‘FIGHTING AGAINST YOUR OWN’: KURDISH MEN SERVING IN THE TURKISH ARMY

By

Yılmaz Adal

Submitted to

Central European University

Department of Gender Studies

In partial fulfillment of the degree of Master of Arts in Gender Studies

Supervisor: Associate Professor Elissa Helms

Budapest, Hungary

2016

ABSTRACT

This thesis discusses what kinds of experiences Kurdish men go through in Turkish Army during their military service with regards to the nationalist and gendered rituals, symbols and discourse. It strives to find out what sorts of gendered, specifically masculinities-related, experiences Kurdish men, as a socially de-authorized heterogeneous group, go through during their service in order to understand how the Turkish army, as a highly masculinized institution, becomes a gendered site for men of different ethnic and/or religious minorities in varied ways in Turkey. In order to discuss the experiences of Kurdish men, the thesis relies on a field research in Istanbul where I have conducted twenty semi-structured in-depth interviews with Kurdish men from various categories of difference such as class, religion, political ideology and educational level as well as different time of the service. Since there is a scarce scholarly attention to the military service with regards to the experiences of Kurds in Turkey, this study should be viewed as a step towards addressing the gap in the literature on the military service in Turkey with regards to the experiences of ethnic and religious minorities. In that regard, it shows some of the possible ways in which men of minority groups are made to feel different in the Turkish Army. Through analyzing the narratives of Kurdish men who have served in the Turkish Army, the thesis shows how ethnic, nationalist and gender identities are negotiated, constructed, stabilized or obscured through various acts, discourses, and rituals. It overall argues that the Turkish Army adopts various mechanisms through which it creates its internal others, that although there are variations among the Kurdish men's perspectives on military service with regards to gendered and nationalist orders in the army, how they navigate the military service is informed by their Kurdishness, and that the Turkish Army becomes a site in which Kurdish men construct forms of masculinity which, on the one hand, complicate hegemonic masculinity in the Turkish Army and, on the other, are still within a patriarchal framework.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to many incredible people for their time and effort in preparation of this thesis. First of all, my supervisor, Associate Prof. Elissa Helms has guided me in every step of my thesis and was there each time I needed help with my thesis. She encouraged me in completing my thesis with her comments, feedback and suggestions and I am most grateful to her for everything and I consider myself to be lucky to have had her as my supervisor. I am thankful to Assistant Prof. Sara Meger for her help and feedback in formulating my research question and preparing my interview guide for my field research.

I thank all of my interviewees for their time and sharing their stories with me despite the political pressure in Turkey on anyone who expresses discontents against the Turkish Army as well as anything related to Kurdishness. One of the best things that happened to me in Budapest was that I met an amazing person Erdoğan Şekerci with whom I had the honor to become very good friends. Special thanks to Heval Şeyda Kapusuz, Meriç, Tankut, Mert, Nur, Meltem, İdil, Simge, Nazlı, Jojo, Kaveri, Santiago, Takuro, Sara, Sarah, Danyel, Deirdre, Danielle, Monike, Monique, Iva, Oliver, İpek, Anna, Ashley, Kailey, Kata, Katalin, Neda, Mirjam, Gizem, Erdost and all others with whom I shared precious time.

My father Mehmet and my siblings Birgül, Nurgül, Fedai, Müjdat, Necdet, Teyocık, and Farit deserve the climax of gratitude from me for their endless and unconditional support and love. I specifically would like to thank Hazal and Helin for being amazing babies who put a smile on my face each time I heard from them. I thank to my extended family which numbers over a hundred people for being who they are in my life.

Very special thank is for my Elinet who has always been supportive, understanding, and caring.

This thesis is dedicated to our sacrificing brother, Fedai, and my dear father, Mehmet.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS iii
INTRODUCTION 1
CHAPTER 1- MILITARY SERVICE: WHERE GENDER AND NATION MEET 4
1.1 Military Service: Oven of Nation 4
1.2 Military institution and military service via gender lenses 7
1.2.1 Women's Inclusion: 'Moms,' 'Sluts' and 'Bitches' 9
1.2.2 Military and Masculinity 10
1.3 Military Service in Turkish Context 12
CHAPTER 2- RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY 17
3.1 In the Field 19
3.2 Profile of interviewees 21
CHAPTER 3- THE TURKISH ARMY AND NATIONALISM 25
3.1 Obligation 25
3.2 Rituals 28
3.3 Marches and Chanting 30
3.4 Resistance 33
3.5 Other Possible Variables 36
CHAPTER 4-GENDER 41
4.1 Mini Rainbow: No Report, Pink Report, Rotten Report 41
4.1.1 No Report: no to women and femininity 41
4.1.2 Rotten and Pink Reports: no to 'diseased men' 44
4.2 Constructing masculinity 46
4.3 "Mehmetçik in Need of Pussy:" Sex and Sexuality 51
CONCLUSION 56
REFERENCES 60

INTRODUCTION

> **Baran**: I did not know what was going to happen because it was a really bad time. There was killing in both sides (the PKK and the Turkish Army). And of course we were hearing some rumors that Kurds there (in the Turkish Army) were intentionally killed and they would make it look like the PKK did it. As a university graduate of course I knew what was going on. As a Kurdish young man I knew what the PKK would do as well as the Turkish Army. Frankly speaking, I always was more worried about the (Turkish) soldiers than I was about the PKK.
>
> **Y.A.**: You were scared of Turkish Army?
>
> **Baran**: Yes. I was scared of them not of the PKK.
>
> **Y.A.**: Why?
>
> **Baran**: I was concerned about my life because I am a kind of stubborn person. I was scared that they would do something to me because I knew I would speak up if there was something about Kurds and that would annoy them. We heard and saw a lot that the army would kill someone and declare the PKK as the killer. That's what I was scared of.

This conversation was from one of my interviews I conducted in Istanbul as my field research. Baran, a 32 year-old teacher, who is an Alawite Kurd, explicitly stated his anxiety about the Turkish Army where he served in 2013. His anxiety is not without reason. In Turkey, Kurds have historically been targeted by the state since its foundation and it has mostly been through the military. Especially with the foundation of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party), a guerilla movement founded in 1978 as a student union that has been in an armed conflict with the Turkish state since 1984, Kurds have been targeted by the military in Turkey. Tens of thousands of Kurds have been imprisoned, thousands of Kurdish villages and hamlets have been forcefully evacuated and/or burned down, and millions of Kurds were forcefully moved to the western parts of Turkey. All these atrocities have been imposed on Kurds by the Turkish State through its military. When these are considered together with the ban on Kurdish language, cultural and symbolic productions, names, or in effect their basic existence in Turkey, Turkish Army becomes a source of anxiety for Kurdish men with regards to the compulsory military service in the country.

This thesis aims to understand what kinds of experiences Kurdish men go through in Turkish Army during their military service with regards to the nationalist and gendered rituals, symbols and discourse. It strives to find out what sorts of gendered, specifically masculinities-related, experiences Kurdish men, as a socially de-authorized heterogeneous group, go through during their service in order to understand how the Turkish army, as a highly masculinized institution, becomes a gendered site for men of different ethnic and/or religious minorities in varied ways in Turkey.

There has been a growing body of literature on the Turkish Army through lens of gender (Selek, 2013; Irlenkäuser, 2012), on how it has been integral to Turkish nationalist project (Bora, 2013; Altınay, 2007) and how gendered this is (Altınay, 2004), on the effects of conflict between Turkish Army and PKK forces from the perspectives of soldiers (Mater, 1999), on its effects in militarization of society and education in Turkey (Kancı & Altınay, 2007), and on how it serves as a place for socialization of (male) citizens in Turkey (Kahya, 2013). Nevertheless, despite the vast number of studies on the Turkish Army, they have paid very little, if at all, attention to the experiences of Kurdish men during their military service in the Turkish Army. This is partly due to the political and social pressure on those who work on subjects related to Kurds and Kurdish nationalism in Turkey as well as on those who critically engage with state institutions, especially the military. For instance, Nadire Mater was sent to court for "insulting and belittling" the military in Turkey due to a book she wrote on soldiers who fought against the PKK in the southeast of Turkey. As a work that is based on primary research, this thesis provides the literature on Turkish Army with an account on Kurds from their own voices. Besides, focusing on gendered and nationalist aspects of the Turkish Army through experiences of a minority group contributes to various disciplines such as men and masculinities, nationalism, and military and militarism to name a few.

The structure of the thesis is as follows: second chapter discusses the role of military as an institution and military service in nation building projects. It shows how the literature has perceived military and military service as integral parts of nationalism in various parts of the world. It continues with the feminist intervention of the literature on military and military service in order to address the gendered aspects and effects of military and military service with regards to citizenship practices, gender norms and regimes within and outside of the military as an institution. It finally discusses all these for the Turkish context in order to show why it is imperative to pay attention to the accounts of Kurdish men in the Turkish Army. Third chapter is on the methodology and design of the research I conducted for the thesis. I have conducted twenty semi-structured in-depth interviews with Kurdish men in Istanbul from various categories of difference such as class, religion, political ideology and educational level.

The fourth chapter analyzes the nationalistic aspects of the Turkish Army through rituals, chanting and marching songs, and discourses it produces and how Kurdish men navigate through these. It aims to understand the kinds of experiences Kurdish men have through their ethnic identity. By discussing the effects of such factors as politicization, education level, class position and religiosity of Kurdish men, it shows that military service is not experienced in the same way even among the Kurds.

Related to the fourth, the fifth chapter is where I analyze the experiences of Kurdish men in Turkish Army through lens of gender. Starting with the gender regime and discourses of military as an institution, I discuss how Kurdish men have stabilized and/or destabilized these gendered aspects especially with regards to their perspectives on women, femininity, homosexuality and homosexual men. It also discusses how Kurdish men construct their masculinities within military in order to see if there are possible variations between Kurdish men and Turkish men in construction of their masculinities.

CHAPTER 1- MILITARY SERVICE: WHERE GENDER AND NATION MEET

This section discusses how military service has been utilized as a part of nation-building projects in general and in Turkey in particular. Additionally, it investigates military service through gender lenses and feminist critiques of military service and its gendered effects with regards to citizenship practices, (re)production of gender norms and challenges to these productions. First, I discuss what roles military service plays in nationalisms and nation-building projects at the global level. Then I discuss military service in militaristic societies such as Israel and the effects of military service with regards to citizenship practices to discuss the hierarchical productions and valorizations through serving in the army. By offering feminist interventions to military service, I discuss the gendered dynamics and productions of military service in social gender norms and meaning productions. Finally I discuss gender regimes and power relations within military institutions through the works of Raewyn Connell on multiple masculinities. Mapping out these discussions, I use them as a framework to discuss military service in Turkey in terms of how the nationalist elite has utilized it to create the Turkish nation, how this has been discussed in the literature and to offer a critique of the literature regarding the scarce attention to Kurdish men's experiences in the service.

1.1 Military Service: Oven of Nation

Charles Tilly argues that war-making and state-making are correlated with one another when he suggests that "[w]ar makes states" (1985, p. 170). Following the French Revolution and especially in the 20th century, war making has resulted in the foundation of numerous national states. Due to the link between wars and nation-state foundations especially in the modern era, Kancı and Altınay propose that militarization and nationalization should be discussed as parallel processes that inform and reinforce one another (2007, p. 53). The links between wars and nation-states are important to discuss not only because wars are a part of founding of

nation-states but because they also become a part of the force that attempts to unite and perpetuate the nation. Ernest Renan argues that a "heroic past with great men and glory (I mean true glory) is the social capital upon which the national idea rests" (1992, p. 10). Heroic past and glories are often viewed as the war victories in the past against the enemies. Discussing what he views as essential conditions of being a people, Renan suggests that these are "having common glories in the past and a will to continue them in the present; having made great things together and wishing to make them again. One loves in proportion to the sacrifices that one has committed and the troubles that one has suffered" (1992, p. 10).

There are a few important issues to point out in the discussion of Renan. First, glories and triumph over the enemy in the past is part of national spirit. Second, citizens of that nation have the will to repeat those glories in the future. Third, sacrificing oneself is a part of one's love for the nation, the ultimate sacrifice being sacrificing one's life for the protection and perpetuation of his nation. Finally, all of these show how military and, relatedly, military service become a place of making such a sacrifice because, as cited in Sasson Levy (2003), Sara Helman argues that "military service constitutes a major criterion for one's loyalty to the state and his patriotism" (Sasson-Levy, 2003, p. 322). This phenomenon has been discursively and practically produced through what is known as 'people's army' (Enloe, 1980), 'mass armies' (Sasson-Levy, 2011), or 'citizen-army' (Altınay, 2007). As opposed to the professional armies which recruit paid soldiers, a 'people's army' uses conscription and rests on the assumption that everyone (mostly men) is obliged to serve in the army to show one's loyalty to one's state. By showing that the army creates stratifications between ethnic groups and social classes contrary to its premises of universal equality, Cynthia Enloe illustrates that the 'people's army' is rather a myth (1980). Nevertheless, the idea of a 'people's army' through conscription is important because it is utilized by nationalist elites as one of the places where people can remember their victorious past and prepare for possible

new ones in the future in line with Renan's discussion of what a nation is. Benedict Anderson, too, talks about people's willingness to fight and die for the nation as an emotional attachment rather than political (2006).

