INTERROGATING MASCULINITIES OF FORMER CADETS: THE CHANGING DIMENSIONS OF MILITARY MASCULINITIES AFTER MILITARY SCHOOL CLOSURES IN TURKEY

by
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ABSTRACT

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Keywords: military, masculinity, education, change, Turkey

After the coup attempt in 2016 in Turkey, all military schools were dismissed, and all cadets relocated to different universities and high schools. With the government's attempt to close military schools, former cadets found themselves in a different world and continued their lives in new settings. In their new world, plenty of things began to change including their masculinities. Based upon in-depth interviews with 20 former cadets who studied in military schools between the years 2009 and 2016, this study aims to elicit the inner dynamics of military education in the construction of military masculinities and demonstrate the changing dimensions of former cadets' masculinities in their civilian lives. At a macro level, the military lost its power in the sociopolitical arena in Turkey and is no longer a powerful shaper of the understandings and performances of men. With the Ergenekon and Balyoz trials, the military fell into a decline in its power. Subsequently, it lost its impact on the political sphere and completely lost its control and power after the coup attempt in 2016. Furthermore, the army is no longer associated with modernity when compared to the previous century. On the other hand, from a micro-level perspective, nowadays most young people can learn about feminism, and some interrogate gender-related issues in todays' world. Also, there is a myriad of feminist and LGBTI+ groups in the universities sharing perspectives with university students. People can increasingly have more encounters with people different from then and other worldviews and perspectives when compared to a few decades ago. This thesis shows that these macro and micro level developments are associated with the masculinity changes of former cadets in their civilian lives.

ÖZET

ESKİ ASKERİ ÖĞRENCİLERİN ERKEKLİKLERİNİ SORGULAMA: TÜRKİYE'DE ASKERİ OKULLARIN KAPANMASINDAN SONRA ASKERİ ERKEKLİKLERİN DEĞİŞEN BOYUTLARI

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Anahtar Kelimeler: askeriye, erkeklik, eğitim, değişim, Türkiye

2016'daki darbe girişiminden sonra Türkiye'de tüm askeri okullar kapatılmış ve tüm askeri öğrenciler farklı üniversite ve liselere yerleştirilmiştir. Hükümetin askeri okulları kapama girişimi ile birlikte eski askeri okul öğrencileri kendilerini bir anda farklı bir dünyada bulmuş ve yaşamlarına sivil ortamlarda devam etmişlerdir. Yeni dünyalarında pek çok şey değişmeye başlayan bu öğrencilerin yaşadığı değişikliklerden biri de erkeklikleriyle ilgilidir. Bu çalışma, 2009-2016 yılları arasında askeri okullarda okumuş 20 eski askeri öğrenci ile yapılan derinlemesine görüşmelere dayanarak, askeri erkekliklerin inşasında askeri eğitimin iç dinamiklerini ortayı koymayı ve eski askeri öğrencilerin erkekliklerinin sivil hayatta değişen boyutlarını göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır. Makro düzeyde bakıldığında, Türkiye'de sosyopolitik düzlemde gücünü kaybeden ordu artık erkeklik anlayış ve performanslarının güçlü bir şekillendiricisi değildir. Ergenekon ve Balyoz davaları ile ordunun gücü azalmıştır. 2016'daki darbe girişimi sonrasında ordu siyasi alanda etkisini yitirmiş, kontrolünü ve gücünü tamamen kaybetmiştir. Üstelik artık ordu, geçen yüzyılda olduğu gibi modernite ile ilişkilendirilmemektedir. Öte yandan, mikro düzey bir bakış açısıyla, günümüz dünyasında çoğu genç, feminizmin ne olduğu hakkında fikir sahibi olmakta, bazıları toplumsal cinsiyetle ilgili meseleleri sorgulayabilir hale gelmektedir. Ayrıca üniversitelerde var olan çok sayıda feminist ve LGBTI+ grupları üniversite öğrencilerinin bakış açılarını etkilemektedir. Günümüzde insanlar, birkaç on yıl öncesine göre, giderek daha fazla farklı insanlarla ve anlayışlarla karşılaşabilmektedir. Bu tez, makro ve mikro düzeydeki bu gelişmelerin, eski askeri öğrencilerin sivil yaşamlarındaki erkeklik değişimleri ile de ilişkili olduğunu göstermektedir.

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Last but not least, I am incredibly grateful to my parents for their unconditional and unequivocal love, caring, and sacrifices.

Dedication page

To all former air forces' cadets who have spent their years in prison.

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FETÖ Fethullahist Terrorist Organization 1, 18, 20

IMT Inclusive Masculinity Theory 21, 22

NCO Noncommissioned Officer 11

PKK Kurdish Worker Party 19

TAF Turkish Armed Forces 16, 17, 18, 58

1. INTRODUCTION

Almost five years ago, I was a sophomore military academy cadet in the Turkish Military academy. A group of soldiers attempted a coup on July 15, 2016. After the night of the failed attempt, firstly, military staff, who were somehow a part of the coup attempt, got arrested. Some of them were taken a hammering before taken into custody, and their battered situations were pictured on the media. The government announced the perpetrator of the attempt as the Gülen movement; now officially referred to as the Fethullahist Terrorist Organization FETÖ [1]. Then, the government began to accuse almost all cadets of being affiliated with FETÖ, and the minister of national defense explicitly expressed that 95 percent of all cadets tie into this organization [2]. Following these statements, the government published a decree-law, and all cadets were discharged from military schools [3]. After a few months later, I started at Boğaziçi University to complete my undergraduate education, and step by step life started to change for me.

In different stages of my life upon leaving the military school, I asked myself how far I am from the person I was while studying in military schools. This question also raised my curiosity about the experiences of my cadet friends. How far were they from their military identities? There were extraordinary changes in our lives, and I considered it very important to think about how these changes altered us. Besides, thinking about the change after military schools led me to ponder what kind of person I was in the military school. With these questions in my mind, I became more aware that the military and masculinity have powerful intertwined relationships, and this cordial relationship constructed military identities in military.

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[1] See 'Turkey Coup: What is Gulen Movement and what does it want?" July 21, 2016 accessed June 27, 2021. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36855846

[2] See "Bakan Işık'tan Şok Sözler! Askeri Öğrencilerin yüzde 95'i" accesed June 27, 2021 https://www.milliyet.com.tr/siyaset/bakan-isiktan-sok-sozler-askeri-ogrencilerin-yuzde-95i-2288113

[3] See the decree law "669 sayılı olağanüstü hâl kapsamında bazı tedbirler alınması ve milli savunma üniversitesi kurulması ile bazı kanunlarda değişiklik yapılmasına dair kanun hükmünde kararname" accessed June 27,2021 https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2016/07/20160731-5.htm

When I asked myself how military masculinities were constructed in military schools and later changed in civilian settings after the coup attempt, my research question had emerged, and I started to think more deeply about it.

My research questions are:

- How were the military masculinities of former cadets constructed in military schools in Turkey? What kinds of elements impact the construction of masculinities in military schools?
- Did former cadets change their masculinity performances and perceptions after military schools' closure? If so, how did their relationship change with other men, women, and queer people? In which conditions and time did the changes occur?

This research addresses the military masculinity construction of former cadets, those who studied in military schools between 2009-2016, and the changes they have experienced upon starting a civilian life. To that extent, the study also focuses on the former cadets' performance, relationship with women and queer people, perception of womanhood and homosexuality in military schools and how these points have changed in their new lives. The military and masculinity have solid connections and interrelations. Therefore, the changes of former cadets reflect on a strong alteration regarding masculinities after military schools. This study initially looks at the inner dynamics of military schools to understand how military masculinities are constructed with the impact of different elements such as the commanders, rules, senior-junior classes. With the effects of these elements, the cadets construct and shape their relationships and perceptions regarding other men, women, homosexuality in military schools. Moreover, this research also scrutinizes changing dimensions of former cadets' masculinities in their civilian lives. After the closure of military schools, former cadets begin to enter new environments, meet new people, and think differently than they used to when in military schools. Their perceptions and performances regarding their masculinities change, and these changes affect their relationship and understanding of other men, women, and queer people. In this research, I track down these points and examine how these changes occurred. As part of this research, I conducted extensive semi structured in-depth interviews with 20 former cadets who studied in Land, Naval, and Air Forces' schools between years 2009 and 2016. I consider in- depth interview is the best apparatus to make clear my participants' narrative since the interviews provide more descriptive pictures about the perspectives and narratives of interlocutors.

This study indicates a distinct perspective regarding military masculinities in Turkey

since the thesis focuses on military schools and education while most of the academic scholarship on military and military masculinities in Turkey focus on compulsory military service and its impact on society. The distinctness of my thesis also arises from my positionality as a former cadet given that I could provide more intimate knowledge about the military as an insider and look at the military itself differently than other scholars. To enrich my arguments in my thesis, I took advantage of my experiences in military schools. This is the first point that I highlight about this research since my aim is to contribute a new understanding of the military. With regard to this, I demonstrate how masculinities are constructed inside the military, and that the military is not homogeneous in terms of military masculinities. In fact, there are different ideal masculinity understandings in different military branches and these diverse understandings also create hierarchies in the military itself within the binary thinking.

Moreover, the thesis shows the relationship with women of male soldiers inside the military, which also contributes to the literature on women in military. On the other hand, existing academic studies on civil-military relations point out that the military changes men to make them real men in accordance with traditional gender roles. Besides, the Turkish army was associated with modernity since the beginning of Turkish Republic. However, my findings demonstrate that this is not the case in today's Turkey. After military schools, my participants' masculinity changes have mostly occurred as a shift towards gender-equal understandings of gender roles and relationships and the understanding of the military is not in line with modernity. At a macro level, I consider the change becomes possible since the military lost its power in the sociopolitical arena in Turkey and is no longer a powerful shaper the understanding and performances of men. With the Ergenekon and Balyoz trials, the military fell into a decline in its power. Subsequently, it lost its impact on the political sphere and completely lost its control and power after the coup attempt in 2016. At a micro level, most young people can hear what feminism is, and some interrogate gender-related issues. Also, there is a myriad of feminist and LGBTI+ groups in the universities, and they also share their perspectives with university students. People can increasingly have more encounters with different people and understandings than they did a few decades ago, and this eases the change. Also, in the digitalized world, people can easily reach new sources and information about anything. In that regard, I claim these macro and micro level changes have also impacted my participants' changes in their civilian lives. Although my participants have a military background, that is allegedly huge impact on masculinities, their understandings, performances, and relationships changed in accordance with gender equal understanding and queer friendly. This is also another contribution of my

thesis to the literature on masculinities and change.

Masculinity is a fundamental aspect of gender relations, and Connell describes gender as the "'reproductive arena,' which includes 'bodily structures and processes of human reproduction', organizes practice at all levels of social organization, from identities to symbolic rituals, to large-scale institutions" (Connell 1995, 71). Masculinity is also considered as practices along with the interaction of men and women in gender and the impacts of practices on bodily expressions, culture, and personality (Connell 1995). Schippers (2007) summarizes three characteristics of masculinity which are "First, it is social location that individuals, regardless of gender, can move into through practice. Second, it is a set of practices and characteristics understood to be 'masculine'. Third, when these practices are embodied... they have widespread cultural and social effects" (86).To that extent, in the third chapter, I focus on the masculinities of former cadets in and out of military schools to show these practices and cultural and social effects. As Connell indicates, the interaction of men and women also has impact on masculinities. So, I examine former cadets' relationships with and perceptions of women and gender roles in the fourth chapter.Moreover, Connell (1992) also clearly expresses "research on masculinity must explore... how homosexual and heterosexual masculinities interact" (737) to understand gender dynamics and the possibilities of change of heterosexual men. In that regard, concentrating on former cadets' relationship with homosexual and queer people is significant, and I delve into this in the fifth chapter.

The military is a very strong shaper of particular masculinity that is military masculinity, and masculinity is immanent to the military. Military masculinity consists of all performances, perceptions, and relations that the military constructed to make military men. To understand how military masculinities are constructed in military schools, Raewyn William Connell's (2005) concept of hegemonic masculinity takes a significant place. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) assert that hegemonic masculinity is not a shared experience by all men, but it is performed only by a limited group of men. It is an abstract concept, does not have depictive indications. Because of the historical dynamic of gender hierarchies in the patriarchal system, it is open to change and appears in a different context. According to Connell and Messerschmidt, hegemonic masculinity can be institutionalized in some organizations, and the military is one where hegemonic masculinity is institutionalized. When I was a cadet, I did not consider the military was as the institution to see hegemonic masculinity, but the professional military education aimed to construct military masculinity hegemonically by different apparatus as I focus on in this thesis

As Cenk Özbay (2013) indicates, in Turkey the military began to fall from grace,

especially with the arrests and trial processes of military officers in the 2010s. Özbay interrogates the position of the military in producing hegemonic masculinities. Also, Elif Irem Az (2014) focuses on the military's shift in sociopolitical power and its impacts on professional military education and the construction of military masculinities in naval schools. I consider, the military lost its hegemonic power and position thoroughly after the coup attempt in 2016 and become an institution that is controlled by the political authority in Turkey. In that regard, Özbay's argument about hegemonic masculinity and the military relationship provides a ground to understand military's position today. Moreover, I show in this thesis how this macro-level shift of the military in the society affected former cadets' understanding of the military, as they adopted to their civil lives more easily and changed. On the other hand, Eric Anderson's (2008; 2010; 2018) Inclusive Masculinity Theory also confers a framework to understand what changes in men's perspectives, performances, and relationships, in the context of their masculinities, with women and homosexual men in recent years. His findings are also beneficial to understanding my participants' change in terms of gender equal understanding in their civilian lives.

1.1 Chapter Contents

In the second chapter, firstly, I attempt to conceptualize military masculinity in the frame of the thesis. Then, I briefly explain the general scope of compulsory military service in Turkey and its reflections in academic scholarships. Following these parts, I discuss how the military's position has changed from a historical perspective. Later on, I address masculinities and change and explore the changing dimensions of masculinities in the literature. Also in this chapter, I discuss my methodological considerations, indicate my research aims, explain my research methods, fieldwork, and data analysis. Thereafter, I briefly discuss my positionality and its reflections on this research as a former cadet myself. Lastly, I introduce my participants and indicate necessary information for the research.

I start the third chapter by introducing my participants and detailing their motivations to go to military schools. Then I discuss how military masculinities are constructed in military schools. To that extent, I address the factors that play out in the construction of military masculinities in military schools. In this construction, class commanders, senior-junior cadets, class friends, families, civilian people, and friends play crucial roles. Looking at the inner dynamics of military masculinity

constructions shows that military masculinities are not homogenous; there are different understandings of military masculinities in the army. These different perceptions of military masculinities also create hierarchical relationships among military branches. This point is significant since the military was predominantly considered a homogenous entity in the literature. However, alongside this heterogeneity, the military protects its binary thinking of femininity and masculinity. Thus, albeit the heterogeneity, various hierarchical relationships are formed in line with the tension between dimensions of the binary. I also show the changing dimensions of former cadets' masculinities in terms of their appearance, perception, and their relationship with civilian people. After military schools, former cadets experience these changes as a process and in different scales. Concordantly, there is not sudden and linear change. In their civilian lives, former cadets entered new settings in the universities, met new people, read critical articles on gender issues. These points also improved their masculinities. Unlike other academic studies, after the military, I demonstrate there can be positive changes in their masculinities in terms of gender equality understanding.

In the fourth chapter, I probe former cadets' relationship with women in the military schools. Thus, firstly I look at how the perception of womanhood and femininity is constructed in military schools parallel to military masculinity constructions. I demonstrate how former cadets constructed their perceptions of women and womanhood with different references. On the other hand, I draw attention to the fact that having a girlfriend was an undesired situation in the eyes of the commanders. Except for the naval schools, the class commanders (*sınıf subayı*) want to prevent cadets from having girlfriends in military schools since they consider that women would deceive cadets by using sexual relationship in order obtain information about the military. So, having a girlfriend is a risk-taking behavior and promotes masculinity in military schools.

Also in this chapter, I attempt to reveal the relationships between male and female cadets. In military academies, male cadets otherize female cadets and humiliate them since they consider them different in military schools. Because of the rules and peer pressure, male cadets do not become friends with female cadets and do not have a romantic relationship. Following this part, I focus on former cadets' changed understanding of womanhood and relationship with women after military school. Most of my participants develop relationships with women and learn that they can become friends with them. These changes also occur with the help of their entrance to a new setting, having more contact with women, taking university courses that are related to gender issues. Existing literature focuses on how a man in the military changed in accordance with gender roles and learned to become a

real man. Also, the literature discusses the hierarchical relationship that is created after military service. This chapter somehow challenges the notion of hierarchical relationship that the military has constructed and conferred a new dimension that demonstrates the gender-equal relationship among men and women.

In the fifth chapter, I explore how homosexuality perception is constructed in military schools and how the cadets conceive homosexuality in the homosocial environment of military schools. Homosexuality was regarded as a dangerous threat to the homosocial environment and social bond among cadets in military schools. However, as fieldwork shows, there were plenty of physical interactions among the cadets. They kissed each other, slap their hips, lay down on the bed side by side, etc., and it was quite normal since their acting was masculine enough. To that extent, in the constructions of masculinities, the military specifies what behavior can be inappropriate in the setting. For naval schools, the perception of homosexuality is more frightening, and they had less physical tactility than other forces' schools since there was some news on the media about gay cadets studying in naval schools. Subsequently, I discuss how former cadets' relationships and understandings change regarding queer people. After the military schools, most former cadets I interviewed think differently homosexuality and approach queer people differently. They changed their relationships by sharing the same environments in universities and abroad with queer people, read about different sexualities, listened to queer people's experiences. It is significant that this change is also not linear and sudden but processual and heterogenous among former cadets. Some still do not think homosexuality is normal but do not embrace military understanding about it. Later in this chapter, I focus on some participants' interrogations about their sexualities after military schools. Some participants clearly share that they examined their sexual beings after military schools, and two of them came out as gay and bisexual. In general, this chapter provides a different perspective on the relationship between homosexuality and former cadets to the literature. Existing literature discusses the relationship between military and homosexuality in the frame of military medical inspection. In that regard, this thesis presents new insights about this relationship and elicits new dimensions of military masculinities in relation to homosexuality.

2. CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW OF SCHOLARSHIP ON MILITARY MASCULINITY AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

2.1 Contextual Background and Overview of Scholarship on Military Masculinity

Academic studies regarding the military in Turkey are predominantly focused on compulsory military service. Military masculinity is considered as something that influences gender roles in society vis-a-vis served conscripts upon compulsory military service. Existing studies mainly focus on compulsory military service in the scope of nation-state construction, national identity, and citizenship. The relationship between compulsory military service and citizenship is viewed as one that forms hierarchies between citizens in terms of gender and ethnicity, and military and militarism are argued to be institutions that give women, as mothers, the responsibility of raising future soldiers. To that extent, Turkishness and hegemonic military masculinity are seen as holding powerful positions in society. There are also studies focusing on the effects of the military and military service on the educational system, and the militarization of national education. However, existing academic studies do not interrogate the inner dynamics of military organization and entities which I find to be the most significant deficiency in this scholarship. This thesis partially attempts to fill this gap in literature by looking at military education and masculinity construction in military schools.

In this chapter, I aim to present an overview of the literature the thesis engages with and discuss points of interaction and departure from relevant studies. Existing studies usually delve into military masculinity in relation to compulsory military service but do not look at the construction of military masculinities in military schools. Scrutinizing masculinities in military schools is also significant to grasp the distinct dimensions of military masculinities and their constructions in professional military

education. Moreover, the literature discusses how men embrace hegemonic military masculinities in their military service and its reflection on the consolidation of gender roles in the society after the military. However, I believe men can reconstruct their masculinities differently from military masculinities after the impact of the military disappeared in their civilian lives and they can change their perspectives in terms of gender equality.

In this chapter, I first provide an account of military masculinity as it is understood in this thesis. Upon a discussion of the concept of military masculinity, I review existing literature on compulsory military service in Turkey and provide a brief historical overview of the relationship between military and politics, the decline in the power of the army in the aftermath of 2007 and the loss of the sociopolitical power of the military upon the coup attempt in 2016 after political control over the military became all the more tightened. This overview will set the background for the discussion of the changes in former cadets' masculinities that I argue to have been influenced by these macro processes. In this chapter, I also explain how I conceptualize "change" in this framework to refer to former cadets' new ways of thinking in terms of gender equality and masculinities after military schools. I discuss theoretical perspectives on masculinities and change and with reference to the relevant literature, I address issues that may be relevant to understand the changes my participants described in terms of their masculinity performance and change and their relationship with other people.

2.1.1 The Conceptualization of Military Masculinity

Military masculinity is a concept that defines characteristics and particular performances that are constructed in the military. Haley Lopes defines it as "a combination of traits and attitudes that are hyper-masculine, hegemonic, and are associated primarily with military soldiers" (2011, 25). While trying to understand how I can conceptualize and describe attributes of military masculinity, several academic studies broadened my horizon to ponder military masculinity in distinct perspectives in the relation to military school education and the construction of masculinity in relation to compulsory military service. Academic scholarship shows that there is no single type of military masculinity in the same army and that it can differentiate among army forces and members. As Ryan S. Ogilvy (2016) describes in relation to the U.S. army, there can be differences and discrepancies among the army's different branches. For instance, land forces and air forces may not have a high opinion of self-reliance, which is a characteristic of military masculinity, identically, which are

some attributes of military masculinity.

Similarly, Melissa T. Brown (2012) argues against monolithic understandings of masculinity and discusses distinct constructions of masculinity in the military. Military masculinities can become diversified however, this diversification is not only constricted among military branches. Military masculinity may also differ individually for military members and have more than one meaning for the same person. Academic scholars do not give special attention to military member's understanding of military masculinity and look from an institutional perspective.

Hierarchy is another significant component of military masculinity. Ramon Hinojosa (2010) mentions sectional differences and underscores hierarchal structures of masculinities in the U.S. military. According to Hinojosa, hierarchal structures emerge as a consequence of symbolic resources, which are "...more morally oriented, self-disciplined, physically able, emotionally controlled, martially skilled, or intelligent" (2010, 182) in the military. I believe these symbolic resources are important for understanding military masculinities construction and performance in military schools in Turkey.

Emotional control is another substantial component of military masculinity. The display of emotions in public is generally related to femininity. Mehmet Ali Birand (1986) states that newcomer cadets in military schools first learn to control their emotions. That is to say; they learn not to cry and struggle in the compelling environment of military schools. Lauren McAllister et al. (2019) identify military masculinity as a culture of emotional control. Thus, military masculinity necessitates hiding emotions and seem insensitive. Although academic studies emphasize emotional control as a characteristic of military masculinity, controlling emotions may not become a substantial element for their military masculinity performance from a cadet's or military staff perspective. That is to say; a cadet may cry if he sorrows in military schools. The military can construct this perspective to demonstrate to the civilian world that soldiers are brutal, insensitive, and uniform. Birand's analysis may be outdated and not sufficient to understand this decade's military masculinity in Turkey, and I believe this was different among cadets in the 2010s.

Military masculinity is also associated with submission to authority, and this point is discussed in different academic studies (Basaran 2014; Cecil 1996; Johnston and Kilty 2015). Başaran (2014) explains why young men are asked to submit the absolute authority of the military as the promise of masculinity, in other words, that submission is imperative to be accepted as a man after military service. Military masculinity is also a significant element of military schools (Cecil 1996). Correspondingly, I consider submission to authority to be an essential element of the

military, and the discourse of absolute obedience is an unquestionable fact of the military.

In the same vein, power is another component of military masculinity (Duncanson 2009; Gill 1997; Lee et al. 2019). Scholars focus on how the military brings power and ideal masculinity to men, and it creates unequal gender relations. The military puts a man into the power position and creates a distinction between femininity and other masculinities. Thus, the military is positioned as superior with its military masculinity performance to other institutions and people. Holding power was a significant component of military masculinity. Still, today, it is debatable since other factors and masculinities are more closely engaged with power in politics and society than the military.

As literature shows military masculinity is associated with a myriad of components but as the following chapters show, some of these attributes of military masculinity are not applicable or seen differently in in Turkey because the military and its relationship with the sociopolitical world are conditioned differently.

2.1.2 Compulsory Military Service in Turkey

According to the Constitution of the Turkish Republic, article 72, military service (*askerlik*) is an obligation for all Turkish male citizens [1]. Internal Service Act of Turkish Armed Forces, article 2, defines military service as "the liability of learning and conducting martial art" [2].Until 2019, conscription was regulated by the military service law no.1111. There were five options in recruiting to military service: six months short term, 12 months reserve officers, 12 months rank and file (*er ve erbaş*), military service with foreign currency, and paid military service. Military service with foreign currency was an option for those who work and reside in a foreign country and are older than 38. Paid military service was applied with a temporary decree [3]. In 2019, the military service law changed (it became military service law no. 7179), and military service was rearranged. The duration of the military service was shortened from 12 months to 6 months for rank and file. After six months, the ones who want to continue military service could continue and be paid for their service for another six months. There would be reserved NCOs (*yedek astsubay*) like

[1]See "Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Anayasası 72. Madde. V. Vatan Hizmeti" accessed June 11, 2021 https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/tc$_a$*nayasasi.maddeler?p*3 = 72 : : *text* = 72., *Maddetext* = *Vatan*

[2]See "3451 Sayılı Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri İç Hizmet Kanunu" accessed June 11, 2021 https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.4.211.pdf

[3]See "1111 Sayılı Askerlik Kanunu" accessed June 11, 2021 https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.3.1111.pdf

reserved officers, and the duration determined 12 months for both of them. The age for military service with foreign currency became 35 [4].Lastly, paid military service became permanent, and almost forty thousand Turkish liras should be paid to be accepted as completed the service [5].

Military service is in the lives of every person in Turkey directly or indirectly. When a man becomes twenty, if he does not study or have any mental/physical problem, he is expected to go into the army in Anatolia. Military service is seen as a stage of life to complete for almost every man in Turkey (Barutçu 2013). The military teaches men how to perform in accordance with ideal hegemonic masculinity (Akgül 2011; Barutçu 2013; Sancar 2011).

2.1.3 Military Service and Its Reflection on the Academic Studies

Most of the academic writings on the military in Turkey focus on compulsory military service, and these writings point out that the military service plays a crucial role in nation-state construction (Aktaş 2010; Altınay and Bora 2002; Altinay 2004; Biricik 2009, 2011; Kancı and Altınay 2007; Öztan 2013; Sünbüloğlu 2013). From a historical perspective, with the introduction of compulsory military service in 1927, almost all male citizens started to enter the barracks to fulfill their duty. In the new regime, the military-operated to imbue to all soldiers with the national identity (Gürbey 2012). In this frame, soldiers learned that they are a part of the Turkish nation and should protect the nation at the risk of their lives. The huge role military had in state-making and national identity construction naturalized the idea of a military nation (Altinay 2004). The Turkish nation was regarded as a military nation, and compulsory military service operated as a tool to realize this idea (Öztan 2013; Sünbüloğlu 2013). Ayşe Gül Altınay (2004) defines "The Turkish nation is a military nation" as a myth. It was a myth since the notion of the Turkish nation was silencing other ethnicities or they have never existed in this country. Altınay also refers to Sabiha Gökçen, who was the first woman combat pilot and adopted daughter of Atatürk and explains how the creation of the militarized Turkish nation, which was 'purged' from other ethnicities, created by bombing (2019) in Dersim in 1937 [6].In

[4]See ""7179 Sayılı Askerlik Kanunu" accessed June 11, 2021 https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2019/06/20190626-1.htm

[5]The amount of paid military service changes by year. This number is valid for the first half of 2021. See details "Bedelli Askerlik Ücreti Ne kadar" accessed June 11, 2021 https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2021/gundem/bedelli-askerlik-ucreti-ne-kadar-2021-ucreti-belli-oldu-6235880/

[6]The interivew with Sabiha Gökçen about Dersim Massacre can be reached online. See "Sabiha Gökçen: Hedef Doğrudan Dersim idi" accessed 26 June 2021. https://m.bianet.org/bianet/siyaset/118256-sabiha-gokcen-hedef-dogrudan-dersim-idi

that regard, it was also suppressing, controlling, and even destroying the process to ethnicize the Turkish military nation. Today the myth of "The Turkish nation is a soldier nation" is being questioned from different perspectives in society since the position of the military is not solid, and people's identities are less associated with the military. Ömür Çatakay (2019) claims in his thesis on paid military service that men do not see the military service as a 'rite of passage anymore and many Turkish citizens approve paid military service. New regulations on compulsory military service and people's willingness to paid military service is also substantial indicators to understand new constituted relationship with the military.

