ORAL POETRY AND WEEPING
IN THE CASE OF DERSIMLI WOMEN

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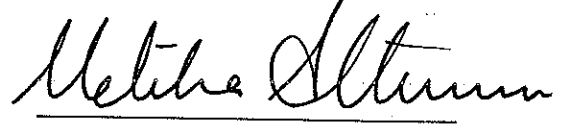MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

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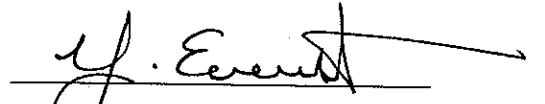GENDER AND WOMEN STUDIES

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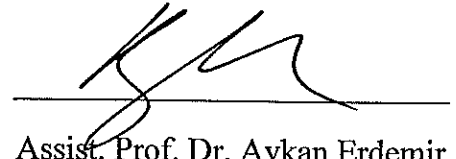Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

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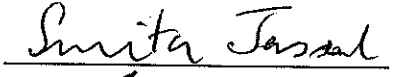
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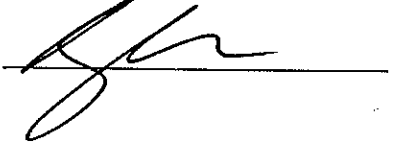
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ABSTRACT

ORAL POETRY AND WEEPING
IN THE CASE OF DERSIMLI WOMEN

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This thesis analyzes the issue of performing self in the genres of oral poetry and weeping, which are performed by Dersimli women in the course of their everyday life practices. This study focuses on the case of Dersim (Tunceli) which is located in the east part of Turkey where Zazaki-speaking and Kurdish-speaking Alevi people constitute the majority of the population. I deal with these performances as repetitive actions, occurring in the course of everyday life. I focus on the narratives in the songs and issues related to giving voice with respect to acceptability, respectability, and experience. The personal narratives or social issues presented with these genres include a range of topics like dissatisfaction about life, a deceased child, loneliness, poverty, forced migration from the villages in the mid 1990s, regret of a woman for her marriage and old love stories. I found that performing those genres as repetitive actions in the course of everyday life practices has an important role both in the construction and the positioning of self. This study deals with songs as processes rather than products. Finally, in these processes, performers express their experiences, emotions, and ideas which are not narrated or spoken, or have limited expression, in the social interaction of everyday life. Although weeping

practices usually reproduce expected gender roles however, the saying/singing practices as a whole may create the possibility of agency and certain spaces for resistance and contribute to the visibility of women in the community.

Key words: women, oral poetry, weeping, performance.

ÖZ

DERSİMLİ KADINLAR ÖRNEĞİNDE
SÖZLÜ ŞİİR VE AĞLAMA PRATİKLERİ

Demir, Aylin

Yüksek Lisans, Kadın Çalışmaları Ana Bilim Dalı
Tez Yöneticisi: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Aykan Erdemir

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Bu tez Dersimli kadınların günlük hayat pratikleri içinde icra ettikleri sözlü şiir ve ağlama pratikleri içerisinde benlik performanslarının gerçekleştirilmesi konusunu inceler. Bu çalışmada, Türkiye'nin doğusunda yer alan ve çoğunluğunu Zazaca ve Kürtçe konuşan Alevilerin oluşturduğu Tunceli/Dersim bölgesine odaklanılmaktadır. Gündelik hayat pratikleri içerisinde icra edilen performansları tekrara dayalı edimler olarak ele aldım. Bu tekrarları görmek için şarkılardaki hikâyelere ve onların içerisinde anlatılan deneyimlere ve kısmi benlik kurgularının anlatılmasına odaklandım. Bu türler içinde, kişiselden toplumsal olana uzanan, örneğin, hayata dair hoşnutsuzluklardan, kaybedilmiş bir çocuğa, yalnızlığa, fakirliğe, 1990'lı yıllardaki zorunlu göç gibi kültürel hafızanın performansına, bir kadının evliliği ile ilgili pişmanlıklarına ve eski aşk hikâyelerine dair konular işlenebilir. Bu türleri gündelik hayat pratikleri içerisinde icra etmenin benliğin inşasında ve konumlanmasında önemli bir rolü olduğu sonucuna vardım. Bu çalışma söylenen 'şarkı'ları bir ürün değil de süreçler olarak ele alır. Sonuç olarak, bu süreçlerde gündelik hayattaki toplumsal etkileşimler içerisinde hiç anlatılmayan veya sınırlı olarak dile getirilen deneyimler, duygular, düşünceler dile getirilir. Ağlama pratikleri beklendik cinsiyet rollerini yeniden üretse de, genel anlamda söyleme pratikleri, belirli direniş alanlarının oluşturulmasında ve dolayısıyla belirli

sınırlar içerisinde failliğin gerçekleştirilmesine olanak tanır ve kadınların görünürlüğüne katkıda bulunur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kadınlar, sözlü şiir, ağlama, performans.

To my family

Acknowledgement

I am grateful to my supervisor Assist. Dr. Aykan Erdemir for his advice, suggestions and comments throughout this study.

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Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to my parents and to my sister, Derya, for their continuing support.

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1. INTRODUCTION

I have a very clear memory from my early childhood about singing. While I was playing in the children's playground, I was improvising a song. It seemed like the song was endless. My father was with me in the park and I felt as if he was laughing up his sleeve. I couldn't understand the probable reason very well at that time, but later I continued to perform those songs alone. I didn't know for a long time how I had learned to sing, or who had taught me. I experienced it as music, but I never thought about the text or the narrative. Everything came so 'naturally'. My experience about those performances led me to think about the folk songs produced by women (in Turkish, 'kadın ağzı türküler') in the later years.

For a long time I have been interested in women's folksongs from the musical perspective. I realized that most of the studies on folksongs reproduce gender roles.[1] In addition, the limited works written in Turkish that I have found about music excludes women from Kurdish or Alevi ethnic origins. Thus, I decide to carry out ethnographic research focusing on women who have their own songs. Therefore, I planned to focus on the relationship between musical performance and identity construction and include ethnic issues.

I am familiar with many parts of Turkey but Dersim/ Tunceli,[2] has a 'special' place in my mind referring to a city that consisted of Alevi population in majority.[3] After attending a festival in Dersim, I made my final decision to work in this region. The city, Tunceli, is located in the eastern part of Turke where

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[1] Başgöz (2008, p. 63), for example, criticizes 'our folklorists' for decreasing the functions of lullabies and defining them as "an utterance of a great love and affection for the children felt by mother."

[2] The official name of the city is Tunceli, but there are many discussions about the name issue. In the beginning, the borders of the city were the inner part of the region which was called Dersim. In 1937, the name was changed to Tunceli.

[3] More detail about the Alevis is given in the second chapter.

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Alevi people speaking Kurmanji, Zazaki and Turkish constitute the majority of the population.

During the festival, I tried to gain an idea about the prevalence of the performances of the songs and I was assured that I could contact those who sang in this way. This contributed to my decision to undertake my research in Tunceli/Dersim. Although the connections I established from the festival did not help me reach other performers because proving confidentiality is difficult in this region but the initial people were very supportive in helping focus on Dersim. Another difficulty was defining the genre that I was focused on. I will refer to this problem later.

I shared my songs and experience with other performers from Tunceli/Dersim. This had a positive impact which helped them to sing when I was present. This, is I believe, one part of being an 'insider' in the field of the research. Judith Stacey mentions that 'ethnographic writing is not cultural reportage, but cultural construction, and always a construction of the self as well as of the other' (1991, p. 115). While in a process of ethnographic writing, I was also a performer who was 'just singing'. Although I do not remember, I have learned that my grandmother often wept and sang. In this process, I understood that I am also a follower of these traditions, thus this was a way of locating myself.

The most important part of my data relates to on women mostly living in the villages of the Dersim region. In addition, my research also includes women who migrated from Dersim to big cities Istanbul and Ankara. When I realized that men were also practicing the genres on which I was focusing, I tried to reach them to talk about their performances.

1.1 Research Question

In the beginning, I had many questions which were the basis of focus of this study. For example: Why all the poets of traditional culture of were men? Could women not have a voice to express themselves through the musical genres? How did women transmit their experiences in context of the traditional village life? How do they give witness to historical events? How might they be constructing their subjectivities in those performances? How were those constructions relating to the issue of cultural and ethnic identity? Were the women constructing and reproducing their gendered roles through those performances? How do they oppose subject positions through their songs? It was very important for me to hear the voice of women and their words because of their invisibility as the producers of cultural products such as music. I believed that I could reveal their roles as producers in these genres of oral tradition. In this way, my aim was to understand how women express of their experience through certain kind of genres.

I focused primarily on the role of these genres in performing the self. I believe that women perform different subject positions in the moments of the performance and in their everyday life discourses. While I mostly focused on the women's experiences and songs, I made contact with men as much as possible to understand their reflections, difference or similarities in performing these genres. In general, I examine the relationship between experiences of a Kurdish Alevi community and oral poetry and weeping practice. In order to do this I needed to answer questions such as: What do these practices tells us about the Kurdish-Alevi community of Dersim and its experiences? How are truth, meaning and knowledge issues established in the community with respect to oral poetry and weeping? What kind of subject positionings do people have poetic and non-poetic discursive fields such as everyday social interaction? Is there a possibility of agency through those performances or is there conformity between the two

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different discourses?[4] How is self narrated and constructed in those genres? How are these genres gendered and how do they reproduce the gender roles?

When I began my fieldwork, it was quite difficult to name the genre I intended to research so I only gave open definitions. There was again a problem because the first connotation of the extended definition of the genre signified the term 'lament'. I explained it as someone who sings her songs on her own (*kendi kendine söylemek*). Here, the word *söylemek* literally means to *say* or *tell* but its connotative meaning refers to *sing* (a song). It is important to see the further relations between speech and those genres of the oral tradition. What the participants and I mean is *to sing*. Herzfeld emphasizes this issue such as '"speaking" the laments, the term usually employed in the villages. Early folklorists discussed whether these could be considered "songs" (trahoudhia), a term usually associated with (and sometimes a metaphor for) joy (khara)…' (1993, p. 245). In a similar vein, in some cases, I sometimes used the term 'folksong' because singing a song mostly refers to popular music songs. On the other hand, folksong can be reminiscent of traditional musical genres. In one case, I asked my question using the word 'song' but the performer objected and said that 'it is a folksong not a song'. The structure of the related performances, however, does not fit the folksong genre. The main point is the numbers of syllables for a verse. In a folksong the measure of the syllables shows a more regular pattern. On the other hand, in a weeping performance, a person may use syllables varied from seven to fifteen and will extend some of the vocal syllables.[5] I also refer to these genres as 'practice' in my study because of their role in the construction of selves. Steven Caton also uses 'practice' to refer to the poetry of a Yemeni tribe. He argues that "[t]o compose a poem is to construct oneself as a peacemaker, as a warrior, as a Muslim. It seems to me that this is a critical insight

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[4] I use 'discourse' in a Foucauldian sense.

[5] I will explain those characteristics Chapter 3.

into the art as a *constitutive* social practice" (1990, pp. 21-22). One problem may arise from using the word 'song' in my research. My reason for using 'song' is mainly based on people's intention to separate themselves from the traditional singing styles such as weeping. They also have different musical patterns as they had claimed. It is more possible to use 'song' for their performances but these songs may be also very long. In that sense, it shows similarities to weeping. Rather than the differences, I thought about the similar patterns of these two genres and decided to use the term 'song' to have a mnemonic relation for each other.

Focusing on the details of the structural issues in the following chapters, I will return to the issues of my definitions in the field. It was actually quite good when I was in contact a possible performer. However, it would not make any sense for someone who is unfamiliar with these practices I focused on these performances happening during daily routines or in the course of everyday life rather than being in a ritual event like a funeral. Later I realized that people use different terms to refer to my definitions, which may further clarify what my research is about. During my pilot research in the cities of Ankara and İstanbul, I asked my key informants if they could help me reach women who perform their 'own songs'. Some of my key informants used the term 'lament' during our conversation so I will also refer to some details about lament in the following chapters because people may give one performance style different terms. It is important to note that there are differences among related genres of oral tradition but there is also fluidity among them. 'Weeping/crying' and 'making-up' were used more in the Tunceli/Dersim district. It is also possible to use 'improvising a song' for 'making up'. I use the second one in my study but here I want to emphasize the 'story/narrative'. The musical characteristics of the song are not the main issue so I also use 'making-up'. I read it as a 'made-up story/narrative'.

However, hereby, I will attempt to summarize the characteristics of the songs like theme, music, audience and the issue of place. A song is a kind of spontaneous

monologue when it is performed alone. Some people referred to their song performances as following: "It is talk to oneself" (*Kendi kendimize konuşuyoruz*) or "We say/tell/sing on our own" (*Kendi kendimize söylüyoruz*). It is not possible to repeat the theme word by word. Even one who likes to sing the same song can be disappointed. While the words cannot be sung in the same way, the theme may show similarities because people give voice to a sorrowful issue which still has a central place in their lives. The dominant sentiments of the songs are not cheerful but grieving or painful. Those sentiments sung are re-experienced in the text. The issues expressed in performances include a range of matters like regret of a woman for her marriage, an old love story, deceased children and dissatisfaction about life, loneliness and poverty.[6]

There are certain conditions for singing. Many of the women I spoke to said: "You should be alone, so that you can sing" (*Yalnız olacaksın ki söyleyeceksin*). Being alone signifies the absence of uneasiness compared to singing before an audience. In that sense, place was one of the significant conditions to sing one's song. It proves a comfort because there may be imperfections in the songs. First of all, the song is composed in the moment of the performance. Another issue the audience may be highly critical about is the narrative in the song's text. One of the most significant reasons of this criticism is that the poetic self is separated from the 'reality'. Vladimir Propp in 'Folklore and Reality' mentions the improvised characteristic of laments and relates to laments as 'a kind of biography', which he finally evaluates this dimension like a 'subjective evaluation of reality' (cited in Feld, S. 1990b). These critiques are the results of a discrepancy located between the subjective realities and social constructions of reality in the social context.

In addition to place and the relationship with the audience, young people can use certain explanations to avoid themselves from being possible participants. They

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[6] I will focus on details in chapter three.

mention that they do not have any misery to 'cry/weep' for. They ask what kind of miseries they may have while they were such young people. Young people also made fun of the performers who may sing his/her own songs if they do not have tragedies in their lives. Some male performers say about their performance 'It is all lies and untruths'. The social construction of 'reality' as referred to above locates people in certain subject positions. Thus, they were expected to perform appropriate roles. For example, the regret in a choice of a spouse is one of the most important parts of the narratives of women's songs. Since the social conditions do support neither divorce nor second marriage this means she has to keep her promise and remain married to her first husband during her lifetime. This social structure is valid for men as well.

There are important studies including Başgöz (2008), Boratav (1986,1996) and Bayrak (1996) which examine laments and folksongs in Turkey. There are many folklorists who collect these folksongs and laments. Yet, these do not relate to the significance and roles of the singing/saying practices in the different communities of Turkey. Thus, I thought an ethnographic study would be a contribution to this absence of research. In this way, I focused on these genres not as products but as processes. Until now, there has not been a study in Turkey, which focuses on the composition in performance and performing of these genres as an everyday life practices. I believe that my study fills this gap in the Turkish context.

In my review of the academic literature on oral poetry and weeping practices, I mostly read performance-based research from well-known studies such as: Kaluli experiences (Feld, 1990), oral poetry of Bedouin women (Abu-Lughod, 1986), ritual wailing of Warao women (Briggs, 1993), oral poetry in Yemeni tribe (Caton, 1990), women's lament performances in a Cretan village (Herzfeld, 1993), heroic song (Lord, 1971), and also 'verbal art as performance' (Bauman, 1975).

1.2 Methodology

The methodology of this study required combining different research methods. Basically, I used qualitative research methods. I carried out ethnographic research based on participant observation and interview methods. I undertake semi-structured and unstructured interview methods. In some cases I conducted oral life history interviews. I also did a media research and monitored TV programs on Dersim especially between December 2009 and February 2010.[7]

I collected the important part of my data in the villages of Tunceli during the summer of 2009. Before going to the villages, I initiated an extended pilot study with the people who migrated from Tunceli to İstanbul and Ankara. I contacted the performers that my key informants remembered. Later, I realized that people in both the villages and cities remembered specific characteristics. When I explained the research subject, then people directed me to performers known because of a tragedy in their lives, an ability to improvise with nice verses and a beautiful voice they have.[8] After remembering women's performances, most of my informants told these women's stories. Those stories were mainly about difficulties, grief and pain that the performers had experienced in their lives.

As I mentioned above before doing my fieldwork in Tunceli/Dersim, I conducted a pilot study to understand more about the related performances in İstanbul and Ankara. It was important for me to have an idea about the issue because I was focusing directly on the performances. I carried out the interviews between September 2008 and June 2009. Although it was a long time period, it was not easy to make contact with the performers in the city. When I succeeded, we

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[7] These programs were mostly on YOL TV and SU TV which were important TV channels of Alevi media.

[8] They had good voices mostly because it is a part of 'being known'. A performer who had an unpleasant voice would not sing before anyone.

mostly talked about their performances. In Ankara and İstanbul, my interviews usually lasted from one to five hours. I managed to interview with eight women.

Although I repeated some of the interviews, they rarely shared their songs with me. I understood that talking about women's lives, experience and oral poetry and interviewing them in the city was not sufficient. However, asking the women to perform songs also constituted a very 'unnatural' situation, especially in the cities. Somehow my existence and witnessing to this performing process may result an occurrence of this situation, but it is more 'unnatural' to ask for a performance in the first interviews.[9]

The whole interviewing process, on the other hand, did not work in the same way for some of the cases. For example, an interviewee from the older generation who had been forced to leave her village in the 1990s usually talked about some details of her past fifteen years. Her narrative was mainly about the day, she left her village and about her present day life in İstanbul. While she disremembered in the interview, her daughter-in-law who lives with her said she would begin to sing when she remembered.

Some of my interviews in the city were a great disappointment. I defined in detail what my research was about, but in one case for example, I went to a very far away district in İstanbul however, even though she has her own songs, unfortunately she did not share them with me. It was difficult to reach performers in the cities but when I managed to do it, very few women actually shared their songs with me. I think this could be that some of them did not trust me this could be because they had been subjected to forced migration from their villages in the 1990s. These experiences in the city gave me a great chance to follow the survival of the genres that I wanted to focus on. Although I had limited examples, I observed that people continue to perform their songs in the cities as well.

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[9] One reason may not being able to locate 'me' as 'the' audience.

I would have preferred to undertake this research in a large village where I could reach many interviewees, but this region had been subjected to interventions in different periods of its history. Now, the population is lower compared to early 1990s,[10] and crowded villages have been mainly dispersed in the evacuations of the villages in 1994. Many performers informed me it was more possible to have found these kinds of cases before the 1990s.[11] For these reasons my established relationships and the interviews in İstanbul and Ankara I decided to apply this research in different locations rather in one settlement.

I narrowed the places that I would visit and interviewed women mainly from the villages around the city center. Most of the women lived in villages located closely to each other. I usually travelled alone. If I was accompanied when being introduced to the performers then the interviewee used to ask the relation between us. If my key informant was a young man they asked if we were married or engaged. If my informant was older, then people used to ask if we were relatives. When the people saw me, they mostly said 'I don't remember you'. Replying to curious questions my host gave replies like 'She is a student', 'She is my guest', or 'She is a stranger'. When I was alone, I had to answer more questions but in general people gave me a kind reception. I lived with the performers if I had reliable references for them. I stayed in the villages for short time periods from a week to 10 days. Other participants were the neighbors or well known performers in the villages. I also visited villages for a day and carried out short interviews if I had the opportunities.

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[10] The population of the villages in 1990 was 82 785. In 1997 census, it was 30 863. In the next two census, it was 39 108 in 2000 and 29 653 in 2007.
<http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tunceli_%28il%29>

[11] As I said earlier, people mainly remembered these genres as the practices of 'older people'. Though one cannot ignore the destructive effects of 1990s I think it is better to keep in mind the issue of 'older people'. When I was in the villages, for example, a woman in her sixties told me that an 'older woman' who lived through the events of 1938 used to sing a lot but she died five or six years ago. I mean what I realized in my field work is that it is always possible to locate this practice in past times.

I stayed in Tunceli for one and a half months in total and interviewed women from 20 to 90 years old. I also interviewed men as much as possible. Women usually talked about the performing experience like a part of their everyday life, so I planned to stay in each location at least for one week in order to have the opportunity to see performances as a practice of everyday life. I followed them in their daily routines. For example, I got up at six o'clock in the morning and accompanied them to the mountains where they put their animals out to pasture.

An important issue I encountered in the process of my research was how to locate myself in terms of being an insider or an outsider. I occasionally explained that I was an Alevi and if I needed to emphasize about the language, I rarely said that I was a Kurdish Alevi. While Kurmanji is a forgotten language for me, I felt very uncomfortable from time to time because of my limited knowledge of the local languages. People also used to ask me many times whether I was an Alevi or not. Their responses to my answer varied as follows: "It does not really matter. All the people are the same for us" or "I understood that you are an Alevi. Our blood is compatible (*Kan çekiyor*)."[12]

In some of the cases, my respondents mostly located me like an "outsider", especially in the case of distrust. At that point language was the first barrier. On the other hand, I also experienced the contrary and I was received as an "insider". The difficulty that I experienced was to locate myself truly for confidentiality between me and interviewees, or to map shared experiences in the interactive research process. Erdemir and Ergun indicate their point of view about this issue as follows:

> Beginning from a primordial and static conceptualization of insiderness and outsiderness does not fully explain the complexity and ambivalence of the researcher's transformative experience in the field. The ethnographic field "is

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[12] 'Kanım çekiyor' is a saying which means that she feels kinship.

an arena for intersubjective interaction" (Paerregaard 2002: 331),… (2010, p. 17).

Nancy Naples remarked that this dualistic division between being an insider/outsider 'sets a false separation that neglects the interactive processes through which "insiderness" and "outsiderness" are constructed' (2003, p. 49). She also emphasizes that the 'insiderness' and 'outsiderness' do not have 'fixed or static positions' but have a 'fluidity' between them (ibid., p. 49).

I think it is also important to mention Naples in terms of referring to the research subjects. She claims:

> …the methods we choose are not free of epistemological assumptions and taken-for-granted understandings of what counts as data, how the researcher should relate to the subjects of research and what are the appropriate products of a research study. (Naples, 2003, p. 5)

As I said, my priority was women as the subjects of my research. The reason for this focus can be seen accurately in Sandra Harding's important work, 'Is There a Feminist Method?' She argues:

> Feminists have argued that traditional epistemologies, whether intentionally, systematically exclude the possibility that women could be "knowers" or agents of knowledge; they claim that the voice of science is a masculine one; that history is written from only the point of view of men (of the dominant class and race); that the subject of a traditional sociological sentence is always assumed to be a man. They have proposed alternative theories of knowledge that legitimate women as knowers. (Harding, 1987, p. 3)

The very problematic part of my study is that I had a limited knowledge of the local languages and I could not speak the local languages. Zazaki (Kırmancki) is the most common language in the area. There are also Kurmanji speaking people in my research area. I was aware of the language problem from the beginning of this study, so my idea was to conduct the research only with women who could speak Turkish. In the first days of our meetings women older than 50 mostly told

me they did not know Turkish very well. After time passed they might say that I didn't know their language when they were tired of speaking in Turkish.