Conscription has indeed been utilized by nationalist elites as a mechanism to create desired national citizens. This is evident in Eugen Weber's discussion of how universal conscription to military service after the French Revolution became a part of the gradual process of turning peasants into Frenchmen (Weber, 1976). Viewing military service as a sort of migration for the rural peasants from their villages to big cities where they are to serve, Weber claims that this migration has contributed the notion of being a part of a larger collectivity into peasants' minds regarding national and international politics (1976, p. 294). This process of being a part of the larger collective, when it comes to its relation to military service, happens through the notion of a 'people's army.' In such an army a man is part of a collective and in this collective all soldiers are disciplined to be docile bodies, wearing the same uniforms, chanting the same marches, speaking the same language and indoctrinated with the same messages (Foucault, 1992). Through these disciplining processes, cited in Altınay, George L. Mosse argues, nationalist and loyal citizens are aimed to be created (Altınay, 2007, p. 191).

In line with these discussions, I view military service through conscription as a national oven in which conscripted individuals go through a process of being desired citizens. But, does this process happen in the same way to everyone? Is it indifferent to varied subjectivities of conscripted soldiers? The answer to these questions is of course no; the literature shows that individuals go through military service in various ways based on their ethnic, religious, class and such identities as well as their sexual orientations or gender identities. The following section offers a critique of military as an institution and military service through lens of gender.

1.2 Military institution and military service via gender lenses

Cynthia Enloe claims that the military is more than just another patriarchal institution that affects women (1988, p. 10). What differentiates the military from the other patriarchal institutions is its intimate relationship with the state and its laws and ideologies (Enloe, 1988, p. 11). Feminist critiques of the military and citizenship suggest that serving in the military becomes a means for enjoying certain rights and privileges as well as the creation of a hierarchical citizenship between men and women. Discussing it within republican discourses on military which perceive military service as 'good citizenship,' Sasson-Levy (2011, p. 393) suggests:

> As long as only men were enlisted into the military, or only men could serve as warriors, only men could be perceived as fully legitimate or 'good' citizens. Women, who were barred from expressing their commitment to the state through 'performance on the battlefield,' were not recognized as men's counterparts in the ultimate obligation to the state… and were therefore not entitled to the same rights and privileges. Thus, the gendered organization of the military also shapes hierarchal and gendered conceptions of citizenship… which persist today in many societies around the globe.

Unequal citizenship rights and privileges or hierarchical relations between men and women at the macro level are partly due to their differential access to or acceptance in militaries. Especially in societies such as Israel and Turkey where militaries are central players in political and social processes, women's acceptance and the way they are accepted, if they are, become crucially important because military service becomes a means to claim a valuable subject-position which often is intricately related to masculinity in the society (Sasson-Levy, 2003). It is possible then to argue that serving in the military becomes a signifier of a valorized subject-position in the society post-service. In fact Judit Stiehm suggests that "[e]xcluding women from combat results in an unequal society divided into those who protect and those who are protected" (MacKenzie, 2013, p. 239). This 'protector-protected' binary has been discussed also by Jean Elshtain as "just warrior" and "beautiful soul" (Elshtain, 1987). "Just warriors are men of valor, protecting their homes, families, and homelands

through warfare justly pursued. Beautiful souls are pure, naïve women who need protection and whose needs motivate men's wars" (Sjoberg, 2010, p. 209).

It is important to note that these tropes are not observations of reality but rather constructions utilized by mostly men to produce and maintain hierarchy between the 'protected and protector.' Elhstain notes that "these tropes on the social identities of men and women, past and present, do not denote what men and women really are in time of war, but function instead to re-create and secure women's location as noncombatants and men's as warriors" (Elshtain, 1987, p. 4). Securing places of women as non-combatants and of men as warriors become a tool to justify the waging of war from both the aggressor's and defender's sides. Both sides justify war in the name of protecting their "own womenandchildren," a concept originally discussed by Cynthia Enloe to show that women are put in the same civilian category with children as those in need of male protection (Peterson & Runyan, Global Gender Issues in New Millenium 3rd Editio, 2010, p. 144). All these efforts that aim to keep women as noncombatants and men as warriors and to make certain rights and privileges conditional on serving in military show how gendered the military is with regards to citizenship.

Liberal feminists rightly problematize such a phenomenon and advocate for women's equal access to militaries and combat (MacKenzie, 2013; Sasson-Levy, 2003). In fact feminists have pushed many states to open their barracks to women.[1] In recent decades women have gained access to serve in (mostly Western) militaries such as that of Canada since 1989 (King, 2016). Moreover, women have historically been fighters in various wars as in the Red Army during World War II and parts of non-state armed groups such as the PLO[2], Tamil Tigers[3],

[1] I acknowledge that it is not only because feminist advocacy that states agreed to access of women into militaries but it is also an analytical and political inaccuracy to ignore the huge amounts of advocacy and effort feminists have put forward in order to achieve that.
[2] PLO, Palestinian Liberation Organization
[3] Tamil Tigers, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

FMLN[4], EZLN[5] and so on (Kampwirht, 2014). Women's access to militaries or combat, however, has brought with it various new forms of gendered problems with regards to militaries, patriarchy and masculinity. Then the question is what happens when women become soldiers?

1.2.1 Women's Inclusion: 'Moms,' 'Sluts' and 'Bitches'

The inclusion of women into combat and militaries does not necessarily solve gendered power inequalities and in fact in certain cases it creates new forms of problems. First of all, one of the tendencies in discussing women in combat and militaries is to ignore their agency by representing them in relation to men in their life. Especially in the western media discourses, women soldiers are often depicted in relation to a man as someone's mother, wife, sister or daughter but not as individuals on their own (Sjoberg & Gentry, 2011). Sjoberg shows that women soldiers in the US military operations in Iraq were not able to avoid being represented as 'innocent fragile women who need to be protected against a hypersexualized enemy' even when they were combat soldiers (2010). In cases where female soldiers are 'ready to kill' just as their male colleagues, they are claimed to be fearsome killers defending their husbands, lovers and children through performing the natural femininity which is caring and life giving (Ahall, 2012, p. 292). For those who make such claims femininity is essentially about caring, life giving and protecting one's own and about being fearsome to the enemies for the protection of their own. Such representations of women are tools deployed in order to render women's agency and participation in combat invisible and thereby keep the status quo on gender hierarchies created through the 'just warriors-beautiful souls' narrative.

Another phenomenon one encounters while investigating the participation of women in militaries is that they are often viewed in relation to their sexuality. Regarding female

[4] FMLN, Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front)
[5] EZLN, Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (Zapatista Army of National Liberation)

soldiers in the US Army, Anthony King suggests that regardless of her competence "[a female soldier's] relations with male soldiers are finally determined by her sexuality" (King, 2016, p. 124). Referring to the "mothers, monsters, whores" narrative that Sjoberg and Gentry discuss as present within militaries (Sjoberg & Gentry, 2011), King refines it into a "slut-bitch binary" (King, 2016, p. 124). These scholars show that the sexuality of a woman becomes a key factor in her place within the military. Informed by an interviewee in his study, King concludes that "[m]ale soldiers have developed a binary classification system for women serving in the military, then: they are either sluts (sexually available) or bitches (sexually unavailable), of which lesbians or 'dykes' (self-evidently unavailable) are a subcategory" (King, 2016, p. 124). Therefore, it is possible to suggest that women's access to militaries as combatants has created new forms of gender problems and that these are most created by the military as an institution and male soldiers in order to perpetuate traditional gender norms which privilege themselves. It follows that the military is a gendered place not only for women but also for men, as the next section outlines.

1.2.2 Military and Masculinity

D'Amico and Weinstein claim that the military (setting) "is a fundamental site for the construction of gender, that is, the defining of the boundaries of behavior – indeed, of life possibilities – for people we call men and women" (1999, p. 4). It is imperative to note that 'boundaries of behavior' almost always work in favor of the valorization of masculinities over femininities and of men over women. I do not have a binary understanding of gender with men being by definition masculine and women feminine because this is factually, analytically and politically inaccurate. But it is also important to acknowledge that there is a social understanding that often associates masculinity with the male body. My approach is inspired by that of Raewyn Connell who suggests that "[m]asculinity *refers to* male bodies (sometimes directly, sometimes symbolically and indirectly), but is not *determined* by male biology. It is,

thus, perfectly logical to talk about masculine women or masculinity in women's lives, as well as masculinity in men's lives" (Connell, 2000, p. 29).

The relationship between military and masculinity is a close one in the sense that both of these mutually support one another. Militaries utilize masculinity as a soldiering framework (Via, 2010) and masculinity provides a "framework through which war can be rendered both intelligible and acceptable as a social practice and institution" (Hutchings, 2008, p. 389). As the above section discussed how military and military service play roles in the gender order in society, it is also important to discuss military through gender lenses at an institutional and individual level. In order to understand these, it is necessary to pay attention to gender regimes (Connell, 2000), discourses, symbolic productions within the military as well as how soldiers navigate this institution in terms of compliance, indifference or subversion towards it. It is also important to understand what kinds of gendered productions and gender identities are produced, reproduced and/or excluded in the military. These are understood through various rituals, performances, discourses and symbols in any given military.

What is common in almost all militaries is their valorization of characteristics associated with hegemonic forms of masculinity over femininities as well as other forms of masculinity. It is, therefore:

> [N]ot by coincidence that the insults most new recruits face are gendered, raced and homophobic; young soldiers are learning to deny, indeed to obliterate, the 'other' within the psyche. Difference can include race or ethnic differences. While it can include being a woman, it can also include simply having attended university or college (Appy 1993: 100). Soldiers must, in particular, deny all that is deemed to be feminine; and this is accomplished throughout the training process. The practice of shaving heads, for example, not only exposes the new recruit to the discipline and uniformity of military life but is aimed at 'removing the extra frills of longer hair often associated with individual vanity (vanity believed to be the prerogative of women)' (Arkin and Dobrofsky 1978: 159). The chants to which soldiers march, either

> denigrating women or linking their militarized masculinity to an aggressive and violent heterosexuality, are widely documented, including the call while holding one hand to rifle and the other to crotch: 'This is my rifle. This is my gun. This is for pleasure. This is for fun' (ibid.: 160) (Whitworth, 2008, p. 113)

The construction of privileged masculinities to the exclusion of femininities and non-hegemonic forms of masculinities makes a piece of research that focuses on the experiences of those who perform non-hegemonic forms of masculinities necessary. Doing such research in military as an institution is particularly important because it enables one to see the simultaneous creation of various forms of masculinities; 'hegemonic masculinity,' 'subordinated masculinities,' 'marginalized masculinities,' and 'complicit masculinities' (Connell, 2000, pp. 30-31). Research on the military as an institution is also necessary because:

> Feminists from India and Zimbabwe, and Japan to Britain, the United States, Serbia, Chile, South Korea, Palestine, Israel, and Algeria all have found that when they have followed the bread crumbs of privileged masculinity, they have been led time and again not just to the doorstep of the military, but to the threshold of all those social institutions that promote militarization (Enloe, 2000, p. 33).

Looking at the traces of hegemonic or privileged forms of masculinity in Turkey, one can see that it is also associated with the 'citizen-soldier' discourse which is very much prevalent and reflected in the popular saying that 'every Turk is born a soldier.' Serving in the military is viewed as a 'rite to passage to manhood,' a required duty for all able-bodied males who are heterosexual or who cannot or do not want to 'prove' their homosexuality.

1.3 Military Service in Turkish Context

Ayşe Gül Altınay wrote a groundbreaking book which demystified the myth that Turkish nation was a military nation and showed how the Turkish state has been trying to create and recreate that myth through education, military service and militarization of society in a gendered way (2004). In a later article Altınay and Kancı claim that "'the Turkish nation is a military nation' is one of the foundational myths of Turkish nationalism. Since the early years

of state formation, two state apparatuses have been crucial in the making of this myth: education and military" (2007, p. 52). Both of these apparatuses, especially the military service, have been utilized to indoctrinate people with the claim that "every Turk is born a soldier." Altınay's work also paved the way for numerous other works on how the military has been deployed in the nationalist project in the country.

In Turkey, it is argued, the army has been deployed by the nationalist elite as an institution to create 'citizens' from 'people' in line with Weber's discussion of 'peasants into Frenchmen.' This has been done through conscription and education. In Turkey, regardless of their ethnic, class, racial or religious identities, all 20-year-old able-bodied males who do not have physical and mental illnesses (including homosexuality, which is considered a psychosexual disease) are conscripted to serve in the military. Similar to various other cases, Turkey has utilized conscription not only for military or war related-reasons but also political reasons. The literature on the Turkish Army suggests that not only is the military regarded as a place where 'boys turn into men' (Selek, 2013; Altınay, Askerlik yapmayana adam denmez: zorunlu askerlik, erkeklik ve vatandaşlık, 2013) but it has been utilized also as a place to turn ordinary people into 'Turkish' citizens (Aktar, 2009; Bora, 2013).

As an institution utilized by the nationalist elite in Turkey as a part of the nation-building process, the army becomes a place for a possible identity crisis for Kurdish men. This is evident in how the Turkish State dealt with the issues of minority groups after its foundation. Ayhan Aktar claims that nationalist and Turkification policies were directed at religious (non-Muslim and Alawites) and ethnic (Circassians, Kurds, Laz, Arab) minorities to assimilate them into an 'ethnic Turkish' identity (2009, pp. 47-49). Therefore, the creation of a "Turkish nation" was partly at the expense of ignoring the existence of Kurds as a people, their language, cultural, economic and political rights (Oran, 2010; Aktürk, 2013; Aktürk, 2012).

