AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF SOCIAL BONDS IN COLLECTIVE CONFINEMENT

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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- this thesis contains no material that has been submitted or accepted for a degree or diploma in any other educational institution;
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ABSTRACT

An Ethnographic Study Of Social Bonds In Collective Confinement

This thesis explores the everyday life of political prisoners and the effects of incarceration after their release. In order to achieve this aim, the study employs the ethnographic data collected in the Silivri Prison and through participant observation and in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted with the prison inmates after their release. This study explores the prison and post-prison life of political prisoners collectively incarcerated in a ward. In particular, the study analyzes the imprisonment process by focusing on two significant events: the arrest and the release. In doing so, my analysis aims to show how political prisoners form social bonds among themselves and the effects of incarceration on their subjectivity after their release. In order to explore the subjectivation processes of political prisoners, my study analyzes the social-material setting of the prison space, the organization of everyday life in prison, and its contestation between the prison administration and the political prisoners. By elaborating on collective self-organization practices, identification, and subjectivation processes of political prisoners, the thesis examines how they make sense of their imprisonment.

The study explores the reintroduction of the family as an institution where care relations are primarily designated and how political prisoners experience the public space in the post-prison life. This thesis proposes to take political prisoners as active agents of transformation within the prison space and beyond the narratives of total destitution and suffering. The main argument of the study is that the relations of care among the political prisoners transform the political ward into an intimate space.

ÖZET

Toplu Kapatılmada Sosyal Bağların Bir Etnografik Çalışması

Bu tez siyasi mahpusların gündelik yaşantılarını ve tahliyelerinin ertesinde hapsedilmenin etkilerini araştırmayı hedeflemektedir. Çalışma bu hedefe ulaşabilmek için Silivri Cezaevi'nde toplanmış olan otoetnografik ve etnografik verileri, tahliyelerinin ertesinde mahkumlarla gerçekleştirilen görüşmeler sırasında oluşturulan katılımcı gözlem ve yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmeleri kullanmaktadır. Bu çalışma koğuş düzeni içerisinde toplu bir şekilde kapatılmış olan siyasi mahpusların cezaevi ve cezaevi sonrasındaki yaşantılarını incelemektedir. Çalışma hapsedilme sürecini siyasi mahpusların çerçevesinden öneme sahip olan iki önemli olay üzerinden analiz etmektedir: koğuşa girme ve tahliye. Çalışma siyasi mahpusların özneleşme süreçlerini incelerken cezaevi alanının sosyal-maddesel düzenini, cezaevi içerisinde gündelik hayatın örgütlenmesini, ve cezaevi yönetimi ile siyasi mahpuslar arasındaki mekansal mücadeleyi analiz etmektedir. Kolektif öz-örgütlenme pratiklerini, siyasi mahpusların özdeşim ve özneleşme süreçleri üzerinde duran tez siyasi mahpusların kendi hapsedilmelerini nasıl anlamlandırdıklarını araştırmaktadır.

Çalışma cezaevi sonrası yaşam konusunda bakım ilişkilerinin öncelikli olarak atandığı bir kurum olarak ailenin yeniden takdim edilmesini ve siyasi mahpusların kamusal alanı nasıl deneyimlediklerini araştırmaktadır. Bu tez siyasi mahpusları cezaevi alanı içerisinde dönüşümün aktif eyleyicileri olarak, yekün muhtaciyet ve acı çekme anlatılarının ötesinde ele almayı önermektedir. Çalışmanın temel argümanı siyasi mahpuslar arasındaki bakım ilişkilerinin siyasi koğuşu bir yakınlık alanına dönüştürdüğüdür.

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- inside and outside.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

"Entering prison is an act of stupidity, no smart man would ever enter prison" Rojan's brother told us when he was preaching to me and Rojan. It was nearly two years after my release and a couple of months before Rojan's release. Definitely it was not our intention to enter prison, yet, according to Rojan's brother, it was an act of stupidity that led us to prison. According to Rojan, he spent four years in prison because he spoke the truth and defended what was right. Sometimes Rojan and his brother would agree that it was the wasted years, nothing could come out of prison that would make sense in its aftermath. Rojan's narrative of his imprisonment as a sacrificial suffering would be translated into an act of stupidity in his brother's eyes. When we talked with Rojan alone, we could remember prison quite differently. Even Rojan's narrative of his own imprisonment as a sacrificial suffering will start to include different aspects, meanings, stories that sometimes detail, sometimes diverge, and sometimes be in conflict with the major narratives on imprisonment.

How is common life organized in prison? What are the narratives on being a political prisoner and the fantasies on life after the release? How do the political prisoners perceive their discursive and legal transformation from ordinary citizens into matters of 'security'? How do political prisoners organize themselves inside the prison ward, when the correctional attempts of the penal institutions fail to resonate over their subjects? How is the prison space formed both through the architecture of the prison and what political prisoners make of it? What 'novelties' expect the

political prisoners in the post-prison life with regards to relations of care and the public space?

This study explores the organization of everyday life in prison, the narratives on being a political prisoner and the fantasies about life outside and inside the prison, and the political prisoners' perception of their incarceration. In particular, I focus on the organization of labor in the prison wards, the formation of collective bonds, relations of care and solidarity among the inmates and segregation practices inside the prison, and communal self-organization of the political wards. As the context of political imprisonment has gone through different phases within the setting of prisons across Turkey, the inquiry for the contemporary political prisoners needs to be situated within the historical cases in Turkey and across the globe. As a way of distinguishing a group of inmates from others, the category of political prisoner has been existing since the formation of modern prisons yet predominantly not well defined or even not existent within the official legislatures.

In Turkey, the category of political prisoner does not exist within the official legislature but still the word is used within the prison itself. One of the crucial tasks in making sense of the subjectivity of the political prisoner is by exploring their self-identification processes and how they relate to other prisoners and the prison administration following the historical precedents that shaped the contemporary setting of political imprisonment. In understanding the subjectivity of political prisoners through the divergent ways it can take, I explore the ways political prisoners narrate their own imprisonment as part of a wider political struggle and how they relate to one as they make a living inside the prison. I take the subjectivity of political prisoner subjectivity as not only a matter of identification but also an attempt to show how it is situated within the social-material setting of prison through

its architecture of segregation. Elaborating on the self-organization of the political prisoners and their reproduction of the political ward through relations of care, I attempt to portray how political prisoners imagine their collective practices. As the identification processes of political prisoners involve fantasies on how common life among political prisoners are organized, I attempt to elaborate on how political prisoners make sense of these moments of collapse. Looking at the temporality of political prisoners, I seek to show how a prison ward becomes a space where fantasies on the life outside proliferate and what is the significance of the release. As I explore post-prison life, I try to understand how life outside is experienced by the political prisoners with a specific focus on the way relations of care are transformed and the family becomes constitutive in the post-prison life.

1.2 Ethnographic works on prison and theoretical framework

Numerous research conducted on a prison in the mid-20th century has been influential in making sense of the life in prison and how criminal jurisdictions have been organized (Clemmer, 1940; Sykes, 1958; Giallombardo 1966; Cohen and Taylor 1972; Heffernan 1972; Jacobs 1977; Toch 1977). Manuela Cunha's (2014) overview of the prison ethnographies shows several works that explore the prisons in Europe and Latin America. In examining the British prison system and its crisis, Phil Scraton, Joe Sim, and Paula Skidmore, in their *Prisons Under Protest* (1991), explored the prison protests in Peterhead prison in Scotland. After the mid-1990s, prison ethnographies became divergent and focused on cases from Poland, Russia, India, Brazil, and England (Drake, Earle, and Sloan, 2015). Prison ethnographies opened up the possibility for exploring how different groups inside prison experienced the penal institutions, what are the sets of meanings attributed to

imprisonment, and at the same time, enabling a critical reflection on being a researcher in such a highly controlled and securitized context (Rhodes, 2004; Piacentini, 2004; Drake, 2012; Crewe 2009, 2014; Jewkes 2014; Liebling 2014; Rowe 2014; Jewkes and Wright 2016). Various researchers elaborated on the difficulties and challenges of conducting a prison ethnography deriving from their studies (Giallombardo 1966; Jacobs 1977; Zwerman and Gardner 1986; Jewkes 2012; King 2000; Liebling 1999, 2001; Waldram 2009). Owen (1998) and Crewe (2006) define their methodological approaches as “quasi-ethnography” and “ethnographic research methods” in order to stress the limits of outsider prison ethnography. Coining such terms emphasizes the difficulties a prison ethnographer can face in accessing such a securitized setting (Wacquant, 2002; Cunha 2014). Yvonne Jewkes proposed that the autoethnographic method can be used to overcome such issues prevailing within prison research (Jewkes, 2012).

Didier Fassin’s work *Prison Worlds: An Ethnography of the Carceral Condition* (2017) bears particular importance with regards to this thesis as his approach involved extending prison ethnography beyond the prison itself and showing where it is situated within the wider social setting. Fassin argues that the prison should not be approached as an isolated space of confinement, physically and mentally, outside of urban life. Instead, it should be thought as a "reflection of society and the mirror in which it sees itself. Therefore, they should be thought of in ways beyond simply referring to them to their buildings, their stuff, and their regulations" (p. 69). Fassin suggests going beyond the prison's given imaginary through its separation from the social world as the prison space is not defined by a total exclusion but a permeable intersection with the outside world.

Following Fassin's framework that closely connects the prison world with its 'outside', in this thesis I attempt to show how political imprisonment operates as constitutive political violence implemented by the state that at the same time reproduces the public space in its extension. By elaborating on the collective self-organization practices, identification, and subjectivation processes of the political prisoners, I attempt to show in what ways the space of the political ward contrasts with the life outside the prison and what happens to the political prisoner after the release. In conducting an ethnographic research on the prisons in France, Fassin attempts to elaborate on what he calls as the world of prison by looking at the ordinary reality through the interactions between the prison population and the prison staff. The author gives a comprehensive account of prisoners' lives by exploring their spatial, temporal, and sensory experiences, while also emphasizing the relations of power and resistance between the prisoners and the prison staff. As the imprisonment as a form of punishment primarily concerns itself with prisoners' time inside the prison, both the prison space and the prison time become crucial to understand by looking at how prisoners themselves make sense of their prison time. Fassin stresses that "the spatial dimension of prison is inseparable from its temporal dimension" (p. 111), and argues that prison temporality can be understood on two scales: one is the daily repetitive temporality of prison routine and the other involves the duration of the sentence.

In this thesis, I aim to show the ambivalence of prison temporality with regards to both its two scaled disposition and its fixation on its end. Moreover, I aim to show how the ambivalence of prison temporality is grounded on the judicial fiction of prison time as the primary element of penality and the diverse range of what actually happens inside the prison. As my thesis has a particular focus on the

political prisoners in Turkey, the symbolic and practical difference with the non-political prisoners plays a fundamental part in the way prison imaginary is shaped. While this difference of the political prisoners has similar manifestations across the globe and various historical contexts, it also bears particularities that stem from the history of political imprisonment in Turkey and the wider political context of it that gives us a sense of social setting in Turkey.

Begoña Aretxaga's article "Dirty Protest: Symbolic Overdetermination and Gender in Northern Ireland Ethnic Violence" (1995) is crucial in the way it introduced the issue of subjectivity into forefront. Aretxega looks at the prison resistance of IRA and INLA members between 1978 and 1981 which was called the Dirty Protest. As Aretxaga describes, the series of extraordinary prison protests started with the male prisoners' refusal to leave their cells to wash themselves or to go to toilet, leading them to living with their own dirt and body waste, later with the participation of female prisoners the menstrual blood entered the imagery of Dirty Protest. Aretxaga's work is situated after the withdrawal of "special status" for the political prisoners that entailed proliferation of disciplinary methods with extreme violence employed by the prison administrations and the resistance practices in response to them. Aretxaga points out that Michel Foucault's work *Discipline and Punish* (1975) offers a significant analysis of punishment as a political technology of the body aiming to produce docile citizens out of dangerous criminals, yet she argues that Foucault's analysis does not address when the attempted transformation fails due to refusal of the subjects. Engaging with Allen Feldman's *Formations of Violence* (1991), Aretxaga criticizes both Foucault and Feldman's frameworks for concealing the question of subjectivity and offers an interpretive anthropological framework that concerns itself with the subjectivity that involves emotional dynamics of the body

and an excess of meanings that emanate from various cultural forms to the extreme violence displayed during the Dirty Protest.

Aretxaga's perspective (1998) further develops Foucault's formulation on how political subjectivities are created through dominant discourses and practices by drawing our attention to how they can be transformed by the very subjectivities they created. Such perspective holds a crucial point in my analysis of the political prisoners because the political ward opens up a space of contestation between the prison administration and the political prisoners. In this manner, I look at how prison space is formed and transformed by both the state and political prisoners themselves. I will be looking at the dynamics in which the political prisoner subjectivity is situated inside the prison with regards to the contestation of the prison space between the political prisoners and the prison administration. I aim to take a similar approach to Aretxaga as one of my concerns is to trace the subjectivity of the political prisoners in Turkey through their relations with other prisoners, the prison administration, and the outside of the prison. Drawing from Lacan, Aretxaga points out that subjectivity is necessarily based on history that is both collective and personal. In this manner, she points out the significance of going beyond what is consciously experienced, yet, still focusing on the way experiences are narrated.

Banu Bargu's *Starve and Immolate: The Politics of Human Weapons* (2014) is particularly useful in conducting this thesis as the scope of the book explores the precedents of the object of inquiry in this thesis. Bargu looks at the death fast struggle of the political prisoners in Turkey between 2000 and 2007. Bargu's work is situated after the introduction of Law for the Struggle Against Terror (Terörle mücadele kanunu) in 1991, when the Turkish state attempted for a reformation of prisons by introducing high security prisons and cellular imprisonment. As Bargu

discusses, the introduction of high security prisons entailed a massive prison movement that involved self-destructive practices such as death fasting and self-immolation practices and also mobilization of the civil society through political campaigning and petitioning outside the prison.

Bargu draws special attention to the self-destructive practices of the political prisoners by conceptualizing them as "weaponization of life" as a tactic that utilizes the human body but yet irreducible to the corporeality of the body. In Bargu's account, the "weaponization of life" both envisions the body as a means of protest to achieve political demands and obliterates its instrumentalization through its deployment only through its destruction. Besides telling the story of the death fast struggle, Bargu attempts to discuss the prevalence of self-destructive techniques among the political prisoners and its significance for the modalities of power. Drawing from Michel Foucault and Giorgio Agamben, she elaborates on the biosovereign assemblage that involves a combination of biopolitics and sovereignty. In Bargu's formulation, the biopolitization of sovereignty entails necropolitization of resistance that "transforms the body from a site of subjection to a site of insurgency". As Bargu discusses, the introduction of high security prisons involved systematic attacks on the political wards where political prisoners established self-governed communes inside the prison. The prison setting in 2010s involves the use of both high security prisons that were introduced in 2000s and the prisons with crowded wards which entailed for the establishment of self-governed political wards. Bargu draws our attention to the assertion of the militant prisoners for their "right to die" against the state's nonconsensual artificial feeding practices.

Drawing the idea from Spinoza that a living being cannot think about death, Ulus Baker (1996) argues that death fasts orient themselves towards not death but

life, their demands concern life and its affirmation. In this thesis, I will explore how prison life is imagined and experienced inside the political ward organized as communes. One of the most widespread phrases voiced inside the political ward was "Join life, brother!" This phrase signified the collective reproductive labor processes of cleaning up, relations of care and self-organization. In this manner, I attempt to emphasize the practices of sustaining the well-being of political prisoners and the political ward itself with regards to its antagonism with the prison administration.

As the context of prison can be defined through a definite constraint over the subject that is materially enhanced and enforced, the structural challenges for the prisoners pose ever present obstacles in fulfilling one's desires. For many prisoners their own experience of incarceration involves an easily recognizable lack that is imagined to end only after their release, as some of them even would define imprisonment as a form of destitution. In this thesis, I attempt to explore the ways this condition of "lack" is resisted by the political prisoners themselves. Lacanian psychoanalysis provides some useful conceptual tools in making sense of the ways the prison setting is being resisted and subverted by the political prisoners, as the fantasy offers us the possibility of overcoming our lack. In this manner, the fantasy of a political ward as a space of communal living offers both a ground for self-identification processes of the political prisoners and their production of social relations that are based on care.

One of the fundamental elements of the subjectivity of the political prisoner is its exclusion from prison labor. Being in such a position inside the prison, the labor processes for the political prisoners involve mainly the reproductive labor that is maintaining and cleaning up the ward, preparing the ward according to the needs and desires, and caring for one another. In this manner, the primary labor practices of the

political ward concern themselves with reproducing and sustaining life inside the prison.

1.3 The historical context of political imprisonment in Turkey

Julia Jansson (2020) notices the elusiveness of the concept of 'political crime,' which makes its definition a problematic task. Although the category of political prisoner is non-existent in official legal documentation, it has been used to situate prisoners according to the crimes they were associated with by prisoners themselves, the prison administration, lawyers, scholars, and activists. While the basic category of the crime that leads to becoming a political prisoner is the crime against the state and the people, the marking that stems from the state perspective and the political violence of the state by itself is not enough to consider inmates as political prisoners. More specifically, association of "terror crimes" by themselves are not sufficient to create political prisoner subjectivity, even though it is one of the crucial elements that could define the contemporary political imprisonment process. Instead of being an official legal category, it is created through a process of identification and entails a chain of meaning structures that has been shaped since the 19th century emergence of the modern prisons. The political prisoners' identification processes have emerged in the context of prisons in Turkey through various historical and structural developments that happened through the resistance movements both inside and outside the prison. As one of the defining moments of prisons in Turkey, repressive methods employed by the military government of the 1980 coup gave special attention to the political prisoners as they were considered to be a threat inside the prison in organizing the prison space itself as a field of resistance. As the state went through a reformation of the prisons by introducing new segregative practices and introduction of high

security F type prisons in the following decades, it was followed by resistance of political prisoners inside the prison through hunger strikes, death fasts, and prison riots that played a significant role in the way prison space was shaped. The increasing use of the words “terror” and “terrorists” to define political crime and political prisoners after the 1980 coup was followed up by the introduction of Law for the Struggle Against Terror (“*Terörle mücadele kanunu,*” 1991) that shaped the discourse of the state with regards to the political prisoners and accompanied by the introduction of a new ‘room type’ prisons. Introduction of Silivri Prison as European type prison with humane conditions took place in the aftermath of the active and passive resistances of political prisoners in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s.

In 2017 the chair of the supreme court İsmail Rüştü Cirit declared that there are “six million 900 thousand suspects in Turkey with a population of eighty million” (Gazete Duvar, 2017) . Drawing from the statistical reports on the legal records from 2016, Cirit says that this involves the suspects subjected to first-degree investigation. In a conference titled "Alternative Solutions Before Jurisdiction," eight percent of the population in Turkey is going through first-degree investigation, which implies that the scope of suspects extends even more to lesser degrees with police records. Cirit’s concern is how this increase in the number of suspects affects the workload of the legal institutions, with piles of case files accumulating in the storage of courthouses. It is a point where the costs of producing criminals exceed the existing capacity of the legal labor force. In Turkey, the number of imprisoned people has increased steadily since 2005, wherein 55,870 people were imprisoned. In 2022, this number reached 309.558, nearly six times the former (Independent Türkçe, 2022). The increase in the population of prisoners is accompanied by the construction of new prisons, as these years also involved the opening of 228 new prisons and expanding

37 old ones. As the Ministry of Justice declared its plans to open up another 18, Turkey's penal regime and imprisonment gradually began to occupy a central place in both state policymaking and the formation of the public space, even though as an institution of incarceration, the prison aims for the non-visibility. After the declaration of a state of emergency in 2016, the prison population exceeded the capacity of existing prisons, worsening the conditions of the prisoners significantly.

After the Covid-19 pandemic broke out in Turkey in 2020 and the contagion of the virus dominated all other concerns across the globe, the government sought solutions to control the prison population that has exceeded its capacities significantly. The government introduced a legal reform that would decrease the percentage of imprisonment time within the given sentence time. The reform, also called the "Amnesty Package," offers a different reduction in time served according to the crime category, while some categories are excluded from its scope: drug dealing, sexual abuse, first-degree murder, violation of private life, and terror crimes. As the reform initially involved the release of approximately 100.000 prisoners, the videos of released prisoners expressing their gratitude to the ruling party and some of them making the gray wolves sign circulated across media platforms. However, even after such reform, the prison population continued to surge, giving us a hint that the conference in which Cirit participated could not provide solutions before the jurisdiction to lighten the weight hanging over the shoulders of courthouses. Two years after Cirit's statement, the number of suspects almost doubled, as seen in the 2018 legal records, reaching 13 million 180 thousand suspects as the number is approximately sustained until 2020 (DW Türkçe, 2022).

As İsmail Beşikçi argues (1990), the Turkish state and the public space were maintained through complete denial of the existence and difference of the Kurds.

However, in the 2000s, with the beginning of the Kurdish-Turkish "peace process," the denial mechanism was replaced by multiculturalism, based on the imaginary of the Ottoman Empire. The Kurdishness was recognized, some of the fundamental rights were given, and the Kurdish identity became visible in the public domain. By preserving the articles that formulate citizenship through ethno-nationalism within the constitution, in Turkey, multiculturalism granted a symbolic field where it 'allows' to keep one's ethnic identity while still being a Turk in terms of national identity. In this imaginary, cultural differences reflect the nation's wealth, and Kurdishness is put in the service of Turkish nationhood.

As the "peace process" entirely collapsed in 2015, the state attempted to monopolize Kurdish representation inside and outside the Turkish state territories, enhanced by the centralization and the monopolization of state apparatus (Küçük and Özselçuk, 2015). My initial ethnographic data was collected during the ongoing war against non-state representations of Kurdishness, which involved drastically increased imprisonment of people associated with the Kurdish movement. Following the declaration of the state of emergency in 2016 after the coup d'etat attempt, political imprisonment escalated dramatically. While the coup attempt was also portrayed as a terrorist plot against the unity of the national body, the state declared war against terror on all fronts. This narrative eliminated the substantial differences between all groups in the public imagination. Already problematic concepts of 'terror' and 'terrorists' started to be used excessively. At the same time, their meaning proliferated in such a manner that it lost any distinctive reference point and resulted in ever-increasing political imprisonment. As my study was focused on political imprisonment in 2018, one of the crucial elements of political violence that goes beyond the existing formal structure of the penal regime is overcrowding. In

this respect, the study has prison overcrowding in its background, as it also has direct implications on the way prison life is constituted and shapes its particular dynamics.

While novelties emerge in the political imprisonment with the declaration of a state of emergency in 2016, it is also essential to trace continuing patterns the state has followed up until the moments regarded as pivotal moments of collapse in democratic progression. Drawing from various other scholarly works, Gökarıksel and Türem (2019) discuss how the liberal legalist paradigm misses the historical and structural interrelationship between the law and politics. It is possible to trace legal practices, the formation of the public space, the technologies of repression, and governmentality within the prison context prior to the "peace process."

1.4 Silivri Prison as an accidental anthropological field

In 2018, together with a group of university students, I was arrested and imprisoned for participating in a protest against a group of nationalist students celebrating the 'victory' of Turkish military forces in Afrin by distributing Turkish delight on the campus (Bianet English, 2022). Although having such conflicting encounters inside Boğaziçi University campus had been common and our campus life enjoyed respective autonomy, the attention we got from the state authorities was quite extraordinary. All of us knew something might have strike us after the Turkish President Erdoğan referred to us in his speech as "terrorist students" and stated that the government would do "whatever is necessary." Some of the students were captured the following days, some weeks later, and others took refuge outside the campus, outside Istanbul, and even outside Turkey. At that time, I was thinking about the ideas for my MA studies, and I was particularly interested in how public space in Turkey is formed and operated as an affective space through symbols that trigger

national sentiments. I was selected as one of the candidates who could enter the oral exam that would decide the students of the upcoming semester for an MA program. However, I was captured before entering the oral exam as someone had informed the police on me. Now looking at the documents, it appears that the police followed me for days and approached me to make an arrest.

After arriving at the political ward in the Silivri Prison complex, I realized many topics to write about. Being symbolically positioned as a middle-class Turkish person from Boğaziçi University, which is considered one of Turkey's top universities, such symbolic differences that resonate in social class and status had been present in our relations with other political prisoners inside the ward. The other ward-mates repeatedly wanted us, the students, to share the knowledge we gained through our education and make classes inside the ward. I was able to share some of the things I knew and make discussions, but usually their desire to learn was overwhelmed by their desire to talk and tell their own stories. I gladly accepted my role as a listener and took notes as they gladly accepted that I would work on my notes and share their stories outside. A significant portion of the data used in this study is derived from the notes I took during my one-month long imprisonment where I was hold in a political ward with people arrested on accusations related to "terror crimes" in association with the Kurdish movement. After my release, I applied for the sociology department and started the MA programme. Even though initially I did not consider studying political imprisonment for my master's thesis, I have slowly become convinced that it would be important to write this thesis to share the stories of political prisoners whose access to the general public was largely cut off.

In this study I employ a qualitative method that combines autoethnographic data, fieldwork notes collected during my imprisonment, and in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted with three political prisoners after their release. Focusing on the prison ward that was cohabited by the author and three interviewees, the study aims to look at shared notions and practices inside the political ward and in the post-prison. In order to prevent any social or legal damages that could come out for the interviewees, throughout the text their names and any other name they refer to in their narratives and mine inside and outside the prison will be replaced by pseudonyms. Quotes that are categorized as “Personal Communication” are all translated from the transcribed text from audio recordings.

Conducting an ethnographic study on prison bears particular difficulties with regards to access considering the very material structure of the prison relies on (even though not total but) a strict segregation from the outside. One of the moments where initially I realized the transformative effects of incarceration was when with my friend we noticed having our sentences starting with “on the outside” or “inside”. Drake, Earle and Sloan (2015) draw attention to the fact that the majority of the prison ethnographies which focus on prisoner cultures or communities are conducted by people who were never imprisoned or likely to never be imprisoned. In other words, many ethnographies were conducted by ‘outsiders’ who go back to their homes after finishing a fieldwork during the day. They stress the difference of ethnography from the sciences in its tendency to become an art of depiction in connection with its suffix being “-graphy” but not “-ology”. The urge to write that I had after a couple of days inside the prison was initially for me the urge to tell and portray.

As evident in the narratives in this thesis, one of the things that would strike someone when they first enter the prison would be the stark contrast of the way prison is imagined from the outside and from the inside. Newbold, Ross, Jones, Richards, and Lenza (2014) point out the structural challenges of conducting a prison ethnography as an 'outsider'. They touch on the fact that even after being able to get an official permission from the state one could not avoid conducting fieldwork under state provision with their selection of the prisoners, let alone getting a permission itself is a hard possibility. In this respect, my one-month imprisonment appeared as a valuable anthropological field that would be significantly different otherwise. In other words, as an unplanned and undesired occasion, getting into and staying in prison had granted me with an accidental anthropological field.

One of the problems that I encountered with regards to the insider/outsider dichotomy has been that there was not a point where I could reach outside of the field as the scope of my thesis involves the prison and the post-prison at the same time. It was extremely hard if not impossible to imagine my field as a distinct time and space as I was required to fit my work under the forms and designs of an academic project. All of the academic procedural requirements during the process envisioned the researcher as going out to the field that was supposed to be seen as a space, separate from the academic production.

Newbold, Ross, Jones, Richards, and Lenza stress the problem of excessive subjectivity that could emerge from the "insider" prison ethnography. They argue that there is a need for a balance within the insider prison ethnography that grounds subjective observation in facts that are objective and verifiable. Following their concerns, it is also important to note that objectivity and subjectivity are not clear-cut

separate zones of inquiry that exclude one another. In other words, one ought to go through the subjective in order to make sense of the objective, and vice versa.

One of the fundamental challenges of writing about my own imprisonment years after my release was that I was fixated on a place which other fellow political prisoners were trying to move on from. As Rojan, one of my ward-mates, told me "once one leaves the prison s/he just tries to forget it all and live on," while I made a professional commitment to the place I left and did not want to enter to begin with.

Conducting interviews with my ward-mates was beneficial in writing this thesis as they were all political prisoners that I came to be good friends with inside the prison. All of them were eager to participate in interviews and wanted to help my research as long as they were able to do so. Sharing a ward together and making a living in challenging circumstances enabled us to surpass issues regarding the ability to talk openly with trusting each other. After completing the interviews, Roni told me that he wouldn't be able to tell many of the things he told me to a researcher he did not know personally; Berrin mentioned that he was feeling disturbed when people are asking questions to him regarding his time in prison, yet he expressed his feelings of comfort talking to me as we went through the imprisonment process together; Rojan repeatedly told me the sense of openness he had with me in conducting interviews. Combining the autoethnographical perspective with the semi-structured interviews transformed conducting interviews into a process of remembering and rethinking our own imprisonment together.

As Crewe and Ievins (2015) point out the problems involved in becoming intimate with research participants when conducting an ethnography, they propose that prison ethnography seeks to honor the subjectivity of the participants while at the same time provide a proper account of their practices and personhoods. Crewe

and Ievins draw our attention to the interplay of intimacy and betrayal to the research participant when conducting a prison research. One of the ways researchers can betray their research participants, they point out, is by re-telling the personal narratives with a deviation from their self-understanding by simply translating an individual's story into sociological terminology and violating the complexity of their inner experiences. By adopting a biographical approach in telling the life stories of my research participants, I attempt to overcome this particular issue. Throughout the text, I tried to use extensive quotes from the interviews that reflect both every participants' commonalities and differences in experiencing the prison and the post-prison. Fassin (2008) points out how biographies do not claim for ultimate truths but involve a configuration of heterogeneous empirical facts, however, at the same time cannot be reduced to a mere expression of the person's life.

Through making a biographical study on political prisoners, one could get a sense of political imprisonment of the given historical context. Considering imprisonment as a particular form of violence that primarily involves a duration of its subject to endure and leaves its mark over to her/him in its aftermath, prison researchers might have tended to frame their participants as victims. However, Fassin argues that biographical study enables a framework that considers research participants as social subjects through an ambivalence of subjection that involves both subordination through relations of power and becoming a political subject.

