

FRAGILE IDENTITIES:
PROSTITUTES AS SIGNIFIERS OF PATRIARCHY AND
HETERONORMATIVITY IN TURKEY

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Thesis Abstract

“Fragile Identities: Prostitutes as Signifiers of Patriarchy and Heteronormativity in Turkey”

‘Prostitute’, being a term or a stigma, both talks through the mouth of patriarchal system and deciphers it as an object, a tool and a subject created and reproduced by this very system over and over again. In a society where religion has penetrated into the social everyday life practices and where culture works as a shaping mechanism beyond law, female body can claim existence or agency only as much as the hegemonic patriarchal ideology consents. Prostitute body which has deliberately detached itself from or been cast out of the dominant ideology has to either embrace the ‘victim’ identity exposed to her or become one of the gears of the mechanism as a power holding subject. The extracts from the interviews studied in this work reveal that prostitutes reproduce the victimization discourse as a way of realizing their social existence and by doing that they describe the ‘essential’ elements of womanhood definition such as marriage and motherhood as a lack, nostalgia or a utopia. Those women see men in their lives either as sacred and untouchable figures or as symbols of power to succumb to. Therefore, they serve as the sustainable and suppressible source created by the patriarchal and heteronormative ideology to satisfy male desire. When the interview extracts of the prostitutes who reject the victimization discourse, knowingly or not, are analyzed, it is seen that the only way to get empowered for them is to appropriate masculine power and become an oppressor or a masculinized woman. Thus, it still remains a utopia to talk about prostitutes as empowered women and a counter-power against patriarchy and heteronormativity.

Tez Özeti

“Kırılgan Kimlikler: Türkiye’de Erkek Egemenliğin ve Heteronormativitenin Göstereni Olarak Fahişeler”

Bir terim, bir hafta olan ‘fahişe’, erkek egemen sistemin yarattığı ve tekrar tekrar ürettiği bir nesne, bir araç ve bir özne olarak hem bu erkek egemen sistemin içinden konuşmakta hem de onu deşifre etmektedir. Dinin toplumsal gündelik hayat pratiklerine sindiği ve kültürün kanunlarüstü şekillendirici bir mekanizma olduğu bir toplumda kadın bedeninin varlığı ve özneliği bu erkek egemen ideolojinin izin verdiği kadardır. Hakim ideolojinin dışında kalmış ya da bırakılmış fahişe bedeni ya kendisine dayatılan kurban kimliğine sarılacak ya da güç sahibi bir özne olarak mekanizmanın bir dişlisi olacaktır. Bu çalışmada incelenen röportaj alıntıları fahişelerin kurban söylemini bir varolabilme aracı olarak yeniden ürettiğini ve bunu yaparken evlilik ve annelik gibi kadın tanımının ‘zorunlu’ öğelerini bir eksiklik, bir nostalji ya da bir ütopya gibi tasvir ettiklerini ortaya koymaktadır. Hayatlarındaki erkekleri ya kutsal ve dokunulmaz figürler ya da boyun eğmeleri gereken güç sembolleri olarak gören bu kadınlar tam da hakim ideolojinin erkek arzusunun tatmini için ürettiği sürdürülebilir ve susturulabilir kaynak görevini görür. Çalışmada bu kurban söylemini bilerek ya da bilmeyerek reddeden kadınların röportajları incelendiğinde onlar için güç sahibi olmanın tek yolunun eril gücü benimsemek ve bir zalime dönüşmek ya da erkeksileşmiş bir kadın haline gelmek olduğu görülmektedir. Dolayısıyla da fahişelerden güç sahibi kadınlar ya da erkek egemenliğe ve heteronormativiteye karşı bir güç olarak bahsetmek hala bir ütopya olarak durmaktadır.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study elaborates on the hegemonic structure of patriarchy in Turkish culture by shedding light on the patriarchal discourse adopted by prostitutes in Istanbul. It focuses on the whole process and consequences of patriarchal social construction of women, prostitutes specifically, through language.

The significance of this study comes from its uniqueness in the literature. Prostitution has been discussed in many works especially in feminist literature but analyzing the position of prostitutes as the reproducer of the patriarchal system has not been discussed to the best of my knowledge. The subject of this study includes women and transgendered women from different ethnic origins and socioeconomic status. Such a subject group has not been studied before with a critical discourse analysis method in Turkey. They are not only hard to access but they also have rarely been the center of attention of either academia or politics. This study provides visibility to a social extremity which has great potential to expose the patriarchal oppression on woman in both institutional and cultural aspect. Prostitutes are very important subjects of analysis as the five criteria for oppression defined by Iris Marion Young can all be traced in a prostitute body (Young, 1995).

1. They are exploited in a labor-income relation.
2. They are marginalized and excluded from social participation.
3. They are stripped off their autonomy under the autonomy of others, mostly male figures.

4. They are stereotyped and become invisible in the society with little audience for their ideas and experiences.

5. They are exposed to random physical and psychological violence from other members of the society.

As prostitutes meet all these five criteria, they constitute a very rich source for a cultural analysis. Such an analysis can expose the social oppression against women and collapse of the judicial system, as well as the corruption in state institutions such as the police force, state hospitals, and governorate. Consequently, an in-depth analysis of their experiences has the potential to lead to a social transformation if necessary changes in and proper application of certain laws and regulations are done.

For this study, twenty prostitutes were contacted and seven of them consented to audio recording. All of the prostitutes participated in this study, with audio-taped or unrecorded data, were from Tarlabaşı district of Istanbul.

In Chapter 3, the extracts from interview data are examined to discuss how womanhood was defined by the prostitutes. Fragility, sensitiveness and emotionality stood out as the characteristics of being female which goes parallel with the traditional definition of women. Motherhood and wifeness were also common points mentioned by the prostitutes to talk about womanhood. This chapter shows how gender roles established by the dominant culture are reiterated by the prostitutes through language.

Chapter 4 concerns itself with the mechanisms which turned women into worshippers of masculine power and how they continuously position and reposition male figures as the authority figures in their lives and in the society, as well. The discussion in this chapter illustrates how the “father” was defined in reference to the “mother”, how male authority figures other than the father, such as the husband, the

son, the grandson, the police officer, the pimp and the customer were depicted in the narrations of these prostitutes.

In Chapter 5, a subgroup of interviewees will be studied to offer a counter argument which has the potential to shake the well-founded discourse of victimization. These interviewees stand out as active agents who repel any kind of male domination from either their professional or personal lives, or both. They object to waive their right to lead a normal and recognized life instead of resigning to the role of impuissant victim or the stigmatized outcast.

Chapter 6 examines the concept of equal citizenship focusing on institutional mechanisms which lead to the social positioning of women as second class citizens. This chapter shows political and legal invisibility of women in spite of the equality emphasis on written laws.

All in all, the entire study explicates the apparatuses which make family, language and state/private institutions prevail as the most powerful disciplining mechanisms operating on female body which trump the egalitarian legal and political regulations. As theory succumbs to cultural practices in the case of prostitution, this study calls for an ascending social analysis starting from the deepest end of social extremities.

Before the definition of key concepts that will form the theoretical framework of this study, it would be helpful to give insight into the theoretical debates on prostitution in general and in the context of Turkey, which is becoming a more and more conservative society and in which social order is shaped by cultural norms and practices rather than legal practices.

Prostitution

Prostitution has been debated in feminist literature since 1950s with two opposing sides, abolitionist view and anti-censorship view. The first group of feminists argues that prostitution is a type of slavery exploiting female body for the sake of male satisfaction. Abolitionists believe that prostitution cannot be seen as the choice of the women as there are many underlying mechanisms that force women into prostitution such as poverty, addiction, male oppression, conservatism or human trafficking. As is in pornography debates, this view argues against empowering the state to define, regulate and control pornography and obscenity through legislated censorship. Anti-censorship feminists, on the other hand, argue that pornography and prostitution can be chosen as a profession by women as active agents. According to this view, banning prostitution will exacerbate the oppression of women exercised by police or state institutions and with state intervention the working conditions should be improved, health insurance and retirement rights should be ensured for prostitutes. Anti-censorship feminists believe that legalization of prostitution will alleviate the burden of stigmatization on sex workers and normalize their social existence. (Kissil and Davey, 2010)

Both views have reasonable grounds for their argument; however when the debates are put into the local Turkish context the first view becomes more valid. In Turkey, prostitution is legal. There are 56 state-run brothels with 3000 registered prostitutes. Street prostitution also constitutes a large part of the business making the general number 100.000 throughout Turkey. 15.000 of these prostitutes are registered with the police. The annual turn-over is \$3-4 billion

(Ankara Chamber of Commerce Report 2004). This is the overall situation of prostitution sector in Turkey. As for the abolition and pro-choice debates, it can be said that pro-choice view remains too western and it fails to understand the dynamics that shape prostitution sector in a conservative and highly patriarchal society in which religion and cultural norms penetrates into the everyday life practices.

When we look at the data of this study, we observe that poverty is not the only factor which forces individuals into prostitution sector; rather it is one of the last factors on the list. Therefore, we cannot see prostitution just as a choice made on financial grounds. Substance addiction is another factor but most of the participants of this study became addicts after their engagement into the business and in many cases this addiction is initiated by male figures to make prostitutes dependent on the sector and therefore dependent on them. Conservatism also emerges as one of the reasons why a prostitute becomes one. Especially women from the eastern part of Turkey find themselves on the streets of big cities to run away from the suffocating familial and social structure of their hometowns which controls almost every movement of women and deprive them of proper education and freedom of decision making for their own lives.

Except for transgendered prostitutes, who have got into the prostitution business as they are unable to – or are made to believe that they are unable to- find any other jobs due to their gender identity, prostitutes in this study were sold by male figures, sometimes from their own family. The system operates on a very exploitative basis in state-run brothels. Women are sold to the owner of the brothel mostly by a male figure and they are obliged to pay the money given by the owner back to the seller; much like a slave. Women in these houses cannot

quit the job because they are officially indebted and their attempts to escape are terminated by the police on the grounds that the owner of the brothel has property rights on the brothel women. Moreover, working terms and conditions are regulated by the brothel owner; insurance premium payments are made arbitrarily by the brothel owner. Women do not have any rights to make decisions about their own bodies such as using contraceptives, having abortions, resting in menstruation periods. Their bodies are run by a male or a masculinized –in some cases brothel owners are women- figure to satisfy male desire. State-run brothels become prison-like places for prostitutes because in some of these brothels women are not allowed to leave the place without the company of brothel workers.

In addition, it cannot be said that transgendered prostitutes have agency on their lives and working conditions. It is true that most of the transgendered workers work alone without any pimp oppressing them and they earn more than women but no matter how improved their conditions are, no matter how able they are to get services and enjoy legal rights by getting private health care or paying social security premiums by themselves, it is still true that transgendered individuals are offered no other job options than prostitution. A choice is not a real choice unless it is chosen from several alternatives.

Given the working conditions mentioned above, the term ‘prostitute’ is deliberately used instead of ‘sex worker’ to refer to the subjects in this study. First of all, the registered prostitutes do not enjoy many of the rights that workers do such as social security, regular income, right to strike, holiday entitlement etc. Second of all, most of them are not registered workers and they do not have any intention to get registered as they do not believe that the state will ensure them

their social rights if they register; an official prostitution record will not make any difference in their working conditions, rather, it will stamp them as prostitutes in official records which will close any possible doors for an alternative occupation in the future or for a new life.

Finally, ‘prostitute’ ‘fahişe’ is the term the subjects of this study use to call each other in their everyday live environments. They use it as kind of an assertion of their social identity. ‘Prostitute’, therefore, becomes a necessary term to expose the exploitation, lack of agency, loss of control of the body suffered by the women in the prostitution business. We appropriate the dominant discourse of the state used for the prostitutes to expose the role of the state itself in creating this discourse and its ascriptions.

All in all, female body has always been the subject of disciplining mechanisms which establish male domination as the dominant cultural system. Prostitution sector is one of these domains where female/feminine body is disciplined by being physically and emotionally abused and exploited; it is a ground for sexuality/gender-based oppression on women with sex as a disciplining mechanism; it is an arena for the patriarchal show of force.

As it will be analyzed in detail in the following chapters, prostitutes use the language of the dominant patriarchal, heterosexist culture as their own. The analysis reveals that the interviewees fear and admire the person, institution or the system that oppresses them. One of the most significant findings of this study is that while some of the prostitutes see themselves as desperate victims in a fatalistic way, some others argue that they have agency. The first group can be seen as a manifestation of the Gramscian idea that when an oppression/domination is internalized/normalized by the oppressed group, it turns into a hegemony and is never questioned by its members.

This group aspires to socially accepted women, primarily housewives and a deep sense of self-reproach and self-hate stands out in their language. Unlike the first group, the latter group asserts that it is their choice to lead such a life and that they can set the standards and working conditions themselves in the sector. Some participants in this group feel grateful that they can earn well enough to buy service from public or private institutions without being subject to discrimination. Some others even feel luckier than other people from other professions as they can earn much more by working much less. This intra-group variation clearly shows that being a prostitute does not necessarily mean being a powerless, self-loathing victim of the system but a significant majority of the prostitutes feel that way because of the ‘ideological state apparatuses’ shaping their minds in that direction,

In his article titled “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses” (1970), Louis Althusser distinguishes between two types of these disciplining mechanisms; repressive state apparatuses and ideological state apparatuses. Repressive State Apparatuses (RSAs) seek obedience and cooperation from public through coercive force such as army, police force or courts. Ideological State Apparatuses, on the other hand, function predominantly by ‘ideology’ through cultural institutions such as education, religion, law, family, media and culture.

In the context of prostitutes, both Repressive State Apparatuses and Ideological State Apparatuses are inevitably at play in the establishment and reproduction of patriarchy as the dominant ideology. However, ideological state apparatuses, such as family, religion and law stand out as the primary gears of the mechanism that makes oppression internalized by prostitutes. These apparatuses firmly establish what is acceptable in the society and permissible by religion as a domain and gender identities and sexualities which fall out of this domain are stigmatized. In order to

make a healthy and insightful analysis of the patriarchal discourse used by prostitutes and their self-loathing remarks, 'Internalized oppression' will be the first key concept to be defined to form the theoretical basis, and it will be followed by patriarchy and heteronormativity, which are the two main ideologies that lead to internalized oppression.

Internalized Oppression

As we witness in the narratives of this study, patriarchal codes and gender-based social positioning are perpetuated by the prostitutes through the appropriation of the dominant patriarchal language. The submissive attitude in the narrations of most of the participants in the study constitutes an example of a phenomenon called 'internalized oppression'. According to Urban Dictionary this phenomenon is defined as "the process by which a member of an oppressed group comes to accept and live out the inaccurate myths and stereotypes applied to the group" (Urban Dictionary, 2003).

Internalization of oppression occurs with the acceptance of gender roles distributed by the dominant culture first. Oppression is established in a society by imposing the roles of the oppressed and the oppressor on new generations. Everyone in a culture of oppression is in some way or another socialized in one of these roles. Members of a group that are constantly mistreated or that are the targets of a certain form of discrimination are socialized as victims, while the members of the oppressing group or the non-target group become perpetrators in a direct/active or indirect/passive way. People are conditioned into a dichotomous division of roles, the oppressor and the oppressed. That is to say, it is not only the victimized group that internalizes the attributes ascribed to them but also the empowered group internalizes

their position as the stigmatizer. Both groups act out the stereotypes imposed on them (Sherover-Marcuse, 2000).

As the narratives will suggest, the roles of the oppressed and the oppressor can overlap in the context of prostitutes. The intra-group conflicts especially the one between the women and transgendered prostitutes is a good example of this overlap. Hostile attitude and derogatory language against other members of the same sexual minority group, prostitutes in this case, manifests that the oppressed reproduce the patriarchal domination in two ways; by appropriating the victimization discourse on one hand and by oppressing the individuals affiliated to the same target group with degrading and disdaining language against them. The groups targeted by oppression "internalize" the mistreatment and the misinformation about themselves. They "mis-believe" the misinformation dictated on them. Such "mis-believing" acts itself out with behavior; and interactions among the members of the same target group and these actions repeat the content of their oppression. Internalized oppression emerges as a way of involuntary reaction to the oppression experienced on the part of the target group. (Sherover-Marcuse, 2000).

