

MOURNING FOR THE DISAPPEARED: THE CASE OF THE
SATURDAY MOTHERS

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MOURNING FOR THE DISAPPEARED: THE CASE OF THE
SATURDAY MOTHERS

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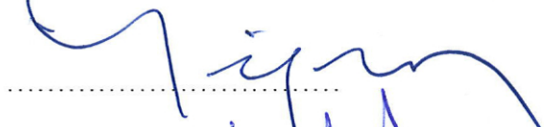
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ABSTRACT

MOURNING FOR THE DISAPPEARED: THE CASE OF THE SATURDAY MOTHERS

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The mourning process in the case of a normal death is different from one in the case of a disappeared person. The women who have disappeared relatives cannot naturally experience mourning since they lack the basic requirements for mourning, such as having a body to bury, carrying out funeral rituals, and having a grave to visit. This study looks at the mourning process of women, whose relatives have disappeared, focusing on the organization of the Saturday Mothers in Turkey. The study explains the theoretical framework from psychology to understand the meaning of mourning and the concept of ambiguous loss. Two cases, the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina and the Bosnian women are given as examples. The definition of New Social Movements and their relation to emotions are examined, because the grief and anger the relatives of the disappeared felt lead them to establish a new organization, the Saturday Mothers. Finally the case study of the Saturday Mothers is conducted through in-depth interviews with six women participating in the Saturday Mothers. Selected quotations from the interviews are analyzed through narrative analysis and there are references to the first three chapters to comprehensively discuss the Saturday Mothers.

Keywords: the Saturday Mothers, disappeared people, mourning, ambiguous loss, the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, new social movements

ÖZ

KAYIPLARA KARŞI YAS: CUMARTESİ ANNELERİ ÜZERİNE BİR ARAŞTIRMA

Kürüm, Şehitnur

MA, Kültürel Çalışmalar Bölümü

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Normal bir ölüm durumundaki yas süreci kayıp birinin olduğu durumundan farklıdır. Kayıp akrabası olan kadınlar yas tutmanın esas gereklilikleri olan gömülecek ve cenazesi gerçekleştirilecek bir bedene sahip olmak ve ziyaret edilecek bir mezara sahip olmaktan yoksun oldukları için doğal bir yas yaşayamazlar. Bu çalışma, Türkiye’de bir kuruluş olan Cumartesi Anneleri’ne odaklanıp, yakınları kayıp olan kadınların yas sürecini incelemektedir. Çalışma, belirsiz kayıp kavramının ve yasin anlamını kavramak için psikolojiden teorik bir çerçeve sunmaktadır. İki vaka, Arjantin’deki de Plaza de Mayo Anneleri ile Bosna’daki kadınları örnek olarak vermektedir. Yeni Sosyal Hareketler’in tanımı ve hareketlerin duygular ile ilişkisini incelemektedir çünkü kayıp yakınlarının hissettiği keder ve öfke onları yeni bir kuruluş olan Cumartesi Anneleri’ni oluşturmaya itmiştir. Son olarak, Cumartesi Anneleri’ne katılan altı kadın ile yapılan derinlemesine görüşmelerle Cumartesi Anneleri üzerine bir çalışma yapılmaktadır. Söyleşi analizi metodu ile görüşmelerden seçilmiş alıntılar analiz edilmektedir ve kapsamlı bir şekilde Cumartesi Anneleri’ni tartışmak için ilk üç bölüme atıflar yapılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Cumartesi Anneleri, kayıplar, yas, belirsiz kayıp, Plaza de Mayo Anneleri, yeni sosyal hareketler

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

12 o'clock each Saturday, a number of people, mostly women, gather in Galatasaray Square, Istanbul, Turkey. What brings them together is their pain. Their sons, husbands, fathers, grandfathers, brothers, and uncles have disappeared. After the families of the disappeared come to the square, they sit in silent demonstration. Farther back, there are other people who are not the relatives of the disappeared but volunteers mostly from the Human Rights Association of Turkey who have come to support the struggle of the relatives. While sitting, each family member holds their missing children's photograph, the only reminder left behind. The families also hold flowers as if visiting a grave. The women among the participants wear white headscarves in their own style reflecting their identity, symbolizing peace. The volunteers are also holding photographs of the disappeared from families who cannot or do not come Galatasaray. They try to remember all the disappeared people. They also make reference to all cases of disappearances in Turkey even though the main focus of the participants is the disappearances that occurred in the 90s. Each week is dedicated to one of the disappeared. That person's relatives and friends talk about him respectfully. They discuss their feelings, experiences, and difficulties in their lives after the disappearance of their loved ones. During the speeches, other families and volunteers sit in a silence. The goals of the demonstration are to commemorate the disappeared, to proclaim these disappeared persons are real people who had their own lives and families before they disappeared.

They are not created characters. Last but not least, their aim is to call the government to account. They end their speeches with their desire to learn the fate of their missing children and demand justice from the State. After the families, one of the volunteers working for the Human Rights Association announces the press statement of that week, and then the demonstration, which lasts approximately half an hour, ends. The participants are both the relatives of the disappeared including both women and men, volunteers who are concerned about human rights, and individuals working in the Human Rights Association. For this reason, they wish to call themselves *the Saturday People* as they gather at Galatasaray each Saturday. However, the media and other people call them the mothers, *the Saturday Mothers* since mostly mothers of the disappeared are seen as the prominent figures and this organization takes the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina as a model. The glorified and respected meaning of mother leads the participants to acknowledge this name even though they continue to call themselves the Saturday People during each demonstration at Galatasaray.

The case of the disappeared is not an isolated simple problem. It is related to Kurdish identity, the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party), a native language problem, and the southeast problem of Turkey. However this study focuses closely on the disappeared people and their relatives' mourning process participating in the Saturday Mothers. This study centrally argues the mourning process for the disappeared is different from a normal mourning process. The study analyses the mourning process and grief of the relatives, which lead them to create and pioneer a new social movement in Turkey. In order to elicit these points, six in-depth personal interviews were conducted. This limited sample consisting of six women were active participants in the Saturday Mothers. Qualitative narrative analysis is the core methodology while analyzing the selected sample quotations from the interviews. To access these women, I participated in the weekly demonstrations of the Saturday Mothers in Galatasaray sixteen times. I contacted one of the volunteers participating in the weekly demonstrations and received several names who could accept to be interview by me. I found one of them, Hatice, and asked her if I could interview her for my dissertation. She kindly

accepted and I interviewed her for two and half hours in YAKAYDER, another association for the relatives of the disappeared. The second woman I interviewed was Nurhan, whom I met in one of weekly demonstrations at Galatasaray. But she does not know Turkish; her son who knows Turkish very well translated my questions to her and her replies to me. I interviewed her at the end of that week's demonstration at Galatasaray. This interview did not last as long as Hatice's interview. I met the third woman, Zehra, during another demonstration, and she gave me her number. I called her and went her house in order to conduct an interview with her. The interview went quite fine and lasted approximately two hours. Later I continued to participate in the weekly demonstrations of the Mothers in Galatasaray. I tried to contact other women however the head of the volunteers in the Human Rights Association demanded I do not speak with the relatives alone. I was told I should have gotten permission from the Human Rights Association first, even though I had mentioned about the woman I had contacted earlier who gave me the names to speak to. I realized there was a manner of political control over Saturday Mothers, held by the Human Rights Association. While trying to contact the Mothers, I witnessed members of the association refrained from contact with the Saturday Mothers who appeared without their control, indicating they did not easily confide in individuals who were not involved in their association. Furthermore, the reason the association did not confide in me could be I do not fit into the usual profile of academic women, as I was wearing a headscarf. They could have kept away from me because they might have thought I could not really empathize with the Saturday Mothers.

Later, I met Hamide whose husband has disappeared for a long time. A few weeks later, I tried my luck and went to Galatasaray. I conducted the interview at a nearby café on that day. But this number was not enough for my study. At Galatasaray on another Saturday I talked to Melda whose brother disappeared. She gave an appointment, and a few days later we met in the place of Human Rights Association and made an interview. I went to Galatasaray and I saw a young woman, Mutlu, who was a relative of one of the disappeared. I asked her whether or not she would to talk to me. She

kindly accepted and we began to talk immediately while the participants were dispersing. In short, I encountered some problems conducting the interviews critical for my thesis and accessing the women whose relatives disappeared.

Concerning anonymity of the interviews, at first I was not sure about giving the name of the women I interviewed. I always asked the interviewees whether they would like to be declared by their real names or not at the beginning of the interviews. All of them told me that declaring their real names was not problem for them as they believe everyone, particularly the State officials, know their names, families, and missing relatives. But even so, I decided not to give their real names while mentioning their experiences and giving their speeches, and thus I gave nicknames to them.

The mother tongue of the women I interviewed is not Turkish, it is Kurdish. I conducted five interviews in Turkish because those women knew Turkish. Only in one interview, I received help from the woman's son. In the fourth chapter of the study, quotations from the interviews are written in English, but I leave the original version in Turkish in the footnote for interested readers. However, even though most of the interviews were conducted in Turkish, I realized these women could not express their experiences and feelings in Turkish very well, as it is not their first language. While talking during the interviews, the interviewees somehow made translations of their speech by themselves. For this reason, the translation of the speeches in English should be regarded as the translation of a translation.

The first chapter, beyond the introduction chapter, presents the mourning process from the psychology literature. After a normal case of death, a process, namely mourning, and its stages are examined. I also explain the terms relating to mourning such as bereavement and grief. Within the definition of mourning, I mention about complicated and unresolved situations to understand what the Saturday Mothers acutely experience since they do not encounter a tangible form of death. In relation to this, I focus on the term ambiguous loss, which perfectly describes the predicament of the Saturday Mothers.

The second chapter looks at new social movements (NSMs) from the sociology literature. I give the definition of a new social movement while making comparisons to older in terms of their basic goals, actors, organization, problems they take on, and preferred tactics. I mention about collective movements and changes in culture and identity that NSMs stem. I briefly talk about the role of NSMs in society. And finally, I consider emotions as initiators of NSMs as I explain the role of emotions in NSMs in detail.

The third chapter concentrates on similar cases to the Saturday Mothers in the world. First, I mention the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina, whom the Saturday Mothers took as a model for their movement. I examine the mourning process of the Mothers in Argentina. Here I emphasize the absence of the fathers and the power of the mothers as the mothers put their maternity in the center of their movement and became a revolutionary mother in the Plaza de Mayo. Second, I examine the cases of Bosnian women, whose relatives, mostly men, were missing due to the war. In this part, there is a focus on the uncertainty the Bosnian women experienced and the importance of place with regards to having a grave. I also mention about the everyday life of these women and their feelings and memories to better understand their mourning process.

The fourth chapter examines the case of the Saturday Mother with intensity. In the light of the first three chapters, I analyze selective quotations from the interviews. First, I look at the Mothers' mourning process. Second, I discuss that the lack of the requirements for mourning such as having a body to bury and carrying out funeral rites. Third, I mention about the establishment of the Saturday Mothers as new organization for the struggle against the disappearances in Turkey. Fourth, I comment on the construction of a sense of place for the disappeared, Galatasaray Square. In relation to this, I take one step further and argue Galatasaray Square has become a kind of a grave for the disappeared. And finally, I qualify the movement of the Saturday Mothers as a NSM while focusing on the features of NSMs observed in their actions.

CHAPTER TWO

THE NORMAL PROCESS OF MOURNING AND THE ONE SEEN IN THE CASE OF AMBIGUOUS LOSS

2.1. The definition of mourning

The process of mourning is quite personal and individual. Mourning is naturally experienced with respect to an individual's unique situation (Rotter, 2000). It changes according to how ready one is, the quality of the relationship with the deceased, the person's psychological mood, and one's competency for being in sorrow (Volkan, 1993). A person might respond differently to each death case that he encounters. Similarly, different persons might respond differently to the same loss (Corr & Coolican, 2010). Mourning can even be different when observing loss between members of the same family. They can experience mourning and grief differently each from the other in terms of ways of expression and levels of experience (Volkan). This makes communication among the family highly difficult while preventing the establishment of a shared comprehension of the role of the deceased among the family members (Littlewood, Hoekstra, & Humphrey, 1991; Riches, & Dawson, 1997).

There are two distinct stages during mourning. The first stage occurs immediately after the death of a loved person. This stage is termed "crisis grief", referring to the experience of the acknowledgement of the loss after

the initial denial of it. After losing somebody, experiencing denial for a short period is the first reaction. This is not unusual (Volkan, 1993). At that time, there is “the wish to avoid or minimize the pain of loss” on the one left behind, which is not surprising since the person begins “a painful journey” (Rubin, 1984, p. 340). In fact, denial is necessary to settle one’s shock stemming from the death of a loved one, and to internalize the agonizing predicament step by step. Denial begins to dissolve after participating in the funeral of the deceased and then visiting the grave, which are facets of the confrontation with the death itself. Without these rituals, accepting the death would be very difficult; denial would continue to be present. Denial in time changes, creating a dilemma where one part of the person begins to acknowledge the death whereas the other part keeps denying. This is the second reaction, called “splitting”. Splitting is widely experienced and it stimulates the person left behind to visit the deceased for the last time in order to bid the loved one farewell. This splitting is adaptive since it makes the one left behind comfortable. Subsequently, there is the third reaction, termed “bargaining”, in which the one accepts the fact of the death to a great extent, yet the denial continues to a degree that includes psychic reactions to attempt to change the outcome. Due to this reaction, the grieving person repeats the last times spent with the deceased before losing him as if bringing him back. At the same time the mourner will create a list what he should have done for the deceased. Usually, this list is habitually repeated as a ritual. After bargaining, the person experiences anxiety and anger as the fourth reaction (Volkan, 1993). This reaction may also involve depression, hostility, guilt, and helplessness (Rubin). The death of a close person awakens feelings of denial and weakness so that the one left behind can feel anxious while facing this reality. To a reasonable extent, feeling anxious and angry is what should be experienced because anxiety “is an emotional fever signaling that our psychic equilibrium is out of whack” (Volkan, p. 20), and anger “is a healthy indication” for acknowledging the fact of the death (Volkan, p. 22). However, as time passes, the way mourners express their anger will not remain the same because “grief is not process, not a state” (Parkes, 1986, p. 97). Rather, what is called a process is mourning, and thus

grief is the expression of one of the major visible reaction after the death experienced during this process, mourning.

At this point, there is a great need to enlarge upon these concepts of mourning and grief, and additionally bereavement in detail in order to understand what happens after a loss. Beginning with bereavement, which is the most inclusive concept among those mentioned here, is the event of loss itself. It is defined as “an action of immediate severance, most often beyond our control”, which is experienced “as something done to us” (Dubose, 1997, p. 368). Following bereavement, it should be noted that grief, which “represents the conditions surrounding loss” (Rotter, 2000, p. 276), is the emotional and personal reaction to bereavement. Grief basically contains “bargaining for a reversal of the loss, denial, anger, shock, anguish, distress, sadness, relief, disgust, self-pity, dizziness, hallucinations, and disintegration of the self-in-the-life-world that one inhabited before the loss” (Dubose, p. 368). Grief can typically be experienced internally or externally, and individual can display it privately or publicly. Individuals, who have not faced serious loss in their lives, might perceive grief reactions as strange. Though they are not a sign of abnormality or disease, instead, they indicate a distress relating to a loss (Corr & Coolican, 2010). The last concept, mourning, is “a process one goes thoroughly to accommodate the loss”, including “displayed psychological, behavioral, social and physical symptoms of loss” (Rotter, 2000, p. 276). And mourning is the process involving an adaption of the loss into individual’s ongoing life and a reconstruction of a new self. In contrast to grief, the mourning process does not make a great emphasis on personal reaction; rather it is based on a readjustment to the social space. That is to say, “mourning is the most public expression of loss” (Dubose, p. 368) while being “an internal, private, or intrapersonal process” (Carr & Coolican, p. 171) at the same time.

Figure 1

	Bereavement	Grief	Mourning
Meaning	a state of being deprived something	an emotional and personal reaction to bereavement	a process for adaption to loss
Content	the event of loss itself, an action of immediate separation	denial, anger, shock, anguish, distress, sadness, relief, disgust, self-pity etc.	psychological, behavioral, social, and physical symptoms of loss
The way experienced and expressed	just happens, not controlled by individuals	internally or externally, privately	mostly externally, publicly
Benefit	–	emotional relief	a reconstruction of a new self, a readjustment to the social space

In crisis grief, the first stage in the process of mourning, the bereaved person begins to feel the pain of grief in a few hours or days after the loss. The pain goes to its climax after five to fourteen days. The pain is constantly felt as it appears spontaneously (Parkes, 1986). This initial phase that may continue to three months is “a time of acutely painful affects and many changes in routine function” (Rubin, 1984, p. 340). However, this phase does not last in the same way; the pain felt continuously becomes less frequent (Parkes). That is to say, the mourning process becomes less disruptive as time passes (Rubin). Pain does not occur unless something suddenly happens that reminds one of the deceased, such as “finding a photograph in a drawer, meeting a mutual friend of the lost person, waking up alone in a double bed” (Parkes, 1986, p. 60). Besides, the bereaved may try to find ways of mitigating the pain that comes from grief. One of them is the continuation of a feeling and impression that the bereaved has experienced about the loss

even though this may not be apparent. The most common way is not to believe the death of a loved one. One other means is to avoid thinking about the deceased and to avoid encounters with people and situations that can call the deceased to mind. Associated with avoidance of thoughts about the loss, the mourner may bury himself in activities such as purposely making himself busy. Or some mourners may remove photographs that are seen as evocative of their loss (Parkes).

The second stage begins after acknowledging the death. Wishing to move one follows this stage, being free of the pain, and getting a hold of one's own life again (Volkan, 1993). This should be followed by a reconstruction of the relationship with the deceased. Nevertheless, the emotional presence of the deceased keeps interfering with one's life (Volkan). This constitutes the bulk of the second stage called "the work of mourning" conceptualized by Freud (1917) in order to define the internal and external adaptations that a person has to implement after losing someone close. For a successful work of mourning, there is a need for two important steps that are first performing a revision of the relationship to conceive its meaning, and second putting this relationship in the part of memory that has no future (Tähkä, 1984).

The length of the period for the work of mourning depends on the individual's ability related to their developmental history. If the person did not previously experience healthy separations, the work of mourning will take more time. In addition, the work of mourning itself is an exhausting period since people unconsciously recall their past. Moreover, reconsidering characters of a relationship causes the mourner to face loneliness and yearning over and over again, which makes the person feel weak (Volkan, 1993). It is important to say "the more dependent the relationship, the more difficult will be the task of resolving its loss" (Engel, 1964, p. 96). Besides, if the mourner does not have many significant relationships around himself, the completion of detachment from the involvement with the deceased will be more difficult. Other factors determining the length of the work of mourning are first the extent of being ready for the loss, and second health conditions of the mourner, both physically and psychologically (Engel). Considering the






concept grief as a reaction to loss, loneliness, and deprivation meaning “the absence of essential ‘supplies’ that were previously provided by the lost person” (Parkes, 1986, p. 29), it can be noted that sometimes grief translates into a soothing element that provides connection to the loss (Volkan). At the time of grief, the mourner cries with tears since the desire and need to cry is irresistible, and crying serves an important role during the work of mourning. Crying appears to contain an acceptance of the loss and the return to a weaker and childlike position. But later, it translates into a means of communication. The crying mourner becomes sensitive to support and help coming from the environment. Grief is one adult reaction in which crying is usually acknowledged and understood when the crying mourner keeps having self-respect and feeling worthy as a person who deserves help (Engel).

In spite of the desire to get rid of the loss and to keep the loved one alive, there is no exact preparation for letting go since the recollections of the person do not completely end. This is because wanting to finish the grief and forget most of the memories of the loved one who passed away might be unconsciously perceived as betrayal (Volkan, 1993). People mostly need other people in their lives, thus after the death of their husbands, wives, or children, they begin to feel empty (Parkes, 1986). To overcome this, grief is the first step.

Considering when the work of mourning finishes, it can be said that people cannot entirely forget a deceased person who was important to them. The unconscious has no time, therefore emotional attachment to someone remains in the cache of the mind. As a result, a death of an important person may always reactivate and cause pain, meaning that even after completely mourned; grief might revive on the special days, such as anniversaries. However, as long as the grief decreases, the view towards the world that there are always depressive frustrations begins to diminish, too (Volkan, 1993). In fact, this is accomplished by the resolution of loss, which is “the process that supplements adaptation to loss” (Rubin, 1984, p. 340). If the mourner becomes accustomed to change and becomes comfortable in making a sense of the representations including memories, fantasies, feelings about

the deceased, the resolution of loss can easily occur. That is to say, an active connection with representations of the deceased does not disappear during the process of mourning. The resolution of loss indicates the mourner's "positive experience of the representations of the other alone, and in relation to his self-representation" while being a guide to the mourner in terms of "not to overidealize nor denigrate and devalue the deceased" (Rubin, p. 343). In the end, the mourner should answer these questions: "What was and is the meaning of this person in your life? What about you was and is evoked, facilitated and hindered in the recollected relationship? How has your appraisal and relationship to this person, available in memory but not in reality, changed?" (Rubin, p. 344). Finally, the most obvious sign of the successful work of mourning is "the ability to remember comfortably and realistically both the pleasures and disappointments of the lost relationship" (Engel, 1964, p. 96).

Figure 2

The Process of Mourning	
Stage 1: Crisis Grief	Stage 2: The Work of Mourning
Denial  Splitting  Bargaining  Anger and Anxiety	Acknowledgement of the death  A reconstruction of the relation with the deceased  The length depends on individuals' ability May revive on special days But there is the resolution of loss, an adaption to loss

After the period of mourning finishes, people often obtain a new energy and vividness while having motivation to accomplish new commitments and relationships. They are able to get rid of being stuck in the past and they are now ready to separate themselves from what they experienced and have new energy to be in relations with people and their environment. That is to say, successful mourning makes bereaved people free in order to “live meaningful lives in their new situation without wholly abandoning what they have lost” (Carr & Coolican, 2010, p. 174). In addition, they gain a new maturity and empathy while envisaging themselves better and realizing what is crucial for them and understanding the essence of life that it is indeed short. Along with this intense understanding, mourning ends with the ability that exhibits what was needed from the relationship with the deceased by means of the mechanism of identification.

Identification, beyond imitation, is “an unconscious process through which – oftentimes in spite of oneself– a person assumes aspects, ideals, and functions of another” (Volkan, 1993, p. 39). People identify themselves with their families even from infancy while taking their behaviors as models and storing observations of what happened in their environment. Although people keep identifying themselves according to people around them, the prior identification plays the most significant role in forming an individual’s personality, character, and basic values. That is to say, “by assuming the aspects, ideals, and functions of another”, people do not really need that other person, therefore they can manage to continue to live alone (Volkan, p. 39). In accordance with the process of identification, people can realize what was noteworthy in the relationship and put it into their identity. In this way, identification makes the deceased person remain close as an internal remembrance (Volkan). After several months, with the mechanism of identification, reminders of the deceased occur less frequently and less deliberately and the mourner feels less sad. With the help identification, which comprises ideals, desires, and longing about the deceased, those left behind can gain a driving force to keep moving forward their lives. These are frequently reflected as a desire “to be what he would have wanted me to be” or “to carry on for him” (Engel, 1964, p. 96).

There are a number of risk factors that can make people experience complicated mourning or unresolved crisis grief. These are: “unfinished business between loser and lost, external circumstances that overload one’s capacity to mourn, unresolved past losses, and emotional makeup that cannot tolerate separations” (Volkan, 1993, p. 45). Particularly, people find themselves in crisis grief due to successful denial, called “absence of grief”. Absence of grief is not derived from the denial of the reality of the loss; rather, it is derived from the denial of the painful emotions relating to that loss. In addition, since mourning effectively requires being able to endure the presence of death, a person, who has experienced the period of mourning for the death of a loved one, might regard that the ability necessary for grief is exhausting. Nevertheless, the process for grieving ultimately arises (Volkan).

There are interesting contradictions about the grieving process when the relationship that has been lost was happy and matured, it will not be difficult to let it go and then move on. This does not refer to painless separation; it might denote a gut-wrenching predicament. In a complementary relationship people might grieve completely. In contrast, in a dependent relationship, the mourner’s self-esteem relies on the deceased. This makes the period of letting the loss go more difficult. For instance, after the loss of a child, it cannot be possible for the parent to experience the mourning process. That child will continue to exist in the parent’s outlook for their future life. Thus the parent anticipates looking after and loving their lost child as if they were making the child live on (Volkan, 1993).

Another factor making those left behind maladaptive and preventing them from moving on with their lives after a loss is having “linking objects”. These objects are some kind of magical mementos, meaning different from just a memento. Linking objects differ from simple mementos in terms of being psychologically more intense as they remind the mourner of conflicts about the death of a loved one and changes happening after the loss. Particularly, linking objects are needed after loss since they help those left behind forget their grief about the lost and serve as a continuation for the loss relationship. They are basically used for emotional expressions showing psychological desires and struggles. They lead to the reconstruction of the

lost relationship in the external world while reminding the mourner of the vitality and the conflict. Moreover, linking objects are aggravating in a psychological sense as long as they reconstitute conflicts and wounds related to the loss (Volkan, 1993).

A large number of objects can be used as linking objects, which are mostly functional, generally belonged to the deceased or are reminders. The ones left behind might choose them since they remember the environment where the death happened. Besides, living people, some particular songs, gestures, and popular phrases can become linking objects. However, linking objects that are functional are no longer used after the loss, and thus become distinctive. They are carefully preserved since the mourner holds on to them to continue the grieving process in the external world. Making the grief visible by means of linking objects provides a sense of control. But, in the end something can happen to these objects; as a result the mourner has to face the grief due the loss of the defense mechanism and has to confront the painful feelings. After linking objects lose their effect, the mourner becomes somber and therefore will have prepared to put an end mourning process (Volkan, 1993).

