

# Global Masculinities and Manhood

Edited by

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Foreword by

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To those who have taught us to be men  
and to those courageous enough to stand up  
and be men even when it seems impossible.

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## Disposable Masculinities in Istanbul

**NIL MUTLUER**

At the peak of the armed conflict between the Turkish army and the PKK (*Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan*, the Kurdistan Worker's Party) in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Turkish state forces evacuated some Kurdish villages and hamlets in Southeastern Anatolia and displaced Kurdish inhabitants without offering them any other place to live. These internally displaced people (IDP) mostly settled in big cities like Istanbul. Here they have developed various tactics<sup>1</sup> to survive in their everyday life. Although a certain awareness of the issue of internal displacement has been raised with the contributions of some civil organizations and academic research in recent years, most studies focus on the macro-level analysis of state policies and legal issues (Kurban et al., 2006; Dinç, 2008; Joost, 2008). Micro-level discussions of the evacuation process have recently been studied and in them the gender dimensions of the issue have been addressed by placing women at the center of the study. Today there have been no studies about internally displaced men and the way their masculinities<sup>2</sup> have been shaped in their journey from homeland to the place they migrated to. By examining the everyday life practices of internally displaced men living in an inner semi-slum area of Istanbul, Tarlabaşı, this chapter aims to examine how the discrimination, which the internally displaced men living in Tarlabaşı face during the displacement and in city life, shape the formation of their masculinities as well as their sexualities.

This chapter is an attempt to shift the center of analysis to men in order to examine power relations from a different angle. By placing internally displaced Kurdish men at the center of the research, it examines the exercise of hegemony in relation to power relations based on gender, sexuality, national-

ism, ethnicity, and class in daily urban life in Turkey. An analysis of policies and a deconstruction of discourses<sup>3</sup> of the state and political institutions on these internally displaced men and their masculinities, as well as an examination of the everyday tactics of these men in relation to those policies and discourses, reveals the dynamics of gendered local knowledge based on various power relations. Essentially, I endeavor to comprehend how macro policies and discourses of the Turkish state or the civil and political institutions, like the ones of the Kurdish movement, as well as the collective consciousness of family, community, traditional, national, and Islamic values are utilized, set, fixed, altered, redefined, transformed, and traversed in the everyday life of the internally displaced men living at the center of Istanbul, in the inner-slum of Tarlabası, and how the masculinities of internally displaced men are shaped in this tension.

In their everyday life in Tarlabası, internally displaced Kurdish men are in relation to various Kurdish and Turkish civil, economic, political, and state institutions as well as to individuals from various backgrounds in terms of class, ethnicity, profession, religion, and sexuality. The everyday discourses and tactics of these men who constitute one of the “underclass” (Yılmaz, 2006) groups in Istanbul are shaped in collision with the reifying and homogenizing strategies of the external identifiers (i.e., the Turkish state, the hegemonic social and political discourse of the society, etc.) that regard them as “bare lives” to which any kind of policy in the name of state of exception can be applied (Agamben, [1995] 1998), and in their encounters with Kurdish and non-Kurdish men and women. Internally displaced men’s tactics in the formation of their masculinities reflect the gendered national, ethnic, class<sup>4</sup> hierarchies and power relations in the society. Their tactics reveal not only the institutional policies and distributive patterns (political, social, economic), but also the power-laden social relations. In this tension their masculinities are formed in a “disposable” way in which masculinity gushes out as an identification tactic in each everyday city-life encounter.

In this chapter, the formation of the everyday discourses and tactics of the internally displaced men are analyzed in areas such as the process of forced migration from the homeland and encounters with middle-class urban dwellers, as well as with the various institutions and the inhabitants of Tarlabası from differing backgrounds. The alterations in the meanings attributed to concepts and notions like rape, torture, and honor and the changes in gender structure within the Kurdish community are also examined. In this regard, after briefly explaining the methodological framework, the first part concentrates on state policies of displacement, the Kurdish nationalist

movement, and power relations in the context of Tarlabası. In the second part, the focus is on the identification process of the internally displaced men in their everyday interactions with the institutions as well as the Kurdish and non-Kurdish communities.

## Methodology

My study focuses on two generations of internally displaced Kurdish men from different classes, sexualities, and occupations. The first generation consists of Kurdish men who personally experienced the displacement, whereas the second generation consists of the ones who were very young (below the age of five) at the time of displacement or the ones who were born in the city. During the fieldwork, more than forty in-depth interviews were carried out with Kurdish and non-Kurdish men, as well as women from various occupations, classes, and sexualities in Tarlabası. The methodology is based on ethnographic methodology (in-depth interviews, participant observation, and life stories) and archival research (official state documents, non-governmental organizations’ documents and publications, newspapers, and journals).

I locate researcher and research subjects in separate but interrelated subject positions in order to examine the responses of the research subject, including discourses, behaviors, and practices in social processes that are produced historically by mutual power relations on the one hand, and to analyze both the separate and the interrelated position of the researcher and the research subject on the other. The research draws on methodology of critical discourse analysis with a postcolonial and poststructuralist feminist point of view (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2000), which enables me not only to understand the heterogeneity of Kurdish masculinity, but also to reveal more insight about me and my social stratification. Reflexivity is also crucial in carrying out my research, because it allows me to “assess the relationship between knowledge and the ways of doing knowledge” (Calas & Smircich 1992, in Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2000, p. 5), where I can self-reflexively examine my positioning from different perspectives as well. Critical discourse analysis enables me to situate the institutional, social, political, historical context and socially constructed meanings in my evaluation. On the other hand, the postcolonial and poststructuralist feminist point of view enables me to question both the gender categories and the terms such as men, women, male and female, and other categories based on power relations like ethnicity, class, and geography (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2000).

## SUBJECTS AND TERRITORIES UNDER A "STATE OF EXCEPTION"

In order to examine the political background of the issue with a deeper analysis, I would like to introduce related concepts developed by Foucault and Agamben on the issues of power, the body, population, and life. Under the light of these theoreticians' conceptualizations, I discuss the sovereign state's power-based politics over its subjects and territories.

**SUBJECTS: INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE** In modern Cartesian dualistic terms, mind and body are considered as separate notions functioning in binaries (Grosz, 1994). Bodies (populations) are regarded as an objectified, depersonalized and passive entity to be controlled and repressed by mind, the sovereign, which can be the collective consciousness of the family, community, or national and Islamic values (Helvacıoğlu, 2006). In Foucauldian terms, biopower fabricates and regulates bodies as a decision maker, making them docile, useful, and productive. Biopower refers to technologies that regulate personal behavior and all dimensions of life that are subjected to the exercise of power (Foucault, [1978] 1990). As Foucault argued, biopower includes disciplinary power that incorporates technologies of domination and technologies of self, as well as coercion and freedom. Technologies of self subsume both the subject's conformity and resistance to the prevailing disciplinary norms and rules. Biopower also reveals possibilities for the subject to generate new forms of power. Biopolitics, on the other hand, with the introduction of modern technology aims to regulate and administer the population—bodies and minds of masses. By introducing regulatory mechanisms that decide who to "make live and let die," biopolitics controls the area of life and sets and protects the borders of the normalizing society (Foucault, [1975] 1995). There is a mutual relationship between the exercise of power and the application of knowledge. The "normalizing" knowledge, which is regarded as "true," is reproduced by those who have the capacity to exercise power over others (Foucault, [1972] 1980, Young, 1990).

