IDEOLOGICAL AMBIVALANCE OF MOTHERHOOD
IN THE CASE OF "MOTHERS OF MARTYRS" IN TURKEY

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

FEBRUARY 2008

Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

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ABSTRACT

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February 2008, 169 pages

The main objective of this thesis is to understand how mothers who lost their sons during the conflicts in East and Southeast of Turkey articulate martyrdom of their sons with nationalism, religion and motherhood; how these women who lost their sons, as a woman and a mother define and express themselves and their experiences after martyrdom. Before their sons are martyrized, these women were ordinary housewives, with the death of their sons, they get a new identity: being a mother of a martyr. In this thesis, it is examined that what being a mother of a martyr means for these women. Moreover, this study attempts to examine certain perceptions and assumptions of these women about nationalism, the state, religion, war and peace after martyrdom. For this aim, this study is based on interviews with mothers who do not realize that they virtually live in a war, on motherhood, war, politics, and peace. Therefore, this research is the study to grasp how discourses of nationalism and religion shape this new identity: being a mother of a martyr. While these women were ordinary housewives before martyrdom, after their sons' death, their narratives as mothers of martyrs are cultivated by discourses of nationalism and religion. Consequently, is it possible for these mothers to develop an anti-war discourse as happened for examples in the world?

Keywords: Motherhood, martyr, martyrdom, nationalism, Turkish nationalism, religion, Sunni Islam, and Alevi Thought.

ÖZ

TÜRKİYE'DE "ŞEHİT ANNELERİ" ÖRNEĞİNDE ANNELİĞİN İDEOLOJİK ŞEKİLLENİŞİ

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Şubat 2008, 169 sayfa

Bu tezin amacı, Türkiye'de Doğu ve Güney Doğu'daki çatışmada oğlunu kaybeden annelerin, oğullarının şehitliğinden sonra tüm bu yaşadıklarını milliyetçilik, din ve annelikle nasıl bağdaştırdıklarını anlamaya çalışmaktır. Çocuğunu kaybetmiş kadınların bir kadın, bir anne olarak kendilerini ve yaşadıklarını nasıl tanımladıklarını ve bunu nasıl ifade ettiklerini görmek amaçlanmıştır. Oğulları şehit olmadan önce sıradan ev hanımları iken oğullarının ölümüyle beraber edindikleri yeni kimliğin, şehit anneliğin, bu kadınlar için ne ifade ettiği ve bu kimliğin bu kadınların milliyetçilik, devlet, din, savaş ve barış algılarını nasıl etkilediği incelenmiştir. Ayrıca, milliyetçi ve dini söylemlerin bu kimlik oluşumuna etkisi, oğullarının ölümünden önce sıradan ev haımları iken ve oğullarının şehit edilmesinden sonra bu söylemler tarafından anneliğin, şehit anneliğinin, nasıl kurgulandığına bakılmıştır. Sonuç olarak bu kadınların, şehit annesi olarak yurt dışındaki örnekleri gibi bir savaş karşıtı söylem geliştirip geliştiremeyeceğine ve eğer geliştirilemiyorsa bunun nedenleri araştırılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Annelik, kadınlık, şehit, şehitlik, milliyetçilik, Türk milliyetçiliği, din, Sünni İslam ve Alevilik.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> What is patriotism? Is it love of one's birthplace, the place of childhood's recollections and hopes, dreams and aspirations? Is it the place where, in childlike naivete, we would watch the passing clouds, and wonder why we, too, could not float so swiftly? The place where we would count the milliard glittering stars, terror-stricken lest each one "an eye should be," piercing the very depths of our little souls? Is it the place where we would listen to the music of the birds and long to have wings to fly, even as they, to distant lands? Or is it the place where we would sit on Mother's knee, enraptured by tales of great deeds and conquests? In short, is it love for the spot, every inch representing dear and precious recollections of a happy, joyous and playful childhood?
>
> If this is patriotism, today, a few people are named as patriotic since the place of play has been turned into factory, mill, and mine, while deepening sounds of machinery have replaced the music of the birds. No longer can we hear the tales of great deeds, for the stories our mothers tell today are but those of sorrow, tears and grief (Goldman, 1911).[1]

A brief glance at recorded human history reveals a preoccupation with war stories. There are few, if any, eras that have passed without war in human history. Women come into prominence at times in these struggles, but not on a widely involved scale. Neither women nor unarmed social groups have been able to play a central role in the ending of wars. Thus, when one gun stops, another gun starts to fire. War is identified with men's unarguable power, legitimized with heroism, courage, and sacrifice. On the other hand, women are identified with peace, cowardice, and passivism. The heroes remembered in history are mostly male warriors. The ones crying behind them are women.

When we look at experiences in various countries, peace becomes an ideal symbolized by a woman. Peace, like woman, is understood as a passive beauty that must be protected with violence when necessary. According to Selek (2007), women's role in the struggle against war does not arise from their peaceful nature, but rather from consciousness and choice. Thus, participation of women in peace struggles is not the natural result of their passive disposition; it is a political choice.

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[1] This quotation is available at
http://www.savaskarsitlari.org/arsiv.asp?ArsivTipID=1&ArsivAnaID=21679

Women are both the object and the hostage of war. Woman either obeys the roles assigned to her by patriarchal society or internalizes masculinized behaviors. Although war and the military are considered to be "men's work," armed conflict and militarist ideology have had a great impact on women all over the world. Motherhood has often been a strong theme in various women's peace organizations, including contemporary ones, based on the idea that women's very ability to have children, whether they choose to do so or not, gives them an innate aversion to violence and war. The strength of this argument has been its success in mobilizing women, especially those who may not otherwise be politically active. Whether or not one accepts the idea of biological determinism, it cannot be denied that mothers have a strong bond with their children and do not want to lose them to war. In some situations, we observe that peace and democracy struggles defined around motherhood do reverse the status of the women involved, who become successful in mobilizing public opinion. Saturday Mothers in Turkey, Plaza de Mayo mothers in Argentina, and the movements of Black Sash in South Africa[2] have all battered dominant discourse from the inside. However, peace struggles based on gender generally strengthen approaches of war. For instance, in Yugoslavia, mothers of soldiers petitioned the government and went to the fronts in order to get their sons back from the war, but those demonstrations were used by some nationalist propagandists (Selek, 2007).[3]

Whenever an opportunity for peace occurs, women come into prominence more than the process itself does. And generally, they take part in this process within a "victim" discourse. Peace negotiations are mostly done by men; in other words, by the ones who make the wars. For that reason, women are not accepted as major actors in the process of negotiations. However, women are welcomed in the efforts to reduce the social effects of war, or in condoling. For example, as Enloe (2000: 4) claimed, there is a remarkable peace struggle taking place in Ireland. Women's associations collaborated to establish a shared background for joint peace activism,

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[2] For more information, see Cynthia Cockburn, *Mesafeyi Aşmak: Barış Mücadelesinde Kadınlar*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2004.

[3] Avaliable at http://www.savaskarsitlari.org/arsiv.asp?ArsivTipID=1&ArsivAnaID=42023.

discovering that they all shared common problems and experiences. From that starting point, and with the assistance of Belfast's Woman Support Networks, women from different ethnic groups have set aside long-standing conflicts to ally for peace. Perhaps they could not stop the conflicts, but they strengthened dialog initiatives. In Israel and Palestine, feminist women have initiated similarly successful projects. For example, women from the feminist magazine *Nova* displayed censured photos of occupation in Tel Aviv Square. Woman in Black[4] started its demonstration in Jerusalem and spread its activism to the world (Women in Black, 2001: 22-25). Those women, together with Israeli women, prepared gender-based campaigns against war and violence. They sewed a Peace blanket. However, none of those activities could gain the women permission to participate in peace negotiations. Moreover, on the table at which the international peace negotiations were discussed, the women's Peace blanket was sadly missing. Other promising experiments have occurred in Bosnia-Herzegovina. For instance, the Woman in Black movement was activated here, by Italian feminists (Selek, 2007). They were denounced as treacherous witches because they talked about rape at their demonstrations every Wednesday. Despite this, they continued to give support to victims of rape. Working in Medica, they created efficient international networks (Cockbourn, 2004: 53). Again, however, none of these activities led women to be accepted as major actors during peace negotiations. In Turkey in the 1990s, there was an increasing focus on the relatives of soldiers, and particularly soldiers' mothers, known as the "mothers of martyrs." Women, especially mothers, became the "symbol of struggle against the PKK." Motherhood has been used not only as a strategy for deepening nationalist discourse, but also as a strategy for countering the issue of Kurdish nationalism.

In this context, it can be said that motherhood has been used as a conceptual tool for questioning women's perceived need to assist men in male-centered battles. When we return to mothers' self-perceptions, it becomes clear that the nationalist movements in many countries have defined mothers in relation to patriarchal ideology, as sisters, mothers, or wives, and those mothers' self-perceptions have often shaped by these constructs. In the last two decades, feminist theory has

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[4] For more information, see Helman, Sara and Rapoport, Tamar "Women in Black: Challenging Israel's Gender and Socio-Political Orders", *British Journal of Sociology,* 48(4): 681–700.

succeeded in problematising "motherhood." While searching the relevant literature, I found that most of the publications on mothers or motherhood examine the way that mothers are imagined and projected in policy-making or in science, literature, or popular media.[5] These approaches have been enormously fruitful analytically, and certainly make statements about the significance of maternalism in the social and political world. Feminist interest in motherhood, as image and as myth, has proved similarly fruitful in political history, particularly in the study of nation formation and policy-making. Mothering and motherhood are the subjects of rapidly expanding bodies of literature.

It should be explained why society focuses on the mothers of soldiers, but not the fathers. Why should mothers be part of the discussion of militarism, nation-state rivalry, and martyrdom? Enloe (2000) has given us part of the answer: women are inescapably involved with militaries, and gender is central to military ideology. Kenny (1996: 447) points out those social movements often strategically construct gendered identities to achieve their goals, whether or not those goals are explicitly gender related. In doing so, movement actors integrate elements of cultural meanings about gender into individual and collective identities to lay claim to certain issues. Women, particularly mothers, are not unusual as iconic representations of the state in nationalist movements (Chatterjee, 1989). State leadership attempts to counter the mothers on their own terms. Kenney (1996: 445) claims that gendered images can be constructed by state discourse to legitimize nationalist language. Motherhood as a sub-institution is one of the strongest "ideological apparatuses," whether state-sponsored or not, of established patriarchal systems (Uluğtekin, 2002: 23). For example, Islamic discourse elevates mothers to near saintliness and exhorts believers to honor mothers. However, motherhood is still stressed as a woman's traditional role in state and military discourse: A "good" mother will be one who wants to send her son not to school or to work, but to war. A "good" mother is one who is willing

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[5] For example, see: Wendy (1996), "Women, Motherhood and Contemporary Serbian Nationalism"; Chan (2003), Review of *Art, Nation and Gender: Ethnic Landscapes, Myths and Mother Figures;* Arditti (1999), *Searching For Life: The Grandmothers Of The Plaza De Mayo and the Disappeared Children of Argentina;* De Alwis (1997), "Motherhood As A Space Of Protest: Women's Political Participation in Contemporary Sri Lanka"; Zeiger (1996), "She Didn't Raise Her Boy To Be a Slacker: Motherhood, Conscription, and the Culture of the First World War."

to sacrifice her son for her nation. Once a woman is a mother, she is assumed to be focused largely on the task of national duty. In national discourse, they cultivated a sense of contribution and commitment to the nationalist struggle. In protracted military conflict, with its attendant losses of life, women, in particular the mother of martyrs, symbolize the giving of life, or national generativity, loss, and sacrifice.

Although women tend to be less exposed to state war propaganda and ideology, in part because they are less integrated into states' mass organizations or the preexisting civic groups supporting the war effort, they, along with their sons, tend to be the sector most negatively affected by war mobilization (Bayard de Volo, 2001; Enloe, 2000; Zeiger, 1996). For militaries, mothers are potential opponents who might rebel as their children are killed, and thus a potential threat to the war effort. Focusing on motherhood's nurturing role reinforces the military ideology which requires women to be submissive and rewards men for being aggressive. By mobilizing mothers into maternal organizations, the military attempts to redirect and control mothers' anger at the death of a son (Bayard de Volo, 2001; Elshtain, 1987; Zeiger, 1996). Enloe noted the maternal focus in militaries' efforts to fill the ranks, arguing that insofar as women are perceived to be the chief caretakers of sons, "[military officials] must win over and then sustain at least the passive cooperation of the mothers of these men. The militarization of mothers and of motherhood has been crucial for any successful manpower formula" (Enloe, 2000: 237). This is why women so seldom play an active role in the questioning of war. Nagel (2004: 61) claims that the invisibility of women is not because women are nonexistent, but because they are not the ones who can determine roles and positionings in society. This can cause scholars to overlook the importance of women in the construction of political and social processes. Consequently, an approach is needed that will help us see women's volitional participation in such processes. Is woman an object or a subject in politics? Are women in politics able to change the politics, or do politics change women?

Women, especially the mothers of martyrs, are popular icons in nationalist and militarist ideology. During war, being the mother of a martyr has become a "patriotic duty." It is repeated many times in popular literature and in sociological

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and ideological writings. On one hand, mothers are invited into the nationalist struggle by nationalism; on the other hand, mothers are taken under patriarchal control by the burden of symbolic roles, such as being mothers of the nation. When we look at the situation from this angle, it is important to consider how mothers of martyrs are constructed, and with what features and images.

In Turkish policy, women are marginalized or mostly excluded from political activity and protest, while the theme of motherhood gives them a socially acceptable foundation for their political invovlement and an acceptable outlet for their anger. Thus, this theme has a significant role in political literature and an examination of mother of martyrs, because these women construct similar identities while supporting nationalist discourse in Turkey, even though they have different ethnic, religious, and class origins. With that stated, I should underline that I do not claim that those mothers are a homogenous group. The status of women in militarization and nationalism are also defined by their economic status, religious identity, and so on.

In this vein, women are defined by men as "mother," "wife," or "sister," as I will study in chapter III. Political functions of those roles depend on patriarchal limitations. As long as women are faithful to conventional female identity, national identity, and militarism, they can obtain the most crucial national status of mothers of martyrs, mothers of soldiers who died for the sake of nation. In that context, I argue that motherhood, which has a critical role in the reproduction of nationalist discourse and militarism in political culture, is a crucial factor of identity in Turkey. Moreover, religion is a vital ingredient in the potent mix constituting the identities of mothers of martyrs. It can be said that religion is part of the masculinist power structure within which social relations become gendered. In that sense, martyrdom provides a relationship between religion and masculinism, and needs to be reinterpreted. This interpretation brings us more sophisticated understandings of how mothers of martyrs shape their self-identity after the loss of a loved one.

1.1. The Significance of Research Topic:

There are various reasons that necessitate further academic interest on mother of martyrs in Turkey that pushed me to make a research on this topic. As I indicated at the beginning, most painful and tragic stories, now, belong to women as mothers

in a war condition. They are, now, part of those stories. However, those stories are told by others, today. Although there are a lot of things spoken about mothers and their stories, their voices were not heard. It is meaningful itself to look for this voice. This research is an effort for the answer of the question how this process is lived and given meaning to it by those mothers who experienced the grief. In this thesis, I want to evaluate how mothers of martyrs articulate their experiences and grievances with nationalism, martyrdom and politics. Especially they now live in quite different life worlds than they did before martyrdom of their sons. Thus, while the thesis lays the main parameters of the theoretical framework of motherhood, martyrdom and nationalism, it also points towards the transformations from ordinary housewives to be mothers of martyrs through which these women viewed their worlds.

In that sense, for an appropriate study, the analysis of martyrdom, the strategies of the state/the army and the structure of organization established by families of martyrs stay insufficient as long as they do not include life worlds as experienced by mothers of martyrs. Those narratives, as the expression of "cultural forms and processes by which individuals express their sense of themselves in history" (Cited in Ciliv, 2002: 22) are useful ways of establishing connections between different structures, in order to be able to identify the relations of power.

The subjects who tell the stories of their own realities therefore simultaneously make references to "an exchange between the purely personal and shared social, literary and linguistic world" (Skultans, 1998: xii). In line with Benjamin, "a remembered event is infinite, because it is a key to everything that happened before and after it" (Benjamin, 1969), my aim is to understand the connections between experiences and grieves of mothers with parameters of meaning. In a discussion about martyrdom, nationalism and motherhood by interviewing with fathers and mothers, Maccoby and Martin (Cited in Bora, 1998: 81) say that:

> Mothers and fathers cannot have consciousness about their behaviors. Meanings of descriptive concepts can change person to person and remembering the past is not a confident source. The worst thing is what we found is not very different than conventional meanings of roles of mothers and fathers in society.

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However, definition of "the worst" can be functional in this research aiming to evaluate relation with personal and social one because question of how conventional definition of motherhood in Turkey is re-created is the most significant question of this research. In this vein, in depth interview technique provides a most articulate passage into the connections between the past and the present, the personal and the social and organizational and national, making crucial connections that stem from the relations between mothers and discourses. So one of the main aims of this thesis is to follow each mother's path from their positionality as housewife through which their notions of their own "motherhood", "womanhood" and their understanding of "politics" was altered.

Therefore, research needs to involve the 'people whose lives are affected by conflict and the mutual animosity and conflicting goals that drive it' (Marshall 2000:4). For that reason, mothers with their motherhood experiences should convey it to the public sphere because in order to abolish the war, it is needed to convey mothers' experiences different from men's into the public life. So, it is significant to evaluate mothers of martyrs because using the motherhood argument can legitimize women's entrances in public sphere in society's eyes. For all of the contributions to our understanding of mothering, however, there are major missing points. That's why, it is necessary to have more attention to the lives of particular mothers such as mothers of martyrs. By focusing the research on mothers' identities, experiences, and activities, and understandings of each, we can secure far more solid and less normative portrayals of nationalism, and martyrdom on lives. At the same time, we need to analyze to connect mothers' personal beliefs and experiences with their political views. These life stages point both to the infiltration of ideologies, conventions and morals into the actor's lives, and their processes of subjectification. As all encompassing life stories, the narratives, and the live stages inherent in them, represent the threads of continuity between discourses within the organizations and those discourses of the networks conventionally deemed outside of them. The meta narratives of honor, nationalism, martyrdom and even of love are connected in the narratives of these women, once again attesting to the inseparability of the private and the public in discourse and in life worlds.

In that point, several questions provide the backbone of this thesis. The main parameters, in close connection with the "before" and "after" of martyrdom, what was their sense of motherhood shaped by, what did they feel the need to support the nationalism and military, and eventually what were the parameters that led them to identify themselves as mothers of martyrs in either public sphere and in politics? Before and after martyrdom, how did they shape their self-identity as a mother, especially in relation to other's definitions of motherhood: as articulated by the state, by organization, by public and by nationalism? How is the concept of "martyr" related to their sense of self, their involvement in public sphere and aftermath in their minds? And through their understanding of this notion, how do these mothers define politics, today? Through these questions, this thesis aims to underline the continuities between two phases of Turkish history, military-nation and motherhood. As such, this thesis stands as a research effort which also attests to the theorizing powers of dept interviews as a method.

1.2. Methodology:

While starting to this thesis, my initial project I had in my mind primarily concerned a comparison of Mothers of Martyrs in Turkey with Mothers of Disappeared in Argentina. Those mothers; those women were brought together by the disappearances. It was a force of opposition to the military rule. Women became more conscious of the dimensions of the repression and this made them more determined. Mothers forced to modify their traditional role as mothers and changed their perceptions of their roles within the society. They were challenging the traditional ideology of motherhood, an ideology most commonly found in the moral discourse of the military. In Argentina, mothers have achieved to construct their own agency that is different from dominant structures and discourses in the country in that era. Like in Turkey, in Argentina, the natural role for woman is being wife and mother (Fisher, 1995:5). However, they resisted the dictatorship and transformed women's view of Argentinian society and their agency in it (Fisher, 1995; Margaret, 2004; Femenia, 1987). However, in order to compare mothers in both countries, they should have the similar bases. In other words, while we are talking about a "death of a loved son" for mothers in Turkey, on the other hand, there is a "disappearance of

loved son and daughter" for mothers in Argentina. Furthermore, in order to evaluate mothers in Argentina, I would mostly depend on secondary resources and this would endanger objectivity of the thesis.

Then, I thought about comparison of mothers of martyrs and Saturday Mothers. In May 1995 relatives of people who "disappeared" in police custody have been holding a weekly vigil in central Istanbul, demanding that the authorities account for the fate of their loved ones. They are known as the Saturday Mothers, since they gather every Saturday at midday in front of Galatasaray High School in Istiklal Street, holding pictures of their "disappeared" sons, daughters, husbands, wives, fathers, brothers. Each time they meet, a press announcement is read out detailing the case of one of the "disappeared", but otherwise the vigil is intended to be held in silence (http://www.amnesty.org/es/alfresco_asset/591ebc9d-b8ff-11dc-bca7-2ba47848ddb7/eur440171998en.html). However, again, mothers of martyrs and Saturday Mothers are not compatible. As it is seen in the example of Mothers of Disappeared, while the crucial thing affects mothers of martyrs' re-shaping self-identity is the death of a loved son, on the other hand, disappearance of loved son or daughter make Saturday Mothers politicized.

Finally, I thought about comparison of mothers of martyrs and mothers of peace who are mothers of those in PKK. However, this kind of research seems to be very complicated for a master thesis since issue of mothers of martyrs, itself, is a very broad issue to study. Moreover, I would have difficulties to reach Kurdish mothers since lately ten of them were sent to prison because of the reason that their discourse jeopardized integrity and unity of Turkey. Then, I decided to study only mothers of martyrs. Moreover, although, before interviews, I did not consider to classify mothers as Sunni and Alevi, after interviews, I faced with the picture that almost half of my interviewees are Alevi mothers. As a result, I compare these mothers rather than comparing mothers of martyrs with the mothers above.

As it is seen in the examples of different ideological ambivalences of the motherhood above, in the beginning of this research, it is expected to observe similar transformation for mothers of martyrs in Turkey. I want to evaluate the ideological usage of the motherhood in Turkey whether being a mother of a martyr could

provide these women to transform themselves as anti-war individuals since this seems to be their rights to question why their sons died while it is state duty to protect its citizens. It is clear that these mothers get a new identity as a mother of a martyr. However, I want to study that how this motherhood is curtailed by which different discourses. As a result, these mothers stay silent. Mothers in Turkey cannot be portrayed as active agents in shaping their lives even as they are represented as victims of vicious terror of PKK because their subjectivities are curtailed by nationalism, religion and patriarchy in the society. In this context, in my research, as I indicated before, I will examine how motherhood discursively represented in this content: mothers of martyrs in Turkey. My position is that regardless of the efforts of the state or structure, can mothers of martyrs find ways to assert their agency as mothers of disappeared did since they (mothers in Argentina) have come to redefine and reaffirm the concept of the maternal role and achieve radical transformation of social relations and agency of motherhood?

When I first saw the mothers yelling as "vatan sağ olsun demiyorum[6]" at her son's funeral[7], I began to be interested in a critique of structures, how do structures affect those mothers? I was interested in how they resisted discursive practices,

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[6] It approximately means: "I do not bestow my son to this nation."

[7] Last year in Turkey, for the first time, families, whose sons died in Southeast of Turkey, said "I do not bestow my son to this motherland" rather than saying "I do bestow my son to this motherland." Thus, for the first time, it was asked for peace by families of soldiers in Turkey. For the first time, almost a taboo was put into words loudly. Unfortunately, I could not reach to them. By quotes in newspapers, I try to remind you that in fact when compared to families of soldiers in the world, they are also part of a group in Turkey.
Hatice Gürbüzer: "I do not certainly bestow my son to the nation. Why do I? I am not proud of martyrdom of my son. Living was his right. Why do I become to be proud of his death? Responsible of this war was not my son."
Fatma Karagöz: "I do not bestow my son to this motherland because nothing has done up to now. We had to live with this grief. This grief can only be understood by who experienced it."
Sezai Okay: "I did not give education to my son to be a soldier. I send him to the best schools. They made him soldier by force. My son did not harm a fly yet he killed an individual. I do not bestow my son to this motherland. Son is my son."
Ayfer Yüzgeç: "I do not bestow my son to this motherland. I do not sacrifice my son to this nation because the state did not do anything for my son."
Nuri Evranos: "I do not bestow my son to this motherland. Politicians should send their sons to Dargeçit, too."
Mehmet Gülseren: "My son, who you used for your dirty politics, is martyr of no one. From now on, I do not have a child to sacrifice. Be conscientious objectors and stay in prison!" (Cited in Köse, 2007: 18).

opening up space for agency. In this context, I was especially looking to see the "breaking points" who no longer believed they would be able to stand up to this discourse of nationalism and religion based on martyrdom as many had experienced after loss of son. The initial question in my mind was whether this transformation from ordinary housewives to mothers of martyrs is able to make those mothers to cooperate with political movement against nationalism, violence, and militarism as we observe in foreign examples such as Cindy Sheehan in the USA[8]. Consequently, I decided to evaluate those mothers' own narratives after martyrdom of their sons and how they articulated this grief with motherhood, martyrdom and nationalism.

In my thesis, my main method for conducting research was in-depth interviews. At the beginning, I chose mothers from *Şehit Aileleri Federasyonu* (ŞAF)[9] who may talk about their experiences and the experiences of others. For that reason, I went to the organization once or twice in three weeks. I tried to be a participant observer for a while. While I was talking with the members of the organization, I expressed them that I am a daughter of a retired soldier. I accept that declaration of my status as being a daughter of a soldier probably provided me access to reach these mothers in organization. Being a daughter of a soldier probably provided a trustful atmosphere so that they let me talk to them and mothers. On the other hand, as a participant, I witnessed that even if I did not declared that I am a daughter of a soldier, they probably would let me talk to them since these fathers were willing to express themselves to people. However, perhaps, these fathers would have hesitated about giving communication information of mothers of martyrs.

Consequently, what I learnt from these visits is that those mothers' pain is common and can not be understood by others easily. For that reason, their willing to organize is deep. ŞAF is one of those associations that gather all other associations under one umbrella. There is one association at least in each and every city. So are the activities or campaigns of those NGOs push further the struggle of mothers for

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[8] Cindy Lee Miller Sheehan is an American anti-war activist mother, whose son, Casey Sheehan, was killed during his service in the Iraq War on April 4, 2004. She attracted international attention in August 2005 for her extended demonstration at a camp outside President George W. Bush's Texas ranch garnering her both support and criticism. For more information look at http://www.gsfp.org/

[9] Association of Families of Martyrs.

solutions of the conflicts in the Southeast of Turkey or do they work within a limited scope of temporary projects aiming at solving urgent problems of mothers?

Although mothers of martyrs and some of relatives have become organized around some associations, apart from rising their demands in favor of peace in the Southeast of Turkey, preventing similar deaths and ending conflicts in Southeast of Turkey, those associations aim to provide solidarity, to become together, to know each other, to gain their legal rights, to inform public opinion about their problems and solutions for various difficulties that they faced after the loss of martyrs. Mothers look for the ways to cope with their loss rather than accepting themselves as active members. When the activities of organizations are considered, it is hard to conclude that they serve to the democratization in the public sphere by giving a voice to mothers. They do not tackle with problems encountered in the East and Southeast of Turkey. Although the associations in total are not working at great efficiency, the influence they make in the identity construction of their members is worth considering. Their limited scope for membership coupled with the phenomenon of being a loosely connected "social group" lacking solidarity, limits their influence to act as "effective civil actors" who are able to take sustainable measures to cure war in the East and Southeast of Turkey.

Before the martyrdom, those mothers were only housewives, however, now within this organization they have gained respect and recognition from both men in the organizations and men from parties, government, and commanders visiting the organization. Most of the mothers I have talked were become members by their husbands' initiatives. They have heard the organization through their husbands. In organization, mostly fathers stay in and spend their time. They write or fax to news papers about daily political issues affecting their status. They have visitors from parties or other NGOs. Mothers' duties in organization are the same as their duties in private sphere. In other words, when important guests come, some mothers are invited to represent the association. They are "true" mothers who do not question anything rather then they are told by fathers or commanders. When they speak, criticize or complain, they do not do these in the name of themselves as an individual, they do these for the name of association. Under this organization, nationalist, conservative stereotype mothers are constructed. When a mother

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criticizes army or organizations harshly, she is marked as a troublemaker and not invited anymore to activities. Mothers routinely participate in a range of different practices such as banquets or media. When a banquet is arranged by commanders or wives of commanders, and politicians, mothers are carefully chosen in order not to give wrong impression. Those mothers are silent and proud because of their holly loss of the loved one. Mothers are not seen as legitimate participants, their voices are ignored and they have little opportunity for shaping and changing situation they are in. Consequently, after I had interviewed members of organization, two mothers and two fathers, I realized that a change in perspective is necessary.

Then, I went to cemetery of martyrs in Cebeci/Ankara on fridays and on the day of Martyrs on 18th March to find mothers of martyrs since those mothers' "new home in which they spend most of their time, has become cemetery." Moreover, because of the belief that friday is a holy day, they come to the cemetery and pray for their sons' soul and peacefulness. I tried to convince those mothers by explaining the purposes of my research. On cemetery, they agreed on participating into my interview. However, when I called them to arrange a meeting day on next day, they changed their mind probably because they asked for the permission to their husbands and they did not let these mothers talk to me. So I relied on snowball method and went to small towns. In small towns, people have much more knowledge about the personal histories of others, and in Merzifon/Amasya, Havza/Samsun and Suluova/Amasya, it was not difficult to reach mothers. In these towns, it should be expressed that I did not declare these mothers in these towns that I am a daughter of a soldier since I thought that these mothers could consider that I was sent by the army and could behave gingerly and could hide what they really think in order not to lose the rights gained after martyrdom. These towns are small towns but my family left these towns so many years ago so nobody can know me as a daughter of a soldier.

As a student, I was not only nervous about my interview skills, but also apprehensive about the reactions of my interviewees whom I had realized, but without sharing the same moral universe. I would be asking them about the hardest time of their lives, and most private issues related to those times. It should be underlined that subject of this research is a very sensitive and difficult to study. It is difficult to study in two ways. First, anything related the army is very sensitive issues

in Turkey because you can easily be accused to behave disrespectful to the army/martyrs or to alienate people from the military service. Second, to study this subject from my point of view could jeopardize my father's status in the army. Moreover, these families of martyrs are very suspicious because of new status they had as a father or a mother of a martyr. As a result, their narratives are curtailed by the commanders or statesmen or by the men in the organization. For example, in three or four interviews, I was blamed of being a spy of the PKK because on those days, there was an article on newspaper claiming that mothers of those in PKK came to the house of mothers of martyrs and provoked mothers of martyrs against the state and the army.[10] Sometimes, while I was talking with mothers, mothers did not want to talk to me alone and husbands or sons of these mothers stayed with them. When I began to ask questions such as what do you expect from the state as a mother of a martyr. Do you have any Kurdish friends? What do you think about Kurdish people? Mothers got disturbed and did not want to talk or left the room since these mothers were advised not to talk to everyone, not to talk about more than how their sons' became martyrized by commanders and men in the family. Consequently, I stayed alone with fathers or sons. Moreover, because these men had read this article, they got suspicious and got angry with me. Then, they accused me to be a spy. As a result, conservation had to be ended. While starting this research, I was expecting to face a transformation of mothers of martyrs as happened to Saturday Mothers, however, what I faced is different from what I expected. It should be underlined that while starting to this thesis, I did not expect to face so many issues related to these mothers. What I study during the research may be seen too much for a master thesis. Perhaps, this study would be more suitable for a doctoral research. However, under these circumstances, this research is about what I learned from narratives of mothers of martyrs.

In this context, it was also difficult to construct a framework under which I can place my findings since there is not a literature about mothers of martyrs in Turkey. While I was searching the literature, mostly martyr was identified with suicide bombers and the idea of jihad. There is not a literature dealing with the

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[10] For the article, see "Biz de Tuzağa Düşmeyeceğiz" avaliable at
http://www.bianet.org/bianet/yazdir/85188.

meaning of martyrdom and motherhood in the way which is experienced in Turkey. As a result, rather than comparing mothers of martyrs with mothers in the world, in this thesis, I try to understand mothers of martyrs as a social reality.

For that reason, I interviewed with nineteen people, fourteen mothers of martyrs, three fathers of martyrs and two wives of martyrs, while the interviews lasted one and a half hour on average, off-the record sections of the talk sometimes extended this duration.[11] The narratives of these people proved to be an interesting case to show how personal narratives interact, overlap or contest with the hegemonic nationalist discourses about them and war. The analysis of their narratives also reveals the possible promises, the contradictions, and the limitations of a political project of coming to terms with the war, as well as exposing the subject positions that their narratives open up for making politics.

In addition, the interview process brought surprises. Fathers were inclined to give me macro information. I did find out about ideological conflicts between factions, the activities of organizations, the ideological stance they took against the government and the conditions of the organizations, but with not references to their own personal thoughts and experiences. For the mothers, especially speaking to a younger woman who is even not a mother, had come to them to hear stories of their life experiences has a relatively difficult situation. In depth interview, they were mostly speaking about their own lives. I mostly preferred to leave them to make their own connections between events, commitments, feelings and grief. Their narratives mostly involved what they took to be their private lives, which were connected to their political commitments, organizational movements and changes of perspective. All of my respondents were ready and willing to share their views and experiences with me since I intentionally chose mothers of martyrs who did not die recently. My respondents are the mothers of martyrs who died between the years 1992-2003. Because time was passed, those mothers could easily speak about their sons.