Another way the researcher might betray her/his research participants stems from the private setting of the interview being transmitted to a public access with its publication as discussed by Crewe and Ievins (2015). Such an issue finds its place within the setting of academia being an area of specialization involving different degrees of knowing between the researcher and the research participants with regards

to what is in store for the narratives during and after the writing process. One of the most challenging aspects of conducting this study for me was the moments that I was required to organize and frame both the data collected from interviews, participant observations on the outside, and my own autoethnography inside the prison. Writing a master's thesis that has a coherent structure in itself has been uncomfortable if not painful at times, when I realized the parts of narratives, descriptions, and aspects of them that would not be possible to delve into within such a limited form. While I explained to all my research participants where their narratives are situated, I am also aware that they would have focused on different aspects of their imprisonment and/or frame issues at stake differently if they were to organize and write instead of me. Newbold, Ross, Jones, Richards, and Lenza (2014) draw our attention to the phenomenon of "convict criminology" that emerged in the late 90s, and the heterogeneous disposition of their gatherings with many debates due to the diverse experiences that they had during their imprisonment.

By conducting semi-structured interviews and displaying extensive quotes from the research participants, I attempt to show and hint the points of diversion between me and my research participants as well. In this manner, my research participants were quoted giving extensive accounts on their emotions and stories, while at the same time their observations and inferences from their own experiences of imprisonment. In this work, I am not trying to find definitive answers to questions that diverge across many different cases within prison, but instead I aim to engage in discussion and enter a conversation. After completing our interviews with Roni, I told him that we could have been co-authors in writing about our own imprisonment in a better world. He responded to me by saying: "No, not at all. I think you are more

than a writer to me at this point, your friendship is worth everything. In a better world our conversation is worth everything."

1.5 Organization of the study

The thesis consists of four main chapters and a conclusion. In outlining the thesis into these chapters, I considered the sections according to the ethnographic data. The first chapter is designed to start the thesis with a general introduction of the thesis subject and methodology. The second chapter will focus on the category of the political prisoner. The third and fourth chapters are shaped mainly through the use of ethnographic data and divided according to the significant moment of release that divides prison and post-prison contexts. The conclusion chapter summarizes the discussions in the previous chapters.

In the introduction chapter, I provide the general outline of the thesis, giving the historical and contemporary contexts of the phenomenon of political imprisonment, and looking at the several definitions of the concept of 'political crime' and 'political imprisonment' given by scholars.

Chapter 2 examines the figure of political prisoner as a distinctive unofficial category by using historical and contemporary cases. Specifically, the chapter traces the practices of segregation applied by the prison administration after the 1980 coup in Turkey. As the political prisoner subjectivity has been formed through the rejection of the associated crime, the rejection of the legal demarcation of the state entailed resistance practices inside the prison that involved rejection of prison labor and violent treatment by the prison administration. The chapter follows the identification processes of political prisoners and discusses how the political

prisoners' self-distinguishment from the "legal prisoners" render a conflicting positioning of political prisoners' politics in and of prison.

Chapter 3 elaborates on the subjectivation process of political prisoners through symbolic narratives but also their own self-organization practices inside the ward. Tracing the notion of sacrifice in the imaginary of "paying the price", the chapter explores different ways of imagining political sacrifice. Elaborating on the notion of sacrifice, the legal documentation of the state that leads up to the imprisonment involves an unjustified demarcation that at the same time signifies the sacrificial act or position. Looking at the relations between sacrifice, care, and intimacy, the chapter argues that relations of care play a crucial role in the way symbolic sacrifice is transformed inside the ward and in the valorization processes of the political prisoners. In this manner, the chapter argues that the political ward becomes an intimate space, both through the architecture of the prison and the relations of care predominant within the self-organization of the political prisoners.

The chapter envisions the political ward as a contested space defined by the antagonism between the political prisoners and the prison administration. One of the important ways the antagonism takes shape is through the social production of the space by the political prisoners. Following the non-participation of political prisoners in the prison labor, the chapter elaborates on how the political prisoners practice reproductive labor as a process where the community sustains its well-being. Looking at the fantasies on the organization of life inside the ward, the chapter explores the infightings as moments of collapse and how the political prisoners make sense of it. Finally, the chapter elaborates on the scenery of illuminations on life outside through its relation to "having time" and the social-material setting of incarceration.

Chapter 4 discusses the transition from the political ward into post-prison life. The chapter elaborates on the temporality of political prisoners in contrast to the narratives of prison time that follows the judicial fiction of prison time as punishment. The chapter argues that the release as a moment of rupture is constitutive in the way political prisoner temporality takes place. By elaborating on the encounters in the post-prison, the chapter discusses the transformation in the relations of care after the reintroduction of the private through the institution of family. The chapter looks at the ways post-prison life is being affected by the marking of the state and its correspondences for the political prisoners' sense of belonging to their communities.

CHAPTER 2

THE FIGURE OF THE POLITICAL PRISONER

> So it's like an army having a court podium, they have a podium right across from me. Wearing the robe, he says "tell." He will not listen, not listen. A cliche set up on his tongue, like they say, balm to the tongues: "Tell!" Because the mentioned allegations are written as catalog crime, you see? So it's not like you gave a side-eye or behaved badly to someone. So he says 'this one especially needs to see our facilities, he needs to benefit from our services.' So [the judge says] "you are under arrest! Aren't you ashamed? You wicked! These are immoral acts, you look like a man with morals". Imagine if I was to say "these are really very immoral things, your honor, let us step aside, we are with morals." Preposterous… (Rojan, Personal Communication, February 2020, own translation; see Appendix B, 1 for the original).

Rojan describes his time in court with a caricature-like narration, making fun of the moment that the decision for his imprisonment took place. This was a couple of months before his release. When we conducted an interview with him, he was about to complete four years of imprisonment due to two crimes that he was convicted of. Four years, he traveled across Silivri prison political wards, and after being transferred to the open penitentiary he traveled across various open penitentiaries in different cities, after a brief moment in the courthouse.

In my own case I had a similar impression of my time in the court before my arrest. As I was giving my testimony to the judge, I had the feeling that what I was saying at that moment had no effect whatsoever on the judge. It seemed to me that he already made his decision and we were just following the procedures, as finally he was announcing the arrest decision. First, I was transferred to the Metris prison to be held temporarily before my final destination in Silivri prison. The prison guards put me in one of the cells with a bed, a table, a chair, and a bathroom in it. My cell was surrounded by approximately twenty other cells that shared a big yard to be used by all the prisoners inhabiting those cells. I asked one of the guards if I could go out to the yard to smoke a cigarette. He opened the door and told me "ok, I will let you use

the yard because you are a political [prisoner]" Just before he left I realized that I did not have a lighter with me and asked him if I could find any lighter. He gave me his lighter and told me: "There you go. But you won't commit suicide and burn yourself with it right?" I smiled at him and said "no, of course not, I love life." I entered the yard with the idea of suicide, imagery of prisoners hanging themselves or burning themselves. There was no one else in other cells as I was walking around alone in that big yard looking at the walls, the sky, thinking about what was expected of me and how long I would stay in prison. The uncertainties about my future proliferated in my mind, enwrapped in many scenarios with suffering. I was in an extreme state of anxiety where my mind was jumping from one scenario to another. Quickly my train of thought led me to the idea of me committing suicide. I looked around to see how I could kill myself, looking at the objects around me. But then I started hearing the sounds of my own breathing, out of rhythm and in panic. I stopped and took deep and long breaths to calm myself down. Perhaps due to the fact that this was such a quick escalation, I could realize what just happened. It was obvious to me that I could not let myself go like that and I needed to be strong in order to survive. Shortly after I remembered the stories of infamous Metris prison as a place of torture and suffering, I started thinking about the prisoners that looked at the same walls before me. Perhaps it was true that places were transmitting their memories onto people and I was going through ordinary state of affairs within Metris as the guard was talking about possibility of suicide with a casual attitude.

After staying two nights in the cell, the guards opened the door and told me that on that day I was being transferred to Silivri prison. They handcuffed me and took me to the entrance of the building where I saw a group of prisoners wearing suits and ties waiting in line just near the entrance door. The guards took me to a

small room with grates in front and a chair standing at its center looking right across the entrance. After putting me inside, they locked the grated door and I sat down on the chair and watched the prisoners in suits being taken out of the building in line. After they left, another group of prisoners arrived at the entrance area all of them wearing some casual clothes, many of them looking down to the ground to avoid any eye contact with the guards. The guards were shouting at them giving instructions, making them into a straight line in a militaristic fashion, cursing them when they acted slightly in disorder. Each of them looked at me as they passed and I sat alone wearing handcuffs in that temporary cell, and I looked at them back wondering why they were inside. After they were taken out of the building, they came to take me out and made me get in the back of the line of the last group. For a moment I thought maybe we were in the same group of prisoners who are inside due to being associated with the Kurdish movement. We entered the transport vehicles and sat down together with six of the prisoners from that group in a small cage-like compartment that had no other space left except for all of us with a tiny window on the side where sunlight and air came in scarcity. After everyone started talking to one another on the way, I realized that the group consisted of prisoners accused of thievery. No one was talking about injustice or mistakes of them being there but most of them were openly acknowledging their acts as crime and seeking a narrative of redemption that might enable them to reconnect back to the wider society. After we arrived at Silivri Prison, we went through a process of documentation that also involved which ward we were supposed to go. Following the confirmation of some ID information, they started talking about my case belonging to "FETÖ"[1]. I told them that there is a huge mistake, I do not have any relation whatsoever and I was

[1] Abbreviation of "The Fetullahist Terrorist Organization" used by the Turkish state after the coup attempt in 2016 to address the members of the Gülen Movement

not accused of anything like that. The prison staff working on documentation told me that it was written as such in the document that was sent from Metris Prison. After I told the specifics of my case and they checked it from other sources, they finally directed me to one of the Kurdish movement wards. A couple of days later political prisoners inside the ward were telling that the prisoners accused of affiliation with the Gulenist movements were all wearing suits and ties. And I understood that the earlier group of prisoners that I saw before I got out of Metris prison were accused in association with being a Gulenist, and they mistook me for being one of them. The prison guards were giving attention to not make us move together and get mixed; the thieves, the Gulenists, and me. For the prison staff I was easily distinguishable categorically from the thieves even though I thought I could belong to that group. Even though I appeared drastically different from the Gulenists, the prison staff could mistakenly put me among them. Before even entering the ward, I was already introduced to a set of practices and regulations inside the prison that involves segregation through differing categories of crime.

In this chapter, I examine the figure of political prisoner as a distinctive unofficial category by using historical and contemporary cases. In doing so, the chapter traces the practices of segregation applied by the prison administration after the 1980 coup in Turkey. As the political prisoner subjectivity has been formed through the rejection of the associated crime, the rejection of the legal demarcation of the state entailed resistance practices inside the prison that involved rejection of prison labor and violent treatment by the prison administration. The chapter focuses on the identification processes of political prisoners and discusses how the political prisoners' self-distinguishment from the "legal prisoners" (*adli mahpuslar*) render a conflicting positioning of political prisoners' politics in and of prison.

2.1 The political prisoner and the imprisoned political

Since the study is focused on the political ward and the post-prison life of political prisoners, the scope of who could be regarded as a political prisoner bears importance in making sense of contemporary formations of prison subjectivities and their historical backgrounds. Before embarking on the discussion on political incarceration in Turkey, this subchapter will look into the historical application and definition of the concept of political crime across Europe and the Ottoman Empire, aiming to identify the significant component that would make the prisoner 'political.'

Kirchheimer has observed that "something is called political if it is thought to relate in a particularly intensive way to the interests of the community" (1961, p. 25). This definition emphasizes the role of the values and interests of particular communities in defining the crime as political. Ingraham (1979) provides a detailed account on the development of the idea of political crime in France, Germany and England. Bringing the parallels with colonial Europe, in France, the phenomenon of political crime contains many paradoxes. The governments that have come to power since the 18th century have never been able to offer a stable definition of political crime, preferring to label certain infractions as "crimes de lèse majesté," crimes against the State, crimes against national security, and crimes of terrorism. The fact that they were placed in a particular part of the prison, with a unique detention protocol, was thus the defining factor of a certain status (political prisoner) that the law itself did not provide or explicitly define. When individuals were accused of acts threatening national security, the courts similarly made choices. Therefore, the status of political prisoners depended on a complex relationship between the government, the prison, and public.

Kenney (2012) discusses how the modern political prisoner emerged as a distinct figure in the last third of the 19th century as the punishment for the political activity differed from the pre-modern settings. As the incarceration in the pre-modern setting was an intermediary stage before the actual punishment (exile, execution, or forced labor), it is only with the introduction of the modern prisons the incarceration inside four walls started to be considered as a punishment in itself. By analyzing the political imprisonment settings in Poland in the Russian Empire, British South Africa, and Ireland, Kenney argues that political prisoners distinguished themselves from the other prisoners with regards to their character and the nature of their transgressions and often demanded for better treatment. The relatively high level of education among the political prisoners in that period means that the fact of incarceration did not mean the end of their political struggle for most of them. Especially in the cases of the political revolutionaries, the prisons were becoming the continuation of politics with other means. Following Kenney's argument, the figure of the political prisoner is based on the self-identification of the prisoners themselves but not the framing of the state. Moreover, Kenney makes a conceptual distinction between the political prisoner and the imprisoned political in the way they are positioned with regards to the relations *inside* the prison. He argues that the incarceration of the imprisoned political entailed an obstruction for their political activity, yet they are not able to envision ways to go beyond the boundaries set by the state with their incarceration. Kenney argues that while the imprisoned political is positioned in his opposition for the prison and imprisonment, the political prisoner makes a politics of and in the prison. In his account, the political prisoner envisions the prison itself as a political terrain and uses the institution as an instrument of political activity where s/he imposes his or her politics onto the prison. In this

manner, the formation of the figure of the political prisoner entailed a resistance inside the prison and a contest of the prison space with the prison administration.

Kebranian (2014) offers a critique of Padraic Kenney's conceptualization of the political prisoner by including the prison setting in the Ottoman Empire. While Kenney's argumentation is based primarily on the European context, Kebranian points out the fact that the prison reformations during the reign of Abdulhamid II merely appeared to imitate the European model but failed to resemble the way prisons operated in the European context. The prisons in the late Ottoman Empire were organized in a loose manner and had less regulations compared to the European ones until a second wave of modernization was undertaken by the Committee of Union and Progress in the early republican period. As Kebranian points out, the Ottoman prisons usually involved overcrowded prison populations where the spatial segregation with regards to the category of the crime was not implemented, and the prisons suffered from lack of provisions and resulted in frequent clashes and escapes. The figure of the political prisoner in Kenney's conceptualization emphasizes its agency and considers the political prisoners as the primary source of their identification. Thus for Kenney, it is the active attribution of a (perhaps even though predominant but) particular figure of the political prisoner that is in political struggle and gets into political conflict deliberately. On the contrary, drawing from the Ottoman Armenian political prisoners' accounts, Kebranian points out that the Ottoman Armenians were subjected to imprisonment due to political crimes even though they did not have any political affiliation or were not aware of the political activities conducted by the Armenian revolutionary organizations in their vicinity. Kebranian argues that everyday villagers, including the underage and the elderly, even in the un-politicized regions were being imprisoned and getting the same

treatment with the revolutionaries as collateral or substitutes. The severe violence directed towards ordinary villagers, Kebranian points out, rendered them as political prisoners as an effect of the opposition of their imprisonment outside the prison. In this manner, Kebranian seeks to reformulate Kenney's conceptualization by saying that the politics of and in prison may coincide with a politics against prison, non-political convicts can become political as they are subjected to severe violence, the collective action and discourse outside prison can constitute political prisoners identification. Following Kenney and Kebranian's contributions, one could see the formation of political prisoner identification might involve collective discourse and resistance practices both inside and outside the prison while who constitutes as political prisoners might include a wide range of militants, revolutionaries, activists, intellectuals to ordinary peasants and workers who are not necessarily involved in political engagement.

2.2 Division of prison labor

While one of the primary punitive functions of imprisonment is segregating the criminals from the rest of the population, segregation has proliferated within the prison complex itself. After the initial division and a complete segregation of males and females,[2] the criminals are assigned according to the category of their crimes. Legal crime [*adli suç*] and political crime is one of the foundational categorizations that is not defined or mentioned directly in the official legislation[3], yet could be

[2] Such segregation comes together with misidentifications and misassignments as well prevalent in the prison settings in Turkey, especially with transgender and non-binary people. Yet, it is a topic that deserves a study with a main focus.

[3] There is an exception to this, where the word "legal crime" is being used in a state legislation that provides regulation on the visiting conditions for the prisoners. T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı Mevzuat Bilgi Sistemi. Hükümlü Ve Tutuklularin Ziyaret Edilmeleri Hakkinda Yönetmelik. Resmî Gazete Tarihi: 17.06.2005 Resmî Gazete Sayısı: 25848.

traced within the legislation as the crimes against the individual (legal crime) and the crimes against the people and the state (political crime).

Although it could easily be proven that political crime and legal crime are not useful concepts to analyze criminality or punishment as they are far from being adequate representations of the subject matter - that is both categories are legal and political in the basic sense- such notions exist both among prisoners themselves, prison personnel, lawyers, legal scholars and researchers in Turkey. While in many scholarly works in English language non-political crime is predominantly referred to as "ordinary crime", the use of the words such as "legal crime" *[adli suç]* and "legal prisoner" *[adli mahpus]* prevails and therefore can be considered as part of the established imaginary of the prison in Turkey. In this imaginary, the legal and the political nature of the crime implies the motivations and reasons for the imprisonment either implying the criminal action or the state's capture and incarceration. In this manner, I will be referring to the non-political crime and non-political prisoners as legal crime as such wording has been prevalent both during my imprisonment and during the interviews.

The categorical divide could be traced back up until the early modern prisons in the 19th century and the very emergence of the modern political prisoner figure. An Ottoman-Armenian political prisoner, Mikayel Ter-Martirossian, known as 'Mar', gives us a historical account of the necessity for labor division and the conditions between the political and non-political prisoners in his work *Kendani Taghvatzneri Ashkharhum* (*In the World of Those Buried Alive*, 1906, in Kebranian, 2014, p. 132):

> By law, political prisoners are supposed to have more freedom and amenities than ordinary prisoners, because no matter how heavy their punishment, even if condemned to 101 years, they are all considered fortress convicts, whereas criminal offenders are sentenced to hard labor. The fortress convicts are supposed to have different, cleaner quarters than the hard

> laborers...they are supposed to live in fortified cities, as exiles, occupying themselves with whatever work they like…[1]

In Ter-Martirossian's account, the legal argument for the requirement of political prisoners not having prison conditions is based on the fact that it is not due to a criminal act that they are imprisoned. The political prisoners, in Ter-Martirossian's perspective, replaced the fortress convicts who were predominantly incarcerated as an extension of warfare. One of the crucial distinctions of political prisoners was that they would have better conditions of incarceration overall but more importantly, they should not be used as labor force. The contemporary subjectivation of political prisoners seems to follow this pattern in its fundamental sense. Besides the identification processes of the political prisoners and the ordinary prisoners, the distinction between the two is based on the way labor is organized within the prison complex.

Besides the official state employees who perform the execution of the penalty by 'keeping the order' and professionals such as doctors, dentists, psychologists, the greatest labor input is supplied by legal prisoners: keeping the corridors clean, preparing food, delivery (of food, books, letters), field farming, working in factory farms and some other production facilities (such as furniture, food processing, textile, leather, packaging, etc.) The production facilitated through prison labor both works for the reproduction and maintenance of the prison complex and surplus production to be used in other state institutions (e.g. furniture for the courthouses) or sold to the outside (in the surrounding urban and rural areas).

Even though in the constitution of Turkey forced labor is prohibited, prison labor is not considered within the domain of labor contract and the prisoners are obligated to work as part of their penalization as explicitly stated by law in accordance with the International Labor Organization (Koç, 2015). While it could

generate the only possible income for the prisoners for their subsistence, the extreme underpayment of the prison labor below the minimum wage reduces the value of prison labor to bare subsistence or even less. Prison labor is advertised by the state apparatuses as an opportunity for the prisoners and mostly practiced as a reward mechanism where prisoners with good behavior and the prisoners in the open penitentiary are able to take advantage of. It is also important to notice that the use of prison labor is not only a matter of economic input within the prison but involves production of docile worker bodies outside the prison. Prison labor is both produced through the repressive and ideological apparatuses of the state and at the same time reproduces the labor force for the workplaces. Regardless of the differences in the repressive methods used in penality, the reproduction of the labor force (or perhaps now reproduction of entrepreneurs could be added to this) remains the basic economic drive for the existence of prisons. 'Humanitarian' prison reforms that have been emerging in some European countries in the last decade that inverts the prison architecture in such a way to deemphasize the punishment and emphasize rehabilitation in this regard develops on their predecessors' economic foundations. Melossi and Pavarini, in their *The Prison and the Factory: Origins of the Penitentiary System* (2018), trace the prison model back to the emergence of the factory system and argue that the primary economic production through imprisonment is not the commodities but the proletariat. The process of imprisonment needs to be addressed in the economic chain of creation of poverty, transforming the poor into criminals, and finally transforming the prisoner into the proletariat. The prison, in this sense, both creates conditions of deprivation for the prisoner and at the same time makes prison labor the only escape from it by becoming docile worker bodies.

The reformation of the prisons in Turkey in the late 20th century, starting from the 1971 military memorandum to the 1980 coup and its aftermath, corresponds to the reintroduction of segregation between political prisoners and the legal prisoners. While numerous accounts of the prison life before the 70s involve descriptions of wards with political and legal prisoners mixed, the transformation of prisons that took its final shape after the 80s coup involved new discourses and practices of segregation. Being experimented in the 'pioneer prisons' of the time such as Diyarbakır and Metris (İstanbul), which were opened up after the coup on September 12, the new regime of penality paid special attention to the political prisoners. 'The enemies of the state and the people' has been named as "anarchists" starting from the late 19th century until the 1980s, while with the coup the naming has been gradually replaced by "terrorists". Meanwhile, the changes in the official discourse were accompanied by segregation of the political prisoners from the rest, widespread systematic torture, raids into the wards, and education sessions aimed at transforming the political prisoners and making them loyal to the principles of Atatürk. As Mustafa Eren (2014) discusses, through these practices inside the prison, the state was now aiming to change the identities of the prisoners and consolidate its power in prisons that were being run by political prisoners until then, according to Nevzat Bölügiray, who was responsible for the prisons during the military government. The state's systematic attacks and repressive reforms on prisons were responded to by recurring collective resistance of the political prisoners and made the prison itself a distinct terrain of political conflict. While the reformation of the prisons resulted in numerous deaths of political prisoners, the media was reframing the political prisoners gradually as "terrorists." The segregation introduced after the 1971 military memorandum had been ever intensified coming to the 90s and took its

final form in the 2000s with the introduction of the cellular F type high security prisons.

2.3 Encounters of political prisoners with legal prisoners

The contemporary practice of segregation involves the distribution of prisoners according to the category of their crimes. Following a pattern of specialization and knowledge production over the bodies in Foucauldian sense, each legal ward signify the crime of its inhabitants (murder, thievery, drug dealing, assault, etc.), and each political ward signify belonging to a political organization (PKK, the Turkish Left, Gulenists, ISIS). The architecture of Silivri Prison Complex involves a particular design of separating the political prisoners from the legal prisoners to the extent of minimizing the encounters between the two to minimum as possible. Most of the encounters take place where the legal prisoners deliver something to the political ward or during public services of the prison administration.

During our interview with Roni, I asked him about his encounters with the legal prisoners. After briefly talking about some general differences between the legal prisoners and political prisoners, he remembered one of his encounters with a legal prisoner that enabled him to make sense of the conditions of political prisoners and legal prisoners.

> Actually, we encountered them [legal prisoners] once or twice in the infirmary. Neither they let us sit next to them nor did they let them sit next to us… On several occasions I noticed the guardians being careful about this so that there won't be any talking [between the two groups]. There is such a thing; maybe we do not notice legal prisoners instantly but when we go to the infirmary… I experienced such a thing twice even. You know the entrance of the infirmary, once we went to the infirmary together with you. As we enter the guardian is going to register us. There, a boy across -he was either my age or older- said to me "are you political prisoners brother?" I replied "yes". I did not understand how he understood that we were political prisoners at that moment of course. I mean, I did not ask. Five minutes later it struck me, "how did he figure out that we were political prisoners?" I mean I was preoccupied with this, nothing bad came to my mind, I was preoccupied. I said "how did you understand that we are coming from the political prisoner ward?" He said: "bro when you come, you come with the guard or behind the guard. When we come they make us walk next to the wall so that the center of the hall stays empty. They make us walk in line, you did not

> come like that. (Roni, Personal Communication, October 2021, own translation; see Appendix A, 1 for the original)

Roni's observations were that the designation of prisoners according to their crimes were not only involved being in different wards but also the prison administration tries to avoid direct encounters between the two groups. He also notices how he cannot notice the difference but a legal prisoner could make him become aware of the difference through conversation. The difference is narrated as legal prisoners' abject humiliation at the hands of the prison administration and the relatively decent treatment of the political prisoners.

The division of labor inside the prison complex is sustained through violent disciplining methods implemented on the legal prisoners. The reduction of the legal prisoners merely to an object, a tool to be used to complete a task -for many of them- is not something entirely new in their lives but an intensification of the prior relations of submission in the workplace. It was the profanity of the world of things that they were considered to belong. The strict segregation implemented by the prison administration was clear to us; to prevent political prisoners from organizing other prisoners for common resistance inside the prison or for 'their own cause'.

Roni elaborates further on his encounter with the legal prisoner in the infirmary and reflects on the everpresent segregation strictly enforced by the prison administration.

> I asked him a question of course, "for how many years have you been in prison?" I asked. He had been inside for three years. I did not ask about his crime, of course, I did not want to. He had been in prison for three years, so we stopped talking there. I had such a thing [encounter], otherwise, we were not encountering legal prisoners much. The administration was especially careful about this so that there won't be much talking in between. There is even such a thing -I do not know if you know about this; if someone previously imprisoned for a political crime is sentenced for a legal crime, that person is sent to the political prisoners' ward again. Because he was imprisoned for political reasons [priorly], the administration watches out for it so that he won't organize people in the ward against the system, for the things he believes and the things he lived through. They look at the criminal records especially. (Roni, Personal Communication, October 2021, own translation; see Appendix A, 2 for the original)

The extreme care for institutional segregation derives from the possibility that emerges from the encounters between the political and legal prisoners, the encounter that could endanger the way the prison complex is sustained through underpaid forced labor and the production of docile worker bodies. In most of my encounters, the figure of the legal prisoners would create a reason for suspicion in the morality of the associated person. Roni did not want to ask the legal prisoner about his crime because he was seeing the possibility of uncovering a shameful part of the person he was talking to. The identification process of the political process entailed a dignified subjectivity, as the crimes associated with the political prisoners could not be considered as crimes for them but signify an act of virtue, speaking out the truth, being part of a righteous political movement, a diversion from being part of an injustice. In contrast, the action or the event that brought legal prisoners inside was signifying something on the contrary for the political prisoners, it was indeed a crime, a wrongful act that gives away a bad characteristic attribution of that person. Even though political prisoners do not make a simple and direct connection between the legal prisoners and them being criminals per se, the existing symbolic difference mostly shaped political prisoners' understanding of the legal prisoners. At the same time, for many political prisoners I encountered, given the institutional setting described above, the legal prisoners are in a sense symptoms of a deeply broken political system and society.

Rojan was one of the political prisoners who tried to subvert the existing segregation and try to defend the legal prisoners against the guards when they were mistreated. For him, most of the legal prisoners were the Kurdish youth lost in systematic suffering and in need of political guidance. After all, the moral claims of the political prisoners is not for a selected group of privileged but it was the equality,

liberty, and peace for all, and the segregation imposed by the administration was blocking a crucial zone of politics in and of the prison. However, if the prison administration was considering the political prisoners as a threat for igniting a riot, why wouldn't they just attack and use their repressive methods on the political prisoners?

Roni elaborates on what he thinks are the reasons for the prison administration not actively attacking the political prisoners in Silivri prison at the time and what keeps the political prisoners' respective autonomy intact.

> I think the prison administrations do not want to have much problem with political prisoners, or could be that they try to maintain peace inside the prison as well. I mean it's not that they want peace. They already do whatever the government is telling them but I am sure that they do consider it. Because having a prison riot or something else would reflect badly on the prison director's records, to his career, or to his environment. I think these matter. It could be related to this. Otherwise, the government already… For us the government is bad in every period. I am 27 years old and I never saw the government behave well or approach good towards -especially- the Kurds. Even if it happened, it was very brief and that was for their own interests. That's why they do not come down on these people [political prisoners] because they can also predict the outcomes of it. It would be bad for both sides. I mean one would win and another would lose, that's a different thing, but there would be unrest or other bad things. So it would be bad in every aspect. Since it would be bad for both sides, I think the ones that try to restrain this are the prison administrations. (Roni, Personal Communication, October 2021, own translation; see Appendix A, 3 for the original)

For Roni, it was in the interest of the prison administration to not have hustle and riotings. In this sense, Roni considers the prison space in a constant contestation and the autonomy of the political prisoners as depending on sustaining the collective organization among the political prisoners. Looking at the historical accounts of the prison riots, one would see that the repressive turns in prison reformations are hardly sustainable and functions as the violence that opens up space for reconstituting the prison space and its relations. The more violent the prison administration's intervention into the political prisoners became, the more radical and mobilized the political prisoners were. As a total institution that has a population of inhabitants, prisons are required to have concerns of governmentality regardless of being coincided through mechanisms of sovereignty. This does not eliminate the tendency

of state to attack on the political prisoners or does not grants us with the telos of prison per se, but gives us an insight on how the prison space and the use of repressive and violent methods depend on the contingencies that shape the contestation between the prison administration and the political prisoners.

Being inside the political ward, we did not have concerns over our security with regards to the prison administration's attacks. We did not expect anything because we were protecting and being protected by thousands of political prisoners in other political wards across the prison complex. Through throwing notes (paper text contained in a bottle) across the yards, shouting through the drain cover in the yards, and echoes of slogans shouted signaling the clash with the guards, there were ways to organize across the political wards in times of emergency. If they were to attack a political ward in one way or another, even if they harm someone initially, in the following days they could expect a riot brewing up across the political wards. Regardless of the fact that things would indeed work out this way, this narrative was the one I kept hearing as an answer regarding my questions on security. It was giving us a sense of security but during our time, fortunately, there was no context to see it being tested. Within the ward system the segregation amongst the political prisoners were easily broken as such communicative methods, making recreational services of the administration such as Quran courses to be meeting spots with prisoners from other political wards, or simply switching to another ward with a letter of request to the prison administration. In this manner, the primary segregation inside the prison could not be intensified amongst the political prisoners but set on a limit in the encounters with the legal prisoners. However, such segregation was not an entirely arbitrary imposition of the prison administration but had its resonances in the symbolic difference amongst the prisoners as well.