On the other hand, compulsory military service fosters a gendered understanding of citizenship. Militarism also emerges as a gendered phenomenon with the impact of service, and, as significant studies demonstrated, it underlies the social ascendancy of men over women in all spheres of society (Akgül 2011; Altinay 2004; Kancı and Altınay 2007; Öztan 2013; Sünbüloğlu 2013). As Pınar Selek (2012) indicated, during military service, men learn to be well-disciplined, to use a gun, and to struggle against difficulties. It provides men a place to prove and empower their masculinity performances. Not only do men want to demonstrate their masculinity performance to their social environments but also themselves. The military creates a doctrine and provides how to behave and use their privilege as a citizen in the public place; prepares the physical and mental conditions of being a man in a hegemonic way (Aktaş 2010).

Besides, the militaristic perspective of men after the service positions women as subordinate citizens in relation to men. Men were considered as protectors of the nation-state, and this also comes to mean that men are the protectors of women. Under these circumstances, " women are utilized as reproductive and recreative bodies, realizing the continuity of the ethnic group, culture, and nation, and as morally unifying agents of the nation-state" (Yuval-Davis 1997; as cited in Kancı and Altınay 2007). Thus, military service operates to construct the gendering of citizenship, differentiates citizenship practices for men and women, and puts men in a superior position by subliming masculinity and manly attributes. However, today the role of military service on gendering citizenship is more questionable because the military-civilian life relationship is different from what it was like before 2000s.

Becoming a mother, especially a soldier's mother, is also a significant subject in relation to the military in academic writings (Altinay 2004; Kaptan 2009; Karaman 2016; Sancar 2001; Şentürk 2009). In the national construction process, women should have had a duty and as men. Women were situated in private sphere, and As Senem Kaptan expressed, "wifehood and motherhood were regarded as the pri-

mary tasks of women" (2009). So, women should bear and raise the future soldiers, and motherhood is the main role for women within the militarized discourse. This understanding of the military also passivizes women and their role in nation-state construction. From a feminist perspective, the discourse of being the soldiers' mother was criticized by different scholars. In her thesis, Kaptan discusses gendered and militarized identities of soldiers' mothers and gives voice to them to hear their experiences from a critical perspective.

Similarly, Rezzan Karaman (2016) also attempts to understand different groups of mothers' experiences regarding motherhood and interviews soldier mothers about their reactions and ideas about their political stance in Turkey after 2010s. Academic studies on motherhood and military relationship are significant to demonstrate that there is no passivized and monolithic understanding of motherhood. In these studies, one sees that there is no single discourse of motherhood and that is challenged by militarized approach in different perspectives. These studies also reveal a lot about the civilian-military relationship in the last two decades. It is important to see that women can talk critically about their relationship with the military in a critical way.

As some academics asserted, the military also has a notable impact on education and the national educational system (Altınay and Bora 2002; Kancı and Altınay 2007). In the literature, military perception is constructed in national education with different implications. For instance, Kancı and Altınay show that the textbooks are visualized by illustrating boys as 'little soldiers' and girls as 'little Ayşes.' Thus, the military's gendered perspective is also reflected by the textbooks, and the idea/concept of the soldier is taught from childhood age. I believe it is significant to grasp that the military tries to convince boys to become soldiers at their early age, and some, as I am, join the military high schools with the impact of this exposure. Accordingly, Altınay and Bora (2002) point out that National Security lessons in high schools are the second implication of the impact of the military on education. These lessons functioned as an apparatus of the military to teach and convince the 'myth' of a soldier nation in Turkey. The lesson was taught by military officers, designed by the General Staff (*Genelkurmay Başkanı*), and a mandatory course for all high school students. This lesson conferred a ground for the military to indoctrinate people in a militaristic way. Moreover, it was a show to demonstrate civilian setting how militaristic values, especially being masculine constitutes real soldiers. Clear expression of the military would touch and direct some people's lives as it wanted. The National Security lesson was removed from the curriculum in 2012 [7]. This is also a significant period to see the changing relationship of civil-military

[7] See "Milli Güvenlik Dersi Kaldırıldı" January 25, 2012 accessed June 13, 2021. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/milli-guvenlik-dersi-kaldirildi-19765864

after a period

When it comes to the study of the relation between military and sexuality, existing scholarship takes up the issue in a single dimension alone. They focus on the experience of homosexuality only in the context of the military medical inspection process (Basaran 2014; Biricik 2009, 2011; Çoban 2013; Zengin 2016). Military-medical inspection operates and negotiates to preclude homosexual conscripts from the military service and legitimizes this exclusion as a medical process. Alp Biricik interrogates medical examination processes and their important role in reproduce nation-state, manhood, and hegemonic masculinity (2009; 2011). Oyman Başaran also interrogates the medical inspection to understand intersections of military, medical, and cultural notions of homosexuality in the construction of hegemonic masculinity (2014). Başaran argues how the military protects its order by excluding dangerous/ feminine bodies to protect hegemonic military masculinity. To that extent, the military regulates and constructs gender identities and operates on which male bodies are appropriate to perform masculinity in the military.

These academic studies are very valuable in forming an understanding of military, gender and sexuality but they are limited in understanding the inner dynamics of the military. Because these studies were conducted with former conscript candidates, their experiences were constrained to what they had seen and lived during a short period of military service. On the other hand, these studies do not examine professional military education and its impact on the military staff in the army. The military does not consist of only people who go to complete their military service; their existence in the military is limited and may not confer a complete understanding of the military structures and dynamics. Furthermore, professional military education has a quite different structure and understanding than compulsory military service since the military aims to raise its future commanders and generals with this education and makes enormous investments in cadets different from compulsory service. Besides, the cadets are seen as permanent possessors of the military.

Existing scholarship on military masculinity in Turkey is extremely valuable and eye opening in terms of understanding the multifaceted relations between civil-military in the past decades. These scholarships have encouraged me to ponder about military and masculinity relationships in detail. However, it is also limited as hegemonic military masculinity is understood as it is formed as a natural consequence of the military structure, and masculinity is perceived as an apparatus that forges gender roles in the society only after the completion military service. There is limited account of how military masculinity is constructed at the "beginning". With this expression, I refer to military schools because military schools are the place of inception

where one learns how to act masculine and where 'real masculinity' is constructed to conscripts when they graduate. From the perspective of masculinity studies, existing academic studies present a restricted understanding of military masculinity construction and diffusion in society.

To that extent, in the following chapters, I demonstrate how military masculinities are constructed in military schools. In this way, I attempt to show how constructed military masculinities influence the relationships between civilian men and women. Promoted masculinities of cadets shape their understanding of manhood and womanhood while studying in military schools. Similarly, existing studies discuss homosexuality also in relation to compulsory military service and the process of military inspection. Looking at homosexuality in the framework of military schools is yet another contribution this thesis aims to make to the understanding of military and homosexuality in Turkey. Before attempting to explain my points in the following chapters, looking at the changes in military power is a necessary step.

2.1.4 The Changes in Military Power

The military directly intertwined by military coups to political, cultural, and social life in different times in Turkey's history. The 1960 coup d'état was the first intervention of the military after the transition to the multi-party system. For almost one and a half years until the last quarter of 1961, a group of soldiers governed the country and amended the constitution. This coup prepared ground for the further ones, and the military legitimized the interventions with the regulation of TAF's internal service act [8]. After that time, two more unsuccessful attempts occurred, and they were not in the chain of command. That is to say, high-ranking officers, generals, did not give support to the attempts, and the chief of staff also was not in charge and control. Thereafter, a memorandum in 1971 and a coup in 1980 happened, and the military dictated and implemented what had wanted to change in the governance. After the coup in 1980, the military authority amended the constitution again and ruled the country for three years.

During this time, the military arrested hundreds of thousands of people and tortured some of them. Thousands of people went abroad as refugees, and some unions and associations closed down [9]. So the military explicitly showed that it could use the

[8] The military grounded the coup on the article no. 35 and 85 in the military code. See "Çare İhtilal Değil, Komutanın Konuşması" accessed June 14, 2021 https://web.archive.org/web/20121019235124/http://www.milliyet.com.tr/2007/10/04/guncel/gun00.html

[9] Human Right Association share the details of military's implication in 1980 coup. See "12 Eylül 1980

power hegemonically without taking permission from any authority. That means implicitly that the military was the sublime authority over the politics. On Feburary 28, 1997, upon a nine hour long National Security Council meeting, the military listed the decisions of the National Security Council to reiterate their goal as to fight against to reactionaries and protect the laic-secular state. The prime minister Necmettin Erbakan, the leader of *Refah* (Welfare) Partisi (Islamist Political Party) did not want to sign it. Almost four months after, Erbakan resigned, and a new government was formed with the decision of the president of the republic [10]. In 2007, there was another military intervention which is named as an e-memorandum in public opinion. Before the election of the presidency in the parliament, TAF published a declaration on the website of the presidency of general staff warning the government about the appropriateness of the candidate [11]. Then candidate Abdullah Gül was not welcome by the army because he is an Islamist politician with a headscarf wearing wife. The declaration was removed from the website in 2011. The government responded to the military's declaration and expressed the presidency of general staff is under the charge of government and should act according to the area of responsibility [12].

After a few months later, Ergenekon investigation started, and a group of retired and in charge soldiers, journalists, and some important figures in Turkish politics arrested, and the investigation turned into a case one year later with the accusation of forming a terrorist organization [13]. In 2010, the Balyoz trial was also opened as a case with the accusation of attempting a coup. The case was opened after the news of Mehmet Baransu, a journalist, on Taraf Newspaper. He claimed that a group of soldiers had planned on a coup attempt in 2003 under the command of the first army commander Full General Çetin Doğan. Baransu also delivered a suitcase of five-thousand pages long document to the prosecution office [14].The Ergenekon

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Askeri Darbe Davası Sürüyor" September 12, 2020 accessed June 15, 2021. https://www.ihd.org.tr/12-eylul-1980-askeri-darbe-davasi-suruyor-2/

[10] "Türkiyenin Post Modern Darbesi: 28 Şubat" February 28, 2018 accessed July 17, 2021 https://www.dw.com/tr/t

[11] The process of e-memorandum can be reached online. See " E-muhtıranın kronolojisi" April 27, 2011 accessed June 15, 2021. https://www.ntv.com.tr/galeri/turkiye/e-muhtiranin-kronolojisi,0Sl6nw7mM0iKqufp3XMd6w/WEwSzUwe-kS6VBfNIzanLQ

[12] "'27 Nisan e-muhtırası'nın yıldönümü: 'Tarihin karanlık sayfaları'nda neler oldu?" April 27, 2020 accessed July 17, 2021 https://www.birgun.net/haber/27-nisan-e-muhtirasi-nin-yildonumu-tarihin-karanlik-sayfalari-nda-neler-oldu-298456

[13] The summary of Ergenekon Trail in nine question. See "Dokuz Soruda Ergenekon Davası" February 2013, 2021 accessed June 15, 2021. https://www.bbc.com/turkce/ozeldosyalar/2013/02/130217$_{r}engin_{e}rgenekon$

[14] See "Balyoz Davası Yarın Başlıyor "December 15, 2010 accessed June 15, 2021 https://bianet.org/bianet/ifade-ozgurlugu/126623-balyoz-davasi-yarin-basliy

trial last five years, and hundreds of soldiers were judged, and some got arrested. Similarly, lots of military staff were accused of attempting a coup and faced a myriad of hardships in the Balyoz trial.

All of these incidents impacted the image of the military among the civilian people and affected the power in society. As Az (2014) points out in her thesis, "... TAF became a questionable institution for large segments of the society, and public confidence in the military has actually been eroding" (68). The military began to give less confidence, and its place became more interrogatable in the eyes of civilian people. Since the trials demonstrated that the military's position and mistakes could be examined, and the army was not impeccable. Moreover, these processes clearly unbarred the fact that the army was not powerful as before anymore. This was the first step of losing power for the military and the fatal blow came with the coup attempt in 2016.

A group of soldiers attempted a coup and aimed to overthrow the government on July 15, 2016. The government announced the attempt was planned and organized by the Gülenist soldiers in the army. There was tension between the government and Gülen movement[15] since 2013, and it was climbing continuously. When the attempt occurred, the perpetrator was accepted as Gülenist soldiers, and FETÖ (Fethullahist Terrorist Organization) became the perpetrator of the attempt. During the attempt, 104 soldiers and 161 civilian people were killed, and more than one thousand people got injured. The next day, almost three thousand soldiers were taken into custody. Following that, more than twenty thousand military staff were drummed out of the army [16]. All of these were significant indicators to understand what changed in the military and how these processes affected its position in the public sphere. Consequently, I believe that the demilitarization of the society became perceptible deeply, and other actors took the place of the military in power relations with the decline of the TAF.

From a masculinity studies perspective, in the light of these evolvements, the military became a place where it could no longer produce hegemonic masculinity. Cenk Özbay examines hegemonic masculinity to understand its inherent structure in different institutions in Turkey (2013). Özbay asserts gender regimes are created according to every institution's particular structure, and almost every institution

[15] In their article, Hakan Yavuz and Rasim Koç (2016) explain Gülen Movement as "a piety-focused educational entity into a violent, secretive religio-political organization bonded by both religious ideas and material interests." To reach the details on Gülen movement and government relationship, Yavuz and Rasim's article is online. Accessed June 15, 2021 Yavuz, M. H., Koç, R. 2016. The Turkish coup attempt: the Gülen movement vs. the state. Middle East Policy, 23(4), 136-148.

[16] The details of the numbers regarding coup can be reached. See "15 Temmuz darbe girişimi sonrasında kaç kişi görevinden ihraç edildi, kaç kişi tutuklandı?" Gizem Sade, July 15, 2020 acccessed June 15, 2021. https://tr.euronews.com/2020/07/15/verilerle-15-temmuz-sonras-ve-ohal-sureci

values man over woman as a necessity of the order. The gender regime also generates different masculinities and the scope; the implications of hegemonic masculinity modify itself in terms of various institutions' structure. According to Özbay (2013), the military was a place where the military doctrine is schooled by the commanders.

The military promoted ideal masculinity during the history of the Turkish republic, especially in the 1990s and 2000s in recent past. This period was full of conflicts between the army and PKK (Kurdish Workers Party) in the southeast region, and the military became more powerful at this time. After that period, as I described chronologically, the Turkish Armed Forces fell into disrepute, firstly, with the effects of the arrestment and judicial processes that military staff had encountered in the early 2010s and secondly the coup attempt in 2016. Concordantly, I conceive the military as an institution that is mainly controlled by political actors today.

Az (2014) focuses on the civil-military relationship change and scrutinizes the construction of military masculinity in the navy schools after and during the Ergenekon and Balyoz trials. Her thesis is important as to this day, it constitutes the only academic study that focuses on military schools in Turkey. Az aims to show how changing political structure and conditions with the Ergenekon, and Balyoz Trials affect professional military education and, subsequently, military masculinity. With the impact of these trials, Az claims that military masculinity become more centralized and hierarchical in the organization after 2009. She aims to understand the effects of the Ergenekon and Balyoz trials on the military from the military education perspective and military masculinity. However, Az's thesis only investigates naval forces' schools whereas naming this constructed masculinity in naval schools as military masculinity can be inadequate in the context of Turkey. Because land forces are the most significant part of the army, and the military is usually associated with land forces in Turkey. To that extent, one needs a broader perspective that also includes other forces' cadets' experiences and views to understand military masculinity. Nevertheless, Az's thesis is seminal and ground-breaking on the discussion of military masculinity in the context of military schools and cadets in Turkey.

I consider Özbay's discussions to be very significant and helpful in the construction of my arguments. I also think that the military's changing power position in the present time and decline after the coup attempt in 2016 was the continuation and accumulation of all happenings in the early 2010s. Salih Can Açıkgöz's (2017) short writing on masculinity, coup attempt in 2016, and military also provides a ground to see how the army was criminalized, and the hegemonic relationship of soldiers with masculinity and power was relinquished with the coup attempt.

From a macro perspective, I believe that the changed perception of the military in society, as both Özbay and Açıkgöz, indicated, also influenced my participants' personal changes regarding their masculinities in their civilian lives, as they moved away from the militaristic understanding. After the military schools' closure, expressing past affiliation with the military was no longer preferred by some as being a former cadet may come with implications of being a putschist or being associated with FETÖ in some settings. As a former cadet, I purposely did not mention my previous experience in the military schools as a cadet in some environments because talking about the military and my previous experiences made me nervous. I knew some of my former cadet friends tried to construct new identities and hid previous ones, different from the military ones. Furthermore, the army was associated with modernity and the modern world in Turkey before (Ahmad 1993). However, in the contemporary world, I consider the military does not correspond the needs of modern world. To that extent, former military identity and affiliation could be unwanted and even problematic for former cadets. Thus, alienation from the military understanding and perception might be associated with the negative image of the military after the coup attempt, and it may contribute to my participants' masculinity change at a macro level, I explain the change in the following chapters, but the next part will briefly account for change and masculinities.

2.1.5 Masculinities and Change

Using the verb of change for masculinities may not be the only preference in the literature to refer to how masculinities improve their relationships with women and queer people different from gender roles. While focusing on alteration of the masculinities in the literature, it caught my attention that there are different expressions for explaining the change of masculinity performance and perception. Some academic scholars use transformation in their writings to highlight the change (Deepan 2017; Gibbs, Vaughan, and Aggleton 2015; Gray 2018; Waling 2019). Gibbs et al. (2015) also use the concepts "reframing" and "challenging" in their studies on sexualities and health programs to emphasize the changing relationship in terms of masculinities. "Reframing" (Kieran 2020)), "transition" (Robinson and Hockey 2011), and "negotiating" (Schrock and Padavic 2007) are also other phrases. I prefer to use the verb "change" to explain my participants' experiences for three reasons. Firstly, they usually told me about their narratives by using the concept of change. Also, when I looked at the literature, most scholars explain their arguments with the "change" verb.

Besides, what I meant by change is my participants' improved views towards gender equality, their changing perceptions about masculinities, relationships with women and understandings of womanhood, as well as changing attitudes on homosexuality as they became more queer-friendly. The changes regarding their masculinities are also related to their self-representations of masculinity and the changes in performances, perceptions and views. It is the direction rather than the definition of change that I direct attention to in this thesis. Moreover, the changes my participants experienced were not sudden and linear but gradual and nonlinear. There are distinct processes that former cadets have experienced in their civilian lives, and these processes influenced different changes they experienced gradually. This point is significant since the change can be considered as occurred suddenly and linearly. However, as will be shown in the following chapters, this was not the case for my participants, various interactions and experiences influenced them since they left military schools. In this framework, the concept "change" was more suitable to explain my participants' narratives and experiences.

Eric Anderson's 'Inclusive Masculinity theory' (IMT) is significant to demonstrate changes of men (2008; 2010; 2018) in the context of sport and young men of the US and UK. Anderson discusses in IMT that "... there is an awareness that heterosexual men can act in ways once associated with homosexuality, with less threat to their public identity as heterosexual... this has socio-positive effects for straight men, gay men, and women as well" (2010, 7). Anderson puts homohysteria at the center of his arguments to indicate the transition from orthodox (traditional) masculinity to inclusive masculinity (2010). Anderson (2008) defines orthodox masculinity with these attributes: "... risk taking, homophobia, self-sacrifice, the marginalizing of others, a willingness to inflict bodily damage, and the acceptance of pain and injury". Orthodox masculinity also looks at femininity negatively, and it reproduces patriarchy. Homohysteria is the fear of being homosexualized among heterosexual men. Anderson claims that homohysteria decreased in recent years, and orthodox masculinity is not paramount as before. According to Anderson, the concept of hegemonic masculinity could not account for the changing relations of male peer groups since diverse masculinities can coexist without promoting ideal masculinity differently than Connell asserted.

On the contrary, Inclusive masculinity theory could explicate and include the conditions of many young men peer groups in the UK and the US who "... reject homophobia; include gay peers in friendship networks; are more emotionally intimate with friends; are physically tactile with other men; recognize bisexuality as a legitimate sexual orientation; embrace activities and artifacts once coded feminine and eschew violence and bullying" (Anderson and McCormack 2018, 548)). In that

sense, inclusive masculinity theory confers distinct masculinity archetypes; these archetypes do not establish superiority to each other and also recognize femininity in men, homosexuality, and diverse forms of sexualities.

Anderson claims that these changes arise from when the homohysteria decreased in the social context. While pointing out the change, Anderson does not give the details of how these heterosexual men changed: Is change something sudden or in a process; do all men who changed had experienced similar social processes? Anderson expresses that his revealing was the decreasing of homohysteria in recent years. Thus, the theory focuses on recent changes in masculinity performances but does not give details on how men experience the change on a personal level. To that extent, the theory needs further refinement on these points, and it is also not enough to explain my context.

On the other hand, Anderson points out the inclusivity of physical tactility among heterosexual men after the change. As I will discuss in the fifth chapters, for my research context, physical tactility was more acceptable, except for naval schools, in the homosocial environment of military schools. Besides, none of my participants mentioned their physical interactions with their heterosexual friends in the civilian settings, as they did in military schools. I draw attention to this point since my participants also embraced the conditions in IMT except for physical tactility. Moreover, Anderson attaches less importance to heterosexual men's relations with women but focuses on the fear of being homosexualized among other heterosexual men. Although he claims men embraced inclusive approaches toward women and started to see them as friends; his arguments on the relationship with women remain less developed. In general, IMT does not provide a ground to explain my arguments since there is no answer to how these changes occurred and how men developed the relationship with women. However, I consider the conditions that form IMT is significant to demonstrate changing relations and points of former cadets in their civilian lives and I partially refer to the IMT to explain my arguments in the thesis.

Besides, the change of masculinity performances and perceptions are also somehow related to the contemporary perceptions of gender equality. Gender equality is a more discussible concept in higher education and some scholars also focus on understanding dimensions of gender equality among university students (Aktas et al. 2019; Belli and AYNACI 2020). University students become more open to interrogate traditional gender roles in their relations. Bayar et al. (2018) claim that the impacts of gender roles also impact men adversely, and university students express society's expectations as a burden. However, some academic scholars mention university students more prone to embrace traditional gender roles (Adana et al.

2011; Belli and AYNACI 2020). In these scholarly studies, gender role adoption is shown among students who study in small cities and universities in Turkey. There is no academic study that focuses on the gender equality perception of students in notable universities and cities of Turkey. This point is essential since most of my participants studied in İstanbul and known universities.

Moreover, I consider academic curriculum and friends to have influenced their understanding about gender equality and masculinity perception. I also believe technology is another significant element that shapes the understanding of gender roles. Feminism became a more welcome subject to discuss among young people along with the impact of technology (Heger and Hoffmann 2021; Munro 2013). People could reach online sources and could research less understood topics. To that extent, I believe my participants' close relationships with online platforms and technology also widened their perspective.

In this section, after the conceptual scope of military masculinity with academic studies, I brought into academic scholarship on civil-military relationship and compulsory military service's effect on masculinity construction, gender roles relations, hierarchy, citizenship, and education. Furthermore, I shed light on masculinities and change in different studies. With this research, I consider I partially contribute to fill an academic gap on the inner dynamics of military and military education from the masculinity studies perspective. Looking at the military from a masculinity lens will be beneficial to understand my participants' experiences in military schools and their changes in civilian lives. Moreover, I believe attempting to display this kind of change of young men after the military and military education opens a new window to ponder on the army and its relationship with society and people in the 2020s.

2.2 Methodological Considerations

This section aims to present the methodological framework of the thesis. Firstly, I describe my research aims and questions. In the second part I explain the methods I used and locate my thesis in the context of the disciplinary frameworks of anthropology and cultural studies. The following part provides a description of the military school system in Turkey, an overview of the research participants, and methods of analysis. In the last part I reflect on my positionality.

2.2.1 Researh Aims

This research examines the changing dimensions of former cadets' masculinities after military school closures in Turkey in 2016. It aims to seek micro-level accounts of former cadets. In the scope of my research, former cadets were the social actors, and their accounts on masculinities were significant to understand the different phenomena which are related to military, military education, change. The main focal points in the research begin with the curiosity on these questions: how were military masculinities constructed in military schools; how did the constructed military masculinities affect the cadets' perception and relationship with civilian people in the military; how did military masculinities change with the move to a civilian life; how did their changed relationships reconstructed their masculinities in their new setting; how we can talk about change in the context of military masculinity. In that regard, I focused on former cadets' military and civilian lives in the context of masculinities to interrogate their changes as a process.

2.2.2 Method Used

In my research, I conducted semi-structured and open-ended in-depth interviews. I applied this method since I desire to reveal my participants' narratives thoroughly. In this vein, Milena et al. express that "the in-depth interview is a technique designed to elicit a vivid picture of the participant's perspective on the research topic" (2008, 1279). I considered a survey or other less descriptive methods would not provide me necessary information and would provide insufficient insights regarding my research questions. Also, they would make less understandable my participants' perspectives and experiences in and after military schools. Also, as a former cadet, I was an ingroup member, and looking from the inside also become another aspect of applying in-depth interviews in this research. Consequently, I thought an in-depth interview is the best tool to reveal narratives that are taken for granted until the present time.

As Clifford argues, "anthropological research was oriented toward the production of deep, cultural knowledge" (1997, 186). In this research, I aim to reveal the inner dynamics of the changing military masculinity phenomenon by examining the production of cultural knowledge of military masculinity in military schools in Turkey. Cultural knowledge can be explicated as every element of constructing masculinities in and out of military schools. In military schools, my participants' masculinities are constructed by military knowledge of being a man that are also

culturally fit in the military context, and cultural knowledge of masculinities may become different in another context. At outside, masculinities change in terms of new environments, and former cadets receive other cultural discourses regarding masculinities in civilian settings. To that extent, my thesis is a cultural studies thesis and aims to reveal cultural knowledge differences in one way as anthropological research.

2.2.3 Interview Study and Data Analysis

As part of this research, I conducted semi-structured and open-ended in-depth interviews with 20 former cadets who had studied in the land, naval, and air forces' military schools between 2009 and 2016 in İstanbul, İzmir, Bursa, and Ankara. I conducted all of my interviews individually between October 2020 and December 2020 in İstanbul. Due to my participants' personal preferences and the necessities caused by the coronavirus pandemic, I had to conduct 4 of the interviews on the Zoom platform online. I completed the rest of the interviews by physically coming together with my participants in a café or in their homes.

