BETWEEN BELONGING AND OPPOSITION:

LIFE STORY NARRATIVES OF WOMEN FROM THE GENERATION OF ’78

By

Serra Ciliv

Submitted to
The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
History Graduate Program
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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This Thesis has been approved and accepted by:

Prof. Dr. Leyla Neyzi _____
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An Abstract for the Thesis of Serra Ciliv for the Degree of Master of Arts in The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to be taken in September 2002

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This oral history thesis draws on the life story narratives of four Alevi women who were participants of the militant left during the 1970s. Born in rural Turkey, these women were politicized at very young ages, and formulated their primary self-identifications in terms of their commitment to the ‘revolutionary ideal’. As women who lived a good part of their life outside the boundaries of law, these narrators are representatives of what has been termed the generation of ’78. Violence and restrictions upon their ‘personhood’ were inherent in their life stories, which are chiefly characterized by their long lasting sense of belonging to the leftist organizations and their continued opposition to the state.

Through an analysis of these women’s narratives, this thesis has a twofold aim. First, it aims to situate the layers of meaning, myth, ideology and activity – the symbolic world – of these women within the historicity of the ‘70s left. This will thereby emphasize the changing relationship of the collective political culture endorsed and reproduced by the leftist organizations to Kemalism on the one hand, and other networks and communities on the other. The continuities between the personal and the social within the narratives also point towards the prevalence of the meta narratives of patriotism, revolution and honor within the ‘microcosm’ of the movement and the world outside: the family, the ethnic community, the neighborhood or the nation. Therefore,

these women's narratives are analyzed in terms of their wide variety of inter-subjective relationalities ranging from their family to their neighborhood, their ethnic group, their organization, and their state.

Second, these women's narratives provide us with a chance to determine the specificities of the 'marginal' positions they have been placed in – as members of the generation of '78, as Alevi individuals, and as women. While this thesis follows each woman's path from her positionality as an Alevi woman within the left into a 'normal' and 'law-abiding' life path, through which their notions of their own 'personhood', 'womanhood' and their understanding of 'politics' was altered. With an emphasis on the heterogeneity of their fluid subjectivities, my aim has been to locate their agency whereby they assert their own needs and desires, negotiating, challenging and transforming the parameters of their life-worlds. An understanding of the complex manner through which these women asserted their agency will not only enable me to question categories such as 'terrorists', 'patriots' or 'members of a subordinate position within the left' as bestowed upon them by official state ideology, leftists and feminists respectively, but will also call for a rethinking of the notions of oppression, violence and power as one dimensional relationalities.

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Bu tez, 1970ler boyunca sol hareket içerisinde yer almış dört Alevi kadının yaşam öyküleri üzerine temellendirilmiştir. Türkiye'nin kırsal kesimlerinde doğan bu dört kadın, erken yaşta politik bir yaşam tarzını seçmişler ve ilk kimliklerini devrimci ideallere bağlılıkları çerçevesinde oluşturmuşlardır. Yaşamlarının uzun dönemlerini illegal çevrelerde yaşayan bu kadınlar, '78 kuşağının temsilcilerindendir. Sol örgütlere bağlılıkları ve devlete karşı duruşları dolayısıyla, yaşam öyküleri şiddetin ve kişisel kısıtlamaların çeşitli anlatılarını barındırmaktadır.

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Finally, I would like to thank my parents Arif Ciliv and Ester Ruso for always being there.

To Ester Ruso
who continues to inspire my interest in people's stories,
and many other things that matter.

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PREFACE

Organized around the life story narratives of four Alevi women who were active leftist militants during the seventies in Turkey, the initial aim of this thesis is to make a reading of social history with an emphasis on the themes of gender and political activism. The body of the oral history narratives attest to the fact that the 1970s in Turkey was a period characterized by large scale political violence on the streets and schools, between the left and the right, and between the newly formed ideologically oriented organizations and the state. The social world of the members of the generation of '78 articulately represents the new meanings and ideals which were formed amidst this violence. They also detail the landscapes of opposition and belonging that ruled their lives for decades.

The thesis aims to follow each narrator's specific processes of subjectification in connection with the macro political events of their lifetimes, the ideologies they endorsed, and the particular choices they made in the midst of power dynamics shaped by the public and private networks around them. It is at this point that stories of different forms of violence can be discerned alongside the political violence as recorded in newspapers and history books, from which arises the necessity of comprehending the micro underneath the relationalities of the macro. The connections between the content of the first macro narration of the first chapter and the ensuing chapters of life stories point towards the closely knit relationalities of networks and ideologies, among the national/ communal/ familial /personal narratives of patriotism, revolution and honor.

Especially as life stories, as the narrators of which now live in quite different life worlds than they did during the 70s, they mark change. Underlining the intricate ways in which these women negotiated and transformed these very relationalities, these stories tell of differing ways survival in dire times. Thus, while the thesis lays the main parameters of the social history of these decades, it also points towards the social transformations through which these women viewed their worlds.

The layout of the thesis mirrors these goals. The Introduction includes a historical analysis, as well as a methodological and theoretical framework. The first section of the Introduction should be taken as a macro background with which to study the next four chapters of life stories. The Introduction provides a historical overview section with a general reading of the years between 1960 and 1980. In these times, Turkey experienced three military coups and witnessed the coming of age of two generations of politically active youth. While this section of the Introduction aims to present the reader with the main parameters of political conflict between different groups and the state, the growth of a culture of militant dissent is also emphasized, a growth based on the expectations and disappointments stemming from the major parliamentary and constitutional changes in the country. The emphasis on the significant loci of power is meant to delineate the political tensions which infiltrated Turkish citizens lives throughout the decade of the 70s, leading many youth to become active participants in the widespread protests and clashes.

This historical overview takes the military coup of 1980 as a landmark, which silenced all mass opposition almost overnight. The political conflict which characterized

the two preceding decades came to halt on September 12, 1980, pointing towards the dissolution of all legal and illegal formations on the left. Needless to say, this process of silencing all mass opposition resulted in the arrest, trial, torture and sometimes the conviction of the many who participated in politics prior to the coup. However, the historical overview does not end with the final words of the coup, but instead emphasizes the onset of the new feminist movement which emerged, in the privacy of homes, after 1980.

Through closing with this historical analysis of the new feminist movement, two parallel aims are addressed. The first of these aims is to lay the groundwork to represent one thread of continuity between the political ideologies of before and after 1980. The new feminist movement was pioneered by many women who had participated in the left. Throughout the 70s, these women were encountering, mastering and transforming their political agendas with new questions as to the notion of politics. In a way, the oral history chapters will reveal some of the personal processes of subjectification, narrations and questions towards a more holistic understanding of politics. These chapters represent the connections between the feminist women's voices after 1980 and the preceding decade of blazing leftist activism.

Secondly, for the purposes of this thesis, it is important to articulate the critique produced by both the new feminists and the leftist organizations against each other. The tension between these new feminists and the people who primarily identified themselves with what remained of the left, lends itself to a productive reading in understanding differing notions of politics. The primary tensions in the conflict between the new feminists' critique of the 70s left and the critique of the 80s' left of the new feminists can

be detected in the personal dilemmas revealed by the interviews. The angst revealed by the interviews present itself as the narrators' sense of being torn between modes of belonging and opposition, individuality and comradeship. Thus, the Introduction aims to make a call for further reading of the early 80s' feminist texts as a background for the narratives in this thesis, if only to begin imagining the implications of theoretical questions regarding subjectivity, agency and feminism on life story narratives, and oral history as a whole.

The crossroads of oral history and feminist theory bring us to the second part of the Introduction, which states the underlying personal and political agendas behind the research and writing of this thesis; exploring the connections between a study of narratives and of theoretical questions regarding memory, subjectivity and agency. As a young woman who came of age in the post-coup decade in Turkey, in this research, I was looking for answers to questions regarding a veiled notion of political militancy. Since my generation has vague memories of the coup in 1980 and the ensuing years of state violence behind closed doors, these narratives ironically have the power to diminish the fear of the paternal state. This is not because the narratives exclude stories of violence and repression, but because these narratives connect with other stories revealing how they individually recovered from the violence, usually actively transforming themselves along with the conditions.

Finally, the Introduction lays down the main questions for the chapters allocated to the narrators: regarding the ways they situated themselves within their organizations, the intricacies of their sense of belonging to these organizations, their opposition to the

state, how they made their decisions, and how they came of age at different stages of their lives.

The method of oral history provides one with the most direct means to infiltrate social history through the words of its actors. The four women included in this thesis were especially articulate in expressing the contours of their private and political affairs. This fluency made it possible for me to outline a framework in which I could trace certain themes related to the making (and/or re-making) of politics in a micro sense. I was presented, while listening to them speak, with the underlying motivations for their commitment to their organizations, and their opposition to the state. More importantly however, I was presented with the fact that these motivations were never merely related to macro politics and particular organizations. The women's narratives endorsed intricate webs: their familial ties and concerns, the neighborhoods where they formed their first notions regarding self and others, their first sexual experiences, their relation to their own bodies, their varying landmarks for coming of age. These threads demonstrated that they had constantly changing dreams and hopes. Needless to say, the four interviews presented me with different paths for living, for making politics, and for living politically.

Though still intrinsically varied, it is relatively easy to categorize Figen, Emine, Perihan and Nuran's lives into three chronological phases: before the movement, during the movement, and after the movement. As Alevi children who were born in rural areas, their early childhood experiences commonly reveal a sense of otherness, a sense of being on the outside, or, to put it very simply, of difference. Figen remembers a blow on the head by the school master, Perihan tells the story of being ostracized by her school

friends, Nuran remembers her family's need to hide during the month of Ramadan, and Emine, who lived in Tunceli where Alevis constituted the majority, recalls the state's distant but violent approach to her community. As these narrations of early childhood violence point to an awareness of being Alevis in Turkey, they also underline that poverty played into the conditions which made participation in the leftist organizations an inviting prospect for these women.

Participation in the left and the resultant new communities of friends and comrades certainly brought a sense of empowerment for these women. The new morals of the left and of the revolution accompanied this new sense of belonging. This paved the way for new identities enabling these four women to surpass the limits set on them by their earlier networks, simultaneously providing them with a new freedom of mobility and action. Doubtless, their generation's women, as well as the women of the generation of '68, were pioneers in being recognized as militant activists in Turkey, a form of transcendence which changed the conventional images of women.

Simultaneously, however, especially regarding the first years of their involvement, the narrators emphasize the primacy of a new set of rules, of 'do's and don'ts', and of new limits on how to act, what to wear and what to say. These narratives affirm in several ways that the organizations of the left took the masses, the people and the revolution as primary, while marginalizing the personal in subtle yet violent ways.

Figen, Nuran and Emine all emphasized that their decision to break away from their organizations was preceded by a time apart and alone, of introspection and questioning. Whether in prison, or while waiting for their husbands' prison sentences to end, these women reiterate that there came a time after 1980 when, for the first time, they

felt utterly alone. They were forced by the conditions arising from the coup to look for ways to stand up on their own feet and give new direction to their lives. Inside prison, organizational requirements became superfluous and obsolete. Outside prison, society was changing and the left had lost the support of the masses. Life alone was to be redefined.

These life stages, which for many who belonged to the generation of '78 were determined by the framework of their participation in the illegal organizations, point both to the infiltration of ideologies, conventions and morals into the actor's lives, and their processes of subjectification. As all encompassing life stories, the narratives, and the live stages inherent in them, represent the threads of continuity between discourses within the organizations and those discourses of the networks conventionally deemed outside of them. The meta narratives of honor, patriotism, and even of love are connected in the narratives of these women, once again attesting to the inseparability of the private and the public in discourse and in life worlds.

However, as much as there are commonalities in the main contours of their life stories, each woman's narrative also reveals the uncategorizable. Every narrative has a different tone and varying key patterns: attesting to the different manner each woman survived, negotiated, manipulated and transformed the networks of power around them. The continuities and ruptures between the narrators present day and remembered selves are inherent in the blurry distinctions between their narratives and their actual pasts.

Figen, who married a movement leader at the age of eighteen, emphasizes the significance of the home, and the pain of being homeless. In Figen's experience, the

sense of homelessness dominated a life of illegality, and while she traveled through transient homes, she learned to write and to adapt to new scenarios of her life. Figen's life story could hence be read as a search for a home of one's own, of efforts to fall into her own skin. Her narrative is fluid, detailed and reads like a steady walk home.

Nuran's narrative is characterized by an emphasis on her sense of difference and need for independence. At the age of fifteen, she left home to avoid her father's intrusions into her political stance, and soon became a member of an illegal organization. After six years of commitment to their politics, as she was finishing her sentence in prison, she left her organization and her husband, in order to be free of their intrusions into her personal life. Today, as she talks about her life story, one is overwhelmed by the many ruptures she undertook, and the stubborn strength she could display throughout. Nuran's narrative has gaps, things she does not remember, or rather does not choose to tell. Though one cannot fill those gaps in detail, one is assured that the gaps, the bits of silence in her narrative point to one defense Nuran the narrator/subject has developed for herself in order to be able to afford those ruptures: the right to remain silent.

