The Representation of Masculinity in the New Turkish Cinema: An Analysis of Zeki Demirkubuz Films

Kemal Aşık

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Approval of the Institute of Graduate Studies and Research

_____
Prof. Dr. Serhan Çiftçioğlu
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Communication and Media Studies.

_____
Prof. Dr. Süleyman İrvan
Chair, Department of Communication and Media Studies

We certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate in scope and quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Communication and Media Studies

_____
Asst. Prof. Dr. Pembe Behçetoğulları
Supervisor

Examining Committee
_____

1. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hanife Aliefendioğlu   _____

2. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nurten Kara   _____

3. Asst. Prof. Dr. Pembe Behçetoğulları   _____

ABSTRACT

This study aims at analyzing the representation of masculinity in the New Turkish cinema. This era in cinema, has not only brought a new perspective to the cinema sector and understanding in Turkey but also holds a different position compared past Turkish cinema examples in terms of its representation of masculinity and femininity.

The focus point of this study is the films of Zeki Demirkubuz, who has contributed greatly to the cinema sector in Turkey with his succes and distinctive perspective. He provides interesting depictions for analysis with his characters that are defeated men in crisis with their masculinity. With the growing interest in masculinity and its establishment as a field, studies that focus on masculinity have increased. Hegemonic masculinity and masculinity crisis have become key concepts in the field of men's studies providing insight regarding the internal world of the modern day men and resulting in new information related to masculinity.

A qualitative research method was adopted for this study in order to reach a more detailed analysis. Textual analysis was used to analyze of male characters in different positions and to examine their relationship with their own masculinity. The results from the analysis showcase a completely different image which is far from the male characters in traditional Turkish cinema which were represented to be highly strong, brave and determined with their masculine associated qualities. The characters from the films reflect that societies expectations from their gender makes masculinity a heavy burden to carry.

ÖZ

Bu çalışma, Yeni Türk Sineması'ndaki erkeklik temsilini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Türkiye'deki sinema sektörüne ve anlayışına yeni bir bakış açısı kazandıran bu yeni sinema, erkeklik ve kadınlık temsilleri bakımından da farklı bir konuma sahiptir. Kazandığı başarılar ve farklı bakış açısıyla Türkiye'deki sinema sektörünün gelişmine katkı koyan Zeki Demirkubuz'un filmleri bu çalışmanın odak noktasını oluşturmaktadır. Yönetmen özellikle ezilen ve erkeklik krizinde olan erkek karakterleriyle incelenmek üzere ilginç temsiller sunmaktadır. Erkekliğe olan ilginin artması ve kendi alanını oluşturmasıyla, erkeklik üzerine odaklanan çalışmalar artış göstermiştir. Özellikle son zamanlarda erkeklik çalışmaları için ana kavramlar haline gelen hegemonik erkeklik ve erkeklik krizi, modern dünyadaki erkeğin iç dünyasına ışık tutmakta ve yeni araştırmaya başlanmış bu alanı geliştirmeye yönelik yeni sonuçlar sağlamaktadır.

Çalışmada, detaylı bir analize ulaşmak için nitel bir araştırma yöntemi, filmlerdeki erkek karakterleri hayatın farklı alanlarında resmedilişlerini ve erkeklikle olan ilişkilerini analiz etmek üzere metin çözümlemesi yöntemi seçilmiştir. Filmlerde geleneksel Türk sinemasında sıklıkla görülen güçlü, kararlı, cesur gibi erkeklik ile bağdaştırılan özelliklere sahip karakterlerden çok farklı bir tablo görülmüştür. Karakterler, toplumsal cinsiyetlerinden istenilen beklentileri karşılama mücadelesi verirken, erkekliğin de taşıması güç bir yük olduğu gerçeğini yansıtmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yeni Türk Sineması, Erkeklik, Hegemonik Erkeklik, Metin Çözümlemesi.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

This study aims to analyze the representation of masculinities in the 'new cinema' of Turkey by examining and analyzing the work produced by one of the successful and profound directors of the period, Zeki Demirkubuz. His films tend to shed light on issues regarding masculinity, men, expectations, and disappointments surrounding men in the Turkish society. His films not only have gained the audiences' attention in Turkey but he has also established a name for himself on an international level by receiving critical acclaim.

It is an undeniable fact that Demirkubuz himself has contributed to the cinema industry and to the recognition of the Turkish cinema internationally; but it is also important to emphasize the significance of the mid-1990s, as it has a unique position in the industry's timeline. Therefore, it would be rational to give brief information about the history of Turkish cinema and the ups-and-downs which have shaped it into the form it has today before providing the general outline of this thesis.

If we take a look at the beginning of cinema in Turkey, it can be observed that the first films were produced during the early 20th century. The first Turkish film to be filmed dates to 1914 and was directed by Fuat Uzkınay. Although this is a controversial topic in the Turkish cinema industry because there are no documents about this specific film; it is still believed to be the first ever Turkish film and Fuat

Uzkınay is believed to be the first Turkish film director (Önder & Baydemir, 2005). After the Turkish Republic was founded in 1923, the interest towards cinema in Turkey grew larger for several reasons. One of the most significant reasons is that after the end of the Empire and the birth of the Republic, cinema was seen as a mass medium which could affect and reach a larger number of people in the country. When the demographics are examined, it can be seen that at that particular time, a large margin of the Turkish population were illiterate. Therefore, cinema was seen as a useful tool to inform and teach the population about the changes within the society and country, without requiring any reading or writing by the people.

The emergence of cinema as a popular form of entertainment in Turkey however dates to the 1950s in which around 100 films were annually produced (Arslan, 2009). Turkish cinema reached an all-time peak during the 60s and early 70s with an average of 200 films annually in order to respond to the high demand not only from the domestic audience but from audiences from countries such as Iraq and Iran (Erdoğan, 1998). Following the USA, India and Egypt, Turkey in terms of the highest number of film production in 1966 with 229 films (Suner, 2004). In 1972, the highest number in the entire history of Turkish cinema was produced with a total of 300 films (Yavuzkanat, 2010). As an industry that focused on profit, Yeşilçam directors and production teams were not able to focus on scripts and post-production but rather simply on the financial gain (Arslan, 2009). It is important to state that cinema is not only one of the most popular art forms but also a significantly large industry, and this is the take that Yeşilçam had on cinema. After the Yeşilcam period, the sector failed to continue the success it had due to various reasons such as the rise of television, the popularity of television among the audience, social reasons,

economic reasons etc. The film sector in Turkey barely survived depending on the sex films and poorly produced films in the 70s, of course with a few exceptions. The 1980s and early-1990s have been referred to the 'dark years'. During the 1980s the general themes were dark, psychological films and films emphasizing women and womens' issues. The only positive note to be taken from the 1980s cinema in Turkey is that the sexual liberation and problems faced by women were projected in a more hopeful manner with the portrayal of female characters who challenged their assigned stereotypical gender roles (Pösteki, 2012).

The early 90s, however, include both high and low points which have marked the history of Turkish cinema. The main interest of the Turkish audience turned to Hollywood films which resulted in an ignorance towards their native cinema. This affected Turkey's cinema industry and led to a decline in the number of films being produced. Additionally, since television spread and became a technology which could be found in almost every household, people began to use used TV as a substitute for cinema in order to fulfill their entertainment needs.

However, the 90s also witnessed positive improvements such as; The Ministry of Culture and Tourism deciding to provide funding to new coming directors in order to revitalize the cinema industry which was going through one of its darkest times. Due to this funding many filmmakers had the opportunity to direct their debut films. Another important improvement was the membership to *Eurimages*, which not only gave the new generation directors financial support but also gave them the opportunity to learn and examine the practices used by international directors (Karabağ, 2005). This period was significant in terms of allowing new generation directors to project their visions. Some of the directors which benefited from these

developments were; Zeki Demirkubuz, Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Derviş Zaim, Ümit Ünal, Reha Erdem, Kutluğ Ataman, Serdar Akar, Yeşim Ustaoğlu and Fatih Akın. These directors indicated a renewed and revitalized industry since "Turkish cinema, which operated in a traditional manner, was introduced to a new generation that aimed at creating their own new voice" (Pösteki, 2012, p. 36).

The 1990s have been a milestone for the development of 'the new cinema of Turkey' which has become a symbol of hope for elevating the quality and success of Turkish films. The new cinema of Turkey's starting point is considered as the films *Eşkiya (The Bandit)* (1996) for popular and commercial films and *Tabutta Rövaşata (Sommersault in a Coffin)* (1996) for the art house/festival films. *Eşkiya (The Bandit)* has been accepted by some, as the beginning of new Turkish cinema because it embodied Hollywood-level technical production quality and Yeşilçam traditions while it was also watched by 2.5 million viewers in Turkey. This number exceeded the viewers of one of the all-time most popular films in cinema history, *Titanic*, which was released the same year. However, *Tabutta Rövaşata (Sommersault in a Coffin)* is considered to initiate the new period by others due to the fact that it signified the rise of new and young directors and allowed them to express their visions (Sevinç, 2014). After a period, which had been considered the downfall of Turkish cinema, the mid-90s were perceived as a revival and a renaissance. Not only did the country's cinema gradually begin to gain strength but also a different vision was emerging with the contribution of directors that would become internationally known and valued filmmakers in the future. In addition to this, the number of viewers which took seats to watch Turkish films in cinemas and movie theatres increased. Turkish films began to catch the publics' interest once again.

Cinema, just like every other art form, is influenced by the changes that take place worldwide and within the society it is produced. Therefore, the shifts that occur in terms of sexuality and gender and alterations within the concepts of masculinity/femininity can also be observed in the films produced at that particular time. Although the position of women in both society and in cinema has been a research topic studied numerous times, studies regarding men and masculinity have only become more prominent in the last couple of decades.

Taking a look at Turkish films from different periods showcases that the roles assigned to women and men and how these characters are constructed changes accordingly with the society's beliefs and norms. As a result of various factors the meaning and significance of men and masculinity has also changed, not only in the Turkish society but on an international level. The results of these alterations can also be seen in their representations in films. Turkish films of recent years are not restricted to male characters that can clearly be identified as a hero or a villain. There is a wide range of different depictions and representations of men in films directed after the mid-90s; such as the depressed, defeated men in Zeki Demirkubuz's film such as *Yazgı (Fate)* (2001)*, Masumiyet (Innocence) (*1997*), Yeraltı (Inside) (2012)*, the homosexual men whose existence itself is a challenge towards hegemonic masculinity in Ferzan Özpetek's *Le Fate Ignoranti (Ignorant Fairies)* (2001) or Mehmet Binay's *Zenne (Zenne Dancer)* (2012) and men which are threatened by their own disabilities in films such as Uğur Yücel's *Yazı Tura (Toss Up)* (2004) and Cemal Şan's *Dilberin Sekiz Günü* (2008). These examples demonstrate how the position of men has found a different meaning in comparison to the hyper-masculine men that can be seen in past films. During the Yeşilçam period the leading male

characters usually had characteristics such as good looks, strength, bravery, honesty and of course heterosexuality (Yeşil, 2004). Whereas, today's Turkish films challenge this 'stereotype' with its wide range of male portrayals that differ in terms of class, education, attractiveness, sexual orientation and many other elements. The male characters are no longer simply brave and honorable heroes nor are they devious yet strong villains; the spectrum has expanded and it is not that straight-forward to categorize the characters as in Yeşilçam.

At this point, I will provide the basic layout of this thesis by touching upon the topics covered in each chapter. As this study will be focusing on masculinity and it's representation in Zeki Demirkubuz films; the literature in related subjects has been reviewed. In the second chapter, the difference of sex (which is associated with nature) and gender (which is a social construction) has been examined in detail in order to provide basic knowledge that the concepts of masculinity and femininity have been built on. The second chapter includes information about the dynamics between gender and power and the power relation within gender itself which results in discrimination of and different treatment towards individuals that identify with different gender identities. As powerful tools that have a huge impact on public opinion, media and cinema have also been examined by offering topics such as the portrayal of different genders by using different mediums, the unequal representation of men and women, the objectification of women and the male gaze.

After establishing the general themes and concepts regarding gender and its relationship with cinema, the third chapter takes masculinity as the core focus. Beginning with the definition and cultural association of masculinity, the development of psychoanalytical theories that are based generally on childhood and

infancy are also explained in relation to masculinity. As the phallus and penis play an important part in psychoanalysis, it is undeniable that it protects its significance for men and women even after those periods. Since psychoanalysis places the notion of phallus as a main actor in theories of Electra and Oedipus complex and indicates that the effects of such complexes carries on even after childhood periods; the literature on the power signifying phallus/penis and the relationship of power and masculinity has also been reviewed. While speaking of power and masculinity, it is inevitable to refer to the concept of hegemonic masculinity. Especially, since this study will analyze the Demirkubuz films by mostly referring to this particular concept, it has been explained in detail in this chapter. Hegemonic masculinity can simply be defined as an unreachable but desirable ideal yet an enormous burden for most men of todays' world including Turkey. As films from Turkey will be examined, it is necessary to take a look at how masculinity is perceived, performed, considered and constructed in the Turkish society in order to have a better and more efficient grasp on the topic. This will include the specific steps (such as circumcision and military service) an individual has to go through in the Turkish society in order to carry the weight of being a 'real man'. The third chapter also includes a part which offers an overview of the evolution of the male figure in Turkish cinema, who has experienced a drastic change from the Yeşilçam films to today's films. As one of the core themes of Turkish cinema in the recent years, masculinity has been explained in relation to themes such as father-son relationships, friendship, homophobia and homosexuality.

Chapter 4 will give the methodological information regarding the method used to analyze the films in question. The method used for the analysis is a qualitative research method called textual analysis which is generally used in social science

research to analyze and deconstruct texts such as media forms like cinema, advertisements, television shows and magazines. Information regarding both qualitative research and textual analysis and their usage in media studies will be elaborated in this chapter.

Chapter 5, however consists of the analysis of the Zeki Demirkubuz films which include both unique story-telling features and melodramatic elements adopted from Yeşilçam. The films are analyzed using the textual analysis technique by looking at mainly the construction of masculinity and male characters. Themes such as romantic relationships, family, suicide etc. will be the focus of this analysis. Although all of the Demirkubuz filmography is subject to this analysis, C Blok *(Block C)* and Kıskanmak *(Envy)* are not mentioned since they are films which tell the story of female protagonists. Therefore, I believed it would be more beneficial to focus on the crisis and representation of the male characters in Demirkubuz's other films which focus on the internal world of men.

The conclusion part in Chapter 6, however, summarizes the assumptions drawn from the analysis procedure. These results will not only be presented within simply a Demirkubuz context but rather will be generalized to be able to link them to the new Turkish cinema in general. Future directions and other issues which can be tackled regarding similar topics will also be suggested and explained.

Cinema as an important art form which can affect millions of individuals instantly, the representation of gender and masculinity in films can be seen as an important tool to analyze how a society constructs and perceives gender and gender related issues. Therefore, the main aim of this thesis is not only to contribute to the literature of

cinema but to also provide a study which uses films as an important and specific medium to enable providing to the newly developing literature of masculinity and men studies.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Sex/Gender Distinction

Since this study will be focusing specifically on the masculinities represented in the new Turkish cinema, which emerged after the mid-90s, it is important to provide a background on the concept of masculinity; but before explaining the theoretical information on how masculinity is constructed, it will be useful to focus and elaborate on the concepts of 'sex' and 'gender'.

'Sex' and 'gender' are terms which are used interchangeably, which has created a confusion, although in terms of their meaning, the two concepts are different. As Prince states 'sex and gender are not the same thing. We are born into a society that is highly polarized and highly stereotyped, not only into male and female, but into man and woman. Man and male, female and woman are considered synonymous pairs of words for the same thing. They are inseparable. But it is not so. Sex and gender are *not* the same thing' (Prince, 2008, p.29).

The studies which challenged difference between sex and gender, took place during the 1950s and 1960s by psychiatrists while examining intersex and transexual patients. The main difference between the terms is that sex indicates what was 'fixed' and 'natural' whereas gender was used for what is cultural and changeable. The distinction between the two concepts have been studied especially after the rise

of second wave feminism and the field which is now known as 'gender studies'. Feminists adopted the term of gender in the 1970s in order to differentiate the biological mechanisms and social aspects of being male or female. After the liberating movement of women in the 1970s women studies and gender studies were developed.

It is important to acknowledge that the distinction between the two concepts is not restricted to sex being simply biological and gender being simply cultural. The following parts of this study will explain both concepts in order to provide a useful understanding and background.

Sex is a term which has been used frequently based on being male or being female. As an individual is born (or even before the birth), the 'sex' of the person is determined by examining the sexual organs (genitalia) which they embody (Dökmen, 2004). According to the definition made by the World Health Organization (WHO) (2011) sex is defined as 'the biological and phsyiological characteristics that define men and women' (WHO, 2011 as cited in Ogle & Schanning, 2012, p.271). The American Psychological Association (APA) (2011) has a very similar definition, stating that sex 'refers to a person's biological status and is typically categorized as male, female, or intersex (i.e., atypical combinations of features that usually distinguish male from female). When it is thought about in very simplistic terms, biologically female individuals generally have two X chromosomes while biologically male individuals have one X and one Y chromosome which can be seen as a main genetical difference between male and female. The genitalia which an individual embodies from birth leads to not only determining their' 'sex' but also results in specific roles, expectations and different treatment by the society, and for

some even discrimination. Sex itself is a label for individuals, categorizing them generally as either female or male. The expected behavior and characteristics throughout a person's life, are a result of the society's premediated certain expectations from females and males.