One of the significant elements affecting a person's ability for mourning is the type of loss. The most difficult plight for mourning is a sudden or violent loss. Yet, if families left behind have proper healthy bonds, they can cope well with this loss. But even so, if the loss is a child, the recovery of the families is genuinely hard (Volkan, 1993). As can be seen, the age of the deceased plays a significant role on the work of mourning, and therefore, "the loss of a child generally has a more profound effect than the loss of an aged parent" (Engel, 1964, p. 96). Overcoming the death of their children, parents described their predicament, "I have experienced death before, the death of my father (or mother), but it is nothing like this" (Soricelli & Utech, 1985, p. 429). Furthermore, the loss of a child may distort the balance among the family members. This loss can separate family members from each other while they struggle to comprehend the meaning of the loss and to disclose their anger and guilt. For instance, the mother can blame the father in the family (Volkan). Sometimes, one parent may embrace

mementos of the lost children more than the other parent, which leads to misunderstandings among the family members and makes the family's grief more aggravating. If family members tell their personal thoughts to each other, they will have a chance to comprehend what they experience and to become more comfortable and grow (Neimeyer, Prigerson, & Davies, 2002). Seeking the remedies for overcoming the loss of a child, parents cannot obtain any substitute and get rid of the gap resulting from that loss. However, some parents establish a new organization or work in an already established organization shifting their personal grief to prevent similar cases (Volkan).

There is need for time and space in order to grieve. This is why a great number of religions and cultures dictate ceremonies and rituals for funerals so as to meet and make possible the psychological requirements for mourning. The denial of the death begins to dissolve as long as the bereaved person is faced with a dead body, has been concerned with the preparation of a funeral, and compelled endlessly to receive condolences. Apart from the remove of denial, such rituals are significant in terms of revealing problems stemming from grief and then soothing those problems (Volkan, 1993). Rituals can be regarded as the institutionalization of the mourning experiences, and it is obvious that they make easier the recovery process as they clearly mark the fact of the death. They certainly remove ambiguity. Funeral rites, moreover, trigger the process of identification with the deceased by means of a variety of rituals that are the symbol of an identity between the bereaved and the deceased (Engel, 1964).

Most of the people, who experience mourning, do not need and ask for psychological support due to their grief (Volkan, 1993). Loneliness and social isolation are aggravating factors in terms of bearing with grief (Parkes, 1986); therefore social networks in which mourners get support are very helpful. In this way, they can show their own feelings how they wish while also noticing what lies behind the work of mourning. That is to say, their lives are not smooth during the period of mourning; at the same time they also experience frustration. In fact, the mourners also receive support from the society breaking the taboos about expressing their thoughts about the death. People around the mourners help them to talk openly what they

experience and feel (Volkan). Namely, as rituals performed after death require being with a group of people, these rituals let guarded feelings be shared and displayed in a real manner (Engel, 1964). Religious leaders and ceremonies are also sensitive to the mourners in terms of revealing ambivalence, anger, and pain. The ones who have no religious attachment even perform their own rituals in order to point out how their lives have dramatically changed. For instance, they determine a specific location and then spread the lost person's ashes. Or some may prefer to attend to programs arranged by support groups in which mourners coping with similar death cases come together. Mourners can find a safe environment during these support groups, which helps them get rid of their guilt and anger (Volkan, 1993). To enlarge upon cultural rituals, it can be noted that Catholic funeral ceremonies, Jewish *shivah*, or secular funeral rituals all have "both integrative and regulatory goals by providing a structure for the emotional chaos of grief, conferring a symbolic order on events, and facilitating the construction of shared meanings among members of the family, community, or even nation" (Neimeyer et al., 2002, p. 237).

In essence, people can realize that "grief is an experience that can have a beginning and an end" as those who are "involved grieve and then move beyond grief" (Volkan, 1993, p. 118). Mourners make their final arrangements to "as if to say goodbye to the relationship, such as visiting a grave (if they have never done so) or devising some other way to commemorate the loss" (Volkan, p. 127-128). They acknowledge that their loved one who passed away is now under the grass being dead and buried in a coffin (Volkan). As a result, a noticeable emphasis on human relationships, a reorganization of priorities in the life, a development of maturity, strength, and empathy in individual's personality to understand pains of other people make the mourners adaptive to loss (Neimeyer, 2001; Frantz, Farrell, & Trolley, 2001).

2.2. Ambiguous loss

Death is a tangible form of loss; therefore it is a concept that can be clearly defined. In spite of the fact that death is an awfully painful

experience, ultimately the passing of a loved one may be perceived as natural. There are precise rituals after death, including “the receipt of the death certificate, the reading of a written will that allocates finances and possessions to certain individuals, and an obituary in the newspaper, and there is typically a funeral where friends and family members gather to lay the deceased to rest” (Betz & Thorngren, 2006, p. 359). All of the cultural rituals and social support mechanisms soothe the grief experienced due to death. Since their loss is regarded as recognized and legitimized in the public eye, mourners are more apt to get support from their environment (Betz & Thorngren). However, if the loss is not clear and indeterminate, namely if a loved one is missing and there is no information about him, then family members experience ambiguous loss.

Ambiguous loss is divided into two forms. In the first form “people are perceived by family as *physically absent* but psychologically present, because it’s unclear whether they are dead or alive”, whereas in the second form “a person is perceived as physically present but *psychologically absent*” (Boss, 1999, p. 8). In both cases people are faced with very different problems compared to what is commonly seen in cases of normal death. Due to ambiguous loss, people may experience melancholia or complicated grieving, meaning that an individual keeps being stuck on and is just concentrating on “the deceased”. In contrast to normal death, people may not be able to detach themselves from the deceased, which is needed for closure. Thus, the mourning process becomes complicated just as uncertainty makes the loss itself complicated. For this reason, the commencement of grieving becomes very difficult (Boss).

The first type of ambiguous loss is at the core of this paper. Sometimes missing people might be viewed as dead, but family members cannot find bodies, bones, or any remains. That is why; family members cannot contemplate anything except their missing loved ones even with the passage of time. At this point, the major problem is how the mourning process and grieving can occur while family members do not recover a body for burial (Boss, 2002).

People always set their mind on certainty. A tangible form of death is more accepted than an ongoing ambiguity. Ambiguity is always more stressful and painful, therefore ambiguous loss is the most agonizing form of loss. Families facing ambiguous loss can become helpless and are more apt to feel depression, anxiety, and experience conflicts with their environment.

There are five major reasons underlying this predicament:

First, family members get bewildered and immobilized since the loss they experience is not clear and prevents them to make sense of what they are dealing with. They cannot overcome the problem, as they do not understand whether their loss is finished or is ongoing. Second, family members cannot adapt to the ambiguous loss since there is an uncertainty. Hence, they cannot reconstruct their roles and rules about their relationship with their missing loved one, and relations between families or between couples become petrified. Third, family members cannot carry out funeral rites that commonly serve as support for a definite loss. What they experience remains unconfirmed by society and there is not much affirmation about their experiences and feelings. As a result, those who are around the family members facing ambiguous loss are not likely to show their compassionate support that they would normally do in the case of death, and they leave the family members alone. Fourth, ambiguous loss seems absurd to people as it calls to mind the irrational and unjust side of the life (Boss, 1999). That is to say, “ambiguity causes even the strongest of people to question their view of the world as a fair, safe, and understandable place” (Boss, 2002, p. 39). Finally, since ambiguous loss is an ongoing loss, it makes people tired both physically and emotionally dealing with unappeasable uncertainty (Boss, 1999).

Sometimes families may pretend as if their missing loved one were still with them even though he might have passed away. Family members might save a place for their loved one at the table or keep picking presents at the holidays. They might feel trapped and avoid talking about their loss and their real feelings (Betz & Thorngren, 2006). In fact, they might hesitate to talk about their grief to persons around them since they might be

embarrassed, want to avoid hearing judgments, or persuade themselves that they should let the situation go (Shapiro, 1994). They wonder that they should hide their feelings and overcome their intense feelings since they are besieged by social norms ruling that being sad is improper and will cause only harm to the missing. This creates a quagmire particularly for women whose statuses are generally shaped as care giving or waiting (Boss, 1999). They get stuck in a helpless situation. In addition, families may believe that assuming the missing as dead implies a betrayal for the loved one. For this reason, they may avoid carrying out rituals about the mourning and grieving process (Betz & Thorngren). Or they might move on with their lives as they keep on with their hope to recover the body. This makes families think dialectically, which is indeed helpful since it is the first trace of healing even though the uncertainty continues. However, a families' wish for having a body does not end, instead it is very important for them because only with a body can those left behind overcome the situation. They need to meet face to face with the body and start funeral ceremonies and rituals to begin the mourning process (Boss, 2002). In the end, witnessing the dead body of the missing becomes a perceivable experience as it rescues the loss from being uncertain. A great number of families seek at least shadow of information about the fate of the missing, but they cannot discover any information or kind of confirmation of death. Hence, they have great difficulties in changing their view regarding the absence of or the presence of the missing. Ultimately, they do not decide "whether to act married or single, to hope or to give up, to hate or to love the missing person, to leave or to stay, to give up or to wait" (Boss, 1999, p. 72). They do not know how to act since there is always possibility that their missing loved one "could still be alive somewhere and return home unexpectedly" (Boss, 1999, p. 98-99). That is to say, as soon as there is no body, the mourning process becomes complex, as family members feel confused. The desire for reaching closure is postponed while making those left behind impatient. Families need more time compared to a clear-cut loss (Boss, 2002). But even so, "the customary rituals of mourning provide little consolation" to families since they experience "invisible or unrecognized" loss (Herman, 1997, p. 188).

Another reason lying behind the desire for the recovery of the body is that, ironically, this recovery facilitates letting go of the situation. This includes the stage in which those left behind say good-bye to their loved one for the last time. If this stage, taking active part in the ceremonies of honor and farewell, does not occur, the process of detachment will not commence. As long as ambiguity about the fate of the missing continues, the families unfortunately keep experiencing depression, anxiety, and family conflict as a reaction to the untenable predicament causing them to feel helpless. To overcome the situation, families need therapy not because they are weak in a psychological sense, but they are dealing with an immobilizing ambiguity (Boss, 2002). And, what they experience is not their faults so they should remember that not all of the events they encounter in their lives are the results of their actions (Boss, 1999). Besides, families must find coping strategies “to reconstruct their own identities and roles and function without the missing person”, otherwise they “will forever be waiting – their grief frozen in place” (Boss, 2002, p. 40).

Ambiguous loss has great costs on the families of the missing. Families might be exposed to physical effects, such as extreme tiredness, sleep disorders, headaches, and stomachaches. In addition, their cognition may be affected as families cannot do anything except thinking about the loss, they may experience forgetfulness, and they may have dreams and feel anxious about the loss. Moreover, ambiguous loss has negative effects on families’ behaviors. They might become talkative, passive, or hyperactive while they might experience regression, dependence, or avoidance, and they might need support. Finally, they may have emotional disturbances such as feeling lonely, anxious, nervous, depressed, fearful, longing, numb, annoyance, or relieved (Weiner, 1999).

Grief can be regarded as a physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, and social affair. It remains even after the person left behind has acknowledged the death. Grief is normally a complex emotional reaction since it makes an individual feel sad, angry, and guilty, or it shocks and confuses them while giving a sense of apathy. This experience is common for people since it appears in the form of ambivalent emotions, including love and hate, hope

and desperation (Tshudin, 1997). This becomes even more complicated and more conflicted in the case of ambiguous loss. Families of the missing might feel extreme guilt and not to have the courage to make any decisions. Hence, family members may be exposed to ambivalent emotions. They are aware that there is something wrong but do not know how to overcome it (Betz & Thorngren, 2006).

Nevertheless, ultimately families of the missing have to make a number of decisions. Due to ambiguous loss, families might feel too weak to move on with their lives. They cannot envisage their future and they may be indecisive even though they expect some sort of solution (Betz & Thorngren, 2006). It is true that families have a great challenge to make sense of the causes of their experience. Seeking an explanation for their plight even with few answers is critical to the mourning process. While coping with situation, each member in the family should first evaluate what they are experiencing, second review their view towards other members, and finally readjust roles and routines in regular family life. In this way, they view themselves as being active in spite of the continuation of their uncertain predicament. After that they come close to making sense of the situation, which is the final and most difficult stage. In this stage, they may be affected by spiritual sources, namely they can feel peaceful and strong by the virtue of spiritual beliefs. Besides, the way family members think and their view towards the world may also have a significant role on making sense of the situation. The more they optimistic, the easier they overcome their plight. Meanwhile, family members have to stop blaming themselves and forgive themselves. If family members seek professional support, they will be able to discuss their issues (Boss, 1999). They do not have to speak of their negative feelings about the loss. They should talk about their personal mementos and experiences, their customs, cultural rituals, and relationships. In this way, the family members will be able to reconcile again and try to give the meaning to the role of the loss in their lives (Rycroft & Perlesz, 2001). As a result, ambiguous loss is an agonizing loss having enduring traumatic impacts. However, persons facing with ambiguous loss can learn to cope with it and to tolerate difficulties in their lives by means of support and resilience. They will acquire “the ability

to grieve what was lost with the recognition of what is still possible” (Boss, p. 135).

CHAPTER THREE

NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

3.1. The definition of new social movements

Post-industrial society, which is a new type of society along with a new center of power and new forms of relationships, engenders a space for the struggle of contemporary new social movements. That is why, new social movements (NSMs) are new, and the space in which they take place does not belong to the state, it belongs to civil society. NSMs derive from the struggle of social agencies over the structure of civil society (Touraine, 1985). The occurrence of NSMs stands for the change between social movements and political structure. That is to say, Touraine (1992) refers to contemporary social movements as new because they separate themselves from the idea of control over the state power and they aim to change civil relationships.

Movements such as “peace movements, student movements, the anti-nuclear energy protests, minority nationalism, gay rights, women’s rights, animal rights, alternative medicine, fundamentalist religious movements, and New Age and ecology movements” (Johnston, Larana, & Gusfield, 1994, p. 3) are examples of NSMs. As concerns all these movements, it can be said that the general demands of NSMs do not coincide with the model of a welfare society. “Problems of quality of life, equality, individual self realization, participation, and human rights” become the most important

issues in contemporary society (Habermas, 1981, p. 33). The problem is how to advocate life styles under threat or how to adapt new life styles in practice. New conflicts do not stem from the problem of distribution; rather they focus on the framework of life (Habermas). In fact, NSMs go one step further as they challenge “the well-oriented materialistic goals of industrial societies” (Pichardo, 1997, p. 414), and indicate “the limitations of a state-centred system of governance” through being a supporter of anti-statism (Faulks, 1999, p. 87).

3.2. Differences between NSMs and previous movements

First, considering the goals of NSMs, it can be said that they are not based on revolutionist’ dreams as seen in old movements that are utopian and romantic. Instead, NSMs put forward a civil society providing for independent mechanisms for political and economic systems (Cohen, 1985). That is to say, NSMs are not derived from economic concerns; therefore their social base should not be described with economic concepts. NSMs indeed should be defined with concepts, such as race, gender, and ethnicity, which go beyond the notion of class in order to constitute collective behavior. The aim of social movements is converted from group-based goals to value-based goals (Buechler, 1995). In relation to this aim, we can come up with that the core of NSMs comprises the notion of autonomy and identity (Offe, 1985).

Second, regarding the actors of social movements, the actors of prior ones played the role of betrayer or the role of hero depending on the situation while moving towards to great dreams or to dramatic fates (Melucci, 1985). On the other hand, the actors of NSMs put their lives in the center of the movement. While prior movements were based on class defined economic conditions, new ones are composed of different classes. The new middle-class, a group that has class-awareness and more general goals than older groups, becomes highly active in new social movements (Offe, 1985). To put it another way, former movements built up their politics with the help of entrepreneurs, workers, and the professional middle class, on the contrary, new ones receive support from the new middle class that is composed of the youth and people having higher education (Habermas, 1981). To elaborate

the new middle class, it can be said that individuals belonging to this class are likely to work in the academy or in human services, or to be interested in the arts. In fact, beside this new class, some persons belonging to the old middle class such as farmers, shop owners, and craftsmen, and a number of individuals mostly having nothing to do with labor activities such as students, housewives, and retired people can also participate in NSMs (Offe).

Third, in contrast to former movements, NSMs belong to an organized structure. Participation to an organization is within the compass of individual's will, and decision-making is carried out by negotiation (Melucci, 1985). However, despite having an organized structure, NSMs are mostly "segmented, diffuse, and decentralized" as opposed to "cadre-led and centralized bureaucracies of traditional mass parties" (Johnston et al., 1994, p. 8). This means that NSMs do not allow oligarchy in their structure so they built up their organization in a flexible manner. Their leadership is constantly changing, each individual in the group votes on all topics, and they perform their duties without preparation (Offe, 1985). Thus, the system of NSMs in terms of their organization does not depend on an elite rule (Faulks, 1999).

Fourth, there is not a sharp distinction between what is collective and what is individual in NSMs. This means what constitutes a collective act is the individual affirmation of identity (Johnston et al., 1994). This is notably reflected in the famous slogan: "The personal is political" (Pichardo, 1997, p. 414). In this way, movements are carried by a group not by individuals, but while focusing on personal problems. Hence, individuals acting within a group make themselves visible in the public eye to make other people aware of their personal problems.

Finally, NSMs, with respect to their domain, project into personal and intimate facets of the individual's everyday life. And the last characteristic of NSMs is "the use of radical mobilization tactics by disruption and resistance", including "nonviolence and civil disobedience", which are dissimilar to those carried out by previous movements (Johnston et al., 1994, p. 8). To be more precise, it can be said old social movements used traditional tactics such as "bargaining, persuasion, or violence to influence

authorities to change”, which are based on “prior history of relations with authorities, relative success of previous encounters, and ideology” (McCarthy & Zald, 2003, p. 172). Also, oligarchy and institutions dominant in the process of social movements affect the tactics used. Within NSMs the link between the actors in movements and the authorities is also recognized, however they make themselves distinct from prior movements. They introduce new methods such as “mobilizing supporters, neutralizing and/or transforming mass and elite publics into sympathizers, achieving change in targets while they are affected by “interorganizational competition and cooperation” (McCarthy & Zald, p. 172)

Figure 3

	Prior Social Movements	New Social Movements
Basic Goals	Economic concerns Group-based goals, namely class Utopian, romantic and revolutionist	Autonomy & identity concerns Value-based goals
Actors	Betrayers or heroes Classes defined economic conditions, e.g. workers and entrepreneurs	Civil society New Middle Class, e.g. different from different backgrounds Marginalized and excluded groups
Organization	Hierarchical organized Oligarchy, elite rule	Segmented, diffused, and decentralized structure with individuals' choices Temporarily organized No oligarchy and flexible leadership
Problems that they challenge	Carried by a group focusing on collective problems	Carried by a group but focusing on personal problems
Preferred Tactics	Traditional, e.g. strict demonstrations, mass manifestations	Various, e.g. passive demonstrations, nonviolence, civil disobedience

3.3. Collective movements stemmed from NSMs

Collective movements, which are the center of NSMs, represent a common interest of a social class, an ethnic group, a union, or a political party. Social movements are the combination of struggles and demands to

the authority having power in the name of a social category that has no settled political status. Hence, the emergence of a NSM is explained as a struggle of the marginalized and excluded groups to get involved in the political arena (Tilly, 1978). That is to say, NSMs do not only aim to resist, but they also struggle to have control over power and resources (Cohen & Arato, 1992). They consist of an interaction between the authority and people demanding a change in the distribution of resources (Tilly). Nevertheless, this view takes no notice of cultural and structural aspects of the conflict (Cohen & Arato). This is important because NSMs do not only focus on an unjust distribution of resources, but also focus on social meanings and methods to define reality (Diani, 1992).

3.4. Changes in culture and identity: The emergence of collective identity

The effect of NSMs on producing new choices in order to renew culture has a significant role in political institutions. NSMs question the political regime by means of the public awareness they create. Even if there is no social mobility in a country, this will indicate truths about the relationship between the regime and the actor, namely it can be understood that in this country there is an authoritarian regime. At that time, NSMs compel the explanation of why politics is in this way in the country. As a result, power becomes visible, which is a highly important change in countries where power is autonomous and hidden (Melucci, 1985).

Regarding different movements such as women's and gay rights movements, it can be claimed that their effort to make marginalized identities politically visible and accepted in the public sphere shows the veracity that social theory and identity can have a great impact in an area of political struggle. Identity is a project that always renews itself as long as it keeps living in spite of the different descriptions that are imposed on it (Calhoun, 1994). That is to say, identity shines by virtue of collective movements: "What individuals are claiming collectively is the right to realize their own identity: the possibility of disposing of their personal

creativity, their affective life, and their biological and interpersonal existence” (Melucci, 1980, p. 218).

In addition, the notion of identity has to do with physical appearance in contemporary societies. Prior to modern times, physical appearance was standardized by traditional societies. But, with the rise of modern society, differences in appearance have become important. Wearing particular style of clothing has gained a new meaning rather than being only for bodily protection; it translates into an external form to reveal the content of identity through being a symbolic demonstration. Hence, physical appearance, clothing, and posture of actors begin to reflect their own unique social identity (Giddens, 1991). In essence, NSMs produce identity as they “provide resources for individuation and enable individuals to perceive themselves as distinct from others” (Melucci, 1994, p. 114).

NSMs also bring the notion of collective identity through their impact on shaping individual’s identity. According to Melucci, collective identity is “an interactive and shared definition produced by several individuals (or groups at a more complex level) and concerned with the orientations of action and the field of opportunities and constraints in which the action take place”(1995, p. 44). In this definition, “interactive and shared” is used in order to characterize collective identity as a process. This is because first collective identity comprises “cognitive definitions concerning the ends, means, and field of action”, which are integrated in “a given set of rituals, practices, cultural artifacts” (Melucci, p. 44). All of these elements are shaped differently, however they always enable the balance between ends and means, process and result (Melucci). At this point, it can be added that collective identity contains values and norms belonging to the movement as determiners of a group behavior. In this regard, collective identity is seen as a social fact designating which behaviors are banned and which are appropriate (Johnston et al., 1994). Second, collective identity implies “a network of active relationships between the actors, who interact, communicate, influence each other, negotiate, and make decisions” (Melucci, p. 45). And third, to understand collective identity, there is need for a certain extent of “emotional investment” that provides “individuals to

feel like part of a common unity” (Melucci, p. 45). To sum up what collective identity is, it can be considered as “an individual’s cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution” (Polletta & Jasper, 2001, p. 285). It is a view towards a shared position or relation that may not be experienced openly but imagined, and it is different from personal identities despite being a part of an individual’s identity. Collective identity is reflected within components of culture such as “names, narratives symbols, verbal styles, rituals, clothing”, while being endowed with “positive feelings for other members of the group” (Polletta & Jasper, p. 285).

Focusing intensely on networks within NSMs, two characteristics of these networks are significant with respect to identity. First, a movement network comprises an area for social relationship in which collective identity is constructed by virtue of negotiation among different kinds of individuals. In this way, making a definition and redefinition of the tendencies and limitations of action becomes possible within the unity provided by networks connecting people with each other in everyday life. Second, a movement network makes the reconstruction and unification of identity possible. With the help of networks, individuals and groups can acquire a certain extent of permanency and constancy in their identities even as they live in a social system in which identities are always broken or destroyed (Melucci, 1994).

3.5. NSMs as a new form of media

NSMs can also be regarded as a kind of media that becomes apparent with their action. This does not mean that they do not speak, that they do not cry out slogans that have become a voice of their demands, or that they do not hold posters on which what they desire is written. However, the function of movements, remaining between the contradictions of the state and individuals’ everyday life, can be observed in their acts. The underlying message can easily be perceived as the existence of and acts of movements. This exposes a problem concerning each person, and put forward that new kinds of power are being carried out around this problem (Melucci, 1994). That is to say, actors of NSMs do not struggle only for material goals.

Rather, they struggle for symbolic and cultural interests. They believe individuals can change their lives while they fight for general changes in society (Melucci, 1985).

3.6. Collective behavior and struggles in relation to social movements

The object of sociology is no longer society; rather, it is social behaviors and social relations (Touraine, 1988). Nowadays, situations do not take place in the core position of society; rather social movement and relations comprise society because social life is organized around a central conflict. Social conflict is not unusual; in contrast it is a tool through which society produces itself (Touraine, 1992).

To comprehend the importance of NSMs in contemporary society, it would be wise to mention the terms collective behavior, struggles, and social movements in Touraine's view. Touraine (1988), first of all, parallel to Smelser's (1962) point of view about the notion of collective behavior, proposes to refer to *collective behavior* as conflict acts that can be understood as an adaptation of a problematical element of a social system or its reconstruction. Then, he describes conflicts with a second term *struggles* when the former are examined as mechanisms for changing decisions. And finally, while a conflict act attempts to transform relations of social hegemony over fundamental cultural sources, he defines these attempts as *social movements*. He claims that all three or two of them can comprise the same conflict but the most critical point is making a clear distinction among these three. Speaking of collective behavior, it has to do with the assessment of conflicts, which are viewed as reactions to a situation that should be understood within itself, with regards to an integration or resolution of a social system. On the other hand, struggles are composed of a strategic social change through, and they are indeed initiatives of which acts are not resulted from, the construction of social system. And, as concerns social movements, lastly, he asserts that they are by no means reaction to a social condition. On the contrary, social condition is the result of the conflict among social movements struggling for control on cultural patterns and historicity. This conflict may give birth to the rupture of a political system or cultural reform.

A social movement is a conflict behavior, by means of itself, converted into a means of social union of historicity and cultural tendencies.

3.7. The role of NSMs in society

Nowadays a great number of social actors defend their interests in an international arena. None of the social movements explain conflicts and powers derived from social change within a national border. Ultimately the field of struggle gradually gains its autonomy in relation to the action of social movements, and collective behavior may orient to a phenomenon Touraine (1988) labeled as anti-social movements. That is to say, the dissociation of the form of the economic development from the process of economic and social system leads to a revival of social conflicts and collective movements carried out for a social and cultural integration of a society (Touraine, 1988). In essence, all changes do not result in a positive direction, and therefore new social movements may convert into anti-social movements.