Agamben challenges Foucault's claim that modern biopolitics is characterized by a new form of politics that constitutes a decisive break from classical power relations. According to Agamben, biopolitics always functions in a "state of exception" whose rules and laws are set by the sovereign to impose its policies over their subjects and territory in its state mechanism ([1995] 1998). Yet through the declaration of rights, the modern state reveals the relationship between sovereignty and biopolitical body, just in a new way. Every subject is in a biopolitical relationship with the sovereign body. Its

source is "bare life," which is a political form of life exposed to death, especially in the form of sovereign violence (Agamben, [1995] 1998, pp. 125–28). Bare life becomes part of the state structure by being inscribed as a citizen, a member of a nation state by birth. Thus, sovereignty resides in every citizen. Once the sovereign regards any "life devoid of value (or life unworthy of being lived)," bare life becomes "homo sacer," who may be killed without being sacrificed (Agamben, [1995] 1998, p. 139). Thus, when homo sacer is excluded by the sovereign, it becomes "explicitly and immediately political," and this, Agamben argues, is "precisely what characterizes the biopolitical turn of modernity ([1995] 1998, p. 153).

In respect to this theoretical discussion, the Turkish state functions in such a way that in its national and neoliberal decision-making processes, it acts as mind imposing its dominant knowledge as the "normal" knowledge and regards its citizens—population—as bodies who have to obey the founding principles and disciplinary norms and rules of the Turkish Republic. The "ideal" citizen of the state is supposed to devote her/himself to the national project through believing in progress, science, and professional achievement without questioning anything against rationality, and is supposed to be a complete stranger to her/his body (Helvacıoğlu, 2006). In addition, "ideal" Turkish citizens are expected to defend their land and the nation at the expense of their lives/bodies. The Turkish state as a sovereign sets the disciplinary roles and norms as well as states of exception. Others, who act against the Turkish state's norms, are regarded as *homo sacers*, "who may be killed but not sacrificed" (Agamben, [1995] 1998, p. 114).

The concept of nation plays a crucial role "in the unification of bourgeois with other fractional class interests in the securing of the bourgeoisie revolution" (Adamson, 1991, p. 34). Contrasting to this functional role of nation, in Kemalist nationalist discourse between 1930 and 1945 the Turkish nation was presented as a classless, unprivileged, "undivided, homogeneous, harmonious totality" (Çelik, 2000, p. 196).<sup>5</sup> Although this mythical discourse does not represent the reality, it is still in the collective memory of the Turkish society in everyday life.<sup>6</sup> As a matter of fact, the Turkish state considers "Turkishness" as an ethnic category based on kinship, on the one hand, and as a cultural identity that should be assimilated, on the other (Yeğen, 2006). The state organs in Turkey have kept on mentioning a possible "internal threat" to the national borders that would come from some of its citizens, whom they stigmatize or address as homo sacer. The stigmatized citizens constitute the ones who are not "Turkish" by ethnic origin or religion or who refuse to act according to the values of an "ideal" citizen or to the founding

principles or the policies of the state. This stigmatization goes along with a code of devalued and stereotyped behaviors attributed to stigmatized ones by organs such as state institutions and the mainstream media. It also enables the state to exercise its regulatory mechanisms, which legitimize its security discourse, and to apply its national and neoliberal policies through declaring a “state of exception,” by implementing restrictive measure in the regions it deems “dangerous.”

The Turkish state declared a “state of exception” in Southeastern Anatolia as a result of the armed conflict between the state and the PKK, where there have been two antagonistic camps since the armed uprising of the latter in 1984. In the late 1980s, the internal displacement<sup>7</sup> policy of the Turkish state compelled Kurds living in the Southeastern Anatolian villages and hamlets to migrate to city centers such as Istanbul (Kirişçi & Winrow, [1997] 2004; Kurban et al., 2006). The goals of the internal displacement policy were to prevent possible Kurdish support to the PKK, which has been in armed conflict with the Turkish army since the beginning of the 1980s (Kirişçi & Winrow, [1997] 2004; Ayata & Yüksek, 2005) as well as to provide “security” in the region, which is the basic condition for neoliberal economic policies to be applied. The internal displacement policy of the state includes not only evacuating and burning villages and hamlets of the Kurdish people but also imposing various forms of discrimination and violence, including torture and rape, to the ones living in those territories. The internal displacement policy of the state on behalf of security allows the state to stigmatize those who lived in a particular geography or space as bare lives, to which every kind of disciplinary norm and rule can be applied under a state of exception. In other words, these stigmatized ones are “disposable” in the eyes of the sovereign.

As military forces destroyed Kurdish communities’ settlements after evacuating them, most of the internally displaced persons’ (henceforth IDP) relationship with their place of origin was extirpated (Ayata & Yüksek, 2005; Çelik, 2005; Kurban et al., 2006). In addition to the collapse of animal husbandry, agriculture, and the lack of security as a result of the ongoing armed conflict between the PKK and the state, one of the main reasons for the IDP to decide to go to cities instead of neighbor settlements in the region is the village guard system, which was introduced by the state in the mid-1980s (Kurban et al., 2006). With the introduction of the village guard system, the state urged the Kurds in the region to cooperate with the army against the PKK.<sup>8</sup> Whether or not one became a village guard was a matter of insecurity for the inhabitants of the region, since in either case there was pressure from

both the state and the PKK. On the one hand, the state went on evacuating the villages whose populations refused to become village guards, and on the other hand, the PKK evacuated the villages whose inhabitants became village guard. As a result of the ensuing economic, political, and social problems, the IDP had to move to new cities such as Adana, Diyarbakır, Istanbul, and Mersin. Many of them did not have any relationships with the Kurds living in these new cities, and the state did not develop any policies to ease the integration process of internally displaced Kurds into the cities (Kurban et al., 2006). Furthermore, as many of the IDP’s worked in agriculture and animal husbandry, practices that are almost impossible to do in the city, they started work as unskilled labor or as street vendors with virtually no employment or social securities. Thus, the IDP Kurds found themselves in a confined situation in the city, where most of them became members of the poorest group and were forced to struggle for a living (Erder, 1996 [2001]; Işık & Pınarcıoğlu, [2001] 2002; Ayata & Yüksek, 2005).

Before delving into the spatial dimension of the issue, it is worth mentioning that the gender dimension in Agamben’s theorization is absent. Detailed analysis of this absence and its relation with the formation of masculinity is discussed below in the section “Disposable Masculinities in Urban Context.”

**TERRITORIES: TARLABAŞI AS “DIRTY INSIDE”** Different than the other districts such as Sultanbeyli, Ümraniye, and Kanarya where IDP migrated to in Istanbul, Tarlabası, one of the inner-city slum areas, is at the very center of the city, with a heterogeneous composition of various ethnic and religious groups from different professions, sexual orientations, and so on. Nationalist policies of the state, on the one hand, and the neoliberal policies of the local governing bodies, on the other, share the same stigmatizing discourse that justifies any kind of state of exception on behalf of “security.” As stated by Yılmaz, it is an area with multidimensional exclusion that includes economic, political, social, spatial, and discursive aspects (2006). There is criminality and compulsory sex work in the region, yet these facts are not new phenomena (Yılmaz, 2006). In addition, as argued by many interviewees, the state and the police regard Kurdish politics as the major crime compared to ordinary ones. Thus, the state authorities and the police connive in the crime and compulsory sex work, since they prefer to consider political activities of the Kurds as “crime” instead of the other types of crime. The discursive exclusion practiced by authorities such as the state and the mainstream media embeds crime and compulsory sex work with ethnic groups and/or the transgendered living in the region (Yılmaz, 2006). Therefore, the state and



other authorities' policies are shaped around the discourse of "cleansing" the region. According to this ethnic stigmatization, Kurds are identified with terrorism, the Romani people as well as Kurds with criminality, and Africans with drug dealing. Although there is no officially declared state of emergency in the region and no official measures are in place for entering or leaving it, the mainstream "security" discourse functions in a way that shapes the imaginary borders of Tarlabası on urban dwellers' minds. These imaginary borders also stigmatize the bodies living within these borders, as if they were a single homogenized criminal community, and these imaginary borders function for excluding or disposing the "dirty inside" of the region from the "clean outside," in Massey's sense (1994).