Sex is usually referred to as a binary category (male/female) but it is also important to note that there are individuals which do not fit within the two categories of sex. 'Sex... remains constant for most individuals across their life span. While there are some individuals who undergo sex changes and a not-trivial number who are born intersex, most people possess biological organs of reproduction that distinguish them as male or female' (McDermott & Hatemi, 2011, p.89). 'Some people have persuasively argued that sex is a social construct and not merely a biological given. It makes more sense to think of the word sex as referring to the 'reproductive structures, hormones, and physical characteristics that exist along a continuum ranging from extreme femaleness to exreme maleness, rather than comprising a set of biological features of a strictly either/or and unchangeable kind' (Doyle & Paludi, 1985). Basically, it has been emphasized that 'sex' can not be seen as a concept which is either black or white, indicating that in fact 'gray' areas do exist. It is important to keep in mind that a significant number of people are born with sexes other tham male or female. Individuals whom are born as intersex are born with genitialia or internal reproductive organs that are not completely female or male. Therefore, it is not a proper definition to see sex as a binary category. In accordance with this explanation, sex cannot be seen as a concept with strictly two categories. When individuals that do not fit the categories are taken into consideration, it is

possible to say that sex does not have the limitations of a binary opposition but is rather a much broader concept.

Although sex has been seen as 'natural' and 'fixed', some scholars in the fields of feminist studies and gender studies, such as Judith Butler, have questioned the 'naturalness' of sex. According to Butler 'sex' is a concept which is just as socially constructed as 'gender', the distinction between not only 'man' and 'woman' but also between 'male' and 'female' is also one which has been created by society. Butler's main criticism of the sex/gender distinction is one which argues that the binary category of 'sex' is regulatory and normative (Pilcher & Whelehan, 2004, p.26). According to Butler the concept of sex is constructed in a normative way from the beginning as it is a category, she states that 'sex not only functions as a norm, but is a part of a regulatory practice that produces the bodies it governs, that is whose regulatory force is made clear as a kind of productive power, the power to produce – demacrate, circulate, differentiate – the bodies it controls' (1993, p.3). Foucault also shares Butler's idea of sex being normative but instead uses the term 'regulatory ideal' (Butler et al, 1993).

The concept of 'gender', in a very simplistic view, is the term used to decribe the cultural, social and psychological differences (which are known as 'masculine' or 'feminine') between men and women. According to the definition made by the American Psychological Association (APA) (2011) 'gender refers to the attitudes, feelings, and behaviors that a given culture associates with a person's biological sex'.

The term was initially used mainly by feminist sociologists and emerged during the 1970s. The main reason for the need of such a concept was to demonstrate that the

biological differences known as sex were used as an excuse to maintain a patriarchal sytem and to limit female and male individuals into specific roles (Pilcher et al., 2004, p.56). Simone De Beauvoir, in her book titled *The Second Sex,* states that 'one is not born but rather becomes a woman' and 'anatomy is not destiny' underlining the existence of the gender and not formulating an individuals' identity based on simply their biological sex. Ofcourse De Beauvoir's assumption that one becomes a woman is also true when it comes to men too, in this manner it can be said that 'one is not born but rather becomes a man'.

One of the main differences that divide sex and gender, is that 'sex' is perceived as the 'natural' and the 'fixed' while it's not the same for gender; all meanings are given to gender, are attributed to the concept by the culture and the society, which means that the concept of 'gender' is a social construct. According to Agrawal the fact that gender is socially constructed indicates that this construction of what 'being a man' and 'being a woman' means is more institutional than individual (2007). Most scholars agree and develop the idea of gender being a social construction. Butler, who is the scholar which introduced and developed the Queer Theory, is also a supporter of the idea that gender is socially constructed. She extends this view in her book *Gender Trouble* (1990) by stating that sex is also a social construction just like gender. Alongside Butler, Garfunkel, Zimmerman and Foucault also express that sex is actually itself a social construction based on categorizing human beings. The idea of 'sex' being a result of social construction has strengthened after the rise of the intersex movement[1]. Different cultures have categorized sex variations in

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[1] Intersex can be described as individuals who are born with sexual organs that are neither completely male nor female. The intersex movement is a rather recent one, starting during the 90s with the establishment of the Intersex Society of North America by Cheryl Chase. Chase and other intersex rights activists formed the newsletter 'Hermaphrodites with Attitude' in which they shared their own experiences and stories. According to

different ways in the past, the sex variation is still a concept which is experiencing changes based on the recently developed measurement techniques. In accordance with the information given above, Fausto-Sterling rejects the notion of two categories of 'sex' and states that it is not possible to limit all human beings into two specific sexual categories, extending these categories (Dökmen, 2004). In addition, Kessler and McKenna's study about transsexual individuals demonstrates that the notion that 'sex' is fixed and is the foundation on which gender is constructed, found that this may actually be incorrect. Kessler and McKenna state that transsexual individuals undergo sex-reassignment procedures in order for their biological sex to be cohesive with their already constructed gender. Basically transsexual individuals do not change their gender, they change their genitals and body, so their is a cohesion between their physical appearance and their psychological gender.

Unlike sex, which is often described as a binary opposition as female or male, gender is a concept which includes variations from extremely masculine to extremely feminine. The way in which an individual is socialized within a specific society varies, therefore it can not be said that gender is a binary category keeping in mind all the different societies that exist within the world. Although an individual is born with a 'sex', the expectations of the people which surround that particular individual affects the way in which this socialization takes place. Socialization was defined by Liesbet van Zoonen in her book titled '*Feminist Media Studies*' as 'the various ways in which individuals become social subjects' (van Zoonen, 1994, p.34). In this context, it is possible to view 'socialization' as the process which begins at the early stages of a person's life, which includes how the person learns and shapes their

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the Intersex Society of North America 1 out of 2000 infants are born as intersex and around 2000 sex assignments surgeries are performed on intersex individuals in the USA annually (Baird, 2001).

'gender'. Although male individuals are expected to be masculine and female individuals are expected to be feminine as the result of the socialization, it is not possible to say that the individual will comply with the previously determined expectations of the society, which enriches and results in 'gender' not being a binary category.

There are specific stereotypical attributes which by the majority of the society, are believed to be fit for men or women, such as men being brave, strong, independent and goal oriented, and women being more dependent, caring, nurturing and fit for more domestic roles. These expectations, the process of socialization are highly linked with what is known as gender roles. Gender roles can be defined as a group of expectations which include the roles, emotions, characteristics and attitudes expected from an individual. 'Gender roles, structure the various 'parts' that individuals play throughout their lives, impacting aspects of daily life from choice of clothing to occupation. Informally, by virtue of living in a social world individuals learn the appropriate or expected behavior for their gender' (Johnson & Repta, 2012, p. 23). Finding out how individuals learn and shape their gender roles has been the main goal for many studies, especially in psychology, which is a field that has developed or used many theories such as psychoanalytical theory, sociobiological theory, social learning theory, social cognitive theory, gender schema theory, social role theory and many more in order to explain particular topic.

Gender identity is also another significant term that is necessary to be addressed. Gender identity can be described as one's sense of oneself as a male, female or a different gender. An individual's sexual identity and gender identity are not the same thing. An individual's gender identity develops with experiences after birth, based

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on how they are viewed and seen by the society in which they live in and from observing the norms, beliefs and expectations which are accepted by the majority of the society (Diamond, 2000). Gender identities develop within a gendered society which it is expected from an individual for their gender and their biological sex to match; in cases which the gender presentation of the individual does not fit the stereotypical attributions which are expected from an individual from a particular sex, the individual may experience discrimination or violence or face extreme legal punishment including death (Johnson et al, 2012).

2.2 Gender and Power

Gender and power, acknowledging that gender in itself is a type of power relations, are terms which are highly related. To understand the relationship between gender and power is crucial for this study because masculinity has a key role in the power distribution within most societies.

Power has been decribed by Max Weber as 'the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests' (Weber, 1947). According to another definition of power which is based on Dahl's concept of power states that 'where A has power over B to the extent she can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do' (Nousiainen, Holli, Kantola, Saari & Hart, 2013, p.43). Basically, power can be defined as a social relation in which an individual (or group) has control over the behaviors of other individuals (Bozkurt, 2013). Power is significant in social interactions, in sense that the individuals that seem to 'have' the power will be able to maintain their influence on others. Generally, the main aim of power (or the individuals which are able to use the power) is usually to maintain their

influence. As Foucalt states 'there is no power that is exercised without a series of aims and objectives' (Foucault, 1978 as cited in Nicolson, 1996, p. 66).

It is almost an undeniable fact to say that most modern societies are male dominated and have adopted a patriarchal system. Although some studies suggests that there were prehistoric societies which had a matriarchal system, it is not a very common characteristic of modern day societies. Margaret Mead who examined tribes in New Guinea in the 1930s, observed the Tchambulias. Within this society women were the ones that dealt with what was the 'business', whereas men usually gathered together and talked about their costumes. It was a norm for the men of the Tchambulias to become timid and more quiter while the women were around, since the men were seen as the 'weaker sex'. It is important to note that there have been and are present societies in which embodies an equal power distribution and work force for females and males, which can be shown as evident that equality is a possible way to maintain somewhat of a system. Mead also came across the Arapesh in New Guinea, who are a tribe that share all roles between women and men. Within this society aggressive acts are forbidden and cooperation and sharing are the principle (Doyle et al., 1985).

The term patriarchy gets its' meaning from the Greek word 'patriarches' which means the 'head of a tribe', it was then used for the Christian Church bishops and also the Pope. Robert Filmer, a British political theorist used patriarchalism as a concept which indicates a system which the king's supreme authority was reflected by a father's authoritative power in a particular househole: Although these definitions do not have the exact same meaning, it is possible to observe a pattern in which a male figure (such as a father or a tribe leader) has authority and power over the family (whether extended such as a tribe or nuclear) in which he is a member of

(Randall, 1982). It is possible to see that some individuals prefer to use male dominance or male supremacy instead of patriarchy, but in all cases the matter includes the subordination of women , sexual minorities and individuals which do not fit within what is defined as 'being a man'. The subordination or 'powerlessness' of these men will be further discussed in other parts of this study.

A lot of theories have been developed which have attempted to explain male dominance by using facts from the field of biology. These theories elaborate the biological differences between the 'two' sexes. The brain structure, hormones, the female bodies 'vulnerability' due to the reproductive system have all been subject to these studies. Raeweyn Connell, whom has studies on gender and especially masculinity, in her book 'Gender and Power: society, the person and sexual politics (1987)', dedicates a part of the book to the biological explanations to which scholars have related power with biological differences between female and male. The ideas and theories which have been developed have been constantly and usually successfully challanged by feminist anthropologists, feminist sociologists and feminist scholars. Connell states that the differences between the male and female are much less when compared to the similarities between both sexes; therefore expresses that the reasoning behind male-dominance does not stem from biological explanations but is rather a social and cultural matter (Connell, 1987). Feminists' sceptical approach towards the idea of anatomical differences as the cause of power distribution, was caused by the fact that there has been 'the widespread tendency to associate what is natural with what is good, acceptance of the natural origins of male dominance can easily seem an acceptance of male-dominance itself' (Randall, 1982).

The main causes of male-dominance and the roots of patriarchy have been a question for scholars from many disciplines such as biology, psychology, socilogy etc. The psychoanalytical explanations have also been used to explain male-dominance, especially the concept of 'penis-envy' which was developed by Freud. According to Freud during the infancy period of an individuals' life (whether boy or girl), the person develops an attachment with the mother. The differentiation between the boy and mother starts as the boy realizes the penis as a source of pleasure. The boy develops the Oedipus complex which involves the boy eliminating his desire towards his mother and identifying with his 'castrating' father figure. While the boy is experiencing this, the girl believes that she has been castrated and therefore shifts her attachment from her mother to her father. According to Freud this shift in the girls attachment is a result of 'penis-envy' which puts the female in an inferior position by attempting to explain that there is always a type of 'lack'. Some feminists argued and challenged this argument of Freud by stating that men actually envy the child-bearing capacity of women. While other feminists agreed with Freud upto some extent, stating that his examination of the female unconscious may be correct but adding that rather than it being a cause for male-dominance, it was actually a consequence and result of the pre-existing male dominanted social system (Randall et al, 1982). What Randall expresses is that Freud's idea of penis envy is not what causes male dominance, but male dominance is an effective force on individuals. Therefore, it is only natural and almost inevitable to be influenced by the patriarchal system. The feminists that express penis envy is a result of male dominance, also believe that the development of a child is affected by the way the society is shaped (in this case in a patriarchal, male dominated way). Threfore, the feminists that support this idea express that the penis envy notion of Freud is a result of the male

dominated social system which enables a female child to feel the 'lack' of what symbolizes 'power' in this particular system, which is a 'penis'.

Psychologists also battled with pre-existing 'scientific' research which was sexist. For decades psychologists conducted research in order to find and explain the intellectual, moral and health deficiencies of women which has been observed to be a judgemental and sexist starting point. Feminist researches were decisive to challenge these sexist findings and found that for most abilities, tasks, and interests no significant difference was found between the sexist (Swim & Hyers, 2009). Feminist researchers did not find 'biology' based research suffiecient enough to explain the power distribution among genders, so research on the relationship of culture-gender and socialization-gender played a significant role.

The family has been an important concept within these research studies, since the structure of nuclear family plays an important role because it has been seen as a norm and a basis for the modern society. From a Marxist-feminist perspective, the two forces of capitalism and patriarchy which feed and affect each other, give shape the organization of production within and outside the family (Hartmann, 1981). Hartmann expresses in her essay that although capitalism has shifted it's locus of control, it is possible to say that men are the dminant force in households. She adds that studies show that the amount of housework may have decreased over the years. Although this argument is justified by stating that this is a results of the shifts between the boundaries of home and market production, such as the increase in fast food consumption rather than home-cooked meals. Even so, this does not change the fact that the majority of domestic roles are assigned to women while men are employed in the public arena. The domestic and child-rearing roles for women have

caused a constraint on their economic and political power. Feminists argue that although women are the sex which give birth to the children, this should not mean that the full responsibility of raising the child must be forced onto the women (Randall et al, 1987). Therefore from a feminist perspective, this is a topic which can be explained culturally rather than biologically. Especially the concept of socialization has an important role in this belief because from a very early age people socialize with the people around them and therefore learn how to perform their gender roles accordingly. These gender roles and expectations reproduce the male – dominated system by expecting men to be powerful and force women to be subordinated.

Connell describes that the nuclear family model is normative and based on a truly heterosexist perspective which has assumed that the nuclear family consists of a women and a man (Connell et al, 1987). While in traditional nuclear families' divison of labor the domestic work is assigned to women and the 'bread winning' responsibility is assigned to the man, this has changed with more women that have entered the workforce. Although there is a significant increase in women in the work force, the domestic work is not divided equally, generally leaving the women to be partly the 'bread winner' and still fulfilling the housework tasks. In the 1970s feminists openly described the nuclear family model as a place for women to be strategically subordinated but at this point it must be noted that the nuclear family and in general the system which subordinates women is not easy to cope with for men too.

2.2.1 Discrimination Based on Gender

It is undeniable that being a woman in a male-dominated, patriarchal system is difficult since women are a constant victim of rape, domestic violence, sexual harrassment, honour killings, discrimination in workplace, marriage at a young age, disabling education for young girls and many more.

Discrimination in the workplace is only one of the issues which women experience. Turkey's *Flying Broom* states in the 2005 CEDAW shadow report that discrimination based on gender is more common in male-dominated occupations such as engineering, construction and even in civil service. The report also includes the fact that women, unlike men, are asked personal questions during their job interviews regarding their future plans about marriage and children (Dedeoğlu, 2012). Even the fact that these questions are asked shows that a double standard among men and women exist in the workforce. Statistics from 2008 show that while 69.6% of men are employed, this number is only 22.3% for women in Turkey (Çakır, 2008). The difference between the rates shows that more than three times of the employed individuals in Turkey are male. This also means that most of the men are in the public, being the 'breadwinner', while almost 80% of the women in Turkey are not in the public arena but in households with domestic roles making them economically dependent to the employed male who they share the household with. One of the reasons that women, especially mothers, are forced to be 'homemakers' is that not all businesses and workplaces do not supply childcare. Women whom have children and do not receive any support for childcare, therefore are forced to become 'stay-at-home' mothers.

Domestic violence is an issue that affects women from all socioecomonic statues and societies that results in all kinds of psychological and physical health issues

including disabilities, AIDS, depression, suicide, alcohol/drug abuse and stress disorders which directly decreases the life standards of the individual. Although domestic violence rates are high, the reported domestic violence cases do not reflect the reality because most women keep silent about it for various reasons such as women having a lower status, traditions and culture, economic dependence etc (Yaman Efe & Ayaz, 2010). A study which was conducted in Ankara with 370 female participants show that 88.1% experienced physical, 43.2% experienced verbal and 1% experienced sexual violence. The study also indicates that women may face violence that is not physical and prefer not to report it which results in a foundation for physical violence (Yaman Efe et al, 2010). In terms of preventing domestic violence media has an important role and its influence should be used in order to raise awareness about what violence is and what cautions and preventions can be taken in order to eliminate it.