In general, I could ask for explanations of the words and meanings of the songs. I did not expect a full song translation from my informants but only the key themes in their songs. Their interpretation of songs also contributed to my research. In the interview process, I explained to all the performers that a professional translator would help me to decipher the songs fully. A few of them refused to explain the meaning of their songs after this explanation, and told me to ask my translator. I think it was not because of the song's meaning, but they wanted avoid telling the story behind the song. It is impossible to understand what she is referring to if one does not know about her suffering and experience. This situation shares some similar characteristics with a study of Bedouin poetry and its significance to people's experience.[13]

I asked the meaning of the stories of the songs as much as possible. I talked to researchers in the field to understand the text as quickly as possible. My experience in the field proved to me how important it was to ask the women the meaning of the words after the performance. A translation cannot always give the true meaning of the songs since there is a story behind them. For example, I was accompanied by an older woman who was going to a hamlet of her village to gather grass to feed her animals. After we had moved a short distance away from the village, she began to recite the events that caused the death of her son. A short introductory poem functioned as a transition, and then she began to sing in a mournful voice for her deceased son. Sometimes she wept with tears. This performance lasted almost twenty minutes. When she had calmed down, I asked for a short explanation. She said her song meant:

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[13] See Abu-Lughod, L. (1986). *Veiled Sentiments: honor and poetry in a Bedouin society*, Berkeley, CA; Los Angeles, CA, and London: University of California Pres.

'If he becomes familiar with that country, that world, if he knows the second world,[14] he would come. He is gone and he has not come back. My son is very young he doesn't know anyone there. If someone would show him the way, he would come.'

A village woman, from neighboring district, translated the song as the woman's son went to another district and he could not find his way to come back. It is difficult to understand the song without knowing the story. In addition, one needs to know what she means with the words 'country', or 'world'. What old woman was referring to was the other world, the hereafter therefore, performer's interpretation is crucial in most cases.

In fact there were women who performed in Turkish although their mother tongue was Zazaki or Kurmanji, and meeting them was very interesting coincidence. Singing in Turkish was rarely a result of assimilation politics it was a political stance which marks the radical leftists' historical base in the region. Now, when I think about my situation there, I know the chance meetings with those performers helped me a great deal in interpreting these genres when I was in the field, this I will explain more in chapter three. A sharp differentiation, however, should be made between these two genres and language use. Weeping is always done in one's mother tongue. It also refers to traditional way of life. On the other hand, the category of oral poetry mostly includes what cannot be conceptualized as weeping, for instance, singing in Turkish within a different musical form in some younger people's performances.

Finally, I always kept in mind the use of the different aspects of feminist methodology in this research process. Conducting relations and conversations that are non-dominative, breaking the hierarchy between the researcher and researched and using interaction in interviews were some of the critical points. I always let

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[14] Her emphasize on 'the other world' made me think a lot on the issue of the imagination of 'other word' very much. When I first heard these songs I was influenced a lot and I asked religious leaders many questions. Eventually, I will add a short part on people's ideas on the issue.

the women know that they could also ask me questions. I kept in mind that interaction is crucial for the feminist methodology. Besides, sometimes it became almost impossible to use interaction due to the reasons such as my being younger than the informants or not being 'one of them'. Issues like being a single young woman, visiting the villages alone, being a student were some of the main factors which determined my place in the field. In general, it was actually easier to be in an interactive process with younger woman. Using a feminist methodology occasionally had limitations. Stacey mentions a very important issue referring to feminist ethnography. She argues that '[t]here cannot be a fully feminist ethnography; there can be ethnographies that are partially feminist' (Stacey, 1991, p. 117). To illustrate, one of my young informants was bored when I began to say something and passed over it lightly to tell me more about her experiences. One of the middle aged married participants talked about her first love, a relationship which had a sad end. I wanted to share my experiences as well, but she said that I had not experienced anything yet. She was probably referring to my single status. It was more difficult to share experiences with middle age and elderly women.

1.3 In the Field

I travelled by coach to Tunceli. Five minutes after departure from Ankara, the passengers behind me began a conversation, which normal in Turkey, especially on long journeys. An old man began to talk about his son's military service. He said his son did not even have a photo of this period. The young man sitting next to him said "I wish he had one." The answer of the older man was simple: "He did not want to do his military service." Fifteen hours later we arrived at the borders of Tunceli city I wondered if there was still identity card control at the entrance of the city which had begun in the 1990s and I had encountered it when I visited the

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city one year ago. In my prior visit, I also visited Ovacık.[15] At that time, the bus was stopped and our identity cards were checked by soldiers at least five times during a two-hour journey on a road heavily guarded by the military from the city center of Tunceli. This time, when the coach arrived at the entrance to Tunceli, our identity cards were checked.

Compared it to my previous experience, my arrival was easier. At least there were no guns focused on the road in the control point this time. After we passed the city border, a young man in front of me phoned a friend and said "we've entered the country." It was such a fragile moment that I was overwhelmed with his words. Why did these controls still exist? This issue is beyond the scope of this research so I will not discuss it here, but I wanted to share my journey to Tunceli/Dersim and my research. The only thing I know is that when I got my identity card back I thought now 'we' were regarded as 'normal citizens' defined as 'not' being a people under suspicion.[16]

Closer to the city center, there were some symbols of military presence on the scene. One of them was writing in white painted capital letters, saying that "We are strong, We are brave, We are ready" "Commando". Although this writing was looking like a representative, as I would realize later in my fieldwork, people have a very sharp differentiation between commando/TIM and regular soldiers. There actually were great differences in the local people's ideas about this issue. They explained to me that their sons do their military service as well so generally they do not have negative feelings for the soldier who is doing his regular military

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[15] Ovacık is one of the towns in Tunceli province. The two hour journey by road passes next to Munzur River and a rich forest. There are important *jiyarets* (sacred places) in Ovacık. Many people from the town and especially the surrounding villages, were forced to migrate in 1990s.

[16] I do not want to use signifiers like 'terrorist' as in the state definition and 'guerillas' as in definition of the PKK and radical leftist groups definition like TKP/ML. Some local people use the word 'dağdakiler' which means 'the ones in the mountains'. I actually prefer to use this term as a kind of umbrella to avoid discursive use of terms.

service but the word 'commando' had a painful connotation in their minds. This word reminded them of the 1990s.[17]

Finally, I saw a sign which gave the population as 28,600.[18] According to the results of the 2000 census, Tunceli had the smallest population for a province in Turkey this is because of the village evacuations in the 1990s. My journey was finished, near the bus station, there was a big military building and across the road there were two big open tea gardens. One named the Peace Tea Garden and the other was the İsmet Pasha Tea Garden. I was surprised when I saw that name because İsmet Pasha was one of the national leaders when events of 1938 happened in Dersim resulting in the deaths of tens of thousands of people in the area. After I passed these buildings, I found myself in the city center. The Democratic Society Party (DTP)[19] held the Peace Tent demonstration in the only square of the city center. They used to have placards saying "There is no war here!" and "The solution is in İmralı."[20] After the square there were both large and small shops and markets. In fact this was the entire city center. In the lower parts of the city is the Munzur River which is a lively place with cafes, restaurants and parks.

Finally I met with the person who had offered me accommodation in the city. When we arrived at his house, his wife welcomed us and after a short period of

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[17] I think I also could differentiate the commandos from the 'others'. For example in Tunceli, one day, I saw three military vehicles, in the first one a man, with a bandana on his head, sunglasses and muscular arms was standing up. This seemed far from the behavior of regular disciplined soldiers I had seen in the city. Later on I realized that this was one of the regular patrols in the city several times a day.

[18] According to the 2009 census, Tunceli has the most thinly scattered population in Turkey. The density is 11 persons per square kilometer. <www.tuik.gov.tr>

[19] The party was closed down and re-established in the name of Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi (BDP) Peace and Democracy Party. I will use DTP to refer to the party since that was the name of the party, when I was engaged in my fieldwork.

[20] The placards refer to İmralı where the leader of the PKK is imprisoned and mean that he should be involved in the discussion to find solutions for the conflict

time, she began to ask questions about what I had come for, what I was going to do. After my explanations, she was surprised to hear I was planning to visit the villages alone. I did not understand why she was surprised but then I was confronted by this question in many different places. People would ask me who I had arrived with. In the days that followed, villagers told me that someone might kidnap me if I strolled around too much. These warnings greatly surprised me I wondered whether they were a joke or not. When I asked who could kidnap me, they said 'anyone'. I thought that these warnings stemmed from the complicated political situation and also to the traditional gender roles which do not permit a woman researcher being alone in the field.

In Chapter two, I will focus on the socio-political context in Tunceli/Dersim. First, I will describe to the issues of ethnicity, the Alevi tradition and historical background of the political situation in Tunceli/ Dersim. From the late Ottoman Empire to events of 1938, Tunceli/Dersim had witnessed many events which are important key points in understanding the contemporary political situation region. I will also refer to the influence of the socialist youth movements of 1970's and the existence of PKK which resulted in wide range village evacuations and forced migration in the region around the mid 1990s. All these events are highly relevant to the current situation of the city and important factors in the construction of contemporary identities in Tunceli/Dersim. People relate those events in their songs. Thus, they perform cultural memory through their songs. Not only the narrative but also the musical styles affected in relation to those political events. Since those events had a tremendous effect on the forms of oral tradition, I need to mention on those issues. I will also briefly mention the old and new forms in the structure of the villages, marriage patterns and sexuality, death rituals and the beliefs in reincarnation and also well-known myths such as the human that changed into a *pepug* bird. Those are important to understand matters such as how performers locate themselves as subjects and in the conditions in which they negotiate between the discourse of social interaction in everyday life and poetic discourse.

In Chapter three, I will focus on oral poetry and weeping which are important parts of oral tradition. I will explain the differentiation and connections between poetry and weeping. A discussion on poetry, weeping and lament is also necessary because of different classifications or overlapping definitions made by the participants in my study about their performances. The theme, musical forms, audience and construction of place are some of the topics which constitute the general framework. I question the conditions in which one can perform before an audience or perform alone. The reasons for performing before an audience or on their own relate to different issues in the social context. All of these are my attempt to see these practices and their meanings in its social context. I will mention survivability of the tradition of and changes to the traditional singing style including the usage of a different language and musical forms. I will also briefly deal with men's performances that I witnessed.

In Chapter four, I will give example of songs and their narratives that I collected during my fieldwork. I mainly mention the experiences of performers in the villages and in which conditions they express these experiences in songs. In this part, I also referred to relationships between the performances and remembering the painful memories, the issue of narrating, and repetition of the theme. Remembering through the performance itself was often mentioned by the performers. People have different responses to each other's performances and it is possible to see their way of evaluating performances on the basis of truth, meaning and experiences in the sample cases.

The last two chapters contain the concluding remarks of my dissertation. In the fifth chapter, I will focus on the issues of the performing self through the related genres of the oral tradition in Dersim. I will refer to the relationship between language and two genres of oral tradition, the function of narrating in the songs and its relation to the self-construction in performance. I will also discuss subject positions which are contradictory in the different discourses in everyday life

social interactions and in the poetic discourse itself. I will mention knowledge/power relations and truth/meaning constructions in the Kurdish Alevi community in my study. Finally, I will give a brief summary in the last chapter.

1.4 Self-Reflexivity

On my first day in Kam village, my host Vake said to me "You are you and I am me and you came here" (*Sen kim? Ben kim? Bak sen buraya geldin*). In these words she was saying that we have very different lives and thus the location of, me, the researcher was initially established. This changed a week later when some young people visited from other villages. We were all sitting Vake's house. The male visitors were her relatives. Following a speech by a radical leftist young man the young visitors began to talk about HPG.[21] After I asked 'what is HPG?', they asked me: 'Where do you live?' then they told me 'You are going to the university but you do not know anything'. 'Knowing' is a very critical issue in the region. I address the questions about 'who knows and what s/he knows' and what they meant with this statement in following chapters. Thus, I lost my position as a 'knower' very quickly. It happened one more time in a different place, but their common point was that the radical leftist young were 'knowing' and defining me as an 'unknowledgeable' person. In the village sample, other young village men devalued my status as an educated woman from a well known university in Turkey because they had heard about the dialog between me and that young man.

From the beginning of my fieldwork to the end, while women were around I talked to men and discussed issues with them but, if the women left I would end my conversation with the men. However, there were unexpected negative results of this communication with the men. In Kam village in particular, it seemed necessary to explain the side I was on. It was difficult to do this because it

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[21] HPG (The People's Defense Force) is the armed wing of PKK (Kurdistan Worker's Party). The mainstream media usually does not differentiate between them thus they consider that the PKK already is the armed wing in their discourse.

appeared that there were only there were two basic categories. One was that I might be a supporter of the radical leftist groups or the Kurdish Party, DTP, but I was not from the any of them. Another category was that I might be a supporter of state's politics but I, actually, do not have any interest in any those mainstream parties, which do not have any interest in women's issues. I was mostly interested in feminist politics. I tried to explain my point of view. However, in the example given above, the young man told me that I would not understand the women in the village without knowing the language of the mountains and stones. I replied saying that he might not understand them even he knew the local languages. After this discussion, I did not refer to my feminist stance too directly.

I indicated that I reached to the performers in different villages. While talking to different women from different districts helped me to have a wide perspective about these performances, it also created a situation where some people lost their trust in me. . In the first days of my visit to Kam, a man in the village, who my key informant in Istanbul had asked to look after me volunteered to take me to visit a woman performer living in another village. I hesitated in accepting his offer. Despite having names to contact, during my research in the cities, I was not able to record spontaneous performances sufficiently. The performers refused to sing because of my existence there. Therefore, I doubted whether I would manage to have sufficient records or not. Hence, I obeyed when people advised me to talk to her. I did not want to refuse this suggestion considering this approval because I was already in a performer's house and I was quite sure my host was a performer. The man, who volunteered, insisted that my host did not know anything but the other woman knew. Knowing means many things here, but primarily it refers to the skill in forming the song, ability to singing and a tragic event behind this performance. Knowing also refers to experience, which is construed as respectability.

The daughter of my host, also talked a lot about the tragedy of the woman lived. She also emphasized her performance on the basis of her pain because it creates a

status of legitimacy to sing without worrying about the social structure which limits the freedom to express themselves through songs.

After the visit to the other village we returned to Kam and I continued to accompany my hosts during their routine chores. One day during our work Vake she told me that she was really worried about me. She and other people told me 'Do not hang around too much. Otherwise they will kidnap you'. Though I was never alone I did not understand why I received this warning so often. When I asked who would kidnap me they replied 'anyone'.

The most difficult part of this fieldwork was that the gossip from each neighboring village, created a mistrust of me and this changed many things at the end of my fieldwork. They probably thought I was a spy. One of the possible author's of this gossip told me that she was worried that I was 'someone from the mountains' who had come to take the young people to mountains. I explained my research and also interviewed her. At that time, I thought that it was only delusion or the empty talk of an old woman and that this conversation was just between me and her. The gossip spread rapidly and it really made my life very difficult in some cases. After my fieldwork, I realized that it was not only something only about me, as a non-native researcher but that people in this region may have a kind of distance about confidence even from their neighbors or their relatives because of the enduring political conflict .

1.5 Research Ethics

The situation in the region was the reason why I use pseudonyms for the villages and the people. However, I used the real name of a well-known religious leader and names of towns. In some cases, I avoided giving very detailed descriptions of people. I also explained to all people who participated in and contributed this study that I would use neither their names nor the village names.

Another difficulty was using a voice recorder since some of the informants were really uncomfortable about its use. I asked for their permission to record our interaction, but at some points of the interview I realized that they were uncomfortable and offered to switch off the recorder. In this situation, I took notes until my interviewee agree that I could switch the record on again. One of my informants told me there were many women performers but the voice recorder would be a problem in the interviews. One reason for this is the distrust of the people resulting from the long term political complications that I will explain in Chapter Two.

2. DERSİM and IDENTITY ISSUES

Dersim used to have a 'special' place in my mind before having a complete idea about its historical background. For this reason, I experienced much surprise at my first visit to the city center, which was a fairly bare and, a small place surrounded with, the mountains. The meaning of this place never signified completeness in my mind, but it was always fragmented. When I was a child, I remember that when my mother began to talk about someone from Tunceli/Dersim, she used to say that "Tuncelililer[22] all are Alevis." It was probably fascinating for me to think that there was a city out there where everybody was Alevi. I think that I used to consider it as a safe city to live in for an Alevi. It probably lost its safety for me first when there was a prohibition to enter the city in 1990s, except for the people who were born in there. Another factor was probably about the literature of music narrating (of/about) Dersim, or its mountains and river, both named as Munzur. The constructions of place through those songs were also a reason for an imagined 'Dersim'.

One of the most famous songs about Dersim belonged to Group Yorum, which was an important figure of the radical leftist's protest music in Turkey. 'Cemo' was one of the songs in their album in the year 1989. The chorus part can be remembered as follows:

Alnında yıldızlı bere	The beret with star in her forehead
Elinde mavzeriyle	With the rifle in her hand
Çıkıp Dersim dağlarında	Ascending to mountains of Dersim
Türkü söylemek var ya	and singing there…
Oy Cemo, Cemo can, Cemo can	Oh! Cemo, Cemo, Cemo.

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[22] Tuncelili means the people of Tunceli and Dersimli is the people of Dersim. I use both Tunceli and Dersim names to refer to the same area. Although they have interfaces, they are not the exactly same places. It can be said that Tunceli consists of an important and central part of the area named as Dersim. I will explain the issue in detail in the following pages.

I used to hear this song mainly in the radio channels which were the first freely set radio stations in Turkey through the beginning of 1990s. I actually used to like this song when I was a child without questioning or understanding what Cemo was doing in the mountains with her rifle.

Another song which is anonymous has the words as follows:

Viran olmuş bizim köyler	Our villages were ruined
Yalnız kalmış menevişler	The violets were left alone
Kurban olsun sana eller	Let the strangers sacrifice for you
Çok özledim Dersim seni	I missed you a lot Dersim
Munzurun soğuk suları	The cold waters of Munzur
Serin olur yaylaları	Its weather is cool in its plateaus
Issız olur geceleri	Its nights are silent
Çok özledim Dersim seni	I missed you a lot Dersim
Buralarda yaşanmıyor	It is not possible to live here
Kimse beni anlamıyor	No one understands me
Dersime hiç benzemiyor	It does not resemble to Dersim
Çok özledim Dersim seni	I missed you a lot Dersim

The examples can be enhanced but the main idea was again construction of Dersim in the songs like a supreme and missed place. While Dersim was remembered, it is not possible to say the same thing about the name of Tunceli. Boundaries of Dersim actually go beyond the area named Tunceli today, but it includes an important part of the area known as Dersim.

Dersim had become a town as a part of Elazığ in 1925 and it turned into a city in the period of the Republic (Aygün, 2009). Dersim actually refers to a wider geography than Tunceli. It includes parts of other cities such as Erzincan, Elazığ,

Bingöl and Sivas. The Bill of Tunceli was accepted by the National Assembly in 1935 and the province of Tunceli was formed by including the region defined as inner Dersim (Kieser, 2003). Aygün mentions that Dersim was renamed as Tunceli in 1936 with the law numbered 2885 (2000, p. 91). He also points out that there was no city named as Tunceli in 1935 when the Bill of Tunceli which included 'juridical and administrative arrangements' came into force in 1935 (Aygün, 2000, p. 93). In the accusation of 1937 in Dersim, the prosecutor represented the main idea behind the renaming the area as '…Tunceli prosecute Dersim'[23] in order to establish cause to forget Dersim. "The new name 'Tunceli' was supposed to mark an epoch-making break" (Kieser, 2003, p. 193).

As I explained all issue about the names about Tunceli/Dersim, it becomes a problem to choose one of them because of their connotations. When I was doing my fieldwork in the villages, I realized that for a villager 'Tunceli' means the city center where they need to do their official works, visit a hospital or a wedding ceremony, etc. The old name of Tunceli city center is Mameki. Some women used to refer to Mameki or Tunceli in their songs in order to refer to a centrally located place. I use both of the names as I said earlier. In the following, I will refer to geographic characteristics of the city.

The geography of Tunceli is formed of 70% mountains, 25% plateaus and 5% champaigns.[24] Gültekin states that the Alevi community mostly lives in the middle, north, east and west sides of the city, while most of the long established Sunni people live in the south part (2007, pp. 54-55). He explains that while Alevi people constitute more than 90% of the population, there are also Sunni people, especially, living in the villages of towns like Chemisgezek, Pertek, Mazgirt and Hozat (p. 54-55). The identity issues are very complicated in this region. I will mention these parts in following.

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[23]The utterance is from the indictment in Dersim 1937, In *Munzur*, 20, 2004/4, p 37-49.

[24] Tunceli İl Çevre Durum Raporu, 2005.

2.1 Identity Matters

Tunceli is located in the east part of Turkey. The majority of the population living in the city is mostly presented as Kurdish Alevis or Alevi Kurds in the academic literature. Dersimli is redefined by many researchers with respect to its differences. The definition also depends on the approaches of the authors in most of the cases. While Ocak (2000, p.125) chose Dersimli kızılbaş[25] to refer to them, Yeğen (2009) relates to Dersim as a part of 'Kurdish resistance'. Each of them mentions different identities as Alevis or Kurds while they referred to people of the same region.[26] Paul J. White refers to these 'complex' issues of identity question in Dersim as follows:

> Most observers ignore the plight of those Dersimlis who insist upon a separate (non-Turkish and non-Kurdish) identity for themselves. These Dersimlis have suffered both at the hands of Turkey's Kemalist establishment-which insists that they are Turks-and of the Kurdish nationalist establishment-which maintains that they are Kurds and deprecates their Aleviness, asserting that this can be traced to Kurdish culture (Bender, 1991). (2003, p.20)

There are three local languages spoken in the region namely Turkish, Kurmanci (Kurmanji) and Kırmancki (Zaza speaking). Gültekin (2007) proposed that three-quarters of the population is Kırmancki. White (2000, p.48), on the other hand, refers to Dımıli as the kızılbaş dialect 'known as Kırmancki and Kırmanci (not Kurmanci, which is the main Kurdis dialect)'. I refer to Turkish speakers relating to Sarı Saltık[27] tribe.

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[25] Kizilbash is synonymous for the word Alevi.

[26] Local people may also use this differentiation. A male DTP activist, for example, refers to me and my host as 'You are Alevis' and continues 'but I am Kurd'.

[27] I emphasize that Turkish is a local language in the region. The Sarısaltık tribe is the only one whose language is Turkish. I also had a chance to interview some members of them. I will refer to a male performer from this family in the fourth chapter.

There are also different emphases on the issue. To illustrate, Leezenberg (2003) and Bruinessen (2001) use the term 'Alevi Kurds' to refer to the people of Dersim. Neyzi (2007) prefers mainly Zaza-speaking Alevis for Dersimli. Neyzi also points out:

> "[h]istorically, the Zaza-speaking Alevis of Dersim referred to themselves as *Kırmanc*, which signifies primarily an Alevi identity within the geography of Dersim, … there is a growing movement among some groups (especially in the diaspora) to reimagine themselves as Zaza…" (2003, p.116).