The Turkish Army is integral to such policies in two ways. The first is through conscription, by which it trains and educates young men to become proper Turks, and the second is by expanding its reach to the national politics through participating in National Security Council[6] in Turkey and courses on national security in high schools. It has been argued that from the early 1920s to 1980s the army has been used as a tool to educate and indoctrinate rural young men with modern and nationalistic ideas (Bora, 2013, pp. 164-165). Moreover, through a mandatory class on national security (National Security Class) in high schools, the army has 'educated' all students with military-prepared curricula since 1926, including female students since 1937 (Kancı & Altınay, 2007, p. 57).

Within the literature on the military service and the Turkish nation-building project, there has been a focus on the varied places assigned to women and men have been through military and military service. Various scholars have discussed that the fact that only men are conscripted does not mean that military service is related to them only and that women are also a part of it (Kancı & Altınay, 2007; Sünbüloğlu, 2009). In such societies as Turkey and Israel where military service becomes a source of entitlement and access to various opportunities, it becomes of crucial importance who is conscripted and who is not. Kancı and Altınay argue that "when it is only men who become soldiers, military service inevitably defines male citizenship and masculinity in opposition to female citizenship and femininity" (2007, p. 54). And in the Turkish context, they claim, "there is no other citizenship practice that differentiates as radically between men and women as compulsory male conscription" (2007, p. 54). It is rightly claimed that such a differentiation does not only shed light on the processes of constructing an ideal manhood in Turkey but it also shows the attempts to delineate ideal womanhood as well (Sünbüloğlu, 2009, p. 59).

[6] This is a council which decides on the internal and external security threats to the state and people and decides what measures to take in dealing with them. It meets under the leadership of the President of Republic and there are representatives of both Turkish Armed Forces and government. By participating in such an important state institution, military becomes a significant actor in affecting politics in Turkey.

It is important to note that within this critical literature on the military/military service and nationalist project of the Turkish State, there is almost no focus on Kurds. They are only listed as one of the minorities in Turkey while discussing assimilationist policies with regards to military, military service and militarization at the societal level. It is therefore my aim to address this gap in the literature with my thesis. I think that the closest case to experiences of Kurds in Turkish Army is that of Arabs in Israeli Military. Both Israel and Turkey are militaristic states in which there is an official discourse of nation or state being surrounded by enemies which is why a strong military is necessary. Also an official discourse built on the idea of a majority identity as *the* identity of the state in both of these states, Jewish and Turkish, respectively. In both states military service is a rite of passage to full citizenship, a place where social gender norms are reproduced and/or reshaped, and is a place where not only people of the majority, Jews and Turks, respectively, but also people of minority groups serve. Although there are many similarities between Kurds and Arabs in these two states, it is important to note that Arabs in Israel voluntarily go to serve due to its various benefits for acquiring citizenship rights (Kanaaneh, 2009) whereas it is obligatory for Kurdish men to serve in the Turkish Army.

Besides, Arabs are also allowed not to serve because of the assumption that the army and the state are defined by Jewishness. This is one indication of the difference between the construction of the state and identity between the two places; in Turkey Kurdish identity is denied and Turkish identity is *de jure* and *de facto* imposed on Kurds, whereas in Israel it is conceptually impossible to get beyond being an Arab even if one is a citizen. Last but not the least, it is not only that Turkish identity has been defined against that of Kurds but that there is a history of military attacks on Kurds and Kurdish regions in the name of state unity and ideology. In this way, the position of Kurds in the Turkish military is similar to that of Arabs in the IDF. However, the attacks of the IDF are directed at Arabs who are not even citizens

since those who serve in the IDF are already privileged with Israeli citizenship, even though it puts them lower than Jews whereas the attacks of the Turkish Army is directed at Kurds even though they are citizens.

In order to understand the experiences of Kurdish men in Turkish Army, I have conducted a field research in Istanbul. The following chapter is on the methodology and design of this research.

CHAPTER 2- RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Each time I think about the fact that I have to serve in the military in Turkey as part of the compulsory military service, I get chest pains and my heart becomes burdened because I know I cannot be a part of such an institution that denies my existence, banned my language, beat my family in front of my eyes when I was a child, destroyed my uncle's wedding for singing Kurdish songs and their countless storming of our village. My lived experience with regards to the Turkish Army, therefore, is the basis of my chest pains when I think about serving in that military. It is also the reason why I wanted to conduct research on the experiences of Kurdish men in Turkish Army.

Because experiences of Kurdish men in the Turkish Army are not homogenous or shaped by a single factor, I crafted my research question in such a way that it can be fragmented into smaller parts. Nationalist and gender aspects, rituals, symbols, discourses, resistance and compliance and so on are all part of the larger research question but it is possible to discuss them separately as part of that large question. It is important to design the research question in such a way that can be fragmented into parts to create themes, build up relations among them and position the parts as part of larger system that I am analyzing (Booth, Colomb, & Williams, 1995, p. 40). Having fragmented my research question, I prepared my interview guide in four parts, in each of which I had questions to answer the respective fragment: the first part contained questions on the background information and various subjectivities in order to get to know my interviewees; the second part was on the questions related to rituals, symbols and discourses of Turkish nationalism within the army and questions on how my interviewees perceived those through their Kurdish identity. This part also included various questions on their arrivals to the army, wearing of their uniforms and various others performances upon their arrival; the third part was on these rituals, symbols and discourses through a gender lens. I asked questions to understand how they perceived and constructed

their gender identities, their perceptions on homosexuality, homosexuals and women. My questions were designed to understand how Kurdish men perceived, performed, stabilized and/or destabilized the institutional gender regime in the Turkish Army; and the last part contained questions on the effects of service on their lives post-service.

Although Emerson et. al (1995) suggest not to have hypotheses and theses prior to the field research in order not to limit your perspective and work better with the data extracted from the field, based on my lived experience in Turkey as a Kurd, I nevertheless had a few hypotheses before the research. First, in addition to a long history of state oppression of Kurds, due to the ongoing conflict between Kurds and the Turkish state in which there are months-long curfews by the state and many civilian casualties, I expected to see frustrations of many Kurdish men. I assumed that this would affect how they remember their experiences during the service and present them in the ways which could be interpreted as forms of protest and protest masculinities. Second, I assumed that when I presented them with language options for the interview (Kurdish, Turkish and English), they would most probably choose Turkish because of their possible education in that language. This was going to be an interesting point to see because based on my lived experience so far, there are many Kurds who communicate their ideas in Turkish more effectively despite the fact that many of them sympathize with the Kurdish political movements, legal and/or otherwise. Moreover, I expected seeing experiences of people which will hint to multiplicity of masculinities they performed. Given that not all the Kurds aspire to the same ideals or have the same positionalities or subjectivities, I expected multiple forms of masculinities to be present in their accounts. Finally, depending where they have done their service, their commanders, other soldiers in their unit and other possible factors in the army I expected them to have varied experiences and resistances within the army.

3.1 In the Field

I originally planned to conduct my interviews in Istanbul, Diyarbakır and Mardin. Istanbul is the city in Turkey with the highest number of Kurds, almost around 5 million based on unofficial reports. There are people from various backgrounds in this city in terms of class position (working or middle/upper classes), different hometowns, religious and political affiliations. Diyarbakır is the most important center of the Kurdish movement as in it has started there, the headquarters of the (Kurdish) political party HDP (People's Democratic Party) is there and also it is a house to numerous NGOs and associations which are politically significant. Mardin is one of the unique cities in the country which has Assyrian, Armenian, Zaza, Arab, Kurdish and Turkish people living in a somewhat peaceful way, divided along the lines of loyalty to HDP and AKP (Justice and Development Party – ruling party of Turkey since 2002). Due to the then and/or still ongoing conflict between the PKK forces and the Turkish State, months-long curfews and various other security concerns I had to cancel my field research in Mardin and Diyarbakır. Instead, I worked only in Istanbul.

Being in Istanbul did not suffice to have an easy time finding interviewees, again due to security concerns. I explained to each and every man I talked to that this research was purely for academic purposes, that it would be written and published in English at Central European University, that I was not going to take their real names and that in case they do not want their voices to be recorded, I would just take notes on paper. Many people refused to give an interview because of the current political situation in Turkey and possible security threats they might face. One incident summarizes the issue: I went to a Kahvehane[7] to see if I could manage to find some possible interviewees. A man at his mid-30s told me "look no offence but fuck off, you say this is for academic purposes but look at it [pointing at the TV in which there were news of academics being imprisoned in Turkey due to their support of a

[7] It literally translates as Coffee House. It is a place where mostly men go and play games, smoke, drink tea or coffee and talk about every subject that they come up with be that politics, sports, military service memories, marriage etc.

declaration of peace in Turkey with regards to the curfews and conflict in the Southeast of Turkey] they are professors and they are in prison." I told him that I would not ask his name or anything that could reveal his identity, that I would not record his voice and that I did not even know him. He said "I don't know you either, what if you are an undercover police?" This was the same reason why I did not want to conduct interviews in Mardin and Diyarbakır, and it apparently was a concern for Kurds even in Istanbul. As a result, I had to use snowball sampling where I asked friends to put me in contact with Kurdish men who have served in the Turkish Army. I started with four nodes and went on from those to conduct twenty interviews in total, eleven of those were individual interviews and two were group interviews, four in one group and five in the other. I conducted my interviews from 15th to 28th of April, 2016 with people from various backgrounds and positionalities in terms of their city of origin, where they did their service, age, class, time of their service, type of service (paid, long term or short term), religiosity and their positioning of themselves in relation to the Kurdish movement.

Despite all the security concerns, as a researcher of Kurdish origin with the language capabilities, I think I had somewhat access to the interviewees. One problem was finding the way to refer to the Kurdish movement due to connotations it has with how one names it or pronounces it. The way one pronounces the PKK- (PEKEKE vs. PEKAKA, one implying guerillas, the other terrorists) shows how she positions herself in relation to the group or Kurdish movement in general. I think the most neutral way to refer to it is "Kürt hareketi" which literally translates as "Kurdish movement." By doing so, I hoped not to disclose my personal position towards the Kurdish movement so that the interviewees would not be affected by me in that regard. Nevertheless, realizing that I am not judging them for their political orientations, especially those who are pro-Kurdish movement felt more comfortable with sharing such experiences about the army and military service which could normally get them in trouble in Turkey.

3.2 Profile of interviewees

I tried to find at least five interviewees from various positionalities with regards to each of the categories I analyze in my thesis such as class, religious affiliation, time and type of service and so on. I managed to find at least five men for each of these positionalities except for the religious affiliation. I managed to find only three non-Sunni men and these were Kurdish Alawite men, no non-Muslims. A great majority of Kurds in Turkey are Sunni Muslims, but the exact number of non-Sunni Kurds is unknown for two reasons. First, the exact number of Kurds unknown in Turkey because Kurdish ethnicity and Kurdish language are not included as categories in censuses in Turkey. Second, Alawite religion is not recognized in Turkey which is why officially they are also categorized as (Sunni) Muslim. There were ten practicing Muslims and seven who said they were culturally Muslim. The 'culturally Muslim' is used for those who said that they did not practice religion but would define themselves as Muslims as opposed to other religions or non-believers. Unfortunately I was not able to find any atheist Kurd who served in the military. More than half (12 out of 20) of my interviewees were sympathizers of Kurdish movement, legal and/or otherwise. Remaining eight acknowledged their Kurdishness but reported that they felt as part of the Turkish nation.

As one might expect, of all the interviewees most of the discontent with the army came from these men who are pro-Kurdish movement. Again, more than half (12) of my interviewees were blue collar workers and 8 were white collar workers. I used this categorization to discuss their experiences in the army with regards to their class positions. I acknowledge that class position is much more complicated than such a categorization but I am using this for analytical purposes to discuss how economic capacity of any individual is a factor in how he experiences military service in Turkey. This is important because it shows that Kurdish identity is not *the* primary identity in all cases or at all times in how Kurds experience the

service. Although I have tried various channels, I could not manage to find a homosexual Kurd who has served in Turkish Army. Such an interview would have been important for my discussions in the section on gender and sexuality and military service but my efforts through my friends, some people I knew at NGOs and different political networks did not provide me with such an interview.

I asked each and every one of the interviewees their language choice for conducting the interview. I asked them to choose from English, Turkish and Kurdish. As I expected, most of my interviewees (18) wanted to speak Turkish rather than Kurdish and the other two wanted to speak Kurdish in the interview. Having been educated only in Turkish and not having had schooling in Kurdish causes many Kurds to resort to Turkish when it comes to communicating on something other than daily conversations. The two interviewees (Lenin, 30 and Amed, 26) who chose Kurdish switched to Turkish many times during the interview when there were terms or expressions they could not say in Kurdish.

A cousin of mine who was working at a construction site in Istanbul told me about his fellow workers at the site; that there were two container houses and 6-8 people lived in each of them. I asked him to put me in contact with those people so that I could interview them and he did. In the first container house there were people from Bitlis, a city in Southeast Turkey known for its religious inhabitants. Not surprisingly, all four men that I interviewed there were practicing Muslims and were distant to the Kurdish movement. In the second container rather than their cities of origin, it was their pro-Kurdish movement stance that was common among five men I interviewed. In order to mind their time limitations for their work and because there was no space to do interviews separately, I chose to do group interviews in these little container houses. Although it could have been easier for me to ask my questions directly to each individual, because of the group interview dynamic I let them speak even to each other while narrating their experiences. I did so because a more relaxed atmosphere with few

interventions from me led to heated discussions, comparison of experiences, less hesitancy in sharing extreme cases among each of the both groups.