Honour killings are also a major issue in Turkey for both women and LGBT individuals. In terms of the honour killings that the victim is a woman, in many cases the reason is that the victim is pregnant due to incest or rape. So, the woman is a victim of murder as well as rape. 'Being suspected of sexual deviancy such as pregnancy outside marriage or adulterous behavior is also seen as enough to justify punishing a woman' (Meeto & Mirza, 2007, p.187).

Honour killing in which result in the murder of LGBT individuals are also extremely common in Turkey, especially the southeast of Turkey. Families are not accepting of their children being LGBT individuals and take extreme measures such as murder in order to prevent it harming their 'family honour'. This is common in Turkey because people in Turkey are socialized in a highly partriarchal system which 'being male' is

a characteristic of high value. The murder of Ahmet Yıldız, a 26 year old university student is probably the case which was most reflected in the press. Ahmet's family are a wealthy Kurdish family located in the southeast of Turkey. Prior to the killing of Ahmet's murder, LGBT honour killing were kept quite because it not only brings 'shame' to the family name but also to the male identity on which the society's structure is formed. Ahmet's father is suspected of killing his son after finding out that he was homosexual. It is claimed that Ahmet's father insisted that his son returned to the village in order to see a doctor and imam to 'cure' his homosexuality. Ahmet refused his father's request which resulted in his father travelling to İstanbul and killing his son (Bilefsky, 2009).

'Homophobia is a human-made construct, fed by political, religious, legal and even pseudo-medical justifications. We know that human beings can be quick to judge, fear and even hate the 'other' – people who are different. And departure from the norm inherently implies social change and even be seen as a threat' (Türk, 2013, p.5). The homophobic attitude towards homosexual individuals affects almost every aspect of their life including their careers and their time within their workplace. A study conducted by Öztürk includes what employed homosexual individuals experience in their workplace (2011). The individuals that participated in the study were from Ankara and İstanbul, the two largest cities of Turkey. Although their stories differed in general what all the participants stated is that including the workplace they had tried to be discrete about their sexual orientation. Almost all of them experienced jokes and verbal harrassment about their sexuality if it was known by their fellow colleagues. One of the participants even said that he was fired after his boss found out about his sexuality. After being asked about how the

discrimination in workplace for homosexual people could be eliminated, some of the interviewees suggested legal reforms, although without changing what the society believes is 'acceptable' the legal reforms would probably be unsuccessful.

Transgender and transexual people are generally not employed by businesses in Turkey and are therefore forced to work in the sex working industry. Pınar Selek's book *Masks, Cavaliers, Gacis - Ülker Street: A Place of Marginalization* (2001) reports how transgender and transsexual individuals are treated in Turkey. The individuals whom interviews can be found within the book are all residents of Ülker Street, İstanbul. The transsexual individuals share what they experienced during their stay in Ülker Street, they were exposed to violence, they houses were burned, their pets were killed. According to Selek transvestites and transgender individuals kept hard objects in their house to be prepared for threats at any moment which shows how dangerous life in Turkey can be for a transsexual individuals. The book is an important example that demonstrates how individuals which do not fit the 'norms' are discriminated, maltreated, even forced to leave the places which they call home and lose complete contact with their families.

2.3 Gender and Media

In this part of the study a brief literature which focuses on gender and media will be given. This will contribute in having a better understanding on the power relationship between media and gender, which is one that is complicated and maintained repeatedly. The power relations including gender are (re)produced by media texts and institutions on a daily basis, contributing to the continuation of the patriarchal capitalist system.

Media studies is a broad discipline that has a rich literature on various topics. These vary from the effects media texts have on the audience the way in which these texts have meaning, the power within the media texts and the power distribution in media instutions in terms of gender and ethnicity. Many of the studies that aim at doing research on the relationship between gender and media use feminist approaches. The studies which focus on gender and media also have a wide literature within itself focusing on different aspects of this relationship from the gender distribution in media instituions such as TV stations and newspapers to the analysis of spectatorship and the gaze of the audience, including how gender is constructed in mediums including cinema which will be the main goal of this particular study. Many research has been undertaken which reflect that women and men are represented in highly stereotypical ways rather than representing the vast roles which women actually do have within a society.

Liesbet van Zoonen's book *Feminist Media Studies* (1994), which includes studies from a number of scholars, is one of the texts that tries to focus on almost all of the various aspects of this relationship. She especially focused on how women are portrayed in different types of mediums such as television, stating that 'not only does television tell us that women don't matter very much except as housewives and mothers, but also it symbolically denigrates them by portraying them as incompetent, inferior and always subservient to men' (van Zoonen, 1994, p. 16). One of the main points that can be observed from van Zoonen's book is that women and the women's body is constantly target of objectification in media texts. The women that usually appear in the media content (especially advertisements and commercials) are young and 'conventionally' attractive women which are usually portrayed in a way that they

are in some relation to a male, in order to continue and maintain the power relations that have been constructed between male and female.

Advertising can be viewed as one of the most analyzed media texts type in terms of gender since the portrayal of female and male figures are usually highly stereotypical and since the aim of advertisements are to sell. The representations are usually constructed in a way which the companies of advertisers believe to be coherent with the majority of the society. It is possible to say that even the creative thinking process that lies before the production of the advertisements is also stereotypical, because the 'man' of the house is usually seen as the 'bread-winner'. Therefore the adverstisements are usually constructed in a way which are more 'pleasureable' for the male audience, to be more specific the heterosexual, middle class male audience. It is an undeniable fact that advertisements generally prefer to use the female body to promote and sell their products. Ofcourse as society changes, the way of thinking about gender and therefore the media content changes. The rise of the percentage of working women and metrosexual men created a difference in media content, especially in advertising. It has also been observed that the time of day in which specific adverts have been aired has been planned strategically. Commercials that aim at a female customer are usually shown during day time, while commercials that aim at a male customer are shown during evening or night time. They are organised accordingly with the traditional gender roles and 'division of labor', keeping in mind that domestic roles are generally assigned to women and that women spend most of their day time at home alone. Whereas accordingly with the traditional gender roles, men are usually performing in the workforce during the day and return to their house at evening. ''For women depicted in media, happiness became cemented in the

home. From advertisements to TV themes, the utopian images of the new traditionalists beckoned married women to a cozy retreat from lonliness and the harsh world of work'' states Anderson, expressing that even in the media content women are domesticated (Anderson, 1995). At this point it important to expand what is meant by 'division of labor'; the term is used to decribed the distribution of tasks and responsibilities between family members in order to continue the maintanence of a house. According to Hartmann the division of labor is a vicious circle consisting of patriarchy and capitalism, which disable women to be more independent. The unequal wages between men and women, encourage women to get married and become a homemaker, which makes the nuclear family a core part of the capitalistic system.

Although the media content can be seen as the one which usually degrades, humiliates and undermines women and femininities in general (and if not, represents women as a 'female body' to be exposed to the 'male gaze'), an important message from van Zoonen which must be emphasized is that audiences can not be viewed as passive participants in the media process which maintains the patriarchal power but rather as 'active producers of meaning, interpreting and accomodating media texts to their own daily lives and culture' (van Zoonen, 1994, p. 150). Basically it is an important responsibility of the audience members to be able to analyze, criticize and even protest against the gendered messages within the media content in order to break the stereotypical portrayals and the demonstrations of the unequal power relations within these gendered representations.

There are studies which have also focused on masculinity and men in various media texts such as magazines, television, cinema and advertising. Research on men's

magazines like FHM, Loaded, Maxim, Nuts, GQ and Zoo found out that men and the interest of men are also represented stereotypically. The general themes of these magazines were women, cars, technological devices and gadgets and sports. Although the research on media for men has been understudied in comparison to magazines or media products which are aimed at women, the results for both male and female audience suggest the same thing: the gender representation of gender is extremely narrow, focusing on specific groups of women and men (Wilson & Kidd, 1998).

The relationship between gender and media has also been studied in Turkey by examining television, newspapers, magazines etc. When television is examined in Turkey it has been found that Turkish television programmes represent the traditional gender roles adopted by the majority of the society. Karahasan-Uslu (2000) have observed the TV watching behaviors of women in Turkey and have found that socioeconomic status of the women results in a variation on the effectiveness of television on these women. According to this study women perceive the average Turkish woman as traditional and honorable but they describe the female image represented in Turkish as not traditional and disrespectable (Karahan-Uslu, 2000).

Research suggests that newspapers give less space to women in comparison to men in Turkey (İmamoğlu & Yasak-Gültekin, 1993). In the study conducted by İmamoğlu and Yasak-Gültekin (1993) four newspapers published in Turkey with different political views were analized and stereotypes about gender roles were seen throughout all the newspapers. Monthly humor magazines (comics) are extremely popular among Turkish teenagers and young adults, it can be observed that these Turkish humor magazines indicate excessive and objectifying use of female

sexuality which generally depicts them simply as sexual objects. A similar pattern has also been observed in Turkish music videos which again sexual objectify women This could indicate cues of the how women are seen in the Turkish society.

2.4 Gender and Cinema

Gender related issues in cinema have been a focus of many studies over the years. Quantitative research on the number of portrayals of female and male characters in films, the analysis and examination on how stereotypical gender roles have been portrayed, the effect of these stereotypical gender roles on the audience (especially children) and the nature of the spectatorship of the audience are just a few which make up the focus of these studies which combine gender and film studies.

Many studies specifically focused on the quantity of gender distribution and gender roles have been represented and portrayed within cinema and what sort of effect this representation has on it's audience. Although this study will not be addressing the effects of gender portrayals but rather the way in which gender is constructed within film, it could be useful to see which types of studies have been conducted in relation to gender and cinema. A large number of these studies specifically focus on how these gender protrayals affect children at young ages because this is the period of life in which one develops one's gender identity. 'Seeing males and females on television or in film engaging in traditional actions or holding sterotypical occupations may also inform young viewers about gender appropriate and inappropriate actions' (Smith, Pieper, Granados & Choueiti, 2010, p.775). For many studies within this line use content analysis which includes examining a large amount of media output. For example Smith, Pieper, Granados and Choueiti conducted a study which observed the gender role portrayals in 101 childrens' films released in the USA and Canada

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between 1990 and 2005. The findings indicated that only 28% of the speaking characters in these films were female which can be seen as an unequal and unrealistic distribution. According to the study the lack of female characters can have a negative impact on children, especially on the self-esteem for young female audiences. Another finding from the same study showed that a large portion of the female characters (%66.3) were portrayed in 'traditional' roles of either being a parent or in a committed relationship, this number decreases to 34.6% for the male characters. The study states that 'this presentation of women as wives and mothers and men as swinging singles may send young viewers a mixed message about gendered parential and relational expectations' (Smith et al., 2010, p.783).

After the emergence of the feminist approaches of investigating culture arised in Great Britain; especially since the 1970s, scholars have focused on understanding the gendered aspects of culture including the element of social class (Sellier, 2010). As cinema is a form and a product of popular culture, it was expected for it to be analyzed through this perspective. Cinema has been a very popular and large industry with a large number of audience, therefore it was inevitable for the way cinema itself constructs and represents gender to be examined. It must be said that feminist criticism and feminist film theories are the main disciplines that allow film studies to be analyzed in the specific way. Many other disciplines other than film studies such as cultural studies, gender studies, queer studies and studies with focus on ethnicity all benefit from the information and approaches developed by feminist criticism, but the most ironic may be that mens' studies also inhold feminist criticism within its' core. The reason which feminist criticism is adapted and benefited from by many disciplines is that the main idea of this disciplines is to analyze, examine or to even

heal the power relations. Therefore it fits and is useful for a number of studies which aim at focusing at different varieties of power relations or inequalities that are a result of power relations.

Laura Mulvey's essay entitled 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' is a breakthrough piece which combines psychoanalysis and film in order to explain the spectatorship of the audience and therefore has been an important contribution to the literature of gender and film. In this essay Mulvey uses the perspective of psychoanalysis with both the scopophilic instinct and ego libido, to explain the male gaze which is defined as active towards the female image which is defined as passive. The main goal Mulvey aimed at was to demonstrate how the patriarchal subconsious of the society affects the experience of watching a film. According to her essay which analyses Hollywood films explains that women in the film are meant to be looked at and therefore the passive side. She also adds that the dominant male character within a film, is a given figure for the male audience to identify with which resembles Lacan's mirror stage in which an individual sees themself as a 'whole' through the reflected image which they see through the mirror (Mulvey, 1975). Mulvey's essay was criticized by many scholars which believed Mulvey's observation left no opportunity for women to enjoy cinema since they are always the object rather than the subject. Bellour explains this by stating that a woman can only enjoy these films through her own masochism and upto some extent also her own sadism (1979). Although this argument has also been critized due to the fact that it leaves no space for subjectivity and is formulated in dichotomies of female/male being equal to masculine/feminine (Stacey, 1987). Mulvey tries to address the problems that were criticized in her previous essay and finds a solution by expressing

that the female spectator assumes a masculine position while watching the films (Mulvey, 1981). Doane (1984) however argued that the female spectator's position can be explained in two ways; either a masochistic position (in which the female spectator identifies with the passive female figure) or a that of a transvestite (in which the female spectator identifies with the heroic male figure). Modleski brought a different dimension to the arguement with a more fluid explanation eliminating the limiting dichotomies. Modleski expresses that during the mirror stage developed by Lacan the first love object for a girl is her mother but in order to reach 'normal femininity' she must turn to her father as her object of desire. The initial desire towards the mother does not always dissappear. This idea supported Modleski's arguement that includes the positioning of the female spectator in accordance with her 'bisexuality'. The male spectator however usually identifies with the male figure while supressing his femininities, although Modleski adds that the male spectator may also be ppositioned bisexually if the male character is active and passive at the same time. Mary Ann Doane, however, focuses on 'female spectatorship' in her essay *Subjecivity and Desire: An(other) Way of Looking* stating that feminist film criticism has shown that especially in Hollywood cinema, the woman has always been portrayed as a sexual object for the male scopophiliac desire and that the female spectatorship has been a controversial concept (Doane, 1987). Her examination focuses on the 1940s Hollywood films because during this period of time a large number of the young males were in armed forces. Therefore film producers believed that the majority of cinema audience would consist of females which puts females in the position of the 'consumer' or 'commodities' as well as 'images'. Although the primary spectator for these films were women, Doane expresses that the narrative structure of the films were as full of masculine mechanisms as classic Hollywood

films were, disabling a desirable female subjectivity. Doane's aim with the study was to point out how the narrative process was not contributing to the construction of a female subjectivity and by doing so to form a path to construct a cinematic practice in which a desiring subjectivity for the woman can be produced (1987).

Chapter 3

MASCULINITY

3.1 Masculinity

Within the history of the development of gender relations, the relations were and are constructed generally in a binary opposition consisting of 'femininity' and 'masculinity'. These are two concepts that complete and contribute to the understanding of one another. It can be said that it is difficult or even impossible to understand the concept femininity without refering to masculinity, as it is impossible to deeply understand masculinity without referring to femininity.

Studies on masculinity are relatively understudied and more recent disciplines when compared to women studies. Feminist studies, women studies, queer studies, and critical studies on masculinity are study areas which are interconnected, supporting the development of each other. Studies on men and masculinities emerged after 1970s, establishing what is known as Men's Studies, Masculinity Studies or Critical Studies on Men, after feminism had provided the necessary foundation on which this discipline could be established. Gay and queer writings on the topic of masculinities have made huge contributions to the field by bringing different perspectives to the discipline and giving it a wider point of view that is not limited to heterosexual masculinity (Hearn, 2004). Especially after the 1980s, the feminist studies began to focus on the variety of women stories from different ethnic, age and class groups which encouraged the emergence of the men studies. A similar approach was also

adopted by the masculinity studies scholars by questioning not only the White, middle-class, heterosexual, middle-aged and employed man which fits 'hegemonic masculinity' but also men that embody other types of masculinities which do not comply to hegemonic masculinity (Sancar, 2008). Although masculinity studies has transformed into a discipline of it's own, it can still be said that it is a field which is tight-knit with feminist studies.

Although masculinity has been defined as a collection of practices that include how a biological male should think and behave and the attitudes and roles expected from them are based on their biological sex, 'instead of associating masculinity with particular bodies, it is instead popularly theorized to be a range of behaviors, practices, and characteristics that can be taken up by anyone' (Johnson et al, 2012). The studies on masculinity have not been and should not be limited to the biological basis of being 'male'. It holds a much wider spectrum within itself and the research topics include much more than just biology; such as the cultural, social and political aspects of masculinity alongside the problems, issues and crisis' involving masculinity. It is important to note that masculinity is also socially constructed, therefore it is possible to say that what is defined as 'masculine' can vary in different cultures and societies. Therefore, masculinity is not seen as a singular concept but more as a concept which includes multiple and conflicting masculinities such as female masculinity which has been theorized by Halberstam (1998) and homosexual masculinity. Masculinity is a set of practices that are constantly reproduced and maintained within the constructed gender system, therefore, the characteristics of masculinity or masculinities may also change in time.

3.2 Psychoanalysis and Masculinity

To be able to undertand the concept of masculinity, it would be useful to go back to explore how a child completes gender development. Although there are many theories on how the gender identity development occurs in an individual, such as Freud's idea of the gender state being masculine, Stoller suggesting that it is feminine or believed to be innate by Horney and Jones, gender identity develops can be influenced by many factors such as biology, hormones, sexual identity and socialization (Person, 2006). Psychoanalysis has been a field which has been used in attempting to explain gender development. One of the earliest uses of psychoanalysis to explain gender development was conducted by Freud and as mentioned before resulted with the explanation of what he called the 'Oedipus complex'. The name of the complex took it's name from a Greek mythological legend.