All of my participants were military high school alumni [17]. Five participants were the senior in the military high school, and the other ones were cadets in military academies when the coup attempt occurred in 2016. I interviewed former cadets from 4 cohorts which are 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016 as to their military high school graduation. In terms of the period, they spent in military schools, one cadet spent 4 -years; four cadets spent 5 -years who only studied in the military high schools, four cadets spent 6 -years, and 11 cadets have 7 -years of experience in the military schools. Except five of my participants, who only studied in military high schools, the other participants studied in both military high school and military academy but did not graduate from the latter. Concordantly, I may distinguish my participants into two groups: those who only have military high school experience and those who have military high school and military academy experience. I prefer to use the term "cadet" for both groups instead of referring to them as military students because the terms cadet is used as the English expression in military high school and academies [18].

When determining my interviewees, I considered differences in military branches. Since land forces have a more sizeable cadet population and a considerable impact

[17] See page 27 for the description of military schools.

[18] See page 30 for participant table.

on the military perception in Turkey than do naval and air forces, I preferred to interview a greater number of former cadets who were educated in the land forces when compared to others. Therefore, I conducted twelve interviews with the land forces' cadets, four with naval cadets and four with air forces' cadets. The interviews lasted about 45 minutes to 1 hour 45 minutes, but the average duration was 70 minutes. I collected my questions under three themes which are masculinity – manhood – men related questions, femininity – womanhood – women-related questions, sexuality – sexual orientations – sexual identities-related questions.

I conducted my interviews from October to December in 2020. I first started interviewing cadets who are also my friends. To reach my other participants, I used snowball sampling. Snowball sampling method "...yields a study sample through referrals made among people who share or know of others who possess some characteristics that are of research interest" (Biernacki and Waldorf 1981, 141). So, I asked my friends if they know someone who may want to attend my research and communicate with them through my friend's reference. The land forces' participants know me in person because we had a mutual acquaintance in the military schools. To that extent, it was easier to build trust in those interviews.

However, some of the naval and air forces participants did not know me before, and they also wanted to get to know me better to build trust reciprocatively. As Finch in the books on ethics and politics of interviewing that "...interviewing promotes a high degree of trust among research subjects, which in turn gives us a special responsibility to ensure that we do not abuse that trust by reneging on commitments, acting deceitfully, or producing explanations that may damage the interests of those subjects" (Finch 1993, 201). Trust has been tremendous crucial for my research because I wanted them to tell me about their private opinions, which may not be expressed easily in most environments. For instance, I wanted to talk to them about their sexuality and sexual practices, and people may not prefer to talk about their sexuality explicitly. As a matter of fact, some of them also express their concern and trust for me in the interviews. Mehmet said (Land, 25), "Normally I do not talk these topics (he means sexuality) with anyone, but I wanted to contribute your research"[19] and Tarık (Naval, 25) also shared similar opinions about this point and told "I personally would not rather talk about these things (sexuality and military background). I mean, I do not speak about my privacy manifestly, either I do not express my thoughts about taboo subjects clearly in society. However, I consider your endeavor precious, and you are also a former cadet. Thus, I think I can talk

[19]Normalde böyle şeyleri kimseyle konuşmam ama araştırmana yardım etmek istedim.

to you on trust" [20]. Accordingly, conducting an academic inquiry also would create a ground to give voice in a different channel than adverse mainstream propaganda. That was one of my biggest motivations to study former military students and it helped to build trust.

To build trust, initially, I talked to my friends about my research context and told them it will be a research about former cadets. Interrogating "us" was considered as a great attempt by my former cadet friends around me. The stigmatization of being affiliated with the terrorist organization and the mainstream media's propaganda regarding being traitors were the discourses surround most of the former cadets since they have started their civilian lives. Obviously, these rumors in the media were not good for former cadets and it may influence their social relations with other people.[21]

After I finished the interviews, I completed the transcription of them. I had already determined the themes and prepared my questions accordingly. Thereafter, I analyzed my interviews within the pre-determined thematic framework. While analyzing the interviews, I focused on consistent commonalities as well as variations between the narratives. Talja likens interview analysis to a jigsaw puzzle and states that "Interviews are not interpreted as stories having a clear and distinguishable message and meaning; instead, all the accounts produced by the participants are taken into consideration and analyzed to identify significant patterns of consistency and variation in them" (1999, 466). Thus, I constituted my chapters through the pattern of consistency and some variations.

2.2.4 Description of Military School System in Turkey

There were four military high schools in Turkey until the coup attempt in 2016 [22]. These schools were Kuleli Military High School (İstanbul), Maltepe Military High School (İzmir), Işıklar Air Force High School (Bursa), Naval School (İstanbul). Land forces' schools were Kuleli Military High School in İstanbul, Maltepe Military High

[20] Kişilik olarak böyle şeyleri çok konuşmayı tercih eden biri değilim. Yani benim özelim olabilecek şeyleri açık açık konuşmam. Ya da toplumda tabu kabul edilen şeylerle ilgili de fikirlerimi her zaman açıkça ifade etmem fakat burada çabanı çok değerli buluyorum ve sen de daha önce askeri okulda okuduğun, benzer yollardan geçtiğimiz için güvenerek anlatabileceğimi düşünüyorum.

[21] Serdar M. Değirmencioğlu also points out this situation of former cadets after closing down of the military schools. See "Askeri Liseler Kapatıldı, Asgari Beklentiler Karşılanmadı". Bianet, August 5, 2016, accessed April 20, 2021.

[22] In the context of this research, military schools mean military high schools and military academies that raise military officers or military officer candidates. To that extent, I do not include NCO schools and military medicine schools.

School in İzmir, and Turkish Military Academy in Ankara. Naval forces' schools are Naval High School and Naval Academy, both of them in İstanbul. Air forces' schools are Işıklar Air Military High School in Bursa and Air Force Academy in İstanbul. Until 2008, Air forces had not had military high school and provided its cadets for the air force academy from other military high schools. Işıklar was Land Forces' school, but then Işıklar was transferred to the Air Forces. Naval and air forces schools are more preferred than land forces schools since being combat pilot or sailor usually were more attractive to cadet candidates. Therefore, the ones who have higher scores typically prefer to study at naval and air forces schools. To study in military high schools, candidates entered an exam that was conducted by YÖK (Council of Higher Education). The successful candidates were invited to medical checkups, sport tests, and an interview with military officers. The ones who completed all stages successfully entered the military school lists. The military called the candidates by commencing from the top of the list.

Military high schools aimed to raise candidates of the military academy, and "the system of military high schools (lyc'es) feeding into the Military Academy offered the way into the officer corps on the basis" (Harris 1965, 61). Thus, military high schools' first duty is to prepare high school cadets for the military academies. Military high schools were offering five-year education since 2008. All military high schools were boarding, and cadets had only the right to go outside on the weekends. The first year was preparation for English, and four years of high school mostly was in accord with the Ministry of national education curriculum. As Brown indicated, "the four-year curriculum is intended to provide the young high school cadet with a strong program of instruction in the sciences mathematics and social studies" (1989, 392). In addition to this, there were heavy sports activities to enhance physical power and endurance. The lesson of physical education was as important as any academic lesson. Physical competence always had a significant component of becoming successful in military high schools. Besides that, the cadets should have learned fundamental military doctrines, such as pace, salute, ranks, etc., until their graduation.

After military high schools, all cadets passed military academies directly. There was no more examination except a medical checkup. The ones who had severe health issues such as cardiac disease could not continue to the military academies. If anyone had not wanted to continue, he might have left after paying indemnity in exchange for his military high school education. The military academies offered a four-year undergraduate education. All graduates held a double diploma; one of them was in one scientific discipline, such as sociology and the other one was a military officer diploma. The military academies were more compelling than the high schools

because their main goal was to educate and make prepared future commanders different from military high schools' goals. Concordantly, the military academy had more discipline, seriousness, and less fault tolerance. Unlike military high schools', military officers in the academy were forcing every cadet to see if s/he could have become successful in the army. Until graduation, a group of cadets would routinely drop out of the academy due to these challenging tests in the military academy. Like military high schools, the cadets were responsible for academic curriculum, military training, and sport tests. If someone had failed at any of these subjects, s/he should have studied the grade level again. All successful military academy graduates would become military officers and earn second lieutenant (*teğmen*) rank with their graduations. Under statutory decree no. 669, all military high schools were closed down. All cadets were expelled from the military schools, and military academies were assembled under the roof of National Defense University [23]. After the closure, military high school cadets were placed in different high schools in accordance with their high school exam results. Recently graduated cadets from the military high schools received an exam to start their education in civil universities. Military academy cadets filled a university preference form in terms of their academic education in the military academies. They were replaced in diverse universities as to their academic achievements in the military schools and university exams (for ones who join military academies after high school education) [24].

[23] The full news about the legislation. See "Askeri Okullar kapatıldı". Birgün, July 31, 2016, accessed April 20, 2021. https://www.birgun.net/haber/askeri-okullar-kapatildi-122249

[24] The statement of YÖK regarding former military Academy cadets can be reached. See "669 Sayılı KHK ile kapatılan askeri yüksek öğretim kurumlarının öğrencilerinin Türkiye'deki diğer yüksek öğretim kurumlarına yerleştirilmesi." September 22, 2016, accessed April 20, 2021. https://yoksis.yok.gov.tr/TS/dokumanlar/usulveesaslar.pdf

1.1.1. Table of Participants

Name (Pseudo)	Age	Education / Work	City	Military School Experience
İlter	22	Undergraduate student	İstanbul	4-year experience (Graduate of Kuleli Military High School)
Bilge	23	Undergraduate student	İstanbul	5-year experience (Graduate of Kuleli Military High School)
Ediz	23	Undergraduate student	İstanbul	5-year experience (Graduate of Kuleli Military High School)
Selim	23	Undergraduate student	İstanbul	5-year experience (Graduate of Işıklar Air Force High School)
Doruk	23	Undergraduate student	İstanbul	5-year experience (Graduate of Işıklar Air Force High School)
Sinan	24	Employed in the private sector.	İstanbul	6- year experience (Kuleli alumni / 1 year in Turkish Military Academy)
Alper	24	Employed in the private sector	İstanbul	6- year experience (Naval High School alumni / 1 year in Naval Military Academy)
Adem	24	Employed in the private sector	İstanbul	6- year experience (Işıklar alumni / 1 year in Turkish Air Force Academy)
Tekin	24	MA student abroad	Abroad	6- year experience (Işıklar alumni / 1 year in Turkish Air Force Academy)
Buğra	25	Employed in the private sector	İstanbul	7- year experience (Kuleli alumni / 2 year in Turkish Military Academy)
Caner	25	Employee and MA student	İstanbul	7- year experience (Kuleli alumni / 2 year in Turkish Military Academy)
Bartu	25	Employed in the private sector	Kocaeli	7- year experience (Kuleli alumni / 2 year in Turkish Military Academy)
Faruk	25	Employed in the private sector	İstanbul	7- year experience (Maltepe alumni / 2 year in Turkish Military Academy)
Murat	25	UG student	İstanbul	7- year experience (Maltepe alumni / 2 year in Turkish Military Academy)
Mehmet	25	Employed in the private sector	İstanbul	7- year experience (Maltepe alumni / 2 year in Turkish Military Academy)
Hamza	25	Employed in the private sector	İstanbul	7- year experience (Maltepe alumni / 2 year in Turkish Military Academy)
Mutlu	26	MA student in İstanbul	İstanbul	7- year experience (Maltepe alumni / 2 year in Turkish Military Academy)
Ege	25	Employed in the private sector	İstanbul	7- year experience (Naval High School alumni / 3 year in Naval Military Academy)
Tarık	25	Employed in the private sector	İstanbul	7- year experience (Naval High School alumni / 3 year in Naval Military Academy)
Ozan	25	Employed in the private sector	İstanbul	7- year experience (Naval High School alumni / 3 year in Naval Military Academy)

2.2.5 Reflections on my positionality as a former cadet

As a former cadet and friend from the military, my positionalities played significant roles in constructing dialogue with my participants. As England says, "The intersubjective nature of social life means that the researcher and the people being researched have shared meanings, and we should seek methods that develop this advantage" (1994, 243). In the first place, in the sight of my participants, I was someone who shares a shared military background and can easily understand their jargon, feelings, and perceptions. Nowicka and Ryan (2015) also point out that migrant researchers have more accessibility to study migrant groups in their article's part on insider and outsider in the research and society. Similarly, in this research, I was a member of the insider group. Sharing the same background and experiencing similar difficulties brought my participants and me close together and helped building trust. Taking the road with this advantage facilitated speaking a similar language. I was also a subject of the similar processes that they may have undergone after the military schools. So, I could understand what they meant quite easily than another person who may want to understand military life and afterward processes in my position.

Moreover, my positionality as a former cadet provided me the opportunity to contribute to my analysis with my own experiences. I exemplified some points through my past experiences and memories to present a more vivid perspective. Hence, in certain parts of this research, I present my personal experiences in military schools. In describing autoethnography and the researcher's position in relation to data Pitard says, "autoethnography intends to draw the reader into the workings of the social context studied thereby enhancing the readers own understanding and knowledge of the culture studied" (2017, 17). The thesis is not an autoethnographic research, but my aim also is to enhance understanding and knowledge of culture with my personal experiences.

However, some former cadets that I reached through my friends' help did not want to talk to me even though we have shared backgrounds. At that point, I thought it would be a literally more compelling process if I were not a cadet before because most of my participants expressed their feelings and told me they would not have an interview with a stranger who is eager to study with former cadets. Also, I understand them right because no one has undergone a smooth process into civil life after military schools' closure. In my position, it is comprehensible to grasp their concerns.

Besides that, I am also an academic researcher, and my main goal is to inquire

and analyze the changing processes that my participants have experienced as men subjects. Nowicka and Ryan also state that "some positions facilitate rapport, while others might hinder mutual trust" (2015, 6). My researcher identity also shaped my participants' perceptions about me because they also were aware of my position as a researcher in the interview. They knew that I would academically focus on their words. Therefore, most of them had some qualms about their accurate and straight expression. Furthermore, one potential participant did not want to have an interview with me and expressed his anxiety. He told me that Sabancı University (my academic institution) encourages people to study intriguing topics and subjects. Also, he mentioned that this encouragement was not well-intentioned. To that extent, he directly expressed he may not trust me because he does not know what I would do with the data. Although I explained to him, it is not about my institution or any encouragement, he held me in low regard because my academic identity and position blurred his perception and discouraged him from attending my research.

As a political stance, I identify myself as an anti-militarist and pro-feminist person since the beginning of my master's education. I did not intend to hide my positions during the interviews, and some of the participants were also aware of my stance. Furthermore, I preferred to explain my ideas and understanding about the military if they asked. Identifying yourself as an anti-militarist is an uncustomary condition after all these years in military schools. Some of my friends from military schools also expressed their confusion about my stance in our out-of-record conversations. However, I have never judged them because of their sayings.

To sum up, my positions as a former cadet helped me to conduct this research. On the other hand, my status as an provided a more implicit understanding of the research topic. In this chapter, I aimed to present my methodological perspective and considerations, describe the fieldwork and reflect on my positionality as an insider. In the next chapter, I begin to explain my arguments on masculinities of former cadets in and after military schools and their masculinities change in terms of perception, appearance, and relations.

3. SEEKING FOR MASCULINITY IN AND OUT OF MILITARY SCHOOLS

This chapter aims to scrutinize masculinities and masculinity constructions with the narratives and experiences of former cadets in and out of military schools. To that extent, in the following part, I begin to introduce my research participants and their motivations to go to military schools. Then, I delve into how military masculinities are constructed in military schools with the impact of different apparatuses. Concordantly, I examine the relations the relationships of former cadets with civilian people. Later, I focus on institutional discrepancies of military masculinities among military branches. Last but not least, I discuss how former cadets' military masculinity identities change after military schools.

3.1 Research Participants

İlter (22)

İlter is a senior undergraduate student in social science in İstanbul. He graduated from Kuleli Military High School in 2016. He did not study English preparation, so he studied for four years in the military high school, different from most cadets. His parents did not want him to study in the military schools but did not take a stand against İlter's desire. His desire to study in military schools originated from the publicity in his secondary school. He expresses his feelings about the military in these words.

> My first encounter with the military was actually a publicity meeting (*tanıtım toplantısı*) [1]. We were talking among friends at that time. It

[1] It is an organization of the Turkish Armed Forces to introduce military high schools to secondary school

> also sounded cool when I was little. For example, I would be proud of telling my friends that I was in military high school like this. It was something to be proudly said for those times. Although I don't think like that today [2].

He wants to pursue an academic career nowadays.

Bilge (23)

Bilge is a senior social science student in İstanbul. He graduated from Kuleli Military High school one day before the coup attempt in 2016. He introduced himself as a successful student and was appreciated by his commander in the military school. However, he was not about to join the military academy because he became more aware of the irrationality in the military after a while. He says that "Lately I was thinking about leaving. I didn't want to be in the military because the military seemed to me as an irrational place" [3]. However, he was so eager to study in the military at the beginning. In his civil life, he wants to improve himself in the private sector.

Ediz (23)

Ediz is also a Kuleli Military High School graduate in 2016, like İlter and Bilge. After his graduation, he is an undergraduate student in İstanbul. His decision to study in the military school was not totally his decision. His father, who was also a noncommissioned officer, wanted him to join the military schools and lead him in this process when he was on the horns of a dilemma. "I thought I was going to Anatolian high school because all my 8th-grade friends will go to the same high school; we say we will go to the same high school, and we are preparing together. Then my father said 'I want you to go to military high school' when I was orientation in Kuleli. After the orientation, there was a -month holiday, and I thought and decided to continue in the military" [4].

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students.

[2] İşte benim ilk askeriyeyle tanışma şeyim tanıtma toplantısıydı aslında. İşte sonra arkadaşlar arasında konuşuyorduk. Bir de havalı geliyordu küçükken. Ben mesela gurur duyardım oradaki arkadaşlarıma anlatırken, işte böyle askeri lisedeyim diye. Gururla söylenecek bir şeydi o zamanlar için. Şu an için pek öyle düşünmesem de

[3] Son zamanlara doğru ayrılmayı düşünüyordum. Askeriye içerisinde var olmak istemiyordum çünkü askeriye bana çok saçma bir yer gibi görünüyordu.

[4] Anadolu Lisesine gideceğimi sanıyordum çünkü 8. Sınıf arkadaşlarımın hepsi aynı liseye gidecek, aynı liseye gideceğiz diyoruz ve birlikte hazırlanıyoruz. Sonra babam askeri liseye gitmeni istiyorum dedi ben Kulile intibaktayken. İntibaktan sonra bir aylık tatil vardı, o zaman düşündüm ve askeriyede devam etmeye karar verdim

Selim (23)

Selim is a senior engineering university student in İstanbul. He graduated from Işıklar Air Force High School in 2016. After he started in Işıklar, he wanted to leave the school, but his father did not want him to leave.

> I joined Işıklar in 2011. The first thing that catches my attention when I started was the incredible waste of free time. You go to the cafeteria; you should wait, you go to the dormitory, you wait again. I said, five -year time hangs heavy on my hands. Because we've been standing, you're just standing idle for two hours. Commanders say that this improves your patience, and it was absurd. Then I called my father and said I want to leave. He said you went willingly and should stay there. Because they also said relatives, and if I had quitted, they would have thought I couldn't "[5].

Doruk (23)

Doruk is also an Işıklar graduate and in the same cohort as Selim. He is an engineering student in İstanbul. He wanted to be a military officer because there were a few military staff in his environment, and he learned military high school exams. He wanted to be an airman and then joined Işıklar. He was a successful cadet in the military high school. During our interview, he was nervous, and he did not want to share many things about his background.

Sinan (24)

Sinan is a newly graduate from social science in a university in İstanbul. He graduated from Kuleli Military High School in 2015 and continued Turkish Military Academy and studied for one year there. After closing of military schools, he transferred to the civil university. He was living in a small Anatolian district, and he expressed his thoughts to join military schools by saying,

> On the one hand, studying in the best high school in a 25 -thousand people district; on the other hand, studying in the military high school in İstanbul. It sounded desirable to go to a high school in Istanbul, to

[5] 2011 yılında Işıklara girdim. Başladığımda dikkatimi çeken ilk şey inanılmaz boş zamanının heba olması. Kafeteryaya gidiyorsun beklemek zorundasın, yatakhaneye gidiyorsun bekliyorsun. Dedim ki beş sene burada geçmez. Çünkü iki saat sadece duruyorsun, boş boş dikiliyorsun. Komutanlar bu sizin sabrınızı geliştiriyor diyordu ama bence saçmaydı. Sonra babamı aradım ve ayrılmak istiyorum dedim. Babam da kendi isteğinle gittin orada kal dedi. Çünkü onlar da akrabalara söylemişlerdi. Eğer bıraksaydım yapamadı bıraktı olacaktı

> get away from my family, to stand on my own feet, rather than to study the best high school there [6].

Alper (24)

Alper is a new engineering graduate. He lives in İstanbul with his family. He works in the private sector. He graduated from Naval High School in 2015 and continued Naval Academy. He studied for one year in the academy before the closure. He stated entering military high school was a desire for him, and he did not even think of leaving, although he had a bumpy ride occasionally in the military school.

> I was not a demanding person. Even when I was a kid, I could not want when I went out with my father. He asked me, 'do you want this or do you want to eat.' I could not say I am hungry, although I was. Concerning the military, I have a desire for it, and I said I would like to go. For the first time, I desired one thing. After I said I did not want to take a step back and did not think 'not want [7].

Adem (24)

Adem graduated engineering department last year in İstanbul. He works as a software developer but is planning to move abroad. He studied Işıklar Air Force High School and graduated in 2015. He continued Air Force Academy for one year and then pursued his academic education in a civil university. His motivation to study in the military was to become a pilot in the army. Therefore, he wanted to study in Işıklar and would not enroll in military school if he had become successful in entering other military high schools but Işıklar. "I wanted to be a pilot. When I was 14 years old, I lay down a condition to my father and said I would study in the military as if I achieve to enter Işıklar; otherwise, I won't go to military schools. Then I entered Işıklar" [8].

Tekin (24)

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[6] Bir taraftan 25 bin kişilik bir ilçenin en iyi okulunda okumak var diğer taraftan İstanbul'da askeri lise okumak. İstanbul'da lise okumak kulağa cazip geldi, ailenden uzaklaşmak, kendi ayakların üzerinde durmak ilçede en iyi lisede okumaktan daha iyiydi.

[7] Ben isteklerde bulunan bir insan değildim. Çocukken bile babamla dışarı çıktığımız zaman isteyemezdim. Sorardı, şunu ister misin ya da yemek ister misin diye. Aç olduğum halde isterim diyemezdim. Askeriye konusunda ise ilk defa istedim. Onlara söyledikten sonra da istemiyorum diye geri adım atmak istemedim ve bunu düşünmedim de.

[8] Pilot olmak istiyordum. 14 yaşındayken babama şart koydum ve dedim Işıkları kazanırsam askeriyede okurum yoksa gitmem. Sonra Işıklara girdim zaten.

Tekin is a graduate of engineering in İstanbul. He pursues his master's degree abroad. There I interviewed with him on Zoom. Tekin and Adem are in the same cohort. Tekin also graduated from Işıklar Military High School in 2015 and continued Air Force Academy before his civilian life. Tekin said he had entered the military high school exam to test himself, and he had become successful. Thus, he wanted to benefit from this chance and enrolled Işıklar. "I thought Işıklar has a high-quality education, and I wanted to study there. As I thought, I received a good education in Işıklar" [9].

Buğra (25)

Buğra is a social sciences graduate and lives in İstanbul with his family. He graduated from Kuleli Military High School in 2014 and continued his military education in the Turkish Military Academy for two years in Ankara. After the attempt, he completed his education at a university in İstanbul. He knows the military from his uncle because he was a noncommissioned officer. He learned the name of Kuleli Military High School on a test book and asked his teacher when he was in 7th grade in secondary school. He also mentions his decision was spontaneous. He emphasized the impact of the military on him in these words "Undoubtedly, being a soldier is one of the significant occurring in Turkey. If you become a soldier, you are everything. You own this country. Even when you were a little kid, you know like that, and you see" [10].

Caner (25)

Caner is an engineering graduate and continues his master's degree in İstanbul. He graduated from Kuleli Military High School in 2014 and studied for two years in the Turkish Military Academy. He finished his undergraduate education at a university in İstanbul. His father is also a noncommissioned officer, but his father does not want him to go to military schools. Caner clarifies his thoughts to join the military school "I had imitated my father because he is a soldier. All in all, I had grown up in the military. I have always been among soldiers. You unavoidably aspire. It somewhat drew me. Secondly, I want to get away from home and come to Istanbul" [11].

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[9] Işıkların eğitiminin iyi olacağını düşünüyordum ve orada okumak istedim. Düşündüğüm gibi, Işıklarda iyi bir eğitim aldım.

[10] Tabi ki asker olmak Türkiye'deki en büyük olaylardan biri. Asker olursan, her şeysin. Bu ülkenin sahibisin. Küçük çocukken bile böyle biliyorsun, böyle görüyorsun.

[11] Babam askeri diye ona özeniyordum. Sonuçta askeriyenin içinde büyüdüm. Askerlerin arasında büyüdüm. İster istemez özeniyorsun yani. Bu bir nebze beni çekti. İkincisi de evden uzaklaşıp İstanbul'a gelme isteğiydi.

Bartu (25)

Bartu is an engineer and lives in Kocaeli. He was my only participant who completed his undergraduate education different city than İstanbul. He is in the same cohort in Kuleli Military High School. After two years in the military academy, he finished his undergraduate degree in 2019 and started his work. He wanted to become a soldier because there was no military staff in his family, and he thought the military provides quality education.

Faruk (25)

Faruk held a social sciences degree and started a job after his graduation in İstanbul. He studied in Maltepe Military High School in İzmir and continued the Turkish Military Academy. When he was in the 8th grade, his family went through a torrid time. Therefore, he wanted to get away from home and entered the military school exam. He explained that time "I tried to get away from home because no one has normal psychology at that time. Luckily, I passed the military school exam. Interviews and so on, in some way, I liked there. Also, I have a sportive personality. Hereby, I decided to enroll the military school" [12].

Murat (25)

Murat is a senior engineering student in İstanbul. After his education in Maltepe Military High School, he joined the Turkish Military Academy and studied for two years there. Murat is in Bursa now because of online education, but we met in İstanbul when he came to pick up his stuff before going to Bursa. He wanted to join the military because his neighbor's son was studying in Işıklar, and Murat also wanted to be like him. Therefore, Murat decided to enter the military school. He said he was a successful cadet in the military school.

Mehmet (25)

Mehmet is an engineer in İstanbul. He studied respectively in Maltepe Military High School and the Turkish Military Academy. He finished his computer science education in İstanbul. When I was conducting this interview with Mehmet, he had a rough time in his personal life. To that extent, during the interview, he was cheerless, although he is not in his ordinary life. I did not make him feel under pressure and tried to be more sensitive. He told his grandfather encouraged him to join the military, and he thought it is a straightforward way to find a job in the state institutions.

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[12] Evden uzaklaşma isteğim vardı çünkü evde kimse normal psikolojide değildi o zamanlar. Şans eseri askeri lise de oldu. Mülakatlar falan derken ben bir şekilde sevdim orayı. Hani sporcu kişiliğim de vardı. Bu yüzden askeri liseye girmeye karar verdim.

Hamza (25)

Hamza graduated from the university in 2019 and started his first job. He finished his education at Maltepe Military High School in 2014. Then he studied for two years at the Turkish Military Academy. His father directed him to study in the military school. He said:

> My father grew up in the village and studied under challenging conditions. He became a civil servant in some way or another. He wanted his children to get a guaranteed job. He knew the district gendarme commander and district governor. When he saw their status, he may be considered my son should be like them. The military school became with his directing" [13].

I interviewed on Zoom because he was in a busy period and could not arrange a face-to-face meeting.