Bruinessen (1994), however, asserts that the conditions of self-definitions of Dersimli as Zaza or Kurd should be searched through 'the migrant communities in Western Europe rather than to Turkey'. During my fieldwork, especially in Tunceli, I also met with many people who emphasized that their language is Zazaki, but did not refer to themselves as Zaza. This situation probably results from the fact that Zaza signifies the Saafi-Sunni groups in Dersim region (Gültekin, 2007). There are also Zaza living around Diyarbakır and Urfa (White, 2003) and 'the Zazas are mostly orthodox Sunni Muslims, of the Shafi'i school of Islamic law' (White, 2000, p.48).

Bruinessen briefly summarizes the ideologies of different parties to define Dersim and one possible answers of Dersimli as follows:

> Perhaps the most fascinating example of overlapping and shifting identities is provided by Dersim, on whose inhabitants (mostly Zaza speaking Alevis) various "nationalisms" are simultaneously exerting their pull. As citizens of Turkey, the Dersimis are considered as Turks and expected to adhere to the Kemalist nationalist ideology; according to official doctrine, they are real Turks of Central Asian origins. To Kurdish nationalists, Dersim is a part of Kurdistan and the Dersim rebellion was the last of the great Kurdish rebellions. Many Dersimis identify themselves in the first place as Alevis, … Finally there is a strong Dersimi particularism, based on an awareness of Dersim's distinct history and cultural identity. (1994, p.26)

Being Alevi is still a key figure in self-definition in Dersim. They also share the common principals of Alevi belief system. To shortly summarize what Alevism is: Alevism is "a belief system and a particular community" (Çamuroğlu, 1998, p. 79). Mélikoff relates to Alevism as one example of "religious syncretisms" (p. 1). Bruinessen (1996) simply refers to Alevis as "a blanket term for a large number of heterodox communities whose beliefs and ritual practices differ significantly" (p. 7). Beginning from Alevis' difference than Sunni Muslims, he defines Alevis as follows:

> Prayer (*namaz*), the fast in Ramadan, *zakat* and the *hajj* are alien practices to most Alevi communities. Instead they have their own religious ceremonies (*cem*), officiated by holy men (*dede*) belonging to a hereditary priestly caste. As among other schismatic Shi'i groups, 'Ali and the Safavid Shah İsma'il are deified, or at least idolized. Alevis have retained many more elements of pre-Islamic Turkish and Iranian religions than Sunni Muslims. Instead of adherence to the shari'a, Alevis profess obedience to a set of simple moral norms; they claim to live according to the inner (*batin*) meaning of religion rather than its external (*zahir*) demands. (Bruinessen, 1996, p. 7)

While Alevism is still a key point for identity issues, the success of the Kurdish Party in elections through the recent years and the negative effect of radical leftist on belief systems should be taken into consideration. Following Bruinessen's opinions on Dersim as 'the most fascinating example of overlapping and shifting identities', I think many issues are intertwined with other opinions even in a speech of one person.[28] In one of my interviews, one woman participant from Hozat[29] used the word 'in our language'. When I asked what she meant, she said that, 'I mean Kurdish'. On the other hand, she was indicating Zazaki, which was her mother tongue. She was not a DTP supporter but it was possible to see different definitions from different people. I believe that local conditions of people may result in defining themselves as one of those, but I prefer to keep in

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[28] I mostly refer to the regular/proffesional soldier differentiation and participants' opinion about the issue in the first chapter.

[29] In Hozat, local people use Turkish, Kırmancki and Kurmancî. Some members of Turkish origined aşiret of Sarı Saltık also speaks languages other than Turkish. All these happen through relationships in neighborhood.

mind that using the term 'Zaza' as a determining factor of Dersimli may be problematic because the majority of Zazaki speaking people belong to Şaf'i groups in the neighbor districts. In addition, there are also Kurmancî speaking Alevis in Dersim. I prefer to use the term 'Dersimli/Tuncelili' to refer to the people.

2.2 One Hundred Years of Abscess: Dersim in Late Ottoman Period and Early Republic Years

All those issues related to multi-ethnic identities of Dersim were a part of its construction as a rebellious place. Dersim was subjected to many events related to its multi-ethnic structure. The most known of them is Dersim 38. Aygün (2009, p. 100) points out that tens of thousands of people were killed in those events. He emphasizes that there was no rebellion in Dersim and the number of people who had been forced to migrate was also around ten thousands (p.103).[30]

Kieser presents that "Dersim represented an 'abscess', an intolerable cultural enclave in the midst of the homogeneous fatherland" for the elites of the early Republic and he argues that "[i]n Dersim they were confronted with the 'other'" (2003, p. 192). He also refers to a well-known discourse that they defined Dersim as a "chronically 'sick' member which needed to be transformed by a radical 'operation' if not indeed amputated" (p. 191).

It was actually not a new definition because there was also a period beginning from the Ottoman Empire.[31] Yet, Dersim was being redefined. It was represented

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[30] Many researchers/writers of *Munzur* claims that not all of the tribes were resisted but only some of them. After executing the leaders of those tribes who were in rebellion, some of the tribes decided to join to rebel as well. Consequently, these participants were only a part of the total tribes. In addition, there were also tribe leaders who supported state authorities. There never existed an alliance among the tribe leaders of Dersim. However, none of these different parties was differentiated.

as sick, too often by different authoritaties in the official discourse of the Republic. "One hundred years of issue, Dersim, is in the way of healing"[32] (*100 yıllık Dersim işi şifa yolunda*). (Cited in Altınay, 2000, p. 258). In addition, remembering Ottoman historical backgrounds on the issue shows how Ottoman tradition continued for Dersim in the early Republic years.

In order to observe how Dersim was turned into an 'abscess', it is important to emphasize the late Ottoman period and its relation to the region. In this period of time, there are some common characteristics which belonged to different ethnic groups. For example, the main economic activity was banditry. Not paying taxes was some of the features of the different ethnic groups living in the southeast and the east part of the Anatolia, as it is indicated as follow by McDowall:

> By the end of the eighteenth century the Ottomans faced a severe crisis, that of a highly centralized empire that had lost of its hinterland. … In the Ottoman territories the eighteenth century had been characterized by nominally subject but effectively independent local rulers. Some of these arose when centrally appointed governors arrogated to themselves independent powers. The problem was not confined to the further flung areas of the empire. All over Anatolia, let alone in Kurdistan, local derebeys (or 'valley lords'), themselves theoretically holding military fiefs, turned their fiefdoms into hereditary holdings, failing to submit the requisite taxes to the capital. (McDowall, 2005, pp. 38-40)

Dersim was accused of not paying taxes and not providing soldiers for the army. Although it was not unique to Dersim, these claims caused its marginalization beginning from these years. Mesut Yeğen evaluates the 19th century as follows:

> The autonomous status of Kurdish tribes continued to be recognised by the Ottoman state until the mid-1800s. …Administrative reforms in the first half

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[31] It is possible to see these definitions in the Dersim: Jandarma Genel Komutanlığı (1998) reports, which mostly mention the military operations in Dersim especially between the early 1900s.

[32] This sentence is a heading written by journalist Ahmet Emin Yalman. Altınay (2000, p. 258) marks that the operations were supported by many articles referring Dersim as 'sick'or 'the last ruins of Feudalism' in this period.

of the nineteenth century aimed to destroy the autonomy of the 'periphery'. The attack of the centre on the autonomy of the 'periphery' was implemented by the practice of centralization in the economy, politics, and administration. (1996, pp. 218-219)

The state could not manage to control Dersim because of varying reasons. Dersim had a fragile position because of its historical background. It had ethnic differences, which were never represented by authorities. The region never had a good economic situation. In addition, Dersim had a geography which caused difficult life conditions. Those issues can be counted as some of the reasons to explain why Dersim could not be integrated into the system both in the late Ottoman period and early Republic years.

The authorities tried to gain control over Dersim by military operations. It was difficult to surround the region because of its mostly mountainous geography. Dersim was one of the regions that its obedience needed to be proven in the state's discourse. The Ottoman Empire took measures after the Administrative Reform. Ottoman did its first military operation to Dersim in 1800s and this period continued for a long run. These operations endured at regular intervals almost for a century until the events of 1938.

This period was evaluated by some Dersimli researchers as 'disobedient/rebellious Dersim for centuries'. Constructing Dersim as a rebellious place was also used by the late Ottoman and early Republic period within the state discourse (Dersim: Jandarma Genel Komutanlığı Raporu, 1998).

While Dersim used to be an autonomous area in the Ottoman period, there used to be problems before the Republic but some of the important answers lie in the construction periods of the Turkish Republic. In this point, the definition of the Dersimli by Turkish elites of new Republic was worth to look at. In addition, it was not only a definition for itself but also they were defining the other and consequently their selves.

2.3 From Abscess to Abjection

Clearly, the 'cleansing' that was done in Dersim in 1938 was an important result of the politics that followed in the construction of the Turkish nation-state process. In this process, Dersim was signified as the 'abject'. I refer to Butler to remember how she reads abjection in a discussion of Kristeva as follows:

The "abject" designates that which has been expelled from the body, discharged as excrement, literally rendered "Other." This appears as an expulsion of alien elements, but the alien is effectively established through this expulsion. The construction of the "not-me" as the abject establishes the boundaries of the body which are also the first contours of the subject (Butler, 2006, p. 181).

It is also significant how Hall reads Butler through abjection and marginalization and how he mentions the issue of identity.

> …Butler makes a powerful case that all identities operate through exclusion, through the discursive construction of a constitutive outside and the production of abjected and marginalized subjects, apparently outside the field of the symbolic, the representable – 'the production of an "outside", a domain of intelligible effects' (1993: 22) – which then returns to trouble and unsettle the foreclosures which we prematurely call 'identities'. (1996, p.15)

Thus, the new formations of Turkish identity are formed by abjection, and it was also constructing the others. Altınay (2000) argues that operations in 1937-1938 have a place not only in the history of the region but also in 'the construction of current identities'. She also emphasizes the significance of shaping Kurdish politics by state in 1920s and 1930s to understand how it affected the formation of Turkish identity/identities.

In my fieldwork, I occasionally talked about this issue of 38 with the people. All of them had the same questions in their mind. Why did state do this kind of massacre in Dersim/Tunceli? Why did they kill the innocent people especially

women, children, elderly people? When they asked those questions, I actually felt a necessity for an effort to answer. I thought mostly if there is an answer that I can say especially for young people. Everybody asks 'why Dersim?' in TV programs. People were dedicating themselves to explain this question as well.[33] Dersimli researchers do their best to explain it in these TV programs but it seems impossible to find a satisfactory answer to the question. This massacre can not be explained with any complete answer though the local people, the inheritor of 1938 and the researchers can not explain the question: Why? How did it happen to all those people- mostly vulnerable ones? It is important to think about the Dersim case with various aspects. In 1937, actually, the leaders of rebellion were executed but operations in the region continued. There were tribe leaders who supported the rebellion in a small scale after the executions, but it was not influential. The trauma that people lived continues in the narratives and they continue to think about that ambiguity because many people lost their lives-not being in a rebellion but doing in their everyday chores in events of 1938. An eighty-five-year-old woman summarizes it with these words: "I am thinking and thinking about it everyday but I can not understand it. Why did it happen to us?"

As I pointed out Dersim has a special place in the history of the early Turkish Republic. There are two other periods which had an important place in Dersim's history.They can be marked as follows: the settlements of radical parties like a Maoist organization TKP/ML in the 1970s and, the last one is TİKKO ('armed wing of the TKP/ML') and PKK establishments in the 1990s.[34]

Some of the women from cities referred to 1970s events as the revenge of 1938. They were evaluating the 1970s period as a response for the unanswered

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[33] There were many programs in different TV channels due to Onur Öymen's, vice president of Republican People's Party, speech on Dersim in the Parliament of Turkey on 10th November 2009.

[34] There was a great silence on events of 1938 in Turkish mainstream media until Onur Öymen, vice president of Republican People's Party, had a speech on Dersim 38 in the Turkish Parliament. His words were criticized for his effort to legalize 38 events. It was the only time period Dersim 38 had a visibility in mass media.

questions: 'the unfair massacre' led people to revolt against these policies of cruelty. They mostly commented it in this way when they needed to associate two cases. Although people of Tunceli had a tendency to support "left radicalism than Kurdish nationalism" (Bruinessen, 1994, p. 22), 1970s' revolutionist youth had also damaged the cultural life and belief system of Dersimli (Munzuroğlu, 2004).

PKK 'intensified' its activities in Tunceli during the year 1994 (Bruinessen, 1994), causing to both evacuations of villages and forced migration from the city. Leezenberg (2003) points out that Dersim 'witnessed … large-scale village evacuations' which was not seen in the other parts of eastern and southeastern provinces. The period was pointed as follows:

> For the villagers, the 1994 military campaign meant the most destructive and violent episode since 1938. It had destroyed not only their homes and economic means of subsistence, but also much of what was left of their traditional social fabric and cultural traditions. According to preliminary results of the (not wholly reliable) 1997 census, the population of Tunceli province had dramatically decreased from 133, 000 in 1990 to 86, 000 in 1997, that is, by over 35 percent. (Leezenberg, 2003, p. 207).

Considering all this period, it is still possible to refer to Bruinessen (1994, p.27) claiming that 'PKK failed to gain a firm foothold in Dersim'. While PKK was reminding Alevis to not forget their 'Kurdish' identities (Bruinessen, 2001, p. 111) in the 1990s, what I observed after years is a possibility for different attitude in the discourse of Kurdish politicians. When I participated in the Munzur Festival[35] during my fieldwork, I observed that the DTP leaders referred to Alevi identity in their speeches and criticized state's policies against them. It is interesting to see that one Tuncelili supporter of DTP denies Alevi identity and says 'I am Kurdish' while on the other hand DTP leaders emphasize, Alevi identity in festival speeches.

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[35] Munzur Festival began to be celebrate beginning form 2000. The population of the city increases so much more during the festival.

The fragile place of Tunceli/Dersim in this historical period is important to understand the formations of national identities in Turkey. In her remarkable discussion, Kadıoğlu states that "Turks were a 'made' nation by virtue of emphasizing their difference from the Ottomans…" (1996, p. 188). I think it is important to understand how these differences were constructed in the historical background. To conclude, Tunceli has an important place in understanding identity formation both in the national and ethnic contexts.

All those periods were also themes of the songs. People perform the cultural memory in them. This historical background is important to understand to see the subjects of the cultural memory and changing patterns in song forms. I believe the performance of oral poetry and weeping in traditional forms and its changing patterns prove an important base to follow the construction of identities in the process which I mentioned. In the following, I refer to social structure in the region. This part will provide a base to understand in which contexts people do or do not perform their songs.

2.4 Blessing the Place and Structure of the Villages

Geography, especially the mountains and the Munzur River, constitutes an important place for people whether they are from Dersim or not in relation to the songs, stories and the history about the region. However those places have special status in the life of Dersimli, with respect to the cult of sacred places. The mountain of Düzgün Baba[36] and Munzur River[37] are some of the well known sacred places. In addition to these, there are many sacred places scattered in the

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[36] Düzgün Baba is a very important place for the people of Dersim. For a detailed study, see Kerim Gültekin (2004).

[37] People mostly visit the sacred (or visiting) places near to the Munzur River and sacrifices animals in those places. It has a very important place in the faith system of Dersim. In addition to these, it was a part of tradition to take oath upon Munzur River.

village bases as well. It can be exemplified in one or two dread pines[38] (or simply trees) in a treeless champaign or a fountain in the village.[39]

Another issue I hardly considered about was the structure and planning of the village houses. They were mainly made of stones, instead of brick wall in conformity with the traditional house construction. The roofs were made of soil or metallic materials. One house usually consists of one kitchen and one room. The kitchen sometimes becomes a visible part of the room for a poor family or there might be one extra room for a family in a better economic standing. There also an extra room which had a separate door for guests or that room becomes a new home for a son when he gets married. The villages generally do not have sewage systems or running water. Women are responsible for fetching the water from the fountain of the village. These houses are mostly single flats but sometimes it is possible to see them double-storied. The first flat forms the stall in these forms. The stall can be separate or adjacent to the house. Its door is separated. However, it is obvious that all these traditional ways of life have changed quickly in the last years. People may choose to build houses from bricks as well. The most visible modifications, however, are in the villages where state authorities rebuild them.

The people forced to migrate in the midst of the 1990s from their own villages where they have no permission to go back have been relocated by state authorities to a big village through a kind of mortgage system. These new houses are quite different than the others and they are very close to the military guards. Normally, the village houses are built up far from each other. If there are many hills in the

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[38] The faith for believing the sacredness of a few pines in a treeless champaign is also a Turkish-Alevi belief. Ahmet Yaşar Ocak (2000) mentions this issue in *Alevi ve Bektaşi İnançlarının İslam Öncesi Temelleri: Bektaşi Menakıbnamelerinde İslam Öncesi İnanç Motifleri.*

[39] Those sacred places have a very important place in the everyday life as well. One of my hosts in Kam village, for example, had lived a conflict with her neighbor. They blamed each other as being liars and she invited the neighbor to take an oath on the fountain of the village in order to see who sayid the truth. Finally, her neighbor did not accept this invitation. Its sacredness serves as a conflict resolution in some cases like in the example case.

village, it is possible to see each house or small house clusters upon a hill. Yet authorities preferred to make all the houses very close to each other. These are single flat homes which have a kitchen, bath, toilets and separated rooms. They reminded me of a song sang by Pete Seeger. He says: 'little boxes … all look just the same'. The houses have a quite manner of a shanty town in the village. The owners neither have land, gardens to grow plants nor places to keep any animals they have.

I spent the longest time in Kam village. It carried an all-traditional[40] way of life in its borders. Its distance from other villages in a mountainous area may be one leading factor in this situation. The 1990s period effected hamlets as well. Although some of the villagers previously forced to migrate were permitted to settle in their villagers, it is more difficult to see the same thing in the hamlets. They are the most important motives of the scattered settlement of Tunceli.

2.5 Marriage Pattern and Sexuality

In my field work, the average age for marriage was low in the case of middle-aged or older, aged women. Those marriages were not arranged always by their families. Especially older generation of women used to marry around 15 years old. Although there were not too many, there were also women who married at the age of 12. Elderly women mostly complained about their younger ages when they got married. When I asked women who regret about getting married in early ages, they mostly answered me like "What did we used to know then? We did not know anything!" Unsatisfactory marriages, making a wrong choice of spouses in marriage or forced marriages are always the concerns of women both in their speeches with me and in their song performances. In the traditional way of villages, couples need to live with each other until one of them passes away.

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[40] I am actually not sure to use 'tradionality' in a comfortable way. When I am talking about village life, for example, I consider how a 'Che' photo in a part of room can be a part of traditional village life. Tunceli is one of the most effected region by 70s youth socialist movement.

People condemn divorced people. Divorced people living in the village are rare. On the other hand, I met with young Dersimli divorced people, who are the city-dwellers that visited their villages for summer holiday.

Getting married in younger ages has completely disappeared in the region nowadays. The surprising issue is the unmarried young people in the villages who are almost thirty years old. I found it very remarkable in villages where traditional life styles still keeps its activity. I should say that all the examples. I have seen were the daughters or sons of the widowed women. That situation was also an excuse for a young person's single state. People explained me that situation like a support for their widowed mothers.

While the cousin marriages are common among the older generations, the younger people do not prefer it. In Kam village, for example, Pınar says: "I want to marry with a stranger. I think marrying with a relative is not good. I saw them as my brothers."

I have never heard an event like honor killing in the places I visited. Honor is a part of the social system though. Virginity, for example, is very important for marriages. In the village where I stayed, people labeled a woman who 'devastated herself' because of losing her virginity out of marriage. This was her 'end' due to losing her honor. This situation mostly marks that she can not find someone to marry with her in her ongoing life. In this case, the only way was usually migrating to the big city with the support of her family.

Marriages are organized by couples in the region. İlkkaracan (1998) remarks some patterns on sexuality and marriage in Eastern Anatolia. She argues that families arranged 'a majority of the marriages (61.2%)'. She also points out that 'one out of ten marriages in the region is polygynous' (İlkkaracan, 1998, p. 69) and claims that there exists polygyny in a small percentage like 5.6% among Alevis in Eastern Turkey (2001, p. 6). She argues that:

These findings show that compared to women belonging to other religious sects, the Alevi women have relatively more autonomy on most of these issues, in line with the Alevi tradition that rejects gender segregation and values gender equality. (İlkkaracan, 2001, p. 11)

During my fieldwork, I mostly witnessed that marriages were arranged by couples and I did not witness any polygynous marriages in the villages of Tunceli.

2.6 Death, Rituals, and Reincarnation

The belief of reincarnation is very common in the belief system of Dersimli Alevis. Bruinessen also remarks that reincarnation is 'pronounced' among Dersimlis and he argues that the belief system of Dersimli looks like "more heterodox and syncretist than those of the Tahtacı and the central Anotolian Turkish Alevis" (1997, p.4). People mostly believed in the idea that one's spirit passes away to another being, depending on his or her life in this world. It may be a human or an animal depending on being a good or bad the person when s/he is alive. However, religious leaders have different beliefs about the issue.

After one person passed away, it was believed that his or her spirit stroll at home (*evde gezinmek*) for forty days. For each day, the house owner has to give one plate of food which they cooked in that day to one of their neighbors. One of the participants indicated that there is also an alternative tradition like cooking a special kind of bread. They divide it to the forty pieces and give it to their neigbours. She told that: 'The family cooks meat in the third day. This third day which follows the loss of the person, the soul of that person understands that s/he has died. Therefore, people cry more on the third day'. After then, they gave a meal for the fourth day after one passed away. In this way, the spirit of the person goes his/her way. People light candles to brighten the way of the spirits of their deceased relatives. It is possible to do it in the graveyard or they can do it in one

part of their home because the important thing is the intention so it is possible to do that at home, too.[41]

Remembering and telling dreams were a part of our daily speeches during my fieldwork. Women were mostly exemplifying their dreams in our conversations. Many women told me at least one of their dreams which influenced them related to our conversation topics. Issues like justice or seeing a sacred place can be counted as some of dream themes. Dersimli women expressed a lively image about the other world especially through their dreams. It is also possible to see an imagination through one of the performer's songs. As I illustrated in chapter one, Bese says her son went to the other world and he cannot find his way to come back. The first effect of this song on me was quite effective. Later I thought her vision about her son who 'cannot find his way to come back' connected to epics of the Middle East.[42]

I thought Bese's song transcends the settled beliefs because of its relations to those old epics. I also interviewed religious Alevi leaders about the songs and narratives. They mostly mentioned reincarnation, the good in any events and one *dede* also incorporated other world definitions related to Islam. The legalization of giving one's voice out (singing/weeping) was visible in the saying 'She sings. She has pain'. This was also the main explanation for her song.

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[41] Ahmet Dede, Personal communication, August 6, 2009.

[42] When I heard her interpretation of own song, I was thinking about a hero in Ursula Le Guin's book. The hero of the Earthsea, Ged, pass the wall, goes to other world and finally find a way to come back. It is possible to think about the epics as well. For example, the most remarkable is the journey of Gılgamesh to underworld.