This study focuses on a gender/sexuality based oppressed group, thus; 'internalized sexism' becomes a relevant term for this study. Sexism strikes in two ways: external and internal oppression. In *external sexism*, sexist messages and behavior are imposed on us from the outside, through institutions and individuals such as "Women are too emotional to be in positions of authority." On the other hand, *Internalized sexism* means accepting and appropriating the stereotypes and misinformation dictated by our sexist culture about being female leading to a submissive language e.g. "What do I know...", "Who am I to speak..." The focus has been mostly on fighting external oppression; however, internalized oppression is

seen equally deadly as it holds women back. It makes them sacrifice their excellence not to embarrass men. It makes them remain silent when facing younger generations, their own children ravaged by this very oppression. Internalized oppression forces women to judge and undermine other women, to doubt their leadership skills (Thomas, 1997).

Internalized oppression is widely used with regard to internalized racism and similar statements were also made earlier in the same context by Frantz Fanon, a psychoanalyst who mostly worked on colonialism in the context of Algeria. He analyzed the effects of colonialism on the way of thinking of the colonized people and their perception of the self. He thinks that colonialism alienates the colonized people from their own identity and makes them feel inferior and blame themselves, their nature for this inferiority. According to Fanon, a systematic degradation of a certain group forces the members of this group to question themselves. If a person belongs to or feels affinity to a certain group, attributes to which are systematically negated and degraded by the dominant culture, he inevitably begins to question these attributes. The minds of the oppressed are constantly occupied by the question ‘Who am I?’ (Fanon, 1967)

Oppression dehumanizes the oppressed groups, stripping them from the ability to see themselves as human beings. They begin to emulate the way how the oppressor exists. The oppressed group, at a certain point, is irresistibly attracted to the oppressor group and its way of being. Within a total alienation from their own identity, the oppressed aspire to the way of life that the oppressor leads; they become obsessed with imitating, following the life of their oppressor. (Freire, 1981)

In the case of internalized oppression, the constant question ‘Who am I?’ asked by the oppressed is answered by the same group to define themselves as ugly, lazy,

uneducated, uncivilized, disable, deviant, pervert etc. The oppressed who internalize the oppression believe that they deserve all the pejorative connotations made by the dominant group. This process of questioning often leads to denial or damnation of their very identity. (Fanon, 1967)

When a member of an outcast group constantly faces the image of himself/herself imposed by all institutions and in all kinds of social contact, he/she is likely to end up internalizing this detested portrait. The denunciatory description inscribed on his identity intimidates him even more because he admires and fears his powerful accuser. The mythical and insulting portrait, which was willfully created and spread by the oppressor, ends up by being accepted and lived with to a certain extent by the oppressed. (Memmi, 1957)

In the context of prostitution, it can be said that the ‘oppressor’ is the male dominant system. Patriarchy emerges as the system which forms and consolidates the victimization discourse in order to set the line between obedient, reproductive and domestic women and the deviant women involved in sexual activity that does not serve for reproduction purposes. Next section will elaborate on the notion of patriarchy.

Patriarchy

“In the beginning was the mother; the Word began a new era, one we have come to call patriarchy. The Word, a symbol, an arbitrary and abstract entity, can give reality to something nonexistent, invented, imagined” (French, 1986, p.65).

Throughout history which is written through a male-centered perspective, patriarchy is seen as a formation that is unchangeable because it is ‘natural’. As social roles have been created depending on the capabilities and lacks in human

biology, these roles become natural and unquestionable. Roles of women as mothers and care-takers have been associated with their natural capabilities such as child birth and nurturing skills whereas men have been marked as hunters, breadwinners and risk-takers in the social life due to their assumed physical superiority to women. This ideological positioning of men as superior over women and dominant in the society makes people believe that there is no other way of social organization than patriarchy. Patriarchy is a historical project running for centuries to turn male dominance into hegemony. Social thought, philosophy, history, law and institutional organization of the society have always been produced and reproduced by males from a masculine point of view. Such male-centered historization associated woman with nature, therefore regarded her as chaotic, as something on which a constant control should be exercised.

Womanhood has been associated with emotions for long in philosophical thought while manhood has been associated with reason. As Iris Marion Young states in her article to explain the exclusion of women from public sphere, the modern state founded by men created a moral division of labor based on the dichotomy of reason and sentiment. Masculinity was associated with reason and femininity was identified with sentiment, desire and needs of the body which needs constant control. Private sphere was therefore constructed as an area to confine the sentiments, emotions and bodily needs of women (Young, 1995).

There has been a certain historization which tries to justify patriarchy by mentioning biological superiority of men over women. Woman was seen as the defective part of humanity and she was blamed for the first sin and believed to be driven by her libido. The beginning and establishment of capitalism deprived women from the areas of work which were theirs before and thus made them lose certain

legal rights on property. In today's world, patriarchy social structure still tracing patriarchy prevailing in the society in some way or another. (Johannsdottir, 2009).

The traditionalist perspective relies on the assumption that biological formation of men makes them superior to women. Religious traditionalism believes in 'sexual asymmetry' which entails the assignment of different roles to men and women because of their inborn lacks and capabilities. Sexual asymmetry suggests that by divine design, women were given a different biological function than men and therefore she should undertake different social tasks. The belief that patriarchy is a god given social formation renders it as a natural and just system. The traditionalists read the history to find proofs for the normalcy of today's male domination. They argue that male body has always been more valued than female body because its physical strength, high speed and aggressiveness make men hunters. As food providers, men become more valuable for the society in ancient times. As the strong, experienced and superior beings, males were supposed to protect the vulnerable, fragile women. As Freud states, 'anatomy is destiny' for women (Freud, 1976). Traditional view also focuses on women's reproductive capacity as a must for the survival of the society. Motherhood is defined as the chief goal of a woman in life and women who do not serve this function are marked as deviants (Lerner, 1986). The public-private dichotomy in the traditional view locates politics in public sphere and family and personal issues are confined into the private as non-political. Thus patriarchy expands itself from the private sphere based on household production with a male ruler controlling woman individually to public sphere with public institutions serving for the maintenance of patriarchy (Walby, 1990).

Patriarchy positions women as child-bearers and establishes the belief that all kinds of sexual activity are supposed to serve for reproductive purposes. Therefore,

patriarchal thought stigmatizes any agent or sexual activity that does not seek for reproduction. Free sex, homosexuality, prostitution are, for this reason, condemned as perversity. At this point, the concept of 'heteronormativity' becomes relevant as it is the ideology which makes all kinds of sexuality which are not based on reproduction a reason for stigmatization. Along with patriarchy, heteronormativity stand out as the main reason why prostitutes who took part in this study internalize their roles as sinful, malfunctioning women that should submissively accept the degrading treatment from 'well-functioning' parts of the society, such as family and state institutions. In the next section, I will elaborate on the notion of 'heteronormativity'.

Heteronormativity

Heteronormativity is the dominant ideology in the society and throughout the history it has humiliated, degraded, abused and battered any kind of sexual activity other than the heterosexual one. The term is defined by Schreier as "a belief in the inherent superiority of demonstrating love only toward members of the opposite sex, and therefore a belief in the right to dominate others and set societal standards and norms" (Schreier, 1995, p.19).

Heteronormativity is a tool used by patriarchy to maintain the gender roles positioning women in the private sphere as mothers and caretakers and men as breadwinners and protectors. Homosexuality is therefore a threat to patriarchal social order. It is a threat because homosexual love seeks pleasure not reproduction. It is a threat because it shakes the deeply rooted distribution of gender roles. As homosexual love is seen as a threat to social order by patriarchal ideology, it has always been degraded, criminalized and stigmatized either ideologically or with

coercive power. The system may not necessarily practice this power itself, but it creates its oppressors by making them internalize heterosexism. Patriarchy and heterosexism operate on so many levels with so many mechanisms that even the members of the marginalized group take the side of the oppressor. This closely relates to the transgendered prostitutes involved in this study who beg for forgiveness from their father, who pray to God for redemption and who see their womanhood as defected and incomplete because of their incapability to give birth.

Referred to as ‘internalized homophobia’, the phenomenon is described as “internalized negative attitudes that gay men and lesbians possess about homosexuality” (Mayfield, 2001, p.54). At this very point another definition becomes necessary to see the origin of this internalization. Homonegativity also emerges as a relevant term here as it is the natural result of heterosexism and the cause of internalized homophobia. The term is defined by Mayfield as “bias against lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgender people expressed in a range of negative ways from derogatory remarks through physical assault” (Mayfield, 2001, p.60). Negative attributes associated with homosexuality such as illness, perversity, deviance, crime etc, can be accepted and even reinforced by queers themselves due to a systematic dictation of heterosexist norms. The indications of this internalization can come forth in different ways. Within the context of this study, for instance, most of the transgendered prostitutes condemn their gender identity by expressing how they wish they had been born as women or men who are not homosexual. Even though they do not fall under the category of LGBT individuals, biologically female prostitutes in this study also display symptoms of internalized heterosexism by regarding themselves worthless just because they are not married or mothers. When

they were asked what their dreams were, the most frequent answer was getting married and having children.

Gay and lesbian youth can be “weak, vulnerable... running away from home, prostituting themselves, abusing themselves, and killing themselves.” (Savin-Williams, Ritch C., 1994). Such kind of behavior from gay people actually reinforces the system which marginalizes and stigmatizes homosexuality. The data of this study includes transsexual prostitutes which display similar attitudes towards homosexuality by defining it as perversity or by admiring a heterosexual life style and biological women with the ability to reproduce and build a family. The description of Savin-Williams of gay and lesbian youth can be expanded to the prostitutes included in this study. Each of the participants is a member of a sexual minority group, not all of them are LGBTQ individuals but all of them are prostitutes. As it will be seen in later chapters, most of the women define themselves as weak, fragile, in need of protection. Most of them have a history of alcohol or drug addiction and physical self-harm. That is to say, the description is not limited to LGBTQ individuals but many oppressed groups display similar reactions to the norms of the oppressor- women, prostitutes, the colonized etc. The reactions to the oppression can vary of course. As we see in this study, some of the prostitutes accept their ostracized position while some others tend to see prostitution as a profession just like any other and rejects any kind of victimization discourse. This shows that reacting as victims is actually something learned.

Internalization of oppression by LGBTTT individuals is a part of a larger literature examining internalized oppression in terms of race, ethnicity and gender. Gender and sexuality based oppression emerges as the core point of analysis for this study, therefore in order to understand the victimization discourse employed by most of the

subjects, it is necessary to gain insight into the phenomenon of internalized oppression.

Sexuality is a domain in which women are dominated by men with the dichotomy of penetrating versus being penetrated. Sexuality has been reserved for male pleasure. It is a property of men which makes female body property of men. As Foucault argues, it is always men's desire that has been talked about (Foucault, 1990). Women are seen as a means of satisfaction of men's desire. Today's patriarchal system is the continuum of Greek and Christian philosophy which is characterized by "male-domination" and "subjugation of women". Sexuality is the most significant ground on which women are dominated by men as their objects of desire.

"Sex is a regulatory ideal whose materialization is compelled and this materialization takes place (or fails to take place) through certain highly regulated practices" (Butler, 1993, p. 1). So it means that sex "is not a simple fact or static condition of a body, but a process whereby regulatory norms materialize "sex" and achieve this materialization through a forcible reiteration of those norms" (Butler, 1993, p.1-2). The fact that there is nothing fixed or stable about the body makes it difficult to control. This necessity for constant reiteration shows us that bodies never fully obey the rules; there are always deviances and instabilities.

In today's patriarchal system, the state exercises constant institutionalized power to suppress these instabilities and deviances mostly associated with women. Democracy becomes a mask for male-domination by providing every individual with equal rights on paper but at the same time by turning a blind eye on suppression of women in practice due to cultural conventions and social norms. By excluding women from public sphere, depriving them of proper

education, ignoring the violence against them by personalizing and familiarizing the issue and confining it onto private sphere, state just 'brackets' the inequalities. Women become alienated from their rights, their bodies, their sexuality through this oppression.

They create 'docile bodies' in Foucault's words. People become the guardians of their own and others. Gaze is the main means to control people. People; as 'docile bodies', as 'willing subjects', create a pan-optic disciplining mechanism which makes the explicit practice of power redundant (Foucault, 1995).

Explicit practice of power has been combined with implicit mechanisms such as culture, language, sexuality and family/kinship relations. Women or other subordinated groups are not only suppressed by physical power but also through ideological assimilation. Individuals are forced through above mentioned mechanisms to give up on their particularities and subjectivity. They are demanded to assimilate into the dominant social order as docile servants of the system. For Julia Kristeva, in the social/the symbolic "subjects are called upon to participate in a law whose determinations and articulations they neither know nor control"(Kristeva, 1978, p. 478). For her, the modern state is the embodiment of representation. She says that the state claims to be the collectivity of all collectivities, the set of all sets. The state is the myth that the institutions compromising it (parliament, bureaucracy, family, science etc.) are the embodiment of reality. (Kristeva, 1978)

The embodiment of gender inequality as reality by state entails a from-bottom- to-top social analysis to demystify the embedded and implicit discrimination against women. One should not attempt to deduce power starting

from the center and to discover the impact of power on the base. “One must rather conduct an ascending analysis of power, starting, that is, from its infinitesimal mechanisms, which have their own history, their own trajectory, their own techniques and tactics” (Foucault, 1980). One should locate power at the extreme points that it is exercised, at the local level where power is less concealed, less legal and more open to critique. That is to say we should not ask ourselves “how the sovereign appears to us in his lofty isolation, we should try to discover how it is that subjects are gradually, progressively, really and materially constituted through a multiplicity of organisms, forces, energies, materials, desires, thoughts etc” (Foucault, 1980). Foucault therefore calls for an analysis of the effects of power on the 'extremities of society', at local level, on family structures, on individuals in the periphery. As Kristeva similarly states, “there can be no socio-political transformation without a transformation of subjects: in other words, in our relationship to social constraints, to pleasure and more deeply, to language” (Kristeva, 1981).

Prostitutes, positioned in the furthest periphery of the symbolic order, constitute an illuminating example exposing the effects of power on the 'extremities of society', an example which deciphers the mechanisms through which women become unrepresentable, they internalize patriarchal codes imposed on them. As the data of this study will demonstrate, prostitutes who are even inferior to women as they lack chastity and purity, have strikingly abundant patriarchal patterns in their language. They express themselves using the codes of the patriarchal system and in a submissive feminine manner. They also seek protection and acceptance through the means used and imposed by the patriarchal society.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY AND DATA

This study aims at revealing the embeddedness of patriarchy in Turkish culture and the mechanisms which have been serving for the construction of male domination as hegemony. In the study, prostitutes in Beyoğlu, Istanbul were chosen as the subject of analysis and critical discourse analysis method was used to analyze the interview data collected. The field work for this study was carried out for six months and nearly twenty people were contacted to get consent for interviews; however only half of them consented to participate in this project because they are requested to let their voice recorded. Almost all of the people that were contacted accepted to participate unless their voice or image was recorded. They had concerns about revealing their identities or pressure from their family or pimps. The non-taped data are used in the last chapter as supplementary material to reveal the counter discourse opposing the prevailing victimized stance of the interviewees discussed in the first two chapters of the data analysis section.

With the prostitutes who had not given consent for audio recording, I used the method of shadowing. I spent hours with those people in their own environment as a participant observer and took notes regarding their families, customers, their relations with state officers, health problems, income, private lives and affairs, relations with other prostitutes, living and working conditions, conflicts in this group between transgendered prostitutes and biological women, their political affiliations, associations and organizations they are working with, sexuality perception, practice

and sexual techniques, preferences, risk perception, drug addiction and prevention measurements. Related data are used to discuss the equal citizenship theory in the context of prostitution sector and political representation of prostitutes in Turkey.

In this project in-depth interview analysis was used as the main qualitative research method to explore the experiences and perspectives of the prostitutes in Istanbul. Group interviews were deliberately avoided in order not to miss the contradictions among the individuals in this very sector and in order to prevent them from building a self-defensive and guided narration of their experiences. A semi-structured interview was carried out and the participants were asked open ended questions. The questions mainly focused on family relations, daily activities, relations with co-workers, social and professional network including friends, neighbors, family members, state doctors, police officers and press members. The shadowing method was especially useful with the politically activist participants who had developed a rigid discourse common in the group or political party they belonged to. The shadowing method enabled the researcher to observe the participants stripped of their political identity or self-defense mechanism. Open ended questions were also helped to detect the underlying indications of patriarchal hegemony behind the high-spirited feminist discourse used by the participants who were actively involved in the feminist\queer movement in Istanbul.

In the sampling process, the main concern was to have diversity to hear the voice of both registered prostitutes working in state prostitution houses and the ones working on the streets without any official prostitute status. The latter group was also divided into two groups as working under the control of a pimp or working independently. The samples chosen were also diversified in terms of age, ethnicity, gender (women vs. transgendered) and economic status. Except for Ayşe and Ece,

the interviewees requested to use pseudonyms so in the study they are called the names they have chosen.