Mutlu (26)

Mutlu continues his master's degree in İstanbul. He graduated from Maltepe Military High School in 2014 and pursued his military education in the Turkish Military Academy for two years. He completed his undergraduate degree in 2019 and worked in a job for one year before his master's degree. There was a myriad of soldiers in his environment. His grandfather also wanted him to be a soldier. His grandfather's inculcations motivated him to join the military school.

Ege (25)

Ege is an engineer and works in a company for almost two years. He started to study at Naval High School in 2009. Ege did not study in the preparation class. So, he completed high school in four years. After the naval high school, Ege carried on his military education in Naval Academy for three years until the shutdown. He wanted to become a naval officer before entering the military school exam. He talked about his feelings "I was living in a remote place than the sea. As said, I only saw the water in the glass. Thus, I chose the Naval High School because I want to live the pleasure of studying at a seaside school" [14].

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[13] Babam köyde büyümüş, okulu zor okumuş bir adam. İyi kötü devlet memuru olmuş. Çocuklarının garanti bir işi olsun istiyordu. İlçe jandarma komutanı ve kaymakamını tanıyordu. Onların statülerini de görünce oğlum da onlar gibi olsun diye düşündü galiba. Askeri okul onun yönlendirmesiyle oldu.

[14] Denizden uzak bir yerde yaşıyordum. Derler ya, suyu bardakta görüyorsun. Bu yüzden deniz lisesinde okumayı seçtim çünkü deniz kenarında olan bir okulda okumanın hazzını yaşamak istiyordum.

Tarık (25)

Tarık graduated from the university three years ago and is working in a company. He studied in the Naval High School for four years and passed to the Naval Academy. He studied there for three years and finished his undergraduate degree in a civil university. He described himself as an idealist person, and he thinks it became effective to want to study in the military schools. Because as an idealist person, he wanted to serve his country. I interviewed with Tarık on Zoom because he preferred it in that way.

Ozan (25)

Ozan is in the same cohort with Ege and Tarık. He also studied respectively in Naval High School and Naval Academy. He is working in a company. When he was in the 8th grade, his teachers mentioned his class about the military school exams. So, Ozan wanted to receive the exam and became successful. His father also encouraged him to go to the military school at that time, and he conveyed his experiences.

> The military was not a thing I want since my childhood. However, when I became successful in the exams, my father wanted me to become a soldier, and I prefer to go to the military high school. Actually, there were not an exclusive cause to choose Naval High School. My family was in İstanbul, and I did not want to go another city [15].

I conducted the interview with Ozan on Zoom because of his request.

My participants have common motivations and similarities are observed in their narratives regarding the choice to study in military high schools. Some explain their motivation as receiving a quality education, others emphasize being a soldier, a pilot, or a sailor intrigued them while studying in secondary school. This is significant since the military and its education were still attractive to some teenagers, although the army was going through a difficult period since the early 2010s. Furthermore, the encouragement of their family members is another underscored element that some of my participants expressed. On the other hand, some participants stated their motivations as getting away from home and being more independent at an early age. In that regard, my participants joined military schools with similar motivations.

[15] Askerlik çocukluğumdan beri istediğim bir şey değildi. Fakat sınava girip başarılı olunca, babam da asker olmamı isteyince, gitmeyi tercih ettim. Aslında, Deniz Lisesi'ni seçmemde de özel bir neden yok. Ailen İstanbul'daydı, başka bir şehre gitmek istemedim.

3.2 Masculinities in Military Schools

Masculinity can be an elusive concept when one attempts to define it. I asked my participants to depict masculinity in the military context, but verbalizing it was challenging for most of them. I considered that it was the case because they had not thought of masculinity as a concept, although masculinity makes them men in terms of "identity, performance, power, privilege, relations, styles, and structure" (Pascoe and Bridges 2016, 3). Constructing masculinity is an internalized and immanent process in society, and men learn and embrace it while acting in gendered ways. In an educational institution such as military schools, masculinity is ingrained in men as a part of structure, and gender roles are adopted deeply. As Tim Edwards claimed, "Schooling is seen, perhaps more than anything else, to inculcate the learning of traditional gender roles" (2004, 9).

Masculinity does not express singularity, and it constitutes an abundance of different definitions. According to Kimmel and Aronson, four dimensions diversify the meanings of masculinity, these are, cultural, geographical – economic, psychological, and society-based (2004). Anthropologically speaking, culture designates how masculinity performs in different cultural contexts, as the authors explain, "Some cultures encourage men to be stoic and to prove masculinity, especially by sexual conquest. Other cultures prescribe a more relaxed definition of masculinity, based on civic participation, emotional responsiveness, and collective provision for the community's needs" (Aronson et al. 2004, 503). Within the framework of this chapter, military masculinity is defined as a product of the institutional culture of military education, and the education is understood to be constructing male subjects militaristically. According to Connell, "Masculinity to the extent the term can be defined at all, is simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experiences, personality, and culture." (Connell 2005, 34). Yet, the concept of masculinity may vary in terms of personal differences, experiences, and perspectives and cultures.

On the other hand, subjects change, and this change affects their practices, bodily experiences, that are also related to their masculinity identities relatively, in different cultural environments out of the military. In this chapter, I begin to uncover military masculinity construction through an analysis of my participants' narratives during military education. In that regard, firstly, I analyze the points they brought to explain masculinity constructions in military education. There are plenty of factors that shape the masculinities in the military schools, which can be exemplified

as the class commanders (*sınıf subayı /bölük komutanı*), class friends (*devre*), senior and junior classes, family, and civilian friends. Another crucial factor is the military branch they had studied which also has a significant impact on their masculinity construction in the military schools. A land force's cadet and naval force's cadet describe masculinity differently as to their institutions as well. These factors provide a ground to understand different constructions of military masculinity in military schools. Secondly, I focus on the changing processes of their masculinities after the military schools. Their narratives and explanations enabled me to grasp their changes and transformations in the behaviors and perceptions about masculinity. It is significant that there is no one stereotypical differentiation after military schools, and they are in the distinct places on a spectrum regarding the changes they experienced. For example, while some do not see it as necessary and prefer to identify themselves as a man or masculine to fulfill their existences in society, some feel masculinity is essential for their manly being in their settings and thinks of masculinity inseparable part of the male body.

3.3 Military Masculinity in the Schools

The interrelation with hegemonic masculinity for cadets starts from the first days of military schools. I remember my first weekend holiday while studying at Kuleli Military High School. My two friends and I went outside and walking on the street with our uniforms. Local business owner and civilian people were applauding us and saying, "You are our heroes," "You are the real owner of the Republic." The first time I felt like a grown-up man in these moments was that a group of people I did not know supported and glorified us because of our military identity. As Brooke Johnson said, "the military is one of the primary sources of how masculinity is viewed in society" (2010, 577). The meaning of their compliments could be about our presence to study in the military schools to become military officers in a child -age. These received praises made me feel manly since I was doing 'what most men cannot do.' I consider this was the first moment that I felt military identity and masculinity was in a superior position when considered to other masculinities and men. Following this point, when put military masculinity in a different place, looking at the military masculinity from within my participants' narratives confers a comprehendible skeleton of my thesis.

Military masculinity has different constituent components according to my participants' experiences. As Ogilvy said, "the relationship between masculinity and the

military is far more complex than one single set of established traits or ideals" (2016, 1). When asked about how they define masculinity in terms of their practices, perceptions, and relational conditions in the military schools (such as senior classes and rules), my participants focused on different attributes of being masculine. Even though there were different characterizations of the ideal military masculinity according to their answers, almost all of my participants conceived themselves as an ideal cadet in terms of military masculinity that they had described. I refer to ideal masculinity to explain a set of traits that are primarily associated with being an appropriate man in military schools. Ideal masculinity also has a close relationship with hegemonic masculinity. Some idealized masculine performance patterns of former cadets can be hegemonic and promote structured and embedded hegemonic masculinity understandings in society. As Özbay and Soybakis indicate in their article on political masculinities, Messerschmidt's concepts of dominant and dominating masculinities also have deep connections with ideal masculinities in military schools (2020). Dominant masculinity is the "most celebrated, common, or current form of masculinity in a context" (Messerschmidt as cited in Ozbay and Soybakis 2020, 30). In military schools, ideal masculinity is also somehow the dominant masculinity since it underlines a set of specific attributes of masculinity in military schools. Besides, dominating masculinity "involve[s] commanding and controlling specific interactions and exercising power and control over people and events" (Messerschmidt as cited in Ozbay and Soybakis 2020, 30-31). The ideal masculinity in military schools is usually constructed in accordance with the traits of dominating and dominant masculinities, promotes a hegemonic masculinity understanding, and gender relations in society.

In their ideal masculinity descriptions, my participants attributed to their physical appearance and characteristics, some pointed distinct attitudes, behaviors, and thoughts different from civilian people. Besides, the difference between civilian people and the cadets was also uttered by the class commanders repeatedly. The class commanders emphasized that the cadets cannot be like their civilian peers because cadets have superiority over other people. As Doull et al. argued in their article with respect Canadian-based young men experience on deployment of power, they express that "the positioning of young men as powerful often emerges as a result of conceptualizations of young men's power in relation to others. . . " (2013, 30). İlter underlines this power relations with civilian peers.

> İlter (22, Land): You are different; you are superior from those in other civilian life. For example, a school commander gave an example; you are different from the Üsküdar High School outside. You do not go into

dogfights with them. You are so different... they would say that we are very mature compared to our peers [16].

There is a demarcation that commanders set down by their discourses for the cadets. Since they wanted cadets firstly to recognize they would be future commanders and could be potential commanders of these civilian people someday. Therefore, there should have been a distinction. İlter's example exhibits the difference was constructed by the perception of being mature and maturity is associated with being more masculine. The distinction was not only described by determining outside groups but also highlighted that the cadets are not kids anymore. The maturity and not being a child starts with the age of 14 for a military high school cadet because the commanders saw every cadet as an adult since the beginning of military schools. As Ege said, the commanders highlighted this point expressions such as:

Ege (25, Naval): We had a commander who would swear at us. Shall I tell you?

Y: tell me.

E: You are old enough to have your own child if you fuck a woman. He was addressing us in this way. He was vociferating.

Y: How did that make you feel this situation?

E: That means you are now grown up, you have become a man, now you are really in life. You are not a child[17].

The commanders underscored that the male body of the cadets might have the capacity to have sexual intercourse with a female body, and that this is essential for being a heterosexual man and masculine. In the context of military schools, some commanders may have used the discourse of sex to emphasize masculinity. Bertone and Ferrero Camoletto focus on heterosexual men's sexual experiences in their research and explain one role of sex as following "... sex as naturally-driven is aimed at confirming masculinity by the recognition from the homosocial environment" (2009,

[16] Siz işte farklısınız, siz işte üstünsünüz öteki sivil hayattakilerden. Hatta mesela şey örneği vermişti bir okul komutanı, dışarıdaki Üsküdar lisesinden siz farklısınız, onlarla it dalaşına girmezsiniz, öyle farklısınız... olgunluk konusunda da yaşıtlarımıza göre çok olgun olduğumuzu söylerlerdi.

[17] Ege:bizim bir komutanımız vardı bize bir küfrederdi onu söyleyeyim mi?
Y: söyle söyle.
E: karı sikseniz çocuğunuz olacak yaştasınız. O tarzda bir hitapta buluyordu. Bağırıp çağırıyordu.
Y: bu mesela nasıl hissettiriyordu seni?
E: böyle söylemesi artık sen büyüdün, erkek adam oldun, artık gerçekten hayatın içindesin. Çocuk değilsin tarzında.

372). In the military school environment, the discourse of sex plays a role to boost masculinity. As Ege stated, it feels like you are a man ever after, and childhood is not a concern if you can physically have a child. When it is looked at from a humanitarian perspective, I consider, it is definitely child abuse; however, the military uses this mechanism to accelerate the adaptation of the cadets to the "real masculinity." As seen in Ege's example, another important point about the masculinity construction in the schools is the physical attributes of the cadets in their puberty. To that extent, most cadets paid attention to their physical appearance because it was seen as a substantial component of military masculinity. However, it does not always mean a V-shaped body.

During our interviews, Buğra and Caner talked about physical power as not about having a sportive body but endurance because an enduring body would be essential to serve as a commander in a war setting. Also, the mentality in the military is raising soldiers, not sportsmen. Hence, being sportive connotes having good posture, becoming successful in sports activities and tests. However, some of the cadets in the military schools also desired athletic type body because it meant being more masculine for some groups. In a research that is conducted with Polish student also demonstrate that having muscular body affects social relations between sexes (Zarzycki et al. 2019). My research also showed that, the presence of muscles apparently affected the relations among men as Sinan expressed:

> Sinan (24, Land): "I would take someone who is bulky seriously. Likewise, I would take someone who looks masculine more seriously in the military setting. It seemed to me more in line with a soldier profile. I don't know, but I took those commanders whose fit bodie almost say "I am here" more seriously. For me, they would more of a man, more serious a soldier [18].

For Sinan, masculinity and having a well-shaped body are in a close relationship. He also expressed he was doing sports regularly to have a v-shaped body in the military schools. Remarkably physical fitness may have affected the subjects' position as a commander or senior class for lower class cadets in the military schools. Also, it adjusts how the masculine military body should appear in military schools. As Magidson argues in his article that how incarcerated male youth construct masculinity in correction facility in US and expresses that "physicality and strength function

[18] İri yarı olan birini daha ciddiye alırdım. Askeri ortamda erkeksi görünen birini daha ciddiye alırdım. Daha bana böyle asker profilinde görünürdü. Ne bileyim komutanlarımız arasında böyle daha fit tipler, daha böyle duruşuyla ben buradayım diyen insanları daha ciddiye alırdım. Benim gözümde daha erkek, ciddi asker görünürlerdi.

as a tool for youth to draw from to demonstrate aggressiveness and competitiveness as well as establish a social hierarchy" (2020, 209). In addition to the inherent hierarchy of the military, sportive physical appearance also may function as hierarchical understanding. I recall that we had talked about some commanders and criticize their physical appearance and military competencies because they did not have a fit body. Actually, the military schools do not promote v-shaped bodies. Still, some cadets attempt to have a more muscular body to design their individual masculinity in the highly masculinized environment of military schools.

Attitudes, behaviors, and thoughts were other components of military masculinity in the schools. According to my respondents' answers, being mature, well settled, heavy-headed, go-getter, psychologically enduring, cultivated, self-improving were essential features of a cadet in the military schools. These features make them more masculine as to their peers in military schools. When I asked Hamza to describe the personality traits of a cadet, he mentioned the following characteristics.

> Hamza (25, Land): Firstly, he should be wise. He should not be agile; he should not have a perception problem that can snatch his hearing. He should grab what he hears, be agile, not slow on the uptake. He should not be a taciturn, calm type because it is a patriarchal place. He has to defend himself there, that is, to give direction. He has to be a go-getter type. He shouldn't be a loser type. So, he needs to improve himself. He has to do something like that to stand out among his peers [19].

As Hamza beckoned, to ascend in the military schools, a cadet should have embraced some features which are associated with being masculine, too. The ones who did not have the mentioned features, when they had joined the military, were forced to have by the commanders and other components of the military schools.

> Bilge (23, Land): When you come together, you cannot be close with everyone. You can't be slack. A cadet is not someone who smiles or hangs out with everyone, but the one who listens and doesn't talk much. It is, after all, the definition of masculinity in our culture (referring to Turkish culture). The man doesn't laugh too much or do other things. It is the woman who makes the gossip etc. After all, he is a more settled, mature person who does not speak much. It is more of a masculine

[19] Hamza: Bir kere zeki olmalı. Duyduğunu kapabilen, çevik, algılama sorunu olmaması lazım. Çok sessiz sakin, sümsük bir tip olmamalı, çünkü ataerkil bir yer. Orada kendini savunması lazım, yani yön vermesi lazım. Tuttuğunu koparan bir tip olması lazım. Ezik bir tip olmaması lazım. Yani kendini geliştirmesi lazım. Diğer yaşıtları arasında sıyrılmak için böyle bir şey yapması lazım.

person, after all. Maybe we were not like this among ourselves, but the image we gave out was like this [20].

Bilge's statements demonstrate a significant detail about military masculinity. The cadets want to be perceived as masculine and perform in that way on the outside, but, as he said, they cannot be swaggerer in their intimate ambiance. Kimmel and Messner say that "The performance signals the individual as socially connected, embedded in a collective membership that always references relations of power" (1992, 104). Thus, the image seen as super masculine, serious, well settled is a performance that the outside group conceives. The outside group can be a lower-class cadet for a senior class because a senior cadet also wants to be perceived as an appropriate masculine person by his lower levels. To that extent, the relationship between classes also occupies a considerable point for military masculinity construction. A senior cadet may have used his authority over lower classes and can terrify them into anything he wanted.

Mutlu (26, Land): As an example, those who are senior to us and watching over us were shouting. Actually, there was only one year age difference between us and the man, but he was scolding us like a child. Of course, I'm talking about the senior classes. Truly, I think there is robust masculinity here. We had considered what the man's doing at that time when we had been in the preparation class. Then, three or four years later, I saw that our friends had acted in the same way when they were senior [21].

When a cadet started military high school, the hierarchy is one of the learned things in the beginning. The hierarchy determines relations among military staff. A prep class student firstly learns that he should obey the orders of commanders. Secondly, he comes across with a senior class and learn that there is also another hierarchical relationship between classes. Unlike other civilian schools, a senior cadet will also be commander of the lower cadets when they graduated. There was not too much beating while I was in the military schools, but the cadet may have made anything

[20] Bilge: Oturduğunda öyle herkes ile samimi olunmaz. Öyle gevşek olunmaz. Gülen, herkes ile takılan kişi değil de daha oturan dinleyen çok konuşmayan kişi olur gibi. Bu da sonuçta bizim kültürümüzde erkekliğin tanımı gibi bir şey. Erkek çok fazla gülmez, çok fazla şey yapmaz. Dedikoduyu yapan kadındır vs. Sonuçta çok konuşmayan, daha oturaklı, olgun bir insan. Bu da daha çok maskülen bir kişi oluyor sonuçta. Kendi aramızda belki böyle değildik ama dışarıya verdiğimiz imaj böyleydi gibi yani."

[21] Mutlu: Örnek verecek olursam bize mesela başımızda rütbeli olanlar bağırıyordu. Aslında adamla bir yaş fark var aramızda ama adam çocuk gibi azarlıyordu bizi. Üst sınıftan bahsediyorum. Aslında burada çok güçlü bir maskülinite olduğunu düşünüyorum. Biz mesela o dönemlerde ya adam ne yapıyor falan diye düşünüyorduk. Hazırlıkta mesela atıyorum. Sonra üç dört sene sonra, çok değil, aynı davranışları bizim arkadaşlarımızın da sergilediğini gördüm.

done to his lower classes except for beating. Moreover, senior classes might have pushed lower classes around without any excuse. Without an excuse, a senior class cadet could have done everything as a show of authority. To that extent, Pascoe and Bridges say in their book that "... dominant masculinities can reproduce other forms of inequality alongside gender inequality" (2016, 19). In that sense, this relational fact was significant for military masculinity construction in senior and lower classes because lower classes also learned how to act like them and repeated it when they became senior.

3.4 The Relations with Civilian People

The connection with civilian life through families and civilian friends consolidates the military masculinity of the cadets. Families begin to see their children as adults and show respect for their military identity. As Connell and Messerschmidt indicated in their article on hegemonic masculinities; "Socially legitimated hegemonic models of masculinity are also in play in families" (2005, 839). Furthermore, I recall my own experiences with my family and relatives while studying in military schools. They had indulged me and asked me questions about the military and military schools. Besides, they also had acted me as an adult when I was only 14. When we had gone back from furlough to the military school, we talked about other people's curiosity and care toward us.

> Ozan (25, Naval): You are a soldier man; you can carry this. You are a soldier, man. Are you cold or something? You don't get cold or anything. If the thing is to be done after that, if it is something that you have never experienced before and do not want to do it, they say that you can do it, you are the soldier man, there were such reactions. My surroundings and my family had such reactions. The discourse turned into this. It can be said still you were a soldier, are you not a soldier man or something like that. I don't mind right now, but before, I felt like a responsibility on my shoulders [22].

Implicitly, their attitudes had laid a burden on cadets to become ideal soldiers in

[22] Ozan: Asker adamsın sen bunu taşırsın. Asker adamsın sen üşüyor musun sen ya falan. Üşümez falan ondan sonra bir iş yapılacaksa daha önce hiç deneyimlemediğin yapmadığın bir şeyse ve yapmak istemiyorsa işte sen yaparsın asker adamsın falan böyle şeyler vardı. Çevremin ve ailemin böyle tepkileri vardı. Söylemler buna dönüştü. Hala bile olum sen asker adam değil misin asker değil miydin falan diye söylenebiliyor. Şu an aldırmıyorum ama o zamanlar omzuma yüklenen bir sorumluluk gibi hissediyordum.

the sight of their families and relatives. Concordantly, feeling responsible pushed themselves to act ideally as to what their family had expected from an ideal military person. Thus, becoming an ideal military person necessitated becoming masculine subjects militaristically in this context.

On the other hand, civilian friends were also another significant component to create outsiders. As İlter mentioned, the cadets were not like a student in Üsküdar High School. Considering this statement, military schools encouraged the cadets to focus on not resembling their civilian friends.

> Murat (25, Land): While studying in the military, the number of my civilian boyfriends had decreased considerably. They considered me as a would be military officer, muscular, built. Hair, beard, standard things. Someone who speaks, with more knowledge than them. Because I felt how they perceived me, I could not be as sincere around my civilian friends as I was before I had gone to the military. When we met with my friends, I became like the leader of a team. They were asking me things like "What are we going to do, Murat [23]?

> Sinan (24, Land): Indeed, I wouldn't say I like this kind of thing; you are muscular or have v type body. I had wide shoulders and six-packs when I was in military school. I'm not too fond of showing off to other people, but I would have liked to crush them down with my appearance[24]

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Murat and Sinan's narratives regarding their relations with their civilian friends demonstrates how they constructed with their masculine military identities in the civilian settings. In their encounters, either they take the leading role of a friend group like a "commander" or make a show of their "qualities" to their friends. As Connell and Messerschmidt argue, "the concept of hegemonic masculinity presumes the subordination of nonhegemonic masculinities..." (2005, 846). Power relations play out between different masculinities. Military masculinity subordinates other masculinities in the encounter. Having a relationship with nonmilitary friends was a matter of hierarchy because the cadet may superimpose their masculinity on civilian

[23] Murat: Askeriyede olduğum sürede sivil erkek arkadaş sayım baya azalmıştı. Eskisi kadar değildi. Onlar beni subay olacak bu, kas var vücut var. Saç sakal hepsi standart. Konuşuyor, bizden bilgili konuşuyor. Onların o kafada gördüklerini hissettiğim için askeriyeye gitmeden önceki gibi samimi olamıyordum sivildeki arkadaşlarımla. Olan arkadaşlarımla da buluştuğumuz zaman ekibin lideri gibi oldum. Ne yapacağız Murat diye bana soruyorlardı.

[24] Sinan: Aslında normal hayatta hiç hoşuma gitmezdi böyle bir şey, sen daha kaslısın, sen daha üçgen vücutsun falan. Benim omuzlarım çok genişti, baklavalarım falan vardı o zaman. O zaman da başka insanlara karşı hoşuma gitmezdi ama onlara karşı, onları dış görünüşümle ezmek cidden hoşuma gidiyordu.

peers who were considered to have less manly qualities when compared to what the cadets internalized in the military schools. This point is interesting because when a conscript joined the army to complete his military service, military and civilian parties encounter, similar to my participants and their civilian friends encounter, and this time the military attempts to shape the conscript's masculinity in accordance with militarist perspective.

At this point, looking at civilian peers' traits in the context of masculinities may also help to understand what military masculinity is not. Sinan told me that he had seen his friends as frail, tatty, and beta males. To that extent, military masculinities were not related to these characteristics in the eyes of former cadets. As Murat signified, most cadets sever their connections with civilian friends and consolidate their friendship in their 'authentic world.' The authentic world was the expression that Murat had used to refer military school.

3.5 Institutional Discrepancies of Military Masculinity

The constituent parts of military masculinity in military schools engulf different parameters: commanders, senior-junior class relations, class friends, family, and civilian friends. In the construction of military masculinity, institutional differences have a powerful impact on how the cadets comprehend military masculinity. In their relations, land forces are considered more masculine than other forces by the army staff. My respondents expressed this point regardless of their army forces. In this regard, air forces are thought as the secondly masculine military force, and the navy forces are seen least masculine within the inner dynamic of the Turkish Armed Forces.

Land forces dominate the understanding of the military because it has more staff and sphere of influence in Turkey. This also impacts the understanding of masculinities among forces. Although there is no written rule about this, all Chief of general staffs (*Genelkurmay Başkanı*) emanated from land forces as a precedent. So, the land forces set a standard for ideal masculinity and gradate other forces under their place in this hierarchy.

When I pondered the relationship among forces, I wondered how air and naval forces former cadets perceived their masculinity in comparison of the land forces. When I was in the military schools as a land forces cadet, I knew that naval schools were regarded as the most feminine and their cadets were nicknamed as *yenge* (aunt-in-law)

or *gelin* (bride). The word *Gelin* which means bride was used since they wear white uniforms and wearing white was considered quite feminine in the military context when compared to land and air forces which had green and blue uniforms respectively. Also, there were some discourses that are expressed by our commanders when I was in the military schools. These discourses degrade air and naval forces' military practices. "*Havadan sudan asker olmaz*" (Air and water do not make you soldier) was a dominant discourse that highlight ideal military doctrine and standardized how a military staff should be in the eyes of land forces. In the army, Hinojosa argues, "...men use the symbolic resources of the military to create masculine hierarchies in which they situate themselves as more morally oriented, self-disciplined, physically able, emotionally controlled, martially skilled, or intelligent than non-military personal (i.e., civilians), members of different branches (i.e., Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force)" (2010, 182). Yet, air and naval forces' former cadets were also practicing similar experiences as I indicated above and thought their masculinity was the product of the military environment in their schools. Nonetheless, they mentioned some institutional practices different from the other forces and placed their masculinity under land forces' cadets in general.

> Ege (25, Naval): Landsmen are more masculine, secondly airman and lastly sailors. I regard landsmen as unkind. They are so unfriendly and not cavalier to women either since the landsmen live in a place where is also harsh. It necessitates being tougher. While even eating, we abided by table manners. Actually, it means we can eat with the queen one day because the naval has the nobility. They expected us to behave in that way like a saloon officer does [25].

Ege's words demonstrate how a naval cadet is raised distinctly from a land forces' cadet, and he points out getting tough with other people, he says even "women" unmingle land forces from the naval forces. When I asked him how a saloon officer should be, he described him as someone who knows how to act towards women, dance, and adopting the protocol. According to Ege, the naval officers are more mannered since they do not get into armed combat ct as land forces and partially air forces; to that extent, their soft skills are promoted in the military context. In the context of land forces, this conduct was not usually associated with a person's masculine identity. Dancing or acting naive was considered feminine qualifications.

[25] Ege: Karacılar daha maskülen, sonra havacılar, sonra denizciler. Ben karacıları biraz daha şey görüyorum. Çok katı yani. Kadınlara karşı da kibar davranamayacak kadar katı. Çünkü yaşadıkları ortam, bulundukları ortam bu şekilde. Daha sert olmayı getiriyor. Bizde yemek yerken bile riyaset kurallarına uyuyorduk. Hani siz ileride kraliçe ile yemek yiyebilecek şeydesiniz. Çünkü bir soyluluk vardı aslında. Siz kraliçe ile yemek yiyecek günler göreceksiniz. O şekilde davranın. Salon subayının yapması gerekeni yapın.