As we talk further with Roni, he talks more on the reasons for the prison administration to not use humiliating violence towards political prisoners.

> The prison administration knows it very well -the guards there as well know it very well- that if no one touches political prisoners on the raw they will not harm anyone. After all, in my opinion, I'm looking at those people; they are all people with principles, many of them are people with principles. Some of them are growing to become -like us, some of them are just newly entering inside but after all they are all people with principles. They are writers, painters, researchers, journalists, most of them are people like that I mean. So I think there won't be harm coming from such people. They [administration] are also aware of this. (Roni, Personal Communication, October 2021, own translation; see Appendix A, 4 for the original)

What is interesting to note is that Roni talks about the acknowledgement of political prisoners by the prison administration as not dangerous in terms of having a capacity to do harm to others. In Roni's perspective, the association of terrorism and terror crimes with the political prisoners are not operational in settings of direct encounters with the prison guards. Roni thinks that most of the political prisoners are intellectuals, people of reason, ethics and aesthetics -their character as such could be recognised by the others. Regardless of which profession the majority of the political prisoners practices, the symbolism of political prisoners as intellectuals is an established imaginary. Cultural productions that emphasizes the imprisoned intellectual figures such as Nazım Hikmet, Yılmaz Güney and so on, the narratives of political campaigns that demands freedom for prisoners incarcerated for crimes of thought, monumental historiography of the Leninist socialists who write about the leaders of a vanguardist party who carries the duty to guide the masses towards collective emancipation, they all have been effective in enforcing the symbolism of the political prisoner figure as the intellectual.

> ...After a point, you become sad for people living in the legal wards because the way events develop is not in their hands. That's why you feel sad that they are living such things. I mean they need to do it when the administration says something. But when it [the administration] says something against their [political prisoners'] principle, against their stance, they [political prisoners] won't do it. In the legal wards, there is no such option. There is no such thing because even though they come due to the same crime -let's say drugs, assault, or murder- but every one of them has their own stories. Ours is not like that, we have a single case -it's the same case. Of course, we have our personal lives but the case is the same, the ideology is the same, and the purpose is the same. So when it's like that, you do not feel

> estranged. Legal wards are the complete opposite of this. (Roni, personal communication, October 2021, own translation; see Appendix A, 5 for the original)

Roni points out the lack of collective identification of the legal wards that could bring them together. As they are categorized according to their crimes, for Roni the legal crimes do not signify a common living or an order to be shared amongst the ward-mates. Although numerous studies have shown divergent ways the legal prisoner wards have their own self-governance (Irwin, 2014), this narrative is significant in understanding the identification of political prisoners. Roni thinks that even though their crimes are not acceptable or desirable in his ethical understanding, they were the result of structural social dynamics that goes beyond their individual agency. Besides the encounters outside the ward, such as infirmary, political prisoners' encounters with the legal prisoners were happening when they deliver food, books, or letters to the ward or in some special occasions where the prison administration arranges some legal prisoners who happened to work in a barbershop before their imprisonment to offer haircut services across the wards. Moreover, one of the everyday recurring encounters between the two was happening on the yards through sound waves amplified through echoing inside the yards' walls and entering into the others. Hearing people giving military salutes and making sounds of headcounts just as it is in the army, in my first week I asked about if this was a military training of the gendarmerie or not. However, then I learned it was actually coming from the legal wards during the prison guards going around the wards to make headcounts in the morning and in the evening. Meanwhile, during the headcounts, we were only coming to the yard or the hall and sitting there minding our own business. In fact, even when I was feeling like standing on foot, other ward-mates warned me not to do that because when we all sat down it was signifying that we do not recognize their authority. They were coming inside the ward silently

and making the headcount themselves, then leaving respectfully with saying "*Allah kurtarsın*", which could be translated as "May God save you [from prison]". Mostly, it was not the angry or hateful gaze of the prison guards that we were seeing, but a tired state worker who expresses his good wishes for the political prisoners. This could be interpreted that most of the prison guards were considering the political prisoners distinctively according to the existing symbolic differentiation with the legal prisoners.

CHAPTER 3

ENTERING THE POLITICAL WARD:

BECOMING A POLITICAL PRISONER

> Under the feet of that man you feel horrendous pain and when you are feeling that pain you tell yourself this: “wait a minute, right now I am not the one who is suffering pain, the one who suffers pain at this moment is the guy that steps on me mercilessly.” Look, I am crushed under his feet, my back, my spine. I am laughing, you see? When he stepped on me I told him this: “One day a pain will be stuck in your heart. Where did it come from? Today did I hurt my mother, did I hurt my father, did I hurt my friend? You are going to think about one of your doings that damages humans and society, that became a routine in your profession, but you will not be able to figure it out. Where did this pain come from, where did this pain come from? I am the answer for the endless pain inside you that you will never be able to arrive or reach. If I touch your heart that pain of yours will pass but I will never touch it. Carry this as a dark inscription on your forehead, a collar on your neck or a placard on your hand for the rest of your life: “I did this, I am an animal” By animal I don’t mean our four legged dear living beings. “I am a vandal! Look I hurted this soul, I shed these tears.” Whereas no one is coming to oversee you there. When you insult that person you don’t get an increase in your points or I don’t know you are not gonna be promoted. With taking me or any laborer, human, student [inside] you are only gonna get this; you can put some 300 liras to the side and nothing else. Was it worth it for this? So when I was being crushed under his feet, I was laughing at him, you see. I was laughing out loud. He was getting angry, after a point their psychology can not take it anymore. “Boy, you are being beaten so much, being insulted so much, and you still laugh. I cannot understand this. We saw all of these in our classes in the police academy, but these are different.” And I say “this is called the sense of rightfulness, the belief in rightfulness. (Rojan, Personal Communication, February 2020, own translation; see Appendix B, 2 for the original)

When I asked Rojan about his time under police custody, he told me in detail about what he went through during the process of his arrest and before he arrived at the political ward. It was very challenging to hear his story as it involved various moments of torture that he described with vivid scenes of violence but also he appeared to enjoy adding colorful remarks and imagery that signify an epic story. He told me about how he was beaten up, his head being pounded up on the table and on the floor during the interrogation. He did not tell me in such detail when we were inside the ward, perhaps not to relive it in such a setting and make anyone else remember their own time under the police custody. During my brief time inside the political ward in Silivri prison, I did not witness any torture from the guards but the

newcomers could arrive with bruises or bumps on their bodies. It is hard to tell to what extent Rojan's story reflects exactly what happened during his torture, or if he gives a comprehensive picture loyal to what happened actually. However, it is of no use to make such an inquiry, as what matters is how he narrates the scene of his torture and how he makes sense of it. Rojan tells this particular moment during his torture under the police custody as a moment of realization that he had superiority over the police officer. For Rojan, even though the policeman was crushing him by stepping on his back, he could not take over Rojan, who had a sense of rightfulness that gave him a moral invincibility. Rojan could have pain all over his body for a while but his torturer was collecting future pains that grows slowly and only could end with the forgiving touch of Rojan.

Police custody consists of constant transportation of criminalized bodies from one place to another; transfers across police stations, hospital visits, courtroom, and eventual transfer to prison. The criminalized body is designated into a constant spatial transition to be stored while itself becomes a terrain of violence. After the police deliver the political criminal into the hands of prison administration, s/he is relocated into a political ward. It is now the process of becoming a political prisoner, entering a different world of established meanings and practices, making the ward a home.

> I entered inside, I saw 15-20 people lined up and sitting down. Immediately they asked me "what do you want" and so on. I told them "I have a t-shirt on me, pants and shoes, I have nothing else. Just give me a cigarette please and let me lay down" "Come on, just sit down". "I cannot sit down, every part of my body aches." Because I was exposed to such a beating, such violence, the whole body became numb. Then I took a shower, which was very refreshing. As I sat down I told them "just show me a place, I need to lay down." They told me "your bed is ready." You know my bell glass of a place downstairs next to the window -my world… I was listening to TRT broadcasts from there through the night up until the morning. I entered there. I started getting to know the bed, getting to know the pillow. I even told this sentence to my big sister one day. "Sister I was so peaceful," I said, "when I entered there I saw peace." "Don't say things like that," she said to me. "I am not feeling cold, being hurt, being broken, I am not waiting under the rain, no one is making me wait. I am here, my place is known. I might have seasonal needs, periodical disappointments, and discontent as well. Then I might have deprivations, desperations, hopes" I mean we can just go on and on. My sister told me "don't say it like that, you are hurting us, we want to be there for you in

> every way." I told her "it's not about you. If one day something happens my residential address is behind the bars, if you ask anyone they will easily describe it to you. S/he will say rights, law, justice and there s/he will find Rojan. S/he will say Rojan is there." We entered inside and saw there were people who needed us. Really, there are people who need our joy, our sadness, our perseverance, our belief. When we confront these we shouldn't stop or, I don't know, give up. (Rojan, Personal Communication, February 2020, own translation; see Appendix B, 3 for the original).

Rojan describes his first encounters when he first entered the political ward. Still having the effects of torture on his body, Rojan briefly talks about the collective care that he was receiving from other political prisoners. However, his focus is more on how he was in a world of his own, his new home. I remember feeling a relief after accepting the fact that the political ward I was inside was to become my home for a while. I had to make a living inside together with many others. After describing how he familiarized himself with his room and the objects inside, Rojan tells about his first phone call with his sister. The way Rojan describes this phone call reflects both how he perceived the political ward and his sister's shock and unwillingness to accept Rojan having peace inside prison. Rojan's sense of peace is narrated over his sense of rightfulness that should have been evident to everyone on the outside, the collective care he receives, the certainty of being incarcerated there, and what his presence could offer to other political prisoners.

In what follows, I elaborate on the subjectivation process of political prisoners through symbolic narratives but also their own self-organization practices inside the ward. Tracing the notion of sacrifice in the imaginary of "paying the price", the chapter explores different ways of imagining political sacrifice. Elaborating on the notion of sacrifice, the legal documentation of the state that leads up to the imprisonment involves an unjustified demarcation that at the same time signifies the sacrificial act or position. Looking at the relations between sacrifice, care, and intimacy, the chapter argues that relations of care play a crucial role in the way symbolic sacrifice is transformed inside the ward and in the valorization

processes of the political prisoners. In this manner, the chapter argues that the political ward becomes an intimate space, both through the architecture of the prison and the relations of care predominant within the self-organization of the political prisoners. The chapter envisions the political ward as a contested space defined by the antagonism between the political prisoners and the prison administration. One of the important ways the antagonism takes shape is through the social production of the space by the political prisoners. Following the non-participation of political prisoners in the prison labor, the chapter elaborates on how the political prisoners practice reproductive domestic labor as a process where the community sustains its well-being. Looking at the fantasies on the organization of life inside the ward, the chapter explores the infightings as moments of collapse and how the political prisoners make sense of it. Finally, the chapter elaborates on the scenery of illuminations on life outside through its relation to "having time" and the social-material setting of incarceration.

3.1 Subjectivity of the political prisoner: sacrifice, care, and intimacy

> Just like I said, I feel like if I start talking, the walls around me would suddenly turn into hedges with green grasses. Then everyone will see the brokenness, ruins inside it. Then there is going back to that hell. Oh do not be fooled, I would talk about my feelings and opinions or ideas in such an open way being with you. When I return to that hell, again I will become a man who has his heavens, his gardens of Babylon inside but a sullen face and some very formal attitudes to the outside. (Rojan, Personal Communication, February 2020, own translation; see Appendix B, 4 for the original)

Before his release, just like other convicts who are about to complete their time in prison, Rojan was transferred to the open penitentiary. In several months he changed his location three times by making requests to the prison administration for his transfer to another city. Even though he was seeing himself as a vagabond and he would constantly change his ward inside the closed penitentiary, his constant movement across the closed penitentiary wards was for seeing new people or coming

back together with his old ward-mates. As we talked about this later, changing cities during his open penitentiary time was due to the fact that he was not fitting in anywhere and going through problems in each open penitentiary. A year after my release and his transfer to the open penitentiary we had the chance of talking with him over the phone frequently as the only limitation to the access for the payphone in the open penitentiary was just prisoners lining up in the cue due to prisons being overcrowded. He was asking me questions on how a person can maintain his decency and morality in a "vulgar" environment. As the prisoners in open penitentiary have a chance of getting one week of permission to leave if the prison administration decides that they 'behaved good' , I met him in such a week to see him and conduct interviews with him as he was also eager about it. We were outside the prison but yet he was still a prisoner who was about to return back to complete his time. Rojan talks about the difference of being in a mixed prison setting in the open penitentiary in comparison to being among the political prisoners exclusively in the closed penitentiary. Even though the conditions in the open penitentiary are supposed to be better in comparison to the closed penitentiary, Rojan remembers the former with nostalgia and refers to the latter as "hell". The intimacy in the ward for him is closely associated with the reason for being imprisoned, just as Roni is being grateful to enter prison for the sake of his political beliefs. The idea that no harm would ever come from the ward-mates in the closed penitentiary implies a community sharing a common morality in contrast to the random encounters of criminals inside the open penitentiary.

> For example, there is a friend inside the ward. I would support this friend in any possible way, we are buddies, friends. But a time comes when another friend has a need; shoes for example, and you have shoes. I supported you in every way but when that time comes you do not give away those shoes. Then I tell myself "learn not to expect anything from anyone. When you do not expect anything from anyone, you become so happy. That makes me happy. As I said I was not used to being like this. I built a barrier around me, I built up walls, do I make myself clear? I try to look like I am indifferent. Now when I open my heart and look inside, I see thousands of children falling down, stumbling. Reaching onto the shores,

> thousands of children… When someone asks for a cigarette from me; "if you were given a cigarette all your problems would go away my friend, would it? What about the children who washed up on the shore, did you do anything for them? No. What about someone who lost his family and everything in a fire or the stolen wage of a laborer woman? No." Maybe he himself stole it, there is such a bad aspect to the open penitentiary. "Then, step aside pal, I have no business with you." I cut it, you got me? When someone tries to build up intimacy with me I ask; "why me?" I say. "What did you live with me, which pain did you overcome with me, which issue did you overcome? Since you did not live in any of these, we cannot have a common ground with you. It would start, no conclusion, no development. It would shift from start to the end. (Rojan, Personal Communication, February 2020, own translation; see Appendix B, 5 for the original)

Seeing Rojan after two years when we were inside the same ward, I was not expecting to hear such a desire for indifference from him. The way I got to know him inside the ward, he was highly energetic in driving the collective labor, celebrating every emerging aspect of life inside the ward, trying to find new ways to subvert the prison routine and create novelties, and perhaps most importantly giving care to many other ward-mates who are in need. Even though perhaps it was not always working, he was trying to listen to the problems of his ward-mates, try and come up with solutions, and tell stories about life outside in improvisation that would provoke imagining scenes from daily life together. He was trying to uplift the mood of other ward-mates and even considered himself a sort of healer tending to the not so obvious wounds. He would try to come up with solutions for the person in need and follow up how he is doing later. As he describes in the quote above, he was gradually disappointed in his relations inside the open penitentiary to the point where he became suspicious of everyone's intentions. In his last months of imprisonment, he resorted to self-confinement to preserve what he believed to be good in himself. Two years before our interview, he was passionately defending the rights of the legal prisoners when he encountered them being mistreated by the guards, and invoking other political prisoners to be aware and proactive against the segregation of the prison administration and to defend legal prisoners' rights.

During our frequent talks over the phone, Rojan was constantly complaining about the other prisoners inside the open penitentiary, how they are vulgar and lack basic decencies of morality. One of the questions that he repeatedly asked me over the phone was "how can someone prevent being corrupted?", for which I had no ready reply but we would talk over this for hours. His desire for indifference in appearance was a result of recurring disappointments on not being able to sustain the relations of care. It was, in fact, a very strong desire for being able to continue the relations of care inside the political ward, yet it was far from being satisfactory for Rojan.

> In the open [penitentiary] you wouldn't find the intimacy existing in the closed [penitentiary]. Ok, for example, some people could be outweighed by a criminal group voicing a totally humane issue. There are things like "let's silence this one, for tomorrow he might get under our feet. Let's throw him in, make him scared. Once he is deprived of his freedom for a bit he won't meddle in such affairs again." But this won't work on the closed [penitentiary]. In the closed [penitentiary] you know approximately who is inside for which case or issue. And there is no luxury of lying there because transparency is at the forefront, there is intimacy at the forefront. By transparency I mean this: like unfriendly questions, questions, questions; all in all if there is a [case] file-and if you are not fooling us- sooner or later one day that file will come onto the surface. So, if there is no such file, I mean when you say "aa I have a file" about a file that is not yours, no one will listen to your story. I mean you need to have a dream or I do not know… (Rojan, Personal Communication, February 2020, own translation; see Appendix B, 6 for the original)

The importance Rojan puts on the case file is not only his approach but reflects a widespread tendency in how the state documents can play a role in both the administrative function within the repressive institutions and also the identification processes of the prisoners. Following Yael Navaro-Yashin's approach on the production of documents in the internationally unrecognized Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in her *The Make-Believe Space: Affective Geography in a Post-War Polity* (2012), one can look at how the documents produced by the state to mark threats to the people opens up an affective space inside the prison. The process of imprisonment is accompanied by the production of numerous different documents ranging from the papers forged for the police custody, list of items belonging to the

prisoner checked to be stored, receipts of the purchases from the canteen, visitors list, and courthouse documents. Among them, the bill of indictment plays the crucial role for both how the imprisonment and the trial will take place, and at the same time signifies the action the prisoner is associated with. It is the distorted memory of the moment that leads one into prison as it contains traces of the prisoner's story where it is framed within the dichotomy of guilt and innocence. In the first part the document states the id information of the prisoner, which crime he is accused of and what are the proofs for persecution. The second part describes the context of the case and how it relates to the broader context, and the third part presents the suggested proofs that justify the arrest and imprisonment of the accused. While the function it serves for the state's administrative and penal operations is more straightforward, the significance for the political prisoners varies. The most widespread way the bill of indictment is received by the political prisoner is the one that Rojan describes; it is the definitive sign of the unjust imprisonment, the arbitrary state violence directed towards the political prisoner. Contrary to the marking of the state's accusations and imposition of guilt, the bill of indictment is the mark of honor showing the political prisoner's righteousness. The counter valorization of the document is enhanced by the ever proliferation of what constitutes a crime of terror in the legal practices of the state and the association processes that takes long leaps in reasoning that speaks only to itself during the state of emergency and massive political purges. The bill of indictment, as a legal document that claims to be the sole source of truth, presents itself as a paper of a public institution. It is not the public itself but claims to represent its interests, and thereby is assumed to be deprived of personalities, private interests, or subjectivity. It holds the claim to be the rational reason for universal justice deprived of emotions. It signifies the suffering of the political prisoners due to

the misidentification of the state, at the same time it signifies the common ethical ground where political prisoners can align themselves together and make a collective living inside the ward. As Rojan closely associates the case files of political prisoners to signify their desire and dream for another world.

Having such constitutive power for both the legal processes and the identification processes of the political prisoners, receiving the document is of great importance. However, many political prisoners have been suffering from being in prison without the bill of indictment for months or even for years in some cases. Not even knowing what they are accused of or when the court hearing is going to take place, it is an extremely precarious position to be in that aggravates anxiety as the unpredictability with regards to the end of imprisonment and the probability of crises emerging prevents a relative stability on the object of thought.

During the police custody and the police transferring me from the university campus to local jail, then to the police headquarters, to Metris prison, and eventually to the Silivri Prison Complex, I was thinking of myself as being drifted to the outside of the public. To me compared to my time of escaping the police, everything was now definite as I was in prison now. It was the end point where I was captured and my personal belongings were taken to be investigated. There was nothing to hide with regards to my political stance and there was no need for it. I had the false assumption to think that this would be the case for everyone else, yet soon after talking openly about my case I was warned by other ward-mates not to talk or ask about the case files. As most of the people in our ward were not convicted but only arrested, there was a common idea to care for the circulation of information inside the ward so as not to make a bad influence on the court decision. Such a fear of transferring the information to the prison administration was based on the ideas that

the conversations inside the ward could be easily recorded in audio and the state could send or recruit a spy inside the ward. Even though such paranoia could be justified through various stories on when such instances happen, there are a considerable amount of stories that would tell when it becomes a violent tool among the ward-mates.

There were security cameras in commonplaces such as the upstairs hallway, the hall, and the yard. The material conditions of the wards and overcrowding make secrecy or privacy a near impossibility among the prisoners, as the surveillance of prison administration results in constant exposure in common places. In this sense, the community inside the ward can be understood as a community exposed in a double sense, both as to its members' exposure to one another and the community's exposure to the state. Erving Goffman (1961) describes this as a contaminative exposure where territories of the self are violated through the invasion of the boundaries set by the individual and the profanation of the embodied self. Such exposure shapes the social reality and its dynamics, as the political ward becomes an *intimate public space*. It is both intimate and public in the sense that the materiality of the prison ward prevents distance that is constitutive of the self while being based on constant exposure. Such a condition structures the self as necessarily collective and shapes how one loves and cares for the other. Conceptualizing the political ward as a public space here is not to argue the publicness of an urban space could be applied within the prison context, instead it is shaped by the intensified segregation of the state within the prison.

The intimacy among the political prisoners is not merely a result of material surroundings and overcrowding. The contention between the architecture of the prison and the architecture of the political prisoners composes the production of

social space inside the ward. It is the constant everyday encounter with the state. The very architecture itself, and being surrounded by the state enables such a recurring encounter. The intimate public space of political prisoners is the constant recurring of that encounter with the impossibility of escaping outside the reach of the state; the prison walls, surveillance cameras, body search, headcounts, filling forms and receipts to the state to get subsistence or medicare, meeting your visitors under prison guards' supervision, letters from and to the outside being read by the prison administration. Besides the presence of the state in each interaction with outside the ward, one of the primary punitive functions of prison relies on its ever existing violence through the prison walls, segregating communities inside the prison through wards and the prisoners from the public.

I asked Rojan what was his first impressions when he entered the ward and he briefly talked about his expectations and what actually happened:

> Like I said, you fall into jail. At that moment you want the whole world to collapse, you see? You bet you want it at that moment; let the whole world just collapse but do not let me go into those four walls. Anyway, after a while inside the jail, the cops take you to the hole or prison they deemed appropriate. In that place where people say "oo I cannot live there at all, I would die there", you see the flowers blooming. You enter inside, it's so relaxed, so fresh. Got it? There is a flood of human love, they greet you in such a way. You say "oo, where did I conquer, I had no idea I was a conqueror." Then you see people are telling you only "I want to accept you as you are, with your fault, with your sin, or with whatever some people called crime as, I accept you, welcome." Someone giving you his shoes, someone offering his slippers, someone giving you a brand new towel, a brand new underwear… (Rojan, Personal Communication, February 2020, own translation; see Appendix B, 7 for the original)

Rojan describes how he was afraid of going to spend time inside the prison with all the widespread imagery of prison as a space of suffering, a point where life stops and time stands still. Meeting with other political prisoners, he talks about how he felt like a conqueror and overwhelmed by people showing their love and care for him. When Rojan talks about conquering and being a conqueror, he refers to the sense of achievement and the dignity it entails. Rojan enjoys using vivid imagery, metaphors, and analogies in his narrations, and he talks about this in a joking manner. Within the

setting of political prisoner imaginary, this refers to the actions that are criminalized by the state, leading to the political imprisonment, yet they correspond to the rightful acts of speaking the truth or doing the right thing. The intimacy among the political prisoners is based on a restoration of their value after the criminalization of the body through police violence, poor conditions of jail, court hearings, dispossession from the belongings and the loved ones, and so on. When Rojan illustrates his feelings of recognized as a conqueror, it is an attempt at returning the lost dignity for the arriver who might have went through torture. It is not a hero that could be singled out but everyone sharing a part of unjustifiable violence for doing something right. Self-valorization of political prisoners starts from the first scene of entering the ward and extends over to the relations of solidarity, care, and love.

When I asked Roni about his perspective on "paying the price" and how does he relate his own experience with regards to that, he was approaching the issue with some caution:

> I mean actually, when I look at it from my own angle, personally I do not consider this as paying the price because there are a lot of people in my environment, families or relatives of a lot of people spending 15 years or 20 years in prison. So there are people whom I know remotely and there are people I know personally. I cannot say "I paid the price" next to them with doing time for 4-5 months. In a sense, it would be an insult to them. (Roni, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix A, 6 for the original)

For Roni, his own imprisonment was not a matter of paying a price, as it might overshadow people who paid heavier prices. He further explained this was due to the fact that he was not convicted when he was in prison but only arrested. Even though he was sentenced for a definitive prison time after his release, escaped abroad because of that and continued political campaigning, he is reluctant to consider both his arrest time in prison and his subsequent political immigration as paying the price. However, it is also important to note that he did not attempt to glorify people who paid the price but consider paying respects to them as a moral obligation.

Roni further elaborated on what really matters for him with regards to being involved in the movement and what is shared among its community:

> I mean this is different for everyone but doing it does not matter. Actually, what matters is taking this risk. If you take this risk -perhaps you won't do time- but everything ends there when you take this risk. (Roni, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix A, 7 for the original)

Roni approaches morality and ethics with a practical focus as he frequently talks about the need for avoiding "unnecessary heroisms" that could put someone in a disadvantageous position without getting an actual benefit except for personal satisfaction (Roni, personal communication, March 2022). In fact, inside the ward most of the stories told about virtuous acts performed by revolutionaries or activists implied their cunning characteristics in fooling or surprising the police and avoiding getting any harm thanks to their wit. Roni's take on paying the price, doing time, and their relation to political activity is a contingent one, as the movement itself involves people who share a vulnerable position with regards to political imprisonment.

Berrin has a more inclusive and affirmative approach towards what can be considered as paying the price as he talks about its significance as an idea among the political prisoners:

> You literally pay the price of something, showing opposition, resisting. Or I do not know these are not big incidents for everyone of course, especially considering people who entered for propaganda [crimes] but there is still such a thing as paying the price. And this is an idea that keeps up people psychologically. Especially for political criminals, the difference between legal criminals and political criminals is an important difference. We did not enter prison because of immoral, shameful, or something that goes against the basic social rules but because of dissent. And this gives strength to people on why they are inside and how time passes. It's an idea paying the price, an idea that grants the will to resist. The reality of it is also, I think, paying the price. I think of it as literally paying the price. (Berrin, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix C, 1 for the original)

Berrin makes a direct connection between imprisonment of political prisoners and paying the price for resistance. Even though he puts a distance to "paying the price" by emphasizing that it is an idea that has a social function for the political prisoners,

he considers it as an idea that holds a truth value with regards to what it means to become a political prisoner.

After talking about paying the price in a general sense, thinking about his own imprisonment with regards to paying the price, Berrin wanted to elaborate further on different degrees and forms paying a price as he was also considering the moral implications of what he talks about. He laughed once he combined what he said about paying the price and his own political imprisonment:

> What is funny for me is entering prison without doing so much of a thing. I do not know, from my perspective, it was not due to a long-term, or an activism or leftism that really had the capacity for making a change, making a transformation but due to a tiny miny matter. Nevertheless, it is paying the price… It's not like you are paying this price for your own personal goal. There are already people who pay this price, you make a contribution to that. So you become a part of something. You become part of the price a movement is paying, you see. (Berrin, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix C, 2 for the original)

Coming to a similar consideration with Roni's narration, Berrin was drawing a distinction of a more genuine form of paying the price and comparing it with lighter cases. He emphasizes the impersonality of paying the price, that is the selflessness within sacrifice. Berrin suggests that through political imprisonment, one takes her/his respective part in history that is already unfolding, sharing the suffering that a movement is subjected to. Just like Roni, Berrin also had accepted the imprisonment as a possibility that could come upon him as he says: "It was a probability in my mind because there is such a circumstance where constantly people are going to prison, so I was naturally aware there was a probability of me going to prison" (Berrin, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix C, 3 for the original).

Bargu (2014) describes the growing predominance of sacrificial acts among the Marxist organizations in Turkey since the 1970s. From numerous literary texts to movies and songs, the figure of the political prisoner has been associated with such sacrificial political action for the people. Bargu argues that the death fast struggle has

been constitutive in reconfiguration of Marxism in Turkey into a secularized political theology. What she calls Sacrificial Marxism operates as a secular theology institutionalized within the radical left and enhanced through symbolism over death, martyrdom, and sacrifice for the cause. While such narrative on sacrifice among the Turkish left does have its resonations in many aspects, it emphasizes a particular militant subjectivity among the radical Turkish socialists.[4] The dominant imaginary with regards to sacrifice and paying the price among the Turkish leftists calls up an imaginary of warfare where one navigates across notions such as glorification of revolutionary martyrs, paying the price, reaching victory and immortality. While the significance of such imagery within the historical setting cannot be denied, it is also important to note how diverging imaginaries have been strongly dismissed or addressed as belonging to an enemy.

George Bataille, in his *Theory of Religion (*1992) points out that death in the literal sense is not the necessity for the divinity that emerges out of sacrifice practices, but death is one of the illuminators of the meaning of sacrifice. According to Battaile, there is no necessary link between death and sacrifice, and divine sacrifices do not necessarily involve blood or death. He argues that the practice of sacrifice is founded on the notions of relinquishment and gift. He argues that what is shared between sacrifice and death is the restoration of the value of the body through a relinquishment that is lost through what he calls the real order (the utilitarian society of labor). According to Battaile, what is achieved through sacrifice is the relief from the order of things where the affirmation of intimate life is negated and death is where such an affirmation of intimate life is fully revealed.

[4] It could be argued that significant differences are evident between the Turkish left and the Kurdish left with regards to valorization and affirmation of life. Even among the Turkish left the totalistic militant subjectivity is only one of the many different ways the revolutionary imaginary takes form.

Rojan did not commit himself to the cause for many years and suffered for years in prison before he got a sense of his value being restored beyond the utilitarian normativity but it was the intimacy of the political ward where everyone was sharing what they have and care for one another with love. Even though Roni shows utmost respect for people who suffered tremendously for the movement and sees it shameful to consider his own experience to be considered the same, he does not glorify self-destructive sacrificial acts, avoids heroisms that appear unnecessary to him, and sees value in accepting the vulnerability of being in the movement. Berrin acknowledges different degrees and forms of sacrificial contribution for the movement but still considers lighter imprisonment cases as paying a price for a movement that is already paying the price, sharing and overcoming the suffering together. While one could find many other different expressions and imagination of political imprisonment and its relation to paying the price, sacrifice, and intimacy, one distinctive way of making sense of political imprisonment appears within the context of the study. It is imagining the political ward as an intimate public space constituted by the marking of the state signifying a political movement's vulnerability, as intimacy implies a desire for an absence of individuality. While sacrificial act for the community and acceptance of vulnerability renders the way into the ward, inside the ward sacrifice and intimacy is practiced through relations of gift, care and love among the political prisoners.