Oedipus the King was a character from Greek mythology and according to the legend, a clairvoyant tells Oedipus's father that he will be killed by his son and that his son would marry his own mother. His father then demands a shepherd to take Oedipus to a mountain and leave him to die; but the shepherd can not fulfill the King's demand. So instead of killing Oedipus he gives the child to another King. Oedipus find out what his 'destiny' is from another clairvoyant and in order not to kill his father (whom he believes to be his biological father), he moves far away. When he moves to this new location he ends up killing his biological father and marrying his biological mother (Uçar, 2001).

According to this theory, a baby boy needs his mother to become his love object and therefore wants to get rid of the father, but around the ages 4-6 (which coincides with

the phallic stage), he realizes the absence of penis in females. While noticing the mother's absence of a penis, Freud argues that the boy fears that he will also be castrated and terminates his heterosexual interest with his mother beginning to identify with his father. In the phallic stage developed by Freud, the development of boys has been emphasize because Freud believed that the phallic stage involved more conflicts for boys than it did for girls. Due to the reasons that the boy generally experiences mixed emotions such as love (towards his mother), fear (for his father) and identification (again with his father) (Miller, 2002). Freud's theory has been criticized by feminists, gay and lesbian individuals claiming that the theory is phallocentric and values the penis as the center of gender development (Bell, 2004). According to Haffner (1999), although it is not rare that children select the parent from the opposite sex as a sexual object, many anthropoligists have argued that these 'complex' relationship have not been visible in all cultures and societies. According to Freud's theory, it has been expressed that boys have a complicated relationships with his mother and father at a very young age. Robert Bly (1990), the author of the bestselling book *Iron John: A Book About Men* explains the complicated relationship between the boy and parents by emphasizing the complex relationship between the boy and his masculinity by stating:

> If the son learns feeling primarily from the mother, then he will probably see his own masculinity from the feminine point of view as well. He may be fascinated with it, but he will be afraid of it. He may pity it and want to reform it, or he may be suspicious of it and want to kill it. He may admire it, bu he will never feel at home with it (Bly, 1990, p.25).

Second-wave feminist psychoanalysis theories however kept the element of 'unconsciousess' but also included the cultural and social aspects within their theories. These theories generally associated the disconnection between boys and the mothers with the fact that the male figure of the family has been a figure which has

also existed outside the household setting, in the public sphere. For this reason, it has been argued that the father figure has been perceived as a more 'exciting' subject for the child since the father excudes more liberation and freedom. Benjamin termed this realization of the father's freedom and desire as 'identificatory love'. However, Chodorow (1979) tackles the issue of gender development from a different perspective by emphasizing the bond girls and boys have with their mother. As boys are from the opposite sex of their mothers, their gender development is based on a sense of differentiation while a girl experience a sense of continuity and similarity to their mothers. Also as the mother is also female, she perceives that a boy is more of an 'other' in comparison to a girl. Therefore, Chodorow indicates that difference and conflict become central concepts for males at a very early stage while she positions the mother-child relationship as the core of gender development. Benjamin and Chodorow have been criticized because they place gender development in a family which is sterotypically heterosexual and nuclear (Bell, 2004). Although the structure of family has become a more diverse concept with the inclusion of single-parent families, same-sex parents and families with working mothers and stay-at-home fathers.

Bell (2004) also expresses that contemporary feminist psychoanalytical theories recognize that it is not definite that each individual will experience the exact same social and cultural constructions of gender, they may also experience different family structures that will affect their gender development. The theories also propose a postoedipal period in which an individual experiences different genders which enriches the experience of one to experience the whole of himself/herself. This period enables an individual to step out of the limitations and constraints of

experiencing one single gender. One of the true achievements of the contemporary feminist psychoanalysis theories is that unlike the previous theories, they underline that gender development is not limited to the oedipal/electra complex but it is a development which occurs during one's lifespan. It can be said that the contemporary feminist theories establish their theories on a foundation that takes into consideration the social construction of gender and the varieties that individuals may experience during gender development.

As mentioned in the previous chapter of this study, gender is a social construct and as the two widely accepted 'categories' of gender both masculinity and femininity are also socially constructed. The social construction of being masculine/feminine differs from sexuality, as traits which are highly associated with either can be performed or adopted by individuals from any sex. Parents, family members, peers, media, the education personnel are some of the factors that contribute to shape one's gender. Individuals gender their behaviors and actions with what they have learned and experienced which are then represented to others as either being 'masculine' or 'feminine'. The characteristics which are defined as 'masculine' are developed by the culture and the society although there are characteristics which are widely attributed and associated with men internationally. According to Edley and Wetherell (1996), many scholars aimed at defining the masculine role since 1930s and they also include a definition which was developed by Brannon in 1976. According to Brannon characteristics which are under masculinity are: 'eliminating any behaviors or traits which are feminine, being successfull, achieving a status and becoming the 'bread-winner', power, independence, aggressiveness, violence and bravery'. According to Atay (2012), an anthropologist from Turkey, the dominant male cliche

in most modern societies (including Turkey) consists of 'being tough, aggressive, violent, angry and most importantly irreconcilableness'; whereas when a man is perceived or accussed of being the opposite of these traits, such as kind or soft (which are generally associated with women), his masculinity is harmed or degraded. However according to Kimmel (Kimmel, 2008 as cited in Atay, 2012) masculinity is valuable due to embodying characteristics such as 'honor, respect, integrity and righteousness'. Gardiner comments on Kimmel's ideals of masculinity by expressing that Kimmel values traditional masculinity as what makes a 'real man', although women can also embody such traits or characteristics (as cited in Atay, 2012).

3.3 Nuclear Family and Masculinity

One of the places in which gender roles, including masculinities, are constantly reproduced and maintained is the heterosexual nuclear family structure which can be seen as the traditional family structure for most modern capitalistic societies. According to German (1989) the reasons that result in the subordination of women vary but the nature of these reasons are tied to the family structure which has been organized under capitalism. She expresses that this family structure (the division of labor for women and men) is what shapes the reproduction of the society. Most social arrangements are based on the heterosexual sexual relatioships which enables reproduction of future generations. Therefore, most economic arrangements are in line with this type of relationship in order for the children to survive and receive sufficient care (Connell, 1987). This is the primary and initial environment in which a child usually observes and learns about the traditional male and female gender roles, where the men are usually in the public world, in the workforce and women are usually the caregivers and homemakers. 'The gender division of household labor defines not only who does most of the unpaid household labor but also the kind of

household labor assigned to men and women' (Messerschmidt, 1997). The gender division of labor is also a tool for men to hold the power within the household. In cases which both the man and woman are employed full time, then the inequality within the household can be seen when men are usually the ones making most of the 'important' decisions while women are the ones giving only some of the 'important' decisions.

According to Sancar (2008) who conducted interviews with men from Turkey on the workforce and the 'ideal partner' in her book on masculinity in Turkey reached the conclusion from what the men had to say that the 'ideal partner' for working men in Turkey is a woman who is a 'homemaker'. According to the men interviewed by Sancar, the division of work based on gender and the expected social resposibilities from men are almost as certain and restricted as their biological sex. She expresses that a wife which is employed is a reason for the man's authority to be damaged in the house and therefore, especially working class, uneducated men strictly oppose to their partner's employment. She reasons this with the perception of a 'man' only becoming a 'man' when he is able to become the breadwinner and financially take care of his partner and children at home. Although according to Connell (1987), 1 out of 3 workers worlwide is a women, demonstrating that there are many men that are not in the workforce which can be seen as evidence of the decline in the stereotypical perception of the 'breadwinning husband' and 'homemaking wife'. Although, generally a household is an environment which has a patriarchal system that institutionalizes masculinity as an authority, it is clear that this system has been damaged. Connel states that although this does not mean that patriarchy has been destroyed or eliminated, it can still be seen as a step forward for changes.

3.4 Masculinity and Power

Men's Studies is a field which is highly related to the concept of power. The system of most modern societies is patriarchal which portrays an image that places men and masculinity as the holders of power, therefore power plays an important role in how men and women are socialized and also is a core concept of the studies that are conducted within this field. Masculinity (maleness) is highly associated with power because of the way the world is constructed and how socialization takes place within this world. Hearn (2004) expresses that studies on which he has conducted on the topic of men and masculinity have in one way another been connected to the concept of power. Hearn (2004) adds that:

> This is not to say that all men are (all) powerful or men are all powerful; that is not so; this is especially clear from a global perspective on men. Rather it is that power is a very significant, pervasive aspect of men's social relations, actions and experiences and that these matters have continued to be neglected in mainstream social science (p.51).

In accordance with Hearn's arguments, power, or in some cases the lack of power, is an essential concept while exploring masculinities. Therefore it is significant to attempt to understand where and how, this hunger for power actually stems from. In biological terms, the main difference that males embody is the fact that they have a penis which indicates the possibility of the penis/phallus being a crucial symbol for the intense relationship between masculinities and power.

3.4.1 Phallus/Penis as a Symbol of Power

The penis has been seen as a symbol of power, this has not only formulated an idea of women being inferior to men but has also created pressure on men to be the 'powerful', the 'stronger' sex. As the penis is the male's sexual organ, it is perceived as the main and most vital biological difference between what is defined as male and female.

Vanggaard explores the meanings that lie within the notion of the phallus in his book *Phallos: A Symbol and It's History in the Male World* (1972) by referring to homosexual and heterosexual relationships from ancient civilizations. According to Vanggaard:

> In the seventh century B.C., a Dorian nobleman through his phallus transferred to a boy the essence of his best qualities as a man. Since erotic pleasure was subordinated to a more important aim this was a genuinely symbolic act, the aim being to make of the boy a man with strength, a sense of duty, eloquence, cleverness, generosity, courage and all other noble virtues (Vanggaard, 1972, p.12).

Therefore, the conclusion that can be reached from this belief is that the phallus was perceived as the beholder of characteristic that still today are highly associated with masculinity. The penis was not only believed to be an organ used for reproduction and a source for sexual pleasure but rather the phallus was perceived as a symbol which is related to attributes which are insistingly linked to the definition of being a man.

According to a study in which men were interviewed about their sexual life's, only a small number of men were satisfied with the size of their penis. The study also shows that men associate 'penile erection' as a sign of power, in terms of that it is used for penetrating women in order to 'win' them (Khan et al, 2008). This 'sexual power' is crucial to men due to fact that it 'cannot be achieved like money, education or a job. Rather, 'good sexual power' was a divine capital and a blessing of human life' (Khan et al, 2008, p.39). This can be associated with the 'fear of castration' from psychoanalytical theories mentioned above. Kaufman (1996) asks a question which reveals how power and masculinity are though to be connected at very young ages:

In the mind of a four- or five-year-old child who doesn't know about the power of advertising, the state, education, interactive psychological patterns, inequal pay, sexual harrassment, and rape, what else can he think bestows the reward of masculinity than the little visible difference between men and women, boys and girls? (p.39).

In line with Kaufman's question, assuming that a child is unaware of how institutions operate within economic and political systems, power can only be associated with the phallus. In line with a psyhoanalytical perspective, as the young boy is allegedly aware that his mother 'lacks' a penis, he may also additionally realize the situation in a household in which commonly the woman/wife/mother is subordinated while the man/husband/father is the decision-making, bread-winning figure. Therefore this may result in a correlation between lacking penis equals to lacking power. The relation between penis and power therefore for a child may be that an individual who also embodies a male sexual organ will automatically also possess more authority.

It is also possible that a young boy fears his father for the same reason, as mentioned in the psychoanalytical theories explaining masculinity, the son may feel fearful that he will not be able to fulfill his mother's love due to the size of his penis in comparison to his father's fully grown penis. This constitutes only a small portion of the vulnerability men feel against masculinity and the power that is associated with maleness. After establishing and explaining the relationship between power and masculinity, it will be useful to explore the concept of 'hegemonic masculinity' which has become a significant concept for studies in the field of Men's Studies.

3.5 Hegemonic Masculinity

Before explaining the concept of hegemonic masculinity, explaining the meaning of 'hegemony' would be a good place to start. According to Donaldson (1993):

Hegemony, a pivotal concept in Gramsci's Prison Notebooks and his most significant contribution to Marxist theory, is about the winning and holding of power and the formation (and destruction) of social groups in that process. In this sense, it is importantly about the ways in which the ruling class establishes and maintains its domination. Hegemony involves persuasion of the greater part of the population, particularly through the media, and the organization of social institutions in ways that appear "natural," "ordinary:' "normal." The state, through punishment for non-conformity, is crucially involved in this negotiation and enforcement (p. 644).

Hegemony can be seen as a subtle disguise of a type of ideological dominance. An important aspect of the hegemonic notions of power is that the aim is to create a false consciousness which enables individuals to accept and even support their own oppression without being fully informed or having full awareness about the situation (Nousiainen et al, 2013). In relation to hegemony, according to Pilcher and Whelehan (2004), 'at the top of the gender hierarchy is 'hegemonic masculinity', the culturally dominant ideal of masculinity centered around authority, physical toughness and strength, heterosexuality and paid work' (p.83). Hegemonic masculinity has especially been subject to the work of Connell in her books *Gender & Power* and *'Masculinities'*. It has also been studied in work written by Carrigan, Lee, Chapman, Cockburn, Lichterman, Messner and Rutherford making it a significant key concept in masculinity and gender studies (Donaldson, 1993). Especially in the last decade a lot of studies which aimed at analyzing and defining masculinities, hegemonic masculinity has been a subject that is used to obtain an comprehensive understanding.

In *Gender & Power* (1987), Connell discusses the three major mechanisms which contribute to maintanence of the gender order. According to Connell these three structures are labour, power and cathexis. Labour indicates the division of labour between men and women which usually results in assigning women to domestic roles

and unpaid housework while assigning men to the public sphere with paid work. Secondly, Connell explains that power indicates that including characteristics such as class, ethnicity and race in addition to gender differences formulate power relations that contribute to the gender order. Cathexis however is associated with how sexual practices are organized within a society which again helps maintain the gender order. Within the concept of cathexis, heterosexuality is the sexual orientation which is perceived as 'acceptable' which provides help in the continuation of the gender. As Connell states women are usually sexually subordinated as seen as sexual objects. The institutions that maintain the gender relations and gender order also provide a foundation to reproduce hegemonic masculinity.

Although these mechanisms seem to subordinate femininities and represent masculinities as the 'powerful', it is not that simple. The gender politics exist between both different genders and also between different types of masculinities. As stated above hegemonic masculinity is perceived to be the top the gender hierarcy which is then followed by 'complicit masculinity' which 'subordinated masculinities' belongs below and 'femininities' are at the bottom of the hierarchy. Subordinated masculinities include minority groups and homosexual men (Pilcher et al, 2004).

> There are three main reasons why male homosexuality is regarded as counter-hegemonic. Firstly, hostility to homosexuality is seen as fundemental to male heterosexuality; secondly, homosexuality is associated with effeminacy; and thirdly the form of homosexual pleasure is itself considered subversive (Donaldson, 1994, p. 647-648).

As homosexuality is seen as counter-hegemonic, these are characteristic which are associated with hegemonic masculinity: White, middle-class, middle-aged, heterosexual, homophobic, Anglo-Saxon, Christian, Western and physically active.

In addition to these characteristic, according to Sancar (2008) taking risks, physical toughness and strength, being determined, aggresive, being rational without taking into consideration any emotions, being able to bear pain and not complaining are also seen as traits that are a part of hegemonic masculinity.

Men whom do not embody these characteristics or are not able to achieve what they perceive as the 'ideal' masculinity, may feel as if the masculinity is a burden. As it has been mentioned in the previous chapter, once a child is born and the 'sex' of the child is announced, expectations from the sorrounding people such as family members, parents etc. begin at that very moment. As it is usually expected from girls to be kind and caring, what is expected from boys is to be aggressive, tough, independent and powerful. This not only affects the individual while s/he is a child but the issue of not living up to expectations may result in issues throughout one's whole life. Due to the expectations and the burden of the myth of 'masculinity' men become quite, they experience difficulties while explaining themselves, they can not easily describe their feelings (Selek, 2008).

Burn (1996) states that men experience limitations when they do not fulfill the 'necessities' of their masculine identity and male gender role; when a man is unable to obtain a higher status or success level, he begins to feel a sense in insecurity and experience a decrease in his level of self respect. In some cases men do not succeed in achieving a higher status tend to exagerate other stereotypes about maleness, as an example they begin to act more 'macho'. Due to the fact that femininities are seen as the lowest in the gender hierarchy, behaviors that are associated with femininity are perceived as not being valuable. For example, in Western societies because female friends generally show physical affection towards each other, this type of behavior is

associated to femininity and therefore men tend to keep their distance with their other male friends (Dökmen, 2004).

The fear of not being able to fulfill the powerful and strong ideals of what is associated with masculinity, men feel a sense of fragility. This fragility and fear sensed against masculinity differs for women and men, because while it is an 'outside' force for women, it is an 'internal' force that damages men (Atay, 2012). It is a constant reminder of no matter how much energy is wasted the expectations are never fulfilled, they are never 'man enough'. This situation of a male trying to reach 'masculinity' but never succeeding has been described by Gilmore (1997) as 'the big impossible'.