The stigmatizing history of Tarlabası dates back to late 1940s, from the early years of the foundation of the Republic. During late 1940s, the main target of the policies applied to the region was to create a "national bourgeoisie." The measures involved in creating a national bourgeoisie included transferring the capital of minorities—Armenians, Jews, and Rums,<sup>9</sup> who mostly formed the composition of Tarlabası—to the state by expropriating their property. In 1942, non-Muslims were forced to pay high amounts of Wealth Tax, and on the sixth and seventh of September 1955, actions against non-Muslim minorities, which were furtively supported by the state, took place, mostly in the Beyoğlu area, which includes Tarlabası. Following these discriminatory policies, non-Muslim groups mostly left the region. This influenced the composition of not only Tarlabası but also Istanbul. Since the late 1980s, large numbers of Kurdish immigrants from the Southeastern part of Turkey either migrated into or were displaced to Tarlabası, where they encountered the Roma population. Nineteenth-century buildings were occupied and houses that were built for families were divided into smaller rooms and occupied, or if the owner was known, rented to immigrant families or single people, specifically men. After Kurdish migration, conflict between Roma and Kurdish communities rose due to economic pressures. More recently, Tarlabası has become the migration point of many immigrants, asylum seekers, and refugees from Africa and neighboring countries like Iraq. Tarlabası is known to be a place of transgender sex work as well, thus many transvestites and transsexuals who mostly work as sex workers live in the area.

The electoral tendency of the population in Tarlabası is basically divided into two. The ones who identify themselves with Turkish nationalism and religion mostly vote for the governing party AKP (Justice and Development Party), and the ones who identify themselves more with the Kurdish ethnic background and nationalism vote for the DTP (Democratic People's Party).

In the last elections, on June 22, 2007, the AKP won the majority of votes in the Beyoğlu region and in its Tarlabası district. It is also important to note that in the last elections the MHP (National Movement Party), the nationalist party, gained a remarkable share as well. Today, with the gentrification policies of the government, properties in Tarlabası that belong mostly to minority associations, Kurds, Romans, and other low-class groups are to be expropriated and sold to one of the private companies that has nepotistic relations with today's AKP government. The contractor of the gentrification project, GAP, is one of the companies of the Çalık Holding, whose owner is related to the prime minister by marriage. The inhabitants, who have not been allowed to restore their buildings by the Committee of Protection or who cannot afford the restoration of the buildings, are forced to leave their homes in Tarlabası and pass their dwellings over to the municipality and its subcontractor company. This will mean a second displacement for some of the inhabitants of the district, like Kurds.

#### DISPOSABLE MASCULINITIES IN URBAN CONTEXT: CASES FROM TARLABAŞI

Cities are places where collective and individual identification is staked, belongings are negotiated, and rights are pursued (Secor, 2004). Everyday life in the city provides the opportunity to observe and analyze how individuals and collectivities ambivalently develop tactics (in de Certeau's sense, [1980] 1988) against the policies of macro structures on the one hand, while identifying themselves with these structures, on the other. The construction of individual and collective discourses occurs and subjectivities are shaped in each domain (i.e., urban life, streets, workplaces, and transports) where individuals and collectivities have their ingenious ways (tactics) in which "the weak make use of the strong" (de Certeau, [1980] 1988). This is the political dimension of everyday practices that are creative and dynamic. This approach to the city shows us the possibilities inscribed within the fabric of daily life against the effects of reification (Gardiner, 2000).

As a reaction to the oppressive policies of the sovereign, which include "exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence" (Young, 1990, pp. 39–65), stereotyped, and economically and socially segregated, groups develop a "double consciousness" (Du Bois, [1969] 1903, p. 45, in Young, 1990, p. 60). Double consciousness arises when the oppressed subject refuses to conform to the devalued, stereotyped projections of the dominant culture about her/himself (Du Bois, [1969] 1903, p. 45, in Young, 1990, pp. 60–61). The concept of double consciousness opens a path to un-

settle conceptualizations of binary relations between the oppressor and the oppressed. Such a conceptualization neglects the bargaining power of the oppressed by her/his ingenious tactics and the value of the gap between the oppressor and the oppressed, which involves the opportunity for creating contrasting and different types of knowledge, “border thinking” in Mignolo’s sense (2000). Alternatively, borderlands, in Anzaldúa’s approach, are present physically when two or more cultures of different communities, races, and classes abut each other and live on the same territory in the sense that “the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy” (1987). In this regard, such a conceptualization can be one of the alternative interpretations of the authorities’ discourse.

Men’s discourses and tactics are shaped in this discursive area where border thinking occurs. Men are a social category shaped by the gender order as well as collective and individual agents, often the dominant ones, of social practices (Hearn, 2004). The structural and interpersonal domination of men over women in various spheres of life can be regarded as historically differentiated patriarchies (Walby, 1990; Hearn, 2004). Hegemony exists in such an environment as a result of the interplay of coercion, persuasion, and consent (Connell, 1995; Hearn, 2004). Nevertheless, it is crucial to note that the bearers of the hegemony do not have to be the most powerful men in the society (Connell, 2001; Hearn, 2004). The differences among men as well as women in terms of age, class, ethnicity, profession, and other markers enable them to utilize the hegemonic, patriarchal values in different contexts. In the oppressive, colonial mind-set, the oppressed are regarded as body rather than mind (Shohat & Stam, 1994). There is also a direct relationship between masculinism and nationalism (Bhabha, 1995). Nation is represented through an ideal father figure who is the head of the nation as well as the carrier of the ideal masculinity. Such an approach naturalizes the way oppression and patriarchy is practiced through the men and women in the society who own the ideal masculinity discourses. In relation to such an approach, other men and women are more likely to be homo sacer, in Agamben’s sense.

In their everyday interactions, internally displaced men become the subject and the object of hegemony and practice coercion, persuasion, and consent in various ways. Internally displaced men experience different power relations emerging from different interactions in the everyday life of the city from the relations in their place of origin. In their everyday identification, internally displaced men identify themselves with the codes and the values attributed to various types of masculinities of the specific locality. In the Kurd’s place of origin, Kurdish nationalist institutions, Kurdish communities

(having a relatively more similar living style), and the Turkish state were the main external identifiers for Kurdish men, whereas in the city, in addition to those, various social, cultural, economic, and political institutions, and both Kurdish and non-Kurdish individuals from various backgrounds, come into consideration. Therefore, there is a shift of power centers and the forms of oppression that influence the internal and external identification process of the internally displaced men. The internally displaced Kurdish men become relatively less reachable and there are times when they are almost invisible to the Turkish state institutions. In this case, the tactics developed by the internally displaced men not only become multiple but also more complex, leading Kurdish men to develop a discourse as a result of complex relations that are the subject of analysis of this study. The discourses and tactics of internally displaced men are shaped as a result of these practices in a discursive area of border thinking.