The method of in depth interview provides one with the most direct means to infiltrate social history through the words of its actors. The women included in this thesis were especially articulate in expressing the contours of their private and

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[11] For the socio demographic profiles of interviewees, look at appendix I.

political affairs. This fluency made it possible for me to outline a framework in which I could trace certain themes related to the making (and/or re-making) of politics in a micro sense. I was presented, while listening to them speak, with the underlying motivations for their commitment to their organizations, and their relation to the martyrdom and nationalism. More importantly however, I was presented with the fact that these motivations were never merely related to macro politics and particular organizations. The women's narratives endorsed intricate webs: their familial ties and concerns, being mothers of martyrs whom they formed their first notions regarding self and others, their experiences with death of loved son, their varying landmarks for nationalism and military. These threads demonstrated that they had constantly changing dreams and hopes. Needless to say, the 19 interviews presented me with similar paths for living, for making politics, and for living politically. There are commonalities in the main contours of their life stories. Every narrative has a similar tone and varying key patterns: attesting to the similar manner each woman survived, negotiated, manipulated and transformed the networks of power around them. Also, these women's reactions to the dynamics of power around them are also ongoing stories of their subjectification and attest to the fact that victims of violence are never passive recipients, but instead are part of a configuration in which they speak, negotiate and transform. Thus, this thesis arrives at a point of open-ended questions regarding womanhood, motherhood and agency, nationalism and transformation. As such, it attests to the power of in dept interview as a method.

Many of their stories were very much loaded not only with information but also with the sentimental weight of the fact that those stories had not found an opportunity to be presented to the public before. On this point, I should admit that for me the most important difficulty of this study emerged when I tried to analyze their narratives. For one thing, I had to leave many parts of the interviews unrepresented in this study, especially those that were related to the experiences of how their sons died, since endeavoring to integrate those parts would surpass the scope of this study. It took a considerable time for me to determine my own subjective position with regard to their narratives, especially when I needed to adopt a critical stance.

Acknowledging the limitations of this study, I nevertheless hope that I did not do injustice to the stories shared candidly with me.

Taking nationalism and nation building projects as a central concern, this study also builds upon the main premise that building of a nation is intrinsically tied to the making of women's identities. Building of a nation state involves the drawing of boundaries, including territorial, national, ethnic, racial, cultural and religious boundaries. In other words, the founding of a nation state is predicated upon determining who will constitute the nation, who will be the members of the nation, what language they will speak, what their religion will be, and what their identity will be. Organized around the life story narratives of mothers of martyrs in Turkey, the initial aim of this thesis is to make a reading of social history with an emphasis on the themes of gender. The thesis aims to follow each narrator's specific processes of subjectification in connection with the macro political events of their lifetimes, the ideologies they endorsed, and power dynamics shaped by the public and private networks around them. The connections between the content of the first macro narration of the second and third chapter and the ensuing chapters of life stories point towards the closely knit relationalities of networks and ideologies, among the national/ communal/ familial /personal narratives of patriotism, martyrdom and nationalism.

This research, after the current presentation of an introduction, is organized into five additional chapters. Chapter II outlines a discussion of religion in nationalist discourse in general, and in the process of Turkish nation building in particular. In this chapter, I will examine general discussions about nationalism, and then question the place of Turkish nationalism in this general picture. Finally, I will focus on the relation between religion and Turkish nationalism, in order to understand why martyrdom affects polticial culture in Turkey. Chapter III contains an analysis of womanhood and motherhood in nationalist discourses, focusing on the link between nation and mothers. I will deal with the issue of women in Turkish nationalism in order to determine how mothers of martyrs are shaped in discourses of martyrdom and nationalism. Chapter IV features an account of martyrdom and its relation to motherhood, nation-state, and religion. In this chapter, I will discuss the notion of martyrdom itself, paying attention to its relation to the nation-state. After that, I will

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focus on what martyrdom means in both Sunni Islam[12] and Alevi thought.[13] I will also try to understand how mothers of martyrs are related with these notions. In Chapter V, I will demonstrate how these mothers perceive being the mother of a martyr to be the new identity of motherhood. Finally, Chapter VI examines perceptions of nation-state, martyrdom and motherhood in self-narratives of mothers of martyrs.

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[12] There are four Sunni sects in Islam: Hanafi, Shafi´i, Maliki, and Hanbali. The Hanafi sect is the largest of the four, and its followers comprise 45% of the entire Islamic world. It takes its name from its founder, Ebu Hanife (Numan bin Sabit) (699-767), and is widespread in Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Turkey, India, and Pakistan. Sunni Islam itself takes its name from its identification with the importance of the Sunna (the examples from the hadiths). There are many small religious differences, and some large differences, Sunni Islam and the other orientations. For instance, Sunni Islam reveres Ali, but does not hold him up as the only true continuation of the tradition from Muhammad, and has no emphasis on his bringing a divine light from the Prophet (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, 2006: 31).

[13] Alevism can be primarily understood as a syncretistic heterodox identity, as along with Islam, Zoroastrianism (Iranian), Shamanism, Maniheism, Christianity, and so on. It has many more elements of pre-Islamic Turkish and Iranian religions than Sunni Islam does (Bruinessen, 1996: 7). For example, prayer (*namaz*), the fast in Ramadan, tithing (*zakat*), and the hajj are alien practices in most Alevi communities. Instead, they have their own religious ceremonies (*cem*), officiated by holy men (*dede*) belonging to a hereditary priestly caste. As among other schismatic Shi'i groups, 'Ali and the Safavid Shah Isma'il are deified, or at least idolized. Instead of adherence to the Shari'a, Alevis profess obedience to a set of simple moral norms; they claim to live according to the inner (*batin*) meaning of religion rather than its external (*zahir*) demands.
There is a noticeable conflict among Alevi groups in that it is "represented" differently based on the ideological dominations. The first group focuses on the religious side of Alevism, defining it as an Islamic sect and a part of Islam. This group uses the term "Alevi Islam," and most of them try to present Alevism as true Islam, or Turkish Islam. The Second group directs Alevis to abandon their religious   identity.   (Şahin, http://www.alevihaber.org/v2/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=263&Itemid=39).

CHAPTER 2

ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE TURKISH NATION-BUILDING PROCESS:

If nationalism[14] is defined as an ideology that builds on the basis assumption that there is a community of people with some common characteristic a unified nation, then "all modernization projects also operate through a nationalist ideology" that defines the nation in a particular way (Çınar, 2005: 8). In other words, nation building process involves the creation of particular sense of nationhood and the construction of a specific national identity, regardless of whether the unifying characteristic is defined around ethnicity, race, religion, culture, language or some similar primordial bond. According to Alexis de Tocqueville (Cited in Juergensmeyer, 1995: 380) the French Revolution "assumed many of the aspects of a religious revolution". The American Revolution also had a religious side: many of its leaders had been influenced by eighteenth century Deism, a religion of science and natural law which was "devoted to exposing [church] religion to the light of knowledge." As in France, American nationalism developed its own religious characteristics, blending the ideals of secular nationalism and the symbols of Christianity into a "civil religion." Consequently, religion in any society, including Turkey, influences the politics, including political culture. It may be useful to study each country individually to understand how religion and nationalism are related, and how religion influences political culture and why. In order to grasp its meaning, you should examine social conditions where nationalism occurs. Turkey is an interesting case in this context.

Since Turkish nationalism was institutionalized in a society that had been governed by Islamic principle for six centuries, the outright rejection or suppression of religion was virtually impossible. Hence, the institutionalization of nationalism involved not a direct exclusion of Islam, but rather an engineered inclusion of Islam within political system and secularism had to be carefully forged and implemented in a society that had lived by Islamic values, principle, and references for centuries.

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[14] "Nationalism" is defined here as an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity for a human population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential "nation".

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Binnaz Toprak says that Kemalist secularism did not, in practice, mean a total divorce between religion and the state. Although the fundamental legitimacy of the state is not now based on religion, it still provides a framework within which political power may be exercised, and an important element of social control.

This chapter will show that it has been the Turkish state's secular character that has defined and set limits on the complex relationship between nationalism and Islam. Without changing its basic secularist stand, I claim that the Turkish nationalism adopted a double discourse: on the one hand, establishing rigid segregation between Islam and the public political realm; on the other, accommodating and incorporating Islam into the system in various ways. So in following pages, I will grasp nationalist discourse in general and uniqueness of Turkish nationalism among them to be able to examine the relation with nationalism and religion in Turkey.

2.1. What is Nationalism? Problems of Definition:

Because of the significant ro1e played by nationalism in current world-affairs, its study has attracted a great body of scholars and produced an enormous literature. Underlying much of the confusion in the literature on nationalism is the absence of an accepted definition of the concept. As Alter points out (1993: 1), nationalism is a political force which has been more important in shaping the history of Europe and the world over the last two centuries than the ideas of freedom and democracy. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the world is experiencing a concurrent rise in two major forces: nationalism and globalization (The Economist, 1999). While it may seem odd to speak about nationalism in an era of intensified global consciousness (Anderson, 1983), nationalism is on the rise in various countries and has emerged as one of the main issues facing the world (Smith, 1992). Kerestecioğlu (2005: 1) claims that nationalism suggests that it is one of the most ambiguous concepts in the present day vocabulary of political and analytical thought. However, ability of nationalism to reach the masses is result of its ambiguity. As Smith (1994: 10) claimed nationalism has always been "coalition of expression" and not had difficulty to be attached with each and every different ideology such as liberalism, conservatism, fascism or socialism. For Kerestecioğlu (2005), nationalism is an

eclectic ideology. Depends on which ideology nationalism has an ally with, its principles have differed. Consequently, there is not a single nationalism, there are nationalisms. In that sense, it can be argued that the forms that nationalism takes have been kaleidoscopic: religious, conservative, liberal, fascist, communist, separatist, irredentist, diaspora, etc. It spills over into any number of cognate ingredients: race, language, religion, minorities, gender, and immigration. In that context, there are two major approaches defining nationalism. First one is modernist model of nationalism that considers nationalism modern notion of 18th and 19th century. On the other hand, there is ethno-symbolist model of nationalism which refuses the idea of nationalism as a modern notion and claims that nationalism, itself, has roots in ethnicity. In first group, there are theorists like Gellner, Hobsbawm and Anderson. In second thought, Smith is the most known theorist of the approach. Firs, I will start with modernist model of nationalism and later I will have a look at ideas of Smith.

2.1.1. Modernist Model of Nationalism:

Common idea of this approach is that nations and nationalism are the outcomes of modern ages (recent centuries). According to this approach, nations and nationalisms have occurred due to occurrence of capitalism, industrialization, secularization, and urbanization or results of those processes. For them, it is impossible to consider nationalism independent from those processes. As Kerestecioğlu (2005: 98) points out, anyway, in ancient societies, there weren't social, economical and political conditions in which nationalism took place. These conditions occur in modern era.

Gellner (1983: 57) analyzes nationalism as a cultural phenomenon dependent not only on state formation and industrial society, but also on certain transformations of culture, such as the creation of "high cultures" and their changing relations with popular or folk cultures, and the imbrications of all particular cultures within a putatively context-free space of cross-cultural communication. At the same time, he is clear in arguing that nationalism is distinctively modem and that it is not strictly the result of prior ethnicity:

> Nationalism is not the awakening and assertion of these mythical, supposedly natural and given units. It is, on the contrary, the

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crystallization of new units, suitable for the conditions now prevailing, though admittedly using as their raw material the cultural, historical and other inheritances from the pre-nationalist world. (Gellner 1983: 49)

Gellner (1983: 55) holds that "nationalism engenders nations, and not the other way round." Similarly, Hroch (1985) argues that nationalism arose from activities of cultural elites seeking histories and constituted the identities of nations without necessarily giving those identities any immediate political purpose; once established, such nationalist claims were available for politicization by cross-class groups. Gellner (1994: 63) claims that nationalism uses some of the pre-existent cultures, generally transforming them in the process. It can be argued that nationalist and their followers have put together various ingredients of the nation; history, symbols, myths, languages, religion, and region.

Anderson (1991: 5) suggests that we regard nationalism as a distinct mode of understanding and constituting the phenomenon of belonging together, comparable to kinship or religion.

> A nation, thus: is an imagined political community . . . It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.... The nation is imagined as limited because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations....It is imagined as sovereign because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm.. Finally, it is imagined as a community, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship. (1991: 6-7).

By this way, nation is perceived as a companionship or a brotherhood. It is this perception of brotherhood that makes individuals sacrifice, and even more die for the sake of the nation. For Anderson, nationalism takes its power from print capitalism (1991: 36). Its effect on long term for nationalism is to strengthen the sense of existence that comes from ancient times.

In that vein, Hobsbawm (1983) considers nations and nationalism as a result of "social engineering." In this process, the most important issue is the invention of tradition. Invention of tradition means to create major customs or rituals which have symbolic values. When those traditions are put in practice over an over again, they provide internalization of particular values and attitudes peculiar to new nation. By

this way, nationalism provides a bridge with present and past. Moreover, it creates sense of continuity (Hobsbawm, 1983: 1). For him, sense of national belonging is the most obvious example of this invented tradition (Hobsbawm, 1990). Although those traditions are created in modern times, they links present to "appropriate" past. They create unity and integrity among social groups. According to Hobsbawm (1983: 14), there are three ways to control individuals and integrate them with new system: to establish new institutions (festivals, sport, and unions), to invent new status systems and ways for socialization (hierarchal education system or royal ceremony), to create groups determining or symbolizing unity of social groups (e.g. nation).

In that point, Hobsbawm (1990: 65) points out the "proto-nationalist" elements during the process of nation-building. Nationalism uses the pre-existent proliferation of cultures or cultural wealth, though it uses them very selectively, and it most often transforms them radically. For example, dead languages can be revived, traditions can be invented. They become parts of nation by intervention and transformation only in the context of society where modern nation and state occurs. Hobsbawm, here, borrows from Gellner and adds that "nationalism shapes previous cultures and transforms them to a nation. Sometimes, it invents nations. Mostly, it distorts existing cultures." (1990: 10) As Gellner (1994: 60) claimed, nationalism activates some pre-existing collective cultural codes and makes them harmonious with modern state and nation. Nationalism easily reaches the masses in comparison with other ideologies because of role of relation between the past of society and new nation established with the help of proto-nationalist elements.

As Renan claimed, nationalism constitutes its soul with only two things; one in the past, the other is in the present (Renan, 1990: 17). Nationalism gets benefits from internalized language, values and expression of old sociality in order to establish a new one. As Ernest Renan said, "being a nation is somewhat to forget." (1990: 11): "Forgetting is a crucial factor in the creation of a nation." In a similar way, Brass (1991: 8) offers an account of ethnicity as the product of manipulation, or at least recurrent invocation. Ethnic groups "are creations of elites, who draw upon, distort, and sometimes fabricate materials from the cultures of the groups they wish to represent in order to protect their well-being or existence or to gain political and economic advantage for their groups as well as for themselves."

The nation is in fact both political-in striving to create a state or to defend national boundaries- and cultural, representing a set of values and meanings inscribed in "a system of cultural representation" (Hall, 1992: 292). Yet nationalism as an ideology can be enlisted in the support of political modernization or in support of a backward-looking traditionalism and has therefore often been referred to as "Janus-faced".[15]

In that point, the study of the processes by how nations are formed has been beset by a fundamental conceptual difference among scholars concerning the nature of groups involved, whether they are "primordial" or "given" communities or whether they are creations of leaders, elite groups or the political system in which they are included. Consequently, in following pages, it will be better to examine second notion of nationalism, ethno-symbolist model of nationalism in order to see other side of the issue.

2.1.2. Ethno-Symbolist Perception of Nationalism:

According to Conversi (1995: 73-75), ethno-symbolist nationalism aims to create a national identity under the light of myths, values and symbols of the past. They give importance to ethnic history and culture. They consider modernist model of nationalism as insufficient since it is impossible for them to explain origin of modern nations without examining their ethnic history.

In that sense, Anthony Smith (1983, 1986, and 1991) has tried to show that nationalism has stronger roots in premodern ethnicity than others have accepted. In doing so, Smith draws together the literature on the premodern origins of nations with that on modern nationalism. What is the connection? He acknowledges that nations cannot be seen as primordial or natural, but nonetheless argues that they are rooted in relatively ancient histories and in perduring ethnic consciousnesses. In that sense, for social integration, primordial ties can usually be used like race, language, assumed blood, custom and religion as the bases for community. He claims that:

> It is true that flags, anthems and ceremonies occurred in recent
> history; however, should we consider them as invented? Did those who

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[15] Mimesis of statute of Janus, one face of which looks at the past, one face of which looks at the future. The Janus image is itself gendered, with women depicted as "the atavistic and authentic body of national tradition", "embodying the nation's conservative principles", and thereby implicitly contrasted with modernizing men (McClintock, 1995: 358-359).

created them think that they were creating "new traditions" for new generations? Or did they attempt to symbolize unity and goal which they and their fellows fight for? (Smith, 1992: 73)

According to him, approaches like "imagined", "invented" refuse the power of past. However, for him, it is not possible to re-build the nation as long as we do not use ethnic heritage (e.g. memories, myth, customs, rituals, symbols and work of art) (Smith, 1992). As Calhoun (1993: 220) claims that nationalism appeared as a descriptive term for people and uses characteristics that not only define, but exclude. Factors such as language, ethnicity, religion, a mythical history and historic homelands are powerful forces in promoting nationalistic feelings. In that point, Smith defines nation as: "Nation can be defined as particular community of people who share common myth, common history, common culture, common economy, common legal right and obligations over common territory" (Smith, 1993: 49-51). Briefly, Smith stresses the continuity in ethnic groupings and the relations of cultural similarity that define them.

In conclusion, the relationship between nationalism and ethnicity is complex. As Calhoun (1993: 239) points out that neither nationalism nor ethnicity is vanishing as part of an obsolete traditional order. I claim that both are part of a modem set of categorical identities invoked by elites and other participants in political and social struggles. While it is impossible to separate nationalism entirely from ethnicity, it is equally impossible to explain it simply as a continuation of ethnicity or a simple reflection of common history or language. Numerous dimensions of modem social and cultural change, notably nation building (along with war); also serve to make both nationalism and ethnicity salient. As Calhoun (1993: 240) points out, nationalism, in short, involves a distinctive new form of group identity or membership. It is a new rhetoric of belonging to large scale collectivities. This depends on new forms of collective imagination, and also on social conditions that encourage a sense of identity. It also depends crucially on modern ideas of individual equivalence that has ethnic roots. Under the framework of those approaches, in the next part, I will focus on Turkish nation building process since origins of Turkish nationalism remain as critical issues in modern Turkish society.

2.2. Turkish Case: Turkish Nationalism?

Turkish nationalism can be characterized under different headings of nationalism and, as a result, Turkish nationalism exhibits a hybrid character. Such an open ending reading of Turkish nationalism examines whether Turkish nationalism is a result of modernization approach of nationalism or ethno-symbolist nationalism. On one hand, ethno-symbolist approaches to nationalism do not help the matter much. Just as one cannot solely rely on modernist models of nation building to categorize a given historical case, one has to keep in mind that formation of a nation is not necessarily a direct product of assumed cultural, linguistic, and historical uniformity. In this context, I will focus on the outcome of a distinct "Turkish nation building process."

Ernest Gellner argues that the political and economic network of a nation-state requires a spirit of nationalism that draws upon a homogeneous culture, a unified pattern of communication, and a common system of education. As Hein and Selden suggest (Cited in Altınay, 2001: 33), "textbooks provide one of the most important ways in which nation, citizenship, the idealized past, and the promised future are articulated and disseminated in contemporary." For example, in Turkish nationalism, *Vatandaş İçin Medeni Bilgiler*[16] was used as a textbook at several levels of secondary and high school education in the 1930s. This can be read as an official dissertation on the structures and discourses of government in the formative years of Republican Turkey in order to establish a national identity peculiar to Turkey.

In addition, as signified in modernist model of nationalism, Kemalist modernization project aimed not to reject completely folk culture and replace it with a totally new culture but in fact, it aimed to modernize and adjust old culture for contemporary modern nation in order to create a national identity which is peculiar to Turkey. As Hobsbawm claimed, this project included both to "invention of national culture" (milli kültür); on the other hand, it had aim to transform folk culture to a new modern structure. As Erdoğan (1998: 117) examined in his article, in order to invention of a national culture, under social engineering of founders of republic, folk

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[16] This textbook was written by Atatürk and his adopted daughter Afet İnan in the early 1930s. Its different sections discuss about state, the republic, the nation, military service, laws, citizenship, and economy. It is a valuable resource for analyzing the ways in which the new state was constructing itself and how Ankara wanted to educate its citizens.

culture was explored from folk music to folk stories. In the same way, re-adjustment or re-producing of folk songs, tales, and stories provided to invent homogeneous society by melting various social, local, ethnic languages or versions into the same national pot. For instance, tales of Keloğlan, attitudes of Karagöz was re-told within Kemalist discourse and morality (Erdoğan, 1998: 121)[17]. Moreover, Republican People's Party had a magazine called Karagöz (1950) (Cantek: 1998: 132). By this way, what the state wants was produced in national schools with the help of national education. In that context, it can be argued that composition of tales, stories, folk songs, etc. attended to invention of "Turkish nation" and "Turkish folk culture."

Erdoğan (1998: 118) points out that in Kemalist discourse, society was constructed in double meanings, on one hand, a society as carriers of glorious values that have existed for ages; on the other hand, a society as underdeveloped and uneducated that experienced impact of elements not peculiar to its "essence." It was claimed that everything that society applied for were not part of national legacy. Some cultural elements involved into culture should be omitted (such as Arabic elements or superstitious belief) and "real" national and cultural elements should be selected and protected. These emerged in the 1920s and 1930s alongside such modernizing Kemalist reforms as changing the alphabet from Arabic script to Latin. It was Ziya Gökalp, a sociologist much influenced by Durkheim, who ardently championed Turkish nationalism as the only satisfactory cultural foundation for the new Turkey. As the emphasis on "the same language and the same faith" reveals, he became foundational sources for the nationalism.

For example, in Turkey, in search of a unifying myth, long forgotten roots of the pre-Ottoman, pre-Islamic era were re-introduced. However, this process was construed not as a scientific endeavor but as ideological glue for national cohesion. In the absence of a medieval "high culture" (as Anderson claimed) that could be labeled `Turkish,' the nationalist elite found their glory in a history that never was. The search for, and consolidation of, a new national identity were carried to such extremes in the 1930s that theories like the Sun Theory of Language or were

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[17] Erdoğan claims that in old plays of Karagöz, Karagöz were making fun of Hacivat's using of "high" language by using nonsense, funny, and illogical sentences in pompous Otoman language. In that context, its reflection in 1930s could be that Karagöz could make fun of "high" language of the new nation-state as he made fun of old "high" language. Karagöz, who misunderstood Hacivat's Otoman, could easily misunderstand Kemalists elites' genuine Turkish language (Erdoğan, 1998: 125).

concocted. According to this "theory," all languages emerged out of Turkish. It was understood, and often stated or implied, that there also existed a Turkish nation in the ethnic sense with a history, language and culture all its own. The ideological basis for a state led ethnic Turkish nationalism was developed thorough a rewriting of Turkish and Ottoman history. The new leaders believed that they were charged with the mission of breaking with the past and creating a new nation. The Ottoman era and everything associated with it, except a few glorious moments of conquest and imperial grandeur was condemned or discounted in history books and official parlance. The disconnection of society from its past allowed the ruling elite to see the Turkish people as an entity ready to be molded according to their vision of what a society and nation should be. The unprecented development that took place during Republican era was that founder of Republic efficiently institutionalized Turkish national history. In this regard, the main tenet of Turkish nationalism has been the popular acceptance of the construct the proud and self-assured "Turk" at the expense of all other identities that flourished and found currency during the Ottoman reign. As an example of ethnic nationalism, Turkish nationalism designates anybody and everybody along the presumed ancestral line running between ancient Turkic tribes of Central Asia, the Hittites and Sümers of ancient Anatolia are ethno-nationalist core of Turkishness, in these cases, is demarcated in terms of what it is not in Turkish History Thesis. As a reminder of those days, the presidential banner consists of a sun representing the Turkish Republic encircled by 16 stars, symbolizing the Turkish states that were presumably created by Turks throughout history.

Although there are these discussions dealing with ethnic and modernist side about Turkish nationalism, it is territorial nationalism that can explain Turkish nationalism when it is considered relation between nation and martyr. Among these approaches, territorial nationalism is the acceptable one for my thesis. It is worthwhile exploring a little further the linkages between Turkish nationalism and one of its characteristics: territory which can define relationship between martyrdom and nation in the case of Turkish nationalism. There is more to link nationalism to territory than just the changing configuration of the world political map: territory plays a central role both in nationalist identity and in nationalist strategy. Indeed, despite the fact that territory figures in many of the definitions of nationalism and the

nation, Anderson (1983) has correctly pointed out that the role of territories for nationalist ideology has often been underestimated. He argues that "nations, like states, are not simply located in geographic space rather they explicitly claim particular territories and derive distinctiveness from them." That's why the concepts of motherland, homeland, and other expressions of territorial affiliation show the psychological importance of territory to the nation. The use of territoriality gives nation an absolutist and historically continuous presence. In general, a specific geographical area becomes associated with a particular collectivity, in the eyes of its members. This relationship between people and land is the product of continual myth-making as it is indicated in ethno-symbolic nationalism. In this way, a particular territory is historicized. They become essential elements of the community's history, and the land becomes a historic homeland, "our land" (Smith, 1986: ch 8). Our land is where we can realize ourselves and our destiny/existence depends on it. That creates a special bond of holiness between the community and its homeland, as well as the piety and awe which surrounds the tombs of warriors, martyrs, laid to rest in the land of their people. Territorial heritages provide the patterns within which elites operate in order to mobilize large numbers. In other words, ideal of self-renewal and the vision of collective destiny are built upon the territory and justify all the sacrifices that citizens may be asked to make. Nationalism had to inculcate a profound keen identification with motherland as a sacred and inviolable ancestral homeland, the only guarantor of its history and destiny. In all these cases, large numbers of people can have been mobilized and martyred in the defense of lands. Where these lands are by tradition sanctified, the site of sacred acts and memories can be evoked, and even larger numbers of people can be mobilized for battle and death.

In Turkish nationalism, a crucial role is played by territoriality. In that sense, if we admit that the nation-state is an "invention" of the late 18th and the 19th century, we can trace how these new states-no longer legitimized by divine right-sought, and finally instituted a new basis for their existence. One of the ways to acquire legitimation was to claim that the same people had inhabited the same territory for hundreds of years, being united by bonds of blood, culture, tradition, language, religion, and the like. In the heyday of nationalism historical and

philological departments were often established or expanded so as to lend their services to the proving of such assertions. In that sense, the basis of the new republic was to be found in loyalty both to the homeland Anatolia and to the Turkish nation which inhabited it. All citizens of the Turkish state were deemed constitutionally Turks, and this was the broader, political meaning applied to the term 'Turk'. Remaining legal barriers between the different communities were eliminated and great efforts were made to instill a sense of patriotism in all members of the population. Conceptualization of Turkish history as a history of high civilization among Turks also provides "an organic unity" (Berktay, 1990: 63). This fabricated glorious territory was a panacea for Turkish pride. Decades of indoctrination and a heavy dose of nationalist education created a deep sense of pride in being a Turk. This pride links the individual attachment to national identity. This political affirmation of the pride may stretch from the language of the group becoming an official language to make people believe the importance of sacrificing for the sake of the territory: nation.

Broadly speaking, this involved two processes; the national re-education of the young, and the inculcation of a spirit of self-sacrifice. The knowledge and the love of the homeland became therefore an integral part of a national programme of mass education, and it drew on the prior attachments of the people to their nation. As far as education was concerned, this meant a mass standardization of outlook, values, knowledge and skills in a national framework around the trinity of literature, history and geography. As Smith (1986: 243) points out, these were pre-eminent disciplines for imbuing the young with a national outlook and feeling, for they revealed, the inner rhythms of the nation and its profound roots in the past. As Altınay (2004: 126) examines in her work, the textbooks used throughout the 1970s and the early 1980s make similar claims: "Turks have formed states in all historical epochs. Turkey has won many legendary victories as the greatest military nation of the world." For early 1990s, the textbooks include passages that define "love for homeland" as the greatest passion of Turks (Milli Güvenlik Bilgisi, 1990: 262) and "heroism" as a spirit that is a hereditary. In Turkey, education and educators have been giving a nationalizing and militarizing role from the early years of nation building. Students throughout Republican History have been told that they are members of a "heroic" race and they

should prove this by being good soldiers. Such re-education was not an end in itself. It served to prepare the spirit of the young for a life of service to the nation, and if necessary of heroic martyrdom.

Under this framework, following pages will deal with another unique character of Turkish nationalism: its relation with religion. As it is indicated at the beginning, nationalist movements use all or some of the proto-nationalist elements during nation building process. Nationalism will be successful on the basis of how it actuates those elements such as religion, culture, language on the way of nation-state building process. One of these elements is religion. The role of religion in politics has received an enormous amount of scholarly attention, and it is not the purpose of this study to review that literature. However, it is seen that for the true nationalist hero is a martyr, sacrificing his life for his nation. Love sacred homeland inspires the martyr's death as it is seen above. For centuries to now, official representatives honor those who died for another sacred cause: the nation. Consequently, nation state is precious and holy to worth dying for the sake of as much as God. The social psychology of martyrdom may be viewed as the replacement of a religious ideal by the secular nationalism. But the idea of martyr gives him for the ideal, the soldier kills or may be killed for the cause. Thus, to be willing to "die for the cause" or to serve for the higher ideal becomes the pledge statement of commitment. For that reason, it will be useful to examine role and impacts of religion in Turkish nationalism and political culture since religion is an effective element to produce a meaning world between mothers who have little or no common characteristic besides martyrdom of their sons.

2.3. Role of Religion in Turkish Nation-Building Process:

All revolutionary movements, to the extent that they question and attempt to destroy existing social-structural arrangements also try to disestablish the value systems of ancient regimes. The attempts to disestablish the Catholic Church together with the pressures to make its personnel conform to the new ideology are features of the French Revolution which are well known (Mardin, 1971: 271). The simultaneous attempt to replace religion by secular is also familiar. For the Turkish Revolutionaries, the symbolic system of society, culture, seems to have had a

relatively greater attraction as a target than the social structure itself. And within culture, religion seems to have been singled out as the core of the system. Islam has profound roots among the Turkish people. We find that religion affected political life in Ottoman Empire significantly until 19th century. From its foundation until its fall the Ottoman Empire was a State dedicated to the advancement or defense of the power and faith of Islam. This centuries-long struggle, with its origins in the very roots of Turkish Islam, could not fail to affect the whole structure of Turkish society and institutions. For the Ottoman, his Empire was Islam itself. Shortly after the founding of the Republic, the influence of religion was reduced to insignificance in terms of politics. After a century of Westernization, Turkey has undergone immense changes. Westernization as a major principle meant to step into secular world of the west. Since 1923, during social-political and cultural transformation, religion was the most confused subject we faced. From empire to republic, during building process of Turk nation-state, the most comprehensive intervention was made to religion.

Benedict Anderson (Cited in Juergensmeyer, 1995: 390) suggested that religion and secular nationalism are both "imagined communities". Religion has the ability to command communal loyalty and to legitimize authority. Clifford Geertz (Cited in Asad, 1983: 240), among modern users of the term, has come closest to its original meaning by speaking of religion as a "cultural system." Both religious and secular nationalistic frameworks of thought are ideologies of order in the following ways: they both conceive of the world around them as a coherent, manageable system: they both suggest that there are levels of meaning beneath the day-to-day world that explain things unseen: they both provide identity for and evoke loyalty from secular communities; and they both provide the authority that gives social and political order a reason for being. In doing so they define how an individual should properly act in the world, and they relate persons to the social whole/nation.

In that sense, Islam is not only a religion in terms of theological belief and worship but also as a way of life which guides political, economic and social behavior (Sarıbay, 1985: 75). A more accurate way of looking at the relationship between religion and social life in general, and politics in particular, would be to suggest that religion affects politics very significantly in some societies. For instance,

the role Islam in public life has been one of the most defined issues in Turkey since the establishment of the Republic. The roots of this problem can be traced back to the Ottoman Empire's falling underdeveloped, and its beginning to Westernize to overcome this phenomenon. In Turkey, it should be useful to examine perspective of state about religion (Sunni Islam) in two levels. First of all is the role of religion in constructing national identity. Secondly, place of religion in political sphere. The secularization process was instrumental in underpinning the transformation at which nationalist politics aimed on both the cultural and political levels. On the first level, secularism became entangled with the definition of the nation as a homogeneous, uni-ethnic (Turkish), uni-linguistic (Turkish), and uni-sectarian (Sunni) entity. However, the crucial aspect of transformation at this level was the need for reliance on the individual's cultural markers-including religion-as the building blocks of the new construct, the nation.

Bertrand Badie observes that the cultural code of Islam is monistic, placing extreme emphasis on the idea of unity and giving no room to pluralism, while Christianity, with Holy Trinity, its hierarchy of saints and the blessed, represents cosmic pluralism. In addition, he notes that there is no delegation of power from Allah to anyone or intermediary powers between him and the believers or a division of labor (Cited in Turan, 1991: 47). As Santillana points out "Islamism means direct will of Allah. Idea of integrity and union known as civitas, polis is represented by Allah in Islam. Allah is name of the highest power working for the sake of common benefit. By this way, public treasure is Allah's treasure. Military is Allah's military. Even public servant is Allah's servant." (Cited in Mardin, 1993: 72) Allah is seen over and beyond whole society. When people come to the mosque and pray together, they become same with slave, command, poor, and rich. In that point, distinction of class, race or nation ends up there. Islam makes everyone equal in front of Allah. Islam emphasize on communal solidarity. Other side of the issue is that ümmet is a united mass without differences. As Mardin claims, in that case, idea of Republic as Turkey is a united and unprivileged society can be depended on ideological characteristics of Islam.

The period of Atatürk, following the final dissolution of the Empire, ultimately enabled Turkish nationalism to become a political doctrine. It defined Turkey's goal as the attainment of the level of contemporary civilization, which for Atatürk and his associates meant western civilization. For them the distinction made by Gökalp between culture and civilization was far less rigid and they were prepared to borrow from the west certain cultural features as well. The proud member of the Turkish nation was to be both a (secular) nationalist and a western, as was to be Turkish society as a whole. These notions were among the most important principles of the Kemalist heritage bequeathed to future generations. A point made by founders of Republic–all claiming to abide by the precepts of secularism -was that Turkey's population was most of Muslim, and that Islam remains an essential part of Turkish culture and identity. In Benedict Anderson's terminology, the Kemalist project of Western-style Enlightenment attempted to achieve the difficult task of making individuals come to "imagine" themselves as part of a nation and identify themselves within that "imagined community" of Turkey. This was to take place without any inheritance of older cultural meanings, the strongest of which was being a Muslim. To that end, the state manipulated the idea of individual identity by encouraging the severance of all links with Islam. Islam was viewed an inferior cultural marker when compared with a modern Turkish identity based on the principle of citizenship endowed with universal rights.