2.7 Pepug (Pepo): A human changed into a Bird

I had a chance to listen some of the folk tales in Dersim. Most of them were about the people who were transformed into animals or stones. As I explained earlier, there is a common belief about reincarnation of the souls but at this time the transformation emerges suddenly when God accepted one's prayer for this wish. The reasons behind this prayer might be a 'shameful' behavior, pain or regret. The person who is in that situation prays to God and asks for his/her wish to give up his/her human being. *Pepug* is the mostly known myth in the region in this context. People use the word *pepug* as well as *pepo*. It is often used in the daily life. Women also use the word in their weeping performances. The story is very common in Dersim region. I personally talked to women from Erzincan, Tunceli and Muş, Varto. They told the same story with little differences. Here, I use the version told by the daughter of my host in Kam:

One day two siblings go to the mountains in order to pick 'kenger'.[43] When they picked kenger with the hoe, they put them into a jug bag. They ate one kenger when they were hungry. One of the siblings was carrying the jug bag and they turned their steps home. While they were returning back home, kenger was spilled from the torn jug bag on the way. When they came home, one of the siblings realized that there was not any kenger in the jug bag. 'S/he said you deceive me'. The other sibling said s/he didn't eat the kengers and reminded that they picked them all together. S/he said he would allocate it among two of them because s/he was not an ungrateful person. S/he did not believe in her/his sibling and accused of her/his sister/brother of eating the kengers. The other sibling takes oath on her/his innocence but s/he can not persuade the one who charges her/him. At the end, s/he says: If you do not believe me then open my stomach up with the hoe and see it with your eyes if I ate them. Then her/his sibling does not believe in her/him and opens her/his stomach and sees that s/he is not lying. There was only

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[43] Kenger is a spiny plant growing on the mountains especially in the spring and early summer.

half of the kenger. Her/his stomach is empty. S/he got that his sister/brother did not eat them but s/he was already dead while s/he was innocent. Soon s/he realizes that the jug bag has been torn. After all, s/he asks the God to turn her/his into a *pepug* bird to weep/mourn for her/his sister/brother in the mountains. The bird sings these words:

Phepu! Kheku!   Phepu! Kheku!
Kam kerd Mı kerd   Who did it I did it
Kam kişt Mı kişt   Who killed him/her I killed him/her
Kam şüt mi şüt   Who shrouded him/her I shrouded
Ax! Ax! Ax!   Ah! Ah! Ah!

Women use this folk tale mostly in weeping. They say, for example, 'Let the pepug sing for me' (*Pepug benim için ötsün/ Pepug mırê bıwano*). It is possible to see a very similar example in Feld's study. He relates to Kaluli experience and points out an important myth which narrares a boy who changed into a muni bird. Feld argued that:

> The major point about Kaluli weeping in relation to the muni bird story is that the three- or four-note melody is used as a sound metaphor for sadness, expressing the sorrow of loss and abandonment. The reduction to a state of loss becomes equivalent to the state of being a bird. … Sad, like a bird, a man spins weeping and poetry into song. That song moves others to tears... (Feld, 1990a, pp. 33-37)

The non-confidence, thus the loss of the other sibling, is the main point in *pepug*'s story. In Dersim, performers wishes *pepug* to sing for them. His/her vulnerable subject position was replaced by the performer and s/he also constructs and locates herself in a vulnerable being by asking *pepug*'s singing for her. In addition, she sings like *pepug* because she has pain like the bird.

People do not have a clear statement about the familia of the bird. They mostly call it as the bird *pepug*. They pronounce the second 'p' as if it is double like 'pp'.

I have actually mostly seen they say *pepo* and add a syllable namely 'go' when I observed weeping. They repeat this syllable two or three times. The vowel is extended most of the time. It becomes 'pepo go go' in a weeping women's song.

2.8 Elıka: A Variation on Lilith

Elıka[44] can be seen as a variant of Lilith in Dersim. People say she comes for the livers of the women who newly gave birth. Women from the same family wait for her during three nights. One participant tells if the woman does not have anyone then she puts an onion and a sewing awl embedded in this onion.

Some women say in their poets this utterance. 'Why did you pull and take away my livers?' The subject, 'You' may differ from a person they knew to *felek* (the angel of death) in order to point the one that does this act. They never refer to this variant of Lilith as one who takes their liver away in poetries or weeping. Women use 'cigera mı' (my liver) as an utterance of affection and love. I translated this word as 'my heart' in the poetries.

Before finishing this part, I should add that they were mostly women and religious leaders were ones who talked to me about the cycle of the soul. The folk tales are mostly recited by young female villagers. I also heard other folk tales from different villages but from women again. When I had contacts with men, we mostly talked about the political situation in the region.

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[44] Another name that I heard was Helke. There are different names which are similar to each other. Those vary from one region to another.

3. ORAL POETRY and WEEPING

In this chapter, I will describe the important components of both oral poetry and weeping. I will refer to theme, musical forms, audience, memory and construction of the place which are some of the main points in performing these two genres. In this part, I will mark fluidity among the genre. In addition, I will comment on the use of different languages in the performances in relation to the complicated political history of the region. Although my original thesis was only concerned with the Dersimli women after realizing that men also performed I tried to interview them. I will also show the importance of a well known bird, the *pepug*,[45] in relation to its usage in the performers' texts. Finally, I will focus on the components of these genres and their relation to the social context in order to understand their roles in the formation of different subject positions through these performances.

3.1 Oral Poetry, Weeping, and Lament

There exists a difficulty in conceptualization of the genres because of the overlapping definitions so in order to clarify the definitions I will attempt to explain the reasons for this confusion. As mentioned before, prior to undertaking fieldwork in Tunceli/Dersim district over a period of eight months I interviewed Dersimli women who migrated from their homeland to big cities such as Ankara and İstanbul. People whom I contacted about my research mostly directed me to older people who lived in Tunceli. Some of the people who directed me to the older women were also followers of the genre as well but I did not discover this until we had many conversations over an extended period of time. The reason for this reluctance to reveal that they were performers is concerned with the conditions of 'acceptance'.

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[45] See Chapter 2 for detailed information.

Giving the voice is more common for older people because their age makes it more acceptable to express their pain or grief. The sentiments need to be based on tragic events. A woman who had experienced the events of 1938, or one who lost a young child was always remembered by my informants. If a woman has that kind of pain then she can express it when there are people around. This social acceptance allows the woman's voice to be heard by an audience in both in the cities and villages. Feld and Fox refers to 'discourse on voice' and they argue that it 'is socially a more metaphoric sense of voice as a key representational trope for position and power' (1994, p.26). Thus, giving the voice also has a discursive meaning. It refers to the conditions for being heard by audience.

When talking with the people I interviewed, in order to elicit how the performers named the genre, I avoided giving a definitive term only generally explained these practices. In the interviews in the cities, these performances were recognized as lament by most of the young and middle aged people. I used statements like 'one's own folksongs in which the music and the theme belong to the performers' or 'improvisation of folksongs'. In fact there are many folklorists who connect folksongs and a lament. For example, Başgöz defines the lament as "the folksong which is sung over death or a similar tragedy" (Başgöz, 2008, p. 76). Boratav refers to the lament as the folksongs which relate to a painful event which is ritualistic or non-ritualistic and the narrative and the melody of these folksongs which refer to those painful events is important (Boratav, 1997, p. 13). He also states that "there is a difficulty in separating some "Anatolian Folksongs" from the laments" (Boratav, 1986, p. 4) since some songs have more than one meaning (ibid., p.4) There are other ways of referring to this fluidity in Turkish such as the *folksong-lament* (*türkü-ağıt*) (Özdemir cited in Boratav 1986) and the *lamenting-folksong* (*ağıtlama türkü*) (Bayrak, 1996).

I did not use the word 'song' during my fieldwork because it is connected to popular or Turkish Art Music so I used the term 'folksong' but this does not

exactly correspond to the observed performances for various reasons. Başgöz states that "a folksong mainly consists of four verses" but there also folksongs that have two or three verses (2008, p. 136-137). The structural differences led me to conceptualize oral poetry and weeping as separate from folksongs.

Although I avoided using a definitive term to describe the content of the performances I sometimes used this term to performances which occurred during daily activities rather than funeral rituals. The 'hardships of life' were remembered mostly in weeping but these practices cannot be called a lament. In the field, from time to time, I used the term 'non-ritualistic lament'[46] but most of the participants in Tunceli city center and nearby villages refused to define their performances as laments especially in the villages explaining that a lament was directly referred to a ritualistic genre associated with funerals.

Worldwide studies have been undertaken to analyze laments through their texts or musical structures and compare different examples. A lament is defined as an improvised genre, performed in relation to the 'inspiration of the moment' (Tolbert, 1990). The variants of laments in ritual, semi- or non-ritual contexts (ibid.) were analyzed and their 'metalinguistic' concerns relating to 'other speech or song forms' and to gender were revealed (Feld and Fox, 1994, p. 42). The content of the genre in ritualistic and non-ritualistic situations includes "rhetorical mourning questions", and "hardships of life" in autobiographical laments (Tolbert, 1990). She defines the Karelian lament as follows:

> The Karelian lament is a particularly striking example of the interplay between language, music and emotional expression, occurring as a fluid mix of speech, song and weeping. This description is not exclusive to the Karelian lament, and is reminiscent of descriptions in the anthropological literature of "tuneful weeping" (Tiwary 1978), "sung/texted/weeping" (Feld 1982), or "ritual wailing" (Urban 1988). (Tolbert, 1990, p. 81)

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[46] Elizabeth Tolbert (1990) refers to this term in her research on the Karelian lament.

While this explains the some of the connotations of 'lament' the Dersimli people refer to weeping and crying in funerals. After using different definitions I settled upon the phrase 'saying/singing/weeping on their own'. Weeping and oral poetry is mostly recited in a monolithic musical structure but a performer may use different musical variations. The important issue is to examine the monolithic music for a song. During my fieldwork, I observed that middle aged or older women mostly use the term 'weeping' in order to explain their performances in the villages. When asking about the weeping at a funeral, the people in Tunceli explained that if one person has lost someone then, everybody cries/weeps. When talking to several people about funerals, the response was 'God forbid! [but if it happens then] if one person has lost someone everybody cries/weeps over the death'. Then, the pain they experience makes weeping/crying acceptable both for women and men yet when I joined one funeral ritual in Hozat I observed that many women but rarely men[47] were mourning with the voice. I concluded that there are important differences between those living their homelands and those who had migrated to the cities to use the terms lament and weeping when they were referring to the same genre. Since my fieldwork mostly relied on the villagers, I focused on oral poetry and weeping practices. In following section, I will define and analyze the differences between the practices and fluidity.

3.2 Oral Poetry and Weeping

In this part, I will focus more on defining oral poetry and weeping both in the world wide context and in Dersim/Tunceli. Many scholars have different

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[47] A close relative like the father or brother of the deceased person would mourn. I observed it in a funeral at Hozat. The brother of the deceased was mourning and saying laments. After a while men warned him and told him that do not cry that much. Control yourself'. However, many female relatives and neighbors were crying and their voices were mostly overlapping. Feld and Fox (1994, p.42) mention 'dialogic complexities in the interaction of overlapping or interlocking voices' in the lament variations.

perspectives regarding oral poetry, Finnegan, for example offers the following definition:

> 'Oral' poetry essentially circulates by oral rather than written means; in contrast to written poetry, its distribution, composition or performance are by word of mouth and not through reliance on the written or printed word. (Finnegan, 1977, p.16)

Lord describes important aspects of the oral poem as:

> For the oral poet the moment of composition is the performance. In the case of a literary poem there is a gap in time between composition and reading or performance; in the case of the oral poem this gap does not exist, because composition and performance are two aspects of the same moment. … An oral poem is not composed *for* but *in* performance. … Singing, performing, composing are facets of the same act. (1971, p. 13).

In most of the examples in my study I dealt with the composition in the performances. Crying or weeping refers to spontaneously formed texts in monolithic music forms expressed in a mournful way and mostly sung at a high-pitched level. There are many formulaic word groups or phrases in a weeping performance. For example: Kêmerve mırê voro go go (Let the stones hail down on me), [k]êmerê kuçê na dinave mırê voro ([t]he land of this world hail down on me), [d]erdo derdo derdo/ [w]uyi lemınê derdo derdo derdo (Oh! It is the misery misery misery), [b]iye, biye biye[48] ([i]t happened, it happened, it happened in that way) and [p]*epug* mırê bıwano pepo (Let the pepug sing for me). As I explained in the previous chapter, the vowels are extended for example, if they refer to the bird *pepug* in a verse, they generally elongate the last syllable 'go' and repeat it a few times. This process can be applied to any words they do not have to be special words. They often use the syllable 'yo', for example, at the end of a verse. Another characteristic of weeping is the use of reported speech. It is very possible

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[48] This word group is used only in the beginning of a weeping practice.

to see an imaginative dialog between the performer and the deceased person. All these features are   essential parts of the structural characteristics of weeping.

Although 'weeping' and 'crying' could be substitutes, I prefer to use the term 'weeping'. I want to refer to the text and the music even if it is a simple melody when I say weeping. Practicing weeping also includes shedding tears during the performance since it is a part of the whole song. However, the amount of tears shed in a performance varies and a performer may not shed any tears.

Both weeping and oral poetry can be seen as a type of everyday life practice connected with daily activities of the performers. There is a monolithic musical structure for both of these practices. In some cases, they have similar structural patterns especially in terms of the measure. A verse can be short including seven or eight syllables whereas another verse can contain thirteen or more syllables. The verse tends to be more regular in the oral poetry performances but as I pointed out earlier there irregularities at some points through their songs.

 In my field work I focused on the people's own definitions of their performances however, I use the term oral poetry to define some of the performances which could not be categorized as weeping. Many young people do not always use the term 'weeping' for their performances for many different reasons which are given below. The young people mostly define their performance as spontaneous singing/saying on their own *(İşte öyle kendi kendimize söylüyoruz)*. I define their performances as oral poetry if it is not mentioned that they practice 'weeping'.[49] The middle aged women can be classified mostly followers of 'weeping'.

It is sometimes difficult to define the borders of these practices. I called it oral poetry in this work but it is also very important to consider the opinions of the performers. Most said they were just singing on their own which refers to their

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[49] When I talked about my comments on those issues with a young village woman, she insisted that it was 'weeping' and everyone cries not in an other language but in his/her own language.

performance without an audience. Young people mostly define their performance as 'making up it for themselves', or 'lies and untruths'. Both the young and older people also define their performance as 'singing/saying on her/his own'.

The critical points here are 'for one self' or 'on his/her own'. For example, a young single woman may define it as 'weeping' but she will do this alone or may not raise her voice when she is close to other people. A young can weep or an old woman can sing without tears the latter may not be relating a painful experience but simply giving advice using a slight musical difference in her singing style. The young person's performance may have structural similarities to the weeping performance even though she says she does not sing like her mother. Depending on these structural characteristics of the related genres, I suggest that there is fluidity between them. Therefore, I use the word 'song' to refer both to oral poetry and to weeping. Rubin comments about the songs as follows:

> The songs are reproduced by people who have become experts in the genre, who have heard many similar songs, and who know how to produce songs that follow the regularities of the genre, even if the version they heard was flawed. (1995, p.12)

Women give voice to their feelings like missing someone, or to their complaints, expectations, problems and criticism through their songs. Thus, it can be seen as a way of communication. The performers do not expect to enter into a dialog from those around them. A mother-in-law, I interviewed in İstanbul, may sing to complain about her daughter-in-law when both of them are at home. While she expresses all her criticisms in her song, her daughter-in-law cannot respond although one of the reasons for this is respect the expression through an emotional genre may make it difficult to respond.

I believe that the social context should be taken into consideration therefore I explained socio-historical context of the performers in the previous chapter. In

this section I examine the relationship between performance and its social context. Finnegan commented on the relationships between poetry and society as follows:

> Oral literature is more flexible and more dependent on its social context. For this reason, no discussion of oral poetry can afford to concentrate on the text alone, but must take account of the nature of the audience, the context of performance, the personality of the poet-performer, and the details of the performance itself. (Finnegan, 1977, p. 29).

Another perspective about oral poetry is presented by Lila Abu-Lughod (1986) who analyzed 'the relationship between Awlad 'Ali sentiments and experiences and two contradictory discourses' namely the poetic and nonpoetic which 'express and inform' that Egyptian Bedouin society (p. 10). She critically examines the reasons for the individuals' expression as two very different discourses and determined that oral poetry was a vehicle for personal expression and confidential communication. Thus, *ghinnawas* as the genre of lyric oral poetry was consider to be the 'poetry of personal life', and 'sentiments about their personal situations and closest relationships' (p.27).

The poetic and the nonpoetic discourses may not be contradictive in some cases. If a person conforms to expected gender roles and also performs them then she would not be criticized. These issues relates to acceptance of a performance for the audience without severe criticisms. For a weeping woman, there might be more space to perform her narratives depending on her age, status, and life experience. Yet, in the example of a woman who while weeping for her son blames her neighbors for deliberately causing his death, later she was criticized by the family members. .People tolerated the woman blaming her neighbors during the funeral because of her pain but not later when she continued over many years to hold her neighbors responsible for her son's death. This situation where the family members were critical of the woman could result in her weeping alone. Thus, reasons for saying/singing/weeping alone may differ related to issues of self-image, respectability and the incompatibility of the narratives with the

realities. At this point, I refer to the Foucauldian term the 'régime of truth', which relates to the discursive field that determines true and false. As stated earlier, some male performers define their own or other's songs as lies and untruths.

These performance moments are very important for providing relief. The themes narrated in their performances are generally not spoken in daily conversation. Poetic performances used to express ideas or sentiments which are not socially acceptable when expressed in everyday social interaction have been analyzed by many authors.[50] When I asked the question to clarify why they sing alone, middle aged or older women mostly told me that they do not want to make the other members of their family miserable. For the young performer the reason is that they fear of being ridiculed. This is a real fear since they will have observed this teasing and in order to avoid this happening the young person will avoid performing in front of an audience.

When I interviewed women performers, I also asked them if there were any young performers at home. Their answer was mostly negative since young people will not be able to fulfill the conditions of acceptability as I discussed earlier. Therefore, even if she knows that her daughter sings the mother may deny it. In the case of a daughter singing their styles may be very different from the mother's or other members of the family. Time limitations for the field work in Dersim meant that I did not have the opportunity to follow a young performer's development and discover who had been her model for the imitation process was because my fieldwork. Furthermore, only a small number of young performers shared their songs with me.

It was also not easy to follow performers in the city conditions as I remarked earlier. However, it was most difficult to witness a young person's song. I categorize their songs mostly as a part of oral poetry rather than weeping and

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[50] See Lila Abu-Lughod, Veiled Sentiments: honor and poetry in a bedouin society, Berkeley: University of California Pres.

young people refused to identify their songs as a part of 'weeping' tradition. We can see that the social status, gender and age are important to give out the voice. . In addition to this, young people feel more embarrassment than older people. Although, before a person performs, there are conditions determined by social norms to be fulfilled they are not always that strict. Vake, a sixty-year old woman, for example, sings in her living room or in neighbor's living room but generally people do not take these songs seriously even though she tells of her problems and sings for her deceased brother. The audience was mostly young people in this case. On the other hand, a young mother's singing, dependent on her experiences, could be acceptable in the course of everyday life in a different village. In general, it is more difficult for young people to give voice because of the social structure.

Although there are many reasons why people sing alone there are also situations when giving the voice becomes socially acceptable. Moreover, the people of Kam village told me that young people used to come together and sing their own songs. In this village everyone was related and the time that they spoke of was the events of the 1990's. They remember and admire the good performances saying 'we used to improvise very nice songs (*atardık ama tutardı*). They also commented that it was better if a person who has an ugly voice did not sing.

This last comment raises the question of how do the singers gain appreciation for their performance. A beautiful voice, an ability to create the verses, and a good story related to this performance are the main criteria for success. During my fieldwork, although I knew that they were still performing some of the participants from different districts refused to sing in my presence. The excuses were mostly that they had lost their voices and were unable to find good verses because they were getting older. When I asked to record a woman singing her songs, she hesitated and made similar excuses. She said she was ashamed of her bad voice and told me that people could make fun of her if they heard the recording. She asked me not to play it when there were other people around.

Most of the performers believe that their singing is unique to them arguing that they were self taught. I persisted in asking them if there was anyone in their family who performed in the same way. Although their mothers' were followers of the weeping and singing practices, some of the young people differentiated their performances from their mothers and the older performers around them. In fact their style was very different and they completely refused to define their performances as 'lament' or 'weeping/crying'. Their reason was that they could not have any problem to mourn at their young age but in fact sometimes this explanation was used to hide their songs about someone they are in love with. It is not only the young women who considered that their performance to be unique a 65-year-old woman insisted that her performance was unique and different from her 90 years-old mother. However, I also heard that performers say that singing is genetic and passed down from one generation to another in their families.

Generally, the performers stated that they began to sing between the ages of eight and fifteen. Their first models were usually someone from the family. If there was no one from the family, then older women in the community were the first teachers among the ones that were remembered. However, the performers said that no one actually teaches. It is a process of imitation.[51] This process happens when there is no audience for example on the mountainside when they watch their animals in the pasture.

3. 3 Themes and Musical Forms

The themes of the singing include many issues; regret for a marriage, an old love story, and dissatisfaction about life, loneliness, poverty or children who died. The theme may have similarities because people express a sorrowful issue which still has a central place in their lives. It is not possible to repeat the sung text word by word. Even a person who wants to sing the same song will not be able to remember. While the words may not be remembered, the theme can resemble

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[51] As suggested by Albert B. Lord in The Singers of Tales, imitation is an important part of learning.

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another song. Therefore, the main themes of narrative may be repetitive but not the sung text.

The theme is also one of the factors before singing in front of an audience. In addition to the themes mention above there may also be minor themes such as improvising about their natural surroundings or about their own districts and villages. People also may refer to sacred places namely *jiyaret* or to saints and the places that were related with those saints like Düzgün *Baba* (*father*) , Hızır (Cult of Hızır),[52] Munzur *Baba* (*father*).

Women from neighboring districts also carry similar musical forms but all these generalizations can change when we reconsider the influence of radical leftist politics in Tunceli beginning in the 1970s. Accordingly performances exhibited changes both in the traditional musical forms and the use of a language different from their mother tongue. While musical forms of the older people were mostly in monolithic forms close to mourning styles, younger people might imitate different styles such as protest music forms. Although a young person can distance herself/himself from older women's style this does not mean that they will not sing their native language as well.[53] A last point I should note is that there were a few young who admitted that they practice weeping.

The length of the song may vary depending on the performers' mood. I mostly witnessed shorter songs of about five or ten minutes. The reason for the short performances may be my presence and that I constituted an audience. Furthermore, this weeping may continue all day. Weeping practice also has similarities with the mourning rituals of the funeral ceremonies. As I mentioned before, there is fluidity between the concepts of mourning in ritualistic events, and

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[52] For a detailed study about Cult of Hızır see: Gürdal Aksoy (2001). Dersim İdeolojisi: Asi Bir Tarihin Dinsel Arka Planı, *Munzur*, 6, 3-47

[53] An example from Kam village is Ali's song in Zazaki which is referred to in the next chapter.

voiced weeping/crying or between weeping and oral poetry. It is only the theme, musicality, and the situation of the performer that clarifies this fluidity.