To sum up, it can be said that hegemonic masculinity is not only a force that subordinates femininities, homosexual and subordinated masculinities; but it can also become a factor of stress and a problematic issue for heterosexual masculinities who can not fulfill and experience characteristics that are represented in the society as 'ideal' masculine traits.

3.6 Masculinity in Turkey

The system within Turkey, especially with the contribution of capitalism, is based on a socialization that is designed around patriarchy. Therefore, men performing masculinity and women performing femininity, complying with their gender roles are crucial matters in Turkey. In order to understand the power relations that are based on gender, it is as important to be able to explore the role of masculinities as well as the femininities. As mentioned before, studying masculinities and men is a recently developing field, therefore the number of studies are limited, although it is increasing

rapidly. When the quantity of studies on masculinities published in Turkey are explored, studies that aim at contributing to the literature of gender are generally about women and the number of publications of masculinities and men are low in quantity.

'Real men have sons'

The Turkish society and culture is one which emphasizes masculinity and especially the power of being masculine/being a man. Even before the sex or gender of a child is determined, the expectations of the people around the unborn child begin. It is common for the socialization in Turkey to take place in a manner that individuals tend to desire having a son rather than a daughter for various reasons. Atabek (2002) states that the desire to have a son, stems from the traditional economic facts based on agriculture. Having a boy (assuming that he is heterosexual) meant he would marry a woman in the future which means there would be another pair of hands that could contribute to the family's economy. Having a girl, however, meant that the girl (assuming that she is also heterosexual) would marry a man and contribute to her husband's family. He also adds that although agricultural production has changed with the effect of industrialization, culture takes a longer time to change which results in the continuation of the traditional beliefs today. Another reason that the Turkish society values boys more than girls is that a son is expected to keep the family name alive and continue the bloodline (Özkan & Gündoğdu, 2011). This expectation and desire of parenting a son is also evident in the discourse used in Turkish culture. There are sayings which can be translated as 'real men have sons' (*Erkek adamın erkek oğlu olur*) and father's that are parents to daughters prefer to use 'real men have manly son-in-laws' (*Erkek adamın erkek damadı olur*). These

examples demonstrate that in the Turkish society, the sex of a child reassures a man's masculinity. This exemplifies that the competitive nature of men to perform masculinity is evident even as father figures. This can be related to what Atabek describes as a 'pissing contest' that occurs from a man's birth and throughout his whole life. He explains that as children, boys literally have pissing contests in which they urinate together in which the one who urinates further is declared the 'winner', although the nature of this competitiveness among men changes as the individuals become more mature. Although the 'pissing contest' has been used as a metaphor, it is possible to observe the competitive nature among adult men in a range of different environments and situations, such as; the workplace, the family unit, in romantic or sexual relationships etc. The competitive nature of men in the Turkish society also embodies feelings such as honour and pride which are significant factors of masculinity. Being defeated is unacceptable, victory however is perceived as what makes a man, a man. It can be said that the effect of the competitive nature of men is also observed in the language used. For example the usage of 'If you're a man pee while standing' (*Erkeksen ayakta işe*) includes the same metaphor while trying to convey a message. The similarity is that urination and male competitiveness are used in a similar manner to prove a specific point. The proverb not only indicates a sense of provocation but also emphasizes how men are obliged to perform specific tasks and behave in particular ways in order to demonstrate their masculinity.

The Turkish language, similar to many other languages used in the world, uses the world 'adam' which can be translated to English as 'man' as an equivalent to human. Bilimadamı (bilim –science, adam –man, *scientist*), işadamı (iş- business, adam – man, *businessman*) are examples of how the word 'adam/man' is used

instead of person or human. It can be said that the Turkish language itself is constructed in a way that associates human beings with masculinity (Atay, 2012). Anthropologist Carol Delanay, in her book *The Seed and the Soil* (2001) examines the metaphors of seed and soil in terms of sexuality and cosmology in an Anatolian village. Delanay shows in her study that the villagers explained to her that metaphorically, 'soil' is productive, fertile and fruitful and therefore is associated with women. While 'seed' is the force that activates this productivity and fertility and therefore is associated with men. Atay (2012) comments on the findings of Delanay by stating that although this may seem as metaphors to feel proud of, the fact that soil is passive and static while seeds are active and dynamic indicates that there is an inequality of how women and men are perceived. Özkan and Gündoğdu (2011), however have a study which aims at analyzing the proverbs and idioms used in Turkish in the context of gender. They state that 'in cultural transmission, these (proverbs and idioms) are important as reflecting the point of view of the society and perspectives of them' (Özkan & Gündoğdu, 2011, p.1133). They found that many proverbs and idioms used in Turkish, show that sons are valued because they are seen as a sign of power; while girls are less valued because they are perceived as difficult to take care of. This is evident in the proverb 'Oğlan doğuran övünsün, kız doğuran dövünsün' which can be translated as 'One who has a son should boast while one who has a daughter should beat his/her chest'. The traditional gender roles are also demonstrated and used within proverbs; such as, 'Erkek getirmeyi, kadın yetirmeyi bilmeli' (A man should know how to bring while a woman should know how to manage) which indicates that the 'man' of the house should be the figure which earns money in the workforce and supports the family financially and the 'woman' should be the one which can control the budget and sources brought by the

man and she should be able to take care of the household sufficiently with the resources. This example is only one of many others which shows that the language shaped by the perceptions of the individuals of the society, degrades women as 'worthless' and limits them to domestic roles whereas men are represented as a figure of power and pride.

'Lose to gain manhood: circumcision'

There are specific steps in order to become a man in the Turkish culture, which begins with the circumcision of a boy. It is how a boy in Turkey initiates his painful journey to what is considered as becoming a man.

According to Kırımlı (2010) circumsicion in Turkey is a symbol of social status besides it's significance in religion. Social status determines how the circumcision ceremony takes place, while upper classes prefer to organize extravagent ceremonies, the case is not the same for working class families. He expresses that the boy is taught that the celebration for the circumcision takes place because it is his first step to manhood. He adds that 'all the traditions that take place during the ceremony causes the boy to develop a notion that indicates he has a different social position in comparison to a girl' (p.23). Atabek's idea about the inequality between how the journey to adulthood is expressed differently for girls and boys by stating:

> Boys become men by circumcision, but what about girls? How do girls take their first steps in becoming a woman? Was there a 'First Menstruatiın Ceremony'? Ofcourse not. Because the transition from child to becoming a young women was hidden, wet and dirty (p. 31).

While circumcision has been perceived as a symbolic event for the transition from boy to manhood, the same case can not be said for girls. Not only has it been unacceptable to announce or celebrate the transition from girl to womanhood. The

secrecy of 'menstruation' does not take place during only the first menstruation of a woman but throughout their lifetime. To openly talk about menstruation in public is not believed to be acceptable in the Turkish society which indicates a sense of 'shame', while circumcision which can be seen as a sense of 'pride' is not only talked about in public but is also celebrated publicly. During these ceremonies the boy receives gift or money from the guests which generally include family members and family friends. It is almost as if the boy is pressured into believing that his circumcision is a step which must be congratulated since he has finally graduated from being just a 'boy'.

Ofcourse the event of circumcision is a fearful and painful process for the boy. Since he will 'lose' a part that once belonged to him and by losing that part of him, he will be stepping up a level on the manhood ladder. At this very moment may be the actual moment where the boy realizes that becoming a man is not simply a journey but one which is scutinizes, praised but also humiliated publicly. Additionally the pressure which one experiences during this process can also be seen as an element of stress at extreme levels.

'Every Turk is born a soldier'

Another important step of the journey to manhood in Turkey is the military service. This is one of the primary masculinity practices that usually operates with a single-gender and according to Sasson-Levy (2003) 'the ultimate test' of a man's willingness to sacrifice his life for the state. Sancar (2008) who is one of the few scholars that studies masculinity in Turkey wrote a book in which she interviewed men from Turkey about various issues concerning their masculinity. In the part

which she tackles the issue of military, one of the participants' defines military service from a men's point of view by stating:

> Military comes after circumcision in the passage to becoming a man. If you accomplish that then you can get married... All women make the big plans for their sons for after his military service: 'Finish your military service and we'll find you a girl'. Although men don't want to admit it, I think they believe military service is important. People with different political views may see it as an obstacle that needs to be handled, some may see it as a service to their country but both internalize the idea that it is an important step... Success is what lies in the basis of it: I went, I succeeded and I'm back. I'm a man that reads books, I'm an intellectual but I had to do it: I went, I succeeded and I'm back (Sancar, 2008, p. 169).

Military service can be seen as the sole institution, that requires a mass participation which is compulsory for all 'healthy' and heterosexual men in Turkey. It is an institution that assigns men for security and protection while excluding women, making it a significant institution representing modern patriarchy (Sancar, 2008). In a way men emphasize or learn their gender roles to protect, take care of and provide security for the state, which after their compulsory service they will use again to provide protection and security for the families they are expected to form. Although the aim of the military is to protect and provide security, military service changes form and becomes an environment in which men feel they can 'prove' their masculinity and come one step closer to that 'ideal man'. Besides this, it is also a place in which hegemonic masculinity values are adopted by young men which turns it into, as Sancar (2008) describes, a 'hegemonic masculinity learning school' rather than an institution that provides military education due to the content of the education they get during this period. Learning how to use weapons is another significant result of the service because as Selek (2008) states 'guns, despite of the shifts in the economic and social life, are still elevated as a form of sacredness'.

Through military and learning how to use weapons men learn how to use devices of violence which has a principal place in the formation of a masculine gender identity.

The military in Turkey is an institution that strictly excludes femininities and homosexuality. In Turkey, if an individual is able to 'prove' that their sexual orientation is homosexuality, they are exempted from the army although this process is not a simple and straight-forward one. Gay men had to 'prove' their homosexuality by submitting visual evidence of them having sexual intercourse with another man in which they were the 'passive' partner and in some cases they were examined by medical doctors that try to determine whether the person's anus has been penetrated and if so, then they are granted with a report stating that they are 'unfit for service'. The reason in which they are given such a report is that the Turkish Armed Forces states that homosexuality is a 'pyschosexual disorder' rather than simply a natural sexual orientation as explained in a news report written by Karakartal (2005). The process is degrading and humiliating for the individual since they have no privacy and respect for their personal life. The film *Zenne* (2011) directed by Caner Alper and Mehmet Binay is based on the issues that gay men deal with in Turkey including the process of obtaining an 'unfit for service' report. *Zenne's* tagline is one which is truely representative of the situation that gay men experience on an everyday basis in Turkey: 'Honesty will kill me'.

Pınar Selek has also written a book about the relationship between military service and masculinity entitled *Sürüne Sürüne Erkek Olmak (Becoming a Man: Through Crawling)* (2008) which includes the personal experiences and stories of men. In this book, Selek explores the different aspects of military services affect on men starting from the journey to the location where the service will take place, the relationship

among the men, the adaptation process and the profound effect military service has on the men after they return home. Selek explains that the military service has various affects on men such as; encouraging stereotypical gender roles like being the protector and provider of the family, strenghtening their physical and emotional abilities, introducing them to other masculinities which at times creates conflict but in other times creates solidarity, reinforcing qualities such as bravery and strength as masculine qualities, encouraging and normalizing violence by the use of weapons in order to protect their 'honour' and teaching hierarchy in military which will influence their everyday lives by means of other power mecahnisms.

'Macho is equal to man'

Atay (2012) points out another important aspect of masculinity in Turkey, which is the significance of being 'macho'. Atay states that there are no macho men in Turkey but rather that macho is equal to man. A man which in any way is perceived as slightly feminine is automatically labelled as a passive homosexual male. Although the Turkish society is socialized in a way which completely alienates homosexuality (which is considered to be feminine), in machoism being the active sexual partner in homosexual intercourse is considered to be acceptable. The reason in which this is acceptable in the social norms of the society, is that machoism is considered to be not only a device which is a power mechanism over women but also a power mechanism to be able to control other men. According to Atay (2012), machoism is 'not only a societal/cultural power and violence demonstration against the opposite sex but primarily a demonstration of power towards the same sex and is also a 'sociopathological' practice of homophobic violence that comes into existence' (p. 50).

Ofcourse, it is important to note that masculinity is not a single concept but a plural one and therefore, there are multiple masculinities in Turkey. ''However there are 'masculinity values' that all men benefit from and strive to sustain. These ideals are crucial elements of hegemonic masculinity that are being constantly reproduced'' (Ertan, 2008). In line with the characteristics associated with hegemonic masculinity, men in Turkey also have specific characteristics that are combined to make up what is perceived as being a 'real man'. For example, a study conducted by Öntaş and Doğru (2013) aimed at understanding whether adolescent men between the ages 15-17 believed there is an 'ideal man', how the 'ideal man' should be and other related matters. The group interviews that took place in the study indicated that the young men believed that having a decent job, being responsible, honest and authoritative were key characteristic of the 'ideal man', especially expressing that being powerful was one of the most significant characteristic. The participants stated that the body of the ideal man must be physically (and emotionally) strong, muscular, athletic and tall, emphasizing that being sportive is also important. When the participants were asked about ideologically ideal men, Atatürk was stated as the ideal man because of his characteristics of being good, brave, intelligent, patriot, cold blooded, responsible, selfless and also being a visionary and a good leader. One of the participants answer indicated that the crisis of masculinity, not being able to live up to the expectations of the society for men is also evident at their ages too. The boy expresses his idea by giving examples of popular actors in the Turkish society; he states that being charismatic and funny is the 'ideal man' that a woman desires but he also adds that these two characteristics can not be found together.

The participants' answers indicated that they were in line with stereotypical gender roles and norms, expressing that men should not be associated with attributes that are generally linked with femininity, such as being talkative and showing emotions in public. The answers also showed that some of the participants defined the 'ideal man' by degrading practices that are generally performed by women and also degrading men that perform these practices.

To conclude from what has been written in the very narrow literature of masculinity studies in Turkey, it can be said that Turkey has also been affected by the issues that have been tackled about gender, such as the feminist movement and the empowerment and participation of women in the workforce, the rise and increasing visibility of alternative masculinities such as metrosexuality and homosexuality and the weight of the hegemonic masculinity burden on men that have all resulted in a crisis within masculinity. The fact that masculinity or being a man are valued 'virtues' in the Turkish society creates a form of low self esteem in men, who feel as if they can not live up to the expectations of others, which leads to issues with the own masculinity.

3.6.1 The Representation of Masculinity in New Turkish Cinema

As mentioned in the previous part of this study, masculinity and 'being/acting like a man' have always been significant in terms of Turkish culture, as well as on a universal level. Ofcourse, it is inevitable to see traces of the influence of the Turkish society's beliefs and expectations about men, and ofcourse about women, in the films produced in the Turkish cinema. The early 1990s is a milestone in the Turkish cinema history, not only because it has been considered as a revival of the Turkish cinema and because it has developed due to directors which have caught

international attention, but also in terms of the representation of masculinities. It is possible to observe these different representations of masculinities in the new Turkish cinema in various directors' work including Zeki Demirkubuz which will be the main focus of this study. When the men from the post-1990s films are examined, it is possible to see a representation which shifts from the traditional man which can be seen in previous eras such as Yeşilçam. the Turkish cinema is examined in terms of masculinity before the 1990s, it is possible to see a very clear representation of masculinities. As Güçhan (1996) states:

> The men in Turkish cinema have been defined with their physical strength, bravery, confidence, respectable occupations, economic power or honourable poverty; they have been a father figure that protects home, a womanizer boyfriend, a cruel husband and a brave lad. Many films have been produced with these cliche definitions of men and masculimity, as in societal life they have continued to be 'important' in films too. The women's roles have been limited to their sexuality, usually not beside the men, but behind them, existing for them (p.32).

But she also adds that as the interest on masculinity and men had increased, the definition of the modern man had also changed shape. She observes that modern masculinity includes the concerns, disappointments and pain experienced by men; she adds that the concept of 'hegemonic masculinity' is one that can change although the process will not be an easy one. When films before the 1990s are examined is possible to see a pattern that depicts men as brave, strong, vindicatory and a hero. However, the new Turkish cinema brings a new perspective of Turkish masculinity by showcasing to the audience, the masculinities that have 'problems'.

The films of the 1980s were an indication of the men in the 1990s films regarding the reforms in social relations regarding men and women, especially emphasizing the fact that men have had to share their existence with women in the workforce and the fact that cinema of the 1980s can be identified as the period of women films. These

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add up to show that the 1980s Turkish cinema implied the lose of authority of men in films which would become more evident after the early 1990s.

Dorsay (2000) notes that, Turkish cinema which only objectified women and used the female body as a sexual object began to be aware of the male sexuality and began to use the male body as an object. He observes that this emergence of the objectification of the male sexuality started in the mid-80s Turkish films. Some of the examples are; Kadir İnanır in *Bir Yudum Sevgi*, Tarık Tarcan in *Fahriye Abla* and Tarık Akan in *Pehlivan*. This indicated a future change of how masculinity would be constructed and represented in the future Turkish cinema in which men will not always be depicted as a 'hero', as a symbol of 'power' but also an sexualized object. These few examples from the 80s may be considered as an indicator that the representation would experience a drastic change in the next decade.

After the mid-90s, the world of men and masculinity has been one of the most prevailing themes of Turkish cinema. The films have generally focused on understanding men which are especially through father-son relationships (as in *Kabadayı*) and friendship among men (as in *Yazı Tura* or *Dar Alanda Kısa Paslaşmalar*) (Yüksel, 2008).

