’t want to do it but he is forced to it.” Sometimes he is really forced to it, but at other times he really does want to punish.

Living with ones honor is valid for women as well as men. Losing her honor and dying are actually the same thing for a woman. A man I interviewed has put this very clearly:

*“Of course lives with her honor, if she loses her honor then she goes off. Death is better than this. If I was a girl and if went to do it [i.e. sex] with somebody else, I’d better die. No one would ever take me to get married; I would always remember this. I would better die if such a thing happens. But there are some girls; they get dirty; now it is in this way, it’s become a trend. Television shows it out. “I don’t care”, she says, “nevermind if I get dirty. Can’t I find someone else? I can.” They talk like this but it’s not in this way”. (Emir, aged 18)<sup>159</sup>*

Giving examples from tabloid TV programs, my respondent views such an understanding of honor as a “deformity” (“*çarpıklık*”). Women who don’t see virginity as a problem slap the fact that “being dirty” is meaningless right in the face of men. But the effect of this slap is limited to the mentality of men. While women don’t see virginity as an issue anymore and live their sexual freedom, the male-dominant mentality that defines woman through her “virginity” goes on seeing this as a “deformity” or “filthiness”. This mentality –which I think should be the topic of another study—is directly link to women’s liberation. In a world seen and perceived by men, in a world shaped according to men, what is the

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<sup>159</sup> Tabi namusuyla yaşar, namussuz olursa gider. Öl daha iyi. Şimdi ben kız olsam , gitsem başkasıyla yapsam, öleyim daha iyi. Kimse beni almayacak, kimse benle evlenmeyecek, hep aklıma gelecek o. Öleyim daha iyi. Ölürüm yani, öyle bir şey olsa. Ama yani bazı kızlar var, kirleniyor, şimdi öyle, moda olmuş. Televizyonlar gösteriyor işte. “Bana ne” diyor, “kirlenirsem kirlenirim.” Başkasına bulamam mı? Bulurum. Öyle söylüyorlar, ama öyle değil. (Emir, 18 yaşında)

way for women's liberation? In the last analysis, what do the strategies of women's liberation serve for? What is the scale of liberation when the masculine mentality is not wholly overcome, when man is still the "gazer" and woman is still the "gazed"? And, to what degree can women from which classes be free? If, for example, an uneducated woman from a lower class worker family doesn't want to see virginity as a problem any more, what sort of prices will she be forced to pay?

If a woman who has lost her honor is not married, she has now lost the qualification of being eligible to marriage, according to this perception: nobody will take her as a spouse. A woman who's "lost" her virginity before marriage will have to suffer lifelong for this; while men hypocritically think that they are permissible to have pre-marital sexual experiences, this is impossible for a woman.

### **5.3 Who Are the "Honor" of a Man?**

After talking about the concept of honor in general, my respondents clearly stated who they viewed as their honor. In fact, right in the beginning as they were defining honor they mentioned those people that they thought of as their honor. While a married man sees his wife as his honor in the first place, many single men told me that they see all the women in their families as their honor. The married men still feels responsible of his sisters' and his mother's honor. One of my respondents who is single yet has told me that as his honor he sees his sister but his wife will also be in this group when he gets married. He added that he also sees his female relatives as his honor.

*I have a sister and a mother. After marriage, my wife is included to this; but still my sister is my honor; my mother is my honor but it is a responsibility after*

*marriage; but my aunt's or uncle's daughters are also my honor; all of them are my honor. (Ali, aged 22)<sup>160</sup>*

*My honor is my home, my bread, my job, my food, my mother, my sister, my wife; all of them are my honor in total. (Kerim, aged 22)<sup>161</sup>*

Just like the perception of honor, who is seen as one's honor also differs according class, culture, region etc. But the women who are seen as a man's honor are the ones whose sexualities should be kept under control. His honor is measured with his success on this control. Any failures of the man in fulfilling this task will bring him despise and loathing, and he can't even dare to go out. The other side of success is, as my respondent has pointed out, the other things that a man has: a house, the daily bread, a job, etc. In a society in which a man who doesn't have a job is seen as unsuccessful, an unemployed man will be kept out of the game of masculinity. The man who has a job is perceived as worthy to get married –to own a woman. A person who loses his job is considered to have lost his power as well, which is linked to “losing one's woman” and then to honor. If a man earns his bread, it is easier for him to take the responsibility of his family; the economic domination of such a man over his wife and children also sustains the gender roles. The expression “man's honor is his bread” (“*kişinin namusu ekmeğidir*”) makes sense in this context.

Zagor, one of my respondents, had a really clear distinction in thinking of honor through the women owned:

*The notion of honor is divided into three; one is the person coming of your blood, she is the mother. The other is your sister as she comes of your mother's blood. And the other is the person, your woman who you get marry like everybody does. I*

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<sup>160</sup> Bacım var, anam var. Evlendikten sonra hanımım da ekleniyor, gene de bacım benim namusumdur, anam da namusum ama evlenince sorumluluk oluyor, ama halamın kızı, dayımın kız benim namusum, hep namusum yani. (Ali, 22 yaşında)

<sup>161</sup> Ya benim namusum, evim ekmeğim, işim, aşım, anam, bacım, eşim. Namustur bunlar sonuçta. (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

*mean all of those three are your honor as long as you live and you breathe. (Zagor, aged 21)*<sup>162</sup>

It's interesting that mother is also seen as honor and this calls for an explanation. If you consider your mother to be your honor, that means you have a right to speak over the behavior of your mother. But when does this happen, and through which authority? When the father is absent as a figure, the mother is considered to be under the control of the sons at home. The son feels responsible of everything about the mother. When the father is there, the son has no influence ("sözü geçmez"), because the authority is present. When the father is absent or when he doesn't act, the elder son takes this place. Father is a strong figure in the family, you should never raise your hand against him, for example. Even if he's an alcoholic, even if he goes to other women, you can't say anything to the father. The father is responsible of the family honor. But when the son "has grown up", he may give a "warning" to the father who, for instance, beats the mother. Here there's usually the figure of a son now more powerful and healthier than the father. The warning is usually taken into consideration and the absolute power of the father has "shaken" now. The duty of protecting the mother has passed to the son, too. He is thus also responsible of her honor. The duty to protect the honor of the woman who bore her consolidates the man's self-confidence and strengthens his power. The man who feels responsible of the honors of his mother and his sister has taken one of the biggest steps of manhood. Even when he gets married in the future, as he's not like the daughter who passes to the control of another family, he will go on "owning" his native family. And when the father dies, the son will go on being seen as the head of the family.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> "Namus kavramı üçe ayrılır. Biri canından kanından geldiğin insandır. Anandır. Biri ananın canından kanından getirdiği insan bacındır. Biri de herkesin şey yaptığı gibi, evlenip barklandığı, kendine layık gördüğü insandır, avradındır. Yani bu üçü de senin namusundur, yaşadığın süre, yaşadığın süre, nefes aldığı sürece." (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

<sup>163</sup> In Turkey, when the father dies, the control and responsibility of the family passes to the eldest man in the family. I can tell that from my own experience. After the death of my father, although we live in different cities, both me and my mother feel a need to get my eldest brother's approval in important decisions. My mother sometimes needs to call and inform my eldest brother about

Sons' relationship with mothers deserves a special study on its own right. How does a boy brought up in a traditional family, socializing with his mother, grow up to become a man claiming rights on his mother and feeling responsible of her all behavior? Can we think of this process independently from the mother? How should we understand mothers' contribution to the construction of masculinity?

The sacredness of mother is a familiar discourse; "our mothers are the crowns in our heads", and thus they gave to be "clean". Any words said on the mother's honor, virtue or her sexuality ruins the state of being honored or clean in a man's life.<sup>164</sup> Boys often grow up as the candidates of authority in the family. The girl will get married, leave the home she's born to be the "family" of someone else. But the boy who will continue the lineage will always stay with his family and claim "ownership" on them.

Honor is sometimes the whole network of kins, and sometimes it is considered as one's closest female relatives, the mother, the sister (daughter) and the wife. Here, often if a man doesn't feel a responsibility towards his paternal uncle's daughter, that's because she has her own brothers and father. The other relatives are no authority when these men in the close family of the girl are present. This attitude has quite a wide-spread acceptance but it might show variations; for instance the paternal uncle's sons might act much more furiously when a girl runs away from home (Kardam, 2005).

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everyday events. When I tell her this isn't necessary, she objects to me by saying "this is what I've seen and this is how I was brought up."

<sup>164</sup> The worst slang words in this country are the ones involving one's mother. Such an insult is an insult to one's own existence, any word about the sexuality of the woman that has brought you up may result in a burst of fury. A man's sister might similarly be put to the target board when he's being cursed. My respondent Zagor, when I asked him why God was cursed so often in the swear language of Adana, replied by saying "Because Allah is one for everybody, he swears to his own Allah as well, but everybody's mother and sister is different" ("Çünkü herkesin Allah'ı birdir, kendi Allah'ına da küfretmiş oluyor ama herkesin ana bacısı başkadır"). As God is not in anybody's responsibility, any slang word towards God will return to the one who says it. It really is interesting that a sacred value is understood in such a way. In a sense, honor has even passed beyond the sacred here. Swearing to the prophet and the holy book (Koran) is also practiced in Adana. An attack to common space doesn't receive reaction because it belongs to everybody, but an attack towards one's private property (like his house or his women) might be a reason for a murder.

*“My honor is my mother, my sister. I am responsible from them in one sense. My honor is my brother’s wife; I see them as honor. I cannot mess with other relatives. For instance, I cannot mess with my uncle’s daughter. If she doesn’t have brother or a father then it’s OK but if she has, I don’t have right to interfere.” (Halim, aged 23)<sup>165</sup>*

A man sees all the women who can be linked/related to himself as his “honor”. It seems that the concept of honor works mainly through blood relationship. Whatever the variations for class, culture or region about the relationships of responsibility and the perceptions of honor, a woman tends to have men controlling her all her life, be it before or after marriage.

Before marriage, a woman is under the responsibility primarily of her father and her brothers. For a sister, a brother (*abi*) is a means of oppression and at the same time a kind of guarantee, a safety figure. He is a control mechanism over her as he takes the duty to protect her honor, and this mechanism becomes a means of oppression that lasts for a lifetime on her. On the other hand a brother is a safety figure against attacks that can come from other men. As a woman who doesn’t have a father or a brother is seen as “without owners”, she is thought to be in a position “open” to threats. This double function of the father and the brother has an important place for a woman who has identified with the values of honor.

The brother shares the ownership of the sister with his father.<sup>166</sup> Honor is of crucial importance for women, as they tend to face serious threats when there are any speculations about their honor. These risks include not being able to get

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<sup>165</sup> “İşte kimdir, anamdır, bacımdır. Onlardan ben sorumluyum bir anlamda. Yengemdir, abimin karısı. Bunları namus olarak görürüm. Diğer akrabalara ben karışamam. Mesela amcamın kızına ben karışamam, onun abisi babası yoksa tamam da kendisin abisi kardeşi varsa bana düşmez laf.” (Halim, 23 yaşında)

<sup>166</sup> My mother who is a Kurdish woman in her 60s is still proud of her elder brothers, she still tells how noble and sensitive they are. The number and power of the elder brothers is often a source of pride for a woman. For a woman who suffers from something bad, or who does something bad, they say “*Gelo, xwediyên ve keçikê nîne?*” in Kurdish; meaning “doesn’t this girl have any owners?” The owners here are the father, and more importantly the brothers. Though not with the same intensity, this relationship goes on after marriage as well.

married, being a topic for gossips, being oppressed and even being killed. Thus women need to protect themselves from threats, they *have to* live a life worthy of their families and their husbands.