I also took part in a documentary film about the lives and experiences of prostitutes in Istanbul as an assistant and a translator which provided me with more contacts and with the opportunity to make observations and interviews in the central areas of prostitution such as Beyoğlu and Tarlabası which would have been dangerous and or inaccessible otherwise. Furthermore, I had the consent to use the whole content of the film for my thesis project which enhanced my data and diversity of the samples.

For the thesis project I interviewed nine prostitutes in total, two of them unrecorded. Written consents from the interviewees have been taken before the interviews. Interviews with seven of these participants were analyzed as the data of this study. One of them who is also my contact person for this project has not been actively working for fourteen years but is well-informed about the sector due to her work as the coordinator of a feminist association called Şefkat-Der. She helped me to find my contacts because the association is providing shelter or financial assistance to women who are prostituting because of poverty, domestic violence and other people forcing them to work. All of the interviews and recordings were made in Beyoğlu, in an environment already familiar to the subjects. Apart from the documentary film, a total of almost 5 hours of recording has been collected consisting of the narrations of seven subjects. Three of the subjects are transgendered prostitutes between the age of nineteen and forty-six. All of them are active in the business. The oldest of them was born in Germany to a Turkish immigrant family and is well-educated having health personnel certificates. The other two transgendered subjects are young and undereducated working mostly in Beyoğlu,

Tarlabaşı or Harbiye. The other four recorded interviews were made with biological women, three of whom are actively working in the sector. The one who is also my contact person is a forty three years old woman born in Germany. She was sold to a state brothel and worked for two and a half years in eight different brothels. She is not currently working in prostitution business but is involved in a feminist activist movement in Istanbul. The oldest of these four women has an eight year official prostitution history. She worked in Istanbul in the brothels of Manukyan and now she is still working to support her family in Taksim now unregistered. The youngest of the subjects is a young girl who has not been fully involved into the sector but she occasionally prostitutes in Taksim if she cannot support herself dancing or hostessing in the clubs. The last of the interviewees is a thirty-three years old woman who occasionally prostitutes for a very small amount of money in Istanbul.

The interviewees were asked the following questions:

1. Can you describe a typical day of yours?
2. Can you tell me about your working conditions?
3. Do you take care of your health?
4. Can you tell me about doctor examinations?
5. Have you ever had unwanted pregnancy and abortion?
6. What kind of precautions do you take not to get diseases?
7. Do you have body care?
8. Is it important to be groomed in this profession?
9. Do you get exposed to violence?
10. How is your relationship with other women in the brothel?
11. How is your relationship with the bosses?
12. How is your relationship with customers?

13. Can you describe the atmosphere of the brothel?
14. How do the state personnel treat you in state institutions?
15. Did you go through menopause? Can you describe that period?
16. For how many years do women work in brothels, when do they get retired?
17. What are the impacts of sex work on your body?
18. What does sex mean to you?
19. What do you feel about “family”?
20. What are the dreams of a prostitute?

The preliminary analysis of the data revealed that interviewees had common patriarchal patterns in their discourse. Therefore, the main focus of the research had become the reiteration and consolidation of patriarchal hegemony by the victims of this patriarchal system itself. Following chapters explore four questions given below:

Research Questions

- 1) What are the characteristics of womanhood defined by the prostitutes in this study?
- 2) What are the aspects of masculine domination from the perspective of prostitutes?
- 3) What are the characteristics of the discourse adopted by powerful, non-victimized prostitutes?
- 4) Why does prostitution with all its content constitute a significant subject of analysis within the framework of ‘Equal Citizenship Theory’?

The list of participants and background information about them has been given below to introduce the participants and make it easier to follow the extracts.

1. Ayşe, a former prostitute with two and a half years of state prostitution house experience, not working for fourteen years.
2. Fatoş has a state prostitution history and is currently working on streets
3. Bilge, a 36 years old transsexual, has been in the prostitution business for 22 years
4. Zeynep escaped from home at the age of 13 and has been involved in drug dealing, robbery and prostitution since then.
5. Serpil, an educated 36 year old female prostitute who can speak two foreign languages. She works in Beyoğlu without a pimp controlling her: Non-taped Data
6. Ayca, an 38 years old, unregistered prostitute, working in Istanbul for 10 years and specifically in Aksaray for three and a half years: Non-taped Data
7. Ece, a 45 years old transgendered prostitute born in Germany to a worker family. She has been a transsexual and a sex worker since 1987. She got trainings and health personnel certificates but she cannot find a job in health sector because of her sexual identity.

CHAPTER 3

ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMANHOOD ACCORDING TO PROSTITUTES

This work exposes the patriarchal discourse embedded in the narrations of prostitutes. In this chapter, the definition of womanhood is discussed and the characteristics of the ‘ideal’ woman are revealed while the criteria for deviancy from social norms are traced by analyzing how prostitutes position themselves and define or act out their womanhood. Three main concepts emerge as the core elements of womanhood: motherhood, wifehood and fragility. In this chapter, the definition of womanhood within these three concepts by the prostitutes is examined as one of the gears of male dominant social mechanism that serves for the consolidation of patriarchal social roles.

This chapter argues that the associations attributed to womanhood by dominant patriarchal ideology are reproduced by the women in the periphery. While prostitutes are the subjects of the least subtle form of male domination experiencing explicit execution of masculine power on their bodies, they fervently stick to the codes of patriarchal system ruled by male domination. What prostitutes in this study understand from being a woman and family and in what ways they seek social acceptance clearly show that those women dream of meeting the criteria to be a decent woman imposed by the patriarchal system against all odds.

Extract 1

Ayşe, a former prostitute with two and a half years of state prostitution house experience, not working for fourteen years

-Bu yoğun çalışma şartlarının bedeninize etkileri neler?

-Şu büroda bile oyuncak süs var bak, oyuncak bebek. Ben kanamalı ve kürtajlı çalışmaktan anne olamıyorum. Sekiz sefer kürtaj oldum, yarım saat sonra müşterinin altına yattım. En başta benden anneliği aldılar, hislerimi kaybettim, duygularımı kaybettim, karşımdaki insana güveni kaybettim.

-What are the impacts of these hard working conditions on your body?

-Even in this office, there is a toy, a doll. I cannot be a mother due to working in my menstruation periods and right after abortions without resting. I had 8 abortions and I lay under a customer just after half an hour. They took motherhood from me to begin with; I lost my feelings, my emotions. I lost trust to people.

The participant is asked about the effects of harsh working conditions in the state prostitution houses on her body. Though the question is about her 'body', the first thing she refers to is the dolls she has in the office she lives in to mourn her incapacity to give birth which resulted from bad working conditions in the prostitution house. This exposes the direct association of the body to motherhood. Female body is seen as an incubator as its *raison d'être*. This approach towards female body is compliant with dominant ideology which limits the functions of female body to reproductive purposes. Sexuality, therefore, loses its all connection with desire and pleasure. It becomes a powerful tool to reproduce the ideology confining women into the domestic sphere as an incubator, as a machine controlled by the male body. The fact that freedom of desire and pleasure is seen as concepts belonging to male domain is revealed by the fact that none of the interviewees mentions her loss of sexual desires or pleasures as the effect of prostitution on her body. Sexual desire and pleasure are reserved to male body and female body is seen as a means to satisfy this desire with no right to gain pleasure out of it.

The participant places the loss of motherhood capacity, loss of her emotions and trust in other people at the top of her list determining the effects of prostitution. It is striking that she gives priority to her emotional trauma over her citizenship rights or the collapse of social state although she is a political activist. When we look at the interview as a whole, it is clearly seen that the same participant states that she was beaten by the police, the pimps or her father many times and she was raped by her own uncle and police officers repeatedly. However; her physical wounds seem less significant to her than her emotional trauma. She does not talk about the effects of prostitution on her self-confidence, physical integrity and life security which normalize domestic violence on women and dependence of women on men. The most significant concern for a woman is then the protection of motherhood skills and feminine emotions as they constitute the major way for a woman to find a place in the society.

Answering the question regarding the effects of harsh working conditions in the state prostitution houses on her body, the participant also talks about her calluses which remind her old days even after 14 years out of the sector.

Extract 2

Ayşe, a former prostitute with two and a half years of state prostitution house experience, not working for fourteen years

-Böyle baktıkça (nasırlara) aklıma onlar (eski günler) geliyordu. Şu vaziyette yaşarken bile onlar beni engelliyordu. Kadınlıktan çıkıyorsun daha doğrusu. Ha dışta kadınsın ama gittikçe dominantlaşıyorsun. Erkeğe hayatında yer vermemeye başlıyorsun çünkü yer verdiğin zaman erkeğin senle ne yapacağını biliyorsun. O duygularınla oynayacağını biliyorsun.

-Every time I look at them (the calluses), they remind me of old days. Even under these circumstances, they obstruct me. You lose your femininity. You

are a woman from outside but you become more and more dominant. You keep men out of your life because you know what they will do to you if you let them in. You know that he will toy with your feelings.

She states that her experience as a prostitute has made her lose her womanhood.

What is important here is the way how she positioned womanhood and domination in a mutually exclusive relationship. When she loses her womanhood, she gets dominant in life. Womanhood is antithetical to domination because domination has always been attributed to men. This makes it clear that female body has been shaped as a docile and submissive one. Female body is seen as fragile and sensitive that is why the participant does not let men in her life any more after they hurt her feelings in all those years. This fragility of women concept has been fed by analogies such as 'women are like roses, they need love and care' widely used in the culture. The ideal woman has long been the one who needs care and protection from men. Such an attitude towards female body becomes a mask for male domination. The participant here clearly shares this attitude by considering herself not as a woman since she lacks this fragility and she does not want a man in her life.

To make another important point, the extracts below will exemplify how being a woman is understood as being a mother and a wife by the participants of this study. What makes those narrations significant is that they are uttered by a group who became prostitutes because of the reasons mostly related to family. Domestic violence, incest and lack of love are the main reasons why these individuals found themselves on streets. Given this fact, it is striking to see how they reinforce the gender roles exposed by the dominant ideology which victimized them in the first place. They seem to have accepted and internalized the social position ascribed to them by the male dominant cultural codes.

The participant mentioned above goes on to answer the question which asks about the effects of her profession on her body by mentioning the physical damage done by harsh working conditions in the sector.

Extract 3

Ayşe, a former prostitute with two and a half years of state prostitution house experience, not working for fourteen years

-Bacaklarda varis oluşması. Ha her kadında varis var hesabı yapılır ama biz hayat kadınlarında daha çok var. Şuraya on tane ben genelevde çalışan hayat kadını getireyim onunda da varis görürsünüz. On tane ev kadını getireyim birinde görürsünüz. Dokuzunda yoktur.

-Varicose formation on the legs. It is true that every woman has varicose but prostitutes have more. If I bring ten prostitutes from state brothels, you will see varicose on nine of them. But if I bring ten housewives, you will see varicose on only one of them. The other nine do not have varicose.

She talks about varicose resulting from standing for long hours on high heels and the comparison she makes to explain the gravity of the situation is significant. She compares the possibility of varicose formation between prostitutes and housewives. The choice of housewives as the opposite party in the comparison demonstrates how house is defined as the ideal place for women. The self and other dichotomy works here as the prostitute versus the housewife dichotomy, the cursed and the sacred. This is a reflection of the perspective that sees women as domestic beings. The participant does not come up with occupations such as a doctor, a white collar worker or any other job which does not involve standing up for long hours by its nature. No matter how prestigious they are, those occupations are not seen as options by the women in the periphery. This proves the fact that the patriarchal system leaves women with no alternatives other than it provides and one of the most striking points

made above emerges again. The victims who suffer from this male dominant system in various ways are at the same time the ones who reproduce it most strongly. The idea that a woman's main reason of existence is to get married, give birth and build up a family can be clearly seen as the common point in the interviews.

In addition to be seen as fragile and emotional beings that should be protected in the domestic sphere, women have another core attribute, which is motherhood. Except for one, all of the interviewees bring up the notion of motherhood when they talk about their womanhood. It is like a part of the definition. Motherhood is involved in the whole package that comes with being a woman along with fragility, sensitiveness and emotionality. The fact that motherhood is uttered by almost all of the participants in this study shows how engrained the gender roles are in the society.

Another prostitute who took part in the study states that she doesn't know what it is to be a woman as she has never tasted it. What is significant in the extract below is that she depicts the ideal life of a woman which involves being a mother, a grandmother who goes to picnic and has barbecue with her family. She does not feel like a woman because she could never have such a life. This participant makes one of the most obvious associations between womanhood and motherhood in the extract below.

Extract 4

Fatos has a state prostitution history and is currently working on streets

-Kadınlık güzel bir şey. Ama kader mi diyeyim şans mı diyeyim. Onu yaşayamadığımdan bilmiyorum. Başkalarını görüyorum çocuğu yanında kızı yanında torunu yanında. Geziyor eğleniyor, mangalını yakıyor, denize gidiyor. Ama ben bunların hiç birini yapamıyorum. Annelik duygularımı hiç kimseye gösteremiyorum. Zaten kızım bana anne dediği zaman kızımı ben düşman gibi görüyorum. Kendi annem aklıma geliyor. Şimdi evladımı

seviyorum ama anne kelimesine ben dayanamıyorum. Anne sevgisi görmedim ben.

-Being a woman is nice. But, either call it destiny or luck, I do not know how it feels to be a woman as I have never experienced it. I see other people with their daughters, their grandchildren. They have fun, go on trips, have barbeque and swim in the sea. But I can't do any of them. I can't show the mother inside me to anyone. I even see my daughter as an enemy when she calls me mom. It reminds me of my own mother. Now I love my daughter but I can't stand hearing the word 'mother'. I never had maternal love from my mother.

The interview question was “Kadın olmak size ne hissettiriyor?”, “how does it make you feel to be a woman?”. The answer extracted above makes it clear how womanhood is directly associated with motherhood. Fatoş hates the word mother even when her daughter calls her, because she was not only deprived of proper love from her own mother but she also can not be a proper mother to her daughter. She both feels herself victimized because her mother did not fulfill her duties given by the society as a mother, she also feels guilty because she can not reflect her feelings as a mother on her own daughter.

This self conflict may be the reason why Fatoş constantly struggles in the prostitution sector under very harsh conditions to meet the needs of her daughter and grandson as stated below.

Extract 5

Fatoş has a state prostitution history and is currently working on streets

-Bu işi bırakayım diye çok düşündüm ama düşündüğünde olmuyor. Kızım yanımda, onun çocuğu var, onu okutuyorum. Kendi evim olmadığı için.

Kiralar ateş pahası. Yeme içme masrafı, okul masrafı, çok pahalı yani. Kızımın ikinci evliliği, çok borca girdi.

-I considered quitting many times and you can't make it real just with considering. My daughter lives with me. She has her own child. I finance his school expenses. I do not have a place of my own. Rents are very expensive. Food expenses, school expenses, I mean, it is very costly. This is the second marriage of my daughter and she has lots of debts.

Even though her daughter is married, young and capable of working, just like her husband, Fatoş raises herself as the main breadwinner just to fulfill her duties as a mother. She puts no blame on her daughter and son-in-law, who know what she does to support them and who seem fine with it. Her daughter does not work despite the debt they got into while getting married and the fact that Fatoş prostitutes under very harsh conditions to pay off those debts as a mother can be interpreted as the reproduction of gender roles. The ideal woman who still has her chastity, fragility and therefore decency should be protected in the domestic sphere but by her mother this time. This masculine position of the participant does not come from her economic independence but from her motherhood. She becomes dominant in a sphere just to make sure she fulfills her duties as a mother. What is significant is that no matter how much the society excludes them, the outcast women in the periphery still continue to perform the duties imposed on them by the same society. The extract also shows how the participant is trapped in this mother-daughter relationship as if it was a indispensable and irrevocable connection.

Even more interesting, the only reason for her to detach herself from this connection which is clearly a heavy burden on her is her future shame when her grandson grows up and finds out her job as the next extract demonstrates:

Extract 6

Fatos has a state prostitution history and is currently working on streets

- Kızınız ya da damadınızdan bir geliriniz yok mu?

- Hayır. Ben yardımcı oluyorum. Bırakmayı düşünüyorum ama. Kızın borcu bitene kadar. Ondan sonra kendilerine göre bir ev tutsunlar. Yarın bir gün bu çocuk büyüyecek. Ben o çocuğun yüzüne nasıl bakarım, erkek çocuk.

-Your daughter or son-in-law does not have any income?

-No. I support them. I am considering quitting this job but... until the debts of my daughter end. I wish they rent a place of their own. One day this boy will grow up. How can I face this child, he is male.