Moreover, they argue, Islam was of intrinsic value to Turkish society and the Turkish state. In its teachings, it has an extraordinary role to play in elevating the moral standards of the nation and in promoting brotherhood and peace among all members of the population. It similarly plays a unifying role among the different Muslim sectarian and ethnic groups. Considering the negligible numbers of non-Muslims still living in Turkey, what better link is there than Islam, which can bring together the important groups of Turks and Kurds, Sunnis and Alevis? Creating a new secularist culture to take the place of the old Islam-oriented one was an onerous and artificial task, causing the crucial problem of legitimacy that the Kemalist elite solved in the early stages by incorporating themes of popular culture and Islamic religion into nationalist discourse. As Cizre Sakallıoğlu (1996: 235) claimed, during the War of National Independence (1919-22), which preceded the founding of the

republic, Islamic discourse was used as a unifying theme to rally the local Anatolian notables, religious leaders, and the peasantry. The pragmatic manner in which secular nationalists recruited Islam for legitimation is illustrated by the way in which they presented the war against occupying Western forces and the Ottoman state: as a jihad, or holy war (Ahmad, 1991:6).

After political borders were determined and political leadership was put into use as institutionally, next step was socio-cultural and economical reforms. Kemalist reforms aiming to secularization of society due to project of nation building were dealing with constructing new identity of a nation, separation of religion with science, creating homogenous society, transformation from religious community to nation state. In that framework, after 1924, being Turk was defined politically; on the other hand, everyone bound to Republic of Turkey by citizenship and accepting language, national ideas and culture of Turkey was accepted as Turk. Relation of Islam with Turkish political system was separated in that level.

As far as I understood from Atay (1998: 100), ruling elites were not attempting to erase religion from the country. What they wanted to do was not to refuse the religion. On the contrary, for Tapper and Tapper, they wanted to examine (or try to examine) religion in a new way and they wanted to re-define it (Cited in Atay, 1998: 100). Among newly occurred (or established) nation state's borders, it was aimed to develop a "religion" which was linked to those borders. In other words, if we say, it was assumed to create a "Turkish Islam" rather than "Islam". Mardin remarks that "the only way to free oneself from Islamic society is to establish an alternative Islamic society." (Mardin, 2000: 72). Although secular nationalist politics has always been in a position to define the parameters of political discourse, the strategic relationship it has maintained with Islam is more dynamic and complicated. Islam was not simply banished and excluded from the official public sphere. Without changing its basic secularist stance, the Turkish state adopted a double discourse: on the one hand, establishing rigid segregation between Islam and the public political realm; on the other, accommodating and incorporating Islamic politics into the system in various ways. This implies that the historical role of Islam cannot be

reduced to a simple pattern of resisting and subverting the Westernization process of the republic. As Tappers claimed:

> While transforming from empire to nation-state, it was unavoidable to have deep change in Islam when considered to its social/political role and character since both caliphate and pan Islamic institutions and moreover, related to those, the religious ideology was not suitable for a national movement aiming to have national freedom based on Turkish culture. (Tapper and Tapper, 1994: 134)

Because of this unsuitability, Kemalist nationalism, with its history of controlling religion, wanted to transform Islam in Turkey different from Islam elsewhere. Islam was separated from law and education and transformed as a private sphere issue for individuals. It can be concerned from Atatürk's speeches that aim of Kemalists reformists was to provide rational and modern content for Islam. By distinguishing between an Islam "more complicated, artificial and consisting of superstition"' and one that "does not oppose consciousness or preclude progress," Atatürk set in motion the republican tradition of employing Islam to promote the ideas and policies of the secular state. By portraying this type of Islam as soft and rationalist, and by leaving intact the secular parameters of the republic, he gave signs of Islam's instrumental position in official ideology: "our religion is fitting reality, intellect and logic" and it is "the most reasonable and the most natural religion." (Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri, 1997: 55). As far as it is understood from the quotation, Atatürk identified the former mode of Islam with the reactionary, orthodox, prostate religion of the ulama of the Ottoman Empire; at the same time, he employed the latter to justify official secular commitments on platforms such as modern education, sexual equality, and technological and infrastructural investments.

The unique features of Turkish nationalism were epitomized by the creation of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, attached to the under secretariat of the Prime Ministry, and designed for the interpretation and execution of an enlightened version of Islam through its civil-service personnel, notably imams. These prayer leaders were to graduate from state schools and serve in the mosques, which were owned and operated by Ankara government never intended to separate the temporal and spiritual realms. Briefly, after abolishing caliphate, other religious institutions were established because it was thought that they would be more suitable for Turkish national project. For the beginning planning, those institutions would be related in

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order to control religion in the state. Toprak (1994: 91) underlines this relation by pointing out that "organization of Islam and staff became salaried servants of state." Based on this line of reasoning, the state focused on training progressive and secular imams and other civil-servant religious cadres to deliver sermons urging political support for its objectives. Allen (Cited in Davison, 2002: 222) claimed that beginning of 1930s, sermons distributed by Directorate of Religious Affairs were prepared to galvanize for "loyalty for God and administration of republic". Religious institutions of new state, as Keyder expressed, substantially were designed to "control from above all aspects of religious life" (1999: 210).

As Cizre Sakallıoğlu points out (1996: 234), Islam, institutionalized in the form of a government agency, was integrated into the government structure, quite in keeping with the Ottoman pattern of including ulama within the state since Islam in Turkey, unlike Western churches, is subject to heavy political and bureaucratic controls at every level. To speak of secularism as separation of religion from public life is misleading, however, since Muslim secularism has not involved a separation of "mosque" and state on the pattern of the American separation of church and state (Berkes, 1964: 480). Dankwart Rustow (Cited in Davison, 2002: 218), in one of his articles, wrote that "institution of religion has never been separated from the state". Binnaz Toprak added that "it was never tried separation of religion and state in western way" (Cited in Davison, 2002: 214). Secularist governments both support and control religious teaching and institutions to a considerable degree. Essentially, secularism has meant state control of religion and state effort to use religion in the service of its nationalist and developmental goals.

In that case, if I summarize, religion is linked with the extension of legitimacy to the polity in several ways. As Ilter Turan (1991: 42-50) claims, first, religion provides a framework within which political power may be exercised. In other words, it is a constraint on what governments can do and still maintain their legitimacy.

Second, religion is an element of social control which includes values such as being respectful to governmental authority and of public servants, and compliance with government's command. In this way, religion is one of several ways through which obedience to political authority is secured. As Binnaz Toprak expresses, since

religion has a control system over individuals, how is it possible not to take into consideration of religion while making politics? (Toprak, 1986: 359-367) In other words, If it is asked people to make political choices, and those people's world of consciousness and emotions can be determined by religion, how can it be avoided applying religious references while making politics? Nation state which did not want to share its power with anybody, could degrade religion, which again could keep its consistency with only the idea of not sharing power with anybody, as a functional element for the sake of its power. These, somehow, have given holiness to "national culture" and become functional to glue elements of "national identity" which were being re-created during nation state building process.

Finally, religion is a source of symbols, ideas and meanings that are used to elicit positive political behaviors from society. A few examples may help to explain what is meant here. A person who dies in battle for the cause of religion is a şehit-martyr- and goes directly heaven. Now this symbol has been borrowed from religious vocabulary, and is used to describe any public servant who dies in the course of public duty; in this way, government service is elevated to the level of God's cause. Religion in symbols sometimes is nationalized with flag at mosques. In Greece and South Cyprus flag is used at church. In 1997, one of the slogans of Nationalist Movement Party was "Nation of Turk is Muslim. They will live Islam and live in Islam." Turgut Özal said: "State is laic but I'm Muslim." Friday sermons are used to invite citizens to engage in acts supportive of government. The Directorate of religious Affairs sends out model sermons to imams (preachers) which may encourage the citizens, for example, to pay their taxes, or to contribute to foundations established to assist armed forces; thus, secular acts are identified as being religiously desirable, and they gain an aura of religious legitimacy. To put it briefly, it seems that the Turkish state, while not viewing religion as giving direction to its policies and actions, continues to treat it as a resource which may be mobilized for "purpose of state" whenever it is found useful or necessary.

In conclusion, as Sakallıoğlu (1996: 250) points out early republican strategy toward Islam showed two trends-one repressive; the other, combination the ideals of secular nationalism with Islamic symbols. In other words, what I tried to prove is that from the beginning of the Turkish nation-state, religion is constructed in the system

to justify positive political behaviors. Although there is not an official religion of Turkey at the state level, this nation has a religion which people die for. For that reason, mothers of martyrs said that their sons are martyrized for this nation, territory *(vatan için ölmek, şehit olmak)*. It can be easily understood that why secular concept nationalism is linked with martyrdom and death is justified with a religious concept, martyr when the role of religion in Turkish nationalism is considered.

In that sense, I will deal with other dimension of Turkish nationalism, woman issue, in order to evaluate why mothers of martyrs are discussed in the agenda of policy makers and commanders while dealing with conflict in East and Southeast of Turkey in next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

ROLE OF WOMAN IN THE TURKISH NATION-BUILDING PROCESS

According to Enloe, "as insightful and helpful" as Benedict Anderson and other theorists were "in charting new ways to think about the creation of the nationalist ideas, they left nationalists ungendered" (1993: 231). Much academic scholarship on the nation building process still remains both gender-blind and disembodied. Many approaches about nationalism do not deal with gender as an important factor as I explained previous chapter, you can look at Gellner (1983), and Smith (1986), etc.[18] That's why, ideas in this chapter claim to prove that gender is not subordinate component of nation building process but also founder component of nationalist projects.

As contemporary scholars have observed, there is a temporal anomaly within nationalism, which is imbued with naturalized gender references. While on one hand, nationalism involves the erasure of the past in favor of the formation of new identities; on the other hand, it needs to emphasize authentic cultural values as the basis of the new national identity. Women in this context are expected to play supporting roles but with dual gender references. When they act as citizens, activists, and leaders, they reflect masculinist notions based on power. When they assume the role of virtuous housewives and selfless mothers, they fulfill masculinist notions of femininity. These two seemingly different roles are in fact two sides of the same coin. In either case, women's acceptable codes of behavior are defined by the parameters of patriarchal social systems that they are supposed to uphold and perpetuate.

In that sense, woman issue has a critical role in Turkish nationalism. On one hand, women were stuck between Westernization and Islam; on the other hand, they were symbolized for the foundation of new nation in Turkey. Why were the women so important for Turkish nation building process? In early Republican Turkey, the image of the modern Turkish woman provided one of the most visible symbols,

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[18] According to Einhorn (2005: 208), theorists of nation who elide gender include Anderson (1983), Gellner (1997), Hobsbawm (1983), and Smith (1991) includes just two chapters by women out of forty-nine. Only one of these two focuses on women and nationalism. None focus on the impact of gender. For a critique, see Racioppi and O'Sullivian (2000: 21).

publicizing the image of the new nation-state as a radical break from its Islamic Ottoman past. Educated women in European outfits who appeared in professional life, at entertainment events, and sports activities fore grounded and displaced the image of the ignorant Muslim woman forbidden from the public sphere and concealed behind her veil.

The discourse on the place of women in modern Turkey has involved contradictory elements from the beginning. There seems to be an overwhelming anxiety over defining and determining the social boundaries of the modern Turkish woman: She should be an educated intellectual but not an active feminist and not only a capable professional but also a dedicated housewife and mother. In that context, I find appropriate to briefly discuss what motherhood means for nationalism and what motherhood has meant in early Republican periods in terms of nation building process in Turkey.

3.1. Nation and Mothers:

The literature review about mothers and motherhood reveals many different discussion topics including working mothers, "bad" mothers, black mothers or lesbian mothers and so on. What is striking about the discussion to date is the absence of an explicit definition of motherhood in most if not all the literature. Aspects of motherhood and qualities of mothers, actual and imagined, are described but concept itself is not subjected to a rigorous interrogation. Motherhood, enveloped with beliefs and values, is institutionalized not only in marriage and family arrangements and practices, but also in law and social policy and through representations in literature, film, and other cultural forms (Kaplan, 1992). For Walker (1995: 418), the international debate has exposed shortcomings in commonsense views of motherhood as "naturally" the role of women. More noteworthy, there is a degree of agreement on content of motherhood: It is to nurture, to preserve, to protect.

All nationalist projects involve a remaking of feminities and masculinities, with an ambivalent set of opportunities and restrictions for both. Question of woman are central to all debates in nation building process. In that context, nationalist movements across the world employ mothers as a symbol of the nation (Mayer, 2000). Hence, the building of a nation involves different interventions and inscription

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upon female identity, whether through the assignment of forged roles such as mother, all serving one way or another the formation of a sense of nationhood. As it is illustrated in the following pages, while mothers come to represent the nation, they are constructed as mothers of nation.

There are several reasons why women become such a target toward the building of a new nation. The significance of mothers is "the main vehicle through which people first form their identities and learn their place in society" (Forcey, 1994: 357). Women are mothers, are life givers, and are mothers of next generation, mothers of the nation. Nira Yuval Davis and Flora Anthias (2003) have suggested that women's relation to nation has taken at least five major forms. Women serve as biological reproducers of national groups (the biological mothers of the people); as symbols and signifiers of national difference in male discourse; as transmitters and producers of the cultural narratives themselves (mothers, teachers, writers…); as reproducers of the boundaries of the nation; as active participants in national movements: in armies, congress, community organizations. In that point, Joanne Nagel expresses like that;

> Nation is a kind of family where man, as a head of family, and woman, as a mother, play their natural roles. Women have a crucial place as mothers of nation while they are dominated by nationalist movements and politics. (Cited in Şerifsoy, 2004: 171).

In many contexts across societies, motherhood has been constructed over nationalist discourse or ideology. To push the illustration further, for Nazi women the slogan of 'Kinder, Kirche, Küche' (children, church, kitchen) led to the conviction that the maternal role extended beyond the family to society. Men are the protectors and women should be grateful to be protected. As it is understood from this, everybody must know her/his roles and must accommodate to the "natural" division of labor to keep society's "order" in safe. Many famous men including Moliere, Fenelon, Montaigne and Rousseau have agreed on an single statement to invite women to their "primary" and "natural" mother-housewife roles (Badinter, 1992). As for the discourse of the state, women are regarded as individuals that are "responsible from nation".

According to Natarajan, woman shapes national imagination (Cited in Saigol, 2004: 232). For her, "woman, with her status of being mother, evoke unity and integrity of a nation." She adds that;

How does figure of mother unify the nation? "Mother" reminds common cultural roots (provides a shelter and food). Like soil, mother is eternal, patient, and indispensable. National demands are supported with solid demands (Cited in Saigol, 2004: 233).

Since role of mothers is to raise new generation and implant them cultural values, motherhood has been mostly used in order to indicate internal and dominated cultural territory for new born nation. Gaitskell and Unterhal (Cited in Saigol, 2004:233) point out in their study about African nationalism that idea of motherhood has changed during 20th century and added that motherhood is not only a fixed biological concept but also a flexible expression. For Yuval-Davis and Anthias, "women do not only teach and transfer the national cultural and ideological traditions, but also mostly, they form them." Mothers play an important role in re-creating the differences between ethnic-national groups. They convey culture and they are privileged signifiers showing national differences. Mothering is ultimately attributed to the whole nation's sake stems from the duties of mothers to the family, society and nation. In that sense, mothers are envisaged as a mother who carries the genuine of the nation in private sphere. Badinter claims:

19th century ideologues that are completely sure about their certainty have benefited from theory of mother's being "naturally altruistic" in expanding mother's responsibilities even more. (…) Women are told that they are the watchdog of ethnic and religion and that the destiny of family and society depend on their way of rearing children. (Cited in Uluğtekin, 2002: 58)

Therefore, in or out of war, mothers play socially attributed roles such as being the mothers rising or giving birth to sons who will be soldiers (martyrs) for the sake of their country and provide health, sexual, nutrition and nursing services to the men in war (Enloe, 1990). Motherhood is attributed to the whole nation's sake from the duties of mothers to the society and nation. In that sense, the experiences and livings of mothers are shadowed with a manipulated sacrifice since what is important is to rear "good" children for the system. While women are lauded as "mothers of nation", they are pacified and limited within this role. Women's these kinds of role, on one hand, points out those mothers are burdened the roles by patriarchal society. On the other hand, with motherhood, it is expected to support the man, who is "protector" for both them and the country where they live in, mothers as objects of wars contribute to continuity of warlike/militarist activities. This stresses that man is

depicted as the warrior-hero or citizen-warrior, entrusted with the almost sacred duty to defend the homeland.

For example, Palestinians, like in Turkey, commonly refer to those who have died for national cause as martyrs and to mothers who have lost children as mothers of martyrs. The national movement endowed the "mothers of martyrs" with status of national icons (Peteet, 1997: 105). As far as I concerned from Peteet (1997), in Palestine like in Turkey, it is assumed as a national duty to bear many children to replenish wartime losses. In doing so, they locate their reproductive abilities in a national political context. While nationalist discourse celebrate them as icons of the nation, they are celebrated their reproductive potential. Although the mother of the martyr may not have been active politically in the sense of belonging to an organization, nationalist discourse transforms her maternal sacrifice as a supreme political act. Mothers of martyrs are invited to attend resistance celebrations with the leadership, a public, symbolic display of a newly acquired stature in the community (Peteet, 1997: 122).

On the other hand, Marco says that mothers of Plazo de Mayo are not only mothers of their own sons, but also they have become mothers of whole society and it was indicated that they represent the idea of "social motherhood" which rebelled against political parties and military government in Argentina. Marco quoted from Schmukler: "After this event in Argentina, we can not articulate motherhood with political passiveness and succumbing anymore" (Cited in Olgun and Yüksel, 1991: 57). In Argentina, mothers have achieved to construct their own agency that is different from dominant structures and discourses in the country in that era. Like in Turkey, in Argentina, the natural role for woman is being wife and mother (Fisher, 1995:5). However, they resisted the dictatorship and transformed women's view of Argentinian society and their agency in it. The structure in Argentina was military rule while mothers of disappeared occurred. However, it was the condition constructed those mothers; those women were brought together by the disappearances. It was a force of opposition to the military rule. Women became more conscious of the dimensions of the repression and this made them more determined. Mothers forced to modify their traditional role as mothers and changed

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their perceptions of their roles within the society. They were challenging the traditional ideology of motherhood, an ideology most commonly found in the moral discourse of the military (Fisher, 1995; Margaret, 2004; Femenia, 1987).

In other words, what I try to show is that motherhood is an ideological status that is defined by different power struggles. Although mostly being a mother is accepted as a significant role of a woman and respected, as it is seen in the example, not every mother is accepted in a respectful way. As long as woman's motherhood is stayed limited within their (nationalism, religion, the state or the army) definitions of mother. An example from Turkey for that discussion can be Saturday Mothers. Since May 1995 relatives of those who have "disappeared" in police custody hold a weekly vigil in Istanbul (Cited in http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR44/017/1998). The Saturday mothers were asking about their beloved who went missing under detention, and calling on the government to take legal action against those responsible. However, although they are mothers, their motherhood did not prevent the police to harass them.

Briefly, it can be claimed that motherhood is not a constant concept. It is a socially constructed phenomenon. Mothering and motherhood are viewed as the outcomes of dynamic social interactions and relationships rather than being seen as "natural, universal, and unchanging" (Glenn, 1994: 4). For example, for Sotelo and Avila (1997: 549), motherhood is not biologically predetermined in any fixed way but is historically and socially constructed. Although the term "mother" can be ambiguous, mothering involves dynamic activity and always evolving relationships. Forcey, for example, defines mothering as "a socially constructed set of activities and relationships involved in nurturing and caring for people."

An interdisciplinary range of recent feminist studies has diluted and held up for questioning the conflation of motherhood with peace, sacrifice and nurturing (Di Leonardo, 1985; Ruddick, 1989). According to Ruddick (1989), motherhood has a social-political significance, since from its practice peace-aspiring patterns of thinking and awareness have to emerge. This notion has been severely criticized by other feminist scholars, who see womanhood and motherhood as socially

constructed, having no predetermined values, attitudes, or habits. Therefore, patriarchal system's positioning of women, especially mothers, within war is based on discourse on essential differences between woman and man due to their nature. Man is the creator of civilization and woman is the element of the continuity of generations. In this discourse, man identity is equal to "culture, political, wisdom, justice, public, power, universality and freedom"; woman identity is equal to "nature, personal, emotional, private, morality, obedient" (Pateman, 2004: 124). There are various explanations about why theories of nationalism overlook gender side. With reference to motherhood, women are described as the passive object of men's sacrifice, thus depriving women of their agency as historical subjects in charge of their own destiny. Mothers in Argentina have been able to challenge the historical narratives of the state and construct competing ones.

In that context, as Verdery points out by looking at early stage of formation of nation state is particularly important because a close look almost always reveals the existence of competing alternatives for envisioning the nature of the nation in formation of a multiplicity of social groups and actors as taking part in this process (Cited in Altınay, 2004: 52). Official history usually silences these "other" voices and presents its own version as right and inevitable, which make it necessary for us to revisit this period and relocate these voices, mostly women's in Turkey. After the war of independence, women became "symbol" of struggle for reform, nationalism, cultural freedom and development in Republican era. Emancipation of women is accepted as inevitable part of national movements. Nationalist ideologies which were willing to develop a new national-cultural identity encouraged image of "new woman" to perform new social roles that were appropriate for modernization process and project of building a nation. In order to give a meaning to role of mothers of martyrs, it is necessary to re-read social history of Turkey with a critical perspective by turning back to Republican Turkey. In following pages, I will try to mark some of the particularities of Turkish nationalism, mainly as reflected in the official ideology of republic and explore the impact of the related reforms in the making of mothers in Turkey.

3.2. Historical Background of the "Woman Issue" in Turkish Nationalism:

3.2.1. "New Woman" In Turkish Nationalism:

Women have always played their part in the history of all nations. Historians used to be primarily concerned with wars and military operations, but recently they have become equally concerned with the part played by individuals, both men and women, in the evolution and development of the cultural and social life of societies in the world. Turkish women played their part, and in Turkey's War of Independence (1919-1923) they founded their own units. The status of women in Turkey may be examined from several perspectives. One perspective might take into account the legal, political, and institutional reforms of the Republican era and their reflection in educational attainment, political participation, labor force participation, and professionalization of women in Turkey. A second perspective might focus on the family dynamics and interaction patterns as well as the place of the woman in the family. This paper will adopt the second perspective. Before taking it up in detail, however, it may be helpful to consider briefly the general picture of the reforms. This should provide us with necessary background and help put our findings into context.

There is widespread agreement that Turkish women have had a unique historical experience due to the total modification of the legal system under the reforms introduced by Atatürk (Abadan-Unat, 1978: 291). Compared with their counterparts in other developing countries, especially those in Muslim world, Turkish women enjoy considerable civil and political rights and are more visible in the public domain. In a very short time the laws affecting women's status were changed drastically: from the Sheri'a to a secular civil code (adapted with very few changes from the Swiss civil law in 1926); from polygamy to monogamy; from unequal legal rights regarding divorce, ownership of property, custody of children, etc. to equal legal treatment (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1986: 485). As Arat (1994: 57) points out, the statistical indicators of female representation among professionals in Turkey has been more impressive than in many Western countries.

From the earliest days of the Republic the rights of women were agreed as part of the social revolution. But the change could not of course be immediate, and

the constitution which was adopted in 1924 did not give women the right to vote. In 1930 women secured the right to vote and to be candidates in municipal elections. In 1935 they secured full political rights in national elections. Not until 1926 was the Holy Law replaced by the Civil Code which prohibited polygamy, made divorce a matter for the Law Courts and gave women the right to demand divorce equally with men. Marriage became a civil ceremony; women were allowed to become legal guardians and were given equal rights of property tenure and independence of inheritance as well as equal pay for equal work. Their political rights came before long in a programme of reform which allowed women themselves and public opinion in general, to become adjusted to the immense changes it involved. In 1937, there were eighteen women in the National Assembly, comprising 4.5 % of its membership (Tekeli, 1982).

For example, in 1923, during the formation of the Republican People's Party, Nezihe Muhiddin[19] formed the Women's People's Party with her friends (Baykan, 2004: 36). Their goal was to realize the principles of democracy by modifying "the consciousness, the negligence, the grave situation" that had made womanhood the lowest class of society in all previous periods (Muhiddin, 1931: 96). For Muhiddin (1931), the "new woman", regardless of society's need, desired to compete with men and, like them, to live a free and independent life. Women of the past, enslaved within their homes, had become visible in public sphere. Once again it was found a basis for constructing an independent, strong working role for Turkish women. For example, in nineteenth century, girls' schools and training colleges were opened and women began entering the universities. Issues of health care, child care, and philanthropy were integrated into the idea of "new woman" (Baykan, 1994: 34).

These reforms provided the legal and institutional structures for the termination of sex segregation and unequal treatment of women under the law. The importance of such legal and formal institutional reforms should not be underestimated, for they provide the formal structures and mechanisms for changes in life-styles if such changes are initiated or demanded. Here is the crux of the matter, for formal structures provide the grounds for changes in life-styles, but they

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[19] For more information about Nezihe Muhiddin, see Yaprak Zihnioğlu, *Kadınsız Inkılap,* Iletişim Yayınları, 2003.

do not necessitate or even produce these changes in life-styles. The Atatürk reforms have been criticized for not producing wide scale change in the everyday living conditions of many women. It is, therefore, not realistic to expect legal-institutional reforms to produce total culture change. Neither is it fair, however, to dismiss these reforms as unimportant or superficial just because they fall short of such total impact. On the contrary, they should be given due recognition for, to reiterate, they provide the formal structures and mechanisms which facilitate informal processes of change. As Kağıtçıbaşı (1986: 486) points out, without such formal structures, informal initiatives and demands cannot get very far, though it is also possible for changes in informal structures to trigger, in turn, changes in formal structures. They have provided the mechanisms for change.

3.2.2. Kemalist Path to Modernity: "Daughters of Republic"

How and why "women" became part of this cultural politics remains to be explained. According to Scott (1988: 94), "gender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relations of power." When there is a change in the power structure, there is parallel change in the symbolic representation of gender. From which side you examine the issue; the best way to remark Turkish women today is to follow experiments lived by the women in historical process. Foundation of Turkish Republic is the result of process that its roots go back to last period of Ottoman Empire's westernization efforts. In view of the apparent suddenness with which women ultimately received full emancipation and recognition of their status, it must be noted that the seeds of this tremendous change had been sown almost a century earlier with the *Tanzimat* (Reorganisation) of 1839, of which the aim was to make vital and essential reforms throughout the whole country, taking the West as a model. Turkish elites and politicians, starting from *Tanzimat*, discussed the "woman issue" as a crucial factor of any social modernization project. The Ottoman elite started to discuss the status of woman in society and family in relation to this project.[20] In Turkey, therefore, the history of women goes hand in hand with the history of

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[20] For support of the idea that the woman issue developed in parallel to the nation-state building process of the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic, see Deniz Kandiyoti, *Cariyeler, Bacılar, Yurttaşlar,* İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 1997.

nationalism. The growth of the "woman issue" developed in the late 18th century and early 19th century in tandem with the "Westernization" and "Modernization" movements.

The first westernizing reforms began in 18th century by the Ottoman administration. The aim of those reforms was to provide modernization, with sample programs imported from the West, and to reorganize civil-political institutions. However, at the end of 19th century, the "woman issue" was discussed mostly in reform movements (Kadıoğlu, 1998: 91). Zehra Toska made a connection between the increasing importance of the "woman issue" in *Tanzimat* and the fact that women, as mothers, were held responsible for the education of children (Toska, 1998: 71). For the Young Turks, protection of the state was not only the duty of the state itself, but was also a social responsibility of every citizen of the Ottoman Empire. Mothers, who had a significant role in the raising of children in the family as a touchstone of society, had an important place in the Young Turks' social project. In that period, motherhood was seen as "patriotic duty." The slogan of "family means nation, nation means family" that *Kadınlar Dünyası* (*Women's World*) told its reader in 1913, and the message that "childrearing is one of the most important duties toward the nation," were both repeated many times in popular literature (Cited in Uluğtekin, 2002: 67).

As indicated before, the present paper will deal with the private sphere of women's lives, mainly within the family. In that sense, as Enloe points out in her book *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases* (1990:45), "nationalism, typically, is born from masculine memory and masculine hope." No nationalism in the world has granted women and men the same privileged access to the resources of the nation-state. Scott (1988) claims that nationalism is constituted from the very beginning as a gendered discourse. In other words, "politics constructs gender and gender constructs politics" (Scott, 1988: 45-46). In this respect, Carol Pateman defines the transition to modernity as a transition from paternalistic patriarchy to patriarchal civil society, or a modern patriarchy that is based on brotherhood (Pateman, 2004: 120-122). For this reason, we may regard concepts such as citizenship and civil society as masculine, in that only men enter the public sphere equally among themselves. Moreover, Walby

separates patriarchy into two spheres, private and public. Private patriarchy is based on women's services to men in household. On the other hand, public patriarchy is based on the state and employment, in that women are not excluded from public life, but exploited in it. The family and kinship, which are defined as private, can be used by the state for its political aims (Cited in Kandiyoti, 1997: 149-151). Although they enter public life, women are not still accepted as 'agents.' Political agency is straightforwardly male, and the male citizen stands in the same symbolic relation to the nation as a man stands in relation to a woman within the family. The most fundamental problem with nationalist discourse is that it casts women as symbolic markers and policy objects, not as active political subjects. Deniz Kandiyoti summarizes this:

> Wherever women continue to serve as boundary markers between different national, ethnic, and religious collectivities, their emergence as full-fledged citizens will be jeopardized, and whatever rights they may have achieved during one stage of nation-building may be sacrificed on the altar of identity politics during another (1991: 435).

During the 1920s and 1930s, the new Turkish republic was heavily engaged in building a new state, which involved the institutionalization of a new secular nationalist project constituted in opposition to the Ottoman past. Therefore, during its founding years, the secular state used the medium of feminity and women's public visibility as a strategic means through which Turkey's new secular project of modernization would be institutionalized and its new national identity would be displayed. There are several reasons why women became such a focus in the building of a new nation state. First, Turkey is not different from other countries in which woman has come to symbolize both the nation and its borders, because of her reproductive capabilities. Second, the designation of woman as the symbol of the nation in need of protection serves to construct the state as a political agent that intervenes with regard to bodies, rescuing and liberating the female and the nation from adverse conditions, and bringing it under its own guardianship, thereby acquiring a masculine mode of agency and power. Third, because European perceptions of the Ottoman Empire were heavily conditioned by an orientalist understanding of Islam, represented by images of women behind harem walls, what

better means could the new secularist Turkish state use to distance itself from the Ottoman past than the advancement of women?

As Fleming (1998: 128) suggests, one should first take into consideration Gökalp's contribution to women's placement within Kemalist modernity. In this sense, Gökalp focused on a return to original Turkish civilization in which women were equal to men. By depicting women as guarantors of the "lost Turkish past," Gökalp treated the emancipation of women and the restoration of gender equality as essential to the revival of authentic Turkish civilization and the development of the Turk, as opposed to the Ottoman (Arat, 2000:14). Within the framework of Turkish nationalism, as I explained in the previous chapter, the culturalal reference for authentic national identity shifted from Islamic culture to the original culture of the Turks before they accepted Islam. Kemal Atatürk and the other leaders of the Turkish nationalist struggle made a radical break from Islamic law and tradition, which had a direct impact on women's position in society.

In the Republican era, the "woman question" was considered to be an important factor of the modernization projects. The Ottoman state had been based on religious authority. Moreover, women are the social category that most heavily feels the weight of this religious authority. Thus, women could play a critical role in shaking and upturning the ideological and political power of the caliphate and the Shari'a. A significant aim of the "woman question," which was considered in relation to development and improvement issues, was to raise the status of woman (Durakbaşa, 1998: 36-37). The Kemalist administration appropriated the status of woman in society as an indicator of modernization (Çağatay-Soysal, 1995: 307). Development and modernization in Turkey meant Westernization, and the Kemalist reforms attempted to reorganize life by replacing the Islamic patriarchy with a secular Western patriarchy.

In the concept of the "modernist feminine," as defined by the Kemalist reforms, ideal women were shaped by mixing images of a sophisticated mother, a thrifty housewife, and a helper of the husband. In other words, ideal women were defined by images that increased the status and comfort of men (Köksal, 1998: 34). With this meaning, the modernization of the Republic was based not in the name of salvation for woman, but rather on a modernization project formed by men to create

a "new woman" and a "new man" (Tekeli, 1995: 96-97). Tekeli claims that those reforms carried out by male administrators were not, in reality, done in order to give rights to women. Those rights were used as a means for political transformation at the state level. Especially during the Republic's one-party period, giving political rights to women was a way to highlight that the administration was different from the other one-party dictatorships in the world (Tekeli, 1995: 25). The only legitimate struggle in this one-party state was the struggle against the military and economic threats by the foreign powers that had occupied the country after the First World War. Its corporatist nationalism recognized no special interests or any conflicts of interest. The population had to be united around the "national goal," and had to be ready to sacrifice all other demands for the "nation" and "country." Thus, the education and political participation of women were seen as tools for national development, rather than as a means for women to create an individual consciousness and form a gender class. Within these frameworks, one can observe that words and deeds were not contradictory; rather, they were consistent with the reconstruction of traditional society within a new, nationalist context (Arat, 1994: 59).