However, existing scholarship on military and masculinity does account of such heterogeneity and the hierarchical relationships within military masculinities in the army. The military is considered as a monolithic institution from the outside. However, the military also contains discrepancies and differences in itself and in defining ideal masculinities.

> Adem (24, Air): I mean, they wear white, have geek -chic, are always clean, very kind and naive. For example, there was no sailor who does not know salsa or bachata. Do I make myself clear? They absolutely create this impression around their environment. It is so feminine. That is to say; an airman should be both like a landman and and a sailor. We also learned dancing, they taught us dancing, but we also boors in among men. For instance, landsmen are completely boorish [26].

Adem also rendered having a boorish spirit as associated with masculinity and being nice, clean, and sensitive with femininity. His locating of masculinity for air cadets is between this spectrum of navy and land forces. Air cadets are not masculine as much as land cadets but not feminine like naval cadets as well. Therefore, military masculinity appears to the understandings and needs of the forces in different definitions, and it is ordered according to their toughness and softness in the military. As seen, the cadets also indigenize the norms that they had learned in the military schools and accept this hierarchal relationship. This hierarchical relationship is constituted in terms of a binary thinking of femininity and masculinity. The military is not monolithic but binary is intrinstic to the construction of the hierarchical relationship. To that extent, the military maintains the gender binary and promotes masculinity.

3.6 Changing Military Masculinity

After the coup attempt in 2016, most people's lives were changed on different scales. These changes do not occur only on a macro level but also on a micro-level. On a macro scale, Turkey's social, economic, and political situations were redefined, and they changed. Within this context, hundreds of thousands of people faced

[26] Adem: Ya beyaz olması, hareketlerindeki entellik, her zaman temizlerdir hani böyle, bazı konularda çok naiflerdir çok kibarlardır. Mesela denizci olup salsa, bachata bilmeyen yoktur. Anlatabiliyor muyum? Mutlaka etraflarında böyle bir izlenim uyandırırlar. Bu da fazla feminen, yani bir havacı hem karacı hem denizci gibi olmalı. Biz dansta öğreniyorduk, dans da öğretiyorlardı ama aynı zamanda erkeklerin olduğu yerde maganda ruhumuz da vardı. Mesela karacılar tamamen maganda ruhuna sahip.

uncommon changes in their lives. One of these people groups was former cadets because all military schools were closed down. The number of all students was 12.794 when the schools shut down. Thereafter, 8973 of them have continued their education in civil universities and high schools with a regulation that determines how the former cadets would carry on their education [27]. Former cadets relocated to different universities in Turkey; mostly in İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir. Relocations were conducted in terms of success ratings of former cadets in military schools and every university in Turkey determined quota for the cadets' preference. As a subject of this turbulent term, I found myself in an insecure environment after this sudden change. I was 21 years old. I was keeping on saying that I am not a soldier anymore, then I should adapt to the civilian world and get used to my new life. Clearly, accepting the reality of the new world causes various changes on a personal level, and masculinity performance and perception became subject of these changes for former cadets. As Connell indicated "...masculinities are not simply different but also subject to change" (2005, 835). The change had occurred in military schools, and it created heterogenous and different masculinities. However, the change in civilian life is sharper than that in the military. Most of us were no longer the men in the sense that military schools indoctrinated us. We altered our styles, the way we dressed, our relations, perceptions, and feelings masculinities were changing. I aim to ascertain the alteration of former cadets' masculinity performances and perceptions after the military schools during my interviews.

Wearing clean and less colorful clothes, not using accessories except a wristwatch, having a standard haircut (officer shave; *subay tıraşı*) and shaved beard were fundamental necessities of a cadet's appearance. Straying from these points may have been considered as lack of discipline and those who did were warned and even punished by the class officers. For instance, before going out on the weekends, the officers controlled all cadets' appearance, and one was not permitted to go out if he was deemed inappropriate according to determined standards. Moreover, wearing colorful clothes, having long hair, using accessories such as earrings were regarded as feminine attributes for men in the military. Some former cadets did not consider long hair as an association with femininity when they were in the military. Yet, they could not have long hair because of the military dress code.

> Mehmet (25, Land): For instance, I wouldn't have worn a pink t-shirt. So, there was a place whose appearance was significant therein. Well, I wore shirt and canvas pants, but now I literally try to wear colorful and

[27] ee "12 bin 794 Askeri Öğrenci Ne Yapsın" Oya Armutçu July 24, 2017 accessed 15 June, 2021. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/oya-armutcu/12-bin-794-askeri-ogrenci-ne-yapsin-40528894

style.

Y: How would it be reacted if you had worn in the military school? What would they think?

M: It becomes a problem if we don't wear an undershirt. In the assembly area, they controlled our undershirts. Even they mouthed off at us if we wear cater -cornered back undershirt how you can wear what you want [28].

Bartu (25, Land): Back then I believed that some things had a gender. For instance, long hair and earrings. For instance, I considered having long hair as unfitting. I mean, it was something I associated with femininity. So, I questioned why someone would grow long hair. When you are in civilian life, you begin to think having long hair is quite normal and stylish [29].

In a civilian setting, Mehmet wears colorful clothes and finds them stylish. None of my participants did not mention a sudden change. The change they have experience was experienced as a process. It is a kind of interrogation of what the military imposed until they left school. Military order controlled what the cadet would wear and restricted the definition of suitable clothes and appearance in and out of the schools. Robinson and Hockeyy state that, in the section of body and masculinity of their books, "the body as an unstable and threatened site can, indeed, become an opportunity for men to confirm and reconfirm masculine power in both public and private spheres" (2011, 85). The military standardized the bodies of cadets and confirmed the appropriate masculine identities by exerting power.

Besides, military masculinity does not tolerate wearing colorful clothes because they are deemed to connote femininity. However, after the military schools, there is no pressure on how a cadet should look like. Mehmet also started to use waxing his leg hairs and growing his hair, although he had previously thought that these were feminine attributes for a man. He does not relate them with femininity anymore, is now well-groomed and says that he feels better when he takes good care of himself. Today, my participants do not conceive dressing colorfully, growing their hair long,

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[28] Mehmet: Mesela pembe tişört falan giymezdim. Orada şekle çok önem verilen bir ortamdı çünkü. Ne bileyim çok gömlek, kanvas pantolon falan ama sonrasında şimdi harbi daha renkli, tarz giyinmeye çalışıyorum.
Y: peki askeri okulda renkli giyinsen nasıl karşılanırdı? Ne düşünülürdü?
M: Bizim içimize atlet giymememiz bile sıkıntıydı. İçtima sahasında atlet giyip giymeme kontrolü yaptılar. Hatta böyle çapraz atlet giydiğinde ona bile laf atan olmuştu. Öyle bir ortamda nasıl giyinebilirsin

[29] Bartu: O zaman cinsiyeti olduğunu düşünüyordum bazı şeylerin, Küpe ve uzun saç için düşünüyordum. Mesela uzun saç bırakmak yakışmıyor gibi geliyordu. Yani daha feminenlikle ilişkilendirdiğim bir şeydi askeri okuldayken. Bir insan niye uzun saç bıraksın ki diye düşünüyordum. Sivildeyken bunun gayet normal ve tarz olabilecek bir şey olduğunu düşünmeye başlıyorsun

body waxing, putting on earrings as feminine attributes. However, they consider these practices and wearing could be associated with femininity in the military schools.

There is no one type and sudden change. Concerning appearance, all of the participants changed the way they look to some extent. However, some of them did it by wearing more colorful clothes; some by growing their hair long or putting on earrings; or by waxing their body hair. Although some made limited changes in their appearance such as wearing colorful clothes; they do not think consider other bodily changes as feminine anymore, different from when they were in the military schools. Also, there is no sudden change. It is processual and occurred in time. When their university lives started, most of them became more aware that there is not a single standard and appropriate form of being a man. Tarık talked about the change in his appearance after he started civilian university.

> Tarık (25, Naval): I was self-limiting myself not to do some things. I presumed it is unmanliness for a real man. For instance, dusty rose color or yellow, I mean light colors. So, I wear the clothes that I normally said I wouldn't wear to get over myself. Accordingly, I changed myself at that point. I have a yellow shirt, and I wear it sometimes. I don't take so much pleasure in wearing it, but I do it to clean off the spider webs in my mind and overcome certain things. It is nice to have this opportunity. I didn't do this as much when in military school. I try to excel in other things but not dress like this. Generally, I dressed more dark, chose more masculine garments. I don't restrict myself anymore. This kind of change occurred [30].

Tarık discerns that his attitude to wear dark colors is a self-limiting act and wants to change his dressing habits. As he claimed, he may not take pleasure wearing colorful dressing, but he considers that it makes no sense to prevent himself from wearing colorful clothes. Tarık said that he started to change in the first year of university after he considered his attitudes about colorful clothes. Tarık also mentioned his "I would have never done list," which consists of the things he had never done in the military, and he said he changed some habits concerning his masculinity. The changes in the way he dressed is one thing he thought he would never do in the

[30] Tarık: Kendimde bir şeyleri yapmam etmem diye kendimi çok kısıtlıyordum. Erkek adama yakışmaz vs. diye. Örneğin mesela gül kurusu gömlek veya sarı, hani biraz daha açık renkler. Normalde giymem dediğim şeyi sırf kendimde bu şeyi aşmak için giyiyorum, arkadaşlar da yakıştığını söylüyorlar. O konuda bir değiştirdim kendimi. Sarı bir gömlek var, arada giyiyorum. Çok keyif aldığımdan vs. değil ama kendimde bazı şeyleri aşma, kafamdaki örümcek ağlarını temizlemek için yaptığım bir şey. Güzel oluyor o anlamda böyle bir fırsatın olması. Askeri okuldayken çok yapmazdım. Aşma şeyini başka konularda yapardım ama bu tarz kıyafetler giymezdim. Genelde daha koyu, daha maskülen kıyafetler giyerdim. Şimdi o konuda kendimi kısıtlamıyorum. Öyle bir değişim oldu

military school. All my participants changed their appearances somehow after they cut loose from the military schools. They began dressing more colorfully, as one participant put it more "elegant and classy", putting on earrings, growing hair, and shaving body hair, although these attributes connoted femininity while in military schools. To that extent, they changed their perceptions about the social meanings of becoming man in time, after they started their education in civilian universities.

While trying to understand my participant's masculinity perceptions; I asked them that what they thought about their masculinity performances and manhood today. Murat, Can, and İlter especially approached masculinity as something that they do not mostly associate with their social identities. That is to say; they attribute their other humanly characteristics as part of their identities rather than being a man. They are clearly aware that gender role has a tremendous influence in their social worlds, but they are inclined to reduce their effect on their personal lives.

> Sinan (24, Land): I mean, I don't see myself as a man anymore, I see myself more as a human. I don't label myself like I am a man like this or that or that I am the chief of seven villages (a local saying in Turkish; *yedi köyün ağasıyım*) For instance, I am a heterosexual man, and I have a girlfriend; I don't see myself as the man of the relationship but rather a component of it [31].

Sinan's words clarify how he wandered away from the militarist understanding of being a man. When in the military, certain hierarchies designate the relations in military and civilian life. Being a man was promoted as a superior virtue and the cadets considered their masculine identities would have served a 'very important purpose' when they graduated. When they went out to civilian life; they started to regard being a man as only one element of what constitutes their identities. Sinan told me that, with the courses he took in the university, he could understand that traditional gender roles were also constructed in the society. His change was also closely related to his university education since he had read and pondered on different topics. Faruk (25, Land), Bilge (23, Land), Mutlu (26, Land) and Hamza (25, Land) also mentioned the courses they took in the university as expanding their perspectives and approaches on masculinity. Thus, civil university education was another vital point for the change of former cadets since they could read and

[31] Sinan: Yani kendimi artık erkek değil de insan olarak görüyorum ya. Kendimi etiketlemiyorum ben şu erkeğim, bu erkeğim diye. Şuranın erkeğiyim, yedi köyün ağasıyım. Ne bileyim öyle görmüyorum. Kendimi birey olarak görüyorum. Şu anda mesela kız arkadaşım var. Onunla ilişkimde bile. Heteroseksüel bir erkeğim. Onunla ilişkim de kendimi ilişkinin erkeği olarak görmüyorum. İlişkinin bir bileşeni olarak görüyorum.

consider on gender related issues. To that extent, they could think more critically on their masculinities and challenge traditional gender roles. However, from some of my participants' expression, I understood that some think their manhood in the frame of traditional gender roles. For instance, when I asked Adem what kind of women he likes, he told me some his girlfriend should be well-settled (*oturaklı*), and docile (*uysal*) and ladied (*hanım hanımcık*). Also, she should get permission from him if she goes out late etc.; that she should be controllable. Tarık also emphasized being an appropriate man and woman in terms of tradition and custom. Thus, it clearly demonstrates that the former cadet's do not experience the same changes regarding masculinity and perception of gender roles. There are discrepancies in their understandings of masculinity.

Most of my participants mentioned the expectations and envisagement of their families and environment regarding their military identity. Their families were also aware of that their sons would not be military officers. Buğra said that his parents were nannyish (*aşırı korumacı*) and fell all over him when he was in military schools. After military school, his parent's attitudes changed, and they became more comfortable in the relationship with him. It can be related to Buğra's age (14-21), but he also considers studying at the military school also impacted his parent's behavior to him. As Ozan indicated, some relatives still mention his military background in their interactions. However, he also said they do not show him respect as much as they did before.

Since they had become military officers, they should have been skillful, astute, profound, and intense and manifested these specifications explicitly. Becoming a soldier is sacrosanct merit, and it aggrandizes masculinity pursuant to military understanding. Their environments also expected from them to demonstrate these characteristics. After the military schools, the pressure they had felt diminished because they are not soldiers anymore, and former cadets don't have to behave in the way the military school's components (e.g., class commanders, rules) have expected. Some of my participants told me they discerned that they were exaggerating their masculine identities and considering themselves as persona grata when compared to civilian men. Caner expressed that the cadets exaggerated their value as human being and considered their community as sublime. However, they are aware of military schools were enchantment for their masculinity construction and gave rise to the thought their glorified masculinities were somehow illusion in the military. Although they did not ponder their masculinities after the military schools deliberately, most of my participants were conscious of their new social world was not tantamount to military life. Hence, they do not have to force themselves to appear, think, and live in one true perspicacity of the military. The civilian surrounding and new social relations

smooth the way to grasp there is not singularity about anything as the military attempted to engrain in. In this chapter, firstly, I scrutinized the elements in the construction of military masculinities in military schools. To that extent, I analyzed how the relationships were established with class commanders, senior-junior classes, class friends as internal factors and families, civilian people, and friends as external factors. In the construction of military masculinity, former cadets not only wanted to distinguish themselves from their military identity but also demonstrate it to other people in their relations. Furthermore, there are institutional discrepancies of the military masculinities in accordance with the army forces. In existing scholarship, the military is considered a uniform and homogenous place, but my participants' accounts show that it has its differences and discrepancies in terms of the construction of their masculinities. The heterogeneity of the military is seen in the hierarchical relation between the army branches in terms of masculinities in TAF.

Subsequently, I focused on the changing patterns of masculinities by focusing on my participants' change in appearance, perceptions about their masculinity, and their relationship with civilian people. Most of my participants changed their appearances. However, these changes were not linear or sudden. In their civil university lives, they encountered different views, had chance to read inspiring texts in their university courses and questioned their masculinities. On the other hand, some think more traditionally regarding gender relations although they changed their clothes and appearance somehow. This chapter aimed to show how military masculinities are constructed in military schools. Different from previous studies, there is heterogenous understanding of military masculinities in TAF and all of them conceived appropriate masculinities in the branches. Also, I aimed to elicit possible changes of former cadets' masculinities and see that the hegemonic understanding of military masculinities mostly disappears in civilian life in the case of former cadets. However, the literature focuses on the pervasion of military masculinity understanding after compulsory military service. I consider, this change also related sociopolitical position of the military today. My participants and field did not correspond changing position of the military in macro level, but it is my contention. Again, there are also different scales of masculinity changes, and it is not heterogenous as military masculinities after military education.

4. FORMER CADETS AND WOMEN

This chapter examines the relationship the cadets had with women in and out of the military schools to shed light onto their perceptions of gender roles and views about women and femininity. Focusing on the relationship with womanhood and femininity is significant since the masculinity constructions is also embodied by the impact of women. Also, the chapter sheds light onto male cadets' perception of women cadets in the military. Different from the military academies, military high schools had always been same-sex schools, open only to men, which affects how high school cadets perceive and get in contact with women. When a boy attended military school, he was expected to be aware that he would study only with boys for five years. It means their masculinity construction would occur in a homosocial environment. Bird defines homosocial environments as "situations in which there are clear distinctions between men and women through segregation and where there is no expectation of sexual attraction to those of the same sex" (Bird 1996, 121). While perpetuating and performing masculinity hegemonically in the segregated settings of military schools, military high school cadets also attempt to know women as to structural order of the military.

In this chapter, I aim to demonstrate how the military shapes the cadets' perceptions of womanhood and their relationships with women in military schools while constructing military masculinity. Also, I concentrate on female cadets' position in the military schools within the relation of male counterparts. Moreover, I delve into how femininity and womanhood were denigrated by male cadets. Then, I examine the changing dimensions of the relations with women for the former cadets after the military schools. Their approaches and attitudes changed while reconstructing their social relations in the civil settings.

4.1 Women and Military High Schools and Military Academies

In the military academies, military high school graduate cadets encounter female cadets and position them differently than other women in the military context. Most male cadets did not think well about their female peers and felt uncomfortable by their existence in the military schools. Besides, male cadets did not regard them as feminine and beautiful enough to be women. Az also highlights this point in her thesis on naval cadets and says "... the common perception that almost all the female cadets are "ugly" in the naval academy" (2014, 100).

While I was studying at the Turkish Military Academy, there were more than 850 male cadets and nine female cadets in our cohort, and female cadets had football player nicknames which were given by male cadets. They were given football players nicknames to humiliate their femininity and create a perception that they were ugly and unattractive. Since they studied in the military academies; they were seen more masculine, and they were thought tatty; it made them less feminine. Rogers ((2006)) points to the binary opposition of genders in her thesis on construction of masculinity in homosocial environment; "cultural scripts endorse gender roles by prescribing that women and men express different motives and behaviors within relationships. These behaviors have been cultivated and refined over time, and though they have been temporal, they still exist within a binary opposition of "masculine" and "feminine"" (83). Concordantly, whilst military and becoming soldier attribute masculine and manly motives and behaviors, becoming a female cadet in the military academies may constitute a contradictory situation for the male cadets since they could not imagine womanhood and military together in their male-dominated environment. Also, the existence of female cadets challenges the binary opposition in the eyes of male cadet.

On the other side, after they left the military schools, former cadets' perceptions and relations with women changed. In the military schools, most of my participants surmise they could not become friends with civilian women. The motivation to talk to a woman might be having a sexual or romantic relationship with her. However, most of them currently believe a man and woman can be close friends and share everything without needing any romantic relationship. Inclusive masculinity theory also highlights the nonsexual relations among men and women. Anderson explains that men constitute social bond with women in a nonsexual way and their social attitudes toward women change in terms of gender equality (2010).

Moreover, their romantic relationships also have changed. Previously, former cadets

expected a woman to be submissive and docile in a relationship and to act accordingly to traditional gender roles. In return, a man was expected to behave as a protector and red-blooded (*güçlü kuvvetli*) man in the relationship. Yet, most of them changed their perception about their girlfriend and relationship with them.

A cadet in the military high school may attribute to women different meanings and qualities than other male groups. In the homosocial environment of the military high schools, women were desired subjects or sexual objects for most cadets. When I asked my participants how they had positioned women in their lives while studying at military high schools, the common answer was that they had imagined women as different species than men. Therefore, they have some fears, confusion, and idealization regarding the woman.

> Sinan (Land, 24): Women were not unreachable people but hard to reach ones. They were people who were hard to talk to, became friends or lovers. So, when I contacted them, I got excited while talking. Actually, I saw them differently since I studied in military school [1].
>
> Mehmet (25, Land): Well, they were so different. I conceived women unreachable. Having a relationship with a woman, talking to her, becoming a friend, etc., sounded quite hard. I see that it is not like that [2].

Similar to Mehmet and Sinan, most of my participants felt anxious even when they had imagined a confrontation with women. In the military schools, they learned how to become a 'real man' but not knew anything about women, and it caused anxiety. Some also associated their woman imagine in accordance with novel characters and idealized women as they had read in the books. Buğra and Bartu expressed that:

> Buğra (25, Land): I may have taken the novels as a reference when I perceived women. I may refer to the scheme of the novels since I had not so many relationships or contact with women until recent times. However, it does not mean I had always thought in this way, but I believe it impacts how I perceived women. The novels I had read may teach me

[1] Sinan: Kadınlar o zamanlar benim için ulaşılamaz değil de ulaşması zor kişilerdi. Konuşması, arkadaş olması, sevgili olması zor kişilerdi. Böyle ulaştığımda heyecan yaptığım, konuşurken heyecanlandığım insanlardı. Onları bir farklı görürdüm aslında askeri okulda okuduğum için.

[2] Mehmet: Ya çok farklı insanlar. Ulaşılamaz gibi düşünüyordum. Bir kadınla birlikte olması, onunla konuşması, arkadaş olması falan çok zor gibi geliyordu orada. Şu an görüyorum ki öyle değilmiş.

the perception of women like that [3].

Bartu (25, Land): I considered women the ones who can have love because we see like that from the books, and we were also children. Age had an impact as well. Yet, I do not consider it like that now [4].

The cadets learn how to be a real man hegemonically, and, in that time, they also construct how a woman should be in their minds. Jeff Hearn also focuses on hegemonic masculinity and power relations in his article and says that "...the relationship between 'men's formation within a hegemonic gender order, that also forms 'women'..." (2004, 61). In the cadets' perceptions, women were idealized as fragile, charming, wife-to-be subjects. Since they learn these attributed roles and characteristics from the books, and while forming their hegemonic masculine understanding, they put women up against their manhood with totally opposite qualifications. From a different viewpoint, although most of my participants see themselves as more masculine than civil peers, Faruk considered the cadets more feminine due to the fact that they have limited interaction with women and learn very few things about them in the military schools.

Faruk (25, Land): We did not see so many women in the military. Therefore, we could not learn how to chat with them. Because we went to the military when we were 13 and did not know how to communicate. Therefore, I consider that people outside of the military are more masculine than us since they knew how to talk superiorly and create higher positionality than women. However, what I saw from my environment, I try to become kinder towards women. I worry about not hurting her or how I can make her feel better. To that extent, I see we are more feminine when considered to other civil people [5].

Faruk's statement also emphasizes a vital point about masculinity which points out that women should be there to exhibit manly attributes and establish superiority

[3] Buğra: Böyle kadınları vs. bakarken, belki de romanları referans alıyor olabilirim. Oradaki işleyişleri referans alıyor olabilirim, çünkü çok fazla şeyim olmadı şimdiye kadar. Kadınlarla içli dışlı hiçbir zaman olmadım yani. Ama bu tabi ki hep böyle düşünüyor olduğumdan değil ama bunun etkisi olduğunu düşünüyorum yani. Okuduğum romanlardan öğrenmiş olmam belki.

[4] Bartu: Askeri lisedeyken kadınları böyle aşk yaşamak için var olan kişiler olarak görüyordum. Çünkü kitaplardan görüp okuduğumuz, biraz daha çocuksun da. Yaşın da etkisi var. Ama şu an öyle değil mesela.

[5] Faruk: Biz askeriyede çok fazla kadın görmedik, kadınla muhabbet nasıl edilir öğrenemedik. Çünkü on üç yaşımızda gittik, bilmiyorduk nasıl iletişim kurulur falan. O yüzden ben dışarıdakileri toplumun maskülenliği olarak baktığım zaman dışarıdakileri daha maskülen görüyorum. Çünkü kadına karşı nasıl konuşacaklarını ve üstün olacaklarını biliyorlar ama bizimkilerde gördüğüm benim ve bende de gördüğüm, her zaman kadına karşı bir daha kibar olmaya çalışıyorum. Kırılmasın, etmesin, daha iyi nasıl olurum. O yüzden bizim tarafımızı ben daha feminen görüyorum.

over women. To that extent, Faruk's point denotes that masculinity is relational to women's existence. Also, his statement demonstrates that the perception of masculinity is not uniform among former cadets. The existence of women empowers masculine identity of men. However, according to Faruk, in the homosocial environment of military high schools, the absence of women is thought of as feminine side for the cadets compared with civil peers. With this absence, the cadets did not learn how to superiorly communicate and interact with women. Therefore, they were more prone to act kindly toward women. On the contrary, other participants said that they wanted to control and acted as to traditional gender roles in their relationship. Even İlter told me that he could not proceed healthy relationship with girls since he was so repressive and controller in his relationships. However, Faruk's approach manifests that military masculinity constructed in a homosocial environment with limited interaction with women.

Structural compositions of the military schools also might have made relations difficult with women. In the land and air forces' schools, the class commanders mostly did not want the cadets to have a relationship with women and warned them not to have girlfriends constantly. On the other hand, in the naval schools, class commanders did not intervene in the cadet's relationship with girls directly, and they had more tolerance to romantic relationships than class commanders in other schools. The reason of this structural discrepancies is related to the construction of homosexuality perception in military schools. The naval forces feel more pressure regarding homosexuality because there was news on homosexuality in naval school in 2010. The details of this controversy will be discussed in the following chapter, but it can be a reason for naval commanders' more tolerant behavior towards romantic relationships. On the other hand, having a girlfriend and continuing the relationship in military schools were also a challenging process for most of the cadets in land and air forces.

Mutlu's class commander's interference throws the mentality regarding girlfriends into strong belief. Class commanders did not want the cadets to have girlfriends because they thought these girls might have deceived them and blackmailed them into obtaining information about the military and military schools. This blackmailing could be recording the sexual intercourse of the cadets with women. It was named '*Bal Tuzağı*' (Honey Trap) in the security intelligence jargon and used among military cadets. It was called *bal tuzağı* because metaphorically, honey signified sexual intercourse, and the trap was being recorded during the relationship [6].

[6]There is news about the honey trap on the Internet. To exemplify the point, I share a news piece about the honey trap. See "NATO, askerlerine bal tuzağı kurdu: Tinder'da konuştukları sahte kişilerle konuşmaya gittiler." Sputniknews, October 5, 2019, accessed May 14, 2021 https://tr.sputniknews.com/avrupa/201910051040327258-nato-askerlerine-bal-tuzagi-kurdu-

> Mutlu (26, Land): The commander showed me her Facebook profile. He asked me if I know her. By the way, I was academically pretty successful at that time. I was a favorite cadet. Probably he turned the screws on me because of my success. If you were successful, you were followed more comprehensively by the commanders. I said yes when he asked me if I knew her. I did not deny it. He wondered who she is. He wanted to hear from me. When I told, he asked me if I knew who she really was, what she was doing. He did not say she was a terrorist (being terrorist means association with illegal organization in military school context), but he said that she was not appropriate for me, she was like that, etc. Thereafter, I had to break up with her when I was in the military Academy orientation camp. I maintained the relationship secretly long time. Then, she left me [7].

Mutlu mentioned that her girlfriend was a member of Communist Party of Turkey and that is the reason why the commander evaluated his relationship as inappropriate. Nonetheless commanders did not want the cadets to have girlfriends even though they did not know anything about the girls in the land and air forces. The class commanders considered the girlfriends as potential debauchers who is going to blackmail cadets.