Emine's life story narrative begins in Tunceli where, she emphasized, Alevis were a majority, and the community was 'open'. In her childhood memories, the community she lived in would embrace her, whereas the distant state above it would not. Perhaps that is why she talks about intrusive episodes in her life – regarding her sexuality, her participation in her organization, her work and her marriage – as distant events outside the boundaries she set for herself. From where she stands today, both employing her closely knit networks, and standing alone, she tells a story of negotiation, survival and transformation, almost never confusing her own desires with any distant ones.

Perihan, on the other hand, emphasizes that from her early youth until today, she has been a believer of the revolutionary morality. Her life story narrative is the one most conspicuously underlining the threads of continuity between her family, her organization, and the overarching Kemalist past of the leftist ideology in Turkey. Her life story initially illuminates continuities which Perihan thinks are important in a moral sense, and then brings out the contradictions in them. Perihan says she does not feel like a woman sometimes, but stresses the importance of her role as a loyal wife and a patriotic mother. While her life story is full of harsh protests against the state and other forces of power which do violence to her body, she insists on the fact that she is not a feminist. As she takes upon herself a role of utmost self-sacrifice and work, she gains power from these very roles which feminist theory has deemed to strip women of their power. Her stern stance at what may be deemed the oppressive crossroads of different discourses of morality makes her a respectable woman in her community, endowing her with power. Perihan's narrative calls for questions on the assumed fixity of women's condition within the formulaic dichotomy of the modern versus the traditional.

Thus, a peek at the uncategorizable in these life stories reveals the complex details of post-70s Turkish social history. Though the narratives are centered around these narrators' militant participation during the 70s, they reveal the overall connectedness between different communities, networks and contexts. In this respect, the Conclusion aims to detail the interwoven aspects of the micro and macro, the personal and political, the organizational, familial and ultimately the national. In the four women's narratives, the crossroads seems to lie at the juncture of notions such as chastity, morality and honor.

Secondly, the Conclusion asks questions about different forms of violence, be it the blatant political violence on the streets, or the "violences of everyday lives" in the privacy of homes or organizations. The narratives articulate both, either consciously or unconsciously, allowing a reading of the continuities of different forms of violence women endure, both then and now in Turkey. However, a reading of violence also requires an emphasis on its varying effects on the victims. Also part of the uncategorizable, these women's reactions to the dynamics of power around them are also ongoing stories of their subjectification and attest to the fact that victims of violence are never passive recipients, but instead are part of a configuration in which they speak, negotiate and transform.

Thus, while initiated by an attempt to make a reading of social history, this thesis arrives at a point of open-ended questions regarding womanhood and agency, violence and transformation. As such, it attests to the power of oral history as a method which calls for a subject-oriented history. This call is required by the findings of the method itself, and is strengthened by political and epistemological concerns to reposition these subjects in the written records of history.

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I would like to thank Graham CF Williams who, during the last stages of my writing, pleasantly spent hours editing my work.

I am greateful to my friends Serhan Babaoğlu, Pelin Turgut, and İlke Aladağ who patiently waited out the longlasting stages of my studies, bore with my absences from my other responsibilities and the leisure time we could have spent together.

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To Ester Ruso
who continues to inspire my interest in people's stories,
and many other things that matter.

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PREFACE

Organized around the life story narratives of four Alevi women who were active leftist militants during the seventies in Turkey, the initial aim of this thesis is to make a reading of social history with an emphasis on the themes of gender and political activism. The body of the oral history narratives attest to the fact that the 1970s in Turkey was a period characterized by large scale political violence on the streets and schools, between the left and the right, and between the newly formed ideologically oriented organizations and the state. The social world of the members of the generation of '78 articulately represents the new meanings and ideals which were formed amidst this violence. They also detail the landscapes of opposition and belonging that ruled their lives for decades.

The thesis aims to follow each narrator's specific processes of subjectification in connection with the macro political events of their lifetimes, the ideologies they endorsed, and the particular choices they made in the midst of power dynamics shaped by the public and private networks around them. It is at this point that stories of different forms of violence can be discerned alongside the political violence as recorded in newspapers and history books, from which arises the necessity of comprehending the micro underneath the relationalities of the macro. The connections between the content of the first macro narration of the first chapter and the ensuing chapters of life stories point towards the closely knit relationalities of networks and ideologies, among the national/ communal/ familial /personal narratives of patriotism, revolution and honor.

Especially as life stories, as the narrators of which now live in quite different life worlds than they did during the 70s, they mark change. Underlining the intricate ways in which these women negotiated and transformed these very relationalities, these stories tell of differing ways survival in dire times. Thus, while the thesis lays the main parameters of the social history of these decades, it also points towards the social transformations through which these women viewed their worlds.

The layout of the thesis mirrors these goals. The Introduction includes a historical analysis, as well as a methodological and theoretical framework. The first section of the Introduction should be taken as a macro background with which to study the next four chapters of life stories. The Introduction provides a historical overview section with a general reading of the years between 1960 and 1980. In these times, Turkey experienced three military coups and witnessed the coming of age of two generations of politically active youth. While this section of the Introduction aims to present the reader with the main parameters of political conflict between different groups and the state, the growth of a culture of militant dissent is also emphasized, a growth based on the expectations and disappointments stemming from the major parliamentary and constitutional changes in the country. The emphasis on the significant loci of power is meant to delineate the political tensions which infiltrated Turkish citizens lives throughout the decade of the 70s, leading many youth to become active participants in the widespread protests and clashes.

This historical overview takes the military coup of 1980 as a landmark, which silenced all mass opposition almost overnight. The political conflict which characterized

the two preceding decades came to halt on September 12, 1980, pointing towards the dissolution of all legal and illegal formations on the left. Needless to say, this process of silencing all mass opposition resulted in the arrest, trial, torture and sometimes the conviction of the many who participated in politics prior to the coup. However, the historical overview does not end with the final words of the coup, but instead emphasizes the onset of the new feminist movement which emerged, in the privacy of homes, after 1980.

Through closing with this historical analysis of the new feminist movement, two parallel aims are addressed. The first of these aims is to lay the groundwork to represent one thread of continuity between the political ideologies of before and after 1980. The new feminist movement was pioneered by many women who had participated in the left. Throughout the 70s, these women were encountering, mastering and transforming their political agendas with new questions as to the notion of politics. In a way, the oral history chapters will reveal some of the personal processes of subjectification, narrations and questions towards a more holistic understanding of politics. These chapters represent the connections between the feminist women's voices after 1980 and the preceding decade of blazing leftist activism.

Secondly, for the purposes of this thesis, it is important to articulate the critique produced by both the new feminists and the leftist organizations against each other. The tension between these new feminists and the people who primarily identified themselves with what remained of the left, lends itself to a productive reading in understanding differing notions of politics. The primary tensions in the conflict between the new feminists' critique of the 70s left and the critique of the 80s' left of the new feminists can

be detected in the personal dilemmas revealed by the interviews. The angst revealed by the interviews present itself as the narrators' sense of being torn between modes of belonging and opposition, individuality and comradeship. Thus, the Introduction aims to make a call for further reading of the early 80s' feminist texts as a background for the narratives in this thesis, if only to begin imagining the implications of theoretical questions regarding subjectivity, agency and feminism on life story narratives, and oral history as a whole.

The crossroads of oral history and feminist theory bring us to the second part of the Introduction, which states the underlying personal and political agendas behind the research and writing of this thesis; exploring the connections between a study of narratives and of theoretical questions regarding memory, subjectivity and agency. As a young woman who came of age in the post-coup decade in Turkey, in this research, I was looking for answers to questions regarding a veiled notion of political militancy. Since my generation has vague memories of the coup in 1980 and the ensuing years of state violence behind closed doors, these narratives ironically have the power to diminish the fear of the paternal state. This is not because the narratives exclude stories of violence and repression, but because these narratives connect with other stories revealing how they individually recovered from the violence, usually actively transforming themselves along with the conditions.

Finally, the Introduction lays down the main questions for the chapters allocated to the narrators: regarding the ways they situated themselves within their organizations, the intricacies of their sense of belonging to these organizations, their opposition to the

state, how they made their decisions, and how they came of age at different stages of their lives.

The method of oral history provides one with the most direct means to infiltrate social history through the words of its actors. The four women included in this thesis were especially articulate in expressing the contours of their private and political affairs. This fluency made it possible for me to outline a framework in which I could trace certain themes related to the making (and/or re-making) of politics in a micro sense. I was presented, while listening to them speak, with the underlying motivations for their commitment to their organizations, and their opposition to the state. More importantly however, I was presented with the fact that these motivations were never merely related to macro politics and particular organizations. The women's narratives endorsed intricate webs: their familial ties and concerns, the neighborhoods where they formed their first notions regarding self and others, their first sexual experiences, their relation to their own bodies, their varying landmarks for coming of age. These threads demonstrated that they had constantly changing dreams and hopes. Needless to say, the four interviews presented me with different paths for living, for making politics, and for living politically.

Though still intrinsically varied, it is relatively easy to categorize Figen, Emine, Perihan and Nuran's lives into three chronological phases: before the movement, during the movement, and after the movement. As Alevi children who were born in rural areas, their early childhood experiences commonly reveal a sense of otherness, a sense of being on the outside, or, to put it very simply, of difference. Figen remembers a blow on the head by the school master, Perihan tells the story of being ostracized by her school

friends, Nuran remembers her family's need to hide during the month of Ramadan, and Emine, who lived in Tunceli where Alevis constituted the majority, recalls the state's distant but violent approach to her community. As these narrations of early childhood violence point to an awareness of being Alevis in Turkey, they also underline that poverty played into the conditions which made participation in the leftist organizations an inviting prospect for these women.

Participation in the left and the resultant new communities of friends and comrades certainly brought a sense of empowerment for these women. The new morals of the left and of the revolution accompanied this new sense of belonging. This paved the way for new identities enabling these four women to surpass the limits set on them by their earlier networks, simultaneously providing them with a new freedom of mobility and action. Doubtless, their generation's women, as well as the women of the generation of '68, were pioneers in being recognized as militant activists in Turkey, a form of transcendence which changed the conventional images of women.

Simultaneously, however, especially regarding the first years of their involvement, the narrators emphasize the primacy of a new set of rules, of 'do's and don'ts', and of new limits on how to act, what to wear and what to say. These narratives affirm in several ways that the organizations of the left took the masses, the people and the revolution as primary, while marginalizing the personal in subtle yet violent ways.

Figen, Nuran and Emine all emphasized that their decision to break away from their organizations was preceded by a time apart and alone, of introspection and questioning. Whether in prison, or while waiting for their husbands' prison sentences to end, these women reiterate that there came a time after 1980 when, for the first time, they

felt utterly alone. They were forced by the conditions arising from the coup to look for ways to stand up on their own feet and give new direction to their lives. Inside prison, organizational requirements became superfluous and obsolete. Outside prison, society was changing and the left had lost the support of the masses. Life alone was to be redefined.

These life stages, which for many who belonged to the generation of '78 were determined by the framework of their participation in the illegal organizations, point both to the infiltration of ideologies, conventions and morals into the actor's lives, and their processes of subjectification. As all encompassing life stories, the narratives, and the live stages inherent in them, represent the threads of continuity between discourses within the organizations and those discourses of the networks conventionally deemed outside of them. The meta narratives of honor, patriotism, and even of love are connected in the narratives of these women, once again attesting to the inseparability of the private and the public in discourse and in life worlds.

However, as much as there are commonalities in the main contours of their life stories, each woman's narrative also reveals the uncategorizable. Every narrative has a different tone and varying key patterns: attesting to the different manner each woman survived, negotiated, manipulated and transformed the networks of power around them. The continuities and ruptures between the narrators present day and remembered selves are inherent in the blurry distinctions between their narratives and their actual pasts.

Figen, who married a movement leader at the age of eighteen, emphasizes the significance of the home, and the pain of being homeless. In Figen's experience, the

sense of homelessness dominated a life of illegality, and while she traveled through transient homes, she learned to write and to adapt to new scenarios of her life. Figen's life story could hence be read as a search for a home of one's own, of efforts to fall into her own skin. Her narrative is fluid, detailed and reads like a steady walk home.

Nuran's narrative is characterized by an emphasis on her sense of difference and need for independence. At the age of fifteen, she left home to avoid her father's intrusions into her political stance, and soon became a member of an illegal organization. After six years of commitment to their politics, as she was finishing her sentence in prison, she left her organization and her husband, in order to be free of their intrusions into her personal life. Today, as she talks about her life story, one is overwhelmed by the many ruptures she undertook, and the stubborn strength she could display throughout. Nuran's narrative has gaps, things she does not remember, or rather does not choose to tell. Though one cannot fill those gaps in detail, one is assured that the gaps, the bits of silence in her narrative point to one defense Nuran the narrator/subject has developed for herself in order to be able to afford those ruptures: the right to remain silent.

Emine's life story narrative begins in Tunceli where, she emphasized, Alevis were a majority, and the community was 'open'. In her childhood memories, the community she lived in would embrace her, whereas the distant state above it would not. Perhaps that is why she talks about intrusive episodes in her life – regarding her sexuality, her participation in her organization, her work and her marriage – as distant events outside the boundaries she set for herself. From where she stands today, both employing her closely knit networks, and standing alone, she tells a story of negotiation, survival and transformation, almost never confusing her own desires with any distant ones.