A man's honor may also be any woman that he doesn't know at all, if he thinks that the woman is in trouble:

*"Abi, it's my mother and my sister. Actually I have relatives, too. I have cousins. And it does not end with them as well. For instance, if I go to Baraj to sit; I might see someone forcing a girl to do something. You can't stay indifferent. You should intervene because, it is a certain fact that the thing that comes through someone else's life might happen in yours in another day. You shouldn't say that "let sleeping dogs lie". You should do what is needed". (Samet, aged 22)<sup>167</sup>*

*"No, I mean, someone else's honor doesn't bother you; there is such thing but if two men are attacking someone's wife, you can't stand by folded arms. You should go and help". (Recep, aged, 20)<sup>168</sup>*

In theory, a man is responsible of the honor of all the women around him. The mentality here is, as put by my respondents, "to me today, to you tomorrow" ("*bugün bana, yarın sana*"). We can think of this as a sort of men's solidarity. When a man goes to help a woman who's being assaulted, in fact he doesn't do this because he actually sees her as his honor. He sees this as "a duty of humanity." This duty "for the sake of humanity" or in fact for the sake of masculinity is in fact related to the world in which women are seen as honor. That woman is not without owners. She certainly has a father, or a brother. A man is also responsible to protect the honor of other *men*. Like a mutual contract. This might be clearer if we think that a rape of a prostitute is seen

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<sup>167</sup> Abi şimdi anam, bacım. Benim şimdi akrabalarım da var. Kuzenlerim var. Onlarla da bitmiyor. Ben şimdi baraja gittim, oturuyorum. Başka biri gelmiş, zorla kıza bir şeyler yapmak istiyor. Sen ona arkana dönemezsin ki? Müdahale etmelisin orda. Çünkü hep şu var abi, bugün ona yarın sana. Bana dokunmayan yılan bin yaşasın demeyeceksin abi. Gereken neyse yapacaksın. (Samet, 22 yaşında)

<sup>168</sup> Yok yani şu bakımdan, hani başkasının namusu seni ilgilendirmez, yani öyle bir şey var, ama yani tutup da yani başka birinin karısına iki adam saldırıyorsa öyle elin kolun bağlı duramazsın ki. Hani gidip yardım etmen lazım. (Recep, 20 yaşında)

partly legitimate in the eyes of many people, even by the law. If a man attempts at an assault, and similarly if another man witnesses this and doesn't react, this will damage the "social system." This can also be seen as a male solidarity.

One of the man I interviewed, Özer, has enlarged this circle even more by extending it to any woman who is with him "at that moment." He apparently sees this woman under his own protection:

*"But there is more; that's how we are in Adana. No matter the one next to me is a prostitute, if she is walking with me, nobody can say anything to her. At that instance she's my honor. At the time that she leaves me at the street corner, this ends up. If she is with me, she is my honor." (Özer, aged 31)<sup>169</sup>*

Here we see very clearly that what matters is not the identity of the woman. A man's honor is measured with the degree he can protect the women who are with him, whatever the consequences. In this point of view, "even if" this woman is a prostitute, she is "de facto" his honor at that time. The woman should be under the protection and guarantee of a man. I think this "de facto" understanding of honor is extremely important. This shows us very clearly that the understanding of honor originates in men. The woman is not important at all here, as if she only existed there at that moment together with the man. She becomes visible through that man. "When she turns around the corner" she will disappear again. Other men also have to respect a woman who is with a man, whatever her position is. A man who doesn't have this respect is perceived as a threat and he is punished. The "de facto honor" here also agrees with Delaney's statement that the common pasture is condemned (Delaney, 1991). A woman is no subject to any common "usage" under any condition. Whoever she is together with, she is his honor for that moment, she is under his responsibility. Zagor had told me that he didn't prefer to go to the brothel with his friends, and even if he

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<sup>169</sup> Ama şu var, Adana'da biz böyleyiz. Benim yanımdaki orospu da olsa benimle birlikte yürüyorsa kimse gık diyemez. O dakika o benim namusumdur. Ha benlen ayrıldı köşe başında, tamam o bitti artık. Ama benleyse benim namusumdur. (Özer, 31 yaşında,)

does go with them, they never “enter” (i.e. penetrate, shag, have sex with) the same woman:

*“Even in the brothel we don’t enter the woman that the friend has entered. Even in the brothel, if a friend has entered that slut, if we know that we don’t go in her. We have no such thing to do. And we tell this too, “man if you go to the brothel, there’s a woman in such and such a place, a friend of ours has entered into her, they’ve fucked her, we keep the blocks and numbers in our minds to tell this. Or he’s just gone without knowing it, that’s okay, it’s just a mistake. But you just shouldn’t knowingly say “first you shag her and then I will.” I saw one asshole, he was saying “we’re two friends”, “we wen’t to ask for a discount, asked her what’s your last price?” They’re talking the price. Man, these are real fagots. That’s really crazy. That’s why I never go with a friend. I never go to the whorehouse with any friend.<sup>170</sup>” (Zagor, aged 21)<sup>171</sup>*

This might be an extreme example, but it is important as it shows the mentality of men. When I asked about this to other men in the neighborhood I had similar answers; even when a woman is a prostitute, it is dishonorable for men to share her. This harms their prestige. The men who do this are low men. A true man doesn’t even think about such an act.

## **5.4 How Should an Honorable Woman Be?**

### **5.4.1 Acts**

For a woman, the state of being honorable means being careful about ones acts. She should take care of her behavior, her words, of “how she sits and how she

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<sup>170</sup> In addition to the “men” who think like that, we also know that the very same masculine mentality have collectively raped a woman. During the study entitled as *The dynamics of Honor Killings in Turkey* (Kardam, 2005), one event that had taken place in Batman shocked all the field team when we learned about it. A young woman who eloped with her boyfriend was shut in a house by her boyfriend and she had been raped for days by the very boyfriend and his friends.

<sup>171</sup> Biz kerhanede bile arkadaşın girdiği kariya girmiyoruz. Genelevinde bile arkadaş girdiyse o kadına, bunu biliyorsak biz girmeyiz. İsimiz olmaz ya. Derik de bir de ha, “lan bak kerhaneye gidersen, şurda şurda bir kadın var, ona girme kardeş, bizim bir arkadaş girdi, siktiler o kariyı” deriz, blok, numara falan akılda tutup söylerik yani. veya hiç bilmeden gitmiştir, olur o eyvallah, yanlışlık olmuş. Ama yani bile bile sen gir arkadan ben gireyim olmaz. Ben bir tane götün birini gördüm. Diyor ki işte, “iki arkadaşık diyor” “gittik pazarlık yaptık, en son ne yaparsın?” dedik. Fiyat konuşuyorlar, lan göveren bunlar ya. Manyaklık resmen. Ben onun için hiç arkadaşlarımla gitmem. Hiçbir arkadaşımın kerhaneye gitmem.”

stands up.” As she is constantly seen as a “sexual object” by men, her behavior will give away what sort of a woman she is: the woman should act not as she pleases, but as men please, as men want to see her.

It is disapproved for a woman to be seen outside her house, in public places. Thus she shouldn’t leave her home. Outside is full of dangers.

*A honorable woman I think she shouldn’t leave home a lot. She shouldn’t speak to anyone, she shouldn’t be in dialogue with men. (Ali, aged 22)<sup>172</sup>*

All the men I interviewed have made an emphasis on female sexuality. Women’s sexuality is found dangerous to the present male dominant system. Although the neighborhood itself is not seen as a conservative one, its dwellers lived Islam even if in a traditional way, they had respect to religious values. Thus it was possible to find some religious postulates in the traditional codes on relations between men and women. Almost all the men I interviewed wanted their future wife to be wearing a headscarf. They defined premarital sexual relationship for women both as a disgrace (*ayıp*) and a sin (*günah*). The owner of the teahouse that I frequented wanted her daughter who reached puberty to cover her head because this is what he viewed as appropriate to religion.

We can talk about a sort of “naturalization” of male and female sexuality in Islam. “The sexual instinct” is something that’s just present, and like all forces or energies what matters is the way it is used. Sexuality is not something that should be treated as awkward or that should be denied, on the contrary, there’s nothing to be afraid of when sexuality is experienced in a “correct” form and under control. What matter is not to cover the concept, but to live it the way Allah wants you to live it. Here is what Bouhdiba tells about sexuality in Islam;

The Islamic view of sexuality is, then, a total one. Its aim is to integrate the sexual as everyday experience. Islam is a recognition, not a missapprehension of sexuality. But this recognition, itself unequivocal, bears on a reality that is

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<sup>172</sup> “Namuslu bir kadın bence yani evinden dışarı çıkmamalı fazla. Kimseyle konuşmamalı, erkeklerle diyalog halinde olmamalı.” (Ali, 22 yaşında)

essentially ambiguous. The serious and the ludic, the social and the individual, the sacramental and the historical –these are fundamental, but ambivalent dimensions of sexuality. To say that Islam wishes to integrate the sexual, without reducing it, means that it accepts it, with all its tensions, its conflicts with the contradictions that are necessarily part of it.” (Bouhdiba, 2008 [1975]: 103).

When Islam makes sexuality a part of everyday life in this way, cautions and precautions found necessary for the control of sexuality also come along into daily life, especially with respect to female sexuality.

At this point we can also talk about “active female sexuality in the sense that Mernissi uses the term. Mernissi argues that female sexuality which is positioned as passive in the Western understanding, is placed into active position in Eastern societies (Mernissi, 2003). The woman is the seducer and she excites and arouses men. Thus she should be kept under control. This is where her clothing and appearance come into view. Her outfit affects men’s perception and views of her. And men are “satisfied.” In Bourdieu’s formulation, the man is the subject who “looks” and the woman is the subject who is “looked at” (Bourdieu, 2001). In this formulation, what women do as individuals is interpreted through the masculine mentality. Every move a woman makes is socially put into a place in the male dominant culture and interpreted within that frame. The acts made by women in order to break the power of men (i.e. sexual freedom, seducing for career at job, etc) are interpreted by men and turned into means of sustaining the oppression of women. A woman acquires meaning through the gaze of a man. More importantly, gender roles are shaped through the man’s gaze. If we discuss this in relation to everyday life, women as the “gazed” subject should take care of her clothing and she shouldn’t tempt the men who look at her. Men are in a passive position here, the one who should look away and control the self is not the man but the woman. She should maintain that she is not looked at with “appetite”. The woman is the devil and she can seduce a honorable men any time.

*It's the same for men, too. You should look properly where you go. You shouldn't keep in contact so much with women. Why? Even if you have nothing towards her, she is female and she might charm you. If she talks and smiles, you are a man and as a result, this might excite you. (Önder, aged 29)*

*A woman is a devil. That's what I can say.. (Özer, aged 31)*

*Exactly. He might suddenly get out of hand.(Önder, aged 29)<sup>173</sup>*

Though it is surprising that men who try to exercise power over women in all fields are so helpless and impotent when it comes to female sexuality, in Eastern societies it is considered understandable that it is difficult to resist the evil / devil. Controlling women is as hard as struggling against the devil. Islam doesn't deny sexual desires, there's just no problem when women's sexuality is under control. But that's not easy and thus both men and women should live in a state of emergency.

The Muslim woman is endowed with a deadly charm that melts the man's will to resist her and reduces him into a passive, obedient role. The man has no chance to choose, he can do nothing but give in to her charm, which is identified with incitement, with the anti-system and anti-society divine forces of the universe. (Mernissi, 2003: 49; my translation)

Many of the men I interviewed laid much stress on a woman's walking, saying that if she walks with her head foremost when she's in public places (in the street, the bazaar or when having a walk) this shows that she's dignified, a woman who doesn't hide herself and looks around even in public places will attract the attention of men and then there might be unwanted situations. She shouldn't engage into any form of dialogue with men; men won't think goodly about such a woman:

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<sup>173</sup> *"Bizim erkekler için de aynı şekilde. Gittiğin yerde düzgün olmalısın. Bayanlarla fazla muhatap olmamalısın. Niye? Sende bir şey yoksa, karşıdaki bayan sonuçta, seni cezbeder. Konuşursa, gülerse sen de erkeksin, dürter seni.*

*Kadın şeytandır. Öyle diyim. (Özer, 31 yaşında)*

*Aynen. Yoldan her an çıkarabilir. (Özer, 31 yaşında, Önder 29 yaşında)*

*I previously said, if she is going somewhere, her husband should know this. After this, for instance she will go to the market place, a honored woman shows it out through even her walking. She lowers her head, directly goes to complete her deeds and comes back. She never raises her head and looks around. She avoids such things. In some sense, she pursuits her bread. (Kerim, aged 22)<sup>174</sup>*

If a woman is honorable she won't look around. A woman who "raises her head up" represents the woman who is included in the existence of another world. Being a part of that world is not expected from a honorable woman. After marriage, life is over especially for her. She is expected to live according to the phrase "the buyer has bought, the seller has sold [her!]". (Alan almış, satan satmış). What a woman ought to do is to live honorably, up to the name of her native family if she's not married, and if she's married, to make her husband happy and to be a good mother to her children, to take care of them. The woman's social life is over in this sense.