The conflicts of father-son relationships have become a key element of films that focus on men. The conflict usually stems from a lack or excess of the father figure which interferes with the son's identity. Unlike melodramas, films that have men in focus are usually constructed on the complex relationship between a father and a son that is full of conflicts (Arslan, 2005). According to Oktan (2008) who wrote an article on the film *Yazı Tura*, 'the absence of a strong father figure has the primary

affect on forming a perception of an unsafe world' (p.163). He extends this idea by saying that an absent father figure in films, may also indicate a feeling of distrust towards other concepts associated with authority such as the state, politics and the law. The father figure has been seen as a key concept in discussions on masculinity because the father figure has usually been perceived as the individual whom teaches his son how to become a man. Thereore, the absence of a father or a father who has not fulfilled responsibilities expected from him, may metaphorically mean that the son has not fully learnt how to become a man or has grown into a man who is unsure about his masculinity. The complexity of the father-son relationship could also be explained through Freud's Oedipal complex which can be explained as the son fearing that his father will castrate him. Therefore according to this theory, a son learns complicated feelings and notions such as fear, power and authority at a very young age through the relationship with his father.

An analysis of the film *Dar Alanda Kısa Paslaşmalar*, which is about male friends that are in a football team, was conducted by Yüksel (2008) who also touched upon the topic of father-son relationship. In the film, one of the characters called Suat lives with his family. Similarly to the women that also live in the same house, Suat also has no economic independence and is dependent to his father, who is the authority figure in the household. Suat's father does not approve with his passion for football and is outspoken about his idea on the subject. Suat's father has a distant, tough and authoritative relationship with not only Suat but also the women of the house and as Suat learns masculinity from his father, he has issues about initiating relationships with other women. Although he is distant and tough towards the women that live under the same roof which is a result of taking his father as an example.

This complicated relationship results in a 'mutilated, weak and resticted masculinity that may look strong but is actually powerless' (Yüksel, 2008, p.133).

Another important aspect of masculinity representation in Turkish cinema is the element of violence. As in many cultures violence is also a dominant attribute of masculinity in the Turkish culture, these is clearly visible in examples of new Turkish cinema. As explained by Erkılıç and Erkılıç (2008), violence can be seen as the opposite of power, because where there is full control and authority there is no need for violence. This indicates that if male domination was fully secured and clear, there would be no necessity for any act of violence. Since violence is an issue in the regarding male/female relationship, it indicates that the control or power is under a threat. Serdar Akar's film *Barda* is an example that demonstrates the relationship between masculinity and power. The film is about a group of men that enter a bar as it is closing and begin to abuse, torture and violently harm the group of friends that are having their last drink before leaving the bar. The group of men being violent towards the group of friends are vindictive for all the things that they lack, such as girlfriends, money and a specific status within the society. The men of both groups, the attackers and the victims, both represent a sort of masculinity that lack qualities which would be associated with an ideal man that can be categorized under hegemonic masculinity. The attackers are vindictive due to the fact that they lack characteristics that the opposite group possess; such as having girlfriends and a higher status within the society. The group of men which are victims lack the toughness and the necessary strength to protect their girlfriends and themselves. 'Masculine violence, which was directed at women in the past, is now also directed towards this new type of man that does not achieve the exalted male model' (Oktan,

2008). In this film, both groups of men represent masculities that are 'damaged' in one way or another.

The 90s have also been a milestone for the representation of gay and transgender men which in previous periods was either excluded or represented in a degrading way in Turkish cinema. With films such as *Zenne*, *The Turkish Bath* and *Ignorant Fairies*, *Lola and Bilikid* homosexuality and trangenderism has began to be a subject which has been taken seriously. This indicates that not only has Turkish cinema changed in terms of representing a whole new range of masculinity but also 'men which would have been a source of 'shame' in previous periods of Turkish cinema are now becoming more visible' (Oktan, 2008). The fact that issues regarding LGBT individuals have become more visible, more spoken about and less of a topic described as a taboo, the representation has increased in media. Turkish cinema, which used homosexuality as a comic element in the past, has now produced films which shed light on the problems that are faced by gay men in the conservative nation of Turkey. This ofcourse is a positive shift since it pulls away from the stereotypical LGBT individuals which were commonly represented in media. For example in the film *Zenne*, we see the story of three homosexual men that are drastically different from each other yet face similar problems regarding their sexual orientations. The fact that these stories are told in a more realistic and educational manner may shed light on he difficulties that gay men experience in countries like Turkey. These film representations may even contribute to changing the society's attitute towards groups such as LGBT individuals who are marginalized by the majority of the public. Although cinema is perceived as a form and tool for

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entertainment, it is possible that it can be used to educate, bring attention, awake and even create reactions to specific issues by the viewers.

Turkish films produced after the mid-90s shows that the cinema of Turkey has also been affected by changes in the society, especially in terms of the shifts observed in gender roles. It is possible to see a whole range of masculinities from emotional, romantic and caring to psychopathic and unstable (Atasoy, 2013). The new Turkish cinema represents a new chapter for Turkish cinema, where men are the center of the story-telling. But this time not for there strength, bravery and heroism but rather for the issues, crisis, friendships, troubles and emotions in which they experience.

Chapter 4

METHODOLOGY

4.1 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research, as a controversial approach, has gained significance during the past few decades and has been used in various disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, psyhcology, communication and media studies, gender studies, nursing, medicine etc. To establish and agree on one single definition for qualitative research has been a tough task but it the nature of qualitative research is as follows:

> The key to understanding qualitative research lies with the idea that meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world. The world, or reality, is not fixed, single, agreed upon or a measurable phenomenon that it is assumed to be in positivist, quantitative research. Instead there are multiple constructions and interpretations of reality that are in flux and that change over time (Merriam, 2002, p.3).

Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research is not based on findings which are drawn from statistics, experiments and other research methods which tend to express their results numerically. Qualitative research uses expressions such as words and picturs in order to deliver the descriptive and detailed information a researcher has gained from a particular topic. The main aim in this type of research is to explain, describe and interpret (Williams, 2007).

A qualitative research method was adopted in this study in order to have a deep, meaningful understanding of the representation of masculinity in the Turkish cinema, specifically in the Zeki Demirkubuz filmography. Gender, as such a delicate issue,

can be better analyzed by using such methods in order to penetrate in a more detailed manner. Although quantitative research studies do contribute to both literature of gender and film studies, they provide solely statistical information rather than answering questions such as 'why' and 'how'.

4.1.1 Textual Analysis

One of the commonly used qualitative research methods in the fields of media and film studies is textual analysis. When the term "textual" is first encountered it can be perceived to include only material that convey messages through a written language. This would be a misconception since messages can be sent and spread using other forms of medium. In this sense "film" itself is also a text and can be read. Although it is not constructed by using written words, it utilizes visual images, music, sounds, gestures, and many other elements that provide a language which can be read and interpreted by members of audience.

According to Güneş (2010) since the second half of the 19th century, textual analysis has been a research method which is used in a wide range of disciplines from advertising to fine art and from music to architecture. The method provides a deeper interpretation in various disciplines which is why it is preferred and can be used extensively. The main aim of the usage of textual analysis is:

> We interpret texts (films, television programmes, magazines, advertisements, clothes, graffiti and so on) in order to try and obtain a sense of the ways in which, in particular cultures at particular times, people make sense of the world around them (McKee, 2003, p.1).

Although textual analysis is a frequently used method considering qualitative research in media studies, it is also a very controversial one. Since textual analysis deconstructs a text in order obtain and find the deeper message underneath, it is very open to interpretation. Some scholars, see this as a negative attribute of this particular

research while some argue that a text can not have only one 'true' or 'real' interpretation; therefore this quality regarding this method is not a negative characteristic as some believe.

Since textual analysis serves as a method that deconstructs and breaks down texts to discover meaning, it is a perfectly suitable method to be adopted in terms of the objective of this thesis. The films of Demirkubuz have been treated as texts and have been analyzed in terms of their representation of masculinity.

4.2 Sampling and Research Questions

This thesis focuses on the shifts in representation of masculinity in Turkish cinema after the mid-1990s. As one of the most successful Turkish directors of the new Turkish cinema, Zeki Demirkubuz's filmography has been selected to be analyzed. The representation of men and masculinity has gone through drastic changes throughout the history of Turkish cinema and the recent status of men is visible within Demirkubuz's films. Therefore, I have seleceted to analyze the following films of Zeki Demirkubuz:

- *Masumiyet (Innocence)* (1997)

- *Üçüncü Sayfa (The Third Page)* (1999)

- *Yazgı (Fate)* (2001)

- *İtiraf (Confession)* (2001)

- *Bekleme Odası (The Waiting Room)* (2003)

- *Kader (Destiny)* (2005)

- *Yeraltı (Inside)* (2012)

Other than the films listed above Demirkubuz has directed two other films, C Blok (Block C) (1994) and Kıskanmak (Envy) (2009). These two films are stories in which the main characters are women and since this thesis aims at explaining the status of men in Demirkubuz films they have not been analyzed. Although it is possible to analyze masculinity through these female characters, in order to give a more detailed and in-depth analysis of the general atmosphere of Demirkubuz films, I thought it would be better to narrow down the subjects of the analysis.

Rather than analyzing each film independently, themes which depict and relate to problems faced with masculinity have been drawn. The analysis has been conducted within these themes which consist of love, deceiving, violence, family and self-destruction. Questions which are attempted to be answered through the analysis of these films are:

- ❖ How do the men perceive the concept of 'love'? How do they approach their romantic relationships?
- ❖ In which situations do these men use violence? Who are the victims of this violence and why?
- ❖ Why do these men despreately need to form a family? How do they attempt creating their own families?
- ❖ Why do these men attempt suicide? What is the reasoning behind their hopelessness?

The questions given above are the core questions that have motivated this analysis. Therefore these questions are addressed under the appropriate themes which are drawn from the films of Demirkubuz.

After establishing the method, sampling and questions have been provided Chapter 5

will include the analysis based on this information.

Chapter 5

ANALYSES

One of the distinguishing features of the new Turkish cinema, which emerged after the 1990s, is the focus which has been turned to men, which includes the crisis they explore with their own masculinity. In this part of the study particular themes of Zeki Demirkubuz films have been examined in terms of masculinity. While using the textual analysis methods, the dynamics of male-female relationships, the absence of stability and inability to form a family and the crisis in which these men experience while not being able to succeed will be examined. Ewing (2008) explains the widely selected focus of the new cinema of Turkey by stating:

> Films made by young filmmakers [Derviş Zaim, Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Zeki Demirkubuz. *KA*] in Turkey depict concerns with masculinity and power that are linked nostalgically with the themes of masculinity and honor. Zeki Demirkubuz, for example, returns repeatedly to the theme of the erosion of masculinity and power in his films (Ewing, 2008, p.124).

The main characters of Demirkubuz's films are male characters, although *C Blok* (*Block C, 1994)* and *Kıskanmak (Envy, 2009)* can be accepted as exceptions, considering that both of these films are stories which have been constructed around mainly a female character.

The conflict of dichotomies such as male/female, man/woman, masculine/feminine, good/evil, innocent/guilty are often played off from the point of view of the main male character. The struggle and shift between these dichotomies is one of main elements the director tackles in his directed films. This is a trait which has been a

signature element of the earlier films produced in Turkey, especially in melodramas which has been mentioned in previous chapters. Melodramatic elements have been effectively used in Turkish cinema, especially during the Yeşilçam period. *Vesikalı Yarim* is a good example for the unique usage of melodramatic elements; it has been subject to analysis and reading in detail in the book *Çok Tuhaf Çok Tanıdık* (Abisel, 2005). Demirkubuz way of using these dichotomies can be seen as a more subtle touch when compared to the traditional melodramas in which the opposite characteristic were portrayed in a very strong manner.

The male characters of his films have been portrayed as defeated, victimized characters that have not been represented as successful in fulfilling most aspects that have been associated with hegemonic masculinity. As hegemonic masculinity is centered around concepts and attributes such as strength, power and authority; the majority of the Demirkubuz men do not embody most of the characteristics related to hegemonic masculinity which have been discussed in previous chapters. The reality of not being able to fulfill the requirements of masculinity constructed by the society eventuates in a crisis for men. Atasoy states that "his (Zeki Demirkubuz) men are portrayed as weak, powerless, soft and passive regardless of their economic or educational status" (Atasoy, 2013). This explanation can be seen as a nutshell review of how the Demirkubuz men are constructed and how he differs from the traditional man complying to traits related to hegemonic masculinity. The reasoning which results in such a representation could be explained by stating that his films reflect the changes which occur within the society and the world. Occurences such as the empowerment of women and it's effect on the economic, social and family life, the acceptance and rise of alternative masculinities such as men with sexual orientations

other than heterosexuality and transmen all serve in the weakening of the gender stereotypes and challenge the perception of what being a 'man' really means.

The weak and unsuccessful position imposed on the Demirkubuz men can also be reviewed through analyzing the construction of their romantic relationships. Having a heterosexual and stable relationship is an important aspect of the ideals of hegemonic masculinity. In the Turkish culture marriage is accepted as a stage of manhood following circumsicion and military service. As cited by Bozok (2011) according to cultural anthropologist Gilmore, the requirements of masculinity in countries in the Mediterranean region can be listed into four statements. According to his intercultural study *Manhood in the Making*, a man from the Mediterranean region is required to impregnate his partner (which must indicate a man's sexual power), provide for individuals that are dependent on him (which refers to the importance of being a patriarchal figure), protect his family (which reflects masculine qualities such as fearlessness and strength) and have personal independence (which indicates a man should be able to take care of himself as well as others, requiring help and support is not perceived as acceptable for men).

The conclusion that can be drawn from these statements is that in order for a man to be perceived as a 'real man' by the society, he must be able to fulfill the conditions above which are linked to having a heterosexual relationship. Films directed by Demirkubuz become an appropriate subject for this analysis, since the main issues projected in his films are the failures of men in their romantic and personal lives. In the light of this information, the analysis will focus on examining how the male-female relationships are constructed and what kind of effects the men's success and failure in these relationships have on their masculinity.

5.1 Love: Obsessed to Conquer

As mentioned above the men in Zeki Demirkubuz films do not fully comply with the expectations of the society which are associated with being a 'man'. The unsuccessful status of these male characters in terms of traditional masculinity has been demonstrated while constructing their relatioships with the women they are romantically linked to. The relationships between the men and women in the films generally consist of a man who seems to be unconditionally devoted to the women in his life, regardless of the women's actions, which at times can be viewed as morally questionable, rather than a mutual love and trust between both parties. In terms of romantic relationships, it is a common theme in Zeki Demirkubuz films for the emotion of 'love' to be showcased in a form of worship which leads to extreme actions in order to prove the level of commitment of the male characters.

The reasoning behind the extreme level of devotion may lead to the assumption that these characters perceive being in a committed relationship with a woman as a significant step to being seen as a 'real man'. It is possible to state that these defeated characters, see conquering a particular woman in mind, making her his own as an objective which must be tackled. To make up for all their other flaws and misfortunes in terms of not being able to become the 'ideal man'; owning the woman they want, not only sexually but also romantically, becomes an obstacle which must be accomplished. In terms of gender in the traditional Turkish culture, which is based on a highly patriarchal system, the woman is generally accepted as a 'commodity' that a man is obliged to protect and provide for. Rather than being perceived as an individual, the woman is perceived as something owned by the man in which she is in a relationship with. Before a woman is married, she is under the supervision and

full control of her father or older male siblings. Once she is married, the authority figure is transferred from one male (the father or brother) to another male (a husband). In all cases, a woman is under the control of a male figure which emphasizes the power distribution in terms of gender and reproduces patriarchal norms.

In this sense, the director's films represent an attempt of the male characters trying to become an authority figure in a desired woman's life. Since the female characters of the director's films are not portrayed as naive and easily subordinated individuals, the male characters are constructed as patient, forgiving and devoted characters. According to Cebenoyan the Demirkubuz men can be classified into two groups: one which is passionate and obsessed to accomplish the target and one whom passive nature is emphasized. Another important aspect which has been identified by Cebenoyan is that many of these men try an pursue relationships with women which already with other men. They are passionate and almost obsessive to conquer someone which is already 'taken'. Therefore, these men will not only feel powerful by achieving a relationship with the woman they desire but by also defeating another man. They will be able to perform an act which indicates power and a sense of accomplishment over both women and men. He reasons the situation by stating that these men experience an oedipal crisis which led them to direct their attention towards a female figure rather than a father figure. This results in an vital necessity for these men to have a strong female figure in their lives since are unable to recall a time with a strong male figure. Since the background of these men are not fully represented in these films Cüneyt's explanation can be taken as a possible yet logical

assumption which explains the core reason which motivates these men to pursue these specifically strong-willed, powerful female characters (Cebenoyan, 2010).

The real questionable part of this devotion which is demonstrated, is whether the men feel an unconditional love towards the woman or they are devoted to fulfill their desire of succeeding in conquering a goal they wish to complete. The intention that lies beneath this devotion is an issue of concern, since it is vague or not so clear whether the men have a desire towards the individual or a desire of the accomplished feeling they will receive once they get their ultimate wish. The concept of love in Zeki Demirkubuz films will be analyzed in accordance with the information given and questions raised above.