On that note, it is important to acknowledge that where I conducted my interviews affected the interviewees. Especially in those I conducted in public spaces such as cafes, interviewees would lower their voice or lean forward towards me when they were about to share something against the military or Turkish state and society. This was less the case with those I conducted in private places. These were either separate rooms in cafes or the houses of interviewees. An interesting thing was that when people were around, the interviewees would answer questions regarding cursing in the military in a discrete way but this would change when we were alone. Baba, 51, said "yes of course they were cursing you, your family, everything" when his wife was in the room but when she left the room he went back to that question to be more explicit: "they said things like 'fuck your moms' pussies, you are children of my dick' and also things like that to your mom, your wife."

Based on these reactions, it is possible to suggest that my gender identity as a man was one of the reasons why these men were explicit in some of their answers. In addition, I also acknowledge that my position as a researcher was affected by my Kurdish identity and my status as a man who has not served in the army. First, speaking Kurdish with them before the interviews helped them relax and be more open to share. Second, not having served in the army affected my insights on the importance some rituals, discourses and symbols over the others. Had I served before doing my field research, maybe my questions or what I found important or not would have been different.

Doing research in Turkey on a subject related to Kurdish identity may present multiple ethical concerns due mostly to security related problems. The political repressions and punishment of opposition by the Turkish State was part of the reluctance for people to speak to me and if

they did, it might have caused them to refrain from talking freely. In line with the 'do no harm' principle, as my ethical duty I told them about the objectives and possible consequences about the findings and publications of this research. I told my interviewees that I would not reveal their names; in fact, I did not ask their real names and background information or address that could enable authorities to track down these people. I let them choose a nickname for themselves and I used these.

CHAPTER 3- THE TURKISH ARMY AND NATIONALISM

As a central institution utilized by the Turkish State, the army creates both institutional and individual/discursive arrangements for indoctrination. It is not possible to find a clear cut distinction between institutional arrangements and individual-level arrangements in that they are often mutually supportive of one another, but it is possible to see that there are individual interventions by the commanders or fellow soldiers which affect the sorts of experiences Kurdish men go through. Therefore, I treat the institution of the military as a mechanism that attempts to apply the discourses, rituals and symbols of the Turkish nationalist project. I posit that this does not happen in the same way or to the same degree everywhere depending on how people in authority at a particular location manipulate the institution.

3.1 Obligation

As explained previously, it is regulated by law in Turkey that every able-bodied (meaning also heterosexual) male must serve in the military. The official discourse on military service is that it is a 'national duty or national debt' (vatan borcu / vatani görev) to be paid. In order to understand their perception of military service in Turkey, I asked my interviewees about their thoughts on being conscripted to the military. Although the majority of these men had problems with having had to serve in the Turkish Army, descriptions of a few of them resembled the official discourse of the Turkish State on military service. For instance, Ahmet, a practicing Muslim with an Arab father and Kurdish mother, narrated that every man should serve in the military because "even our prophet Muhammad (of Islam) had served" there. The emphasis on the prophet of Islam is important to note here because in my group interview with practicing Muslims they also referred to serving in military as Sunnah, deeds, teachings and sayings of the Islamic prophet Muhammad and is considered one of the two sources of Islamic teaching along with Quran. What is more interesting, I believe, was that Baba and Bekir, both of them Alawite Kurds, described service as a *national* duty, thereby being in line with state discourse on the service. Nevertheless, a majority of them declared that they served

because they had to and there was no way to escape it. As Adar, a forty year old Muslim in a cultural sense who was pro-Kurdish movement, put it:

> You go there because of obligation, they forcefully take you, and you have bad feelings towards it. Also, you don't feel belong there because you are Kurdish and also because you know who they fight against.

An important point to make here is that those who did not want to serve were not necessarily anti-militaristic. Many of the interviewees said that they did not want to serve in the "Turkish" military and that "everyone should serve in their own militaries" (Koçero, 30, graduate student, paid for his service). I think that such positioning as "everyone should serve in their own military" is illuminating as to how being a Kurd affects some men's perspective of serving in the Turkish Army in the sense that there are those who are against military service because it is not of their own nation. Nevertheless, some suggested that they were against militarization and militaries in general for the whole world and that they would not want to serve in the military "even of Kurdistan" (Teyrê Baz, 30, graduate student, paid for service). In contrast, for some, service was a "national duty, a debt to the nation that needs to be paid" and a place to learn the difficulties of life (Ahmet, 28, security guard).

Not only is military service an obligatory duty of male citizens, but it is also punished in various ways if not fulfilled. Everyone that I interviewed suggested that military service was an obstacle in their lives that they had to overcome. Some said that it was an obstacle for their marriage, some for education, some for future career and some said that without serving it was impossible to go to a state institution or a hospital. The state imprisons those who do not serve without a valid reason and given that most services are documented in institutions, it is nearly impossible for "escapees (*kaçak*)" to make use of public institutions such as hospitals, schools and so on. In addition, especially those who came from urban centers emphasized the social pressure about serving in the military when it comes to marriage in that

some families would not want to "give their daughters to" them for marriage (Ahmet, 28, security guard).

Although it is not possible to claim that military service is an obligation specific to Kurds, it is possible to see that there is a specific effect that it has particularly on Kurds. First it is difficult to pinpoint such thing as a document or declaration of some sort which has institutionally been created specific to Kurds, but the fact that even those who willingly went to serve declared that there was discrimination against Kurds testifies that Kurds experience the service through their ethnic identity, though to varying degrees. Second, previous ethnographic research on the experiences of ethnically Turkish soldiers has revealed that, at least for some Turks, military service is a means of constructing their masculine identity. For instance, a thesis written by a captain in the Turkish Army, Ali Kahya, in 2013 through an ethnographic research in Ankara and Sakarya with 20 participants on socializing effects of military service in Turkey includes many testimonies in which soldiers say they were saddened by the fact that they did their military service in an office and did not have a chance to go to the mountains to fight against "terrorists." "Terrorists" is a code for Kurds who take up arms and fight against the Turkish State in the mountains in the southeast of Turkey. Kahya observes that some of his participants "felt like losers" because they were not able to participate in "active military service" and that therefore one of them signed a petition asking to be sent to the region where fighting against "terrorists" took place (Kahya, 2013, pp. 164-165). This form of framing of "real service" as actively fighting against the enemy through combat is exactly what Tamar Mayer (2000) discusses for the case of combat soldiers in Israeli Defense Forces. She argues that some combat soldiers deserted their duty because due to possible peace processes between Israeli State and Palestine which would stop the combat soldiers to engage in conflict. As a result many of these soldiers deserted the duty because

there was no “rush,” “glory” or “rush” in peace mission and because it was not manly-enough a duty (Mayer, 2000, pp. 283-285).

In these accounts, one can observe that the construction of military service and manhood for some of these (Turkish) participants is through fighting against the PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party). For these men, the ultimate man and/or soldier is the one who goes through all these hardships, perfectly obedient to his commanders and superiors, full of love for the homeland, but also fights against 'terrorists' because doing other work in the army makes them feel less of a man, as losers. Of all the twenty people I spoke to, none declared such a fight against “terrorists” as part of “real military service.” In fact, many of them explained their frustrations with having to fight against Kurds in the mountains. Therefore, in my perspective, military service in Turkey is to a certain degree experienced through ethnic identity for a majority of soldiers, regardless of which ethnicity they belong to. This argument is also supported with the fact that whereas having had to serve in Turkish Army caused further discontents with the Turkish State for many of my interviewees, Kahya suggests that all of his (Turkish) participants agreed that military service had positive effects on their “love for the nation and citizenship consciousness (vatan sevgisi ve vatandaşlık bilinci)” (Kahya, 2013, p. 164). Perhaps, then, it is more accurate to argue that military service is mostly experienced through the identity/ies around which an individual has been politicized and given that educational curricula has been created along nationalistic lines, most men who serve in Turkish Army are politicized through their ethnic and national identities. This is the case for the Kurds regarding their Kurdishness especially because, as these examples show, the Turkish Army is explicitly constructed around Turkishness and against Kurdishness as its main Other.

3.2 Rituals

From the time of waking up, to when and how much they are to eat, to prayers before eating, to type and duration of sports, to the ways of using toilets, time spent in bathrooms, folding of

their clothes and sheets, to polishing of their shoes, to cleaning of their surroundings, to guard duty and to the time they go to sleep all the daily routines and rituals of soldiers are regulated institutionally. Being exposed to such an environment has created various types of stress and frustration for these men. Many of them defined military as an imprisonment, a place where there is no freedom, and a time where one's individuality is erased. This is a common phenomenon in almost all militaries. For the Turkish Army, that is a similar situation for all conscripts, so, institutional targeting of Kurds through these daily routines and rituals is a difficult claim to make. The question is, then, what kinds of rituals, if any, take on specific meaning to Kurds in Turkish Army?

Especially when it comes to works such as undesired guard duties or cleaning of toilets, many of them expressed that they felt discrimination because they were Kurds. When I asked them if they thought that such a feeling of discrimination was institutionally designed, they claimed that it was and that it was just because they were Kurdish. Amed put it like this:

> I served 5 months. I had bleeding in my stomach because I was smoking a lot due to the stress and all the curses… Also, they were writing too much guard duty for me, sometimes I would have to stand on duty for ten hours. Why? Because I was Kurdish, it was irritating them that I was Kurdish (Amed, culturally Muslim, pro-Kurdish Movement).

This was the case for many of my interviewees. The problem is that when I asked how they knew their Kurdish identity was the reason for such discrimination, as they said it, their answers were often like that of Amed who said "my commander was a fascist Turk and he hated Kurds, that's why he made me go through everything I suffered there." Thus, even if it is not necessarily done to him because he was Kurdish, the way he and others explained what they experienced was through their Kurdish identity. Institutional targeting of Kurds,

perhaps, is most evident in the pressure on them with regards to their use of Kurdish language. Lenin explained:

> You had to speak Turkish at all times. My parents don't speak Turkish, so when we spoke to them in Kurdish other soldiers and commanders would punish us because of that (Lenin, 30, pro-Kurdish Movement).

The above statements show two important issues. First, they show the frustration of being treated differently and that the Kurdish soldiers feel that the institution of the military is the root cause of their discrimination. The second is that, as discussed by many interviewees, having to have the same haircut, clothes, shoes, waiting in long lines and being treated as an "animal herd," as Lenin put it, create a loss of individuality for these people. I heard from some of my interviewees that while at shooting practices the commanders would tell Kurds who were good at hitting the targets that they must have had practice from the "other side" (read PKK). By associating 'successful' training of Kurds with an assumed link to the PKK, at least some, commanders of the Turkish Army positioned Kurdish soldiers as an internal enemy. To my question of how Kurdish men reacted in such situations, it was recurring often that they had no choice but to obey the orders. In my effort to see if there were spaces for these people to have resistance or subversive agency, I realized a form of "hidden transcript" as used by James C. Scott (1990) especially when it comes to chanting and marches, as I elaborate in the next section.

3.3 Marches and Chanting

I had questions on marches and chanting in order to understand what kinds of lyrics are used, which I believe tells much about the gendered and nationalist construction of military, to understand how it was for Kurdish men to have to scream Turkish-praising songs and to see if there were moments of 'collective effervescence' where the individual identity would be insignificant compared to the collective spirit (Durkheim, 1966 [1895]). It is a practice of the

militaries to use chanting, marching songs and call cadence especially during trainings in order to create a spirit and bond among the soldiers. I must admit that when I was formulating questions I knew that I would hear about different marches or chanting which would be nationalistic or even fascist but when I heard about the different marches that the interviewees told me, I was terrified with their misogynistic, fascist, racist and homophobic contents. It was not the content per se that terrified me but the fact that this was institutionally used by one of the most important state institutions in Turkey.

As stated earlier, the Turkish military is an institution which attempts to create and/or recreate "Turk, Sunni Muslim, heterosexual" citizens. Anyone who does not fit these categories is put through punishment processes (Kancı & Altınay, 2007; Aktaş, 2009; Selek, 2013; Altınay, 2004). The Turkish Army, as many other militaries in the world, utilizes chanting and marches during education and trainings to indoctrinate the young males (most of whom are in their early 20s) into the Turkish nationalist discourses. Through these the army attempts to achieve a collective spirit in which the individual is expected to transform into a being who is fully Turkified, ready to die for the protection and honor of the state, nation and motherland.

> We set up ambush in mountains //The night sleep is ruined// Won't you give a sip of water? // To the commando, you girl of Konya
>
> A grenade in one hand, // A machete in the other, // A backpack on his back,// The lions of the second company
>
> Gentle splash of water// Red embroidery on her waist// Won't a look of commando// Be enough for you, you girl of Konya
>
> Love of homeland in my body// Flag and banner in my blood// He's next to his father (ancestor)// Lions of the second company
>
> To Mardin, Şırnak, Şenova// To Yüksekova of Hakkari// To Tunceli and Diyarbakır,
>
> We will climb the mountains,//We are going to kill the bandits

The above chant is an important one that many of the interviewees told me about. Not only does it create different and hierarchical places for women and men as man is the fully equipped commando soldier and woman is a civilian, but it also depicts the woman as one who dress up beautifully with embroideries around her waist and is ready to be seduced with a single look of the soldier. Such romanticization of women's traditional(ized) roles and men's heroic figure resonate with Elshtain's as "just warrior" and "beautiful soul" discussion (1987). These gendered assumptions and indoctrinations will be discussed in more detail below. I would like to discuss the nationalistic and antagonistic assumptions it contains in this section.