3.2 The political ward: prison setting and its subversion

> I said "thankfully I did not enter because of a legal crime such as injuring someone. I entered because of what I believed in." After that the prison did not appear as a horrible place to me. For twenty days, I mean, for those twenty days friends did not make me feel like I was in prison." (Roni, Personal Communication, October 2021, own translation; see Appendix A, 8 for the original)

Silivri prison complex is a giant one built on 955.000 square meters of land with the capacity of holding approximately 11.000 prisoners inside. It contains 10 prisons inside and has been advertised to be the biggest prison complex in Europe. During its construction and the early years of its use, Silivri Prison Complex was announced as a European type prison with high security, newest available technologies, and conditions of a 5 star hotel even a palace compared to the older prisons in Turkey (Milliyet, 2008). Just as the political prisoners' collective memory tells the story, one could trace the excessive increase in the capacity by adding new beds into the rooms. The initial design and the furniture makes itself visible from the different material used in one of the beds inside each room. While the rooms were designed to provide private room for each prisoner, a blue coloured bed was multiplied by added bunker beds in gray making the capacity for one room 6 prisoners.

The prisoners and the sections are divided first into two categories: adli (legal) and siyasi (political). Political prisoners and wards are sectioned as terror and non-terror. Prisoners accused of terror activity are also sectioned according to different organizations: Gülenists, the Turkish Left, ISIS, PKK. Within PKK wards the prisoners have been sectioned again into two categories: aligned (*taraflı*) and non-aligned (*tarafsız*). Here aligned implies that prisoners in these wards either are convicts or will make political defense in the court. The ward we were in was called non-aligned terror by the guards. This plays a crucial role in understanding the dynamics within the ward since almost every prisoner inside this ward had a precarious condition of being imprisoned. Besides prisoners that would not make political defense in the court, some prisoners with heavier cases were also there because they considered the aligned wards to be too disciplined and rigidly

structured. By no means, of course, the non-aligned wards were isolated from the others.

Communication among the wards was sustained through throwing batteries wrapped in paper letters and plastic water bottles enwrapped with letters. Water bottles were used for other logistical purposes such as to trade among wards' craftsmen and other prisoners, especially the accessories made with using the available material. As there is no access and usage of money except for buying a shortlist of items of the prison administration, cigarettes were used as a medium of exchange. Primarily the convicts in other wards who have been staying for longer periods of time were trying to cover up their cigarette expenses and even possibly make a subsistence that would reduce their dependency on other prisoners or people outside providing for them.

Every former political prisoner I talked to remembers very vividly the day they entered the ward and their first impressions. Although there might be slight differences in each of them, they are descriptions of a series of encounters that cheers one up, restores the dignity and morale after the police custody, and is full of joy and relief. My own entrance was no different in this regard.

With a bag, a pillow, and a mattress at my hands trying to carry them all staggering, every now and then dropping some of them, looking for one of the guards to notice that it is too much for me to carry on my own and help out. Exhausted, with all the sweat, dirt, and stink I accumulated throughout the process, walking down the corridors of the prison, I reached the doors of the ward, people were looking through the small window of one of the metal doors. I dropped down everything I was carrying and the guardian ordered me to open my arms and legs, and searched me. As he opened the door, one of the student prisoners came in,

grabbed everything one by one, and took them inside. As I entered the yard of the ward, everyone was there in the yard aligned looking at me with a lovely gaze. People welcomed me and shook hands with me one by one, except for the elder prisoners in the ward. After my solitary small little adventure, I felt like I was in heaven. Finally, I could express my feelings and there were people who care. I told them “I’m so happy to be here, I cannot put it into words” with an enthusiastic and crying tone. They first tried to comfort me and asked me if I wanted any food or water. I saw the teapot boiling and people getting their tea inside the common hall. I said with a tone of surprise in my voice “you have tea, oh how I missed a cup of tea.” Initially, it was enough to be just there sitting in the yard with some of my friends and other people whom I just met. I asked for a cigarette to slow myself down.

A prisoner named Ciwan told me “You would feel much better if we cut your hair and beard”, I rejected him kindly twice. But he was so insistent and was so lovely in his insistence, I told him “Okay, I see that you really want to give me a haircut. At least just to make you happy, let’s do it. But only the beard, we are not touching my hair.” We went inside the hall. He grabbed some old newspapers and opened them on the floor to make a big square. Then he put a plastic stool in the middle of it and asked me to sit down there. I sat down and he grabbed a plastic garbage bag, opened it up and cut it with a knife to make a space for my head. Then someone brought an electric razor, Ciwan made me wear the plastic garbage bag, and cut my beard. By setting up a small barbershop inside the common hall, he already made me forget that I was in prison for a while, playing with the grim material setting of punishment. Everyone kept asking me if I needed anything, offering me some things that I might eventually need. After a while, I found out that they already placed my bed in one of the rooms and even prepared it for me.

Just as Roni and Rojan describe the scene of entering the political prisoners' ward, my own experience as well, encountering people lined up inside the ward's yard to greet me with gazes full of love, and the care they provided for me was overwhelmingly joyful. After being in constant displacement with harsh conditions and treatment during the police custody, entering the ward triggers a process of finding a place in a new terrain of established meanings and practices.

There were thirty-three inhabitants in the ward with seven rooms, five rooms on the second floor, and two rooms on the first floor. From the wards' entrance doors on the common hall and the yard to the bathroom and sleeping rooms' doors, every single door was a blue-colored heavy metal door that requires some extra muscular effort to move and inescapably makes a harsh metallic sound of moving or hitting a surface. Even the windows in the rooms and the common hall looking towards the yard had metal bars on them reducing a relative sense of openness. Going out to the yard accessible to the ward and the prison administration only, one would see the concrete floor with sewage in the center and two poles to be used for putting on the volleyball net. Surrounded by gray walls with the painting falling down because of years of neglect, one could aspire to set his eyes for a distance longer than 10 meters which is approximately the longest distance inside the yard. With such an aspiration one might be tempted to look at the sky through the frame of rectangle-shaped barbed wires applied to the roof. Yet besides the spoiling existence of barbed wires in the scenery of looking at the sky, one would not see a longer distance but only have a sense of infinity. Such a widely romanticized image about looking at the sky inside a prison yard to get a sense of freedom appeared to be completely unsatisfactory to me. It was not inspirational, empowering, or emancipating in any sense but one would see the sun and the clouds moving, sometimes a prison staff collecting thrown items

from the roof, a plane passing by to its destination, in other words, just the earth going on round and round regardless of everything. If anything, looking at the sky after a while was beginning to fill me up with anxiety. If one were to sit down in the yard, close his eyes, and just listen to the surrounding sounds when the ward is calm, one could get a chance of hearing the sounds coming from other yards in recurring echoes. As prisoners in other wards hit the volleyball, the soundwaves emerging from hitting the volleyball reflect rapidly in milliseconds on numerous surfaces on the walls and coming to your ears. You hear the sound multiplied in instant echoes resulting from the very architecture of the prison complex, giving you the sense of how the number of wards just extends over to the surrounding space at a great distance. In other words, interacting with the major surroundings was primarily reminding me of the very fact that I was in prison and there was no escape. Instead, one ought to look at the eyes of the other prisoners sharing the similar conditions for similar reasons to get a sense of freedom or openness.

What was giving me inspiration, enthusiasm, joy, or a sense of openness was the fellow ward-mates starting a new day, setting up their own material settings, telling each other stories, helping out each other, playing games, making decisions collectively, inventing new ways to solve the problems inside the ward. Being confined in an overcrowded prison ward, I remember myself watching people in constant motion and interaction with one another, transgressing the predesignated individual boundaries by forming up assemblages, dispersing them again and reforming. Within the architectural and structural constraints of the prison setting one would enter into the other by opening himself to others, eventually blurring the individual boundaries through a socially-materially necessary transgression.

The more I saw through the ways political prisoners were improving their conditions, making a living inside the ward, and creating their own order of things, the more I was amazed. It was rejecting the prison in action, living according to their ethics and aesthetics - subverting the punishment by playing with it. After all, sadness was a contagious disease that would complete the punishment and the violence directed at us. Forgetting the fact that you are in prison as Roni describes was a way of fantasmatic escape, a way of resisting among many others. Özge Nadide Serin (2013) with a focus on the death fasts, writes about the way political prisoners get a feeling of escape through *volta*, one of the most essential practices for the prisoners in Turkey. It is pacing back and forth in cycles, entering into a trance-like state, forgetting the passing of time, and mastering the penal time in endless footsteps. If the prison was a space designed for punishment, to make people suffer in grief, then the resistance is to recreate that space into a space of enjoyment and dreams.

The limited list of items that could be bought from the canteen is in fact smaller than it appears. Some of the items were not being provided by the prison administration on the basis of being potentially used for purposes that would create disorder, rioting or escape. Not being able to buy glue from the canteen, political prisoners were using a cheap Colgate toothpaste with certain chemical ingredients to make use of as a glue as the heat transformed it into adhesive. Heating a piece of it with a lighter and sticking it onto the wall would enable one to decorate his wall with pictures or posters. Rojan was very enthusiastic about creating his own world in his room. He bought Colgate, tablecloths, and a number of prayer rugs from the canteen. He cut the tablecloths into pieces according to his design, glued them over the whole wall with Colgate to make it appear like a wallpaper, and put all the prayer rugs onto

the ground so that people would enter the room barefoot with seeing ornaments on the floor, giving a sense of home. Inviting other ward-mates to come as a guest into his home, setting up a date for the special occasions, offering them coffee and snacks, talking about numerous topics, consoling and cheering people up if there was a need for it.

Six people sharing a small room, there was only one table to study or work on for each room but even the table was not provided by the prison administration. By breaking the lockers in the corridor into pieces, warping the long metal pieces on the sides 90 degrees with force and nailing them on the wall, we had our handmade working tables. As the exposure to white flourecent light 24 hours a day without having access to sunlight during my jail time under the police custody was a form of torture to me, I was feeling particularly disturbed by seeing white flourecent light everywhere including my own ward-room. As I was sleeping on the top of the bunker bed on the narrowing side of the ceiling, the light was just above me. At the first possibility, I got cardboard and cut it according to the size of the lamp, wrapped it around and sealed it with Colgate. The result was a mellow yellow night lamp that makes me calm as I read, dream or think. However, Roni was not happy with the change as he was sleeping below me and getting even less of a light to read before sleeping. Then I broke the seal and made it adjustable according to momentary needs, negotiating the space and reconfiguring according to the moment. The common places such as the hall and the yard were mostly empty during the day to be designed and set up according to the needs and wants of the day.

> I mean “here what can we do, what can we enjoy?” So after all, since we are not free, without giving discomfort to other friends or without giving even a tiny damage to their freedom, how can we enjoy? This is actually a very difficult thing. I mean let’s say, you cannot go out to the yard and sing very loudly, you cannot go out at certain hours in the morning and play volleyball as you like, or you cannot chant. (Roni, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix A, 9 for the original)

Roni formulates the challenges that emerge from living inside the ward with regards to how one could find his way into enjoyment without disturbing another ward-mate. He further elaborates on how living together inside the prison ward requires one to get to know about his ward-mate and the unwritten timeline that unfolds itself through habits. It is important to note that Roni portrays breaking the routine as a significant element of enjoyment inside the ward, yet it is ever changing through the novelties emerging from one's self and the others'.

> So one needs to learn these time periods. These are not written down somewhere but life that goes on inside the prison puts somethings right on the track -the order is definite. In fact, there is such a thing for example: When you stay too long, for instance, I will know when my friend next to me is going to smoke a cigarette or when he is going to get hungry -the meal times are fixed but- or when he will want to go upstairs I come to a level where I can more or less guess. He gets to know me in the same way as well. That's the thing. After solving these, then you create time slots for yourself within those time periods. By asking "what can I do at that time slot" one needs to try different things everyday because when the same things happen it won't be enjoyable. I mean it would make it harder to pass time. (Roni, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix A, 10 for the original)

One of the most fundamental political conflicts between the prison administration and the prisoners was thereby the struggle over space and its configuration: the architecture of the state and the architecture of the political prisoners. Here, the concept of architecture needs to be understood as the practice of production of space in terms of Henri Lefebvre's conceptualization of social space (Stanek 2014).[5] As the state produces the space of ever proliferating constraints and regulations over the social relations with the architecture of prison, the political prisoners produce the space of emancipation through relations of solidarity and enjoyment.

The decision-making was primarily taking place during the weekly meetings where everyone could voice their problems, suggestions, or concerns over the

[5] To read about the applications of Henri Lefebvre's theorizations on space in the Turkish context, see Husik Ghulyan, "Lefebvre's Production of Space in the Context of Turkey: A Comprehensive Literature Survey", *Literature Review – Original Research, Sage Publications,* July-September 2019, pp. 1–14.

ongoing life inside the ward. Everyone had a right to propose an issue to discuss together and perhaps that could lead to an agreement over a decision regarding the matter. Even if the issue was not resolved during the meeting, it would open up ways for it to be resolved in time as it is now known to every ward-mate. As we were constantly drinking tea throughout the day and considered it to be one of our important common enjoyments inside the ward, I had the desire to improve our tea quality. Pouring down a cup of tea, one could see a purple-gray layer shining on the surface signaling harmful elements and giving a bad taste to the sip. After a small investigation into the matter I learned that this was due to the tap water we were using. In one of the meetings I addressed this issue and asked if it would be possible to use bottled drinking water to brew tea. And I proposed that perhaps people with relatively better income could cover the expenses if everyone agrees to. A more experienced ward-mate explained in the meeting that they have been aware of this issue and they calculated the expenses and tried to come up with a solution but it did not appear to be feasible in any account. Subsequently, we moved on to other subjects. Several days later, another ward-mate came up and introduced his hand-made water sanitation device. He had collected wide plastic water bottles and cut them into half. Using the pouring end of the bottles, he put kitchen sponges on the end of each bottle and assembled them in a vertical line. We hung it over the stairs, put a big plastic bottle filled with tap water just over it to slowly drip from the small hole we opened and filtered through multiple layers of sponges. It was taking some time and effort but as a result we were having decent cups of tea without the purple-gray layer on its surface and a better taste of the tea itself.

> Well, actually it did not hold decision making but… In fact, the admin's fundamental thing there, for instance, its fundamental mission was this: the election of a representative against the [prison] administration. When the ward has a problem, if there is anyone to discuss this with the [prison] administration it's the representative -not everyone can go. For example, when the ward has a problem you could go to him. Otherwise, the admin did not hold any

> decision-making power whatsoever. Not like "you are going to do that, I will do this, he will do that." That was how the admin, its mission there was like that. That's why it was not that important. In terms of having a representative, it made more sense and was more logical for it to be performed by someone with a [distinct] political stance. (Roni, Personal Communication, October 2021, own translation; see Appendix A, 11 for the original)

The prison administration makes a requirement that each ward has to have a representative which initially appears as a position of political power. However, as Roni describes this was not corresponding to the power of ruling per se. The representative was a position of responsibility among others to communicate with the prison administration for the demands of the prisoners inside the ward. He could be taken off from the position by other prisoners inside the ward if there was dissatisfaction with his performance. It was a position where everyone inside the ward could decide who could hold it by holding an election with secret ballots when there was a need to change it. Having to select a representative with a majority gave more of a symbolic idea of what the people inside the ward wanted. While the election of a representative did not entail a direct effect for the relations inside the ward, it gave a sense of a looser understanding of what was wrong and what was desired. From what my other ward-mates were telling me they went through a change of the ward representative some weeks before I entered the ward. As they told me, the former representative was selected due to his experience of being in prison several times and engaged in politics for decades. However, he was taken off from the position due to having a harsh attitude and too much involvement in other prisoners' daily lives.

3.3 Join life brother!: maintenance, cleaning up, well-being

One of the basic and most emphasized necessary work was cleaning up of the ward. Once a week (on Saturdays) there was a 'general cleaning' where a comprehensive cleaning up of the ward was taking place starting from the rooms to the hall and the

yard. It was considered as a collective work that carries to bring everyone together. Especially among the old Kurdish prisoners voiced by a leftist Kurdish prisoner called Nebih. He was an experienced prisoner inside the ward with abundant stories to tell us. He was always thinking about and caring for the order and the governance of the ward and frequently intervened in others' . In my first days in prison, I was not expected to participate in any of the work inside. There was a for the newcomers to give them time to rest and adapt to his new condition. I did not feel in shock or in need of a long rest, so I tried to participate in the daily cleaning up of the yard. But it was impossible for me to participate because no one was giving me the mop. "You just came here, let it pass for a week".

The invitation to work was evoked by the common phrase "Join life brother!" ["Hayata katıl heval!"]. For a while, it seemed like it referred to mainly collective work of daily and weekly cleaning up of the ward, preparing food and tables, distributing food. However, even after I participated with a satisfactory effort, I kept hearing this invitation directed towards me. Later on I realized that 'participation in life' not only required one to be part of the domestic labor but also meant to keep your spirit up and even inspire and help others.

Berrin was the male prisoner who had a feminine bodily attitude that complicated the taken-granted relations of manhood within the ward. He was the closest body that evokes the idea of women among heterosexual prisoners. There were no taken-granted ways of relating to him and his presence was considered to be of a high value. As we were talking about "joining life" and cleaning up the ward, Berrin remembered his distinctive experience inside the ward:

> Honestly, I was personally privileged in this matter. You know this. Still when there was collective [weekly] cleaning up I was doing something, but when my turn was coming -it [daily cleaning up] was in turns- someone else was doing on my behalf. I mean it was voluntary, not as something I wanted. I was doing it still but less than others. There was also this view about me; "he entered inside and entered depression as well". I mean, I was not

> thinking that I was too bad to help out or participate in something but still I liked the fact that they were having such a caring attitude. I liked it because they had an attitude for looking out. Oh, also there was this thing. When I took a mop or a broom, someone was coming to get it out of my hands. I do not know, maybe they thought that I was not physically able? [he laughs] (Berrin, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix C, 4 for the original)

It was interesting to see that prisoners with more masculine bodily attitudes were not letting Berrin and I participate in the domestic labor to the extent that they were doing. We cannot somehow manage to get the mop into our hands. At some point Berrin started to think that the mop became a phallic object in the sense that having possession over it meant holding power. I remember just as he describes years later, and he was not complaining about this as well:

> There was also this thing, we were talking about this with you; it was pretty much a performance making that clean up, actively taking up tasks, doing work. People doing work are people who have something to say. It's not doing something bodily for the sake of this [having a say], considering the maintenance and making planning, providing an organization were also important. (Berrin, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix C, 5 for the original)

Berrin points out that participation in daily reproductive labor processes inside the ward implied a respectable position with regards to participation in the weekly meetings where discussions and decision-making were taking place. Even though he sees himself not having much to say in the meetings and accordingly not participating in the daily works as much, he is content with such conditions and did not formulate such an unsatisfied desire. That is to say, he thinks having political voice during the meetings was a by-product that does not signify an institutional hierarchy, as "joining life" meant more than just completing tasks of cleaning up.

> I do not think it was all about completing tasks such as finishing the ward's work, cleaning up the surroundings or distributing food etc. Like I said, at the same time it was also a way of collectively caring through exercising our capacities. Because in that space it matters more when someone else is being good or bad. This was also going through the thought of "working iron does not rust." Someone also came to me and recommended it; "if you do not feel well, go clean up or do something", as a friendly recommendation. It was like that of course, what are you going to do if you do not move? So, it was important. Joining life was in a sense joining yourself [he laughs], it also had such a meaning. (Berrin, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix C, 6 for the original)

Berrin draws a connection between the domestic labor inside the ward and collective relations of care that enables our empowerment. It is the political ward reproducing itself through care and nourishment. Being in an enclosed space among a community and waking up to the same place every day, one is acquired with the knowledge that someone having a problem could affect everyone else. Inside the ward, it is not a matter of choice to help someone or not but a very material necessity of living together. Self-interest and the interest of others are intrinsically intertwined, as one cannot simply withdraw to his home and act like that person does not exist the next day. As Berrin formulates nicely by saying "joining life was in a sense joining yourself", imagining joining life implies reaching out to the other that eventually returns back to you and to the community itself.

> Let's say someone has a need. Not only a need but it could be a desire as well. Let's say I want to learn Kurdish, right away they direct me to talk with who might teach Kurdish the best there. Or say someone wants to learn English, they direct him to me, and so on. I think collective action is provided both for solving the basic needs and again reasonable desires like this. For instance, no one would ignore helping in something when they have the capacity for it. (Berrin, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix C, 7 for the original)

Berrin emphasizes that the relationship of care was not only with regards to sustaining a minimum well-being but also to improve for the better through self-education practices inside the ward. Many political prisoners inside the ward and after my release mentioned that the political wards which consisted of mostly convicts were well-established and even provided structured self-education schedules with an extensive curriculum. When some of the students were sharing their concerns about not being able to pursue their educational careers due to possible extension of their imprisonment, some of the ward-mates were joking around by suggesting that they could always continue their education inside the prison.

Berrin further elaborates on what is particular about care relations inside the political ward:

> Caring and being cared for is a function and a need. It is something that is learned and improved. Because of life outside it's more in ready-made forms and happens in accustomed ways. It happens in certain social roles such as your family caring for you or you only caring for the family members. But if you are going to stay inside [the prison] for many years, you need to expand this circle a bit more. Someone else's trouble starts to become much more your problem. It was like that for me. I was listening to personal problems of some people, we were talking and so on. That's how I felt personally; generating solutions or making recommendations, or at least sharing troubles, those kinds of activities were important inside [the prison]. That's how I felt from the others as well generally, when I told them and they listened. It is much more than the intimacy developed among men in the outside world. I think It was a bit like a bromance, an intimacy that was growing. (Berrin, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix C, 8 for the original)

Berrin points out that care relations on life outside are strictly defined and operates according to familiarity and habits. He suggests that being inside the prison ward where family as a unit exist only in relations with outside, entails a possibility of exploring new ways and forms of caring among men. It is an unmapped territory of meanings and practices of care that renders new processes of becoming.

Living in a prison ward comes with the more direct involvement of prisoners among themselves under the apparent necessities resulting from being in an enclosed space. If one has a problem with another prisoner, he cannot just decide not to see him for a while. The social setting in the prison ward requires prisoners to necessarily participate in domestic labor as most of the work consists of that and it has vital importance with regards to keeping one's self and the entire ward healthy -an infectious disease, a virus could quickly spread out to every prisoner. Moreover, care labor becomes an indispensable part of social relations in keeping the well-being of the political ward.

3.4 Fantasy disrupted: infighting and how to deal with it

> In there, what makes you feel like you are in prison is this: for example, two friends are fighting, there emerges an uneasiness and you get it at that moment. At least this is how I got it. One or two times there emerged uneasiness, some friends scuffled one another. I got it at that moment, for example, I am demoralized. For example, you think "I was in prison already, what was I expecting" you say. (Roni, Personal Communication, October 2021, own translation; see Appendix A, 12 for the original)

For Roni what brings back the harsh reality of being in prison is when the harmonious relationship among the political prisoners goes astray. The assumed and forged bonds among political prisoners are at stake, the pre-imagined result of a group of people being in confinement. The community is no more, just as their reasons, interests, goals, and commonality of them are in question. How could a political prisoner be so harsh on another, knowing and sharing the same conditions of harshness being applied to them ever-present? Then one remembers this is just what happens when you put a random group of people in a small space of confinement; they start to have problems and eventually fixate their problems on one another. And we as a ward of political prisoners failed to distinguish ourselves from being merely a group of people, now we appear to ourselves as just prisoners.

> The bond there is very powerful. For example, the bond of comradeship, the bond of friendship… For instance, when I was there I really saw this. See, but when two friends get into a quarrel or when there are many quarrels for an insignificant reason, or when you see physical actions reaching to the level of fighting, you are demoralized. Like the prison inside your head, the profile of the prison inside your head before you enter the prison comes into existence at that moment. And when that happens, you are demoralized, of course, you feel that you are in prison more. That's the issue. Otherwise, before these things happen everyone is already peaceful, they are good with one another, they talk nice and pleasantly, and you have a routine. In order to prevent these from happening, meetings are done once a week -so that everyone can talk about his problem. But when it happens regardless of this, of course, you are demoralized. (Roni, Personal Communication, October 2021, own translation; see Appendix A, 13 for the original)

The popular imagery of prison being a place of excessive vulgarity, prisoners pumping their bodies up for physical strength, empowering oneself at the expense of another, regardless of the actual realities of prison life, resurfaces into the prisoners' imagination of their own embodied experience. There is no enjoyment but sadness dominates the ward, one gets signs of personal resentment, anger and hatred in such recurring bad encounters. Roni seems to put the blame onto the people who are having the fight but, even though he has a point in that, there is more to investigate.

Roni points out the stark contrast between the 'good routine' and its distortion by infighting. He points out one of the precautions included into the

routine of the ward by the political prisoners themselves to prevent infighting: the weekly meetings. As I mentioned in chapter 2.2, the weekly meetings are imagined to have multiple purposes. Besides the decision-making, discussions, and self-organization, the weekly meetings usually contain a session of "self-criticism". These sessions are where internal disputes and any interpersonal issues are expected to be resolved through the practice of self-criticism widely adopted by socialist organizations in Turkey. This practice appears to replace direct confrontation among prisoners but at the same time assumes a particular relation for conflict resolution. The object of criticism, by the form, could not be the other but the subject itself needs to open up itself and expose what is wrong, explicitly or implicitly promise that it won't happen again, and commit to the promise. Exposition of the self is definitely not an easy task to be applied by all, and as expected not everyone or everything would go on to be discussed in these sessions. As the criticism concerns the self and its actions, it opens up for the structure of shame and guilt to be operative in such a setting.

Sara Ahmed, in her *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2004) discusses how shame operates as a binding relation of the subject with itself where the gaze of the other is constitutive. She argues that shame initiated through self-negation involves a sense of exposure and a drive for concealment at the same time. She argues that "in shame, one desires cover precisely because one has already been exposed to others' " and points out how the undesired element in question cannot be simply attributed to another. Even though shame is not explicitly expected, as a constitutive element in forming community the practice of "self-criticism" expects such a self-initiated negation of a quality of the self where the interpersonal limits are defined -one ought not to include criticism of others in his self-criticism.

However, as I discussed in chapter 3.1, the structure of the ward and the other total institutions is that the territories of the self are violated and the self inside the ward is necessarily public in the sense of its double exposure. Inside the ward, the well-defined boundaries of the individual self are already blurred. In this sense, the practice of "self-criticism" at the same time reproduces the individual self and makes it vulnerable by opening it up. As this practice discourages direct confrontation and expression of sadness or anger for the other, there would be gossiping around. In such a small space being overcrowded, most of the people would already have heard about the story of the conflict. As such a form of relation could easily turn into long moments of silence where everyone is expecting some people to initiate the already known disputes, Rojan - enjoying to destroy the routine and seeing the session is stuck- would sometimes start speaking out about what's in everyone's minds by pointing out the faults in people with a friendly attitude.

When "self-criticism" does not work, and if the conflict cannot be resolved in any other way, the possibility of infighting emerges. The threat of infighting is not only a matter of identification process for the political prisoners, but also it makes the whole ward vulnerable to the infiltration of the prison administration and give away its autonomy inside the prison. As a governmental body, the prison administration seeks out to sustain the prison population and any undesired disorder, injury, or death has the possibility of reflecting negatively for the career of the warden. The disputes and the fights not only takes place in the exposure of other ward-mates but also of the prison administration through the security cameras placed in common places.

In our ward, we arrived at a point where there had been recurring infighting between two political prisoners several times. The conflict had gradually become an intensified quarrel with hostility, where it was being discussed in the weekly

meetings and also tried to be solved through other personal interactions. We were at a point where either we would resolve the conflict ourselves or the prison administration would make its own resolution for us as our autonomy would be compromised. At our weekly football field time, playing football with most of the ward-mates, the masculine competitive take on the football game led up to the actual fight between the two. With haste, we tried to separate them, but just as quickly the prison guard entered the field to announce that our time in the football field had ended. We returned back to our ward and started discussing the event to come up with an immediate solution. However, as it was feared, after a short while the prison guards came in to take Selim (one of the inmates involved in the dispute) away from the ward and announced that we won't be able to have access to the football field for the following weeks.

The removal of Selim from the ward appeared to us all arbitrary, why would they take only Selim? There was no reasoning that could be done for the punishment of one and not the other, both of them were aggressors. Could it be the case that Selim is Kurdish but Murat is Turkish? Well, no one could say impossible. Perhaps they were already watching closely on the surveillance cams for a while and made up their minds about which of them should leave to another ward? Or maybe just someone did not like one of them personally? Who knows… Speculations were endless without any information from the administration. I was speechless to see that there was nothing we could do to keep him in the ward and resist against the administration's attempt to take one of our ward-mates away to an unknown. No one really even thought about it because we were broken, to the prison administration and to ourselves for a moment we were just some prisoners. While some of us were being sad about all that was happening, some other ward-mates demanded an urgent

meeting after dinner to make a discussion and decide on how to proceed. Shortly after, in smaller group chats, it was obvious that some wanted Murat to leave as well.

> There was Murat and Selim, I do not know if you remember. They had fights two or three times. Finally they had a fight on the football field. Because of them we were deprived of our two-three weeks of football. The administration took Selim away. Then we said "two people started this problem, this problem is bilateral." It is not unilateral, after all two people fought. Besides, it's not the first time. We said "let's send Murat away". They said "no it's this and that." I said "he should definitely leave" and made my view clearly expressed. Then this was voted on, but did not pass. (Roni, Personal Communication, October 2021, own translation; see Appendix A, 14 for the original)

I was one of the people who voted for Murat to stay. To me, everything escalated so quickly and I did not want another ward-mate leaving in such a way. I cannot see this serving any good for Murat and it was not clear to me that it would be good for the ward as well. In this meeting, Murat was required to stay in his room upstairs and not listen to the discussions so that there won't be any further personal conflicts between him and another. As Roni describes, only a minority wanted him to leave. However, there were no smiling faces but people who made such a difficult decision and the information that a small group of people wanted Murat to leave. A couple of days later, in the morning we saw a mattress put right next to the door in the yard with some personal belongings. "Are they taking someone away? Are they taking Murat? Or is someone new coming in?" It was Murat wanting to leave the ward voluntarily, not to another ward but to a solitary cell. However, he was not there. After hours passed, we learned that they got into a quarrel with his roommates and eventually they convinced him to stay. In the evening one of his close friends came in to collect his stuff.