This picture actually is a perfect example of the position of women in the society who are silenced and forced to accept their 'destiny', who are taught to sacrifice everything, even their bodies, to show their complete dedication to their families. When her chastity, which is a precondition of social acceptance for a woman, is gone, no matter for what reason, no matter who is responsible for that, she is the one who has to bear the shame. The participant earns money and she can support her life much more easily if she rejects to fulfill her responsibilities as a mother, which, in her case, takes a form of exploitation, however it is not even a considerable option. The only reason to walk out of such a painful relationship is again familial. The participant pays the school expenses of her grandson, pays the rent and meet food expenses of the house just to build a proper family atmosphere for her daughter and grandson but she has no right to love them and be near them in the future just

because she had a 'shameful' life and she does not want to contaminate her grandson's life with this shame.

One of the most interesting extracts is the one taken from an interview with a transsexual prostitute. Her statements serve as a proof of how gender roles have nothing to do with biology but they are socially constructed. The participant, as a transsexual, marks motherhood as the indispensable part of womanhood which shows that the requirement for reproduction is not biologically driven but it is imposed on women by heteronormative patriarchal ideology.

The following extracts will support the argument that the only way of social acceptance/existence for women is through gaining a position in a family established within a heterosexual relationality.

Extract 7

Bilge, a 36 years old transsexual, has been in the prostitution business for 22 years

-Hayatta en çok yapmak isteyip de yapamadığın şey ne?

-Sana bir şey söyleyeyim mi? Eğer eşcinsel olduğunu biliyorlarsa.. Sence bir erkek bir travestiyle ya da bir transseksüelle niye beraber olur? Rahat olduğu için, parayı onda gördüğü için. Normal bir kadın olsa der ki, bana çocuk verir, yuva verir, aile verir ama biz ne vericez? Hiçbir şey. Sadece para.

-What is it that you want to do most but you can't?

-Let me tell you something. If they know that you are homosexual...why do you think a man wants to be with a transvestite or transsexual? Because it is comfortable, he finds money with them. If she was a normal woman, he thinks, she would give me a child, a home a family but what can we give to them? Nothing. Just money.

Above statements clearly demonstrate that womanhood is only valued if a woman has the ability to give birth and create a family. The social role ascribed to women is internalized by a transsexual and even dreamed of as the ideal way of being. Bilge, as a transsexual individual, repeatedly claimed that she is a woman both physically and under law. She highlighted that she has a pink ID card -the identity card given by the state to the transsexuals after they have sex-reassignment surgery to make them officially women- and she is a complete woman more than once during the interview. However, it can be clearly seen in the above statements that she finds a lack in herself, which is reproductive ability. She does not find herself worthy of being married depending on the criteria identifying the marriageable women. This exposes how reproductive capacity is marked as the essential core of womanhood. Despite her fervent claims of being a woman with a pink ID and a vagina, she at the same time contradictorily compares herself with 'normal' woman who is capable of giving a baby to the man. She is certain that the only motivation of a man to be with a transsexual is for financial benefit. Her understanding and justifying attitude towards this intention is the indication of the strict codes which determine social roles based on reproduction.

Just like the first two interviewees mentioned above, Bilge also associates womanhood directly to motherhood and family. A position in a family is seen as the essential requirement for a social position. Similar to the Extract 5 and 6 which shows the woman's inextricable bond with her family, Bilge also stresses repeatedly the sacredness of family even though she was exposed to domestic violence and her family turned their back on her because of her sexual orientation. The following extract shows this inherent association between womanhood and motherhood.

Extract 8

Bilge, a 36 years old transsexual, has been in the prostitution business for 22 years

-Eşcinsel olmayıp da böyle evlenmek, çoluk çocuğun olması torunlarımın olması. Erkek olsaydım öyle isterdim. Eşcinsel olup mesela şimdi evlensem çocuğum olmasa bile mutlu bir yuvam olsa, mutlu bir kocam olsa. Ben evde otursam, ya da ben de çalışsam o da çalışsa. Özlem duyduğum çocuk, koca. Aile gibisi var mı?

-I wish I weren't homosexual and I could marry, have kids, grandchildren. I would wish that if I were a man. Being homosexual, I wish to marry and have a happy family, a happy husband, even without children. I wish I did not work or I wish that both I and my husband worked. What I long for is a child, a husband. Is there anything like family?

Bilge goes further to say that she would prefer to be a man rather than being an incomplete woman because then she could have a family, children and grandchildren which make a person acceptable in the society. This statement not only shows the deeply rooted gender roles and cultural norms of respectability, it also shows the heteronormative domination in the society. A transsexual individual prefers not being homosexual in the first place to be capable of creating a family which shows that family is seen as a domain of heterosexual relationality entailing a man and a woman having reproductive capacities. Bilge is a significant example because she embodies both gender roles. She tells what she would want from life if she remained a man, getting married, children and grandchildren and she also makes remarks on her dreams as a woman to have a family, be a housewife and have children. Same expectations from two different sexes inhabiting the same body at different times strongly prove that family and reproduction as the ultimate target in life is not only a biologically driven concern but it is also an outcome of a historical process.

The last extracts for this chapter are from the interviewee who ran away from home when she was thirteen and has been in the prostitution sector since then. She is asked for her reasons to run away and her answers involve striking contradictions about her family life which shows the significance of family for the women and for their positions in the society.

Extract 9

Zeynep escaped from home at the age of 13 and has been involved in drug dealing, robbery and prostitution since then.

-13 yaşında evden kaçma sebebin ne?

-Bana olan ilgilerini göstermiyorlardı. Benim babam beni çok sever, annem hani benim için ölürdü. Gerçi üvey annem ama onu öz annem gibi gördüm. Beni büyüttü, kendi çocuğunun sütünü bana vermiş bir insan. Ama ne bileyim yani herkesin değeri gittikten sonra anlaşılıyor. Mesela hani biz kürdüz. Çok sıkıyorlardı, bildiğin gibi değil. Beni 13 yaşında evlendirmeye kalktılar. Ben istemediğim bir adamla hayatta evlenmem. Sonuçta ben onla aynı yatağı paylaşacağım, aynı evi paylaşacağım, ömrüm onun olacak.

- What is the reason that made you escape from home?

- They did not show me that they cared about me. My father loves me very much, and my mother would die for me. She is my step mother but I've seen her as my real mom. She raised me, she gave me the milk reserved for her own child. But, how should I put it, everything is valued after it is gone. For instance, you know, we are Kurdish. They were too strict, you cannot imagine. They tried to marry me off at 13. I never marry a man that I do not love. In the end, I will share my bed with him, my home. My life will be his.

Extract 10

Zeynep escaped from home at the age of 13 and has been involved in drug dealing, robbery and prostitution since then.

-Aile içi şiddet ya da tacize uğradın mı?

-Tacize aile içinde uğramadım ama şiddet gördüm, haddinden fazla. Okuldan da aldılar.

- Have you ever been exposed to domestic violence or sexual abuse?
- Not sexual abuse but I have been exposed to violence, beyond measure.
They also removed me from school.

In these extracts, the interviewee reveals a striking conflict. The happy family portrait she draws in the beginning does not comply with her remarks about how restrictive her family was towards her. She has the illusion that her father and her mother love her very much while they try to force her into an unwanted marriage and make her drop out of school. Her overall idea about family and fatherhood even after all beatings and her being made to leave school by her family clearly demonstrates how sacred and untouchable family and father figure are. As women are positioned in the domestic sphere and family is the first and foremost domain that they can be accepted, Zeynep's normalization of the violence she was exposed to by her family can be interpreted as the proof of women's oppression.

The use of 'mesela, hani', 'for example, as you know' with the statement 'biz Kürdüz', 'we are Kurdish' by the interviewee to explain the conservatism of her family shows that she accepts the conservative, oppressing and male dominant family structure as given. The discourse marker 'hani', 'as you know', implies that Zeynep assumes the fact that she is Kurdish hence comes from a conservative community is a shared information by both herself and the interviewer. This reproduces the conservative cultural norms oppressive about women as a widely known and accepted fact. She implies that the violence in her house does not result from lack of love but it is only a part of their cultural organization. That is why she is so sure about her parents' love despite of their maltreatment. Let alone accusing a

party of violation of human rights, the violent act itself is not considered as a crime. In this case, it is hardly surprising that most of the women subjected to domestic violence do not take any action against the doer of the violent deed. Her attribution of woman suppression - such as their being deprived of education rights, forced to get married at an early age or being exposed to domestic violence- to ethnocultural reasons shows that male domination has been naturalized by the victims of the male dominant system.

In the extracts 9 and 10, we can see another clear proof of the fact that motherhood is not actually a biologically driven phenomenon but a package of culturally determined duties. Zeynep's love for her step mother as she fed her with her milk by not reserving it to her natural child once more highlights the nurturing duties ascribed to women by the social norms. The expectations from a woman are made clear by all interviewees above. The definition of womanhood is charged with motherhood, being a wife and submission/silence by the prostitutes suffering most from the strict definition of gender roles. Just as the first three interviewees define their womanhood within the limits of a family, Zeynep also positions herself as a daughter and a future wife. Even though she ran away not to marry the man her family chose, she obediently accepts the rule of his father as the decision maker by being so sure about her father's love for her. When the statement is analyzed in detail, it is realized that the reason why she ran away is that she does not love the man. She is not concerned about her tender age, her future or her right to determine her own destiny. Marriage is set as the ultimate aim for a young woman, as a unique and sacred phenomenon and the dream of a happy marriage and long-lasting family becomes the motive to rise against her father's decision. She runs away because she does not think that she can 'dedicate her life' to that man. Once more, we see the role

of woman as the servant of the male figure. Zeynep escapes from the rule of one male figure, her father, dreaming the domination of another one, her future husband.

All ten extracts discussed above clearly demonstrates that family and marriage is seen as the only way for a woman to exist in the society. Zeynep, just like the other three interviewees, mourns her loss of family. All of the interviewees in this section complains more about losing the chance to have a place in a family or build a family of their own than about their profession and working conditions, lack of life insurance or security or the outcomes of her lack of education.

For this chapter on ‘womanhood’, different extracts from four participants have been chosen to show how womanhood is defined in this community. The analysis of the data demonstrates that the prostitution community constitutes a microcosm of the dominant system. The social codes that define womanhood remain the same for the women in the social extremities. In an attempt to deconstruct this definition, this work exposes three main aspects, motherhood, fragility and being a wife. These features are the same with the ones inscribed on female body by dominant ideology to socially construct it as a docile body in domestic sphere. Considering this construction, it is hardly surprising that sexual desire and pleasures, having a profession, a political stance, preferences or interests have not been brought up by any interviewees as a topic of interview. The interviewees define them as woman or not-woman by the deeply rooted codes provided by the dominant system even though they are the victims of the same system. This picture clearly shows that reasoning, decision making, having agency and making choices are characteristics reserved for men. Women in the prostitution community, on the other hand, are so silenced and suppressed that they cannot even imagine an alternative way of life other than the one idealized by the system as the counterpart of their miserable life.

CHAPTER 4

ASPECTS OF MASCULINE DOMINATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF PROSTITUTES

In this study, 'Masculine domination' is composed of two different but related figures, the Father and other dominant male figures. This chapter shows how the participants reproduce the Godlike father figure created by patriarchal ideology. The holiness of the Father remains intact regardless of how alcoholic, abusive or violent he is. This chapter discusses how gender roles are distributed in the society. The comparisons made by the participants between the mother and father demonstrate what they expect and do not expect from a mother on one hand and the father on the other. These expectations obviously shape the determination of the mother as the guilty part of the story and keep the sacred father figure intact.

The 'other dominant male figure' refers to the male figures other than father such as husbands, partners, police officers and clients. This section explores how male dominance becomes embedded in the prostitution community through various power relations, explicit and subtle, in addition to kinship. It is argued that the prostitutes who have power attain this power through the means used by male domination, either using the power by themselves like selling other women or keeping some men having this power close to them. What is more, those who lack such power grieve this lack and try to find a way to obtain it through heteronormative marriage, for instance.

Patriarchy is by definition a social system which is ruled by male authority figures and in this system family constitutes the smallest organization in which fathers have control over women, children and property. Starting with the birth of a child, gender roles and patriarchal hierarchy are inscribed on her/him through implicit or explicit

signs. As motherhood has been identified with care and nurturing skills, fragility/emotionality and domesticity, fatherhood has been associated with bread-winning, physical strength and public sphere. Family is the first domain where male figures internalize these gender-based social codes and they carry them further into their own marriages and jobs. Confinement of women to domestic sphere starting from family creates and constantly reproduces the private/public dichotomy between men and women. Despite the written laws making every individual equal in modern states, deeply-rooted cultural codes ruled by patriarchal patterns make women second class citizens in practice. This study exposes how these cultural codes have been internalized by the individuals who are oppressed by this patriarchal system and pushed to the periphery. No matter how far one goes from the center, the central ideology remains intact and carries the codes to the extremities.

Due to these associations ascribed to fatherhood mentioned above, the physical force used by the father over their wives or children, or their not providing love and care to their family is ignored as long as they fulfill their duties as breadwinners. As patriarchy is the rule of the Father, fathers have a privileged position in the social order. This privilege is not something that should be analyzed from top to bottom, rather, to see the operation of patriarchy, individuals and their performances should be scrutinized. The narratives of the prostitutes in this study which seem highly personal actually represent the overall picture of a male dominant society. Cultural embeddedness of patriarchy exposes itself in the interview data through the statements of prostitutes regarding maternal and paternal roles, the definition of family and position of women.

It is even more striking to observe that the Father does not necessarily acquire a prestigious position in the family or in the society in general through usage of

physical violence. It is true that a significant number of interviewees talks about domestic violence from the father, but it is also true that some of them hardly mention them in the whole interview while giving a detailed and blaming description of their mothers. The absence of father from the intra-family conflicts marks him as an inaccessible domination figure fully present but never accountable to other family members. This proves that the domination of the father is not actually reproduced or consolidated by fathers themselves but by the women, wives or daughters, dominated by the fathers. This tacit agreement between family members proves that when male domination in a society is established by its members as a social norm, the physical violence becomes redundant for the sustainability of the patriarchal system and thus the laws against male violence becomes useless. Father figure constitutes an important part of this chapter because the father automatically acquires his prestigious position starting from the moment he is born as a male regardless of whether he has any kind of power or whether he uses this power to suppress women, or not.

As mentioned earlier, family is the first and the most significant ground that male domination is established and reproduced. The husband figure, real or imaginary, takes over the dominating power from the father and keeps it going in the domestic sphere at first and then in the whole social organization. It is striking that the positioning of a husband and expectations from him by a woman is the same for both a woman who is already living under the domination of a husband and another one who is dreaming about having a husband. This clearly shows that husbands do not necessarily acquire power through their deeds in the domestic sphere but they are born into this dominating position. This male hegemony does not merely result from

the sense of fear or threat that male power causes women to feel, but it results more from widely accepted cultural codes that have naturalized male domination.

This section additionally elaborates on authority figures that are either male figures enjoying the already existing privileged social position or female figures becoming powerful by appropriating male power for their own benefits. It is not always males that have and practice power on women but in plenty of cases women are suppressed by their own mothers, sisters, stepsisters or stepmothers/mothers-in-law. Even if the doer of the violent acts changes, the type of power used is always the masculine power. The authority figures are not only detected from the characters depicted by the interviewees in the interviews but they are implicitly exposed by the interviewees themselves, as well.

The first extract is from Fatoş, who is actively working in prostitution sector to support her daughter and grandson. Even her definition of the father figure is not very clear, her description of the mother figure and the position of the mother in the domestic affairs determines the untouchable and privileged position of the father. This extract is also significant in that it shows how a female figure has to masculinize herself to be an authority figure by oppressing other female figures in the private sphere by resorting to coercive force which is associated with manhood.

Extract 11

Fatoş has a state prostitution history and is currently working on streets

- Aile kavramı size ne ifade ediyor?

- Ben aile hayatı yaşamadım. Çocukluğum yoklukla geçti. Babam alkoliğin tekiydi. Annem şiddet gören bir kişiydi. Kardeşlerimle anneme.. rahmetli bir kardeşim vardı o. Küçük yaşta kaneviçe deriz bilir misiniz, küçük yaşta yapardık. Parasıyla. Dikiş nakış kursuna gidiyordum zaten. Kardeşlerim bana öyle mesajlar yollamışlar ki, o kadar aşağılamışlar ki. Annemin yaptığı hataları şöyle diyorum bir kaset yapsam, doldursam kardeşlerime yollasam.