#### ***How should an honored woman behave?***

*A woman shows herself out even while walking but dishonorableness can be understood by one's walking style. It's obvious through the one's talking and behaviors.*

#### ***How does an honored woman walk?***

*She should lower her head. As far as I know, an honored woman lowers her head while walking, she doesn't look around. Once she looks around, it means that she is seeking for trouble and men would think that "well, we can sleep with her". This is so. (Halim, aged 23)<sup>175</sup>*

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<sup>174</sup> Yani demin de dedim ya, mesela bir yere gidiyorsa eşinin haberi olmalı, ondan sonra ya mesela en kısa örneği buradan çarşıya gidecek, ya namuslu bir kadın zaten yürürken kendini belli eder. Kafasını önüne eğer, gider işini halleder, geri gelir. Kafasını yukarı kaldırıp sağa sola bakmaz. Bu tür şeyler yapmaz. Bir nevi ekmeğini kovalar yani. (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

<sup>175</sup> **"Namuslu bir kadın" nasıl davranmalı peki?**

Bir kadın yolda yürürken bile her türlü kendini belirtir, belli eder yani ama namussuz kadın yürüme şeklinden bile bellidir. Konuşmasından olsun, tavırlarından olsun bellidir yani.

**Nasıl yürür namuslu kadın?**

*An honored woman should never raise her head, the only thing is that she shouldn't have a roving eye, she should be careful about her clothing and she should be aware of how she should behave. (Recep, aged 20)<sup>176</sup>*

The honorable woman has her head foremost. She thus isolates herself from the world outside. If she's looking around, she's clearly giving the message that she's not honorable. But what's more normal than looking around when you walk? Men perceive that differently and treat a woman looking around as "a woman who lets herself in for something" ("aranan kadın"). Why is a woman placed in a position to be so much afraid of? Are men looking for a simple glance from a woman to be aroused? I think this is men's hypocrisy again. If there's this potential for the men to be trapped by a woman at any time, shouldn't it be the man who doesn't look around? However we see again here that what is expected and aimed is not for the man not to look, but for the woman not to let them look. The task to be honorable is given to the woman again. Men can look, he has that freedom, and it is the woman who should give the message "I have an owner, I am a honorable woman." It's not just a coincidence that in cases of rape and sexual assault many man say "I was aroused, she aroused me with her dress, her words, her glances" in court. They say that because the common social perception is that women motivate men, even if she has nothing like that in her mind.

The situation is even harder for a married woman. She should be in dialogue only with her husband. Even a simple talk with a man might lead to "misunderstandings." Even if she doesn't want this, her act will be perceived as if she's courting.

*Well, as I said, she should be aware how she should behave. Some are both married and look at other guys. Is this possible?(Recep, aged, 20)<sup>177</sup>*

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Başı önde yürümesi lazım. Şimdi benim bildiğim kadarıyla namuslu kadın başı önde yürür, sağa sola bakmaz. Şimdi kadın sağa sola baktığı zaman aranıyor demek ki, erkekler de "ya biz bunla yatalım" diye düşünür. Budur yani. (Halim, 23 yaşında)

<sup>176</sup> Namuslu bir kadı kafasını yerden kaldırmamalı, kadın sadece işte böyle gözü dışarıda olmayacak, giyimine kuşamına dikkat edecek, oturmasını kalkmasını iyi bilecek. (Recep, 20 yaşında)

*“Abi, an honored woman would not be so interested in men. I mean, if a guest comes into their home, she would say “welcome”, join the conversation if she is allowed but if she is talking unnecessarily, you would say that she is such a slag.”(Samet, aged 22)<sup>178</sup>*

One of my respondents attributed the responsibility for “a woman to have a roving eye” (“kadının gözünün dışarıda olması”) to the husband:

*“I think this is having a roving eye. For instance, her husband doesn’t purchase clothes for her and then she has roving eyes; and once a man is interested in her, she would respond him. This ends up with dishonorableness and brings dirt.”(Halim, aged 23)<sup>179</sup>*

A man should fulfill a woman’s needs in order to provide that she doesn’t have a roving eye. “Having a roving eye” was a concept I often heard. It meant having an interest in other men. A woman whose needs are not satisfied will not hesitate to respond when a man shows attention to her. So the husband is expected to take care of (“own”) his wife in any case.

It is not good for a woman to talk when she’s not given the space to speak. It is not approved for a woman to speak in a place where men are present. What is understood as being brazen faced (“*yırtıklık*”) here is actually a woman to freely say what she thinks. When a woman tells what she wants to say, this is called “whistling dixie” (“*boş konuşmak*”) in men’s perception. Actually such a woman is a source of unrest for the man because she interferes into their world. Being *yırtık*, which literally means “torn” signifies a deformation even in the first meaning of the word. It is meaningful that *yırtık kadın*, the brazen faced woman signifies the woman who “transgresses the borders” and “speaks where she

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<sup>177</sup> “Valla işte dediğim gibi önemli olan nerde ne hareket yapacağını bilsin yeter, bazıları yani, hem evli oluyor hem de karşıdaki erkeğe göz atıyor, böyle bir şey mi olur?” (Recep, 20 yaşında)

<sup>178</sup> Abi namuslu bir kadın erkeklerle çok haşır neşir olmaz. Yani evine misafir geliyorsa hoş geldin der, laf verilirse konuşur, ama laf verilmeyip boş boş konuşuyorsa vardır bunda bir yırtıklık dersin. Böyledir yani. (Samet, 22 yaşında)

<sup>179</sup> Gözünün dışarıda olmasıdır. Mesela kocası ona elbise almaz, gözü dışarıda olur, gözü dışarıda olduğu zaman bir erkek ona hareket ettiği zaman o da karşılık verir. Buradan namussuzluk olur. Leke getirir. (Halim, 23 yaşında)

should keep silent". The brazen faced woman is free and disturbing, she spoils men's peace of mind.

*"She should know how to walk in the street and how to communicate with other people, other men. She should be aware of her level. Once a woman is slimy, the man next to him becomes encouraged. It is said that 'if the female dog does not wag the tail'. Then the man thinks that I would go to her more and his friends also become encouraged. You go there as a guest and if you see something soft there, then you would like to go there more. Why? The aim is different. But if you stand more strongly, then he comes to you less". (Önder, aged 29)<sup>180</sup>*

A woman, as put by Önder, has to know her "level". Because a woman is never perceived to be equal to a man in any condition, she should be aware of that in all her relations. A woman should always be aware that she is in the position to arouse men. Something that the woman doesn't even think of as she acts might be coded in a different way in the man's mind and it is always the honorable woman who should be very careful at all times. The woman, whose "limits" and level is determined by men, is perceived as an "acceptable and honorable" woman as long as she moves within these limits.

#### **5.4.2. Dressing**

My respondents said many things about the way a honorable woman should dress. How a woman dresses is important because the dress is about her appearance, about her visible side. Whether or not a woman is honorable can be understood from the way she dresses as much as the way she walks and her dialogues with men. However, considering the men I interviewed, there's no agreement on the way a woman should dress. Although there are opinions that Muslim woman don't cover themselves because of any oppression but because

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<sup>180</sup> İşte yolda yürümesini bilecek. İnsanlarla, erkeklerle konuşmasını iyi bilecek. Seviyesini bilecek, şimdi bayan yavaş olursa karşıdaki adam cesaretlenir. Dişi kuyruk sallamazsa demişler, kadın gevşek davranırsa adam cesaretlenir. Ben buna sık gidip geleyim der, eşi dostu da bile olsa cesaret alır. Sen misafirlğe gidiyorsun, oradaki kadından biraz yumuşama görürsen gidip gelmeyi sıklaştırırsın. Niye? Amaç farklı? Ama sen sağlam durursan o adam sana ayda yılda bir gelir. (Önder, 29 yaşında)

it moves their bodies away from the social focus and it makes them free (Lobban, 2004:86), I find this a very optimistic point of view. First of all, why does a woman's body have to be a point of social focus? Secondly, freeing a woman's body is possible by covering it? And thirdly, then how do you position the women who are not covered?

For some men, it is possible to categorize women according to the way they dress. What is considered as covered is a key point of the discussion. The men I interviewed tended to define being covered ("*kapalı*", literal translation of "closed") not as using a headscarf but as wearing clothes that don't show the woman's body lines and that aren't low-cut. The aim here is, again, not to arouse men and to avoid dressing in a way that would "charm" them.

So a woman should not disclose her body lines. Whatever she wears, it should be something loose. The "private parts" ("*avret yerleri*", the genitals) should not be obvious.<sup>181</sup> This is why low-cut clothes should be avoided.

*For sure, she can wear jeans or trousers. Trousers are also OK. We are against low-cut dresses, brother! See what they say in Imam Hatip; 'what are the private parts of the body? Women's belly, breasts; those parts shouldn't be seen. I mean, for God's sake, doesn't it matter, brother! Their breasts are open, coming out from the clothes, and they just wander around like this. (Zagor, aged 21)<sup>182</sup>*

A man, on the other hand, doesn't have to care about what he wears. A man doesn't arouse any sexual desire with his clothes. He's free in that sense. His

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<sup>181</sup> Leila Ahmed, gives the term "Avret" (private parts) as an example to argue that women-centered eroticism dates back at least to the Middle Ages: "... The term *avret*, for example, especially in its usage related to the female body (a usage whose origin goes back to the Middle Ages at least), gives the meanings of negativeness and shame to the woman's body. The term which is derived from a root that means "defect" (and also "defenceless" and "weak"), is used especially in relation to the body parts that religion orders to be kept covered –the parts related to sexuality; some authorities place the part between the belly and the knees for men, and all the body for women... ." (my translation) (Ahmed, 2003:59)

<sup>182</sup> "Tabi ki canım, kot da kumaş pantol da giyer. Kumaş pantol da giyer. Biz dekolteye karşıyız kardeş. Ne diyorlar bak, şeyde İmam Hatipte, "avret yerleri, nedir? Kadınların göbeği, göğüsler, görünmeyecek diyo. Yani Allah için fark etmiyor mu kardeş? Göğüsleri açık böyle, dışları taşıyor, açık geziyor böyle." (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

dress has no erotic meaning. But a woman can become a threat if she's not careful about what she wears.

*If you ask how a man should wear, he is a man whatever he dresses. But a woman should be sensitive about this. I can wear the blue colour, green colour or any other of this jacket; you are supposed to wear what suits you, it doesn't matter for a man. For a man, a t-shirt and a pullover is enough, it's OK. Do you have anything else? I don't for my own. I wear trousers and a pullover and go out. This is my way. And a woman should behave like this. If she wears a skirt, she should be careful about it. (Zagor, aged 21)<sup>183</sup>*

Zagor thinks that women wearing "open" clothes ("açık giyinmek", translated in tureng turkish-english online dictionary as "be dressed to kill") deserve all sorts of behavior. It is even her who desires it. According to this mentality, she is "asking for it", and she sees no problem in arousing men if she's dressing in an "open" fashion.<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> "Erkek nasıl giyinmeli dersen, erkek ne giyerse giysin erkektir. Ama kadın seçici olacak, ben şimdi bu ceketin mavisini giyerim, yeşilini giyerim, şeyini de giyerim, zaten kendine yakışanı giyecen, yakışın yeter ki ama erkek adam için fark etmez, erkek adam üste bir tişört, alta bir kazak, bitti. Tamamdır. Var mı sen farklı bir şey yapıyor musun? Yok, ben öyle yapıyorum şahsen. Pantol giyiyorum, üste kazak, hadi eyvallah görüşürük. Budur benim görüşüm. Kadın da ona göre giyinecek, etek giyerse ona göre giyinecek, pantol giyiyorsa ona göre giyinecek." (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

<sup>184</sup> The answer below for a question on "women dressing openly" and covering reflect the religion authorities' point of view:

Question: We see today that many ladies dress up in an open fashion. Some even exaggerate to the point of wearing very tight clothes, mini skirts etc. As we are men, these catch our eye even if we don't want to. But isn't the arouser responsible in this as much as the one who looks at?