Perihan, on the other hand, emphasizes that from her early youth until today, she has been a believer of the revolutionary morality. Her life story narrative is the one most conspicuously underlining the threads of continuity between her family, her organization, and the overarching Kemalist past of the leftist ideology in Turkey. Her life story initially illuminates continuities which Perihan thinks are important in a moral sense, and then brings out the contradictions in them. Perihan says she does not feel like a woman sometimes, but stresses the importance of her role as a loyal wife and a patriotic mother. While her life story is full of harsh protests against the state and other forces of power which do violence to her body, she insists on the fact that she is not a feminist. As she takes upon herself a role of utmost self-sacrifice and work, she gains power from these very roles which feminist theory has deemed to strip women of their power. Her stern stance at what may be deemed the oppressive crossroads of different discourses of morality makes her a respectable woman in her community, endowing her with power. Perihan's narrative calls for questions on the assumed fixity of women's condition within the formulaic dichotomy of the modern versus the traditional.

Thus, a peek at the uncategorizable in these life stories reveals the complex details of post-70s Turkish social history. Though the narratives are centered around these narrators' militant participation during the 70s, they reveal the overall connectedness between different communities, networks and contexts. In this respect, the Conclusion aims to detail the interwoven aspects of the micro and macro, the personal and political, the organizational, familial and ultimately the national. In the four women's narratives, the crossroads seems to lie at the juncture of notions such as chastity, morality and honor.

Secondly, the Conclusion asks questions about different forms of violence, be it the blatant political violence on the streets, or the "violences of everyday lives" in the privacy of homes or organizations. The narratives articulate both, either consciously or unconsciously, allowing a reading of the continuities of different forms of violence women endure, both then and now in Turkey. However, a reading of violence also requires an emphasis on its varying effects on the victims. Also part of the uncategorizable, these women's reactions to the dynamics of power around them are also ongoing stories of their subjectification and attest to the fact that victims of violence are never passive recipients, but instead are part of a configuration in which they speak, negotiate and transform.

Thus, while initiated by an attempt to make a reading of social history, this thesis arrives at a point of open-ended questions regarding womanhood and agency, violence and transformation. As such, it attests to the power of oral history as a method which calls for a subject-oriented history. This call is required by the findings of the method itself, and is strengthened by political and epistemological concerns to reposition these subjects in the written records of history.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

1960-1980: Three Military Coups and Politics Between the Extremes Of Opposition and Belonging

This thesis is based on the life story narratives of four militant women who belonged to radical leftist organizations during the 70s. These women lived during a phase of Turkish history in which large numbers of youth defined themselves through their commitment to 'leftist' or 'rightist' factions in opposition to the state, and contributed to the transformation of a political culture whereby violent conflicts among political factions became the order of the day (Samim, 1981). The period between 1960 and 1980 thus represented a time when people's participation in politics was getting increasingly more widespread and oppositional than ever before in the history of the Turkish Republic (Keyder 1990).

Characterized by three military coups, gradual dissolution of the developmentalist and populist economic framework, and state practices which grew more and more oppressive, this time period is also distinctive due to the all-encompassing sense of belonging which a considerable number of individuals felt towards the illegal

organizations they identified with. The growth of a culture of resistance to the state and of belonging to the new political movements inherently point to the formation of new social meanings and the transformation of old ones into new forms.

The years between 1960 and 1980, when the youth was described as "bandits" by the media and deemed a 'threat' to national interest (Feyzioğlu, 1998), witnessed the emergence of two generations of youth. The university students in the 60s embraced the responsibilities bestowed upon them in Mustafa Kemal's speeches as "the owner and guardians of the reforms and of the regime" (Keydul, 1997), and turned to extra-legal means accusing those in power of betraying the Kemalist ideals that they upheld. Their protests started with calls for improvement in the conditions of the universities: by 1968, their support for other movements such as those of teachers, workers and peasants had turned them into a rebellious generation with a distinct identity. It was only in the latter part of the 80s that these young people whose university years coincided with their commitment to political opposition come to be called the generation of '68, in line with the youth movements elsewhere in the world (Tura, 1999).

By the time of the military coup in 1971, when the leaders of the student movement had resorted to armed struggle, youth had already begun to turn to Dev-Genç (Revolutionary Youth) in large numbers around the country (Çavdar, 1996:183-6; see also STMA, 1988: 2104-9 and 2134-45). The silencing of political opposition by means of state violence from 1971 to the amnesty of 1974 did not suffice to sever the influence of the '68 generation on the next generation. Those who were living their late childhood and early teenage years during the beginning of the 70s had already caught on to the spirit of the leaders of the student movement whose executions they had been marked by.

The new youth of leftist activism, the generation of '78, which followed in the footsteps of their 'elder brothers' and 'sisters' was also in synch with a sense of the age hierarchies which are central to the construction of personhood in Turkey (Neyzi, 1999; Neyzi, 2000). At very young ages, the generation of '78 formulated their primary identifications in terms of the left and vis-à-vis the state, subsequently living much of their lives outside the boundaries of the law. These youth, which now came from urban and rural areas alike, were participants in a political culture which was further characterized by violence, not merely in opposition to state authorities, but also by ideological and armed conflict between the right and the left (Samim, 1981). The clandestine nature of the widespread illegal organizations strengthened their notions of self, coalescing their personal and political lives within the moral universe of their organizations.

The two generations of political militancy between 1960-1980 were thus identified by their youth and the construction of their subjectivity in relation to the socio-political events of the period. Without doubt, the transformative events they lived through led them to share a 'moral universe' (Kriegel, 1978) and shaped their participation in the public space of politics. In these terms, the definition of generational identity as put forward by Mannheim (1952) is useful in delineating the specificities of these militant groups and situating them in their socio-historical context.

This introductory chapter will outline the wider political and social framework within which the narratives discussed in the body of the thesis are embedded. The chapter will discuss state policies and discourses which grew increasingly undemocratic

throughout the two decades in question in which conflict largely replaced consensual politics.

1960- 1970: Adherence to and Disappointment in the Idea of a "Progressive coup" and a "Democratic Constitution"

The coup that marked the beginning of "The Second Republic" in Turkey on May 27, 1960 was aimed at overturning the anti-democratic rule of the Democrat Party (DP). After twenty-seven years of the one party rule by the Republican Nationalist Party (CHP), DP came to power in 1950 with a program which called for liberalization in economics and politics, and a slogan which proclaimed "Enough! It is Time for the People to Speak." (Cumhuriyet, 290). Throughout the elections of 1954 and 1957, they were re-elected to come to power within the parameters of the electoral majority system. DP's confidence in this majority however, soon led them to formulate strict measures to keep all opposition quiet. Right after the elections in 1954, the DP administration passed laws arbitrarily limiting the participation of individuals in the justice system and the universities, and the movement of political candidates among different parties Cumhuriyet, 290). Those cities whose majority voted for opposition parties were punished with an abatement of status, and journalists who supported the opposition were arrested. Soon enough, in 1956, the New Press Law would limit all possibilities of support for any parties outside of DP. By the time of the elections in 1957, opposition parties were impelled to make a common declaration which called for the restoration of the rights and liberties of the citizens, by preventing the passing of unconstitutional laws,

asserting the independence of the justice system, and guaranteeing the rights of supervision which powers of legislation held over those of the execution in parliament. By 1959, DP's harsh measures pointing towards a form of parliamentary fascism not only resulted in utter disappointment in Turkey's first decade of multi-party politics, but also began to attract intellectuals, journalists and students alike into oppositional protests against the government.

"The Turkish Armed Forces have taken control of the administration of the country to put an end to the crisis of democracy the Turkish nation has had to suffer" (Cumhuriyet, 463) proclaimed the radio on the 27th of May in 1960, and the National Unity Committee (MBK) made up of 38 officers, took command over all important decisions regarding Turkish politics (Zürcher, 1993: 351-5). The Turkish army had used its right to resist a governing body which had lost legitimacy in the eyes of "the people," and the constitution, which legitimized the army-dominated National Security Council (MGK) as having powers equal to that of the Cabinet, justified the army's right to intervene with parliamentary governance (Zürcher, 1993; Çavdar, 1996: 81-4).

The newly formulated constitution was nevertheless deemed the most democratic in the history of the Republic. Formulated by a committee of professors appointed by the NUC, the constitution aimed to counterbalance the power of the national assembly with a senate and an independent constitutional court. The judiciary, the universities, and the media were guaranteed full autonomy, and the Turkish citizenry were now being introduced to new civil liberties which had hitherto been unheard of during the Republican era (Çavdar, 1996: 99-109).

In particular, it is plausible to argue that the emergence of new political movements during the 60s was made possible by this new constitution, the debates on which triggered new questions on the possibilities of a Western type of democracy, and a more liberal law on unionization. Also fuelled by the overwhelming leftist inclinations in various geographies ranging from Cuba to Egypt and from Korea to China, the beginning of the 60s saw the rise of various leftist formations in Turkey. The left, confined to underground politics throughout the 50s, was now coming to the fore in various independent channels. The 1951 arrests of the Turkish Communist Party (TKP) members, which had forced most of the leadership out of the country and confined the rest to underground activities accompanied by constant fear of police surveillance, had left the Turkish left devoid of its pillar teams. Now in 1961, with the new constitution, new teams were beginning to form. The political debates of the 50s which had been dominated by the possibilities of a western type democracy were replaced by discussions related to socialism and the revolution. Within mainstream politics, the Republican People's Party (CHP) was receiving an increasing number of votes from urban and rural areas alike with its newly formulated notion of 'left of center' politics.

Among the major forces of the left in the early 60s, The Turkish Worker's Party (TİP) epitomized the conjoining of the forces of the intelligentsia with the ideals of a unionized working class. Under the leadership of Mehmet Ali Aybar who had been a member of the TKP, TİP aimed to transform the main framework of union activities hitherto dominated by the right-wing Türk-İş worker's union, instantly drawing in support from the former TKP cadres as well as the newly politicized youth. As differing legacies of Marxism were pushed forward by the various groups within the party, their

common ground remained to be the eager continuity they addressed with the reforms of the early Turkish Republic and the war of independence. Through its commitment to the rhetoric of anti-imperialism, TİP soon created itself a space in the Turkish Parliament further alleviating the hopes of the non-parliamentary left, as well.

Outside formal politics, the early sixties witnessed a substantial rise in left publications. From among the members of the committee to formulate the 1961 constitution, several intellectuals published the Journal *Yön* (Direction) in the same year. The journal's strong Kemalist tendencies were subsequently embraced by most of the leftist intelligentsia. Around the journal, was soon a movement which advocated the enlightenment rhetoric of the Kemalist era, aiming to further the reforms which had remained unfinished because of the feudal relations of production dominant in Turkey. *Yön* looked to find the path to socialist developmental methods for Turkey, and emphasized the primacy of the 'active forces' inherent to the leftist intelligentsia and youth.

Though the left was dispersed among different platforms for politics, they were also interconnected. The Socialist Culture Associations (Sosyalist Kültür Dernekleri-SKD) was founded in İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir by some of the members of *Yön*. Advocating the urgent necessity to make research in the sociological and historical structures, SKD's founders had organic ties with the Institution for Governmental Economic Planning (DPT), which characterized the state economic strategies of the 60s.

The election to the parliament of fifteen representatives from the Turkish Worker's Party (TİP) in 1965 constituted a new era in Turkish politics (Zürcher, 1993:368-73). The left which was now becoming more vocal also attracted leftist

university students to the Federation of Clubs of Thought (FKF) in universities. Socialist texts were translated, and leftist publications of various viewpoints increased in number (STMA, 1988:2002-3). By 1967, the Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions (DİSK), which would soon be able organize hundreds of thousands of workers, was established (STMA, 1988: 2019). Popular contestation within Turkish politics was reaching an extraordinary level.

Broadly speaking, however, regardless of their varying viewpoints on socialism and anti-imperialism, the different branches of the 60s' left, be it the TİP which worked from within the parliamentary system, or those who supported the notion of a National Democratic Revolution (MDD) among intellectuals and students, or the movements identified with the journal *Yön* eager for "westernization, progress and enlightenment" (STMA, 1988:2006)– perceived the May 27 military coup as an intervention against the pro-imperialist policies of the Democratic Party, applauding it as a return to what they considered to be the revolutionary ideals of Kemalism. There were contradictions of course, the least of which could easily be defined through the coup leaders' first international declaration emphasizing their commitment to NATO and CENTO (Tura, 2000). Still, in the minds of many, the 'democratic' constitution attested to the progressivism which characterized the May 27 'revolution'.

As mentioned before, the left in its totality also shared the post-1960 notion of developmentalist economic planning which paralleled the Kemalist principle of 'statism'. Moreover, economic statism and its political counterpart were entangled: since Turkey had not yet made the transition to a fully capitalist mode of production, the road to revolution presumably rested in the cooperation between the army and leftist

intellectuals. Therefore, the leftist organizations of the early 60s held onto the conception of the state as an agent of radical change, neither forming a new identity completely separate from the Turkish state, nor questioning its class basis (Keyder, 1990:117-9). In that sense, as leftist youth protested in favor of new public schools, or the ousting of the American marines from Turkish waters, they were not asserting a completely different ideology than a statist, nationalist, or, at its most radical, an anti-imperialist one.