3.5 Seeing through the walls: illuminations on the life outside

Disruption of the fantasies can be regarded as openings where the associations that sustain the fantasy operational comes under suspicion. Moments of collapse that put the subject at a distance to the scenery, emerging possibility of saying "something

does not add up." After being disappointed, one could insist on the fantasy and look for errors in externalities, or one could abandon or revise the fantasy in the light of emerging novelties that conflict with it. Here, I adopt the concept of "fantasy" from the Lacanian psychoanalytic approach, as it implies an imagined scene where the subject can position her/himself in it (Cowie p.127). As the fantasy always represents the fulfillment of a desire, it becomes recognizable as a fantasy for the subject itself during the moments of its collapse. In this manner, the identification processes of political prisoners and the way the political ward is imagined and organized has a fantasmatic aspect that shapes daily practices of the political prisoners.

The narratives on prison as a corrective institution where prisoners are expected to question themselves while being incarcerated, improve their behaviors and make a redemptive or rehabilitative return to society could be expected not to function with political prisoners as their identification is based on the rejection of their association with crime. Even though the political ideologies or political engagements of political prisoners do not change as the narrative would suggest, the social-material setting of prison does constitute prison as a space where prisoners think and reflect in a different way. The imagery on political prisoners as intellectuals who think and write, the philosophers who ought to lead masses into freedom, is not only an ideological cultural production but also based on the materiality of the prison and political prisoners' relation to it.

> When bad things happen you think bad things, that's what it's all about. I mean those fights, those quarrels damage that perception a bit. Of course, later on you also get used to it. In other words, you start to see it as normal after a while. You start to look at the process of imprisonment in a larger image. You start to see it as normal and you start adapting your psychology accordingly. From then on, when something like this happens you are saddened much less. I think it all depends on the adaptation process. I think one shouldn't frame everything as good because it's not all moonlight and roses. It's not like everything is bad as well. For example, I was thinking that prison was very bad, it was not so bad. It's bad but not too bad. When you enter prison, it is also a mistake to think that the friendliness since that entry will never be broken. I mean nothing lasts that long. Nothing lasts forever like that or it won't last as we desire. That is to say, everything eventually is damaged or destroyed. So you start to realize such things, more about life, about life outside. You start to think about life

> outside with a more luminous mind because there inside the prison you have the possibility of questioning this. You question yourself, you question your environment. In fact, it does not matter for which crime you entered [the prison]. This is how prison is, you question yourself. You question yourself sometimes or you start to know the people around you better -who is actually your friend or not. You learn all these, I mean, actually, in a sense there are some achievements in life for the [imprisoned] person. The cost of all these achievements, of course, is the restriction on freedom, just like there is a cost for everything. (Roni, Personal Communication, October 2021, own translation; see Appendix A, 15 for the original)

Seeing the encounters of infighting inside the ward, it is nevertheless true that we were a group of ordinary people who were put inside four walls. In other words, our identification as political prisoners meant to involve moments of transgression, leakage, or breach because our subversion of the prison setting was by no means ending our imprisonment with its ever existing social-material reality. After observing how witnessing infightings have affected himself, Roni concludes that people are susceptible and are transformed according to what they encounter. For him, figuring out and learning how and why this happens, obtaining knowledge is part of resistance. “Looking at the process of imprisonment in a larger picture”, one might acknowledge that political prisoners are after all not completely different from the legal prisoners. Roni, in a sense, approaches a Lacanian psychoanalytic angle by acknowledging lack as a constitutive part of processes of desire and fantasies. It is a realization that the totality offered by symbolic narratives are doomed to fail, however Roni does not completely abandon the significance of being a political prisoner as distinguished from others and the fantasmatic elements of communal life. He still continues his political engagements without a break after his release and still holds the common morality among the political prisoners to be of great value. His discovery not only gave him insights regarding prison life but the life outside as well. Roni says that he was able to think more clearly about himself, his friends outside, and his life outside. Being inside such a definitive setting as prison and being incarcerated, led Roni to start thinking luminously and abandoning thinking in terms of absolutes.

There is a tricky aspect of having illuminations inside the prison on the life outside, that is the materiality of incarceration as being put inside a concrete cube shapes how the memory and thoughts on the life outside is formed. It is a materiality that constitutes the prisoners' memory as abstracted memory where life appears as outside or distant as one would be deprived of continuous interaction with it. Not having direct access to what is happening on the life outside, one ought to imagine and fictionalize it by building on her/his memory that stands still. Even though prisoners might get some news about the developments happening in the lives of people that they know, it still needs to be fictionalized both by who is transferring the news and the prisoner who receives the news. Months after my release, talking over the phone with Rojan when he was in open penitentiary, he would try to guess what I was doing, what my plans could be for the day, or how I would react to things happening. Mostly, he would be partially correct and partially wrong, perhaps due to the very conditions of incarceration. However, his claim to have the ability to see through the prison walls persisted. Being at a distance and having an abstracted stable object of inquiry enables the scenery of enlightenment, a duration of isolation that reduces information and stimuli intake to open up a space for making sense of the memory.

First time I had a talk with Rojan inside the ward, he was asking a question to another younger ward-mate and he said that he did not have an answer. After asking him what he was wondering so that maybe I could be of help, he asked me: "How does someone save all his memories and not forget the past? This is the question I have been dealing with. I am afraid to forget something from my past while I am here." At that time he was inside for more than two years. I also did not have an answer to the question and the desire to hold on to every memory initially appeared

bizarre to me as someone who entered prison just yesterday. However, after seeing how the prisoners would tell the same stories repeatedly and experiencing the stimuli deprivation myself, I could understand that the imagery on the outside was crucial and in scarcity. The way prison temporality differs from the working class temporality on the outside entails a contrast where being in prison opens up conditions of leisure time for the political prisoners.

> I actually realized this inside; I was, for instance, too busy outside. Like I did not have the time to think. For example, I was working for 11 or 10 hours a day as my profession required. See if we had the time, we were hanging out with friends in a cafe on the weekends. Only chatting, according to the warmth of the moment. When everyone was in good psychology or in a good mood, we would develop good conversations. Also when we come late in the evening, sometimes when there was a need for a march for example, or a press statement, we would go. I mean mine was more based on practice. I was not thinking much [he laughs], let me put it that way. Both for myself and -I mean, like- for the political view I belong to I was not really in a state of thinking. Of course, I was thinking about why we were doing these or we knew how we did them but I did not have the time to and possibility of thinking thoroughly about the details. This was possible inside. Because this was possible inside, I mean, I started to see everything in every aspect much clearer. I started thinking about things which I never thought about before for example. I started questioning lots of aspects of the people whose friendship or political views I had never questioned. Such things happened. From my perspective, I see it in such clarity. Actually, when you look at it as a certain consequence or in a certain meaning, I see time as the reason for me seeing so clearly. Because I did not have much time outside, everything was based on practice. I mean the reason for not having time was that I was working too much. Our job requires a lot of time. For example, from 8 in the morning until 8 in the evening. That's why you do not have time to do many things. I had been working in this profession since I was a child, it was always like this. (Roni, personal communication, October 2021, own translation; see Appendix A, 16 for the original).

As with the working class temporality, even leisure time is lived as an extension of the workplace, the speed of the ever repeating cycle of production and reproduction prevents an opening such as in political prisoner context. Even when Roni engages in political activities, he does not consider the temporality to be changing but appears to him as a continuation of not having time. As the political prisoner subjectivity is based on the rejection of being subjected to prison labor and bodily disciplining practices of the prison administration, the most abundant thing for political prisoners is time. Incarceration as a punishment in itself involves the penalization in terms of time, in other words, the penal regime that enforces imprisonment implies the equation of time served and the crime committed. The Turkish word for serving time

is *hapis yatmak*, *hapis* meaning prison and *yatmak* meaning lying down, implying imprisonment as a process where it is actualized through passage of time. As one of the most widespread practices inside the prison, *volta atmak* (pacing back and forth) appears as a way for the mastery of the penal time (Özge Nadide Serin, 2013, p. 15) and also triggers prisoners' sense of opening up to the outside world.

> When doing volta, what I felt was this; you adapt your body to a rhythm, except from that, you think what are you going to do when you are out or what are you going to do here. I mean this is not only for planning, sometimes you just dream when doing volta. So volta, as you know, is the most widespread physical activity there. When doing volta it becomes more enjoyable, that's why I liked doing volta. There were a lot of times when I did volta by myself especially. After a while, some friends would come and join -that's another story. What Volta contributed to me is thinking in a healthy manner inside prison. This is my perspective on volta. Everyone tells me that volta is a good thing but before going into prison I did not look at volta from this angle. You understand it better by living it. Perhaps not everyone has the same perspective but this is my perspective on volta. I think it grants you the skill for thinking in a healthy manner. I mean you cannot think so well on the bed lying down - I think- or on the table, or sitting together with a friend in the common hall. In volta you withdraw into yourself, withdraw a bit to your own world. I mean that's how I was doing it at least - let me put it that way. That's what I understand from volta, that's what volta contributed to me. So I can tell that I was going for a volta in order to think [he laughs]. (Roni, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix A, 17 for the original)

In contrast to the imagery of prison as a corrective space where prisoner interrogates her/himself, the scene of a prisoner sitting on a corner dreadfully thinking, worrying about the future, allegorically whipping her/himself with guilt and shame, doing volta, as Roni describes, transforms the penality that is based on passage of time into a terrain of enjoyment. Being in a state of mobility with a fixed rhythm, the repeating cycles of movement where one gets a sense of openness to focus on whatever s/he wants to. Even though for Roni volta is something he primarily enjoys by himself, it is at the same time an established social practice inside the prison. While it is possible to see people doing volta individually on the outside, the prison is a space where it has a whole other meaning when done together. Roni describes volta as a practice where an intensified return to the inside is happening, a withdrawal that enables a greater opening. Entering a state of mobility with a fixed rhythm, where one could approach the familiar objects of inquiry in a different manner.

CHAPTER 4

GETTING OUT

After we got to a pause during our interview, I asked Rojan a question to hear where his desires lie as he was about to be released some months later: “For a moment, imagine anything you want could happen, what would you like to see happening?”

> I wish to find what I have lost. Love… A person… They took love from me. I wish she didn’t laugh… In fact, you know what I said to a girl one day? She talks, she talks -our first meeting… “Don’t say anything”, I said, “I would believe anything you say.” That person I never got to know, you see, broke me down. I don’t even want to remember her name. She left me with such pain that I see her in every woman I look at. And especially when you are inside four walls, you extremely want to see that someone can do something for you regardless of the conditions. You want this with your whole heart. I lost love, I lost belief, I lost trust, I lost waiting. I learned not to care, not to see, not to hear, not to know. Actually the secret of life is very simple: indifference. (Rojan, Personal Communication, February 2020, own translation; see Appendix B, 8 for the original).

I knew what he was talking about. We talked about this when we were inside the ward together. His imprisonment followed his significant other leaving him, and he had been suffering from heartbreak. He was repeatedly talking about romantic relationships being infiltrated by the state, ministries and judges entering the relationships, violating their privacy. As Rojan ends up his words with solving the secret of life being indifference, his initial words for his desire to find love were appearing in conflict. Throughout our conversations he was expressing his disappointments in different ways. I asked him if he was saying all these for particularly romantic relationships because in my memory Rojan that I got to know inside the prison was far away from such a desire for indifference. He told me that it was not only about romantic relationships but in a broader sense.

> Actually, I owe this to such people: the person who doesn’t show up on the visiting day after promising to visit -the person I was waiting for specifically, the person who didn’t write letters after promising to write, or the people for whose sake I was imprisoned for… That is inexpressible. Through that door, that letter came for someone who wasn’t beneficial for anything in life -in terms of love- and no letters for you. This cannot be expressed, it needs to

> be lived. Everyone hurted [me], everyone broke [my heart]. (Rojan, Personal Communication, February 2020, own translation; see Appendix B, 9 for the original)

Rojan was predominantly disappointed in the people outside the prison with whom he imagines a community that shares a basic common morality. His suffering for the others by doing time in prison, his sacrifices for the benefit of others, all was unreciprocated to him. “Either we will break down all the walls, or we will be silent” he told me.

In this chapter, I discuss the transition from the political ward into post-prison life. The chapter elaborates on the temporality of political prisoners in contrast to the narratives of prison time that follows the judicial fiction of prison time as punishment. The chapter argues that the release as a moment of rupture is constitutive in the way political prisoner temporality takes place. By elaborating on post-prison encounters, the chapter discusses the transformation of the relations of care after the reintroduction of the private through the institution of family. As the reintroduction of the private at the same time entails imagining the public through its separation from the private, the chapter explores how the public space is experienced by the political prisoner after the release.

4.1 Prison temporality and the release

The imprisonment process involves a double rupture that could be defined by two events: the arrest and the release. While these events have a drastic effect on the prisoner’s life, it is also moments where the state performs its claim for sovereignty by reserving itself to be the sole decision-making agent with the capacity to physically enforce its verdict. The release is a moment that takes a crucial part in both fantasies on post-prison life and the temporality of the prisoners. As the prison life involves some basic affective elements of incarceration such as not being able to

see new places and being in a low stimulus environment, the segregation from a greater public space and being transported to the outskirts of the cities enables the prison public space through its liminality. For many prisoners, their imprisonment time is not a living time but also could not be considered as a dead time, either. The notion of wasted time is one of the most common ways prison time is considered both by the prisoners and the people who were never imprisoned to frame the content of the punishment. Spending time inside the prison as the primary element of the punishment, the prisoners talk about their wasted years with regards to what they could have done if they were outside in that duration; graduating, earning money, proceeding or sustaining their career, and so on. Making incarceration as a punishment in itself with the introduction of modern prisons involves a process of abstraction. As the court gives out prison sentences, the abstraction of time, criminal act, and labor is required for the state in order to be able to give rational justification for the punishment. It is the principle of exchange between equivalents granting for the fairness of punishment fitting the crime (Alessandro De Giorgi, 2016, p. 18).

Evgeny Pashukanis argues (2001, p. 181) that the principle of equivalent recompensation within the bourgeois-capitalist law is linked to the notion of abstract man and abstract human labor. The prison sentence, in fact, involves a relation of debt where the prisoner is indebted for his crimes to the state and the society that the payment is by doing time. The same pattern enables courts to transform some lighter prison sentences or 'lighter' crimes to monetary payments. After finishing the sentence the prisoner could claim to pay her/his debt or an imprisonment on false grounds can grant the prisoner to be repaid for her/his wrongful indebtedness.

Narrative on prison time as waste envisions time and body with regards to their utility. It envisions the prison as a space without progression while at the same

time the outside as being primarily defined through its capacity for maximizing utility. While such a narrative resonates with many social-material aspects of imprisonment, it still operates within the fantasy of the modern judicial institutions that misses the fragmented multitude of narratives that situate in conflict with the imposed fiction on the prison time. The prison as a space of punishment is fully actualized when the prisoners themselves see nothing but unproductive suffering, when they make sense of their time in prison, seeing their own embodied experience through abstraction from the perspective of their punishers. Just like numerous other political prisoners, Roni talks about how being in prison entailed contributions in his perspective on life, and Rojan describes his first impressions of the political ward as flowers blooming and filled with love while the widespread narrative is that it is not a liveable place. While doing time, prisoners can embed themselves in reading, writing, exercising, playing chess, learning languages, organizing their own classes in the ward, working on themselves, making observations, and so on.

> So, in a sense actually the prison grants skills to everyone in terms of analyzing people. I mean you watch all the time, you watch someone. You are put in such a condition that you necessarily watch, to be more precise, because we are in the same place 24 hours. That's why even if you do not want to, you get to know your friend. For example, you can guess what his activities will be during the day. I mean, it's not like you need to be close with someone because we are in a restricted space. The brain is working in that way from then on. If you also accept that place, I mean if you do not think too much about the outside, you come to a point where you can think completely about everything because time is definite, people are definite -same people. That's why in a sense it gives you a skill. Of course, besides that there is the psychological depredation as well. Guessing that same thing is going to happen everyday or knowing that same thing is going to happen everyday -that's difficult as well. As if time is frozen. There were times I felt like this for example. As if time is frozen, the same things are happening all the time. There were situations where I felt like it's not that we were stuck in prison but we were stuck in time because the same things are happening all the time. (Roni, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix A, 18 for the original)

Regardless of the distortion that the narrative of wasted time involves in omitting the minor counter-narratives that challenge the totality of the fictional aspect of the punishment, it is important to note that the temporality of prison space is qualitatively different from the temporality of the outside as a result of

social-material implications of incarceration over the body of the prisoner. Different widespread expressions of the prison time revolves around the similar dynamics such as a sense of a continuous present, an everlastingness (Özge Nadide Serin, 2013, p. 14) or an extreme slowness, stillness, a sense of time being stretched (Michael Hardt, 1997, p. 65).

Even though such framing of prison temporality resonates with the fiction of incarceration as punishment, it is important to note that a complete actualization of the fiction involves a narrative of suffering as well. In other words, such temporality by itself is not necessarily linked to the notion of wasted time but could also be envisioned as a relief of getting out of the regime of work time of pre-prison life where one could not enjoy or improve her/himself while being in a constant rush of production cycle. Roni makes a similar illustration on his temporality in prison as frozen time. As we could see, Roni narrates this particular temporality inside the prison not as an ever present condition but something that occurred to him in some moments. In other words, the portrayal of prison ward setting as consisting of mundane and routine repeating cycles without an event offers a totalistic narrative on the prison life that dismiss the minor events happening inside the ward such as someone all of a sudden being filled with inspiration starting to sing a lamentation, infightings that could break inside the ward, caring for someone being injured while playing volleyball, a flower finding its way and breaking through the concrete, someone coming up with an invention or a new game to play together, receiving a letter from someone, or getting the news that someone is going to be released. A better way to understand the temporality of prison could be looking at the ambivalence and the conflicting narratives that does not necessarily translate into a totality but still shares the basic social-material conditions of incarceration.

When I entered the ward, it was already in my ward-mates' memories that they witnessed the death of a political prisoner friend in their previous ward due to a heart attack. Roni remembers how they became silent in the following days as part of mourning and expresses their condolences to his closer friends, and Berrin tells his shock as how it was even harder to deal with death and its aftermath inside the prison. After going to the infirmary with some health complaints, one of our ward-mates was diagnosed with being at risk of having a heart attack. He was strongly recommended to quit smoking and avoid being in spaces where people smoke. We were showing him extreme care, as his condition was reminiscent of the memory of another ward-mate dying. He told me: "Everyone is getting out of here sooner or later with applause; you either get out with applause over the shoulders or you get out with applause over the shoulders inside a coffin." One of the shared topics that haunts most if not every prisoners' minds is when their release will be. The release within the prison setting is institutionally in the monopoly of the state, reflecting its claim for its capacity to act as sovereign. While it could be the case that the state could be enforced to release prisoners either through international pressure, political mobilization on the outside, or a crisis in managing the prison population, for the prisoner it appears as an external contingency that he could only partially effect. The ambivalence in the way temporality of prisoners takes conflictual forms is based on a sense of uncertainty resulting from its reliance on the contingencies outside the prison. However, even within its ambivalence, the temporality of prison is fixated on and marked by its end; the release as a major event in prisoner's life enables prisoner temporality as such.

> Of course, I said goodbyes to all of them one by one. It was my gain that as I was leaving the ward I did not have any resentment or ailment to anyone, and anyone to me for that matter. This was a good thing for me I mean. We said goodbye to each other one by one. (Roni, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix A, 19 for the original)

Leaving the political ward, one would be both sad and joyful at the same time because the release is only someone switching to the other side of the incarceration. Knowing that one would not be able to see her/his friends until their release and yet celebrating together that someone is getting out of prison. Before release, one needs to be transported to the courthouse and return or enter the court digitally from a room inside the prison.

> I can say that it was really a surprise to me. I was already expecting 6-7 years because of membership [crime]. When I went to the court, I was saying this; even if I do not get a sentence, the best case scenario for me was that they would decide to sustain my imprisonment. But I got released, how I got it I do not know either. Was it the case that the judge was having a good day or something like that, I did not get it either [laughs]. In fact, I did not pay much attention but being released was a surprise to me. (Roni, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix A, 20 for the original)

Roni describes how the decision for his release appeared as an arbitrary externality as he was expecting to become a convict eventually due to the legal accusation on him as being a member of a terrorist organization. Even though Roni's case is relatively heavier and release appears more arbitrary than others, there are many cases where prisoners expect to be released and receive a decision for the continuation of their imprisonment or until getting the decision for release the state of uncertainty persists in prisoners' minds.

Roni further elaborates further on the moments of his actual getting out of the prison complex:

> I had this fear; I mean I did not believe that I was being released until I left the prison. Okay they were releasing me, they did this and that but… Because you get another criminal record check [GBT] as you are leaving prison, to check if you have another case or not. So I feared even that, I mean if they would turn me back from the door. I went to the court through Segbis [audiovisual information system]. So I'm there, the judge looked at my face and told me that he will release me already. Then the guards come in, you collect your mattress and stuff. You bring it back, so on and so forth. I brought my mattress and gave it to them. You go through searches again… After going through the criminal record check and seeing nothing came out of it as I feared, I left the prison. Went through the door -they leave you at the door. My brother was waiting there, and with his friend they came to get me with the car. (Roni, personal communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix A, 21 for the original)

Even receiving the decision for his release was not convincing for Roni to believe that he was actually leaving prison as he was accused of a membership crime.

Dreaming about the moment of release, one imagines a sudden movement of getting out. The release involves a series of procedures inside the prison such as finishing documentation, returning the items provided by prison administration, receiving back personal items from the administration, and so on. Given the fact that Silivri Prison is built in a huge area, prisoners are delivered to the entrance gate with a minivan. However, as Roni describes, even getting to the final steps of leaving the prison, one needs to go through a last criminal record check to see if there are any other cases opened up against him that could involve imprisonment or if he is a deserter from the mandatory military service.

Berrin remembers the first weeks after his release starting from the actual moment of release itself:

> Well, it might have happened to most of us, not only me. First I was overstimulated of course. Lights, different people, faces, colors, earth, animals, cars and their sounds. Not only positive things of course but I went through a state of overstimulation. And this pushed me into a place where I felt dazed. I was feeling dazed and did not know what I was going to do. And leaving after getting used to such monotony, it becomes harder to make decisions. It is really hard to make decisions because you forget about choices and making decisions inside. (Berrin, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix C, 9 for the original)

Just as Berrin describes, the change happening in the post-release is most apparent with the drastic proliferation of stimuli. Overwhelmed by ever proliferating affections, it is a time for exploration and rediscoveries: Looking at people, the streets and nature in awe, taking long walks around the city, climbing a mountain, trying to reattach the cut bonds or attach new ones. Berrin tells how he realized that he forgot to make decisions and choices, as it was initially a challenge to put himself into such a position of making new choices everyday. Two years after my release, in our meeting with Rojan, I also noticed Rojan taking a long time and looking around in the supermarket to decide which product to buy while people were lining up behind him and waiting.

Rojan illustrates a similar contrast between the life inside and the life outside as he remembered his conversation with one his ward-mates being released:

> Really there are a lot of people who say that they wish that they were inside. They say "outside is not like you know, very cruel. Life is too harsh, too angry." Once I told a ward-mate "when I'm inside, I become happy with the sounds of the cars whose direction I do not know. When you are outside, be happy with the cars whose direction you will know." Then I thought to myself "what mentality is this?" Imagine a man becoming happy with the sounds of the cars whose direction he does not know, because there is only that. That was his only possibility." (Rojan, Personal Communication, February 2020, own translation; see Appendix B, 10 for the original)

Rojan remembered this conversation just after he was talking about how he was being disappointed and sad when he did not get a letter in a week or when the visitor he was expecting did not come. It was hard for him to make sense of such instances except for a disloyalty to the bonds of friendship, as the imagery of prison implied a definite destitution in comparison to the openness and possibilities of life outside. After expressing that he was hurt for not being visited or not receiving a letter, he would hear from them about life outside being cruel and harsh. Even though Rojan is not satisfied with such answers as he does not consider them to be entirely true, for many political prisoners the post-prison life involves another process of adaptation where they are situated back to their families and entering back the time regime of the workplace.

4.2 Back to family and work: reintroduction of the private

The post-prison life bears particular novelties and crises. It is the second moment of rupture imposed by the state, leaving the ward and the people and going back to ordinary life. Regardless of the narrative being based on going back and picking up things where they were left off, the fact of the matter is the sensation of temporality inside the prison being radically different has its basis on other social-material senses. Being under the constraints of imprisonment for a significant period of time, now one is supposed to be free and expected to adapt into ordinary life. Switching

from an environment with low stimuli such as the ward to one with high stimuli such as the urban spaces, just the abundance of encounters can be overwhelming. Even though the prisoner most likely requires some free time to take all in and the fantasies of a post-prison life resembles that of a long vacation, the life outside is embedded with established structures and crises of its own. It is the process of reterritorialization of the political prisoner back to the family and the workforce.

> Of course, when I entered prison it was a really bad time in terms of my family's condition because it was only a year after my father went abroad. When I was in prison, my brother was in prison in Edirne as well. So I had two [other] brothers, my mom was looking after them as well. He [one of the brothers] had three children in his family at that time. She was looking after his family, looking after me and they were looking after my brother in prison. I mean my two brothers were working and so doing all these were becoming really difficult from time to time. So after I left prison, so that they had a bit of comfort and the material needs were a bit lightened, I started working voluntarily after approximately 10 days after my release. I worked for 2-3 months, then later I went to the village. I felt such a necessity, in terms of material needs I felt such a serious necessity I mean because we were not doing well in financial terms back then. As I said, my father, my brother, me… So I started working right away because our situation was not exactly good. (Roni, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix A, 22 for the original)

One of the initial noticeable changes after the release is the way care is organized outside the prison. While the shift is not necessarily happening in the same manner for everyone in the post-prison life, the organization of love and care inside the political ward within an intimate public space is now contested by the predominance of family as a distinct unit of love and care within a private space. The immediate introduction of the family after the release at the same time reintroduces the dichotomy of the public and the private, the production and reproduction. As Roni tells, his political belonging is not of an exclusively personal one but runs in his family, as his father became a political immigrant and his brother was also imprisoned during his time. Coming back to the family, for Roni, does not bear drastic differences in terms of political identification and belonging. In fact, the imprisonment directly involves and radically transforms Roni's family. Even after his release, Roni needed to overcome the difficulties of his father's absence and his

brother's ongoing imprisonment. In other words, even though he was not a political prisoner anymore, he was part of the resistance of political prisoners as the state violence is directed towards a much broader public that includes his family.

The challenges that await Rojan after his release were yet significantly different from that of Roni's. As Rojan tells me, even though his family is Kurdish and they do acknowledge their ethnic difference and Kurdish is spoken inside the house, their political affiliation resides with more Turkish nationalist and even ultra-nationalist political parties such as AKP and MHP. When we were inside the ward with Rojan and after we talked over the phone as he was transferred to the open penitentiary, he was mentioning this stark contrast between him and his family but never really wanted to talk over it. As his release was coming closer to a few months he started talking more about the problems arising with his relationships in the family, and especially with his big brother. Reintroduction and the predominance of the family as a unit of care and support after the release, in fact, starts to be forged inside the prison. As we were imprisoned during the state of emergency declared in 2016 and lasted until 2018, the state regulations on who would be accepted as visitors for the political prisoners were narrowed down to only first degree family members such as parents, siblings, spouses, and children. In this manner, the designation of care and support relations with the outside was enforced to be within the unit of family starting from the imprisonment itself.[6]

As we met during his one week in three months allowance from the open penitentiary, I went to Antalya where he was to spend this one week in February. His imprisonment was coming to an end in four months and besides the difficulties of

[6] Even though the state was enforcing such a strict regulation, financial support could be granted through public funding campaigns or through financial solidarity among friends or comrades. Besides the financial support, practices such as exchanging letters or sending books could be considered as the breaches of such imposition by the state.

being inside the open penitentiary he was trying to find how he would continue his life after four years of imprisonment. We went and stayed in a house his brother arranged for him. As we walked down the streets he showed various houses his brother now owns, showing me how wealthy his brother became. He was saying that his brother was offering this upper-middle class house to him. It was a cozy duplex in a newly built complex with latest furniture and a jacuzzi on the top floor master bedroom, with a long balcony that one could see the distant surroundings. Being in a touristic part of Antalya, there were numerous hotels, resorts, spa centers, and cafes around the house. However, since it was February, the streets were significantly empty with a small number of inhabitants living in the area. Wondering in the empty streets without any aim and selecting a random cafe to sit down and talk, we were happy to come back together after 2 years and feeling all awkward with regards to where we were.

No matter what we talked about, when we came to a pause in the course of our conversation, he would try to reach his brother and ask him when he was coming to see him. Even though his brother was supplying him with shelter and money, he happened to be on a business trip during this one week allowance of Rojan. He said that his brother was getting angry at him for calling too much during his business trip and asked him to wait as he would return a couple of days before Rojan returns back to the open penitentiary. He was not happy at all regardless of staying in a decent house and having some time outside, as he was repeatedly saying “He says that he cannot come because this business trip will be beneficial for the family, not only himself. So he says he’s there because he cares for me, but I do not care about his money, his houses, or his business. This is my small window of free time, I miss him

and wanna see him." The stark contrast in their political affiliation seemed to resonate in their fantasies on life, their ethical and aesthetical understandings.