Social movement cannot be separated from the fact of class. What differentiates a social movement from class is class can be defined as a condition whereas a social movement is an action, which is the action of an actor questioning historicity. Through the refusal of the idea there is a contrast between society and nature, classes should be regarded not as incompatible, but as actors in the conflict. That is why, to specify this important change and understand society, instead of social class, social movements should be used. This is because social class is a condition does not manifest anything by itself; it manifests something when it is included in a social movement which is the essential force driving the masses to act. In this regard, social movements can be described as a conflict act of a social class defined with its hegemony or dependency over a form of historicity, cultural investment, and models of knowledge and morality, which lean to these cultural models (Touraine, 1988).

There is a request for the renewal of culture, language, and habits within NSMs, which influences institutions, governments, and politics. In addition to the renewal of culture and modernization, NSMs more

importantly question other issues such as who decides codes, who determines the rules of normality, where is the field of difference, how can an individual be identified accepting differences without being assimilated? These questions are most probably not appreciated by the system. Ultimately, NSMs ask where people are going and why. It may be difficult to notice who is speaking since they represent a part of society. Nevertheless, they try to appeal to the entire society as the problems they put forward have an impact on the global understanding of contemporary mechanisms (Melucci, 1985).

To evaluate the result of NSMs is not possible. NSMs can be considered a dilemma since they are both a winner and a loser at the same time. NSMs are against dominant codes, and therefore, with their presence they question the political system controlling the power relations. In this way, NSMs reproduce modernity, recall a demand for novelty, and push the system to reform. They lead to the emergence of a new privileged class, changes in the staff belonging to political institutions, and new models for behavior and organization. With the help of their means, namely how they carry out their organization, they manage to indicate that there are always alternatives (Melucci, 1985).

3.8. What initiates NSMs?

In order to understand reasons that trigger NSMs, we can begin with Edward Walsh's notion of "suddenly imposed grievances" (1981, p. 2). This notion defines "dramatic, highly publicized, and generally unexpected events" such as "human-made disasters, major court decisions, official violence", which "increase public awareness of an opposition to previously accepted societal conditions" (McAdam, 1994, p. 40). These kinds of events can also stimulate a number of emotions in people such as fear, anger, desperation, frustration, alienation, sorrow, and grief. These emotions should be viewed as forces that drive individuals to do something together, namely to participate in a collective movement.

It is obvious that the person who is weeping and the one whose eyes are watery are not the same. Or reasons behind crying with joy and sadness can be different from each other. Crying due to emotional reasons springs

from thoughts in contrast to tears triggered mechanically or which appear as a reflex. This does not mean that emotional tears come up due to being consciously aware of the situation; rather it means that they are based on perception towards the world and thinking style (Neu, 2000). Hence, feeling an emotion and then expressing it are particular to human beings. That is to say, there is a great importance of emotions in human's lives since they embrace the entire social life, even social movements (Jasper, 1998). Individuals' sense of themselves and their political preferences go with emotions. This refers that "people's notions of what is politically possible and desirable" are affected by emotions (Gould, 2004, p. 162).

A majority of ordinary and typical everyday activity, viewed as neutral, can stir up severe emotional reactions when impeded. Extraordinary situations are likely to arouse more complicated emotions. Emotions are not only included in our reactions to events, but they also constitute our aims while doing something. There are both positive and negative emotions as the former is described as admirable and public whilst the latter is labeled as despicable and hidden. Furthermore, if there was no emotional response, there may not be any social action. For this reason, considering emotions as rational or irrational will become obviously a mistake (Jasper, 1998). In fact, it should be noted that instead of being the opposite of the reason, most of the emotions are the part of it. Emotions are integrated with cognitive beliefs and moral values; therefore they by no means make actions irrational (Jasper, 1997).

There are several emotions that have a great effect on political action. Trust and respect might be the first ones. Individuals are likely to trust persons they are with them and to agree with the ones they trust. It can be said that people build up an organization in a movement based on trust that they feel to each members. There are also other emotions orienting a movement. In general, a majority of individuals submit disagreeable changes, as governments do not approve to people protest. Nonetheless, others do not remain silent, and what prevents them from being passive is their fear and anger that they feel due to changes emerging suddenly and unexpectedly (Jasper, 1998).

Expression of emotions is by and large perceived as particular to women. In fact, women are highly aware of this notion and they mostly allow emotions while orienting their movements (Jasper, 1998). For example, grief coming from the loss of their sons through a mother's perspective was an important part of the movement of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, which will be discussed in the following chapter. This is notably supported by Hochschild's point of view: "Social movements for change make 'bad' feelings okay, and they make them useful. Depending on one's point of view, they make bad feelings 'rational.' They also make them visible" (1975, p. 298). In this way, women are not stuck in negative feelings; instead they transform them to have a voice in the public eye.

Within social movements themselves, there appear a variety of emotions among group members. Some of the emotions emerged due to a social movement are defined as reciprocal, which are also relevant to each person's feelings to one another in a movement. These emotions can be described as "the close, affective ties of friendship, love, solidarity, and loyalty, and the more specific emotions they give rise to" (Jasper, 1998, p. 417). Besides, there are also other emotions in a social movement called shared that each participant consciously nurtures with together at the same time. For instance, individuals in a group may hold anger towards persons outside of the group or governments. Hence, it is important to say that in spite of their difference, reciprocal and shared emotions go along with each other and furthermore they commence a movement with together (Jasper). Here the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo can be seen as an example since they have reciprocal and shared emotions in their movement. First, concerning reciprocal emotions, they generate a sense of we-ness and they feel belonging to each other, which reflects their feelings such as solidarity, love, and loyalty common for all Mothers in the movement. Second, regarding shared emotions, the Mothers all together nurture anger towards the military regime in Argentina at the same time. In addition, the Mothers always preserve their hope for their missing children. All of these emotions, solidarity in their group, anger towards the government, and hope for their children constitute the emotional core of their movement.

Moreover, there are not only negative emotions that drive individuals to act, namely to pioneer a social movement. Positive emotions are also significant since some of which engaged in hope, joy, and compassion reinforce abstract principles of justice. But even so positive emotions are not as powerful as negative emotions, such as threat, outrage, dread, and anger, in terms of driving people to do something particularly facing with unjust conditions (Jasper, 1998). Both negative and positive emotions are also observed in the movement of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo. For example, the Mothers have experienced both fear and anger towards the military junta at the same time. Moreover, concerning their disappeared children, the Mothers feel hope and despair at the same time. All of these emotions have surrounded their entire lives and therefore in each step they take they act according to their feelings and instincts. What they feel is so important it has led the Mothers to establish a new organization and a new movement.

As regards protests in social movements, the role of anger can easily be noticed. Anger nurtured towards outsiders or governments is directly associated with threat and blame. The most important two characteristic of protest are threat and blame, and these two interlace emotions, moral values, and consciousness to each other. In this regard, it can be proposed that changes in people's physical environment are basic forces driving them to protest. Besides, an emotional attachment that an individual build between herself and her environment, due to the need for ontological security, can also be a driven force for a protest. A feeling of threat is involved in the core of the most of protests. Annoyance suddenly imposed, cognitive liberation, unity of frame, and the frame of injustice are perceived as cognitive notions, nevertheless they are in fact integrated with emotions, particularly negative ones such as fear, threat, and anger (Jasper, 1997).

Protests generally start with individual actions, but later they transform into organized movements. With the passage of time, protests can consciously or unconsciously arouse feelings that encourage or discourage participants. However, dancing, or singing a song, or other rituals can step in to awaken positive emotions for solidarity and joy. Meanwhile, interestingly,

within protests, another world is created. This other world indeed looks more real than life itself because in this world individuals perform their real personalities in addition achieving intense justices and belongings that are naturally blocked by daily routines. That is to say, a protest keeps its existence through unlimited complex motivation, skill, and pleasure while they also comprise participants' identity (Jasper, 1997). At this point, it is important to mention about tactics used within protests.

Tactics do not refer neutral means for individuals in protests. Rather, they symbolize significant rituals that are remarkable in emotional and moral senses in participants' lives. Participants' activities as their ideologies also reflect their political identities and moral values. But even so, people can give up being part of a protest due to pain and deprivation that are commonly observed. On the other hand, unusual individual characteristics including being stubborn and even crazy can be helpful, namely they continue a requirement for protests lasting many years and contribute to define pleasure and pain. As a result, individuals can participate in protest groups, or they can leave if they need (Jasper, 1997).

Symbols derived from culture are mostly viewed as an effective instrument in social movements. Symbols are noteworthy with regards to the double-sided connection between them and emotions. The first aspect of the connection is the power that symbols hold to activate emotions. The second aspect is the reverse one that the meaning of culture somehow lies behind emotions as the latter provide a power to the former in terms of regulating conduct. Ultimately, "emotions are what give cultural symbols the very meanings and power to regulate, direct, and channel human behavior and to integrate patterns of social organization" (Turner & Stets, 2005, p. 292). Taking the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo into consideration, it can be said that their symbols have also significant roles in their movement. Emotions that the Mothers experienced led them to use symbols. For instance, having longing for their children made the Mothers hold the photographs of the disappeared during their weekly demonstrations. Apart from that some of their actions regarded as symbols may give a sense of hope. In this respect,

wearing a white headscarf can be regarded as an example of the effect of one symbol in activating an emotion.

In general, emotions, regarded as “culturally delineated types of feelings or affects” (Thoits, 1989, p. 318), are important for society since they take part in “social control, role performance, and interpersonal interaction” (Rosenberg, 1990, p. 4). Furthermore, emotions are also notable in individuals’ lives because they are not regarded as “usual or typical responses”, rather they are perceived as “logically necessary outcomes of events” (Rosenberg, p. 6). Taking one step further, emotions bring forth “ideas, ideologies, identities, and even interests their power to motivate” (Jasper, 1998, p. 420). A number of emotions can be sudden reactions to what happens while the rest of emotions have permanent effects. In addition, some emotional motives drive individuals to participate to a movement whilst others may prevent them getting involved in it. In essence, we can understand networks and communities better by virtue of emotions as regards ongoing movements or movements that become inactive (Jasper).

3.9. Summary

New Social Movements (NSMs) have emerged in post-industrial societies where power relationships have changed and civil society gains much more importance (Touraine, 1985). NSMs basically aim to enhance quality of life and bring justice while emphasizing human rights, and making individuals more aware of themselves (Habermas, 1981). NSMs distinguish themselves from the materialistic goals of welfare societies since participants do not fight for material interests; instead they put symbolic and cultural values at the center of their movements. That is to say, they wish to bring about the renewal of culture (Melucci, 1985). In general, NSMs are noteworthy in the contemporary world because they give marginalized and excluded people a voice and help them become visible in the political arena (Tilly, 1978). As they resist, they try to take greater control of power and resources (Cohen & Arato, 1992). Also, they question the state, namely the political system’s dominating power relations through the awareness and attraction they arouse in individuals within entire society (Melucci).

Individuals in NSMs use the power of emotions, which are essential in people's social lives, while carrying out their movements. The most basic emotions observed in NSMs are fear, anger, desperation, frustration, alienation, and sorrow. All of these emotions should be viewed as driving forces for individuals to pioneer and participate in social movements (Jasper, 1998). Besides, people's ideas about themselves and their political choices cannot be separated from their emotions (Gould, 1994). Furthermore, emotions are also important and apparent within the movements themselves. That is to say, they are both outcomes and inputs to actions. Sometimes they can be motives to make participants take specific actions. Or they can be ends that participants can feel after their actions and protests. Moreover, participants can make their movements more powerful by virtue of emotions such as a sense of friendship, loyalty, solidarity, belonging, and trust and respect, which they nurture towards each other in their groups (Jasper).

CHAPTER FOUR

SIMILAR CASES FROM ARGENTINA AND BOSNIA

4.1. A case from Argentina: The Mothers of the Plaza De Mayo

There are thousands of cases of people who have disappeared due to political reasons. One of the most illustrative cases is the people who disappeared in Argentina under the military regime in the mid 1970s. The army kidnapped these people, and then any information about them could not be obtained. A great number of the disappeared were young men between the ages of twenty and thirty, though some were young children, teenagers, and elderly people. A majority of them were blue-collar workers while there were also students, and white-collar workers, including teachers and lawyers (Navarro, 2001).

General Iberico Saint Jean, who was a governor of Buenos Aires Province under the military dictatorship, confessed that they firstly killed all subversives; then their collaborators; later, the ones having sympathy with them; afterward, the ones staying indifferent; and finally, the one who were undecided (Femenia & Gil, 1987). In spite of this confession, carrying out the activities at that time was not legal; there were no official documents that are signed for all of these executions. When the relatives of the disappeared tried to get information, each authority they pursued denied that there was any information about the disappeared people. The families faced with

uncertainty about their missing children that made them feel anxious and sorrowful. What is more, the authorities were suspicious towards the relatives of the disappeared since the relatives could cover up about the disappeared. That is why; the relatives were not taken kindly in each place where they sought out information. In addition, the media also did not pay attention to them, and therefore the relatives were left alone in their struggles (Femenia & Gil). That is to say, they got stuck in “a Kafkaesque situation” conceptualized by Navarro (2001), because they had to demonstrate that their children were missing to the authorities who rejected that kidnappings were happening in Argentina. In the end, the family members did not know where to go.

4.1.1. A new organization: “The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo”

In order to do something for their disappeared sons and daughters, mothers came together, and thus Las Madres de Plaza de Mayo, the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, emerged as a new organization (Femenia & Gil, 1987). They first gathered in 1977, and then “began meeting and marching weekly in the Plaza de Mayo, the central plaza in Buenos Aires that is the site of the cathedral, the presidential palace, and other important government buildings” (Borland, 2006, p. 118). It is important to say, this place was chosen since “it was a public place where any protest could be seen by many people, and in such a public space it would be more difficult for the military to kidnap them” (Abreu-Harnandez, 2002, p. 397). In addition, the plaza is also significant for the independence of Argentina from Spain on the 25 May 1810, on which a small pyramid as a remembrance for the beginnings of the independence movement is also situated (Navarro, 2001). In these demonstrations, the Mothers were holding the photographs of their disappeared sons and daughters and wearing the white headscarves embroidered with the names of the disappeared, which later turned into a symbol of the Mothers’ movement (Borland). Furthermore, thanks to these gatherings, the Mothers managed to draw the attention of passers-by with their rallies by prominently presenting their problems in one of the most important public spaces of Argentina (Femenia & Gil).

The Mothers paid for an advertisement in the local newspaper to collect signatures of thousands of people: “All we want is the truth”, they cried; however the government again remained silent (Femenia & Gil, 1987, p.12). In addition to this, there were also other posters through which they tried to make everyone notice their disappeared loved ones. One of them was: “We do not ask for anything more than truth” which reflected the Mothers’ demand in order to find out the fate of their children (Bouvard, 1994, p. 76). There were also important slogans the Mothers were exclaiming in the gatherings. One of them was: “They took them away alive, we want them returned alive” (Bouvard, p. 81). The Mothers used simple words in the slogans and banners, though they were still able to draw attention to the confusing truth about the disappeared people and the ones who responsible for their being missing. Another slogan expressing the Mothers’ intention about the situation: “We will not forget we will not forgive” (Bouvard, p. 209).

4.1.2. The process of mourning

Regarding the focus of this paper, which is the psychological requirements of the mourning process for disappeared people, it can be said that the Mothers in Argentina had difficulties in fulfilling the mourning process since there was no certainty of the death and also no body. The Mothers believed that the disappearance of the person did not necessarily mean the death of that person. They were aware that their sons or daughters had been taken away sometimes even in front of them, yet “death did not have tangible form because there was no corpse to prepare for burial, no wake to ease the pain, no grave to visit in the cemetery” (Navarro, 2001, p. 256). Moreover, it was possible that their children had been detained and hidden in somewhere. Their children vanished away that was all they knew. They felt if they looked hard enough, they could find them (Navarro). In addition, “being disappeared” translated into being “temporarily missing” as mentioned by Abreu-Hernandez (2002). That is to say, psychological reasons made them convinced that their missing children were not really dead. In fact, the return of one or another of the disappeared from a concentration camp now and again gave the Mothers hope in terms of their denial of the

death of the disappeared. Besides, the Mothers denied their children's death due to the fact that they did not want to accept it and believed that accepting it would mean killing their children once again and this would inadvertently help the murderers. Because the public generally stayed silent regarding the cases of the disappeared, the Mothers had to be alone keeping their missing children alive and providing witness to about their names, works, houses, kids, and friends. After all, they were able to reconstruct a realm of existence for their missing loved ones in the eyes of family and society through the impacts of memory on human beings (Femenia & Gil, 1987).

All of the gatherings in the Plaza de Mayo can be interpreted as a mourning process or rather as a coping strategy due to the lack of the bodies of the disappeared. Together with the meetings in the Plaza de Mayo, the Mothers introduced a series of campaigns to change the perception of the public toward the disappeared. They prepared life-seized posters of the disappeared putting their real names on these posters with the help of a great number of young militants. Then all of these posters were hung on the walls of the buildings around Buenos Aires. In addition to this, they distributed pieces of paper prepared like human hands, which represented the real hands of the disappeared. Also, they let balloons including the names of the disappeared go to the air. And, after putting on identical masks they demonstrated and marched since they wanted to represent the predicament of the disappeared resulting from State terrorism (Femenia & Gil, 1987).

However, the Mothers continuously experienced doubts and denials and feelings of both hope and desperation due to the absence of the bodies of their loved ones. This lack of certainty affected their psychology of mourning while making the mourning process become extremely problematic. Eventually, when the bodies of some of the disappeared turned up, death became a reality. Therefore some of the Mothers began to experience a mourning process that was more normal (Femenia & Gil, 1987). In addition, after the decline of the military dictatorship and the re-establishment of a constitutional government, the Mothers asked for an accounting: "Jail for those who committed genocide, for those who violated, tortured, robbed, and disappeared thirty thousand people. Jail for those

criminals set free by corrupt judges and for politicians without scruples” (Bouvard, 1994, p. 251). Their insistence on seeking the rights of their missing children should be regarded as a coping strategy for the lack of the basic requirements of the mourning process.

4.1.3. The absence of the fathers and the power of the mothers

The reason why there were always mothers speaking for their disappeared children and the reasons for the absence of the fathers are quite important. The mothers and the fathers were affected differently by the disappearance of their loved ones. The fathers were likely to admit the situation quickly and without complaining compared to the mothers. In the course of time, the fathers believed they could not overcome the wall constructed by the military junta; therefore they consider that it would be useless insisting on asking for the fate of their missing children. After pursuing each place that the families could go by themselves or with the help of a human rights organization, they noticed all they did was wish to have hope for the impossible; finding the disappeared. Eventually, the fathers decided to behave as “rationally” and acknowledged the situation of their children, so that they gave up fighting with the military junta openly (Navarro, 2001).

On the other hand, the Mothers rejected to admit the circumstances surrounding the disappearance in spite of the fact that they were supposed to be passive and obedient in the Argentinean society. In contrast, instead of being passive and obedient stemming from the acceptance of the situation, they became active in pioneering a new social movement. To put it another way, the kidnappings of their loved ones spurred the mothers to act since they began to feel uncomfortable and upset about their role as mothers doing nothing about their children. That is to say, due the lack of their children, their roles as wives and more importantly mothers became almost meaningless. Previously, they had to take care of their children, to meet their needs, namely they were doing all the things they had to do for them such as caring about their health, education, well being. After the disappearance of their children, the Mothers had to do all of these by both looking for them

and trying to take their role to carry out the impossible. For this reason, they did not have any other thing to do except to act, even if it required a confrontation with the military junta (Navarro, 2001). In fact, they did all of these in order to help their disappeared children who gave them hope and in the end they felt that they were not leaving their missing loved ones alone (Bouvard, 1994).

Another reason leading the Mothers to be more active than the fathers was that the mothers generally could spend more time searching for their children compared to the fathers. The fathers' time was valuable because they had to earn money in order to live, and therefore they ultimately had to continue to work. On the contrary, as soon as they finished their duties at home, the Mothers could arrange time

To go once more to the Interior Ministry, follow a lead that might prove useful, get another writ of habeas corpus, collect money or signatures for an advertisement, contact with women in the provinces whose children had also disappeared, help those who had been left destitute (Navarro, 2001, p. 257).

In addition to having more time, the mothers used advantages of being a *mother*. At that time, men and young people could suddenly disappear without any reason in Buenos Aires. Nevertheless, there was no problem for elder and matronly ladies in terms of moving around the city because mothers were seen as 'just a mother' in Argentina. Moreover, motherhood is ascribed as glorified and exalted by the society. That is to say, the Mothers were not seen by the government as the same as "subversives" so that they did not have to be afraid of and to be worried about their security while moving about the city. The Mothers themselves were aware of their privileged role. Being a mother was highly accepted by the public so that they made their motherhood visible for the purpose of protecting themselves. For this reason, they all had agreed to marching by themselves, thus they did not accept men with them. This indeed worked since mothers were regarded as having nothing to do with politics in Argentina (Navarro, 2001).

Furthermore, another advantage of being a mother was the lack of previous political experience by a majority of those women. By the virtue of the lack of experience, the Mothers were not restricted by political ideologies nor did they have to obey the directions of any political party, or need to carry out any previous tactics. It is important to say, being free, the Mothers could choose to “use new symbols, devise appropriate tactics, and adopt actions, such as the Thursday marches” (Navarro, 2001, p. 257), which had not been observed in Argentina before. Even though they were living in a terrified country under the control of a military junta, thanks to motherhood the Mothers were able to preserve themselves and attained a freedom and a power that were not afforded to traditional political actors particularly by those who were men. In essence, the Mothers became one of the new political actors in Argentina. The Mothers, as a new political actor, had nothing to do with the traditional activities of the political parties since the vital issue for them was the situation of the disappeared and that was not negotiable (Navarro, 2001).

4.1.4. The role of motherhood in the Mothers’ movement

It is important to enlarge upon the concept of motherhood and the ways the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo used it. Motherhood had an extremely important role in their movement. They constructed their resistance based on motherhood. Motherhood made them feel strong, which was the basis of their resistance. Motherhood became the mothers’ single reason for staying alive. This is notably reflected in the speech of one of the mothers whose two sons were missing: “As long as I am alive, my sons will also be alive” (Bouvard, 1994, p. 107). In fact, this mother proposed a new term, “permanently pregnant”. She told that the absence of her sons had left her permanently pregnant so that she said: “If they are no longer, I have had to be them, to shout for them, to return them” (Bouvard, p. 182). She added: “I always feel my children inside me. This gives me much strength and makes me feel that my life is being used for the gestation of a new person” (Bouvard, p. 183).

In fact, motherhood also brought them a collective consciousness so that “they identified strongly with each other and began to think of themselves as more than mothers looking for their disappeared children” (Bouvard, 1994, p. 93). The mothers have learned to make their maternity a social phenomenon as “they have begun to see each other’s children and grandchildren as belonging to all of them” (Bouvard, p. 180). They became aware that their struggle for their children was not individualistic; rather it was common and shared, which led them to feel solidarity and to generate a sense of social awareness. Previously, they had been concerned only with their families, though they later criticized this as being self-centered. They began to believe that focusing on only personal problems was not social and blamed themselves for not being concerned with wider social problems in their country. That is why; they put an end to the focus on their personal problems. As soon as they became concerned with social problems happening in Argentina, they realized that there had to be collectivist solutions for all of the problems. They developed their identities based upon this solidarity and collectivism, namely they called to every one of them *Mother*, and while mentioning as a whole they called themselves *Mothers* (Bouvard). That is to say, they constructed their interpersonal relationship on the basis of “strong emotional bonds” and “shared collective identity” these are two important terms coined by Bosco (2001, p. 311). Because their connections between themselves became stronger, they decided to become not only the voice for their missing loved ones, but also for all the young of Argentina of those days and for the future. This is clearly seen one of their claims: “The child of one is the child of all of us, not only those who are missing, but the ones who are fighting for their rights today” (Bouvard, p. 181). Explaining where they learned this, the Mothers claimed that they were only pursuing their instincts instead of any philosophical ideas (Bouvard).

One of the famous statements of the mothers was: “The Mothers don’t give up. They will never shut up, forget or forgive, but will continue to struggle against justice” (Bouvard, 1994, p. 112). This implies that they have not accepted to mourn and cry for their missing loved ones since they became aware that mourning and crying were a kind of behavior that the

government expected from them. For this reason, they wanted to be perceived as “fighters”, not as “grieving women” conceptualized by Bouvard (p. 184). Their rejection of being “grieving women” is also noticed in their attitudes toward the church. One of them said: “As soon as you get to a church, you have to kneel down. The church imposes silence on you, tells you to keep your pain and pray” (Bouvard, p. 227). They did not want to obey the church as the same just as they did not want to obey the military junta. The only thing they wanted to do for their missing children was fight. The speech made by a young supporter of the Mothers is remarkable as it reflected their fight as dignified while emphasizing that the meaning of life is based on dignity, justice, liberty, and love. Therefore, the most essential point the Mothers emphasized is that “to live is to struggle and to struggle is to dream” (Bouvard, p. 185).

4.1.5. Being a revolutionary mother

The Mothers were not concerned with “bargaining and negotiating in the traditional manner” as they did not want to get involved in the system of the State that was seen as “inherently corrupt” (Bouvard, 1994, p.188). Rather, they wanted to be a ‘revolutionary mother’ not being silent and obedient to the State system. An explanation from one of the Mothers relating to being revolutionary is notably impressive: “They say that to dream alone is only a dream, but to dream with others is revolutionary. I feel like a revolutionary Mother, a fighting Mother every day, resisting and combating” (Bouvard, p. 189). In essence, they wished to bring a new governmental system to the nation, and they focused on maternal politics, which proposed a society in which justice would be valid for each citizen in terms of getting health and education services and making use of the opportunities for work and housing. They were regarding maternity as a core of their new political formation instead of seeing it simply as an obstacle to such participation. In addition, there was one more description of being revolutionary coming from another mother: “We are revolutionaries because we don’t accept things so easily. We are carrying on a different kind of a revolution, of women with a different point of view who do not hide. We do everything completely the opposite way” (Bouvard, p. 196). The Mothers

claimed that the way they chose became an example of politics based upon morality not upon corruption. As a result, they thought that they acquired power thanks to their acts, which is seen in their own words: “To be able to tell the truth, as difficult as it might be, to be able to face the powerful without violence, to face them, as we do, gives us strength, a different kind of power, not their kind” (Bouvard, p. 253).