Answer: Good SWP, in the 30th versicle of the Nur surah orders men not to look at the forbidden ("haram"), and in the 31st versicle He orders women not to look at the forbidden and to hide their ornaments from foreign men. "(My Messenger!) Tell the faithful men to dim their gazes and protect their private parts. This is what is clean for them. Allah knows what they do."

"And tell the faithful women; they dim their gazes and protect their private parts..." (Nur, 24/30-31)

A woman who dresses openly is committing a sin because she does not obey this order of Allah. And the men who look at the women who dress in this way are violating God's prohibition to look at the haram. So they are both sinners. Here the men do not need to blame the women and the women do not need to blame the men. There will be no problems if each individual acts with the responsibility of [him/her]self. That some women are dressing openly does not give men the right to look at them. One should not forget this hadith related from our prophet:

"The adultery of the eye is to gaze." (Buhârî, İsti'zan, 12)

[Soru: Günümüzde birçok bayanın çok açık giyindiğini görüyoruz. Hatta bunu abartanlar, daracık giysiler, mini etekler vs. giyenler var. Bir erkek olarak bunlara ister istemez gözümüz kayıyor. Fakat bakan kadar tahrik edenin de rolü yok mudur bunda?

*They are looking for their trouble, brother! She says that 'I'm a bitch, look what I wear, I am a bitch'. She means that 'I'm a bitch, treat me that way'. That's why it's that way. Otherwise, if everybody looks at their own way, everything would be better. If everyone would be sensitive about this, I mean both men and women are included. Father of a man and a woman is very significant. (Zagor, aged 21)<sup>185</sup>*

The woman's dress is taken as an open message. A woman dressed openly (uncovered hair, wearing sundresses, make up etc.) is open to threats. A covered woman is like furnished with shields against her enemy, she's not defenceless anymore. Men think that dressing "openly" is understood as a sign of civilization, but that civilization is something else:

*Well their dresses are erotic, lord, they charm, they dress evilly, evilness is in women's nature, well that's what they say, well she dresses up in such a way with stockings and suspenders and mini skirts, strapped shirts, wearing a lipstick, now everybody would say "wow such a pretty girl, just look at her once", I mean they surely talk like that.. I wonder whether those girls don't have any brothers, uncles or a father. They say that they are behaving individually, socially, they are proper and civilized. If we are to be civilized, let's go out naked! A civilized person should*

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*Cevap:* Allah Teâlâ Nur suresinin 30. ayetinde erkeklere harama bakmamalarını, 31. ayette de kadınlara harama bakmamalarını ve süslerini kendilerine yabancı olan erkeklerden gizlemelerini emretmiştir.

"(Resulüm!) Mümin erkeklere söyle; bakışlarını kısınsınlar, edep yerlerini korusunlar. Onlar için temiz olan budur. Allah, onların ne yaptıklarından haberdardır."

"Mümin kadınlara da söyle; bakışlarını kısınsınlar ve edep yerlerini korusunlar..." (Nur, 24/30-31) Açık saçık giyinen kadın, Allah'ın bu emrini tutmadığı için günah işlemiş olur. Bu şekilde giyinen kadınlara bakan erkekler de Allah'ın harama bakma yasağını çiğnemiş olur. Yani her ikisi de günahkârdır. Burada erkeklerin kadınları veya kadınların erkekleri suçlaması gerekmez. Her bir birey kendi sorumluluğunun bilinciyle hareket ederse herhangi bir sorun çıkmaz. Bazı kadınların açık saçık giyiyor olması erkeklere, onlara bakma hakkı vermez. Peygamberimizden nakledilen şu hadisi de unutmamak gerekir:

"Gözün zinası bakmaktır." (Buhârî, İsti'zan, 12)]

<http://www.fetva.net/yazili-fetvalar/acik-sacik-giyinen-kadinlara-bakmak.html>

<sup>185</sup> Kaşınıyorlar, hiç kimseye bir şey diyemeyen ki. Kaşınıyor kardeş, "ben" diyor "Orospuyum" diyor. "Ben orospuyum, görmüyor musun nasıl giyinmişim" diyor. "Ben orospuyum bak ben giyiniyorum, ona göre bana davran" diyor. Onun için de o şekil oluyor. Yoksa herkes birazcık arkasına baksa her şey çok güzel olur, herkes çok güzel olur. Herkes birazcık duyarlı olsa, erkek için de kadın için de geçerli bu dediğim. Erkeğin babası, kızın babası önemli. (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

*wear properly. I mean, I see women with good dresses, walking around properly. Everyone behaves in the way that suits herself. (Zagor, aged 21)<sup>186</sup>*

In Turkey, identifying open clothing with civilization is a discourse that has a cultural base. "Dressing up like Westerners" means dressing yourself according to their civilization and thus not conforming to the patterns of this land. There's a common perception that dressing in an open manner is something imported from the West. Anatolian woman has a different style of dressing. According to Göle, "in Turkey the difference and even contradiction between Eastern and Western worlds has found its expression in the social status of the woman" (Göle, 1991:43). Discussions go on with a focus on how women should dress. How a woman dresses herself has a place that also determines the honor codes of a society. In Turkey a honorable woman shows this with her headscarf, it is perceived as shameful to make a pass at a headscarved woman or to insult her. I believe that under the respect shown to women wearing headscarves there lies the idea that such a woman is honorable and at the same time "religious." It is thought that men don't make passes on women with headscarves, that they don't disturb them. Men tend to think that making passes on headscarved or "closed" woman or woman wearing veil ("*tesettürlü*") is committing a sin. In the masculine perception women don't open themselves to the outside world, they close the gates to dialogue by wearing a headscarf. Such women are thought to give the message that they don't want to arouse men. Any assault from men under these conditions is fully seen as men's fault.

My respondents told me that a married woman may dress differently from a single woman. I believe this is the common opinion in the society. Single women are allowed relative freedom in their clothing. A single woman may go around

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<sup>186</sup> Yani erotik giyiniyorlar ağam, cezp ediyorlar, şeytanca giyiniyorlar, şeytanlık zaten kadınların içinde varmış, yani öyle diyorlar, yani öyle bir giyiniyor ki, jartiyer giyinmiş, mini etek giyinmiş, askılı giyinmiş, saçlar açık, dudaklar boyalı, şimdi her insan diyordur, "lan ne güzel kızmış, bak hele şuna bi kere" yani bu şekil konuşuyorlardır yani. Yani bunların abisi amcası babası yok mu acaba? Neymiş işte kişisel düşünüyorlarmış, sosyal düşünüyorlarmış, işte düzgünlermiş de medeni düşünüyorlarmış. Lan medeni olacaksak o zaman çırılçıplak gezek? Medeni adam düzgün giyinir. Yani kardeş ben görüyorum kadın güzel giyinmiş, efendi efendi geziyor, herkes kendine yakışanı yapar. (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

without a headscarf. She is expected to show greater care in her dress and to respect the views of her husband on her dressing. Because that woman has become the honor of her husband now. As a single woman is not perceived to be responsible, she may be act more relaxed about her clothing with respect to a married woman.

A married woman should first obey her husband's wishes about her clothes. As the woman is under her husband's responsibility, it is perceived as normal for a husband to interfere into what his wife wears. This is an important mechanism of control. If a woman gets dressed according to her husband tastes, this means she has no opinion of her own. Her husband will decide in her name. A woman who wears clothes that her husband doesn't approve is disobeying her husband, which is a reason for problems.

*"I think a married woman should have a headscarf, first of all. In her youth, she wouldn't need it, it's OK for me. Because, after all, she's young. But after marriage, committing herself to honor, after becoming an honor of someone, she should wear a headscarf. She shouldn't have roving eyes. She shouldn't be busy with entertainment and going out". (Kerim, aged 22)<sup>187</sup>*

There's nothing inconvenient in a single woman to be more relaxed, because after all she's a young girl and she's looking for candidates to get married, thus it's not bad if she takes care of herself in this context. Her acts to look beautiful will be explained with the fact that she's a young girl. But after getting married she should dress up in the way her husband wants and shouldn't transgress what he says.

Nevertheless a single woman should still be very careful. "Men shall look at her." All kind of speculations can be made upon the way she dresses. A woman can be "misunderstood" through what she wears and she might be assaulted or raped because of this. We had previously said that this perception also pervades in the

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<sup>187</sup> Bence abi bir evli kadın ilk önce kafasında bir eşarby olmalı, evli bir kadının. Gençliğinde belki açık giyinebilir, ona bir şey demiyorum. Çünkü sonuçta genç yani. Ama evlendikten sonra kendini namus ettikten sonra, birisinin namusu olduktan sonra bence kapanmalı yani. Dışarıda gözü olmamalı, gezeyim, eğleneyim diye bir işi olmamalı. (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

norms of law, as a mentality of the male dominant system: it is seen as a justified probability that a woman can be raped or assaulted if *she* is not careful with her clothing, if *she* wears anything that would arouse men. And in such a case the man can get a reduction in penalty. Here the man is perceived as if he has no will, he's not guilty if he's aroused. It's the fault of the woman who aroused him. I think this is the mentality that underlies the reduction in penalties for the rapist men if the victim is a prostitute.

*Well, a young girl should be careful about her dressing, she shouldn't wear low-cut dresses. She should have longer clothes because men would look at her otherwise. And people might understand it wrongly and a quarrel would emerge. For this reason, she should wear longer clothes. If she wears low-cut clothes, people might think of her as a bitch. It would bring dirt to her honor. Even she might be raped."*

***What do you mean by saying low-cut dress?***

*I mean obvious breasts. Those with short skirts. I hate them. When I see them, I look at another way. That doesn't suit a man. (Doğan, aged 18)<sup>188</sup>*

A man I interviewed, Zagor, has openly stated that he is "disgusted" with such "open" women, women wearing mini skirts. "To be disgusted" is a word that covers hate in itself. Looking with disgust at a woman who wears miniskirts also bears an attack towards her.<sup>189</sup> The men who think that women dressed openly are arousing them tend to be disgusted with these women at the same time. This state of "disgust" is something that is loathsome and it deserves to be destroyed, according to them. Gay men also face the same attitude. Gay men become targets of people who act with this sort of a perception and they fall victim to "hate crimes." Those who are thought to threaten social morals, the gays,

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<sup>188</sup> Valla genç kız giyimine dikkat etmeli, açık giyinmemesi lazım. Kapalı giyinmesi lazım. Erkekler bakar çünkü. Millet de yanlış anlar, kavga çıkar. Bu yüzden kapalı giyinmesi lazım. Açık giyinse millet orospu zannedebilir. Namusa leke getirir. Tecavüze bile uğrayabilir.

***Açık giyinmek nasıl oluyor?***

*Açık derken, hani göğüsleri açıkta. Mini etek giyenler. Tiksiniyorum onlardan. Ben gördüm mü yüzümü çeviriyorum. Yakışmaz zaten erkek adama bakmak." (Doğan, 18 yaşında)*

<sup>189</sup> Violence towards "open" women that we sometimes see in the newspapers, fanatical attacks against them like throwing aqua fortis over them, seems to be results of such a "disgust."

transvestites, women wearing open clothes are all perceived to be loathsome and attacks against them are seen legitimate with the permission of “general laws of morality.”

In most of the men I interviewed I can't say that there's a very strict discourse about women's covering themselves (i.e. with a headscarf etc.) –through there are some differences as seen from the example below. It's good if a woman is covered but it's no big problem if she isn't, it's enough if she wears loose clothes that hide her body lines. we can link the situations that being covered becomes a serious, “must” issue to cultural and regional differences. But, in contradiction to some other Middle Eastern countries, the headscarf is often not a strict rule in Turkey although it is approved, and I think the headscarf policies of Turkey have some affects in that. It seems that westernization policies have been partially affectful in Turkey, with an emphasis on secularism. Nevertheless, one of my respondents had views that can be considered extreme. Halim said that a woman should wear a chador (“*kara çarşaf*”) that only lets her eyes be seen. But I should tell that this approach doesn't reflect the general perception of the young men I interviewed.

*I would prefer women with headscarves. I am already against jeans. I would like her to have only her eyes seen. Something like chador, she should be dresses in this way.”*

***Isn't it difficult in this time?***

*Actually, many of my relatives are dressed in this way. It's not difficult. (Halim, aged 23)<sup>190</sup>*

Delaney again explains men's wish to have woman “covered” with land and property relations:

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<sup>190</sup> Giyim olarak başı kapalı olsun isterim. Kot pantolona karşıyım zaten. Gözleri görünsün isterim sadece. Hani siyah çarşaf derler ya, onun gibi giyinmesini isterim.