Internally displaced men make use of the strategies of the sovereign and develop various tactics in each of their encounters with the institutions as well as individuals in the urban space. In this tension their everyday practices are shaped in a positional way such that their masculinities are always in the process of being disposed and disposing in return. Thus, internally displaced men’s masculinities are formed in a disposable way such that in each of their encounters in a specific power-based relationship setting they create a new form of masculine being. In the next section, how internally displaced men’s disposable masculinities are shaped is discussed in various sites such as the bodily and the visual humiliation they experience, the supportive space that Kurdish nationalist institutions provide, and the changing gender relations they practice.

### Shaving, Torturing, and Raping the “Other” Male Body

Contrary to the modern dualistic approach, which addresses the mind or state as the subject with controlling power and the body or citizens as the objects to be controlled, it is crucial to examine not only the state’s hegemonic power but also bare lives’ discourses and tactics in relation to the hegemonic power in order to have insight about power-laden everyday relations, and to examine how the dominant knowledge of the hegemony is interpreted and transferred differently in creating border thinking. The body, on which many policies have been developed, “must be regarded as a site of social, political, cultural, and geographical inscriptions, production, or constitution”

(Grosz, 1994, p. 23). Subjectivities developed by a person must be considered as the outcome of the self's individual and collective identification processes (Skeggs, 1997; Brubaker et al., 2000). The bodily behaviors of individuals cannot be extracted from their bodily practices (Bigwood, 1998). In this regard, men—as bodies—can also be regarded as sites for contestation where macro policies are applied and at the same time the resistances and conformities to these policies occur, even though the state regards them as a “threat” and declares a state of exception to regulate them. In other words, men can be regarded as sites to examine the border thinking developed in the formation of their subjectivities. The subjectivities of the internally displaced men are shaped in relation to “historically situated differences in social sensibility”; “cross-cultural differences in cognition, affect and action,” as well as “the peculiarities of each individual” (Biehl et al., 2007, p. 3) in their everyday city life.

As discussed earlier, as a result of the economic and political tension in the Southeastern region, many of the IDP had no other choice but to go to the cities. On their way to as well as in the city, internally displaced men became homo sacers who passed through individual and collective humiliation, torture, and even rape under custody. There are various unknown murders in the villages and there are times when JİTEM,<sup>10</sup> the “unofficially” existing intelligence organization of gendarmes, organized raids on civilians' houses and took them under custody without any sufficient reason. As a result of these activities, many civilians were lost or murdered. In Tarlabası, when the military operations in Southeastern Anatolia are active, police have taken ex-guerrillas under custody for long periods of time, as long as six months without giving any sufficient explanation.

One of the practices of state institutions, mostly the army and JİTEM in the Southeastern Anatolian region, as argued by many of the internally displaced people, is to collect Kurdish people at the center of their villages and make men undress and stay naked in front of the rest of the community. They also beat men and shave their mustaches in front of their wives or in front of the community. Being beaten or being shaved by the state bodies in front of women and the rest of the society harms and almost crushes the virility of the men, whose masculinities are shaped by tradition and honor. As stated by Helvacıoğlu, having or not having a mustache and beard are signs of masculinity in various societies (2006). In regions such as the Mediterranean, Anatolia, and the Middle East, the mustache and beard become signs of masculinity as well as political affiliation. Secular men mostly prefer to shave their mustaches or beards as a sign of modernity, whereas some Muslim believers have them as a sign of their Islamic affiliation, or some guerrillas

have them as a political sign. One of the interviewees, Hasan,<sup>11</sup> explains how he felt during the time when soldiers shaved him in front of the community:

They shaved me in front of the community. At the beginning it was awful, but then I saw it as the beginning of my resistance, I almost stabilized myself. I was frozen. They tried to destroy me. I didn't look at anybody in the eyes. I just waited [for] them to finish. It's just the part of my body and I can devote it to my nation.

The idea of devoting his body and himself to his nation and national ideals enabled him to ease the humiliation that he passed through during the evacuation of his village. During the oppression, the presence of an alternative regulatory system comes onto the scene and the internally displaced man finds meaning for resistance by identifying himself with this new system. In order to protect his virility, he developed a subjectivity in which he regards this incident as a starting point of his resistance. Under the state's oppression, the identification with an alternative power such as the Kurdish nationalist movement enables him to sacrifice his body for a reason. In other words, his body becomes an entity to be sacrificed, not a bare life.

It is not easy for men to talk about this. Although one of the male interviewees explained his experience, most of the time it was women who explained in detail what had happened during the evacuations. Men were mostly silent about the humiliation, torture, and rape they passed through. Or they talked about these factors as other men's experiences. One way or another they developed tactics to explain what had happened without mentioning themselves. One of the interviewees who was subject to rape and serious sexual assault justifies their tactics as follows:

Men cannot admit the rape which they experienced during the torture. Their male identity they want to defend leads to a serious depression.

Another interviewee, Cevat, states:

He cannot admit it. Because if he is perceived as a raped man. His masculinity will have been degraded and his male honor will have been tainted. Therefore, he may admit torture but not rape!

“Degraded masculinity” and “tainted male honor” are the red lines where internally displaced men are willing to talk about torture, but resist talking about rape in order to protect their masculinity. Cevat also adds that,

Torture starts by sticking a bottle into you. That is the basic reality and everybody knows, but no one can admit it in the prison.

Thus, on the one hand Cevat accepts the fact that there is a rape and he wants to explain and to show the inhumane treatments of the state, but he insists on explaining it as the experience that others passed through. In the Agambenian sense, this case reveals the fact that trespassing the bodily integrity of a man, which is a state of exception in everyday life, becomes a norm in the prison, something that everybody knows.

It is very recent and rare that interviewees start to talk about the rape that happened to them. Even if they start to talk about it, they prefer just to mention it very quickly and then go on justifying why they hide it or what should be done. As a “man,” they feel the need to give reasons to explain such a traumatic incident. As stated by another internally displaced man, Mazlum:

If it happened now, I would directly sue the state in the European Court of Human Rights. But it was harder for us. We couldn't do it during that time. You are the first person that I am telling this. But I should open it.

After this explanation we stayed silent for minutes in our interview. This explanation also shows how his discourses and tactics are in continuous change in relation to the Kurdish movement's strategies. Until the 1990s, the Kurdish movement regarded men as the main figures of their resistance (Caglayan, 2007), thus the responsibility of representing the movement prevented Mazlum from mentioning anything about rape “during that time.” Like the reaction of Hasan being shaved in front of his community members, Mazlum's identification with the movement makes him feel that his body represents the movement and gives him a reason to sacrifice his body and his life. Thus, although his masculinity did not allow him to talk about the rape before, the changes in the discourses of the movement allow him to talk about it without harming his masculinity now. In both Hasan's and Mazlum's cases, they identify themselves with the Kurdish nationalist movement's regulatory mechanisms, or strategies in de Certeau's sense, instead of the state's ones.

During our interview Cevat also compares his position with women and argues:

In the case of rape women seek for justice but men can't with the fear of losing their reputation as masculine. This is where they are weaker and more pathetic than women.