After the military junta fell, since their children never appeared again, the struggle of the Mothers for the lives of the disappeared was replaced by a struggle for justice (Abreu-Hernandez, 2002). Their movement eventually turned into an extensive activism meeting the political problems that resulted from the domination of neoliberal movement in Argentina. They began to be on the same side with activists apart from themselves. For instance, they supported the unemployed, neighborhood councils, workers having problems with the factories where they worked, defenders of women rights, and the movements of the young. In expanding their movement, the Mothers brought a new image to women as ones who rebel against the prevailing position of women in Argentina and the world, and they broke the belief about gender and age that elderly women should not be interested in political issues (Borland, 2006; Bouvard, 1994). Therefore, they did not only confront with “the military regime’s oppression and exploitation”, but also confronted with “the patriarchal society” in the long run (Abreu-Hernandez, p.403).

Considering the sense of solidarity the Mothers constructed by coming together, it can be regarded that it was one of the major sources in helping them bear the consequences of the disappearance of their loved ones. They claimed that they were not ordinary mothers since they felt strong and established an ongoing organization, The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo. Hence they could feel and share each other’s pain for their disappeared children. Besides, they could understand and help to each other while having other difficulties such as illness, economic problems, and the loss of another relative. One of the Mothers clearly demonstrated this: “We quarrel a lot, but we are much more than a family. We help each other, and that solidarity is worth a lot” (Bouvard, 1994, p. 221). Another mother likened their solidarity to establishing a chain that is indestructible as connecting them to their

missing loved ones. This chain was also seen as “a chain of love, hope, and feeling” (Bouvard, p. 221). In spite of the pain and horror they experienced, the Mothers could feel happy being together and because people were listening to them. They even found ways of making themselves enjoy moments such as “celebrating the birth of a grandchild” or “laughing at a good joke” (Bouvard, p. 251).

4.1.6. The importance of the Plaza de Mayo

As far the importance of the Plaza de Mayo, it can be said that it became a sacred place for the Mothers. In the Plaza, the Mothers were able to consider their dignity, to find the right thoughts, and to think and to decide how they should act against the government. Also, the Plaza was where the Mothers insisted on their demands for revealing truth about their children, and called the government to account for what they did to them. The Mothers embraced this place as if it belonged to them. The Plaza became the space that gave a realm of existence to the disappeared both socially and politically. For instance, one of the Mothers said, referring to the regular Thursday protests: “If I miss a Thursday, I miss my child” (Bouvard, 1994, p. 254). Furthermore, they perceived the Plaza as if it was their skin and embraced their bodies. This space belongs to them, not any other persons after being there for fourteen years. They continued: “Going to the Plaza is an encounter not only with the son you are not going to find, but also with the young activists that come in our support, who will follow in our steps when we are no longer here” (Bouvard, p. 254). And they made an emphasis on the idea that the Plaza turned into a symbol of their missing children: “Our children were tortured and killed, but their ideas remain. They were planted in the Plaza. No one can destroy them. No one can torture them” (Bouvard, p. 254). The other descriptions for the Plaza made by some of the Mothers are also noteworthy: “the Plaza is our memory; our sons and daughters. It is being present and resisting”, “in the Plaza I feel myself. In the Plaza, it is as if we are constantly reuniting with our children and finding ourselves”, “I don’t think that we will ever achieve what we want, but I still come to the Plaza as a way of get rid of my pain”, and “a *Madre* (Mother) in the Plaza is a symbol of continued struggle, a symbol of our struggle for our

children, and a symbol of our collective memory” (Bosco, 2001, p. 315-316). In addition, the Mothers sometimes demonstrated “the plaza as the place of resistance for everybody and for every cause and popular struggle” (Bosco, p. 323).

Regarding the sustainability of the collective identity of the Mothers with respect to location and group solidarity, it can be asserted that the connections the Mothers constructed are seen highly important in the establishment of a social movement. The Mothers chose to make their meeting in the most significant square in Argentina so that the international media and the people around the world would become aware of their movement. Moreover, the Mothers embraced other activities for the disappeared, thus “all the new groups in the territorially widespread network of *Madres* (Mothers) started to conduct similar public demonstrations in the main squares of their localities at the same day and time as the original group in Buenos Aires” (Bosco, 2001, p. 315). The regular marches of the Mothers all over Argentina can be regarded as the representation of collective action. At public gatherings, this collective action turned into being a kind of ‘ritual’, which made the Mothers keep their group solidarity and their collective identity alive. In this respect, “being in the square at a specific day and time knowing that other women like them are doing exactly the same in many other different places is a way to reinforce their feeling of membership in the groups” (Bosco, p. 315).

4.1.7. The Mothers’ Movement as a Peace Movement

It is wise to take the movement of the Mothers into consideration with respect to “a peace movement” which is “a nonviolent movement that uses direct action against oppression and exploitation” as defined by Abreu-Hernandez (2002, p. 386). Since the Mothers made a choice and practiced “nonviolent actions” so as to achieve their purposes, their movement can be regarded as a peace movement. The Mothers’ movement was the only one that overtly “confronted the repressive, violent, and dictatorial military regime of Argentina” while preserving their movement as a peaceful one (Abreu-Hernandez, p. 398). The Mothers knew that all the actions of the

military junta executed were illegal such as not respecting lives of the people and their freedom, not considering human rights, and not paying attention to justice for everyone. Against the actions of the military junta, the Mothers used several nonviolent actions. For instance, they “walked in circles around the monument in the Plaza, produced leaflets and stickers announcing their meetings, wrote letters and collected signatures to send to churches, government officials, and the military” and “used any possible publicity that they could find even writing messages on pesos to let people know that their children were taken by the military” (Abreu-Hernandez, p. 401). All of these means made the Mothers not only question the dictatorship in their country, but also made them fighters against it. Although they were aware that being in the Plaza de Mayo at each gathering endangered their lives, they did not give up their struggle. They eventually won “the Peace Prize of the People, given by the Norwegian government to those who qualified for the Nobel [Peace] Prize but did not receive it” (Abreu-Hernandez, p. 405)

Consequently, the Mothers’ movement became a powerful and widespread struggle for the decline of the military regime in Argentina because they chose actions and tactics that had nothing to do with violence. Thanks to nonviolent direct action, women at any age from different geographical places regardless of their social and economic backgrounds could participate in this movement. Besides, since the Mothers did not pursue to violence, the military junta was not able to label them as a threat to itself, or to brand all the actions Mothers carried out as an illegitimate movement. All in all, the Mothers’ struggle represented a movement searching for human rights. What is more, they became inspirations for other women living in Latin America and even in Turkey. The reason lying behind their significant influence all over the world is that all they wanted was seeking peace and pursued this goal through peaceful means (Abreu-Hernandez, 2002).

4.2. The Case of Bosnian women

A great number of people’s husbands, brothers, sons, or fathers disappeared during the war that happened in Bosnia between 1992 and 1995.

After the war ended, the women whose relatives were missing felt uncertain about the fate of their relatives since they could not obtain any information about them. The uncertainty about the missing loved ones depended on several reasons: They might have been abducted, arrested, killed, or held in hidden places. Maybe they were captured and held solitary confinement for a long time, or they might be left alone accidentally after a fight or on purpose by the opponents. In addition, they might have belonged to one of armed groups who were missing due to military operations. They may have become refugees not having access to any means of communication; or they may be one of the missing who died without anyone's notice so their identities were not recovered (Crettol, & La Rosa, 2006). When the women experienced this uncertainty, sometimes they had hope and believed that their husbands would come back. Though sometimes they lost their hope and grieved for their missing loved ones even as they tried to hide their grief from their children. In their speeches, the women emphasized the hope for the impossible; their husbands were still alive. Yet, they were indeed aware that the only thing they had to live for was their hope, which is obviously seen in their speeches. One of them said: "I think everything will be better. I am living in hope" while another explained: "But I am hoping every day because I think he is alive somewhere but who knows" or one young woman depicted her situation as: "Until now nobody has said that they have seen him dead. There is hope, but there is nothing else ... They found the ID of my husband. Maybe he is dead, and maybe he is alive. Who knows? I don't know" (Robertson, & Duckett, 2007, p. 471).

The relatives of the missing people believed that their loved ones were alive even though there was no information about them and the government in Bosnia announced that a majority of the missing most probably had died. The relatives' belief was based on three major reasons. Firstly, a great number of the relatives had not witnessed the death of their missing loved ones. Secondly, there were few discovered bodies as opposed to the thousands of the missing. And, finally, "the Srebrenica community lacked trust in their government and [also] the international community as a

result of the failure to intervene in 1995 to maintain Srebrenica as a safe area” (Keough, Kahn, & Andrejevic, 2000, p. 73).

Since there were few dead bodies, the relatives continued to have a hope that the disappeared did not die. Hope against the odds was also seen in the case of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina. Also, the lack of certain verification and identification, and rumors about missing people confined in Serbian mines after the war led the relatives not to accept the death of their missing loved ones (Pollack, 2003). In fact, this is highly understandable because admitting the death of the disappeared meant to commit “a psychic murder of a loved one” (Keough et al., 2000, p. 84).

Keough et al. (2000) made interviews with the women whose relatives were missing in their study. During these interviews, they asked the interviewees their expectations about the study. The women’s reflections were noteworthy in terms of experiencing their own hopes about their missing loved ones. For instance, one of them said: “To bring some result, whatever it is” while another one said: “I expect to know the destiny of our missing persons and find out the truth”. Furthermore, the desire to get rid of the uncertainty can be noted in their speeches: “I hope this uncertainty will stop”, and “If my sons are dead, I want to bury them with dignity, and then I can go [to] their graves, where I can pray for them with my grandchildren” (Keough et al., p. 83). In another study, a speech of one woman also indicated the same feeling: “I just want them to be buried –to put the names of my husband and my sons. I don’t know much about memorials. I just want to know where they are buried” (Pollack, 2003a, p. 131). The importance of finding the missing even if they were dead is also noted in another woman’s statement: “Mothers are so happy when they find the bones of their children. We live for the day when we will find the bodies of our dearest” (Kacic, 2009, quoted in Clark, 2010). In fact, the burial of the missing is important for the relatives because the mourning process cannot begin without it (Pollack). The absence of a body to bury prevented the relatives from experiencing real grieving. Grieving without a body was perceived as disloyal to the loved one (Williams, & Crews, 2003). That is why the identification of dead bodies is crucial for the relatives who experienced both

hope and grief at the same time. Having a body ceases their hope, gets rid of them being stuck in the past, and only then the mourning process can commence (Pollack; Clark). Then the relatives will complete their mourning process, the victims of the war will gain reparation and honor, and the society will settle with the past and proceed in peace (Crettol, & La Rosa, 2006).

A place, defined by Pollack (2003b, p. 793) as “often taken granted; it is a site where action and where time passes”, is important in terms of the burial of missing people. The burial ensures certainty to the relatives about the place of their missing loved ones. In general, people develop attachment to the places they maintain in their daily lives and carry out specific rituals. In this respect, the tremendous attachment to place transfers a special meaning that is home, providing a sense of security and a possibility for establishing personal space. Homeland then becomes identified with bones, and bones identify the homeland. Burial, relating to both the relatives’ connection to their social and physical environment and the mourning process, marks and ensures the attachment to the homeland. For this reason, the relatives wanted to choose the place for the burial as one woman explained: “I think it is a good idea to put the dead people where they belong to, where they came from” (Pollack, p. 797). In addition, Memed, who was the head of a family association, also emphasized the desire for burying the missing people in their birthplaces: “We want them [the missing people] to be buried in their birthplace where they came from... Because there is in Bosnia a tradition of burying families together” (Pollack, p. 797). According to Memed, this desire stemmed from Bosnian tradition relating to the customs and care of the people who passed away, instead of derived from the religion, which is Islam in Bosnia. Dino, who was a religious leader and scholar, explained it: “It has nothing to do with Islam. But it has to do with the personal wish to have dead people returning to their country and [the families] want to be able to, once a year, visit the grave” (Pollack, p. 797). For Bosnians, visiting the graves has a significant role in their lives. In this way, the families can care for the graves such as planting flowers and cutting the grass. The families especially visit the graves on the anniversary and in

the Ramadan, a holy month according to Islam, which leads them to remember and show their respect to their loved ones who passed away (Bringa, 1995). Furthermore, place gains importance during the recovery of the trauma that happened due to the disappearance of the missing loved ones. The recovery in this context does not refer to an entire healing and reconciliation. Rather, it provides a better comprehension of the trauma and its role in the lives of the ones who are alive after losing their relatives due to the war (Herman, 1997). Burial makes the families reconstruct the place and attachments, and assigns new meanings to that place while they visit the graves of their loved ones (Pollack).

According to Powell, Butollo, and Hagl (2010, p. 185), “having a missing family member” makes the other members of the family experience “unconfirmed loss”. Until they discover the dead body of their missing through identification in one of mass graves in Bosnia, the family members continue to suffer from unconfirmed loss even though they suspect that their missing loved one died during the war. Dealing with unconfirmed loss is quite hard because it prevents the relatives from experiencing the normal mourning process and it can translate into “traumatic or complicated grief”, characterized as an extended maladaptive grief process coming after mourning (Powell et al.). Complicated grief makes people experience yearning and feel pain after the loss while it also gives a sense of hopelessness, emptiness, denial, tension, numbing, and unexpected anxiety (Prigerson et al., 1995). The grief and yearning that are normally experienced can be perceived as an adaptive strategy for preserving identity and continuity in people’s lives. This is why, the psychological effect of experiencing an unconfirmed loss, compared to a confirmed one, for a relative is akin to feeling traumatic and everyday stress relating to both the past and the present (Powell et al.). The relatives of the disappeared could not experience normal mourning process and full grief, which led them to experience a trauma that would never end until the recovery of the bodies of the disappeared. The relatives felt guilty for their missing loved ones; this is a characteristic of unconfirmed loss related trauma. For instance, one of the mothers said that she continuously questioned herself whether she could buy

something new or not while her son was still missing (Clark, 2010). In essence, what made the relatives feel guilt were that they survived while the others vanished and they had to make provisions, which were needed in order to stay alive, by means of action and inaction (Williams, & Crews, 2003).

Regarding the everyday life of the relatives of the missing, the relatives described that they had to keep their lives and activities since there was nothing except them. Missing persons in their families highly affected their lives (Keough et al., 2000). Since almost all of the missing people were men who had provided the source of income for the family, the families had difficulties in maintaining their lives (Crettol, & La Rosa, 2006). The relatives somehow learned how to survive mostly without men, and with restricted resources or sometimes with the help of other people (Keough et al.). But even so the family members should be regarded as the same as the missing persons, as victims. Besides, the disappearance of a great number of men did not only influence the relatives, but also influenced the entire society (Crettol, & La Rosa).

Memories of the relatives were always fresh in the relatives' daily lives; they could not forget the war. For instance, each month, a group of women from Srebrenica came together to participate in a demonstration because they wanted to express their predicament looking for their missing loved ones and to keep the problem of the disappearances visible in the public eye. The women who gathered on the 11th of every month, as a remembrance for the collapse of Srebrenica, which happened on July 11th 1995, were generally old and infirmed. During these gatherings, they were holding photographs and posters in which the names of the disappeared were written, and chanting slogans. Two of the important slogans were "We are searching for our missing" and "Let us not forget"(Clark, 2010, p. 430). Their demonstrations always ended in the central square of Tuzla, "Square of the victims of genocide in Srebrenica" (Clark, p. 430).

Talking about their personal grief and their own feelings, people can experience a cathartic moment on the one hand. But, on the other hand, the

cathartic situation can be regarded as a repetition of the past making them feel that pain again (Keough et al., 2000). For instance, one woman who lost her son, husband, and two brothers in Srebrenica described her life after the trauma: “Today, I do not live like normal people who have never had tragedies in their life. I now live without joy and without a real sense of life” (Clark, 2010, p. 430). Other women, whose husbands were missing, participated in Robertson & Duckett’s study (2007) described themselves as nothing since they were women who lost their husbands. All the women in this study were of the same mind that “if their husbands did not return, it would not be acceptable to move on, fall in love, and marry again” (Robertson & Duckett, p. 471). Furthermore, one woman emphasized that losing a husband meant also the loss of the status of the family for a woman living in Bosnian culture (Robertson, & Duckett). In fact, the uncertainty of the death of a husband made the status of the other family members, especially the wife, unclear. These women having missing husbands could not even be labeled as widows, though they were waiting to become widows. This was a highly agonizing status (Williams, & Crews, 2003).

Considering women living in refugee camps, their talk focused on their feeling homesick and therefore they wanted to go back to their home and reconstruct their lives. However, they believed that returning home was not easy. Apart from talking about their yearning for home, the conversation of these women contained recalling and retelling of their experiences about leaving their homes. Some of the women repeatedly told their stories to each other. A description of the life in the camp, made by one of the women, Fatima, who was a 31 year-old woman coming from Srebrenica, is noteworthy to understand what these women experienced and felt after the war:

I had five brothers before the war. One was killed. Two are held in concentration camps by the Serbians. I have no idea where the two youngest ones are. They just disappeared... The food is not very good here in the camp, but every time I have a bite to eat I wonder if they have food, if they are well, if we will be ever together again. There is not much else to do here than think. The only thing that keeps me

going is that all day long I take care of my family, then visit and talk with the neighbors. We go from day to day like this. Who knows what tomorrow holds? (Huseby-Darvas, 1995, p. 21).

As seen in the case of Fatima, most of the women in the camp could not obtain any information about their relatives whether they were confined, died, or survived and will come back to the homeland.

Another woman in the camp described how her life had changed after becoming a refugee:

Before the war, at home we would never accept gifts, not even a good word unless we knew that we could reciprocate... since we are refugees, we accept anything that is offered to us and that in itself is difficult and humiliating to accept and to live with... we are charity cases (Huseby-Darvas, 1995, p. 23).

In addition to this woman's reflection, the refugees coming from Bosnia had a disadvantage because they did not know the language of the host country, in the case of Hungary. For this reason, Bosnians had difficulties in finding sources of income while living in the camp (Huseby-Darvas).

The families of the missing people wanted to learn what happened to their relatives and if they died, where their dead bodies were. They preferred to find out the truth because they wanted to get rid of the torment of uncertainty, even though they knew the truth would be painful (Girod, 1996). In fact, knowing that the missing people were dead was not enough for preventing the relatives from suffering every day. This led the families to insist on finding the bodies of their missing loved ones. Only with this, they could make a dignified burial, mourn at their gravesite, and obtain closure (Megevand-Roggo, 2005). Following the closure, they asked for justice and the truth. They demanded the exhumation of the dead to reveal the evidence to determine the cause of the death. It was found that most of the victims were massacred. That is why; they called to account those responsible for the massacres (Girod). In addition to those responsible for the killings, the ones who did not intervene the massacres were not innocent, either. This is noted

in a speech of one woman: “The people who allow this to happen are embarrassed” (Pollack, 2003b). Carrying out justice could make the families cope with and come to terms with what had happened, then begin to believe in peace and justice (Girod).

4.3. Women of Bosnia and Argentina: Common grief and different approaches

There were thousands of missing people, who were mostly men, in both Bosnia and Argentina but the reasons behind these disappearances and how they occurred were different. In the case of Bosnia, people were missing because there was a war with Serbia at that time, thus the missing were probably abducted, arrested, captured, isolated, killed, or they became refugees. They became missing due not having any means of communication, or they died while nobody saw them (Crettol, & La Rosa, 2006). However, in the case of Argentina, people disappeared due to a military dictatorship, which ruled the country, kidnapped and then killed them while carrying out these actions illegally and actively hid the evidence. That is to say, in Argentina the disappearances were due to State sponsored terrorism. In Argentina, the State did not allow people to live as they wished, and did not consider democracy (Femenia & Gil, 1987).

One of the common problems in these two cases was the uncertainty about the fate of the missing people. This means the relatives of the missing did not know anything about their loved ones whether they died, were killed or were still alive. That is why in both cases they wished to learn the destiny of the missing and to find out the truth. Both in Argentina and Bosnia there was this intense desire to get rid of the uncertainty. Sometimes the relatives felt hope and believed their loved ones were alive, yet sometimes they could lose hope and began to grieve in both Argentina and Bosnia. But even so, they both regarded their hope as the single driving force for staying alive (Robertson, & Duckett, 2007; Keough, Kahn, & Andrejevic, 2000). Why they continued to believe the missing were alive emanated from several reasons: first, the relatives did not witness the death of their missing; second, there were few recovered bodies; third, they did not trust the governments in

their countries (both Argentina and Bosnia); fourth, there was a lack of certain confirmation and identification of both situations; and finally, for the relatives who were left behind accepting the death of the missing was perceived as committing “a psychic murder of a loved one” (Keough et al., p. 84), meaning to kill the missing by their own hand (Femenia & Gil, 1987).

The relatives’ desire to find their missing loved ones was so intense that they wanted to discover the bodies of the missing even if they were dead. The relatives insisted on taking the remains of the missing since they wanted to bury their loved ones. After the burial, they could go and visit the graves, and therefore the normal mourning process could commence (Pollack, 2003b). Otherwise, they continued to feel “unconfirmed loss” including the experience of yearning and the feeling of pain unless there could be a recovery of the missing (Powell, Butollo, & Hagl, 2010, p. 185). In addition, the families both in Bosnia and Argentina had difficulties completing the mourning process since there was no dead body and they had to cope with death that did not take on a tangible form (Navarro, 2001; Pollack, 2003a).

In each case, the relatives who were left behind were mainly women, mothers, wives, daughters, and sisters (Navarro, 2001; Robertson & Duckett, 2007). However, both the public and government left them alone in their predicament. The public remained silent whereas the governments in each country ignored and stayed indifferent to, even actively worked to hide in the case of Argentina, the problem of the disappearances (Femenia & Gil, 1987; Keough et al., 2000). Yet, the relatives in Bosnia and Argentina insisted on asking for justice and the truth while also calling to account those responsible in order to do something for their missing loved ones (Girod, 1996; Bouvard, 1994).

Focusing on the everyday lives of the relatives, it can be said that they always repeated and recalled what they experienced; that was the war in the case of Bosnia, and was the sudden disappearance in the case of Argentina. To put it another way, the memories about those days were always vivid, and those memories prevented the relatives from coping with their plight (Clark,

2010; Huseby-Darvas, 1995; Bouvard, 1994). In addition, the roles of the women whose children had disappeared in Argentina and the roles of the women whose husbands were missing due to the war in Bosnia evolved in different ways from each other.

In the case of Bosnia, the status of the women having missing husbands became unclear since they could not even be called widows (Williams, & Crews, 2003). In the case of Argentina, the women identifying themselves as mothers began to lose their role as mothers since the ones who were disappeared were their children. However, they did not want to lose their maternity, nor did they wish to stay passive and obedient. They wished to do something for their children since they lived with the consciousness of motherhood. Their desire was to maintain being the mothers of their missing children so that their role turned to looking for them and coming together in order to help their children. In fact, the mothers in Argentina went a great step further; they established a new organization, the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo (Bouvard, 1994). With this organization, they pioneered a new social movement in Argentina (Navarro, 2001). They became a new political actor in their country putting motherhood, which was the only thing the Mothers had in common, besides their missing children, at the center of their movement. They desired to introduce a new governmental system based on maternal politics proclaiming justice for everyone stemmed from morality not corruption. They expanded their movement so that they paid attention to broader social problems in Argentina while supporting collectivist solutions since they created a new identity embracing solidarity and collectivism (Bouvard). Their movement translated into a symbol of the struggle for justice and a revolutionary movement looking for peace in Argentina (Abreu-Hernandez, 2002). They described themselves as “fighters” and “revolutionary mothers”. In fact, these Mothers used to their advantage of being a mother in Argentinean society in which motherhood is regarded as glorified. This position of the Mothers was convenient; they did not have any difficulty moving around the country (Bouvard). What is more, the geographical location of Argentina provided an advantage for the Mothers since there were ongoing social movements in and around Latin America.

Besides, there was stability even though there had been the rule of the military junta and then its decline.

In contrast, in Bosnia, there was no such social movement because the country was not stable and was dealing with ethnic problems. A majority of the women who were left alone had great difficulties in maintaining their lives in Bosnia since their source of income depended on their family members who were men, and they were missing (Crettol, & La Rosa, 2006; Keough et al., 2000). Furthermore, some of them did not have any place to live so they became refugees; thus, in addition to their loss, they also felt homesick (Huseby-Darvas, 1995). Besides, some were also faced with terrible situations during the war while they were alone. They were treated badly and sometimes had been raped by the Serbian Chetnik. This indeed indicates one major difference between the women in Bosnia and the Mothers in Argentina since the Mothers did not face such experiences and were not exposed to such treatment in their country. However, women in Bosnia experienced difficult days similar to their missing, maybe even more difficult days than them. They had to cope with two traumas, one was losing their family members and the other was their own experience during the war. All of these later turned into a quandary due to not knowing what they grieved for, was it for their own pain or their missing family (Clark, 2010)?

There is another significant difference between the cases of Argentina and Bosnia that is the cultural difference in terms of the mourning process. The Bosnians emphasized the importance of the burial of the missing, going to their graves, and praying for their loved ones more than the Argentines. In addition, the families in Bosnia paid attention to the place of the burial for their missing relatives; they wanted to bury them in their birthplaces, which reflected a tradition of burying families together in Bosnia. In order to show remembrance and respect to their missing members, the families desired to visit the grave on special days, which is not the case in Argentina (Pollack, 2003b).