I accompanied women in their daily routines doing housework alone, putting the animals out to pasture or harvesting grass for them. The songs were usually performed during routine work in the garden, field, mountain, and at home with members of the household were the first audiences.[54] They may sing in their resting time as well. Some of the performers or their daughters defined the period as 'I am (or she is) crying/weeping whole day long'. In addition to short performances, I also had a chance to listen to these longer performances lasting between thirty and forty-five minutes and mostly happened when the singers were alone. The structure of the villages, houses and daily life are also some of the factors which determined the conditions of the performance. My observations showed me that in the summer generally people have to work all day and have a limited time to be together.[55] However, in the winter there is more time and people visit each other According to the women the men, will go to the coffee house or restaurants in the winter which means that the women have more time at home.[56]

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[54] This situation is relevant for the performers both in the city and in the village. However, the women performers in the village have more mobility. They have to work all day. Even they stay at home, other members of the household may out at work. The common point is that mothers are the role model for the performance. Being a mother especially those who have experienced difficulty in their lives are accepted as having the right to sing before an audience.

[55] This are the normal part of the village life but those routines may be distorted when villagers are relocated in state housing as mentioned in Chapter 2. In this new accommodation the houses do not have space to keep animals and villagers do not have any land or garden to farm. The historical and political backgrounds and its effects on the region should be borne in mind.

[56] These houses were usually for men. While they may be open to women, they are for the village women and again restaurants may be a place of gathering for women and men, but usually local women do not go there.

3.4 The Narrative and the Audience

The critique from the audience is a very important issue. The audience evaluates the narrative in the poetry in relation to the pain and misery. Labov comments narrative judgment thus:

> "A narrative that is judged entirely false, 'nothing but a big lie,' does not have the impact or acceptability of a narrative that is considered essentially true." (Labov 1982: 228, 245-6 cited in Bauman, R. 1986, p.10)

The narrative never becomes totally 'true' because every song was performed within the contours of subjectivity. Thus, the narrative of the song can be categorized as 'not true', 'fictive or 'lies and untruths', with the acceptability dependent on the performers' loss. This situation shows us the importance of the discourse of loss and pain in this particular society. It is the pain what determines whether the performer's song is accepted by the audience and thus whether someone can voice their song or sing when there are other people around. The level of acceptability is determined locally, for example the death of a young person or a child is a severe loss. In my research those interviewed stated that those who have experienced loss were remembered and remarked that they sing because of their pain. Sometimes the narrative may not be that real. For example if performer narrates a subjective experience concerning family relations or an unrequited love, people would probably tease him/her and would not consider this song was worth listening to with respect.

For young performers, if there has been a real tragedy or they have experienced pain then their performance is acceptable. It depends on the marital status as well. I mostly heard about the weeping of young mothers. It does not mean that men do not practice weeping but on the base of motherhood discourse it becomes possible to perform not particularly for an audience but when they can be occasionally overheard by others.

The type of criticism that can be received by the performer also depends on the audience is and the social positions of both performer and audience. In general, a weeping young person or his/her complaints about imagined sweethearts may bring them derision. In one of my interviews, an unmarried young village woman told me that she never sings her songs if there are friends around. Finnegan remarks that practicing the songs on one's own is not so common and she argued:

> If delivery to an audience is indeed the characteristics setting for oral poetry, it has to be conceded that there *are* also occasions where there is no audience, and the performance is a solitary one. This is less typical (and seldom or never happens in the better known case of oral prose narrative) but it does occur. The Nuer and Dinka pastoralists of the Southern Sudan sing solitary songs as they watch their cattle. The cattle are perhaps a kind of audience-to the Nuer and Dinka they are indeed closely approximated to human beings- … (Finnegan, 1977, p.215)

I think it is important to focus on different characteristics of singing/saying on their own. In Kam village, young village women or young male performers, for example, did not sing when there were people around. Their reasons varied, from respect for an audience of elders to a fear of being ridiculed by others. As illustrated above, a young woman said that other people would probably make fun of her if they hear her songs. People can also gossip about issues recounted in the song. I some young male performers told me that they were too young to have experienced misery so they would be ridiculed if they sang before an audience. A last point is the issue of 'attaining one's desire/to have one's own way' (*muradını almak*) which is connected to marriage pattern as well. Traditionally, in the region, a person was expected to marry and not to divorce. Thus, complaining about one's marital status or referring to unrequited love could result in being ridiculed and losing the respect of the community. Thus, performing songs related to these types of themes would be performed alone or to a limited audience.

3.5 Language of the Songs and Relationship to the Identity Issues

In the traditional way, people usually learn these practices from their older family members or other members of the community and use their mother tongue which are Kırmancki (Zazaki) or Kurmanji[57] However, some young people perform in Turkish this often is related to the performers' desire to imitate the musical forms of protest music which narrate the discourse of radical-leftist parties. In this case, the musical structure resembles the imitated one. One performer stated she had insufficient knowledge of her native language due to assimilation policies. I met with two women performers who were mainly using Turkish in their songs although they were not of Turkish origin. One of them explained that she liked the protest music singers and the other woman said that her family always spoke in Turkish when she was with them so she could not learn her language very well. Both could sing in their native language but they shared their songs sung in Turkish. Hatice, for example, commented that although she knew some songs in Kurmanji but she remembered more songs in Turkish. A male performer also said he is a fan of Ferhat Tunç[58] and imitates his style. His main explanation is that he wants to imitate protest music forms. Apart from these examples, all the other performers sang in their own languages.

When I shared the idea that younger people use Turkish in their songs, a young woman overreacted and resisted this idea. She claimed that even if a person doesn't know their mother tongue they will cry/weep in their own language. What she meant is that pain will best be expressed in one's own language even if the performer commands of his or her language. Her example referred to death. Her

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[57] I will not refer Sarısaltık here because of avoiding a complication. In addition, this family had a few members remaining in the original village. I only managed to communicate with only a few people from that village.

[58] Ferhat Tunc is a well known singer of protest music from Tunceli/Dersim. He mostly sings in Turkish and was a strong supporter of radical leftist groups for many years. In recent years, he began to sing in Zazaki .

response was a very important to avoid any generalizations. We reached an agreement about using one's mother tongue when somebody is practicing weeping. It was also important to see the people's reactions to my definitions and conclusions in order to not to lose their perspectives on these issue. Returning to the issue of singing in Turkish quantify this sample, out of 30 interviews only 3 people stated that they sang in Turkish, all three were in the Tunceli district. A performer who migrated from her village when she was a child used to be more sensitive to the use of her mother tongue in her songs. In the cities the people I spoke to only sang in their mother tongue language.

3. 6 Construction of Place

Place is a key element in performing memories through songs. Women, and also men, looking after the cows in the pasture have more freedom than when doing other daily tasks. Those who have the responsibility for these animals mostly perform this duty once or twice in a week. Being alone in the mountains is the perfect time and place for singing because no one can hear the singer. When they go to the mountainous district surrounding the village, they actually are not that alone. At least two people from the same village will be in a specific area. Those who can go to those areas mainly sing there and when I ask the place of their performance, they talk of the mountain or 'the time of looking after the animals'. Thus, the mountain is construed as an important place for a good performance.

Some women, on the other hand, do not have this opportunity because she may have children who can look after the animals in the pasture. If there are many men at home, women rarely go to the mountains. In Tunceli, if the home is built in a separated place, which is the main situation in Tunceli where the houses are far from each other but houses may be clustered according to kinship, the women sing at home as well. Sometimes they sing when their children are around. One

woman said that since the children are incapable of understanding the theme, the issue or the main grief in the song. This perspective allows children to be suitable audiences. Although it is difficult to generalize to explain the whole oral transmission period, I believe mothers have an important role in the transmission of these practices to the next generation. Since, a woman's voice is socially accepted as a suffering mother for her children.

It is also possible to see men's performances in a living room or courtyard of house. This is very unusual of course, but the place is a factor in determining the mode of performance. For example, I heard middle aged men whistle when we were chatting on a daily basis so I often asked what song it was. They replied that it was 'lies and untruths'. This happened many times in my field work. It makes me think about that the whistle hides the men's performances and they can do it without being visible performers, though they are practicing. The whistling gives the men a kind of conformity because no one can hear the words of a song performed by them.

Place is also one of the thematic components of the songs. People who had been forced to migrate to the city mostly use their villages, plateaus or Tunceli/Dersim, as a part of the theme. In particular, sacred places such as *jiyarets* (sacred places), Düzgün Baba, Munzur River can be recalled in the songs. Those types of songs rather than the themes of private life are most easily recited before audience.

3.7 Transmission of the Oral Tradition and Survivability of the Genre

Weeping and oral poetry were performed by many people in their traditional lives in order to express personal or collective issues, but the process of transmission probably may be impeded because of the education of the younger generations in the cities and the work opportunities for them in other cities. As I

stated the people from Dersim/Tunceli living in the big cities associated those genres with the old women particularly those still living in Tunceli/Dersim. During my fieldwork in Tunceli I realized that people, from the older generation to the younger, from the villages to the cities,[59] are still the followers of these genres. It is clear that they have different singing styles, however, it is necessary to explore in more detail the differences between the village and the city performers main themes for the city people can be about a longing for your homeland.[60] In addition, as I pointed out earlier, there may be great differences even in the village base because of impacts of the political conflicts in the region.

Although there are differences between the migrants in the cities and those who still live in Dersim there is a continuation of the genres. There are assimilation policies, changing life styles and also forced migration from the region which not only result in a decrease in the numbers of performers but also discursive differences in the young followers singing forms and texts. Nevertheless, it is possible to follow that younger generations still can perform this practice if they learned it either from their rural past or from their elders who were forced to migrate to city.

3.8 Performances of Memory

 In this part, I question how oral poetry and weeping may relate to performances of memory. Most of the participants interviewed in my fieldwork said that their memories return when they begin to sing. I wondered if they remembered when they began to sing or they began to sing because they remembered and I asked them which the case was. They gave different answers. For example, one woman said that when she began to cry/weep she remembered everything. Others replied

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[59] I refer to my interviews in Tunceli city center, Ankara and İstanbul.

[60] I recorded the songs of four of the interviewees in the city interviews. Three of them shared their songs about Tunceli with me.

that they never forget their pain and their regrets were always in their minds. I think that the issue of remembering the past and recalling the memories through this genre are actually performances of memory in their songs. A person can remember out of the song performance as well. But in most cases those songs could be seen as the performance of memory because remembering is also an act of doing. In addition, it has been learned to be performed in music as a mode of speaking in the learning process. A singer sometimes performs weeping for many hours with her music. This, in conclusion, can be handled as a kind of act in these two genres of oral tradition.

3. 9 The Pepug bird in the Text

The Pepug is a well known bird in the region. It is the story about a human being who changed into a bird. The story is told in a similar way around Dersim including parts of Erzincan and Bingöl. A usage which shortens *pepug* into the word *pepo* expressing the feeling of 'sorrow, pain and regret' (Özcan, 2002, p. 99) and people use this in everyday speech. The transformation of human being into an animal or into stone is an important part of Dersim myths. There are many other stories that describe people being changed from their human form, but *pepug* is mostly used in the songs of women, especially the middle aged and elderly. After using the word 'pepo' women usually use the sound 'go', 'yo' and sometimes 'ge' and 'go'. These syllables are mostly sung in an extended way. *Pepo* is recalled by saying let the pepug sing for me as well. Adding another formulaic word group, 'Let all the stones and earth of this world rain on me', here is a sample of the rhyming verse including the bird, Pepug.

(Sample Song1)

Daê daê bawo go go o yo   Mother, mother, father
Pepug mırê bıwano go pepo yo yo   Let the pepug sing for me pepo

(Sample Song2)

Nê daê daê cigerê mı zof dezenê	Oh! Mother, mother! My heart is broken
pepo go	pepo go
Nê ez ax u zariya na bırawunê ho	I long for my brothers
pepo go	pepo go
Kêmerve mırê voro go go	Let the stones hail down on me
Wela na dinavê mırê voro go	Let the all earth and stones of this world hail down on me

Here is a notation for first sample song:[61]

The desire to sing about the *pepug* can be seen the most appropriate way of symbolizing their pain. It is also possible to consider that this represents 'poetic vulnerability' as Abu-Lughod (1986) argued in *Veiled Sentiments* and also allows for the reconstruction their suffering position in each repetition. In the next chapter, I will describe the lives, experiences and of the people of Dersim and give examples of their songs.

[61] bb=koma

4. EXPERIENCES and SONGS

Thus far, I have referred to many issues such as socio-political background, belief system, some well known myths of the region and also the structure of weeping practice and oral poetry. As I have shown in the previous chapter, Dersimli narrate their wishes, desires and miseries through these songs. Both men and women are the followers of these practices. Although I am mostly interested in women's songs, I witnessed male performers as well. There are some important differences when we consider the issue of gendered constructions. I have never heard someone referring to a male performer with this explanation: 'He has pain' or 'He is weeping'.[62] Yet, in general, people refer to a woman who performs weeping as 'she has pain'. The relationship between pain and weeping needs a status of legitimacy and acceptability. As I stated in the previous chapter, living a tragedy or the loss of a person, a deceased child for example, can be counted as reasons to weep and accept one's performance. The issue is that it never signifies a discursive production like 'fatherhood' in men's case. On the other hand, 'her' performance has been associated with motherhood discourse. The 'she' in 'she has pain' is a mother and suffers because of losing her child. Expression of pain in such a performance is rare for men in the course of everyday life practices, but they practice 'lament' in the funerals.

There are compositions which are open to audience. While I didn't witness it, women told me about men who perform in the marriage ceremonies. It has been said it would be a shame for women to do it.[63] These men have a kind of popularity. These songs were probably produced before the ceremony. Men may sing if they think that their song has a good composition. I will give an example

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[62] There might be exceptions though. As I explained the issue in the previous chapter, a man can weep at a funeral. Once I witnessed that people were saying that 'he has pain'. This man had lost his son and he was still weeping after funeral.

[63] This information based on a speech with an old woman performer.

below. Young village men also send their poems to famous singers of the city.[64] I heard men's singing in non-ritualized forms as well. For example, they whistle their songs or when there is nobody near they will sing in a mumbling way in everyday life. In general, people pointed out the men who made good compositions or religious couplets. I will present some of their performances as well.

The most important factor is these practices provide the performers with a space to express themselves without being criticized. People are able to release their feelings in these moments of singing and feel relief from their pain. One's subject positions could be coherent in a discourse of everyday life, but poetic discourse proves a way to express irrational, desires, conflicting ideas, and feelings in those performance moments. All of them could be harshly criticized by an audience which contains diversed power relations. To explain these issues in detail, I will detail my fieldwork experiences and sample songs in this part.

4.1 In a Village

I stayed in Kam village for a total of about ten days. It was the longest time that I stayed in one village. This village was also a very important starting point for my research. I managed to talk about these practices with different age groups. Although marriage has a vital role in the order of the social structure, there were many single young people in their thirties both in this one and the neighboring villages. The young singles of the village Kam mostly believe marriage must be between people who love each other. A young single woman, Pınar, complained about the new generations: 'There was love among young once upon a time but not now'. They mentioned that young people were very decisive about marrying

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[64]In another village, a woman performer complains about his husband's attitude against her poets. She can not find a chance to send them to someone. Men, especially younger ones, on the other hand, have a try to reach well- known local artists.

their sweethearts. S/he can flirt with one person, but people expect them, finally, to marry. All I can say is there is a grand change in the current marriage pattern compared to narratives of middle and old aged women. But divorce is still regarded as an unwanted situation especially in the villages. However, it is possible to observe that a woman who lives in the city may have an agency to change it. Lastly, keeping her virginity is vital for a woman. One loses her chance to be a suitable candidate as a spouse if she has a sexual intercourse out of marriage. The villagers were talking about a woman who lost her virginity. They were saying 'she destructed herself' (*kendini mahvetmiş*).

The issue of marriage as I pointed out before is very important because it is the most important turning point for one's life. The strict codes of marriage in connection to honor ideology determine people's lives. As I emphasized earlier, divorce or second marriages are not welcomed. There are a few exceptions though. In the village, for example, Cemile, had lost her husband when she was in middle age. After a period of time, she married his brother. These events happened years ago but it was the first story I heard about Cemile from her neighbors. When I visited the women relatives of that deceased man, they directly told me that they were opposed to this marriage. It was the first story they had told me about her. I asked people in other villages if it was a common tradition to come across, but they condemned this case and said they never heard anything about this kind of event.

In general, I can say that I didn't see any second marriages among widows apart from one or two cases. In the narratives of aged women, between 55 and above, it has been told that if a woman leaves her husband for another man, she has to leave her children. The rest of the community condemns the situation and excludes those who leave their spouses in such a way. Divorce has a similar effect. One 42 years-old woman said 'it is better to be married rather than being divorced'. Her answer mentions how difficult life could be for a widow. If a man gets divorced from his wife, especially for an arbitrary reason, it is also retold for

years as an example of unfaithfulness. These patterns in marriage specify why a wrong choice or a mistake in determination of spouses may turn into a tragedy for one's life. Therefore, it is very important to have consent to choose the spouse. As I said before, in the past, most of the marriages were arranged marriages or cousin marriages. However, nowadays the the couples arrange their marriages for themselves.

I want to begin with a marriage story and life long regret for it. This is one of the most important parts in women's songs. I will refer to this issue in another village sample again. This example is from Kam village. In our first meeting, a sixty-year old woman shared her dissatisfaction with her life because of her choice of spouse. She told me she regretted marrying him and wept about this everyday of her life. She also wept for her son because although he was educated in the big city he did not support them financially. During all the years of poverty, her son was probably her only hope.

While people narrate themselves in the everyday speeches, there is a priority in their songs in term of the misery or pain that have a central place in their lives. Ochs and Capps argues the 'fragmented' state of the experience as follow:

> Every telling provides narrators and listener/readers with an opportunity for fragmented self-understanding. Each telling of a narrative situated in time and space engages only facets of a narrator's or listener/reader's selfhood in that it evokes only certain memories, concerns, and expectations (41, 126,162). In this sense, narratives are apprehended by *partial* selves, and narratives so apprehended access only fragments of experience. (1996, pp. 21-22)

While she mostly talked about her life in terms of a wrong spouse choice, her songs were mostly on her son. Once I accompanied her in a daily routine of works. While she was harvesting, she was also singing from a distance with a monolithic and high pitched tone. When she came closer to me I asked the theme

of the song. She replied me with her song singing in Turkish translation for me. She said:

Anne sana kurban olsun	I sacrifice myself for you
benim ciğerim,	my heart
Ben nerde seni göreyeyim	Where could I see you?
Yollar uzaktır nere gideyim	The roads are far away
	Where should I go?

She was feeling comfortable to sing when there are people around her. When she began to sing, the young people teased her implying that her pain was not so severe and that her narratives are fictive. It is very complicated to sing before the audience and it depends who these people are. There exist complicated power relations. Since, in Vake's case, they were mostly young people or neighboring women. Once, she told me she would never sing when the man who was her neighbor was in the same house. She also explained that because she had respect for him she would avoid going to the house when he was there but if he was at home she would cover her face. Obviously, she was not behaving in the same manner for another man who was her neighbor's brother in law. Once she sang a little song in Kurdish which was performed by her mother after she ran away from her family home. Her daughter and I were the only listeners at that time. Apart from this song, she did not share any songs about the issue. In conclusion, one needs to evaluate the situation to sing before audience.

I will give more song examples below. An unmarried 30-year-old village woman, Pınar, sung in Turkish while her first language is Zazaki. She also differentiates her style from her mother and says she does not sing/say like her mother. She has some main themes in her songs. I could manage to listen to her singing similar themes two or three times. She mostly repeats her desire to have a house and to be together with her beloved one. She knew that it was an unrequited love and he has already married with another woman. The issue is about the conflicting

discourses. She refuses her interest in such a person in the everyday life discourse. On the other hand, she accepts it in the poetic discourse. Yet, it doesn't mean that the second one has a full consistency in it. Poetic discource also has many contradictional statements in it. In the second song, for example, a statement is 'Please come back', and another one 'Go! Go far away'. The most important function of poetry is that it proves a space to express contradictive statments, nonrational issues and desires. Before giving the examples below, I will relate how a very formulaic statement, 'Let the *pepug* sing for me', could be relocated in a young women's song.

Pepug still has its place in the songs even it is performed both in Turkish and by a young woman. However, it is not used as it is in the traditional form examples. Here, we neither see the name *pepug* (pepo) nor the syllable 'go'. As we remember, *pepug* wishes to be a bird to sing his/her pain in the mountains. Here is a short example from one of her songs:

(Song 1. 1)

Ben bu dağların üstünde gezeyim	I wish I could stroll around on these mountains
Kuşlar gibi öteyim	And sing like the *birds*
Ağaçlarına dağına konayım	To be placed on its trees and mountains
Dertli dertli öteyim	I wish I sing with grief like a *bird*

She performed those songs when we were in the mountainous area around the village where they took their cattle to pasture for all day. She also sung from the Dersimli famous singers like Aynur Doğan and Yılmaz Çelik. In addition, she remembers many performances from her village or around and points out them. Here are the parts of two other songs. I am not totally sure if she sings for long hours, but these songs lasted mostly around five minutes.

(Song 1. 2)

| I wish I was a *bird* | Ah bir kuş olsaydım |

to sing in these mountains	Şu dağlarda ötseydim
I wish I could sing for you	Senin için ötseydim
I wish I was a *bird*	Ah bir kuş olsaydım
I would go to distant lands	Uzak diyarlara gelseydim
I wish to see you there	Seni orda görseydim
Open your window and listen to my voice	Aç pencereni sesimi dinle
(…)	(…)
I wish you dreamed about me	Rüyana girseydim
Please come back	Ne olursun dön gel
I want to look at you from far away	Sana uzaktan bakayım
I cannot come close to you	Sana yaklaşamam ki
(…)	
I would tell your voice	Sesini dağlara kuzulara
to mountains, lambs and violets	menekşelere anlataydım
I cannot forget you	Ah seni unutamıyorum
I cannot forget you	Ah seni unutamıyorum
Please come back	Ne olursun dön gel
(…)	
I never will come to you	Bir daha gelmem sana
I suffered too much	Canım öyle bir yanık ki
(…)	
I will not forgive you	Affedemem seni
Go! Go far away,	Git gidebildiğin kadar
Go as far as possible	Uzaklara git
(…)	

(Song 1.3)

I wish we had a home with you	Ah bir evimiz olsaydı
Oh what wouldn't I do	Ben neler yapmazdım

After she performed her song, she said she does not share her songs with anyone. The reason she says: 'People talks. They gossip'. Gossip is an effective control mechanism in that sense and no one needs to loose her respectability. If this subject is a young single woman, it becomes more important to keep it. Later on, I asked if she could not forget her beloved. She replied with a well-known expression in the village: 'I even don't remember what I ate yesterday'. It was hard to believe her at that time, but I realized that they perform their memories mostly in the moments of singing. I also can say that they perform if there are suitable conditions like being alone at home. The important thing is the act of

remembering in those performing moments. Thus, I can say that the act and the place are connected to each other. I also should remind that people spend their times in shared places like a saloon. As I said earlier if it is middle class village family they probably have one more room and a kitchen. In general, villagers often visit each other and there exists a little possibility to be alone.