In contrast to such continuities, however, the 60s also witnessed a growing oppression of the left by the state. Starting from 1962, TİP's offices around the country were attacked by incognito masses, with no ensuing measures of justice taken against the aggressors. The government, the National Security Council, and the National Information Organization (MİT) were purging schools and universities of leftists while individuals who belonged to students' associations, writers, and union leaders were arrested. The 141st and 142nd articles of the Turkish Penal Code, introduced in the 1940s and stipulating that espousing socialism and communism was a criminal act , were used to justify these arrests. After 1965, killings at the student protests organized by the FKF became commonplace, paving the way to more radical articulations of the sense of injustice accumulating among the left.

The Justice Party (AP) which came to power in the mid 60s, became notorious for its hard line stance against the left (Zürcher, 1993: 366-7). The Justice Party began to organize rightist students (later to be called independent counter-guerilla formations by the left) under its auspices. By the end of the 60s, the left had several interconnected forces against it: The police, MİT, the Association for Struggle against Communism, the right-wing press and the government. The left, which had supported the new constitution

and its ideologues was now being tried with the support of the 141st and 142nd articles. By 1966, The Justice Party Minister of Justice was making a distinction between freedom of thought and support of communism and anarchism, adding that the government was resolved to take measures to strengthen these two articles 'in order to close all doors' to these influences. (Cumhuriyet, 561) The trade unions, established under the freedom the constitution had granted them, now had to confront police violence while protesting for their constitutional rights. The left, which had grown strong in the space the new constitution had granted it, was now having to face on a day-to-day basis those aspects of the constitution which had been left open-ended.

The oppressive practices against the left, coupled with the new factionalizations within the limits of TİP led to radicalization of leftist politics. After its 1965 victory of having fifteen representatives elected to the parliament, the debates on socialism within the party soon became tainted by over-confident parliamentary cretinism: different branches among the cadres were now questioning the legitimacy of TİP as the self-proclaimed movement of the working class. Now, debates on notions of a national democratic revolution and socialism were governed by emasculating interests of power among different groups. Questions related to parliamentary versus non-parliamentary methods towards the revolution, discussions on the necessity of mass movements or mass support, the possibilities of reform versus strategies of revolution were now encompassed by an antagonistic race based on essentialist views regarding radical theory.

In a political environment in which different branches of the left turned to purism and asserted their own methods as the path to 'correct socialism', the more radical elements among the youth began to break their affiliations with the parliamentary

platforms they deemed opportunistic. This led to the politicization of new groups among university students, and soon FKF was transformed into an independent organization, the Dev-Genç, able to mobilize many youth around Turkey, who by this time were moving in large numbers towards the left (Çavdar, 1996:183-6; see also STMA, 1988: 2104-9 and 2134-45). By the end of the 60s, the anti-American student protests were taking an immoderate turn and Kurdish youth around the country were beginning to get organized under their own Eastern Revolutionary Culture Associations.

By 1970, the Turkish Army for Popular Liberation (THKO), the Turkish Army for the Liberation of Workers and Peasants (TİKKO), and the Turkish Party/Front for Popular Liberation (THKP-C), which would be the forerunners of the many leftist factions of the 70s, were established by members of the student movement (Zürcher, 1993:370-3). Deniz Gezmiş, Mahir Çayan, and İbrahim Kaypakkaya, who would become the mythical leaders of the 70s' left, resorted to armed struggle before 1970, leading the platform of politics from legal to illegal grounds, which led to increasingly illegitimate and violent methods of retaliation on the part of state authority, resulting in the further alienation of those whose subservience had become a prerequisite for the state's survival.

The 1971 Military Intervention as the Beginning of the End: Definitions of the State as Fascist and the Formation of 'Other' Bonds

It was the March 1971 coup that brought home the fearsome face of the state. By 1971, the leftist movements had come to be viewed as definite threats to the unity and

legitimacy of the state. After a memorandum which once again declared the responsibility of the Turkish army -"born of the bosom of the Turkish nation" (Cumhuriyet, 638) - to uphold the laws of the Kemalist revolution, the interim government declared a state of emergency in eleven cities, and began to arrest leftists (Zürcher 1993: 375-8). Leftist associations, publications, and newspapers were shut down overnight, and the reformulations of the 1961 constitution introduced restrictions on basic rights, political parties, universities, media, and the courts.

"The measures taken will land on their heads like a hammer"(Cumhuriyet, 638) declared Nihat Erim, the president of the interim government, expressing the gravity of the consequences for those defined as the state's 'other's through the coming decade. The legal parties, associations, and unions established in compliance with the 1961 constitution were now declared illegal. The arrests, gone overboard, were arbitrary; any connection with the left –unlike the 1960 coup- could result in maltreatment and even torture regardless of class background. The 1971 intervention not only showed that the foundations of civil society as established by law could be obliterated overnight, but also attested to the fact that the state had no interest in recognizing those viewed as 'respectable intellectuals' in the eyes of the public (Keyder 1990:162). The left could no longer trust the state for cooperation in working towards a 'progressive' revolution; they were now well aware of its barbaric methods, which soon translated into the 70s' conception of the state as 'fascist'. The execution of Deniz Gezmiş, Hüseyin İnan and Yusuf Aslan from THKO, the massacre of Mahir Çayan and his friends from THKP-C and THKO, and the killing of İbrahim Kaypakkaya from TİKKO under torture, only added to the alienation the left and the populace felt for the violence exercised by the

state. Though their defenses at court, full of references to the Kemalist revolution and its ideology would constitute some of the most important documents for the next generation, the young leftists could no longer see the present government as a progressive force in the movement towards the revolution (Samim, 1981).

The 1971 military intervention and the following period of state of emergency thus fuelled the ascension and potency of the next generation of leftist activism. The prohibition of leftist political activities on legal grounds pushed the already mobilized youth underground. Now in rural areas and cities alike, young people were growing up with a strong sense of reverence for their "elder brothers and sisters" who had been killed. As their parents had mourned the deaths of Deniz, Mahir, İbrahim and their friends, the generation of '78 wanted to be like those about whom they did not know much, apart from stories of heroism. These idealizations translated into new meanings regarding commitment to the revolution, and led to stronger identifications with the left than ever before. By 1974, when the political prisoners of the '71 coup were pardoned by the constitutional court, members of the generation of '78 were eager to find out more about their ideas and tactics. As they approached adulthood, activists who belonged to underground groups had constructed their primary identifications in terms of their contribution to revolutionary activity, and their commitment to the movement (Keyder, 1990:168-9).

All around Turkey, fuelled by the myths surrounding the earlier generation, the increasingly undemocratic practices of the state, the deepening crisis of import substitution industrialization, and the attacks from right-wing factions against which the state offered no protection, leftist youth met in the People's Houses and middle and high

school associations, eventually becoming drawn to the illegal organizations born out of THKO, THKP-C, and TİKKO.

The 70s also marked the introduction of large numbers of Alevis into the left. Alevism in Anatolia refers to a minority distinguished by their heterodox belief systems (Bozkurt, 1998; Zeidan, 1999). The Kızılbaş, as they were called in the Ottoman documents after the 15th century due to their red headdress, were nomadic and semi-nomadic groups, the rural counterparts of the Bektasi order (Melikoff, 1998; Vorhoff, 1998). Historically, the Alevi were associated with resistance and rebellion against the dominant Sunni majority, and thereby, the state.

The abolition of sharia and the implementation of secularist ideology within the parameters of Kemalist nationalism removed some of the constraints formerly imposed on the Alevi (Bozkurt 1998). The newly formed connections between the urban and rural areas which accompanied the project of modernization opened up Alevi communities to outside influences (ibid). Hence, the Alevi tended to identify with the CHP, who, they believed, would protect them from Sunni domination .

However, despite the underscoring of the notion secularism under the Republic, the term 'Turk' continued to be identified with persons of Sunni Muslim origin (İnsel 1991, Kirişçi 2000). Under the norms of homogeneity advocated by the Republic, the heterogeneous population inherited from the Ottomans would motivate policies of both assimilation and repression. The official state ideology as practiced by The Directorate of Religious Affairs through its recognition of the Sunni as the only 'true' Muslims, inherently supported the prevailing view of the Alevi as heretics (Bozkurt, 1998).

During the 1970s, Alevis became increasingly politicized. As mostly rural communities, who had identified themselves against the Sunni as oppressed minorities, the Alevi turned quickly towards the left. The growing Sunnification of Turkish state, coupled with the rhetoric of Sunni Islam within the circles of the 'right' motivated them to participate in the movement which had by then reached the rural areas (Neyzi, 2000: 7). The humanistic implications of their religious beliefs, likened to the "liberation-theology" of the 70s in South America (Bilici, 1998) made this transition into the left smoother. By the end of the 70s, the division between the right and left often paralleled the Sunni-Alevi divide.

When the Nationalist Front (MC) coalition government came to power in 1975, the relations between the rightist youth and The Nationalist Action Party (MHP) had become much stronger. *Devlet*, the journal affiliated with MHP, had already declared that power could not be defined merely in terms of "power in parliament": it meant ruling "the state, the street and the parliament" (STMA, 1988: 2216). The Hearths of the Ideal (*Ülkü Ocakları*) , the strongholds of cooperation between ultra-nationalist youth and the state, were established in 1974 (Bora and Can, 1999).

Though the ultra-nationalist right held on to notions of "national independence" also associated with the left and Kemalism, their rhetoric evolved into Pan-Turkism, anti-communism and anti-materialism through a synthesis of the racist historiography of the 30s, the notions of a corporatist society developed between the two world wars and cold-war ideology (Keyder, 1990:169). On the other hand, throughout the years of economic crisis during the 70s, official government rhetoric insisted on the threat of a Marxist revolution, pulling masses to the right based on their fear of downward social mobility,

and of the unionized working class (Keyder, 1990:173). The emphasis on Islam further mobilized the masses towards the right.

The years 1974 and 1975 were characterized by attacks on CHP's and the leftist youths' protest meetings, with slogans like "Muslim Turkey", "death to the communists", and "communists are burning mosques" (STMA, 1988:2216). The police, if not openly supporting the attacks, refrained from intervening. Especially in Central and Eastern Anatolia, anti-communist rhetoric of the right was strengthened by anti-Alevi propaganda. The Alevi were a suitable target for the right-wingers who had taken it upon themselves to bring the Turks to their 'ideal,' basing their rhetoric on 'the primacy of blood and morals' (Çağlar, 1990). The massacre of Kahramanmaraş in 1978, which started with a rumor regarding an "Alevi bombing of a cinema complex," in Sivas with "Alevis attacking mosques," and in Elazığ with "Alevis poisoning the city water," soon turned into massive attacks on leftists' shops and homes, as well as Alevi neighborhoods (Cumhuriyet, 699).

As the death toll due to political violence rose over the years 1975-1980, divisions within leftist organizations also increased (Zürcher, 1993: 383-5). Also fuelled by the international affinities to the socialist groups in China, Latin America, Albania and the USSR, the strict approach to ideological differences translated into further factionalization, transforming the battleground from ideologies to one in which membership in a leftist organization also meant secrets to be kept from others, and harsh criticisms of their actions. Among Halkın Birliği and Partizan which emerged from TİKKO, Kurtuluş, Dev-Yol and MLSPB from THKP-C, and the main branches of Emeğin Birliği and Halkın Kurtuluşu following THKO, there were different strategies for

revolution, ranging from armed struggle to educational and propagandist approaches, in relation to their views on the prevalent 'mode of production' in Turkey, or the nature of the Turkish state (Yurtsever, 2002). Different factions accused each other of "opportunism," "legalism," and "ideological deviation," identifying their own views with the correct path to revolution.

The political violence of the 70s led to another military coup and a new constitution, which was set on saying the final word on any sort of freedom or civil society in Turkey. A few months before the coup of September 12, 1980, the National Security Council issued a decree that underlined the obligation of every constitutional institution and citizen to act in accordance with the principles of the Republic and Kemalism. The National Security Council, which would heretofore supervise all actions of the power of execution, would now be exempt from judiciary control over it. The constitution, which limited personal and political rights, openly identified the "others" of the state as "the enemies of the nation". As such, the constitution and the National Security Council were not merely set against "terror, separatism, and fundamentalism", but set to encompass all areas of life, such as the economy, science, art, and human rights (Tanör, 1998).

By the end of 1983, when direct rule of the military came to an end, unprecedented numbers of people had been arrested, tortured, tried, and convicted. With the third military coup within the last twenty years, the Turkish State reminded its citizens, once and for all, of the long-lasting tradition of the primacy of the State in opposition to its supposedly uniform body of citizens. As such, the 'old' forms of violence were marginalized, but certainly not by an endorsement of democratic conflict

resolution in the framework of democracy. The legacy of September 12, 1980, with its new constitution, new institutions, and a new understanding of the public sphere, led the way to a new generation which would know little of what happened throughout the 70s, mostly recognizing the organizations on the left as 'terrorists' in line with their representation in the post-coup media. In emphasizing the notion of a 'strong state,' the coup had managed to dismantle all political entities which represented a threat to the National Security Council's all-encompassing authority.