In conclusion, these two cases were generally alike with regards to thousands of missing people and their relatives left behind who were

searching for them. Even though the reasons behind the two events were different, the experiences and feelings of the families of the missing were quite similar. Their lives had dramatically changed due to the disappearance of their loved ones; they tried to overcome what they had experienced. In the end, they were able to find coping strategies such as establishing a new social movement, or discovering the bodies of the missing, burying them, and then visiting their graves to pray.

4.4. Summary

Taking this background into consideration, the following chapter will focus on the case study of Turkey. There will be an analysis of interviews conducted with the Saturday Mothers who have missing relatives in Turkey. The analysis will mainly depend on an exploration of the Saturday Mothers' mourning process. In this coming chapter, the case of the Saturday Mothers will be regarded as one of the new social movements recently seen in Turkey, and therefore notions springing from theories of NSMs will be discussed within this special case. Also, there will be references to the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo since the mothers in Turkey took this NSM as a role model. And, similarities between the Bosnian and Turkish women will be shown with respect to the process of mourning.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE CASE OF THE SATURDAY MOTHERS IN TURKEY

There have always been disappeared people in Turkey due to political reasons. The number of the disappeared particularly rose after the coup d'état in 1980, and reached its highest level in 1990s. A considerable number of men, mostly Kurdish, were taken into custody and then they were disappeared. The State purposely did this; what it did was removing individuals it perceived as a threat, and then tried to whitewash this predicament as if it never happened. The State intended to get rid of these people and leave their relatives without any information. State officials did not declare whether these people died or murdered. Moreover, State officials did not even accept that they carried out the actions that lead to these people's disappearance, and claimed that there were no such persons or those taken into custody somehow ran away. In brief, "disappeared while taken into custody" means that any information could not be received about the people taken into custody by the police and the State did not acknowledge these people were even arrested (Tanrıku, 2003). In this study, I examine the relatives of these disappeared people through the in-depth interviews that I made with six women, who have participated in the Saturday Mothers. Narrative analysis is the core method to explain these interviews. First I analyze the interviews regarding the mourning process of these women to their disappeared relatives, which is different from a mourning process to

dead people. Second I claim that their mourning and grief make the women act and pioneer a new social movement, the Saturday Mothers.

The struggle against being taken into custody first began after the coup d'état on 12 September 1980. The mothers whose children were taken into custody did not stay silent due to their sons being tortured in prisons. At that time two prisons were established only for the people arrested after 12 September, one was the Mamak Prison in Ankara and the other one was the Metris Prison in Istanbul. Those in Metris went on a hunger strike in 1984 due to severe torture. Those in the Mamak Prison, which had been used as a barn before, experienced similar torture as seen in Metris. They also went on a hunger strikes from time to time. But the most severe tortures were carried out in the Diyarbakir Prison in Diyarbakir, where people were killed in this prison (Mavioğlu, 2004).

The mothers of the people exposed to the inhumane conditions in Mamak and Metris prisons came together in order to do something for their children even though they did not know each other. Those in Ankara would go to the Mamak Prison, while those in Istanbul would go to Metris in order to show they were not abandoning their sons and to protest the tortures happening in these prisons. The front of both Mamak and Metris became the symbol for the first struggle against cases of extended and unlawful custody. Those going to Mamak called themselves Mamak Mothers, and those going to Metris called themselves Metris Mothers (Akçam, 2011). There is a kind of continuity between the Saturday Mothers and people who suffered from the coup d'état on 12 September. And it can be said the roots of the movement of the Saturday Mothers are based on the struggle starting in front of Mamak and Metris Prisons.

Coming to 90s, there were many cases of disappearance, which remained as unidentified murder for years. However, the unidentified murders were not indeed unidentified; rather the Security forces carried them out, of which the families of the disappeared were very much aware. They started a struggle to find their missing loved ones, and if they were dead, they would wish to recover the bodies. At the same time, the families aimed

to call the government to account, learn the truth about the fate of the disappeared, and ask for justice. For these reasons, the Saturday Mothers were established in 1995 after the bodies of Hasan Ocak and Rıdvan Karakoç were found in the woods in Beykoz in Istanbul (Melda, personal communication, 10 May 2012).

For the first time, the families of the disappeared came together in front of the gate of Galatasaray High School on Istiklal Street in Istanbul on 27 May 1995. They continued to demonstrate and make statements to the press at 12 o'clock noon each Saturday so that the fate of the disappeared would be found out, those who were responsible for the disappearances would be discovered, and then judged, and the problem of the disappearances could be brought to a close. What they did was to sit in silence in one of the most visible places in Istanbul to pronounce the disappearances to the entire world. And while making their weekly demonstrations, they welcome everyone who wanted to do something for the disappeared and those who individually came and participated in their demonstrations. However, sometimes they were obliged to take a break from their demonstrations and sittings because of police oppression. For example, in Galatasaray Square on 13 March 1999 they were treated badly by the authorities and taken into custody (Tanrikulu, 2003). Hatice while explaining they had to take a break for a long time and said:

We again began regularly to sit there [Galatasaray] each week years ago. We took a break but even so we were there for example in the week of the disappeared, and on 17 May and 31 May, I mean we were again waiting. I mean we were again going but we were not sitting regularly. These two years we have been sitting more regularly¹ (Hatice, personal communication, 12 January 2012).

The Saturday Mothers took the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina as a model while establishing and organizing their struggle. They

¹ “İki yıl önce de gene düzenli olarak her hafta orada oturmaya başladık. Bir ara vermiştik ama gene de mesela kayıplar haftasında, 17 Mayıs, 31 Mayıs orada oluyorduk. Yani gene de bekliyorduk. Yani gene gidiyordu ama düzenli oturmuyorduk. Bu iki sene daha düzenli oturduk.”

knew what they experienced was highly similar. The pain they felt was the same because their children had disappeared. Furthermore, the Saturday Mothers were aware of the inevitable effect of the movement of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo all around the world. As Melda indicates the struggle of the Mothers in Argentina became their guide in their own struggle (Melda, personal communication, 10 May 2012). Hatice also knew the power of the Mothers in Argentina: “Those mothers [the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo] are very strong... They really did many things for their children, for their grandchildren. I mean you take strength from those people, along with those people”² (Hatice, personal communication, 12 January 2012). And the influence of the movement of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo is also noticed in Zehra’s speech: “They [the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo] came once or twice to support us. Their pain is like ours. Theirs is the same; there are so many disappeared people”³ (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012). As a result, the Mothers in Turkey believed they could cry out and declare the disappearance of their children to primarily Turkey and then the world. They wanted to be the voice of the disappeared.

There is one important distinction between the cases in Turkey and Argentina. In Turkey, those who did not remain silent for their disappeared relatives were not only mothers; they were fathers, brothers, sisters, wives, granddaughters, grandsons, uncles, aunts etc. But people and the media preferred to call them *Mothers*. That is why, the name *the Saturday Mothers* came up, even though individuals participating in the Saturday demonstrations claimed that they are *the Saturday People*. Later, the relatives of the disappeared had to accept this name (Tanrikulu, 2003). At this point, if we consider the Saturday Mothers as a new social movement, we can say that a new social movement does not have a name that is chosen by itself, rather its name is given by the outside since it is in relation to its environment and its influence on society.

5.1. Similar stories and common grief

² “O analar gerçekten çok güçlü analar... Gerçekten çok şey yaptılar kendi çocukları için, torunları için. Yani o insanlardan güç alıyorsun, o insanlarla birlikte.”

³ “İşte bir iki kere onlar geldi bize destek olmaya. Onlar da acıları bizim gibi. Onların da aynı, kayıpları çok.”

Hatice's husband disappeared in Istanbul 19 October 1995. One year before this event, they came from Diyarbakir to Istanbul. As Hatice states a married of 37 years of age who had five children were abducted from one of the centers in Istanbul. No further information was received.

Hamide's husband disappeared in Mardin in 1994. As she indicates the State took him, and even though she searched for him, she could not find him. The State officers claimed they had released him, but Hamide states if he was released, where is he? She was left alone at the age of 30 with four small children, two daughters and two sons. To recover her husband's body, she was searching for unidentified bodies. She was looking at clothing to find something that belonged to her husband. However, she could not find anything, not clothes, a grave, or bones.

Nurhan's father-in-law had been missing for eighteen years. He had disappeared in Yüksekova, Hakkari in 1994. She and her family applied to the Human Rights Court and received a small amount of compensation. Nevertheless the offenders were not found. They had begun to have difficulties in their lives after her father-in-law had disappeared. The disappearance gave their family gain a bad reputation; as a result some other family members were taken into custody. They returned later but her father-in-law never did, and the family has not received any word about him.

Melda's disappeared relative is her elder brother. He was taken into custody between Aksaray and Zeytinburnu in Istanbul on 21 March 1995 and then disappeared. His family did not receive any information about him. They started a campaign to find him both in Istanbul and Ankara. Melda's mother, sister, and brother went to Ankara to talk to government officials. Her father, another sister, and she herself stayed in Istanbul to continue their struggle. Human rights defenders and another brother and, their friends supported their campaign. Later, Melda's brother dead body that appeared to be tortured was recovered around Beykoz but he was not shown to the family. Melda and her family struggled to get his remains from the Directorship of Kucukcekmece Cemetery on 17 May 1995. After the recovery of the body, the Foundation of Human Rights declared 17th day of

each month as a memorial day for the struggle for the disappeared. After that day, the family strived to bring justice to those responsible for the action of the disappearance.

Zehra's son was abducted in front of their house in Bitlis on 28 July 1993. Her son was a young man of 19 years of age. One day after the abduction, someone phoned the family and told them they had captured their son and wanted ransom from the family to release him. They also warned the families not to go to the police. But they of course went to the police and searched everywhere. However, for ten days they could not find any clues. Twelve days later, someone contacted the family again and stating their son was found dead around Hazar Lake, Elazig. The family went there to gather their son's remains, and then took the remains to their hometown, Bitlis. The funeral rites took place as they wished, in a dignified manner. However, the recovery of the body did not bring them any closure, as they had not forgotten the disappearance of their son. Thereafter, Zehra participated in the Saturday Mothers' movement, to advocate for justice.

Mutlu's brother-in-law disappeared when he was an 18 year-old student in high school. Mutlu participated in the Saturday Mothers for five years in place of her mother-in-law who has bone loss and difficulty in walking. Mutlu's brother-in-law had been missing for seventeen years. After the day he was taken from the house, nobody has seen him. Mutlu's mother-in-law wanted her child back and went to the police after the day her son was taken by security forces. But the officers at the police station stated that there was no such person. She even applied to the European Court of Human Rights; however she did not even have a document indicating that her son was arrested. She and other family members searched for him diligently; especially in areas where someone informed them that some people are buried. They tried to find something belonging to their disappeared son among the unidentified bodies in the mass graves. Nevertheless, they have not recovered anything belonging him.

5.2. The process of mourning in the case of the Saturday Mothers (the lack of the requirements of mourning)

When a loved one dies, people experience a process called mourning, which refers to adapting death into ongoing life and the reconstruction of a new self. The process of mourning is divided into two stages respectively; crisis grief and the work of mourning. During crisis grief, people's first reaction will be denial, meaning that they do not want to accept the death. But this period of denial does not last long, in general, because people can come to terms with death as they carry out the funeral rites for the deceased. Considering the case of the Saturday Mothers, it can easily be said the period of denial lasts very long, due to the lack of a body. People experience great difficulties in accepting death where no funeral rituals have taken place (Volkan, 1993). In fact, the case of the Mothers is even worse than this because they are not sure whether their children are dead or not, let alone not having their body. They experience ambiguous loss since they do not know the fate of their children (Boss, 1999). In the normal mourning process, the first reaction, denial, is followed by splitting, an adaptive reaction that includes saying goodbye to the deceased while giving the sense of comfort. The Saturday Mothers mostly cannot experience this reaction because of the uncertainty about their disappeared children and the lack of the recovery of the bodies. After splitting, bargaining is observed as a reaction in which people acknowledge death to a certain degree but at the same time the period of denial continues to a minimum extent. While experiencing bargaining, people always recall the last time they were with the deceased. In contrast to splitting, bargaining occurs among the Saturday Mothers. Furthermore they may be caught in this period because they always remember the last time they saw their missing loved ones, and habitually repeat it as a ritual. Following bargaining, people feel anxiety and anger since facing death makes them weak, which is regarded as healthy to a certain degree (Volkan, 1993). After all, as Parkes (1986) proposes people's expressions of their anger will change with the passage of time and the acceptance of death. The Saturday mothers also experience anger and anxiety, but their feelings remain the same as time passes.

During crisis grief, the mourner feels pain in a most acute degree up to three months after the loss. Later, the degree of pain will decrease while

becoming less frequent, which makes the mourning process less disruptive. Pain is no longer felt unless the mourner faces sudden reminders of the deceased (Parkes, 1986). Nevertheless, the degree of the pain the Saturday Mothers feel does not diminish. To feel the pain they do not need those events reminding them of their loved ones because they continue to feel pain deep insides. They remember their missing loved ones all the time; nothing changes in their grief:

I swear we are always mournful. A person losing her child, husband, mother, son, sibling, we... I, myself am always mournful. My mourning is always with myself. Where I go, it does not end. If I go there, it is still inside of me. If I leave from there, I walk. I go to a car. I come down the coast. I cannot ever forget it⁴ (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012).

The mourner may wish to do something in order to mitigate the pain. What is commonly seen among mourners is not to believe that the loved one has passed away (Parkes, 1986). The Saturday Mothers also choose this way; they reject the death of their children. But, their rejection is different from the rejection towards a normal death since what they experience cannot even be called death, rather it should be defined as ambiguous loss. Another way to mitigate the pain is to avoid thinking about the deceased and coming into contact with persons or situations that remind them of the deceased (Parkes). This is not possible for the Saturday Mothers they always think about the disappeared. In fact, thinking about them made the Mothers to come to Galatasaray each Saturday. If they miss one of the weekly demonstrations, they feel uneasy: “Sometimes I say ‘I won’t go this Saturday’ but even so it is not possible. It appeals, takes me away. I go. If I am not sick, I will also always go”⁵ (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012). Since going to Galatasaray each Saturday has become some kind of a ritual for these women, they may even wish that Saturday would come immediately: “For

⁴ “Valla biz her zaman yaşlıyız. Bir insan, çocuğunu kaybeden , kocasını, annesini, evladını, kardeşini, biz benim şahsım her zaman yaşlıyım. Benim her zaman yasım benimle beraberdir. Nereye gitsem bitmiyor. Oraya da gitsem içimdedir, oradan çıksam, yolda yürüyorum, arabada gidiyorum, sahile iniyorum, hiçbir zaman ben onu unutamıyorum.”

⁵ “Bazen diyorum ‘bu Cumartesi gitmeyeyim’ ama yine de mümkün değil beni çekiyor, götürüyor, gidiyorum. Hasta olmasam her zaman da giderim.”

example today is Saturday, ‘When will Saturday come?’ I am counting: Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. I am waiting the next Saturday. Now I am waiting for Saturday”⁶ (Hamide, personal communication, 12 May 2012).

The work of mourning, the stage that follows crisis grief in the mourning process, commences as long as the mourner accepts the loss. The Saturday Mothers cannot completely experience this stage since they are not able to accept the death of their loved ones. This stage comprises a reconstruction of the relationship with the deceased, but the Saturday Mothers cannot reconstruct their relationship with their missing children. Since their children are missing, the Mothers do not have anything, not even bones or remains to confront. As Volkan (1993) suggests the emotional presence of the lost person may continue to intervene in the mourners’ lives. This is entirely true for the Saturday Mothers’ daily lives. These women keep living with their disappeared relatives. That is to say, they are not able to experience a successful work of mourning, as Tähkä (1984) indicates; they cannot adjust their relations with the deceased, in terms of making meaningful sense of the relationship, and cannot place this relation in the hidden recess of their memories.

Mourners can feel weak and lonely all the time when they think about the features of their lost relationship (Volkan, 1993). The Saturday Mothers experience this difficulty each time they remember their relationships with their disappeared relatives. What they experience is even more painful because their relationships depend on the disappeared and this dependence prevents them from resolving their loss (Engel, 1964). A dependent relationship refers to a relationship between a mother and a son, or the one between a husband and wife, or the one between siblings as in the cases of the Saturday Mothers. For example, Zehra’s son, Hatice’s husband, Hamide’s husband, and Melda’s brother were disappeared. In the case of losing a child, even within the normal mourning process, parents may not experience this, namely parents may keep their child alive in their lives and even in their future plans. For this reason, they continue to look after and

⁶ “Hani mesela bugün Cumartesi, ‘aa Cumartesi ne zaman gelecek?’ Sayıyorum, Cumartesi, Pazar günü, Pazartesi, bir sonraki Cumartesi’yi bekliyorum. Şimdi Cumartesi’yi bekliyorum.

love their children (Volkan). This is also seen in a mother whose son disappeared:

There is not pain similar to the pain experienced after the loss of a child...I lost my mother within three years... But my son's place is utterly different for me... That pain is utterly different. Here is his photograph. I talk to his photograph. I talk to myself too. I talk to his photograph... I cannot forget. He is unforgettable⁷ (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012).

The Mothers may sometimes cry in order to relieve the pain, which makes them vulnerable since they need and seek support and help. The Mothers have a right to expect support from their environment since people generally feel empty and then need others after losing their spouses or children. Thus overcoming grief will be more difficult if they feel lonely and socially isolated (Parkes, 1986). That is to say, social networks providing support are helpful in the mourning process (Volkan, 1993). But the Mothers indicate that support to the Saturday Mothers is not enough. According to the Mothers, people do not give their support. Not because they are afraid or not informed about the veracity of the disappearances in Turkey, but because most of the people ignore this reality, which the Mothers complain about:

They don't care. They know these, see these, hear these but ignore... Nobody comes here without a reason. Those without a reason come by, look around and walk away. Because they have no pain. They walk away. But the people here, they all have problems. A part of their body has been lost. Every one of them. Everyone⁸ (Hamide, personal communication, 12 May 2012).

We received very intense support during our sittings in the 90s. Many people from all over the country showed great awareness. But I don't

⁷ "Hiçbir acı evladın acısının yerini tutmuyor... Annemi de kaybettim. Üç yılda... Ama oğlumun yeri başkaydı benim için... Onların acısı başka. Fotoğrafi işte burada. Fotoğrafiyla da konuşuyorum. Kendi kendime de konuşuyorum. Fotoğrafiyla konuşuyorum... Hiç unutamıyorum. O unutulmaz zaten."

⁸ "Umursamıyorlar. Bunları biliyorlar, görüyorlar, duyuyorlar ama işte arkasın atıyorlar... Kimse buraya boşuna gelmiyor. Boşuna geliyorlar, bakıyorlar, geçiyorlar. Onların acısı yok çünkü. Geçiyorlar. Ama buraya gelen insanlar, hepsinin bir sorunları var. Hepsinin vücudundan bir parça kaybolmuş, herkesin yani, hepsi."

think it is enough these days... I believe that more people should cry out for the struggle for the disappeared... Even a tourist, even a person coming from abroad, had heard of the Saturday Mothers, however I do not think it is possible for some people from within this country could hear about the event. People should be sensitive⁹ (Melda, personal communication, 10 May 2012).

Every region in Europe heard [the Saturday Mothers]. Everyone knows. But in Turkey don't. They are deaf to [this]. They don't want to hear¹⁰ (Mutlu, personal communication, 9 June 2012).

As do Hamide and Melda, Zehra also tells that everyone knows the situation of the disappearances in Turkey. And Mutlu also indicates although there are people coming to support for them, their number is not enough. Furthermore, Nurhan's speech draws attention to public opinion about this problem:

They [People] don't give support. We only come here to gather. And our channels [Kurdish TV channels] just broadcast us, and that is it... Turkish public has no idea¹¹ (Nurhan, personal communication, 3 March 2012).

This is also stated by Mutlu:

Now we are in the seventeenth year but these are not broadcasted by ATV, Kanal D, Show TV, Star [which are mainstream TV channels in Turkey], none of them. Furthermore, most people who are just passing

⁹ "90'lı yıllarda oturmalarımızda çok yoğun bir desteğimiz vardı. İnsanların duyarlılığı çok fazlaydı her kesimden. Ama şimdilerde maalesef ki yeterli olduğunu düşünmüyorum... Kayıplar mücadelesine çok daha fazla insanın ses vermesi gerektiğini düşünüyorum... Dışarıdan gelen bir insan bile, bir turist bile Cumartesi Anneleri'ni duymuşken, ben bu ülkede yaşayanların duymamasının mümkün olmadığını düşünüyorum. Ama sadece biraz daha insan kalmak gerekiyor bence."

¹⁰ "Avrupa'nın her yeri duydu [Cumartesi Anneleri'ni]. Her yer biliyor. Ama Türkiye'dekiler duymuyor. Kulak kapamış. İstemiyor duymak."

¹¹ "Destek vermiyorlar. Sadece biz gelip buraya toplanıyoruz. Bir de bizim kanallar veriyor. O kadar... Türk halkının çok haberi olmuyor."

here, stop and ask ‘What is this?’ After seventeen years, people are still asking what this is¹² (Mutlu, personal communication, 9 June 2012).

For this reason, they sometimes feel lonely. As Hamide demonstrates, if they had support maybe things would be different. However, Hatice believes nobody is really aware of anything in this country even though she describes the support for the Saturday Mother similarly to Melda who says “... previously a great number of people who had nothing to do with the disappeared came to demonstrations but now they are no longer do” (Melda, personal communication, 10 May 2012).

The work of mourning does not entirely disappear even if it is successfully completed. In other words, grief may reappear on special days, particularly on anniversaries (Volkan, 1993). The case of the Saturday Mothers is even worse because they feel grief all the time; what makes them recall their disappeared relatives are not just special days; the disappeared are always on their minds not in their subconscious. In fact, they desire to continue grieving and recalling all their memories about the missing, otherwise they think of themselves as if they were betraying to their loved ones (Volkan). After the disappearance of their loved ones, their lives have changed; there is no longer a place for holidays, weddings and entertainment in their lives. Mutlu depicts her mother-in-law’s situation:

Our holiday is not like a holiday. Look, for example Mother [her mother-in-law] has five children; she gave all of them in marriage however after that day no weddings took place. ‘We can’t have weddings.’ she says: ‘they cannot be done.’ She says: ‘how will I dance, how will I laugh?’ I haven’t seen her wearing anything nice during any of the Eid celebrations. In our area, in Mardin, we have a local scarf with white beads. I haven’t seen a bead on her. ‘I won’t

¹² “Şu anda on yedi seneyiz ya, ama ne bir ATV de, ne bir Kanal D de, ne bir Show TV de Star da, hiçbir yerde bunlar yayınlanmıyor. Hatta çoğu kişi buradan geçiyor nedir bu diye. On yedi sonra insanlar diyorlar ki bu nedir?”

wear beads, I can't ' she says¹³ (Mutlu, personal communication, 9 June 2012).

Zehra also describes her changing life after the disappearance of her son:

Honestly my whole life has changed after my son disappeared. Our home changed. Our work place changed. Our financial condition had improved more or less [before the disappearance of her son]. Our wealth changed [after the disappearance]. We migrated, and came here. We left behind our houses. I became nervous and stressed. After that I got even more nervous. I still have all that stress¹⁴ (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012).

Furthermore, Hatice also experiences that grief and feels mournful all the time:

You always have that mourning feeling inside of yours... for example I haven't even put a drop of henna on my hand. You have a nephew, or a sibling or a close relative or a friend is getting married, you know, someone you really love, you put henna on your hands. But this is something you don't even want to do. You are mourning all the time For example; I haven't been to any weddings for years. For example, something is organized for the disappeared, normal political statements are offered, I go, I participate. I have participated in many events like this, but not to something such as wedding, where you should enjoy yourself. Because if I go, I will feel bad. Because I do not want to enjoy myself¹⁵ (Hatice, personal communication, 12 January 2012).

¹³ "Ne bizim bayramımız bir bayram. Bak mesela Hediye annenin beş tane çocuğu var. Hepsini evlendirmiş ama hiçbirine de düğün yapılmamış o günden sonra. 'Yapılamıyor' diyor. 'Ben nasıl oynayacağım' diyor, 'nasıl güleceğim' diyor. Daha bir bayramda doğru düzgün bir şey giydiğini görmedim. Hani bizim buralarda, Mardin yerinde, yöresel bir türbanımız var beyaz boncuklu, onda daha boncuk görmedim. 'Takmıyorum' diyor, 'takamam' diyor."

¹⁴ "Valla ben oğlumu kaybettikten sonra benim bütün hayatım değişti. Bizim evimiz değişti. Bizim iş yerlerimiz değişti. İyi kötü toparlanmıştık. Mal varlığımız değişti. E göç ettik, geldik buraya. Evlerimizi orada kaldı. Sinir, stres oldum. Ondan sonra sinirlendim. Halen de o stres bende var."

¹⁵ "O senin içinde her zaman yas oluyor... mesela bir elime bir kına bile sürmedim. Senin bir yeğenin oluyor, veya da senin kardeşin evleniyor veya da bir yakın akrababan dostun. Hani diyor ki çok sevdiğin bir insanda eline bir kına yakarsın. Onu bile istemiyorsun. Her zaman

Even though the work of mourning does not completely finish, it begins to lose its abrasive effect on individuals' lives by means of the resolution of loss, meaning an adaptation to the absence of loved ones (Rubin, 1984). Nonetheless, this is almost impossible for the Saturday Mothers. They cannot become accustomed to the veracity of the finality of the disappearance, which is the biggest problem preventing them from experiencing a normal mourning process and completing it. In relation to this, the Mothers cannot obtain a new energy and vitality unlike the people who experience the normal mourning process. Since the Mothers cannot feel energy, they continue on being stuck in the past and can never become ready to separate themselves from what they are experiencing (Volkan, 1993). That is to say, they will never experience successful mourning as long as they cannot completely let go of their missing loved ones (Carr & Coolican, 2010).