When Demirkubuz films are examined many complicated love stories can be seen, unrequited and complicated romantic relationships are one of the main elements of his filmography. The characters who feel the unrequited love are usually the male characters. In *Masumiyet* the audience is encountered with Bekir, a man who follows the women he loves around for 20 years and loses his job, house and family and Yusuf, who is afraid from the world outside prison and ironically finds himself in the center of a dangerous and violent love triangle. *Üçüncü Sayfa* ise about İsa, a man who considers murder in order to please Meryem and to win her over. In *İtiraf*, Harun is in a unhealthy relationship which leads to the suicide of his best friend. In *Kader*, the audience ones again views Bekir's obsession towards Uğur.

The similarity of the romantic relationships showcased in these films is that the male characters take extreme measures and behaviours in order to maintain their relationships with the female characters. Since marriage and forming a family

constitutes a foundation in terms of masculinity in Turkey and since these male characters are constructed as individuals which are exposed to these cultural norms, they perceive maintaining a successful heterosexual relationship as a step to achieving their masculine ideal. It is significant to identify that the extreme behaviors performed by these characters is in order to reach their objective of reaching their ideal self under the disguise of being sacrificial and selfless in the name of love. The real reason of these acts is to be accepted and respected as a man by the society.

Keeping in mind that Bekir had a previous marriage and that the other male characters could have pursued relationships with other women, it is significant that the woman in which these character initiate a relatiponship with are not just any woman. A desired woman whom has been chosen as a specific target to tackle becomes significant. Being able to have a relationship with the particular desired woman becomes satisfactory in terms of the male character's sense of masculinity. Decisiveness, determination and aggression which are attributes highly related to the concept of masculinity, which function as validation of one's masculinity, leads to the assumption that the necessity to validate one's masculinity serves as a reason that lies beneath the obsession towards these women.

Once the women that the Demirkubuz men fixate on are examined, it is possible to observe that they are constructed as strong-willed, decisive women. Uğur's desire to be with Zagor and her persistence in continuing prostitution, Meryem's efforts in using three men in order to eliminate her husband, Nilgün's decisiveness in continuing her affair despite the fact of Harun's awareness; all serve as evidence that the female characters in Demirkubuz films do not strictly comply with the traditional

gender roles regarding women. While Demirkubuz created his male characters as insufficient in terms of bravery, determination and strength, the women are created as extemely aggressive and brave which underlines Demirkubuz's effort at playing with the dichotomy of feminine/masculine. Qualities highly associated with masculinity are attributed to and performed by the women in these films. In this sense, it can be said that 'conquering' these women become an obsession for these men because these women embody characteristics that are absent in them as men. The attribution of masculine characteristics to female characters, the fearless attitude of the female characters towards the men and the constant internal battle the male characters have with their masculinity demonstrates the masculinity crisis which today's man deals with.

Zeki Demirkubuz uses the concept of love as an unreachable ideal. Succeeding in love will validate a man's masculinity and serve as a tool to dominate women. In his films, it can be observed that the traditional gender roles and norms are used in reversal upto some level. In line with modernity, the Demirkubuz women are represented as a more confident and independent type of woman. In this sense the Demirkubuz men, who has been exposed to a culture stemming from male domintion and patriarchy, feels jealousy and a certain level of weakness against these powerful women.

Love has been used as a tool for the director to describe the changing dynamics in romantic relationship among men and women from a male perspective. As the audience we see these male characters weaken and lose power against a combination of the unbearable will to conquer a woman and the norms regarding masculinity which they are obliged to reproduce.

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5.2 Deceiving: A Female Act?

Demirkubuz is a director who enjoys exploring the good/bad dichotomy and the depth of human relationships and interactions in terms of this dichotomy in the films that he has directed. It is almost impossible to distinguish which character is innocent and which character is evil, as his characters are complicated since they perform qualities which can't be strictly categorized unlike the melodramas which the Turkish cinema has produced in the past. This ambiguous nature of not being able to select a clear victim also extends to the romantic relationships among the Demirkubuz men and women. One of the popular themes of his films is the fact that, in spite of the belief that men are perceived as manipulative and tend to resort to cheating more often than women, the women are positioned as unfaithful in the romantic relationships.

Although there is a general public opinion that men are generally the party who cheat on their partner, Demirkubuz chooses to construct the female characters as the individual whom is involved in an act of infidelity. Although these 'infidelities' are questionable, the audience views these stories from the main male character's perspective. The quote below from an interview with the director explains the reasoning behind his construction of such relationships involving dynamics between masculinity and femininity, which are less frequently encountered:

> I find the suffering of a man more interesting and also it's not a subject that is commonly explored. The human race prefers to think based on physical data. And while thinking of a woman, they tend to think based on the inequalities, unjust actions, the second-class citizen status of women but I believe that men have a similar situation too. When a women cheats, it's is tragic in every sense and it's worth making into a film (Öztürk, 2006).

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It is clear that the director perceives the pain and suffering of a man who has been deceived to be a greater one when compared to a woman. This view of the director may stem from the perception that women are generally associated with being loyal and faithful when it comes to relationships among couples. Therefore, the infidelity of a woman can raise a higher reaction taking into consideration the socially constructed and various expectations that surround men and women in the gender binary system. By creating stories in which women oppose and challenge this stereotypical belief, gives the audience and the director himself a higher satisfaction in terms of viewing a dramatic storyline.

In films included within his filmography, all the storylines include infidelity and unfaithfullness and the situation the men are placed in due to these affairs. Tülay in *C Blok*, Uğur and Yusuf's sister in *Masumiyet,* Meryem in *Üçüncü Sayfa*, Sinem in *Yazgı*, Nilgün in *İtiraf,* Uğur in *Kader*, Serap in *Bekleme Odası* and Mükerrem in *Kıskanmak* are all female characters which are portrayed as women which have deceived the men in their lives by having affair or sexual encounters with other men.

In spite of the fact that these women are portrayed as the deceiving party, one of the controversial issues considering the Demirkubuz women are whether they are *femme fatale* characters or not. A *femme fatale* can be defined as an evil woman who deceives men using their sexuality. These characters place these men into situations which endanger their personalities, material assets and social status. As the leading characters of the Demirkubuz films are men and the stories are told mainly from their perspective, many members of the audience perceive the female characters as villians. This leads to a feeling of pity towards the male characters. According to Güler (2012) to define the women of the Demirkubuz films as *femme fatale* would be

a misinterpretation and would be approaching them with an incomplete understanding. Although Güler states that the female characters do not use their sexuality to take advantage of the men, they are partly *femme fatale* in the sense that they do become a threat for these men. Sinem from *Yazgı* and Meryem from *Üçüncü Sayfa* can be accused to be partly *femme fatale* in some aspects. While Meryem tries to trick İsa by giving him false hope in order to get her husband killed, she continues her affair with the landlord's son who is financially stable. Meryem perceives İsa as a tool to achieve a perfect life by eliminating her husband and finding a future partner which will be able to provide her and her children's needs. Sinem in the film *Yazgı*, however, marries Musa although she has no feelings for him in order to take revenge from her married employer who she is having an affair with. After her employer Naim murders his family, Sinem blames Musa which leads to him getting punished with a prison sentence. These two female characters, give the male characters false hope which results in negative consequences for Musa and İsa. Although it would be incorrect to generalize all Demirkubuz women as *femme fatale*, Sinem and Meryem are close to the *femme fatale* definition while using their charm in order to improve their lives.

When the other examples are examined, it can be observed that the other female characters do not give false hope to the male characters but the hope the men have about initiating a relationship with these women may lead to a false conception. In *Masumiyet*, although Uğur does not give any positive reaction towards Bekir's feelings, he still believes he has the right to become protective and give violent, abusive and jealous reactions to her actions. Bekir gives up on his own wife and family in order to be with Uğur which can be interpreted as Bekir cheating on his

wife, his reactions indicate a dilemma in terms of his attitude. In *İtiraf*, although Harun and Nilgün's relationship begins as an affair and leads to Taylan's suicide, Harun overreacts to Nilgün's affair with another man. In spite of the fact that Harun has also committed similar unethical actions, he believes blaming Nilgün is justified. In *Yeraltı* after finding out that Türkan decides to marry her employer who is Muharrem's landlord, he feels deceived. Although these two characters do not have a romantic connection, Muharrem's strategy to murder the landlord with the assistance of Türkan does not take place which leads to Muharrem showcasing abusive reactions.

These relationships are constructed in a way in which the men are in expectations that are not reciprocated by the woman who clearly do not make a commitment. These examples indicate that the men have a false impression of the nature of these relationships and analyze the events that take place with their deluded and morally complicated perspectives. They are unable to accept the sexually liberated and improved status of women which have taken effect on today's world. The sexually liberated, decisive, independent and strong female figure becomes an obstacle for men to be in peace with their own masculinity, since characteristic highly related to masculinity are also attributes which can be found within the modern day women. The independency of women becomes a threat and danger to masculinity itself. Rather than reasoning the masculinity crisis with the deceiving women, the main reason these men experience a crisis is their denial concerning the weakening of male domination. The system which once excluded women has begun to value women due to feminist movements which contributes to their liberation. In this sense, authority

and domination which are the basics of hegemonic masculinity, transfers being giving men power to becoming a burden to them.

5.3 Violence: A Tool for Domination, A Sign of Weakness

Studies which focus on violence against women establishes one of the most studied areas of gender studies. These studies tend to focus on the victimized women and cautions which can be taken to prevent these kinds of violent acts, while the reasons which pressurize men to perform violence is an understudied topic.

Eliminating and oppressing everything which is accepted as related to femininity constitutes as a significant component of the concept of hegemonic masculinity. In order to reproduce and maintain male dominance within a patriarchal system, the power which oppresses femininity must also be reproduced and maintained. Once authority loses power, alternatives such as violence which emphasize masculinity begin to rise. Women which have gained strength with the influence of modernity become a threat to patriarchy and cause a loss in male power. Whenever masculinity, constructed on power and potency; gets into a weaker position due to various life events, its power is reduced. Their reduced power is tried to be reconstructed through violence. Currently, rising of violence against women appears to be stemming from men's weakening position in the family and in society rather than the traditional ideas of masculinity.

It would be appropraite to describe the relationship between the affect, influence and usage of violence as a practice on masculinity as a tool for domination yet a sign of weakness.

Violence is represented as a practice of masculinity in Demirkubuz films. It can be observed that the male characters apply violent acts in situations when they feel threatened, lose their authority, want to regain their authority or to emphasize their power. As violence can not only be limited to simply physical violence, emotional and psychological violence is also demonstrated by the male characters created by the director.

In *Masumiyet*, Bekir uses emotional violence by constantly swearing and underestimating Uğur. Bekir is unable to face and accept the fact that Uğur has sexual intercourse with multiple men and pressures her to have sex with him too. He is unable to accept that he neither owns Uğur nor that she in unwilling to be in a committed relationship with him. Therefore he applies verbal abuse and violence as a tool in order to punish her. Uğur's fearless and strong attitude is perceived as provocative according to Bekir's perspective.

The character Yusuf from the film *Masumiyet*, shots his older married sister and the man she plans to run away with (who is also his friend from military service) in order to protect the family honor which leads to his prison sentence. There is a contradiction between Yusuf's quite, naive and obedient nature and the violent acts which he has committed which showcases how masculinity, norms and expectations surrounding masculinity become a burden and a danger for men. Being accepted and respected by the society as a man, pressures individuals to showcase their masculinity through the medium of violence. As one of the passive and more 'innocent' male characters within the Demirkubuz filmography, Yusuf showcases the dramatic struggle one experiences with one's masculinity. This examples underlines the strong hypermasculine stereotypes imposed on men by the society and how even

individuals that do not embody characteristics related to hegemonic masculinity can feel defeated and give into the stressed roles and rules regarding gender.

A domestic violence case which takes place in the film *Masumiyet* is the story of Yusuf's sister and brother-in-law. Since Yusuf disables his sister's escape, she is forced to return to her husband. Although years have past, the brother-in-law tries to fix his broken masculinity by beating his wife with a belt. This attempt to taint the family honor is trying to be cleansed by using violence as a tool. The audience witnesses a man who tries to balance out his destructed masculinity by using another masculine practice, violence, at extreme levels. As mentioned previously, violence is a tool which is utilized to eliminate any threat. Yusuf's brother-in-law uses this to remind his family that as the 'man of the house' he is the authority figure. Not only does he abuse his wife, he is also abusive towards his child. Although his son is not deaf or unable to speak, he is mute and his level of speaking is minimum. Uğur's daughter Çilem also loses her hearing and speaking abilities due to violence inflicted by her father. These showcase women are not the only victims of male violence but as easier targets children are also a group which as abused. The pattern which can be extracted from these abuse cases which are shown in the film is that the individuals which violence is performed on are either mute or silenced. It would not be right to limit the reasoning of this silence to basic fear since the characters do not really showcase behaviors which indicate they are afraid. Yusuf's sister for instance seems to simply not care as if she has lost all her hope since not only was the man she was planning to run away with stolen but also her voice was too. The child whom prefers to speak as little as possible also does not showcase any extreme levels of fear, neither does Çilem. Ofcourse the director must have a reason for portraying these

characters as silenced. In this case, it would be reasonable to assume that silence indicates not being able to fight back or speak up. Due to this, the man which performs violence is able to harm the victim without any struggle. This showcases that these men feel powerful and fearless in situations which it is almost guaranteed that their will be no back fire.

In *Yazgı*, Musa's employer Naim murders his wife and children. Sinem, who is Musa's wife and also co-worker, has a relationship with Naim which his wife is aware of and unhappy about. Sinem's marriage to Musa, his wife's suspicions of his affair result in Naim having a meltdown and slaughtering his family. The fact that Naim is unable to prevent Sinem from marrying Musa, results on him inflicting his anger onto the other woman in his life. The fact that Naim does not have full control and authority over both women becomes a burden to and consequently results in the murdering of his family and his suicide.

Harun physically harms and attacks Nilgün who he claims to value. Harun uses violence in order to threathen, frighten Nilgün and attempts to prevent her from leaving him. Harun's attitude serves as a good example for the struggle men experience considering the different behaviors he performs in order to prevent Nilgün from leaving. Although Harun is physically violent towards Nilgün, he also cries and begs to stop her abondanning him. The film and the character Harun provides an example of the struggle and internal battle men experience. While trying to act accordingly with the gender norms expected from a man, he also performs emotional outbursts which do not comply with the gender roles set out for men.

While the focus of the director's films are the unhealthy relationships between men and women and due to this the violent scenes are generally between a man and a woman, the films also showcase the violence among men which is used as a tool to remind them of the hierarchy among them. *Üçüncü Sayfa* and *Yeraltı* especially serve as examples of the use of violence among men:

In *Üçüncü Sayfa*, while İsa can not stand up to the men that accuse him of stealing money, he transforms into a man that is able to kill his landlord who is unarmed and lives alone. Similarly while the people working for the mafia speak in an indimidating and abusive manner to İsa, they speak polite and almost frightened while speaking to their boss. These men are constructed in a way which reflects reality; while men tend to be more dominant towards people that have less power than them, they become more obedient to people which are powerful figures.

A similar example is also observed in *Yeraltı*. Although physical violence is not used in the film, exlusion is used which serves as psychological violence. The main character of the film, Muharrem, can not get along with his old friend and new rival Cevat. Their mutual friends exclude and ignore Muharrem while taking Cevat's side, since Cevat has new found success in the literary world. In one scene in which all these men sit at the same table at a restaurant, the mutual friends make fun of Muharrem despite he is clearly uncomfortable of being the odd one out. Although they do not stop their bullying due to Muharrem's upsetting state, they stop talking once Cevat gives them an intimidating look. Cevat takes the role of the leader among that particular group and has a more superior status in comparison to Muharrem and their other friends. The group dynamic reflects the hierarchy among these men which places Muharrem as the inferior and Cevat as the group leader.

Whether the victim of male violence is male or female, the swearwords used by the men are degrade women, homosexualiy and femininity. The usage of swear words such as 'faggot', 'puff', 'son of a bitch', 'bitch' and 'whore' serve to one of the basic principles regarding hegemonic masculinity, which is to eliminate and subordinate women and homosexual men. These degrading expressions used during the psychological and emotional male violence not only clearly emphasizes their sexist attitude but also legitimizes and normalizes violence towards these groups.

With the indication of the analysis of the examples above, as mentioned previously, violence comes into play once their is an intimidating threat. Male violence whether directed at women or men serves as a practice that's objective is to regain, emphasize or strengthen male domination. While the reasons for male violence which targets women in the films occurs in situations that aim at protecting honor or punishing infidelity, the reasons for male violence which targets other men occurs in order to threaten the less powerless, to enhance respect or emphasize the power hierarchy. In all examples including violence from the films, groups or individuals considered to embody less power are subject to violence. Throughout the story-telling in the films, the targeted groups such as less powerful men, women or children function as victims that provide a sense of authority and enhance the confidence men have towards their masculinity.

5.4 Family: An Unconventional Construction

In line with the requirements of the ideals of hegemonic masculinity, being heterosexual, married and having children are crucial for the masculine ideal in the Turkish culture. According to Altunpulat (2009) hegemonic masculinity in Turkey refers to a heterosexual family man who is able to protect and fight for the woman

and property which his 'own', at the same time being dependent on the traditional values of the Turkish culture. In order to be accepted as a 'man' which is defined and shaped accordingly with the culture and society, men are obliged to fulfill particular processes such as; circumcision, military service, occupation and marriage as mentioned before.