> Adem (24, Air): "By saying that either you would become a leader cadet[8] or continue your relationship, my class commander threatened me. To become a cadet leader , I lied that I broke up with my girlfriend to my commanders. One day, one of the commanders came and said that there were huris[9] (girls) outside, verbalized as huri, and these huris may had sex with us and shot a video and blackmailed us. You see, we were looking and considering girls as if they would have sex and record us on video [10].

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tinderda-konustuklari-sahte-kisilerle-bulusmaya-gittiler/

[7] Mutlu: Kızın Facebook profilini gösterdi. İşte bu kim tanıyor musun? Bu arada şöyle, o dönemde akademik olarak baya iyiydim. Gözde olan bir öğrenciydim. Muhtemelen bu kadar baskıda bulunmasının nedenlerinden biri de bu olabilir. Yani başarılı olunca daha çok takip ediliyorsun komutanlar tarafından. Evet dedim tanıyor musun deyince. İnkâr etmedim. Kim falan dedi. Benden duymak istedi. Söyleyince, kızın kim olduğunu biliyor musun, ne yaptığını biliyor musun? Kız işte terörist demedi de bu senin için uygun değil, bu şöyle, bu böyle. Sonra harp okulunun intibak kampında kızla ayrılmak zorunda kaldım. İlişkiyi uzun süre gizli şekilde devam ettirdim. Kız ayrıldı benden.

[8] Cadet leadership is a responsibility which the commanders gave to hardworking and disciplined cadets in military schools. The cadet leader might have had responsibility in his class and junior ones if he was in the top class of the military school.

[9] Huri does not only mean women and girls, but it refers to girls in the military school context.

[10] Adem: "Ya lider olacaksın ya da kız arkadaşın diye tehdit etmişti beni. Kızdan ayrıldım diye yalan söylemiştim komutanlara, sonra lider olabilmek için. Bir gün bir tanesi gelmiş şey diyor. Dışarıda huriler var, huri diye anlatıyor, işte sizinle beraber olur, videolarınızı çeker, şantaj yapar falan. Yani dışarıda gördüğümüz kızlara acaba bu benimle sevişip videoya çekmek için mi bana bakıyor diye düşünüyorduk."

The discourse of the "honey trap" can be something developed after 2010s since Birand mentions cadets' romantic and even sexual relationships in the military schools (1986). Moreover, it is also not taken up in Az' thesis (2014). In the Ergenekon and Balyoz trails, there were some allegations about sex tapes and this process might have affected the pressure of commanders in military schools. When I started military school, I do not remember from whom, but I had learned honey trap in the junior classes of military high school. All of these explanations uncloak how the military system surrounds the relationship with women in the military schools, and it affects perceptions of the cadets regarding women. In one way, the military inculcates the cadets with misogyny and creates an illusion that all girls can be evil, imposter, and untrustable. As Colleen Burke indicated "one of the ideological manifestations of patriarchy is the imposition of rigid conceptions of gender roles. These are used to justify discrimination against women. . . " (1994, 5). In the framework of gender roles, the military creates adverse perceptions regarding women. As Adem indicated, he felt uneasy when he had talked with a girl because she may have recorded their intimacy to harm him. It is also traumatic for any cadets to start a relationship since they establish their connection on an insecure basis deriving from the discourses perpetuated by class commanders. On the other hand, some cadets keep their relations going despite structural constraints. The ones who had a relationship in the military schools regarded this understanding quite silly because it was their commander's speculation to protect them from the outside world. Hamza became more aware of this as a nonsensical consideration as well and attempted to have a relationship in his senior years in the military high school.

> Hamza (25, Land): I remember there was the expression honey trap when I was in 10th or 11th grade. It seems as if all girls in İzmir would entrap me. We couldn't think at that time and said that there was a honey trap. They would use the cadets to obtain information. That's why keeping away from the girls, etc., was repeated statements. However, I passed to the 11th and 12th grades. I finished my puberty, could use my brain more effectively, and said fuck it, that makes no sense. In this circumstance, I could manage to have a girlfriend [11].

As occurred in Hamza's case, he could overcome this incoherent understanding of the relationships with girls. Similarly, some cadets also had romantic and even sex-

[11] Hamza: Yani hatırlıyorum, lise 2 -3'e kadar bal tuzağı. Sanki bütün İzmir'deki kızlar durmuş durmuş beni tuzağa düşürecek abi. O zaman düşünemiyorduk. O zaman şey diyorduk. Abi bal tuzağa var. Askeri öğrencileri bilgi almak için kullanırlar. O yüzden kızlardan uzak durun, bunlar tekrarlanan şeylerdi. Ama artık 11'inci sınıftan 12'ye geçtim. Ergenlikten çıktım, beyin daha çok çalışmaya başladı, siktir et böyle salak şey mi olur dedim. Ben bu durumda kız arkadaşı yapabilmiştim.

ual relationships with women in the military schools, although it may have created concrete handicaps and hardships in the military school. However, in the masculine sense, having a girlfriend was also a significant parameter for being more masculine in military schools. It is the fact that having a relationship with girls is an undesired thing by the class commanders; on the contrary, having a girlfriend seems more masculine since the cadets demonstrate themselves as a man in front of the military system and their other cadet friends. "Sexual and romantic relationships with girls appeared to be closely bound up with the assertation of heterosexualized masculine competence" (Redman 2001, 190). If the commanders knew about their relationships, they would have faced enforcements with leaving their girlfriends and having more burden to force them into the military schools. To that extent, having a girlfriend is a risk-taking behavior in military schools and makes cadets more masculine.

> İlter: Since I had more girlfriends, generally I told my experiences. I had thought they respected me. They came and consulted me about their relationships. Well, I directed them and shared my opinions. I definitely considered myself superior to my friends because I could do something that most cadets couldn't, and have a girlfriend put me in a significant position [12].

İlter somehow saw himself as more masculine than other cadet friends because he had considered having a girlfriend provides him a precious place among his friends since he could do most of the cadets could not. Furthermore, he also attempted to share his experience to direct other cadets in their relations as an experienced mentor. When I was a cadet in Kuleli, some of my class friends also share their sexual experiences with women, and a group of people listened to them and asked questions about the details. When I looked at that time, this experience sharing also promoted some cadets' masculinity over others because teller was taking risks by telling and having sexual and romantic practice with women. To that extent, having a girlfriend and sexual intercourse with her can be regarded another significant component of military masculinity.

[12] İlter: Genelde ben arkadaşlarıma anlatırdım daha çok kız arkadaşım olduğu için. Bana saygı duyduklarını düşünürdüm. Bana gelip artık, ilişki meselesinde danışırlardı. İşte ben artık onlara yönlendirmelerde bulunurdum. Düşüncelerimi paylaşırdım onlarla. Tabi ki kendini bir üstün görme falan durumu vardı o zaman çünkü askeri lisede çoğu erkeğin yapmadığı şeyi yapıyordum, kız arkadaşımın olması beni önemli bir konuma sokuyordu.

4.2 Female Cadets in the Military Schools

When I joined the orientation camp in 2014 in İzmir for the Turkish Military Academy, nine female cadets were in my company (*bölük*). It was my first time seeing female cadets in military schools. It was really confusing for me since I considered military schools as a man's thing even though I had female commanders in Kuleli. Seeing female bodies with uniforms was an unlikely experience. Like most of my cadet friends, I observed newcomer female cadets and evaluated their newly established relationship with the military. Within two weeks, some of my friends began to mention them with nicknames that are the names of some football players. Although most of us learned their names after a while, we still preferred to call them by their nicknames between us as male cadets. For example, the ones who study at the military academies were called *Harbiyeli*, but we called *Harbiş* for the female cadets to feminize the word and differentiate them from male cadets. As Sheila Jeffreys says in the article on women in the military that "Men affirm one another as men through the exclusion, humiliation, and objectification of women" (2007, 19). In the military schools, as male cadets, heartrendingly, we have never treated female cadets as our counterparts and humiliated them in a way. During my interviews, all of my participants expressed their disapprobation concerning female cadets while studying at military schools. Some of them also think it was not necessary to accept women to the military schools.

> Ege (Air, 25): Indeed, I thought it was no need. I don't tell a lie. It seemed nonsense to me. Since being in the military setting and living, there were not easy. I thought the military was not a woman's scene [13].

Besides that, most of my participants told me they did not talk to them unless necessary and keep away from the female cadets. Because being seen together with a female cadet or talking to her were gossip materials in the military schools, especially in the land and air forces. No one wanted to be the subject of rumors.

> Buğra: I did not talk either, but it could be social pressure; otherwise, I

[13] Ege: Aslında ne gerek var falan diyordum açıkçası. Niye yalan söyleyeyim. Çok saçma geliyordu bana. Çünkü o ortama girmek, o ortamda yaşamak kolay şey değil. Bir kadına göre olmadığını düşünüyordum yani.

> would speak. Talking to a female cadet, seeing them as someone who was forbidden. As you know, it was forbidden to see them as women. Because of this premise, talking to them may have created an adverse perception. I mean examining why he spoke. Hence, no one even preferred to become friends [14].

Similar to Buğra's thoughts, Sinan conceived this unresolvable problematic relationship between female and male cadets was occurred because of the military system, and it suppressed the potential communication of the parties in the military academies.

> Sinan: I believe it was something that the system directed us. The military system otherized female cadets and separated them from us. Otherwise, I did not care. I remember that my friend Ahmet (pseudo named) was responsible for something, and female cadets came twice a week and were written their names to the list he had followed. Because he talked to female cadets, other cadets said, 'look, he is a philanderer, what are you doing, Ahmet, etc.' So, he was ridiculed by other cadets [15].

On a personal level, some of them would have preferred to talk to them and could have been friends, but peer pressure of the male cadets to each other prevent them from talking and fearing them being gossiped about relationships with female cadets. Being friends with female cadets seemed frightening to most since they were not considered "normal" friends. Female cadets were like foreigners in the military in that regard. Moreover, no cadet would have thought about the possibility of friendship between male and female cadets, any encounter could easily become a subject matter of rumors. Iwamoto and Smiler point at peer pressure in their article on alcohol use and say "... being a member of a peer group comes with a 'cos' given that being in a group requires the individual to conform to the values and behaviors of the peer group which may not be consistent with her/his own values" (2013, 372). Even though some male cadets wanted to be friends with female cadets, almost no one expressed their desire to have romantic relationships with female

[14] Buğra: "Ben de konuşmuyordum ama benimkisi toplumsal baskı olabilir, yoksa konuşurdum. Onlarla konuşmak zaten şeydi, onları bir şey olarak görmek yasaktı. İşte kadın olarak görmek yasaktı, yani düşünebileceğim. Böyle bir ön kabul olduğu için de onlarla herhangi bir konuşma böyle bir algıya sebebiyet verebilirdi. Hani niye konuştu ki. O yüzden arkadaş bile olmayı tercih etmiyordu kimse.

[15] Sinan: Bence bu sistemin bizi yönlendirdiği bir şeydi. Sistem fazla erkek az kadın olduğu için onları otomatik olarak ötekileştiriyordu, ayırıyordu bizden. Yoksa benim umurumda değildi bu. Yoksa ben konuşurdum da. Şunu hatırlıyorum ben. Ahmet diye bir arkadaşım bir şey sorumlusuydu, haftada iki kere kadın Harbiyeliler ona gelip isim yazdırırdı. Onunla böyle konuşulduğu için şey olurdu. Ooo Ahmet, ne yapıyorsun sen çapkın falan diye. Dalga konusu olurdu onlarla konuşmak.

cadets. They regarded female cadets as masculine, which they did not considered to be a a nice thing for a woman to be. Moreover, some of my participants stated that they found the female cadets ugly and unattractive, and thought that the military system intentionally prefers enrolling physically unappealing female candidates to the military schools. It was seen as a strategy of the military to control female-male relationships in the military schools because if a female cadet was not attractive enough, male cadets would show less interest in them. However, it is mainly related to the perception of the male cadets that was also constructed in the military schools, and most of the male cadets accepted this constructed female-male relation without interrogation.

Similarly, class commanders had restricted female-male cadet relationships in the military academies as well. Having romantic or sexual relationships between female and male cadets was a reason for expulsion from the military academies. Class commanders set strict rules and control possible interactions between female and male cadets to prevent its happening. I recall that while one of my friends had been talking about a responsibility he had to mention to a female cadet, one of his platoon commanders (*takım komutanı*) had seen him. Later, the commander called him over to his room and interrogated why he talked to her, what they had talked about. Thus, it was such a clear example for other cadets to grasp we should not have talked about anything except military responsibilities.

> Tekin (24, Air): Our relationships with female cadets were restricted redundantly by the commanders. Even when you were in military training, if you groveled near to female cadets or came side-by-side with her, you should have done your training remote from the female cadets and moved away from her. Under no circumstance could you not have physical contact. We knew the commanders watched our every move in training [16].

Interaction with female cadets has different consequences in the military academies and these consequences made hard normal friendship with female cadets. Firstly, they may have been excluded by their male friends and tagged as "jaws," which was an expression to refer to male cadets who have a relationship with female cadets. Jaws expression comes from Jaws' namesake series of Jaws, and I learned what it means when just I was a cadet in the preparation class in Kuleli. This metaphoric

[16] Tekin: Bizim onlarla ilişkimiz komutanlar tarafından acayip kısıtlanmıştı. Yani hatta şey vardı, eğitimde beraber sürünüyorsun ya veya zaten sayıları da azdı, yan yana gelirsen veya denk gelirsen uzak yapmaya çalışacaksın eğitimi, ondan uzaklaşacaksın. Hiçbir şekilde fiziksel bir temas olmayacak. Komutanların eğitim yaparken her hareketimizi izlediklerini biliyorduk.

expression means that the “jaws cadet” arranges slily female cadet as his girlfriend; makes attack like a shark to hunt his prey (female cadet). It was not seen as normal flirting and used to control as a pressure mechanism towards male cadets who want to have relationship with female cadets. cadets Secondly, they might have expelled from the military academy if a commander had construed in the wrong way the relationship between male and female cadets. To that extent, almost all male cadets did not attempt to interact with female cadets. Even they degrade them because of distinct characteristics than male cadets which are mostly related to femininity. To that extent, male cadets may have insulted female cadets since they were unreachable to communicate as well as forbidden in the military academies.

On the contrary, female cadets were also quite serious and strict in their communication with their male counterparts. They may have felt more pressure because they were fewer in number and naturally drew attention when they were in any environment in the military schools. "...while such women cross traditional gender boundaries in the military by assimilating into roles that had been reserved for men, they also preserve the clear hierarchical boundaries between femininity and masculinity that typically characterize masculinized institutions such as the military" (Rimalt 2007, 10). The military system probably changed female cadets' temperament after joining the military academy because they were being expected to become tough and reticent. They were also different from their female civil peers and not embracing the traditional gender role of womanhood in the military. They were seen as more masculine than any women out of the military.

The understanding of staying away and ugly female cadets were constructed since the beginning of military high schools. As I indicated above, I knew what "Jaws" meant in my first year in the military because our senior classes had talked about female cadets adversely, although they also had not never studied together in the military schools. When I asked my only high school graduate participants about female cadet perception, they underscored learned hearsay in the military schools.

> Ediz (23, Land): I will tell you what I heard. I think some of the female cadets may be beautiful, but the imposed idea that all of them were hairy, bearded, more masculine. It was imposed on us that they were people that you should kept away from [17].

As Burke argues in her article on military and women that “Being too assertive,

[17] Ediz: Duyduklarımı söyleyeyim, yani bence içlerinde güzelleri de vardır ama bize genelde empoze edilen killi, sakallı senden daha erkek, uzak durman gereken tipler olarak bize empoze ediliyordu.

too sexually active, or simply in a place not fit for 'nice' women can all be given as reasons why a woman 'deserved' to be assaulted" (1994, 10-11). In the military context, women are not fit for having womanly attributes, and it was internalized by rumors in the military high schools. Since most high school graduates began military academies with these prejudices, they directed their understanding of how studying with female cadets should have been in the military schools. Also, some of them were considered female cadets interfere in manly conversations with their existence in a class. The number of female cadets was not so many, and they were in some sections (*kısım*) in the military academies. The ones who did not study with female cadets were happier and contended because they did not feel obligated to restrict their behaviors. Also, some teacher commanders felt more comfortable when there were no female cadets in class as Ege indicated.

> Ege (25, Naval): One day, one of our commanders came. He asked if there were any female cadets. She raised her hand and said, 'I am. The commander said hi, etc. Then, the female cadet was taken to another class two or three weeks later. Her friend was alone in another class. She was taken to another class not to stay alone in one class. Later, the commander came and said there was a female cadet and asked where she was. We said she transferred to another class. He said, yeah, fuck it, I got relieved. Also, he told us I couldn't teach the lesson in the fucking class. I couldn't swear [18].

This structural and systematic constitution of the military does not embrace women and treat them alienated subjects. On the contrary, commanders and rules as structural components highlight female cadets are different from male ones, and male cadets take advantage of this discrepancy and benefit from it to otherize female cadets. Moreover, male cadets harbor a misbelief in the female cadets' ability to be good soldiers. Thus, they consider female cadet's dissimilarity as a weakness, and believe that female cadets have less military competence. Similarly, most female cadets join service jobs in the army after graduation as a systematic implication of the military. Burke also discussed the position of women in the military and expresses that "the exclusion of women from combat is essential to preserving the masculine identity of the military and to justifying the continued male dominant position in the social order" (1994, 13).

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[18] Ege: Bir gün bir komutanımız geldi. Sınıfta kız var mı dedi. Oradan el kaldırdı. Ben varım dedi. Merhaba falan dedi komutan. Sonra iki üç hafta ders işledik kızı başka sınıfa aldılar. Arkadaşı diğer sınıfta yalnızdı. Onu oraya aldılar yalnız kalmasın diye. Sınıfta bizim kız kalmadı. Sonra komutan geldi lan bu sınıfta kız vardı ne oldu dedi. Dedik komutanım yan sınıfa geçti. Oh be amına koyayım ya dedi. Bir rahatladım diyor. Oğlum amına koyduğumun sınıfında ders işlenmiyor diyor. Küfredemiyorum diyor.

4.3 Women and 'Civilian' Former Cadets

The fallacy that man and woman cannot be friends was a popular expression that most former cadets had embraced in the military schools. The homosocial environment of the military high schools indoctrinates that real friendship could be established only among men, especially those who are cadets. To that extent, most of the former cadets believed friendship is a male-bounded concept, and the relationship with women should be romantic or sexual. Their gender-based approach also affected their relationships with women. "Since gender is usually a background identity in such contexts, the effect of other individual differences in identities, skills, and abilities will almost always outweigh the impact of gender on these behaviors and evaluations" ((Ridgeway and Correll 2004, 519). However, when I talked to my participants, at present, most of them eradicated their constructed perception regarding women in the military schools.

> Bilge (23, Land): I conceived a man and woman cannot be close. If so, there should have been a cunning, too. I reached it. Gender roles, men, can do that but not do that, etc. I overcame these kinds of things. I consider women as only human. They are solely identified with gender. They can be friends, partners, everything. I mean, I took them out from the concepts of woman and man and saw them as different people. Their appearances only are distinct because being a woman was constructed like that socially [19].

Bilge's approach to the man and woman relationships is grounded on an egalitarian understanding. After military schools, Bilge started to university and interacted women in his social environments. He said that he entered different milieus that consist of both men and women and could have chance to know women more. Similar to Bilge's experience, most of my participants mentioned their new social settings after military schools. Different from their homosocial environment in military schools, in the universities that they joined, they could become friends with women and learned more about them. However, as my participants indicated, the change was not sudden, it was the consequence of a process.

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[19] Bilge: Bir kadın ile bir erkek çok samimi olamaz gibi düşünüyordum mesela. Varsa kesin bir hinlik vardır gibi geliyordu. Onu yıktım. Görev dağılımları, erkek şunu yapar şunu yapmaz gibi şeyleri yıktım diye düşünüyorum. Şu anda kadınlarla alakalı bir insan olduklarını düşünüyorum. Sadece cinsiyet dediğimiz şeyle tanımlanmış insan. Arkadaş olunabilir, her şey, eş olunabilir. Yani o kadın ve erkek kavramından kurtararak farklı bir insan olarak görüyorum. Sadece dış görünüşü farklı toplumsal olarak kadın olmak bu şekilde düşünüldüğü için.

Bilge does not believe men or women should do specific tasks because of their gender. He implicitly expressed all of these were socially constructed, as happened deeply in the military schools. His awareness of gender roles changes his perception and behaviors because he is more aware of how this binary thinking restricts his relationship with men and women. His perspective also expanded after taking some courses in the university. Bilge studies political science and had change to read critical articles on gender relations in some courses. According to my participants' narratives, some could understand binary thinking in terms of traditional gender roles restrict their relationship with women and they could understand by reading about these topics. Some also mentioned they had read about feminism because of his personal interest. On the other hand, as Connell stated, "...men had the same interest as women in escaping from restrictive sex roles" (2005, 1812). Like Bilge, most of my participants evaluated their current relationships from a more egalitarian perspective. Since they could understand that women are not different 'species,' their interactions also differed. They said that they do not feel uneasy and bothersome and can establish more healthy relations.

Consequently, sharing same environments in the universities eased to know women. They could understand they may be friends with women as their male friends. Also, some had chance to read about critical texts on gender roles in their courses. They started to think differently gender relations. Some told me that they also read out of personal interest. To that extent, most adopted more egalitarian understandings of gender relationship. However, none these changes happened suddenly; on the contrary almost all of them occurred in progress of time according to my respondents' accounts.

Their expectations from a girlfriend also become different than military schools. They wanted their girlfriends to be physically attractive, and the girls would be controllable as they wanted. Being controllable means, she should have given an account of herself and her behaviors. In the military schools, cadets had only weekend holidays to go outside, and they could solely have met their girlfriends on the weekends. At all other times, they could have communicated on a payphone or sneak their cell phones into the schools. In both circumstances, they had limited connection to reach their girlfriends, and as most of my friends expressed, they could not proceed with normal relationships, and as some descripted, they usually had toxic ones. The toxic relation means they wanted to control their girlfriend and directed them as they wanted. For example, they could interfere with how she dressed or where she went. However, they could not be successful because they were in school on weekdays and had limited impact on their long-distance relationships contrary to what they desired. In civil life, most of my participants' approaches to their

romantic relationships also changed

> Hamza (25, Land): Now, the concepts of logic, compassion, emotional intelligence elicit. I was so formalist when I was in military school. When I passed to the military academy, I desired to have a girlfriend with blonde hair and blue eyes. That was the pattern. I dated a girl like that for one year, but I understood it was not my thing. After the military academy, I see real life and the things I wanted to be changed—sitting and taking the same things, getting along, looking at the same side. Intelligence became more important than physical appearance, and my girlfriend is like that now [20].

Hamza's expectations from a relationship focus on more qualitative characteristics than physical ones. He understands a romantic partner is someone who also attracts with her nonphysical attributes now, but he did not think like that in the military schools. However, I think Hamza's wish is not to have the edge over her girlfriend, but he wants to be understood by his girlfriend. The reciprocal expectations do not mean a superior-subordinate relationship. It means being partners, not girlfriend or boyfriend relationship because the latter also points out gender roles in society. Wade and Donis expressed this in their article on male identity and romantic relationship as the "conformity to traditional masculine norms related negatively to relationship satisfaction for both women and men" (2007, 776). Hamza's initial approach to the romantic relationship is more related to his traditional conception of masculinity and manhood, but it did not satisfy him as he wanted. His present expectations may be associated with his current age and maturity. When he was in military school, he was in a childhood age and his expectations could be focused on more tangible characteristics. However, his changed perspective does not only relate to his age. Also, Sinan stated that:

> Sinan (24, Land): In my current relationship, I never have expectations like this: that women sulk, men make women sad, then men do something to turn things around. There are no such dynamics such as man buys flowers, gifts, etc., my girlfriend may also buy me flowers and that would make me very happy. I also say to to her, I tell her that she can buy me flowers and that it will make me happy. I mean, we do not have those

[20] Hamza: Şu an biraz daha mantık, merhamet, duygusal zekâ gibi kavramlar ortaya çıkıyor. Ben askeri lise, askeri okulda çok şekilciydim. Harp okuluna geçince şöyle bir isteğim vardı. Sarışın ve mavi gözlü kız arkadaş. Kalıp buydu. Harp okulunda böyle sarışın mavi gözlü kızla çıktım bir yıl ama benim istediğim bu değilmiş yani. Harp okulundan sonra, daha gerçek hayatı gördüm istediğim şeyler değişti. Aynı şeyleri oturup konuşabilmeyi, anlaşabilmeyi, aynı yerlere bakabilmeyi. Ne bileyim zekâ, fiziksel den ziyade bunlar da iyice ön plana çıkmaya başladı, şu anki kız arkadaşım öyle açıkçası.

socially imposed rules in our r relationship [21].

Sinan's views exemplify how he moved away from societal assertiveness of gender beliefs in his relationship. Connell also says that "the core aspects of gender beliefs consist of both a hierarchical dimension that associates men with greater status and instrumental competence and a horizontal dimension of fundamental difference that associates each sex with what the other is not" (2005, 527). Traditionally giving a flower to a woman or a girlfriend as a show of his love is mostly expected to be a man's responsibility in a relationship. However, Sinan expresses that it is not the case in his relationship. Concordantly, most former cadets no longer consider women as different creatures. They are more aware of socially constructed gender roles, and they can transcend assigned gender roles in their relationships. In some ways, gender roles-based relationship lays more burden on former cadets than they wanted. Therefore, they interrogate being a woman in relation to a man and how they act in a romantic relationship.

On the other hand, there were two participants who mostly consider relationships in terms of more traditional gender roles. As I indicated in the previous chapter, Adem was one of them. Although he expressed, he does everything in the home as domestic work, he does not consider it is an assignment for women, he thinks her girlfriend should ask for his permission to go out after a certain time. Also, he said he interferes with what her girlfriend wears. On the other hand, Tarık also indicated that he could not understand women in his relationship and said women are so different than men in terms of temperament. Tarık also does not think he could be friends with a girl. In the interviews, Tarık and Adem attached more importance to what they defined as Turkish traditions and customs, and they said they grew up in traditional Turkish families. To that extent, I suppose, their perspectives closer to traditional gender roles since they attribute significance to tradition and custom more than other participants. Besides, there is no linear understanding about women and the relationship with them. For instance, Buğra told me even he did not perceive women as different kind of people, he feels nervous when he came together in a new setting. To that extent, their changes also in different scales.

Furthermore, most of my participant's perceptions regarding female cadets changed as well. Most of them feel remorse because of their attitudes toward female cadets in military schools. They conceived them less woman and feminine than other women

[21] Sinan: "Hiçbir zaman şu anki ilişkimde kadın küser, erkek üzer, erkek telafi eder beklentisi yok. Böyle dinamikler yok. Erkek çiçek alır, hediye alır, kız arkadaşım bana çiçek de alabilir, bu beni mutlu eder. Ona da söylüyorum bunu, bana çiçek alabilirsin, ben mutlu olurum bundan diye. Yani hiç toplumun dayattığı ilişki kuralları yok aramızda.

and humiliated their presence in the military schools. However, this was not usually their personal opinion about female cadets, and it was the effect of peer pressure and structural imposition in the military schools.

> Buğra (25, Land): I don't think they had considered the military academy and came to study there. They will come to the academy and don't talk to men. Ultimately, all are men, and I couldn't even imagine that. For example, I enroll in a female-dominated school, there are only five male students, and no one talked to us. That would be an awful and abject situation [22].