Beni suçlama annemi suçla. Acaba nasıl can verecek. O kadar çok şeyler yaşadım ki... Babam hayatta, o benim her şeyimdi. Babamı hayatta suçlamam çünkü evleneceğim kişinin geçmişini, geleceğini, her şeyini bildiği için anneme vermem dedi. Annem camları kırdı vericem dedi. Anne zoruyla olan bir işti.

- What does family mean to you?

I never had a family life. My childhood passed in poverty. My father was an alcoholic. My mother was a person exposed to violence. My sister and I ... I had a sister who passed away... We used to make, they call embroidery canvases, you know when we were little. For money. I was already taking sewing classes. My sisters sent me these terrible messages, they insulted me so much that... I sometimes think of recording my mother's mistakes in a cassette, and sending it to my sisters. Do not blame me, blame my mother. I wonder how she will die. I went through so much. My father is still alive, he is everything to me. I never blame my father because he told my mother that he would not let this man marry me knowing his background, his future, his everything. My mother just broke the glasses and told that she would give me away. I was forced into it by my mother.

In this extract the interviewee is asked “Aile kavramı size ne ifade ediyor?”, “What does family mean to you?”. The usage of ‘Annem şiddet gören bir kişiydi’, ‘my mother was a person who was subjected to violence’ not only obscures the doer of the violent act but also creates a feeling of detachment for the interviewee from the action itself. It is expressed as if the violence was a natural phenomenon occurred in a time and place without any reason and outcomes, having no history. It seems similar to the neutralizing power of some terms frequently used by mass media and in feminist literature, as well. ‘Domestic violence’ (Aile içi Şiddet) or ‘violence against women’ (Kadına Yönelik Şiddet) also obscure the doer of the violent act who are male figures in many cases and therefore diminishes the accountability of men to

the women. Such normalization of violence against women gives men social, political and legal immunity for their deeds.

The interviewee does not use such an obscuration for the deeds of her mother. The mother is the party who is obviously and fervently blamed for the tragedies in the life of the interviewer. The facts that the mother and the daughters had to work to make a living, and that one of the children of the mother had died are significant details here. These details may or may not be a clue to explain why the mother forced the interviewee to an unwanted marriage so insistently but what is more important is that the interviewee does not even consider these factors before rendering a judgment about her. Women, no matter which conditions they live under, have to fulfill their motherhood duties and when they fail to do so, there is no one to be blamed but them. This clearly demonstrates the strictly shaped, taboo-like cultural norms which silence women and even assimilates them into powerful signifiers of the patriarchal system. The type of violence used by the mother who breaks the glasses in the house to push the father and the interviewee to accept this marriage can be interpreted as the symbol of irrationality associated with womanhood. In this case the father has lost his powerful position in the domestic sphere to the mother who appropriated the violent and suppressive characteristics of male domination to suppress her daughter. Therefore it can be said that even though the mother is powerful, her power is confined in the domestic sphere and the mother uses it to discipline a female body just like male domination does.

The fact that the war in the domestic sphere goes on between the interviewee, her sisters and the mother completely excludes the father from the conflict. The interviewee raises the mother as the guilty party in the family relationship to persuade her sisters to stop blaming her for becoming a prostitute but to blame the

mother instead. This is significant because while the sisters are blaming Fatos for becoming a prostitute and Fatoş is blaming the mother for it, the father goes untouched in this conflict. He is not even an addressee, let alone being accountable to anyone. Here we see that it is not actually the dominant groups but the suppressed groups who reiterate the dominant ideology by creating intragroup conflicts based on the established cultural norms. The fact that father figure has unquestionable authority while the mother is constantly monitored and scrutinized to check if she is being an appropriate mother and wife, or not clearly shows that female body is under constant control. The guardians of this controlling mechanism are not necessarily male figures. The operation of the mechanism also depends heavily on female figures who have undergone this disciplining process before. It becomes a vicious circle in the above abstract in which the mother disciplines her daughter by acquiring power in domestic sphere and in return the daughter blames the mother for not being a good mother. Both victims become servers of the dominant patriarchal system turning it into male hegemony. Internalization of patriarchal codes by female figures can also be supported with another abstract by the same interviewee.

In chapter 3, in extract 6, Fatoş performs the submissive female role by accepting to leave her family willingly not to dishonor her grandson. In the statement, she says “Yarın bir gün bu çocuk büyüyecek. Ben o çocuğun yüzüne nasıl bakarım, erkek çocuk” (he will grow up sooner or later. How can I look at his face, he is a boy). For the interviewee, the reason for her being ashamed of looking at her grandson’s face is his being male. The rhetorical question “nasıl yüzüne bakarım” (How can I look at his face) marks the shame of the woman as a well accepted situation. There is nothing to be questioned as it is the way it should be. As the statement reflecting the acceptance of shame and guilt is followed by the explanation

of the reason, “erkek çocuk” (he is a boy), it also leads to the acceptance of male domination. Maleness is marked as a natural source of authority. That is male power is not something acquired thorough physical power, rather it is something innate as it is seen in the power of a little boy-the grandson- incapable of physical violence. Masculine domination therefore comes with the birth and reconstructed over and over again by performances of male and female figures.

The interviewee prostitutes to support her family, to fulfill her motherhood duties and she cannot stop prostitution because of this inextricable bound between mother and child. On the other hand, she agrees to stop being a part of a family which is the only domain of existence for a woman to protect the honor of a male figure. This clearly defines the role of a woman, besides being a mother, to act appropriately as she is the indicator of a man’s honor which makes female body a property of men. Female body and its performances are strictly shaped by patriarchal codes.

The following extract is from the interview with Bilge, a transsexual prostitute. It exemplifies how prostitutes have submitted to cultural codes which make them outcasts. This extract provides very rich material regarding father figure, male domination and definition of woman. The interviewee is a transsexual prostitute disowned by her family due to her sexual orientation.

Her statements about her first sexual intercourse are the reflection of the general attitude of the society to rape. The dichotomy of the penetrated and the penetrator works here as well. Sexual intercourse is constructed as the domain of heterosexual male domination displayed through penetration.

Extract 12

Bilge, a 36 years old transsexual, has been in the prostitution business for 22 years

-İlk seks kaç yaşında yaşadın?

-12 yaşında vallahi yaptılar. Ev sahibimizin oğluyla oldu. Ayy ne güzel.

-Sana bir nevi tecavüz etti?

- Tabii, hem de tuvalette.

- Yani bir nevi şikayet etsen, o cezaevine giriyordu.

-Hem de sapıklıktan.

-Ama etmedin.

- Eder miyim? Analığım yakaladı babama söyledi, babam da beni döve döve öldürdü (gülüyor). Ama bir ay sonra unuttu, bu çocuk cahil ne yaptığını bilmiyor diyerekten.

-When was the first time you had sex?

-They did it when I was 12, believe me. It was with our landlord's son. Ohh, what nice.

-So he raped you in a way?

-Of course, in the toilet.

-So if you had filed a complaint against him, he would have been arrested.

-Not to say, of perversity.

-But you did not.

-How would I? My step mother caught us and told my father. He beat me to death (laughing). But he forgot everything after a month. He thought that this boy was uneducated, did not know what he was doing.

Bilge was a homosexual male during the time of rape. Being a male is not enough to have power in the society, you also have to be masculine and heterosexual with penetrating capacity. Bilge loses his male identity, therefore his power holding position due to his homosexuality but in the mean time he cannot fully acquire a female identity due to her lack of reproductive skills as we see in extract 7. What is more interesting is that Bilge as a homosexual in the past and a transsexual now

defines homosexual intercourse as perversity. She thinks that if she filed a complaint about him, the man who raped her would be sent to prison for perversity, not for rape. Just like Bilge's earlier statements in Extract 8, this definition clearly shows the heterosexist male domination in the society which interpellates its members into subjects serving for the reproduction of the system by creating a consciousness that any type of sexuality other than heterosexual love is perversity.

One of the most significant authority figures in this extract is the step mother. She finds out about the rape or the homosexual relation-the intercourse is repeated more than once- and she tells the father about it which causes the interviewee to be beaten to death by the father. This is very common in the society as the mother-in-laws, sister-in-laws or stepmothers often appropriate masculine power and use violence on women in the domestic sphere. This once more constitutes an example for the masculinization of female figures to become a power holder. This masculinization gives them a position in the middle of the dominant and dominated so that they gain a secondary power-holder position in the domestic sphere.

The depiction of the Father figure in this extract who beats Bilge when he learns about the rape shows that fathers are one of the most effective tools of the dominant ideology, which establish and protect the heterosexual male domination in the society. Penetration becomes a male right and the fact that a woman or a man does not want to be penetrated does not enforce any sanction on the penetrator. The fact that Bilge does not consider filing a complaint not because her father beat her but because of the possibility of being beaten by him is an example of silencing of women. The acceptance and even normalization of male violence wipes out the slightest possibility of creating counter power. The most striking point in this extract is that the father is marked as a mighty figure that has the right to punish her child

and then forgive her because of an action which she is not responsible for. The construction of female body -feminine body would be more accurate in this case- is performed by male body. Therefore, male body is a disciplining mechanism which constantly tries to create docile bodies which will perform as the servant of the system to reproduce the heterosexual patriarchal ideology just like Bilge who defines homosexual love as perversity and who seek forgiveness from his father accepting the guilt of being ‘castrated’.

The way that Bilge constructs her father as an authority figure and idolize him can be seen more clearly in the following extract.

Extract 13

Bilge, a 36 years old transsexual, has been in the prostitution business for 22 years

-Okusaydın ne olmak isterdin?

-Ne olmak isterdim? Ne bileyim. Avukat olmak isterdim, doktor olmak isterdim. En çok da polis olmak isterdim biliyor musun? Babam polisti. Emekli. Bayramlarda tüylerim diken diken olurdu. Ne bileyim aile gibisi yok. Şu an babam dese ki affediyorum seni gel dese giderim. Gittim uzaktan ağrı gördüm. Saçları bembeyaz olmuş. Hasta olsa giderim. Her türlü yardımı yaparım ama ortama giremem evine giremem. Üvey annemle aram iyiydi, şimdi kötü. Gizli gizli geliyordu gidiyordu. Simdi diyor ki baban diyor beni seninle konuştuğumu duyunca dövüyor. Gözüm açık giderse aileden gider.

-Çat kapı gitsen?

-Aaa. Ölümüm olur, yani bile bile gidiyorsun yani. Hani bir arabaya binersin olume bile bile gaza basarsın olume gidersin ya. Öyle ölüme giderim.

-What would you like to be, if you had gone to school?

-What would I like to be? I don't know. I would like to be lawyer, a doctor. But you know what? I would like to be a police officer most. My father was a police officer. A retired one. On Bayrams (religious holidays) I used to get

goose bumps. I don't know. There is nothing like family. If my father now told me "I forgive you, come back home", I would go. I went to see my father from a distance. His hair got all white. I will go if he gets ill. I will do whatever I can to help him but I can't go into the family, to his house. I was on good terms with my step mother but now we are not. She used to visit me now and then. Now she says that my father beats her when he finds out that she is visiting me. If I die in remorse, it is for my family.

-What if you go out of the blue?

- Ohh! It will be my death; I mean going to death intentionally. Imagine that you are getting into a car and speed up to kill yourself. That would be the same thing for me.

The way Bilge answers the question "okusaydın ne olmak isterdin?", "what would you like to be if you could have got education?" is very telling about the embeddedness of male domination through canonization of the Father. To answer the question, she first lists socially prestigious professions such as being a doctor or a lawyer. These professions are telling also in that they are the authority figures in the lives of prostitutes. Their understanding of power is obviously shaped by the authority figures they are exposed to which shows the restrictedness of their social development, their confinement to the extremity with limited alternatives. The admiration to these two professions is significant because doctors and lawyers are the people who have power on the lives of prostitutes. The prostitutes admire the doctors who protect their bodies from diseases or give them clearance report which enables them to work officially in brothels and the lawyers who keep them away from prison. Considering these, it can be said that authority figures are defined by the interviewee as the people who protect them and who have control on their bodies. This complies with the argument of the womanhood definition as fragility. As argued in the womanhood chapter, female body is defined as a fragile body needed to be protected

and this protection is provided by male figures that own and protect female body as a property. This argument was supported by the extracts from the interviewees who dream of a husband who they will dedicate their life. Similarly the dream of becoming a doctor and a lawyer shows that power is defined by the prostitutes as the capacity to control/protect female body.

Another striking point in this extract is that she raises ‘police officer’ as the profession she would like to have most. Police officer becomes her dream-job just because it is her father’s profession. Being a policeman is precious for Bilge because it gets its value from the prestige of her father. What is more striking here is that being a police officer is made valuable and desirable by an individual who is constantly subjected to violence by police officers as part of her profession. The way Bilge depicts herself as a woman waiting for forgiveness by her father and watching him from a distance as if she had no right to be near him and a part of his family like an evil-doer demonstrates how she submitted to the cultural codes which blame her for being ‘derailed’ and position her as a discredited outcast. Interestingly enough, she takes the Father as the only authority to account for. The Father is marked as the dominant figure who is the only person that can give Bilge her position back in the family and this proves once more that family is the domain of the Father. The usage of possessive ‘his’ for the family house clearly defines the family as a property and marks the father as the owner of it and Bilge cannot enter this property without his father’s permission.

The nostalgic statements of the interviewee about her past family life and her mourning the loss of her position in this family supports the argument that women are positioned as domestic beings and family is the only domain that they can exist. The way she diverts the question which has nothing to do with family to her

nostalgia about family life and doing this just after mentioning her father clearly build a connection between the Father and his determining role in defining Bilge's status in this family. The fact that 'Ne bileyim aile gibisi yok', 'I do not know how to say, there is nothing in life like family' is immediately followed by her seeking for forgiveness from the Father defines family as a sacred place and marks the father as the endower of the right to be a part of this sacred place. She does not ask forgiveness from the step mother, sisters or brothers which shows that the guilt she feels is actually socially constructed. She feels the guilt imposed on her by the society just like Fatoş who are ready to leave their family behind being ashamed of facing her grandson in the future. Bilge, and Fatoş too, seek acceptance from male figures which shows that their feeling of guilt is not a genuine feeling but it is a learned state of mind.

The last point to make about this extract is that the interviewee normalizes the violence used by the Father against herself and the step mother. Bilge tells in detail how her father will kill her if she dares to go and see him. Her step mother is also beaten by him just because she talks to Bilge. She depicts a father figure who use violence against female figures in the family and who disowns his child due to her sexual orientation but what is interesting is that she never puts any blame on her father for anything. Such normalization of violence used by male figures which can also be seen in the other interviewees is a part of the process through which male domination turns into male hegemony.

In the following extract Ayşe, who worked in seven different state prostitution houses for two and a half years, constitutes an example of how male domination is reproduced constantly through family institution. Surname becomes a

means of patriarchal system which makes women property of men. Surname symbolizes that women are owned by fathers at first and by husbands later through marriage. Women are born with their father's surname which marks fathers as the head of the family and then they get out of the control of their fathers just to enter the domination of another male figure. In this extract father's surname is constructed as a sacred belonging more valuable than anything.

Extract 14

Ayşe, a former prostitute with two and a half years of state prostitution house experience, not working for fourteen years

-Tayyip Erdogan bir donem demisti ki, ben bunu biliyorum yani, basina da cok soyledim. Cikmak istiyene biz hayat sartlarini vericez. Hani. Gel yasadigim yeri gor. Yeni kimlik vericez. Hani. Gerci ben soyismimden gecmem de. Simdiye kadar siz benim yuzume tukurdunuz bundan sonra da ben tukureyim. Ha tukurugum o kadar degersiz mi bilmiyorum, onların yuzune tukurecek kadar. Benim soyadım benim değerlim. Babamın adıydı çünkü, dedemin adıydı.

-Tayyip Erdoğan once said that, I also told this to the media many times, they would give new lives to the women who wanted to get out of brothels. Where is it? Come and see where I live. "We are going to give you new identity cards". Where is it? Not that I would abandon my surname. Until now you spat on my face, from now on let me spit on yours (her surname means spitter in English). I don't know if my spit is that worthless, though, to spit on their faces. My surname is my precious. It was my father's surname, my grandfather's surname.