> A very direct, very harsh man he is, you got it? Like tock-tock-tock, he does things. He always wants me to be this thing you see… Always like a monster next to him, you got me? He wants a monster alright. He himself is a legend. I'm telling you seriously, a legend. Because he is a legend, he wants us to be legends as well. Everyone is different, not everyone can be anything. Maybe I can be this thing. I mean maybe, sometimes I think, I was created for these pains. Sometimes… I think, for example, what I suffered maybe you can partially endure or not. Someone else might not endure another pain. But I make all these pains a mixture and all of these… Oh is that pain? Let me have some. Is this scar a bit sour? Let me get some of these as well. I use pains as a herbalist in a way. Sometimes I sprinkle them on my scars. There are some scars that do not form a very serious scab, so I sprinkle salt on them. After I sprinkle salt on them, I take a handful of hot pepper… The more pain comes in, the more I run towards the pain to a masochistic degree. Come, you know, where else is left? Is there anything beyond? There is nowhere else left to break. (Rojan, Personal Communication, February 2020, own translation; see Appendix B, 11 for the original)

Rojan seeing himself as a herbalist who works on pain and collects different pains inside his body with a great capacity to endure pain reflects both his bodily distinction from others and at the same time his openness to others. As Ahmed discusses (2004), pain is crucial in forming bodily surfaces and borders, but at the same time opens up the possibility of forming connections with others. Before we met with Rojan, over the phone he had been telling me various propositions of his brother where he was to receive considerable financial support in exchange for his compromises. It was mostly an ethical dilemma for Rojan, where he was to select between his ethical principles and his future comfort. After a while he explained the similar dynamics behind his brother offering the house to him. His brother made it a requirement that he would be working beside him, in other words he was supposed to earn his brother's support. Rojan described to me one of their earlier meetings with his brother where he was trying to motivate him as an aggressive entrepreneur by asking questions about Rojan's aspirations in life. He told me that his brother projected a picture of himself to the wall: his brother's face splitted into half, one side a glamorous neighborhood and the other side ruins of a destroyed neighborhood.

After a couple of days his brother arrived in Antalya and paid us a brief visit in the house. He entered the house with haste and sat down on the sofa immediately. He was a thin and tall man wearing a long black coat with a formal shirt inside, black pants, and black pointy-toed shoes. After some small talk, he started preaching on life and how to become a better man. His brief stay consisted mostly of monologues of him where we were making small remarks or some questions to him every now and then. Still there was a discussion going on with Rojan and his brother on the background of every topic; Rojan saying how fragile and worthwhile everything can be, while his brother seeing the value in things with regards to their use in reaching success. After he made clear his political affiliation with the Turkish ultra-nationalist party MHP, I was afraid to get into an unpleasant political quarrel with him as together with Rojan we were two political prisoners accused of terror crimes. After asking about how he came to be so close with MHP, he replied to me saying that for him the political parties do not matter. He was saying that economic success was the only goal in life and anything could be used and expended in reaching that. Swiftly the topic of the conversation came to imprisonment where his brother said "entering prison is an act of stupidity, no smart man would ever enter prison. I also commit crime but I make sure that I will never get caught". We started looking at each other with Rojan and smiling with our eyes, nothing stopped him from preaching on and after a quick smoke he left the house to finish other business. It was almost like a tornado entered the house and disappeared in half an hour. I was speechless, there were so many things that needed to be said but we did not really have a voice. However, my first impression was that I was concerned that his brother could have a heart attack at some point in his fast paced never-ending talk. He did not appear to be

comfortable, happy or content at all but he seemed to be in a struggle - almost as if he was about to drown.

After he left the house, we were trying to calm our mood. I was worried that Rojan would have a really hard time after his release if he continues to build on his post-prison life depending on his brother. He asked me what my impression was about him and I explained as it was. I asked if he had alternatives planned and implied how difficult things could be for him. He did not seem to see any other alternative and still was seeing a potential in coming to terms with his brother. “Did you look into his eyes? Did you see who he actually is underneath?”. I thought he was touching on my observation of him as if he was drowning. “Did you not see the small village boy from Bingöl in his eyes? It’s there, I see it in my brother’s eyes.” Later in the evening I asked about his brother and what he means for Rojan.

> For me he has a role expressed as such: trampoline. I mean I answered without any thinking; trampoline. Can you imagine that? So I said that I answered without thinking but it seems like I have been waiting for this question for 40 years, it seems like I have been waiting for this question for 50 years. “Not that, not this” I eliminated all other questions. This is the right question you see? “What does your brother mean to you?” I told this to you earlier again. “What is your goal?” At this moment, my goal is to find the lighter in my pocket. But as I said “what does your brother mean to you?” I said trampoline without confusing anything because I believe him so much, I trust him so much, I am so sure of him. Whenever I let myself fall back, I know I am going to fall down on his arms whatever happens. After all, this is what makes it meaningful, and what makes it genuine. Someone could say something like “x person for me is a vault or a bank,” or I do not know, “security or flying -he makes me fly to my dreams and he can make me kamikaze to crash surface.” I am not saying that, I say my brother means a trampoline to me. I let myself fall back, he always lifts me up in the air. I fall, he lifts, I fall, he lifts… (Rojan, Personal Communication, February 2020, own translation; see Appendix B, 12 for the original)

Rojan was aware of and did not try to conceal the importance of financial support after his release and his brother’s role in it. However, both in our interview and in his actions he did not seem to emphasize the financial dimension to his relationship with his brother. Perhaps this was due to his perception of monetary relations being evil or corrupted and his aspirations for a saint-like modest, honorable, and moral life. Without the financial support of his brother, another set of problems that is faced by many prisoners after their release were awaiting him. In his view, to restore himself

and get back to life outside, the financial support of his brother was needed. What is interesting is that Rojan emphasizes the scene of jumping up and down on the trampoline where momentary touches define the relationship with the trampoline and the jumper as opposed to the other examples that signifies a more consistent relationship. This implies that it is his expectation that they would fall apart in time due to their radical differences and get back again whenever he needs his brother, yet never ending in its own way.

Berrin's post-prison life is also heavily affected by the family, but rather through its absence. I remember one of his family members came to Silivri Prison to visit him. As the only visitors allowed during the state of emergency were close family members, this was his only chance to have any visitors. Berrin did not accept them and instead stayed inside the ward when many prisoners were going out to see their visitors. This was not a novelty in his life at those years but they fell apart with his family years before that. I asked him in what ways not having a family affected his post-prison life.

> There are some positive sides to it but very limited. So what I mean to say is, I think that a healthy family environment, nice family relations are necessary for people. I mean in order to become healthy individuals… You know, even if it is not biological but an alternative one, one way or another it is necessary. Not having a family has an advantage in granting you freedom but, as I said, if you have a good family, a healthy family it provides you freedom. The freedom I can talk about here is not more than the freedom that comes with getting rid of a family in Turkey which constrains you, represses you. Such a thing happened of course. But this doesn't do it. I mean it doesn't make you happy about this circumstance by itself. Even if it does, only for a very brief time. I mean I don't remember being happy with this idea. So it's only a relief. At one point I had a relief but other than that this is a negativity. I mean you might have problems in your friendships but when you have problems in the family, this doesn't very easily mean that the relationship is over. I say very well-known things but this is how it is. It provides support, a base in your life. I always felt the lack of family in my life, not only after getting out of prison. I mean I have never been in a position to say "family is an institution of the bourgeois society" and look from such an angle and so on. To me ending my relationship with the family was not a political decision but a decision out of necessity. Mine happened to be a toxic family to me. I was toxic for them as well, they were also not satisfied with me. That's why not seeing them happened to be good in a sense, because I had such consideration in my mind as well. They were not satisfied with me in any sense. Not only being gay but that was also included. (Berrin, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix C, 10 for the original)

Berrin suffered from unemployment and low-paid employment in his post-prison life and relied on his friends' financial support frequently. Being in such a precarious condition, he lived nomadically in the city going from one of his friends to another in a week. This condition eventually caused problems with his friendships and stopped seeing quite a bit of his friends after two years. What he finds valuable in the institution of family is exactly what he lacks in the post-prison life, and what Rojan was talking about when describing his relationship to his brother. In a sense, the imagination of family presupposes an ever existing sense of belonging that someone desires and expects it to provide care and support.

4.3 What sticks after the release

Getting out of prison is hardly a matter of getting back to the pre-prison life, as the imprisonment operates as a transformative violence not only through its more direct effects on the prisoner but through its marking that persists after the release. Berrin describes how his relationship with other students and his friends have been affected after his release.

> When you live a different experience, it is hard to find people who would find common grounds with that experience. That's what I understood. Also becoming different in society… Let's not say becoming other because it seems to contain a meaning such as discrimination but becoming different is very easy. That also leads to a discriminative effect. You feel different due to reasons that are not much up to you. I felt this with my friends quite a lot. It still is very weird for me. For example, after I got out -let's say there was the summer school just after the release, many people… I don't know… Many people don't talk to me. People who were talking before, don't talk at that moment. But there are some -those are people whom I was extra extra taken aback, they run away on the road in order to avoid saying hello. When this happened of course I felt like I was an alien. I went through a conversion, or a transformation due to what I lived. That's what I felt. I understood that society is not a very homogeneous thing. (Berrin, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix C, 11 for the original)

For Berrin what was distorted after his release was his sense of belonging to his community of friends and colleagues before his imprisonment. As belonging implies the sense of being accepted as part of a community (Affective Societies, p. 301),

being a former political prisoner comes with a luggage of meanings that sticks with him and define his post-prison encounters to the extent that some of them would not interact with him at all. According to Berrin, this was not a practice of discrimination, but a process of becoming different that shakes his accustomed set of social relations and grants him moments of clarity on his social relations. I asked him how he felt after having such encounters.

> This of course caused me disappointment. I don't know why some of them behaved like this since I didn't talk with them, and some talk but it's better if they won't. They talk and ask stupid things, I don't know, for example, one of the first questions s/he asks me is "did you have gay sex inside?" Questions like this [he laughs]... Am I a person who is craving to make an orgy with people who are stuck inside out of compulsion? [he laughs] So I understood that there are many people who don't communicate in a healthy way with me or that not everyone is open for healthy communication. Because I was more reserved and silent, the people I was talking to were few. They became few. There was a decrease before and after. For instance, let's say I went into the class, people smoked during the break. When I enter the environment, let's say people smoke in the fire escape, when you enter there to smoke everyone becomes quiet as if a dementor came in. So what happens when it is like this? You go downstairs and smoke there. Of course, there might be a psychological side to it that leads me to live it like that. But I think independent of me there is such a thing. People doing stupid… So it's not like I became sensitive, everything started to offend me or I started to become uneasy about everything. Because I spent two or three months there, so how much… If it was one or two years I could think like that but… No, I think… I understood that, for example, the friendships I built up were not that solid or some of them were not as good friendships as I thought they were. I'm not saying this for everyone of course. For example, there are a few people whom I didn't have such thoughts or judgments about. All in all, I felt like it's very easy to fall out of society, get disconnected, become different, and so on. I understood that. (Berrin, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix C, 12 for the original)

Berrin's disappointment on having such encounters in his post-prison life, implies his desire for a process of (re)collectivization that failed and resulted in his individuation instead. He describes how being a former political prisoner has been following him after his release in differing ways. However, it was not only a matter of being a former political prisoner but also he came to a realization through such encounters that his community of friends and colleagues were not as he thought they were. Following his narrative on the toxic relationship with his family that came to an end and his desire to have a healthy family, Berrin reflects on his relationship with his community as being mostly unhealthy. It seems to follow that a community with healthy relationships would involve caring and celebratory relations that sustain

themselves over crises such as being imprisoned. The way Berrin is being disturbed by the questions that does not touch upon his singularity but only positions Berrin with regards to his gender identity, implies his desire for collectivization that does not exclude his singularity, in other words a process of a heterogeneous collectivization. I asked Berrin what he thinks could be the reasons that people would behave in such a way. Is it that they were afraid of getting into trouble?

> Actually I thought about this in my childhood, in my teenage years as well. I didn't think thoroughly and too much about it but I brought the pieces together. In society, when there is any kind of victimhood, but like heavy kinds of victimhood, let's say what we went through or being raped, being beaten up to death, and so on, when people live such things, some people really do what needs to be done -they stand by you. But for some other people this creates a feeling of an atmosphere that needs to be avoided. And I think that this is related to the moral codes a bit. For example, when I was a child playing on the street with another child whose mother is single. Now the place, it's not like Istanbul so a single woman is prone to be marked as a whore immediately. My parents, they were saying "don't play with that kid, his mother is a whore" [he laughs]. Or I don't know if there was another child, her/his father killed her/his mother in front of her/his eyes. It was a very tragic story, they were telling me to avoid her/him too. So being marked like that is bad and not necessarily something unwanted -let's say her/his mother being a whore, but lives that do not look nice to the society. It could be someone being a whore or getting in and out [of prison] due to unjustly -it's not important how it is. People who live things that diverge from the normal citizen life are people who should be avoided. I think there is such a perception in society. I think it is like this now with our friends as well. No, I mean it's not because of only something like "it would reflect on me, then it could also get me into trouble." I mean it's like being a bad person. You shouldn't stay too much with her/him anymore. (Berrin, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix C, 13 for the original)

The transformative effect of political imprisonment for Berrin is very similar to that of being called a whore or any other violence that leaves its mark over the body. In this manner, Berrin suggests that his political imprisonment as a political violence persists and finds its ground in the wider social setting of Turkey. Berrin does not think that people behave in such a way because they fear getting themselves into trouble, but instead it is a matter of ethical and aesthetic perspective that dominate social relations that frame some lives as pleasant and some others not. Berrin continued to describe how he make sense of those encounters:

> I mean it's not because of, let's say you went through a traumatic thing, you want to stay alone, listen to your mind, nothing like that. Because these people never came and talked to me. And these were people whom I talked to frequently, communicated through the phone and met, studied together, and whatever kind of people. I don't know, it's not only related to this, I think friendships are also very problematic. I mean friendships can be so easily avoided. Being there for one another, and so on, these are very weak. For example, I was

> very good friends with Hulya. [When] I got out, she didn't write to me for about 3-4 months. I didn't have her number, but I would expect her to write to me anyways. We had a new phone, and so on. People who were trying to reach me, they were reaching the intermediary people who were the closest to me or whoever is closest to that person. Hulya never reached me and when she was talking to a friend of mine, this was brought up so she decided to reach me. And the thing she said to me is "I waited for you to be good." You wait, but you don't wait for 3-4 months. And there is such a thing, after living through a bad thing if time has passed over it, I think it's harder to talk about it. For example now, with you it's different, but talking with someone else it's harder for me. But in terms of bandaging the bleeding wound, one might be in need of talking afterwards and s/he needs whoever is the closest. (Berrin, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix C, 14 for the original)

What is lacking for Berrin in the post-prison life is the relations of care and support among friends. Compared to the enclosed social setting of the political ward, the possibility of avoiding friendships and being indifferent comes to the forefront for Berrin. His expectation is that friendship would base itself on necessities that emerge within life, to be there for one another in times of need. There is no chaotic randomness and a sense of freedom to ignore and be indifferent to the friend's needs. Having such disappointments in his friendships seems to correlate with Berrin's desire for a healthy family instead. The dualistic imagination of the public and the private as mutually exclusive and seperate zones follows up the association of the necessity of care within the private and the openness to contingency with the public. Such imaginary is perhaps more evident in Rojan's narrative on a random encounter that he had before he entered prison:

> How shall I tell you, let me tell you like this: I believe in the power of coincidences. Seriously I believe in the power of coincidences because coincidences bind us to life one more level. For example, 3-4 years ago in Mecidiyeköy metrobus station we bumped into each other with someone -she hit me from behind. I turned around and looked, and she said "do you expect me to apologize?" I said "I don't expect any apology", after all she is a lady. She was a blond lady, her name was Selin. She was a headliner in X Bar in Taksim -a place with a lot of regulars. She said "my name is Selin." I said "ok, and my name is Fedora." You know I was always wearing a fedora hat back then. "Ok, if you believe in the power of coincidences," she said, "if we came across in Mecidiyeköy, we will come across somewhere else." We got wonderful vibes from each other but again… Can you imagine? You ask yourself, how can I find you among 20 million people again? That person says "you will find if you believe in coincidences and if we both are honest people and if you deserve to meet and come face to face, we will see each other." You play pitch and toss with it. Rojan to one direction, Selin to another. Coincidence that is, one day you get out in the Ayvansaray metrobus station, you go through the night world a bit: "How meaningless, I couldn't get any meaning out of life today as well." And you see someone from behind say "hist!" You turn around and see Selin. If she got out first, you might ask if I followed Selin. No, this time I ask: "Do you want me to ask, are you following me?" She said "no, it's a coincidence." She was living in Balat, so we walked through the door. A person I don't know at all, and she

> doesn't know me either. We went to her home. She is an art lover; paintings, gramophones, 45 vinyl records… During conversation she was always telling me "kid, I will tell you my whole life story until sunrise, and you tell me yours. And when you get out, I beg you to never see me again, and I will not see you again. Because I want people to never hit us with our life stories, our pains, our scars again." she said. This is actually what happened, I never saw her again. Don't I wonder [about her]? I do. I missed all the companionship, friendship, and conversation of the person I call Selin, but one day if we deserve this we will see each other again. (Rojan, Personal Communication, February 2020, own translation; see Appendix B, 13 for the original)

Rojan told this story repeatedly in slightly differing versions while still maintaining the main structure and the plot. The possibility of being open to the randomness and contingency of a vast city has been the image that motivated him the most both when we were inside and after his release. In Rojan's narrative, the contingency of a massive city life can be bent according to one's desires and perhaps the divine evaluation of one's deeds and character. The scene Rojan describes is a night of exchange between two people suffering from being vulnerable to others, a moment of complete opening between the two yet as a secret that is kept by total separation. In this way, Rojan seems to aspire for an intimacy and care that emerges out of the randomness within the public, yet he carries a sense of distrust for such an openness.

Roni's post-prison life differs with regards to both his relation to his community and what sticks with him after the release. Eventually, Roni's surprise of his release and his fear of being imprisoned again turned out to resonate with the reopening of his case file. However, he was able to escape the state's attempt to recapture and became a political immigrant in Greece as his father is.

> I mean since there was the shock of my release, I did not know what to do. Should I have gone to my hometown, should I have worked, or something else? So it was hard for me to decide on how to take further steps. This was due to the shock with regards to my release. Then two months later, I went to my hometown and stayed there for 4-5 months. Then I came back to Istanbul, and if I'm not mistaken, I was sentenced two months later; 7 years and 9 months of imprisonment. After that I left and came to Greece. This sentence came from the same case which I was released earlier. For whatever reason they sentenced me for 7 years and 9 months of imprisonment. It was approved in 20 days. My lawyer suggested that I shouldn't wait too long, he said openly: "Leave. Either you are going to leave or you are going to prison." So that's the situation. And here I am, I left and for three years I have been here." (Roni, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix A, 23 for the original)

Roni has been asking me repeatedly: “So, when are you coming over here?” Even though we have been dreaming of meeting in Greece or France when I get the chance to travel, he also asks this question meaning when I leave Turkey permanently and start life in another country in Europe. He says that “people like us eventually end up leaving Turkey one way or another.” We as political dissidents and former political prisoners are destined for departure with differing degrees of urgency, yet share a common public that was subjected to political violence infiltrating into both institutional discrimination and predominance of Turkish nationalism in public spaces. What sticks with Roni after his release is relatively an affirmative one in his encounters in the post-prison life:

> I mean there is this thing, for instance, when someone is imprisoned usually they ask “for what crime?” Depending on the people in your environment, whatever they aspire for, or whatever they like or do not like, they judge you accordingly. Here, for example, I was imprisoned for a short time but I did time for political [crime], and most of the people in my environment know that I did time for political [crime]. So because of this reason -I do not want to make them feel this way but- I mean there is -it’s actually coming from the family as well, since we are a political family- there is this genuine gravitas. I am not saying I have gravitas in society but there is an advantage to it. Inferring from the perspectives of people on you and looking from the angle of the society that I am in, it has an advantage. Like the friends around you, the people you newly met. Of course, I am not saying this anywhere, I mean they learn about this somewhere definitely because many people around me know this. That’s why their perspective on you is a bit more cautious -let me put it that way, not bad. Let’s say if I was imprisoned due to assault or robbery, 80% of our society won’t even say hi to me. But as I always say, fortunately I was imprisoned for political reasons and nothing else. I was imprisoned due to what I believed and loved. And this is not exactly being a burden to me. I mean of course there are still damages in my subconscious due to the conditions of prison but it is because of this reason; our lives after prison were not quite good again. Like if we had a decent life, it could minimize this but since our lives were not quite like that, since we moved from one place to another, it’s still there. After the prison, nomadism -I mean being an immigrant… That’s why I can still feel the damages from the prison. We stayed for a short time but life after prison cannot minimize this. (Roni, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix A, 24 for the original)

Similarly to Berrin, Roni tells that the fact that he is a former political prisoner follows him everywhere regardless of him telling anyone. Roni talks about having gravitas in his post-prison life, where people approach him more cautiously and treat him with respect. For Roni the marking that sticks with him after the release has an empowering effect that solidifies his sense of belonging to his community. I asked him if this was due to the affiliations that his community has:

> The people in my environment are all in fact in the Kurdish movement. I mean I have Turkish friends as well but I have no Turkish nationalist friends at all. There were some I encountered but our minds did not really hit it off. I mean not politically but spiritually our minds did not hit it off, so I did not try to be friends with them. One thing I observe in Turkish nationalists is this; they have nothing except for them being nationalists. I mean that's what I observed, maybe it's wrong I don't know. Like let's say, they look from a nationalist perspective even to a glass. For example: "why isn't this glass not in Turkish style bla bla bla, it would be better if it was in Turkish style" etc. This is like -how to put it, to me it seems obsessive. That's why I do not want to get in touch with people who obsess themselves with ideology. It does not matter which ideology, if it's an obsession then it's not a good thing. (Roni, Personal Communication, March 2022, own translation; see Appendix A, 25 for the original)

Compared to Berrin and Rojan, Roni talks about a more particular community that positions itself separately from a general public that is dominated by Turkish nationalism. For him a separation from Turkish nationalists in his daily encounters and friendships is unavoidable as those encounters bear no fruit except the conflict that would stem from domination and resistance. In this manner, Roni considers his community through its capacity to contain heterogeneous parts where nothing dictates life.

In both Berrin and Roni's post-prison encounters the signification of being a former political prisoner sticks with them, yet operates under differing valorization processes. Ahmed (2014) proposes to make sense of stickiness as an effect of surfacing that is embedded within the histories of encounters between bodies, objects, and signs. She argues that the sticky and the disgusting are closely linked to each other and a sticky surface incorporates other elements. In this manner, when a body, an object, or a sign becomes sticky, it operates through an excessive proliferation of signification. As Ahmed discusses, not all sticky things are disgusting, yet they become disgusting when what is sticky threatens to stick to us. The difference between the cases of Berrin and Roni in terms of what sticks with them after the release shows us the way different valorization processes can drastically change the way post-prison encounters enable ways of becoming. What sticks with Roni in his post-prison encounters proliferates around the notions such as

virtue, sacrifice, and respect; in other words affirmation of the identification processes involved inside the political ward.

The way Roni describes the community he belongs to excludes Turkish nationalists as an effect of countless encounters within Roni's personal life but also a history of domination and resistance. Compared to the public imagined by Berrin and Rojan, Roni imagines a more particular public that distinguishes itself from a wider public. Such distinction can be seen in how Roni imagines his public, which Nancy Fraser (1990) denotes as a subaltern public. As Fraser argues, subaltern publics operate as parallel zones of discourse where counter-discourses of a dominant public are invented and circulated under stratified societies.

What is common in the post-prison lives of Berrin, Rojan, and Roni is that the practices and relations of care are designated to the private in contrast to the public care practiced inside the political ward. Such a transition happens in line with a global tendency that has its resonances in Turkey as well in the way neoliberal transformation has promoted the family as an institution to provide care for its members. As Wendy Brown (2019) discusses, neoliberalism sought to replace the welfare state with the imagined altruism of the family. Brown notices that it was not for its capacity to provide social security that neoliberal intellectuals considered family to be of great importance but also they envisioned family to be of importance in its capacity to discipline and provide a correcting authority for the democratic excesses. Considering the need for care and support in post-prison life, such an economic order where relations of care are designated into the private constitutes family as the institution for entering and adapting to life outside. In case of the post-prison life for the political prisoners, the challenges not only revolve around the

issue of where the relations of care are designated but also the continuation of their criminalization.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In this thesis I tried to explore the formation and transformation of the social bonds among the political prisoners during their incarceration and after their release. Drawing from various studies on the formation of the figure of the political prisoner, I tried to discuss its constitutive elements through resistance practices inside the prison, self-identification of the political prisoners, and political discourse and mobility outside the prison. Elaborating on the encounters of political prisoners with legal prisoners, I tried to show how the subjectivity of the political prisoners has been shaped through its distinction from the legal prisoners. As the distinction itself is a result of segregative practices of the state in governing the prison space, I attempted to show how political prisoners made sense of this segregation with regards to their political engagement in and of prison. While the segregation of the political prisoners from the legal prisoners involves both creation of the architectural divides and production of worker prisoners, the political prisoner subjectivity is based on a practice of rejection being a legal prisoner as it is based on the rejection of the associated crime.

Looking at the way political prisoner subjectivity formed through the notion of sacrifice, I attempted to show how the notion of sacrifice renders the political ward as an intimate space. Relations of care and mutual aid prove to be a significant element in the way community in the political ward reproduces itself. By exploring different narratives of political prisoners on sacrifice and “paying the price” for the cause, I tried to show different ways political prisoners make sense of their

imprisonment beyond the orthodox symbolism of political sacrifice. While the demarcation of the state signified the unjustifiable political violence and the state documentations played a constitutive part in the formation of the political prisoner subjectivity, "paying the cost" remained as a symbolic reference point as the valorization of the political prisoners were actualized through relations of care.

Entering the political ward and becoming a political prisoner entailed a process where one enters into and takes part in a terrain of historically established meaning systems. What was particular about the political ward was that it involved a contestation of the prison space between the political prisoners and the prison administration. Analyzing the political ward as a social space produced through such contestation, the political prisoners' subversion of the architecture of the prison through their own aesthetic and ethical construction of the space proved to be a crucial form of resistance in transforming prison from a place of collective suffering to a place of collective enjoyment. Given the particular circumstances of the political ward that I stayed in Silivri Prison in 2018, the predominant challenges for the political prisoners were overcrowding but not a widespread use of systematic torture practices that include bodily damaging, humiliation, raids on the wards and seizure of personal belongings inside the ward. In this manner, the study provides a particular condition of political prisoners, where an autonomous communal life is not targeted and systematically repressed by the prison administration.

Following the political prisoners' rejection of prison labor, I tried to show how the self-organization of the ward was practiced through repeating reproductive labor processes that sustain the political ward itself. Invocation of the phrase "join life, brother" implied the formation of community through domestic reproductive labor. As keeping the ward clean and maintaining a basic condition of hygiene with

extreme care was considered as crucial to sustaining the well-being of the ward, drastic changes could be expected after the break of the Covid-19 pandemic both in the prison administrations' and the political prisoners' practices. While numerous reports have been made with regards to the conditions of political prisoners and the violations of the political prisoners' basic rights during the Covid-19 pandemic regulations, further research can provide what could be expected to constitute the future disposition of the political imprisonment in Turkey.

As I attempted to discuss the prison and the political imprisonment from the perspective of the political prisoners, it was crucial to elaborate on the fantasmatic elements within the self-narration of the political prisoners and the moments of collapse within the fantasy of political prisoners. As one of the significant moments of collapse, I elaborated on the infightings emerging between political prisoners as minor events where the collective identification of the political prisoners appears at a distance to themselves. In this manner, the moments of collapse entailed a dissolution of the subjective distinguishment of political prisoners from the legal prisoners, reminding back the fact of simply being in prison.

Based on the political prisoners' non-participation in the prison labor processes, I tried to show how the political prisoners could envision the prison as a space where they have the time in comparison to the working class temporality. Together with the social-material setting of being incarcerated, thinking about "the life outside" took a particular form of illuminating on life. I tried to elaborate on how this is enabled through the way memory of the life outside is experienced as an abstracted memory.

I tried to elaborate on the release, as one of the major events that involves a moment of rupture in the way political prisoners experience both inside the prison

and in the post-prison life. I attempted to show how the totalistic judicial fiction of prison time as punishment involves imagining prison time solely as an ever-stretching circular time where life stands still without an event. It is the prerequisite of the judicial fiction that the prisoner temporality composed of a state of suffering and the prison time as penal time could be completely actualized only if it is acknowledged as such by the political prisoners themselves. Instead, I tried to show how political prisoners experience and make sense of their time in prison that involves various ambivalent forms that are constituted by the release. Following this discussion, I propose to analyze prison time not within a totalistic narrative that follows up the judicial fiction but instead to consider its ambivalence disposition with regards to the prisoner's temporality.

In making sense of the post-prison life and its encounters, I tried to show the change in relations of care after the release with the reintroduction of family as an institutional unit. While reintroduction of the family as an institution that care relations are primarily designated on the life outside starts to be constructed by the state with the prison regulations prior to the release, the actual repositioning of the political prisoner within the family involves a contrast with the care relations inside the political ward that operates outside the private. I explored the ways being a former political prisoner sticks after the release and involve different processes of valorization in accordance with the belonged community.

APPENDIX A

ORIGINAL NARRATIONS OF RONI

1.

Ya aslında bir-iki defa revirde böyle karşılaştık. Ne bizi onların yanına oturtuyorlar ne de onları bizim yanımıza oturtuyorlar. Ama mesela revirde karşılaşmalar oluyor ama ne bizi o adli mahkumların yanına oturtuyorlar ne de onları bizim yanımıza oturtuyorlar. Bir muhabbet falan olmasın diye gardiyanların buna özellikle dikkat ettiğini ben 1-2 defa fark ettim. Şöyle bir şey var; belki biz adli mahkumları hemen fark etmiyoruz ama biz revire gittiğimiz zaman… Hatta iki defa böyle bir şey yaşadım. Revirin girişini biliyorsun, seninle bir ara beraber de çıktık revire. Girdiğimizde gardiyan bizim kaydımızı yapacak orada. Orada karşıdaki çocuk bana söyledi, -benimle ya yaşıt ya yaşça büyüktü yani tam bilmiyorum- dedi "abi siz siyasi mahkum musunuz?" ben dedim "evet." Yani tabi o zaman adamın nereden fark ettiğini anlayamadım. Yani sormadım. 5 dakika sonra dank etti, "ya bu nereden anladı siyasi mahkum olduğumuzu". Yani kafama takıldı, aklıma kötü bir şey gelmedi, kafama takıldı. Dedim "sen nereden anladın ki siyasi koğuştan geldiğimizi?" Dedi "abi siz gelirken gardiyanla beraber yada gardiyanın arkasından geliyorsunuz, biz gelirken bizi duvarın kenarından yürütüyorlar koridorun ortası boş kalsın diye. Böyle hizalayıp yürütüyorlar, siz öyle gelmediniz" diyor.

2.