As Altınay (2004: 55) claims, nationalist history in Turkey is not history without women in it. On one hand, women are given a role as the carriers of modernization and Westernization. On the other hand, the limitations of this role were drawn tightly by men. Indeed, as Deniz Kandiyoti (1994: 378) argues in her study on women and nationalism, women both actively participate in and also become hostages to nationalist projects. Partha Chatterjee claims that emancipation of women was subjugated to national historical goals within the nation-state and the secondary position of women was legitimized in new way (Chatterjee, 2004: 113). In Turkey, the project of nation-building encouraged women to carry on in traditional roles in modern situation, and started to determine women's valid role patterns. On the question of gender roles, there was no difference between the traditional point of view and the modernist one (Berktay, 2003: 110). As Yeşim Arat (1997: 100) suggests:

> All reforms that helped secularize and westernize the republic encouraged women to play new public roles in society. They could now become professionals expected to be equal to men in the public realm,

embodying the universal ideals of equality of humankind. Women assumed their new roles with a vengeance. Theirs was a nationalist mission. The purpose of the professional work expected of women was service to the modernizing nation.

The image of the "new woman" of this period was that of a woman who appeared in Republican ballroom receptions and similar gatherings organized by cultural centers and associations, together with men, displaying modernity. Mustafa Kemal himself did much to promote the image of the "new woman" as "a symbol of the break with the past" by personally encouraging women's public visibility and making personal appearances together with his wife and adopted daughter at social occasions and official ceremonies (Kandiyoti, 1991: 41). The new state itself acquired the role of the liberator who would guide the young nation toward civilization. Moreover, images of women in bathing suits were used in photographs during the formative years of the republic (Ahmad, 2005: 105). These symbolized Turkey's radical break from the Ottoman past to secular modernity. The state was actively promoting the appearance of women in the public sphere, wearing modern clothes, engaging in modern activities. Women would participate in the public sphere in occupations such as teachers or nurses, in continuity of their motherhood. In this way, a woman would be adjusting to modern life. On the other hand, she would do this not for herself, but rather for her nation.

In this vein, Kemalist Republican ideology incorporated a project of "degendering" and "regendering" into its modernist reforms. New forms of masculinity and femininity were presented by Kemalists, who condemned some of the traditional gender notions as backward, and praised others in a new context. Durakbaşa suggests that "the Kemalist female image reflected the pragmatism of the Kemalist ideology and was basically a combination of conflicting images: 'an educated-professional woman' at work; 'a socially active organizing woman' as a member of social clubs, associations; 'a biologically functioning woman' in the family fulfilling reproductive responsibilities as a mother and wife; 'a feminine woman' entertaining men at balls and parties" (Durakbaşa, 2002:147). In that sense, the "daughters of the Republic" were educated, employed in professional

occupations, and expected to serve their country. Nezihe Muhiddin[21] (cited in Zihnioğlu, 2003: 224) who claimed that the basis of woman's role in the 1923 Republicdepended on the enlightenment of *Tanzimat*, argued that the woman of the Republic was represented as a woman to whom Atatürk gave a hand. Pictures of Atatürk with his adopted child, Ülkü, appeared frequently in the media. Those pictures were significant symbols of the founders' image of woman. The "new woman" of the Kemalists was a child and a daughter growing up with the innovations of the Republic. It is significant that Atatürk adopted daughters, not sons, who were brought up as exemplary Republican women, well-trained in their careers and devoted to the Kemalist ideals as well as to Atatürk himself (Zihnioğlu, 2003: 226).

Alongside the modernizing reforms that emphasized the professional and political roles of women, many intellectuals voiced the priority of women's domestic duties. The popular press, which voiced the opinions of these intellectuals as well as of journalists and foreign authors, was clearly split as women were idealized both in conventionally masculine roles, such as members of the parliament, professionals, and athletes, and in domestic roles, such as child-rearing, housekeeping, cooking, and sawing. Many articles in Ismail Hakkı's journal, *Yeni Adam* (*The New Man*) (1931), for example, focused on the importance of the maternal-feminine role of women and insisted on the worn-out duality of the superiority of reasoning capacities in men and emotional breadth in women to confine women to the domestic sphere. Information about hygiene, scientific upbringing of children, housework of technology, and homemaking were instructed through the family and women's magazines and courses taught at schools and education programs offered courses on those subjects (Durakbaşa, 1998: 144).

Women's role as public figures was glorified only upon their successful accomplishment of motherhood and familial duties. The modern Turkish woman was embraced by the modernist agenda of the nation-state only so long as she provided the legitimate symbols and nurturing basis for the operation of dominant social codes. Atatürk highlights motherhood as the most important function and virtue of women. In one of his speeches, Atatürk openly stated that ''the most important duty

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[21] For more information, see Yaprak Zihnioğlu, *Kadınsız Inkılap,* Iletişim Yayınları, 2003.

of woman is motherhood. The importance of this duty is better understood, if one considers that the earliest education takes place on one's mother's lap" (Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri 2, 1989: 89–90). Atatürk believed that the power would make Turkish society reach "contemporary civilization level" would be based on the next generations, advanced due to the principle of him and the Republic (Toska, 1998: 71). As reflected in the quotation, motherhood was still stressed as a woman's traditional role, along with her new role as a professional woman. His speeches demonstrate that Atatürk held women in high regard as productive and reproductive forces. In 1923, he says that "we should believe that everything on earth is the product of women." (Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri 2, 1989: 89–90) In the modern society that Atatürk envisioned mothering requires additional and more advanced qualifications for women. He argued:

> The education that mothers have to provide to their children today is not simple, as it had been in the past. Today's mothers have to attain several high qualities in order to bring up children with necessary qualities and develop them into active members for life today. Therefore, our women are obliged to be more enlightened, more prosperous, and more knowledgeable than our men. If they really want to be the *mothers of this nation,* this is the way. (Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri 2, 1989: 156)

As a result of this, specialization in schools (especially professional schools, such as the Institute for Girls[22]) created an educational system that pursued traditional gender roles. Different attitudes toward men and women were applied in other secondary school programmes. In schools, some subjects were determined to be either feminine or masculine, and offered only to the corresponding group. While physical education and military lectures were given to only boys, only female students received lectures on sewing and embroidery, home administration, and child care. A feminine course program was developed in order to transform backward women into skillful mothers and practical wives. Articles on women's trade schools, where women learned about house management, childcare, and sawing, favored the figure of the capable wife and mother. In an article on Üsküdar Trade School, for example, the aim of the school is stated as ''saving women from being consumers and educating girls capable of offering comfort and peace to their home'' (Cited in

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[22] For more information, see Elif Akşit, *Kız Enstitüleri*, İletişim Yayınları, 2004.

Baydar, 2007: 6) Furthermore, in 1945-46, in a picture from a junior class's schoolbook, *Hayat Bilgisi,* verse points out gender discrimination obviously:

> In the mornings, we get up, we drink tea, eat bread. My father goes to work, we go to the school. In the evenings, all of us gather around the table, we eat the meal that my mom cooked, we eat and speak. Later, my mom washes the dishes, my father read the newspaper, and we study. (Cited in Gümüşoğlu, 1998: 105).

In 1963, in another school textbook, or *Hayat Bilgisi*, we see that the school taught girls how to be efficient mothers:

> Oya was wondering how to wash the clothes. She begged her mom: "Mom, could you teach me washing the clothes?" Her mom said, "Tomorrow is our washing day; you will see how to do it there." Then she saw her father. When her father asked the reason of her happiness, she said that she would learn how to wash the clothes (Cited in Gümüşoğlu, 107).

In a textbook from 1982, we see similar duties of women, even in the 20th century.

> My mom prepared the pickle, peeled garlic, and put tomatoes and pepper in the water. My dad spent money and bought me shoes (Cited in Gümüşoğlu, 109).

These teachings were not written in state textbooks randomly. In these books, ideas were used to define women in the private sphere, while the duty of men, as fathers, was to control, affirm, and make decisions. The duty of women was to be good mothers. Moreover, in Article 152 of the 1991 Civil Code, it was said that the man was the head of the family, the breadwinner, and the decision maker. In order to have peace and order in the nation, people, and especially men, have to be peaceful at home. To assure this, people, especially women, should obey the "natural" division of labor. To keep peace, mothers should not ask for anything for themselves, should not be selfish. They should be kind and easygoing. Thus, one the most significant duties of citizenship for women is the care of the home (nation). Education is an efficient way to make women internalize those duties, as seen in the examples above.

If we summarize briefly, the goals of this kind of education were to ensure that women participated efficiently in social life. This ambition was seen in both schoolbooks and speeches of the founders of the Republic, as seen in my examples above. They aimed to have educated women, but when the conditions of that era are considered, some women were not be able to receive higher education. Therefore,

there were policies for the education of housewives, as well. The goal of these policies was to create useful mothers for the nation, who provided assistance for their husbands, were responsible for their homes, and raised children loyal to republican ideology. In brief, it was hope to create an educated republican woman. If one was unable to be a republican woman, they could be a republican mother. In spite of these reforms, the Kemalist state continued to employ a traditional definition of female roles and emphasized reproduction and child care as the primary function of women.

In conclusion, Turkish women's participation in defining women in social terms has been in general effaced and forgotten. Women have been objects and subjects of social change. In this part, women's status in Turkey has been examined from a comparative perspective. In Turkey, the greatest gains in women's status are achieved through development. The greater range which exists in women's status and life-styles makes for much variability, complexity, and dynamism in Turkey. The formal structural changes and the legal and institutional reforms which were discussed in the beginning of the paper have certainly had much to do with opening the doors for women to the upper levels, as far as life-styles and status are concerned. They have provided the mechanisms for change. It is important to see the feminist movement of the period in terms of other than instrumentalist ones. First, it was embedded within a search for a new national identity, a new ideology of secularism and progress, and the global construction of categories of "new woman." Second, the contributions of Nezihe Muhiddin and others show how women played active and important roles as subjects. There was definitely an effective public discourse about feminism gendered by women, so women have been participants in their own emancipation.

However, on the other hand, "Kemalism" was served as "feminism" for a new generation of elite women who could enjoy the advantages and privileges of the new status the Republic had given them. Women relied on the protectionism and paternalism of the state (Durakbaşa, 2002: 153). The forces led Atatürk to grant suffrage to women in the early 1930s and to include eighteen women in the Assembly in 1937 can in part explain how women became objects for political ends. Issues of gender stood at the center of the fight between reformers and traditionalists and were appropriate for public display abroad. Women, later named as "daughters

of Republic," were given significant roles as the carriers of westernization and modernization during the reforms at the end of 19th century and the beginning of 20th century. For the modern Turkish elite that had turned its face toward West since *Tanzimat*, the "woman issue" always remained a central point and had a significant place in nationalist movements. Women can be seen as "symbolic pawns" in Atatürk's anti-religious political program. Women were not merely an "instrument" to prove democratization but were regarded as "evidence" of this process. The generation of the Republic grew up with new ideas about women. The "woman issue" that was shaped around Kemalist ideology was a new concept, without a link to the earlier Ottoman women's movements. The issue has remained tied to nationalism for the last 84 years.

Modernization projects, since *Tanzimat*, have increased the difficulty of women's tasks, obligations, and responsibility. Modernization caused a transformation of classic patriarchy, reshaping it (Pateman, 2004: 110). While patriarchy changed its form, gendered structures, including an exploitative economic system, were re-shaped. Th basic foundation of nationalism, as drawn by Kemalist ideology, was the home and family. Woman's role as mother stayed at the center of the national process. For continuity of the new state, the role of "mother" was put on the shoulders of women because of the importance of biological reproduction of new generations and production of social codes. For that reason, "daughters of the Republic" were created. They were equal to men in public life; on the other hand, they kept conventional roles in private. The daughters were granted the opportunities of education, career, and certain liberties in participating in social activities. Women participated in the "mission" ascribed to them and fit into the ideal image of women of the reformist ideology.

In order to appreciate the Kemalist revolution and its impact on the identities of today's Turkish men and women, we must rethink the history of modernization in Turkey. The consequences of Kemalism are meaningful for feminist discussions in Turkey today. Although most of its shortcomings in the questioning of sex roles and sexist standards of morality have been scrutinized within contemporary feminist circles in the last ten years, it remains a main ingredient, a catalyst for the formation

of new identities. For the last twenty years, one of these new identities has been "mother of martyr," due to the conflict in southeast of Turkey. In following pages, I will examine the role of the mothers of martyrs in Turkish political culture and nationalism.

3.3. From Daughters of the Republic to Mothers of the Nation: Mothers of Martyrs in Turkey:

> In one of his articles called "Ich sterbe," Sarraute narrates memories of the Russian author, Chekhov, on his deathbed in a hospital in Germany. Chekov, who was also doctor, straightened out and shouted at a German doctor, not in his native language, but in German, "Ich sterbe," when he realized he was going to die. It means "I die". For Sarraute, this means to try to control his own death totally. If he had said he was dying in Russian to his Russian wife beside him, everything would be simplified (Cited in Ahıska, 2006: 20).

In Turkey, even in games, "playing at families" (evcilik), girls learn to be altruistic mothers of the future. While girls play at making coffee, learning housework, their male peers play as the "backbone of the game" (oyunumuzun direği), the breadwinners, coming home from paying jobs. The girls have sons, and they become soldiers. They valiantly fight to protect the nation from enemies. The girls play with pink Barbies and wait for their sons to come home, singing songs like *Küçük Ayşe.*[23] Turkish girls encounter the militarist-patriarchal-nationalist system as mere children. When they begin to question this system, they face the idea that those practices of supporting the patriarchal structure inherently exist in "woman's nature." According to so-called this "nature," girls are destined to be mothers of "soldiers," protectors of the system and the nation.

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[23] In this song, as constructed in the Turkish nation-building process, girls are idealized as wives and mothers, while boys are identified with being soldier, as follows:
"Küçük Ayşe, küçük Ayşe
Napıyorsun bana söyle
Bebeğime bakıyorum, ona mama veriyorum
Gülyüzünü öpüyorum, ona ninni söylüyorum
Küçük asker, küçük asker
Napıyorsun bana göster
Tüfeğime bakıyorum, palaskamı takıyorum
Kasketimi giyiyorum, ben kışlama gidiyorum"
"Little Ayşe, little Ayşe. Tell me what you are doing. I care and feed my baby. I kiss her face and sing her a lullaby. Little soldier, little soldier. Show me what you are doing. I care my gun and wear my catridge belt. I wear my hat and go to my barracks."

This socialization, perpetuating these gender roles, extends into peacetime and civilian life, as well, and the characteristics that are encouraged and rewarded in schoolboys, such as competition, aggression, and the suppression of "weak" emotions, differ very little from those drilled into recruits. These ideas are disseminated through school curricula that focus only "masculine" achievement, including physical education, which encourages competition and physical aggression, turning war into a game. Thus, boys develop into the kind of men who would look forward to being a soldier, or who are at least capable of accepting or perpetrating violence. Girls are similarly socialized to accept their proper attitudes of compromise, accommodation, and submission, and their toys prepare them for roles which reflect nurturing characteristics. These ideas become deeply ingrained and society accepts that it is "natural" that boys are aggressive and girls are passive. Gender specific roles are considered to be "common sense," in much that same way that militarism itself is. As I examined above, one can say that Turkish nationalism is constructed as a patriarchal/militarist society. Women are defined due to a division of labor that is constructed by gender: "mother," "wife," and "sister." The political functions of those roles are subject to patriarchal limitations, because as long as women perform those conventional roles, militarism and nationalism can totally control social practices. Thus, women could rise to significant positions, when it is necessary, such as women playing in theatres, singing in operas, dancing in western style clothes, bombing the places with a plane…

If we consider the link between gender and nationalism, we face motherhood as a significantly subjective identity, either supporting nationalism or challenging it. Since the 1980s, in southeast Turkey, an armed struggle has been raging between the PKK and the Turkish army. In this process, mothers enter the public sphere with different demands. Most mothers of martyrs have been seen in the public sphere internalizing patriotism and nationalism in order to support the Turkish army demand revenge for their dead sons. In that context, I believe that motherhood has a critical identity role in Turkey, in constantly producing militarism. The most crucial role of women is, from the beginning of the nation-building process, to raise children suitable for a militarist, nationalist and patriarchal structure, or, in other words, to be a mother. The mother who has lost her son in a war, defending the homeland, has

been one of the most powerful images of hegemonic nationalist culture. In public discourse, the mother frequently represents the nation itself. Therefore, a mother cannot demand a right to her son's life and cannot question his loss in war, since, as a mother of the nation, she gave birth to a son of the nation, and whenever the nation asks for him, she should give him up. The individual loss of each son is also a collective, national loss. While held up as public symbols, however, bereaved mothers of the martyrs are silenced by society, their voices not to be heard. For both mothers and fathers, the highest level of valor is in carrying their pain in silence.

In Turkey, women, especially mothers, became a "symbol of the struggle against the PKK." Before, they were only "ordinary" housewives, but with martyrdom, they have become "mothers of the nation," known to everyone and respected by statesmen and commanders. Motherhood has been used not only as a strategy for deepening nationalist discourse, but also as a strategy for countering the issue of Kurdish nationalism. With the trial of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan, the "relatives of martyrs" (şehit yakınları), as they came to be known, began to organize themselves and used anti-PKK sentiments at every opportunity, most notably in the courtroom where some of the families sat while Öcalan was being tried. They internalize the nationalist and militarist structure with conventional subjectification as mothers in Turkey. Mothers' demonstrations become politically powerful because the women are performing their culturally appropriate role as "good" mothers and bearing witness to their own maternal suffering.

In Turkey, since martyrs sacrificed for the nation the lives given to them by their mothers, those mothers themselves promote propaganda from a supposedly apolitical perspective. They are framed as mothers speaking from the heart, out of love for their children, rather than from a political standpoint. Through maternal frames, mothers have been used to make powerful calls for nationalism by appealing to emotions to rally a thirst for revenge, a resignation to patriotic duty. A mother who had given life to her son is presented as a tragic heroine at his death. For the mothers of martyrs in Turkey, this sacrifice is celebrated twice, on the day their sons become a soldier and on the day they are martyred. The women are presented to the nation-state as appendages of their husbands and fathers and tend to be depicted in their

familial roles as wives and mothers. Suddenly, ordinary housewives have become women known by all. Mothers have gained a respected status as the mothers of martyrs.

In this sense, the focus on mothers of martyrs has increased,, and they are seen more often in the media, on television and in newspapers, in Turkey. A particularly common scene involves a mother crying at the funeral of her son, shouting that, if she had another son, she would send him to war, too, while cursing the PKK. There are many other expressions of this trend. Women speak in public, in emotional and personal terms, about their sons. Many mothers resent ready-made clichés of national language concerning the tragedy of their sons. In other words, women, as mothers, are taking their rightful place as mourners of their sons, and in doing so, they reproduce the entire discourse around death in nationalism. Funerals of martyrs are rituals that enact a linkage between mothering, death and sacrifice, and the nation in a way that publicly states and validates the mothers' moral and political standing. Attendees at funerals give a chorus of public, mournful recognition to maternal feelings of loss and also assuage that loss by symbolically supporting the mother. For example, mothers of martyrs demonstrated for the capital punishment of Abdullah Öcalan. One of those women was a nurse, Yıldız.[24]The public met her as a proud but pained woman, the widow of a petty officer martyred by the PKK. It is expected that these women, like all other female citizens of Turkey, will obey the prototype for the ideal woman figure, as determined by the elite men who shaped womanhood during the nation-building process (Kandiyoti, 1997). On the other hand, for those mothers, acceptance of their situation transforms their narratives of loss into narratives of resurgence. They experience a transition of self-identity, from "poor, repressed women," to "proud, patriotic women."

These women become strong. But strong in contrast to whom? First and foremost, they are strong in contrast to other women in other situations. As Turkish women, in contrast to Kurdish, Armenian, or Jewish women; as a married woman in contrast to single women; as a part of distinguished group in contrast to "ordinary" women; as a mother of a martyr in contrast to all other women; thus, they gain an

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[24] For more information, see
http://www.savaskarsitlari.org/arsiv.asp?ArsivTipID=1&ArsivAnaID=37079

ascendancy that could not be obtained in any other way. This ascendancy makes them powerful against men and other institutions. By implication, this shapes the relations of women with each other as much as it shapes relations between man and woman. Additionally, the practice and emotion of motherhood were transformed in a way that did not challenge the gendering of citizenship. Nationalism endowed the "mothers of martyrs" with the status of national icons and yet did not consider this particular form of national participation as grounds for equality of citizenship. Maternal sacrifice was categorized as belonging to the realm of the "natural." According to Aksu Bora (1998), women have gained the right of being citizens in relation to mothering. That is different from men's citizenship, which is realized in the public realm. Women become citizens in the private realm by being mothers. In that context, what determines women's citizenship has been, to a great extent, their function in reproduction. Turkish history has great parallels with Western history, as mentioned by Elisabeth Badinter (1992): the new responsibilities and duties attributed in the context of citizenship to women by virtue of being mothers. Ironically, although the metaphor of the "motherland" is strong in nationalist thought, real mothers and women are the ones who are exposed to inequality, second-class citizens who have few rights in the power structure of the nation-state. Such was the case with the cultural leaders of the new Republic, for whom "woman" was not a monolithic category. The ideal modern Turkish woman as the symbol of Republican values was explicitly distinguished from others. It is important to note here that the body of the modern Turkish woman not only serves as a basis for the operation of a nationalistic discourse, but is also produced (as sister, wife, and mother) by national discourse, as well.

To sum up, just as Chekhov shouted in his doctor's language so that his doctor could understand him on his deathbed, we need another language that will allow mothers to contribute their own voices to current events. Participation in the public sphere should extend beyond an individual's private sphere. So, as Ahıska (2006:21) said, I argue that it is necessary to have a policy in which the power of violence can be broken by the ones who have witnessed it. That is why, as much as we need to examine the outlook of some institutions for militarism and nationalism, we also need to better understand the experiments, emotions, and narratives of these

women in order to create more efficient feminist policies representing a new composition of private and public languages of the feminine and masculine voices and modes of being in today's nationalist discourse in Turkey. In that context, in the next chapter I will focus on the notion of martyrdom in relation to religion, nationalism, and motherhood, because nationalists' use of the mothers of martyrs relies on the general holiness of motherhood, which has its origins in religion.

CHAPTER 4

ROLE OF MARTYRDOM IN THE DISCOURSES of RELIGION, NATIONALISM AND MOTHERHOOD

As Peter Medawar claims, life and death is not totally scientific concepts. They are political concepts and they can be politicized with just a decision coming out of mouth (Cited in Agamben, 2001: 213). Observing the links between martyrdom and nationalism brings us closer to some of the most teleological and ambivalent uses of death in nationalist discourse. So what are the purposes of using of martyrdom? In order to have a common will in the present, it is needed to have common glories in the past. This means that shared suffering is more important than shared joy. When national memories are concerned, grieves are of more value than triumphs, for which they impose duties, and require a common effort. In insisting on notions like "sacrifice", "grief", or "shared suffering", it shows that they have special urgency in the framework of nation building. The devotion to their heroic memory is a significant means whereby communities-be political or religious- maintain their internal cohesion and control their social formation (Wood, 1993: 91-92).

As Paul Connerton (1999: 11-12) states, the control over and the regulation of social memory is not only a technical issue, but it's related to the legitimacy of the existing social order. All memories are individual. They can not be reduced to something. They disappear with individuals. However, social memory is not remindful, it is a conditioner event. Ideologies, discourses collect persuasive visual archives, representative scenes which can actuate expected emotions and thoughts for collective memory such as pictures available to be poster; smoke cloud after atom bomb, Martin Luther King speaking at statue of Lincoln, astronaut walking on the moon, funeral of a martyr etc. With the help of them, we can commemorate historical events. Advantage of creating a collective memory is to provide leaving its imprint on people's consciousness with the drama that those pictures illustrate. Those scenes and photos are used and showed over and over again in order to keep the effects of dramas alive.

All the photos and news about war are open to manipulation with the articles below or titles above. For example first years of Balkan wars, while Serbians and

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Croatians were at war, photos of the same children who were killed by bombarding a village were used by both Serbians and Croatians in their propagandas (Sontag, 2005:33). If you change the article below, death of children has easily an ability of being used over and over again. Pictures and scenes of dead, martyrs and civilians can be helpful to intensify the hostility against enemy. A scene or picture limning such a violent can easily cause adverse reactions. This can be a peace call or a nemesis. Perceptions of war by people who have not experienced the war are determined recently with those scene and pictures.

In this sense, focus on martyrs has raised and they have begun to be seen more on media, television and news paper in Turkey. The press has played the major role in "persuading" martyrs in their roles in the values of nationalism. We often face a scene that a mother crying in the funeral of her son shouts if she had a son, she would send him too while she is cursing PKK. Funerals of martyrs were rituals that enacted a linkage between images of death and war. Those provide fear, respect, admiration and adherence to the state and the army. With this kind of news, citizens can not perceive the images as the images of death, violence, pain and hatred. Those ordinary, weak citizens attach their consciousness to those and feel themselves strong as being part of a strong nation-state. In order to understand impact of martyrdom culture on mothers, in following pages, I will grasp, firstly, notion of martyrdom, then its place in religion and nationalism, finally, its impact on mothers of martyrs in Turkey.

4.1. Notion of Martyrdom:

Philosophers from Aristotle to Hobbes have declared that the tendency to make war is inherent to the human species. Individuals have died and been killed, in fact, millions of individuals in 20th century died from war, torture, accidents or etc. Some deaths are memorialized and some are identified as martyrs. This is a function of attribution that distinguishes certain individuals and ways of dying from others, which have been no less, significant but probably less forged in memory. The human mind struggles to put meaning on six million individuals, but can form from a symbolic individual. To die for a cause in itself can not be a measure of anything rather it is an accident or incident en route to a goal.

While there are many martyrs to be found in history, few are chosen to be representative of a given movement, belief system or people. Of those few, even fewer speak across cultural boundaries and become national in their reach. It is more common for the bloody details to be spelt out in detail, and for the audience to be brought up to the moment of collective guilt and sorrow through the ritual of narration of the endless suffering of the martyr.

The term martyr is officially recognized by national representatives. As Fouché claimed, the status of martyr appeared as one of the means to get recognition (Cited in, Valerie Rosoux, 2004: 110). Indeed, this concept appears to be much more dramatic than the usual notion of "victim." Here again it is noticeable that the quality of dead as "victim" or as "martyr" is not just a question of vocabulary. The conversion of a victim into a martyr is generally business of official representation. As Agamben said, the important thing is here: "This holly life, from the beginning, has a political character and is related with the land where power in rule is established" (Agamben, 2001: 135).

History affords many examples of the use of martyrdom as a propaganda and inspirational tool. Therefore the martyr himself becomes a living definition of the intrinsic nature of the nation for which he was willing to die. Some or all of the following uses can be made of the martyr's death: the strength of his belief as attested to by his willingness to die for his cause can inspire and consolidate the commitment of his followers or young generation to their common cause; the strength of his belief as thereby attested can motivate to action those who sympathized with the cause but are not yet participants; relating and reciting the details of his sufferings can allow his coreligionists to experience his trauma vicariously and thereby evoke a level of sympathy which can further animate the young generation; the extent of the oppression of the system as evidenced by the system's willingness to kill the martyr can radicalize the polarity between the righteousness of the state's cause and the injustice of that against which they struggle; annual commemoration of the martyr's death can serve to keep his sacrifice alive and present in the collective memory and thus help to keep alive the aims and goals of the state; his death can be used as a newsworthy event which can be reported to the outside world in an attempt to elicit sympathy and external support.

The martyr's defining role is most helpful when that particular belief system/nation is under attack within a given geographical location. He creates an example, a standard of conduct by which to judge other fellow believers. By demonstrating publicly that there is something in the subordinated or persecuted nation worth dying for, the value other believers place upon it is augmented, and that nation is highlighted. For example, on the day of 18th March, Martyrs Day, it is repeated by commanders as follows;

> If we are able to live independently on this land, we owe this to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and our martyrs. Our martyrs are alive in our hearts. They will stay there forever and ever as long as we live. We aim to make young generations remember under which conditions this nation, in which they live in peace, are founded and how much we owe this to our martyrs.[25]

In that sense, one can argue that crisis moments traumatize society or deeply divide society. In such a context, primary object of the martyrdom is to restore possible sense of self-esteem and a form of unity among the society; to gather all the segments of society around one central figure and to focus their attention on an unequivocally heroic fate; to unify society against the enemy, and his tragic martyrdom became the unifying narrative. Remembering martyrs is a shared icon of a common history. This stage of the martyrdom is of crucial importance, perhaps even more crucial than the actual suffering and martyrdom itself. Those stories that have become national are among the most moving and dramatic that humanity has produced and continue to inspire people, generation after generation. Stories of glorification, as Smith (1986) underlines, are tools mostly applied in building of a nation and to build or fill the collective memory since these records of memory invite people to take lessons from the deaths for the sake of future of nation. In this way the martyr is granted stature and nobility out of the mouths of his own persecutors and enemies. For example, it is mostly repeated at demonstrations against PKK and

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[25] In Turkish, "Bu topraklar üzerinde bağımsız olarak yaşıyorsak bunu Mustafa Kemal Atatürk'e ve şehitlerimize borçluyuz. Şehitlerimiz gönlümüzde yaşıyor. Bir ömür boyu bu isimler orada kalacak. Yeni nesillerin huzur içerisinde yaşadıkları bu vatanın ne şartlar altında kurulduğunu ve bunu da şehitlerimize borçlu olduğumuzu unutmamalarını hedefledik."

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terrorism in Turkey: "Martyrs do not die and our nation cannot be divided into parts."[26]

In this context, where does martyrdom as a religious concept stand in secular nationalism?

4.2. Relation between Concepts of "Nation" and "Martyr":

As it is indicated in chapter II, secularists nationalism may also, quite consistently, view religion as a desirable or even necessary support for personal ethics and, thus, for public order and well-being. They may hold the common idea that religion is necessary for the cultivation of the feelings, as distinct from reason. In fact, under certain circumstances, secularist styles and rhetoric may be highly religious as I showed in second chapter. Religion is a source of symbols, ideas and meanings that are used to elicit positive political behaviors from society. As Smith (1986: 262) claimed, in order to create heroic spirit (and heroes), religious values and norms can be used in nationalism as "cultural-ideological" myths. If nationalists cannot create heroic past or heroes, they will not have those deep cultural resources to fall back upon when internal conflicts and dissensions break out.

As it is discussed in second chapter, nationalism, after all, has emerged as an ideological movement and by secularism; many traditional myths and beliefs are re-shaped. In that sense, it is mostly a familiar event that concept like martyr is borrowed from religion. Myths of martyrs are vital both for territorial claims and for national solidarity. National heroes have been manipulated or invented. It is significant to have shared memories of great sacrifices and battle experiences for the formations of nations. Schöpflin (1997: 27) points out that "mythic and symbolic discourses can be employed to assert legitimacy and strengthen authority. They mobilize emotions and enthusiasm." In that point, it can be argued that basic principle of myth construction is that claims for high status and power on a presumed link with a hero, a deity. For example, Oguz Khan for Turks is important about symbolic link between all members of present generation and all its forebears. This link ensures a high degree of communal solidarity, since community is viewed as a

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[26] In Turkish, "Şehitler ölmez, vatan bölünmez."

network of interrelated groups. Likewise, Muslims have emphasized the role of Muhammad and his companions as Arab national heroes.

Heroes provide models of virtuous conduct, their deeds of faith and courage. Most crucial side of them, they were voluntary, in that way, successive generations can have heritage in which they can regenerate themselves. They symbolize liberation from the foreign repression, which released the power of the people for cultural innovation. It was a sacred duty because territories were parts of homeland and generations have to realize their true destiny to liberate homeland from their alien oppression. In this way, as it is explained in territorial nationalism in second chapter, the land becomes "our" land through the special heroic acts of moral and ritual conduct of a community and its heroes. In order to respect them [heroes], people, for ages, give their lives for the sake of their motherland (nation). However, how has martyrdom become related with secular nationalism meaning to die for the sake of nation since martyrdom is religious concept meaning to die for the sake of God?

Yet, with the development of Turkish nationalism as discussed above, the evolutionary, universalistic history that has explained its emergence in "the theatres of war" (Altınay, 2004: 29) was eventually replaced with a nationalist history based on a construction of Turkish culture starting in Central Asia. Contemporary uses of the term "military nation" are based on this move of turning a characteristic of contemporary armies into cultural/national characteristic. This fabricated glorious past was a panacea for Turkish pride wounded by the loss of empire. Moreover, citizens of the Republic had objective reasons to be proud. They were the heirs of a major world empire and had created a new state by rescuing their country from the victors of the First World War. It has been the basis of Turkish nationalist writing of history according to which Turks have formed many states and created many civilizations throughout history all owing to their military spirit. As Halil İnalcık points out:

> Turkish nation has preserved its military nation character from the beginnings of history today. If Turk is marching on the forefronts of world history, which is because of his unshakable national characteristics, military character, his grand military virtues and his ability to engage in total war for his rights and freedom. (İnalcık, 1964: 56)

As Altınay (2004: 30) points out, Turkish history, discussion of the Turkish military and national defense in official historiography starts with a narrative locates military service in Turkish culture. This discussion defines "civilization" through military power, revealing a deeply militarized sense of national history and national self. In short, it can be argued that Turkish history produced the myth of the military nation that established the citizen army of Turkish Republic as the basis of Turkish cultural/national character through out the history. Military service, an obligation set by nation state for its male citizens was turned into an "invented tradition" (Hobsbawm, 1983) that combines the realm of culture and politics in the body of the "military nation." Consequently, what are the implications of this notion? Altınay examines implications in four ways (2004: 30). First, the marriage of military service with an ahistorical sense of culture/nation has accompanied a distancing of military service from wars, fighting, and possible death such as martyrs. Secondly, it has placed military service outside the realm of history, making it immune to historical change. Third, if nation is "by its very nature" a military nation, then challenging compulsory military service would not be about discussing the nature of relationship between the state and its citizens; it would necessitate a challenge to the essential characteristic of Turkish culture/nation. Fourth, this formation leaves little room for an independent, civilian sphere in national politics and cultural practice. If every Turk is born a soldier, then all Turkish life goes on in uniforms, and when it is necessary, they should sacrifice their lives for the sake of their nation.