Back to Pınar's performance, we see there are many differences in a young person's performance compared to older ages. First of all, as it is in the example above, Pınar sings in Turkish. Her musical pattern is very different than her mothers in relation to language choice. The songs in Turkish signify her interest in leftist protest music. Different musical patterns are possible in one's performance depending on the language. Her mother, for example, was using both Kurmanji and Zazaki (Kırmancki). The music is monolithic for one song but one has variations on it so I should mark that there are musical differences as well. Her musical mood could differ in regard to her choice of language in performing. This young woman emphasizes that she does not sing like her mother. 'The construction of the "not-me"' (Butler, 2006: 181) relates to one's subjectivity here in defining the borders of one's, especially a young person's, 'poetic self'. A similarity to the traditional weeping performance could be thought as 'suffering subject position' that one uses in her/his poems.

In addition to her performance, I got a chance to talk about those practices with some young men. Young people were joining the usual evening chats in Vake's house. She was visiting their homes, too. While I asked one of them for a possible performance, a young male performer said when he is on his shepherd turn, he sings for 'mountain, stones and cows'. He differentiated his performance from the 'others'. He pointed out that he imitates Ferhat Tunç's[65] protest music style and he sings only in Turkish. Although he didn't perform his songs, he explained the

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[65] A well known singer origined Tunceli. He was an important representative of leftist protest music. Recently, he began to sing in his mother tongue rather than Turkish language which was a choice for his political stance at that time.

themes and his beloved one for whom who recites his all songs. This explanation for sure depended on a mutual affection and he wants to marry with her. I could not listen his songs. It was difficult for me to follow the men in their daily routines because of my short ethnographic methodology plan.[66]

A young male performer Ali, another single male performer in thirties, also refers to Vake's style as 'Their songs are altogether empty'. He criticizes her narrative, calling it 'meaningless'. However, in a different day, Ali accepted to vocalize one of his songs for us. He considered that Vake's performance and songs as nonsense and that they could sing all the day in that way. After Pınar, Vake's daughter, told me Ali had a nice 'composition' of his own, he sung it. The song was both about the two important figures of their belief system, namely Düzgün Baba and Hızır. Those names also refer to the places which were remembered with. Here is his song:

(Song 2)

…

I take a step in that side, it is Hızır
I take a step to this side, it is Düzgün Baba

I am confused to choose which side
Both of them are *jiyarets* for us
I take a step in that side, there is Hızır
I take a step to this side, there is Tunceli

This song is also very important for me to think how he relates to his ethnic identity. Ali is opposed to *dedes* (the religious leaders in Alevis). In one of our conservation, while his mother was claiming that *dedes* visits are blessings, he blamed them for deceiving the people. He was also carrying a cross, which had surprised me in our first meeting. I never asked the meaning though. Lately another man who was a guest in the village told me a story about his Armenian

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[66] These performers were on their shepherd turn once in three or four days. Since it was a heavy task, responsible ones from the household were shepherding in turn.

great grand father.[67] I am not sure but I commented that his cross probably related to the roots in the mentioned story. However, Ali's only song which could be voiced before the audience was about the sacred people and the sacred places of Dersim.

We also talked about his songs, which were performed in a similar vein like the other young people. He advised me of two well-known village men and mentioned that they had their own compositions and *beyits* (religious couplets). I could not manage to talk to them, but I refer them here to illustrate young villagers' differentiation about the genres between men and women. However, I do not believe that there is such a sharp difference. In other words, it is first a difference in categorizing and in language. They signify gender in a sense. It is true that I never heard a woman who performs *beyits*. While it could be possible, I do not think that it is something common. Therfore, there may exists categorization of different genres which depends on the gender. Yet, I believe some genres are gendered very much in some cases depending on gender role expectations. It is a weeping performance by men. This example is to see how men can weep as well. A 75 years-old man, for example, was known for his songs by the villagers. It was told that he sings for his deceased brother when he is alone on the mountain as well but no one says 'he is weeping' or 'crying for his brother'. When he died, his brother was around 70 years-old. One young villager expresses the song and translates it to Turkish as she remembered in this way:

…

Gençliğin toprağın altında	Your youth molders
Çürüyüp gidiyor	under the earth
Ölüm sana yakışmıyor	Death does not suit on you
Felek sana nasıl kıydı	How *felek* killed you

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[67] Although it was limited, many people in Dersim with their different perspectives and stories related to Armenains and the history in our daily conversations. This was one of them. The daughter of that granfather marries with a man from their family. Her father donates considerable amount of land for her dowry. The story goes on this way. I asked his permission to record but he didn't allow me so I emphasize a little.

When I had a chance to ask him some questions about his songs, he told me that they are known songs. It was an audience-closed performance as it was in some other cases. I have only one male performer who sang spontaneously in my work Hozat, from a town in Tunceli. I will mention his song in the end of the chapter to illustrate a man's performance.

4.2 Visiting Neighbor Villages

In the first chapter, I explained my motivation to visit the neighbor villages. Although I had reached performers in Kam village, some people advised me to talk to well-known performers in other villages. I have already explained the reasons on the basis of acceptability and conditions to give one's voice out. Some people of Kam village also agreed with my guide who offerd me this idea. Thus, I decided to visit her. After an uncomfortable journey, we arrived at the village in the afternoon. When my guide explained the reason for being there, she said it is done. Yet, I had to wait for the morning. Some male villagers from the village came to greet him when we were having dinner. While they talked mostly about the daily political issues women listened to them in silence. When I went to the kitchen to talk to young people, I asked Bese's 30-year-old daughter why she did not participate in their conversation. She answered that those men did not know anything. Although her answer surprised me, it was a reaction that I saw in other villages as well. Women were not participating in conversations when males were talking, but they criticized them strictly. While I suppose women's silence as a form of oppression, I changed my mind after their answers. Gal (2001) emphasizes that some anthropologists who focus on communicative events categorize women as "mute or uncommunicative". Referring to 'Women's everyday talk and women's voice', she argues 'both can be understood as strategic responses, often of resistance, to dominant hegemonic cultural forms'. Gal also refers to Abu-Lughod:

> Finding the attempts at resistance will tell us about where and how power is exerted, and knowing how institutions of power work will tell us where to look for possible signs of resistance (Abu-Lughod 1990). (cited in Gal, S. 2001: 425)

It is not only men and women who evaluate each other. It is also possible to see the evaluations of social status on the base of 'knowing' among the same gender. Although women tended to be more careful in these evaluations taking into consideration the pain and life experiences relating to this discourse, anyone can be confronted with this assessment. As I said in the introduction, my position as 'knower' also was challenged. Some people concluded that I did not know anything. I will come back to this issue in the following pages again.

In the morning, I accompanied Bese to go to a hamlet. She was going there everyday to shepherd her cows and also harvesting grass for the animals. When we exited from the village, she began to talk about her pain. She said "when I begin to sing I remember everything." This situation explains the details remembered in the text very well. Text narrates what happened, especially on the day of their loss. It was difficult to ask her what she meant. In the beginning, I tried and then she gave little breaks. I asked the meaning of her song. While I had interviewed women who know Turkish, most of the performances were in Zazaki. Being in the field without knowing the native language caused me many difficulties. I knew it surely, but I thought listening to their narratives in the performance is also very crucial. Besides, their translations were very important, since, without knowing the story behind the song it was not easy to understand what the song was about. In this case, the woman translated some parts that no one could translate what she meant exactly. I referred to this part in the introduction, but I will mention it again.

After short translations, it was impossible to ask what she sang. When she was singing, she was also crying and I would only listen to her performance. She was

actually one of the performers who sang for relatively long time. Her performance lasted around one hour. She sang until we reached the hamlet. When we were returning, she also continued to sing for a long time period. During our return, she stopped to ask me some questions about my life, for example, my family and then she continued to sing. These were short questions, which allowed her to go back to continue her performance. I want to mention a last issue before the samples. It is 'felek' translated as 'fate' in some studies.[68] In my examples, I believe women mostly refer to *felek* as the angel of death (Azrail). Bese also refers to its role on the day of her loss. There is some part from her performance:

(Song 3.a)

Bonê cigera mı dürryo yano	The house of my heart is far away, at the edge
Kês mırê xevera xere niyano	No one delivers a promising message for me
Vanê: Qersune gına mı	He says I am shot no one touches me
kês destê ho mıra ninano	

Mı va: Feleko kor	I said damned *felek* would not act
qemisê ma nêbeno	heartlessly towards us
Derdo derdo derdê mı gırano	Misery misery! My misery is great
Mı çı zona feleko kor mırê	How I should know that the blind
meymano	*felek* is my guest
Cigera mı letey keno beno	It will break my heart into pieces and
	It will take it

Perê mı qeynatê mı cigera mı	My arm my wing my heart
Perê mı ceranê mı	My arm my gazella
Ne ceranê mı tı canê mı	My gazella you are my soul

(Song 3.b)

Se bıkeri da se bıkeri
Welatê mıno horê tey vınderi dae

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[68] Ilhan Raman and Bahman Baluch, Semantic effects as a function of reading skill in word naming of a transparent orthography,Reading and Writing, Volume 14, Numbers 7-8, 599-614.

Bonê cigera mı mıra dürryo
Verê çımunê mı tariyo
Şeri verê çeveri buko çırriya ke mıde
Bono ke ez teyro ne pencerewo ne çevero
Ezo wertê çor dıwarudero
Vano: Vengê to gosê mıde yeno
Çawusê mı çetıno izne mı nêdano
Vıreniya mı qapana
Daê bınale waê bınale
Caê mı bonce bınê viyale
Qersune gına mı wa u bıraê mı yenê
dormê mı yawas yawas bınale
Ezo şune cigerê mı ninê
Mursaê bıraê (…) vırasto
Yola İzmir Bornage'de pino
Cigerê mı nıka horê veyvıke ano
Toxtorê Tunceliya vesayiye
wae u bıraê mı butu mır êkerdi bervi
Ez yaraliyo anê nişkun (…)
Kemer kuçê yavani mırê bıvoro
Şiya tariya raê oncena cigera ho ser
Wurze cigerê mı wurze sodıro
Kêmer kuçê yavani mırê bıvoro
Herkes karê isê hodero
Wusaro anê (…)
Herkes mıradê ho ser sa biyo
Cigerê mı bınê wela şaede poyiyo
An êse bıkeri no qeder qederê mıviyo
Cigerê mı momın biyo
Cigerê mı nazık biyo
An êse kena bıke endi faydê mı torê çino

(Yetimdi, cigera mı yetimdi)
Derdo derdo derdo
Felekê koy cigera mı mıra vısno berdo
Welatê mıno qenatê mıno cigerê mı perê mıno
Nê sono tariyo sondewo wuyi
Cigera mı şiyo Bornaga vêsayiye
Wuyi lemınê derdo derdo derdo
Anê mı nêzona çevesae felek mırê amo
(…)
Mı va: Hona mı ça merax kena
Hala na cigera mı şiyo çaê nino
Vano: Mı çı zona na çevesae amo
Mı wuza pino
Cigera mı mıra tenevê yano

Mı hona vırasto ser gureto
Rae sero cigerê ho pino
Mı va hora ciran xayinê
Kês mırê xevera xere niyano
(…) xayina
Vana: Yaraniya, kês mırê yardım nêkeno
De wayi wayi wayi
Cigerê ho xestexanede sae ke
Çevesayiye şiya xestexane cıleto toli
Daê sono tariyo (….) mırê bırnayi
Nê daê daê bınale
Ax horê bınale
Daê mı boncê meretê bınê viyale
Wa u bıraê mı de verva mı tene bınale
(…)
Wuyi lemın derdo derdo
(…)
De sono sono
Mı qeda no xeriv amo
Amo bıraê mı (….)
Ne cigera mı sono tariyo biye
Hewalunê hode şiyo
Mı veng da jiyar u diyaru
(…)
Ne daê payizo
Herkeş mırodê ho gureto
Cigera mı bınê wela şaede poyino

What should I do mother What should I do
My country[69] is for myself I shall stay in there
The house of my heart is far away from me
I shall go to in front of the house of my son
I have his beautiful voice
The house where I have been
Neither have a door nor a window
I am among the four walls
It is evening it is dark. My son it is evening
He says: Your voice morns in my ear
It is hard to get permission from my sergeant
My way is closed
Mother cry sister cry
Take me to under the willow tree

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[69] Here, she refers to the 'other world' when she use the word 'country'.

I am shot
My sister and brother will come close to me
Cry slowly slowly
(…)
I am injured mother
I cannot do it
Let the stones and earth of nature on me
(…)
Get up my heart Get up
It is morning
Let the stones and earth of …
Everybody is on their own job
It is spring mother
Everybody is happy with their wishes
My heart is moldering under the black earth
Mother! What can I do?
It was my destiny
My heart was faithful
My heart was gentle
Mother! Do whatever you can!

There is no use of me for you
(He was orphaned. My heart was orphaned)
Misery! Misery! Misery!
The *felek* of the mountain took my heart away
He was my hear he was my arm in my land
It is dark Oh It is dark
My heart went to Bornag
Oh! Misery! Misery! Misery!
Mother I couldn't know that
Felek came for me
(…)
I said: Why do you care about me?
My heart is gone Why didn't he come back
He says: How can I know that the damned *felek*
Came there to chase me
(…)
He says: It is a joke! No one helps me
Oh oh oh
I look for my heart at hospital
I went to damned hospital
It is the empty bed
Mother it is dark, evening
Oh Mother! Mother wail
Oh Cry for yourself

Mother take me to under the willow tree
Let my sister and brothers cry for me a little
(…)
Oh It is the misery, misery
(…)
It is dark, dark
(…)
Oh mother
It is the autumn
Everybody got their wishes
My heart molders under the earth

Our walking ended when we arrived to the hamlet. While she was harvesting grass, I had a chance to interview the woman living there. I asked whether she sings when people are around or not. She replied she sang from time to time because of her pain. Another issue was that she was not singing at her home because her young daughter was uncomfortable with her weeping all day. But the people of hamlet said she sang at home as well. The audience is also occasional when they hear her weeping performance. They only can witness it by hearing her because she does not sing before anyone (any audience), but when she sings at home during house chores people come across her weeping. Her daughter opposed to her singing because of illnesses that both of them had. Most of the cases, young women said they did not want their mothers to be upset. So the older woman mostly cried when she was out of house or she sang at her home as well when her daughter was outside.[70] While her daughter forbids her mother from weeping, she admitted that she also performed this practice exactly like her mother. While she accepted that she had her own songs she preferred not to perform any of them. Compared to the performances of young villagers of Kam, her weeping performance would be more intensive like the older people.

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[70] I heard two tragic consequence of this continuous weeping. One of them is Melek whose sister died because of weeping and singin all the time. While she was performing these practices, she was also beating her own chest with her hand. Bese says that she died with her own scourge'. Another example: After a tragedy people lived, the woman performer says that her sister and mother were weeping for deceased all the day. Her father warns them to stop. In other case, he says, he will commit suicide. He does what he says and kills himself.

Eventually, we arrived back to the village. We prepared to go to Kam from Bese's village. Villagers normally walk between the neighboring villages. Probably, one of the most important things was one's travelling companion. It is sometimes shorter than getting on a minibus but the roads are too difficult for a non-native. It was difficult for me to walk all the way. I hesitated too much related to many issues; one of them I emphasize here was something I never calculated. When we were coming closer to a village named Hes, I heard the voices of an armed conflict from far away. When I asked about the voices, my guide said it was kind of bombarding with mortar. While we were walking, I stopped and wanted to take shelter. Then he explained they were really far away. How far could it be? I really felt miserable because this was an experience that I cannot imagine such a case in my everyday life.[71]

After awhile we arrived at Hes. It was one of the villages where we stopped for a rest. In this short time period, I was happy to have chance for recording some songs again. While I was having a rest in a villager's house, the house owner came and sat on the corner and she began to sing. I asked for her permission to record her voice. She was one of the participants that we had very limited communication.

As I mentioned before, having a beautiful voice is one of the important conditions of singing before the audience. The woman warned me not to open the voice recorder when there are other people around. She explained me people can make fun of her if they hear the records. Actually, she was right about this warning. After the following days, in Kam village, for example, people told me, the one who does not have a nice voice have a better voice if s/he does not sing. During the time, she continued to sing with a control over her voice level. When she was

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[71] When I witnessed that someone use their guns in another village, I reacted again and asked what these sounds were. I asked if something was happening. My woman host said 'I know just what you know. I am like you. I don't know more. Someone says it is soldiers' education shots'.

weeping in a tuneful way, she burst into tears and she couldn't go on. Here are her songs. The first one was about her suffering and loneliness:

(Song 4)

Vaji vaji to sero vaji Güzela mı	I sing I sing on you, my beauty
Biye biye ezvê qırvanê tovi	Come, come here I sacrifice myself for you
Des domoni kerdê pili	I raised ten children
Lewê mıde çino	I do not have none of them with me
Ezo bınê na bonê	Mother I live alone in this ruinous old house
xıravide daê teynaro	
De vaji vaji vaji ax ho sero vaji	I say I say I say I say for myself
Bervis mezalê mı nêdano	A gush of tears do not allow me
ez tora sa vaji	What should I say to you
Wax de çigera mı ez teynaro	Oh my heart! I am alone.
(She speaks here:)	
Des domonê mı estê, teynaro	I have ten children but I am alone.

When we were outside together she sang again. This time she did not burst into tears because she was improvising a song which was discontinuous and consisted of short sentences for me. For example:

(Song 4.1)

I say I say I say for you
Oh! My inexperienced is on her way
…
She is my guest
She is beautiful
She is the daughter of strangers
She eats little by little
My girl! Do not eat our mulberries!
Why are you eating all of them?
Why are you eating our mulberries?

Her songs were very important because they were sung spontaneously. In addition, her style exemplified how speaking and singing intertwined. She was singing as if she was speaking to me.

In my last days, I visited the neighbors and recorded one song. Ayse was a woman in her sixties. When we went to her house, there were some other women neighbors. In our first visit, she explained she had been forced to marry with her cousin when she was very young. She was comfortable in explaining her life story when there were other women around. When she expressed the difficulties of her life clearly, I wondered what kind of discursive difference there might be in her song performance.[72] I should note all of the women have relatives to each other. I visited her in following days and I wanted to talk about her songs. She provided an excuse of being old for not singing. Despite of her unwillingness, she sang a little. Here is a part from her song:

(Song 5)
(…)

Ax de waê lemınê derdo	Oh sister! Oh! It is the misery
Daê na deje ma derinê	Mother! That pain of us rebelled
Ax kês cırê dermanê nêdino	Oh! No one could find its remedy
Wax de wayi wayi	Woe Woe Woe
Ax daê daê gêrmo	Oh mother mother! It is sultry
Ax gêrmê omnoni qırmis kerdo	Oh! The hot summer had suppressed
Ax kılê derdê sari biyê kani	Oh Mother! Everybody's misery became old
Ax derdê ma newde biyê	Oh! Our misery was renewed

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[72] I relate to Abu-Lughod. Discursive difference between two expression, daily speech and poetry. Her expression in speech form does not create a discrepancy in the social structue. The most important factor in her expression is her status as an old woman.

4.3 Performing Cultural Memory

I moved away from Kam village for some days. At that time, I had a chance to visit other performers, Çiçek, a woman in her seventies living in the city center and Vake, an 85-year-old woman, living close to the center. Their songs illustrate how women reproduce cultural memory in their songs. The first performer, Çiçek, married her patrilineal cousin before she was fifteen. Her husband died when she was in her thirties. She did not marry again and took care of all her children. She related the village evacuations of the 1990s in her song. Some of the people were not able to return to their homes like her family. Here is the song:

(Song 6)

(…)	(…)
Koê Dersimi top kerdê amê Tunceliye	They picked all the mountains of Dersim to Tunceli
Teseliya ma dewera kotiye	We lost our hope from our village
Çetıke ma efkar keme	I am afraid we became sad
Çetıke dewunê ho nêsome	I am afraid we cannot go to our village
Mat êde (…) ardê	They brought all of us here
Dewe biya tole made	Our village was evacuated after we left
Teseliya ma kota kılê	We lost our hope mother
Herkeş dewê ho ca verdê	Everybody left their villages

She said when everybody left house, she began to cry and sing until they came back home. She performed before an audience from time to time as well. For example, when their visitors came and they remembered old days and their villages, she performs her songs. She did not differentiate between singing among men and women.

The other performer mostly talked about events of 1938 and she repeated many times that she could not understand why events of 1938 happened in their lives. She said: 'I am thinking and thinking but it does not make any sense'. In our

second meeting with her, her male and female relatives were there as well. She sang spontaneously on events of 1938. It was one of her songs probably made years ago.

Here what she sang:

(Song 7)

(Biye Biye) Kafirê Mervan yeno çadir sanê dormê Heniyê Pili
Kafirê Mervan yeno çadir sanê dormê Heniyê Pili
El u qomê Xeça vêsayiye top kerdo berdo Hopıka vêsayiye
Ağır makine qurmıs kerda mılet pêro jê velg u vaşi qırr kerdo
qedeno goyn vejiya riyê asmeni

(It happened …It happened…)
The heathens of Mervan is coming,
they set up the tents around the big fountain
The heathens of Mervan is coming,
they set up the tents around the big fountain
They all gathered the people of Xeçe to Hopık
They set up the heavy armor and kill all the people
like leaves and grass
The blood had risen to the sky

One of her male relatives who was in his late 70s celebrated her performance and said: "Look! What she does!" He admitted that he did not know if she had ability for such a performance. On the other hand, his sister was practicing weeping in a freer manner. While some women and a man were slicing beans in the garden, she began to weep for his son who died five years ago. She did not cry though. I felt that the discourse of pain or loss had an impact in that situation but her statement about the older one as 'she is our bride' made me think about the negotiations of possible power relations again. While she was younger, she might have more freedom because she was the daughter of that village or that household. The last thing here was the older women performed her song in a public sphere because it was not about private matters. Its narrative about that well-known event was closer to the performances about the sacred places so it would be accepted and welcomed. Concerning the more private issues, I have already referred to

marriage and women's regrets about wrong choices at the beginning of this chapter. Now I will give examples below.