This statement reveals how in the minds of the internally displaced men the forced sexual intercourse is identified with women and femininity, while it is the fear that harms manhood and masculinity. Since “seeking for justice

for rape,” or in other words, rape itself, is normalized in this discourse, it is as if women can seek justice more easily. Women's bodily integrity and sexualities are considered as matters such that any kind of decision about them are decided by legislative, executive, and juridical forces, their integrity representing biopolitical borders of the sovereign (Miller, 2006). Sexuality, rape, abortion, and adultery are seen as the single crimes that only women are subject to (Graham, 2006). In the second part of the statement, Cevat regards men as weaker than women. Here he identifies himself more with modern urban values than traditional ones. The Kurdish movement's changing discourse about the roles and functions of men and women in Kurdish society also influences his discourse.

The torture, rape, and electric shocks that many of the internally displaced men experienced under custody hamper their psychology (in Kurban, 2006). Some of them stated that because they regarded the violence, including rape, that they experienced under custody as damaging to their virility, they needed to test their manhood. Thus, when they were released, some of them immediately went to brothels or married and had children, in order to test their sexuality and fertility. In some cases, some of them even tried homosexual intercourse to test their erectile function.

Many of the internally displaced men's bodily experiences in different power-laden relations are influential in their everyday identification process with the Kurdish movement, Turkish state bodies, their policies, city structures, and interactions with other city dwellers. Whatever the circumstances they encounter, one of the main factors that needs protection is their virility. Even in cases of encountering the most humiliating practices that have the high possibility of harming their masculinity, like shaving, torture, or rape, they immediately identify themselves with a strategic discourse—the Kurdish nationalist movement—that is worth devoting their body for, a cause that saves them from feeling that their lives are bare lives. Identifying themselves with such an “upper” ideal opens a space for them to protect their virility. Moreover, their discourses show that such a space provides them the possibility of proving their masculinity and manliness in front of an audience.

### The Visibility of Internally Displaced Men

Internal displacement has influenced both the lifestyle and the gender roles of the Kurdish community (Şen, 2005). The IDP women and children have faced serious problems by becoming a cheap labor force for industries (e.g., the textile industry) in both formal and informal ways (Çelik, 2005; Kurban et

al., 2006). At the same time, non-governmental organizations (e.g., TOHAV, MAZLUMDER, GÖÇ-DER, Başak Culture and Art Foundation, Tarlaabaşı Community Center) have developed various projects in order to rehabilitate their poor conditions. Although these projects are not adequate enough to improve the Kurdish women and children's living standards at present, they have aroused a certain awareness in the society about the existence of this group. Moreover, the Kurdish women's movement has also become powerful in the cities and has supported internally displaced women and children.<sup>12</sup>

While Kurdish women were becoming more and more visible, internally displaced Kurdish men were not only ignored, but also stigmatized with such terms as "maganda," "hanzo," and "kıro"<sup>13</sup> by middle-class city dwellers at the end of 1980s. *Maganda* as a masculine figure emerged as a "derision who is totally oblivious to his own uncouth and offensive masculinity—thus 'interfering' with the moral discourses of the decade, to destabilize and debunk the authoritative codes of 'civility'" (Öncü, 2002, p. 174). The term *maganda*, which encapsulates the fact that the interconnectedness of contemporary consumption patterns and narratives of masculinity depend on place, setting, and context (Öncü, 2002), is not used in every context for every Kurdish man, but for the ones whose behaviors and manners are different than the ones regarded as "civilized" and "modern" by middle-class city dwellers. The media's interest in the issue of honor killings and the increase in crime rates in Istanbul also present Kurdish men as criminal and "uncivilized" figures. Therefore, internally displaced Kurdish men have found themselves in a position of both being *invisible* in the search for their economic and social rights and *visible* in debunking the authoritative civil codes of the city as "maganda" in the society, on the one hand, and both being *dominant* over less powerful women and men and *subordinated* by the patriarchal, dominant values of Turkish and Kurdish societies, on the other.

One of the interlocutors, Hasip's, words show this in-between position. He said that:

They [people in Istanbul] call me kıro, *maganda*. Everyday in the television they laugh at the way I talk, I walk. They think I am ignorant, I don't know anything about their Istanbul. They say we have only one Istanbul. But they forget the fact that Istanbul is ours with its mosques. My father was an educated man, he was an *imam* [a leader of Muslim prayer]. If someone from our village went to Istanbul, my father told him to go to all the religious places. I know they want to humiliate me. But they couldn't. I am not ignorant as they think.

Education, but the secular education, is considered by the Turkish elite or middle-class city dwellers as one of the most crucial elements in shaping the modern, contemporary, and prosperous Turkish nation. While reproaching his self-representation in the minds of the middle-class city dwellers, Hasip uses education in his narration; however, he converts the content of the education from secular to religious. In this way, he shows both that he is aware of the "education" discourse of the Turkish state, on the one hand, and that he challenges this discourse through changing its content with another, "oppositional" knowledge of the founding principles of the Turkish one, a religious one, on the other. In his discourse, he also sets the hierarchy and the borders of this "oppositional" knowledge. By putting his father at the top of the hierarchy as *imam*, he presents his closest kin member as the authority, and by referring to the mosques in Istanbul he displays that his knowledge, as well as his authority through his father, goes beyond the borders of his hometown to include Istanbul.

### Becoming a Kurd in Tarlaabaşı: The Institutionalization of Political Embodiment

The Kurdish institutions like the DTP (Democratic Society Party) and MKM<sup>14</sup> (Mesopotamian Culture Center) in Tarlaabaşı and İstiklal Street (very close to Tarlaabaşı) play significant roles in the identification process of internally displaced Kurdish men in Tarlaabaşı. While resisting the oppressive policies of the state or its bodies, these institutions become places with which internally displaced men identify.

The DTP, the pro-Kurdish political party with twenty seats in the parliament, is regarded as the successor of the DEHAP (Democratic People's Party), which was also the successor of several Kurdish parties that were banned by the Constitutional Court, which claimed that the party had connections with the outlawed PKK. The DTP and DEHAP are also regarded as the political wing of the PKK. Although the DTP does not officially declare whether it has links with the PKK or not, it does engage in symbolic gestures that refer to this link. For instance, in October 2007, the DTP sponsored a conference in which the jailed leader of the PKK, Abudullah Öcalan, was released.

The MKM, which was founded in 1991, also plays a significant role, especially in the young generation's everyday life, with its nineteen branches all over Turkey. The MKM is one of the crucial sights of the pro-Kurdish movement, since it is not only the first cultural center of the political movement,

but also has a wide range of participation form Kurdish people. There is a mutual relation between the MKM and the PKK. Some of the activities, including political discussions and art projects, reflect the ideas of the leader of the movement, Abdullah Öcalan. The MKM plays a significant role in this identification process, since it provides the opportunity to Kurdish people for raising their voices in their own language and it provides the opportunity of education to the youngsters, especially those who have not had chance to complete their education.

As a matter of fact, as stated by many IDPs in Tarlabaşı, it is almost impossible for any pro-Kurdish party or institution not to have connections with the PKK, since family members or relatives of any Kurdish family are either murdered by the state or become “martyrs” as guerrillas in the PKK. Thus, in such an environment the PKK is regarded as the center of resistance to the state’s discriminatory and anti-democratic policies by many of the IDPs in Tarlabaşı. Most Kurdish people need a central power that understands their pain, solves their problems, and with which they can identify.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, a paradoxical situation must also be taken into account in that some family members and relatives carry out their military service as citizens of the Turkish Republic. Therefore, there are cases where the same family has both guerrillas and soldiers at the same time. However, inside the houses, the photographs of the family member guerrillas on the wall are a sign of their dedication to the movement, whereas the photographs of the family member soldiers are kept in drawers as a sign of the obligation that they have to fulfill.