Ben tabi ona bir soru yönelttim "kaç senedir cezaevindesin?" dedim. 3 buçuk senedir yatıyormuş. Suçunu sormadım tabi, sormak istemedim. 3 buçuk senedir yatıyormuş, muhabbeti orada kestik. Öyle bir şey yaşadım, yoksa adli mahkumlarla pek fazla karşılaşmıyorduk. İdare zaten buna özellikle dikkat ediyordu böyle bir muhabbet olmasın diye. Hatta şöyle bir şey var bilmiyorum biliyor musun; daha önce siyasi ceza yatan bir insan adli cezadan yargılandığı zaman o yine siyasi koğuşa gönderiliyor. Çünkü siyasi ceza yattığı için yaşadığı sistemi, yaşadığı şeyleri yada inandığı şeyleri adli koğuştaki insanları örgütlemesin diye idare buna dikkat ediyor. Siciline bakıyor özellikle.

3.

Aslında ben şöyle düşünüyorum. Ben cezaevi yönetimlerinin böyle siyasilerle fazla sorun yaşamak istemediklerini düşünüyorum, yada cezaevindeki huzuru sağlama konusunda sarf ettikleri çabalar da olabilir. Yani huzur istemiyorlar da hepsi zaten hükümet ne derse onu yapıyor ama ben bu yönde düşündüklerine eminim. Çünkü bir cezaevinde isyan çıkması yada başka bir şey olması o adamın siciline, atıyorum cezaevi müdürünün siciline kötü yansıyacak, kariyerine kötü yansıyacak, yada çevresine kötü yansıyacak. Bence bunların önemi var. Bununla da alakalı bir şey olabilir. Öbür türlü hükümet zaten… Bizim için hükümet her dönemde kötü. Yani aslında ben 27 yaşımdayım, yani ben hükümetin özellikle Kürtlere hiçbir dönemde iyi davrandığını yada iyi yaklaştığını görmedim. Olmuşsa da çok kısa süreli olmuş o da çıkarları için olmuş. O yüzden kazanım olmazsa da bence karşı taraf da bunun sonuçlarını kestirebildiği için pek fazla bu insanların üzerine gitmiyor. Her iki taraf açısından da kötü olur, yani biri kazanır kaybeder o ayrı konu ama. Huzursuzluk olur, başka kötü şeyler olur. Yani her açıdan kötü olur, her iki taraf için de kötü olacağı için bence bunu dizginleyen cezaevi yönetimleridir.

4.

Ya mesela şöyle bir şey var; cezaevi yönetimi çok iyi biliyor ki, oradaki gardiyanlar da çok iyi biliyor ki siyasi mahkumların yarası deşilmediği sürece bence kimseye zararı olmaz. Neticede bence yani kendi açımdan o insanlara bakıyorum; hepsi ilkeli insanlar, birçoğu ilkeli insanlar. Bazıları yeni yetişiyor bizim gibi, bazıları yeni yeni giriyor içine ama neticede birçoğu ilkeli insanlar böyle yazar, çizer, araştırmacı, gazeteci. Çoğu böyle insanlar yani. E böyle insanlardan da zarar gelmez bence. Onlar da bunun farkındalar.

5.

Evet, yani bir yerden sonra üzülüyorsun çünkü adli koğuşlarda yaşayan insanların yatan insanların yani olayların gelişmesi onların elinde olan bir şey değil. Bu yüzden de üzülüyorsun. Yani onların kontrolünde olan bir şey değil, o yüzden de üzülüyorsun. Böyle şeyler yaşadıklarına üzülüyorsun. Yani idare bir şey diyorsa yapmak zorundasın, ama siyasilere bir şey diyorsa ikelerine uymuyorsa, duruşlarına uymuyorsa yapmazsın. Ama adli koğuşlarda öyle bir seçenek yok, öyle bir şey de yok çünkü birçok insan belki aynı suçtan geliyor atıyorum uyuşturucudan geliyor yada adam yaralamaktan yada

cinayetten geliyor ama hepsinin kendine göre haklı sebepleri var, kendine göre hikayeleri var. Bizim öyle değil ki, bizim tek dava. Aynı dava, tabi elbette ki kişisel hayatlarımız var ama dava aynı, ideoloji aynı, amaç aynı. Öyle olunca da pek fazla yabancılık çekmiyorsun, adli koğuşlar bunun çok aksi.

6.

Ya aslında kendi açımdan baktığım zaman ben şahsen bunu bedel ödemek olarak görmüyorum çünkü benim çevremde birçok insan var, birçok insanın ailesi-akrabası olsun, böyle yıllarca 15 sene 20 sene boyunca cezaevinde kalmış insanlar var. Yani uzaktan tanıdığım böyle şahsında tanıdığım insanlar var, ben onların yanında kalkıp da kendime "bedel ödedim" diyemem dört-beş ay yatarak. Bu bir anlamda onlara hakaret olur.

7.

Ya bu kişiden kişiye değişir bence ama mesele bunu yapmak değil. Aslında mesele bunu göze almak, eğer bunu göze alıyorsan belki yatmazsın da ama bence göze aldığında her şey bitiyor zaten.

8.

Dedim "iyiki adam yaralama olsun, başka adli suçlardan girmedim içeri. Girmişsem inandığım bir şey için girmişim." Yani o süreden sonra cezaevi çok da böyle korkunç bir şekilde gelmemeye başladı. 20 gün boyunca zaten, o 20 gün boyunca mesela benim cezaevinde olduğumu hissettirmediler arkadaşlar.

9.

Yani "burada biz neler yapabiliriz, nelerden keyif alabiliriz?" Yani sonuçta orada özgür olmadığımız için başka arkadaşların keyfini de kaçırmadan ya da onların özgürlüğüne ufak bir darbe olsun vurmadan nasıl keyif alabiliriz? Bu aslında oldukça zor bir şey. Yani çıkıp atıyorum avluda yüksek sesle şarkı söyleyemezsin yada belirli saatlerde çıkıp sabahleyin istediğin gibi voleybol oynayamazsın, tezahürat yapamazsın.

10.

Yani bu zaman aralıklarını öğrenmek lazım. Bunlar yazılı çizili şeyler değil ama hapishane içinde geçen hayat bazı şeyleri böyle rayına oturtuyor -düzen belli. Aslında şöyle bir şey var mesela. Çok fazla kaldığın zaman örneğin yanımdaki arkadaşımın ne zaman sigara içeceğini bilirim yada ne zaman acıkacağını bilirim -yemek saatleri belli ama- yada ne zaman yukarı çıkmak isteyeceğini artık az çok tahmin edebilecek seviyeye geliyorum yani. O da aynı şekilde beni tanıyor. Mesele bu. Bunları çözünce de sen de o aralıklarda kendine zaman aralığı yaratıyorsun. "O zamanda ne yapabilirim" diye hergün farklı şeyler denemek lazım çünkü hergün aynı şeyler oldu mu zaten bir keyif vermez. Yani zaman geçirmeyi de zorlaştırıyor.

11.

Ya aslında karar verme şeyi yoktu ama… Aslında yönetimin oradaki temel şeyi şuydu mesela, temel misyonu şuydu; idareye karşı bir temsilci seçimi. Koğuşun sorunu olduğunda bunu idareyle görüşecek biri varsa o da temsilcidir, herkes gidemez. Mesela koğuşun bir sorunu olduğu zaman gidebileceğin biri olsun. Yoksa yönetimin böyle karar alabilme falan durumları yoktu. "Sen şunu yapacaksın, ben bunu yapıcam, şu şunu yapacak" değil. Yönetim öyleydi, onun misyonu orada öyleydi. O yüzden önemli değildi. Temsilcilik açısından böyle siyasi duruşu olan bir insanın bunu yapması daha makuldü, daha mantıklıydı.

12.

Orada cezaevinde olduğunu sana hissettiren şeyler şu; mesela iki arkadaş kavga ediyor, bir huzursuzluk çıkıyor o anda anlıyorsun. Ben de öyle anladım yani, bir iki defa huzursuzluk çıktı bazı arkadaşlar itiştiler kakıştılar böyle. Ben o anda anladım mesela, moralim bozuluyor. Mesela şey düşünüyorsun ya "ben cezaevindeymişim zaten, ne olacaktı ki" diyorsun.

13.

Oradaki bağ çok güçlü, mesela yoldaşlık bağı, arkadaşlık bağı. Mesela ben gittiğim sıralarda gerçekten onu gördüm yani. Bazı davranışlardan onu gördüm. İşte ama iki arkadaş tartıştı ya da eften püften bir sebepten çok tartışmaların olduğu zaman, ya da işte kavga seviyesine varan fiziksel hareketler olduğu zaman görünce moralin bozuluyor. Böyle tıpkı kafandaki cezaevi, cezaevine gelmeden kafadaki cezaevi profilin o anda oluşmuş oluyor. O olunca da tabi moralin bozuluyor,

cezaevinde olduğunu hissediyorsun daha çok. Mesele o. Yoksa onlar olmayana kadar zaten herkes huzurlu, birbiriyle iyi, güzel, hoşbeş konuşuyor, bir rutininiz var. Bunların olmaması için böyle haftada bir defa toplantı yapılıyor herkesin sorununu konuşabilmesi için. Ama ona rağmen olduğu zaman tabiki moralin bozuluyor.

14.

Murat'la Selim vardı hatırlıyor musun bilmiyorum. Bunlar ikidir üçtür kavga ediyorlardı işte. En son kavga ettiler futbol sahasında. Onlar yüzünden iki-üç haftalık spor saatimizden olduk. İdare Selim'i aldı götürdü. Biz de dedik ki "bu sorunu iki kişi çıkartmış, bu sorun iki taraflıdır". Tek taraflı değil neticede, iki kişi kavga etmiş. Bir de birinci defa değil. Biz dedik Murat'ı gönderelim, onlar dediler "yok şöyledir böyledir." Ben dedim "kesin gitsin." Görüşümü net belirttim. Ondan sonra oylama yapıldı, olmadı.

15.

Kötü şeyler olunca kötü şeyler düşünüyorsun, bence bundan ibaret. Yani o kavgalar o tartışmalar bu algıyı da biraz tahrip ediyor. Tabi sonrasında sen de alışıyorsun buna. Yani bir süre sonra normal görmeye başlıyorsun, daha büyük bir şekilde bakıyorsun cezaevi sürecine. Normal görmeye başlıyorsun ve psikolojini ona göre adapte etmeye başlıyorsun. Artık öyle bir şey olduğu zaman çok daha az üzülüyorsun. Hepsi bence alışma sürecine bağlı. Her şeye de böyle iyi bakmamak lazım bence çünkü her şey toz pembe değil, her şey çok kötü de değil. Mesela ben cezaevini çok kötü düşünüyordum, çok kötü gelmedi. Kötü ama çok kötü değil. Cezaevine girdiğim zaman, o girişten itibarenki sıcakkanlılık hep böyle hiç bozulmayacakmış gibi düşünmek de bence hata. Yani hiçbir şey böyle çok fazla sürmez, öyle sonsuza dek sürmez, ya da bizim istediğimiz uzunlukta sürmez. Yani her şey neticede bir gün tahrip olur ya da yok olur. İşte böyle şeyleri anlıyorsun. Daha böyle hayata dair, dışarıdaki hayata dair böyle daha çok berrak kafayla düşünüyorsun dışarıdaki hayatı. Çünkü orada cezaevindeyken bunu sorgulayabilme imkanın var. Kendini sorguluyorsun, çevreni sorguluyorsun. Hangi suçtan girdiğin aslında önemli değil, cezaevi böyle bir yer, kendini sorguluyorsun. "Acaba iyi mi yaptım, kötü mü yaptım?" Kendi benliğini bazen sorguluyorsun ya da çevrendeki insanları daha iyi tanıyorsun, aslında kimin seninle dost olduğunu yada olmadığını. Bunları öğreniyorsun yani aslında bir anlamda hayata dair insana bazı şeyler kazandırıyor. İşte bu

kazanımların bedeli de tabi ki özgürlüğünün kısıtlanması, her şeyin bedeli olduğu gibi.

16.

Ya ben aslında içerde şunu fark ettim; ben mesela dışarıda çok yoğunmuşum. Böyle düşünecek zaman yokmuş bende. Mesela günün 11 saati ya da 10 saati ben çalışıyordum zaten işim gereği. İşte zaman olursa haftasonları arkadaşlarla takılıyorduk böyle birkaç saat kafede. Sadece sohbet, o anki sıcaklığa göre, o anki herkesin psikolojisi iyi olduğu için yada morali iyi olduğu için sohbet iyi gelişiyordu. Bir de akşamları geç geldiğimizde bazen böyle gerek duyulduğu zaman, mesela yürüyüş olsun, basın açıklamaları falan olsun, olduğu zaman gidiyorduk. Yani benimki daha çok pratiğe dayalıydı. Pek fazla düşünmüyordum [gülüyor], öyle söyleyeyim. Hem kendim için hem de böyle yani mensup olduğum siyasi görüş için yani, çok fazla böyle bir düşünce içerisinde değildim. Düşünüyordum tabi ki elbette, ne için yaptığımızı, nasıl yaptığımızı biliyoruz ama çok fazla ayrıntıya girip düşünme imkanım, zamanım yoktu. İçeride bu mümkün oldu. İçeride bu mümkün olduğu için yani her açıdan her şeyi daha berrak görmeye başladım. Hiç düşünmediğim şeyleri düşünmeye başladım mesela. Hiç böyle arkadaşlığını yada siyasi görüşünü sorgulamadığım insanların böyle bir çok şeyini kendimce yani kendi içimde sorgulamaya başladım. Böyle şeyler oldu. Kendi açımdan böyle berrak görüyorum ben. Aslında bir neticede, bir anlamda baktığın zaman bu kadar berrak görmemin sebebini ben zaman olarak görüyordum. Çünkü benim dışarıda pek fazla zamanım yoktu, her şey pratiğe dayalıydı. Yani zaman olmamasının sebebi ben çok fazla çalışıyordum. Mesela bizim işimiz zaman olarak çok fazla. Mesela sabah 8 buçuk - akşam 8… O yüzden birçok şeyi yapmaya zamanın olmuyor. Çocuk yaşımdan beri çalışıyorum zaten o meslekte hep öyleydi.

17.

Volta atarken mesela benim hissettiğim şuydu: Vücuda bir ritm uyduruyorsun, onun haricinde düşünüyorsun; dışarı çıkınca ne yapçaksın ya da burada ne yapçaksın. Hani bu sadece planlamaya yönelik değil bazen hayal de kuruyorsun. Bu volta aterken… Hani volta, biliyorsun, oradaki en yaygın fiziksel aktivite. Volta atarken bu daha keyifli hale geliyor, o yüzden volta atmayı seviyordum özellikle tek başıma volta attığım çok olmuştur yani. Daha sonradan arkadaşlar

gelmiş katılmıştır o başka. Yani voltanın bana kattığı şey sağlıklı düşünme şekli cezaevinde, voltaya benim bakış açım o. Herkes voltanın iyi olduğunu söyler ama ben voltaya hiç böyle cezaevine girmeden önce bu açıdan bakmamıştım. İnsan yaşarken daha iyi anlıyor. Belki her insanın bakış açısı aynı değildir ama benim voltaya bakış açım budur. Sana sağlıklı düşünme becerisi kazandırıyor bence, yani yatakta o kadar sağlıklı düşünemezsin, uzanırken ~~bence~~ yada yemek masasındayken, yada bir arkadaşlarla ortak alanda otururken. Voltada insan biraz kendi içine kapanıyor, biraz kendi iç dünyasına kapanıyor. Yani ben öyle yapıyordum en azından öyle söyleyeyim. Benim voltadan anladığım o, voltanın bana kattığı şey o. Yani düşünmek için voltaya çıkıyordum diyebilirim [gülüyor]

18.

Yani bir anlamda da aslında cezaevi aslında insanları analiz etme konusunda bence herkese böyle yetenek katıyor. Yani izliyorsun sürekli, birilerini izliyorsun. İzlemek durumunda kalıyorsun daha doğrusu çünkü aynı mekandayız 24 saat boyunca. O yüzden istemesen de birçok arkadaşını tanıyorsun, mesela günlük hangi aktiviteleri yapabileceğini tahmin ediyorsun. Bu şey değil yani, bunun için samimi olman gerekmiyor çünkü dar bir alandayız. Artık beyin o şekilde çalışıyor. Orayı da kabullenmişsen eğer, yani dışarıyı da fazla düşünmüyorsan eğer bu konuda böyle tam her şeyi düşünebilir hale geliyorsun çünkü zaman belli insanlar belli -aynı insanlar. O yüzden bir anlamda yetenek katıyor, tabi bunun yanında psikolojik tahribat da var; hergün aynı şeyin olacağını tahmin etmek yada hergün aynı şeyin olacağını bilmek -bu da zor tabi. Zaman donmuş gibi sanki. Benim böyle hissettiğim zamanlar oldu mesela orada; sanki zaman donmuş gibi hep aynı şeyler oluyor. Böyle hapiste sıkışmışız değil de zamanda sıkışmışız gibi hissettiğim durumlar oldu yani çünkü hep aynı şeyler oluyor.

19.

Tabi hepsiyle teker teker vedalaştım. Benim kazancım şu oldu, koğuştan çıkarken kimseye bir dargınlığım, kırgınlığım olmadı. Kimsenin de bana olmadı, bu benim için iyi bir şeydi yani. Herkesle tek tek vedalaştık.

20.

Bana gerçekten sürpriz oldu diyebilirim yani. Ben zaten bir 6-7 sene bekliyordum üyelikten. Mahkemeye çıktığım zaman da yani ben şunu diyordum; ceza almazsam da benim için en iyi ihtimal tutukluluk halimin devamına karar verilir diye düşünüyordum. Ama tahliye aldık, nasıl aldım ben de bilmiyorum. O zaman hakim iyi gününde miydi neydi ben de anlamadım [gülüyor] Açıkçası pek fazla da ilgilenmedim. Yani tahliye olmak bana sürpriz oldu.

21.

Bende şöyle bir korku vardı; yani cezaevine çıkmadan ben tahliye olacağıma inanmıyordum. Tamam bırakmışlar, şey yapmışlar ama… Çünkü cezaevinden çıktığın zaman bir gbt taraması daha oluyor, başka dosyası var mı yok mu diye, hani ben ondan bile korkuyordum. Yani beni kapıdan çevirmesinler diye… ben Segbis'le çıktım mahkemeye. Çıktım, zaten hakim yüzüme bakarak tahliye edeceğini söyledi. Ondan sonra işte gardiyanlar geliyor, yatağını falan topluyorsun. İşte götürüyorsun falan… Yatağımı götürdüm verdim, tekrar aramalardan geçiyorsun. Ben hala kapıda bir gbt uygulaması yapılacak ya, ben hala ondan bile korkuyordum yani öyle söyleyeyim sana. Benim korkum oydu, oradan da bir şey çıkmayınca zaten cezaevinden çıktım. Kapıdan çıktım, zaten kapıya bırakıyorlar. İşte abim orada bekliyordu, bir de abimin bir arkadaşı arabayla gelmişler beni almaya.

22.

Tabi ben cezaevine girdiğim zaman ben ailevi olarak çok kötü bir zamanda girdim çünkü babam o dönem daha bir sene falan olmuştu yurt dışına gideli. Benim cezaevinde olduğum dönemde abim de cezaevindeydi Edirne'de. Yani iki kardeşim vardı, annem hem onlara bakıyordu. Onun ailesinde üç tane çocuğu vardı o zaman, hem onun ailesine bakıyordu hem bana bakıyordu cezaevinde hem de abime bakıyorlardı. Yani iki kardeşim çalışıyordu ve yani bunu yapmakta gerçekten zorlanıyordular zaman zaman. İşte ben cezaevinden çıkınca hani onlara biraz rahatlık gelsin, o maddi ihtiyaçları biraz hafifleteyim diye ben de çıktıktan 10 gün sonra falan çalışmaya başladım kendi isteğimle. 2-3 ay çalıştım zaten ondan sonra köye gittim. Ben böyle bir gereklilik hissettim, maddi açıdan böyle ciddi bir gereklilik hissettim yani çünkü bizim mali açıdan o zaman durumumuz pek iyi değildi. İşte dediğim gibi babam, abim, ben… Yani durumumuz pek iyi olmadığı için direkt çalışmaya başladım.

23.

Yani tahliye olmanın şoku olduğu için ben de ne yapacağımı bilmiyordum. Memlekete mi gitsem, çalışsam mı, başka bir şey mi yapsam? Yani hayatımda ne adım atacağıma karar vermekte zorlandım. Bu da tahliyenin şokundan oldu, zaten bundan iki ay sonra memlekete gittim 4-5 ay orada kaldım. Sonra tekrar İstanbul'a geldim, yanılmıyorsam iki ay sonra zaten ceza geldi bana: 7 sene 9 ay. İşte ondan sonra çıktım geldim Yunanistan'a. Bu tahliye olduğum davadan ceza geldi. Niye olduysa artık 7 sene 9 ay ceza verdiler. İstinatı 20 günde onaylandı. Avukatım zaten fazla bekleme dedi, yani "git" dedi adam açıktan. "Ya gideceksin ya cezaevine gireceksin" dedi. Yani durum bu. Biz de geldik buradayız, 3 senedir çıkmışız.

24.

Yani şöyle bir şey var mesela bir insan cezaevine girdiğinde genelde "neyden" diye sorarlar. Çevrendeki insanlara göre… Çevrendeki insanlar neye özeniyorsa yada en çok neyi seviyorsa, yada neyi sevmiyorsa cezaevine girip girmemeni ona göre yargılarlar. Burada ben mesela çok az bir süre yattım ama siyasi yattım, mesela çevremdeki insanların çoğu siyasi yattığımı biliyorlar. Yani bundan dolayı da, ben hissettirmek istemiyorum ama, şey var yani, aileden gelen bir şey gerçi politik bir aile olduğumuz için, böyle özgün bir ağırlık var. Toplum içerisinde ağırlığım var demiyorum ama bir avantajı var. İnsanların sana bakış açılarından yola çıkarsak içinde bulunduğun toplum açısından bir avantajı var. Hani etrafındaki arkadaşlar olsun, yeni tanıştığın insanlar olsun. Tabi ben bunu belirtmiyorum hiçbir yerde, yani mutlaka bir yerden öğreniyorlar çünkü etrafımdaki birçok insan biliyor bunu. O yüzden sana olan bakış açıları biraz daha temkinli -öyle diyeyim yani, kötü değil. Mesela atıyorum gasptan girseydim yada hırsızlıktan girseydim bizim toplumumuzun %80inden selam dahi almazdım. Ama ben zaten her zaman diyorum iyiki siyasiden girmişim, başka bir şeyden girmemişim cezaevine. Hani inandığım, sevdiğim bir şey uğruna girmişim. Bu da bana pek böyle yük olmuyor. Yani tamam hala bilinçaltımda aslında cezaevi koşullarının yarattığı tahripler var ama bu da şundan kaynaklanıyor; cezaevinden sonraki hayatımız pek iyi olmadı yine. Hani iyi bir hayatımız olsaydı bunu minimize edecekti ama pek fazla böyle iyi bir hayatımız olmadığı için, oradan oraya gittiğimiz için bu hala var yani. Cezaevinden sonra göçebelik, yani mültecilik… O yüzden cezaevindeki tahribatlar hala biraz hissediliyor. Az bir süre kaldık ama cezaevi sonrası hayat bunu minimize edemedi.

25.

Zaten benim çevremdeki insanların hepsi aslında Kürt hareketinden insanlar. Yani Türk arkadaşlarım da var ama Türk milliyetçisi arkadaşlarım hiç yok. Çevremde olmuştur ama pek fazla yani kafalarımız uyuşmamıştı, yani siyasi açıdan değil de ruh açısından pek fazla kafalarımız uymadığı için fazla arkadaşlık kurmayı denemedim. Şöyle bir şey var, benim Türk milliyetçilerinden gözlemlediğim şey şu: milliyetçiliklerinden başka bir şeyleri yok. Yani ben bunu gözlemledim, belki yanlıştır bilmiyorum. Yani atıyorum bir bardağa bile milliyetçilik bakış açısıyla bakıyorlar. Yani örnek veriyorum; "bu bardak niye Türk usulü değil de şöyle, Türk usulü olsa daha güzel olur" gibisinden… Bu biraz şey yani nasıl desem, bana göre saplantı. O yüzden ideolojiyi saplantı haline getiren insanlarla pek fazla ilişki kurmak istemiyorum. Hangi ideoloji olursa olsun bu fark etmiyor. Bu saplantı haline gelmişse iyi bir şey değil.

APPENDIX B

ORIGINAL NARRATIONS OF ROJAN

1.

Bir ordunun mesela bir mahkeme kürsüsü var ya, karşımda bir kürsüsü var. Cübbeyi girmiş böyle "anlat." Dinlemeyecek bak, dinlemeyecek. Klişe dilinin altına yerleşmiş, dillere pelesenk derler ya. "Anlat!" Çünkü katalog suç olarak geçiyor malum iddialar yani anladın mı? Hani birine yan baktın, birine ters attın bu anlamda değil. Yani diyor "bunun özellikle bir tesislerimizi görmesi lazım, hizmetimizden yararlanması lazım." Efendim, "Tutuklusun! Utanmıyor musun! Ahlaksız! Ahlaksızlık bunlar, ahlaklı bir adama benziyorsun" Desem ki hakikaten de evet bunlar çok ahlaksız şeyler, hakim bey biz bir kenara geçelim biz ahlaklıyız. Ne münasebet.

2.

O adamın ayaklarının altında çok müthiş bir acı hissediyorsun ve bu acıyı hissederken sen şunu söylüyorsun "ya bir dakika ya, şu an canı acıyan ben değilim, şu an canı acıyan benim sırtıma acımasızca basan adam." Bak ben onun ayaklarının altında eziliyorum, sırtım, omurgam. Ben gülüyorum anladın mı? O sırtıma basarken ben ona şunu söyledim: "Bir gün yüreğine bir acı saplanacak. Ya nereden geldi? Bugün anamı mı kırdım, babamı mı kırdım, arkadaşımı mı kırdım? Mesleğinde artık rutin halini alan insana topluma zararlı hareketlerinden bir tanesini düşüneceksin ama yok çıkaramayacaksın. Bu acı nereden geldi, bu acı nereden geldi? Ben o içinde hiçbir zaman ulaşamayacağın erişemeyeceğin sonsuz acının cevabıyım. Yüreğine dokunursan o acın geçecek ama hiçbir zaman ona dokunmayacağım. Bunu ömür boyu alnında bir kara yazı, boynunda bir tasma ya da elinde bir döviz olarak tut. "Ben bunu yaptım, ben hayvanım" Hayvandan kastım ben bizim dört ayaklı canlarımızı kast etmiyorum. "Ben vandalım" "Bak bu canı ben acıttım, bu göz yaşını ben döktüm." Oysa kimse gelip seni orada denetlemiyor. O kişiye hakaret edince şark puanın artmıyor ya da ne bileyim derecen yükselmiyor. Beni ya da herhangi bir emekçiyi, insanı, öğrenciyi alırken senin ulaştığın şey sadece şu; bir 300 lira fazladan para atarsın başka bir şey yok. Bunun için değdi mi peki? Hani ben onun ayaklarının dibinde ezilirken ben ona gülüyordum anladın mı? Kahkaha atarak gülüyordum. Sinirleniyordu, bir yerden sonra artık psikolojileri kaldırmıyor.

“Oğlum, o kadar dayak yiyorsunuz, o kadar hakarete uğruyorsunuz, ve hala gülüyorsunuz ben bunu anlayamıyorum. Biz bunları polis akademisindeki aldığımız derslerden de gördük. Bunlar farklı. Ben diyorum, bunun adı haklılık duygusu. Haklılığa olan inanç.

3.

İçeri girdim, baktım 15-20 kişi bunlar böyle güzel dizilmişler oturuyorlar. Hemen işte “ya ne istersin” falan filan derken dedim “bir tişört var üstümde, bir pantolon, bir ayakkabı, başka hiçbir şeyim yok. Bana bir sigara verin ya.” Ayaklarımı şöyle uzatayım. “Ya otursana” “Ben oturamıyorum ya, her tarafım ağrıyor ya” çünkü öyle bir dayak öyle bir şiddete maruz kalmışız ki bütün vücut bildiğin uyuşmuş. Bu süreçte hemen duş aldım, çok ferah. Şöyle oturduğum yerde dedim “bana bir yer gösterin, ben yatıcam.” “Yatağın hazır” dediler. O fanusum yok mu en alt kat cam kenarı -benim dünyam. TRT’nin yayınlarını hep oradan dinlerdim gece boyunca sabaha kadar. Oraya girdim işte. Başladım yatakla tanışmaya, yastıkla tanışmaya. Hatta bu cümlemi ben bir gün ablama da söyledim. “Abla o kadar huzurluydum ki” dedim “oraya girdiğimde ben huzuru gördüm.” “Oğlum öyle deme” dedi. “Ben hani orada üşümüyorum, incinmiyorum, kırılmıyorum, yağmurda beklemiyorum, bekletilmiyorum. Ben buradayım, yerim belli. Kimsenin bir bahanesi olamaz, beni tanıyan seven. Hiçbir şekilde bir bahanesi olamaz. Buradayım, yerim belli. Mevsimsel ihtiyaçlarım olabilir. Dönemsel kırgınlıklarım olabilir, dargınlıklarım olabilir, kızgınlıklarım da olabilir. Sonra yoksunluklarım olabilir, çaresizliklerim olabilir, ümitlerim olabilir. Hani yelpazeyi genişletebiliriz. Ablam dedi “oğlum öyle deme bizi incitiyorsun, yanında olmak istiyoruz her anlamda.” Dedim “senlik bir durum yok” bir gün biri “aa işte şu oldu bu oldu.” Bir dakika, benim ikametgah adresim telin arkası, bunu kime sorsan çok rahat tarif edecek. Hak diyecek, hukuk diyecek, adalet diyecek, bak direkt orada X’i bulacak. Diyecek X orada. İçeri geçtik sonra baktık bize ihtiyacı olan insanlar var, gerçekten. Sevincimize, hüznümüze, azmimize, inancımıza ihtiyacı olan insanlar var. Biz bunlarla yüzleştiğimizde “dur” dememek lazım ya da ne bileyim pes etmemek lazım.

4.