4.4 Marriage patterns, Loneliness and Songs

In this part, I will mostly remark about regret for an undesirable marriage. Hatice, a middle-aged, married village woman, expressed her grief through her songs. She mostly complained about the absence of a friend. When she tried to share her regrets with her family, everybody advised her to go on with her marriage and be grateful for her having. Singing is the only way for her to feel relieved. She also reflects traditions about marriage as follow. She explains that once she had a boyfriend, but she was having some problems with him and they were separated at that time. Her present husband saw her when she was sixteen and wanted to marry her. She didn't refuse their request, which was about paying a visit to see a prospective bride. While she didn't accept the marriage, her family did not approve of her attitude and persuaded her to marry. She was in her late thirties and tradition was still so strong about marriage issues twenty years ago. Her family persuaded her because when one marriage was set or the woman's family approved the marriage then it was not desirable to change the decision. Her family mentioned that 'What other people says if we don't keep our promise." She explained that she regretted all her lifetime because of saying 'yes' for their visit. She mostly sings about her loneliness and the man that she first loved. Hatice questioned her act of singing from time to time wondered if it may be a sin to sing in this way. She says: 'My husband is a good person. Sometimes I think if I displease God…'

I stayed for almost a week in her village. I tried to have most of the time with her, but unfortunately it was not possible to record one of her songs eventhough we talked about them all the day. Some women, especially older ones, performed more easily than anybody else, but it does not have to be the same for everybody

to feel the comfort to sing before an audience who waits for a performance. As she said, she was not singing when there are other people around. Only exception was her children. She, for example, said 'they would not understand anything'. They were around 12 years old. She mostly related to singing for 'mountain, stone and flowers'. Reasons for this limited audience were issues like gossip and loosing respectability. Another issue was that she already shared her problems with her family, but they advised her to praise for having her ownings. All these matters were determing the boundaries of her performances.

As I explained, it was not possible to witness 'a' performance in some cases. Finally I thought it is really difficult to perform because first it would not be spontaneous. I considered the importance of interaction in performing as well. I decided to share one of my songs with her and I sang at the end. She said it was a good song if it really belonged to me. After I shared my song with her, she sang me the songs that she performed earlier. One of the questions in that point is if it is really the same song because they do not record or write it. The song mostly changes in those cases. When I asked what kind of themes she says in the text, Hatice says it is mostly similar themes to each other. This relates to her misery about the beloved one. This was the song that she shared with me:

(Song 8.a)

Yine yalnız kaldım ben	I am left alone again
Geceleri düşündüm,	I was thinking through the nights
hava karanlık soğuk	It is dark and cold
Ama ben üşümedim	But I didn't feel the cold
Ağladım	I cried.
Sen de bunu yüreğinde hissedebildin mi	Did you also feel it in your heart
Geceleri dudağına dokunsam	If I touch on your lip at nights
Bunu yüreğinde hissedecek misin	Would you feel it in your heart
Üşüdüm, yıldızlara ağladım, anlattım.	I am cold I cried to the stars I told
Gitme ne olur,	Please do not go I am scared here

yalnız korktum ben buralarda	alone
İstemem doğan güneşi	I neither want the rising sun nor the
ay ışığını da istemem	moonlight
Yağmuru çok sevdim,	I loved the rain
saatlerce ıslandım	I got wet for hours
Bıkmadım üşümedim eğer varsa	I neither get tired nor cold
doğan güneşi sabahleyin isterim	If there is a rising sun
	I want it in the morning
Sadece benim senin olsun	Just be yours and mine
Eğer gidersen	If you go
Ne doğan güneşi ne de ayı istemem	I want neither the sun nor the moon
Sen yoksun hayatımda	You don't exist in my life
Sol yanım yok ben de	I do not have my left part
Yalnızım çok boş kaldım	I am alone I stood empty
Yürüdüm boş sokaklarda	I walked in the empty streets
Sadece seni düşündüm	I just dreamed about you
Esen rüzgarı düşündüm	I thought about the wind
Saatlerce oturdum	I sat for hours
Karıncayı izledim	I watched the ant
Çok rahat çok huzurlu	How comfortable and peaceful it was
Ben öyle değilim ki	I am not like the ant
Çok üzüldüm çok ağladım	I am so sad I cried too much
Gitme yollar uzar senin için	Don't go
	The roads go far for you

This song is a very nice example for what people mean that 'we just sing' or 'we are murmuring' or '[t]hey [songs] are about lies and untruths'. It is a great example for how fictitious the narrative is in a text song. This is the main issue actually. She comments her own performance and says that:

'This is it. I murmur like that…You may find it made-up. I say that there are people like me. If they cannot tell their grief to her/his friends then to trees, stones, earth…I sing when I light the fire. When I was looking to moonlight, for example, I sit here many times. I looked at the sky. I cried and sang'.

One of the questions I asked many women was about the relationship between singing and memory. I asked: Do you sing when you remembered or do you remember when you sing? She, for example, replied: 'It is all the time. I cannot get rid of it my mind whatever I do'.

It is not only recited for 'beloved' ones, but songs include daily politics as well. She said she cried for soldiers who died in the armed conflict. In addition, she sang for a neighbor's son who went to participate to 'ones in the mountains' and died there. Hatice mentions she said it in lament form in Kurdish language. While I insisted her to sing a part from this lament, she could not remember. I want to remark on some of her words in our last conversation:

I do not remember. If I sing, I sing well. You know. Somebody who listens to me cries[73]. … I wish I remember but I cannot. You sing a great verse in one moment; you forget it all a few hours later.

Her words are also good examples for the act of remembering in the performance moments. The monolithic structure of the music is one of the important elements. They sing in the styles they are accustomed to. For example, Hatice's song that I wrote above was sung in Turkish. She marked that she does not adequately know her own language, Kurdish.[74] Her family had avoided using their own languages when their children were around. Although she said that she did not know her mother tongue well, she sang a lovely song of her own that was not in Turkish. This is again about the Cult of Hızır and a sacred place. Here I give one part of the song:

(Song 8. b)

Ez ewro hewnde Xızır diyo   I dreamed Hızır tonight

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[73] As it is quoted from the experiences of a Bedouin community in *Veiled Sentiments*, "Beatiful poetry makes you cry." (Abu-Lughod, 1986, p. 177)

[74] I use 'Kurdish' because she used it in this way.

Ez nişkino mıra pers derdê to çıko	I cannot stand it. He asked me: What is your trouble?
mırado ke esto mıra vaze	Do you have a wish?
Ez nişkino towa vajeri	I cannot stand it. How to say it
way lemın lemın derdo	Woe woe woe is me, it is the misery
Ez derdê ho kamrê qesey bıkeri	To whom I speak my misery
Nê kêmer nê kuçi dayanmıs beno	Neither stones nor rocks can bear

In her village, I also visited some old women who also were known with their performer identities. Bese was living next to Hatice's house and I visited her and explained the whole story again. Nobody sang but her daughter told me one case about crying at a funeral as follow:

> Do you know how it is, Aylin? The day before yesterday we went to opposite village. There was a funeral. There was a woman who had come from a village. Her son was a student and he had died in an accident. Honestly, many people gathered but they could not quieten her. This woman was saying and saying and saying. It took my heart away. Girl! Men even cried. God had given that kind of voice to her. She was saying 'I went to İstanbul. I bought ointment but I couldn't find my son'. She embroiders so beautifully as if she is beading [the words]. They said 'For God's sake! Quieten her. We have blood pressure. We may die'. I cried a lot there.

My short visit to this neighbor had ended with an interesting question. The daughter of the old woman neighbor asked me whether their neighbor Hatice had those kinds of performances or not. The question itself was a clue to refuse her identity as a performer. I did not say anything and pointed out another well-known performer in the village. Finally, to approve themselves, she said 'Come on! What does Hatice know?' Many people responded me in this way as I indicated earlier. I will discuss on the issue of knowing in the end of this chapter again.

4.5 Some Formulaic Words and Pepug in Text

This text is from my earlier experiences in the field. It was the first day in the field. I went to another village since it was close to the city center. This was something quite important for me to start with. I met with her brother and sister-in-law in the city center and we went to her village. It was actually a hamlet consisting of a few houses. I explained the reason for being there and my research topic. She defined it as 'crying' and asked why she would cry if there is no one to cry over. She meant that she would practice it if there is a funeral or a tragedy like an accident, or a patient.

I was intending both to visit her and to participate in a charity meal in a neighboring village. The charity meal was organized by the family of a deceased person. After the meal, everybody went to the graveyard. Men and women who were in older ages cried for the deceased. Then the family distributed packages full of some foods like fruits, dried fruits or beverages. I, my interviewee, named Selvi, and her sister-in-law went to another graveyard. As we were getting closer there, Selvi's brother left the graveyard. The sculptures of rams were used as gravestones for some of the graves. Selvi lit the candles and put them into a metal bucket. This was done to light the way of the spirits of the deceased person. After sitting there for a while, she began to weep and said these words:

(Song 9)

Daê daê bawo	Mother mother father
Pepug mırê bıwano pepo	Let the peppug sing for me
Ez qırvanê bınê lıngunê	I sacrifice myself for their way
na dakıla ho u bakılê ho bêri	of my mother and Father
Kêmerve mırê voro	Let the stones hail down on my head
….	…
Kêmerê qurçê na dinave mırê voro	Let the stones and the earth of this world hail down on me

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Pepug mırê bıwano pepo Peppo	Let the pepug sing for me pepo pepo

This was the first part of her performance. The words are very formulaic. There is no story in the text. This was performed near the gravestone and her sister-in-law was there. I didn't have a chance for a second grave visiting, but the existence of an audience was one of the reasons which made this performance formulaic. The second part goes as follows:

Nê dakıla mı ez retsızo besenêkeno	Oh my mother! I am ill I can't do[75] it
Ez besenêkeno	I can not do it
Zerrê mı zon dano pepo	My heart is broken
…	…
Nê dakıla mı dae dae	Oh mother! Mother Mother!
Pepug mırê bıwano bawo	Let the pepug sing for me father
(…)	
Ez ax u zerya na dakıla huyo	I have a longing for my mother
Pepug mırê bıwano daê	Let the pepug sing for me

As I discussed in the previous chapter, the text of the songs depends on who is the audience. Consequently, her song performance was highly formulaic. I should take into consideration that she was performing in a graveyard. But what I know is her second performance was more personal. In our second meeting with her, she told me she didn't want to sing because she dislikes her brother and his wife. During a week period, she told me her life story and problems with her brother. Her second performance that I witnessed was mostly about the problems she lived with her brother.

This hamlet was very small and women were always busy with everyday life courses. I asked if it was possible to accompany her during her daily routines. While her response was affirmative, she mostly didn't perform any songs when I was around her. The reasons vary for not singing before an audience as usual. It

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[75] She means she cannot stand difficulties in her life.

may be actually not about being 'audible' but being before an audience. The young daughter of my host was the most important audience in the hamlet. She warned her mother not to cry because she didn't want her to make herself upset. The reasons relate to many issues but most importantly she had serious illnesses. Yet the young woman hears her voice from time to time. She says: 'My mother thinks that no one hears her when she goes to the hill but her voice comes here. I know that she cries there among the trees'.

In my last night, my host Selvi sang. Her daughter left the garden and hid into the house. When she came back, it was obvious to see that she cried at home. Thus, I understood why she didn't want to sing her songs before the audience in a bitter way. She narrated more issues related to her problems in her song. She sang:

(Song 9.b)
Ax derdê mı gırano waê
Mı va derdê zerrê u pıskê mı werdo pepo
Kêmerê kuçê na dinave mırê voro
Mı va: Daê bawo ez se bıkeri
Ça derdi zerr u pıskê mı werdo waê

(konuşma: Axve mırovo ax)

Va: Dakıla mı ez se bıkeri wuyi
Ezo derdê mı bêkeşi derdê ho sero vanu
Va: Teseliya mı kota wuyi
Kêmerve mırê voro
Va: Wela na dinave mırê voro
Nêzonon na çıkeviye mırê amê
Va: Xıdırê mı bakılê mı bakılê mı
(…)
Va: Nêzonon ke na kotra mırê amê
Nêzonon ke na vore vera mendu
Va: Teseliya mı (…) koto
Mı veng dan ke veng nêdan ke kês vengra ho nêkeno
Va: Teseliya mı kot perr u qeynatê mı şikiyê
Kêmerê kuçê na dinave mırê voro
Nê veng dan nêdan ke towa kêsê mı caê çino
Ez qırvanê na xortê hovi wuyi
(…)

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Va: Haqvo ke dakıla mı derdê mı gırano
Derdi zerr u pıskê mı werdo pepo
Mı va: Pepugê des u dı kowu bıwano
Ezo ke ax u zarê na yel u qomê huyo
Bakılê mı bakılê mı Xıdırê mı (…)
Ezo ke teseliya mı endi asmenra kote
(…)

Wela na dinave mırovo ez se bıkeri
Nê daê daê bawo Xıdırê mı ez se keri
Nê kêmerve mırovo ez se kon
Ez qırvanê bınê lıngunê na cigera ho cencê ho
                              …
Oh! My suffering is severe my sister
I said my soul is exhausted by misery pepo
Let the stones and lands of this world hail down on me

I asked: Mother Father what should I do?
Why sorrow exhausted my heart, sister
Woe is me[76]
She asked: My mother what I should do oh!
I am alone I say over my sorrow

She said: We were surrendered oh!
Let the Stones hail down on me
She said: The land of this world hail down on me
I don't know what it was happened to me
She said: My Hıdır, my Father (..)
(…)
She said: I don't know what is this trouble that find me
I don't know I remained under this snow
She said I lost my hope
I called but no one sound me back
She said: I lost my hope
Let the Stone and land of this world hail down on me
I called out/hailed to but no one is there
I sacrifice myself for this young man[77]
(…)
She said I swear it is true my mother my misery is too much…
I am exhausted by misery peppo
I said let the pepug of the twelve mountains sing
I am in longing of my neighbours
My father my father my Hıdır

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[76] I borrow this expression from Abu- Lughod (1986).
[77] She relates to her deceased husband.

I, we lost our hope from the sky
(…)
The land of this world hail down on me
What should I do?
Mother Mother Father, my Hıdır, what I should do
The Stones on my head What I should do
 I sacrifice myself for my young man

Actually, all the song was about her anger for her brother. When she began to build her house in the neighboring village via the help of people who made a donation of land and money because of her poorness, her brother also worked in building the house. He also let her use some part of the land, which belongs to their family but finally he said he would not give her the land register. The reason, he explains, is that she has daughters that would marry one day and the property would pass to those men who are not from the family. She didn't move to her new house and came back to the hamlet. While she has many formulaic words in her second song, she was referring to those events mostly in questioning the trouble that found her.

During my visit in the hamlet, I asked if their neighbor could share one of her songs. I recorded one song just before I left. This song is about the performer's brother and his deceased daughter. His daughter lost her life after she joined the PKK. Although it is not possible to understand what events the performer refers to through the song text, her neighbor reminded me slowly that the story is about 'that daughter of her brother'. Young village women said that she mostly sang about this issue and she stopped singing when she sees that someone comes near her. She commonly used wording patterns in the text. It is possible to see the similarities in the text above.

(Song 10)

De waê waê	Oh sister sister
Derdunê mı têra meke tora	Do not scratch my misery
vaji lemê lemê	I tell you oh me me

Nê waê ma roz şayme roz nêdiyo	Oh sister we are in dark days
Na dina çevêsayiyede	In this world,
	Let its home be burned
Kêmer kuçê na dinavê	Let the stones hail down on me
mırê voro cigera mı	Oh! It is the misery!
Nê wakıla mı na dina çevêsayiyede	My sister! In this world, let its home
rozu serde ma roj nêdiyê	be burned
	I didn't see good days
Ax lemê derdo	Oh! It is the misery
Ne kêmerve mırê voro bıra	Let the Stones hail down on me
	brother
Ax belka ez feqırrviyo	Oh! Maybe I was poor
Ne derdê bıraê mı gırano	The misery of my brother is great
…	
Mı va: Bıra bêkes kata şiya kotra yena	I asked lonely brother: where did
	you go to?
	Where you come from
Vake: Delê zalım waê cigera ho fetelüne	He answered: (…) I look for
	my heart/soul
Feteline feteline cigera ho caê nevinenu	I am looking aroun and around
	I cannot find my heart

Many of the performers interpreted their own songs. I had explained to all women that I have inadequacy in language so I would need a translator for the songs. But only, it was she refused interpreting and said 'take it to your translator'.

4.6 A Man Singing on the Balcony

As I said earlier, I observed limited performances by men. In some of the cases, men were signified as the performers of *beyits* (religious couplets). On the other hand, it is not the only genre men perform. It is maybe more prestigious to practice it and to have those songs. I don't believe that genres are mostly divided between men and women. It looks like some of the genres were mostly performed by one gender. But this proves expectations of performing certain roles as well.

I will illustrate a song by Cemal *Dede* (grandfather). In addition, there is a short self-narrative about his view on how a man may have a chance to follow certain ways in being a professional performer. He has syllable –ga in his text. There are also other ornaments but they are not as clear as –ga.

(Song 11)

Şu dünyaya geldim geleli
Ağlamakta benim özüme özüme
Evvel aglayanlar sonra güler mi
Aglamakta benim özüme vah vah özüme vah vah
Şu dünyada fani fani bir dünya ga ga ga
Yalan bir dünya ga ga ga
…
Dertli olan her dem her dem böyle mi söyler böyle mi söyler
Şu benim derdime bir derman vah vah bir derman vah vah vah

As I came to this world
Crying is my essence my essence
The ones who cried first
Would they smile later?
Crying is my essence my essence
This word is a mortal world
A fake world
…
Does one who has misery sing in that way always?
Sing in that way?
Oh! A cure for my misery, a cure

His neighbor told me that he sings from time to time. When she heard him singing in his balcony, she said, she cried a lot. Cemal Dede also says that he murmurs on his own. He emphasizes he didn't search for ways to sing and play his instrument, *saz,* before an audience. His blindness may be a reason for this situation. The important thing is he considers this issue in a different way. While he couldn't succeed in it, he knows about its possibility. Playing an instrument may be a reason for him to locate himself like an *aşık* which can provide a space for his performances. *Aşıks* have important roles in traditional society as poets. They were mostly men or it has been said so. It was argued women poets were both

excluded by the male *aşıks* and also they were not included into the studies which focus on *aşıks* (Gülbudak, 2010). Thus men can involve in an institutionalized musical structure.

Before I left the field, I composed my own songs. I was also a performer as I mentioned before. Therefore, my performance carried some similar points. For example, I watched the audience to be sure they do not hear me from the distance between us. In another example, my audience was a 12 years old child so I felt comfortable because of thinking that he would not understand whether the song belongs to me or not. I also realized it is a performance of remembering. It led me to think in these performances, music has a key role in the performance of those remembrances. It is like a language that one learned the constructions of the issues related to one's experiences and subject positions. A final similarity was the fictitious narrative of the text.

5. PERFORMING THE SELF IN SONGS

In this part, I will focus on performing self in the songs. In general, I will discuss the role of these two practices in construction of the selves especially through the narratives. To do so, I will present some of the arguments on performance-based studies and state my point on the issue. First of all, I will explain the role of oral poetry and weeping in relation to the audience and performer. I will explain mainly three issues. The first issue is seeing these genres as a way of speaking. I intend to understand the relationship between language and performance. Thus, I relate to the communicative aspects of the performance. Then, I refer to the concept of performativity and the role of the narrative of the songs in performing selves. In the final phase, I will focus on how performers have different subject positions in relation to the discursive fields both of these practices and everyday life. I also mention possibility of agency and the conformity to the dominant subject positions.

Abu-Lughod argued that "expression of these sentiments by individuals contributes to representation of the self, representations that are tied to morality, which in turn is ultimately tied to politics in its broadest sense" (1986, p.34). Her analysis has led many scholars to follow the issue of self-expression in different genres. Weidman commented in *Music and Gender: Perspectives from the Mediterranean*: "Musical performances give women a culturally sanctioned way of expressing sentiments that would be socially unacceptable otherwise" (2003, p. 523). I believe acceptance has certain limitations depending on the local contexts. In my study, I explained audience and narrative matters as much as possible. There are important control mechanisms such as the criticisms of the audience and gossip. The audience criticizes one's constructed subject positions in performed texts. As I pointed in the previous chapters, the situation which does not result in discrepancy in the social norms relies on many conditions. The issue of acceptability for a performer related to many different issues on the basis of

meaning in the text, a tragic event that was narrated in the text, gender, and age of the performer. I also agree with Abu-Lughod on her analysis of the issue of respectability. Yet, there may be discrepancies depending on the social context when people performed their songs before the audience. It relates to the status of the performer, the audience and the social structure. The point is how to handle the relationship between performance and language, and their role in the construction of self. First, I will discuss how performance can be seen as a kind of speaking. Bauman stresses the relationship between the language and performance as developing:

> … a conception of verbal art as performance, based upon an understanding of performance as a mode of speaking. … Thus conceived, performance is a mode of language use, a way of speaking. (Bauman, 2009, pp. 290-293)

Bauman and Briggs (1990) indicate that 'a given performance is tied to a number of speech issues'. In my study, women and men, in most of the cases, defined their performances as '*murmuring/speaking/saying on their own*'. I also emphasize the issue of the mode of speaking whether it is performed alone or communicated to an audience. Bauman refers to communication and emphasizes some important points about the audience and performances. He maintains that:

> It is part of the essence of performance that it offers to the participants a special enhancement of experience, bringing with it a heightened intensity of communicative interaction which binds the audience to the performer in a way that is specific to performance as a mode of communication. Through his performance, the performer elicits the participative attention and energy of his audience, and to the extent that they value his Performance, they will allow themselves to be caught up in it. (Bauman, 1975, p. 305)

As I explained above, the issue of audience and performer is very complicated. Finnegan mentions that the practicing singing 'on one's own' is not an uncommon situation. She mentioned that maybe cattle could be counted as audience. The performers in this study also repeated many times that they sing for 'stones, mountain, earth, cattle'. However, it is difficult to evaluate singing alone

since it cannot generally be witnessed it can only be reported to the observer by the singer. . Yet, the point is what happens when a performer use those genres as a way of speaking. This issue led me to think about the speech act and the concept of performativity.

I will mostly refer to the concept of performativity and Butler's reading on Austin to explain my point of view in understanding those performances as 'a way of speaking'. Parker and Sedgwick (1995) refer to the issue of performativity reminding us of these questions: 'W[hen is saying] something doing something? And how is saying something doing something?' I will refer to a wellknown example in Austin's conceptualization of performativity to consider the answers to these questions. He explains the issue as follows: 'Suppose, for example, that in the course of a marriage ceremony I say, as people will, "I do" ─ (sc. Take this woman to be my lawful wedded wife)' (Austin, 2000, p.240). It is important to see how Judith Butler focuses on the issue in detail as follows:

> [A]ccording to his view of the illocutionary speech act, the name performs *itself*, and in the course of that performing becomes a thing done; the pronouncement is the act of speech at the time that it is the speaking of an act. Of such an act, one cannot reasonably ask for a "referent," since the effect of the act of speech is not to refer beyond itself, but to perform itself, producing a strange enactment of linguistic immanence. If a word in this sense might be said to "do" a thing, then it appears that the word not only signifies a thing, but that this signification will also be an enactment of the thing. It seems here that the meaning of a performative act is to be found in this apparent coincidence of signifying and enacting. (1995, pp. 197-8).

Butler (1995) argues that '[i]t is not simply that the speech act takes place *within* a practice, but the act is itself a ritualized practice'. She explains that: "performativity must be understood not as a singular or deliberate "act", but rather, as the reiterative and citational practice" (Butler, 1993, p. 2). Considering these two genres of oral traditions as repetitive actions occurring in the course of everyday life, I prefer to emphasize their roles in the construction of self.