Like Turkish nationalism’s mythical “classless, unprivileged society” discourse, Kurdish nationalism aims to create a “classless” equal society, and it openly declared this in its 1995 party program.<sup>16</sup> In light of this discourse, Kurdish nationalist institutions open a space to fulfill this agenda and to strengthen Kurdish nationalism among community members. As mentioned by the members of the DTP and MKM, both organizations constitute Kurdish people from various classes and educational backgrounds. “Classless society” discourse plays a significant role in the everyday identification processes of internally displaced men. As pointed out by a member of the MKM, “people, including construction workers or the ones with very poor conditions, for the first time in their life act and sing at the stage in their own language.”

This construction-worker metaphor can also be seen in the discourse of Şeyhmus, another internally displaced construction worker, who is responsible for various office work of the DTP in the Tarlabaşı region. Holding such a responsibility gives Şeyhmus a confidence of being more than *amele*, which

is a slang term used in everyday language instead of worker, and which he is used to hearing from middle-class city dwellers. Regarding the word *amele* and the DTP, one of the construction workers, Cafer, states that:

It [*amele*] is not a bad word normally. But sometimes I realized that Turks used it to humiliate me. They look down on me. Of course not all of them, but some. But in DTP I am dealing with the office work from financial affairs to paper work. We had a congress last week. My audits were transparent. They reelected me for this duty. We Kurds are equal in the movement and in the organization.

While referring to his feelings about the DTP, Cafer is proud of himself and tries to show me, a non-Kurdish middle-class woman researcher whom he says he trusts and calls *heval*, meaning *friend in Kurdish*,<sup>17</sup> that the DTP manages what Turkish nationalism could not manage. This political capital provides him a social capital in which his status is not discussed, but justified. With this justification, he can show his capabilities in confidence. This confidence plays a crucial role in the formation of his subjectivity. On the one hand, he identifies himself with Kurdish nationalism, on the other hand, he challenges the power hierarchy by being the subject of the knowledge rather than the object of it in front of a Turkish woman. Challenging the stigmatization of internally displaced men in mainstream media and political discourse that presents them as potential criminals or thieves or as violent dangers both to Kurdish and to non-Kurdish women, internally displaced men’s everyday discourses and tactics allow them to become part of the city where they shape and are shaped in.

Nevertheless, there is the other side of the coin as well. From the state bodies, like the police’s point of view, having such memberships also means being close to the Kurdish movement. Such a closeness to the movement is regarded as a threat to “Turkish national unity” by the state bodies. In relation to this point, almost all of the interlocutors of this study argue that the state prefers to distract Kurdish IDPs’ attention from political issues to criminal ones, since the state finds politics more “dangerous” than ordinary crime. Under these circumstances, the ways IDP men identify themselves with notions like nationalism, religion, and crime differ in various power-laden contexts.

These differences tell much about the political dynamics in the region. Many of my interviewees, both women and men from different ages and worldviews and so on, mention that police connive in creating the high crime rates in the region and accept bribes. While talking about the crime and se-

curity, some of my interviewees mention the fact when there is a decrease in the everyday crime they witness, they understand that “their criminals” could not afford the bribe. The criminals are said to be taken under custody only when they cannot afford to give a bribe to the police. Some even said that “the bribing time of the high police officials is Friday afternoons.” Whether this is correct or not, it is a fact that crime and its relation with the state is normalized in the everyday discourses of the IDPs and becomes part of their collective memory.

In such an environment, where the police’s relation to crime and the treatment of the political “criminals” becomes a collective knowledge, internally displaced Kurdish men develop various tactics in presenting their relation with nationalism, religion, and crime. For instance, one of the internally displaced men whose sons and daughters work, bringing money to the family, is more likely to identify with his own family than with Kurdish nationalism, since there are no other breadwinners in the family. As frankly stated by Firat,

I know they want us to become criminals, drug dealers, they even want our daughters to become prostitutes. They don’t want us to deal with the politics. But, we as a family devote ourselves to our movement. My son and my daughter work for twelve hours to support the family. I spent ten years in prison, two of my brothers became martyrs in [the] guerrilla [movement].

The fact that Firat can openly declare his affiliation with the movement and the guerrilla figure is significant in the formation of his masculinity.

On the other hand, Kamil, who has to work to support a family of nine, identifies himself more with religious values. Not wanting to risk identifying himself as a political figure and wishing to avoid attracting the attention of the police, he initially identifies himself with religion. But as the interview went on he asked me some questions about the people I know in Tarlabası, the DTP, MKM, some of my opinions about some political events, and then mentioned his loyalty to the Kurdish nationalist movement.

It is not easy for the community members of a society with strong and tight traditional ties based on notions such as honor and honesty to accept other members becoming sex workers or drug dealers. However, both the economic and political conditions of the IDP in Tarlabası leave no other space for them but to accept such things as normal factors. Nevertheless, on the other hand, instead of becoming victimized subjects repeating a victimized discourse, they prefer to alter the mainstream hierarchal order in the production of their subjectivities.

## Changing Gender Relations

With its complex structure (Mitchell, 1971), gender organizes the social order in our everyday lives (Connell, 2001). Gender refers to the engagement of the relation between women and men, femininities and masculinities in different historical trajectories. It is also related to various power-laden relations based on the intersectionality of factors such as class, ethnicity, religion, and profession. It is directly related to bodies, sexuality, reproduction, and the subjectivities of women and men. Thus, examining gender relations between Kurdish men and women, Kurdish men and non-Kurdish women, enables us to analyze power-laden relations of various intersectionalities. It also enables us to question the equality discourse of both Turkish and Kurdish nationalisms. As mentioned earlier, gender relations in the city have changed enormously for both women and men. In addition, the changes in the discourse of the Kurdish nationalist institutions about gender structure, as well as the tension between these institutions and the state or governing bodies in Tarlabası, play significant roles in shaping gender relations. In this section, the main focus of analysis is upon the relationship between Kurdish men and women from various backgrounds.

The PKK’s founder, Abdullah Öcalan, is the leading figure of the Kurdish nationalist movement. Although some Kurdish families are critical of the armed policies of the PKK, its founder Öcalan is regarded as untouchable, since Öcalan represents the PKK, which establishes a totalizing hegemonic identity upon Kurdishness. The PKK is the organ that aims to homogenize the multiplicity of the Kurdish identity in its discourses through creating a mythical history, the representation of “ideal” Kurdish men and women. Thus, Öcalan plays a significant role as an “ideal” masculine figure in the identification process of the internally displaced people. As mentioned before, changes in the discourse of Öcalan or the PKK have the capacity to reshape the gender structure in the Kurdish community. As stated by Çağlayan, until the 1990s, as women had not become the active members of the movement, the main focus was on men, and women were regarded as “weak people who cannot be trusted” (2007). However, as the involvement of women in the movement increased, the discourse of Öcalan as well as the PKK in general started to emphasize the role of women while criticizing the traditional, “feudal” virility of Kurdish men (Çağlayan, 2007). Nevertheless, this does not mean that the community is not patriarchal anymore; rather, the meaning attributed to various notions like honor has changed.