In this chant, these 'lions' are full of love for their homeland so much so that their blood consists of the flag of the nation. This refers to the nationalistic symbolism about the Turkish flag in which the color red in it represents blood of the martyrs, the star represents the martyr, and the crescent represents the independence of the state. In one of his speeches in the Turkish Grand National Assembly, then Prime Minister and now President of the Republic of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has repeated this symbolism in the midst of a discussion among parliamentarians on the importance of the flag (Ortaçer, 2015). It is these lions who are going to march to the mountains of all those cities to "kill bandits". It should be no surprise that all the cities and regions named are located in what has historically been referred to as Kurdistan and are populated mostly by Kurds. The institutional enemy, Kurds, are recreated and enshrined in to soldiers' minds as the enemy through such chanting and marches. This is an important point because creation of Kurds as an institutional enemy is so powerfully applied that it has temporal transformative effects even on some Kurds. Such transformative effect is evident in Bozo's, a 36-year-old Kurd who is a practicing Muslim, account below:

> As a Kurd you think that it is ridiculous that you have to scream things like that. I am a Kurd, why am I here? But also you know, you are a teenager and full of enthusiasm

> you know, you are a soldier (proudly), so we would enjoy chanting these things. Think about it, you are more than 500 men and you are all shouting the same thing. At that moment you are getting in a mood that you want to really climb the mountains on foot and kill all those in the mountains.

Bozo is a religious Kurd who served in Ankara, the capital city of Turkey. He acknowledges that he never went to the mountains and experienced fighting against the PKK guerillas and that with his current state of mind, he would never want to do such a thing. But for the time of service he states that he would have done it if there was an order or a chance. He says that he probably would never want to kill anyone or anything because "our religion bans violence, so I am against it." The transformation of the individual in such a collective into a person who is ready to kill and die is related to the collective effervescence as discussed by Durkheim. Being a part of larger collective, screaming songs that touch emotions of individuals, and being forced and encouraged by commanders as 20-year-old men, it is possible to claim that it is all these factors coming together that become a part of such transformation. Besides, Turkish nationalists have built the nationalist project through a discourse of 'internal and external enemies who have a wicked eye for the Turkish lands and there is a constant threat surrounding the homeland which is why the creation of citizen-soldiers is a must' (Kancı & Altınay, 2007, pp. 59-60). This is most evident in the popular saying that "Turks have no friends but other Turks" (Kancı & Altınay, 2007, p. 59). Within such a discourse, the Kurd automatically becomes an enemy of the Turk and therefore s/he needs to be eliminated if not Turkified.

3.4 Resistance

Marches and chanting as rituals also provide a fertile space for possible resistance. Many of the interviewees claimed that they had no choice but to obey the orders meaning they had to take part in roll calls, formations to march from one place to another, exercise and other physical activities. At the same time, they would add that mostly they just mumbled instead

of screaming when they were ordered to chant and sing as a group. Some said that during the chanting or marches which were belittling or cursing Kurds, the PKK or Abdullah Öcalan (the imprisoned leader of the PKK) they would curse the Turkish state, Turks and Atatürk but with a silent voice. Such phenomena, in their perspective, were not strong enough a resistance. However, I believe that mumbling of chants as opposed to screaming, or cursing the Turkish national symbols as opposed to Kurdish ones could be considered a form of hidden transcript (Scott, 1990). Adar (40, pro-Kurdish movement) said that a few friends of his also just mumbled chants instead of screaming them, the way he mumbled.

Not following the order of screaming could be viewed as a form of resistance in and of itself. Similarly, some of the interviewees reported that they would make fun of their commanders and mock them in their private groups. I find it important to note here that the army sometimes takes measures like peer control against those who do not scream. One of them said that it was ordered by their commanders that if the "one next to you did not scream, you could take their hat from their head and throw it away. If you were a soldier whose hat was thrown away, then you were screwed. I think they took such a decision to make Kurds scream" (Bozo).

Because of a tattoo of Caliphate Ali's sword (religiously important leader for Alawites) on his arm, Bekir was asked by his commander if he was an Alawite and he said yes to that. Then when asked if he was Kurdish, he said "Sir, I do not know, my parents speak Kurdish at home but I don't know if I am Kurdish." The commander told Bekir that he was an Alawite Qizilbash ("Red Head," used as a demeaning word) Kurd and threatened him that he would make Bekir do all the filthy work, clean toilets and various other threats. After some thinking he called his mother to ask if he was Kurdish and she said that he was Kurdish. After learning "who he is," he goes back to his commander and tells him that he is Kurdish:

> I told him that I was an Alawite Kurd and he suspended my right to go out on weekends for 26 days. He told me 'how dare you so comfortably come and tell me that you are Kurdish in these lands of Turks?' I told him I answered so comfortably because he asked me that question so comfortably. I was so lucky that he was sent to another place (Bekir, 34, became pro-Kurdish movement after military service).

This example shows that, depending on the place of service, the army as an institution creates such an environment that not rejecting one's identity becomes a reason for a Kurd to be threatened. My interpretation of this is that claiming a Kurdish identity or even not rejecting it becomes a way of resistance for Kurds. Some other examples of resistance are more visible. A few of the interviewees reported that they had been in fights with their commanders or other fellow soldiers because the others would intentionally curse Kurds, swear at "our mothers, sisters, wives when we were around them so that they would start a fight and we would fight. I never had fear. I would voice my concerns even if I would be beaten" (Adar, 40, pro-Kurdish movement). The institution of the military is a very strong system in perpetuating its politics within Turkish nationalist discourse. As stated before, according to Turkish nationalist elites, soldiering is an essential characteristic of Turks and that Turks have been surrounded by enemies therefore there is a constant need for a strong military and militarization of society (Altınay, 2004; Kancı & Altınay, 2007). Discourse on Turks as always surrounded by enemies is reproduced when it comes to Kurds as well. Kurds are categorized as the internal Other, an enemy, and this is partly successfully imposed on Kurds, too.

Within the barracks, the military institution tries to be omnipresent as in indoctrinating, training, educating soldiers and making them work, and leaving them as little free time as possible. My interviewee Lenin, 30, pro-Kurdish movement, stated that it was not possible to have any free time because they were ordered to do one thing after another. He said "they were scared that soldiers would destroy everything if they had nothing to do." These aspects

of the military apply to Turkish soldiers, too, but there are instances which could be discussed as specific to Kurds. Sidar, 30-35, from the group interview in which pro-Kurdish men were present, said that "whenever a few of us (Kurds) gathered together to talk, or to sing, the commanders would tell us to stop it and they would give us irrelevant jobs." My understanding of this is that through various performances and rituals, the military institution strives to be at all aspects of soldiers' lives and at all times in order for the soldiers not to be "derailed" but rather stay on track as the army wishes. Even within such an institution, as hidden or public transcripts, there are possible means of resistance. It is also very important to note that resistance is present but it is also punished. Ronahi, 35-30, from one of the group interviews, said that:

> When they were about to give us workout suits, everyone wanted the tailors to put a big Turkish flag or nationalist sayings on their suits. A Kurd from Tunceli and I agreed to the flag but in a smaller size, we did not want big ones. The commander beat us so much that his fingers were hurt. The guy from Tunceli said "sir, why don't you wear this and go to my village, see what people will do to you" to the commander. Because he said that, he was sent to military prison.

3.5 Other Possible Variables

Regarding the two group interviews I conducted, my observation was that for the first group Islamic identity was more central than Kurdish identity and it was the other way around for the second one. The answers I got to my questions varied significantly in terms of what sorts of experiences those people had. One of the most significant differences was that the first group expressed much frustration with the mealtime food prayers in the military which go, "Praise to our God, our military and nation shall live forever." One of the men in the first group complained that they had to say 'God' instead of 'Allah' despite all of them being Muslims and said that "it was difficult for us to say God because it is a Jewish word. Why do I say a Jewish word in a Muslim military?" Based on the kinds of frustrations with the

military service, Kurdish identity was more salient for the second group. They complained about having to say things like 'every Turk is born a soldier, my life shall be sacrificed for the homeland.' This might be a dynamic of a group interview, in that they would support one another to share such frustrations, yet these two group interviews are important in terms of shedding light on the fact that different subjectivities affect how one experiences the service even when they are Kurdish.

Moreover, as I have stated earlier, it is not possible to claim that military service is experienced in the same way by all the Kurds because characteristics of commanders, dynamics of the company, regiment of platoon, location, personal identification with religion and Kurdish movement, educational level and class positions are also important factors in determining what kinds of experiences a Kurd encounters during his service. Two of my interviewees, for instance, paid for the service instead of physically going to the barracks and this was an available option because of their class position (could be read as power to afford paying for the service) and educational level as they both were graduate students.

One of the most important determinants of type of experiences one goes through during the service is the educational level. This goes for everyone in the army, not for Kurds only. If you are a university graduate, the army gives you the option of serving short-term which usually is half of the full-term, around 6 months and 12 months, respectively. In addition to that, while in the service university graduates are given a rank if they choose to serve long term while those with less education serve as ordinary soldiers. If the university graduate chooses to serve long term, he is given a significant amount of money as a salary. Thinking about this with respect to Kurdishness and Turkish nationalism, education is an important survival mechanism. Especially those coming from rural areas or those who are less educated and thus are less qualified in speaking Turkish language have harder time during their service. All my interviewees spoke Turkish, in fact many of them wanted to conduct the interviews in

Turkish, only a few wanted to speak in Kurdish. As mentioned previously, this has to do with the fact that medium of instruction in education in Turkey is Turkish and that Kurdish is only spoken in private life which is why many Kurds does not have a good command of the language when it comes to articulating complex discussions. Many of the interviewees told me about Kurds who spoke no Turkish coming from remote rural areas and the much bigger hardships they would encounter while at the service.

Based on the interviews, it is possible to claim that the location of the service as in which part of the country one serves at and the amount of violence between the PKK and the Turkish state at the time are important determinants of what sorts of pressures, possibilities and dynamics await Kurdish people. In general those who serve in the western parts of Turkey are said to have an easier time, depending on their commanders. Perhaps one of the most important and repeated notion about commanders was that those who had their epaulets of ranks on their shoulders (military academy graduates, more educated commanders) were more understanding and less violent than those who had epaulets on their arms (those who chose to stay in the army and gained a rank through long years of working, in general less educated and cannot gain higher ranks after a certain point). Many of the interviewees complained that it was those who had epaulets on their arms that would turn the service into hell for them and many would label such commanders as 'fascists who wanted to exercise power over soldiers because they are not capable of doing anything else.' Depending on such characteristics of their commanders, those who served in the western parts of Turkey seemed to have an easier time as Kurds in the service.

Another important factor is the conflict between the PKK forces and the Turkish military. Especially in the regions close to the PKK forces in the mountains there seems to be a higher tension between Kurdish soldiers and their Turkish counterparts. The interviewees expressed various forms of distress there. First, they were conscripted in to an army in which they have

to fight and shoot 'their own' so, as one man said, "I was just shooting in the air when we were taken to the mountains to fight against the PKK because I knew it was our people. I could not get out of the operation but I did not shoot my own sibling" (Adar, 40, pro-Kurdish movement). Some of these Kurds expressed that they were ashamed of the fact that they had to fight against 'their own' when they went back home after the service. "They (people back at home) knew we *had to* serve there, it was not our choice but there still was something that was hard for them and us" (Baran, 32, Alawite-Kurd). Moreover, especially during times of violent clashes between soldiers and the PKK forces and when the PKK would kill soldiers, those who served in the eastern parts of the country talked about tense relationships with the Turks in the barracks. Baran, for instance, said:

> They would curse Kurds in front of us to start a fight; they called us terrorists many times as if we were the ones who killed the soldiers. It was incredible to see even the moderate Turks who in the beginning seemed to be concerned with human rights being transformed into fascists who would say that they wanted to kill Kurds.

On the one hand, the military as a center of Turkification seems to be successful in radicalizing those who are Turkish nationalists, ethnic Turks and others alike. On the other hand, attempts to create a Turkish identity for everyone or Turkify those who are not Turks seem to be counter-productive in many cases for Kurds as they become more radicalized against the Turkish state. Things like having to fight 'their own,' hearing commanders and fellow soldiers curse the 'honor' of Kurds, or being pressured because of speaking Kurdish have caused frustration for many. It is, therefore, possible to claim that institutional arrangements, which are designed to create 'good citizens,' have created counter-productive effects when it comes to some Kurds. Bekir, for instance, learned about his Kurdishness while serving and started to be active in various aspects of the Kurdish movement post-service. Many others have expressed frustrations due to the pressure on them about using the Kurdish language and that it in turn reinforced their Kurdish identity. This is most prevalent

in the forming of friend groups as in many interviewees said that their close friends were Kurdish and that they would talk about hardships of serving in the army, mock the commanders, curse Atatürk etc. in their private in-group conversations.

As it is the case with great majority nationalisms in the world, Turkish nationalism is also very gendered and often masculinized especially with regards to military and military service (Nagel, 1998; Altınay, 2004). In fact, the army has been utilized by the nationalist elite as a construction site for hegemonic forms of masculinity in Turkey (Aktaş, 2009). Throughout my interviews I have encountered many aspects of the military as an institution, discourses and individual performances which are important to critically analyze through the lens of gender. The following chapter presents an intersectional analysis of Kurdish, Turkish and gender identities through practices and performances in the military, personal positioning of Kurds towards what they defined as misogynistic aspects of the army, analyses of their perspectives on women, femininity, masculinity and homosexuality within the military.