**Bu zamanda zor değil mi?**

Valla bizim akrabaların çoğu öyle giyiniyor. Zor değil yani.(Halim, 23 yaşında)

Like land, women must be “covered”; a woman must always be under the mantle of a man (whether father, husband, brother, or son), and this is symbolized by wearing the headscarf. A woman who wears the headscarf is referred to *kapalı* ,(covered, closed) as opposed to *açık* (*open, uncovered*). A woman who walks around *açık* is open to sexual advances from men; it is as if she were openly exhibiting her private parts. Women without cover, without a headscarf, indicate that they are without protection and are considered loose, immoral, and common property. (Delaney, 1991: 38)

Here marriage can be interpreted as a passage from being open to being closed. My respondents tended not think of being covered as a must for a single woman, but what is expected from a woman after she gets married is to cover her hair and to act in a dignified way. The message she gives here is “I am married, I am closed.” Being closed here means not only to have her hair covered/closed (this is expressed with the same word in Turkish, *kapalı*), but to wholly close herself to foreign men.

To sum up the issue of behavior and dressing, we can say that an honorable woman is expected to be serious and dignified, not to speak much, not to join talks among men, not to be brazenfaced, not to look around as she walks and not to dress openly in any way that can attract attention.

### **5.5 How Should an Honorable Man Be?**

An honorable man is, first and foremost, not defined upon male sexuality. Man’s acts, his dialogue with women in everyday life or his style of dressing is not evaluated in a frame of honor as it is for the woman. Honor, for the man, is evaluated upon responsibilities. A honorable man at the same time signifies an ideal man. In contradiction to the woman, honor is not something that the man carries in his body, but it is what he is “responsible of.”

A honorable man minds himself and his family, he doesn’t look at anybody else’s honor. A man who looks at another’s honor –another’s wife, daughter or

sister—is not a proper man. If he does that, this means he’s transgressed the field whose limits were set.

*He should go to his work, deal with his business. I mean he shouldn’t have an eye on other men’s wives and daughters. (Ali, aged 22)<sup>191</sup>*

*I mean he should be proper in that sense, he shouldn’t look at anyone, and talk with people other than his wife. Therefore, he shouldn’t snipe at anyone and misbehave, this sort of stuff. (Emir, aged 18)<sup>192</sup>*

Minding his own business is one of the most virtuous acts for a man. For a honorable man the most important condition is to earn his bread, to be able to look after his wife and children. My respondent Zagor emphasized this, according to him being honorable himself is not enough, if anybody from his close surrounding acts dishonorably this will indirectly affect him, it will make him restless:

*A man, an honorable man is always obvious. A dishonorable man is also obvious, no matter what he does. He should provide to have milk and meat in his fridge at his home, his family and children shouldn’t be hungry, and then he can do whatever he likes, the rest is none of my business. But he should take care of his home and think of his friends. Let me think of a friend of mine and say that “this is my close friend and he is known as Zagor’s friend in my community”. When I think about the worst and say what I wouldn’t want to be told about my friend, I feel proud if they say “Zagor’s friend killed a person” rather than “Zagor’s friend sells women, he is dishonorable.” Because, if a person is my friend, he is supposed to be an honorable man, or if they say “Zagor’s friend died” rather than “Zagor’s friend is a thief” I feel happier. I would say myself that “My friend died, may god rest his soul” and if he has sisters or brothers I would take care of them. (Zagor, aged 21)<sup>193</sup>*

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<sup>191</sup> İşine gitmeli abi, ekmeğine bakmalı. Hani hiç kimsenin karısında kızında gözü olmamalı yani. (Ali, 22 yaşında)

<sup>192</sup> Yani o anlamda düzgün olmalı, kimseye bakmamalı, karısından başka kimseyle konuşmamalı, yani laf atıp falan terbiyesizlik yapmayacak, yani bunun gibi şeyler yani. (Emir, 18 yaşında)

<sup>193</sup> Bir erkek dediğin, namuslu bir erkek dediğin, her zaman bellidir. Namussuz erkek de bellidir. Namusuna sahip çıksın, ne boku varsa yesin, ne yaparsa yapsın. Buzdolabında sütü eti olsun, evinde

A man can do anything bad, he can even commit a murder, for instance; but the only thing that he should avoid is to be coded as a dishonorable person. Once he's coded as such, he won't be able to find anyone around him to call him "a friend", he will be isolated from his environment. Because a man's honor is perceived through the women he is responsible of, all other things he does can be accepted somehow, but if a man is unable to "own" his honor, he will be excluded from the community of men. Nobody wants to be friends with a man who's called "dishonorable."

For a honorable man, it is important not to spend the daily bread ("rızık") of his family, his children at other places. As a family man ("aile babası", literal translation is "the father of a family"), he should play his role properly and fulfill the responsibility of looking after his family.

#### ***How should an honorable man be?***

*An honorable man takes care of his wife and children, provides them with food and water. If he fulfills this, than I call him an honorable man.*

#### ***What about hanky-pankies?***

*If a married man sleeps with other women to enjoy, he is dishonorable. Because he spends the money that's to be spent for his children, for the other women. .*  
*(Halim, aged 23)<sup>194</sup>*

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çoluk çocuğu aç kalmasın, ne yaparsa yapsın. Onu ben bilmem. Ama evine barkına bakacak, arkadaşlarını düşünecek. Ben şahsen çok yakın bir arkadaşımı düşünüyüm, diyim ki, "lan arkadaş, bu benim çok yakın bir arkadaşım, benim çevremde bu insanı Zagor'un arkadaşı olarak biliyorlar" diyim. O çevrem, en kötü ihtimali düşünüyorum, arkadaşımın benim için şu kelimeyi mi konuşması isterim, bu kelimeyi mi konuşmasını isterim derken, "Zagor'un arkadaşı avrat satıyormuş, Zagorun arkadaşı dümbükmüş, Zagor'un arkadaşı namussuzmuş" diyeceklerine "Zagor'un arkadaşı adam vurmuş" desinler ben daha da gururlanırım. Çünkü benim arkadaşım olan bir insan arkadaşımın namuslu olacak, veya "Zagor'un arkadaşı hırsızmış" diyeceklerine "Zagor'un arkadaşı ölmüş" desinler ben daha da mutlu olurum. Derim ki "Arkadaşım ölmüş, Allah rahmet eylesin" derim kardeşi bacısı varsa sahip çıkarım. (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

#### **<sup>194</sup> Namuslu erkek nasıl olur?**

Şimdi namuslu erkek karısına, çocuğuna, çocuğuna bakar, onların ekmeğini suyunu getirir. Bunları yapıyorsa namuslu erkektir derim ona.

#### **Kaçamaklar yapması peki?**

In a difference from others, Ali said he didn't find it normal for a married man to cheat his wife, but he didn't see it as dishonorable either. The mentality "he's the masculine man, he can do it" reflected in the views of Ali.

***If a man cheats on his wife, would you call it as a dishonor?***

*If a man cheats on his wife, this is not dishonor; at most, if his wife can not bear it, they'll break up. " (Ali, aged 22)<sup>195</sup>*

The basic reasoning underlying here is that honor is not filth when a man cheats. Of course this is not approved, but it has no sanctions. Because a man is not under anybody's responsibility like the woman, whatever he does interests and affects him and only him. But when it is the woman who cheats, this is understood as dirting the honor. The man has a right to impose sanctions in such a case.

**5.6 "Affecting the Honor"**

In the comments made on honor, two concepts that are often used are "clean" and "dirty." Honor has a neutral place when it exists alone as a phenomenon. Everybody has a honor, this is like an identity given or imposed on the individual, especially the woman. But when we talk about "dirted honor", this is a case specific to the woman and describes that the woman is now defiled. Whether she is married or single, if she is together with a man without the notice and approval of the man that is responsible of her means that this woman is defiled ("*lekeli*") now. "Being together with a man" doesn't have to be anything sexual. Speaking to a man, walking around together, dressing openly or having rumours about these can be perceived as a dirtying of the honor (Kardam, 2005).

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Şimdi tabi kendisi evli ama gidip zevkine başkalarıyla yatarsa bu namussuzluk olur tabi. Çocuklarının parasını gidip o kadına yediyor sonuçta. (Halim, 23 yaşında)

<sup>195</sup> **Erkek aldatsa da namussuzluk olur mu peki?**

Ya şimdi erkek aldatsa da namussuzluk olmaz, çok çok nasıl olur, ayrılırlar yani karı koca, ha karı bunu şey yapamazsa (kaldıramazsa) yani ayrılırlar." (Ali, 22 yaşında)

Being clean and being dirty. Categorizing women who act outside of the given codes of honor with these concepts provides the legitimacy for punishments. As there is the idea that a dirty woman “will be like dead” even if she lives, it is thought that taking her life away will be better for her as well. What good is it if she lives anyway? Everybody looks at her with bad eyes. She will “fall to the dirty road” (“*kötü yola düşecek*”, become a prostitute) and become “common property” (“*ortalık malı*”). But if she is killed, she will be cleaned and the lost “family honor and reputation” will be regained. The man responsible of her can return to social relations with pride, if he kills her. Although a murder, ending a person’s life is horrible from any view point, it seems consistent when thought from the men’s world. This means that the killings with the pretext of honor will not end as long as the codes of honor and gender inequalities prevail. Whatever we call this, be it honor killings or passion murders, the main reason underlying it is the view of women as property. These crimes, called passion murders in the West and honor killings in the Middle Eastern geography, are the peak of violence towards women and they are related to a mentality that develops through the idea that women belong to men. A man who constructs a mechanism of absolute power and ownership over the woman will believe in the legitimacy of killing the woman or enacting violence on her when he thinks she has betrayed him. Here the man related to the woman in an extramarital relationship may also be punished but the main motivation is to destroy the woman. The common perception in Turkey on a woman who is raped is well known: what did *she* do that she received such a reaction? Maybe she countenanced the man? Could she have dressed openly? Was she outside at “an improper time”? These questions that occur to people’s minds in a case of rape show us the hypocrisy of the masculine mentality. Although the actor of rape is the man, he is indirectly accused of the act while the woman is the one directly accused.

Whether an issue related to honor is known or heard by others is crucially important. Such issues are tried to be covered. The woman and her family try to close the case; their main motivation is the fear “what will others say?” Honor is

like a sword that a whole society swings over the women and the men. Even in cases of sexual abuse within the family where the girl child is the victim of an incest relation, she still cannot escape having “her honor dirty” (“*namusu kirlenmiş*”). This is one of the main factors that prevents these cases from coming out. Çavlin-Bozbeyoğlu (2009) also points out that, families want to cover such cases to escape social oppression in cases of incest. The aggressors in cases of incest especially try to avoid situations like a pregnancy that everybody will understand something.

The prevalent concept of honor and the relevant tensions on girls and boys, and their families prevent the families, under certain circumstances, from taking action against incest even when they find out about it. The society perceives incest as something beyond sexual assault, it is considered to be a stigma to the victim's and his/her family's honor. The aggressors make use of this societal concept of honor in order to keep these incidents concealed, and they try to avoid acts such as defloration and impregnation.” (Çavlin-Bozbeyoğlu 2009:25)

For a woman honor is not only a field where men in this world will call her to account for, but at the same time an issue that Allah in the other world will call her to account for. Because honor is a trust from Allah to the woman, protecting her virtue is the most fundamental duty of a woman.

***Previously you said “dirting the honor”, what should happen to dirt the honor?***

*If you are deflorated, have a sexual intercourse, you are married or you have a sexual intercourse... If you are in brothel and do it on purpose, it means you have already accepted to be dishonorable, you are in brothel. Even if you get married some day, what you've done doesn't go away. God and angels, they record it. They will ask you in the afterlife, that you damaged your honor. (İmam, aged 23)<sup>196</sup>*

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<sup>196</sup> **Az önce konuşurken bir yerde namusun kirlenmesi dedin, ne olunca kirleniyor?**

Ya işte şeyini bozmuşsun, ilişkiye girmişsin afedersin, evlisen ya da ilişkiye girmişsin. Ha kötü bir yere düşmüşsündür, kendi isteğinle yapıyorsun, zaten sen namussuzluğu kabul etmişsindir, kötü yere düşmüşsün, zaten onu kabul etmişsin. İleride evlensen bile o senin üzerinden gitmez. Allah onu

By being careful in her acts a single woman should both keep the name of her family clean, and get married to her husband as a clean person. A woman whose name is dirty, who is gossiped about risks her marriage as well. In this sense it is important that a woman is “clean” before marriage. Delaney’s observations and analyses in the village she stayed on the behavior of single young women are in line with the views of the men I interviewed.