Post 1980: The Rise of the Feminist Movement and its Outlook on the Experiences of the Left

The 1980 coup not only silenced all political opposition overnight, but also led the way to a new public culture in Turkey with its ensuing strategies of neoliberal economic regulation and acculturation. It was as though the 70s had not happened. Now, one heard on TV and in papers of the new middle class (*orta direk*) of Özal's years; the working class was no longer an issue. The primary aim now was for Turkish society to ensure that it was free of all conflict, including all forms of mass resistance (Gürbilek, 1988). Defined by the restrictions on political freedom, the 80s also attested to the power of the freedom to consume, now attuned to the all-powerful and increasingly privatized media . There were also signs of change in the communist countries of the world, attesting, in the eyes of the new media, that all that had been said regarding the 'revolution' had melted into thin air.

The obliteration of all mass movements after 1980, the neoliberal regulations of the 80s, coupled with new literature on identity politics from the West, started a new era of politics which took the identity groups as primary. On the one hand, politicization of the questions of identity diverted critical energies from questioning the neoliberal regulation of the economy and the violence which ensued behind prison gates, but on the other, questions of oppression in relation to different identities and minority groups began to be discussed (Gürbilek, 1997).

The 'autonomous women's movement' was born after the military coup which had silenced the streets, political journals, and associations. Therefore, it is not surprising that the feminist ideas of the 80s emerged in the privacy of homes, where women came together and talked about their experiences, bringing on a consciousness of the oppression they suffered in all areas of life. The feminist literature which had taken a new turn after 1968 in the West, was now arriving in Turkey.

According to the post-1980 feminists, marriage remained the only life alternative for most women; women were not provided with the means for education as much as men; women's labor inside and outside the household was exploited; birth control was not an option in the rural areas; and sexual harassment and domestic violence were widespread. For this wave of feminism which emerged after 1980, oppression and inequality were the main issues. In 1981, the Writer's and Translators's Cooperative (YAZKO) started translating feminist texts, and the first 'feminist page' was published in the journal *Somut* in 1983. Other women's groups followed, and by 1987, when the "Campaign Against Battering" was under way, 3000 women participated in the first public protest after the coup (Tekeli, 1989).

The early issues of the socialist feminist journal *Kaktüs* mostly discussed the 'autonomy' of the feminist movement. The movement stressed its independence especially in an organizational and political sense: the movement was to be "conducted by women, around women's questions and for their needs – resisting all efforts of appropriation to transform the struggle into a platform for other interests" (Paker, 1988). The new women's movement would work independently of any other political association's decisions and exigencies. Its basic premise was that women experienced oppression specifically because they were women, and declared that issues of class, ethnicity and political inclination would be secondary to their project of equality.

As Stella Ovadya (1988) asserted in the same issue of *Kaktüs*, this emphasis on the notion of 'independence' was partly conditioned by the left's attitude towards the new women's movement. Since the publication of *Somut*, women who had identified with feminism had been criticized by leftist circles for their 'bourgeois ideology'. Feminism was viewed as an 'imported ideology' closer to the right than the left. In 1989, in the First Women's Assembly organized by the Human Rights Association, the discussions between socialists and feminists attested to the fact that the friction between the two ideologies was not going to be easy to abolish (Saylan 1995; Tekeli 1989; Cankoçak 1989)[1]. As socialists blamed the feminists for pursuing 'bourgeois concerns' while their comrades suffered torture in prison, feminists were blaming the socialists for maintaining the same dogmatic views since the seventies.

Ironically, most women who were speaking for the feminist movement at the beginning of the 80s were women who had participated in the leftist organizations of the 60s and 70s and had experienced their share of state violence. Moreover, some of them

had met each other at prison gates waiting to see their sons, daughters, or husbands, where they had been protesting against the inhumane practices of the state. In the new found privacy of their homes, their formulations concerning the oppression of women had started with their 'consciousness-raising groups' discussing their own experiences.

Those experiences, the result of patriarchal relations in society, were inherent to how they viewed their involvement in the left as well. As articles pertaining to women's experiences within the left during the seventies became widespread towards the end of the eighties, harsh criticism came to the fore. First of all, the left had not paid any attention to the specific forms of oppression women faced with the assumption that women's independence would be achieved with the construction of socialism (Tekeli, 1989), it was viewed as an unfortunate ideological deviation even to be talking about women's issues. Some feminists made the connection between the leftist movement's commonalities with Kemalism ('the army and the youth hand in hand') and its inclination to confine women to the category of the 'mothers of the nation' (Özkaya, 1998). Women were given secondary responsibilities within leftist organizations, and their contribution was that of a back-up force, mostly consisting of menial tasks. Even the women's branches of the organizations, which were geared towards the mobilization of women for socialism, were not agents of their own activities, but received their orders from the male members from the hierarchies of the organization (Devecioğlu, 1988).

The feminists also had criticisms of the 'revolutionary morality' which designated all women members "sisters" (*baci*), anonymous representatives of the honor of the left. Through the slogan "the people are my only love and all women are my sisters", feminists asserted, male militants tried to protect themselves against women's potential

for introducing discord into revolutionary unity and solidarity (Berktay, 1988). Women were pushed to participate in the left only by abandoning their sense of womanhood and sexuality; they could only be accepted as 'tomboys' who were completely committed to the revolution (İlyasoğlu, 1989). Love, within these parameters, was viewed as a 'bourgeois' feeling.

It is crucial to keep in mind these early critiques of the left by women who lived in it. Therefore, in an effort to underline the historical continuities between the leftist movement of the 70s and the feminism of the 80s, I keep these criticisms in mind through my analyses of the interviews. In another vein, these narratives also provide a retelling of the 70s' experiences, and point toward the necessity of reformulating questions and themes of the early 80s' feminism. In this sense, each of these narratives not only details the personal aspects of social history, but also provides valuable gateways through which the spoken word may comment on the written words of earlier waves of feminism.

B- METHOD AND THEORY: CHALLENGING DEFINITIONS THROUGH WOMEN'S NARRATIVES

Fear of the State and Social Memory

My decision to write a thesis on the life story narratives of members of the generation of '78 stems from a personal agenda related to fear, guilt and questions concerning how to live with dignity. As a member of a generation that came of age between the generation of political activism and that of almost complete political oblivion after 1980, I grew up hearing distant stories of the militant generation before 1980,

including the violence they endured at the time of the military coup and thereafter. My early teenage years were informed by a knowledge of police violence behind closed doors, and the understanding that the Turkish state was an unforgiving father figure. The fear I felt whenever I passed a police station was coupled with a sense of indignity, for I knew that in not so distant history, some people had chosen to take political action, regardless of the consequences they would suffer. Fiction, autobiographies and interviews related to the 'movement' soon turned into a new form of idealization for me of these people I did not know. As I was studying Marx and his theory in the early nineties, my curiosity in a pre –1980 generation was fuelled, especially because by that time they represented a lifestyle and an ideology which became hard to imagine two decades later.

As I told my interviewees about the parameters of my research, I added that I was confused about how to "live like a person", a dignified citizen in this country. I said that I was trying to hear different people's answers, particularly people who had made a choice of a life of activism –taking upon themselves whatever burdens, restrictions and violence that choice brought with it. I suggested that perhaps this would allow me to come to terms with my fear of the police, and thereby of the state. I hoped that this would eventually lead to some answers about 'social history'; theirs and mine. The stories these "elder sisters" told me would ultimately point to the foundations of the fear I felt, not only in terms of being in opposition to the state, but also due to the difficulties they lived within the left.

The initial project I had in mind primarily concerned an analysis of state oppression as experienced by the generation of '78. I was especially looking to see the 'breaking points', the points of rupture when individuals for whom participation in

politics had been a matter of commitment shaping their self-identities throughout the 70s, but who no longer believed they would be able to stand up to this system, as many had experienced after the coup. I took it one step further though. I was looking to interview people who not only quit their involvement with their organizations, but also decided to leave cities, where one tended to live more immersed in the world of politics, and human interaction was more informed by the parameters of its political conflicts. I knew that many people from the generation of '78 had resolved to live their lives in the more isolated areas of Turkey and was looking to find out the outlines of that decision which would delineate the limits and narratives of weariness of state oppression.

In small towns, people have so much more knowledge about the personal histories of others, and in Gümüşlük and Datça, it was not difficult to reach members of the generation of '78. After I had interviewed eight people who lived in small towns in the southern areas of Turkey, however, I realized that a change in perspective was necessary. First of all, there was never a single point of rupture which motivated these people to leave the city. It was sometimes health issues, sometimes economic problems, sometimes relatives living there, sometimes a weariness of the human bustle in the urban areas, but never quite an end point in terms of politics. I realized I had actually been looking to define a moment of flight, which would perhaps not ease my fear about the way things are in this country, but would curtail my sense of indignity about not being in active politics.

Secondly, what struck me were the stark differences between my interviews with men and women. As a student of oral history, I was not only nervous about my interviewing skills, but also apprehensive about the reactions of my interviewees whom I

had idealized, but without sharing the same moral universe. I would b e asking them about the hardest years of their lives, and the most private issues related to those times.

The interview process brought surprises in that sense. Men were inclined to give me macro accounts of the time period. From them, I heard a lot about the different organizations' ideologies, their factions and their structural significance within the historical period, elaborations on what I had already read about for my research. I did find out about the ideological conflicts between factions, the activities of organizations, the ideological stance they took against the state and the conditions in prisons, but with no references to my interviewees' own personal fears or longings.

With women, the interviews were quite different. They were mostly speaking about their own lives through what seemed to be a stream of consciousness. I mostly preferred to leave them to make their own connections between events, commitments, feelings, dreams and fears. Their narratives mostly involved what they took to be their private lives, which were inseparably connected to their political commitments, organizational involvements and changes of perspective. For women, perhaps especially when speaking to a younger woman who had come to them to hear stories of alternative lifestyles, life stories were relatively easier to tell, intricately entangling the private and the political.

Different forms of violence, as expected, were prevalent in their lives, and generally speaking, the restrictions on their life alternatives were often suffocating to hear. However, it was also these stories that reminded me that "people get by", and in the most creative ways. No form of violence, domination, or restriction leaves the subject without any agency, without endowing her with new knowledge, new strategies to

counteract and transform relations of power. Agency, and especially political agency achieved through confrontation with restrictive forces, and its rearticulations among the powers that be, was also what partly curtailed my fear, which, until that point, had come to foreclose an understanding of dignity inherent to the specificities of actors' lives.

I came back to Istanbul, determined to meet other women of that generation, ready to hear stories of violence, but in close connection with stories of survival and change.

Oral history as a Method and as a Basis for Theory

For an appropriate study of social history, the analysis of macro-political events, the strategies of the state and the structure of political organizations is insufficient as long as they are not informed by an understanding of the articulation of the 'life worlds' as experienced by the actors. Life story narratives, as the expression of "cultural forms and processes by which individuals express their sense of themselves in history" (Portelli,1991, ix), are useful ways of establishing connections between different structures, in order to be able to identify the relations of power which define the parameters of change in history.

Therefore, it is one of the main purposes of oral history is to "allow concrete historical subjects to be established which were previously engulfed by the broad explanatory mechanisms specific to a political historiography in which the subjects only appear as participants in an impersonal system" (Garcia, 2000). Especially in the case of a study of the generation of '78, that which has been deemed the 'microcosm' of militancy –the disconnected worlds of the organizations- reveals its intricacies and its

connections with the outside world only through the narrated subjectivities of the narrators.

Within these life stories, we are confronted with the relationalities these women have endeavored to make between themselves and others, between their own formulations of the world and the floating discourses around them. The subjects who tell the stories of their own realities therefore simultaneously make references to "an exchange between the purely personal and shared social, literary and linguistic world" (Skultans,1998, xii) which in its totality present the reader with the rich connections between collective and personal histories.

It has been argued that the nature of reality itself as experienced by individuals is an emergent effect of narrative (Bruner, 1991). The understanding of continuities between the subject as 'narrator' and the subject as the one who experienced the narrated events makes the use of oral history particularly telling for the study of the social history of the past thirty years. Since the post-1980 Turkish society is one in which old forms of knowledge and morality were obliterated, today's narratives also represent a rupture with the moral universe of the 70s which formed the basic self-definitions of these women in their youth. Likewise, the primary of their relationalities with the world, as defined through their organizations, were severed; leaving them devoid of the very networks which prepared the ground of those self-identifications. Therefore, the double-edged notion of the 'I', which simultaneously refers to the 'I' as the agent of the remembered past and the 'I' as the narrator in the present, (Olney, 1980) and surely thickens the already blurry boundaries of the experienced event and the narrative of its memory, nevertheless starkly reveal the power of these individuals to organize their past

experiences into parameters they deem correct today. The judgments of today, reflected upon the symbolic worlds of the past inherently point to what transformations have taken place within the last twenty years, emphasizing the notion of "subjectivity as a historical process" (Spivak, 1989) In line with Benjamin's reminder that "a remembered event is infinite, because it is a key to everything that happened before and after it, " (Benjamin 1969, 202: Portelli 1991) my aim is to connect the parameters of meaning and history.

In this vein, oral history provides a most articulate passage into the connections between the past and the present, the personal and the social, and the organizational and the national; making the crucial connections that stem from the relationalities between people, organizations and discourses. The effort is to step outside and muster the boundaries of all these categorizations established by the written word of macro studies.