After the period of the work of mourning comes to an end and therefore gaining a new energy and vitality, people reach a new level of maturity and empathy. Due to this maturity and empathy, they can understand themselves better and see the most important things in their lives (Volkan). This is valid for people experiencing a normal mourning process but it can be said that the Saturday Mothers can also gain this kind of maturity and empathy even though they are far from feeling a new energy and vitality because the period of mourning does not finish for them. The maturity and empathy they obtain are reflected in their speeches. Asking if participating in the Saturday Mother movement is enough for the struggle for disappearance, Zehra states that she will participate in other activities, if there are any, and in fact she wishes that more activities for the disappeared would be organized. Mutlu claims, "Nobody, only a felonious person can rejoice in somebody's death. I never rejoice in a death of a policeman, or

o yası tutuyorsun. Mesela aylarca yıllarca ben hiçbir düğüne katılmadım. Her zaman o yası tutuyorsun. Mesela bir insan öldüğü zaman bir sene o yası tutarsın, ondan sonra kendini toplarsın, biter. Mesela ben belki sekiz dokuz sene hiç bir düğün törenine gitmedim. Mesela bir kayıplar için bir şey oluyor, normal bir siyasi şeyle ilgili açıklama bir şeyler oluyor. Ben gidiyorum, katılıyorum. Yani çok şeye katıldım ama düğüne falan keyifli olan bir yere gittiğim zaman kendimi kötü hissediyorum çünkü içimden gelmiyor."

anyone else”¹⁶ (Mutlu, personal communication, 9 June 2012). Hatice also mentions her desire to be a real advocate for human rights. According to her, being an advocate for human rights is honorable because it requires not discriminating against people dependent on their identity, ideas, language, and religion. Melda knows what she has been doing within the struggle for the disappeared: “Because not only for my brother, I think I have been doing many things for the disappeared. And maybe my brother can rest in peace as I survive and do all of these things”¹⁷ (Melda, personal communication, 10 May 2012). In other words, they have become more sensitive and mindful about social problems. And they always want to do anything they can for the disappeared and for people who have been wronged.

What the Saturday Mothers experiences can be regarded as a complicated mourning process or unresolved crisis grief, conceptualized by Volkan (1993), due to two important reasons. First, the relationships among the Mothers and their missing loved ones cannot ever finish. Second, they face an inevitable external circumstance that is the lack of the body of the disappeared. These reasons overload the Mothers’ capacity to mourn and therefore they cannot tolerate the separation from the disappeared. In order to mourn effectively, the mourner has to experience the presence of death, but the person dealing with unresolved crisis grief perceives this ability grief requires as exhausting (Volkan). This is also true for the Saturday Mothers. For instance, Zehra describes she was fine and healthy before the disappearance of her son, but what she experienced has made her really tired:

I think, if this hadn’t happened to my son, I would have looked ten years younger. I have broken down very much... I mean I am very exhausted; I have been struggling for twenty years¹⁸ (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012).

¹⁶ “İnsan, ancak canı bir insanın öldüğüne sevinebilir. Ben bir polisin asla ölmesine sevinmem, hiç kimsenin yanı.”

¹⁷ “Çünkü sadece kardeşim için değil, kayıplar için çok şey yaptığımı düşünüyorum. Ve belki de kardeşimin gözlerinin arkada kalmaması, benim ayakta durup bunları yapmamla olacak yanı.”

¹⁸ “Bence, bu oğlumun şeyi olmasaydı, ben bir on yıl daha genç gösterirdim. Ben çok yıkıldım... Yani artık yoruldu ben de, e yirmi yıldır mücadele ediyorum.”

This is because she is experiencing the same grief that is never ending. And when she is asked whether or not they seek psychological help, she replies that she has not gone to any psychology department even though she needs to and sometimes says to herself “I wish there would be a psychology doctor, I would go.”¹⁹ Moreover, Nurhan’s mother-in-law died while she was looking forward to see her missing husband. Hamide also talks about how her health has changed after her husband disappeared:

Look, I have become diseased. I have high blood pressure. I have heart disease, I had a surgery. Look at me, everything is swollen. My whole body is swollen because I am tired²⁰ (Hamide, personal communication, 12 May 2012).

Talking about whether or not they received psychological help, Hamide indicates she has received psychological support for five or six years:

It helps in this way, for example I take a medicine, until it wears out, I forget myself. I mean once in a while I am able to smile. See without this support, I would never be able to²¹ (Hamide, personal communication, 12 May 2012).

Describing a smile on her face, Hamide’s choice using “once in a while” is meaningful because it implies that everything she experiences is for once in a while, nothing in her life is constant. She cannot positively experience anything as in the way she should.

The Saturday Mothers also have linking objects observed during unresolved crisis grief. These objects are used for continuation of the lost relationship since they prevent people from just thinking about their grief (Volkan, 1993). In fact, people embrace these linking objects more when they do not believe that their loved ones are gone. This is particularly seen in the case of the Saturday Mothers. Since they are not sure about the death of

¹⁹ “Keşke bir psikoloji doktoru olsaydı, gitseydim.”

²⁰ “Bak, hastalık sahibi oldum. Tansiyonum oldu. Kalbim var, ameliyat oldum. Her şey baksana şiş. Her yerim şiş. Çünkü artık yorulдум.”

²¹ “Faydası, şöyle faydası var, mesela bir ilaç içiyorum. İçtiğim zaman onun etkisi geçene kadar mesela ben kendimi unutuyorum. Yani ara sıra yüzüm gülüyor. İşte o destek olmasa hepten ben kendime gelemiyorum.”

their missing children, they preserve things belonging to their children very carefully as if they would come back one day and use them again.

It is asserted that the most difficult predicament for mourning is sudden or violent loss (Volkan, 1993). This can also be seen in case of the Saturday Mothers since their children have suddenly disappeared and there is no information about them meaning they were most probably killed violently as some bodies were found in the middle of nowhere appearing to have been tortured as in the cases of Hasan Ocak and Rıdvan Karakoç. It is claimed as long as families have proper healthy bonds among their members, they can overcome this plight (Volkan). This may be true for the Melda's family. Melda says they were pretending to each other that everything was fine in order to deal with this situation. But even so, it is more difficult for the mother and the father. Melda mentions they could keep their father alive only for six years after the disappearance of her brother (Melda, personal communication, 10 May 2012). Even in normal cases of death, coping with a loss of a child is the most difficult thing for parents to recover from. Parents experiencing the loss of their children always say the death of a child is different from all other cases of death. Melda's mother has been feeling sick about the death of her son. Melda says they did not show the picture of his brother's dead body to their mother since they wanted her to remember her son with a smile on his face (Melda, personal communication, 10 May 2012). In addition, parents can experience this in different ways; meaning one parent may choose to protect memories about their child while another may not. This is why there may be misunderstandings among parents and grieving process may become more aggravating. However, if family members communicate with each other about what they think and feel, they may better understand the experiences of each other and feel more relaxed (Neimeyer, Prigerson, & Davies, 2002). The different ways, through which parents act, can be seen in the case of Zehra. When she describes her grief, she says her husband experiences his grief differently from her. And she complains about the lack of communication about their feelings and thoughts with the other family members and relatives (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012).

5.3. The importance of a body, a grave, and funeral rituals during mourning

In order to grieve, people need time and space. For this reason, funeral rituals and ceremonies derived from religions and cultures are crucial as they provide the psychological requirements for mourning. The denial of the loss of a loved one begins to fade because people witness a dead body, take care of funeral arrangements, and receive condolences. Through such rituals, problems resulting from grief come up, and this makes the period of tranquillization and the recovery process easier (Volkan, 1993). Cultural rituals carried out after death, allow mourners to share and express their guarded feelings (Engel, 1964). Furthermore, mourners can display their confusion, anger, and pain they feel with the help of religious functionaries and ceremonies. After rituals and ceremonies, people can go and visit the grave of the deceased, which plays a significant role in the recovery as it enables saying goodbye to the deceased (Volkan). Having a grave for the deceased is extremely important. This way, families know where their loved one is and they can visit them when they wish.

The most important thing the Saturday Mothers lack is the body of their missing relative. This aggravates their grief and pain. Moreover, due to the lack of a body to bury and for which to carry out funeral ceremonies, the grief the Mothers feel becomes unending, even though normal grief is “an experience that can have a beginning and an end” (Volkan, 1993, p. 118). This definition of grief refers to people who can move beyond grief and continue their lives, given they experience a normal mourning process. If someone’s death has been accepted by his relatives, those left behind will eventually learn to regard this death as natural (Betz & Thorngren, 2006). However, the Saturday Mothers cannot regard the disappearance of their loved ones as natural. They mostly do not see the bodies and witness the death. In fact, they even do not know whether their relatives are dead or alive. In the case of tangible death, the loss is seen and recognized and legitimized in the public eye, which makes receiving support from the environment possible (Betz & Thorngren). But, in the cases of the Saturday Mothers, the loss they experience is indeterminate, namely ambiguous loss,

which is the most agonizing form of loss (Boss, 1999). Hence, they cannot find words to describe their predicament and cannot know what to call themselves. Ultimately, they cannot make sense of what they are coping with:

People were coming to our house, and saying: ‘what do we say, my condolences to you, shall we recite Fatiha²².’ We cannot do any of this, we cannot say anything²³ (Mutlu, personal communication, 9 June 2012).

What the Saturday Mothers experience is an ongoing ambiguity that is highly stressful and painful. Due to the uncertainty about the fate of the disappeared, the Mothers cannot know whether their loss is completed or continuing. They cannot confront the death of their missing loved one, so they cannot reconstruct their roles regarding relations with the missing. They cannot perform cultural rituals and funeral ceremonies, and what they are dealing with remains unconfirmed by society. This makes their mourning process complicated (Boss, 1999). In order to experience the mourning process entirely and then to complete it, the Saturday Mothers need to recover the body of the disappeared. Their desire for having a body and bones never ends. They have to encounter the dead body, which is the tangible way to understand the death. Recovery of the body provides an opportunity for the Mothers say good-bye to their children for the last time while making it easier to let go. Only in this way, the Mothers can get rid the torment about the fate of their loved ones (Boss, 2002). Otherwise, their loss remains as “invisible and unrecognized” preventing the Mothers from receiving consolation from the customary rituals of mourning (Herman, 1997, p. 188). For this reason, the Mothers get into a quandary, they cannot decide whether they keep their hopes alive and wait their loved ones or give up (Boss, 1999).

Having a body to bury is so important that one of the family members, a participant in the Saturday Mothers, sees herself as lucky since she has a

²²The first section of Quran that is always recited to the person who has just passed away.

²³ “İnsanlar bizim evimize geliyorlardı, ‘ne diyeceğiz’ diyorlar, ‘başımız mı sağ olsun yani, bir Fatiha mı okuyalım?’ Hiçbir şey yapamıyoruz, hiçbir şey diyemiyoruz.”

grave to visit (Melda, personal communication, 10 May 2012). Those left in ambiguity may begin to question the unjust side of the life, namely they may lose their belief towards the world as “a fair, safe, and understandable place” (Boss, 2002, p. 39). They may ask these questions: “Why God, why me? What did I do to deserve this?” For instance, Hatice indicates she rebels when she is suffering so much and becomes aggravated. However she also explains she immediately wishes forgiveness from God and recites passages from the Quran while taking strength from religion:

If there is no belief, a person does not survive. Belief is very important²⁴ (Hatice, personal communication, 12 January 2012).

Zehra also tells that she sometimes rebels:

God, what did I do? What did I do to you? What was my fault?? Was it being Kurdish? Was it my son being a journalist? Did all of this happen only to the Kurdish?²⁵ (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012).

This rebellion is not directed towards God; rather it is towards the State, because this mother knows the actual offender is the State to whom she is a citizen paying taxes. Her speech reflects she is really aware of her and her family’s identity and the meaning of being Kurdish in Turkey. All of this happened to her family; her son disappeared and then was killed only because they are Kurdish. Maybe she is not aware whom she nurtures rebel; therefore she thinks she refuses her fate. And she feels bad for rebelling just as Hatice. She curses Satan and thanks God for her other children. She tries to console herself alone, she feeling that religion does not give strength since she lost her son and she cannot take strength from anywhere. But even so, she somehow tries to find ways to ease her suffering. Hamide also embraces religion to console herself while accusing those responsible for her husband’s disappearance:

²⁴ “İnanç ta olmazsa insan ayakta durmaz. İnanç çok önemlidir.”

²⁵ “Allah’ım ben ne yaptım, ne ettim sana? Neydi suçumuz? Suçumuz Kürt olmak mıydı? Benim oğlumun suçu gazeteci olmak mıydı? Hepsi bu Kürtlerin mi başına geldi?”

Our sins are on those who did this, did this to people, on those left these children [her children] fatherless... our sins are on them. In the other world, I personally, in that world my hand adheres on their necks, I will not let go. Certainly, I don't give my blessing [to the State]; I will not let this go. On that world... But this world can be theirs, never mind. Sooner or later, we will die. We will also die, they will die too. This world will end but the other world will not. It is hard in that world, it is very hard. Yes, for those who left the children fatherless it will be very hard²⁶ (Hamide, personal communication, 12 May 2012).

This speech mirrors the power of belief keeping these women alive. Even though Hamide seems as if she accepts her destiny, her belief in the otherworld gives her hope and relief. Her emphasis on her belief that offenders will be punished in the other world may be interpreted as her giving up on calling them to account. Nevertheless, she is also aware of who is guilty, and prays this guilty State will become merciful. In addition, she somehow feels hope about recovering her husband, and still expects benevolence from the State:

God willing, one day these bones will be found... We also say God willing one day, because the State has lost them. They should know where they put [them]. One day they will become compassionate. One day they will feel death²⁷ (Hamide, personal communication, 12 May 2012).

The Mothers become physically and emotionally tired as they try to overcome this ambiguity and ongoing suffering (Boss, 1999). They continue to experience denial and doubt as they feel both hope and desperation at the same time. After the bodies of some of the missing are discovered as in the

²⁶ “Bu yapanlara, bunu insanlara yapanlara, bu çocukları babasız bırakanlara günahlarımız onların boynunda, o dünyada ben şahsen, o dünyada elim onların yakasına yapışır, bırakmam. Kesinlikle, helal etmiyorum, bırakmıyorum. O dünyada... Ama bu dünya onların olsun, boş ver. Nasıl olsa öleceğiz. Biz de öleceğiz, onlar da ölecek. Bu dünya biter ama o dünya bitmez. O dünya çok zor, çok zor. Evet, çocukları babasız bırakan, kolay bir şey değildir.”

²⁷ “İnşallah bir gün bu kemikler bir yerden çıkar diyorum... Biz de diyoruz inşallah bir gün, çünkü bu devlet kaybetmiş onları. Nereye koymuşsa biliyordur. Bir gün merhamete gelirler. Bir gün ölümü hissederler.”

cases of the Mothers de Plaza de Mayo, death became tangible and real (Femenia & Gil, 1987). The families who discovered dead bodies of their loved ones, as the families of Melda and Zehra, could finally begin to experience more normal mourning process:

It [having a grave] is a small consolation. At least a piece of my son's bone now belongs to me. I put a flower on a piece of bone belonging to him. This emotion is utterly different²⁸ (Melda, personal communication, 10 May 2012).

We all collapsed at that time. That was really painful when the news of his death was received. I still sometimes say that... some are saying: 'if only we could see our children's grave'. And I am say: 'if it [the grave] was not there, maybe I would still be hoping, is he alive, he will return. The grave finished over there, the grave finishes [hope] there... But even so I am saying: 'No, fortunately, seeing that they killed him, there is the grave. If they had not shown the grave to us... there are many friends like that... I am visiting the grave. I am sitting there for two three hours... I go there; I don't want to come back. I mean I don't leave from there. I want to stay there... It [having a grave] is a consolation, of course²⁹ (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012).

But both Melda and Zehra continue to feel extremely sad and mourn even if they have the graves of their loved ones because they also experienced disappearance of their relatives for a short time. Those days, when they could not receive any information about their relatives, are always vivid in their minds and keep making them sad. All in all, what they faced was not a normal case of death, it was traumatic:

²⁸ "Çok küçük bir teselli. En azından oğlumdan bir kemik parçası artık bana ait. Yakınımdan bir kemik parçasının üstüne bir tane çiçek bırakıyorum. Bu duygu çok başka."

²⁹ "Hepimiz o zaman yıkıldık zaten. O çok acıydı onun ölüm haberi gelirken. Halen de bazen diyorum ki... bazıları diyor ki işte 'Çocuklarımızın mezarını görsek.' Ben diyorum ki olmasaydı belki hala umut ederdim, acaba sağ mıdır, gelecek. Mezar artı bitti orada, mezar orada bitiriyor... Gene de, yine de diyorum 'Yok, iyi ki de, madem ki öldürmüşler, mezarı var.' Eğer mezarını da bize göstermeseydiler... çok da öyle arkadaşlar var... Mezarı ziyaret ediyorum. Oturuyorum orada iki üç saat... Oraya gidiyorum, oradan gelmek istemiyorum. Yani ayrılmak istemiyorum oradan. İstiyorum ki orada kalayım... Bir teselli tabi ki."

I don't ever believe my son is dead. I go to his grave but I don't believe. I don't believe, because he continues living in my heart... It is not a normal death. If it were a normal death, I would consent to it. Mine was not normal. I feel so sad... I wish someone shot him... I would consent to it... Those ten days were very painful for me... Still that same day, same hour, and same minute comes to my mind; and I relive it³⁰ (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012).

There is an endless mourning. I mean we found [his body] but our mourning hasn't finished because it does not finish. Finding is not enough... A grave is not an ending of mourning... That sense of justice, first of all, people's sense of justice has to be satisfied... Only securing the real justice will finish this mourning³¹ (Melda, personal communication, 10 May 2012).

The sense of mourning is such an uneasy sense, that even those having graves to visit cannot be content with what you have. They cannot feel peaceful knowing that they have a grave of a loved one. The completion of the mourning process remains very difficult for these people. This is because they were not able to witness the death of their loved ones, even though they recovered the bodies. In addition, the disappeared were executed with extreme prejudice. The families are aware of this reality. This means mourning is not the only issue; they have been wronged by the State. That is why; they do not accept this form of death. They want those who were responsible will be judged so that justice can be carried out. Only in this way, will they be satisfied:

They will apologize, one day, the State will apologize to us, one day they will³² (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012).

³⁰ “Çocuğumun ölümüne ben zaten hiç inanmıyorum. Mezarına da gidiyorum ben inanmıyorum. Çünkü o benim kalbimde her zaman yaşıyor. İşte normal bir ölüm değil. Normal bir ölüm olsa ben ona da razıyım. Benimki normal değildi. Ona çok üzülüyorum... Keşke bir tabanca sıksaydılar... Ben ona razıyım... O on gün benim için çok büyük bir acı... Hala aynı gün, aynı saat, aynı dakika hatırıma düşüyor, aynı onu yaşıyorum.”

³¹ “Sonsuz bir yas var. Yani biz bulduk ama bizim yasımız bitmedi, bitmiyor çünkü. Bulmak da yetmiyor... Mezar bir yasin bitişi değil... O adalet duygusunun, ilk önce insanların adalet duygusunun tatmin olması gerekiyor... Gerçek adaletin sağlanması ancak bu yası bitirecek.”

³² “Özür dileyecek, bir gün devlet özür dileyecek bizden, bir gün dileyecek.”

The families who do not recover the bodies of their children wish that this uncertainty would immediately stop, just as in the case of the Bosnian women (Keough, Kahn, & Andrejevic, 2000). They are aware that their missing loved ones are no longer alive, after all this time. For this reason, they desire to discover the bones of the missing to ensure the places of their loved ones and to reveal their fate. Their desire is significant and meaningful regarding the definition of place made by Pollack as “often taken granted; it is a site where action and where time passes” (2003b, p. 793). Developing an attachment to a place is frequently observed in people’s daily lives. In these places, people can live their routines and carry out specific rituals. At this point, it can be said the most remarkable attachment to a place should be regarded as one’s home. Attachment to home is crucial because it is home that ensures a sense of security and the possibility of the construction of personal space. Homeland is perceived with bones, and bones with homeland. Burial has a significant role in making the attachment to home possible because it provides a connection for families to their social and physical environment and helps to ease the grief felt during the mourning process (Pollack). That is why, the families rightfully insist on the discovery of their children’s bones and the burial of them where they choose. This way, the families can visit the graves and care for them while remembering their loved ones and showing respect (Bringa, 1995). This may ease the pain the families feel. In this respect, a place implying a grave comes into prominence during the recovery from the trauma. Here, the recovery does not indicate an entire healing or reconciliation; instead it reveals a better comprehension of the trauma in the lives of those left behind (Herman, 1997). If families have graves for their children, they can reconstruct their places and attachments, and give new meanings to those places (Pollack).

I am saying, I wish I had a grave [of her husband]. Why did I put this flower into this frame? If there were a grave, I would put this flower on the grave. I mean on one Friday [a sacred day for Muslims], or on Eid, I would go to that grave and would recite the Fatiha, [then] I would come back. I wish I knew I had a gravestone... Now those who

recovered [a body], those ones are lucky...³³ (Hamide, personal communication, 12 May 2012).

We have some special days; Eid is close or the day he disappeared. Or I have the right to visit his grave on several special days. We wish we had a grave to leave flowers during Eid³⁴ (Hatice, personal communication, 12 January 2012).

The lack of a grave prevents families from carrying out some rituals:

Since we don't have a grave we always cry at home. During Eid, we do it at home... There is no grave, so we cannot go and pray. We cannot do some of the religious things³⁵ (Nurhan, personal communication, 3 March 2012).

As seen in the cases of the Bosnian women (Pollack, 2003b), Nurhan also desires to discover the body of her father-in-law and then bury him where he belongs: "When my mother-in-law died, we left an empty grave next to hers. It is her bequest that he be buried there when he is recovered"³⁶ (Nurhan, personal communication, 3 March 2012).

Hatice describes the difference between having a grave and not having one:

Now those people bring his life, and take it and put it inside a grave, they then bury it, but they know that those graves are now there. Meaning they have to accept. But for these losses, this is difficult. Really very difficult. If there was a grave, I mean, you might say, I

³³ "Ben diyorum ki, keşke bir mezarım olsaydı. Bu çiçeği niye bu fotoğrafın içine koyuyorum? Mezar olsaydı, o mezarın üstüne koyarım bu çiçeği. Yani bir Cuma günü, bir bayramda bir şey, giderdim o mezara bir Fatıha okurdum, gelirdim. Bilseydim bir mezarım var. Şimdi kendileri bulanlara, onlar çok şanslı."

³⁴ "Bazı özel günlerimiz var, bayram geliyor veya onun kaybolduğu gün. Veya ben birçok şey özel günlerde onun mezarını ziyaret etmek benim hakkımdır yani. Bir bayramda çiçek bırakabilecek bir mezarımız olsun."

³⁵ "Mezar olmadığı için hep evde ağlıyoruz. Bayramları evde şey yapıyoruz... Mezar yok o yüzden gidip dua edemiyoruz. Birtakım dini şeyleri yerine getiremiyoruz."

³⁶ "Kayınvalidem öldüğü zaman onun yanında bir mezar boş duruyor. Onun vasiyetidir, o bulunduğu zaman oraya gömsünler diye."

now have a grave. I have nothing else left to do³⁷ (Hatice, personal communication, 12 January 2012).

The grief a mother feels if she does not have her son's grave is notably reflected by Mutlu:

My mother-in-law made a vow that [her son's] bones would become hers. It is so painful. Who rejoices to find her children's bones? But... she is now 75 years old. [Her mother-law says] 'If I find his bones, I can finally rest'³⁸ (Mutlu, personal communication, 9 June 2012).

The definition of the act of being disappeared is different from any other grievous reality. As Michel de Certeau (1988) asserts in the case of disappearance death cannot be named, it is an unnamable and unthinkable act, and he adds: 'Nothing can be said in a place where nothing more can be done' (p. 190). Disappearance is not a form of death it is even worse, it is unnamable:

Being disappeared is really something really different. Dying is different, being killed is different, [and] being burned is different. But all in all it is loss, if he is not dead there is doubt, there always is³⁹ (Mutlu, personal communication, 9 June 2012).

Those who have disappeared relatives are always in between hope and hopelessness. What they experience is indefinable:

What if he shows up one day and knocks on the door, I say. What if one day, she [her mother-in-law] says, for example somewhere, somehow he experienced amnesia, she says? Maybe someplace these pictures, us on TV . . . What if he comes back, I say. I have such hope. On the other hand you say if he was somewhere else, like in a prison, I

³⁷ "Şimdi o insanlar yaşamını getiriyor, işte götürüp mezara koyuyor, artık defnediliyor ama o insanlar biliyorlar ki artık bunların mezarları oradadır. Yani onu kabul etmek zorunda. Ama bu kayıplar için çok zor. Gerçekten çok zor... Mezarı olsa artık şeydir yani sen diyeceksin bana benim işte artık mezarım var yani. Yapabilecek bir şeyim kalmıyor."

³⁸ "Kayınvalidem adak adadı o kemik benim olsun diye. Öyle bir acı. Kim sevinir ki çocuğunun kemiğini bulmak için. Ama... 75 yaşında artık onun kemiğini bulayım, bir toprağa gömeyim ki ben de rahat edeyim."

³⁹ "Kayıp gerçekten bambaşka bir şey; ölmek başka, öldürülmek başka, yakılmak başka. Ama kayıptır yani, ölmediyse diye bir şüphe var, her zaman var. "

the bottom of a pit, we would have heard something I mean⁴⁰ (Mutlu, personal communication, 9 June 2012).

Accepting and being accustomed to this situation and coming back to their normal everyday life is exceedingly difficult for the relatives of the disappeared since they have nothing to confront:

She [her mother-in-law] says that ‘I cannot be [happy]’. ‘I cannot forget him, she says. ‘I wish there is one, [his] one bone’, she says. ‘I only wish to go and sit beside his grave, I wish I bury him next to his father’, she says. ‘They had killed his father, I accepted and took his bones, but this...’⁴¹ (Mutlu, personal communication, 9 June 2012).

They only confront uncertainty:

Something inside of me prevents me from mourning for these losses, because you don’t know if they are alive, you do not know if they are dead, you do not now where their graves are. Last year when mass graves were opened, so did my heart. That is how bad I felt⁴² (Hatice, personal communication, 12 January 2012).