If a girl engages in conversation or receives glances from any man outside the intimate, she can be defiled and her reputation tarnished. As the evil eye an envious person can bring misfortune to the one whom it is directed, so too can the eye of desire, if not deflected, penetrate the woman and bring about her defilement. It is as if something physical, some extension of the man, passes with the glance. She will be blamed for having received and accepted it. In order to preserve her reputation, a girl participates in her own enclosure: she averts her eyes when unrelated men are around, wears the headscarf and other voluminous coverings such as *şalvar* (baggy pants), and stays at home. By these activities she demonstrates that she is *kapalı* (covered, closed) as opposed to *açık* (open, uncovered), that she is *temiz*, (clean, pure) as opposed to *pis* (dirty, defiled). She is preserved in this state until marriage, when her husband has the right to open her and thereafter control the times and places of her opening. (Delaney, 1991: 42)

Young woman whose honor is dirty is considered defiled and nobody will want to get married to such a woman. This means that a woman should give importance to her virginity, which is the most important sign of her honor. Honor and its symbol, virginity, are like a shield or armour of a woman. This shield should be removed only for the man she’ll marry. A woman whose shield is taken away from her falls to a defenceless and miserable position. As a woman who’s dirty makes the reputation of her family “*beş paralık*” (useless, spoiled, ruined), this dirt will affect the family honor maybe even more than the

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zaten, melekler kaydediyor. Öbür tarafta soracak, sen namusuna halel getirdin diye. (İmam, 23 yaşında)

woman. Where reputation is affected, methods of cleaning the honor will come into the picture.

### **5.7 “Cleaning the Honor”**

A marriage relation is built on loyalty. This is a loyalty centered on the woman. The men I interviewed have clearly expressed that they will engage in strict attitudes in cases of cheating. But they have also emphasized especially that man’s cheating is not the same thing with woman’s cheating. It seems possible to understand this with the common perception of honor. For a man, although cheating his wife is not found proper, having a relation with another woman is described at most as “he’s done something wrong”, but when a woman has a relation with another man she’s considered to have committed the gravest of crimes. A married woman cannot be with any man other than her husband under any circumstance. Her to speak with another man, to be friends with him, to wander around with him is seen as a horrible crime. Such a situation, seen as an enormous material for gossiping, is condemned by the society and her husband is expected to “clean the honor.” Most, almost all, of the men I interviewed told that honor can be cleaned by killing the woman, while some said that divorcing her would be the best way. In case the man has relations with other women, the wife to kill the husband was not at all accepted as a reasonable option, while the wife to demand divorcing was discussed in relation to her economic status: if the woman has power, she can divorce; if not, she can only pray to god that her husband won't do such a thing. The dialogue below with one of the man I interviewed sums up the issue clearly:

***What would you do in such a situation? Or let me ask you how should you behave in such a situation?***

*Initially you should investigate the case, if it is true, the solution is obvious.*

***What is the solution?***

*You shoot at the man and at the woman, and if you can do you also shoot at yourself, than it is enough.*

***Is this a solution? Is it a murder? If you don't shoot at yourself, than you go to the prison... Is it worth this?***

*For me, it is worth for honor. It doesn't matter whether you live here or there. If you live here, it is even worse.*

***Why?***

*They will call you dishonorable, they will say you everything. (Ali, aged 22)<sup>197</sup>*

Such a situation turns into a real problem for a man. He tends to have adopted the public oppression. A man who hasn't cleaned his honor is no different from dead. He'll be "like a chewing gum" in people's mouths (he will be extensively gossiped about) and nobody will exchange salutations with him. A great isolation awaits him. He himself also believes this is what he deserves. He won't be able to get out to the presence of other people, and when he does he will always have his head foremost.<sup>198</sup> Zagor says killing the woman is in fact benevolence to her, as she will thus be "cleaned":

*"She gets clean, most importantly. I mean your wife, your woman gets clean. Because you can break up with her since she is a bitch, it's gone then, it's finished. But if everybody hears this, nobody will accept her, she can go neither to her mother's house nor her father's house, prostitution is her only option. She'd rather die than that." (Zagor, aged 21)<sup>199</sup>*

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<sup>197</sup> **Nasıl davranırsın öyle bir durumda? Ya da nasıl davranmak gerekir diye sorayım?**

Ya şimdi önce araştırırsın, eğer gerçekse çözümü belli zaten yani.

**Nedir çözüm?**

Ya bir adama sıkarsın, bir ona sıkarsın, bir de oluyorsa kendine sıkarsın yeter.

**Bu mu çözüm? Cinayet mi? diyelim kendine sıkmadın, yıllarca cezaevi var, falan. Değer mi yani?**

Değer bence namus için. Ha orada yaşamışın, burada yaşamışın. Burada yaşasan daha beter.

**Niye?**

Şerefsiz derler, her şey derler yani. (Ali, 22 yaşında)

<sup>198</sup> As a young child when I was naughty my mother would "interrogate" me with her slipper in her hands. I would lower my head, unable to look at my mother's face. Then she would tell me, in Kurdish, "weke benamusan serê xwe netewine!" ("Don't lower your head like the dishonored!")

<sup>199</sup> O temizlenir her şeyden önemlisi. Yani hanımın, avradın, karın temizlenir. Çünkü bir kere orospu diyerekten ayrılırsın o kadınla, o gider biter. Olay biter. Ama herkes duyarsa, onu ne kimse alır, ne anasının babasının evine gidebilir, onun yapacağı şey gerçekten orospuluktur. Öyle olacağına öldür. (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

Some of my respondents also stated that it's no problem to go to jail after killing the woman, that it's much better to go to jail then to live among people in this way, and if a man is afraid to go to jail then he can kill himself as well:

***So, should you run away?***

*No, you shouldn't run away, it's better to clean your honor and go to the prison. These things are really hard. (Ali, aged 22 )<sup>200</sup>*

***What should a man do when his wife cheats on him? Is killing a must?***

*You must kill both of them. Later, you should call the police and tell them to come and take you. What can you say?*

***But you will go to prison? You also kill a person?***

*It doesn't matter, honor is worth it. What happens if you don't go to the prison? Is it better to die while living? If you cannot bear it than you shoot at yourself. But, you kill them anyway. (Faruk, aged 20)<sup>201</sup>*

***So, the punishment for a misbehaving person is to be killed?***

*Yes. Suppose that the man comes and sees them in such a situation, if this man isn't dishonest, he will turn the bed into a grave for them at that moment.*

***Therefore, honor killings are right for you?***

*Yes, they are right. (Kerim, aged 22)<sup>202</sup>*

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<sup>200</sup> **Kaçıp gitmek mi lazım o zaman?**

Kaçıp gitmek değil de yani, namusun lekesini temizleyip gidip paşa paşa yatman daha doğru bence. Ağır şeyler bunlar. (Ali, 22 yaşında)

<sup>201</sup> **Karısını kendisini aldattığında adam ne yapmalı? Öldürmek şart mı yani?**

Abi vurmak lazım ikisine de. Ondan sonra polisi arayıp gelin alın diyeceksin. Ne diyeceksin?

**Cezaevi falan olacak ama? Bir cana kıyıyorsun?**

Fark etmez abi, namus için değer. Cezaevine girmesen ne olacak, yaşarken ölmek daha mı iyi? Kaldıramayacak bir insansın bir mermi de kendi kafana sıkarsın. Ama vurmak lazım her türlü. (Faruk, 20 yaşında)

<sup>202</sup> **O zaman şimdi yanlış bir şey yapanın cezası toprak mı?**

Yani tabi abi. Şimdi adam geldi, gördü, zaten o adam haysiyetsiz değilse o yatağı onlara mezar eder yani. O anda.

**Senin düşüncene göre o zaman namus cinayeti haklıdır o zaman?**

Haklıdır tabi abi. (Kerim, 22 yaşında)

In a distinction from the others, Zagor says killing the woman will clean her honor as well as that of the man, he finds it better for her to die than to live a life with the stigma of a “bad woman” (i.e. prostitute):

***When they are killed, are all things cleaned?***

*If you do so, yes. I clean myself and her. She gets clean after all. I mean your wife, your woman gets clean. Because you can break up with her since she is a bitch, she's gone and it's finished. However, if everybody hears this, nobody will accept her, she can neither go to her mother's house nor to her father's house, prostitution is her only option. She'd rather die than becoming a prostitute. I mean, if she does so once, she can do it with everyone. So, you shouldn't be busy with and pursue her, you should divorce her. But if everybody is gossiping about her, or even the worse, if she does something with a person who you know, than you should kill her. (Zagor, aged 21)<sup>203</sup>*

But there were some men who stated that killing is no solution and divorcing her instead is the most logical way. One of my respondents who viewed himself as a “religious” person, said that it isn't good to kill the woman because Allah will not like a murder (only Allah can take the life that Allah has given), and that the best is to leave the issue to Allah.

***What is to be done in such a situation? Some people say to kill etc.?***

*I think you should get divorced, it's nonsense to kill, it is also written in Holy Qur'an, if you kill a person you will go to hell, why do you kill a person?, if she does something wrong, than simply divorce, leave the rest to God. She will be punished after life.*

***It is said that sometimes when there are gossips etc?***

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<sup>203</sup> **Öldürünce temizlenecek mi her şey?**

O zaman tabi. Kendimi temizlemiş olurum, onu temizlemiş olurum. O temizlenir her şeyden önemlisi. Yani hanımın avradın, karın temizlenir. Çünkü bir kere orospu diyerekten ayrılırsın o kadınla, o gider biter. Olay biter. Ama herkes duyarsa, onu ne kimse alır, ne anasının babasının evine gidebilir, onun yapacağı şey gerçekten orospuluktur. Öyle olcağına öldür. Yani bir kere yapmışsa herkese gider artık. Onun için hiç uğraşmıcan, peşine düşmücen, boşayıp yol verceksin. Ama baktın ki herkesin diline düşmüş, hele ki bir de tanıdığın birisin yaptığı kişi o zaman öldürecek. (Zagor, 21 yaşında)

*It is very simple, you beat the person who spreads the gossips. They cannot gossip a lot now, before there were many narrow minded people. For, they cannot do now. There is nothing like this now. When you attempt to kill they even step in and prevent you to do so. (Recep, aged 20)<sup>204</sup>*

*Okay, the man is right in such a situation, but what can you do? Do you have to kill? Suppose that you killed, what will happen? You kill and go to the prison. For example, my sister bought a house in my district. The husband in the house next to my sister's house cheats on his wife with a married woman who lives in next house. What did the man do? He shot with a pump- rifle. He led a dog's life. But the woman got married to another man. (Abdullah, aged 31)<sup>205</sup>*

One man has said that he really doesn't know what he will do at that instant. This was actually one of the most realistic replies on what a man can do at the moment he learns that he is cheated by his wife.

*I do not what I would do in such a situation, I would do what mu mind could tell me at that moment. I do not know what I would do at that moment. (Mehmet, aged 28)<sup>206</sup>*

Although most replies involved killing, it is really unknown what would be done "at that time." The common point among all my respondents was the phrase "Allah kimsenin başına vermesin", "God never give [such a calamity] to anybody". This situation, accepted as a really tough one, pulls man into a deep dilemma. As

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<sup>204</sup> **Ne yapmalı peki durumda sence? Öldürmek falan diyorlar?**

Bence boşamalı abi, öldürmenin bir anlamı yok ki, Kuran-ı Kerim'de de belki yazıyor, bir insanın canına kıyan direkmen cehennemliktir, sen niye insanın canına kıyıyorsun ki, o insan bir hata yaptıysa direk boşa gitsin, Allah'a teslim et. Öteki dünyada cezasını çeksin.