Displacing the Fixity of the Margins through Narratives: Alevi Women as 'Other's

Since the military coup of 1980, much has been said regarding the structures and the ideology of the leftist organizations of the 70s by official state discourse as well as by socialists and feminists. While official state ideology defined these organizations as 'terrorist', the left has made an effort to reclaim its history, especially in terms of its ideology and the illegitimate repression it had to endure during and after the 70s. Feminists, on the other hand, detected one of the most traditional forms of hierarchy within the left, underlining the specific forms of oppression women had to endure during their involvement with these organizations. Hence, actors in the political opposition of the 70s have been referred to in diverse frameworks; as 'terrorists', as 'patriotic youth of revolutionary commitment' and as 'women (of a subordinate position) in the left'

The four women interviewed for this thesis who represent members of the '78 generation experienced further marginalisations within Turkish history. As women who belonged to the Alevi minority in Turkey, they are members of a group which experiences denigration regarding its identity with names such as "Kızılbaş" implying immoral practices. As they come of age, individuals who belong to the Alevi community develop a sense of 'otherness' vis-à-vis the Sunni majority. Being women, on the other hand, endows them with specific forms of oppression in Turkey as elsewhere in the world, and a consciousness of being the 'second sex' whose agency is traditionally relegated to the private sphere. Hence, these women are not only members of the '78 generation, historically defined as the 'others' of the state and 'the enemies' of the nation, but also belong to categories often deemed marginal even within the left. The term 'marginal' is associated with notions of lack of freedom, of subjection and a lack of agency.

The oral history account at hand is an effort to get more specific in its approach to this positionality of the 'marginal'. Without doubt, these four women lived in a phase in Turkish history which was violent, oppressive and oppositional. From statistics, historical research and fiction alike, we know they have had to endure illegitimate practices of state authority, restrictions of the organizations on their individuality and that they were further marginalized as "the enemies of the nation" after 1980.

These categorizations, however, remain one-dimensional in their approach to the relations of power. In identifying the left as an entity victim to illegitimate state authority, and women as subordinate members of patriarchal and undemocratic structures within the left, and Alevis as a recipient of oppressive nationalism, one neglects to see the subjective

processes each individual lived through, and transformed, throughout the decades in question. These explanations identify the authority of the state, the plaguing forms of nationalism, and the dynamics of power within organizations, without, however, putting forward the "historicity of these dynamics as formulated by the subjectivities within the narrative process" (Portelli, 1991), which is one of the primary aims of the method of oral history

From within the narratives of these women, we encounter moments of variation from the fixed and passive positionality of the 'marginal', ways in which they have chosen to take varying paths, negotiating the boundaries of their lives on different terms. One of the main aims of this thesis is to follow each woman's path from their disadvantaged positionality as Alevi women within the left into 'normal' and 'law-abiding' lives, through which their notions of their own 'personhood', 'womanhood' and their understanding of 'politics' was altered. This effort will not only reveal the productive tensions inherent to the positions of marginality these women inhabited, but will also underline the fact that no position can be confined to a space of passive endurance.

In line with Foucault's reminder that power "does not only weigh on us as a force that says no… it induces pleasure, forms of knowledge, and produces discourse"[2], and in an effort to "discover the historical links between certain modes of self-understanding and modes of domination, and to resist the ways in which we have already been classified and identified by dominant discourses" (Foucault, 1980: 27) I would like to displace the notion of 'the movement' and its 'margins' from the frozen categories it has been placed

in, and to make my analysis dependent upon 'subjectivities in process' defined in terms of the agency of political actors.

As such, several questions provide the backbone of this thesis. The main parameters involve questions regarding the way women situated themselves within these movements, in close connection with the 'before' and 'after' of their involvement. What was their sense of belonging shaped by, what did they feel the need to oppose, and eventually, what were the moments of rupture that led them to identify themselves apart from the movement?

Before, during and after their involvement, how did they define their sense of being Alevi and being female, especially in relation to others' definitions, as articulated by the state, by the organization, by the public and by their families? Did participation in these movements provide them with viewpoints hitherto not experienced by them? How did these women utilize their newly formed relationalities within their communities?

Within the restrictions of organizational structures, did women make their own decisions? From within the confines of illegal life, of being 'bacı's, and 'other's, - marginal positions as they have been called- what were the strategies used by these women to survive, to transform, and when the time came, to break away?

How is the concept of being 'other' related to their sense of self, their involvement in the movement and its aftermath in their minds? And through their understanding of this notion, how do these women define politics today?

Through these questions, this thesis aims to underline the continuities between two phases of Turkish history which are often deemed completely detached from each other. Women's life story narratives which reveal significant changes in the ways they

viewed their own worlds, and their connections with the outside world, connect the leftist political culture of the seventies, with that of the feminist movement of the eighties. As such, this thesis stands as a research effort which also attests to the theorizing powers of oral history as a method, especially in a historiographic sense.

CHAPTER 2

EMINE'S STORY:

CONCESSIONS, NEGOTIATIONS, POSTPONEMENTS, AND TRANSFORMATIONS: COMING OF AGE AMIDST THE POWERS THAT BE

Non-assertive is the word that remained with me after all the interviews with Emine. Not in the sense of not being able to say 'no', but saying 'no' in a way which didn't shout out the `no`, was not proud of the uttered 'no', instead walking around the assault, silently but surely. As it is easy to see in the pieces of her narrative that follows, Emine, in spite of all the intricate networks of power which seemed to encompass her life story, inevitably brought about the changes she believed she needed, sometimes waiting it out patiently until the waters could take it, sometimes making articulate negotiations with the powers that be, sometimes changing the direction of her path in ways that suited her, and sometimes capturing control of the whole story, while never quite asserting herself.

She is a very articulate narrator. Her straightforward narrative, surely effected by her distanced but lucid acceptance of the conditions of the time, was partly what made her stories so effective. The stories she told, usually without too much interpretation of the events, are very telling of the many ways she took her stance in the face of rather oppressive practices and norms, sometimes of the state, sometimes of family and organizations, and of the overlapping areas of power in which many youth of her

generation had to negotiate and survive. Her life story narrative articulately elucidates the history of a generation, from their coming of age, into the later years of adulthood.

Emine's stories of childhood in Tunceli bring to the fore the growing opposition to the state through anecdotes which point both to the closely knit ties of the Alevi community and their interactions with the state. As she tells the story of growing into adulthood as a revolutionary, she is also telling the story of that limiting space between the sexual being she became, her organizational identity and responsibilities, and of conceptions of 'honor' and relationally, 'virginity' endorsed by a range of networks and localities, which have also been endorsed by the state . Her narrative of her marriage and years of organizing in Ankara also depict her changing situation within the organization, pointing towards the varying roles women played within organizations, in discourse and reality. Like many women of her generation, her feelings after the military coup are simultaneously of aloneness and self-realization. Finally, when she talks about the psychological problems of her son, she is actually pronouncing the accumulative effects of decades of trauma and terror on families, and the generations to come.

Emine's life story narrative is but one expression of the oppressive norms and practices, be it by the state, the organization or the family, and of subjectivities in process, which deal with the networks of power they face, and in turn translate them into new values, stances and generations.

Tunceli: An 'Open' Geography of Communal Lives where Coming of Age Entailed Becoming Oppositional

Emine was born in Tunceli in 1957. She said there were five others after her, a total of three girls and three boys. Throughout primary school, middle school and high school, her family lived in the center of Tunceli, on top of a hill overlooking the river Munzur, which cut right through the center of the city.

Her most vivid memories from childhood were about the communal life they led in the city, where neighbors were intimate with each other, no one ever locked their doors, and the kids were always out playing in the streets. May 1st festivities, as well as New Year's Eves were special get together days when many families used to play games and dance.

The communal life in public areas was enforced by an atmosphere of open-mindedness in the Tunceli of those days, "everything was out in the open" she remembers. The relations among the population were never oppressive, which, Emine emphasized, was translated into the literacy level of 90% in the Tunceli of her childhood, for girls as well as boys.

In contrast to Elazığ, where her mother was from, Tunceli was an easier place to be a girl. The different levels of conservatism between Elazığ and Tunceli, which in later years would make the former a fortress of the 'right' and the latter of the 'left' could be sensed even by the young Emine, whose attire had to be adjusted according to locality.

> Daha tutucu, daha bağnaz, daha ahlakçı. Aynı kız erkek hepimiz ortalıkta hep birlikte oynar gezer dolaşırdık ama bu Elazığ'da mümkün

değildi mesela. İşte elbise giyersin. Altına hiçbir şey giymezsin, bir pabuç giyer gezersin. Elazığ'da hemen bir pijama giydirilir ya da pantolon giydirilirdi. Açamazsın, kolunu kıçını açma derlerdi. Dedemlerin köyünde anneannemlerin anneannem birşey hatırlamıyorum söylemezdi ama dedem şöyle bir bakardı hiç bir şey söylemeden işte. Şehire iner döndüğünde çiçekli basmadan bir kaç metre kumaş getirip anneanneme verir; şu kıza bir don dik de bacakları açık gezmesin oralıkta derdi. Hemen o dikilirdi öyle dışarı çıkardık. (1)

Tunceli, highly populated by Alevis, is also a city which witnessed and was victim to the oppressive and assimilationist policies of the Turkish Republic, especially throughout its early years. Emine's narrative regarding her late awareness of her identity as an Alevi not only illustrates a living account of the resulting split between generations of Alevis in the region, but also gives clues about the ways in which the processes of politicization during the 70s began to dismantle those policies through a reiteration of Alevi identity. For Emine's parents' generation, the aspiration of upward social mobility also meant speaking Turkish and forgetting the Zaza language. Interestingly enough, the next generation which would not be encouraged to learn their own language, would eventually turn out to be the very generation to attempt to persuade their elders concerning the atrocities of the state throughout the 70s.

- …Ben de Alevi kökenli bir ailenin cocuğuyum diyeyim. Ama Alevilikle ilgili bir çok şeyi lise dönemlerindeki politik söylemler başladığı zaman öğrendim. Yani biz Aleviyiz, şuyuz buyuz, hiç hatırlamıyorum ailemden bu tür şeyler. Ama işte şöyle bir şeyi var. Mesela Kürtçe konuşulur oralarda. Zazalar var Tunceli'de. Benim ailemin de konuştuğu dil işte Zazaca. Biz altı kardeşin hiçbiri bu dili bilmiyoruz. Evde konuşulmadığı için. Belki işte babamın memur olması, şu bu , eğitim yani kent yaşamı. Çok fazla o dili kullanmadım. (2)

Emine's narrative of her childhood years point to a very early process of politicization. Children in Tunceli were growing up with an awareness of teachers being

exiled, and soon enough, elder persons being killed. The two protests she remembered from her middle school years were both communal protests, one in school among children, and the other one in front of the police station by the Tunceli community who were protesting the banning of a play. Both of these two episodes, which were vivid in her memory, ended with utter disappointment for Emine and with differing levels of agony for those involved.

Her first protest was when she was in middle school, a school-wide strike for their math teacher who was exiled to another region. All students at school had a strike of three days and refused to attend classes, to no avail. On her last day, the teacher made a speech in the school yard: "Derslerinize dönün. Beni çok mutlu ettiniz ama eğitim almak zorundasınız. Burda yapmak istediğimi gider orada da yaparım. orada da sizin gibi çocuklar var dedi ve gitti öğretmenimiz." The children's' protest, inherently conjoining the love they felt towards their teacher and political ideologies, was perhaps a formative experience, a shifting of parameters for most who attended. By 1970, when Emine was in 9th grade, school had already become a platform for politics, not only through student protests, but academically speaking as well. In classes of sociology, history, psychology and philosophy, issues related to Turkish politics were being discussed.

The second protest in Emine's memory also entailed the first killing she witnessed. A play about Pir Sultan Abdal, a sixteenth-century mystic who was involved in an Alevi uprising and hanged, was banned by the mayor after everyone was seated in the theater. Though the mainstream press of the time commented on the event as an upsurge of people who raided the central police station, Emine's narrative about the actions of the protesters who were attempting to negotiate with the state officials is much milder. The

killing of an elder in a community where elders are very much respected, coupled with new stories of torture point towards one of the more powerful stories of alienation from the state.

> Bütün Tuncelili Pir Sultan oyununu izlemek üzere hazırken işte oyun gece tam başladığı anda valilik yasaklama getiriyor.buna tepki gösteriyor insanlar. Yahu, herkes salona oturmuş, parasını ödemiş. Bu ayıp bir şey bunu yapmayın diye. Yok emniyet izin vermiyor. Sonra bir grup diyor ki işte avukatıydı, ileri gelen eşrafı bir ekip oluşturup gidip görüşelim. Kalabalık bir grup emniyetin önüne doğru yürüyüşe geçiyor. Bir kısım da biz de destek olacağız diye arkalarından gidiyor. Emniyete yaklaştıklarında Tunceli'nin sevilen ama biraz alkolik bir amcası var. Bu amca diyor ki insanlara, durun diyor siz. Ben bir gidip konuşayım diyor ve bir iki adım öne çıkıyor. Ve orada adamı vurdu polis. Adam vurulunca tabi insanlar çok büyük bir tepki duyuyorlar. Bayağı bir kargaşa çıkıyor. Başka vurulan olmuyor ama çok büyük bir üzüntü yaratmıştı ve ortalık da birbirine girdi. (3)

Though 'provocation' was a word frequently used in the newspapers of the time, Emine's narrative attests to the fact that minute details of timing with regards to provocations are sometimes omitted from accounts of 'upsurge' and 'raids'. After all, in Emine's narrative, the elderly man was killed before what one may choose to call an 'upsurge' occurred.