Here, the interviewee owns her surname so much so that she even rejects the idea of a new life brought by a brand new ID card. She is certainly against the idea of abandoning her father's surname which is striking because when we look at the

interview as a whole it is easily detected that her father is an alcoholic man and beating his wife and children. Just as Zeynep who is sure about her father's love even though she is subjected to constant violence by him (Extracts 9-10), Ayşe also does not put any blame on her father for her becoming a prostitute. She implicitly reproduces the same distribution of gender roles imposed by the dominant ideology when she accuses her mother fervently and canonizing her father by calling her surname 'my precious'. This clearly shows that having the surname of a father, being a part of his family is valued greatly by women whose only domain of existence is confined to domestic sphere. Acceptance in a society starts with the acceptance in a family and this is the reason why Ayşe, just like Bilge in extract 13, depicts her father as a holy mighty figure who she begs forgiveness from.

The conflict she reveals clearly demonstrates how patriarchy subconsciously runs on in the mind of a woman who claims to have feminist awareness and be a women's right activist. Her using the sentence “kadın erkek ayrımı yapmıyorum”, “I do not make any distinction between men and women” twice in Extract 11 to talk about the prevalence of patriarchal mentality in the whole society is an attempt to prove that she is aware of the patriarchal domination and struggling against it. However, the way she depicts her mother as a bad woman having malignant mentality and the way she owns her father's and her grandfather's surname at the cost of her own life suggests that she has obviously internalized the positioning of male and female figures in the society.

The next abstract is from Ayşe again. She constitutes a clear example about the image of father in women's mind. Her statements demonstrate that father is culturally constructed as a god-like figure with unquestionable rights. In the following extract, the privileged position of the father is actually revealed by the

interviewee assigning the blame on the mother for her miserable life, just like we see in Fatoş' statements.

Extract 15

Ayşe, a former prostitute with two and a half years of state prostitution house experience, not working for fourteen years

-Istersen yuz tane universite bitir arkadasim. Zihniyetsiz adam cok farkli. Kadin da erkek de boyle. Hic ayrim yapmam. Benim annem şu anda zihniyetsiz bir kadın, kızının ne halde olduğunu düşünmeyecek kadar aciz, oğlunu da her hafta gidip hapishanede ziyaret edecek kadar 'üstün' bir kadındır. Ben anneme de bu lafi soyledikten sonra, kadin erkek ayrimi yapmiyorum demektir.

-Doesn't matter that you finished a hundred of universities. Lacking mentality is something else. Both for women and men. I do not discriminate. My mother lacks mentality, for example. She is too cheap to consider what I am going through, but she is 'superior' enough to visit her son in prison every week. That I say these for my mother means that I do not discriminate between men and women.

In this statement, the interviewee makes a perfect example of what roles are ascribed to a mother by the society. A mother has to stand by her children whatever happens. She has certain motherhood duties which make a mother 'cheap' if not fulfilled. The interviewee makes a comparison between her mother's attitude towards her and her brother who is in jail to accuse her mother of not standing behind her. The brother in jail is a criminal but this does not diminish the love and care of the mother to him, on the other hand the same mother turns her back on her daughter because she is a prostitute. The mother's attitude clearly shows that males have a privileged position in the society and they always have another chance to be reintegrated into the

society. However, what is more significant about this extract is the difference between the depiction of the mother and the father by the interviewee. Even though she says she does not make any distinction between men and women in terms of patriarchal mentality, the difference between the way she depicts her father and her mother definitely tells otherwise.

Extract 16 points at another important male dominant figure in the lives of prostitutes. A lover/husband stands out as a significant figure which has control on the lives of the interviewees. Men are seen as the figures to which women are/should be dedicated. Fatoş in the following extract clearly reflects the definition of women as individuals who have to serve for their men at all costs.

Extract 16

Fatos has a state prostitution history and is currently working on streets

-Çalıştım, çalıştığım gici de her şeyimi kaybettim. Varlıktan yokluğa düştüm. Çok sevdim ama, çok sevmiştim. Evim vardı arabam vardı. Sevmiştik evlenecektik. Aldattığını gördüm. Benden ne istediğini gördüm.

-Ben şahsen allah göstermesin de şimdiye kadar erkek ekmeği yememişim şimdiden sonra da erkek ekmeği yemem. Ben çalışıcam, evlenicem, evlendiğim erkeğe ben bakıcam. Ben onu yapamam. Benlen evlenecekse o erkek bana bakmalı. O zaman ne anladım ki. Aynı işi devam ettiriyorum. O evlilikten ne anlıyorum.

-I worked, I worked and then I lost everything. I fell into poverty after a period of prosperity. But I loved, I loved a lot. I used to have a house and a car. We were in love. We were going to get married. I saw him cheating on me. I figured out what he actually wanted from me.

- I, god forbid, have never spent a man's money, and I will never eat a man's bread in the future either. I will work, get married and support my husband. I can't do that. If a man is to marry me, he must support me financially.

Otherwise, what is the difference? I would be doing the same thing. Then why did I get married?

The reason that Fatoş gives for her losing everything is that she loves a man very much. The use of ‘ama’, ‘but’ after the statement ‘Varlıktan yokluğa düştüm’, ‘I fell into poverty after a period of prosperity’ makes ‘love for a man’ a justification for losing everything for him. If a woman loves a man, she has to sacrifice everything for that man. This understanding is the same with Zeynep’s in extract 10 who refuses to marry the man her family chooses just because she does not love the man as much as to dedicate her life. So, heterosexual love is defined as complete dedication to a man. The statements “Evim vardı arabam vardı. Sevmistik evlenecektik”, “I used to have a house and a car. We were in love. We were going to get married” demonstrates that marriage is defined as the ultimate aim for a woman for which she is ready to do whatever possible. Marriage is idealized by the interviewee as a justification for putting her life under the control of a man. The reason why Fatoş loses her property is her dream of getting married to a man she loves. This implies that women regardless of whether they have money or property dream of a domestic life giving the control of their money or property to their husbands. In this very case, the interviewee earns the money by selling her body and giving the control of the money she earns to a man makes that man not only the owner of her money but the owner of her body, as well

The last point to be highlighted in this extract is that Fatoş falls into a critical conflict while expressing her ideas about male domination. She makes a radical transition from “ben şahsen allah göstermesin de şimdiye kadar erkek ekmeği yememişim, şimdiden sonra da erkek ekmeği yemem”, “I, god forbid, have never spent a man’s money, and I will never eat a man’s money in the future, either” to

“Benlen evlenecekse o erkek bana bakmalı”, “if a man is to marry me, he must support me financially”. The former feminist stance of Fatoş can be resulting from the trauma she experienced having trusted a man and lost everything. She is trying to build a power discourse to regain her self-esteem and honor which is understandable but what is more significant here is that this discourse counter to patriarchal system collapses when she talks about marriage. Once more marriage is constructed as a male dominant domain in which women are controlled by male figures. Fatoş defines marriage as “Benlen evlenecekse o erkek bana bakmalı. O zaman ne anladım ki. Aynı işi devam ettiriyorum. O evlilikten ne anlıyorum”, “if a man is to marry me, he must support me financially, otherwise what is the point. I will be doing the same business. Then, what is the point of being married”. Marriage is defined here as a domain in which males have to take care of the females as if it was a natural distribution of gender roles. The whole extract perfectly demonstrates the paradox that the women are trapped in. Women, especially the suppressed and outcast ones, are well aware of the suppression against them by the male dominant ideology and they may be trying to create a counter discourse, however they are restricted by established cultural codes and tacit social agreements regarding gender roles.

The last extract of this chapter is from Zeynep who has been on streets since she was 13 years old. The statements of Zeynep exemplify the attitude which requires women to be under the wings of a male figure to be safe and secure in a society. They also show how women are always accountable to male figures and internalize the secondary position in their families and therefore in the society. In the extract, family is once more constructed as a disciplining mechanism and female body is constructed again as an entity in need of protection.

Extract 17

Zeynep escaped from home at the age of 13 and has been involved in drug dealing, robbery and prostitution since then.

-Fuhus yaptım yapmadım desem yalan olur. Ama yani nasıl desem bunlara insanlar zorluyor. Yani kimse isteyerek fuhuş yapmaz. Biri gelse elimi tutsa çekse beni bu alemden hayır demem, ama öyle birisi yok. Mesela ben şimdi birisiyle evlensem, hani beyoğluna eğlenmeye gelsem. Doğum günüm var mesela. Geldim orda geçmisteki bir müşteri beni gördü. Orda bu konuyu açtı. Kocama mı rezil olacağım, aileme mi yoksa kocamın ailesine mi?

-I have been involved in prostitution. It would be a lie, if I said otherwise. But, how should I put it, people force us to prostitute. No one does that willingly. For example, if someone came now to hold my hand, get me out of this world, I wouldn't say no. But there is no such person. For instance, imagine that I marry someone, and come to Beyoğlu to have some fun. Let's say it is my birthday. I come to the place and an old customer sees me. He brings up my earlier life. I am going to get disgraced before my husband, my family and my husband's family.

The first point to make is that the interviewee does not address the people who are responsible for her becoming a prostitute. It can be interpreted as some people forced her to this business but it is no use mentioning them because they always get away with that as usual. Considering all the interviews made for this study, it is clear that the reason for the people to end up on streets is mostly male figures such as an alcoholic father, a lover, a husband or a rapist. Just like the agents are not addressed in the terms 'domestic violence' or 'violence against women' or the father is not taken responsible by none of the interviewees for their miserable lives, the people who caused Zeynep to prostitute are not addressed and therefore the whole process leading prostitution has become impossible to analyze and thereby become naturalized. This is one of the parts that form the vicious circle the prostitutes are in.

They do not want to prostitute but they have to because they cannot get out of the nexus constituted by well-established cultural norms. And with their performances they reproduce these cultural norms every day. These cultural norms become the most significant reason why these people cannot be accepted by the society and forced to stay in the extremities. This conflict is the same as the one Fatoş displays in the previous extract. Just as Fatoş blames a man for losing everything and tries to build a feminist discourse but at the same time accepts and even seeks for male domination in a marriage, Zeynep defends herself by saying that she is dragged into prostitution by some people, in other words her life is not under her control, she at the same time calls for a man to put her out of her misery, in other words accepts and needs the domination of a man over her.

What is striking is that the subject of the sentence “Biri gelse elimi tutsa çekse beni bu alemden hayır demem, ama öyle birisi yok”, “if someone came and held my hands to pull me out of this world, I wouldn’t say no. But no such person exists” is ‘someone’, an indefinite pronoun. It can be anyone but the following sentence clearly shows that the ‘someone’ definitely refers to a man. A male figure is waited by the interviewee as the only way of being rescued. And even more strikingly, the condition for getting out of the sector is getting married with that man. The power of a man is needed for rescue but it is not enough for social acceptance, you also need official approval from the state, being marriage, stating that you are a decent, respectable citizen. That is, one more time, family institution or marriage more specifically is seen as the only way to reintegrate into the society by the prostitutes.

This extract is also a good example showing the hierarchy in a family after a woman gets married. Imagining a situation of running into an old customer while she is with

her husband, Zeynep actually reveals the power structure in the family institution. In case of such a situation, she would be disgraced before her husband, her family and her husband's family. These three are the most common mechanisms controlling women in a traditional family. Before marriage a woman is under the control of her father and after she gets married the control is taken over by the husband but this does not necessarily mean that the woman are freed from the domination of her own family. On the contrary the oppression on a woman is tripled with marriage. It is also significant that, just like other interviewees, Zeynep accepts the disgrace that her life brings to her which we infer from her hopelessness in finding a man to rescue her. Like Bilge who does not expect to get married because of her incapacity to give birth and like Fatoş who obediently agrees to leave her family not to dishonor her grandson, Zeynep is hopeless about building a family because of the disgrace she bears. This not only shows that they submissively accept the status attributed to them by the dominant system, they also dignify maleness as a source of authority which women are accountable to. And male honor is extolled so much so that a woman has to behave befittingly to preserve that honor which limits the performances of female body making it a property of a man.

In this chapter it is seen how male figures are constructed as authority figures by their immediate victims. Firstly fathers are defined as untouchable holy figures fully present but never responsible for their deeds. The parallelism between Zeynep, Bilge and Ayse who do not even consider questioning the responsibility of their fathers for their ending up as prostitutes clearly shows that they reproduce the almighty Father figure by being silenced and even fascinated by the Father's might and not even being aware of that. It can be said that those who are oppressed by the system become the feverish worshipper of it. In addition the parallelism between

Zeynep, Fatoş and Bilge in terms of the definition of marriage, family and being a wife clearly reflects the general attitude making women docile and needy individuals who have to be under the domination of a man to gain a decent status in the society.

In conclusion, masculine domination does not originate from physical strength of male body; rather it is produced long before the male body physically exists. The whole mechanism creating male hegemony is much more complicated than a dichotomy between male and female. There is a nexus of power relations which is not marked by sex but by gender. It is not always male figures who have control on female body, but there are also procuresses in brothels, transgendered prostitutes who sell women on streets, female owners of prostitution houses who hire rooms for prostitutes and gain commission, step mothers oppressing their step daughters, mother in laws and sister in laws who use the power of the sons or brothers to oppress the daughter in law and the birth mothers or sisters who obeys the cultural norms and dismiss the family members who prostitute and even prostitutes who collaborate or live together with the police officers to gain power in the sector. There are many intermediate power groups and oppressed groups which can go upwards and downwards in the hierarchical structure of these power relations. That there is no fixed center in the power relations and social construction is a fluid and constantly changing process is the main reason why dominant ideology needs to reproduce its disciplining mechanisms over and over again through the performances of its members. In this whole chapter these mechanisms are exposed in the very context of prostitution sector to reveal how these mechanism work and who are involved in this process.

CHAPTER 5

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISCOURSE ADOPTED BY POWERFUL, NON-VICTIMIZED PROSTITUTES

The previous four chapters revealed that the masculine domination which led to the acceptance of the victim position by the women has worked really well on most of the subjects in this study. As other of the other, prostitutes internalized their inferiority to “normal” women on one level and to men on the other. By establishing this double negation and normalizing it, patriarchal ideology not only determines and reiterates absolute attributions of womanhood but it also consolidates, hegemonize superiority of men over women. However, this study is significant in that the data also lays bare the potential of non-compliance to the dominant victimization discourse. Narrations of three participants stand out as the proof that the systematic endeavor of the patriarchy to victimize prostitutes as doomed women and make them employ a fatalistic attitude towards their lives fail at some points creating a rupture, a crack in the patriarchal system for women to build a counter discourse or an empowered self. Empowerment they claim to have can be seen in their choice of not consenting for their voice to be recorded. Unlike the participants who see themselves as victims, two out of three women in this chapter did not let their voice recorded. It is most probably because of the fact that they believe they have the power to do that. They have full control on their bodies and it is their call what to do with that body. Even this little detail reveals that prostitutes who adopted victimization discourse have lost control of their bodies not only in the context of prostitution but also in every interaction with the members of the society.

The following extracts exemplify such a ‘deviancy’ from the expected scenario. The following three participants either appropriate the tools of the existing power mechanisms to become a power holder or they just wage war against the wretched and despised image of prostitutes and the deeply rooted womanhood attributions such as weakness, fragility, seeking male protection for survival.

Serpil, an educated 36 year old female prostitute who can speak two foreign languages. She works in Beyoglu without a pimp controlling her: Non-taped Data¹

Serpil thinks that prostitution is a good job. There is nothing wrong with prostitution business if you do it correctly. She is interested in cinema, literature and music. Being a prostitute does not affect her social life. Her close friends are not from the sector. She works independently with no pimps controlling her. She also does not have any lovers, she is enjoying her freedom. She takes good care of herself. Bodily hygiene is very important for her so she uses body care products and takes a shower very often. She says that she is enjoying Istanbul. She does not condemn herself or prostitution at all. She did not detach herself from the social life. She swims in Florya Beach in summer, goes bowling and has rakı (traditional Turkish alcoholic drink) and fish with her friends. She has orgasm from time to time. She seeks sexual pleasure as she sees it as a natural need. She is against having lovers; she does not want to be used by them for money. She chooses her customers and she has rules in bed. She sleeps with men she likes. She does not like saucy men. A man should have etiquette, wear nice and clean clothes and be over 18 for her to choose him as her client. She never aspires to the lives of other women. She does not want to be a

¹This extract is made up of the notes taken by the researcher during a non-taped interview with the interviewee.

housewife. She speaks two languages and she works whenever she wants then she takes some days off and goes on vacations. She protects herself from STDs and unwanted pregnancy. She does not wear too revealing or flamboyant clothes. She prefers being casual. She does not highlight her femininity. During the interview, she was asked “why do you still do this job, while you can speak two languages?”, she answered the researcher with another question: “How much do you work dear, and how much do you earn?”. The researcher’s answer was: “I work every day from 9 to 6 and I earn 1.500-1600 TL monthly”. Upon getting this answer, Serpil told that: “I earn this amount in three days and do whatever I want for the rest of the month, why should I quit my job? ”. This conversation clearly shows that prostitution is a well-paying job with flexible hours for this interviewee. She has no fatalistic attitude towards her life or profession. She feels that she has full control on her body and she is the only decision maker regarding her life.