**Dedikodu çıkar falan diyorlar ya?**

Dedikodu çıkarmanı döversin, bu kadar basit abi. O kadar dedikodu çıkarmazlar, eskiden eski kafalı insan çoktu. Ama şimdi yapmazlar bence. Şu anda öyle bir şey yok. Hatta araya da girerler yani öldürmeye kalksa. (Recep, 20 yaşında)

<sup>205</sup> Yani bak tamam erkek haklıdır belki o konuda, e ne yapacan? Öldürmek mi lazım? Hadi öldürdün ne olacak? Sen öldürdün, içeriye girdin. Mesela şimdi bizim orada, ablamgil bir ev aldı, o aldığı evin bitişiğindeki evde, koca ile, şimdi ev aldık ya, o evin hanımı bitişiğindeki koca ile aldatıyor. Adam da ne oldu? Pompalıyan vurdu. Ne oldu gitti süründü. Ama kadın gitti başkasıyla evlendi (Abdullah, 31 yaşında)

<sup>206</sup> Valla o zaman ben ne yaparım bilmiyorum, o zamanki aklım ne derse. O an ne yaparım bilinmez. (Mehmet, 28 yaşında)

this is viewed as a situation to engage in entangled thoughts, on the one hand you have the fear from prison, the reputation going down to zero, and then taking a life away, being disgraced (*“rezil olmak”*), to have your own life ruined; thus, among all this confusion, what a man might do seems really to be up to “that time.” But I can say that in the discourse all my respondents had strict attitudes about this issue.

## **Chapter 6:**

### **CONCLUSION**

Masculinity studies, which have taken a crucial part in feminist literature since 1970s, are important in understanding gender relations and finding out the relations of exploitation between genders. While masculinity studies in Turkey is far from the focus of academics (Sancar, 2009), studies on masculinity have started to increase in recent years.

This thesis which aims to be one of a handful of studies on masculinity in Turkey, derives from the idea that one of the ways of understanding gender inequalities is to examine the power relations of men who hold an oppressive and privileged position (Connel, 1998). While “honor” can be taken as a phenomenon through which the oppression of women by men and the power relations among men can directly be read, this thesis aims to understand the dynamics that shape the masculinity and honor perceptions of men through a field work conducted among young men between 18-32 aged lower class neighborhood of natives of Adana. This study discussed the relation between masculinity and the perception of honor by men. Considering the narratives of interviewees and the observations in the field work, which are the main data source of this study, through out the thesis, the main argument is that the honor perception of men is shaped by their masculinity and the importance they attribute to their manhood.

In general, the interviewees regarded honor, which is defined through controlling women both socially and sexually, as a part and parcel of their masculinity and their identity. According to the findings of this study, the neighborhood in which men live, turns into a private sphere, a “larger family”, and these men feel responsible themselves about the “honor” of the women of all the neighborhood. While honor is an important dynamic which enables men

sustain to their control over women both in their family and in their neighborhood, it is also a tool which defines masculinity and generates a hierarchy among men; the more honored and strict you are, the more men you are, and any failure of a woman you “own” leads to losing your reputation as a man. In this sense, men strive to be seemed as “tough” and experience their manhood in a very strict way.

The findings of this study can light the way for the further studies on the relationship between masculinity and violence against women, and the construction of male identities through suppression of women. Moreover, discussions about honor and masculinity in this thesis might contribute to a better understanding of women killings which are nowadays one of the hot topics in political agenda as well as the agenda of the feminist movement. One of the limits of this study is that it lacks a comparison between men from different classes. In this sense, further studies which focus on perception of honor based on classes differences and different class cultures of men can lead a comprehensive understanding of power relations among men while revealing more about the construction of hegemonic masculinity.

As one of the thesis’s findings, my respondents’ views about honor are “quite harsh.”<sup>207</sup> The fact that these young man whom I would expect to hold more liberal views in accordance with their age, are actually really strict and merciless on such issues<sup>208</sup>, presents a pessimistic picture. Almost all men whom I interviewed think that it is normal to kill women for the sake of “cleaning the honor”. Since “honor” is so important for them, a matter of existence for them, all issues which are related to honor are in a delicate position. This strictness of the lower class men may be read as a sort of survival strategy, however it should be emphasized that a whole society has been pumping masculinity with all its apparatuses, presenting men with

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<sup>207</sup> In the study “Dynamics of Honor Killings in Turkey” that I had participated, I had again observed that young men are stricter than the old men.

<sup>208</sup> I can say that most, though not all, of my respondents don’t stand in any place that gives us hope for the future. Especially about honor, all these men related more or less the same opinions.

nothing else but manhood. A further study to be conducted among various age groups will show to what extent this strictness is related to age. Such a study might provide us with the possibility to compare the aspect of manhood related to age, i.e. how much one has lived.

Another finding of thesis is that lower class perception of honor can not be related with the local differences. As it was mentioned before in the thesis, especially in the field of popular culture, honor and honor killings are perceived as a problem of the East of Turkey. But as it can be seen in this thesis, the perception of honor and especially honor killings are perceived in the same way in Adana, too. So we can say that, the perception of honor does not depend on regions but is related with masculinities as an ideological stance. This output was actually the main argument of this thesis. In my opinion, as one of the ideological standpoints of the masculinity, honor is also one of the most important indications of a “real man” for lower class young men. The main idea of these young men is “protecting honor means protecting masculinity”.

This thesis is based on in depth interviews, but on participant observations as well. As a method of inquiry when we consider participant observation, an ethical perception would suggest the researcher should be “close enough” and “far away” from the group she/he studies in order to see its similarities and differences with other groups. (Pala, 2004: 132). Pala thinks that data obtained through the study can't be shaped independent from the prejudices of the researcher:

Many of the data obtained are filtered through the researchers own opinions and the prejudices of her/his theoretical orientation. Writers who argue for self-reflexivity, the view that it is not possible to scrutinize on the social world without being a part of it, think that participant observation is not a research method, but rather a way of being in this world. (Pala, 2004:137)

After five months of fieldwork and all the interviews I noticed that I also had different feelings towards my respondents, this was also what I observed while reading my thesis like a third eye after I finished it. While before starting to work on my thesis I was trying to get the mentality of the men I would interview, after starting the fieldwork and after spending months with these men I saw that I understood them, I tried to understand them now, though I didn't think like them. This might have somehow been reflected in my thesis. Every world had its rules within itself and these men were playing the game according to these rules. It can't be said that the empathy I tried to develop has turned into sympathy or fondness –I do think that wouldn't be true for this work—but while talking to them and spending time with them during my fieldwork I started to think that they also do right things for themselves. I realized that this way of thinking has reached dangerous stages when I read what I had written.

During the time I spent in the neighborhood I felt that I was being affected, even though I knew that I didn't think like them. This the crucially important part for a researcher. In studies like this one that involves not only in-depth interviews but also extensive participant observation it's possible that the researcher goes deep into the issue and forms a bond with the researched. While the advantage of this is to feel the issue deep inside yourself, the disadvantage is to think like the people researched, and as my subject of study is masculinity, this would be quite undesirable. For example, while speaking about the murders committed with the pretext of honor, after hearing the "I'd kill her" reply from almost all the young men I interviewed, I was really surprised to hear when one of them just said "it's not right to kill, if I don't like it I'll just divorce her and that's all." More than that, I even asked "but what would the people say? Wouldn't they gossip about you?"!

This study is not based on quantitative research, therefore showing the frequencies of findings and comparing them to the population in general is not possible. However, since every instance of human interaction represents a

'slice from the lifeworld' (Denzin 1986, cited in Williams 2002:130), even the narrative of a single interviewee is valuable.

From my interviews and the impressions I had through fieldwork, I can say that there's a "pessimistic" picture. Equality of gender is based on limiting the women. We cannot talk about a "real equality" of gender relationships in men's perception. Men seem to be content with the power they have as a result of the masculinity produced through social processes. As Carrigan, Connel and Lee wrote, maybe we should think neither in a pessimistic nor optimistic way about the situation of politic masculinity:

We hope for a realist sociology of masculinity, built on actual social practices rather than discussion of rhetoric and attitudes. And we hope for a realistic politics of masculinity, neither fatuously optimistic nor defeatist. We see such an enterprise as part of a radical approach to the theory of gender relations in general, made possible by convergences among feminism, gay liberation, contemporary socialism, psychoanalysis, and the history and sociology of practice. The theme of masculinity only makes sense in terms of that larger project. At the same time it is, we think, an important part of it. (Carrigan, Connel and Lee, 1985: 553)

Nevertheless I'm among those who think that we shouldn't be pessimistic. The gains that the feminist movement in Turkey has acquired and will acquire, will provide the basis for the men to question themselves. The structure of masculine domination should change as a whole. I hope that this thesis will have a contribution in that change.

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## Appendix 1

**Table of Interviewees**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Profession</b>	<b>Education</b>
1	Zagor	21	Textiles-Weldor	Dropout Lise 1
2	Kerim	23	Waiter	Dropout Lise 1
3	Ali	22	Textiles	Dropout Lise 1
4	Emir	18	Barber (apprentice)	Dropout Lise 1
5	Doğan	18	Barber (apprentice)	Diplomaed Ortaokul
6	Recep	20	Presser	Dropout Lise 1
7	İmam	23	Plumber	Dropout Lise 2 terk
8	Halim	23	Barber (Semiskilled)	İlkokul 5 no diploma
9	Faruk	20	Repair car hoods	Lise 1 terk
10	Abdullah	31	Street Hawker	Diplomaed İlkokul 5
11	Samet	22	Presser	Diplomaed Ortaokul
12 - 13 - 14	Özer-Önder, - Mehmet,	29-25	Shopkeeper, Waiter, Shopkeeper	Diplomaed Ortaokul

## **Appendix 2**

### **Short Information about Interviewees**

#### **Zagor**

For Zagor I can say that he was the most interesting of the men I interviewed. The greatest difference of him from the other men I interviewed in the neighborhood was his strict and nervous character. Tall and swarthy Zagor also held himself different from the other men in the neighborhood. Viewing himself as “*delikanlı*”, Zagor was one of my few respondents who regularly had joints and alcohol. He was to go to do his military service a short while after I interviewed him. In the neighborhood the other men I spoke with told that their environments were different with Zagor. The reasons for this was that he didn't have a regular job and he was in constant quarrels with everybody around him. During the time that I did my fieldwork Zagor worked temporarily in textile works, tea service and repair works. His friends had a respect mixed with fear towards him. To use their expression, it wasn't good to mess with Zagor because one could find himself in trouble. Zagor didn't view issues as other men did, he had a much sharp and certain attitude. Especially in issues related to honor he had very clear and “harsh” opinions.

#### **Kerim**

Kerim worked as a waiter in his father's tea house. Having done his military service, Kerim saw himself as a sober and *efendi* person. His closest friend was Ali, who was also among my respondents. According to Kerim, because the military service brought maturity to a man and because Ali also completed his military service, they got on well with each other. As a hobby Kerim went to the bird market and looked after pigeons on the roof of their house. Also going to cock fights with his father from time to time, Kerim was among the men who saw himself ready for marriage.

#### **Ali**

Ali sold rolls of cloth and women's dresses in the textile shop right against the tea shop that Kerim worked in. He had good relations with his boss and thought “if you work the bread will be plenty for you.” He defined himself as someone who minded his business and who wasn't quarrelsome. He had done his military

service. He was a rather silent person, we spoke only a little bit in each time that we met.

### **Emir**

Emir was one of my respondents who told me about his girlfriend. He told me about his relationship with her with a great sincerity. Each time he told me that he was uncomfortable with the gossips in the neighborhood about them, and also that he would one day close the mouths of all by getting married to this girl. He was a silent and calm person.

### **Doğan**

Doğan was perhaps the most silent and miserable one among the men I interviewed. He had a speech problem due to a fever he had when he was young and he told me that nobody had any fear of him in the neighborhood. He said he had good relationships with everybody, but because of this speech problem that he suffered from, his friends made fun of him, he explained. Although he was deeply hurt by this, as he was physically very weak as well and he didn't like fights, he had to take it and parry it. His family had financial difficulties as his father didn't work, only he and his brother were working. Doğan's greatest dream was to have his own barber shop one day, and he told me he was sure he would one day succeed in this, although his master didn't believe him.