CHAPTER 4-GENDER

4.1 Mini Rainbow: No Report, Pink Report, Rotten Report

4.1.1 No Report: no to women and femininity

Article 66 of the Turkish Constitution of 1982, states that "[e]veryone bound to the Turkish State through the bond of citizenship is a Turk." In addition, Article 72 takes military service as national service and defines it as "the right and duty of every Turk." Thought together with the popular saying that "every Turk is born a soldier," these laws and regulations beg the questions as to why women are not conscripted. Are they not born soldiers, are they not Turk enough or is Turk as a category is inherently a male identity? The exemption of women from military service is problematic because it deprives them of performing a citizenship right, as it is defined in the constitution. Therefore, from the onset, we see that there is unequal access to citizenship rights between women and men in Turkey. But the centrality of military and military service in Turkey, a militaristic society, where military service legitimizes a valorized place for those who do it, denying women the right or not obliging them to serve becomes the hallmark of a hierarchical society in which men are valorized more than women, as outlined in Chaper 2. Men who perform their military service are given a report known as *tezkere* as proof of their service and *have to* use this for the rest of their lives like when applying for a passport, getting a job and so on. This report is denied to women, so they basically are not even considered for any form of a report when it comes to military service; they get no report. Although no one asks women for that report in their lives, the fact that having such a report provides a higher status in the society shows that the state deems an inferior position for women in relation to serving in the military.

By excluding women from military service, the Turkish State implies that women either cannot or should not do it and that they are to occupy a civilian status in the "military nation" as opposed to warrior men. In order to understand Kurdish men's perspective on this I asked

them the following question "do you think women can perform military serve? Do you think they should do it?" I could not understand if it was their wishful thinking or because my question was too vague, but except for Koçero and Teyrê Baz, both of them graduate students, the great majority (18) of my interviewees said that women would not be able to survive in the barracks with men. The way they understood the question was as if I asked them if women could do it in mixed barracks. The fact is that I did not have any separate or mixed service in my mind. But they assumed that if women served, it would be in the same space with men because a majority of them said things like, "I think it is wrong for women to serve because there would be a population explosion in the military" (Ahmet, 28, practicing Muslim). Having heard so many responses like that, I asked them if women could and/or should serve separately. Then the answers varied from "yes they can but they should not because women cannot survive all humiliations and curses. But actually maybe women could diminish curses there," as Baran, 32, Alawite-Kurd said, to Ali's (26, pro-Kurdish movement) statement that, "women cannot serve because you know they are fragile, their bodies are different than ours"

Based on the responses I received to my question about women doing military service as well as follow up questions I asked, there are two general conclusions one can assert. First is that there was a clear emphasis on the "honor code" which perceives women as reflecting the honor of men. This was evident especially in comments like, "no no, women should not go. It is not a place where they belong. I would not send my wife or sister among those horny animals" (Mustafa, group interview with practicing Muslims). The reason that I take this as his concern with women's honor is because he added that Turks would probably send their wives but Kurds would not do and the reason, he suggested, was that Kurds and Turks do not come from the same place. He stated that "come on men where are we coming from? No Kurd would send 'his sister, wife or mother' to serve in *this* military. Turks would send

because they no longer have their morals" (emphasis added). Based on this statement he assumes that sending "his women" to "their military" is an "immoral act that Turks would do but Kurds would not. Therefore he speaks within a patriarchal framework where women are perceived as honor of the men and that of nation. The second is that there were comments informed by Kurdish identity, though still extremely gendered, like "why would we send our women to their military" (Ronahi, group interview, pro-Kurdish movement group). He opposes women's service because it is "their (Turks') army" and not that of Kurds. This is because when I asked what he thought about women fighters of the PKK, he said "they are our guerillas. And it is a different institution. It is not like Turkish Army." His answer was also extremely gendered because he still posed it as his decision to "allow" women to go to serve or not.

In light of such discussions, the majority of Kurdish men that I spoke to, in one way or another and to varying degrees, perpetuated the gender regime and discourses of the Turkish Army and the Turkish State. In various ways, they ignored women's agency and reproduced existing traditionalized gender roles in Turkey. First, some of these men put themselves in a position being the ones to decide whether to allow women to serve or not. Second, for them, women cannot serve because men in the army are "horny animals" thereby positioning women as just waiting there and not acting or even reacting to what would happen to them if they were serving in military. This also positions women as sexual targets, potential victims if they are conscripted. Third, some of them used biological-deterministic claims that women's bodies are not designed in such a way that they can perform soldierly duties. The interesting thing is this biological-deterministic approach does not apply to Kurdish women fighting for the PKK. Last, but not the least, perspective of many of these men on whether women can or should serve was informed by their Kurdish identity in that they were fine with Kurdish women doing soldierly work in the PKK but not in Turkish Army. Therefore, my observation

is that through such discourses on women, many Kurdish men stabilize gender regime in Turkish Army but by, at least discursively, accepting and welcoming women's service if it was in "their own military," they complicate the traditionalized gender norms that assigns the soldierly-work to men in Kurdish society.

4.1.2 Rotten and Pink Reports: no to 'diseased men'

While women are denied the right to be conscripted, it does not mean that all men are conscripted either. Disabled men, those like obese men whose weight-height ratio does not qualify for military standards, those with contagious illnesses and also homosexual men, as homosexuality is defined as a psychosexual disease in Turkey, are exempted from military service and are given infamous rotten reports (çürük raporu), or the 'pink report' (pembe tezkere) in the case of homosexual men. To be more accurate, Turkish Military does not necessarily exclude homosexual men per se, but those who "prove" their homosexuality. Therefore, it has a gender regime that positions itself against homosexuality. In order to prove their homosexuality various atrocious procedures have been imposed on homosexual men who would like to be exempted from service. These include "Personality Tests, Photos or videos taken during sexual intercourse, Photos or videos taken while wearing women's clothes in public places, Rectal Examination, Hospital Stay" as well as a relative who would testify that the one who claims to be homosexual has 'come out' (Irlenkäuser, 2012, pp. 56-57).

Although a few of my interviewees spoke outside of a heteronormative discourse when it came to their perspective on homosexuality and homosexuals in the military service, many of my interviewees argued that homosexual men would not be able to serve in military because of possible sexual encounters there. It was mostly that "normal soldiers," as one of men in group interview with pro-Kurdish movement ones put it, would rape homosexual men if they were conscripted. Assigning heterosexual and "unproven" homosexual men into a "normal"

category and homosexual men into an "abnormal" one is in line with Turkish Army's definition of homosexuality as a psychosexual disease. Many of the interviewees had a smirk on their face when I asked them about homosexual men in their barracks or about their perspectives on conscription of homosexual men into the military. I asked them how homosexual men were referred to in military; they said that such words as "ass-giver, balls, softs, faggots" were used to describe them. Such words were also directed at men already in the military as an insult.

With their responses to my question on whether or not homosexual men would be able to perform military service, many of the interviewees were stabilizing Turkish Army's stance on homosexuality as well as the dominant social stance among Kurds and Turks alike. Moreover, based on how they defined homosexual men, many of these interviewees had a narrow understanding of what homosexuality was. For instance, Lenin, a thirty year old pro-Kurdish movement man, said "how can they serve when even women cannot? You know gays see themselves as half women. Also they would do bad things with other men." In a similarly misinformed way Ali, a twenty six year-old practicing Muslim, said that homosexual men would not be able to perform soldierly duties because "they (homosexual men) think about the opposite sex." Although this is the definition of heterosexual, it seems, for Ali, that because homosexual men would "think" about sex with men they cannot perform military service.

Bahoz, 35-40, a practicing Muslim, described a situation when responding to my question on homosexual men in military service. He said that upon his arrival to the barracks with other recruits, their commander wanted the soldiers in the company to make a circle and put their hands behind their backs. Then the commander said "if you are a faggot, make a fist" and he walked around the circle to detect whether or not any of the soldiers was a "faggot." He added that this ritual was done to detect those who had "health problems" such as what is

known as 'flat feet.' I do not think that "faggot detecting" is something that happens everywhere in Turkish Army but it shows that in certain ways the non-majority men are made to feel different. I argue that because of physical examinations that many of the interviewees spoke about. Apparently, again in the early days of their service, the commanders would command everyone to strip naked and tell those who were not circumcised that if they wanted to be circumcised, they could do it in the army.

This is an important issue to discuss because circumcision is utilized as a way to other the men from non-majority groups. Circumcision in the Turkish context is one of the rites of passage to manhood (Selek, 2013) and an Islamic requirement that boys be circumcised before they reach puberty. Therefore, in two ways these physical examinations are utilized as mechanisms to make men of non-majority identities feel different. First, men who are not circumcised in Turkey are mostly Christians or non-believers. Thus, being uncircumcised among hundreds of circumcised men in an institution which describes itself as the "House of prophet Muhammad" puts these men into the category of "other." Second, since circumcision is a ritual through which boys symbolically pass to manhood, it becomes a means for the commanders to emasculate those who are not circumcised. Since a great majority of Kurds in Turkey are practicing Muslims or Muslim in cultural sense virtually all of them are circumcised.

4.2 Constructing masculinity

In the official discourse of the Turkish State, military service is a debt that has to be paid as part of citizenship duties but more importantly it is a rite of passage to manhood, a duty that men are expected to be proud of performing and completing. It is discussed as one of the central ways for a man to construct his masculinity. Based on what my interviewees have argued, this is not the case for many Kurds. Except for those who view military service in line with the religio-ethnic heteronormative discourse of Turkish State, military service is a

traumatizing experience for Kurdish men. Baba, a 51 year-old Alawite Kurd who is distant to the Kurdish movement, stated that he escaped the service for a while for economic reasons and because he had a wife, a child and a mother to take care of but that he finally decided to go because "in the end, it was a national duty and I was going to do it at one point." Contrary to this understanding, many of my interviewees stated that having to fight against 'our own people' made them feel ashamed of themselves post-service. As men who could not exert their dominance as in not being able to resist the Turkish State and having to serve in its army, an army that many of them defined as one that fights Kurds, for these men, then, serving turns into a shameful performance, one that they feel embarrassed about as opposed to the general understanding that military service is a rite of passage to manhood.

Various other rituals which are generally performed by soldiers to prove their masculinity did not apply to Kurds during their service. It is very popular in Turkey for soldiers to take pictures with weapons and ammunitions, RPGs, army knives and either sending these pictures back home or nowadays posting them on social media. Baran, thirty two year-old teacher, said that he never took such pictures because "the entire service was a time that I hated. I did want to have any memories from it and those guns were used against Kurds, how could I be proud to take picture with them?" Not taking pictures holding guns, where doing so is part of performing hegemonic masculinity, becomes a subversive act against hegemonic masculinity.

Nevertheless, there were other ways in which Kurdish men's perspectives reproduce hegemonic masculinity in Turkey with regards to serving in military. There was almost a consensus that paying your way out of military service did not count as "real service" for these men. In general two reasons were proposed; first, some perceived it as unfair in the sense that they had to suffer all the hardships of military service as poor people and that when the rich pays not to do that it is not fair to them. The second is that some of them perceived military service only as physically being present in the barracks and that not performing

soldierly works does not count as serving. When these are considered in light of recurrent emphasis on military service as enduring humiliations, curses, long ours of guard duty and sports, and being under command for the protection of the rest of the people, many of the interviewees did not perceive paying for the service as masculine enough a phenomenon. As Ahmet, a 28 year-old practicing Muslim, put it:

> Why would a man not serve in military? He would not because he is scared … because he has no use for the benefit of the homeland. If a man is doing his national duty (*military service*), he is protecting his lands, or family, or wife or siblings… But if a man is paying his way out, then he is not protecting. Paying for it and pretending to have served does not mean that he really served. He needs to live there, see hard conditions, eat the food, and sleep on bunk beds to really have served.

This comment is almost identical to how military service is discussed in National Security Course (Milli Güvenlik Bilgisi), which was a course given in public schools generally by a ranked soldier from the army in Turkey. In one of the books, cited in (Kancı & Altınay, 2007, p. 63), it is stated that:

> Military service is the obligation to learn and perform the art of war in order to defend the Turkish homeland, Turkish independence and the Republic. Being the most sacred service to the homeland and the nation, military service prepares the youth for real-life conditions. A person who has not done his military service cannot be useful to oneself, one's family or one's homeland.

I posit that Kurdish men go through an extremely gendered and nationalistic institutional experience during their military service in Turkey not that nationalistic and gendered experiences are mutually exclusive. In fact, gender and nationalism are intertwined in such ways that it is almost impossible to perceive a spectacle, discourse, performance, ritual, or symbol in the military as solely gendered or nationalized. Besides, it is also very difficult to assign a certain identity or category as 'the primary one' for any individual. Nevertheless, based on the narratives of my interviews, it is possible to claim that Kurdish identity is the primary point of departure for certain experiences of these men. I think the story below from

Baran, a leftist, Kurdish-Alevi teacher, describes the entanglement of various categories of difference and how Kurdish identity becomes the point of departure for certain experiences.

The story came as response to a question I asked my interviewees at the end of each interview. When I finished all my questions, I asked each them if there was anything else that they wanted to add to create a space for them where they would not be channeled by my questions but rather says whatever they remembered from their military service experience. Baran told me a story of a Kurdish woman who gave her phone number to soldiers and talked to them and how he dealt with this situation. Having served in Hakkari, a city predominantly populated by Kurds, he described military service as the darkest experience of his life, as something he would never do if he had had the chance to avoid it, and added that he went through a psychotic breakdown during the service due to fascism, discriminations, humiliations and insults against Kurds and not being able to fight against those. So, when I asked him if there was anything he wanted to add, he told me this story:

> Maybe it was something crazy but I had to do it. Perhaps it was the only good thing about my military service actually. It would have been terrible if that did not happen. There was the phone number of a Kurdish girl in the hands of all the soldiers; there are girls like that everywhere, frivolous girls. This cannot be generalized to a society or a nation but it happens. All the soldiers had her number. This guy, that guy would call her and say "I will lick you, fuck your pussy, do this do that" After a while these soldiers started to say "all these (Kurds) are like this (a prostitute)." I had huge fights many of them, screaming at each other. I said "Aren't there prostitutes in Yozgat (a city in Central Anatolia, populated mostly by Turks). Don't people of Yozgat fuck each other? I am sure there are more prostitutes in Yozgat than in Hakkari. Don't you know how much a Kurdish woman a Kurdish girl cares about her honor? Haven't you heard of honor cases (referring to honor crimes)? How can you call all Kurds, all people of Hakkari as prostitutes just because you saw one? You are a university graduate, what you say is not right! Watch your mouth, I am also a Kurd." We were about to fight but they stopped us. Anyways, but I was really disturbed by the situation.