Honor is one of the crucial ways of controlling the gender and sexual rela-

tions among community members—specifically, the sexuality of women in patriarchal kinship societies (Sirman, 2004). With the influence of modernity, patriarchy is no longer based on the kinship system, yet fraternal relations form the base of the patriarchy (Pateman, 1988), and honor begins to be controlled by kinship relations or by modern nuclear family members (Sirman, 2004). The content and the definition of honor changes in the society as a result of a “patriarchal bargain” that is shaped by the possible existence of conflicting interest groups as well as the historical changes in gender regimes (Kandiyoti, 1988). Kandiyoti explains the “patriarchal bargain” as the male-dominated discursive space in which all social actors constantly negotiate, contest, and redefine gender relation.

Women who used to come to the city only when they needed a doctor begin to be the producers of the city after internal displacement. Due to economic reasons in particular, the young women of the IDP families who do not need to look after their children start to work. Changes as such are not new for men either, yet the meanings attributed to honor have to be changed. The meanings attributed to honor have also been changed by the movement. Honor used to refer directly to the woman’s body and sexuality, whereas now it refers directly to territory of the country, but still indirectly to women’s bodies and sexuality (Çağlayan, 2007). Although women who work in the city gain some “rights,” as they argue, such as dressing in a modern way, shaping their eyebrows, or dyeing their hair, they cannot make their own decisions or act freely. As noted by one of the internally displaced women interviewees, Asya:

My clothes and my hair style is different in Dargeçit [a district in the South-east]. My brother was very conservative. He didn’t allow me to take a seat with his friends or with the neighbors when they came [to] us as guests. He didn’t allow me to go everywhere. But now, I can go to work. I have to because we need it. I can wear whatever I want to and can sit with the friends of my brother when they come. But I and my brother know that there are some limits. These limits are needed to protect our society. We Kurds know this.

The changes in the context and the need to survive also change the attitude of Asya’s brother towards her. Her brother adapted himself to the new context, yet as Asya mentions, both know that “there are some limits” to be protected for the “society.” The changing discourse of the movement in relation to the notion of honor enables Asya’s brother to develop a border thinking that he can engage to utilize both knowledges. The patriarchal bargain that they share opens a space for them to act relatively free in the urban context

while preserving the family’s honor. He can allow his sister, whose behaviors and sexuality represent the family as well as the community, to do various things in the urban context while keeping the virility of his masculinity. On the other hand, it is worth mentioning that although Asya feels freer than before, her obedience to the discourse of “some limits” reveals the fact that there is a silent agreement between her and her brother about the new dynamics of the patriarchal relations.

In some cases, men mention the interaction between women’s sexuality and men’s masculinity. As Cemal frankly states, women’s sexuality is one of the important factors that shapes men’s masculinity:

Although honor killings are exaggerated, women’s sexuality must be kept under control . . . men are afraid of women. Sexuality is important for men and this is the only power they have got. Apart from this, women rule society. . . . I am telling this for the sake of society, otherwise I respect women’s freedom for experiencing their sexuality.

This discourse embodies the conflict of urbanized Kurdish men: the conflict between traditional rural values and the modern values of the city. In this regard, Cemal’s masculinity is “situational”<sup>18</sup> in Monterescu’s terms. According to Monterescu, situational masculinity “praises the code of ‘tradition’ and seems to subscribe to it, but de facto it expresses a playful stance towards it and towards its own position” (2006, p. 134). Cemal’s response is situational in the way that he advocates controlling the sexuality of women “for the sake of a peaceful society,” which is a very traditional view on the one hand; while he wants to be perceived as a tolerant modern man regarding women’s sexual rights, on the other hand, when he talks to me, a non-Kurdish, Turkish woman researcher, the “other” for him. Additionally, working on the feelings of the other and making her/him supportive of their causes is one of the tactics that IDP men employ in Tarlabası when dealing with more powerful figures.

According to Cevat, the main difference between women and men is their flexibility according to the circumstances. Cevat argues that “women are more flexible than men. Therefore, women change whereas men cannot change. This scares men.” He argues that the real power is held by women, because they reproduce. According to him, men are aware of their weakness, and this weakness leads to a pursuit of security in a patriarchal society. This weakness and lack of confidence discourse is also utilized for legitimizing psychological or physical violence, especially towards women. This is the paradox where the power of manhood is exercised on the less powerful.



The importance of honor in internally displaced men's lives seems to emerge from their lack of confidence. This lack of confidence, which is influential in shaping male weakness and insecurity, has a relation to endogamous marriages as well, as argued by one of the interviewees, Hejan:

How can my mother or father trust anybody outside the family? Both married their cousins. They couldn't even trust their cousins . . . we, Kurds, are all relatives. Therefore, everybody feels insecure and feels the right to control each other.

As Hejan states, endogamous marriages cause lack of confidence, since the taboo of sexuality could not even be controlled in such close relationships, which are supposed to be based on trust. Sexuality is a taboo that enables men to control women's behavior in both kinship-based and modern societies (Sirman, 2004).<sup>19</sup> Hence, everybody is responsible for her/his behavior. While sexuality is controlled by the members of society at various levels, the borders of freedoms and sanctions are altered in every context as well. This influences a person's relationships with other society members and also leads to the development of a double discourse towards women and the meaning attributed to sexuality. Internally displaced men develop different tactics in relation to Kurdish and non-Kurdish men and women from various backgrounds, and their masculinities are shaped in this tension. At the same time, although endogamous marriages are widespread and sexuality among family members is regarded as taboo, examining the meanings attributed to inter-family relations reveals their paradoxical approach.

Distinguishing traditional Kurdish women from urbanized and politicized ones, Kurdish men develop a double discourse towards Kurdish women as well. In the Kurdish nationalist movement, women are called *heval*—friends—who are regarded as being like siblings. Relationships with *hevals* are considered holy relationships, with sexual intercourse or any kind of private and intimate relation forbidden. This approach reveals the paradoxical discourse about endogamous marriages. It shows the limits of the sexual relations among community members: you can marry your cousin, but not your sister. *Hevals* are different from traditional women, who are mostly mothers. In their everyday life, internally displaced men position the mother figure in a more traditional place in which they argue they have “more” right to apply any kind of patriarchal treatment, from violence to strict control of their everyday practices. On the other hand, as *hevals* are considered political figures, they have the right to behave more freely. As it is in the case of Asya, *hevals* are supposed to internalize the patriarchal limits to protect their family name

and community. In addition, internally displaced men show more respect to *hevals* and regard them as “equal” friends with urbanized or politicized values.

Some of the IDP men argue that the shift in the gender roles in the community and the interaction with women of the city becomes an ideological position for men. According to Cevat, “men have to prove themselves in various ways: as bread winners, as sexual partners, and as desired honorable men.” This statement also represents the situational positioning of Kurdish masculinities: in-between traditional women, mothers, and siblings.

## Conclusion

Being an internally displaced Kurdish man at the very “heart” of Istanbul, in Tarlabaşı, is an ambivalent state. It is a state of encountering various meanings of stigmatization, prejudices, and discrimination, on the one hand, and a state of encountering different relationships of opportunity, creativity, and freedom, on the other. It is a state of being visible and invisible as well as being dominant and subordinated at the same time. It is a state of redefining, interpreting, and practicing what hegemony defines and practices as the so-called mind of the population. It is a state of being regarded as a homo sacer by this “mind,” and in turn being disposable in everyday practices. It is an ability to think from both and neither of the dominant and subordinated knowledge positions at the same time. For an urban dweller, it is a state of setting, fixing, altering, transforming, and traversing the borders of the city as well as the borders in minds.