As all the actors of the play were arrested and tortured throughout the coming weeks, the community of Alevis were especially implicated in some of the rumors about what was happening inside the police station which pointed to the fact that the terror people had to confront was not merely geared towards their political ideologies, but was also directed at their religious beliefs and identities.

> Gavur Ali diye bir kahraman yarattılar sağolsun polisimiz. Gene işte manav dükkanı olan adı Ali olan Tuncelili bir adam. O da işte gözaltına alınanlardan. İşçi partisi sempatizanı ya da üyesi. İşkence yapılırken polislere yalvarıyor. Allahınızı severseniz yeter. Peygamberinizi severseniz diye. Polis de "aa senin allahın mı var!?" deyip daha fazla

> falakaya yatırıyorlar adamı. “Senin peygamberin mi var?!” deyip. Bu da artık canı çok yandığı için sanıyorum şey demeye başlıyor: “Eğer benim allahım ayrı sizinki ayrıysa ben sizin allahınızı... Eğer benim peygamberim ayrı sizinki ayrıysa ben sizin peygamberinizi… Onlar vurdukça o küfretmeye başlıyor. Ondan sonra onun adı Gavur Ali’ye çıktı. Ondan sonra da 70’li yılların 12 Mart dönemi başladı. Böyle bir olay hatırlıyorum. Bu lise zamanında olan bir şey. (4)

Myths of heroic deeds were formulated and disseminated especially at times when the state was most insulting to the Alevis’ beliefs, leading to organic affiliations between the Alevi population and the oppositional left. In Emine’s memory, the story about Gavur Ali was connected to the beginning of the emergency state, which the generation of ’78 based its opposition against.

The beginning of her high school years in Emine’s memory is also coupled with discussions of social injustice and law, Tolstoy’s *War and Peace* and many other novels about social issues, as well as news of student protests and clashes everywhere. The organic ties between the left and the community around Emine were enhanced through the news of atrocities their teachers, relatives and acquaintances had to endure. The days of the military coup in 1970 brought together the disappointments and pain regarding arrests in Tunceli and the stories of revolutionaries elsewhere, bringing home to Tunceli macro political events of the times. The executions of Deniz Gezmiş and his friends changed many lives, personally as well as politically:

> Tam askeri darbenin başladığı dönemler. Sürekli gazetelerde işkence haberleri tutuklamalar olmaya başladı. Annem duyarlı üzülüyor, babam duyarlı bunu konuşuyor çevresinde.Okulda bunu konuşuyoruz, evde bunu konuşuyoruz, başka hiçbir şey konuşulmuyor. Deniz Gezmişler’in idamı ile ilgili süreç izleniyordu. Son idam günü annemle babamın sabaha kadar oturduklarını biliyorum. Babam ilk defa yani tutucu bir insan değil ama inançlı bir insandı. Annemler 12 imam orucunu tutarlar işte.. Namaz filan yoktu ama ramazanda 3 gün tutarlardı. Babam her şeyini bu çocukların idamına yükledi . Tanrının varlığı, işte bu inançla ilgili böyle bir adalet

> böyle bir güç varsa çocuklar asılmasın. Son orucunu ve şeyini hep onlara yükleyerek yaptı bütün dualarını bilmemnelerini. Ve idam kesinleştiğinde Yok böyle bir şey benim için dediğini hatırlıyorum.. Allah da yok, inanç da yok. Bütün konu komşu herkes sabaha kadar kapılardan yoklanarak birbirine haber veriyor. Son dakikaya kadar, durdurulsun diye inançlarını yitirmedi insanlar. Fakat idamlar gerçekleşti tabi. (5)

Although the story of utter disappointment about the executions is reminiscent of many parents' stories I heard during my interviews, Emine's was perhaps the most striking, especially because the power of disappointment with politics, and of course, with the killings, was strong enough to reconstruct Emine's father's religious beliefs, representing in a sense, the transformation of his religious identity into a strictly and bitterly political one. Emine says she felt as strongly against the executions as her father did, and the next day, students at school refused to put on the white collars of their uniforms. These times coincided with readings on metaphysics, dialectics and materialism.

Emine soon experienced her first interrogation for a cartoon she drew in the school newspaper next to a poem her best friend had written. Beside the poem about the executions, Emine drew a scaffold and people piling in front of it in order to stop the executions. The two girls, as advised, told their interrogators that by 'revolution', they had meant Atatürk's revolutions. Their case was taken to the office of the public prosecutor nonetheless, only to be dropped many years later.

As two high school students had to hide their revolutionary stance behind a Kemalist rhetoric, their parents –who perhaps had a better idea of the implications of that rhetoric- were worried for them; "they were afraid", Emine remembers. However, between Emine's generation and her parents', lay the generation of '68, the older brothers

and sisters who had by then become mythical figures in Emine's mind. After the comprehensive arrests which took place between 1970 and 1974, those arrested had come with news of the older generation of leftist activists, bringing an awareness of the distinctions between different illegal organizations.

> Dediğim gibi o yıllar yeni insanlarla, hatta işte cezaevine girip çıkmış örgütlü abilerimizle ablalarımızla tanışma yıllarımız oldu. Bir şekilde acaba kaç tane örgütlenme var, ne oluyor sorusunu sormaya fırsat kalmadan biz de taraf olduk, ya da birçok insan öyle taraf oldu. Çünkü senin kafanda şöyle bir şey var; devrimci olmak devrimci olmaktır. Yani işte sisteme karşısın. Sistem kötü bir sistem çünkü dünyada adaletsizlik var. Dünyayı değiştirmek; daha adil daha yaşanılabilir, haksızlıkların olmadığı, sömürülerin olmadığı bir dünya düşünü kurmaya başlıyorsun. Sonra sonra bu sempati seni oraya yönlendiriyor. O insanlarla birlikte olmak hoşuna gidiyor. Onları yakalıyorsun, soruyorsun, öğrenmeye çalışıyorsun, sıkıştıryorsun. Bunları yaşadık hepimiz. (6)

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Emine told me that living in the east of Turkey, she soon found herself most inclined towards İbrahim Kaypakkaya's theories regarding the need to start with the peasantry for it was easy to see that Turkey was a semi-feudal country. She believed that there needed to be different strategies of revolutionary activism for urban and rural areas, that political organization was a must, and that as one became more conscious about the world, one would have to teach others. Many TKP-ML people surrounded her at the time, she met them and soon became a sympathizer. First came some booklets about the party principles and leftist politics, and suggestions for reading, both historical and fiction, and 3-4 person educational groups to discuss them. "Sanırım akıllı bulunduk, çabuk öğreniyoruz falan. Küçük küçük bize görevler verilmeye başlandı"(7). Pointing towards how theoretical affiliations were also structured by local-political myths of the times, Emine's narrative of İbrahim Kaypakkaya's theoretical stance was followed by perhaps one of the most visually striking stories of heroism I had heard about one of the leaders of

the 70s' left, another myth which the state had delivered into the mouths and minds of the people, only to restructure, in a stronger way, their opposition.

> Bizim köyden Tunceli'ye şehire döndüğümüz bir geceydi, akşamüstüydü. Yollar kapatılmıştı, karışıklık vardı. Babamların konuşmalarından sağdan soldan gelen haberlerden İbrahim Kaypakkaya diye birinin askeri bir jipin arkasına bağlanarak sürüklenerek getirildiği anlatılıyordu. Ayağı falan donmuş. Tutuklandıktan sonra ayağının biri kesiliyor, ya da ikisi. İbrahim ile ilgili böyle bir hikaye hatırlıyorum. Daha sonra bütün o tezleri o insanın hazırladığını öğrendiğimde benim için çok daha önemli olmuştu. İşkence sürecinde de İbrahim Kaypakkaya ser verip sır vermeyen bir lider olarak yer etti tarihimizde. Hiç bir şey konuşmadı. Ama yok ettiler, öldürdüler. (8)

The first important task her organization gave her was the distribution of some leaflets in school, in memory of İbrahim Kaypakkaya on the day of his death. She said she was very nervous and scared; she felt she had to carry out the task in the most perfect way possible. The leaflets had to be distributed at eight o'clock sharp in all schools. Emine remembers leaving her class in spite of her teacher's refusal to let her go. She remembers running down the corridor with her teacher yelling behind her, going to the empty classrooms upstairs, and distributing the leaflets under the desks.

By the afternoon hours, the police began their raids at the schools, but somehow she could leave for home. Late at night, a neighbor came to their house, and warned her that her name had been mentioned and that those arrested were being taken to Diyarbakır. She hastily left home and went to her mother's village, got lost for a few days and was not arrested. Regardless, she remembers that the fear of arrest was later superseded by her belief in comradeship and her guilt about not being arrested with her friends –"I should have been there in Diyarbakır with them". Her sense of belonging to the organization was much stronger than, as much as it was fueled by, the fear of the state.

Towards 1974, the political climate in Turkey, and of course in Tunceli began to change in diverse ways. As Emine began to hold a stronger position as a sympathizer of TKP-ML, the emergency rule of '71 was beginning to lose its strict character, there were now legal as well as illegal journals, and there were legal organizing activities among the unions and the neighborhoods, as well as illegal ones. With cases of state officials judged for torture, there was a rise in the democratic demands from among the youth, questioning and criticizing the atrocities of the regime of March 12. "Our hope is Ecevit" shouted the leftists in many areas around the country. But this was also the time of further and stricter differentiation between the right and the left; *ülkü ocakları* were sprouting up everywhere; neighborhoods and families were to be protected by the nationalist or leftist youth, whichever had gained control in a specific area. The young generation had proved its ground, almost to the point of persuading the parental generation. These were the times when Emine decided she wanted to become a professional revolutionary, and gave me what was perhaps one of the clearest descriptions of what was meant by the concept. Growing up to be a "good person" also meant becoming a professional revolutionary, strictly associating your life with an all-encompassing effort for the revolution, stripping yourself from all other identities, tasks and past.

> - Ne demekti sizin için profesyonel devrimci olmak?
> -Ondan önce yaptığın sempatizanlık düzeyinde gidiyor. Sempatizan olarak sadece yardımcı eylemler, yardımcı işler yapabiliyorsun. Profesyonel devrimci olmak demek tamamen kendini o işe vermen anlamına geliyor. Yani senin işin mesleğin o oluyor. Öğrencilik yapmayacaksın. Herhangi bir yerde çalışmayacaksın. Ailevi bağlarını koparacaksın. Belli bir yapılanma içerisinde sen artık kadrolu birisin. Profesyonel devrimci 24 saatini bu işe ayırıyor. Sadece bu iş için çalışıyor. (9)

Fifteen Days in the Life of a Young Girl: A New Professional Revolutionary

After a year of strict supervision of her activities and personality by the organization, at eighteen, she was accepted as a member of the organization, a professional revolutionary. The first step was to leave home. The day was set, and she was initially Elazığ bound with a friend. She had no idea whom she would meet there, and what would happen from then on. She put on her grandmother's black *carsaf*, left a note saying she was leaving: , "Ne yapacağımı da söylererek gidiyorum yani …beni aramayın, ben sizi ararım. Ortalığı karıştırmayın, polisi ararsanız daha kötü olur." (10)

Emine's first memories in her life as a professional revolutionary coincide with the first awakenings of her sexuality. On the bus to Ankara, her new comrade kept looking at her and asking her questions, she remembers. She remembers feeling disturbed by his attention, but since this was the first time a man was so attentive to her, she was also excited. In Ankara, Emine, this new comrade and another girl moved into a flat in Dikimevi, and there started the fifteen-day period which would lead to major changes in Emine's life.

During these fifteen days, not only did she begin meeting new people, but an intense relationship started in the small apartment in Dikimevi. Apart from her introduction to the strictly illegal life, this time was also when she was engaged in another 'forbidden' sort of activity, namely sex.

> Tanımadığın bir şehire gidiyorsun, tanımadığın insanlarla bir aradasın. Bu arada yolculuk yapıp aynı evde yaşadığın insanla aranda bir şeyler gelişiyor. Ne olduğunu anlamıyorsun. İlk defa bir erkek ilgi gösteriyor sana. Tuhaf duygular hissediyorsun, heyecanlanıyorsun, utanıyorsun, kızarıyorsun, bozarıyorsun, ne yapıyorum ben diyorsun. Suçluluk

> duyuyorsun. Yani çok dar bir alandasın. Birkaç metrekarelik bir alanda yaşıyorsun üç kişi… Biz birlikte de olduk o zaman onunla. (11)

However, presently, the commotion her father caused in Tunceli put an end to Emine's life as a professional revolutionary in Ankara. Worried about his daughter, Emine's father had told her friends in Tunceli that he knew everything, and would go to the police unless they brought her daughter back. At the end of the very intense fifteen days she spent in Ankara, a friend from Tunceli came to pick her up, telling her it was too big a risk to keep her there, and that she could still continue her activities in Tunceli.