> Then, there were garbage collection trucks coming from the municipality into the barracks. The municipality was of HDP (known as pro-Kurdish political party in Turkey). I went to the garbage collectors and told them "trust me I believe in the same things and think as you do. There is a girl here, bring me a phone number from 'the party.' The girl is a slut (with an angry and disgusted face), what she does is being generalized to the people here. Tell her not to come around here anymore!" They said OK and thanked me. The next time they came, they brought me a number. I told them that "I am a soldier inside these walls. I don't care if the phones are wiretapped, if I don't tell you this, I will feel terrible." I wanted to do a small good you know. You know what they say, each sound makes an echo. It indeed does. I was saying that I would not leave this place without doing something good, however small it is. I had to make a change however tiny it was. I don't whom I spoke to- from municipality or from the mountains (the PKK). I told them about the girl and said "I don't know if she does it for money or pleasure, but as a Kurd it infuriates me (kanıma dokunuyor). Please tell this girl or her parents, she should not come around here anymore and change her phone number, because it makes me seriously uncomfortable." After that, the girl never passed around and the soldiers never called her again. She changed her phone number apparently. I know that they did not do anything bad to her. They must have warned her, maybe warned her hard and changed her phone. And she never came around the barracks anymore.

This entire story is gendered. The way he narrated it, that he had to do something about Kurdish girl exchanging numbers with Turkish soldiers; as a man positioning himself as one who needs to protect the honor of the woman of his nation; the fact that those he called changed the girl's phone number and stopped her from coming close to the barracks; the fact that Baran feels good about himself for having done that. These all are textbook-gendered considering feminist critiques of nationalist discourses where men and women are discursively assigned different roles and they show how nationalism and gender are intertwined. The reason that I suggest it is the Kurdishness that becomes his point of departure is because he reacts in a gendered way to this gendered situation because he was a Kurd, and the woman was also one. He explicitly states that he did what he did because he

was a Kurd. It was not an ordinary man "protecting the honor of a woman" but it was a Kurd who thought he had to "protect the honor of a Kurdish woman from intrusion of Turkish soldiers."

4.3 "Mehmetçik in Need of Pussy:" Sex and Sexuality

There is a conservative stance of military in Turkey when it comes to sex and sexuality. Based on the statements of all of my interviewees, except for the two who paid for their service, the military prohibits any sort of sexual activity for the soldiers in and out of the barracks during their service. The lack of physical sexual activity was one of the topics that many interviewees discussed. Many of the interviewees stated that during their free time on weekends when they could get out of the garrisons for a few hours, it was prohibited for them to go to places where alcoholic beverages were sold as well as brothels. Serhat, a pro-Kurdish movement Muslim in the cultural sense, said that in each garrison there is an "Emergency Response Squad (Acil Müdahale Mangası)" the name of which in Turkish is abbreviated as AMM. Serhat reported that the soldiers would play with this abbreviation and refashion it as "Ama Muhtaç Mehmetçik" literally translated as "Mehmetçik in need of pussy." Some of them said that in order not to be in such a "need," they had visited brothels before "giving themselves in" to their barracks. Besides, describing the severity of the issue, Baran, said that "we are talking about men with low levels of education and who do not see any lady, any girl which is why their libidos skyrocketed. They would almost fuck each other despite them not being gay."

Abstinence in relation to sexual activities in the barracks has trickled down to certain performances and rituals among the soldiers as well. In the Turkish Army based on what I heard from my interviewees, for instance, hazing rituals are rather de-sexualized as opposed to many other cases in various militaries. De-sexualized, however, does not mean not

gendered. Gendered-ness happens mostly through exertion of power by the superiors over the newcomers. Waking newcomers up to clean the dormitories in the middle of the night, painting their faces with shoe polish, making them eat very spicy peppers, having them stand on one foot for long periods and so on were among the hazing rituals that my interviewees reported. Lenin, a thirty year old pro-Kurdish movement practicing Muslim, said that the senior soldiers would put tooth paste on the floors and make the junior soldiers clean it in the middle of night. The de-sexualized aspect of hazing rituals parallels with conservative social norms and also the institutional stance of military as well yet there is high usage of sexualized language among soldiers as well as between commanders and soldiers.

Although they prohibit any physical activity, they are discursively preparing soldiers for performing sexual activities. This is most evident in marching songs and chants. All of my interviewees remembered one particular chanting song during their service: "blonde, brunette does not matter, commandos do not forgive (*esmer sarışın fark etmez, komandolar affetmez*)." In its Turkish form, this chant suggests that it does not matter for commandos which type of women there are, blonde or brunette, commandos would "fuck" any type. This and such chanting are gendered and sexist on many levels, which is why I wanted to understand what Kurds thought of them while singing them. The chanting and marching songs had differential effects on Kurds. Bozo, thirty six year-old practicing Muslim who is distant to the Kurdish movement, said that "it makes [one] very zealous, so much that you think you can go out and conquer all the women in the world." Contrariwise, Adar, a forty year old Muslim in a cultural sense who is pro-Kurdish movement, argued that "these were degrading women and women's bodies. We (Kurds) do not have such morals as them (Turks)." It would be misleading to claim that their different opinions are because of their positions towards Islam and Kurdish movement just as it would be a mistake to ignore the possible effect of these on their perspective. Nevertheless, especially in the statement of Adar and such statements by a

few other Kurds show how these men construct their masculinity in the Turkish Army as informed by their Kurdishnes.

Contentious politics among Kurds against the Turkish State has led some Kurds adopt perspectives which could be perceived as gender-egalitarian partly because it is what the Turkish State is not. When I asked about such writings as "girls we came here, but you were not here" or "we are here, skirt-wearing ones are gone" written by the Turkish soldiers on the walls and streets of Kurdish regions in which the PKK forces and the Turkish State engaged in a battle which caused months-long curfews, Adar, a forty-year-old pro-Kurdish movement man, said that "these are things that the Turks would be offended by. Writings are degrading women but it does not offend us, Kurds, that they call us women. We love women, in the end it is women who gave birth to us." For him Turks would be offended if they were to be feminized through such writings but Kurds have no problem with women or being feminized thereby defining Kurds as what Turks are not. Adar was not the only one who made such claims which is why it is possible to see creation of moral hierarchies and othering on gendered terms as "we" respect our women thereby masking patriarchal hierarchies among "us."

Another aspect of the military to discuss with regards to sex and sexuality is the use of curses by commanders and soldiers because it was one of the topics about which my interviewees were frustrated the most. As it is the case for many militaries in the world, curses are commonplace in Turkish military as well. Adar said that the first thing he associated with military service in Turkey is curses. Serhat, from one of the group interviews, said that it was the first thing he heard when he arrived there because he joined a group that was not his and "the commander said 'what are you doing there you bull dick' (laughing) it was the first thing I heard in the military." From the curses they remembered their commanders or fellow soldiers used some are "horse dicks, dickheads, pussies, hairs of pussies, ass-giver, balls,

softs, faggots, pussy-headed, motherfuckers, sons of my dick." These are used on a daily basis for everyone according to many interviewees. Sexualized language through such curses, a given that there is a wide range of them, suggests that any sort of sexual or sexualized words are perceived as derogatory. This is not surprising in an institution where there is abstinence from any physical sexual activity and where sexual activity is punishable by the institution. However, some of them stated that sometimes the commanders would directly curse Kurds. Ronahi, from one of the group interviews, a pro-Kurdish movement man, said that his commander would look at Kurds and say "fuck your mothers' and your wives' pussies." This is an interesting statement in the sense that it shows how some of the commanders in the Turkish Army use gendered honor codes as a mechanism of othering or a means to instigate a conflict with Kurds. It shows how the conflict between the PKK and the Turkish Army is gendered and it is trickled down to the individual level.

Serhat, from the same group with Ronahi who also served in the same place, in Nusaybin, a town near Mardin, reported that "the commander would choose Kurds on purpose and have them repeat after him '"Bastards of Apo (Abdullah Öcalan) cannot deter us' (*Aponun piçleri, yıldıramaz bizleri*). One of the Kurds said 'Bastards of Apo are going to fuck you.' They exiled him to somewhere else." This shows that everyone participates in this discourse of hetero male sexual domination in which penetration is perceived as power domination. Another interviewee, Sidar, said that Ahmet Türk and Selahattin Demirtaş, Kurdish parliament members in Turkey, had been on TV and when his commander saw them he said "fuck the mothers and wives of everyone who votes for these traitors." To describe the hardships they went through during their service, Sidar and Ronahi said "they (the army) fucked our mothers, our wives." Although this is the case metaphorically, it resonates well with the literature on gendered nationalism and the metaphorical place of sexuality, sexual violence and women. Regarding metaphorical gendered sexual violence Spike Peterson

argues that "women/the feminine are passive and denigrated by definition and it is the definitively masculine role of agency and penetration that exemplifies heterosexism, whether the denigrated *object* of that agency is female or male. Hence, male–male rape exemplifies heterosexism's objectification of the feminine even though no females are involved" (1999, p. 40). So when Sidar and Ronahi define the hardships they experienced in the Turkish Army as a form of sexual violence on their wives and sisters, they are reproducing such a heterosexist nationalist discourse as Peterson discuss. Although it is the army which expose them to extreme hardship it is their "wives and sisters" which are "being fucked." All of these testify that curses are commonplace in Turkish Army, and as part of a sexualized language that is supposed to be derogatory some are specifically targeting Kurds and that there are cases where Kurds respond to their commanders and fellow soldiers with the same curses. But perhaps the most interesting analysis of military regarding curses came from Teyrê Baz, who paid for his service and has not actually been in the barracks. He said that "the entire Turkish Army is constructed as a curse to Kurds. It feminizes Kurds; just the way women are thought to be those who need to be conquered by men, Turks have the same ideas about Kurds." This relates to the earlier discussion on how the Turkish soldiers was using a language that was feminizing Kurds through the writings on the streets and walls in the Kurdish region after they battle with the PKK. Besides, when this quote is thought together with the other testimonies of Kurdish men in the Turkish Army as "cursing Kurds to instigate a fight" or army's stance on homosexuals as well as non-Muslims (through stripping to see who is not circumcised), they all show the logic of the Turkish nationalism and hegemonic form of masculinity and proper citizenship. Going back to the earlier discussion on how the Turkish nationalism was constructed at the expense of the minorities, circumcision, feminization of Kurds, stance on homosexuality are mechanisms adopted by the army to make the minorities feel different.

CONCLUSION

This thesis discussed the experiences of Kurdish men during their compulsory military service in Turkey with regards to nationalist and gendered rituals, symbols and discourses in Turkish Army. This thesis showed that Kurdish identity is one of the primary categories of difference through which Kurdish men experience the military service in Turkey.

Feminist critique of nationalism has shown that nationalisms are very gendered in their discursive and symbolic productions, in their political and social applications and in their effects on social norms in any given society. The case is no different in Turkey especially considering the military as an institution and military service. Utilized by the nationalist elite as one of the central nation-building mechanisms, military service in Turkey was used to create ethnically Turkish, Sunni Muslim, heterosexual citizen-soldier men. Since this process has often been at the expense of various ethnic and religious minorities in Turkey, this thesis focused on the experiences of Kurdish men in the hallmark of Turkish nationalism in order to see the possible ways in which non-majority men are institutionally created as internal Others. This is why the case of the Kurdish men in the Turkish Army was an important one to study.

As discussed in chapter four, in their reactions to the nationalist rituals, discourses and symbols in the Turkish Army, there are two ways in which Kurdishness becomes the point of departure for Kurdish men. First, Kurds are directly targeted by their commanders and/or fellow soldiers; pressures on Kurds who speak Kurdish with each other or on the phone with their families, cursing Kurdish political actors such as political leaders of HDP or guerillas of PKK in the presence of Kurdish soldiers and having Kurdish soldiers scream marching songs and chants which are "humiliating" Kurds. Second, depending on their ideological affiliations to Kurdish political movements, Kurdish men tend to perceive various military hardships as discriminations against them due to their Kurdishness. As discussed in chapter four, many

interviewees believed that they were forced to do long hours of guard duties because they were Kurdish.

With regards to the gendered aspects of military service in the Turkish Army, it was discussed that there are various ways in which Kurdish men stabilize and/or obscure the institutional gender regime through their discursive productions as well as their acts and rituals. Especially with their perspectives on homosexuality and homosexual men, many Kurds were discursively stabilizing heteronormative gender regime in the army. Although through their contentions against the popular understanding that military service helps transform a boy into a man, Kurdish men seem to be producing resistant subjectivities as a result of their position as Kurds to the construction of hegemonic masculinity in the army, some of them nevertheless speak within a patriarchal understanding when it comes to their perspective on women. This, however, is still to a certain degree informed by their Kurdishness because some of them seem to find no problem with women participating in soldierly works if it is in the name of protecting and liberating the Kurdish nation but not supportive of that if it is within the Turkish Army.