The nuclear family unit is a significant and basic element which reproduces and maintains patriarchy. It also holds a crucial position in the Turkish culture as an environment which provides men with a validation of the power they are believed to possess. Men are able to showcase and manifest their strength and authority through the smallest unit of society which is the nuclear family unit. Marriage and becoming a father validates a man's masculinity, providing a more respected status in the eye's of the public. According to Gilmore's requirements of ideals of being a man in the Mediterranean region; the principles are all based on having a heterosexual relationship which results in marriage and impregnating their partner.

Being a father, however showcases the sexual potency of the individual serving as a tool to gain respect from the other members of society and male peers. As Sancar states 'Fatherhood is not only a responsibility but a social/legal position which is defined with the rights of the children (and therefore, the woman who gave birth to the children)'. Fatherhood serves a position which ties family, market and government. Since a father is positioned to be responsible as the 'provider' of the family, the 'employee' of the market and 'patriarch – breadwinner' in the government.

Although the traditional nuclear family unit holds a unique and crucial place for manhood, it is one which is absent in the Zeki Demirkubuz films. Despite the constant and ongoing attempts of the male characters, they are unable to reach the objective of forming their family. As mentioned previously, the male characters are in a struggle with their love interests. Since they are unable to initiate a successful romantic relationship with these women, they are also far from achieving the ultimate goal of creating their own family in which they can demonstrate and prove their masculinity. To be precise, these characters create disfunctional and unconventional family structures in a different sense. The concept of family is difficult to define or limit, since especially in the recent years it has changed form with the rise of different variations such as single parent families and same sex parents. Although in the films most of the characters are not married, do not have children together, or are not even in love with each other; it is possible to view them as individuals that support, provide and show effort to protect one another regardless of their motives. So, the main issue regarding these characters is not being able to construct 'traditional' family structures which serve to demonstrate and emphasize the masculine authority. Examples from the Demirkubuz filmography regarding this issue, are given below:

In *Masumiyet*, the relationship among the characters Uğur, Bekir, Yusuf and Çilem resembles a family in the sense that they support, protect and provide for each other. Uğur is the biological mother of Çilem but due to the fact that she works, she is unable to take care of her child full-time. Bekir and Yusuf, however, serve as caregivers to Çilem, as they keep her occupied by taking her to the park on weekends and provide support by taking her to the hospital when she is sick. In traditional

family structures, while one parent (usually the father) works in order to provide for the family; the other parent (usually the mother) is forced to be responsible of childcare and housework. In *Masumiyet*, Uğur is the breadwinner and the provider; while Yusuf and Bekir are given somewhat 'domestic' roles. In this sense, the family created by these characters not only show signs of a reversal of traditional gender roles; but is also interesting since three adults are catering Çilem's needs. The fact that neither of these men are married to Uğur, nor are they the biological father of Çilem; although they prioritize helping out and protecting Çilem and Uğur demonstrates that they have constructed a new type of family which does not comply to the traditional norms regarding the family unit.

In *Üçüncü Sayfa*, a similar pattern is also constructed. Although Meryem is married and is also in a relationship with another man; she is also close to İsa. In some ways, even for brief moments, they act and behave as if they are a family. For example; in one scene when the thugs come to threaten and beat İsa, Meryem comes out of her house, stands up to the men and defends İsa. She showcases a sense of responsibility to protect someone whom she is close too, while the instinct to protect is one of the foundations of the family unit. In another scene, we see Meryem, İsa and Meryem's children go to a park and spend quality time together. The image of them at the park resembles a typical and traditional family, with a mother figure, a father figure (although İsa is not the father) and children. İsa decides to take them to the park to fulfill their need of entertainment, in a way he tries to provide for them which is one of the core elements of fatherhood in the Turkish traditional sense.

In *İtiraf*, which projects the story of Harun and Nilgün, the couple are not married in spite of the fact that they share a house. It is not taditionally accepted for unmarried

couples to live together because society becomes judgemental, especially for a woman who lives with her partner she has not married yet. This can be reasoned by the notion that sexual purity 'must' be protected until marriage; and living in the same house indicates that the couple engage in sexual relations. The couple Harun and Nilgün portray a modern relationship, in which both parties work in decent jobs and are able to live in the same house. The affect of modernity is not only shown by portraying Nilgün as a working, independent woman but by also breaking away from traditional family norms.

Yazgı tells the story of Musa, a man who is numb to all the events which he experiences including extremes such as the death of his mother and being sent to prosion for a crime he did not commit. The character's most used line is '*it doesn't make any difference*'; this is also how he replies when Sinem asks whether he would like to get married. Although they do get married, they do not have a traditional family life since Sinem continues to have an affair with her boss. At the ending scene of the film, Musa is released from prison and reenters his house, where he is encountered by his wife Sinem and a child which he did not father. Musa himself is not a traditional man nor does he attempt to reach the masculine ideals of the Turkish culture. He accepts and shows no reaction to his wife's infidelity while he is completely numb to the fact that Sinem has a child from another man. In a way, the family honour is in danger since the honour of the family is constructed around the woman's sexuality. Musa's whole reputation and status as a man is threatened by the society's awareness towards Sinem's deception but Musa reacts with giving no reaction at all. This showcases a family which does not comply with the traditional

family since it consists of a deceiving wife and a husband that does not fulfill his traditional role by not even attempting to protect the family's honour.

It may even be a more accurate definition to say that these characters share a common fate rather that actually form a family unit. Especially in *Masumiyet*, *Üçüncü Sayfa* and *Kader* as the audience we see a group of characters that can be classified as working class people. They have dark secrets, troubled families, unhealthy obsessions and no hope for a better future. Seemingly, they somehow end up together figuring out how to get by with the companionship of another individual. These are characters that have been losers throughout their lives and have shown very little effort to break the barriers which may carry them into better lives. The belief in fate is one which is significant in the personalities of these characters which explains why they do not bother about trying to better themselves. They are portrayed as people who believe that their past, present and future are fixed; therefore, they accept and deny any challenge to create a change within their own lives.

When these examples are examined, we see male characters which have unconventional families. Whether they play a father figure to someone elses child, protect and care for women that they are not partnered with or they are married but do not feel the necessity to provide and protect the individuals which make up the family; these men do not fulfill the role of being a family men which will serve as a tool to raise them into a respected and more secure status in the eye's of the society. So, it is possible to state that the Demirkubuz men are unsuccessful at succeeding in the family aspect of the masculine ideal. Their failing and defeated status is also evident in the way they constructe their families which leads them to a position in

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which they do not comply with the strict definition of what being a man means in the traditional Turkish culture.

5.5 Self-Destruction: Blood and Tears

Suicide is perceived as a final solution an individual resorts to in order to finalize issues or problems being experienced. Studies conducted on the suicide rate in terms of gender, indicate that the suicide rate is higher for males in comparison to females. Although suicidal thoughts can be prevented by seeking professional help or by seeking guidance and support from family member, friends or spouses, men generally chose not to ask for help. Möller –Leimkühler expresses that seeking help does not comply with the traditional norms regarding the masculine ideal which results in men oppressing their 'dark' thoughts. She adds that 'help-seeking implies loss of status, loss of control and autonomy, incompetence, dependence and damage of identity' (Möller-Leimkühler, 2003, p.3). The masculine ideal is constructed in such a way which emphasizes characteristics tightly related to power, strength and independence; the perception of requiring help and support creates a contrast with these norms which leads to men preferring to deal with issues on their own terms. While norms regarding masculinity are usually fixated on feelings of success and accomplishment, the downside of these norms is that they result in a constant struggle to fulfill expectations, fear of failure and a tendency to oppress negative feelings.

It is possible to see the pattern of men who feel they have lost their authority over women with strong personalities in Zeki Demirkubuz films. For example, the characters Bekir, Harun or İsa are not able to accept and move on with their lives once they are unable to achieve full domination over the female characters. Zeki

Demirkubuz touches upon this failure at achieving domination by using suicide as a sign of the burden of not succeeding in performing the traditional gender norms.

Suicide as a form of self-destruction has been used in three films of Zeki Demirkubuz, which are *Masumiyet*, *Üçüncü Sayfa* and *İtiraf*. The common reasoning behind all the suicide attempts in the Demirkubuz films has been constructed as the unrequited love experienced by the men and their realization of the complexity of these feelings.

In *Masumiyet*, for instance Bekir can no longer take the burden of chasing a woman who is not interested in him. Before his suicide, Bekir has an argument with Uğur and expresses that she 'must' have sex with him too since she is a 'prostitute' that has has intercourse with various men. After sacrificing so much for Uğur, Bekir showcases that his love was not as pure as the auidence or even the character Bekir himself imagined.

In *Üçüncü Sayfa*, İsa finds out that Meryem has been using him to try to get her husband murdered in order to continue her relationship with the landlord's son. After discovering the truth about the nature of their relationship, İsa becomes furious with Meryem and threatens her by pointing a gun at her. He then decides not to shoot her and leaves the room. In the closure of the film, as the audience, we see İsa leave Meryem's apartment and then subsequently hear a gunshoot, which suggests that İsa has killed himself.

In *İtiraf*, Harun attempts suicide after discovering Nilgün's affair which reveals the unhealthy nature of their realtionship. Harun is constructed as a complicated

character, like most of Demirkubuz characters which hold bad and good qualities. While Harun begs for Nilgün to never leave him in one scene, he hits and uses violence and his physical strength to express his anger. Harun differs from the other characters in the sense that the audience is aware that Harun survives his suicide attempt after calling a friend for help.

An assumption which can be made in the light of these examples is that the reason lying under these suicides (which can be interpreted as acts of self-destruction) is the realization of the unhealthy and unpure feelings these characters develop for the woman they are in love with. Rather than simply being a suicide for the sake of love, these acts can be analyzed in the sense that these men decide to completely destruct themselves after finding out the dangerous nature of their masculinity. This danger becomes noticed by them after attempting to hurt or harm the person they specify as their most loved one. Bekir forcing Uğur to have sex with him, İsa threating to kill Meryem or Harun performing domestic violence to prevent Nilgün from leaving are all acts that these men perform before deciding to give up on their own lives. Therefore it is possible to say that these characters are constructed in a way which showcases the ongoing battle men experience with their masculinity. While traditional norms regarding masculinity dictate men to become dominant, experiences, feeling and opinions hinder this path to complete domination. This creates a crisis within the individual whom on one hand feels the necessity to satisfy the society by complying the specified but on the other hand develops feeling and ideas which contend against these norms. Keeping in mind that in the Turkish culture it is generally seen as a sign of weakness for men to require professional or social help, the characters decide that suicide is the only option which ends all their misery.

Zeki Demirkubuz succeeds in projecting the constant conflict men experience on an everyday basis. Although the suicide scenes may be extreme examples of these internal struggles, he is able to reflect the dilemma men go through in the real world while being torn between the ideal man the society expects he must become or the ideal person he believes he must become.

Expressing emotions in extreme measures tends to be associated with femininity rather than masculinity. The notion behind this association is the belief that showing emotion can be perceived and misinterpreted as being weak or vulnerable. Expressing emotions are only perceived as masculine if they are expressions of anger or aggression. As being perceived as weak is unacceptable considering hegemonic masculinity, emotional expressions such as crying are strictly unexpected and forbidden. The gendered system in which boys are raised in dictates cultural codes such as 'boys don't cry' which pressurizes them to oppress feelings rather than express them. This leads to emotionally disabled and psychologically unstable young men who feel under threat and ashamed in situations which they display emotions.

In almost all his films, the main character expresses fear, anger or sadness by crying. Not only are these emotional expressions performed by these men, they are performed in the presence of other individuals. Bekir in *Masumiyet* cries once he understands that Uğur will never want to be with him; similarly Yusuf cries for his unrequited love towards Uğur, in one scene he also cries on his sister's lap regreting his past crime which resulted in her loss of speaking abilities. In *Üçüncü Sayfa*, İsa cries when the thugs which accuse of stealing come to his apartment to threaten him. Although Meryem is present at the moment, in spite of the fact that tears will destroy his masculine image in the eyes of Meryem, İsa begins to cry because of the fear that

he feels. In *Yeraltı*, the character Muharrem cries while watching a film on the television. As one of Demirkubuz's trademarks Muharrem is watching the film *Masumiyet* on the television which is also directed by Zeki Demirkubuz.

It is possible to state or question whether being able to express emotions such as crying can be accepted as a strong attribution of these characters. One may assume or think that these characters are strong in the sense that they are able to challenge the strict principles and expectations surrounding masculinity which have guided them into becoming the man they are. It may also be assumed that these characters are brave enough to get in touch with their 'feminine' side and are confident and at peace with their own identities. Since in the previous parts of the analysis, it has been observed that these characters are at war with their masculinity and subordinated with the never-ending expectations that not only the society but they also burden themselves with, it is more likely that the director used crying as a sign of weakness rather than a strength of these personalities. Demirkubuz creates these characters as victims, losers, outsiders in order to emphasize drama experience by men; therefore it is more rational that Demirkubuz includes these emotional outbursts to underline their weakness rather than a strength to challenge societal rules. The tears of these characters symbolize a different type of self destruction. While suicide is a way to end one's physical existence, crying however, serves as a social suicide of one's masculine identity.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

Cinema plays an important part for the most people since it is a major source of entertainment and also a unique form of art. As other forms of art, cinema is also influenced by social changes that occur nation wide and internationally. These changes can range from various factors and can be depicted in infinite ways by constructing stories that are only limited to the human imagination.

Gender as a social construction can be described as almost a living organism since it constantly evolves. Issues regarding men and women, the way they are perceived, definitions made to masculine and feminine are all subject to these changes. While women have become more liberated and femininity become more celebrated over time; masculinity which feeds off domination and spreading fear has experienced a major decline in comparison to what it used to mean. Today men find it hard to cope with the combination of many things which affect their masculinity greatly such as; the empowerment of women, the overbearing expectations of the society and the unachievable ideals of hegemonic masculinity. All these lead to great depression and major crisis in masculinity.

The main objective of this thesis was to examine and observe how these mutations regarding men and masculinity have been portrayed and projected in the new Turkish cinema. Turkish cinema has also experienced its' ups and downs with its high succes

during the Yeşilçam period to almost being non-existent from the 70s to the mid-90s. The mid-90s became a landmark for Turkish cinema by both indicating a rise in both commercial and artistic success. As a revitalizing era, this period continues to provide a platform for newcomers to come into the picture. One of these is the critically acclaimed director Zeki Demirkubuz.

This study aims at analyzing Zeki Demirkubuz films in terms of men and masculinity. By benefiting from information gained through a literature review including psychoanalytical theories, sex/gender distinction, hegemonic masculinity etc. an analysis was performed on the directors' filmography. The research method used for the analysis is a qualitative research method known as textual analysis.

The analysis showcases the level of crisis and hopelessness attributed to these male characters as representatives of the alterations which have taken place to the modern day man. These defeated, weakened male characters have been analyzed under themes of love and obsession, being exposed to deception of a woman, being a victim ut also an active user of violence, longing for a family yet being unable to create one and finally self-desctructing acts as a result of being crushed under the burden of being a man. These characters prove that today's men are burdened with ideals and expectations that they will never be able to fulfill. This feeling of unsatisfaction results in a major crisis filled with the a decline in the feeling such as self confidence, self respect, pride, bravery etc. Ironically, these are the very characteristics which are generally associated with masculinity. To focus on masculinity and the crisis of masculinity has only take place in recent years. Therefore, the literature of studies on men and masculinity are not very extensive.

Especially studies which are based on Turkish men or the representation of men in Turkish cinema are only limited to a few.

In accordance with masculinity, its depiction has also shifted in Turkish cinema. Whether a hero or a villian, the men of Yeşilçam films shared qualities such as bravery, pride, determination whereas that man is now replaced with a hopeless, emotional, fearful and beaten down man of the new Turksih cinema. Ofcourse the representation of women has also extremely differentiated. While we saw a different type of portrayal of women during Yeşilçam, we now witness a stronger, more independent and determined woman in new Turkish cinema. These do, upto some extent, reflect the reality of how gender and gender roles have changed shape. It would be absolutely correct to say that women have become more empowered over the past 30 years which has resulted in shaking the male dominance that was thought to be extremely solid and unbreakable. Although it is impossible to speak of total gender equality, it is however possible to speak of positive improvements which are bettering the unbalanced position between men and women.

I would like to express that cinema is somewhat a reflection of the world we live in. It provides us with a view on how we construct the meaning of things in the world and how we live in this world. Therefore, as audience members, we can use cinema to identify some of the issues which may be fixed or altered in the society and consequently begin to look for effective solutions.

When it comes to gender however I believe that studying masculinity could shed light and provide useful information. Although we have learned a lot, studies which do research on women issues have been overstudied. Studies which take a look at the

contruction of masculinity and the issues regarding men bring a different perspective to the table which can also result in positive improvements for other issues. It is possible that studying masculinity can even provide a great basis to end major issues regarding gender such as; violence against women, discrimination, honor killings, domestic violence, rape and hate crimes. Rather than studying the victimized side may be it would be beneficial to deeply explore why men feel the need to perform such acts and the society teaches them that this may be the only way they can be a man.

This thesis aimed at combining both film and masculinity in order to provide an insight of how men are also victims of their own gender and that male dominance is a war they experience internally within themselves. I believe that this thesis could contribute to the recently developing research field of masculinity and provide an understanding of the weight of the burden men from the Turkish society have to bear everyday.

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