For example, a person who dies in battle for the cause of religion is called a *şehit*-martyr in Turkey. Now this symbol has been borrowed from religious vocabulary, and is used to describe a public duty. Moreover, title of Ghazi was given to most brave heroes of war in Ottoman Empire. Both of those terms have meanings in an Islamic struggle. The idea that national struggle was for Islam fought by Ottoman patriotic was so strong that when in October 1922, war ended, "most people believed that at the same time, sultanate could be abolished, and also, a constitutionalism having Islamic essence could be provided" (Ahmad, 1991: 6). Title of Ghazi was the most obvious legacy that nationalists willingly took over from Ottomans. Sultans of Ottoman Empire starting with Osman used this title and gave

more importance than sultanate (Ahmad, 2005: 26). First sultans ruled their armies in the battles and deserved to get this title. However, this title was used later by the sultans who had not been in battle arena. This title was given to them by Sheikh ul-lslam. Atatürk resisted the Greeks under Islamic colors and even received the Islamic title "Ghazi" for his efforts. Although Mustafa Kemal was supporter of secularism, he used this title until surname of Atatürk, fathers of Turks, was given in 1934. Even today, whenever, Turkish Army Force actuations, terms of ghazi or martyr are used.

In that sense, I should look at different meanings of martyrdom in religion in order to evaluate how the concept, itself, obtain the highest prestige for individuals' life that people can be manipulated to die for.

4.3. Notion of Martyrdom in Religion:

The theological preoccupation with suffering and sacrifice exists quite strongly in many of the world religions alive today. For example, a martyr is defined in all monotheistic religions. While the idea of martyrdom is clearly rooted in the Qur'an, it is possible that the term is translation of the Greek word "martyr". In an etymological coincidence, the words for "witness" and "martyr" are almost identical in Greek and Arabic. In Greek, a "witness" is martus, and "to witness" as well as "to be or became a martyr" is marturein (Bowersock, 1995: 19). For the Christian martyrs were those who witnessed by their manner of death to the reality of heaven and the inevitable victory of God. It is in Christianity that the themes of suffering and sacrificial martyrdom find their most complete and developed embodiment. Jesus' death on the cross is the saving event *par excellence,* for not only is all humanity redeemed and saved by this act, and not only is it the theological core of Christianity, but more Jesus' death and resurrection is often viewed as the key event of the entire history of God's universe. Martyrdom is not the monopoly of Islam. Islam introduces its own concept of martyrdom. The concept should be explained within the framework of Islam. In following part, first, I will intensely try to analyze the concept of martyrdom in Sunni Islam and then in Alevi thought.

4.3.1. The Concept of Martyrdom in Sunni Islam:

Martyrdom exists as an active and powerful force in the ideology of Islam and to understand why it has such powerful roots and such great symbolic weight, it's

necessary to examine the different levels at which the concept manifests itself. In Islam, martyrs are called "witnesses" because their souls witness paradise, their deaths are witnessed by angels, or their wounds will testify to their dignified status in the afterlife. To fully understand the religious and socio-political contexts of both types of martyrdom in Islam, one needs to examine their religious and historical grounds in the Qur'an and hadith.[27] According to Saloul, in Islamic tradition, there are two main forms of martyrdom: martyrdom in war and spiritual martyrdom of asceticism.[28]

The first, martyrdom in war, is the most obvious form: someone who dies in battle for his religious belief. In Islamic history, this form is the earliest form of martyrdom and it is primarily related to the concept of Jihad, often translated as "holy war".[29] The Qur'an refers to martyrdom in war and the rewards of martyrs in many places.

> And say not of those who are slain in the Way of God: 'They are dead.' Nay, they are living, though you perceive it not. Think not of those who are slain in God's way as dead. Nay they live, finding their sustenance in the Presence of their Lord....the (Martyrs) glory in the fact that on them is no fear, nor have they (cause to) grieve. They rejoice in the Grace and the Bounty from Allah (Qur'an, 3:169-71)

There are different explanations describing how Muslims first became aware of what it meant to be a martyr in war. According to one explanation, these verses

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[27] Hadith is the documentation of Prophet Mohammed's statements and actions which were preserved from original oral transmissions. Hadith exists in a variety of degrees of reliability. While most of Hadith are accurate, some may have been fabricated, whether due to sincere misunderstandings or by devious intent. Since this project examines the religious thought of believers and not historical events, the veracity of hadith will not be an issue: a hadith reflects belief whether transmitted by a careful historian or consciously manufactured to promote an agenda. In this paper I will support my argument by using Hadith from Sahih Al-Bukhari, which is considered by the majority of Muslims as an accurate and valid collection of Hadith. Quotations from Sahih Al-Bukhari taken from the internet: Link name "Hadith Bukhari (English Translation)"; URL http://www.sacred-texts.com/isl/bukhari/index.htm.

[28] Available at
http://home.medewerker.uva.nl/i.a.m.saloul/bestanden/Martyrdom,%20gender%20and%20cultural%20identity.pdf

[29] Some writers claims that while the Qur'an frequently refers to war, the words used for war are "harb" and ""qital". Translating Jihad as "holy war" would be incorrect in this context, for the literal translation of holy war "harb muqaddasa", is not to be found in either the Qur'an or hadith (Montgomery, 1976: 155).

were revealed to Muhammad on the occasion of the battle of Badr, as a response to questions by Muhammad's companions concerning the lot of those who had fallen in the battle.[30] Such a position does not only take its strength from the Qur'an, but it is also supported by many hadith that elaborate further on martyrdom such as the following two examples:

> Somebody asked, O Allah's Apostle! Who is the best among the people? Allah's Apostle replied: A believer who strives his utmost in Allah's Cause with his life and property. They asked who is next. He replied: A believer who stays in one of the mountain paths worshipping Allah and leaving the people secure from his mischief. (Sahih Al-Bukhari 4.52.45)

> Allah's Apostle said, By Him in Whose Hands my soul is! Whoever is wounded in Allah's Cause...and Allah knows well who gets wounded in His Cause...will come on the Day of Resurrection with his wound having the color of blood but the scent of musk. (Sahih Al-Bukhari 4.52.59)

As these two hadith declare, the martyr is highly positioned in Islamic tradition. Thus battlefield martyrs are put in a special category as "martyrs in this world and the next" and are honored with special burial rites. The martyr's body, in most circumstances, is not washed; he is to be buried in the clothes in which he was killed. Some hold that no prayers over the martyr are necessary since he is automatically purified from sin. The lesser categories of martyrs are "martyrs of the next world" meaning, chiefly, that they are not eligible for special burial rites but must be satisfied with divine approbation and the rewards of paradise (Berenbaum and Firesone, 2004: 140).

The second form of martyrdom is the spiritual martyrdom of asceticism. Spiritual martyrdom refers to a martyr who is killed for his/her faith or murdered while in the service of God, but who does not necessarily die in battle.[31] According to Kohlberg, the category of martyrs was extended greatly after the decrease in the number of battlefield martyrs following early conquests (Cited in Berenbaum and

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[30] The battle of Badr (in the year 2 A.H. / 624 A.D.), is the first military encounter between Muslims and unbelievers in Arabia.

[31] A fuller presentation of these themes can be found in Jonah Winters, "Martyrdom in Jihad" (unpublished paper; University of Toronto, 1997). Accessed from the internet: Link name "Martyrdom in Jihad"; URL http://bahai-library.com/personal/jw/my.papers/jihad.html.

Firesone, 2004: 141). The category of martyr was enlarged to include many kinds of death, including drowning, pleurisy, plague, or diarrhea. According to other traditions martyrs also include those who die in childbirth, those who die defending their property, those who are eaten by lions, and those who die of seasickness. The trend culminated in the transference of the value of martyrdom to other religious acts, so that death was no longer the most important prerequisite. Within this theological basis, martyrdom is portrayed as the highest privilege of Islam that contains two main sources of belief. While the first emphasizes the importance of Jihad and its different forms and meanings, the second describes the glory of the martyrdom act. For example,

> The Apostle of Allah...said: If anyone fights in Allah's path...Paradise will be assured for him. If anyone sincerely asks Allah for being killed and then dies or is killed, there will be a reward of a martyr for him....If anyone is wounded in Allah's path, or suffers a misfortune, it will come on the Day of resurrection as copious as possible, its color saffron, and its odour musk; and if anyone suffers from ulcers while in Allah's path, he will have on him the stamp of the martyrs.[32]

Although, it was not expected to compare Sunni mothers and Alevi mothers at the beginning of the research, but, after interviews, the picture I had showed that almost half of my interviewees are Alevi. As a result of this, I had to search literature about Alevis and then I found out that death has a different meaning in Alevi thought in contrast to Sunni belief. So in following pages, I will try to grasp notion of death in Alevi thought in order to figure out impact of martyrdom on Alevi mothers.

4.3.2. Phenomenon of Death in Alevi Thought:

According to Aktaş (1999), there are two understanding about death in Alevi thought. First one is biological death called as "Hakk'a yürümek." Second one is "death at confession (ikrar) ceremony."

For Aktaş (1999), first kind of death is known as "to die before death" and expressed as "to die". Death at confession ceremony is a volitional death. For this level, individual should voluntary give up his material or spiritual demands. By this way, he believes that his soul will come into existence in a sense (mana) world. For Alevi thought, after this ceremony, it is believed that individual gets re-born and it is called "second birth." In other words, with this ceremony, they confess before the

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[32] Available at Sunan Abu Dawud;
http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/fundamentals/hadithsunnah/abudawud.

real and last confession time, death. In other words, it is expected that people get the chance to regret for a lot of things happened during their lives before they face with death.

Secondly, a phenomenon of death, which is perceived as a natural end of human beings, is a crucial phenomenon for both individuals and societies. When we scrutinize thoughts of individuals about death from the beginning of human beings to now, the unchanged idea is that death symbolizes an "end". For Alevis in Turkey, first of all, death means switching of soul from visible world to invisible world. By this way, it is regarded as a new start. Then, soul of human beings will pursue its existing in different environment after leaving its body. In that case, word of death is not used among Alevis. Instead of that, it is used such as *Hakk'a yürümek*[33], reaching to reality, form shifting, *sır olmak*. İsmail Kaplan elucidates *Hakk'a yürümek* in that way: "Body gets old, exhausted or damaged. In that way, it gets the form that cannot have the capacity to carry on *can*[34] (life). In that case, body (form) is left. Life leaving its form goes back to God as it came from Him. In other words, death/dying are accepted as reaching to God or as rejoining its essence. (Aktaş, 2005) For Alevis, God gives all humans as a part of Himself. That's why, human being having God essence reaches to God with his death. He completes with Him. On the contrary to Sunni belief, Alevism has a different afterlife belief. Alevis do not believe in heaven, hell, Azrail or other fears in Sunni belief.

In that context, it can be said that the notion of martyrdom is the only mechanism through which these mothers can deal with events after the loss of their sons and it is these experiences, witnessed second hand, that mothers partly use martyrdom to explain what they have lived. Changes in socializing agents can help us to understand the contemporary nature of praxism, but this awareness does not explain why mothers are motivated to pursue the contextual factors involved in the

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[33] For more information look at
http://www.hbektas.gazi.edu.tr/portal/html/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=780#_edn1

[34] The belief in Sunni God is based on fear, but the Alevi base their faith in love, a love which is within all people and that can be found within them. They illustrate this by saying that in the beginning; God created the world, and gave creatures life (can). However, he looked at his work and felt that there was nothing which truly reflected His Being. Accordingly, he gave all humans as a part of Himself. Now, when they pray together in cem, they do through collective worship to become part of God (Shankland, 2003: 20).

process. In order to comprehend reasons of this motivation, we should scrutinize the function of religion on motherhood for mothers of martyrs in Turkey. Apart from the idea of martyrdom in Alevi and Sunni thought, does being Alevi or Sunni woman affect those mothers' points of view about the society or politics? Before answering this question, we should look at the woman issue in Alevi and Sunni thought first.

4. 4. Relation Between Martyrdom and Motherhood:

Since hundred even thousand years, status of women in society has been discussed, talked and produced theories about them. There are countless myths, legends on pages of history. These discussions started at the moment of creation of human being still go on and will go on. Every belief system has a definition about existence of women. For example, in the mythology of Iron Age, woman was identified with holiness of underground and underground was symbolized with a woman's uterus. Relation between woman's fertility and plentifulness of nature was established because of this, woman was discussed as major issue of religious rituals.

As religions, in doing so, the national movement locate mothers' reproductive abilities in a national political context. While nationalist discourse celebrate them as icons of the nation, they are celebrated their reproductive potential. As far as I understood from Lieblich (2001), in the discourse of loss of the loved one, the primordial, biological, mother-son relationship, which is aimed at giving life and protection from harm, is confronted with nationalism. In Turkey, policy makers or commanders mostly focus on this relationship by referencing significance of motherhood in religion that I will grasp in following pages.

4.4.1. Status of Woman in Sunni Islam:

The issue of woman in Sunni Islam is highly controversial. The issue of the role of women in Islam is an extremely sensitive one today both in the Muslim world and in the world of Western scholarship. Rather than attempting any kind of general evaluation of the circumstances, then, I will try to present as objectively as possible a brief look at what the actual situation for women in Islam has been. After that we

may be in a better position to determine some of the reasons why efforts to impose the concerns and formulations of mothers of martyrs on nationalist scene are viewed.

From the Muslim perspective, Islam provides women a position of honor and respect, with clearly stated rights and obligations. Islam acknowledges and emphasizes the importance of the woman's role in her family and society as a mother, a mother whose function can not be substituted by any others. Many proverbs and sayings about motherhood in verses from Qur'an that are narrated throughout the Islamic world, and the sermons and speeches that, are delivered in places of worship and religious gatherings, which attest to the supreme importance of motherhood and the devotion mothers are due hadiths (sayings). It is said that among the greatest gifts God has blessed womankind with is the motherhood. Moreover, the Qur'an has a special recommendation for the good treatment of mothers: "And we have enjoined upon man (to be good) to his parents: His mother bears him in weakness upon weakness..." (Qur'an 31:14). A woman becomes complete when she becomes a mother. Enjoying her power of creativity and grade of superiority over man, she experiences those precious feelings and senses, which nature gives only to woman. The mother has been given greater priority as far as kindness is concerned. The role of mother in Islam is so majestic and noble that women in general and mother in particular have been called the "School of the Nation" (Seyyid, 1988: 13). The first seeds of knowledge and the first knowledge of God are planted and developed at home under the guidance and loving care of the mother (Seyyid, 1988: 25). It is a role God has gifted her with the capabilities to accomplish, the sense of giving and ability to inspire a sense of belonging.

As the verse of the Qur'an indicates, thankfulness to parents, especially to mothers, is linked with thankfulness to Allah, and a failure in either of these respects is indeed a major failure in one's religious duties. Once Hakim bin Hizam came to the Prophet Mohammed and asked:

> Who is most deserving of my devotion? The Prophet replied:
> "Your mother." The man asked him: "Then who?' The Prophet replied:
> "Your mother." The man asked him: "Then who?" The Prophet replied:
> "Your mother." The man asked: "Then who?" The Prophet replied: "Your
> father." (İlhan, 2005: 135)

> One of the companions, Muawiya Ibn Jahama came to the Prophet hoping to go out with him on *Jihad* (holy war). The Prophet asked him if his mother was still alive. "Yes" he answered. The Prophet then said: "Go back to her and make your Jihad together." The man repeated the question twice, and when he came to ask a third time the Prophet said to him: "Woe unto you. Sit at her feet and stay there, for that is where you will find paradise." (İlhan, 2005: 142)

In another hadith, the Prophet has said: "Paradise lies at the feet of mothers" (Seyyid, 1988: 13). Apart from those hadiths and verses from Qur'an, there are some examples in stories telling about ideal mothers which I've grown up with. There is the mother of Musa, whom God inspired to save her son from Pharaoh's massacre of the first born sons of the Children of Israel. Furthermore the mother of the Messiah, Issa ibn Maryam, the Virgin, chosen amongst women, peace be upon them. Moreover the mother of Muhammad, the Lady of all mothers, Amina bin Wahab, the flower of Quraish, mother of the Hashimite orphan, the chosen of God, the last of his messengers, the Seal of the prophets. The examples above should suffice to restore the position of women in religious history both as regards her maternal function as mother. She is loving, caring and patient: A woman who is loving and caring to her husband, and gives births to his children.

As we see in these examples, motherhood, relation with mother and children are glorified in Sunni Islam. In that sense Kavuncu points out that:

> Why are Muslim men afraid of mindful and aware women? Because it is easy to oppress women who are disconnected out of world, only busy with housework. It is more attractive to have a woman consenting everything who is easygoing like sleepy beauty. (Cited in Göle, 2004: 164)

> Place of Turk woman in religion is not suitable for civilized, free, social individual. She is not even a child. 15 year age old of a child is more free, human and honorable than 40 year age old mother. Because father cannot intervene in worships, goodness or badness of 15 year age old child, but can beat his wife who does not worship regularly. (Cited in Bulut; 1999:210)

As it is seen in quotations, mothers are constructed as passive individuals although the grief they have experienced can give the right to ask for why since due to the citizen-state relation, its state duty to protect its citizen in peace and war. They cannot obtain collective identity and consciousness in politics. Consequently, they

cannot be considered to have an identity apart from being a wife of a man and a mother of a child. After examining status of mother in Sunni Islam, I should examine woman in Alevi thought whether Alevism has a different impact on identity construction of these women or on their expressions despite the fact that the grief they experienced is the same as Sunni mothers.

4.4.2. Woman in Alevi Thought:

This part deals with the social positions of the woman both in Alevism and Alevis in social plane. By making a distinction between Alevism and Alevis, the study tries to get the discourse of woman in Alevi doctrine. In addition the study points to the gap between the discourse and social reality concerning the social positions of woman in Alevis.

As Uyanık (http://www.hbektas.gazi.edu.tr/portal/html/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=524) claimed, first problem we face when we take Alevism and woman together to analyze them sociologically is the fact that contents for concepts Alevism and Alevis are not the same. While Alevism is a belief system, is a name of harmonious values as a whole, the Alevis is social reality in this belief and values system in social level. The gap between any religion, belief system or ideology and its supporters or believers can be seen. When we are talking about Alevism and Alevis, this gap can be reduced or enlarged due to time or place, but never disappears. Because of that, it is not the same problem; women in Alevism and women in Alevis. However, they are different appearing of the same problem. Yet social role sharing and constructing of gender shown in discourse of woman in Alevi doctrine cannot be harmonious with Alevi social reality. In following pages, first of all, I will try to drawn a profile of women in Alevism by examining women in Alevism as a belief and value system.

Every belief system has different remarks about world and afterlife. These different remarks shape outlook of individuals in their community and religious hierarchy. Either they classify individuals according to their gender or they give meaning to them due to their skills since they believe that they are sexless in God level. This is not only different from religion to religion but also it has differences in

the same religion between different sects. The most interesting example of this can be seen in Turkey, today between Alevism and Sunni belief. According to Sunni belief, gender discrimination is pretty obvious. Moreover, it has patriarchal understanding of society. In Alevism, members of community are not classified due to gender but, they appreciate people due to their skills and define their status in religious hierarchy due to this. For that reason, Alevis worship women and men together in *Cem*[35] ceremony (Melikoff, 1999: 35-89). Furthermore, there is respect to women saints in Alevism. In Alevism, it is because of the same reason to have respect to wife of Prophet Ali, Fatma. Women are accepted some how living representatives of Fatma[36] mother.

We face severe criticism of inequality between man and woman due to glorification of woman in Alevi doctrine. In this doctrine, it is a repeated principle that there is not gender discrimination and they give meaning to individual just because of being human. In Alevism, every human being is accepted as *can* and has equal rights and responsibilities without considering whether it is man or woman in the society (Hacı Bektaş Belediyesi Yayınları, 2004: 28). In Alevism, woman is the world, is the one giving birth to world. The creator created her. That's why, in Alevism, man and woman stand side by side in every part of life. They participate in *Cem* ceremony at which both men and women worship together.

As far as I concerned from this research, Alevis had less traditional gender role expectations than Sunnis. It seems that the higher status and freedom Alevi women enjoy in their families when compared to traditional Sunni women. Free from the control of the senior members of their extended families in the village and the

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[35] The principal Alevi ceremony is the cem which celebrates several things at once: its core rituals symbolize the martyrdom of Hüseyin at the Kerbela (Shankland, 2003: 19).

[36] Writing deals with Fatima's devotion, sense of responsibility, and sacrifice to her father and later to her husband. She is described as a devoted daughter and wife who suffers hardship, deprivation, and extreme poverty throughout most of her life without ever complaining or withdrawing her support from the two men in her life. No amount of sorrow or humiliation sways her from her path of righteousness. Neither her father's death nor her husband's betrayal by the Prophet's Companions in caliphate decision causes her to give up her struggle for justice (Ali's right) or fight against tyranny (that of Ali's enemies). Fatima's role as a devoted, hard-working wife to Ali and a mother to their children (Hasan, Hosain, and Zainab) is regarded as the exemplification of the ideal Muslim woman. In short, the two roles of Fatima, a devoted self-sacrificing wife and mother attending to her family's needs are glorified.

village community itself, Alevi women have some autonomy and power in their nuclear families. On the other hand, in conservative religious Sunni families, women's interaction with the public sphere is curbed and their movement is restricted within the boundaries of the immediate neighborhood, and sometimes inside the house. This isolation of women from wider society causes their powerlessness and helps reproduce men's domination in the family.

After brief summary of understanding women in Alevism, now, I will try to grasp women in Alevis by examples from rituals among Alevis. It does not mean that there is absolute equality between men and women in Alevism in social relations since they give more importance to women than Sunnis. According to belief, *dede*[37] is accepted that he should come from the ancestors of Prophet Ali, ergo Prophet Mohammed. The primary criterion of being dede is to be man (being literate, having representative morality in society, etc) (Hacı Bektaş Belediyesi Yayınları, 2004). Although, wife of dede is respected different from other women as a mother, the biggest position, in order to continue the social order, is closed to women. This can be seen as an exception for principle of equality between women and men. For some writers, this situation reflects the patriarchal character of Alevi society (Çakır, 1998).

In cem ceremony, dede chooses people to do other duties apart from dede position such as guide, zakir, propeller, goldfinch (saka) among men. Women who participate with men in cem ceremony, deal with kitchen works such as cooking *lokma* (dish eaten during cem ceremony) that is prepared by traditionally women whether Sunni or Alevi in Turkish society (Shankland, 2003: 83). Varhoff claims that "it is especially emphasized in Alevism that status of women is very high and there is equality between men and women and glorification of woman. However, these are not true." Varhoff (1999: 257) says that in religious rituals, it is claimed there is so called glorification of woman in Alevism, but he adds "they [rituals] are shaped due not to let women ascend. There is sexist division of labor in Cems. Women are entrusted as cook, sweeper. But they never can be zakir or guide. When dede reached the God, he is replaced with a man not a woman." These results show us that as it is generally seen in Turkish society, Alevi women have problems in their

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[37] The dede are rightly regarded as one of the keys to Alevi society: they are at one its focus, its teachers, temporal judges and links to their religious heritage. (Shankland, 2003: 19).

own social sphere caused by patriarchal understanding. Although Alevi women are freer in clothing, relation with opposite sex, etc than other women, this does not mean that they do have a perfect life (Uyanık, http://www.hbektas.gazi.edu.tr/portal/html/modules.php?name=News&file=article& sid=524).

In conclusion, despite the variations in the degree of power and autonomy of the women in Alevi thought, Alevi or Sunni mothers in this study, they all function within the framework of "classic patriarchy" (Kandiyoti, 1988). Even the women in organizations do not question men's superiority. It can be claimed that religion strengthens the patriarchal structure of the society since in Sunni thought, women depend on men. As it is seen in quotations from Qur'an, women are valuable when they become mothers. On the other hand, in contrast to Sunni belief, Alevi thought provides more freedom and equality for women. However, it cannot be separated from the conditions where Alevi thought is experienced. As it is discussed, it is different what is told and what is experienced by individuals. Although Alevi thought behaves equal to both men and women, in practice, it is unavoidable that Alevis cannot get rid of patriarchal structure in Turkey. Moreover, religious/nationalist significance of motherhood for Sunni and Alevi mothers is doubled when they become mothers of martyrs. A transformation is lived from ordinary mothers to mothers of martyrs. However, this transformation is ambivalent. On the one hand, martyrdom increases these mothers' status in society both in nationalist and religious way. On the other hand, this new motherhood is curtailed by religion and nationalism because being mothers of martyrs bring new responsibilities in which these mothers have lost the subjectivity of the ordinary motherhood.

In that sense, when those women come into public sphere with their motherhood identity, they do not question unequal woman-man power relations based on religion and nationalism. They cannot transform their objective position to subjective position. They depend on being wife of a man and mother of a son. Glorification of motherhood prevents those women to participate in public sphere as collective actors although those mothers, especially mothers of martyrs, have the chance of shaping politics by inspiring from their own experiences and lives. As Olgun and Yüksel said, for parents, the death of their grown up son is the hardest

loss from which to recover. However, they claim effects of mourning are not limited with parents' emotional worlds. It affects their social relations, too (Olgun and Yüksel: 2001: 41). Almost twenty years of war in Turkey reflects as a trauma to the lives of mothers who lost their sons in the war. Politics of war politicize women, or rather, make them the "tools" or the "victims" of violence politics. However, this "politicization" that is constructed over motherhood prevents them from being active effective political subjects.

In that context, in next two chapters, I will focus on narratives of mothers of martyrs I interviewed under two titles. First of all, I will analyze interviewees according to understanding of those mothers' nationalism, martyrdom, and politics. Secondly, I will focus on identification of those mothers after martyrdom of their sons as a mother of martyr.

CHAPTER 5

"A MOTHER OF A MARTYR" AS A RECONSTRUCTED IDENTITY

"The story of our life, in the end, is not our life. It is our story."

Americano (2005)

As Zisook remarks, "Mourning experience, the loss of the loved one because of death, is a universal phenomenon that most people deal with for once or more in their life time" (Cited in Olgun and Yüksel, 2001) This painful loss affects both the individual's emotional world and social functions. In that sense, mothers, especially mothers of martyrs, are the most popular icons of nationalist discourse, widely portrayed in the media. However, their voices have not been heard. That is why it is important to focus on the mothers' narratives to show how nationalist discourse builds "mother of martyr" as a social category, not as a social actor.

In this context, as Hall underlines, identities are constructed by different discourses, practices, and positions that intersect with each other and are antagonistic (Hall, 1996: 4). Such theories of subjectivity reject the humanist notion of a unified, fixed self that has a stable, essential core, and instead proposes the self as a site of disunity and conflict that is always in process and constructed within power relations (Weedon, 1997). The social structures and processes that shape our subjectivities are situated within discursive fields where language, social institutions, subjectivity, and power exist, intersect, and produce competing ways of giving meaning to and constructing subjectivity (De Lauretis, 1986; Weedon, 1997). Identities emerge in the midst of social relations, as constructivists argue (Cornell and Hartman, 1997: 81).

In this vein, answers for the questions of "Who are you?" or "Would you introduce yourself?" are about one's perception of identity. It is about how you introduce yourself to someone and how you feel about yourself. In other words, perception of identity includes both "given" characteristics and an "essence," and it also has socially constructed characteristics. As Harold R. Isaacs mentions in his book, *Idols of Tribe*, identity includes several features: common descent, shared history, and religion (Isaacs, 1989: 38). Identity may originate from either assignment by others or assertion by self. Whatever criteria are used to distinguish

one's identity from other identities, the question is whether it is derived from primordial attachments or is socially constructed. Consequently, in this chapter I will focus on mothers' narratives in order to understand how the loss of a loved one shapes these mothers' self-identity and their perception of motherhood after martyrdom.

5.1. How the Loss of A Son Shapes the Perceptions of Self-Identity of Mothers and Fathers:

There is no doubt that bereaved mothers (and other family members) are, like their sons, victims of a tragedy. Is their loss any different because their sons were killed in a war rather than by disease or a car accident? In what way is this tragedy a social phenomenon as well as a personal experience? After establishing the field of meanings constituted by the multiple discourses of death, I turned to a second question: What are the social effects of their sons' martyrdom on the women as mothers? Any study of how people respond to death must also be a study of how they create their lives. Thus, a study of laments must include an inquiry into how the social practices of bereavement may contribute to maintaining a particular form of social life.

As I mentioned before, I do not attempt to grasp the "real life" in in-depth interviews, but rather to focus on how this life is interpreted by these mothers. Geertz (Cited in Bora, 1998: 83) defines culture as "meaning patterns which are told from generation to generation and symbolic structures that explain attitudes and information of individuals about life." As Bora (1998:84) points out, the "culture of motherhood" can be considered as an ideological interpretation. In this context, nationalist discourses interact with political institutions and manipulate social and cultural practices to imprint gendered identities on embodied subjects, attempting to make them malleable within the power struggles of the nation-building or nation-defending process. I aim to demonstrate the interaction of gendered discourses with normative notions of race and religion in the service and reproduction of the national idea. For that reason, I attempt to learn about these mothers' understanding of being a mother of martyr while beginning to ask them about "who they are."

At first, mothers of martyrs perceived the question of "who they are" as strange and unfamiliar. After I changed the structure of the question and asked them for information about themselves, they talked about their sons and their families. For example, Ayşe (57, housewife, lost her son 13 years ago) says:

> Well, I am a mother of a martyr, and a housewife. Well, how do I introduce myself? I am a mother who raises her children and sends them to school for years.

> İşte şehit annesiyim, ev hanımıyım. Nasıl tanıtayım işte yıllardır çocuklarını okutan büyüten bir anne.

Another mother, Meryem (45, housewife, lost her son 14 years ago) says:

> I am a mother of a martyr. (…) Well, I got married when I was young. I became a mother at the age of sixteen. Then, I had problems with my husband. I had problems with the father of my children. (…) As of now, I am a mother of four children.

> Şehit annesiyim. (…) Ben şimdi çok küçük yaşlarda evlendim. Ben 16 yaşında anne oldum ben. Derken babamızla aramızda, çocuklarımın babasıyla aramızda olan sorunlar yaşadım. (…)Bu ana kadar 4 çocuk anası oldum.

Moreover, Ayşe Naciye (63, member of the Association of Families of Martyrs, lost her son 15 years ago) says:

> I am a mother of a martyr.

> Ben şehit Erkan'ın annesiyim.

As can be seen in the above quotations, each woman, first of all, defined herself within familial networks. These narratives show that those mothers perceive themselves not as independent individuals, but rather as a part of a family. As explained in Chapter III, those mothers represent the conventional roles of woman. They remain loyal to conventional family bonds as altruistic mothers who care for their sons and families before themselves, before their own needs and interests. They do not consider themselves as individuals. They are, first of all, someone's mothers. It is true that they have experienced important changes in their lives and lifestyles after their sons' martyrdoms. However, they maintain the patriarchal bonds within conventional family structure. On the other hand, for fathers of martyrs, the question of "who they are" is not an unexpected question. Furthermore, their answers include more personal information, in contrast to mothers' answers. Although they also

define themselves in familial bonds, they give more priority to personal information. For example, Hamit (57, Second Chairman of the Association of Families of Martyrs, lost his son 10 years ago) defines himself:

> My name is Hamit, a father of a martyr. I was born in 1950. I am from Sivas/Zara. I am retired. I have a son and a daughter.

> Adım Hamit, şehit babasıyım. 1950 doğumluyum. Sivas Zaralıyım. Kendim emekliyim. Bir oğlum ve bir kızım var.

Another father, Şükrü (65, Chairman of the Association of Families of Martyrs, lost his son 13 years ago) says:

> My name is Şükrü. I am Chairman of the Association of Families of Martyrs

> İsmim Şükrü. Şehit aileleri derneğinin başkanıyım.

Moreover, Kemal (55, General Secretary of Association of Families of Martyrs, lost his son 15 years ago) says:

> My name is Kemal. I was born in Artvin/Arhavi. I was born on 24 December 1953. I had three sons. My first son was also an associate officer in the same place, in the same city. Both of them went to the army voluntarily. First one was discharged and came back. Mehmet had almost 40 days to be discharged. Then, he could not come. He was martyred.

> İsmim Kemal. Artvin/Arhavi doğumluyum. 24 Aralık 1953'de doğdum. 3 oğlum vardı. Birinci oğlum da yedek subaylığını aynı ilçede yapmıştı. 2'si de gönüllü gittiler. O terhis oldu geldi. Mehmet'in de 40 günü falan vardı terhisine. Yedek subaylar 12 ay yaparlar herhalde. Efendim işte o gelemedi. Şehit oldu.

The quoted fathers are all members of the Association of Families of Martyrs. All of them are retired civil servants. However, when asked who they are, they tend to speak about themselves. It is perceived that fathers consider their self-identity to extend beyond their familial bonds. Moreover, they are aware that the answer to a question about their identity depends on their personal characteristics.

Another difference between the fathers and the mothers is that many mothers failed to give their names in their introductions. On the other hand, almost all fathers provided their names first. They knew that I knew their names; however, they still included their names first in their introductions.Mothers called themselves "mothers of martyrs" before offering their names, although they knew I had come to ask them about themselves. So then what does it mean to be the "mother of a martyr"?

5.2. What Does It Mean To Be "A Mother of a Martyr"?

In this section, my aim is not to give a clear definition of what a "mother of a martyr" is or not; rather I want to provide a picture of what it means to be such a mother, by the actions and practices of the mothers themselves. I argue that those mothers' identities are constructed through nationalist discourse and religion, as Hall claims that each subject position is a reflection of a discursive practice. Mothers of martyrs are constructed in accordance with conventional gender roles, and the structure demands that they apply those roles in being a mother of a martyr. Giving meanings, by nationalist and religious discourse, to death by martyrdom transforms those mothers as "mothers of martyrs" and endows them with a special status both in society and in religion.

First, in the discourse of nationalism or the recreation of an "imagined community," it is crucial to build national consciousness. The transference of personal motives and meanings to public and political symbols contributes to an understanding and explanation of a martyr's death. Before, they were only "ordinary" housewives, but with their sons' martyrdom, they have become "mothers of the nation," known by all and respected by statesmen and commanders. They have found themselves in new roles and new subject positions. As a result of this, these mothers answer the question above by stating, "I'm a mother of a martyr." First and for most, the factor defining their identities is that they are a mother of a martyr.