My understanding of their perspective on finding no problem with Kurdish women fighting in the PKK but being against it if it is in the Turkish Army is that it is informed by the Kurdish nationalist project, that it is informed by their Kurdishness and how they construct themselves in relation to Turks and Turkishness and that it serves as a mechanism to mask various other patriarchal practices among the Kurds in Turkey. Under the leadership of the PKK, Kurdish nationalist project which adheres to somewhat gender egalitarian politics such as co-chairing of power positions, high political representation of women, equating freedom of women to that of Kurds etc. has certain effects on men at least at the discursive level. In relation to the extremely masculinized Turkish Army and its politics, some Kurds adopt a discourse that resonates well with the discourses of the PKK regarding women in the army. Adopting a

somewhat progressive discourse on women's military service does two things; first, it helps Kurdish men to position themselves against Turks to a higher moral ground by such statements as "Turks have lost their morals" and "Kurds have different traditions and morals than Turks." And second, by seeming not to have problem with women fighting for the PKK or not having problems with feminization of Kurds through such statements as "we love our women," "we are not like Turks," it also is a form of pink-washing in the sense that they put themselves to a morally higher position than Turks while at the same time masking various other patriarchal problems going on among "us." This is a form of temporally progressive and otherwise patriarchal masculinity is emerging or being reproduced among ordinary Kurdish men serving in the Turkish Army. Construction of such a form of masculinity is informed by the contentious politics Kurds have against the Turkish State and the Turkish Army which partly makes them define as what Turks and Turkishness are not.

Therefore, when it comes to the construction of their masculinity, there is an intentional distancing from the hegemonic forms of masculinity in the Turkish Army by some Kurds. As opposed to their Turkish counterparts, Kurdish men tend to refrain from rituals which are thought to be as part of the construction of hegemonic masculinity in Turkey. This has to do with the long history of forced assimilation, oppression and attacks on Kurds by the Turkish State. Therefore, this research shows that hegemonic forms of masculinity are the most desired form at all times and everywhere. Depending on the constructions of other categories of difference, an individual might reject a certain form of hegemonic masculinity within an institution. Therefore it shows that hegemonic form of masculinity might in certain cases be undesired because of the way that it is constructed. This is the case with some of the Kurdish men in how they construct their ethnic masculinity in relation to the gender order in the Turkish Army.

This thesis attempted to include Kurdish men from various categories of difference such as class, religion, education level and religiosity but was not able to include atheist and/or homosexual Kurds who have served in the Turkish Army. Therefore, it acknowledges that a more comprehensive study regarding its results is possible yet it still shows how Kurdish men think about their experiences in a way that highlights the ethnic difference and also ethnic masculinity. Besides, this study should be viewed as a step towards addressing the gap in the literature on the military service in Turkey with regards to the experiences of ethnic and religious minorities. In that regard, it shows some of the possible ways in which men of minority groups are made to feel different in the Turkish Army.

Not only has this thesis been one of the first studies which have taken Kurdishness as a category of analysis in discussing the experiences of men in the Turkish Army, it also has included how ethnic, nationalist and gender identities are negotiated, constructed, stabilized or obscured through various acts, discourses, and rituals. Therefore, it contributes to literature in various disciplines including gender and nationalism, military masculinities, militarism and militarization in Turkey, gender regimes in military as an institution.

REFERENCES

Ahall, L. (2012). The writing of heroines: Motherhood and female agency in political violence. *Security Diaolgue 43(4)*, 287-303.

Aktar, A. (2009). Turkification Policies in the Early Republican Era. In C. Duft, *Turkish Literature and Cultural Memory* (pp. 29-62). Waisbaden: Harrassowitz.

Aktaş, F. O. (2009). Being a Conscientious Objector in Turkey: Challenging Hegemonic Masculinity in a Militaristic Nation-State. *Being a Conscientious Objector in Turkey: Challenging Hegemonic Masculinity in a Militaristic Nation-State (MA Thesis)*. Budapest, Hungary: Central European Univeristy.

Aktaş, F. O. (2010). Türkiye'de Erkekliğin Kurgulanışında Askerliğin Yeri (The Role of Military Service in the Production of Masculinity in Turkey). *MA Thesis*. İstanbul: Istanbul University, Faculty of Social Sciences .

Aktürk, Ş. (2008). Türkiye Siyasetinde Etnik Hareketler, 1920-2007. *Doğu Batı, No.44, Feb-Apr*, 43-74.

Aktürk, Ş. (2012). *Regimes of Ethnicity and Nationhood in Germany, Russia, and Turkey.* New York : Cambridge University Press .

Aktürk, Ş. (2013). *Türkiye'nin Kimlikleri: Din, Dil, Etnisite, Milliyet, Devlet ve Medeniyet.* Istanbul : Etkileşim Yayınları.

Altınay, A. G. (2004). *The Myth of the Military-Nation: Militarism, Gender, and Education in Turkey.* Palgrave Macmillan US.

Altınay, A. G. (2007). Eğitimin Militarizasyonu: Zorunlu Milli Güvenlik Dersi. In A. İnsel, & A. Bayramoğlu, *Bir Zümre, Bir Parti: Türkiye'de Ordu* (pp. 179-200). Birikim Yayınları.

Altınay, A. G. (2013). Askerlik yapmayana adam denmez: zorunlu askerlik, erkeklik ve vatandaşlık. In N. Y. Sünbüloğlu, *Erkek Millet, Asker Millet: Türkiye'de Militarizm, Milliyetçilik, Erkek(lik)ler* (pp. 205-260). İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları.

Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* . London, New York: Verso Books.

Bateson, F. (2015, August 3). Beautiful Souls and Just Warriors.

Belkin, A. (2013). Combat exclusion RIP. Will patriarchy's demise follow? *Critical Studies on Security Vol. 1, No. 2*, 249-250.

Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G., & Williams, J. M. (1995). "From Topics to Questions" and "From Questions to Problems". In W. C. Booth, G. G. Colomb, & J. M. Williams, *The Craft of Research* (pp. 29-63). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Bora, T. (2013). Ordu ve Milliyetçilik (Army and Nationalism). In A. İnsel, & A. Bayramoğlu, *Bir Zümre, Bir Parti: Türkiye'de Ordu (A Coterie, A Party: Army in Turkey)* (pp. 163-178). İstanbul: Birikim.

Connell, R. (2000). *The Men and the Boys.* Australia: Allen & Unwin .

Connell, R. (2005). *Masculinities.* California: University of California Press.

D'Amico, F. J., & Weinstein, L. L. (1999). *Gender Camouflage: Women and the U.S. Military.* New York: NYU Press.

Durkheim, É. (1966 [1895]). What is a Social Fact? In É. Durkheim, *Rules of Sociological Method* (pp. 1-13). New York: Free Press .

Ekinci, T. Z. (2013). *The Reality of Turkey and the Chance to Find a Resolution to Kurdish Question.* EU Turkey Civic Commission. Retrieved January 3, 2014, from EU Turkey Civic Commission: http://www.eutcc.org/articles/8/20/document223.ehtml

Elshtain, J. B. (1987). *Women and War.* Sussex: The Harvester Press.

Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (1995). *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes.* London: The University of Chicago Press.

Enloe, C. (1980). *Ethnic soldiers : state security in divided societies.* London: Penguin Books.

Enloe, C. (1988). *Does Khaki Become You?: The Militarization of Women's Lives.* London: Pandora Press.

Enloe, C. (2000). *Maneuouvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Foucault, M. (1992). *Hapishanenin Doğusu. Çev. Mehmet Ali Kılıçbay. Ankara:.* (M. A. Kılıçbay, Trans.) Ankara: İmge Kitabevi.

Hutchings, K. (2008). Making Sense of Masculinity and War. *Men and Masculinities Volume 10, Number 4*, 389-404.

Irlenkäuser, J. (2012, May 29). Çürük Raporu-The Rotten Report: Gender Identities and The Turkish Military. Frankfurt: İstanbul Bilgi University & Eruopean University Viadrina.

Kahya, A. (2013). Türkiye'de Zorunlu Askerlik Hizmetinin Erkeklerin Sosyalleşme Sürecindeki Etkilerinin İncelenmesi: Ankara Merkez ve Sapanca'da Nitel Bir Çalışma. T.C. Kara Harp Okulu, Savunma Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Güvenlik Bilimleri Anabilim Dalı.

Kampwirht, K. (2014). *Kadınlar ve Gerilla Hareketleri: Nikaragua, El Salvador, Chiapas, Küba (Women and Guerilla Movements).* (E. Eren, Trans.) İstanbul: Sümer Yayıncılık.

Kanaaneh, R. A. (2009). *Surrounded: Palestininan soldiers in the Israeli Military.* Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

Kancı, T., & Altınay, A. G. (2007). Educating Little Soldiers and Little Ayses: Militarised and Gendered Citizenship in Turkish Textbooks. In M. Carlson, A. Rabo, & F. Gök, *Education in 'Multicultural' Societies – Turkish and Swedish Perspectives* (pp. 51-70). Stockholm: Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul Transactions, vol. 18.

King, A. (2016). The Female Combat Soldier. *European Journal of International Relation Vol. 22(1),* 122–143.

MacKenzie, M. (2009). Securitization and Desecuritization: Female Soldiers and the Reconstruction of Women in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone. *Security Studies, Vol. 18, No. 2.*

MacKenzie, M. (2013). WOMEN IN COMBAT: BEYOND 'CAN THEY?' OR 'SHOULD THEY?'. *Critical Studies on Security, Vol. 1, No. 2,* 239–242.

Mater, N. (1999). *Mehmedin Kitabı: Güneydoğu'da Savaşmış Askerler Anlatıyor.* İstanbul: Metis Yayınları.

Mater, N. (2005). *Voices From the Front: Turkish Soldiers on the War with the Kurdish Guerillas.* (A. G. Altınay, Trans.) New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mayer, T. (2000). From Zero to Hero: Masculinity in Jewish Nationalism. In T. Mayer, *Gender Ironies of Nationalism: Sexing the Nation* (pp. 283-307). New York: Routledge.

Nagel, J. (1998). Masculinity and nationalism: gender and sexuality in the making of nations. *Ethnic and Racial Studies Volume 21 Number 2*, 242-269.

Natali, D. (2005). *The Kurds and the State: Evolving National Identity in Iraq, Turkey and Iran.* New York: Syracuse University Press.

Oran, B. (2010). *Türkiyeli Kürtler Üzerine Yazılar (Writings on Kurds from Turkey).* Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları.

Öztürk, S. (2008). *İsmet Paşa'nın Kürt Raporu* . İstanbul: Doğan Kitap.

Peterson, V. S. (1999). Sexing Political Identities/ Nationalism as Heterosexism. *International Feminist Journal of Politics, 1:1* , 34–65.

Peterson, V. S., & Runyan, A. S. (2010). *Global Gender Issues in New Millenium 3rd Editio.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Renan, E. (1992). What is a Nation? *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* (pp. 1-11). Paris: Presses-Pocket. Retrieved from http://ucparis.fr/files/9313/6549/9943/What_is_a_Nation.pdf

Sasson-Levy, O. (2003). Feminism and Military Gender Practices: Israeli Women Soldiers in "Masculine" Roles. *Sociological Inquiry, Vol. 73, No. 3, August*, 440-465.

Sasson-Levy, O. (2003). Military, Masculinity, and Citizenship: Tensions and Contradictions in the Experience of Blue-Collar Soldiers. *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power, 10*, 319–345.

Sasson-Levy, O. (2011). The Military in a Globalized Environment: Perpetuating an 'Extremely Gendered' Organization. In E. L. Jeanes, D. Knights, & P. Y. Martin, *Handbook of Gender, Work and Organization* (pp. 391-410). United Kingdom: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

Scott, J. C. (1990). *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Selek, P. (2013). *Sürüne Sürüne Erkek Olmak (Becoming Men through Crawling).* Istanbul: İletişim.

Sjoberg, L. (2010). Gendering the Empire's Soldiers: Gender Ideologies, the U.S. Military, and the War on Terror. In L. Sjoberg, & S. Via, *Gender, War, and Militarism* (pp. 209-218). New York: Praeger Security International.

Sjoberg, L. (2010). Women fighters and the 'beautiful soul' narrative. *International Review of the Red Cross Volume 92 Number 877*, 53-68.

Sjoberg, L., & Gentry, C. (2011). *Women, Gender, and Terrorism.* Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

Sünbüloğlu, N. Y. (2009). "Sürüne Sürüne Erkek Olmak": Normatif Erkekliğin Kurucusu Olarak Askerlik. *Birikim v. 240*, pp. 59-63.

Tilly, C. (1985). War-Making and State-Making as Organized Crime. In P. Evans, D. Rueschemeyer, & T. Skocpol, *Bringing the State Back In* (pp. 169-186). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Via, S. (2010). Gender, Militarizm and Globalization: Soldiers for Hire and Hegemonic Masculinity. In L. Sjoberg, & S. Via, *Gender, War, and Militarism: Feminist Perspectives* (pp. 42-56). Santa Barbara; Denver; Oxford: Praeger Security International .

Walker, G. W. (2006). Disciplining Protest Masculinity. *Men and Masculinities, Vol. 9 No. 1*, 5-22.

Weber, E. (1976). *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France 1870-1914.* Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

Whitworth, S. (2008). Militarized masculinity and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. In J. L. Parpart, & M. Zalewski, *Rethinking the man question: sex, gender and violence in international relations* (pp. 109-126). London & New York: Zed Books.

Yörük, E. (2009, December 6). Türkiye'de işçi sınıfı Kürtleşti – Erdem Yörük ile söyleşi – . (İ. Kayhan, Interviewer)