Sometimes families may believe their missing loved ones are not dead so they act as if their children were still with them (Betz & Thorngren, 2006). For instance, Zehra indicates that while being alone, she talks with her son as if he were listening to her (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012). In addition, families of the missing may not want to talk about their loss and their real feelings (Betz & Thorngren), they may hesitate to talk about their grief to other people because they may feel embarrassed, they may not wish to be subject to judgments, or they may convince themselves they should

⁴⁰ “Ya bir gün kapıyı çalıp gelirse diyorum. Ya bir gün diyor bir yerde mesela bir hafıza kaybına uğramışsa diyor. Ya bir yerde bu resimleri, bu televizyona çıktığımızı... Ya geri gelirse diyorum... Öyle bir umudum var. Bir yandan da diyorsun nerede olsaydı, bir cezaevinde, bir koyun dibinde olsaydı bir ses çıkardı yani.”

⁴¹ “[Mutlu] olamam’ diyor. ‘Ben onu unutamiyorum’ diyor. ‘Bir olsa’ diyor, ‘bir kemik olsa’ diyor. ‘Sadece gitsem mezarda otursam, babasının yanına gömsem’ diyor. ‘Babasını öldürdüler ben kabullendim kemiğini aldım ama bu...’”

⁴² “Bu kayıplar için sürekli içimden bir yas tutma diye bir şey oluyor yani çünkü o insanın sağ olduğunu bilmiyorsun, ölü olduğunu bilmiyorsun, mezarını bilmiyorsun... Geçen sene toplu mezarlar kazıldığı zaman yani benim yüreğim kazılıyordu... O kadar kendimi kötü hissediyordum...”

overcome this situation (Shapiro, 1994). Zehra does not talk about her grief to people around her, including her close relatives and neighbors, not because of the reasons stated above, but she believes no one can understand her and her pain, she says:

There is no one I can talk to. I cannot talk to my own community. There are no others either. Not a neighbor. I go to my hometown where I have some friends, there I talk. If I could talk about my problems, I would feel better. I say everything and I cry out, but you see, only to myself. Every two or three days, if I don't cry I will explode. I definitely cry. Then I feel a little relaxed⁴³ (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012).

Memories about their missing loved ones and the stories of their disappearances are always fresh and vivid as viewed in the cases of the Bosnian women (Clark, 2010). Zehra describes how her son was taken into custody and then became disappeared as if she was reliving that time again. In addition, Hamide and Hatice tell how their husbands were abducted giving all the details about those days. And Melda also talks about the day she saw her brother for the last time and the disappearance, mentioning everything about that day whether relevant for the disappearance or not. As Keough et al. (2000) propose, when they talk about their personal grief and feelings, they experience cathartic moments on the one hand and on the other hand these cathartic moments are somehow repetitions of the past while leading them to re-experience that pain. For instance, Zehra indicates while talking and sharing her pain, she feels relieved. However, at the same time feels as if she is mourning since her grief refreshes and everything comes to her mind. She also acknowledges that talking about her grief makes her sad. Even though she is in a quandary, she wants to keep talking about her grief because it is her only agenda:

⁴³ Yani kimse yok ki ben anlatayım. Kendi halkıma anlatamıyorum. Başkaları da yok ki anlatayım. Kapı komşum da yok anlatayım. Memlekete gidiyorum birkaç arkadaşlar var, anlatıyorum orada. Derdimi anlatsam daha içim rahat eder. Döküyorum içimi. Ağlıyorum, döküyorum. İşte kendi kendime. Yani iki üç günde bir, iki günde bir ben ağlamasam patlarım. Mutlaka dökerim. Biraz içim rahat ederim sonra.”

Sometimes some women come here, we drink tea. I don't enjoy this . . . we talk. It is not really my conversation. I mean this conversation does not satisfy me. See, as usual, you talk about local stuff. Not my problems, which I would like to talk about⁴⁴ (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012).

On the other hand, Hatice never feels relief while talking about her experiences. Whenever she talks, she feels sick. According to her, telling the same thing over and over again is always depressing. That is why, she does not want to talk about her grief (Hatice, personal communication, 12 January 2012).

Like Hatice, Nurhan and Hamide do not feel any relief while talking about their grief as they experience their pain once again (Hamide, personal communication, 12 May 2012; Nurhan, personal communication, 3 March 2012). Yet, Nurhan is somehow in a quandary as Zehra because she also always wants to talk about her grief so that everyone will know (Nurhan, personal communication, 3 March 2012).

Mutlu's response is similar to Zehra. She states she is relieved when talking. She also adds talking about grief somehow gives her hope to solve their problem through people. For this reason, she wants to talk, as she also wants that everybody to ask her about her problem. Nonetheless, she is in a quandary since she feels sad and re-experiences grief during the conversations. But even so, her wish that everybody will know the truth is more dominant than her feeling sad:

To everyone for example, not only to journalists. I sit around at work; I even talk to my colleagues about what happened to me. One of them, for example, I have a friend now, from Siirt. 'I am Kurdish but I don't know anything about these events', she says. I tell her, hoping that she

⁴⁴ "Bazen bazı bayanlar geliyorlar burada, çay içiyoruz. Eh, içimi açmıyor... Sohbet ediyoruz. Yani o sohbet benim sohbetim değil. Yani o sohbetle ben tatmin olmuyorum. İşte yine de kendi yöresel, yöre sohbetlerini açacaksın... Ta benim derdime gelene kadar istiyorum öyle olsun."

tells someone else. You know, she should explain, she should be⁴⁵
(Mutlu, personal communication, 9 June 2012).

They want to talk about their grief to announce to everyone what they have experienced. This is because they desire to be “recognized” by other people, society, and the State. In fact, they share the same pain with the mothers of the exact opposite side, the Turkish soldiers’ mothers. The Saturday Mothers know this, therefore they wish to be recognized and accepted the same way the other mothers are always recognized and respected by society. Moreover, the Saturday Mothers take one step further they desire to be on the same side with the Turkish martyrs’ mothers:

I wish a [Turkish] soldier’s mother would come here [the Saturday demonstrations], a martyred mother. A mother’s heart hurts badly here. Who cares if her child was killed on mountain and yours as a soldier... Let them come hand in hand so the State authorities cannot gain anything from you. They cannot argue politics with your children’s lives⁴⁶ (Mutlu, personal communication, 9 June 2012).

Even though they become extremely sad while talking about their pain, they believe that their talk will contribute to the struggle for the disappeared. For this reason, they do not give up talking and keep being a part of the struggle in spite of finding talking difficult.

We are living with a heavy burden. Every time we talk, every time we tell, his smile conjures up. While I am talking, I am picturing the photographs of my brother’s dead body, I remember his broken face. I mean, it is really difficult to live this. It is difficult to talk about. But knowing that this serves the struggles maybe makes us speak about it. ... It is easy to talk about the struggle. To talk about doing things and

⁴⁵ “Herkesin mesela, bir sadece gazetecilerin değil. Böyle iş ortamında oturuyorum, sohbet ettiğim zaman arkadaşlarıma bile anlatıyorum bak başıma bunlar geldi. Bir tanesi, mesela, şu an benim bir arkadaşım var, Siirtli. ‘Ben Kürdüm ama bu olayları hiç bilmiyorum’ diyor. Ben anlatıyorum ona, ‘o da başkasına anlatsın’ diyorum. Hani bilinsin ya. Açıklansın yani açık olsun yani.”

⁴⁶ “Bir askerin annesinin buraya gelmesini isterim, şehit olan bir askerin annesinin. Ya burada bu annenin yüreği yanmış. Onun çocuğu dağda öldürülmüşse, senin çocuğun asker öldürüldüyse... Bırak da el ele verin ki baştakiler sizin sırtınızdan kazanmasın, sizin çocuklarınızın kanı üzerine politika yapmasın.”

actually doing things is easy. But describing the disappearance is not⁴⁷
(Melda, personal communication, 10 May 2012).

5.4. The establishment of the Saturday Mothers

Families look for some kind of motivation while trying to cope with their children's deaths. Yet, they cannot find anything to substitute their pain and free them from the cavity they feel due to the loss of their child. But even so, some parents may create new organizations or they may work in a pre-existing foundation. This way, their personal grief translates into an important force driving them to prevent similar cases (Volkan, 1993). This is the major reason lying behind the establishment of the Saturday Mothers as a new organization. The families wanted to do something both for themselves in order to cope with the disappearance of their children and for their children as well. They became successful:

Perhaps we stopped and prevented the disappearance cases that occurred in this country by raising awareness and by carrying out such struggles. When we first started sitting at Galatasaray, the number of the disappeared was between three and four hundred. Later as we continued to sit, as we went out . . . and we by the time we took a break in 1999in between March 1998 and 1999there were only nine persons who disappeared after being taken into custody. This was a great victory for us. People were coming and saying this to us in Galatasaray, those who were released in custody... this was being said in persecution to people in 1990s: 'You should be grateful to the Saturday Mothers, otherwise we would also make you disappeared in custody'...⁴⁸ (Melda, personal communication, 10 May 2012).

⁴⁷ "Sonuçta çok ağır yaşıyoruz. Her konuşmamızda, her anlattığımızda, yani gülüşü geliyor gözünüzün önüne. Ben anlatırken kardeşimin cesedinin fotoğrafları geliyor gözümün önüne, parçalanmış yüzü geliyor. Yani sonuçta bunları yaşamak gerçekten çok ağır. Anlatmak çok ağır. Ama bunun bir mücadeleye hizmet etmesi belki de bize bunları anlatıyor... Mücadeleyi anlatmak kolay geliyor açıkçası. Yapmak ya da yapılmak istenen çok rahat anlatılabiliniyor. Ama kayıp anlatılamıyor."

⁴⁸ "Bu duyarlılığı yükselterek belki de bu ülkede yaşanan kayıpların gözü altında kaybedilmeler, kendimizce yürüttüğümüz mücadeleye durdurduk, engelledik. Biz ilk Galatasaray'a oturmaya başladığımız zaman bir yılda gözü altında kaybedilen insanların sayısı üç yüzlerle dört yüzler arasında geziniyordu. Ama sonrasında Galatasaray devam ettikçe, bizler dışarıya çıktıkça, 99'da ara verdiğimiz zaman, oturmalarımıza ara verdiğimiz zaman,

Now, they want the murderers to be judged and they believe they can be successful again as Melda indicates (Melda, personal communication, 10 May 2012). They believe the power coming from being a part of a group, they are aware of the meaning of group solidarity.

In general, the role of support groups is significant while dealing with grief because these groups provide a secure environment for mourners, and help to lessen mourners' guilt and anger (Volkan). The Saturday Mothers as an organized group can be viewed as a support group for the families of the disappeared. As Bosnian women in refugee camps; the Saturday Mothers repeatedly talk about their disappeared relatives with each other when they gather in weekly demonstrations:

For example I will say, 'sister, you saw your bones, did not see mine. I wish, like you, you are lucky, I could see my bones too.' What else will we say? Mine were lost somewhere. Someone else said, 'Mine were lost somewhere.' What else will we talk about?⁴⁹ (Hamide, personal communication, 12 May 2012).

We still talk about the same stuff. There is nothing else. All the same stuff. Same problems. There is nothing else⁵⁰ (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012).

The Saturday Mothers can be considered as a survivor group or an interpersonal psychotherapy group where they have an opportunity to socialize with similarly traumatized individuals as Herman (1997) suggests. According to Herman, traumatized people become very alienated due to their experiences; survivor groups may become helpful during the recovery process. The survivor groups make people encounter others experiencing

98-99 Mart arasında gözaltında kaybedilen dokuz tane insan vardı. Bizim için çok büyük bir kazanımdı. İnsanlar gelip Galatasaray'da bize şunu söylüyorlardı, gözaltından serbest bırakılanlar... işkencede şu söyleniyormuş insanlara 90lı yıllarda, 'Siz dua edin Cumartesi Anneleri var, yoksa biz sizi de gözaltında kaybederdik'..."

⁴⁹ "Mesela ben diyeceğim, 'Abla sen kemiklerini gördün, ben kemiklerimi de görmedim. Keşke ben de senin gibi, sen şanslısın, ben de senin gibi kemiklerimi görsem. Başka bir şey ne diyeceğiz? Benim filan yerde kayboldu. O diyor benim filan yerde kayboldu... Başka ne bahsedeceğiz?"

⁵⁰ "Yine de aynı konularımızı anlatıyoruz birbirimize. Başka konu yok ki. Konular aynı. Derdimiz aynı. Başka konu yok."

similar situations. In this way, they no longer feel isolated, shamed, or stigmatized. With the help of the group, they do not only obtain “mutually rewarding relationships”, but also “collective empowerment” (Herman, p. 216). As they become members of different groups, they see each other as peers and equals. In spite of suffering from the similar pain and being in need of support, each member can offer something to help the other. The group makes its members stronger, and therefore “the group as a whole has a capacity to bear and integrate traumatic experience that is greater than that of any individual member” (Herman, p. 216). When people come together, they realize commonality with others. Commonality refers to “belonging to a society, having a public role, being part of that which is universal” it also means “having a feeling of familiarity, of being known, of communion”, and “taking part in the customary, the commonplace, and the everyday” (Herman, p. 236).

5.5. The construction of a visible place for the disappeared

The Saturday Mothers have struggled to render the disappeared people, who were made invisible, visible. To do this, they intentionally chose one of the most visible and significant locations, Galatasaray Square, Istanbul. By coming together and sitting at Galatasaray Square each Saturday, the families of the disappeared constructed a place for their invisible members. Through this visible place, the families have become the voice of the disappeared and have reconstructed a place for the disappeared in the eyes of families and society. This is crucial for those who disappeared because they were always thought as if they never existed. This place belongs to both the families and those who disappeared at the same time.

In this place, Galatasaray, the families have a chance to talk about their missing loved ones. The families can commemorate the disappeared to other participants, passersby, and all people through the media. Or they can call the government to account for truth and justice, and to give up the bodies/bones

of the missing. One of the Mothers, Fatma Morsümbül, the mother of Hüseyin Morsümbül who disappeared after being taken into custody during the coup d'état in 1980, exclaimed: "I want my son's bones" (Tanrıkulu, 2003, p. 280). Or another mother, Elif Tekin, showed her son's picture to the police: "Look carefully at this picture, maybe you saw him, give my son back" (Tanrıkulu, 2003, p. 280).

However, most of the families cannot come to Galatasaray since a great number of the disappeared were living in the east side of Turkey, and their families continue to live there now. Those who came to Galatasaray witnessed that there are sittings for all of the disappeared in Galatasaray each Saturday, and realized they are not alone since there are always people supporting them even though they could not come (Tanrıkulu, 2003).

Construction of a place and the establishment a movement for the disappeared should also be viewed as one of the coping strategies:

We want to make ourselves heard. We pour our heart out. Sometimes I feel like standing up and I do up, I talk very much [at Galatasaray]... We dull our pain a little bit... You see, it is consolation⁵¹ (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012).

At Galatasaray, they feel intense emotions during their weekly demonstrations:

Every Saturday, every Saturday, when we take in our hands that photograph, they give us flowers. We put [flowers] them inside of the [photographs]. Everyday we relive death and loss. Every week we relive them⁵² (Hamide, personal communication, 12 May 2012).

They [the Saturday Mothers] have pain in their hearts. They are coming here [Galatasaray] to talk about their pain. I have spoken here a

⁵¹ "Sesimizi duyurmak istiyoruz. Deşarj oluyoruz. Bazen içimden geliyor, kalkıyorum, çok konuşma yapıyorum... Biraz işte acımızı dindiriyoruz... İşte bir teselli."

⁵² "Her Cumartesi, her Cumartesi, o fotoğrafı elime aldığımızda o çiçekleri bize veriyorlar. [Çiçekleri] onların [fotoğrafların] içine koyuyoruz. Her gün o ölümü, o kaybı yaşıyoruz. Her hafta yaşıyoruz."

few times and I have said whatever is in my heart⁵³ (Mutlu, personal communication, 9 June 2012).

Perhaps there [Galatasaray] means a great intensity of emotion for us. This is an inexpressible thing. We nurture a longing with all relatives of the disappeared... But those photographs that we hold in our hands are not only photographs for us, not pieces of picture, not pieces of paper. We don't only hold them in our hands, we stick them to our faces each Saturday, we hold them to our hearts⁵⁴ (Melda, personal communication, 10 May 2012).

Even though they have difficult moments during weekly demonstrations at Galatasaray, they still bring forward their struggle more than their grief:

We relive our pain there [Galatasaray]. All the photographs are there. Our young children are there. We feel that pain. But we bury the pain in our hearts. Everything happens with this struggle. Not with crying and weeping. I mean there we did cry a lot, wept a lot, screamed and cried out a lot. This was no remedy. The remedy is this, we know our children, who go, do not return. But we want the murderers of our children's. We continue to search for them⁵⁵ (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012).

The most important feelings coming from being in Galatasaray each Saturday are hope and solidarity:

Maybe pain is the last [thing] that we experienced because we made the pain give birth to hope on that square. Now we want to nurture this hope. I mean, we experienced the beauty of supporting each other.

⁵³ "Bunların yüreğinde acılar var. Acılarını dökmek için geliyorlar. Ben buraya birkaç kere konuştum, o kadar çok içimdekileri olduğu gibi döküyorum."

⁵⁴ "Bizim için çok büyük bir duygu yoğunluğu belki orası. İfadelendirilmeyecek bir şey. Biz tüm kayıp yakınlarıyla birlikte bir özlem büyütüyoruz... Ama o fotoğrafla elimizde tuttuğumuz fotoğraflar, bizim için sadece bir fotoğraf, bir resim parçası, bir kağıt parçası değil. Biz onları sadece elimizle tutmuyoruz, aslında biz onları her Cumartesi yüzümüze asıyoruz, yüreğimize basıyoruz."

⁵⁵ "Acılarımız tazeleniyor orada. Bütün fotoğraflar orada. Gencecik çocuklarımız orada. O acıyı biz hissediyoruz. Acıyı artık kalbimize gömüyoruz. Her şey mücadele ile oluyor, her şey ağlamakla sızlamakla da olmuyor. Yani orada çok ağlamışız, çok sızlamışız, bağırılmışız, çağırılmışız. Bu bir çare değil. Çare budur, biliyoruz çocuğumuz, daha giden gelmiyor. Ama çocuklarımızın katillerini istiyoruz. Aramaya devam ediyoruz."

WE all became sisters there⁵⁶ (Melda, personal communication, 10 May 2012).

Being together and sharing their pain made the families stronger and keep them alive:

[We feel] stronger, more hopeful, more decisive. We share our hope as well as our despair at the same time. I mean we share our tears, our hopes, our bread, our water. There is nothing more than that⁵⁷ (Melda, personal communication, 10 May 2012).

We wouldn't go there [Galatasaray] if we didn't feel strong there. All the strengths, I mean, we go there because we are strong. We were beaten with a truncheon; we were taken into custody. I was in custody twice for twenty-four hours... But we still were not silenced. We still go on with our struggle⁵⁸

The hope the Mothers have acquired at Galatasaray is also important to creating an opportunity to call the government to account:

Galatasaray has become hope for us. I mean there, now, whether we protest or not, we sit or not, it has become hope for us. We go there, we shout, we say, 'We want our children's murderers, we are looking for them. We wish our children's murderers will be judged'... At that moment [during weekly demonstrations], God willing, our children's murderers will be found, judged. We will call them to account for this. I mean, we have a feeling of hope⁵⁹ (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012).

⁵⁶ "Acı belki de bizim en son yaşadığımız oluyor çünkü biz bir acıdan umut doğurduk o meydana. O umudu büyütme gibi bir derdimiz var. Yani birbirine yaslanmanın güzelliğini yaşadık, biz hepimiz kardeş olduk orada."

⁵⁷ "Daha güçlü, daha umutlu, daha kararlı. Biz umudumuzu da umutsuzluğumuzu da paylaşıyoruz orada aynı zamanda. Yani gözyaşımızı paylaşıyoruz, umudumuzu, ekmeğimizi, suyumuzu. Bunların ötesinde bir şey yoktur."

⁵⁸ "Orada zaten güçlü olmasak oraya gitmeyiz. Orada bütün güçler, yani güçlüyüz ki oraya gidiyoruz. Biz orada cop ta yedik, bizi göz altına da aldılar. Ben yirmi dört saat iki kere gözaltında kalmışım... Ama yine de susmadık. Yine de mücadelemize devam ediyoruz."

⁵⁹ "Galatasaray artık bizim için bir umut oldu orası. Yani orası, şimdi orada eylem de yapsak yapmasak da, otursak da oturmasak da, orası bizim için bir umut oldu. Yani gidiyoruz, işte haykırıyoruz, söylüyoruz, 'Çocuklarımızın katillerini istiyoruz, arıyoruz. Çocuklarımızın

5.6. Galatasaray Square: A constructed grave for the disappeared

Galatasaray has become a place of their own, that the Mothers embrace as if it were a grave:

Why are these relatives of the disappeared going and sitting at Galatasaray in the mud, in snowy weather, in winter? This means they have no place. It is like a grave there. They are going there as if it is a grave that they won... You during Eid go to one grave, leave a flower, stand by the grave, put some water or clean it. You leave that stress there and go back home. But these families have nothing. Once a week they go there, hold their photographs and try to cry out. I mean, for those people, that place is very important⁶⁰ (Hatice, personal communication, 12 January 2012).

Find our bones. We want a grave. That is why we come here. This place for us is like a grave⁶¹ (Nurhan, personal communication, 3 March 2012).

When she [her mother-in-law] comes here [Galatasaray], she feels as if she were coming to her child's grave. She looks forward to each weekend in order to come here⁶² (Mutlu, personal communication, 9 June 2012).

Ultimately, they have created an ambience of a grave in this square, Galatasaray, because they were deprived of their loved ones' graves. In Galatasaray, there are references to rituals that take place at graves such as holding photographs, bringing flowers, making speeches. The Mothers are

katilleri yargılsın'... O esnada, inşallah çocuklarımızın katilleri bulunur, yargılanır. Biz bu hesabı onlardan soracağız. Yani içimize bir umut doğuyor.”

⁶⁰ “Bu kayıp insanlar neden bu çamurda, bu karda, bu kışta gidip Galatasaray'a oturuyor? Demek ki bir yeri yoktur. Orası da mezar gibi artık. Orayı kazanmış mezar yeri gibi oraya gidiyor... Sen bir bayramda bir mezara gidiyorsun, bir çiçek bırakıyorsun, bir mezarın başında duruyorsun, bir su veriyorsun veya temizliyorsun. Onun stresini orada atıp eve geçiyorsun. Ama bu ailelerin hiçbir şeyi yok. Artık haftada bir kere oraya gidiyor, o fotoğraflarını kaldırıyor ve dile getirmeye çalışıyor. Yani o insanlar için orası çok önemli bir yer oldu.”

⁶¹ “Kemiklerimizi bulsunlar. Bir mezarımız olsun. Buraya onun için geliyoruz. Burası da bir nevi mezar ifade ediyor.”

⁶² “Sanki buraya geldiği zaman çocuğunun mezarına geliyormuş gibi oluyor. Her hafta sonunu iple çekiyor diyebilirim sana buraya gelmek için.”

making themselves believe Galatasaray has become the real grave for their loved ones.

The Mothers are aware of the importance of Galatasaray Square in their struggle:

Really, that place [Galatasaray] is different for us because those mothers made themselves heard to the world in front of Galatasaray. How the Plaza de Mayo becomes the place for the Mothers in Argentina, everyone now says Galatasaray had become the same for the Saturday Mothers... This has become an important place to keep the disappeared on the agenda... When someone says 'Galatasaray', that high school in Galatasaray doesn't come to my mind anymore, that square comes to my mind⁶³ (Hatice, personal communication, 12 January 2012).

This means that the Saturday Mothers nurtured a new identity and consciousness through the struggle for the disappeared creating a socialized movement. The Mothers are aware that this new identity and consciousness has a different meaning to their weekly demonstrations:

Maybe one day he will say 'I remember. We made him disappear. And we killed [him] this way; we dumped [him] there.' Maybe he will become self-conscious and come [to Galatasaray]⁶⁴ (Hatice, personal communication, 12 January 2012).

Why did they abduct our children? What were their faults? Some have graves, some don't. Some want their bones, some want their graves, and some want their children. In front of Galatasaray has become hope for us. But it is a place of shame for Turkey. Not for us anymore. This place is for mothers. 'Will our children return, will they show them to us?' The children are still lost, some mothers are hoping they will

⁶³ "Gerçekten oraları bizim için farklıdır çünkü o analar dünyaya sesini Galatasaray'ın önünden durdular. Nasıl Arjantin'deki Analar Plaza de Mayo meydanı olmuş, şu an herkes onu diyor, Cumartesi analarının da Galatasaray oldu... Kayıpları gündemde tutmak [için] orası en önemli bir nokta olmuş... Galatasaray dediği zaman artık Galatasaray'daki o lise benim aklıma gelmiyor, artık o meydan benim aklıma geliyor."

⁶⁴ "Belki bir gün dese 'Ben bunu hatırladım. Biz şunu kaybettik. Ve de veya şöyle öldürdük, şuraya attık.' Belki bir vicdan azabı çeker ve gelir."

return. Maybe they are not killed yet, because we saw some of their bodies, some we never have⁶⁵ (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012).

Hatice can be viewed as the most contentious participant among the Saturday Mothers. She has been part of the movement since the beginning. Her knowledge of the struggle is understood from her politicized and sophisticated speeches.

5.7. Regarding the Saturday Mothers as a new social movement

New social movements (NSMs) occur through the initiative of civil society with reference to an independent mechanism for political and economical systems (Cohen, 1985). NSMs stem from the struggle of social agencies against the structure of civil society as they intend to change civil relationship rather than focusing on the idea of control over the state power (Touraine 1985; Touraine, 1992). The problems NSMs prioritize are problems of quality, equality, individual self-realization, and human rights (Habermas, 1981). Actors participating in NSMs as individuals will question these problems while putting their lives in the center of the movements, bringing in the notion of autonomy and creating new identities (Melucci, 1985; Offe, 1985). The Saturday Mothers should be viewed as one of NSMs in Turkey because they struggle against the problem of disappearances. Their movement has social meaning questioning equality and human rights in this country. They call the government to account and struggle for human rights while believing in their struggle very much as seen in each social movement. The Mothers themselves represent a part of civil society.