As indicated above, while martyrdom sanctifies and glorifies the martyr in social and religious realms, it also provides prestige for the relatives of martyrs, especially for their mothers. When I began to look carefully at the ways people talked about death, the crucial role of one element - religious faith - became apparent. Like the discourse of honor, religious discourse builds itself on lamentation. Faith in God has to be seen, for men and women, as another moral register in which to read people's practices. This construction of religion's place has two consequences. First, it enables mournfulness to become a special statement about the meaning of death. When women lament and wail, they are accepting God's will. Second, this configuration makes people's responses to death relevant to their social standing. This is where the gendering of the discourses of death becomes significant. Like the code of honor, religious faith provides for mothers of martyrs a principle of

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social differentiation, a standard by which people can be ranked. They benefit from these principles. Through such enactments of piety they offset some of the negative effects of their inability (because of their economic dependence).

In that sense, martyrdom, as it is discussed above, is a sanctified and exalted event in the eyes of religion. It is believed that both the martyr and his family will be comfortable in the afterlife. They will be rewarded by God. This is a way to cope with the loss of a son: to achieve something sanctified, special, and prestigious in religion. Mothers own this prestige obtained by their sons' death after martyrdom. By making these mothers comfortable, it also provides them socially important status. Before, these mothers were only ordinary housewives; after martyrdom, they were recognized and remembered by important statesmen, politicians, and commanders. Prestige obtained by martyrdom is not limited to religion. It also has a social side. "Dying for the sake of the nation" is the highest status that can be obtained by those soldiers. Dying for the sake of the nation, providing an important service for society, assures this respected status for the martyr and his family. This newly obtained social and religious prestige makes up for the loss of family, especially for mothers. In this way, life after martyrdom becomes more bearable.

In light of this understanding of martyrdom, why are Alevi mothers affected by the idea of martyrdom, defining themselves as mothers of martyrs, when they do not believe in an afterlife like Sunni mothers do? There are, I think, two major reasons for this. First, like Sunni mothers, Alevi mothers must deal with the sudden loss of their beloved sons. This death is seen as pointless, because those mothers were waiting for their sons to return home at the end of their military service. The situation is especially tragic because it usually involves a young man of about twenty. It is perhaps the suddenness of these deaths that makes it so terrible at first, because without any logical reason or warning, a mother has lost her son. Mothers, whether Alevi or Sunni, claim that this pain cannot be understood by one who has not experienced it. The only way to cope with the pain is by glorifying the death in an attempt to give meaning and prestige to the martyrdom. The mothers' narratives present various ways to make sense of a senseless death. As I will explain further in the next chapter, Alevi mothers give meaning to this sudden death not by religion, as Sunni mothers do, but rather by nationalism, emphasizing that their sons died for the

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sake of the nation. Alevi mothers do not place so much importance religious benefits of martyrdom, such as the son and his family being rewarded in heaven, because they do not perceive death as an end, as explained in a previous chapter. It is easily seen in the narratives of Alevi mothers that they call themselves as "mothers of martyrs" because their sons died protecting the nation; in nationalist discourse, such a man is called a "martyr."

Second, rituals related to death can vary among Alevis depending on whether they live in the city or the country, or due to their level of education. Because Alevi doctrine is based on oral, rather than written, history, and lacks "certain rules," as in other faiths, due to differences between city life and country life, and regional demographics, it can be said that Alevis develop different rituals and beliefs about death. Most importantly, when they migrate to the cities, Alevi people have to apply to the municipality for their funeral or death rituals, because Alevi houses of gathering (*cemevi)* are not officially accepted as responsible for such work, not being officially recognized as places of worship. Therefore, the tradition of mosques and imams has started to enter Alevi practice, though not an original part of Alevi doctrine. Secularization did not, however, bode the end of the widespread Sunni prejudices against the Alevis. The Alevis' gradual integration into the wider society, along with their to the towns and entry into education and careers in public service, brought them into closer contact, and sometimes into direct competition, with Sunnis. The official attitude toward Islam since 1980 has represented an even greater departure from the Kemalist tradition, actively fostering a Turkish-Islamic synthesis that began as a doctrine combining fervent Turkish nationalism and Islamic sentiment. Religious education, previously an optional subject, was made obligatory; the Directorate of Religious Affairs was strengthened; numerous new mosques were built and imams were appointed, not only in Sunni towns and villages, but also in Alevi communities. Alevis no longer had a unique religion to which they could turn, because the institutions of traditional Alevi thought were almost entirely eroded. Alevis are not allowed to learn their own values and rituals. Consequently, Sunni beliefs fill the gaps where Alevi thought is missing in Alevis' lives. As an unavoidable result of assimilation, Sunni beliefs have blended into Alevi beliefs. Additionally, although Alevis have a fear of assimilation and criticize the state

politics that cause this process, Sunni beliefs or rituals can still become dominant in their daily life, despite the fact that those rituals or ideas are not indigenous to Alevi thought. Martyrdom is the best example of this. Although Sunnis and Alevis have different beliefs, they live side by side in cities. Naturally, they can affect each other. As the state continues to impose Sunni beliefs on Alevis, it is impossible for Alevi mothers to not be impressed by Sunni views of martyrdom; nothing else exists to give meaning to their sons' sudden deaths.

In that context, it should be examined the meaning of being a father of a martyr since fathers affect points of views of mothers, in fact, mostly fathers or men in the army or in the state reshape the being a mother of a martyr. While being a mother of a martyr is sanctified at the same time, it is dominated with nationalism and martyrdom; on the other hand, fathers of martyrs use social status of being a father of a martyr and having a mother of a martyr in the family. Different from mothers, fathers, either Alevi or Sunni, benefits from social status of having a mother of a martyr in the family whether this motherhood justifies itself because of religion or nationalism. While fathers of martyrs obtained prestige of martyrdom, they also silence mothers of martyrs because of the fear of losing the social status they had because with this social status, they easily reach to the statesmen, commanders or politicians even without having an appointment.

Another glaring issue in these mothers' words is their glorification of the dead son, the martyr. In their speeches, they portray their deceased sons as brave, strong, and, moreover, big-hearted, clean, moral, respectful, and unobtrusive boys. They exalt the martyr's personality to a near-divine level: flawless, warm-hearted, wise, and easy-going. For example, Geyfer (57, farmer, lost her son 16 years ago) says:

> He was very kind. If you asked him, he would have given you what he had. He did not interfere in anything. If he saw a bird with a broken wing, he brought it to me and asked me to heal it. After one or two months were passed, when the bird got recovered, he brought it back to where he found it.

> Çok efendiydi. Desen ağzındaki lokmayı ver verirdi. Kimsenin yelinde yağmurunda olmazdı. Bir kanadı kırık bacağı kırık kuş görse getirir anne şu iyice edek. 1 ay 2 ay geçince iyleşinci aldığı yere götürürdü.

Another mother, Hamdiye (60, cleaning woman, lost her son 15 years ago) defines her son:

> My son was extremely calm and he had benignant character. He was compassionate. He loved everyone.

> Oğlum da zaten son derece sakin, sevecen bir tabiatı vardı. Sevgi doluydu oğlum, herkesi severdi.

Moreover, Güler (63, housewife, lost her son 10 years ago) defines her son in this way:

> Now, my son was martyrized when he was 26. Until that age, he did not do anything disrespectful. I did not see him using bad language or behaving improperly during his life.

> Bak oğlum benim 26 yaşında şehit oldu. 26 yaşına kadar bir gün şu kadarcık bir toplu iğne başı kadar en ufak bir saygısızlık, hürmetsizlik kötü bir laf kötü bir hareket hiçbir şey görmedim oğlumdan.

Rubin claims that mournful parents see their dead sons as unique and claim special relationships with them. Sons are remembered differently in death than in life. Moreover, by idealizing their dead sons, parents assign them a very important and central place in their internal worlds (Rubin, 1993). In addition, mothers sanctify their sons' rooms, memories, and belongings. As Sancar (2001: 26) says, they turn as the remnants of their sons' lives into a home museum. There are some mothers who keep and clean the dead son's pillow, clothes, and personal belongings for years. A martyr's grave in the cemetery is perceived as an extension of the home. It is frequently cleaned and decorated with flowers. Before martyrdom, these mothers did not go out alone. After martyrdom, they often go to the cemetery alone, especially on Fridays. As Sancar (2001: 27) claims, "death is not accepted. It is adjusted to life." In this way, it becomes something more bearable.

Another salient issue in the mothers' narratives is the glorification of masculinity and the patriarchy. They value boys over girls, they require their daughters to serve their brothers, and they are proud of having men in the family. Yet, Turkey is a predominately patriarchal society where the social organization is based on the family unit, and with its argument for the family and the strict gender division of labor within it, is an effective means of reproducing the patriarchal character of Turkish society. These mothers of martyrs tend to be submissive to their husbands and have internalized the patriarchal ideology. Yet, it is important for

fathers to acknowledge the presence of those women who have achieved some power and prestige in their families, as well as those women who does not question patriarchal ideology and women's disadvantaged position because they think that they will disrespect the memories of martyrs.

Moreover, as it is discussed before, Turkey is constructed as a militaristic nation through discourses of Turkish history. As a result, military service is an unavoidable duty for men in society since until recently; a man who does not fulfill his military service is not accepted as a citizen of Turkey. While motherhood is a way for women to symbolically establish their citizenship, military service was a way for men to establish their own citizenship, since every Turk, supposedly, is born a soldier.[38] As a result, mothers hang up pictures of their sons in uniform everywhere in the house as a prestige symbol. Plaques of service, medallions, and certificates of success are also displayed. It is easily seen in the mothers' narratives that the military conditions were not perceived as war conditions. They simply sent their sons to the state. So, for those mothers, the patriarchal values framing this structure are not perceived as problematic. That is why the facts of "killing" and "dying" are not interrelated for these mothers. To kill for the sake of nation is not the same as to kill a person.

After martyrdom, these mothers were placed at the heart of the army. In one way, these mothers become the subject of militarist socialization. In other words, the army defines a stereotypical "ideal" mother of martyrs. This causes tension in different power relations, such as the relation between the army and Islamists. There is more than one definition of "mothers of martyrs," depending on which discourse they are shaped in. For instance, the army internalizes these mothers by defining them as the real mothers of the nation, and grants them symbolic "custody" of the martyrs. We can see this notion of motherhood in a speech of Yaşar Büyükanıt on 18 March 2007:

> Martyrdom is the sorbet of immortality. The day of 18 March is the day of martyrs. The Turkish nation owes much to these women. They are the most glorious mothers who sacrificed their sons to our nation.

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[38] In Turkey, apart from citizenship, if a man does not fulfill his military service, he cannot easily get married or find a job.

Şehitlik ölümsüzlük şerbetidir. 18 Mart şehit analarının günüdür. Türk vatanının namusu onlara çok şey borçludur. Onlar oğullarını vatana bahşetmiş aziz analardır.

On the other hand, Islamists create their own definition of "mothers of martyrs." For instance, in newspapers like *Vakit*, it is seen that they particularly uphold mothers of martyrs who wear the veil and criticize the army for disparaging mothers of martyrs in veil.

Thus, it can be said that each side, the army and the Islamists, try to establish its own legitimacy over these mothers, who represent the real "mother," the "essence" of Turkey that is created during the nation-building process. As a result of this, the army generally associates mothers of martyrs with historical mother figures such as Fadime Nine or Nene Hatun. On the other hand, Islamists primarily refer to religious figures as symbols of sanctified mothers, such as the holy Fatma mother, the holy Hatice mother, or the blessed virgin Meryem.

After martyrdom, dying for the sake of the nation, the martyr's status provides both social and religious prestige and privilege for his surviving family. But on the other hand, this causes new responsibilities for them. Thus, martyrs are buried in official ceremonies attended by statesmen and commanders. Their names are given to streets and public gardens. Families of martyrs are pensioned. The brother of a martyr is exempt from military service. Families of martyrs are offered new job opportunities. Many mothers change their lifestyles, habits, and social networks, in an effort to be suited to glorified legacy of their martyrs. For that reason, although it is expected from these mothers to react against the state, the army or those who are responsible from this death; however, this being a mother of a martyr prevents these women to transform themselves as active agents questioning this process after martyrdom since being a mother of a martyr is shaped by discourses of nationalism and religion about martyrdom and motherhood. There is an ambivalence occurred here. On one hand, these ordinary mothers are raised to the status of being a mother of a martyr. On the other hand, they lost their previous subjectivity. Their new subjectivity is restricted because of this prestige in nationalist and religious discourse.

As a result, the social environment and relations of these mothers have changed. Before the martyrdom, they did not watch television or read newspapers,

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and they did not know about politicians, the government, or the military. In turn, of course, those institutions did not know these women, either. After the martyrdom of their sons, their points of view, and political standing and involvement, have changed. In interviews with these mothers, I try to understand whether there is a difference between their lives before the martyrdom and their lives after the martyrdom, and I attempt to analyze how those mothers perceive the world before and after the event. In other words, I try to understand how these mothers integrate the martyrdom with the political world. Consequently, I realized that the mothers' political perspectives have specifically changed. It can be claimed that their use of language has been perceptibly "politicized." However, in contrast to what Sara Ruddick (1989) points out, there is not a correlation between motherhood, as a symbol of love, care, and protection of life, and the abrogation of violence. In reality, the mothers of martyrs do not have any understanding of the will of active political arrangement necessary for the establishment of peace.

5. 3. Perceptions of Motherhood:

It is also relevant to mention the mothers' conceptualization about "good mothers" and "bad mothers," and their understanding of their own mothering. As supported by Badinter (1992), the mothers I interviewed perceived the ideal child to be an extension of the perfect mother. Moreover, it seems that mother/child relationship has a special importance for these women, in that they regard their children as part of themselves. For example, Hacer (65, housewife, lost her son 12 years ago) says:

> Well, there are mothers who behave decently; on the other hand, there are mothers who behave badly. It happens. I am a mother of a martyr. Can anybody become a bad mother for her children? Children have become a part of yourself.

> İşte iyi davranan oluyor, kötü davranan oluyor. Oluyor işte. Ben şehit annesiyim işte. Herkes evladına kötü anne olur mu? Bir parçan oluyor evlat.

In this vein, some women insist that "there is no bad mother," or that they did never saw a "bad mother" in their personal experience. For example, Sıdıka (70, housewife, lost her son 11 years ago) says:

There is no bad mother. Does your hearth classify bad or good? If something happens bad to one of your children, you feel the same pain for each of them.

Olmaz. Ciğerin iyi kötü der mi? Parmağının birini kessen hepisinin acısı bir.

Another mother, Birgül (70, housewife, lost her son 14 years ago) says:

There is no bad mother. Mother is mother. Whoever she is, mother is mother.

Kötü anne yoktur. Anne annedir. Kim olursa olsun anne annedir.

In connection to this point, these mothers heavily emphasis education as a crucial part of childrearing, as seen in the above examination of the relation between mother and nation. Atatürk emphasized the education of mothers, because mothers, in turn, will be the first educators of children. Mothers emphasis the education of their children because they want to rear children who are fit for Turkish society. For that reason, they express a desire to do everything they could do. However, this education is not designed to meet the child's own needs in dealing with the world, but is rather necessary to ensure that the child is "well-educated, honest, moral, and serviceable" for Turkish society. This perception about rearing and educating a child occurs because of the perception of relation between society and individual.

As it is discussed in Chapter III, rearing a child was a part of the nation-building process beginning in the 1920s. Moreover, discourse on children was mainly focused on the high fertility of women and the education of children. Children are identified with their mothers. This causes society to consider mothers as the causes of many social problems. In that sense, the interviewed mothers also regarded participation in the PKK as a situation that stems from other mothers' attitudes. Similarly, these mothers do not understand why mothers in the southeast of Turkey give birth to so many children while they lack so many things, so as food, or future job opportunities. For example, Meryem (45, housewife, lost her son 14 years ago) says:

We see the poverty of those children. I feel sorry for them. Those children or men go to the army. It is a shame, but the family cannot feed them. You notice the ignorance, but there are men who have 10, 15, or even 45 children. Television proclaims this.

Görüyok ya o çocukların sefilliğini görüyok insanın içi acıyor. Nerede bir askeriyenin neyin böyle adamlar şeylerine gidiyor çocuklar

yazık amma doyuramıyor adam. Düşünüyon cahilliğini düşünüyon ya sen 10 tane 15 tane 45 tane çocuğu olan var yav. Bunu da televizyon gösteriyor.

It seems, from their narratives, that the mothers of martyrs do not have obvious hostility for the mothers of PKK members. For many mothers of martyrs, mothers of PKK members are mothers just like them, and no mother wants her child to become "bad." However, as is seen in the quotation above, many mothers of martyrs blame and criticize mothers of PKK members for not giving their children proper education and morality. In this way, mothers of martyrs express that they themselves were successful in their mothering, and that mothering is a difficult and arduous task. When I asked them whether their expectations for their children were actualized or not, they, without exception, claimed that they were successful in raising the children. Their children received the best possible education, found a job, or married a spouse with a good job, in contrast to children of other mothers, and particularly children in the PKK. At the end, everything in the child's life is predetermined by the quality of motherhood. As a result of this, social responsibilities prevent the development of these mothers' individualism.

Who, then, is a good mother? Where does the mother of a martyr fit in this picture? Mothers of martyrs, compatible with the dominant ideology of nationalism, appear as the ideal mothers. As a result, most mothers judge and evaluate themselves in hopes of proving worthy of their martyrs. Before martyrdom, these mothers' social networks were limited to neighbors and relatives. However, after their sons were martyred, the networks expanded; the mothers now ask military officers and commanders for advice on material and moral issues. They communicated often with military offices and commanders, because the military offices appoint one or more commanders specifically to take care of families of martyrs. In small towns and big cities alike, military offices keep lists of these families' names. On special days, such as Martyrs' Day, 18 March, commanders invite "chosen" mothers to attend dinners, at which the importance and sanctity of these "good" and "ideal" mothers are celebrated yet again. I prefer to call them "chosen," because for this kind of event, the mothers are carefully selected so ast to not give a wrong impression to the media or the public. When I asked the Association of Families of Martyrs for names of

mothers to interview in Ankara, the head of the association looked at the lists and chose mothers who are mostly sent frequently sent to press conferences or official dinners, omitting other mothers, implying that they or their attitudes are "improper." As far as I understood, those improper mothers are the mothers who are speaking for themselves, who are questioning policies of the state or the military. The Association of Families of Martyrs also questions some policies of state, but only policies related to families' rights or martyrs' rights. On the other hand, the "improper" mothers question why, for example, their sons were sent into conflict areas without proper equipment, or why mothers of martyred petty officers receive a higher salary than mothers of private officers.

The cemetery has become the new social gathering place for these mothers of martyrs. There, they are united with women who share their same grief, a grief that can be understood only by those who have experienced it. The women believe that no one else can understand them. During interviews, almost every mother told me that I could not understand them, because I was not a mother. I began inviting my aunt to join me for the interviews, in hopes that the women would be able to better relate to her. She would explain my questions to the mothers in more understandable ways. Although my aunt is the mother of three children, these mothers of martyers pointed out that even she could not understand them, because, they say: "Ateş düştüğü yeri yakar."[39] Moreover, they cannot form relationships with all other mothers of martyrs, because being a mother of a martyr imposes new responsibilities. All of them try to be a "proper" mother for their martyr. Though an understanding of the most "appropriate" behavior can vary from one woman to the next, all mothers pursue that goal. Most are critical of the behavior of at least some of the other mothers, and are thus reluctant to talk to everyone else. As it has been seen in the interviews, mothers of martyrs compare their mothering to others' mothering. For example, Ayşe (57, housewife, lost her son 13 years ago) says:

> There is no need to present yourself by saying 'I am this or not.' It is related to me and my inside. However, some [mothers] do this. For whom? I sacrificed three sons for this nation but nobody knows what happened. I cannot express myself. I cannot express myself in the way that seeks to arouse pity for myself by using my martyr. Since I am a

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[39] Approximately, "This grief can only be known by those who experience it."

mother of martyr, I cannot do this. However, there are mothers doing this, I know, but it is not proper.

Ben buyum diyip de reklâm yapmanın anlamı yok ki. Ben varsa da içimde yoksa da içimde. Bazıları yapıyor öyle. Kimin için? 3 tane evladımı verdim ama kimse bilmez ne olduğunu. Diyemiyom da. Öyle çocuğun arkasına sığınarak kendini acındırıyormuş gibi geliyor herkese. Ben şehit annesiyim yapamam ki. Yapanlar var görüyoz ama olmaz öyle.

Moreover, a father of a martyr, Kemal (55, General Secretary of the Association of Families of Martyrs, lost his son 15 years ago), talks about his wife:

My wife cannot get in touch well with every other mother. She reacts. She does not appreciate mothers who are garrulous. Mostly, she is angry with mothers of martyrs who laugh, or are chatting, enjoying themselves or wandering and strolling. I mean, she gets upset. She gets angry because, at the cemetery, mothers gather and laugh loudly. She sits near her son's tomb and reads the Qur'an. Then she comes back home.

Pek her anne ile uyum sağlayamaz eşim. Tepki gösterir çenebazdır onları kabul etmez, söyler. Çoğu zaman şehit annelerine de kızar orada gülerler, oynarlar yok şuraya gitsek buraya gitsek geziye gitsek, eğlenceye gitsek gibi yani o şeyler moralini bozuyor. Orada bir araya geliyor kadınlar, kendi içlerinde gülüyorlar kahkaha çok sinirleniyor. Oğlunun başında oturur ağlar, okur sonra çeker gider.

Another mother, Ayşe Naciye (63, member of the Association of Families of Martyrs, lost her son 15 years ago) says:

There are mothers who criticized the government. They were nearly put into jail. For that reason, I don't want to talk too much, and I don't talk, my dear.

Şehit anneleriyle ileri derecede hükümetle konuşmalar yaptılar onlar neredeyse içeri alınacaktılar. Onun için de ne daha fazla bir şey konuşmak isterim ne de konuşurum yavrum.

From these quotations, it appears that a mother of martyr should be grateful and should mourn silently. Since she has become a mother of a martyr, she should not question events and should not ask for anything for herself; she should simply be proud of her martyr. Pride was an underlying theme in many of the narratives heard during the interviews. In one way, stories of pride re-produce masculinity. Mothers were proud that their sons had protected their men in the course of their numerous operations in the southeast against the PKK: "No one under my son's command died, except him." In this context, military service is not only seen as a service to the state,

but as something that produces masculinity. A sense of proper masculinity is reinforced by the achievement of each man in fighting or in handling other tasks.

Following the evaluations of mothering qualities, I asked how the mothers spend their time with other mothers of martyrs. Most mothers replied that they do not spend time with other mothers, other than activities on special days or at the cemetery. In those limited situations, conversations are mostly limited to discussing how and when their sons died, or else they inform each other about the rights that they obtained after the martyrdom. For example, Hamdiye (60, cleaning woman, lost her son 15 years ago) says:

> I'm not in contact with any other mothers. I can only see them in meetings. There is no such solidarity between us, I mean.

> Hiç yok yavrum anca toplantılarda görüşüyoruz, şey ediyoruz. Öyle bir yakınlık yok yani.

Another woman, Hatice (45, retired teacher, lost her son 7 years ago) says:

> Of course, I talk with other mothers of martyrs. They are like me. What I experienced is what they experienced. I feel what they feel now.

> Şehit anneleri ile konuşuyorum tabi onları kendimde görüyorum ben. Onların yaşadıkları benim yaşadıklarım şu anda onlar ne yaşıyorlarsa bende aynısını yaşıyorum.

Moreover, Hacer (65, housewife, lost her son 12 years ago) says:

> What we talk about, well, is about pain of each other. Yours died in that way; mine died in this way. Everyone consoles each other.

> Ne konuşalım işte hep herkesin acısını işte seninki şöyle oldu, böyle oldu. İşte şunu dedi, bunu dedi. Herkes birbirini öyle teselli veriyok.

Another woman, Yurdagül (50, housewife, 5 years ago) says:

> Well, for example, if one of us heard about something related to our rights, she can inform the others. (…) When one of us gets a report, she asks us if we acquired the same report or not. Or if a possibility of aid arises, or if something related to our rights occurred, we ask each other if everyone knew about it. We talked about things like these, I mean.

> Şimdi mesela birbirimize bir haber geliyorsa, diğerlerine söyleyebiliyor. (…) Bana şöyle rapor geldi, size gelmedi mi diye soruyorduk. Başka bir yardım geldiyse veyahut bir yerden bir şey geldiyse hani sana da aynısı oldu mu? O şekilde yani.

On the other hand, fathers talk more about politics, such as government policies, as I will explain in the next chapter. This is a result of a cultural feature of Turkish society, in which women have social solidarity networks, and socialization occurs differently among women and men.. Women do still experience hindrance when the attempt to participate in the public sphere. The mothers do leave their homes, to go to the cemetery, for example, but this fact alone does not mean that they are entering the public sphere. On the other hand, new "private spheres" evolve, in addition to the family and home. With solidarity between women, mothers of martyrs try to create a new life sphere for themselves. For these women, motherhood is a significant part of personal existence and the death of their sons freeze these women's lives for a while. After their sons' martyrdom, the world outside the home gradually becomes more important for these women. However, a change in "patriarchal bargaining" is not a result of this process.[40] This transformation is not a step toward individualization for these women. For example, belonging to an organization does not mean being in the public, as these mothers' social networks within such organizations remain limited to the private sphere.

In conclusion, by exploring the narratives of mothers of martyrs, this section first gave an understanding about being a mother of martyr within Turkish nationalism, where patriarchal values dominate. It is seen that patriarchal society's underlying ideology influences women's evaluations of mothers of martyr, and also their self-evaluations in terms of ideal mothering qualities. Moreover, it can be said that the influence of martyrdom reshapes women's daily lives. Second, it is seen that all mothers attribute great worth to being a mother of a martyr, although more than half of them believe that woman is not given any independent value by society in general. Related to this fact, social and personal responsibilities on the part of the mothers of martyrs was emphasized by most mothers. The feelings of pride and sanctity are common among mothers.

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[40] For more information, see Deniz Kandiyoti, "Bargining with Patriarchy," *Gender & Society* 2, 1988, pp. 274-90.

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The instrumental use of gendered stereotypes in the name of national reproduction becomes most evident in the intimate interrelationship of nationalism and mothers of martyrs. It is epitomized in the constructions of women as mothers of martyrs. For example, in the media, at the state or army level, these mothers and widows of brave martyrs who laid down their lives on the altar of their homeland are exalted. Nationalist narratives of mothers of martyrs slide easily from the iconography of nation as woman to the construction of woman as nation, figuring women as motherland, the fecund body of the nation. This narrative is translated into moral imperative, requiring women both to represent the nation through moral virtue and social norms, and to reproduce the national group in biological as well as cultural terms. These images honour the women keeping Turkish national culture alive while their men were resisting foreign invasion during war. Not only have mothers of martyrs been used as a symbol of the nation's moral purity, but in her image, contemporary Turkish women are particularly targeted as strategic to the conservative battle to preserve the nation and its moral purity. In that sense, martyrdom provided a relationship between religion and nationalism and needs to be reinterpreted from a feminist perspective. This interpretation brings us more sophisticated understandings of women's self-identification. It is difficult to make forecasts on where feminist studies of religion, motherhood, and nationalism may go next, but it would seem that there is a need for further research in these areas. For that reason, the next chapter will focus on the mothers' perceptions about the discourse of nation-state, martyrdom, and war and peace.

CHAPTER 6

INTERSECTIONS BETWEEN PERCEPTIONS OF MARTYRDOM, NATION-STATE AND WAR/PEACE

This chapter focuses on an untouched side of the war that has been ongoing in the southeast of Turkey for the last 20 years. It is an effort to understand the experiences and ideas of mothers who lost their sons in the war. In this research, almost 20 mothers who lost their sons in the war offer their emotions, ideas, and expectations from society, in their own words. Before starting the research, my goal was to explore the following:

- How women who lost their sons in the war define themselves after martyrdom, as explained in the previous chapter.

- How they articulate the relation of martyrdom with motherhood.

- Through examination of their personal narratives about reasons for the war and its impact on their lives, how these mothers articulate their experiences with the state, the army, and society in Turkey.

- Most importantly, what the relation is between motherhood and war and peace.

I hoped to evaluate how these women define their own experiences as women, as mothers, and as citizens. In doing so, I visited women in their homes to observe how they cope with death. I wondered how these mothers, whose lives were discombobulated because of grief for their lost sons (*evlat acısı*), continued their relations with their social solidarity networks, friends, relatives, and other mothers. I also wondered what solutions, if any, the mothers would offer for the war and death impacting their lives, and how they articulate all these events in light of national politics.

I began the interviews in question-and-answer style, asking questions and waiting for answers. For example, "What do you think about politics, the state, or war?" However, such questions did not make sense in the mothers' minds; until now, they have not been asked for their personal opinions on such topics. Then, depending on the questions, I changed the interview structure to a conversation. This conversation usually started with how their sons became martyrs and continued in

this way. The following pages include my comments on the mothers' narratives about martyrdom, the nation-state, and war and peace.

6.1. Perception of Martyrdom:

As previously state, motherhood, as a social identity, is determined by the depth and quality of a woman's emotional relationship with her children. The emotional side of this relationship is love, protection, and childrearing based on unrequited effort on the part of the mother. When faced with the untimely and meaningless deaths of their sons, who were raised with unrequited love and effort, these mothers experience profound trauma. As Sancar (2001:25) points out, almost every mother of a deceased child lives the rest of her life in an emotionally disabled state. Mothers give more care to their children than they do to themselves. Their bond with the outside world is intricately connected to their children. After martyrdom, this bond is demolished and mothers lose much of their personalities. Consequently, they must develop new life strategies in order to continue living. At that point, both Alevi and Sunni mothers look to martyrdom in an effort to find meaning in their sons' death and cope with their loss.

These mothers sent their young sons, between the ages of 20 and 25, to serve the state. While waiting for the sons to come home at the end of their military service, the women are suddenly confronted with grief and loss (*evlat acısı*): their sons have become martyrs. The mothers see the death as senseless and meaningless. The only way they can cope with the loss is to attribute a certain value and prestige to their sons' death, sanctified by religion. They create special meaning in "martyrdom" to make sense of their loss. Mothers describe their sons' death as "destiny, predestination." They often ended their interviews with comments such as, "his fate (*nasib*)," "his life span was short," or "when a person's life is up…" In their narratives, the women explored the various ways to make sense of a senseless death. In the end, they believe, a person's time of death is God-given or "written." Most essential to faith is an acceptance of God's will. All the mothers I interviewed, including Alevis, hold that a person's time of death is determined in advance by God; some say it is "written on his or her forehead.". For instance, Meryem (45, housewife, lost her son 14 years ago) says:

May God rest his soul, there is nothing to do. Is it written on forehead or is it God's will? However, there is another point that if you believe in God and in martyrdom, at the end, this is written on your forehead. There is nothing to do.

Allah rahmet eylesin yapacak bir şey yok alın yazısı mı takdiri ilahi mi? Bir de şurası var Cenab-ı Allah'a inanıyorsan şehitlik şeyine inanıyorsan demek ki alın yazısı yapacak bir şey yok.

Another mother Perihan (56, farmer, lost her son 9 years ago) says:

What can we do? This is God's will. It is told that it is written while you are in womb of your mother. Never rebel against your God. God gives him a life and God determines his life span too. At the end, of course, God will take him back. You never rebel against Him.

Napalım yine Cenab-ı Allah'tan yine. Ana rahminde yazılırmış insana, ana rahminde… Cenab-ı Allah'a karşı isyan etmiycen hiçbir zaman. Onu veren Cenab-ı Allah vadesini de vaktini de veren Cenab-ı Allah. Ona karşı hiçbir zaman isyan yapmıycan.

Similarly, Sıdıka (70, housewife, lost her son 11 years ago) says:

If it is his fate to die, his destiny, he dies while walking down the road. However, if it is not his destiny, even if he walks in the fire, nothing will happen to him. My son had a friend. The two of them were classified as commando. His friend told him [Rıza] that he was afraid of going. At that time, terrorism had increased again. His friend said that he would give up being a commando. Then, the friend left the army in 1990. And my son was martyred in 1992. A month later, his friend had a traffic accident and died.

Nasip kısmet alnının yazısıysa o yaşta ölmek yolda da düşer yine ölür ama alnında yazılı değilse ateşin içinde yürürse bir şey olmaz. Bunun arkadaşı vardı. 2 kişi ayrılmıştı komondoluğa öbürü demiş ki Rıza demiş ben gitmekten korkuyom demiş o ara yine çoğaldıydı. Ben çıkıcam demiş komondoluktan. 1990'da timden ayrıldı. Oğlum 1992'de şehit oldu, bir ay sonra öbürü yolda kaza yaptı. Kazada öldü, araba almış, 1 ay sonra o da arabaynan kaza yapıp.

The women's stories and commentaries implied, on the one hand, that blame for the death could be traced to human decisions or actions, or that their sons had died because of the actions of the PKK. At the same time, they believe that all that happens, especially death, is God's will. Even the friend who had left the army could not escape death in the end. In the structure of the narratives, the religious discourse gets the last word, putting a temporary stop to speculations about responsibility. Mothers believe that this pointless death has (or should have) a purpose. This is a natural result of the expression of martyrdom culture in Turkey and in Islam.

In these cases, religion is not "the opium of people, but the vitamin of the weak" (Debray, 1994: 15). When we examine the statement of "the opium of people," it can be said that Marx believed that religion numbs people, makes their minds muddy, pacifies them; in brief, religion is corruptive. However, according to Ertuğrul Kürkçü, when this statement is examined, it is usually isolated from the conditions that Marx saw as causing injustice (Atay, 103). Moreover, Kürkçü adds "opium, in question here, is a kind of pill used as a painkiller in 1840s Europe. It is not just used as a drug as it is used in China or Far East." In other words, Marx's statement about opium can be understood to mean that religion is not something to numb people, but rather is something to placate people. It is something that relieves the poor masses from their suffering. It is a soothing thing, and its promises of spiritual opulence help people cope with the world. When people cannot explain what is happening around them or to them on rational grounds, they are likely to turn to traditional, religious analyses and remedies. Generally, these mothers are unable to explain rationally what has happened to their sons, and they tend to seek explanations within soothing religious traditions.