Showing empathy towards female cadets was a common attitude when I interviewed my participants. Although they could not develop empathy in the military schools, they can put themselves in female cadets' shoes and look from different perspectives to their relationships with female cadets in the military schools. Most of them appreciate them because studying at the military schools was a more challenging experience for female cadets than any male one. They should have coped with the systematic pressure that military schools had internalized. To that extent, in my interviews, most male former cadets evaluated their endeavor more valuable than any male cadets. Their changed relationship and understanding also reflected on former cadets' civil lives in one way.

> Caner (25, Land): I liked to ask former female cadets that how was going when I was in the dining hall. In the end, I mean, they also experienced the same things as us. They are the people we had common ground with. Thus, I liked to chat with them. I went to them asked about their situations a few times in the civil university [23].

Although Caner had never spoken to female cadets in the military schools, he wanted to chat with former female cadets in the civil university. I also asked if they talked to former female cadets about the military schools, but he said they did not. He considers the common history with former female cadets makes them closer. In the military schools, female cadets were invisible subjects, and even imagining chatting

[22] Buğra: "Böyle düşünüp gelmemişlerdir bence kadın askeri öğrenciler. Bu okula gelip erkeklerle hiç konuşmayacaklar. Sonuçta herkes erkek, böyle bir şeyi hayal bile edemem ki ben. Atıyorum bir tane kızların olduğu okula gidiyorum ben, 5 kişi erkeğiz, hiçbir kız bizimle konuşmayacak. Çok kötü olurdu yani, berbat bir durum olurdu.

[23] Can: "Yemekteyken yanlarına gidip halini hatırını sormayı seviyordum. Yani sonuçta onlar bizimle aynı şeyleri yaşamış. Ortak bir paydada buluşabileceğimiz insanlar. O yüzden muhabbet etmeyi seviyordum onlarla. Birkaç defa da böyle gidip yanlarına oturup hallerini hatırlarını sorduğum oldu."

with female cadets in the dining hall was not of concern for any male cadets. Today, they can construct normal relationships with female cadets and may see them closer than other people in the civil setting.

> Tarık (25, Naval): While I was doing my internship in Ankara, one of the female cadets married a former cadet who was a senior to me in the military schools. I went to the wedding. She was pretty pleased. We danced together and chatted with other former female cadets. I mean, I no longer think like I did in the military school. I can understand them better [24].

Tarık's experience clarifies how former male cadets' relationships with female cadets normalized, and they started interacting more than they did in military schools because they can look at their relationships without the military lens. Regarding the military, most of my participants consider more female cadets should be/have been in the military schools, although most of the male cadets were uncomfortable with female cadets' presence in the military schools when they had studied in the military academies. Their stance and relationship with the military also change in time and new experiences in the civilian lives, and they can improve more critical perspectives than before by reading different articles in their courses and as a personal interest.

Davidoff and Hall discuss men and women in the nineteenth centuries, and they express that "'Masculinity' and 'femininity' are constructs specific to historical time and place. They are categories continually being forged, contested, reworked and reaffirmed in social institutions and practices as well as a range of ideologies" (as cited in Segal 1993, 626). The military may become the most significant institution reproduces these categories continuously in Turkey. In this chapter, I aimed to elicit the invisible sides of the former cadets and women relationships. Accordingly, I discussed how former cadets' perceptions of women were constructed in the military high schools. When I started to this research, I wondered how the military masculinities impacted the relationship with women. In construction of the masculinities in the military schools, the absence of women is a significant point. The military also aims to prevent relationships with women because it evaluates women can deceive and blackmail the cadets to obtain information about the army. On the one hand, military promotes the masculinities of cadets by referring discursively their sexual capabilities and sexualities with women; on the other hand, it restrains them from

[24] Tarık: Ankara'da staj yaparken içlerinden birisi bizim iki üst sınıfla evlendi. Düğününe gitmiştim. Baya memnun oldu. Kız beni hiç beklemiyordu. Karşılıklı oynadık falan böyle. Onu ortamıza aldık. Karşılıklı oynadık. Diğer arkadaşları da oradaydı. Onlarla muhabbet ettik. O şeyim geçti yani. Şu an daha iyi anlıyorum.

having girlfriend because the girls may persuade them sexually. This point is quite contradictory and interesting.

Subsequently, I focused on female-male cadet's relationships in the military schools and male cadets' perception regarding female cadets while studying together. I underlined male cadets had considered female cadets as subordinated subjects because of their womanhood and femininity and been uncomfortable with their presence in the military schools. Female cadets also another interesting topic in the military since former cadets could not understand how a normal relationship proceed with female cadets and they otherized them in the military schools. I consider this chapter is significant to demonstrate women in the military from a different perspective.

Following that point, I delved into how former cadets' understanding and relationships changed with women after military schools. They could develop their perspectives and embraced the view of woman and man can be friends. Their changed perspectives became possible with new settings, in there, they could interact with women as friends as knew more of them. Also, they had change to read critical articles in their courses at the university and as a personal interest. All of them were processes rather than a sudden change. On the other hand, some former cadets did not express similar changes that most of my participants mentioned. To that extent, the change is also not linear; there are some different levels in their changes. In this chapter, my focus was to grasp and explain how the military masculinities change while the perception of womanhood and relationship with women are changing.

5. FORMER CADETS AND HOMOSEXUALITY

Homosexuality is the most significant stigma and taboo of the military in Turkey. The military has never accepted other sexual orientations and identities except for cis heterosexuality and marginalized them in written legislations and unwritten implications. According to health regulations for the Turkish Armed Forces (article 17; subtitle 4), it is defined as sexual identity and behavioral disorder and explained as the phenomena that will or may create adaptation (*uyum*) and serviceableness (*işlevsellik*) issues because of sexual attitudes and behaviors in the military. Başaran (2014) says that "Turkish military, medicine, and the cultural notion of homosexuality is embedded in the inspections that are designed to protect hegemonic masculinity and the boundaries of male homosocial bonding through excluding nonnormative/dangerous bodies from military service" in his article about medical process of homosexual conscription in Turkey. (564). His explanation sheds light on that the military aims to protect the understanding of appropriate and superior masculinity and masculine bodies in the homosocial environment by excluding 'inappropriate' ones. The dangerous bodies refer to queer bodies and people who encounter the military in the medical examination of the military.

Entering the military as a military staff occurs in two ways which are compulsory military service and military schools. In the former one, the military executes the protection of hegemonic masculinity by examining queer conscripts in the medical inspection, it is a humiliating process and a violation of human rights (Basaran 2014; Biricik 2008, 2009, 2011; Zengin 2016). The second way is enrolling in a military school where the military aims to raise professional soldiers for the army.

In military schools, the understanding of homosexuality has multiple layers. Undoubtedly, if any male cadet is known to have sexual interactions with another male cadet or men outside the military, he is immediately dispelled. To that extent, the concept of homosexuality is associated with fear, perturbation, and abomination for most cadets in military schools. During my interviews, all of my participants talked about these perceptions on homosexuality when they were in the military schools

because it was a significant part of the construction of their masculinities in military schools. However, except three participants, all of participants talked about embracing more tolerant views and attitudes towards homosexuality and queer people after leaving military school. Three participants expressed that they are not feeling uneasy but do not also describe their attitudes towards homosexuality as friendly or different from their views in the military schools because their religious belief and traditional perspectives are incompatible with a view that normalizes homosexuality.

In this chapter, firstly, I frame the understanding of homosexuality for the former cadets in the homosocial environment of military schools. Concordantly, I focus on varying relations among cadets in different military schools because of the distinct construction of homosexuality in the military branches. The diverse perception of female and male homosexuality also is another vital point to demonstrate changing approaches of the cadets. Secondly, I concentrate on changing understandings and attitudes of former cadets after the military schools and the factors that make ease these changes. Most former cadets can easily understand what means having different sexual orientation and identity than cis heterosexuality and get on well with queer people in their new settings. Lastly, I also draw attention to some former cadet's interrogations and confrontations with their sexual orientations after the military schools. I witnessed their sincere and intimate approaches to their sexual existence during my interviews. Two of them also said that they do not describe themselves as heterosexual anymore in their civilian lives.

5.1 Homosexuality in Military Schools

While studying in military schools, my friends and I had intimate physical relations, which usually take place rarely between civilian men. Most cadets did not regard lying on the bed near his fellow cadet or kissing him on the cheek to show his amity as a problem. In the homosocial environment of the military schools, these acts were considered enhancing social bonds and attachment implicitly between cadets. It was not also perceived as a threat to their masculinity in the military schools since most cadets should have conceived these intimacies as nonsexual interactions in the military school context. Tankut Atuk describes a homosocial safe zone as "a place where the transgression of homosocial bonding will not result in emasculation or risk heterosexuality, and the privileges it confers on men and masculinity" (2021, 130). In that regard, most cadets did not even think the possibility that having a

close physical relationship connotes sexual closeness.

> Bartu (25, Land): For instance, we laid on the bed together. Converse, chit chat etc. For example, while watching something, we would lie next to each other. Yet, there was no sexual intimacy [1].

> Bilge (23, Land): (We would be like) Let me lie next to you and we'll watch together. Let me sit next to you and we'll look (at something) together. We were already ten people in the dorm. There were not so many places to sit; then, we sat closely. We would even seat on each other's laps. We thought it did not matter because we were like siblings. Therefore, nobody was uncomfortable about such things [2].

Physical contact was not only restricted to show sincerity but also associated with jokes. Some cadets preferred to slap their cadet friends' hips as ballyragging. Slapping did not connote sexual intimacy again; it was considered joking with one another.

> Mehmet (25, Land): For instance, someone was walking down to the bathroom, and our baths were downstairs. I was hitting him jokingly, slapping his ass. I'd pulled down his foot while he was coming down the ladder. you know, stuff like that... These were not considered as sexual encounters. For instance, if someone was wearing a bathrobe, I would try to undo its tie to scare him. It was not about sexual pleasure; it was about scaring him [3].

Even though these implications may seem to evoke homosexual contact, former cadets did not consider these kinds of interactions as emasculating or homosexual because there was an invisible border that separates these two things for them. It was like "drawing a line between the homosocial male bond and homosexual

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[1] Bartu: Mesela aynı yatakta yattığımız da oluyordu. Muhabbet sohbet. Mesela bir şey izlerken, muhabbet ederken öyle olduğu oluyordu. Ama hiç cinsel bir yakınlaşma bir şey olmuyordu.

[2] Bilge: Dur yanına yatayım beraber izleyelim. Dur yanına oturayım beraber bakalım. Zaten on kişi bir koğuşa girdiğinde oturacak yer sınırlı olduğu için on kişi yan yana oturuyordu. Kucak kucağa oturulan durumlar da vardı. Bir şey olmaz kardeşiz biz gibi düşünülüyordu. Öyle olunca kimse bundan rahatsız olmuyordu.

[3] Mehmet: Mesela adam bornozla iniyor banyoya. Bizim askeri lisede banyolar aşağıdaydı. Şaka yollu vuruyordum; götüne şaplak atıyordum. Ayağını çekerdim merdivenden inerken. Bunlar yani. Bunlar cinsel şeylere girmiyordu. Bir de bornozlu ya, korkutmak için bornozu falan açmaya çalışırım. Tamam açmayacağım zaten veya bacağı sıyırıyordum korkutmak için. Zevk almam değil, karşımdaki insanın korkması.

relationship" (Lyman as cited in Rogers 2006, 64). Rogers also draws attention to this separation in her thesis regarding a fraternity. Thus, the first rule in the contact was becoming masculine enough to perform these jokes or intimacy. In one sense, feminine acting and being feminine men may have meant crossing that invisible line and become a threat in the military schools. Therefore, having physical interaction between male cadets should have constructed as something masculine in accordance with the everyday behaviors and form of socializing in the military.

While military schools and cadets could embrace physical intimacy and jokes among male cadets' homosexuality or its existence in the military was not acceptable since it was considered as the biggest threat to the military order and unity. Moreover, homosexuality was regarded as a genuine attack on anyone's masculinity. Thus, in the hegemonic masculine context of the military schools, homosexuality was the firstly severest threat for social bond and never a topic up for discussion.

> Buğra (25, Land): It was not even talked about. I remember it that way. Because homosexuality was an extremely frightening thing in the military environment. For instance, let's say you learn that your close friend is gay, what are you going to do in such a situation? It was considered deviancy, something very horrible, and miserable. What if your friends starts to look at you differently etc., as I said, he could even be lynched in there. Things can get there. That's why it (homosexuality) was looked down upon and never spoken about [4].

Buğra describes the situation and the fear the cadets felt regarding any possibility of confrontation with homosexuality. From the outside of the military, it may seem quite contradictory. On the one hand, they were scared half to death to be thought of as homosexual and not even talk about it explicitly. On the other hand, they had more physical contact and interaction than any other male groups. To clarify this point, it is significant to highlight that their understanding of homosexuality was associated with femininity. Thus, the danger was considered to be being feminine, homosexuality was directly associated with femininity. As Başaran (2014) indicated in his article, the military focused on femininity to identify people as homosexual, and it was the case for most former cadets. In our conversation, Mehmet showed me a male dancer on Instagram and explained that he had considered that gay men would look like this artist. Kimmel (1994) also touches upon the intertwined

[4] Buğra: Konuşulmuyordu bile. Ben öyle hatırlıyorum. Çünkü eşcinsellik çok korkutucu bir şey o ortamda yani. Çünkü atıyorum sevdiğin bir arkadaşının eşcinsel olduğunu öğreniyorsun ne yapacaksın. Çünkü sapkınlık, çok kötü, çok kötü bir durummuş gibi düşünülüyor. Sonra işte sana farklı bir şekilde bakar mı arkadaşın bilmem ne. Dediğim gibi işte linç bile edilebilir orada. Durum buraya kadar varabilir. O yüzden kötü bakılıyordu ve hiç konuşulmuyordu bence

relationship of femininity and male homosexuality in his article about masculinity and gender identity construction with homophobia. In that vein, all gay men were seen as feminine, flamboyant, and womanized in the minds of the majority of cadets.

Although physical interaction was quite common among cadets, naval cadets were cautious about physical interaction. It was because there had been in the past some newspapers pieces about homosexuality in Naval schools. The news piece was published under the title, "Gay Cadet Scandal in Turkish Naval Academy" in 2010 and the Naval Forces were accused of not expelling 'pervert' cadets from the academy [5]. In response, the Naval forces issued a written statement and accused the newspaper reporters because for bending the truth and violating the presumption of innocence [6]. As a consequence of these processes, subsequent cadets had more clear-cut boundaries not to be misunderstood as gay in their physical interactions.

> Ege (25, Naval): Because of the stuff that happened everybody was more careful. If such things were never experienced in the naval forces, I would hug and kiss my friends. I would lie next to to them. But we paid attention to not having physical contact in order not to be misunderstood. For example, if my friend were to lay on the bed, I could not lie next to him [7].

In a way, any naval cadet feared being subject to this kind of 'inappropriate' scandalous news as did some naval cadets in the past. Ege also felt this burden on his shoulders and behaved accordingly not to be misunderstood. When I searched the news about homosexuality in the military on the Internet to look at news pieces, I saw some blogs that discuss whether all naval staff was inclined to homosexual relations. It was also an example that shows how the naval forces and homosexual relationships were constructed out of the military as well. In that regard, most naval cadets tried not to be stigmatized in this way and limited their physical interactions with other male cadets. Unlike land and air forces, naval forces showed more tolerance to cadets' girlfriends in the naval schools. This tolerance can also be linked to the fear of homosexuality in the Naval forces. Having a girlfriend meant that they

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[5] See "Deniz Harp Okulu'nda gay öğrenci skandalı" April 14, 2010 accessed May 23, 2021. https://beyazgazete.com/haber/2010/4/14/deniz-harp-okulu-nda-gay-ogrenci-skandali-83348.html

[6] The full written statement of Naval Forces can be found online. See "Deniz Kuvvetleri Komutanlığı'ndan habervaktim.com'da yayınlanan "Deniz'de Gay Tayfa Skandalı" başlığı ile yayınlanan ve birkaç gün üst üste devam eden haber" April 27, 2010 accessed May 23, 2021. https://kaosgl.org/haber/deniz-kuvvetleri-komutanliginin-acikalamasi

[7] Ege: çünkü bir yaşanmışlık var ya. Ondan dolayı herkes daha dikkatli. Yoksa bizde öyle bir şey yaşanmasaydı ben arkadaşlarıma sarılır öperdim. Yanına uzanırdım. Yanlış anlaşımasın diye o fiziksel yakınlaşma olmasın diye dikkat ederdik. Mesela arkadaşım yatakta uzanıyor ben gidip yanına uzanamazdım.

are not homosexual since they can have contact with women. Also, the naval forces may have considered if they do not prevent naval cadets from having girlfriends, then naval cadets would not attempt homosexual relationships in military schools. Despite all adverse attitudes and approaches regarding homosexuality in military schools, no commander even alluded to it, not even to warn cadets about the consequences or in any negative way. Therefore, it was not only an unspoken topic for cadets but also for the commanders.

Besides that, when looked at from a personal point, although they did not prefer to talk, most of my participants had adverse feelings and thoughts concerning homosexuality. Their approaches to homosexuality were not trying to understand but judging from their standpoints because otherizing homosexuality in the homosocial manly setting of military schools was the easiest way to demarcate a line between their manhood and homosexuality.

> Selim (23, Air): Back then I regarded it as a deviance. That it was not something right. I did not think homosexuality was innate; I rather thought it was a preference. Or I also considered it can be something treatable medically. Also, I believed it (homosexuality) had increased in more recent years while in the military school [8].

Selim's statement summarizes the general context of the cadets' perception of homosexuality in the military schools. The popular discourse about homosexuality was that it is a perversion, a preference, a mental disorder, something which can be cured. Former cadets could legitimize their negative perspectives about homosexuals because the construction of homosexuality was associated with the military environment. Former cadets assumed that 'normal' people should be like them, cis and heterosexual, in the military schools. However, it is significant to emphasize this association was regarding male homosexuality. Female homosexuality was constructed as a fantasy and was more acceptable for them because it was pictured as normal and alluring as conditioned by the straight porn industry. Most of my participants remarked they did not consider lesbianism as a big issue, and it was a sexual fantasy for some. They were mostly watching porn in the military schools and saw female-to-female intimacy and did not perceive it as homosexuality. Armando X. Estrada and David J. Weiss (1999) also demonstrate that military personnel's attitudes were more negative towards gay men than lesbian in their research on US

[8] Selim: O zamanlar sapkınlık gibi görüyordum. Doğru bir şey değil gibi. Bunun çok doğuştan bir şey olduğunu düşünmüyordum, daha çok tercih edilen bir şey gibi. Ya da mesela tıbbi şeylerle tedavi edileceğini falan düşünüyordum. Son zamanlara doğru da arttığını düşünüyordum askeri okulda okurken.

military personnel's attitudes toward homosexuality. In civilian settings as well, some scholars show that heterosexual men are more hostile towards gay men than lesbian women (Herek 1988, 2000).

> Ozan (25, Naval): When I was in military school, I saw female homosexuality as more normal. I mean, I did not consider male-male and female-female sexuality similarly. Especially for men, lesbian relationships sounded like something pleasant but being gay was considered disgusting. I also thought that way. I think this was related to the attractiveness of the female body for heterosexual men, hence it was easy to normalize. Since we saw female to the female sex in the porn we watched [9].

When female body and sexuality were regarded, the partner of the female subject was trivialized, and female to female sexuality was normalized because, as Ozan expressed, it was a more tempting, favorable fantasy and could be seen in porn. I remember one of my cadet friends only watched lesbian porn when we were in Kuleli, and he said that he did not want to see a penis in the porn. I think his statement was also a demonstration of masculinity somehow because even while watching porn, he thought the only penis had to be his penis. So, he kept his distance from other men's sexual relations even in a porn movie and glorified his manly sexuality and masculinity in that way. Besides, he implicitly demonstrated what he had consider about male homosexuality with his words.

As part of the perception of homosexuality in military schools, some cadets also thought that homosexuality and transsexuality had a transitional relationship. That is to say, a person initially comes out as gay; after a while; he becomes transsexual. Hence, for some, homosexuality was considered to be a stage before deciding to become transsexual. To that extent, no difference was made between sexual identity and sexual orientation. From this perspective, being gay was already related to being feminine and more femininity meant becoming a trans woman.

> Murat (25, Land): Actually, gay was seen as trans. Most people considered that gay people put on lipstick, paid attention to personal care. That they must be feminine. From the military perspective, being gay

[9] Ozan: Kadınların eşcinselliğini çok daha normal görüyordum askeri lisedeyken. Yani erkek-erkek ve kadın-kadın olarak düşündüğüm zaman çok aynı kefeye koymuyordum. Özellikle erkekler için lezbiyenlik hoş bir şeymiş gibi geliyordu ama gaylik iğrenç bir şeymiş gibi düşünülüyordu. Ben de öyle düşünüyordum askeri lisedeyken. Bu da kadın bedeninin genel olarak heteroseksüel bir erkeğe hoş gelmesiyle alakalıydı bence ve bunu normalleştirmek kolaydı. Çünkü izlediğimiz pornolarda da kadın kadına ilişkileri görüyorduk.

> and trans were the same. They were seen as the same thing. Being gay was the preceding stage. The second step was transsexuality [10].

Since homosexuality was understood to be linked to femininity in the military schools, most cadets intermingled the concept of homosexuality and transsexuality and believed homosexuality and transsexuality to be successive processes. As Biricik (2011) indicates, transsexuality is described as extreme homosexuality in the military medical inspections of conscripts. The military labeled more feminine bodies as extreme homosexual to somehow refer to their transsexuality. The holistic view of the military, which defines homosexuality and transsexuality as a disorder, reverberates the cadet's perception and some also considered as the military approached in the medical examination. In general, none of the cadets I interviewed had really thought over homosexuality and transsexuality but unquestioningly internalized these while studying in military schools. The institutional understanding was also reproduced in the military schools through occasional homosexual intimacies between cadets, rumors about these intimacies, and rotten report which also can be given or received to/ by the cadets in the medical inspection before attending military academies and in the first year of the military academies.

> Selim (23, Air): There was a boy (the rumors hard it), it was always like that, there was a boy. He was from Bursa. He was taking night duties. During the night watch, I guess, he was touching people's ass (while his friend was sleeping). We called them faggot behind their back. It was not really a thing we talked much about. We were surprised how homosexuals had entered the military school [11].

The cadet Selim talked about was considered as gay since he touched his friend's hip in a different context. To that extent, there is also contextual differences. if someone pats his friend while his friend was sleeping it denotes sexual contact and becomes problem. I remember that when these incidents occurred, the cadets' horror probably elicited, and they cursed 'faggot' cadets. Since the perception of all cadets was 'real' and masculine men were obliquely threatened. They felt horror, which jeopardized their intimate relations among cadets, and they were more open to

[10] Murat: Hani daha çok gey dediği zaman insanlar işte trans gibi görüyordu. Gey bir insanı çoğu insan ruj sürüyor, bakım yapıyor gibi görüyor. Feminen olacak illaki. Aslında geylik / translık aynı askeriyedeki bakış açısına göre. Aynı şey gibi görülüyordu. Geylik bir önceki aşama gibi. İkinci adım da transseksüellik.

[11] Selim: Bir çocuk varmış, hep böyle, bir tane çocuk olurdu. Bursalıydı. Kendine gece nöbetleri yazdırıyormuş. Bu gece nöbetlerinde gidip milletin götünü elliyormuş herhalde. İbne falan diyorduk arkalarından. Çok konuştuğumuz bir şey değildi. Nasıl girmişler askeri okula falan diye şaşırıyorduk.

questioning their friends' 'sexual deviance.' Concordantly, they learned how they positioned themselves across these incidents of homosexuality and fronted off about the awkwardness of homosexuality in the military schools. It is not possible to accept own sexual orientation and come out as gay for someone who studies in military schools because he would face social exclusion and bullying.

> Caner (25, Land): All in all, I might have identified myself as bisexual after going out (of military school), and (this would mean) I would have lived under constant pressure for seven years (in military school). It was psychologically very heavy in many ways for people, and there was no possibility to even speak about it as a community. If you do, it means immediately be excluded and disconnected from the community [12].

In his article that focuses on homosexuality in the military, Dean Sinclair expresses, "It is no secret that homosexuals have in the past, do so currently, and will continue to serve in the military... What has been a secret is their sexual orientation" (2009, 701). In that sense, the military does not intend to exclude homosexual people; it aims to preclude the femininity of male cadets and sexual intimacies between them. Otherwise, the military does not pay attention to their sexual or emotional interest unless they make a move or perform femininely. As Caner depictured, it is a terrifying experience for queer cadets because they may have felt themselves as having a mental disorder, as perverts, and feel desperate because the system would not admit them if they identified themselves as gay or bisexual. As I witnessed in my interviews, some of my participants could come out and express their sexual orientation to themselves and close circles only after military schools. Yet, at the cost of not being themselves, they knew it would not be possible to even talk about it in the military and hid their sexual orientations to protect themselves from being expelled.

5.2 Civilian Universities and Queer Encountering

After military schools' closure, most former cadets made friends with people from different environments. They learned new perspectives, lives, realities and made

[12] Can: sonuçta ben kendimi biseksüel olarak da tanımlayabilirdim dışarı çıktıktan sonra ve yedi sene boyunca bunu sürekli bir baskı altında hissetmiş de olabilirim. Gerçekten mesela biseksüel olabilirdim ben yani ve yedi sene bunu gizli de tutmuş olabilirdim. Bu bir insana psikolojik anlamda çok ağır bir şey ve topluluk olarak bunu dile getirme ihtimalin bile yok. Dile getirdiğin an direkt olarak dışlanacaksın ve topluluktan kopacaksın.

friendships with new friends in their new environments. As a former cadet, I believe the most significant novelty of the new world was the understanding of people who were not like us because, after the coup attempt, we were also marginalized and became unwanted subjects in the eyes of authorities. These processes influenced us to look at things from different perspectives. For instance, for a former cadet, the definition of a terrorist was so clear while studying in military school. Terrorist meant someone who threatens the unity of the state through discourse or action. Yet, it became a more blurred concept in civilian life since these definitions and approaches were ideological and not personal. Similarly, after military schools, most former cadets developed relationships and become more open to coming into contact with queer people in their university environments. Unlike military schools, they lowered their guards and wanted to understand queers.

> Caner (25, Land): My girlfriend introduced me to her gay friends. I definitely did not approach them with any preconceptions. My girlfriend had told me that they were gay before we met them. My negative thoughts changed a lot after meeting my gay and lesbian friends; I also spent time with them socially. Actually, I could understand; it was not a preference; they were born this way. I did not have such a perspective before. I had a very uniform way of thinking [13].

Caner's experience illustrates how he reconsidered his understanding of gay and lesbian people and approached to know them. Estrada and Weiss provide references from a myriad of research that discuss the relationship homosexuality understanding and people's attitudes. They mention Herek and Capitanio's (1999) finding, which indicates that "... heterosexuals who had experienced interpersonal contact with gay men or lesbians expressed significantly more favorable general attitudes toward gay people than heterosexuals without contact" (186). In his experience, Caner did not keep himself aloof from queer people; he had interpersonal contact, which may have helped change his attitudes. Similarly, Faruk also shared his experiences regarding his home mate coming out as gay.

> Faruk (25, Land): It did not impact our friendship. We even started to get along with each better. He was not able to express himself clearly

[13] Can: Kız arkadaşım gey arkadaşlarıyla tanıştırmıştı beni. Onlara karşı herhangi bir yargıyla yaklaşmadım kesinlikle. Onlarla tanışmadan önce zaten kız arkadaşım söylemişti gey olduklarını. Şu anda sosyal anlamda bir şeyler yaşadığım gey ve lezbiyen arkadaşlarımla tanıştıktan sonra olumsuz düşüncelerim çok değişti. Aslında gerçekten tercih değil, onların böyle olduğunu anladım. Bu bakış açısı önceden yoktu bende. Tek düze düşünüyordum.