Hani dedim ya sana sanki konuşursam -hayır işte- etrafımdaki ördüğüm duvarlar birden yeşil çimlerden oluşan çitlere dönüşecek. O zaman herkes içindeki kırıklıkları, harabeleri görecek. Sonra işte buradan geri o cehenneme dönmek var. Ha bakma senin yanında bu

kadar duygularım ve düşüncelerim ya da fikirlerimi çok açık bir şekilde konuşurum. Bu cehenneme döndüğümde tekrar kendi içinde cennetleri olan, babil bahçeleri olan bir adam ama dışarıya karşı asık bir surat ve çok resmi bir takım tutumlar…

5.

Mesela koğuş içerisinde arkadaş var. Ben bu arkadaşı her türlü sırtlarım, arkadaşız, dostuz. Ama yeri geliyor bir arkadaşımızın bir ihtiyacı oluyor. Ayakkabı örnek veriyorum, sende ayakkabı var. Ben seni sırtlamışım her anlamda, o vakit geliyor sen o ayakkabıyı vermiyorsun. Sonra diyorum ki kimseden bir şey beklememeyi öğren. Hiç kimseden hiçbir şey beklemediğin zaman o kadar mutlu oluyorsun ki, o mutlu ediyor beni. Dedim ya eskiden böyle birisi değildim. Set kurdum yani etrafıma duvarlar ördüm, anlatabiliyor muyum? Kayıtsızmışım gibi görünmeye çalışıyorum. Şimdi yüreğimi açıp baktığım zaman binlerce çocuk görüyorum. Düşen, ayağı takılan, sahillere varan binlerce çocuk görüyorum. Birisi benden sigara istediğinde "sigara verilse senin bütün sorunun çözülecek dostum öyle mi? Peki kıyıya vuran çocuklar için bir şey yaptın mı? Hayır. Peki yangında kendini ailesini her şeyini kaybeden birisi için ya da bir emekçi annenin çalınan maaşı için bir şey yaptın mı? Hayır. Bizzat çalmıştır belki, açık cezaevinin öyle bir kötü tarafı var. "O zaman dostum sen şöyle bir kenarı git, benim seninle işim yok." Kesiyorum. Anladın mı birisi benimle samimiyet kurmaya çalıştığında sebep soruyorum. "Neden ben" diyorum "benimle ne yaşadın, benimle hangi acının altından kalktın, hangi sorunun altından kalktın? Bunların hiçbirini yaşamadığın için seninle bir çizgimiz olamaz. Başlar, sonuç yok, gelişme yok. Başlangıçtan bitişe geçer.

6.

Kapalıdaki samimiyeti açıkta bulamazsın. Hani tamam örnek veriyorum, şu suç grubu tamamen insani bir konuda seslerini çıkarttıkları için birilerine ağır gelmiştir. Ha "bunu susturalım, bu yarın öbür gün ayak bağı olur. İçeri atalım, korkutalım. Özgürlüğünden bir nebze olsun uzaklaştığı zaman bir daha böyle bir şeylere karışmaz" gibi şeyler de var. Ama kapalıda öyle bir şey söz konusu değil. Kapalıda biliyorsun, herkesin az çok hangi davadan hangi konudan orada olduğunu. Ve orada kişinin yalan söyleme gibi bir lüksü yok, çünkü orada şeffaflık ön planda, orada samimiyet ön planda. Şeffaflıktan kastım şu: ya işte dostcanlı olmayan sürekli bir sorular sorular sorular, yani sonuçta bir dosya varsa eğer -bizi de

yemiyorsan- o dosyan çıkacak ortaya bir gün -ha erken ha geç. E öyle bir de dosya olmadığı zaman, yani senin olmayan bir dosya için "aa dosyam var" hikayeni hiç kimse dinlemez. Hani olması lazım bir hayalin ya da ne bileyim…

7.

Ya dedim ya işte nezarete düşüyorsun. O an istiyorsun ki bütün dünya yıkılsın anladın mı? Emin ol o an istiyorsun, bütün dünya yerle bir olsun ama ben o dört duvar arasına girmeyeyim. Bütün dünya yıkılsın ama ben oraya girmeyeyim. Neyse nezaretten bir yerden sonra polisler seni alıyor. Uygun gördükleri bir kodese ya da hapishaneye ya da insanların "oo ben orada hayatta yaşayamam, ben orada ölürüm" dedikleri yerde bakıyorsun çiçekler açmış. İçeri bir giriyorsun böyle çok rahat çok ferah. Anladın? İnsanların bir sevgi seli var, bir karşılaması var. "Oo" diyorsun "ben nereleri feth etmişim, ben bir fatihmişim haberim yokmuş" Ama bakıyorsun insanlar sadece sana diyor ki "seni olduğun gibi kabul etmek istiyorum, hatanla, günahınla, ya da birilerinin suç dediği şey neyse seni onunla kabul ediyorum, hoşgeldin" Birinin sana ayakkabısını vermesi, birinin sana terliğini uzatması, birinin sana sıfır bir havlu, sıfır bir iç çamaşırı vesaire…

8.

Kaybettiğim şeyi bulmayı isterim. Sevgi… Bir kişi… Benden sevgiyi aldılar ya. Keşke gülmeseydi… Hatta birgün bir kıza ne dedim biliyor musun? Konuşuyo, konuşuyo -ilk tanışmamız. "Hiçbir şey söyleme" dedim, "ne söylersen ben inanırım." O hiç tanımadığım insan işte canımı çok acıttı. İsmini bile hatırlamak istemiyorum. Baktığım her kadında onu görmek gibi bir acı bıraktı geride. Ve özellikle dört duvar arasındaki birinin senin için gerçekten bir şey yapabildiğini koşulsuz şartsız bunu görebilmeyi çok istiyorsun. Bunu bütün kalbinle istiyorsun. Ben sevgiyi kaybettim, inanmayı kaybettim, güvenmeyi kaybettim, beklemeyi kaybettim. Umursamamayı öğrendim, görmemeyi, duymamayı, bilmemeyi. Aslında hayatın şifresi çok basit: kayıtsızlık.

9.

Bunu aslında şu kişilere borçluyum; görüş gününde gelicem diyeceğim diyip gelmeyen insana -özellikle beklediğim insana- sana mektup yazıcam diyip yazmayan insana, ya da uğruna yattığım insanların… Orayı anlatamazsın ya. O kapıda o mektubun hiç bu

hayatta hiçbir şeye sap olamayan -sevgi anlamında hiçbir şeye sap olamayan bir adama- mektup gelmesi ve sana mektup gelmemesi. Bu anlatılmaz ya? Yaşanması lazım. Herkes incitti, herkes kırdı.

10.

Gerçekten de keşke içeride olsaydım diyen çok insan var. "Dışarı bildiğin gibi değil, çok acımasız. Hayat çok sert, çok öfkeli." Koğuştan bir arkadaşa bir gün şunu demiştim "ben içerideyken ne yöne gittiğini bilmediğim arabaların sesiyle mutlu oluyorum. Sen dışarıdayken ne yöne gideceğini bileceğin araçlarla mutlu ol." Ya sonra düşündüm "Bu nasıl bir kafa ya?" Bir adam düşün, ne yöne gittiğini bilmediği araçların sesiyle mutlu oluyor çünkü sadece o var. Elindeki tek imkan oydu.

11.

Çok net, çok böyle sert bir adam anladın mı? Böyle tak tak tak, hep böyle şeyler yapar. Beni hep şey istiyor anladın mı, hep böyle yanında canavar istiyor anladın mı yani? Bildiğin bir canavar istiyor. Kendisi bir efsane. Sana ciddi söylüyorum bir efsane. O efsane olduğu için bizim de legend olmamızı istiyor. Herkes farklı, herkes her şey olamaz. Ben belki şey olabiliyorum. Yani belki ben bazen düşünüyorum da bu acılar için yaratıldım. Bazen… Düşünüyorum yani mesela benim çektiğimi belki sen kısmen kaldırırsın-kaldırmazsın. Bir başkası daha farklı bir acıyı kaldıramaz. Ama ben bütün acıları karma yapıp, böyle hepsinin… "Aa acı mı? Biraz… Ya şu yara biraz ekşi mi? Şundan biraz… Acıları ben bir nevi aktar olarak kullanıyorum. Serpiyorum yaralarıma bazen. Bazı yaralar var çok ciddi kabuk bağlamıyor, ben onlara tuz serpiyorum böyle. Tuz serpiyorum onlara ondan sonra bir avuç acı biber alıyorum. Acı geldikçe mazo bir derecede daha çok koşuyorum acıya. Gel hani daha neresi var? Ötesi var mı? Kırılacak herhangi bir yer yok.

12.

Benim için şöyle bir ifade görevi var; trambolin. Yani hiç düşünmeden cevap verdim; trambolin. Bak düşünebiliyor musun? Hani burada mesela hiç düşünmeden cevap verdim dedim ama sanki bu soruyu ben 40 yıldır bekliyorum, sanki bu soruyu ben 50 yıldır bekliyorum. "Bu değil, bu değil" soruları hep eledim. İşte doğru soru bu anladın mı? "Abin senin için ne ifade ediyor?" Geçen sana yine anlattım. "Hedefin ne?" Şu dakikada hedefim benim cebimdeki

çakmağı bulmak. Ama demin dedim ya “abin senin için ne ifade ediyor?” Trambolin dedim fazla kafa karıştırmadan. Çünkü o kadar inanıyorum ki, o kadar güveniyorum ki, o kadar eminim ki ondan, ben kendimi her sırt üstü bıraktığımda ben onun kollarına düşeceğimi biliyorum ne olursa olsun. Zaten anlamlı kılan da bu, özgün kılan da bu. Biri der ki işte “benim için x kişi kasadır ya da bankadır ya da ne bileyim security’dir ya da uçmaktır -hayallerime uçurur beni, istediği zaman dibe de kamikaze çakabilir.” Ben onu demiyorum, ben diyorum ki benim abim benim için trambolin demek. Kendimi bırakırım sırt üstü, o beni hep havaya kaldırır. Ben bırakırım, o kaldırır. Ben bırakırım, o kaldırır.

13.

Sana nasıl söyleyeyim, sana şöyle söyleyeyim: Tesadüflerin gücüne inanırım hocam yani. Ciddi anlamda tesadüflerin gücüne inanırım, çünkü tesadüfler bizi bir level daha hayata bağlıyor. Örnek veriyorum: Bundan 3-4 sene önce Mecidiyeköy metrobüs durağında biriyle çarpıştık -o bana arkadan çarptı. Ben döndüm baktım, “özür mü dilememi bekliyorsun” diyor. Dedim “özür falan beklemiyorum” sonuçta hanımefendi. Sarışın bir hanımefendiydi adı Selin’di assolistti Taksim’de X Bar’da -çok müdavimleri olan bir mekan. “Benim adım Selin” dedi. “Tamam, benim adım da “şapkalı” dedim. O zaman hep böyle fötr şapka takıyordum ya. “Tamam, eğer tesadüflerin gücüne inanıyorsan,” dedi “biz Mecidiyeköy’de karşılaştıysak başka yerde de karşılaşırız.” Müthiş bir elektrik aldık birbirimizde ama bir daha… Düşünsene 20 milyon insanın içinde ben bir daha seni nasıl bulurum diyorsun. O insan diyor ki “bulursun ya gerçekten tesadüflere inanıyorsan ve eğer gerçekten ikimiz de dürüst insanlarsak ve bir daha görüşmeyi, yüz yüze gelmeyi hak ediyorsan biz görüşürüz.” Salıyorsun çayıra mevlam kayıra. X bir tarafa Selin bir tarafa. Ve tesadüftür ki bir gün Ayvansaray metrobüs durağında iniyorsun, biraz gece aleminden geliyorsun: “Ne kadar anlamsız, bugün de bir anlam çıkaramadım bu hayattan.” Bir bakıyorsun arkandan biri “hşşt” diyor, bir dönüp bakıyorsun Selin. Şimdi senden önce o inseydi dersin ki ben mi Selin’i takip ettim. Hayır, bu sefer ben soruyorum: “Sormamı ister misin ısrarla sen mi beni takip ediyorsun?” “Hayır” dedi “tesadüf.” Balat’ta oturuyordu, kapının oradan yürüyerek gittik. Hiç tanımadığım insan o da beni tanımıyor. Evine gittik. Sanatsever bir insan. Tablolar, gramafonlar, 45lik plaklar… Sohbet esnasında hep bana “çocuk, güneş doğana kadar ben sana bütün hayat hikayemi anlatıcam. Sen de bana anlat ve çıktığında bir daha yalvarırım beni görme, ben de seni görmeyeceğim çünkü insanlar bizi hayat hikayelerimizden

acılarımızdan yaralarımızdan bir daha vuramasın istiyorum" dedi. Hakikaten de öyle oldu, bir daha da görmedim. Merak etmiyor muyum? Ediyorum. Yeşim dediğim insanın arkadaşlığını dostluğunu sohbetini hepsini özlüyorum ama bir gün belki eğer bunu hak ediyorsak bir daha görüşürüz.

APPENDIX C

ORIGINAL NARRATIONS OF BERRIN

1.

Literally bir şeyin bedelini ödüyorsun. Opposition göstermenin, direnmenin ya da ne bileyim herkes için çok büyük olaylar değil tabi ki propagandadan girenler için özellikle ama yine de bedel ödeme gibi bir şey var bence. Bu da psikolojik açıdan insanları ayakta tutan bir fikir. Çünkü şey gibi bir ayrım var yani adli suçlularla siyasi suçluların arasındaki fark önemli bir fark siyasi suçlular için özellikle. Herhangi bir şekilde ahlaksız, yüz kızartıcı ya da ne bileyim işte basic toplum kurallarına uymayan şeylerden dolayı değil de dissent olduğu için içeri girmiş olduk. Bu da yani insanlara neden içeride oldukları konusunda ve oradaki geçen zaman içinde onlara güç veren, dayanma gücü sağlayan bir düşünce, bir fikir yani bedel ödemek. Gerçekliği de bence böyle yani yine bedel ödemek. Literally bedel ödemek olarak düşünüyorum.

2.

Benim için komik olan şey çok bir şey yapmadan içeri girmiş olmak hani. Ne bileyim uzun soluklu veya gerçekten de bir değişim, bir dönüştürme gücü olan bir aktivizmden dolayı yada bir solculuktan dolayı vesaire içeride olmak değil de daha ufak tefek mesele olduğu için benim açımdan… Ama yine de bedel ödemek… Kendi personal amacın için ödemiyorsun ki bu bedeli. Zaten bu bedeli ödeyenler var, ona bir katkıda bulunmuş oluyorsun. Yani bir şeyin parçası haline geliyorsun, bir hareketin ödediği bedelin parçası oluyorsun işte.

3.

Bir ihtimal aklımdaydı çünkü şey yani zaten sürekli insanların girmesi gibi bir durum olduğu için tabi ki cezaevine girme ihtimalimin olduğunun farkındaydım.

4.

Valla ben şahsen bu konuda ayrıcalıklıydım. Biliyorsun işte… Yine ben tabi toplu temizlik olduğunda falan yine bir şeyler yapıyordum ama [gülüyor] sıram geldiği zaman, sıra sistemi vardı, başkaları

yapıyordu yerime. Hani gönüllü olarak isteyen benim istediğim bir şey olarak değil de. Yine yapıyordum ama diğerlerine göre daha az yapıyordum. Bir de şey bakışı vardı bana, içeri girdi depresyona da girdi gibi bir bakış vardı. Yani yardımcı olamayacak kadar, bir şeylere katılamayacak kadar kötü durumda olmadığımı düşünüyordum ama yine de böyle bir tavır takınmış olmaları hoşuma gitti yani care eden. Gözeten bir tavırda olmaları hoşuma gitmişti. Ha bir de şey de vardı tabi. Elime alınca falan birileri gelip elimden alıyordu çekçeki, süpürge falaş bilmemne. Herhalde ne bileyim fiziksel olarak da able olmadığımı mı düşünüyorlardı? [gülüyor]

5.

Bir de şey vardı işte seninle de konuşuyorduk ya bunu, insanlar için baya performanstı o temizliği yapmak, aktif olarak görev almak. İş yapmak yani… Ya iş yapan insan lafı sözü olan insanlar. Sırf bu yüzden bedensel bir şey yapmak değil o maintenance'ı consider etmek ve planlama yapmak, organizasyon sağlamak da önemli bir şeydi.

6.

Bence şey değildi sadece; şu koğuşun işi görülsün, ortalık temizlensin yada yemek dağıtılsın gibi tasklerin yerine getirilmesi değil sadece. Daha dediğim gibi kapasitelerimizi exercise ederek aynı zamanda bir collective care etme yoluydu bu. Çünkü başkasının iyi veya kötü olması daha matters yani o alanda. Bu biraz da şey üzerinden görülüyordu bence, işleyen demir paslanmaz mantığı üzerinden de görünüyordu. Bana da birileri tavsiye etmişti yani; "iyi hissetmiyorsan kendini, temizlik yap yada bir şeyler yap" falan filan gibi, arkadaşça bir öneri olarak. Öyleydi zaten yani hareket etmeyip napçaksın? Önemliydi yani evet. Hayata katılmak yani bir anlamda kendine katılmak hani [gülüyor] öyle bir anlamı da vardı.

7.

Atıyorum diyelim birisinin bir ihtiyacı var. İhtiyaç değil sadece bir istek de olabilir. Diyelim işte ben Kürtçe öğrenmek istiyorum, Kürtçe'yi en iyi kim öğretir hemen ona yönlendiriyorlar işte şununla konuş gibi. Yada işte birisi İngilizce öğrenmek istiyor bana getiriyorlar falan filan böyle. Hem basic ihtiyaçları ve yine böyle makul istekleri çözme yönünde kolektif action sağlanıyor bence. Atıyorum bilgisi dahilinde olan bir konuda yardım etmemezlik gibi bir şey olmuyor.

8.

Care etmek de edilmek de bir fonksiyon ve ihtiyaç yani. Öğrenilen ve geliştirilen bir şey. Çünkü dışarıdaki hayatta biraz daha kalıplar halinde ve alışıla gelmiş şekillerde oluyor. Belirli toplumsal rollerde oluyor mesela ailenin seni care etmesi yada senin sadece aile bireylerini care etmen. Ama içeride uzun yıllar kalıcaksan biraz daha bu circle'ı genişletiyorsun mecburen. Başkasının derdi daha fazla senin derdin olmaya başlıyor. Benim için öyleydi mesela kimilerinin kişisel problemlerini dinliyordum, hani konuşuyorduk ediyorduk falan. Kendi adıma öyle hissettim yani. Çözüm üretme yada tavsiyelerde bulunma yada en kötü dert paylaşma falan, o tip aktiviteler önemliydi içerde. Karşımdaki insanlardan da genelde böyle hissettim yani ben kendim anlattığımda ve onlar dinlediğinde. Dışarıdaki dünyada erkekler arasında gelişen intimacy'den daha fazla hani böyle bromance gibi biraz. Gelişen bir yakınlık vardı bence.

9.

Valla çoğumuzda olmuş olabilir, sadece bende değil. Overstimulation oldum tabi ki ilk. Işıklar, farklı insanlar, yüzler, renkler, toprak, hayvanlar, işte arabalar ve sesleri. Sırf olumlu şeyler değil tabi ama bir overstimulation durumuna geçtim ve bu da beni böyle bir şaşkın hissettiğim bir şeye itti. Şaşkın hissettim ve napçağımı bilemiyordum. Bir de böyle monotonluğa alışıp ondan çıkınca daha zor oluyor karar vermek… Karar vermek çok zor çünkü seçenekleri ve karar vermeyi unutmuşsun içeride

10.

Olumlu yanları var ama yani çok kısıtlı. Yani şöyle diyorum, sağlıklı bir aile ortamı, güzel aile ilişkileri bence gerekli insanlar için. Yani sağlıklı bireyler olabilmek için… Yani hani illa biyolojik olmasa bile alternatif de olsa bir şekilde gerekli. İşte aile olmamasının özgürlük sağlaması gibi bir avantajı var ama dediğim gibi iyi bir aileye, sağlıklı bir aileye sahipsen o sana özgürlük sağlar. Benim burada bahsedebileceğim özgürlük en fazla işte Türkiye'de seni kısıtlayan, baskılayan bir aileden kurtulmayla gelen bir özgürlük olabilir. Öyle bir şey oldu tabi. Ama işte bu şey yapmıyor yani kendi başına seni bu durumdan mutlu etmiyor yani. Ediyorsa bile çok kısa süre, yani ben öyle çok bunun fikriyle mutlu olduğumu hatırlamıyorum. Yani rahatlama sadece, bir noktada rahatlama yaşamıştım ama onun dışında

işte olumsuzluk olarak bu. Yani arkadaşlıklarda problem yaşayabiliyorsun ama ailede problem yaşadığında bu işte böyle bir ilişkinin kopması anlamına gelmiyor çok kolay bir şekilde. Çok klasik şeyler söylüyorum ama böyle yani. Bir destek oluşturuyor senin hayatında, bir dayanak oluşturuyor. Ailemin olmamasının eksikliğini ben hep hissettim. Sadece cezaevinden çıktıktan sonra değil. Yani ben şey konumda değlidim hiçbir zaman işte "aile burjuva toplumunun kurumudur" falan filan gibi bir yerden bakmıyorum. Benim için hani aileyle ilişkiyi bitirmek siyasi bir karar değil zorunluluktan verilmiş bir karardı. Benimkisi toksik bir aile oldu benim için. Ben de onlar için toksiktim. Onlar da benden memnun değildi o yüzden görüşmemek bir anlamda iyi oldu. Çünkü benim kafamda öyle bir consideration da vardı. Benden hiçbir anlamda memnun değiller, geylik tek değil ama o da dahildi.

11.

Farklı bir deneyim yaşadığında o deneyimle ortaklaşçak insan bulmak çok zor. Bunu anladım. Bir de toplumda farklılaşmak… Ötekileşmek demeyeyim çünkü böyle discrimination gibi bir anlam da içeriyor sanki ama farklılaşmak çok kolay. O da bence yine bir discriminative efekte sebep oluyor. Kendini farklı hissediyorsun böyle çok elinde olmayan sebeplerden dolayı. Bunu arkadaşlarımda çok hissetmiştim. Ya benim için hala çok garip. Mesela çıktıktan sonra -atıyorum işte yaz okulu vardı hemen sonrasında, insanların baya böyle ne bileyim… Çoğu insan benimle konuşmuyor. Öncesinde konuşan insanlar o an konuşmuyor. Ama hani kimileri var -onlar böyle ekstra ekstra şaşırdığım kişiler, selam vermemek için baya kaçıyorlar yolda falan. Böyle olunca tabi şey gibi hissettim tabi, böyle uzaylıymışım gibi. Yaşadığım şeyden dolayı bir conversion geçirmişim falan, transformation ya da. Hissettiğim o oldu. Toplumun çok homojen bir şey olmadığını anladım.

12.

Bu tabi ki benim hayal kırıklığı yaşamama sebep oldu. Bir kısmının neden böyle davrandığını bilmiyorum konuşamadığım için, bir kısmı da konuşuyor ama konuşmasa daha iyi yani -salak salak şeyler konuşuyor yada soruyor. İşte ne bileyim, bana ilk sorduğu sorulardan biri "içeride gey seks yaptın mı?" falan böyle sorular [gülüyor]. Şey yani böyle hani aynı ortamda mecburiyetten kalan insanlarla orji yapma manyağı bir insan mıyım yani? [gülüyor] Yani benimle çok sağlıklı düzeyde iletişime geçmeyen yada her insanın sağlıklı iletişime

çok açık olmadığını anladım. Çünkü ben daha reserved ve sessizdim. Konuştuğum insanlar da azdı. Azaldı yani, öncesinde ve sonrasında bir azalma oldu. Mesela şey işte, atıyorum derse girdim. Sigara içiliyor ders arasında. Ya ortama girdiğimde, diyelim işte yangın merdiveninde sigara içiliyor, sen de oraya sigara içmeye gittiğinde sanki bir ruh emici gelmiş gibi herkes bir sessizleşiyor falan. E öyle olunca noluyo, aşağı kata iniyorsun orada sigara içiyorsun falan böyle. Bunun tabi benim için bu şekilde yaşamama sebep olan psikolojik bir tarafı da olabilir. Bence ama benden de bağımsız öyle bir şey var yani. İnsanların salak saçma… Yani yüzde yüz olarak ben hassaslaştım, her şey bana batmaya başladı yada ben her şeyden rahatsız olmaya başladım gibi bir şey değil yani. Çünkü ben orada iki ay üç ay falan geçirdim hani ne kadar… Bir yıl iki yıl falan olsa biraz daha böyle düşünebilirim ama… Yok yani bence… Şey anladım ya, kurduğum arkadaşlıklar o kadar da sağlam değilmiş mesela. Yada düşündüğüm kadar iyi arkadaşlıklar değilmiş bazıları, herkes için demiyorum tabi. Mesela birkaç kişi var onlara karşı hiç böyle düşüncelerim yargılarım olmadı. Öyle ya şeyi hissettim toplumdan düşmek, kopmak, farklılaşmak falan çok kolay bunu anladım.

13.

Ya aslında ben bunu çocuklukta, ergenlikte falan da düşündüğüm olmuştu. Ya böyle çok düşünüp kafa yormadım ama böyle birleştirdiğim de oldu. Toplumda herhangi türden bir mağduriyet ama böyle ağır mağduriyet formları, atıyorum bizim yaşadığımız şeyler yada ne bileyim tecavüze uğramak ölesiye dayak yemek falan filan, böyle şeyler yaşayınca insanlar bir kısım insanlar gerçekten yapılması gerekeni yapıyorlar. Yanlarında oluyorlar falan ama bir başka bir kısım insanlar içinse bu kaçınılması gereken bir atmosfer hissi yaratıyor. Ve ben bunun biraz da şeyle ilgili olduğunu düşünüyorum yani ahlaki kodlarla ilgili olduğunu düşünüyorum. Örneğin işte ben çocukken işte sokakta oynuyorken beraber çocuğun annesi bekar. E şimdi İstanbul gibi bir yer de değil tabi bekar bi kadın hemen orospu olarak damgalanmaya çok yatkın oluyor. Benimkiler, annemler falan şey diyordu yani "oynama o çocuğun annesi orospu" falan [gülüyor]. Yada işte ne bileyim bir tane daha çocuk vardı mesela onun annesini babası öldürmüş çocuğunun gözü önünde. Böyle çok aşırı trajik bir hikayeydi falan, ondan da avoid etmem gerektiği söyleniyordu. Ya böyle bi damgalanmak kötü ve istenmeyen -yani sırf şey olmak zorunda değil atıyorum annesinin orospu olması gibi bir şey değil ama toplum tarafından hoş görülmeyen yaşantılar işte. Birisinin orospu olması da olabilir veya haksız bir şekilde -yani nasıl olduğunun bir

önemi yok- haksız bir şekilde içeri girip çıkması da olabilir. Herhangi bir şekilde normal vatandaş yaşantısından diverge eden şeyleri yaşayan insanlar avoid edilmesi gereken insanlar. Bence toplumda öyle bir algı var. Bu artık arkadaşlarımızda da bence bu şekilde. Hayır yani sırf şeyden değil, "bana da yansır, sonra beni de belaya sokar" gibi değil. Yani kötü bir insan olmak gibi. Çok artık yanında durmaman gerekiyor.

14.

Yani şeyden de değil, atıyorum sen yine travmatik bir şey yaşamışsındır, yalnız kalmak istiyorsundur, başını dinlemek istiyorsundur falan, böyle bir şey değil. Çünkü bu insanlar benimle gelip hiç konuşmadılar. Ve yani öncesinde falan çok sık konuştuğum, işte telefondan haberleşip buluştuğum, ders çalıştığım, bilmemne türden insanlardı. Ya bilmiyorum, şey hani sırf bununla ilgili değil bence arkadaşlıklar da çok sıkıntılı. Yani çok kolay avoid edilebiliyor arkadaşlıklar da. İşte birbirinin yanında olmak vesaire bunlar çok zayıf. Mesela ben Hülya'yla çok iyi arkadaştım. Onu biliyorsun yani. Ben çıktım, üç dört ay falan bana yazmadı. Bende de onun numarası yoktu zaten ki onun bana yazmasını beklerim. Yeni bir telefona geçmişiz bilmem ne. Hani bana ulaşmak isteyenler, bana en yakın ve ona en yakın kimse işte aracı kişilerle ulaşıyorlardı. Hülya hiç ulaşmadı ve sonra işte bir arkadaşımla falan konuşurken o lafı açılmış, sonra o bana ulaşma kararı almış. Ve bana dediği şey işte "iyi olmanı bekledim." Beklersin de üç dört ay beklemezsin yani. Bir de şöyle bir şey var hani kötü bir şey yaşadıktan sonra üzerinden zaman geçince konuşmak daha zor oluyor bence. Mesela şu an, seninle ayrı da, başkasıyla konuşmak benim için daha zor. Ama hani böyle kanayan yarayı sarmak anlamında sonrasında konuşma ihtiyacı olabiliyor insanda ve en yakında kim varsa ona ihtiyaç duyuyor.

APPENDIX D

APPROVAL OF ETHICS COMMITTEE

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 24.03.2022-59307

T.C.
BOĞAZİÇİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL VE BEŞERİ BİLİMLER YÜKSEK LİSANS VE DOKTORA TEZLERİ ETİK İNCELEME KOMİSYONU
TOPLANTI KARAR TUTANAĞI

Toplantı Sayısı	:	29
Toplantı Tarihi	:	24.03.2022
Toplantı Saati	:	10:00
Toplantı Yeri	:	Zoom Sanal Toplantı
Bulunanlar	:	Prof. Dr. Ebru Kaya, Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Yasemin Sohtorik İlkmen
Bulunmayanlar	:	

Mete Ulutaş
Sosyoloji

Sayın Araştırmacı,
"Toplu Kapatılmada Sosyal Bağların Bir Etnografik Çalışması" başlıklı projeniz ile ilgili olarak yaptığınız SBB-EAK 2022/12 sayılı başvuru komisyonumuz tarafından 24 Mart 2022 tarihli toplantıda incelenmiş ve uygun bulunmuştur.

Bu karar tüm üyelerin toplantıya çevrimiçi olarak katılımı ve oybirliği ile alınmıştır. COVID-19 önlemleri kapsamında kurul üyelerinden ıslak imza alınamadığı için bu onay mektubu üye ve raportör olarak Yasemin Sohtorik İlkmen tarafından bütün üyeler adına e-imzalanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla, bilgilerinizi rica ederiz.

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Yasemin
SOHTORİK İLKMEN
ÜYE

e-imzalıdır
Dr. Öğr. ÜyesiYasemin Sohtorik
İlkmen
Öğretim Üyesi
Raportör

SOBETİK 29 24.03.2022

Bu belge, güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.

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