### **Recep**

Recep worked in a printhouse close to his home. Because he was a close relative of the boss he wasn't very tired of his work and he enjoyed it, he said. He told me that he had done the military service and now it was the time for marriage but he wasn't thinking of the spoiled girls of our modern times. His greatest dream was to marry a girl as hardworking and honored as his mom and then to work in a clean job.

### **İmam**

Among my interviewees İmam was the only one who fasted and prayed and defined himself as "religious." He saw himself different from the other youth of the neighborhood and found them "corrupt." He spent his time rather in a tariqa of which his father was a member. He was working in an installation work when I interviewed him. He had an introverted, silent nature.

### **Halim**

Halim worked as an apprentice in a barber shop, against the tea house that I frequented. He said he was happy with his job but didn't think of getting married because the woman he loved was forced by her father to marry someone else. He wasn't really fond of Adana, he said that Adana was "corrupted" now in comparison to the past and that the good relations among people were finished now. He thought it wasn't right for him to hang out with "children" as he had completed his military service.

### **Faruk**

I remember Faruk as a very active young man who was just not capable to stop, with the greatest dream of escaping to Istanbul. He comfortably told me that he did drugs, adding that he would quit it after his military service. He expressed that Adana was a boring place by saying "its people are good but there's no life."

### **Samet**

Samet worked as a printer in the same place with Recep. He was a very talkative and cheerful lad. He said he became more mature in the military service and that he still missed the friends he made there. He was also telling that his father had a different attitude towards him after the military service, now seeing him as a "man".

### **Abdullah**

Abdullah earned his life by selling smuggled cigarettes in the part of the neighborhood close to the main avenue. He complained about his life. He later told me that he suspected a lot that I was a policeman. He thought life was hard and that the police was bothering with him all the time.

### **Focus Group:**

#### **Özer, Önder, Mehmet**

When I interviewed him Özer had just married, he was telling that his marriage went well. He worked in his father's spice shop.

Önder was about to get engaged. He was working as a waiter in a pastry shop. I didn't see him again after the interview.

Mehmet also worked in a spice shop in front of Özer's. Birds were his only passion. In the lunch breaks he ran home to feed his pigeons in the roof and hurried back to work.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Fieldwork Experiences**

I went to Tepebağ district without any gatekeeper. Several pilot interviews, I started interviews in a tea house which was close to the main road crossing the city center. In due course, this little tea house turned to be a key place where I could find my interviewees and take the advantage of observing the daily life of men while drinking my tea. This tea house, which was a homosocial place which was composed of three-four tables, exclusive of women, enabled me to observe the men, witness their daily life, behavior, conversations and to arrange interviews.

Mürsel was the owner of the tea house. He was at the age of 45-50 looked robust despite of his white hair and his moustache and fingers faded with smoke. He ran this tea house with his son and two waiters who were from Urfa. While we were drinking tea and I was informing them about my research, a person called “Zagor” entered into the teahouse. At that moment, I could briefly talk with him. He told me that he worked in the textile shop which was close to teahouse and sometimes drunk his tea in this tea house. When I talked about my research he suggested that I interview him and we decided to meet the following day.

### **Cockfights**

In one of our conversation with Mürsel at the tea house, I learnt that he also had some cocks and he was interested in cockfighting. In the day that we would go to the cockfighting I met Mürsel in his tea house, after drinking a very strong tea.<sup>209</sup> We turned off the cooker and got on Mürsel’s car. Mürsel’s son used to come with his father to cockfight, then he came with us. In the car we listened to the songs of Ebru Gündeş and Ferdi Tayfur and talked about the elections.

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<sup>209</sup> I had to drink a strong tea there. When I asked him to have a weak tea, he told me that ‘men drink strong tea... Other wise it would not be a tea. You are men, you should drink strong tea.’ I did not refuse his strong tea offer.

Mürsel told that Adana is now corrupted, it was a better city before. Throughout our journey to the cockfight he did not speak at all. When we arrived to the coffee house where the cockfight took place we saw that there was a festival. Many people from Adana and even from the countryside of Adana came here with their cocks. With Mürsel, we went to see Mürsel's "baby" which was locked in a cupboard behind the coffee house. He claimed that this cock would destroy all other cocks in two months. He took the cock out, gave him water and food. While he was giving some *cezerye*<sup>210</sup> to the cock he said that "you couldn't imagine how much I love him.. He's my baby, I prepare him now, get him exercised, he needs some time to fight. I went to Mersin only to buy some *cezerye* for him in order to feed him better." He expected me to say something. I would like to say "this is nonsense" but of course I did not say it. I only said "He's nice... He looks like the cock of my neighbor who also participates in cockfights".

It is widely known that men enter into a different mood in man-to-man socialities. What a man thinks while he is alone might be completely different from what he does while he is with other men. In the same vein, a man, who is polite when he is with his girl friend, might be rude within men's socialities in order not to be considered as henpecked. I found myself pretending to be familiar with "these businesses" while Mürsel was praising his cock.

Then we entered to the coffee house for cockfighting. Since the people knew Mürsel, there was no problem, they did not usually let the strangers enter. Millions of Turkish Liras were bet at that night and Mürsel and his son lost 50 Turkish Liras each. In cockfights, first of all the favorite cocks are declared, so people don't bet initially. What is important is how long the weak cock can endure (there was a pause in every 15 minutes to give water to the cocks, their bloody heads and beaks were cured). For example if I say three water to a cock, it means I bet that cock will be beaten in 45 minutes and if I say I bet 50 teas for this prediction, it means I bet for 50 Turkish Liras since a cup of tea costs one Lira. Because people could change their prediction whenever they liked, the

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<sup>210</sup> A kind of Turkish delight.

bets frequently changed. This was how the bets are organized. In the cockfight which lasted approximately an hour, there were hundreds of bets but none of them were written. It was so hard to understand what people were saying and I could not follow the bets and got confused although the betting men did not have any problem with following the bets. The cocks are fighting in competition on the ring and their owners are following the fight by shouting constantly. The favorite cock's owner is rigorously shouting: "Come on son! Hit the knife as your father does, fuck it up, fuck it up like your father!" I cannot follow what people say and rarely understand how the bets are going on. I came to the conclusion that "every business has its own environment". One of the cocks gradually loses its power after a severe combat and before falling into the fourth water, its legs start to shiver. From then on, it cannot hit and starts to escape from the beatings. It is head bleeds and dazedly looks at its rival. Lastly, it fails to stand and falls down; eventually this means its defeat. Mürsel Abi previously told me that "a cock is defeated in two ways. It fails to bear after hard beatings and falls down, or it is frightened of his rival and runs away like a faggot".

Mürsel Abi lost 50 liras in this bet but he seems to be content saying that "it goes on well, I can regain this money in the next fight". After this, I leave the place as I can hardly endure all the things going on around me. Men from the age of 16 to 80s are in this place, all the losers. Those who do not have families, who lost their families for the blind love of cock fights, who were previously inmated, unemployed men, who are at the bottom of the society. And then, I ask what will happen to the defeated cock. He answers that "the defeated cock is over, we cut it". I wonder whether it is for meal or not and he says that "for meal of course!" Its taste is great. If you cut it before it dies, it is not dirty. We can have it one day". When I left the place Mürsel Abi and his son were waiting for the next fight in excitement.

Mürsel Abi recommended me to go to the birds market before following the fights. Birds market is being set once a week and bird lovers gather there to enjoy it, to buy and sell them. Here is the place for pigeon lovers. Men with

passion for pigeons are considerably quiet men in their own way. They buy and sell pigeons and sometimes the money paid for a pigeon reaches a significant amount. In comparison with cock fighters, pigeon lovers apparently seem much more naïve to me. He also told me that “an Adana man’s day starts in the birds market and ends with marijuana in the barracks.” Birds market and cock fights. Men’s world under the rule of poverty is fully dark and cold.

In the way back to my home, I heard two teachers from a private educational institution discussion on the bus. One of them asked the other that “there was a woman with you, who is she? Is it serious?” The other teacher answered him “No, I don’t have any kind of seriousness at this age, I will fairly go on like this and then get married if it is possible. Until that time, I will feast and fuck; and then I will find someone first hand and get married”. The other teacher approved it by a gesture. When you work on something, everything that you come across seems related your topic of study. In the bus I realized that no matter what their education degree, all the men are affected by this masculine reason.

### **Zagor**

One day while I was sitting in the tea house (*çay ocağı*) a man, Zagor, came into that place. Zagor was exactly a typical *Adanali*. He was in his twenties with a dark skin and he was working in a textiles work shop. The discussion that we were making at that time was relevant to my thesis project and he joined our discussion. When I stated that I am looking for young men to make interviews, he said that “you can do it with me”. We made an appointment for the day after. I met him when his working day ended. Firstly, we tried to find a coffee house around there; but then he invited me to his house and I went there. Zagor was living with his grandmother, sisters and brothers. He told me that his parents were divorced but I could not see his father that day. Before we started our interview in the third floor of an old, three-storey building, I had the chance to know his grandmother. She was sitting with children in one of the rooms of their home. She was not in a good health condition, she had a backache and flu

like all the elder women who lived their life in severe poverty. She was eating lemon when we entered the room. Zagor told her that “grandma, here is a friend of me, he is a student and we will make an interview with him”. We left the room with his “big man” role-playing. After we drank the soup his sister cooked, we went upstairs to make the interview. I could rarely see his sister, she served the soup and left the kitchen. The place that Zagor calls “my place” was transformed from an attic. Zagor told me that he doesn’t let anyone come into his place except for cleaning purposes because he doesn’t like his place to be corrupted.

While we were drinking soup with him, he said that he doesn’t have marijuana at home because he’s afraid of the possibility that his *bacı* (sister) can realize it. However, when we went upstairs, he described its benefits lyrically and he offered me to arrange a meeting for this purpose. When I said that “I sometimes drink but I don’t smoke marijuana”, he took a paternal pose and told me that “this is the best thing for you, you are a student, you should be distant from those things.”

The interview took longer than I expected, he was speaking at length and he likes talking and telling about his own life. He was behaving as if he had many experiences. Maybe, the masculinity that he is socially coerced to engage will turn into a trouble in his life, he will get injured or injure someone else for the sake of *delikanlılık*. Hegemonic middle class masculinity both supplies an ideological basis for Zagor’s masculinity and at the same time it doesn’t really support and accept it: Zagor’s masculinity is too brute and hard in comparison to hegemonic masculinity.

When Zagor said that “Fatmagül<sup>211</sup> is one hundred percent guilty, what is she doing at such a late time in the forest? She should have stayed at home”, I was extremely irritated. The day after, a university professor<sup>212</sup> came up with an

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<sup>211</sup> Fatmagül’ün Suçu Ne? (What’s Fatmagül’s guilt?)” is a TV serial in which Fatmagül is a engaged woman who is raped by four drunken men who saw her outside late at night.

<sup>212</sup> For this professor’s declarations, see <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalDetayV3&Date=16.2.2011&ArticleID=1040153&CategoryID=77>

explanation saying that “a woman with decollete dress invites the rape, she shares the blame with the man.” When I saw the professor’s declaration, I could fully understand what feeds the Zagor’s way of thinking.

Tepebağ is so close to the city centre of Adana. At the entrance of the neighborhood, there are plenty of commercial units and many children from this neighborhood who have their places in the street alleys are working in those shops. Because they are so close to the centre, they are not distant from the urban life; they can easily engage to the various urban lifestyles. On the one hand side, they are unwanted children of the city and this makes them much stronger. No one ignores the power of money. However, Zagor says that “respectability acquired through money does have an end; the most significant thing relies on one’s own humanity, *delikanlılık*”.

Honor has been one of the most emphasized issues during the interview with Zagor. He was using the notion of honor as a defense mechanism. He was explaining how manly he was while giving praise to honor. He has a much stronger and quarrelsome personality in comparison to other young men in the neighborhood. Regarding the following interviews, other young men avoid coming across with him. They have reverence with the feeling of fear hidden in it. In this sense, Zagor stands for a negative hero rather than a role model for the other young men. All of them held the belief that they will “become wiser” after doing the military service. In our last interview with Zagor, he told me that he will lead a different life after doing his military service, too. Their expectation from the military service was related to its “disciplining” functions: military service makes them mature, and they came back as an exact man. For this reason, there exists a latent polarization among men who served for the military and who did not. Those who did not serve for the military are perceived as “raw” and young while others are seen as serious and responsible.