In general, personal problems initiate NSMs as actors embrace this well-known motto, “the personal is political”. They put forward their personal problems collectively, meaning as a group. In this way, individuals

⁶⁵ “Niçin çocuklarımızı kaçırdılar? Çocuklarımızın suçu neydi? Kimisinin mezarı var, kimisinin mezarı yok. Kimisi kemiklerini istiyor, kimisi mezarını istiyor, kimisi çocuğunu istiyor. İşte bizim o Galatasaray öñü, o bir umut oldu bize. Yani bir, gerçi Türkiye’nin bir, nedir diyelim, utanç yeridir bence. Bizim için utanç yeri değil artık... İşte orası anneler için ‘çocuklarımızı acaba gelecek mi? Bize gösterecekler mi?’ Çocuklar hala kayıp. Bazı anneler umut ediyor ki çocukları gelsinler. Belki halen de öldürmemişler çünkü bazılarını, biz cenazelerini gördük, bazıları hiç görmediler.”

together can make themselves visible and their personal problems can be known by the public. In fact, these personal problems are not personal; they touch upon the entire society. In the case of the Saturday Mothers, the problem of disappearance is not personal although it may seem like it is. When they go out, when they are in Galatasaray, they carry their experiences and feelings with them, and therefore their place comprising their previous experiences and feelings, their “home”, does not disappear. This indicates the Mothers’ belief everyone living in Turkey has to know this reality. Their movement implies a combination of struggles and demands directed at the State powers, as the movement does not have a settled political status. This means that the Saturday Mothers represent a marginalized and excluded group who wish to be a part of the political arena to make known their problem and be recognized (Tilly, 1978). They desire to learn the fate of their disappeared relatives and demand justice (Cohen & Arato, 1992). They challenge political authority and demand the truth through the creation of public awareness (Tilly 1978; Melucci, 1985). For the Saturday Mothers, their everyday life, the street, Galatasaray, and their political expression become an arena of resistance as opposed to an arena of enslavement (Lefebvre, 2002/1961).

What they do during the weekly demonstrations in Galatasaray can be regarded as a kind of tactic in the term of De Certeau (De Certeau, 1988). They show their resistance to the State for what it has done. Each Saturday, they draw attention to political struggle in the sphere of everyday life. They are just ordinary people whose lives were interrupted suddenly with the abduction of their relatives. This forced them into the political arena. It can be asserted they feel a kind of relief in this place, Galatasaray, where they construct their own sphere. While talking about the disappeared and their struggle in Galatasaray, they try to indicate what they believe and establish reality. They try to change the point of reference, trying to create a new reality, about the disappeared through their speeches made every week repeating truths and giving certainty to the cases of disappearances. They send the message they will not forgive those responsible for these cases and not let others forget. They coexist through their movement comprising their

tactics. They do not carry out those tactics in the name of tactics; because they need these tactics to survive and become strong in their difficult lives. They highlight the importance of action (De Certeau).

As NSMs struggle to make marginalized identities politically visible (Calhoun, 1994), the Saturday Mothers aim to make an ostracized identity, being Kurdish in Turkey, visible and recognized. Through their collective movement, they try to bring forward their identity the right to show their emotional life and physical and social existence as Kurdish (Melucci, 1980). Here is the word existence is extremely important because the State in Turkey perceives its Kurdish citizens as if they do not exist. The State considers Kurdish people invisible. The Mothers intend to establish a state of existence, both for their missing relatives and themselves by means of their movement. In fact, the movement provides an identity to the Mothers, that of a mother of the disappeared.

As Touraine (1988) suggests class is a condition while a social movement is an action questioning historical authenticity. The essential driving force of a social movement is leading the masses to act, because social class is a condition that does not manifest anything by itself; it manifests something only when it is in a social movement. In the case of the Saturday Mothers, it can be said the social condition refers to the disappeared Kurdish relatives. When the Mothers act and do something, being at Galatasaray each Saturday at 12 o'clock, they become a Saturday Mother. This is sociology of action. If they did not participate in the demonstrations and act, they could not be a Saturday Mother. They would remain only as having disappeared relatives and their social condition would not work for anything. What makes them a Saturday Mother is their actions acting their social condition. Through constructing a new identity, a Saturday Mother, the Mothers become an important subject within the struggle for the problem of the disappearances in Turkey.

Wearing a particular style of clothing has significant meaning within NSMs since physical appearance, clothing, and posture of the actors mirror the actors' unique social identity (Giddens, 1991). Therefore the Saturday

Mothers wear white headscarves during their weekly demonstrations in Galatasaray. They take this style from the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo as a symbol of peace. But their white headscarves are slightly different because they have beads, which characterize the Kurdish style, although some choose not to wear beads. In addition, they hold photographs of their disappeared relatives with flowers. Holding the photographs of the disappeared demonstrates these disappeared people are real people, and not the relatives' fabrication. These photographs are also important to keep the disappeared in public mind and to be recognized by the society.

Individuals within a NSM do not only fight for material interests, they also fight for symbolic and cultural goals, and for general changes in society since they believe in their cause (Melucci, 1985). The Mothers, through their presence in Galatasaray, demand changes in society and the political system. They desire the problem of disappearance stop soon those responsible be exposed and judged. During their weekly demonstrations, the Mothers question the political regime and power relations. Furthermore, they push the political system first to answer their queries about the fate of the disappeared and then to reform.

What lead the Saturday Mothers to act and to pioneer a new movement are their emotions. Emotions are always involved in social life and also social movements while unusual situations tend to awaken complicated emotions, meaning both negative and positive emotions (Jasper, 1998). In relation to extraordinary situations, changes in individuals' physical environment can also affect them in terms of acting and protesting (Jasper, 1997). The situation of disappearance should be viewed as an extraordinary situation and a remarkable change happened suddenly and unexpectedly in the lives of the families of the disappeared. Due to this predicament, the Mothers feel various kinds of emotions. The initial emotion of the Mothers is intense grief, derived from losing a son. Their grief and pain are one of the first forces driving them to act. They also feel anger towards the government because they know their relatives were taken by State officers. The anger the Mothers feel is associated with feelings of threat and blame (Jasper, 1997). The Mothers righteously blame the government since they know their

disappeared children were not guilty. But the feeling of threat is more prominent in action and protest, since it is significant to feel the need for ontological security. Thus, the Mothers participate in the movement in order to get rid of the threat and cry out against injustice, a suddenly imposed affliction, and against the absence of cognitive liberation in this country (Jasper, 1997). They convert their negative feelings rational ones (Hochschild, 1975). Negative feelings are always more powerful than positive ones especially when encountering unjust situations (Jasper, 1998). As a result, the Mothers' negative feelings give them power and energy to become visible in the public eye and to build up a new social movement, i.e. the Saturday Mothers.

The Mothers can feel positive feelings through being a part of the movement. They establish an organization in their movement in which they trust to each other. Within their movement, they also feel respect towards each member. Moreover, they nurture close friendship, love, solidarity, and loyalty. This gives them a sense of "us" making them feel belong. They all together feel anger towards the government. However, they preserve hope for the disappeared, more importantly for justice.

Symbols and rituals have significant roles in the Saturday Mothers' weekly demonstrations (Jasper, 1997). Each Saturday they dedicate to one disappeared person. The form of the statements is similar every week. This means talking about the disappeared becomes a kind of ritual and this ritual arouses emotions such as a sense of solidarity and belonging on behalf of the participants. At the same time, due to this ritual, they feel their grief once again as they recall and repeat their painful experiences. Concerning symbols, they have double-meaning regarding emotions within social movements. First, emotions can lead the Mothers to use symbols (Turner & Stets, 2005). Holding the photographs of the disappeared each Saturday in Galatasaray indicates these Mothers feel longing for their children. In addition to the photographs, holding flowers at the same time represents the Mother's longing for their children's grave since they assume their children were most probably killed. Second, symbols can awake emotions during demonstrations (Turner & Stets). Wearing white headscarves symbolizes

peace and can make the Mothers feel hope. And wearing headscarves in their traditional style is also important as it can awake a sense of belonging to their Kurdish identity.

The Saturday Mothers as a movement brought a new unified national experience to Turkey. The anger and pain the Mothers felt due to the disappearance of their children made them act, which indicates they used their emotions to foster their movement. For the first time, they created a visible place for the disappeared, who were not visible, as the Mothers became their voice. However, this movement still oscillates between being a new movement and continuation of previous Kurdish movements seen in Turkey. Previous Kurdish movements have not gone beyond being solely ideological and rigid. They embraced one single ideology through one single political party, the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) perceiving it as sacred (Bozarslan, 2002: 2007). This political party was an inflexible and warlike organization so it could have influence on movements and NGOs who held similar political ideas. The Saturday Mothers were also affected by this mainstream Kurdish movement. That is to say, they remained in between democratic demands and the struggle for political Kurdish identity. The Saturday Mothers pioneered a multidimensional movement bringing forward new elements, such as transformation of mourning to a movement and asking for human rights and justice. However sometimes this movement can demonstrate a traditional approach belonging to the old Kurdish movement. For instance, during weekly demonstrations, apart from talking about their disappeared people, participants made comments about today's politicians through the language of the mainstream Kurdish movement even though these comments did not touch upon the cases of the disappeared. In addition, this movement cannot appeal to individuals from different backgrounds due to being insular. Perhaps, for this reason, this movement cannot make an impression on hundreds or thousands of people. This movement does not transform into a mass movement and it faces the risk of being stuck within itself as Zehra also acknowledges:

I think the Saturday Mothers are almost alone. I mean they will end up alone. Why? Because they cannot find any other alternative. For example we could have come together and gone to, you know, Silivri as ten people. The Prime Minister captured and imprisoned them. They say “No, they did this for themselves”. So what if this was done for themselves, or for us, ultimately the man captured them and imprisoned them, so then we should support, too. Let’s judge them with you, too and the ones who killed our children. Who killed them, they should find them, too. Find them too. Who burned villages, who demolished them, who ordered this, find them, too. Unfortunately, I feel really sad about this. That [The Saturday Mothers], we are alone and I look there is nothing⁶⁶ (Zehra, personal communication, 19 March 2012).

5.8. Conclusion

This chapter is the most important chapter of this dissertation because it focuses on the mourning process of the Saturday Mothers. The chapter is based on personal interviews conducted with six women, all who are relatives of the disappeared. The study uses a qualitative research method, and is based on a limited sample. Selected sample quotations from interviews are the essential element in this chapter. Interpretation is made through narrative analysis. While analyzing the Saturday Mothers’ mourning process in a psychological sense, I have also make references to sociology, since I consider these women’s mourning process as an initiator to a new social movement in Turkey.

A great number of Kurdish men disappeared in Turkey in 1990s due to political reasons. These people’s relatives did not know what to do as they

⁶⁶ Bence bu Cumartesi Anneleri de tekleşiyorlar. Yani tek kalacaklar. Neden? Başka bir alternatif bulmuyorlar. Mesela biz on bin kişi toplanıp şeye gidebilirdik, Susur- şeye- Silivri’ye. İşte bu şimdiki cumhur- Başbakan bunları yakalamış, bunları atmış içeriye. Hayır, bazen diyorlar işte kendileri için yapmışlar. Kendileri için de olsun, bizim için olsun, adam onları yakalamış ya atmış ya içeriye onları, biz de bir destek verelim. Hadi biz de seninle beraber bunları yargılayalım. Bizim çocuklarımızı öldürenleri de, kim öldürmüş, onu da bulsunlar. Onu da bulun. Kim köyleri yakmış, yıkmış, kim emir vermiş, onu da bulun. Maalesef ben buna çok üzülüyorum. O da, tekleşiyoruz, bakıyorum, hiçbir şey yok.

could not receive any information about their loved ones. They were not even sure whether their children were alive or dead. They experienced intense pain but they could not naturally experience the process of mourning. They experienced a kind of mourning, however, one much different from the mourning experienced after a normal case of death. Their mourning process is complicated because they have no remains and did not witness the death. Thus, they cannot carry out funeral rites and ceremonies. They cannot take comfort from their cultural rituals and religion. They experience ambiguous loss, the most agonizing form of loss, because always having to deal with uncertainty about the fate of their children. They may sometimes rebel against religion or God, which is actually a rebellion against the State who is responsible for the disappearances. They feel little hope for the disappeared, most of the time they are aware their children are no longer alive, and therefore they wish to discover their remains and have their graves. Their desire for ensuring a place for their loved ones is meaningful since people always develop attachment to places, particularly to home. Bones and graves can be linked to homeland. Hence, the relatives want to have their children's graves in order to be able to visit and show their love and respect towards their children. They believe only in this way, their grief may diminish.

The relatives wished to do something for their missing children. They felt pain and anger towards the State since they knew their children were not guilty, and what they experienced was due to the State politics. Their pain and anger gave them power and led them to establish a new movement, the Saturday Mothers. They managed to make themselves and the problem of the disappearance visible and recognized in the public eye. They demonstrated in Galatasaray embracing it as a place of their own. The lack of the graves of their loved ones made the Mothers regard this place as a grave, and they commemorated and talked about the disappeared every Saturday. Through demonstrations at Galatasaray each Saturday at 12 o'clock, established a state of existence both for themselves and the disappeared. Through pioneering a new movement, they acquired a new identity of being a relative of a disappeared person while preserving their Kurdishness and motherhood at the same time.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

The study investigates the mourning process of women, who have disappeared relatives, with particular emphasis on the Saturday Mothers of Turkey. Analysis of this mourning process shows the morning process of those with disappeared relatives is different from those in the case of tangible death. This is because these women lack of the basic requirements of mourning, which are having a body to bury, carrying out funeral rituals, and visiting a grave. During the normal mourning process, people are able to accept death with the passage of time, but these women cannot. They keep feeling mournful and their grief is unending, as the emotional presence of the disappeared continuously intervenes in their daily lives. They did not want to remain in silence with their grief and desired to do something for their

missing children. They felt anger towards the State since they knew it was responsible for the disappearances.

The anger and grief led these women to act and establish a new organization, such as in the case of the Saturday Mothers. With the help of this new organization, the Saturday Mothers, the Mothers pioneered a new social movement in Turkey. They protested State politics and called the government to account. They demanded justice while struggling for the disappeared. Their movement led them to construct a state of resistance. Their movement did not only imply protest and resistance; it also implied an alternative outlet for mourning. While the Mothers gathered at Galatasaray Square, due to the absence of a grave they created an alternative ambience for mourning. They tried to act in such a way as to cope with the torment of uncertainty. Their movement is both for the disappeared and for the relatives themselves.

In the first chapter, I presented the mourning process from the field of psychology while making reference to the term “ambiguous loss”, which perfectly defines the predicament of the Saturday Mothers. In the second chapter, I explored the definition of New Social Movements (NSMs), and their implications and relations to emotions via sociology literature. In the third chapter, I focused on two similar cases from the world; the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo and the Bosnian women who had missing relatives due to war. And then in the last chapter, I researched the Saturday Mothers by means of personal interviews I conducted with six women participating in this organization.

Studying the process of mourning became an essential guide for me to understand what the Saturday Mothers have experienced and felt after the disappearance of their children. Research into NSMs gave me insight into understanding the social dimension of the mourning process in the case of ambiguous loss, and how the Mothers’ mourning translated into a social movement. And then examining the cases of the mothers in Argentina was important because the mothers in Turkey took their struggle as a model while establishing the Saturday Mothers. Also researching the Mothers of the Plaza

de Mayo assisted me in formulating my interview questions. Investigating the Bosnian women made clear the importance of having a body, a grave, and of carrying out funeral rituals.

The only problem encountered during this study was in conducting the interviews with the Saturday Mothers. Accessing the women participating in the Saturday Mothers was difficult. Individuals voluntarily working for the Saturday Mothers were helpful in contacting the Mothers but they sometimes became decision-makers for my interview list, meaning the number of interviewees on which they had decided would have to be enough for my study. For this reason, I could not conduct as many interview as I planned for my case study and my sample size remained limited.

Further researchers should be aware of the difficulty they might encounter while trying to contact the Mothers along with the difficulties due to language (most of these women do not speak Turkish, although they would have liked to be interviewed, due to linguistic barriers this has not been possible). In this study, I looked at the Saturday Mothers from a narrow perspective as I aimed to examine their mourning process and its place in their everyday lives. Further studies may look at the importance of the Saturday Mothers in Kurdish problem of Turkey from a wider perspective. Historical, political, and economic background of the individuals comprising the Saturday Mothers can also be examined. More importantly the isolation of the Saturday Mothers from the general public opinion in Turkey should be discussed, since I noticed the Saturday Mothers were left alone, or they preferred to be alone, due the organizational behavior of the people supervising the Saturday Mothers.

There are some limitations of this study. However, this study makes a contribution to the field because there are no studies regarding the Saturday Mothers as individuals. I looked at the Mothers' psychological state since they are not subjects they are individual human beings. They each have their own lives, pasts, experiences, and identities. They are Kurdish women. They are mothers at the same time. Their experiences and psychological states brought them to participate in the Saturday Mothers. I focused on their

identities, therefore the study is qualitative. And lastly, this study ultimately indicates psychological problems are always affected by social problems, and how these two are integrated.

In conclusion, this dissertation studies the mourning process, how the process differs between “ambiguous loss” and “normal” loss, and how these differences can lead to the formation of NSMs. Not having a body and a grave for their children aggravates the pain and grief of those left behind and makes the situation more difficult to accept. Through the establishment of a new organization they created a coping tactic in order to deal with what they experienced. Through this movement, they created a new identity, in which Kurdishness was an important element. By virtue of this new identity, the relatives built their own place to be the voice for the disappeared. They have constructed Galatasaray as a place of their own, perceiving it to be the missing graves. However, this still does not bring complete closure to the relatives; their children are still missing, the bodies are not recovered, and those responsible have not been judged and punished. Therefore, the mourning process due to ambiguous loss does not end and is discernibly different than mourning due to normal loss.

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Appendix A

Interview questions

1. Which of your relatives disappeared? Which year, where, and how did he disappear? How did you learn the news of the disappearance?
2. What did you do to find your missing relatives, before participating in the Saturday Mothers? Where did you go as a family?
3. How have you heard about the Saturday Mothers?
4. When did you begin to participate in the Saturday Mothers? What were your reasons for participating?
5. What does the Saturday Mothers mean to you? Is it a political action? Is it mourning? Does it ease the pain? Does it make society and the public more sensitive?
6. Before the Saturday Mothers, have you ever participated in similar activities, or in any political activities?
7. What does the meeting at Galatasaray Square make you feel? What is happening at that square? Do you feel strong there? Do you feel as though you are mourning? Does gathering there give a sense of recovery to you? Or does it revive your pain?

8. Meanwhile, what do you do? Are you married? How long have you been in Istanbul? (If she came from another city) where did you come from, and when?
9. Can you mourn for your disappeared relative? Or do you feel a lack since he is missing? How do you deal with this? What is the role of your religion at this point? How do you complete religious rituals?
10. Do you think there should be a person's grave in order to mourn? What would change if there were a grave? (What is the importance of having a grave?)
11. What has changed in your life after having participated in the Saturday Mothers? Do you think some things have changed in the way you look at the life?
12. Is only participating in the Saturday Mothers enough for you? Or do you participate in or organize any other activities to find your missing relative?
13. How is your relationship with the other families participating in the Saturday Mothers? Do you do any other activities together?
14. Do you think there is enough support from the environment to the Saturday Mothers? What do you think about the support given? How aware are people of this reality? Are those who are aware of this reality fearful or indifferent?
15. Does support from the environment make you feel strong (how much power does it give to you? Or do you feel alone since you do not see the support you would have expected?
16. In general, what has changed in your life after the disappearance of your relative?
17. What do you feel while talking about your missing relatives and your experiences to someone? Does talking about them make you feel relieved? While talking, do you feel as you are mourning for the disappeared? Or does talking about your experiences make you feel sad, as they remind you of your pain? Do you want to talk about these issues or would you prefer not to talk about them, since it makes you re-experience your pain?
18. Have you ever received any psychological help? If so did you find it useful?
19. According to you, why did the disappearances happen? Why were all these people abducted and made to disappear?
20. Were the disappeared people involved in political activities?

21. What kind of impressions did these events leave both on you and on the Kurdish community in general? While they were taking place, what kind of impressions do you think the State wished to leave?
22. According to you, why are the graves not known? Why are not the bodies resigned to the families?
23. Finally, what should be done after this moment? What are your most important expectations from the State, the public, and the people for the future? Do you wish the State will accept what has been done, apologize, and those who are guilty will be punished? Do you wish at least to recover your missing relative's bones?

Görüşme Soruları

1. Kayıp akrabanız neyiniz oluyor? Kaç yılında, nerede, nasıl kayboldu? Siz kayıp haberini nasıl öğrendiniz?
2. Cumartesi annelerine katılmadan önce kayıp yakınınızı bulmak için neler yaptınız? Aile olarak nerelere, hangi mercilere başvurduunuz?
3. Cumartesi annelerinden nasıl haberiniz oldu?
4. Cumartesi annelerine ne zaman katılmaya başladınız? Katılmanızın sebepleri nelerdi?
5. Cumartesi annelerinin buluşmaları sizin için ne ifade ediyor? Siyasi bir faaliyet mi? Yas tutmak mı? Acıyı bastırmak mı? Toplum, kamuoyunu duyarlı kılmaya çalışmak mı?
6. Cumartesi annelerinden önce buna benzer bir faaliyete ya da herhangi bir siyasi faaliyete katılmış mıydınız?
7. Galatasaray meydanındaki toplantıların bizzat kendisi size ne hissettiriyor? O meydanda neler oluyor? Orada güçlü mü hissediyorsunuz? Yasınızı tutmuş gibi hissedilebiliyor musunuz? Orada toplanmak size bir tür iyileştirme hissi veriyor mu? Yoksa yaşadığınız acıyı daha da deşiyor mu?
8. Bu arada, ne iş yapıyorsunuz? Evli misiniz? Ne zamandan beri İstanbul'dasınız? (Başka yerden geldiyse) nereden, ne zaman geldiniz?

9. Kayıp yakınınıza karşı yas tutabiliyor gibi hissedebiliyor musunuz? Yoksa kayıp olduğu için bir eksiklik hissediyor musunuz? Bu eksikliğe karşı neler yapıyorsunuz? (Bu duyguyla nasıl baş etmeye çalışıyorsunuz?) Bu noktada inancınızın yeri nedir? Dini birtakım vecibeleri nasıl tamamlıyorsunuz?
10. Sizce yas tutabilmek için kişinin mezarı mı olmalı? Mezarı olsa sizce ne değişir? (Mezarın olmasının önemi nedir?)
11. Cumartesi annelerine katıldıktan sonra hayatınızda neler değişti? Hayata karşı bakış açınızda bir şeylerin değiştiğini düşünüyor musunuz?
12. Sırf Cumartesi annelerine katılmak size yetiyor mu? Yakınızı bulmak için başka faaliyetlere katılıyor / organize ediyor musunuz?
13. Cumartesi annelerine katılan diğer anneler ve kayıp yakınlarıyla ilişkileriniz nasıl? Beraber başkafaaliyetler yapıyor musunuz?
14. Sizce Cumartesi annelerine dışarıdan yeteri kadar destek geliyor mu? Yapılan destekler hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz? İnsanlar bu durumun ne kadar farkındalar? Farkında olan insanlar arasında sizce korku duyan veya umursamaz olanlar var mı, ne kadar?
15. Dışarıdan gelen destekler kendinizi güçlü hissetmenizi sağlıyor mu (Size ne kadar güç veriyor)? Yoksa beklediğiniz kadar destek görmeyip kendinizi yalnız hissettiğiniz de oluyor mu?
16. Genel olarak, yakınınızı kaybettikten sonra hayatınızda, özellikle gündelik yaşayışınızda neler değişti?
17. Kayıp yakınınızdan ve yakınınızın kaybından sonra yaşadıklarınızı birilerine anlatırken, birileriyle paylaşırken neler hissediyorsunuz? Bunlardan konuşmak sizi rahatlatıyor mu? Konuştukça yakınınızın yasını tutuyormuş gibi hissediyor musunuz?
Yoksa yaşadıklarınızı anlatmak acınızı size tekrar hissettirdiği için sizi üzüyor mu? Bu konulardan bahsetmek istiyor musunuz, yoksa üzüntünüzü yeniden yaşadığınız için konuşmak istemiyor musunuz?
18. Hiç psikolojik destek aldınız mı? Faydasını gördünüz mü?
19. Sizce neden böyle bir şey yapıldı? Bu kadar insan niçin kaçırıldı, kayıp edildi?
20. Kaybedilen kişinin siyasi birtakım faaliyetleri veya eylemleri var mıydı?

21. Bu olaylar, hem sizin hem de Kürt halkının üzerinde nasıl bir etki bıraktı?
Yapılırken devlet nasıl bir etki bırakmasını bekliyordu?
22. Sizce neden mezarlar bilinmiyor? Ölenlerin naaşları ailelere niçin teslim edilmiyor?
23. Son olarak, sizce şu andan itibaren yapılması gerekenler neler olmalı?
Geleceğe dair bu konuyla ilgili en önemli beklentileriniz nelerdir; devletten, halktan, kamuoyundan? Devletin durumu kabullenip, özür dilemesini ve suçluların cezalarını çekmelerini mi istiyorsunuz? Kayıp yakınlarınızın en azından kemiklerine mi ulaşmak istiyorsunuz?

Appendix B

CURRICULUM VITAE

Personal Information:

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2005 - 2010 BA in Psychology, Bogazici University, Turkey

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Work Experience:

2010 - 2012 Graduate Assistant at Istanbul Şehir University

Publications (if any):

1.

2.