Mothers of martyrs' attitudes are often determined by their social networks. While Sunni mothers use religious values of martyrdom to cope with their loss, Alevi mothers look for legitimation of the loss of their sons in nationalist values. Sunni mothers generally are proud of their sons' achievement of martyrdom status in the afterlife. They bear the grief because of the idea that their sons are not truly dead, as written in the Qur'an and examined in Chapter IV. The mothers find solace in their belief in the reward of heave. In addition to this culture of martyrdom, many mothers experience a growth in their personal faith and religious practice. Though identified as Muslim on their identification cards, many do not consider themselves to be personally religious. For some mothers and wives of martyrs, full integration into their religion, like integration to nationalism, only occurs after the death of their sons or husbands. Most of them have started reading the Qur'an, praying, and even veiling themselves. For example, Birgül (70, housewife, lost her son 14 years ago) says:

> Before my son was martyred, I did not pray five times in a day.
> After my son was martyred, my life was damaged. I was saved because
> of my belief in God. Otherwise, I would be mad. I used lots of pills.

> Ben oğlum şehit olmadan önce 5 vakit namaz kılan biri
> değildim… Oğlum şehit olduktan sonra benim ciğerim koptu, canım gitti
> elden Allah'a inancımdan dolayı teskin oldum yoksa kafayı, deli
> olacaktım çok psikolojik haplar kullandım.

Additionaly, Asiye (51, housewife, lost her son 7 years ago) says:

> I turn back to God, and veil. This veil is my peace.

> Manevi olarak Allah'a sığındım. Başörtüsüne sığındım. Örtüm
> benim huzurum.

Like mothers, Sunni fathers emphasize the religious aspect ofmartyrdom. For example, Şükrü (65, Chairman of the Association of Families of Martyrs, lost his son 13 years ago) says:

> In our religion and law, a martyr is a person who died while
> fighting an outsider, or another country. However, a person who died
> while defending the unity and integrity of the nation against separatist
> traitors, who are among us, is also a martyr.

> Çünkü bizim dinimizde, kanunlarımız çerçevesinde şehit bir dış
> güç, ülkeye karşı savaşan kişi hayatını kaybeden ama bizim içimizden
> çıkan bölücü hainlere karşı birlik bütünlüğünü savunmak amacıyla
> hayatını kaybeden kişi dinen şehit.

On the other hand, Alevi mothers are generally proud of the idea that their sons died for the sake of nation. They define themselves as *Atatürkçü*, secular, and find relief in the fact that their sons died for the principles in which they believe. For these mothers, there is nothing more prestigious than the social status obtained by dying for the cause of the nation. For example Ayşe (57, housewife, lost her son 13 years ago) says:

> What he became a martyr for, well, for the sake of his nation,
> while defending the nation.

> Ne için vatanı için şehit oldu işte. Vatan savunmasında.

Another Alevi woman, a wife of a martyr, Sakibe (40, housewife, lost her husband 14 years ago) says:

> He became a martyr for his nation, his flag and his land. If it is
> necessary, we all sacrifice our lives for our nation.

> Vatanın için, bayrağın, toprağın için yani icap ederse hepimiz
> vatanımız için canımızı veririz.

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This is the nationalist side of martyrdom. Apart from the religious prestige, martyrdom provides social prestige on nationalism terms for both mothers and martyrs, as explained in the previous chapter. This is the highest honour, for a Turkish citizen to die for the sake of the nation, for nationalist discourse. This prestige provides a meaning for death: "You do not die for nothing. You die for the nation." Nationalism gives sudden death a meaning and helps mothers cope with their loss. As I explained before, death has various meanings in religion and in nationalism. Because of these different meanings, mothers attribute different meanings to martyrdom in their narratives. As it is discussed before, the meaning of death in Alevi thought is not the same as in Sunni Islam. In Alevi thought, death is not the end, so there is no belief in an afterlife. Therefore, religious prestige is not as important as social prestige for Alevi mothers.

Another result of martyrdom, for both Alevi and Sunni mothers, is a belief that their sons' death is not fair, because those who die are from poor families. There are not martyrs from the families of the rich, statesmen, or generals. This is the only issue about which the mothers express discontentment. After martyrdom, I argue, they begin to develope some kind of class consciousness. They began to correlate their family's own income with martyrdom and question why the sons of the rich are not also sent into the conflict area. They give the example of the son of politician Tansu Çiller; it is said that her son, Mert Çiller, fulfilled his military service at his mansion. They repeat that the cemetery of martyrs is full of people who lacked sufficient food and clothing. For example Geyfer (57, farmer, lost her son 16 years ago) says:

> Do they care that your son died? Is there a single martyr among them? When you come to the meetings or ceremonies for martyrs, there is no one in a suit. They are all like us, villagers. If they [rich people] also experienced this pain, this conflict would end. Is there any martyr of the rich? Do you really think so?

> Onların şeyinde mi senin benim oğlum ölmüş. Onlardan bir tane var mı? Hep bir şeye geldi mi toplantıya şehit törenine bir tane öyle kravatlı yok. Hep bizim gibi köylü takımı. Onlarında canı yansa biter tabi. Onlardan bir tane şehit olsun bakayım. Var mı duyuyon mu hiç?

Another mother, Hamdiye (60, cleaning woman, lost her son 15 years ago), says:

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When my son died, the prime minister was Çiller. It is said that her son hid in his apartment. I mean, he did not fulfill any military service. I shouted on that day [the funeral of her martyred son], God knows. Why don't the sons of the rich die? Somebody tell me if it is possible that sons of the rich die in the conflicts. Villagers and the poor are sent to the conflicts. Whatever happens, affect them [the poor].

Benim çocuğum ölünce başbakan Çiller idi. Çillerin oğlu şeyde saklanmış Deniz apartmanda diye. Yani hiç askerlik etmemiş. Ben o gün bağırdım Allah biliyor. Niye hiç zenginlerin ki ölmüyor. Ordan biri dedi ki ah teyzem dedi zenginlerin çocuğu ölür mü dedi. Köylülerin, garibanları öne sürüyorlar hep onlara oluyor dedi.

Another interesting point in the narratives is that even death has a hierarchy. As fathers point out, in state and military circles, a martyr is classified according to his rank. In other words, class differences in life continue to hold importance in the afterlife, and even in the most sanctified death, martyrdom. In narratives of mothers, I also witness "rank" differences. For instance, Güler (63, housewife, lost her son 10 years ago) says:

We have Kurdish martyrs, too. One of them was here a few minutes ago. He told me that he was leaving. We have good fathers of Kurdish martyrs.

Bizim Kürt şehitlerimiz var aha şimdi buradaydı abla gidiyorum dedi Kürt şehitlerimiz var çok iyi.

Additionally, one of the fathers, a member of the Association of Families of Martyrs, Hamit (57, Second Chairman of the Association of Families of Martyrs, lost his son 10 years ago), says:

Well, there is not any wealthy person here. All of our friends are retired fathers of martyrs. All of them are people from rural areas. There are Kurds, Turks, Arabs, Circassians. Here, we do not classify our martyrs or war veterans. The state did not classify them while sending them to the army, but it classifies martyrs in material ways. The state does not provide equal material benefits for each martyr.

Yani burda varlıklı bir insan yok. Emekli, gücüyle çalışmış, bizim şehit babası arkadaşımız... Bunların hepsi kırsal kesimin insanları. Kürdü, Türkü, Arabı, Çerkezi var. Burada şehit ve gazi olan kimseler ayrılmaz ama... Askere giderken ayırmamış ama maddî imkânlardan ayrılmış, o imkânlar sağlanmamış.

As I learned from the Chairman of the Association of Families of Martyrs, the state recognizes two kinds of martyr: one is a martyr of duty, and the other is a martyr of terrorism. "Martyr of duty" means that a soldier died in an accident while

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on duty, such as in a car accident while on the way to the front, rather than in armed conflict. These soldiers are not included in the scope of Article 3713; their families cannot obtain all the rights of martyrdom. For example, families of martyred petty officers can receive the salary that the soldier earned while alive. On the other hand, a "martyr of terrorism" is a martyr that died from a bullet of a terrorist. These families, included in the full scope of Article 3713, receive full benefits, including housing or job assistance. Families of martyrs of duty do not automatically receive these benefits; they must sue for them. If they choose to do so, however, they must give half of the compensation to their lawyers.

During interviews, I witnessed a further difference between the mothers of martyred private soldiers and the mothers of martyred petty officers or ranking officers. Mothers of martyrs who were members of the TAF[41] (e.g. sergeant, army officer, etc.) experience their sons' deaths differently than do mothers of martyrs who were privates. Although both groups experience death as a painful loss sanctified by religious or national meaning, their reactions differ. Mothers of martyrs who were members of the TAF are deeply attached to nationalist discourse and the ideas for which their sons died. In other words, although those mothers do not transform themselves into a political or social movement against the military or the government, like Argentinean or Kurdish mothers,[42] they still lay claim to their sons' "cause." They have become more sensitive and more informed about the conflicts in southeastern Turkey, and about the relation between the army and the state. Concepts such as 'the Kurdish issue,' 'terrorism,' 'war,' and 'government' have been added to their vocabulary. Before martyrdom, they were informed about the situation in southeastern Turkey by their sons. After martyrdom, they searched for information about their sons' deaths, and began informing themselves. Many mothers of martyred

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[41] Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri: Turkish Armed Forces.

[42] In Serpil Sancar's research, she not only interviewed Turkish mothers, but alsoKurdish mothers. According to her, Kurdish mothers have experienced a politicization process after the death of their sons. By owning a political identity, those mothers become part of a bigger political phenomenon, "Kurdish identity" (Sancar, 2001: 29). For more information about women in the Kurdish movement, see Handan Çağlayan, *Analar, Yoldaşlar, Tanrıçalar,* İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2007.

petty officers or ranking officers visit the place where their sons were stationed. From the moment their sons became members of the TAF;, these mothers began to live with the military. They benefit from military facilities. In other words, they experience military socialization. However, this socialization stays limited along borders of the army. For instance, while a mother, who went to Mardin with her son, was describing her experiences in Mardin, she only talked about what she did in the military blocks. However, she did not know anything beyond the gate of the military blocks; she did not know the "other" life, outside of the blocks. For this reason, for these mothers, martyrdom has a different meaning. After martyrdom, the army behaves differently toward these mothers than toward mothers of martyred privates, accepting the mothers of martyred officers as a part of the army's "family."

On the other hand, although mothers of martyred privates have been visited by statesmen or commanders, these visits are limited to special days, such as Mother's Day. In other words, they are often left alone. For most of those mothers, their sons were the family's only breadwinner. That's why, after martyrdom, they do not experience nationalist or militarist socialization as deeply as other mothers, although they accept their sons' death with pride. After martyrdom, they must deal with difficult economic problems, stemming from the classification of martyrs explained above. However, pride in martyrdom is used as a way to cope with both economic problems and the loss of a loved one. At the end, for these mothers, it is all God's will and it would be wrong to question the outcome of events.

When we consider these facts, it would be wrong to expect these mothers to unite and evolve into a social movement, such as Kurdish mothers do. Before they think about questioning the war, they have to deal with other practical problems. Furthermore, they are consoled with pride by either nationalist discourse or religion. I believe it is failure of leftist, socialist, and anti-militarist groups that they do not offer support to these mothers of martyrs. These mothers are always supported by rightist parties and policies. As a natural result of this, these mothers are politically silenced with a focus on "heroism" or "martyrdom."

Additionally, in my research, whether women are Sunni or Alevi, living in big cities or small towns, they all depend on patriarchal bonds. For instance, an Alevi mother living in Suluova/Amasya stated that she would not even able to pay the

electricity bill if her husband passed away, since her husband tended to everything related to the outside world. She did not know where the electricity office was located. As I explained before, the Turkish nation is constructed as a large family, in which all old men, as uncles (*amca*), are responsible for all women, as aunts (*teyze*) and mothers. Moreover, all young men, as brothers (*abi*), are responsible for all girls, as sisters (*bacı*). In Turkey, as happened in other countries in which modernization took place from above,[43] it is the state's duty to provide a legitimate base for individuals in order to unite people under the umbrella of the nation. In that stage, using family symbolism to build national solidarity is a way of political socialization. The symbolically constructed kinship between citizens is another emphasis on the usage of family as metaphor by the state. Usage of family as a metaphor by nationalism encourages citizens to accept the nation as a kind of family, in which women and men play their natural roles. In this family, women have symbolic importance as mothers of the nation.

Consequently, the established performances of militarized masculinity have not been disturbed by the traumatic experiences of mothers of those who fought against the PKK. The soldiers' martyrdoms have replaced them as the new symbols for masculine and national pride. As a result of this, many mothers and fathers associate military service more with Turkish national or military culture than with war and politics. This did not result in personal resistance, such as that Scott (cited in Altınay, 2004: 43) has called "weapons of the weak." Such resistance has not translated into a public debate about the nature of military service, nor has it found a political expression, except for the small and marginalized "conscientious objector"[44] movements and some mothers who declared that they did not bestow their sons to the nation, as I explained before.

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[43] See Çağlar Keyder, 1993.

[44]Since the 1990s, there have been a small number of consciencous objectors (COs) who publicly state that they refuse to perform military service for non-religious, pacifist reasons. The first known Turkish CO was Osman Murat Ülke, a Turkish citizen who grew up in Germany and returned to Turkey. In 1995 he publicly declared that he was a conscientious objector and refused to perform military service. Since then, dozens of others have followed suit. Between 1995 and 2004, approximately 40 men have openly declared themselves to be COs, mostly by making a public statement or giving media interviews about their reasons for refusing military service. For more information, see
http://www.refusingtokill.net/Turkey/QuakerReportRightConscientiousObjection.htm

6.2. Martyrdom and Perception of the Nation-State:

6. 2.1. Perception of the Nation-State:

Mothers of martyrs perceive the state at two levels: the army and the assembly, or politicians. For them, "state" is a holy concept and loyalty to the state has a symbolic value. Under Turkish nationalism, as discussed above, the Turkish nation is a nation with a highly developed military spirit. If the nation is, by its very nature, a military nation, then compulsory military service would not be a question of the nature of the relationship between the state and its citizens. Rather, military service is a way for citizens, both soldiers and their mothers, to approve the state and prove their loyalty. Military service embodies both the stability of the state and security for its citizens. For example, Meryem (45, housewife, lost her son 14 years ago) says:

> If these martyrs did not exist, if people did not become martyrs for the sake of their nation, I don't think any of us could be peaceful in this nation.

> Orda bu şehitler verilmezse bu vatan için bu şehitler verilmese bu vatanda hiç birimizin huzurlu olacağını sanmıyorum.

Moreover, Güler (63, housewife, lost her son 10 years ago) says:

> He became a martyr for the sake of the nation. Now, I cannot claim that this nation is not my nation. My son had said that he would sacrifice his life for this nation while he was leaving for military service.

> Vatan uğruna şehit oluyor şimdi ben diyemem ki bu vatan benim değil diye. Bu vatana zaten oğlum giderken öyle dedi kanımın son damlasına kadar bu vatan için canımı feda ederim dedi.

Although their sons' death seems senseless to these mothers, the loss of a son does not demolish the legitimacy of the state in their eyes. On the contrary, martyrdom with nationalist discourse and sanctification by religion only strengthens the mothers' bond with the state. This reaction can be understood as approval for the state at an ideological level,more than approval for state at a practical, functioning level. In other words, mothers of martyrs accept the legitimacy of the state at a notional level. However, they simultaneously criticize the perceptible functioning of the state, the government, and politicians. While Sunni mothers have criticized the policies of all party governments until now, Alevi mothers most obviously criticize

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governance by the Justice and Development Party (AKP). For example, Hatice (45, retired teacher, lost her son 7 years ago) says:

> My son became a martyr with Erdoğan in power. If he was not elected, this conflict wouldn't have happened. If I find them, I will maul them. I do not vote for the AKP.

> Benim çocuğum bu Erdoğan zamanında oldu. Eğer bu başa gelmeseydi bu artmazdı. Benim çocuğum böyle olmazdı. Benim elime verseler gözlerini çıkartırım, vermem ben AKP'ye vermem.

Another mother, Sıdıka (70, housewife, lost her son 11 years ago) says:

> The state does not care about families of martyrs. Previous governments behaved in the same way; however, this one behaves worse.

> Şehit ailelerine devlet bir umursuz, bir ilgisiz. Daha önceki hükümetlerde de bir şey yoktu ama bu da beter.

In that context, these mothers place blame on both the PKK and the attitudes of the state. For these mothers, "the number of martyrs will not decrease because sons of people making decisions on this subject do not go to the conflict area and face the risk of death." Mothers gave their sons to the state not in order to fight in war, but in order to perform their duty to the state. Consequently, if their sons became martyrs, as much as they value the pride and sanctity of martyrdom, they nevertheless ask for amends. With the death of their son, as said before, mothers gain prestige. As a result of this prestige, they further gain the right to ask for compensation of the price they paid: their sons. With a new status as "mothers of martyrs," they believe that they should receive material compensation from the state. Moreover, they think that their sons' martyrdom should provide them "new" rights. For example, Birgül (70, housewife, lost her son 14 years ago) says:

> I am a mother, too, and also I am disabled. If you [the state] does not look after me, who will? If you do not care, does anyone care? You will care. You have to look after me. If my son had been here, I would have been perfect. My son died. I became disabled. Now who will look after me?

> Ben de anayım hem de sakatım sen bakmayınca bana kim bakacak? Sen bana bakmıyınca bu bakar mı? Sen bakıcan bana mecbursun bana bakmaya. Benim çocuğum olaydı ben 4-4'lük olurdum. İyi o çocuğum olmayışlık, düştüm kim bakıcak bana.

Another mother Perihan (56, farmer, lost her son 9 years ago) says:

(…)The state gives our rights. I do not have more expectations. What do I expect from the state? (…) Do I have to cry? Am I not worth a ton of coal? I have a martyr… A head official came to the house the other day. He says 'hello,' and that's it. Why does not he do something since I am a mother of a martyr?

(…)Haklarımızı versin devlet daha beklentim olur mu, ondan ne bekliycem ki? (…)Benim ağlamam şart mı? Bir ton kömür kadar değerim yok mu? Benim şehidim var… Kaymakam geldi geçen geldi selamün aleyküm aleyküm selam. Neden bir şey yapmıyor bu şehit annesi diye?

In that sense, some mothers have begun to be interested in their own rights. They look to gain new rights because of their sons' martyrdom. In other words, they look for rights based on mother-son relation, not on the citizen-state relation. In the minds of the mothers and some of the fathers I interviewed, the concept of "rights" automatically evokes mutual "duty, obligations, and responsibilities" for the state. When asked if they know their rights as citizens, the interviewees reveal that they are informed of their rights by either the TAF or the Association of Families of Martyrs and, moreover, they recognize "new" rights, results of their sons' martyrdom. In other words, in addition to duties determined by the law, these mothers are educated about the new rights gained by the martyrdom of their sons. Rather than internalizing the rights that the state should unavoidably provide its citizens due to the state-citizen relation, mothers of martyrs are "taught" rights with martyrdom. As I explained in Chapter III, these women are accepted as citizens because of their productivity, because they are mothers. For example, Hacer (65, housewife, lost her son 12 years ago) says:

I don't know. We do not interfere with anything or anyone. We do what the state wants. The commander explained our rights to us. They inform us, and call us. They search for us.

Bilemiyom. Kimseye karışmayız biz. Devlet ne derse onu yapıyok işte. Haklarımızı komutanlar anlattı, ordan haber veriyor, telefon ediyorlar. Onlar araştırıyorlar.

Furthermore, Geyfer (57, farmer, lost her son 16 years ago) says:

Commanders from the air force explain [our rights] to us. They inform us that you can benefit from this, or that this will be done in such a way. They inform us.

Bize hava üssünden gönderiyorlar. Böyle bundan yararlanacağınız, şu böyle olcak, bu nasıl olcak diyi. Onlar gönderiyor şeyden.

A wife of a martyr, Sakibe (40, housewife, lost her husband 14 years ago), says:

> (…)We did not know. Well, something was sent to us. While we were in the village, a commander came to us. He wrote everything down and explained to us that we could benefit from the hospitals, doctors and we could have a salary, and so on. (…)

> (…) Hiç bilmiyorduk biz. Bize şey geldi. Bir subay geldi köyde idik. Geldi oturdu işte yazdı böyle her şeyi. Neyse o vakit işte biz dedi her yerden yararlanacağınız, doktordan, aylık alacağınız falan filan işte o söyledi. (…)

Twenty years of war in Turkey have caused traumas for the mothers who lost their sons. For those mothers who have to cope with the loss of beloved ones, whether Alevi or Sunni, war means deprivation, poverty, and a breaking of the fundamental emotional ties that make life meaningful. In some situations, such as asking for revenge, mothers are taken seriously and have real opportunities for shaping and changing the conditions of their lives. However, in other situations, such as asking for peace, mothers are not seen as legitimate catalysts for change, their voices are ignored, and they have little opportunity for shaping and changing their situation. But what about the fathers of martyrs? How do they react?

Although the subject of this thesis is "mothers of martyrs," I inevitably talked to men, as well, during my interviews. I had to interview some fathers, because some mothers did not want to talk, and I discovered that they, and other men at home, such as brothers or sons of martyrs, are in a politicization process. Since the surviving men, first of all, have experienced military service like martyr, their understanding of nationalism and militarism, regardless of their demographic origins, has not changed. In fact, it can be argued that their nationalism deepens after martyrdom. They are not reluctant to participate in the public sphere. Those who establish support associations are mostly fathers. They do not criticize the process by merely talking amongst themselves, but they also participate in television programs and media interviews. They go to the assembly or appear before politicians in express their opinions. One of the fathers, a member of the Association of Families of Martyrs, Hamit (57, Second Chairman of Association of Families of Martyrs, lost his son 10 years ago), says:

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The 57th government was in the power. We, the administrative committee of the Association of Families of Martyrs, visited them in order to discuss some issues. (…) Then, we asked them whether they were planning to make peace with them [PKK] by forgiving them. At that time, Mesut Yılmaz was the prime minister. We explained to him, the prime minister, that soldiers had been martyred. He said that the three leaders of the parties would confirm that statement. Then, when we asked him, 'If your son, Hasan, had been killed by the same group and his tomb was put in front of you, would you be able to sign this pardon?', he ended the meeting and suggested that we leave.

57. hükümetti biz yönetim kurulu üyeleri olarak gittik kendileriyle konuştuk. (…)Biz o zaman kendilerine dedik ki siz onları affetmekle onların gönlünü mü kazanacağını sanıyorsunuz. O zaman biz Mesut Yılmaz'dı. Başbakana gittik efenim bakın bu şekilde olay oluyor. Efenim dedi biz anlaştık 3 tane lider bu affı çıkartıcaz. Biz de o zaman şunu söyledik, senin oğlun Hasan'ı da aynı örgüt öldürse cenazesini getirip önüne koysa aynı şekilde kararlı olup da imza atar mısınız? dediğimiz de sizinle görüşme bitmiştir dedi. Bize kapıyı gösterdi.

Moreover, unlike mothers, the fathers can identify statesmen and politicians, watch television, and read the newspapers, both before and after the martyrdom. They have become more interested in politics, rather than disinterested; they have become an active part of the political process. Kemal (55, General Secretary of Association of Families of Martyrs, lost his son 15 years ago) says:

We can only go to the special television channels and we explain our problems as much as we can. We explain how the state attitude is wrong, and how much the statesmen compensate us.

Ancak biz özel TV'lere gidiyoruz dilimizin döndüğü kadar, söylüyoruz burada devletin yanlış yaptığını, devlet büyüklerinin taviz verdiklerini.

Conducting these interviews, I was a young woman trying to talk to men about the most painful experience of their lives. It was not easy. The same men who would talk on and on in social or political settings about how their sons' martyrdom changed their lives refused to talk to me when I defined the conversation as a research interview. It was unacceptable to them that their stories of pride, male-bonding, and pain turn into impersonal research. For that reason, fathers mostly talked about general topics, and especially complained about what the government did or did not, about what their rights should be, what the Association should work for, or how hard the Association should work. They never mentioned their personal feelings about being a father of a martyr. They are proud that their sons achieved the

most important status in society and in religion, martyrdom. The intense atmosphere that had characterized the martyrdom and its aftermath for these families was ruptured by the presence of commanders and the subsequent influence of the militarist/nationalist structure. Their newly constructed nationalistic identities prevent any discussion of politics at home, particularly with strangers. A strong dislike and fear of politics was present in the narratives of most of the mothers I interviewed. In these families, the one permitted to talk about politics is the man, who has been put more directly under the hegemony of the military perspective.

Another interesting point is that in the case of mothers of martyrs, they are not only the one having grief but in some situtitons, they can be the one who cause the pain. For example, while these mothers are asking for revenge of their sons' death. Moreover, these mothers, especialy mothers of petty officers or officiers, want her grandsons to become officers or petty officers and give the necessary punishment for those who killed their dads. After martyrdom, sons of martyrs become particularly special to their mothers; sons of martyrs are seen as the ones who will take revenge for their fathers' death. According to research by Mehmet Ali Birand and Ahmet Taner Kışlalı about the social roots of the army in Turkey, in the early 1970s and the 1980s, army officers and sergeants were the sons of poor or middle-class families. Only a minority of them came from wealthy families (Hale, 1996: 80). Rough 10-15% of the fathers of officers or officer candidates were farmers. There are two important implications of this information. First, most of the older relatives of the martyrs, such as their parents, have been farmers. Their sons, as verified by the research of Birand and Kışlalı,[45] had entered the army because of poverty, for lack of other opportunities. However, when we consider the sons of the martyrs, we find a different situation. The sons have not entered the military for financial reasons. Sons of martyrs, members of the TAF, apply to military school for "revenge" for the death of their fathers. Returning to the second result of the research, approximately 40% of officers or officer candidates were the sons of sergeants and civil servants. As Hale notes, "this is a kind of gathering men from

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[45] Here I refer not the sons of martyrs, but rather to the officers who were martyred themselves, who joined in the army in the 1980s.

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inside." (Hale, 1996: 80) This statistic verifies that the army is a demographically divided group, rather than a homogenous representation of any one group in society.

6.2.2. Perception of the Army and Military Service:

For these mothers, their first encounter with the state is during their sons' military service. They sent their sons to the state. Therefore, the army has a special place in their lives. Although women might have a few critiques about the army, they are expressed implicitly. On the other hand, they consider politicians to be both a source of the problem and a solution. Politicians are blamed for being reluctant to fix the families' problems and being addicted to status. On the other hand, the army is not discussed in the mothers' narratives. Almost all of the mothers claim that they do not have any problems with the army. Moreover, they add that commanders visit them on special days. Commanders ask them if they need anything. However, this respect for the army could arguably be influenced by the belief that if the army does not exist, Turkey would not exist, or because because the army is seen as the most trustworthy institution in Turkey. As Webb (2000) points out, in Turkey, as elsewhere, militaristic values are not simply imposed from above, but are an established part of the dominant culture and thus reproduced and perpetuated within civilian society via institutions and social practices of different kinds.

In that point, we are faced with a contradiction. Although the martyr's death is senseless for these mothers, the significance of military service remains the same. It can be argued that this is a natural result of the militarist structure of Turkey. Military service is important in the lives of young men, and to their families. Regardless of geographical or educational background, there is a widespread belief that a young man will not be ready for life until he does his military service. Marriages are typically postponed until after military service, and it is very hard to find a job before serving. Most of my interviewees mentioned that their sons would be getting married after military service. As it is examined in Chapter IV, nation-states initially had two main tools for creating citizens with a military spirit: compulsory military service and compulsory national education. These were two institutions through which the state had direct contact with its citizens. In Turkey, one sees prominent ceremonies for sending off young men to military service. Families and friends of the departing soldier would gather to shout "our soldier is the

greatest." The most popular version of this ceremony occurs at bus stations around the country with great family parties, sometimes with musical accompaniment in the form of *davul* (drum) and *zurna* (a wind instrument), the waving of Turkish flags, and a young boy hauled up and swaying on the shoulders of elder brothers and uncles. Navaro-Yashin (2002:119) argues that in the 1990s, these "farewell parties" for soldiers-to-be were transformed into "a show of veneration for the state. The state is exalted, celebrated, and reified in these soldiers' farewells." It is possible to observe a direct correlation between the increase in the numbers of martyrs and the growing popularity and intensity of these farewells.

As I argued in Chapter II, for citizens of the new Republic, military service was invented as a necessity. Part of this invention process required the mythologizing of the Turkish military spirit. Military service was redefined as a cultural and national characteristic. According to Vagts (cited in Altınay, 2004: 69), "if members of a whole nation are to be made soldiers, they must be filled with a military spirit in time of peace." I argue that the major success of this process has been the internalization the idea that the military has a place in civilian life. Although the significance of military service does not change after martyrdom in the mothers' narratives, the style of military service has changed. After martyrdom, these mothers are angry that their sons were sent to the conflict area and that only people from their own demographic groups die in the conflict. So after martyrdom, because of their newly obtained pride and prestige, as it is discussed in Chapter IV, they are still content to send other sons to fulfill the duty of military service, but not in the same way that the martyr served. Either they make use of the exemption that allows brothers of the martyrs to avoid military service if so desired, or they request that their remaining sons serve in western Turkey, not eastern Turkey. They expect the state to behave equally and fairly in assigning military service. In spite of the painful losses these mothers have experienced, as a result of militarist nationalist socialization, they still do not accept the idea that any healthy Turkish man would refuse to do military service. They are absolutely opposed to the idea of paid military service (*bedelli askerlik*) or conscientious objectors. As I explained above, military service is sanctified and an obligation for the nation. Mothers of martyrs believe that

Turkey is surrounded by enemies and needs protection. For example, Hatice (45, retired teacher, lost her son 7 years ago) says:

> Honestly, until the doomsday, there will be martyrs. Until the doomsday, we will sacrifice martyrs. However, of course, military service is a sanctified duty. Military service never ends. From the beginning of the world to the end of it, military service will go on.

> Valla kıyamet kopana kadar şehit olacak kıyamet kopana kadar da şehitler vereceğiz biz. Fakat tabi askerlik kutsal bir görev askerlik hiç bitmeyecek taa dünya kurulduğundan batana kadar askerlik devam edecek.

Moreover, Ayşe (57, housewife, lost her son 13 years ago) says:

> Paid military service… In this country, every healthy Turkish young man who benefits from this nation will fulfill his military service. Can paid soldiers protect the nation? Can they [paid soldiers] love the nation?

> Paralı askerliğe gelince… Bu ülkede bu ülkenin nimetlerinden faydalanan her sağlıklı Türk genci askerliğini yapacaktır. Paralı askerler vatanı sever mi korur mu hiç?

A wife of a martyr, Nazife (40, housewife, lost her husband 15 years ago) says:

> Conscientious objection? Is it possible? Everyone performs his duty. If the army does not exist, we cannot live here in safety. Everyone does fulfill his military service, his obligation for the nation. If she has a daughter, she will get married. If she has a son, he will be soldier. Military service is necessary.

> Vicdani ret mi öyle şey olur mu? Herkes görevini yapıcak. Askeriye olmazsa biz burda sağlamca yatabilirmiyiz? Herkes yapıcak askerliğini. Vatan görevini yapıcak. Kız ise kocaya vericek, oğlan ise askere vericek. Askerlik şart.

Although death is senseless, these mothers are willing to sacrifice other sons, if necessary. Of course, there are some mothers who are unwilling to send any further men from the family for military service,and they grow to favor the idea of paid military service. But for the majority, refusing to the fulfil one's military service is not acceptable.

In this vein, there is a view that our sense of self is constructed by, or is an 'effect of,' discourse. The key idea at the heart of this theoretical agenda is that, as Hall puts it, 'Identities are constituted within, not outside, representation' (Hall, 1996:4). According to this notion, the subject is a product, an embodiment, of a set of

discourses that construct her actions, beliefs, and her notion of self, within a social nexus of structures of knowledge, meaning, and power. The constructed identity of a mother of a martyr is the result of the differential incorporation of social categories in national missions as they are conceived in light of the routine management of conflict and of war. This differential incorporation has constituted social identities. These identities in turn are mobilized in collective action frameworks to advocate the war politics of the state. So the main two identities that are mobilized, the fighter's (martyr) role and motherhood, have not been successful in broadening the constituency of the peace movement.

In this vein, it can be claimed that, for mothers of martyrs, power relations within certain discourses produced a "truth" about what it meant to be a mother of a martyr. However, because this "truth" is socially constructed by the material and cultural practices of its subjects, it is open for reconfiguration. Thus, although the militarist/nationalist discourse is successful in constructing these mothers' point of views, there are contradictions. I argue that if leftist, socialist, or anti-militarist groups could manipulate these contradictions, these constructed identities of mothers of martyrs could constitute a pacifist social movement. In that sense, what do mothers of martyrs think about solutions to war?

6.3. Martyrdom and Perceptions of War and Peace:

Before examining the possible solutions, the women's personal understandings of war and violence should first be highlighted. These mothers do not send their sons away to the war, but rather to the state. When their sons died for their duty to the state, mothers did not perceive their sons' service negatively, as a kind of violence. On the contrary, these mothers are proud of their sons' military service, for the religious and nationalist reasons I discussed above. While considering their own sons' death, almost none of these mothers consider the possibility that their sons might have caused the death of someone else in conflict. According to these mothers, the only significant reality is the death of their sons. Mothers of martyrs have difficulty defining their experiences. The concept of war is not familiar to them. For example, Hatice (45, retired teacher, lost her son 7 years ago) defines war in this way:

I send my son, but we do not fight with Russia, or the USA, or any foreign country. If we fight, I would also go to the fight. I do as much as I can do. If I become a martyr, I will be glad. However, for now, I will send my son. Who do we fight? This is terrorism.

Şöyle gönderirdim. Biz Rusya ile savaşmıyoruz, biz Amerika ile de savaşmıyoruz yabancı bir ülke ile evet savaşmış olsak ben de giderim gücümün yettiği kadarı ine yapıyorsam yapayım şehit olurum ne mutlu bana. Ama şu anda ben nereye göndereyim. Kiminle savaşıyoruz biz? Terör işte bu ne bileyim.

Meanwhile, Güler (63, housewife, lost her son 10 years ago) points out:

I am 63 year old. If I am told: 'Let's take this gun. We have a fight, and are going to the war,' I would go to the war like the mothers Fadime or Ayşe, who fought during the Independence War. However, now, there are not war conditions and this is not war.