Turkish state, government, and local governing and nationalist institutions regard Tarlabaşı as a dangerous place for living. They impose their nationalistic and neoliberal policies in Tarlabaşı, policies that have stigmatized the inhabitants of the area. The aim of the governing bodies is to discard and dispose of the inhabitants—homo sacers—of stigmatized Tarlabaşı. These policies have influenced the perception of city dwellers, leading them to exclude the region in their everyday life as if there existed a state of permanent exception. Yet, the everyday tactics of homo sacers show that they develop various ways of being.

In modern, dualistic, hegemonic settings, “Kurdishness” and “Turkishness,” rural and urban, as well as men and women, are presented as fixed, opposing categories. In Turkey the dominant discourse regards “Turkishness” as the “original” aspect of citizenship and considers “Kurdishness” as its oppositional one. The middle-class urban dwellers, who identify themselves with this dominant discourse, consider themselves the “original” inhabitants

of the city, defending its territory. Therefore, each encounter with the “other” is seen as a reaction. The tactics developed in everyday life reveal the fact that hegemonic discourse is utilized by both sides in various ways. Through examining the formation of the masculinities of the internally displaced men in Tarlabası, I have focused on how the discourse and the knowledge of the two sides are in the process of change in everyday life. Such an analysis enables us to comprehend the structured relationships powered by hegemonic discourse, on the one hand, and to evaluate the internally displaced men not as a passive, victimized category, but as agents that reshape the traditional, national, and neoliberal meanings attributed to city, masculinity, and nationalism, on the other.

In order to mediate between the Turkish state’s assimilative and Kurdish institutions’ nationalist “strategies,” Kurdish men in the city develop “border thinking” (de Certeau, [1980] 1988; Mignolo, 2000) in their everyday interactions with other actors. Kurdish masculinities are interwoven “in between” (Bhabha, [1996] 2002) the traditional, nationalist, and neoliberal gendered discourses (both Turkish and Kurdish) and the everyday life realities of internally displaced men in the city. Kurdish men’s resistance and tactics in the formation of their masculinities reflect the gendered national, ethnic, class hierarchy and power relations in the society. Kurdish men’s resistance and tactics reveal not only the institutional policies and distributive patterns (political, social, economic), but also the power-laden social relations. In the formation of their everyday tactics, the internally displaced men become both the objects and the subjects of the hegemonic discourse. Nevertheless, each being, each position, is a new identification in the sense that even if they conform with hegemony, their interpretation of hegemonic values in their context is a new thing, different from hegemonic values.

## Notes

1. Here the terms “tactic” and “strategy” are used as de Certeau uses them. According to de Certeau, strategy and tactic are complementary terms. Strategy is “the calculus of force-relationships, when a subject of will and power can be isolated from an environment,” and assuming “a place that can be circumscribed as proper and serve as the basis for generating relations with an exterior distinct.” Tactic is “a calculus which cannot count on a proper, nor thus on a borderline distinguishing the other as a visible totality,” rather insinuating itself into “the other’s place.” A tactic depends on time and “must constantly manipulate events in order to turn them into opportunities” ([1980] 1988, pp. 34–39). Various scholars like Kandiyoti (1997b) and Uğur (2003) use the term “survival strategy” in the way de Certeau uses the term “tactic.”

2. I use the concept “masculinity” to refer to all the configurations of discourses such as behaviors, utterances, and wordings that have been attributed to male embodiment in specific times and spaces (Mutluer, 2009).

3. Here discourse is defined as “producing and organizing meaning within a social context” (Edgar & Sedgwick, 2005, p. 117). Discourse examines the various configurations of assumptions, categories, logics, claims, and modes of articulation, including knowledge, statements, propositions, institutions, and so on (Foucault, [1969] 2005). Structured by political, cultural, and institutional discourse, individuals and collectivities that have the capacity to exercise power in a specific historical moment normalize themselves, the images of themselves, “others,” and world by accepting, preserving, categorizing, and transmitting knowledge that is constituted by discourse (Foucault, [1972] 1980; Young 1990).

4. I use the term “class” in Kalb’s sense. According to Kalb, the expanded conceptualization of class searches for “the interconnections between relationships in (and of) production, narrowly conceived and social and cultural practices beyond the immediate point of production, albeit supportive of it, thus is really nothing new” (1997, p. 5).

5. According to Nur Betül Çelik, this mythical discourse was presented to establish a “set of equivalences, first between the Republic and the ‘nature’ of the Turkish nation; secondly, between the modern West and Turkishness; and finally, between the ‘classless’ nature of Turkish society and one-party rule” (2000, p. 196). Similar debate can be found in Paul Dumont’s “The Origins of Kemalist Ideology” (in Landau, 1984, pp. 25–44).

6. Some examples of the everyday usage of this mythical discourse can be found in the following newspaper articles, columns, and so on: <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=221053>, <http://yenisafak.com.tr/yazarlar/?i=5289&y=FehmiKoru>, <http://www.sokeekspres.com/Makale.aspx?MakaleID=1861>, <http://www.haberprogram.com/yz.php?yid=15&yyid=412>, [http://www.evrensel.net/haber.php?haber\\_id=7434](http://www.evrensel.net/haber.php?haber_id=7434). All sites accessed on February 8, 2011.

7. In the migration and international relations literature, internal displacement is used to refer to forcefully migrated communities.

8. Contrary to the general presentation showing that the opposing parties involved in the Kurdish issue are Turks and Kurds, the village guard system is a crucial example of revealing the fact that the conflict has various actors from at least both sides. Depending on the intersecting interests, or ongoing local hostilities, Kurds may relate to the issue on the side of the Turkish state as well.

9. Although the direct translation of *Rum* is “Greek,” Rums living in Turkey prefer to be referred to not as Greeks, but as Rums.

10. Further details about JITEM can be found in some interviews with ex-officers, confessors, and others: <http://gaphaber.com/detay.php?id=14782>, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=170609>, <http://www.navkurd.net/arsiv/jicapemeniye/tanrikulu.htm>. All sites accessed on February 8, 2011.

11. The names used in this study are the nicknames given by the interviewees.
12. One of the examples of the support of feminist Kurdish women is the speeches of these women in the Kurdish Conference, in which they criticize not only the policies of the Turkish state, but also the patriarchal system in the Kurdish community. The Kurdish Conference was held in Istanbul on March 10–11, 2006.
13. All of these terms, which are used interchangeably with the same meaning in the city, mean “yokel,” “yahoo,” “lout,” or “hick” in English.
14. In Kurdish nationalist discourse Mesopotamia is regarded as the “holy” lands from which the Kurds originated. In this regard, it has a holy meaning in the myths of national discourse or in the discourse of the leaders of the PKK (e.g., Öcalan, 2004).
15. Similar discussion can be found in *Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence*, by Aliza Marcus (New York: New York University Press, 2007).
16. The 1995 PKK Party Program was declared after the party congress held on January 24.
17. The word *heval* is discussed in the following section.
18. Here the terminology is inspired by Daniel Monterescu’s *situational* masculinity model (2006, pp. 123–42). In his study about Palestinian–Arab men in Jaffa, Monterescu develops the model of situational masculinity to point to the discourses of masculinities that maneuver between the essentialist discourses of Islamic conservatism and liberal-secular masculinity (2006, pp. 133–37). While his research focuses more on the role of ideological formations in Jaffa in the construction of masculinities, my research focuses on how gendered nationalism is constructed in relation to everyday tactics of marginalized men in the city structures of Istanbul.
19. Although men’s responsibilities in terms of controlling women’s sexuality change, in both kinship-based and modern societies men are responsible for men’s honor.

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