It can be clearly seen in the above abstract that Serpil sets a clear distinction between her professional life and her social life. In such a case prostitution becomes a profession just like others without any traumatizing effects on the worker, such as stigmatization or extreme physical or psychological damage. The interviewee sounds to have a notable sense of agency in her life. She also expresses her content with the resources offered by her profession, such as high income, flexible working hours and extended holiday options. Serpil displays an evident feminist attitude by rejecting the idea of having a lover in her life, which confronts the submissive stance displayed by most of the interviewees in the previous chapter who seek for protection from a male figure. In addition, Serpil sits separate from the previous interviewees in that she does not quit going after her desire and seeking for pleasure as she defines sexuality

as a natural need. Now and then she has orgasms, which shows that she has not turned into a robot-like commodity serving for male figures. Serpil is a significant example since she refutes the idea of ‘ideal’ woman confined into private sphere by the patriarchal ideology. Contrary to Ayşe, Serpil does not aspire to being a housewife which can be interpreted as she enjoys her agency and economic power.

Ayça, an 38 years old, unregistered prostitute, working in Istanbul for 10 years and specifically in Aksaray for three and a half years: Non-taped Data²

Ayça argues that if you do this job properly, it can ensure you financial comfort. She has a large social circle, earns well. She owns two houses. As she has financial power, she can get proper health service or pay her social security premiums. She is fully aware of the power relations in the business. She has a power holding status so she is not oppressed by the police or institutions. She takes the police on her side by paying bribes. She does not see herself as a victim but she victimizes other prostitutes in the sector who does not have a power similar to hers. She believes that prostitution should be legalized and recognized as an official profession as it is a necessary service for the public. Ayça did lots of other jobs before she got involved in the prostitution sector and she chose to be a prostitute because other jobs did not pay her the amount her labor deserved. Unlike the interviewees who adopted victimization discourse for themselves and reproduces patriarchy by extolling their fathers and grandfathers, Ayça blames her father for everything and describes her grandfather as useless because he had money but they never benefited from that money. She rejects to be controlled by her family and to get rid of the paternal

²This extract is made up of the notes taken by the researcher during the non-taped interview with the interviewee.

oppression, she bought a farm for her father so that she gave him a domain to dominate other than her life.

Let alone being a victim, Ayça draws a portrait of a power-holder. She has considerable financial power with high income and real estate. She seems fully aware of how the system operates and to have integrated herself into it as an active agent. She appropriated the tools required to acquire power in the capitalist and patriarchal society. Ayca considers her engagement in prostitution business as her deliberate choice after trying many other jobs and quitting them unsatisfied with the gain in return for her effort. She does not feel as a second class citizen because she can enjoy every right given to her thanks to her financial power and strong social circle. Another point that distinguishes Ayça from the interviewees in the previous chapter is that she does not sanctify the ‘family’ or ‘father’ figure. On the contrary she sees them as repressive tools and therefore she has got rid of them using the power she has to secure her independence.

Extract 18

Ece, a 45 years old transgendered prostitute born in Germany to a worker family. She has been a transsexual and a sex worker since 1987. She got trainings and health personnel certificates but she cannot find a job in health sector because of her sexual identity

- Vücudunu nasıl koruyorsun?
- Bir kere kesinlikle kondomsuz ilişkiye girmiyorum. Eğer müşteri tercih etmezse o müşteriyi reddedebiliyorum. Serbest çalışmanın en büyük özgürlüğü o yani. Kimse başında yok. Takmıyorsan girmiyorum diyorsun.
- How do you protect your body?
- First of all, I never have sexual intercourse without a condom. If the customer does not prefer this, I refuse to have sex with him. Working independently is the biggest freedom, I mean, nobody controls you. You can say, “if you do not use condoms, I am out”.

- Gelecekle ilgili hayallerin neler?
- Yani aslında şu anda gerçekten kendi hayatımla ilgili, ciddi anlamda bir işe girmek istiyorum. Sertifikasını yaptım. Zaten ben sağlık sektörünü de sevdim. Çocukken eğer okuyabilseydim, cinsel yöneliminden ötürü sorun olmasaydı, doktor olmayı ya da bir hukukçu olmayı tercih ederdim. Ama yapamadım.
- What about your dreams about your own life?
- Well, right now I really would like to get a proper job, I mean, I got my certificates and I really like health sector. If I had had the opportunity to get education, if hadn't had problems because of my sexual identity, I would have liked to be a doctor or a lawyer. I couldn't.
- Hayatını kimseyle paylaşmak ister misin?
- Günün birinde ben hayatımı biriyle paylaşabileceğimi düşünemiyorum çünkü en sosyalist solcu erkeğinden en sağcı erkeğine kadar birileriyle bazı diyalogları ilerlettiğin vakit gene o erkek egemen sistem üste çıkıyor yani. O nedenle bu sistem çökmeden zannetmiyorum. Bir erkeği kurtuluş olarak görmek de ayrı bir ezilmedir.
- Would you prefer to share your life with someone?
- I do not think that I can share my life with someone one day because from the most socialist, leftist man to the most rightist man, when you further the dialogue to a certain extent, you see that they are in this very patriarchal system. That is why, unless the whole system changes, I do not think I can do this. It is another way of being exploited to see men as a rescue.

In the above extract, the interviewee clearly opposes to the overall victimization discourse by not considering marriage as a way of salvation. She does not blame her mother or any other agent in her life but she blames the patriarchal system for her misery. Ece's dream is not to build a family or have children to acquire the 'ideal' woman position, she rather struggles against the heterosexist and transphobic ideology which prevents her engaging in the profession that she has been trained for.

We can also infer from her words about bodily care and protection that she has the control on her body and she cherishes her independence.

All three interviewees above constitute a great example that shows the victim role is not the only choice for the prostitution. They can be aware and active agents that control their own body and even enjoy their profession. However, out of three participants rejecting the victim role, only one actually enjoys what she does. The other two either appropriated masculine power or got involved in the prostitution sector against her will. The only difference between these two women and the participants who internalized masculine oppression is that the former group does not worship male figures in their lives and they do not see themselves as sinners or helpless outcasts, they put the blame on the system not on themselves or they do not curse their destiny in a fatalistic way. At this point, it can be said that claiming prostitutes can have agency and be empowered would be far-fetched as they cannot escape from the grasp of patriarchy completely. They either accept the victim role imposed on them and develop a self-reproach or appropriate the tools used by patriarchy to survive or they have to stay in prostitution sector due to lack of alternatives even though they have the recognition about the dynamics of the patriarchal system and condemn them, which makes all of them oppressed eventually.

CHAPTER 6

PROSTITUTION AS A SIGNIFICANT SUBJECT OF ANALYSIS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF 'EQUAL CITIZENSHIP THEORY'

As discussed in chapter 3 and 4, patriarchal cultural norms have been internalized by a majority of prostitutes interviewed who reproduce the male domination and second class social status of women by appropriating male dominant discourse in their narratives. On the other hand, it is observed that three of interviewees do not succumb to the process of ideological victimization and resist adopting the fatalistic view which makes them silenced outcasts aspiring to the idealized woman image. Both groups are significant in the formation of this last chapter. While the first group points to the institutional corruption leading to the continual oppression of women and naturalization of male domination, the latter group shows the potential women/prostitutes with a certain level of awareness have to initiate a possible social transformation as the first hand witnesses of patriarchal hegemony.

This chapter will discuss the concept of equal citizenship within the framework of the discussions in the previous chapters regarding the embedded patriarchal and heteronormative norms. The findings in the previous chapters are the reason why equal citizenship theory fails in the context of prostitution sector. After exposing the embeddedness of patriarchal codes and internalization of patriarchy by its victims, suppressive and exclusionary mechanisms leading to such internalization will be discussed.

Prostitutes have significance in the controversial issue of equal citizenship. They are excluded from political recognition not only because they are women but also they do not fit the description of ideal woman in the heteronormative patriarchal society. In the capitalist system that we are all in, sexuality and female body have traditionally been seen as reproductive tools. This 'sacred' maternal role of women is destroyed by prostitutes because they use or are forced to use their bodies for purposes other than reproduction. When we consider that women already suffer from discrimination and inequality with their existence limited to private realm, it is not surprising that prostitutes face total non-recognition because they do not have the qualities that the society expects from a woman. Prostitutes provides significant material to support the idea that equal citizenship theory fails when socio-economical equality and parity in open access to public sphere is not achieved.

This chapter elaborates on the concept of public sphere with its embedded exclusiveness against certain groups. Participation in the public sphere as equal citizens excludes prostitutes because public sphere is restricted to a limited group of men and socially accepted and propertied women. This study aims to reveal how equal citizenship is not substantively realized for prostitutes as its formal implications suggest. It brings into question the underlying mechanisms that produce and reproduce this exclusionary public sphere against prostitutes.

The overarching hypothesis of this chapter is that the strict separation between private and public spheres leads to suppression of powerless groups by dominant ones. Approaching public and private as two mutually exclusive realms exacerbates the suppression of women. As women are dominated within their houses by male figures and as this domination finds no place in political arena on the grounds that

they are private affairs, male domination becomes patriarchal hegemony masked by equal citizenship on paper.

This study benefits greatly from Fraser (1999) to form its theoretical framework. In her essay, Nancy Fraser critically engages with Habermas' concept of public sphere. She calls for an alternative, post-bourgeois public sphere model (Fraser, 1999).

Habermas' model assumed that public sphere is "a body of private persons assembled to discuss matters of public concern or common interest" (Habermas, 1991). However, Fraser thinks that Habermas' model of public sphere was actually marked by significant exclusions. Gender was one of the grounds of this exclusion and such an understanding of public sphere led republicans to revive the classical traditions which put women and publicity in a mutually exclusive relationship. This positioning made women confined in their houses, in private sphere without any rights of representation. Fraser makes it a must to reread and retell the whole history to demystify its deliberate positioning of women in private sphere and exclusion from publicity. The historization of women as domestic beings and familiarization and personalisation of private affairs excluded them from public sphere and therefore from political arena (Fraser, 1999).

As Fraser states in her article, the rhetoric of domestic privacy makes some issues and interests confined to domestic sphere as private matters by personalising and/or familiarising them. This rhetoric positions these issues and interests as non-public, non-political matters. She gives the example of domestic violence to support her argument that the dichotomy between private/personal and public/political serves for the advantage of the powerful groups and for silencing of the subordinates (Fraser 1999). This rhetoric can be identified as the most significant reason why the

participants in this study do not raise their voice against the violence they are exposed to. Normalization of the violent acts of the father as discussed in the extracts 11 and 12 results from the fact that familial affairs are supposed to remain in the public sphere. Moreover, as the public sphere is dominated by male figures, women are confined in a domain on which they have no control which makes women totally unrecognizable.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the alcoholic and abusive fathers are not held responsible for their misery by the prostitutes; the rapist of Bilge got away with what he did; and husbands, real or imaginary, are given a mighty and untouchable status by the prostitutes. The untouchable position of male figures is reiterated by ideological tools. The transformation of male domination into male hegemony is done by institutional power. Media stands out as one of the most powerful ideological tools used by the patriarchal ideology to establish male dominant cultural codes. The following extract demonstrates how media serves for the silencing of women.

Extract 19

Ayşe, a former prostitute with two and a half years of state prostitution house experience, not working for fourteen years

-Hiç şiddete maruz kaldınız mı?

-Şiddet..maruz kaldım mı?. Ben 9 yaşındaydım, öz amcam tecavüz etti bana bıçak zoruyla. Hala izi vardır belimde bıçağının. Yıllar sonra öğretmenim fark etti. O adama neden bir şey olmadı. Ben yıllar sonra televizyon programlarına çıktığımda tecavüze uğradığımı söyledim. Kimin yaptığını söyletmediler. Kestiler yayını. Neden saklıyoruz bunu. Genelevindeyken de üçüncü firar edişimde devletin üç memurun tecavüzüne uğradım, birebir tecavüz. Şimdi ben şurda bir polisi kaçırsam, ona tecavüz etsem, ne yapar acaba bana? Her şeyi yapar. Ben niye bir şey yapamıyorum bunlara. Fahişeyim diye.

-Have you ever been exposed to violence?

-Ever exposed to violence? I was just nine years old; my own uncle raped me at knifepoint. I still have its scar on my waist. Years ago, my teacher noticed my situation. Nothing happened to that man. Why? After years I appeared on TV and told that I was raped. They didn't let me tell who did that. They cut the broadcast. Why are we hiding this? Furthermore, when I was in state prostitution house, I attempted to escape for the third time and I was raped by three police officers of the state, literally. Now imagine. What would happen to me if I kidnap and rape a police officer? They would do everything to me. Then why couldn't I do anything to them? It is because I am a prostitute.

This part of the interview shows how house, whether it is a family house or a prostitution house, is an arena of male domination which socializes women or forces them to be silent. The extract is a good example showing the institutional process of women's suppression. Media uses the tragedy of a woman to evoke the feelings of the audience which is not unexpected from mainstream media but by not letting the participant utter the name of the rapist, it once more locks the issue of incest rapes or sexual harassment into the private sphere. By making the incest rape a taboo and not disclosing the responsible part, the media marks these sorts of tragedy as unspeakable and the victims as silenced. Tabooing the incest rapes or intra-family sexual abuse confirms the domination of male figures on female body which defines such incidents as undesirable events rather than criminal actions.

This extract also reveals another repressive tool used to silence women and discipline the female body. Police force of the state becomes a disciplining mechanism against women in the prostitution sector. The attempts of the interviewee to escape from the brothel were prevented and punished by the police officers of the state. The participants in this study who were exposed to violence either could not attempt to report these instances to the police due to social pressure or their attempts

fell on deaf ears of state institutions which labeled them ‘private’ or ‘personal’. These areas have historically been marked with borderlines which should not be crossed. Women are made aware of the established patriarchal domination in state institutions from a very early age that they cannot even attempt to speak out what they experience in their houses or they are intimidated and silenced by repressive state apparatuses after their constantly failing attempts.

Above mentioned experiences faced by women in a democratic society lay bare that the distinction between public and private reproduces and reinforces male domination over and over again and by doing this through subtle forms of power such as sexuality, language and culture, this distinction turns male domination into hegemony.

In addition to media and police force, social inequality defining women as second class citizens is pursued by institutional discrimination against prostitutes and the gender-based social roles are internalized by the suppressed groups which are demonstrated by the following extract.

Extract 20

Ayşe Tükrükçü, a former prostitute with two and a half years of state prostitution house experience, not working for fourteen years

-Devletten ne bekliyorsun bir hayat kadını olarak?

-Yaşam zor, normal insan için de zor ama bizim için kat be kat daha zor. Bir kere genelevindeki çalışma saatleri düzenlensin, emeklilik şartları düzenlensin, sigortalar günü gününe yatırılсын. Ben iki buçuk sene çalıştım 212 gün sigortam çıktı. Ona da şükrediyorum. Biz 365 gün çalışıyoruz, regli günlerinde, kürtaj masasından kalkıp müşterinin altına yatıyoruz. Hafta sonlarında, bayramlarda, kandillerde, seçimlerde çalışıyoruz. Devlet bize ne yapıyor yok sayıyor. Bir erkek bir kadını vurduğunda devlet ona hapiste bakıyor. Cezaevinden çıkana da koçlar gibi bakıyorsun, topluma

kazandırıyor. Ben genelevinden çıktım hiçbir hakkım yoktu benim. Şirketlerde cezaevinden çıkanlara özürölere iş verme mecburiyeti var. Hayat kadınlarına niye yok? Vesikalısın çünkü. Önemli olan zihniyettir. Zihniyet değişmedikçe hiçbir şey değişmez. Mesela benim annemde de aynı zihniyet var. Kızının ne durumda olduğunu düşünmekten aciz ama ceza evindeki oğlunu her hafta ziyaret edecek kadar ‘üstün’ bir kadındır.

-What do you expect from the state as a prostitute?

-Life is hard, even for a normal citizen. However, it is much harder for us. First of all, work hours in a state prostitution house should be regulated, retirement terms should be reviewed, and social security benefits should be paid regularly for every work day. I worked for two and a half year but I had social security benefit just for 212 days. I consider myself lucky for this. We work for 365 days of the year, in our menstruation periods. We sleep with customers just after we come out of an abortion operation. We work at the weekends, on bayrams, on holy nights, during the time of elections. What does the state do for us in return for this? It ignores us. When a man shoots a woman, state looks after him in prison. It even takes care of him after he is released from prison. It reintegrates him into the society. When I got out of the brothel, I had no rights. Companies are obliged to offer jobs to the disabled and former convicts. Why is it not valid for former prostitutes? It is because you have a prostitution record. What matters is mentality. Unless mentality changes, nothing will change. For instance, my mother has the same mentality, as well. She is unable to consider her daughter in such a situation but she is such an “exquisite,, woman that she visits her son in prison every week.