Ben 63 yaşındayım şimdi deseler ki bana gel şu tüfeği al savaşımız var savaşa gidiyoruz. Zamanında İstiklal savaşında savaşan Fadime ana, Ayşe analar gibi belime kuşağı da takınırım o savaşa da giderim ama şimdi savaş denecek bir şey yok savaş yok. (…) Kardeş kavgası işte.

As seen here, they do not have particular understanding of war. They do not perceive a particular conflict as war within their environment. War enters their mind with the death of their sons and is understood as a sole event: terrorism. As is seen in the quotation above, in the mothers' narratives, the notion of a "fight between brothers" is commonly mentioned. For them, this is nonsense, impossible. According to them, between Muslims and especially between individuals living in the same country, "war" is not possible. These mothers do not know the reasons for the war or the demands of the PKK. They do not know much more than the popular narratives of "foreign enemies".

In the mothers' narratives, the notion of "peace" is also missing. Already, they do not fully understand war. For most of these mothers, everyone is an enemy of Turkey: "The PKK is our enemy. Greece is our enemy. The USA is our enemy." When I asked them about the Kurdish issue, they immediately identified it with the PKK. They associated the PKK with "our enemies: The PKK is controlled by other countries. They use the PKK to weaken Turkey." As soon as I raised political issues in my questions, particularly the Kurdish issue, a long discussion followed on the strategic importance of Turkey and the animosity of Turkey's neighbors and other countries. Many mothers spoke as experts on the interests of, among others, France,

Syria, and the US in Turkey. Such foreign involvement is a significant aspect of the mothers' shared discourse on politics. Their ethnic and religious origins differ widely, but not their emphasis on this kind of political analysis. Mothers of martyrs are not afraid of Kurds speaking in their own language or having cultural rights, but they do not appreciate the use of violence in order to obtain these rights. Using violence against individuals within one's own country is identified as treason. They do not believe any solution is possible without first ending this violence. In order to end this violence, the PKK should be erased. The mothers see this as a duty of the statesmen, governments, or politicians. Even the army itself, the women say, cannot do anything without political initiative.

Therefore, as it is indicated at the beginning, some mothers have become members of organizations and associations. They have grown more interested in political agendas and politicians. They have become more sensitive and more informed about what is happening around them. Concepts such as the 'Kurdish issue,' 'terrorism,' 'war,' 'government,' and 'military' have been added in their vocabularies. Before martyrdom, the situation in southeastern Turkey would never have been a subject of their conversation, but now they have begun to talk about it. For many mothers, learning about who or what killed their sons was a way to grieve and heal, and an officer from the army or their husbands were the most qualified people to teach them about this issue. Behind this process, one can see the growing feelings of insecurity in mothers whose identities have been associated with threats, particularly in regard to southeastern Turkey. These mothers were learning one-sided information. They depend on patriarchal networks to provide information after the martyrdom just as much as they did before the martyrdom. Although they are members of organizations, their duties and responsibilities within the organizations remain limited to the private sphere. They cook in the organizations for fathers. They host guests from politics or the media. But they do not talk to the guests, apart from telling the story of their martyr. It is the responsibility of the men in the organizations, not the women, to comment or criticize. For example, a father of a martyr, Kemal (55, General Secretary of Association of Families of Martyrs, lost his son 15 years ago), says:

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Although mothers are not active in the organization, they do not leave us alone. They come and go to the organization. They became members. We have visitors from political parties. They [mothers] entertain the guests.

Aktif olmasalar dahi bizi yalnız bırakmıyorlar. Derneğimize geliyorlar efendim. Hem üye oluyorlar hem de burada olup bitenleri. Ziyaretçilerimiz oluyor. Partilerimizden geliyorlar. Onlarla birebir muhatap oluyorlar.

Mothers of martyrs in organizations, and those who are not members of any organizations, depend on traditional solidarity networks, on their husbands, and on their remaining sons to ask for their rights or resolve other issues related to the martyr. Consequently, both groups of mothers have become informed about their rights by men, whether at home, in associations, or in the army. They have gained the right to have a voice in the public sphere only through the intervention of their sons. This right to a public voice depends on their identity of "motherhood." They can not consider themselves as individuals with the consciousness to interfere in political phenomena, because their understanding remains limited to conventional roles due to the gender-based division of labor, as discussed in the introduction.

On the other hand, there is also often an emphasis on the active role that people play in constructing identities. It is assumed that the question of identity is an important one, but what is seen to be lacking is an "empirical account of how people actually construct their sense of self in real social relationships in the context of competing forces and interests" (cited in Hammond, http://myweb.lsbu.ac.uk/philip-hammond/1999b.html). In some situations, mothers are taken seriously and have real opportunities for shaping and changing the conditions of their lives. In this sense, for Young, subjects are not only conditioned by their positions in structured social relations; subjects are also agents (Young, 2002: 101). To be an agent means that a woman's identity is the product of her own interpretation and reconstruction of her history, as mediated through the cultural discursive context to which she has access (Young, 1990: 45). For Young (2002:101), we construct new roles and ways of life around these discursive contexts. Subjects are not only conditioned by their positions in structured social relations. Subjectivity is constructed through a continuous process, an ongoing constant renewal based on an interaction with the structure. Moreover, subjectivity is produced not by external ideas and values, but by one's

personal, subjective engagement in the practices, discourses, and institutions that lend value and meaning to the structure.

With this in mind, one further category of mothers of martyrs should be noted: single mothers, who are either divorced or widowed. They mostly live in cities. They are not members of the Association, but most have heard about it. In contrast to the other mothers of martyrs in my research, these single mothers are more comfortable talking about politics. Since they are single, they do not depend on any patriarchal networks in their family or in society. They are on their own and have to learn to deal with the world around them. But because they are mothers of martyrs, they cannot fully escape militarist socialization. Some of them do criticize both the army and politicians. For example, Hamdiye (60, cleaning woman, lost her son 15 years ago) points out:

> Being a mother of a martyr, well, is a policy of the state, a failure of the state. Military service is compulsory. I am not willing to send my son to the army. I am proud of my son's martyrdom. However, they [the state and the army] just use us [mothers of martyrs]. Mothers are emotional, but they are aware of what the state is doing. (...) Why can't the privates benefit from something? Only officers or petty officers can. Both privates and officers are martyrs of the state. Who is in the fire? Just privates, Mehmetcik, they are in the fire, aren't they? 'Mehmetcik, do this.' Mehmetcik was shot at first. At first, Mehmetcik has the accidents. Then, why do they classify my Mehmet, my Ahmet? For what did my son become a martyr? I tell you, for nothing. We do not have enemies. Governments change but their policies do not change. Everything is the same. They do not cheat us.

> Şehit annesi olmak şöyle bu devletin bir politikası devletin hatası bu benim elimde olmadan götürüyorlar. Oğlumunan gurur duyuyorum şehit olduğu için amma. Bizi kullanıyorlar sadece, sadece bizi kullanıyorlar. Anneler duygusal ama anneler hep biliyor onların yaptıklarını. (…) Neden erlere yok. Rütbelilere var sadece. Rütbeli devletin şehidi erde benim şehidim. Topun ucunda kim var asker var, Mehmetcik var değil mi? Hadi Mehmetcik git topun ucuna doğru git Mehmetcik vuruluyor en ilk önce, ilk önce kaza Mehmetciğin başına geliyor. Peki, benim Mehmedimi, Ahmedimi neden ayırıyorlar? Neden böyle dışlıyorlar? Ne için şehit oldu benim oğlum pisi, pisine şehit oldu. Karşımızda düşmanı göremiyoruz ki biz. Görünmeyen bir şey var o da hükümetler idare ediyor politikaları değişmiyor. Aynı konum aynı yani bizi kandıramazlar.

Moreover, in this context, there are also families of martyrs who say: *"Vatan sağ olsun demiyeceğiz,"* rather than the usual discourse of *"Vatan sağ olsun."* Thus,

for the first time in Turkey, those voices represent a new composition of private and public languages. The time has perhaps come for mothers, "new" kinds of mothers, individualists, feminists, and daring women, to enter the public arena in Turkey for their sons' sake, for their own sake, and for the sake of peace. However, the chances for this are slight, since these kinds of mothers are silenced and are not seen in public sphere. As a result, it is difficult to reach them. They, like proper mothers of martyrs, decide to mourn in proud silence.

As it is indicated in Chapter II, the discourse of the Turkish nation being a militaristic nation developed in the late Ottoman and early Republican periods. Women became a part of this discourse, not only as wives of military men, but also as mothers of the military nation, who themselves gave birth to warriors. As mothers and wives, they were responsible for "reproducing" and "supporting" the nation's military force. In that sense, women's agency is a designated agency, an agency by invitation only. I agree with McClintock's assertion that "nations are contested systems of cultural representation and limit and legitimize people's access to the resources of the nation-state" (1997: 89). One of the important discursive moves in limiting this access may be the designation of women's agency as one that is constituted by invitation only. The agency of mothers of martyrs, in short, is simply seen as the passive offspring of male agency and the structural necessity of war. As guests, women never fully belong to the national center and are always asked to go along with the rules of their (male) hosts. Related to this argument is Nükhet Sirman's point that the formation of the "modern Turkish family," headed by the men, signals a desire to construct "all men as equal representatives of households, while women are presented as "passive and obedient" (Sirman, 2001: 174). In other words, Sirman argues that modern structures, like the nation, construct their own patriarchies, building on existing forms of patriarchy, as well as inventing new forms. As the above narratives highlight, "mother of martyr" is one such construction.

The above narratives have made immensely valuable contributions to our understanding of the relations between women, nationalism, and war, and of the construction of militarism through notions of motherhood and masculinity and their

impact on women's lives. They have also produced key analytical frameworks and tools through which women's experiences and the relevance of martyrdom have been approached. This approach often assumes a direct link between women's agency and women's participation in the public sphere, and understands the discourse of war as potentially empowering, especially when linked to the support of nationalist movements. This research on the militarization of mothers' lives, be it militarization through direct relations with the military, as seen in the example of mothers of martyrs who were members of TAF, or militarization through family associations, relied on the concept of women's agency and empowerment. However, I argue that mothers' presence in the public sphere or politics does not seem to change the masculine nature of these institutions; nor does it contribute to a general advancement of the mothers' social positions. It does not tear away the legitimizing camouflage that has sustained martyrdom as a symbol of national pride and security.

As a result of this research, I claim that, while mothers' roles do change in war, even dramatically, and mothers do take on new responsibilities within the household, community, or organizations, war is actually used to preserve gender roles and order in Turkey. War, martyrdom, and nationalism become means of preserving, achieving, and reclaiming dominant masculinity as well as dominant gender hierarchies. From the interviews, it is seen that as a consequence of being a mother of a martyr, these women gain the right to become visible, publicly known, and to participate in the public sphere. However, they use this right not as an individual or as a woman, but by depending on their newly gained identity of national motherhood. In short, with their sons' martyrdom, they have begun to exist in the public sphere for the first time, gaining public respect. However, this transformation, from ordinary housewives to mothers of martyrs, does not transform mothers into actively participant citizens. They do not question what happened, or why. They are seen in the public sphere, but not as individuals. They are seen as mournful mothers, speaking of the glories of their sons, both in the past and at the present.

When we talk about such contested concepts as 'war,' 'the solution,' or 'peace,' the phenomena are represented by the concepts that are being debated. Thus,

these concepts only make sense as they are developed within discourse. We find it difficult to accept that "political objects" are not there. So, as Ahıska (2006:21) said, I think it is necessary to develop a political style that allows those who have witnessed violence firsthand, such as the mothers of martyrs, to break its power. The problem is that women invoke the other discourses; references to God's will or let the men in the family/the army talk instead of themselves. Those discourses make them powerless and do not let them canalize the trauma they experienced as a political movement questioning the war and violence. As it is showed in school books in previous chapter, father is the one who makes decisions. By this notion of family, it places the issues about mothers in private sphere, out of politics. It does not change apolitical structure of motherhood. In that family, nation, with the notion of mothers of martyrs, status of women are glorified by making base of identity of women biological, in other words, by making identity of women out of politics. In that sense, this represents ideological ambivalence of the motherhood. Depending on the conditions, motherhood is either sanctified or degrading. In the case of mothers of martyrs, these mothers are sanctified in double ways. On one hand, they are nationalist icon of the war. On the other hand, they are sanctified in religion by being rewarded with heaven. Moreover, motherhood can be shaped as a counter-discourse against militarism or the government.

For instance, when women have organized themselves into groups with a political purpose, we have witnessed significant advancement in the construction of civil society and politics such as in Argentina. Tens of thousands of Latin American mothers have had family members abducted - "disappeared" - by death squads in recent years. What can these women do in their despair when their governments ignore their requests for help? In 1976, a number of Argentinean mothers began a silent protest every week in front of the government offices as a way to release their despair. Wearing black dresses and white kerchiefs, they carried photographs of their missing loved ones and marched around the plaza. They wore a white rose bud if they hoped their loved one was still alive and a red rose bud for the dead. From Argentina the march of the mothers spread to El Salvador and other countries (Fisher, 1995: 1-15).

In this sense, when I asked these mothers about what they do think about the peace for the conflict in the East and Southeast of Turkey, they got surprised because until now, they have never been asked what they think about. Mostly, instead of these women, their husbands deal with the problems. As a result, concept of peace does not make sense for their minds. When I asked the mothers to suggest solutions for the conflict in southeastern Turkey, they said that the solution should come from the political institutions. But the lack of a connection between political institutions and the women makes the words of the mothers "apolitical" (Sancar, 2001). While the mothers' words do show a true search for an understanding of a solution, they do not hold the power or responsibility to actualize such a solution. Their identity as mothers provides them the ability to speak in the public sphere, but only about their sons'. Apart from that topic, mothers remain passive and powerless in the decision-making process. The politicization of mothers reproduces the "victimhood" of women insofar as it fails to cooperate with a political movement against violence, militarism, and exploitation.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

The main objective of this thesis is to understand how mothers who lost their sons during the conflicts in East and Southeast of Turkey articulate martyrdom of their sons with nationalism, religion and motherhood; how these women who lost their sons, as a woman, and as a mother on the top of it, define and express themselves and their experiences after martyrdom. Before their sons are martyrized, these women were ordinary housewives, with the death of their sons, they get a new identity: being a mother of a martyr. In this thesis, it is examined that what being a mother of a martyr means for these women. Moreover, this study attempts to examine certain perceptions and assumptions of these women about nationalism, the state, religion, war and peace after martyrdom. For this aim, this study is based on interviews with mothers who do not realize that they virtually live in a war, on motherhood, war, politics, and peace. Therefore, this research is the study to grasp how discourses of nationalism and religion shape this new identity: being a mother of a martyr. While these women were ordinary housewives before martyrdom, after their sons' death, their narratives as mothers of martyrs are cultivated by discourses of nationalism and religion. Consequently, this study has been an attempt to examine if it is possible for these mothers to develop an anti-war discourse as happened for examples in the world.

In that sense, the similarities among the mothers' narratives of pre-martyrdom lives, their relations with their families, the army and the organizations and post-martyrdom experiences refer not only to effects of nationalism and martyrdom, but, perhaps more importantly, reveal the intricacies of the life worlds in which these women formulated their identities as mothers of martyrs. The narratives all begin with articulations of the sense of being a mother of a martyr. While these mothers were waiting for their sons coming back home, they come across the sudden death of their sons. As a result, they find this death as senseless. In that point, nationalism and religion placate this death and its trauma on mothers in two ways.

On one way, nationalism claims that their sons did not die for nothing. It is told that their sons died for the most significant value, for nation. As it is discussed in second chapter, Turkish nation is constructed as military nation. For that reason, it is accepted that every Turk is born soldier. From the beginning, this sudden death gets a legitimation. Since Turkish nation is a military nation by its nature. It is normal for its sons to have lives in uniforms. So for these mothers, martyrdom was a patriotism strengthened by myths of heroism to idealize the death. In that sense, they express themselves as mothers of martyrs because in nationalist discourse, these mothers are glorified. The discourse of martyrdom upheld rhetoric of integration with the nationalist discourse and advocated superiority among other women, in the family and in the society. More interesting thing is that although Alevi thought has different understanding about death and afterlife as it is explained in the fourth chapter, Alevi mothers' narratives display the similarities with Sunni mothers. They also internalize the martyrdom culture. Martyrs are not accepted as death since for Alevi thought; death is not accepted as an end. Moreover, with martyrdom, sudden deaths of their sons get a meaning. For Alevi mothers, their sons died for the sake of the nation that is the most significant status that a person can achieve in a society.

On the second way, religion describes those who died during a war as martyrs and they are rewarded with heaven. So as discourse of nationalism does, religion gives a meaning to this sudden death. Sunni mothers internalize the religious part and they are silenced with the idea that their sons and their families are rewarded with heaven which is the most crucial status that a Muslim can obtain in her life. As a result, they transform their self-identity from ordinary housewives to mothers of martyrs. Hence, with so much to say, their experiences which provided these women with a sense of being respectful, recognizable, and exalted mothers whose subservience was required by the state, the army and the religion, their involvement within nationalism was not to come as a surprise.

Findings of this study plainly demonstrate that these narratives prove that these mothers transform their self-identity from being a housewife to be a mother of a martyr as a new identity. However, for my interviewees, this new identity has affected the existing subjectivity. In other words, while these mothers, Sunni or Alevi, have freedom and emancipation while they were ordinary housewives. After

the loss of the loved sons, they are named as mothers of martyrs by nationalism and religion. Therefore, I can say that these mothers' enlistment within the nationalism and martyrdom also did not change the boundaries of the hierarchical gender roles with which they were traditionally faced. The appropriation of a mother of a martyr identity meant new space for them in public sphere, in the state, and the army level, an unprecedented respect from community, and new friendship among mothers of martyrs. Before they were only "ordinary" housewives, with martyrdom, they have become "mothers of nation" known by everyone and respected by statesmen and commanders.

However, nationalist discourse does not only produce a new morality but also individualizes experience of mothers by putting a strong emphasis on the notion of responsibility. The new world of this motherhood had restrictive rules alongside this new identity. This new identity was enhanced by the army, the martyrdom and familial or organizational networks which they are in. As a result, they are restricted with the new rules such as not to question the process or not to talk to somebody who are not accepted as appropriate by the army. While it is expected from these mothers to question the process since they are the ones, who experienced the pain, it is easily seen that their narratives are curtailed by the men in the army, organization or in the family. Moreover, their voices are silenced because of the fear that they would lose the rights they had such as the salary since after the loss of their sons, most of the families economical status got worse than the before martyrdom or they think that they would disrespect the prestige of the martyr provided by both nationalism and religion.

And their private choices were to be encapsulated within boundaries of conventional gendered roles. In this sense, the martyrdom took the grounds of the personal, and placed it within the restrictions of the nationalism. In other words, the limits of the mothers of martyrs' private lives were encompassed not only by the prestige and responsibility of martyrdom which had to accommodate a prideful but a silent life as a mother of a martyr, but also confined women's identities and lives within the norms advocated by the army and the state, and thus their conception of "a mother of a martyr." There is a relation based on resonance between what is represented and its representation. Resonation can literally be defined as a sound

produced when air is present. Here I have accepted the sound as being a mother of a martyr, and the air as the social, religious and nationalist dynamics, which in a way paved the way for the rise of mothers of martyrs and shaped them. From such a perspective, I have tried to display how discourse of martyrdom and nationalism gave peculiar meanings to or made sense of identity that these mothers experienced.

In that sense, identity of mothers of martyrs was a hybrid site where different discourses and traditions revealed themselves. It both imported certain properties from religion (discourse of the martyrdom) and developed its peculiarity from traditions inherited from Turkey's history. The similarities between those narratives appear in the self-representation of the interviewees themselves, which was made through reflections of the nationalism and through the usage of concepts of the religion used to characterize the martyrdom. Within this framework, while the metaphors of heroes, martyrs function to represent the death of loved sons as martyr, representing themselves as being mothers of martyrs, as being socially and religiously proud, these subjects are in a continual search to face and overcome that sudden death of loved sons since death of their sons are accepted as meaningless. In that sense, the martyrdom is presented as necessitating the development of a collective consciousness about the integrity and unity of the nation and sanctified by the religion.

As it is discussed in the second and fourth chapters of thesis, martyrs are glorified by both nationalism and religion by appealing to metaphors of religious values that also have nationalist connotations, describing the martyrdom as a prideful and sanctified event. Experiences of my interviewees indicate that being a mother of a martyr has some of the same characteristics of the discourses of the military, nationalism, and religion in Turkey. It is easily noticed in narratives of mothers that narratives of mothers of martyrs are the reflections of major discourses of nationalism and religion in Turkey. The interpretation of the narratives of mothers reveals the continuities of discourses about motherhood of nationalism, religion and culture in Turkey. An analysis of the narratives in the preceding chapters proves that the discourses which infiltrate these mothers' lives have a historicity which macro frameworks ranging from kinship networks to discourses of nationalism.

The continuities between mothers of martyrs' sense of mother and that of the religion and nationalism are also connected to the notions of womanhood as formulated by the ideologues of the early Turkish Republic as it is discussed in chapter III. The Turkish modernization project, which deemed the state the father, and citizens the children of the state, also formulated a new identity of Turkish woman as the hardworking, patriotic mothers of the Republic. Therefore, as this discussion cannot be separated from the debate on the Turkish modernization process, I have briefly touched upon women issue shaped by the modernization and Westernization effort. As soon as we have entered the realm of the modernization project, we encounter not only with a great deal of complexity and ambiguity, but also with parallel discussions on other complicated concepts such as formation of gender and social hierarchies. Here I have not tried to draw a comprehensive picture but a line, which can give us insights about the symbolic representation of the women as mothers. I have tried to underline the meaning of a woman who was put on the center by the Turkish nationalist narratives and have also drawn attention to the relation between the nation and motherhood.

Because of this placation constructed by the martyrdom in both religious and nationalist ways, mothers have difficulties in transposing that pain to a political perspective and stance. In other words, for some women, "motherhood" identity provides them to have a legitimate say in public sphere. However, this motherhood identity provides facility for mothers to speak about only their victimhood about their sons' death in public sphere. Apart from this, mothers stay passive, powerless and inefficient in decision making process. Politicization of mothers of martyrs reproduces the "victimhood" of women as far as it fails to cooperate with a political movement against violence, militarism and exploitation. Although to a certain extent they continue to see themselves in the position of mothers of nation, on the one hand they admit that there were problematic aspects in their relations with the politicians; on the other hand mothers do not search for a political language that will enable them to establish the links between the present needs and problems of families of martyrs. However, they cannot open unconventional ways for problematizing not only the martyrdom itself but also the current problems of peace; they also cannot direct

attention to the structural impediments present both after the martyrdom and the development of peace at the present.

There are four major reasons for my interviewees' failure to cooperate with a political movement against violence, militarism, and exploitation. The first reason is the patriarchal/militarist structure of society in Turkey. As explained in previous chapters, Turkey has a patriarchal society in which women are subject to men within the family or the society. They are mostly seen as the "second sex." Because of this, mothers in my interviews are not usually asked for their opinions on state or family issues. They let men decide for them. Consequently, when their son is martyered, they accept the grief and mourn silently, not questioning why. Furthermore, Turkey was constructed as a military nation during the early years of Republic. If a nation grows from such militarist roots, then it is only normal that every Turk is a "born soldier." In this sense, all women have a national duty of being mothers of soldiers for the sake of nation. When a son is martyred, it is the mother's duty to accept the death with pride. That's why, in Turkey, mothers often apply henna on a man before he leaves for his military service. Henna has three symbolic applications in Anatolia: 1) for sheep, to signify their closeness to God before they are sacrificed; 2) for brides, to signify their closeness to their new husbands; and 3) for soldiers, to signify their closeness to their nation, and their willingness to sacrifice themselves.

The second reason is the culture of martyrdom that exists within Turkey and within Islam. According to the Qu'ran, martyrs do not die and are rewarded with heaven. Mothers gain prestige from this holy event, and they cannot question their sons' death without questioning the religion. The discourse of martyrdom gives meaning to the loss of their sons and is based on religious faith that the deaths are, at the end, God's will. As a result, in Islam, individuals cannot question the reasons and consequences of such an event. On the other hand, this death is equally significant in nationalist discourse, because the citizens of Turkey owe their safety and freedom to these holy martyrs. When mothers try to question the deaths of their sons, they must simultaneously question the legitimacy of the nation-state, because, for these mothers, the state is perceieved as a father figure, as I discussed before.

Third, mothers of martyrs are not part of already existing social movements such as Saturday Mothers. As Nükhet Sirman (cited in Çağlayan: 2007: 15)

highlights, we should not forget that "any state of belonging, whether ethnic identity or gender, cannot turn to a political category by itself. This transformation of social or political movements can occur under the circumstances of a particular life experience with its own discourse and practices. Moreover, this transformation process is open-ended; that is, open to new transformations." For instance, there is already a Turkish social movement against the invasion of Iraq. Within this discourse, mothers are politicized and become active political actors in society. There is has been a "Kurdish question" in Turkey since the 1980s, and Saturday Mothers campaign for a solution to this problem (Sancar, 2001: 33).

Finally, as a fourth reason, it seems that the discourse of mothers has long been shaped by right-wing political groups and nationalist movements. The analyses of women's agency in and against war should be the subject of studies of anti-war activism. In Turkey, however, the impact of changes in mothers' roles during war has not been examined by leftists or anti-militarist groups. These kinds of groups should provide a platform that allows these mothers to discuss and declare their problems and grievances as individuals, not as proud mothers of martyrs, dependent on victimhood to "earn" a public voice. In these policies, politicization of mothers shouldn't be based on motherhood. Relying solely on motherhood to justify women's interest in peace can be a poor organizing tool. Politicians and nationalists can reverse this politicization as it is seen in the example of mothers of martyrs. Moreover, discourses of nationalism and religion dominate the mothers and their potentials. Focusing on motherhood as the primary traits of women actually reinforces the military ideology which requires women to be submissive and rewards men for being aggressive. Although this ideology values "feminine" qualities, it is essentially a conservative one, which preserves existing social relationships. Mothers are replaced as assistant for warriors of the nation (assistants to the men) and by the discourse of victimhood of mothers; they are removed from the mechanisms of decision making and represented by the men in organization, in the army or in the family.

In that vein, it can be said that war and militarism may be "men's business," but women are undeniably affected by it, whether as prostitutes outside a military base, victims of a bombing attack, or mothers whose sons became martyrs.

Traditional discussions of militarism and war deny women's specific experiences and reinforce existing power dynamics. Furthermore, as a gender analysis examines the very strong links between militarism and patriarchy it enables women to name their specific oppression and to make the connections between interrelated institutional forms of oppression. By examining militarism's role in socializing people to accept violence as natural and patriarchy as normal, we see, too, that "gender systems of domination and subordination are not fixed, but, rather, are constructed through socialization and perpetuated through unjust political and economic structures." (Burke, http://www.wilpf.int.ch/publications/womenmilitarism.htm) Changing this process of socialization is a daunting task, but it is not without hope. We must look at gender stereotypes and see how these values and behaviors get passed along from generation to generation. Once we can identify these processes we are able to work for change. That's why, as much as we need to examine outlook of some institutions for militarism and nationalism, we also need to grasp experiments, emotions and narrative of those women in order to create more efficient feminist policies representing a new composition of private and public languages of the feminine and masculine voices and modes of being in today's nationalist discourse in Turkey. The time perhaps come for mothers, new kinds of mothers, individualist, feminist, and daring, to enter the public arena in Turkey for their sons' sake, for their own sake, and for the sake of future.

Because of the limitation of this thesis, there are related issues untouched in order not to be out scope of this research. For that reason, for further researches, I can suggest that it could be examined impacts of different political discourses such as CHP (Republican's People's Party), MHP (Nationalist Movement Party) or conservative, Islamist parties on these mothers' sense of identity.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF INTERVIEWEES

Names [46]	Relation to Martyr	Marital Status	Education	Profession Occupation	City	Religious Status	Rank Of Martyr	Date of Martyrdom
Perihan	Mother	Married	illiterate	Farmer	Yazıkışla/ Havza/ Samsun	Sunni	Private	1999
Hacer	Mother	Married	Abandonment From Secondary School 1	Ex-Farmer, Housewife	Suluova/ Amasya	Alevi	Professional Sergeant	1996
Geyfer	Mother	Widow	illiterate	Farmer	Dibacı/ Merzifon/ Amasya	Alevi	Petty Officer	1992
Sıdıka	Mother	Married	Abandonment From Primary School 3	Ex-Farmer, Housewife	Eymir/ Merzifon/ Amasya	Alevi	Private	1997
Fatma	Wife	Widow	University Student	Student	Merzifon/ Amasya	Sunni	Private	2001
Yurdagül	Mother	Married	illiterate	Ex-Farmer, Housewife	Merzifon/ Amasya	Alevi	Private	2003
Hatice	Mother	Married	Graduated from Teacher Institute	Retired Teacher	Ankara	Alevi	First Lieutenant	2001
Hamit	Father	Married	High school	Retired General Manager in Forest Ministry, Second Chairman of Association of Families of Martyrs	Ankara	Alevi	Army Officer	1998
Şükrü	Father	Married	Graduated from Junior Technical College	Retired Petty officer, Chairman of Ass.of Families of Martyrs	Ankara	Sunni	First Lieutenant	1995

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[46] Names are pseudo names.

Names	Relation to Martyr	Marital Status	Education	Profession Occupation	City	Religious Status	Rank Of Martyr	Date of Martyrdom
Birgül	Mother	Widow	Primary School	Ex-Farmer, Housewife	Merzifon/ Amasya	Sunni	Private	1994
Sakibe	Wife	Widow	Primary School	Housewife	Merzifon/ Amasya	Alevi	Professional Sergeant	1994
Meryem	Mother	Married	Primary School	Housewife	Suluova/ Amasya	Sunni	Petty Officer	1994
Ayşe	Mother	Married	Primary School	Housewife	Merzifon/ Amasya	Alevi	Private	1995
Nazife	Wife	Widow	Primary School	Housewife	Merzifon/ Amasya	Sunni	Petty Officer	1993
Asiye	Mother	Married	Primary School	Housewife	Merzifon/ Amasya	Sunni	Petty Officer	2001
Kemal	Father	Married	High School	Building Contractor, General Secratary of Ass. Of Families of Martyrs	Ankara	Sunni	Second-Lieutenant	1993
Güler	Mother	Married	Primary School	Housewife	Ankara	Sunni	Professional Sergeant	1998
Ayşe Naciye	Mother	Widow	Primary School	Housewife, Founder of Ass.of Families of Martyrs	Ankara	Sunni	Second-Lieutenant	1994
Hamdiye	Mother	Divorced	Primary School	Charwoman	Ankara	Sunni	Private	1993

APPENDIX II

IN DEPTH-INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Have you ever worked outside of family in your life?

If yes, what kind of work is it?

2. Why did you quit this job?

3. Do you work for income in the family?

4. How much income do you have in total?

I.   SOCIAL SOLIDARITY NETWORKS

5. How long have you lived in here?

6. Where did you come from?

7. Why did you choose to live here?

8. Do you have relatives here?

9. Who do you ask for advise for example, when you have material problems?

10. Do you have any aid from NGOs or the state?

    If yes, for what do you need an aid?

11. Who do you ask for advise for non-economical problems?

12. Who do you get in touch with in your daily life?

13. Do you get in touch with other families of martyrs?

14. How often do you go to the cemetery?

15. Which issues do you talk with other mothers of martyrs on the cemetery?

16. Are there any differences in the attitudes of other people who are not families of martyrs before and after martyrdom? How and Why?

17. What do you expect from them?

18. Are there any people who you cannot get in touch with? And Why?

19. Do you have any eastern friends?

If yes, do you think that they are different from you? What do you think about these people? Are there any families of martyrs from these people?

II. POLITICAL RELATIONS:

20. Were you interested in politics before your son was martyrized? How did you express your intrests or critiques in daily news, and politics? (by television channels, newspapers, political parties or organizations)

21. Has your interest in politics changed after martyrdom? How do you express your intrests or critiques in daily news, and politics after martyrdom?

22. Do you vote? Does your husband or organization affect your voting process?

23. Have you changed the party that you vote before martyrdom after martyrdom? Why?

24. Are you member of any organization, NGOs or a political partyr? If yes, how often do you participate in activities of them? Why and when did you become member of them? Did you want to be member of them? Or was it your husband initiative?

25. Is there any community that you belong? What is that?

26. Are you familiar with Association of Families of Martyrs?

27. If yes, when did you become member of it? And Why? What is your status in the association? Whose initiative was it to become member of association?

28. Do you voluntarily participate in the activities of the association or does your husband want you to participate?

29. Do you think if Association of Families of Martyrs represents you?

30. What do you think about this association?

31. What do you think about the state? What kind of responsibilities should the state have according to you? What do you expect from the state?

32. Do you think if the state shoul have a limitation in its activities and responsibilities?

33. Do citizens have responsibilities against the state?

34. What are your rights as a citizen?

35. what do you think if military service is a right or a duty?

36. What do you think about military service?

37. What do you think about conscientious objection?

38. What do you think about paid military service?

39. What do you think about conflicts in the East and Southeast of Turkey?

40. What do you think about peace?

III. RELATION BETWEEN MOTHER AND SON:

41. Where were your son appointed and what was his rank?

42. How was the martyrdom of your son told you?

43. How do your thoughts and emotions change from the first time you heard your son's martyrdom untill now? What do you think about martyrdom of your son?

44. If you had another son, would you send them to the army? Or Will you send your other sons to the army, too?

45. For what do you think that your son died?

46. How was your relation with your son?

IV. PERCEPTION OF MOTHERHOOD AND WOMANHOOD:

47. How do you perceive motherhood and womanhood?

48. Do you think whether there is "good" and "bad" mother?

49. What do you think about sending girls to school?

50. What do you think about working women?

51. What are the rights of women in the society?

52. What does it mean to be a mother of a martyr?

53. Does being a mother of a martyr change your points of view about the motherhood or womanhood?

54. How does the loss of your son change your life?

55. How do you cope with the loss of your son?