The discourse of poetry and weeping might be contradictive in positioning subjects compared to the discursive fields of everyday life. Here, I refer to Chris Weedon's argument on subject positions and different discourses:

> …feminist poststructuralism sees subjectivity as the site of conflicting and competing subject positions. In constructing meanings for us, language, in the form of a multitude of different discourses, constructs different possible modes of subjectivity. Conflict comes from the attempt to take up a single, unified position in competing or incoherent discourses. These subject positions constitute desire in particular ways and imply particular forms of repression. (1987, p. 146)

I referred to her analysis in order to explain how my understanding the issues related to these subject positions. While poetry could be considered as a way of transmitting of the experience, I believe that the experiences and/or the subject positions such as a suffering mother or a suffering lover and 'the vulnerable poetic selves' were constructed in those performance moments. Weedon argues that:

> Experience is not something which language reflects. In so far as it is meaningful, experience is constituted in language. Language offers a range ways of interpreting our lives which imply different versions of experience. (1997, pp. 79-82)

I refer to Butler's comment:

> …note that simultaneous with this retroactive positing is a moral resolution of a continuous "doing" into a periodic "deed": reading Nietzsche "there is no 'being' behind going, effecting, becoming; 'the doer' is merely a fiction added to the deed—the deed is everything." (1995, p. 199).

In this sense, it is important to question how self, narrative and experience are related to each other. Ochs and Capps indicate the relationship between the experience and self. They argue that "[p]ersonal narrative simultaneously is born out of experience and gives shape to experience. In this sense, narrative and self are inseparable" (Ochs and Capps, 1996, p. 20).

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I will also mention the role of the narrative in the process of self-construction referring to Brockmeier. He indicates that:

> …narrative as a *performative* or *discursive order*. Several authors have emphasized that narrative, as a form of communication and symbolic mediation, is not only a product, a story, but also a process, a telling; it is not only an account of an action but an action itself, not only a structure of meaning but also a performance of meaning (e.g.,Bamberg, 1997; Brockmeier & Harré, 2001; Edwards, 1997). (Brockmeier, 2002, p. 35)

I agree with Brockmeier and I think that all the narrative is constructed in this process of performing. The meaning in a performance, on the other hand, would be judged in relation to its cultural codes. Finnegan comments on the issue of audience and meaning as follows:

> Judging the effect of a particular piece of oral poetry on an audience can thus never be a simple matter, even for someone with deep knowledge of local conventions. To understand the effect fully one would need to know the 'meaning' locally attached to the particular characteristics of the poem as well as to poetry generally, the mood of the audience, the social and historical background, the appreciation of certain modes of delivery, and so on. (1977, p. 240)

The self is narrated during those performance moments. Therefore, the poetic self is constructed in the process of these practices. Especially, the suffering subject position in the song performances is an important part of the construction of poetic self. In addition, this subject is positioned and consolidated in each practice of repetition. Weedon refers to subject positions and the possibility of resistance as follow:

> The subject positions and modes of embodied subjectivity constituted for the individual within particular discourses allow for different degrees and types of identity and agency both compliant and resistant. As will be seen from many examples in this book, the discursive fields, which produce meanings and subjectivities, are not homogenous. They include discourses and discursive practices which may be contradictory and conflicting and which

create the space for new forms of knowledge and practice. While there is no place beyond discourse and the power relations that govern them, resistance and change are possible from within. (Weedon, 2004, p. 19)

It is also important to remember what Foucault says about the relationship between power and resistance "[w]here there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power" (1998[1976], p. 95). Another discussion on subject is made by Belsey who refers to it as a "process" that a conceptualization belonged to Kristeva. She argues that:

The subject is thus the site of contradiction, and is consequently perpetually in the process of construction, thrown into crisis by alterations in language and in the social formation, capable of change. And in the fact that the subject is a *process* lies the possibility of transformation. (Belsey, 2009, p. 168)

The possibility of transformation or expressions of oneself in contradictive discourses has been presented in studies such as *Veiled Sentiments*. Abu-Lughod focuses on the contradiction of 'poetic discourse and discourse of ordinary social life' that individuals could express themselves, stating that:

Poems are vehicles for the expression of attachments to sweethearts or spouses that, if communicated in everyday social interaction, would damage reputations and jeopardize claims to respectability and, at the individual level, would ordinarily undermine self-image and self-presentation. (Abu-Lughod, 1986, p. 232)

People may have safe 'spaces' when they practice oral poetry which can be seen contradictive to the everyday life discourse. However, in weeping practices women have more safe spaces than in oral poetry. We should take into consideration that it is not for every weeping woman but specifically 'who has pain'. The conformity to expected gender roles allows women to weep and narrate themselves in safer way than any other gendered ones of that society. They were tolerated by a majority of people while a house hold member may resist or forbid

weeping because of intense grief which continues for long years. As I stated earlier, men would not signified as '[t]hat man is weeping because he has pain' in everyday life discourse. As I explained earlier, weeping of men in the funerals are exceptions.

Issues related to both cultural memory such as socio-historical turning points, namely the events of 1938 and political conflict in the mid of 1990s, and sacred places have been performed before audience in a more comfortable manner. On the other hand, the songs which are related to individual issues are subjected to control mechanisms which lead performers to sing in certain conditions.   Gossip about and teasing the performer about with the text of the songs could be considered as important parts of those mechanisms. These limitations signify the meaning construction in the social context. The audience criticizes the text of the song because of its distance from the 'reality'. Some performers, as I mentioned before, explained their songs as 'lies and untruths'.   Beasley argues socially constructed dimension of meaning following a Lacanian influence: "In other words, **meaning/language is never neutral**─including the meaning given to identity/the self─rather it is **socially contextualized and constructed**" (1999, p. 92).[78] Beasley relates to 'constructed complexity of meaning, power and the self' and refers to Foucault as follows (p. 92):

> In other words, insistence on only one meaning, on the Truth is a strategy which enforces dominance and fixity. By contrast, Foucault asserts the plurality (though it is not unlimited) and constructed character of meaning in which truth is a performative exercise established by its links with power. (1999, p. 93)

Foucault explains to the relationship between truth and power as follows:

> The important thing here, I believe, is that truth isn't outside power, or lacking in power… Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its

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[78] Emphasized points are from the original text.

régime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true. (Foucault, 1980, p. 131)

The only thing that audience does not criticize is the pain of loss, especially if the deceased is a young person or a child of the performer. Briggs relates a similar situation in the case of ritual wailing in Warao women. He states that "[a]n additional reflection of the social power of laments can be found in the belief that 'what [the wailers are] crying is entirely true; they couldn't cry lies'" (1993, p. 952). Those kinds of losses form a space for acceptability and the Dersimli women performers were evaluated as '[s]he has pain so she sings anytime'. Thus, performing those subject positions before the audience depends on the theme in the narratives, the experiences and truths which has its base in discourse of loss and pain. How then truth, knowledge and power relate to each other? Briggs follows Foucault to point out these issues as follows:

As Foucault suggests, acquiring and validating truth is crucial in determining what counts as knowledge, how it is inserted into particular discourses, who can possess and present it, and what types of other discourses in the production of 'truth' in laments and challenging the place of other discourses in the production of 'truth' thus forms a vital dimension of the way women insert themselves into Warao political economy. … Determining who can recontextualize discourse when, where, and how involves complex negotiations that produce differences in strategies, ideologies, and power alignments while at the same time relating parties through shared interests in communicative resources. (Briggs, 1993, p. 952-953)

The issue of 'knowing' for a performance is a complicated issue but I explained this in terms of my field work in Kam and other villages well. To sum up, knowing requires a good voice, an ability to form the verses and tragedies, like losing a young descent marks the experience due to suffering as I stated earlier. Knowing and performing mostly require the person to be older. For example, older women were expected to have more difficulties, but the crying of a middle aged woman who had lost her children was also accepted in a funeral or in her

everyday life. These women conform to the expressed gender roles when they give those performances. The women in the village referred to funerals and woman performers as mothers in case of public weeping. Motherhood discourse is reconstructed through their narratives about how those mothers felt. I heard this sentence many times in these kinds of speeches. 'It is a mother's heart'. A close male relative can weep with voice at the funeral but any woman can lament, they do not have to be a close relative. Lastly, knowing is to live the most extreme experiences, not undesirable marriages or platonic loves, but for example the loss of or injury to one's children.

The important thing is the periods of performance in which people narrated themselves thus they locates their selves in those narratives. Riessman makes an important comment on this matter:

> These positionings of the self in personal narratives signify the performance of identity. … Personal narratives are, at core, meaning-making units of discourse. They are of interest precisely because narrators interpret the past in stories rather than reproduce the past it was. (2003, p. 338-341)

In addition, "[m]eaning is always political. It is located in the social networks of power/knowledge relations which give society its current form" (Weedon, 2004, p. 134). How poetry relates to politics can be followed in different positionings of self through those narratives and contradictive fields of discourses. The issue of truth, meaning and experience were the main issues that allow the possibility of a performer to be heard. On the other hand, this does not mean specifically the possibility of agency for resistance or change. Since, it might conform to dominant subject positions such as expected gendered roles. Besides, a performance, such as oral poetry, might be contradictory to the discourse of everyday life because of the expression of their subjective experiences, personal narratives and their own meaning-units in this practice. It should be noted that in a poetic discourse there exists contradiction and conflict. A performer may use

conflicting utterances in the performances as well but there also exists a negotiating self in the songs. As I explained earlier there exists a negotiation between the audience and the performer which is bases mostly in tolerance.

Ochs and Capps argued that "[i]t is in this sense that we actualize ourselves through the activity of narrating" (1996, p.29). In a sense, those practices provide a space for agency but the extent is always negotiated. So, my final word is a quotation from Butler:

> There is no possibility of agency or reality outside of the discursive practices that give these terms the intelligibility that they have. (Butler, 2006, p. 240)

6. CONCLUSION

In this study, I analyzed oral poetry and weeping performed by the Dersimli women. I described to these performances as a part of everyday life rather than ritualistic practices. My main object was to understand the kinds of roles that these performances have in performing self. I considered songs recited by women not the products but the process in which they construe their selves. The women's words and songs were my main concerns but I also included some songs performed by men. In the introduction, I briefly introduced my first field observations, an explanation of the genres and my methodology which is interactive, reflexive and also considered whether a feminist ethnography was possible. Furthermore, I explain how people located me during my fieldwork.

In the second chapter, I focused on the issue of identity in Tunceli/Dersim. These issues have a tremendous effect in understanding both the different themes, musical styles and language choices for songs. This region has a traumatic past which was mostly signified with the events of 1938. I refer to the late Ottoman and early Republican period to give a background to the region. Other events which affected the region was the 1970s radical leftists youth movement and the forced migration from the region through the mid 1990s. These last two have had an effect on the genres but people mostly continue to follow these genres both in the village and cities. I outline social structure in the region described the traditional village structure, marriage patterns, some important myths like a human changed into a *pepug* bird and a variation on Lilith. Then I explained the impact of those issues on the songs and how they were used in the narrative.

In the third chapter, I focused on the structural characteristics of the related genres. I explained two genres namely oral poetry and weeping. I also touched upon the term lament which is used to refer those genres in some cases. I tried to indicate that there is fluidity among those genres. People use different terms in

regard to an appropriate positioning for them. I also explained the thematic issues, the musical structures and the process of learning. The most important things for the songs were the narrative and the audience dialectic. I tried to clarify when and in which context a performer would sing when they may be heard by an audience. I explained the situation in which a person would sing on her/his own. I interpreted the issues of audience and narrative on the basis of the question: What do all those performance types tell us about the socially constructed meanings of gendered roles? I referred to the construction of place and performance of memory in this part as well. Another important theme is the use of the bird *pepug* and its role in narrating the self. I explained to *pepug* and women's suffering subject position.

In the fourth chapter, I exemplified women's experiences over their lives and their songs that related to these experiences. I illustrated how gender roles were constructed by marking women as suffering subject and indirectly referring them as mothers. The text of the songs shows how important the narrative is. Besides, one needs to know the story behind the songs in most of the cases. The examples in the fourth chapter retell the importance of the audience and its criticism in determining where and how to perform those genres. I discuss the criteria of acceptability which is related to gender, age and social position.

In the fifth chapter, I reviewed the issue in a theoretical discussion. First, I reviewed the analyses that handled performances of the genres as a kind of speaking. I briefly mentioned the speech act theory and the concept of performativity. I evaluated the issue of the relationship of social construction of meaning and truth and how it is connected to performing these genres.

The process of the research was a long journey both physically and mentally not only did I locate myself as a performer who follows these traditions but I gained much insight into the practices of how women give voice to the feelings and experiences. I learned how women became visible in the community using these

types of genres and create a space for agency. I also discovered firsthand the problems of being a woman researcher in the field. I was pleasantly surprised that the tradition of weeping and oral poetry was continuing through the generations with young people expressing themselves in these songs.

This research contributes to the literature by give detailed examples of the weeping and oral poetry practice of Dersimli women which to my knowledge has never been studied before. I hope that this work will stimulate further research into these genres not only in Turkey. Furthermore, this research addressed the complex issues of respectability and its relationship to performance in public. I believe that this situation exists elsewhere in world and it would be interesting to uncover studies that deal with these issues.

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APPENDIX

(*Pepug*un ötüşü)
Pepuu! Kekuu!
Kim yaptı ben yaptım
Kim öldürdü ben öldürdüm
Kim yıkadı ben yıkadım
Vah! Vah! Vah!

Chapter 3

Sample Song 1

Bu dünyanın taşı toprağı bana yağsın
Pepug bana ötsün pepo

Chapter 4

Sample Song 2

Bir adımımı o tarafa atıyorum Hızır
Bir adımımı bu tarafa atıyorum Düzgün Baba

Hangi tarafa gideceğimi şaşırdım
İki tarafta bize ziyaret
Bir adımımı o tarafa atıyorum Hozat
Bir adımımı bu tarafa atıyorum Tunceli

Song 3.a

Ciğerimin evi uzaktır yandır
Kimse bana hayırlı bir haber getirmiyor
Diyor: Kurşun değmiş bana kimse elini bana vurmuyor
Dedim: Körolasıca felek kıymaz bize
Derttir derttir derdim ağırdır
Ben nereden bileyim kör felek bana bisafirdir
Ciğerimi parçalayıp götürecek
Kolumu kanadımı ciğerimi
Kolumu ceylanımı
Ceylanım sen benim canım

Ne ana ana ciğerlerim çok acıyor pepo
Ne ben ahu zarıyla kaldım kardeşlerimin
Taş yağsın bana
Bu dünyanın toprağı yağsın bana

Song 3.b
Ne yapayım ana ne yapayım
Benim yurdum kendime içinde kalayım ana
Ciğerimin evleri bana uzaktır
(…)
Benim içinde bulunduğum evin ne penceresi var ne de kapısı
Ben dört duvarın arasındayım
Akşamdır karanlıktır oğulcuğum akşamdır
Diyor: Senin sesin kulağımda inliyor
Çavuşum çetindir bana izin vermiyor
Önüm (yolum) kapalı
Ana inle, bacı inle
Yerimi çekin söğüdün altına
Kurşun bana değmiş bacı ile (erkek) kardeşim gelirler
yanıbaşıma yavaş yavaş inle
Ben gittim de ciğerim gelmiyorlar
…
Ciğerim şimdi kendine gelin getirir
Yanasıca Tunceli'nin doktorları bacım ile kardeşimin
tümünü bana ağlattı
Ben yaralıyım ana yapamıyorum (…)
Yabanın taşı toprağı bana yağsın
Gitmiş, karanlıktır yol sürüyor ciğerinin üstüne
(…)
Kalk ciğerim kalk sabahtır
Yabanın taşı toprağı bana yağsın
Herkes kendi işindedir
İlkbahardır ana (…)
Herkes muradına seviniyor
Ciğerim de kara toprak altında çürüyor
Ana ne yapayım bu kader benim kaderim imiş
Ciğerim mümin imiş
Ciğerim nazik imiş
Ana ne yaparsan yap ardık benden sana fayda yok

(ağlayarak konuşma: Yetimdi ciğerim yetimdi.)

Derttir derttir derttir
Dağın feleği ciğerimi benden kopardı götürdü
Yurdumda kanadımdı ciğerim kolumdu
Ne akşamdır karanlıktır akşamdır oy
Ciğerim gitmiş yanasıca Bornag'e
Oy aman derttir derttir derttir
Ana ben bilemedim ki yanasıca felek benim için gelmiş
(…)
Ben dedim: Daha beni niye merak edersin

Hele bu ciğerim gitmiş niye gelmiyor
Diyor: Ben nereden bileyim bu eviyanasıca gelmiş
İzimi orada sürüyor
(…)
Ciğerim benden birazcık yandır
Ben yeni yaptım üstünü kapadım
Yol üzerinde ciğerimi bekliyorum
Dedim: Zaten komşular hayın
Kimse bana hayırlı haber getirmiyor
(…) Hayindir
Diyor: Şakadır, kimse bana yardım etmiyor
Ah vay vay vay
Ciğerimi hastanede arayayım
Eviyanasıca gittim hastaneye boş yatak
Ana akşamdır karanlıktır (…) bana kestiler
Ah ana ana inle
Ah kendine inle
Ana beni götürün meret söğüt altına
Bacım ile kardeşlerim benim için biraz inlesinler
(…)
Vay aman derttir derttir
(…)
De akşamdır akşamdır
Ben kurban bu garip gelmiş
Gelmiş kardaşım (…)
Ciğerim akşamdır karanlıktır gel
Arkadaşlarıyla gitmiş
Ben seslendim ziyaret ile diyarlara
(…)
Ne anam güzdür
Herkes muradını almış
Ciğerim kara toprak altında çürüyor

Song 4.a

Söyleyem söyleyem senin üzerine söyleyeyim Güzel'im
Gel gel ben sana kurban olayım
On çocuk büyüttüm de
Yanımda (kimse) yok
Ben bu virane evin altında ana yalnızım
Söyleyem söyleyem söyleyem ah kendi üzerime söyleyem
Gözyaşlarım fırsat vermiyor ben sana ne söyleyem
(ağlayarak)
Vah cigerim ben yalnızım

On çocuğum var, yalnızım. –(Konuşma)

Song 4.b

Söyleyeyim söyleyeyim senin için söyleyeyim
Bilmezim cahilim yollara düşmüş
…
Benim misafirimdir
Güzel kızdır
Elin kızıdır
Yavaş yavaş yiyior
Kızım dutlarımızı yeme
Niye hepsini yiyorsun?
Niye dutlarımızı yiyorsun?

Song 5

Ah bacım aman derttir
Ana bu acımız başkaldırmış
Ah kimse dermanını bulamamış
Vah vay vay
Ah ana ana sıcaktır
Ah bu yaz sıcağı bastırmış
Ah anacığım elalemin derdi eskimiş
Ah bizim derdimiz yenilenmiş

Song 6

Dersim dağlarını toplamışlar getirmişler Tunceli'ye
Umudumuz köyümüzden kesilmiş
Korkam ki biz efkârlanırız da
Korkam ki biz köylerimize gitmeyek
Bizi tümümüzü (….) getirmişler
Köyümüz boşalmış ardımızda
Umudumuz kesildi anacığım
Herkes köylerini terk etmiş

Song 7

Böyle olmuş böyle olmuş
Mervan'ın kâfirleri bizi topladılar koydular Kutuderesi'ne
Bugün bizi sorguluyor, İslam dininin sorgusunu
Korkam ki gelsin başımıza bu kez Aliboğazı'nda olanlar
Mervan'ın kâfirleri geliyor, çadırları kurmuşlar Büyük Çeşme'nin etrafına
Mervan'ın kâfirleri geliyor, çadırları kurmuşlar Büyük Çeşme'nin etrafına
Yanasıca Xeçe'nin yaşayanlarını toplamışlar götürmüşler yanasıca Hopıke'ye
Ağır makineyi kurmuşlar milletin hepsini yaprak ve ot gibi öldürmüşler,
bitirmişler kan çıkmış gökyüzüne

Song 8.b

Ben bugün rüyamda Hızır'ı gördüm
Ben yapamıyorum, bana sordu:
Derdin nedir, muradın var ise bana söyle
Ben yapamıyorum ki bir şey söyleyeyim
vay aman aman derttir
Ben derdimi kime konuşam
Ne kaya ne de taş dayanır

Song 9.a

Ana ana baba
Pepug bana ötsün pepo
Ben kurban olam ayaklarının altına
anacığım ile babacığımın
Taş yağsın bana

Ne anacığım ben rahatsızım yapamıyorum
Ben yapamıyorum
İçim acıyor pepo
Ciğerlerim yanıyor pepo
Ne anacığım ana ana
Pepug bana ötsün baba
(…)
Ben ahu zarıyla kaldım anacığımın
Pepug bana ötsün ana

Song 9.b

Ah benim derdim ağırdır bacım
Dedim: Dert içimi yemiş pepo
Bu dünyanın taşı toprağı bana yağsın
Dedim: Ana baba ben ne yapayım
Niye dertler içimi yemiş bacım

(konuşma: Ahlar bana, ah.)

Dedi: Anacığım ben ne yapam vay
Ben kimsesiz kendi derdim üzerine söylüyorum
Dedi: Umudumuz kesilmiş vay
Taşlar yağsın bana
Dedi: Bu dünyanın toprağı bana yağsın
Bilmiyorum ki bu neydi bana geldi
Dedi: Hıdır'ım babacığım, babacığım (…)

(…)
Dedi: Bilmiyorum ki bu nereden bana geldi
Bilmiyorum ki bu kar altında kaldım
Dedi: Umudum kesildi
Ben ses verdim vermedim ki kimse sesime ses vermedi
Dedi: Umudum kesildi kolum kanadım kırıldı
Bu dünyanın taşı toprağı bana yağsın
Seslendim seslenmedim ki kimse bir yerde yok
Ben kurban olam bu delikanlıma vay
(…)
Dedi: Vallahi anacığım benim derdim ağırdır
Dert içimi yemiş bitirmiş pepo
Dedim: Oniki dağın pepugu ötsün
Ben ki konu komşumun özlemi içindeyim
Babacığım babacığım Hıdır'ım (…)
Benim ki, umudumuz artık gökyüzünden kesildi
(…)
Bu dünyanın taşı toprağı bana yağsın
Taşlar başıma, ben köpek bu ciğrime alıp nerelere gidem
Bu dünyanın toprağı başıma ben ne yapam
Ana ana, baba Hıdır'ım ben ne yapam
Taşlar başıma ben ne yaparım
Ben ayaklarının altına kurban olam ciğerimin, delikanlımın

Song 10

De bacım bacım
Dertlerimi kaşıma sana söyleyeyim aman aman
Bacım biz kara günlüyüz, gün görmemişiz
Bu eviyanasıca dünyada
Bu dünyanın taşı toprağı başıma yağsın ciğerim
Bacım ben bu eviyanasıca dünyada günlerden gün görmemişim
Ah aman derttir
Taş yağsın bana kardaş
Ah belki de fakirdim
Kardaşımın derdi ağırdır
Gitti düştü yanasıca mamlekete
Vay vay vay
Gitti düştü eviyanasıcaya, yansın (orası) bacım
Bu eviyanasıca dünya kimsede gelmiz vay
Dedim: Kimsesiz kardaş nereye gittin nereden geliyorsun
Dedi: Köpek zalım bacı ciğerim için dolanıyorum
Dolaşıyorum dolaşıyorum ciğerimi bir yerde bulamıyorum