> before he came out, now, he can express himself comfortably. We can understand each other well. I couldn't understand him well before. We lived in the same apartment for years. We continued (to live together) after we learned (that he is gay). For instance, if there were to be a homophobic person among us and had told him anything that makes him feel uncomfortable, he wouldn't want to stay in the apartment anymore. He would want to move to another place where he would feel more comfortable. Thank God nothing like that happened. It's his right to write off if any such thing happens [14].

Selim and Murat also lived with their gay friends in the same apartment. Both of them also expressed their relationship got better, and nothing had changed. Murat talked about his concerns in the early days when his home mate came out because he had some doubts about proceeding with their relationship as healthy and normal, but over time, he saw these concerns were irrational. They also mentioned that while living with their gay friends; they could develop more empathy towards other queer people as well. Military masculinity constructed homosexuality as a threat. However, when former cadets interacted with queer people, they could see that it is not the case and proceed with their friendship. To that extent, their current masculinities normalize different sexualities, and this point differs their masculinities from military. Ege also talked about how he could understand queer people as a time process in his civilian life.

> Ege (25, Navy): Nowadays it is the exact opposite for me; it seems so normal. Because now there are people around me who make me think this way. I went through a phase. I said okay it is your preference. Then, I began to believe that, okay you feel this way and you were created as you are. I believe in a creator. Also, I adapt it to myself in a way. If he feels this way, he is. It does not have to be like I should be like him or feel in this way. For instance, I can't tell a person are you are stupid, why do you like the color black. He could than also think that I'm stupid because I like the color blue [15].

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[14] Faruk: Arkadaşlığımıza hiçbir etkisi olmadı. Hatta böyle daha iyi anlaşır olduk. Çünkü o kendini net ifade edemiyordu bize söylemediği için. Şimdi o kendini daha rahat ifade edebiliyor. Biz onu daha iyi anlıyoruz. Öncesinde o kadar iyi anlayamıyordum. Senelerce ev arkadaşlığı yaptık. Öğrendikten sonra da yapmaya devam ettik. Mesela evde bir tane homofobik olsaydı. Bir şey söyleseydi ona bu evde durmak istemezdi. Daha rahat edebileceği bir yere de gidebilirdi. Allah'tan öyle bir şey yaşadığını düşünmüyorum. En doğal hakkı yani birilerini hayatından bu sebeple uzaklaştırmak.

[15] Ege: Şu an tam tersi bana çok normal geliyor. Çünkü bunu düşünmeme sebep olan da çevremde insanlar var. Bu da bende bir aşamadan geçti. Tamam eyvallah, bu da senin tercihindir falan diyordum. Daha sonra şunu düşünmeye başladım, ya işte evet, sen böyle hissediyorsun, sen böyle yaratıldın. Ben bir yaratıcı olduğuna inanan birisiyim. Onu da kendime bir şekilde uyarlıyorum yani. Öyle hissediyorsa öyledir. İlla benim o şekilde olmam, hissetmem mi lazım, değil. Ben mesela bir insana gidip mal mısın bu siyah renk de sevilir mi diyemem yani. O da benim hakkımda salak mı bu mavi renk sevilir mi diye düşünür. Bunun gibi bir şey yani.

Ege moved away from the solid understanding of the military regarding homosexuality gradually. When he said homosexuality could be a preference, he did not consider it as a problem either. People may want to have relationships sexually or romantically with other people without regarding their gender. Therewith, preference does not seem trouble for some cadets, too, because it can happen with a decision of two individuals. Ege's basic analogy also mirrors his emphatic interpretation of homosexuality in his perspective. Fundamentally, he is more aware that the life experience of a queer person is not the same as his experiences, and he can feel empathy towards them, unlike when he was in military school. Most participants' perception of homosexuality changed after sharing the same environment with queer people, becoming friends, living in the same apartment and reading about more scientific research. When they listened to their queer friends' experiences, they could look at them from different perspectives. İlter, Faruk, and Sinan mentioned they had read a myriad of research on homosexuality in their academic courses in their universities and out of personal interest in order to understand. As Eric Anderson (2008; 2010; 2018) claimed in his researches on masculinities and changing relationships with women and homosexuals that there is no threat for social identity as heterosexual for former cadets anymore, and their masculinities are more inclusive to accomplish queer proximity.

For some of my participants, their overseas experience helped to change their perceptions about homosexuality. For example, Hamza talked about his bisexual friend changed his mentality and viewpoint about queer people while studying in Belgium with the Erasmus program, Besides, Caner, Bartu, and İlter depicted queer people's flirting with them and their responses to them in these situations.

> İlter (22, Land): When I was at a festival in Germany, there was a guy who was around 26-27 years old. He touched me and tried to contact me. He said you resemble my ex-boyfriend. I said thank you, but I am not interested. Then he touched my shoulder once again, and I turned back. When I said again, I am not interested; he went back to his friends to continue his partying. I understood that this fear was without reason. I became aware they are also individuals like me, and when I said no thanks, they would not go further and hurt me in any way [16].

[16] İlter: Almanya'da bir festivaldeyken tahminen 26-27 yaşlarında bir erkek, bana dokunup iletişim kurmaya çalıştı. Eski sevgilime çok benziyorsun falan şeklinde imalarda bulundu. Tamam ama ilgilenmiyorum teşekkür ederim dedim. Sonra baktığımda bir kere daha omuzuma vurdu, döndüm falan filan. Sonra tekrar ilgilenmediğimi söylediğim zaman, tekrar kendi eğlencesine, arkadaşlarının yanına döndü ve ben de şunu anladım; ya bu korkunun çok boş yere olacağını. Bu insanlarla iletişim kurabilip, istemediğini belirttiğin zaman farklı bir zarar gelmeyeceğini, onların da artık senin gibi bir insan olduğunu, bir birey olduğunu falan fark ettim.

İlter's experience in Germany also helped change his perspective against queer people. In the military school, he conceived homosexual people would also be demanding to procure what they want. In his encounter, in one way, he saw his understanding was biased regarding queer people that they would be harassers and still continue to harass you even when you said you are not interested in. İlter's situation is also related to the concept of homohysteria of Anderson (2010) because homohysteria is the fear of being perceived as gay, and İlter may also have feared being labeled in this way in military school. In his case, he could see his phobia was pointless. As Anderson and McCormack expressed, "decreasing homohysteria is improving attitudes towards homosexuality in broader society" (2018, 549). Similar to İlter's experience, Bartu and Can said they responded to their queer friends' interest in them in a normal way while they were living abroad. Mutlu mentioned one of his colleagues asked him out on a date, and Mutlu declined his offer. However, he also said that it is pretty normal to ask someone, regardless of their gender, on a date unless it repeats harassingly.

All of my participants described their attitudes and perceptions of homophobia in military schools. Almost all of them normalized their understandings and could put a new complexion on relationships with queer people.

> Bilge (23, Land): It is pretty normal for me now. The concept of sexuality became different in my eyes. Therefore, l don't think loving each other of two people or fancying each other, or just desire to have sexual intimacy were not so different. Also, it does not become important the gender of the parties in these relationships [17].

One way or another, most of my participants could grasp that homosexuality or other sexualities are no big deal. It is between two individuals and does not concern them. Ascribing meaning to the queer people and their relations are ideological and socially constructed in military schools, and they became more sensitive to look at from a humanitarian sense. It is also noteworthy to touch upon that it could be a matter for their masculinity to have friendship with queer people from a military sense. Yet none of my participants did not attach importance to be seen as masculine or having a relationship with queer people may show them less masculine in their civilian lives. However, all of them emphasized that they would get away from homosexual people while studying in military school although they had met

[17] Bilge: Şu an benim için gayet normal. Hani cinsellik kavramı gözümde farklılaştı. O farklılaştığı için de iki insanın birbirini sevmesinden ya da birbirinden hoşlanmasından veya sadece cinsel bir şey yaşamak istemeleri çok farklı bir olay değil yani. Bunların aynı veya farklı cins olması çok da önemli değil.

at the outside with nonmilitary person. Since they might have been regarded as homosexual as well if they had friendship with them. This friendship also may be associated with appearing less masculine somehow in military schools and a threat their military masculinities.

Adem and Tarık said they do not think homosexuality is normal. Adem described himself as a conservative and religious person, and homosexuality is inappropriate according to his beliefs. He also indicated that he had read a few articles, he did not say where and when he did, about homosexuality in which it was explained as preference. I asked him the names of the pieces, but he said he couldn't remember. Moreover, he told me he does not want to become friends with queer people. Doruk and Tarık were also my other participants who do not have positive attitudes regarding different sexualities. Tarık also was associated his thoughts with his religious belief. In that regard, religiosity was a significant impact on the attitudes of people. Johnson and Vanderbeck (2014) presuppose homosexuality can be considered unacceptable among people who affiliate themselves with religious and moral values. Moreover, Estrade and Weiss (1999) point out the relationship between negative attitudes to homosexuality and religious orientation. Although Ege identifies himself as a religious person he said he believes homosexuality also comes from the god and it is quite normal for him. Religious arguments are linked to their perspectives and how they interpreted it.

On the other hand, Doruk said he considers homosexuality partially normal because it is being promoted socially, and some people want to express themselves in this way. He believes encouraging people in this way is not normal, and it becomes a preference for Doruk. To that extent, according to Doruk, homosexuality and different sexualities are not orientations for every queer people but also a choice for some, and he does think of it as normal. Different from Tarık and Adem, Doruk did not give reference to his religious belief for his arguments. From a general perspective, there is no common ground that brought them to think homosexuality is not normal. Their commonalities are two of them from air schools, one is naval schools; all of them is engineer and they studied prominent universities. Their religious identities may be correlated with their understanding, but I think it is not enough to explain their perspectives completely. In that regard, However, they mentioned their perspectives changed as to military's because it was a threat for the masculinities. On the other hand, they do not feel uncomfortable about homosexuality as before.

5.3 Calling Oneself into Question

Military schools delude the cadets into being heterosexual as only appropriate and genuine sexuality. However, when former cadets stepped outside of the military box, most of them understood it was just a "myth" of the military as most things propounded in there (Altinay 2004). During my interviews, some of my participants talked about their interrogations concerning their sexualities and sincerely expressed their endeavor to comprehend where they stand sexually. As a former cadet, I also believed heterosexuality was the only normal and appropriate sexual orientation in military schools. I deemed what the military proposes was convenient in every case of our lives. However, after military school, I got over the militarist understanding and could evaluate situations from a personal perspective. In that regard, I also interrogated my sexual being and began to think there is no one hundred percent heterosexuality. People may interest other people irrespective of their gender and sexuality, and I might also be attracted by people because of some of their features. Therefore, I understood I am more open to diversities of distinct sexualities in relationships. Like my experience, some of my participants underscored how they ponder upon their sexual orientations after military schools.

> Caner: Since I believe in your sincerity, I don't have a problem with that. After I went out, I interrogated myself a bit. I mean, I considered if I had an orientation to the women. Well, I thought I am asexual for a while since I had no sexual pleasure. How should I say? I don't feel joy with any sexual thing. Therefore, I thought if I am asexual [18].

Caner's probing about his sexuality demonstrates his changed approach to heterosexuality. In one way, he starts to understand people may not interest other people sexually, and he ponders his sexuality comprehensively. Caner also stated he did not consider whether he is bisexual or homosexual in our conversation because he considered himself asexual for a while. Yet Hamza declared he examined this probability and expressed his confusion about his sexual orientation.

[18] Can: Ya ben samimiyetine binaen, sıkıntı değil yani benim için. Ben ilk dışarı çıktığım zaman kendimi biraz sorguladım. Yani acaba benim cinsel yönelimimim kadınlara mı yani bunu çok düşündüm kendimce. Yani bir ara aseksüel olduğumu falan da düşündüm. Çünkü cinsel hiçbir hazzım yoktu yani. Hani böyle nasıl diyeyim, cinsel herhangi bir şeyden haz duymuyordum yani. O yüzden birazcık aseksüel miyim acaba diye düşündüm.

> Hamza: For instance, my bisexual friend told me, dude actually, eighty percent of people were born as bisexual, the society suppresses, and you run away with this notion. I said, is it really like that. Then, I said, if I am like that. So, I liked a guy. He seemed handsome, but sexuality is a different thing. I decided to watch a gay porn. No, not this one. It does not attract my attention. Then, I said, I guess I am straight [19].

Unlike military schools, Hamza attempts to understand his desire and sexual attraction to men. In military schools, heterosexuality was considered a necessity through masculine gender roles. Therefore, questioning heterosexual masculine identity did not occur for most heterosexual-identified men. Scrutinizing self-sexual beings after the military schools signifies how some cadets changed their perspectives regarding hegemonic heterosexual masculine identities in the military schools either. Morgan, Steiner, and Thompson's (2010) research on sexual orientation questioning processes of heterosexual men also indicates there is a diversity of heterosexual identities of men, and almost fifty percent of straight men question their sexual orientations in their lives. Also, the research demonstrates that the ones who question their orientations have more close and normal relationships with sexually minority groups.

In their civilian settings, almost all of them do not feel anxious to be seen as more masculine in their relations. Since there is no hegemonic pressure of the military and former cadets may see different possibilities about their existences and other people. İlter also expressed he may find guys attractive in a period of his life, and it does not make him uncomfortable because these are his feelings. During my interviews, two of my participants also identified themselves as gay and bisexual after military school. They do not feel so easy while sharing their orientation with me; therefore, I did not ask further questions about their sexualities not to make them uncomfortable. Nonetheless, my bisexual participant said that he had a sexual experience with a man and understood he was also interested in men sexually. Also, my gay participant expressed he knew he was not heterosexual in the military school but could not think over his sexual orientation because it would not be easy for him to study there if he could think like today.

Allocating sexualities in civilian life was a new experience for former cadets. In their new lives, they could ratiocinate their sexual beings and understand they may have different sexual orientations. It became possible because there was initially not military domination upon their lives. Moreover, former cadets could meet other

[19] Hamza: Mesela benim o biseksüel arkadaşım demişti ki kanka aslında insanların yüzde sekseni biseksüel doğuyor, toplumlar baskıladığı için sen işte heteroseksüelim zannediyorsun. Gerçekten böyle mi acaba dedim. Sonra ben bir ara dedim ki acaba bende böyle miyim? Öyle olunca, bir heriften hoşlandım, yakışıklı falan geldi, ama cinsellik daha farklı bir şey. Bir bakayım, gey pornosu falan izleyeyim dedim. Yok bu değil. Bu benim ilgimi çekmiyor. Ben buyum herhalde dedim.

people who have different sexualities, and they could understand that queer people are not so different from them as they conceived in military schools. Besides, when they shared the same settings, they expanded their perspectives towards differences in general. They read about different sexualities and encountered in different places and could think beyond their narrow understandings, which come from the military schools. These points also make them consider their own sexual existences somehow for some cadets, and their new social settings and approaches emancipated them from militarist understandings of masculinity.

In conclusion, I first aimed to demonstrate how former cadets perceived homosexuality and different sexualities in military schools. Homosexuality was the most dangerous threat for the cadets in the military schools, and they did not even dare to talk about it there. For the naval forces, homosexuality was a more sensitive topic since mediatic rumors, and it affected physical relationships among cadets in the homosocial environment of naval schools. Secondly, I focused on former cadet's changing perspectives and relationships towards and with queer people. In their civilian lives, they could understand and approach queer people differently than military schools and proceed with normal relationships. It became possible because they shared the same ambiance in universities and abroad, read about different sexualities, listened to queer people's experiences and developed empathies with them. Lastly, I examined how some former cadets interrogated their sexualities in their civilian lives. While questioning their orientation, they also conceived masculine heterosexual identity may not be rigid sexuality for them. Concordantly, some of them came out as bisexual and gay.

This chapter shed light on how most former cadet's perceptions regarding queer people changed through their masculinities after the military schools. I also aim to question at the beginning of my thesis that how former cadets' changes in terms of their masculinities may alter their perceptions and attitudes toward queer people. Their changing approaches demonstrated they could be inclusive towards sexually minority groups although they had rigid hegemonic heterosexual masculinity construction before civilian life. As Anderson proposed, heterosexual masculinities can change and be inclusive and military masculinities are also subject to changes in time. In this change, the tough perception of heterosexuality may open to question and modify itself by these questionings.

6. CONCLUSION

As existing literature on the military in Turkey indicates, 'the military had the responsibility to educate men and construct their masculine identities as the ideal' was a popular discourse. A man has joined the military as a part of his compulsory military service and learned how to become a real man in terms of gender roles. Concordantly, the military was considered a place where ideal hegemonic masculinity was promoted and reinforced. Serpil Sancar (2011) claims that military training operates as a hegemonic masculinity learning school in the military service. However, the military began to go into a decline gradually through the impact of the Ergenekon and Balyoz Trials since 2007. Besides, the coup attempt in 2016 was another turning point for the military, and it lost the sociopolitical power drastically. The next day after the attempt, the soldiers were killed, attacked by the civilian people, and the military was humiliated with these half-naked soldier photos, and it was publicly shown on TV.

As a consequence of these processes, the military's ideological and influential position in politics regressed, and drastically "military fell from grace" (Az 2014). According to Açıkgöz, "the rift within the hegemonic relationship between masculinity, the military, the state, and the nation was deepening" (2017, 179)) after all of these processes the military experienced. The military does not have the power to set ideal gender roles for men anymore, and it lost its hegemonic position in society.

While starting my research, my research questions were how the military masculinities were constructed in military schools; how these constructed masculinities shape the perception of and relationship with civilians, women, other men, and queer people; how the military masculinities changed after military schools' closure; how former cadets' relationship and understanding about their own masculinities, women, other men, and queer people take shape in civilian life.

The thesis firstly aimed to depicture how military masculinities are constructed in military schools. To that extent, I inquire about all components of military edu-

cation and related elements that help the constructions of military masculinities to grasp the construction process. This research demonstrated that the construction of military masculinities is not monolithic, but it is diverse. In different military branches, distinct military masculinity constructions occur, and all of them were regarded as military masculinities. However, I also remarked that different constructions of military masculinities create hierarchies among military branches. The hierarchical relationship is constructed as to binary thinking between femininity and masculinity. I believe this point is a significant contribution to the military and masculinities literature since it presents important details on how inner dynamics and relationships in terms of masculinities in the Turkish army.

Another significant contribution of this study is about the perception of womanhood and relationships with women in military schools. Existing literature indicates how the army locates women as inferior to men, and there is a hierarchical relationship. Yet, there is not enough discussion to underline how this understanding is constructed in the military. Also, male soldiers and their relationship with female counterparts are lacking in the literature on military, masculinities, and feminist studies. To that extent, this thesis also attempted to bring in new insights about the relationship between male and female soldiers and the construction of womanhood within the construction of military masculinities in the military.

Homosexuality and military relationship are studied in the existing literature in the scope of compulsory military service and military medical inspection. Differently, I aimed to mirror how homosexuality perception is constructed and how this constructed perception affected the relationships in homosocial environments of military schools. With this attempt, I presented perspectives about homosexuality internal to the military, and as such contributed to the building of a new ground on military, masculinity, and sexuality relationships in Turkey.

Throughout the thesis, I attempted to demonstrate the effects of these macro-level sociopolitical and micro-level personal changes on social actors from different perspectives. When former cadets got into civilian life, the military had lost its power in the political sphere. At the macro level, I consider, these processes also somehow affected my participants' approach to the military understanding. Being associated with the military or having military identity were not promoted attributes anymore in their civilian lives. Although considered as the representative of modernity for a very long time, the changes my participants have encountered and narrated exemplify that the military no longer meets the demands of the modern world. Moreover, some participants did not even talk about their military background in some settings. To that extent, this thesis showed that the military is not powerful

anymore and could not shape men's lives and not create a hierarchical relationship in terms of gender roles as before, as such the thesis provides new insights into the civil-military relationship in Turkey. This does not mean that the society embraces gender-equal understandings; traditional gender roles and hierarchical relationship between men and women can continue to exist in the society with the impact of different apparatuses, but the military is not in a powerful position to regulate this relationship.

On the other hand, in their civilian lives upon leaving military schools, the former cadets I interviewed started getting to know new people and perspectives at the micro-level and questioned their stance in life. Since the military promoted a singular understanding of everything, being different was an eyesore and undesirable thing in military schools. However, civilian life comprises of differences, and most former cadets understood that change is inevitable in their identities to adapt easily and look at differently. Thus, from a gender perspective, as I discussed throughout the thesis, the change appeared in their military masculinity identities, and they could reconstruct their masculinities and changed relationships with their own identities, other men, women, and queer people in a process. As a result, most of them could embrace a gender-equal perspective and queer-friendly approach in their personal lives. This point also confers another significant insight on military masculinities and civil-military relationships and provides a distinct dimension to the literature. After leaving the military, people can embrace gender-equal perspectives and become more inclusive to the queer friends with their changed masculinities. However, existing scholarship does not discuss this kind of change, which is another contribution this thesis makes.

In the second chapter, I began the quest to demonstrate the literature on military and military masculinity in relation to nation-state construction, nationality, education, military education, gender relations, and sexuality. Then, I delved into changing masculinities and their relations with self-masculinity, women, and queer people. The impact of the military in the macro-level change in the society mostly became a research object, and social actors in the military who affect this change were passed over. At the macro level, military understanding permeated every sphere of the society with national education doctrine and was undergirded to bring up little soldiers and little Ayşes (Kancı and Altınay 2007). Besides, compulsory military service in Turkey promotes hegemonic masculinity and gender roles and appropriate masculinity performance for men. After the military service, the man becomes the commander of his family and implement what he learned in the military. In this scenario, women become mothers, especially soldier mothers, and raise soldiers for the nation. Thus, it is essential to construct the Turkish nation-state, and this paradigm

denies other ethnicities in national construction since only genuine national identity is becoming Turkish in Turkey. Also, in this gender roles relations, the military excludes inappropriate subjects who are queer people and also considered as dangerous bodies. The military encourages and protects hegemonic understanding of masculinity, and queer people are seen as a threat to masculinity construction in the military.

However, the significance of the military in the political and social arena began to diminish with sequential incidents of the Ergenekon-Balyoz Trials and 15th of July coup attempt, and the military gradually lost its hegemonic power and impact in general. After these macro-level changes, I focused on masculinities that also change in time and space. As Anderson (2008; 2010; 2018) argue, men can adopt more inclusive masculinity and could develop relationships with women and queer people as friends. From this point, men can change in terms of their masculine identities and embrace more inclusive relationships with women and queer people. Also, they may recognize gendered behaviors more and change the dynamics that promote gender inequality and homophobia.

In the third chapter, initially, I tackled how military masculinities were constructed in the military schools. There were three different military branches, four military high schools, and three military academies in Turkey. All military schools did not have a common aim to define being an ideal soldier homogenously; they diversified military masculinities at the institutional level. This is a significant point since the literature focused on the homogeneity of the military until now. Class commanders, senior-junior class relationships, and class friends impinged upon former cadets' masculinities under the roof of military schools.

Moreover, former cadets' families, civil people, and friends forged how the military masculinities became counter to the civilian world. In the construction process of military masculinities with the influence of these elements, all former cadets had the idea that they were superior than other civilian people in terms of their masculinities and military identities. Then, I attempted to display former cadets' masculinity changes after military schools' closure. There were two-dimensional changes which are appearance and approach to the traditional understanding of becoming a man. Apart from military schools, they could become more aware of how the military constructed their masculine identities. After military schools, most of them changed their appearance and wore more colorful clothes, put on earrings, grew hair. They did not associate their new appearance with femininity because this association pertained to the military. Moreover, all of them could see that becoming man or masculine was not as important as in the military. To that extent, some

also changed their perceptions of becoming a man in society. However, there is no singular and linear change for all of them; some made changes in their clothes; some denied gender roles in their relations with women and other men. Also, it was a process in time rather than sudden changes. These changes differed in terms of their personal experiences in civilian life. In general, this chapter showed that military masculinities change in a progressive way towards gender equality in contemporary times with the diminished impact of the military in society.

In the fourth chapter, I focused on former cadets' relationships with women in and after military schools. Military masculinity also arranges cadets' interactions with women and constructs their perception regarding womanhood in military schools. The military aims to prevent romantic relationships in land and air forces' schools and forbid sexual relationships completely in all military schools. In the homosocial environment of the military schools, former cadets idealized and romanticized women but had hostile feelings towards female cadets. Former male cadets thought female cadets were incompetent in terms of their military skills and ugly and unattractive compared to civilian women.

The relationship with women in and out of the military is another critical point about military masculinity since this thesis contributed a new perspective about the relationship with women. After military schools, former male cadets' perceptions and interactions changed, and they could understand that women are also people like them. It became possible because they could enter different settings and know women well. Also, they could become more engaged in feminism and gender-related topics in their university courses. As a consequence of these processes, they changed but not heterogeneously. This chapter attempted to show that the military could not affect men as before somehow. Men can improve more egalitarian relationships after the military.

In the fifth chapter, I scrutinized the homosexuality perception of former cadets in and out of military schools. Most of them conceived male homosexuality as a mental disorder, deviance, and abnormal phenomenon in military schools. Hence, they were even afraid of talking about homosexuality and regard it as a threat to military masculinity since male homosexuality was affiliated with femininity. On the other hand, female homosexuality was not a threat, and even it was a sexual fantasy for some since it was not a threat to military masculinity. Female to female sexuality was seen on porn videos and evaluated as normal and more acceptable among former cadets. After military schools, most former cadets encountered queer people and made friends with them. Different from military schools, they were more open to contact with queer people. Furthermore, some shared their homes and lived

together and knew them better. To that extent, their masculinities developed and changed to embrace homosexual people. Some also read articles and do research on the sexual differences and reconstructed their understanding of homosexuality and queerness. All of the processes shaped their insights and approaches toward queer people, and most of my participants could form a basis to grasp what homosexuality is and not. On the other hand, some still consider homosexuality is not normal but also do not associate their ideas with the military. This chapter demonstrated that masculinities changed and normalized what they regarded as a taboo in different settings. The military promoted homosexuality as an adverse phenomenon, but it could not affect the perception of former cadets in civilian life. To that extent, this point also points out how the military became outside of people's lives even though they became soldiers for a long time.

A few points need to be mentioned as the limitations of this research. Initially, my aim was to open up a new ground for further discussions regarding civil-military relationships from a different perspective than existing scholarship did. While attempting to do this, some questions were left unanswered regarding my participants' family background, social class, political stance, religious affiliations. I purposefully did not include these in my analysis due to time limitations and choice of framing. These could be subjects of further research. Moreover, language use is a significant dimension that reveals a lot about the construction of masculinities and masculinity performance in military schools. Some obscene expressions can be observed in some of the quotations in some participants' narrations of their experiences or stories from military schools. While acknowledging the importance of the role of language for understanding heterosexual masculinity construction, I could not delve into this further in bounds of this thesis. Further research could interrogate the relationship between obscene language and masculinity in the homosocial environment of military schools.

Last but not least, for further research, female cadets' and women soldiers' narratives may contribute a lot to understanding the military and gender relationship in Turkey. While interviewing my participants, I thought it would be beneficial to give voice to female cadets' narratives about military education and military masculinity construction. However, it was outside the scope of this research. Yet, I consider female cadets' experiences to be beneficial to understand military masculinity and military femininity in the Turkish army. Military femininity is not a concept that has been used in literature, but I prefer to refer to this expression to emphasize the feminine attributes of female cadets in the military.

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