This whole piece clearly shows how this woman sees herself different from other individuals in the society. The use of the adjective “normal” for describing the rest of the world other than prostitutes lays bare how she internalized the identity inscribed on her. She belongs to a group which is clearly marked with ‘difference’ and she is well aware that this group is not a part of the whole set of ‘normal’ people.

Throughout the whole narration the interviewee makes striking comparisons between the group she belongs to and other individuals who she is allegedly equal to. The phrase “Biz 365 gün çalışıyoruz, regli günlerinde, kürtaj masasından kalkıp müşterinin altına yatıyoruz. Hafta sonlarında, bayramlarda, kandillerde, seçimlerde çalışıyoruz. Devlet bize ne yapıyor yok sayıyor”, “We work at the weekends, on bayrams, on holy nights, during the time of elections. What does the state do for us in return for this? It ignores us”. This statement exposes the failure of Marshallian citizenship theory in which citizenship is defined as “a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community. All who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed”. However, as the above statement manifests, such a mutual relationship between the state and its citizens collapses when a certain group is both exploited under unbearable conditions in a state owned enterprise and at the same time ignored by the state itself in terms of social rights. This time the relationship turns into a one-sided gain which is called exploitation. The whole statement is a perfect example of how the interviewee is both socially and culturally positioned as a second class citizen. The gender-based discrimination firstly occurs at family level which is exemplified by Ayse’s mother’s prejudiced attitude against her daughter while embracing her criminal son. The second class position of women also exposes itself at many levels of state which is manifested by the prostitutes being ignored in an institute owned by the state itself. This statement is also significant in that men, even though they are criminals or disabled, always have a place in the society. They are valuable enough to maintain their existence and are welcomed back in the society. As a woman’s acceptance in a society depends on her chastity and effectivity in the heteronormative male-dominant society governed by the notion of reproduction, contrary to men, a prostitute stands

no chance to be embraced by both male and female individuals serving for this system. She is a flawed woman, a travesty of ideal woman because chastity has traditionally been defined in terms of female body and sexuality. As chastity and reproduction is the only power a woman can have, it can be said that prostitutes are castrated and excluded from the public.

The internalization of patriarchal system is both a cultural construction and institutional process running at the same time. As Laborde argues, the domination can be both intentional and systematic. She says “when we are dominated, we are either deprived of the ability to form our perspective (we are indoctrinated, manipulated, socialized into submissive roles) or, if we possess the capacity, we are prevented from using it (we are silenced, humiliated, threatened)” (Laborde 2008). The participants of this study exemplify this failure to use the potential in a quite striking way. Two pieces are quoted below to put the factors blocking this potential from all sides under scrutiny to expose these two modes of domination.

Extract 21

Ece is a transsexual prostitute actively working in prostitution sector

-Ben para karşılığı zorla fuhuş yapanlara diyorum fahişe. Belki yüzde bir kitle derki ‘e ben hem hoşuma giden insanlarla yatıyorum hem paramı kazanıyorum’. O bile dayatılmışlıktan çünkü insanlar dayatılmışlıklarla büyür. Alışmıştır farkında olmadan. Mesela transeksüeller “ben travestiyim, transeksüelim başka yapacak bir işim yok” diye düşünüyorlar, toplumda iş verilmediği için. O nedenle onu bilinçaltına gömüp, hani travestilik, transeksüellik benim kaderimdir deyip, bu işi yapmayı benimsedikleri için, yaptığımız iş hoşumuza gidiyor diyorlar.

- I call people prostitutes when they prostitute for money by force. One percent of those people may tell that they both have sex with whom they find attractive and they earn my money at the same time. I think this statement is

out of imposition. People grow up with impositions. They get used to their positions even without knowing it. For example, transsexuals think like this “we are transsexuals, we have nothing else to do but prostitution” just because the society does not offer them job opportunities. They engrave it in their subconscious, they accept prostitution as their destiny and they integrate it. That’s why they say that they love what they are doing.

This statement demonstrates how transgendered individuals, prostitutes in general, are socialized as an outsider and accept their position as if it was the choice made out of their full agency, which is an example of intentional domination. This makes them willingly occupy these positions. Such an attitude makes them vulnerable to further domination by suppressing any possibility of reaction or counter-power.

The second piece is related to the systematic type of domination:

Extract 22

Ayşe, a former prostitute with two and a half years of state prostitution house experience, not working for fourteen years

-Genelevde diğer kadınlarla ilişkiniz nasıldı?

-Yoktu öyle bir şey. Herkes alkol, uyuşturucu batağında. Umutsuz.

Umudumuzu kaybediyoruz içerde. Çıkış çaresi arayamıyorduk, çünkü devletin yanımızda olmadığını biliyorduk. Emniyetin bizim yanımızda olmadığını biliyorduk. Mesela giriş yapıldığı zaman valiye gidiliyor, emniyete gidiliyor, zührevi hastalıklar hastanesine gidiliyor. Devletin üç birimi bunlar. Bunların hiçbirinin çekip de, o kadını karşısına alıp da konuştuğunu görmedim. Benimle konuşulmadı. Biz kapıda beklerdik. Genelev vekili içerdeydi. Kapıyı açardı vekil, bir adım içeri atardın, ikincisini attırmazlardı. Ayşe Tükrükçü sen misin? Evet efendim. Çık dışarıya. Buydu. Sormak çok isterdim ‘burası neresi?’, ‘ben buraya niye geldim?’ diye.

- Can you describe your relationship with other women in the state prostitution house?

- We had no relationship. Everybody was slave to alcohol and drug addiction. They were all hopeless. We lost our hope inside and we could not even seek for a way out. We knew that state wasn't there for us; police forces were not on our side. For example, to register to the prostitution sector, you go to the governor, police department and venereal diseases hospital. They are three bodies of the state. None of them talked to those women face to face. I wasn't talked to. We waited outside the doors. The agent of the brothel was inside. They would open the door, you would take a step inside and they wouldn't let you take another. Are you Ayşe Tükrükçü? Yes Sir. Get out. That was it. I really wished that I could have asked "What is this place?" "Why am I here?"

This interview piece reveals the systematic domination directed to prostitutes by significant state institutions. Two of the participants in this study had a state prostitution house history. Their experience is valuable to demystify the corruption in state institutions turning them into repressive tools against women. Registration to these houses is a bureaucratic process passing through three main institutions: the police, the governor and the venereal diseases hospital. According to the above statement of the participant, the women who are mostly sold to these houses against their will or even without their knowledge have no right to speak out for their rights. They are surrounded with male domination both from individuals and from embedded patriarchal operation of state institutions. When drug or alcohol addiction developed due to harsh conditions or deliberately by house owners is combined with physical and psychological violence and the suppression and silencing following this violence, any kind of collective action or collective conscious becomes impossible. The powerless group in question is not only deprived of the "ability to form [their] own perspectives" but also "prevented from using it".

Deeply rooted cultural conventions and suppression of women through ideological and repressive tools of state make feminist thought highly skeptical about equal citizenship concept. Existing democracies turn a blind eye on discrimination against women on the grounds that everyone is equal before the law. However, rights bestowed by written laws are not necessarily enjoyed equally by everyone. Social norms may tacitly continue favoring men over women. Substantive inequality experienced by women in Turkey reveals itself strikingly in the context of prostitution. The idea of equal citizenship gives itself away as a utopia in the prostitution sector in Turkey. The similarities among the narrations of interviewees were indicative of this absence of equality in our existing democracy. The equal citizenship theory became a mask for domination in terms of the application of laws and regulations. The responses of the participants to some of the interview questions reveals that formal rights are not substantively enjoyed by prostitutes due to the rigid and deeply rooted social norms and corruption in state institutions.

The extracts in this chapter clearly show that when certain groups can not enjoy rights given to them by written law, they lose confidence in state and its operation. Such mistrust causes the mutual relationship between state and its citizens to collapse. Giving more examples from interviews would be useful to support the argument of corruption in state institutions which causes suppression of women.

According to the statements of participants in this study, pimps and brothel owners use police as a dominating power on prostitutes, and the police gains financial benefits from this tacit agreement. A great amount of money circulates illegally among police officers, pimps and doctors which consolidates the patriarchal domination over female body through institutionalized power. One of the interviewees exposed the failure of written laws by describing the working

conditions in state prostitution houses. She was forced to work in her menstruation periods having heavy bleeding or just half an hour after an abortion operation with a clean bill of health given by doctors from state hospitals. She added that the owner of the brothel did not let them use contraceptives because of the deformation they would cause on the bodies of women. She also said that women working in brothels had no rights to say “no” to the customers so they had to fulfill any kind of demands of the customers including physical violence, unprotected sexual intercourse and anal sex. Three attempts of her to escape and seek shelter from the police were failed by the police force itself and she was delivered to the brothel again by the police officers which was followed by torture from the owner of the brothel and rapes by police officers for days. The interviewees working independently on the streets stated that they had to pay bribes to police officers not to be subjected to physical and psychological violence from the shopkeepers, tramps and police officers themselves. This reveals a microcosm of power relations dominant in the whole society. The ones who have money or contacts enjoy the right to live and to be protected.

Iris Marion Young offers five criteria to call something oppression in financial, social and cultural aspects. Prostitutes are also significant in that they meet all five criteria for oppression defined by Young. As Young says, “the benefits of their work or energy go to others without those others reciprocally benefiting them (exploitation)”. This is the first criterion and it is especially true for the ones working in official prostitution houses. They work for 12 hours in 365 days without a social security benefits or reasonable salary. Secondly, “they are excluded from participation in major social activities (marginalization)”. Prostitutes, especially transgendered individuals, are deprived of any job opportunities because of their sexual orientation or prostitution record. They are also not welcome to public places

such as restaurants or cinemas. The third criterion is significantly met by prostitutes because “they live and work under the authority of others, and have little work autonomy and autonomy over others themselves (powerlessness). Prostitutes, especially working in state prostitution houses' do not have any autonomy on their work or income. They also live in those houses under the control of pimps or house owners. This situation strips prostitutes from any right to speak for themselves about their life or work. The fourth criterion exposes social exclusion and political non-recognition of prostitutes. “As a group they are stereotyped at the same time that their experience and situation is invisible in the society in general, and they have little opportunity and little audience for the expression of their experience and perspective on social events (cultural imperialism)”. Prostitutes are stigmatized as non-operating and degenerated individuals having no place in a healthily running social system. As the interview transcriptions above demonstrates, state itself creates and recreates the prostitution sector through institutionalized power. It creates an outcast group, dis-empowers it through stigmatization and repressive tools, benefits from it financially and, at the same time, turns a blind eye on their experiences and situation. Finally, as for the last criterion, prostitutes “suffer from random violence and harassment motivated by group hatred or fear”. Transgendered prostitutes and prostitutes in general are exposed to physical and psychological violence by police officers and other citizens. They are victims of domestic violence and social exclusion both before and after they become prostitutes. This analysis of oppression is very significant in that it shows how written laws fail to create equal citizens and they may even exacerbate the oppression of women in the society by a false consciousness of equality (Young, 1995, p.208).

Apart from analyzing the discrimination against women and prostitutes in Turkey, this study aims to find solutions which will lead equality in society and open access to public sphere for women. The narrations of prostitutes in this study is actually reveals the capacity of this outcast group to expose the corruption in state institutions and gender-biased social norms. Prostitutes have a unique potential to break the male dominance in legal and political realm by deciphering embedded discrimination against women in every layer of the society.

Cecile Laborde is very helpful for this work to offer possible solutions to the suppression of women and problems of prostitutes. She argues that ideal principles may not work in actual settings as it happens in color-blindness theory. She states in Chapter 10 of her book *Critical Republicanism* that “while color-blindness might be the ideal morality for an ideal society, it is not necessarily the appropriate response to racial discrimination in existing color-coded societies” (Laborde, 2008, p.246). This argument also fits perfectly to the context of gender-coded Turkish society. Gender-blindness may be perfect in theory; however, in a society which has rigid gender codes and gender based discrimination such as Turkey, gender-blindness will only exacerbates the oppression and exclusion of women. Therefore, Laborde calls for color consciousness policies to de-racialize society in the long term. As she argues in her book, social change will be achieved through careful analysis of social contexts (Laborde, 2008).

This necessity for the analysis of social contexts and institutions finds significant reflections on the context of prostitution. Prostitutes embody a group which extremely suffers from social discrimination and public exclusion despite their equality on paper. This is the reason why they demand analysis of gender biased social norms, family structures and economic dependence of women on men.

Prostitutes especially suffer from this suppression because they live and work under very harsh conditions, mostly lack of autonomy. Prostitution sector stands out as a perfect example stressing the necessity for social analysis of women's position in Turkey.

In conclusion, prostitutes are demanding recognition from state by asserting their difference. They are witnesses and subjects of male domination reinforced with written laws. Laws make everyone equal before the law and the state uses this as a justification for their ignorance towards women's social exclusion and their problems as victims of domestic and social violence. As Laborde illuminatingly expresses in her book, “political philosophy, if it is going to make a practical difference, should concern itself with the effective critique of existing structures and social norms, not only with the design of ideal institutions and laws” (Laborde 2008, p.245). This study aims to push forward the need for this critique by giving concrete examples from everyday lives. Prostitutes not only stand out as victims of a male-dominant society, but they also constitute a rich and powerful potential to disclose the gears of the mechanism that establish patriarchal domination, such as state institutions, police force and legal practices.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

The major findings of the study are summarized and outlined in this chapter and suggestions for further research are offered.

This study attempted to make discourse analysis on the language used by prostitutes. Nine prostitutes were interviewed and seven of them consented to be tape recorded. Note taking method was used for the other two interviewees. All the interviewees are from Tarlabası district of Istanbul and all of them are actively working in prostitution sector, except for one. The subject group is comprised of both biologically female and transgendered prostitutes at different ages and from different socio-economical background and ethnic origin. Interview analysis method was used to analyze the discourse and in addition to one to one communication with the interviewees shadowing method was also employed to observe every day conditions that surround prostitutes. The main problem of the study was regarding the data collection process. Plenty of prostitutes did not agree to take part in the study as they were afraid of their identity to be disclosed. They believe that such a disclosure might lead to restrictions on their social life and in some cases to their death. Biologically female prostitutes are mostly controlled by pimps and they were afraid of getting exposed to violence by those pimps if they take part in this study. For transgendered prostitutes, the new identity cards they acquired after quite challenging medical and bureaucratic procedures and their new look are what keep them alive. They are under constant threat posed by their own family members. Especially transgendered prostitutes from Kurdish origin continuously experience the anxiety of getting killed. This brought a significant limitation to the study by

narrowing the subject group and making an ethnicity-based or queer-based analysis became impossible.

After the data was collected, a common point stood out in the statements of the interviewees. A great majority of them had intensely patriarchal discourse. Their womanhood definition was based on traditional phallogentric gender codes which confine female body to the domestic sphere as mothers and wives. A significant majority of the interviewees expect emancipation from marriage and protection of a man. Likewise, transgendered interviewees see themselves as impaired women lacking the capability of becoming mothers. Their worshipping attitude towards their father was another striking point that came up in the study. Even though most of the prostitutes were subjected to physical or psychological violence by their fathers or they witnessed their mothers being beaten by them, they keep respecting them and seeking their forgiveness. The unconditional and unquestionable love for the father and their quest for forgiveness are the indications of internalized oppression. Patriarchal and heteronormative codes made them see themselves inferior to men and to 'untainted' women who function well as mothers and housewives.

This study indicates that not all of the prostitutes see themselves as victims and condemn their identity as prostitutes. They even embrace their profession as a well-paying job with flexible working hours. They find it empowering and they seek for sexual pleasure out of it. There are a lot of transgendered individuals and callgirls who are happily involved in the prostitution sector and have really high living standards. There are also homosexuals, transvestites and transsexuals who ran away from their hometowns to Istanbul to be able to live their sexual identity freely. They prefer prostituting to repressing their desires and living a lie as a docile body under heteronormative codes. Therefore, prostitutes can constitute a subject group for a

queer theory-based analysis, as well. Such an analysis would yield significant results showing that gender is socially constructed and victimization is a discourse imposed on women by dominant patriarchal and heteronormative ideology.

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