Within the parameters of organizational secrecy, she didn't know the real name of the man she'd been with. The only thing she knew was that he was from Tunceli. He knew her name and where she lived. He kept a picture of hers which they had had taken for a new identification card, and told her that eventually he would come to see her. She left with a secret, one she would not be able to share with anyone, neither her comrades from the organization, nor her family.

In Tunceli, Emine had become a hero. "Döndükten sonra yürüyüşü bile değişti"(12), people said about her. For a short while she stayed home, and soon she again started her activities in the region.

This was also the time when divisions within TKP/ML began to take shape. Emine recalls a research project on the socio-economic structure of the country. The aim was to determine the primacy of relations of production. An extensive questionnaire in rural areas regarding families' production cycles, their relations of exchange, and the extent of animal husbandry and of technology in agriculture was produced to resolve questions about the balance of capitalistic and feudal forms of relations of production in the area. The discussions about the results of the questionnaire ended with the

differentiations of Halkın Birliği and Partizan from within the cadres of TKP/ML. She took position with the Partizan wing, which would from then on base its strategies on the understanding that feudal relations of production were dominant, and that there would have to be a revolutionary land reform before a bourgeois revolution; the revolutionaries would hence have to start organizing the rural areas, and then move on to the cities.

In a year's time, Emine's friend from Ankara arrived in Tunceli, during a funeral/ protest they were holding on the banks of the Munzur. The story which followed was interesting especially because Emine's difficult situation pointed to a restricted space between her organization and its morals, and the morals of the society at large, especially in relation to virginity.

> Ben evlenmek üzere geldim dedi. Ama Halkın Birliğindendi. Ben onu oportunistlikle suçlayıp böyle bir şeyin artık mümkün olamayacağını söyledim. Bu arada yaşadığım başka psikolojiler vardı. Evden o dönemde 15 günlüğüne çıkıyorum. Bir sürü idealler için gidiyorum. Sonra bir erkekle birlikte oluyorum. Daha 18 yaşındayım. Başka erkeklere de bakamıyorum, çünkü ben böyle bir şey yaptım. Artık bakire değilsin ve bunu kimseye anlatamazsın. Ama gene de militanlık had safhada gidiyor. Bu kendi sırrım olarak duruyor içimde. Tabi o geldi, tam da geldiği gece biz Munzur'da köprü başında bir cenaze bekliyoruz.orada geldi, beni buldu. Çok fazla yüz vermedim. Opportunist diye. Başka bir şeyi savunuyor diye Bu anlatmış işte herşeyi. Kıyamet kopmuş. O zaman evlenirsin demişler. Böyle bir beraberlik mümkün değil dedim. Sen farklı bir yerde yer aldın. Ben burdayım. . Farklı siyasi örgütlenmelerden insanlar birbiriyle evlenemezlerdi. Neden? Çünkü sen oldukça sır küpü, oldukça gizli bilgilere sahip bir örgütlenme içindesin. Farklı yapılardan bir ilişki kurduğun zaman onların… yani olmaması gerekiyor. Yine konuşup tartışacağız bunu. Beni ikna et. Ben burda olacağım. Ben seni ikna edersem sen bizim safımızda olacaksın. Ve hemen bu gece çözeceğiz bu işi. Çok yakında bir arkadaşın evine doğru gittik. Bayağı ideolojik tartışma yapıyoruz bununla. (13)

Though Emine believed that she would have to hide her sexual encounter in Ankara from everyone around her, because of their different factions, -a publicly obvious obstacle to their togetherness-, she would not / could not agree to marry him.

These were also times, Emine emphasized, when life was to be postponed, for now the masses on the left were swiftly growing in numbers, there were strikes which involved thousands of workers at a time and even their parents' generation were beginning to take sides. The revolution, Emine's people believed, would be happening very soon. Life, and surely private affairs such as marriages, would have to be postponed. Entangled around the problem of her lost virginity was her commitment to her organization, the decision for marriage made by Halkın Birliği in Ankara, and actually, as she told me later, another man she'd met and fallen in love with, but had not been able to tell of her 'situation'.

The discussions lasted a few days, with the support she received from more theoretically knowledgeable people from her organization, and sometimes her mother, who did not want her daughter to leave again. Finally Emine was persuaded, and they got married in a few days. Without a bridal dress, as Emine emphasized, for their friends were getting killed everyday.

Her parents did not approve, for they believed she was actually leaving under the command of the organization. Friends from her own organization were furious. They never forgave her, Emine says. Stripped of all that she had so far belonged to, the next day, Emine left with her husband for Ankara, leaving her own organization, friends, family, and the man she loved behind. She merely had two suitcases, no dowry, and was going towards an illegal life without an address to leave behind.

Given the ideas regarding women's chastity endorsed by the family, leftist organizations and state ideology, Emine had possibly made the only decision she could afford to.

A Revolutionary, a Woman, a Wife and a Mother under the Auspices of a New Organization

In Ankara, under the strategic planning based on the primacy of capitalist relations of production, Halkın Birliği had accelerated its organization among the bureaucracy and the unions. The newly-wed couple too started working for the Ministry of Rural Affairs, with the intention of organizing. Having come to Ankara, where her husband had stronger relations with the organization, had changed the balance of power between husband and wife. Whereas in Tunceli, Emine was a heroic revolutionary, those in Ankara did not know her as such.

> Eşim daha siyasi bir şey yürütüyor. Ben onu kamufle eden durumuna düşmeye başlıyorum. Ben çalışmaya devam ediyorum. İşte ev tutarken şurda burda daha legal bir görüntü. Daha kabullenilebilir bir görüntü de çıkıyor ortaya. Ve gene sonuçta ben de kadroluyum. Ben de görevler alıyorum. Ama O daha aktif bir durumda, ben daha pasif bir konumda devam etmeye başladım. Mesela o işyerinde işyeriyle ilgili dernek çalışmaları başladı. Biz kadınları örgütlemeye başladık. (14)

Emine felt the need to emphasize that the legal organizing she did within the Ministry of Rural Affairs for democratic and economic demands was just as important, and adds that the only aim was not camouflage. Though she was now working on substantial issues such as child care in the workplace, the kind of work she did remained secondary in the eyes of the organization, that of her husband, and possibly even her own. By this time, Emine was pregnant, and the couple had started arguing frequently. Emine told me of an episode when she told her husband that she would leave if they kept on arguing. Her husband, however, thought life for her without him would be almost

impossible, now that she had left her own place and her own ties. Stripped of her own networks, she was now deemed, at least by her husband, as a dependent.

> O da nasıl yaparsın bunu gibi bir şey söyledi. Sen burada nasıl var olacaksın? Babanın evine mi döneceksin? Niye döneyim, kadrolu bir elemanım burada. Yoldaşlarım var burada. Sonuçta benim çalışma alanım var, dönmeyeceğim. Örgüt de nasıl olsa ayarlayacak bir yer. Anlaşamıyoruz ayrılırız. Ben yine devam ederim işime. (15)

These were also the times when the organization had started the "critique / self-critique" mechanism, a mechanism of questioning which ranged from revolutionaries' personal lives to their activities within the movement. A common practice among the leftist organizations of the 70s, it was believed that after the revolution, the mechanism would be applied to the whole society. Emine's marriage, which had started with a clandestine and 'immoral' sexual encounter, didn't escape the questioning. The norms and the morals of the organization were set, just like the society at large. Though Emine's narrative of the meetings of critique / self-critique' pointed to the organization's rhetoric regarding the protection of their female comrades, her remarks also show that her primary sentiment was shame.

> Ben profesyonel devrimci olacağım diye çıkıp geliyorum. Orada bir parti evinde kalıyoruz ve o sırada böyle bir şey yaşanıyor ve bundan kimsenin haberi olmuyor. Böyle bir şeyin doğru olmadığı şeklinde eleştirilere maruz kaldık. Özellikle eşim çok ciddi saldırya uğradı bu konuda. Toplantılardan birine de ben çağırıldım. Sen ne diyorsun bu konuda dendiğinde, bu kadar da tartışılmamalı, bana yanlış geliyor dediğimi hatırlıyorum sadece. Ve çok kötü hissettiğimi de hatırlıyorum o kadar insanın önünde. Hatta eşime de bu beraberlik çok uzun sürmez. Sağlıklı bir ilişki değil bu demişler. Belki eşimin de bu kısmını sorgulaması gerekiyor. Beraberliğin bitmemesi konusunda bayağı inatçı çıktı çünkü. Onlar içerisinde biz farklıyız. Biz çok seviyoruz birbirimizi. Ölümüne kadar sürecek bu aşk gibi yaklaşımları vardı çünkü. Ve bu beni boğuyordu. Bu kadar baskıdan dolayı böyle bir ilişkiye tutunma şeyi olabilir tabi. Evet böyle şeyler de yaşandı o sırada. Bayağı ciddi yüklendiler ona. Bir süre izlemeye aldılar. Evindeki yaşamı nasıl? Eşiyle ilişkisi nasıl? Ev yaşamını paylaşıyor mu? (16)

In a country where notions and experiences regarding sexuality are frequently interwoven with feelings of shame, the organization justified itself by arguing that it was only promoting ideals of 'personhood' among its members.

It is interesting that the husband was the one under critique . Though traditionally it is usually the women who bear the accusations regarding "unchaste" relations, the organizational mechanism of surveillance had focused its allegations mostly against the man, with what is reminiscent of feminist rhetoric of "educating the men to be more helpful, better husbands". On the other hand, the fact that he is accused also rests in the fact that he was deemed to be the 'active' one in the relationship, the one to have made the decision. Emine, meanwhile, was left with her shame.

The mechanism of critique/ self-critique is one of the first practices mentioned during discussions of the restrictive ideology of the 70s' leftist organizations. Emine's narrative also pointed to one of the many complex ways in which private lives could be shaped in the face of such intervention; Emine's husband was even more determined to keep the relationship going. Emine, on the other hand, says she was overwhelmed by his ambition, which she today believes was effected by the critique of the organization.

However, the intrusions into the member's privacy and the systems of surveillance endorsed by the organization which seemed utterly invasive to my own notions of privacy , was explained in a different way by Emine. In our second interview, while answering my questions about these times, , Emine explained that life was communal, and that having other people from the organization in the household was common practice. The activists' private lives were intertwined with their life-encompassing work, which was being a revolutionary:

> Zaten herşeyini vermiş durumdasın. Onun için çok da öyle, hani niye benim evime geliyorsun, sen kim oluyorsun, niye benimle yaşıyorsun, gibi birşey yok. Evliliği denetlemek gibi algılamamak lazım. Yani o kişinin hayattaki duruşu izleniyor diyelim. işte evinde eşine şunu getir bunu götür diye bakıyorsa, devrimciliğe yakışmaz diye de uyarılabiliyor. Yani biz yaşamlarımızda düşündüğümüzü ne kadar yaşıyoruzu gözleyip o insanın zayıf eksik, geri ve ileri yanlarını gözlüyor. (17)

While a strong and intricate web of relations between the organization and her home had taken hold of their lives, Emine was pregnant, working in the ministry as a full time state official, lobbying for democratic and economic rights, and organizing women in Ufuktepe. In Ufuktepe, Emine was responsible for organizing the women's group, i.e., the women's branch of the organization.

> Amaç bu devrimci mücadele içerisinde örgütlenme içerisinde halktan insanların devrimcileri tanıması bilmesiydi. İşte evinde birini barındırıyorsa başına gelecekleri bilmesi. Ona göre davranması.. Bir yandan da bölge kazanma çalışması. (18)

One is immediately reminded of the critiques of the post-80s feminist movement regarding women as constituting merely a back up force in the left movement. Then again, the rest of Emine's story brings in a further twist, presenting us with a situation where women wished to be involved more deeply, but were allowed no space to do so, at least within the structures of the organization:

> Fakat kadınlarımız çok canavar çıktılar. Siyasi olarak da bilinçleniyorlar hızla. Bir yandan da yani biz sadece ekmek yapıp onların çamaşırlarını yıkayıp evimize almakla mı yetineceğiz. Biz de artık görev almak istiyoruz demeye başladılar. Diyelim ki o bölgeyi kapsayan bir eylem yapılacak. İşte gece afişlemeye çıkılabiliyor. Bildiri dağıtılıyor. Çeşitli görüşmeler yapılıyor.. Herkes kendi alanında haldır haldır çalışıyor. Kadın grubumuz hızlı çıktı ve görev almak istiyorlar. Fakat parti çalışma sisteminde bunun ötesinde bir yer yok gibi. Tıkanıp kalıyoruz orada. Biz de görev vermek yetkisine sahip değiliz. O insanlar sanki sadece bize yardımcı olacak cephe gerisi kadrosu gibi görülüyor. Bizim birimimizde ciddi bir yazı hazırladık biz o dönemde. Yani bu

> çalışma sisteminde bir aksaklık bir bozukluk var. Bu yetersiz bir şey. Bizim bu konuda belki daha farklı yetkilere sahip olmamız gerekiyor. kendi yaptığımız çalışmanın sonuçları bizi zorlamaya başladı. Zorlayınca, biz bunun tartışmalarını yapmaya başladık ve fesh edildik.(19)

What had started as effective organizing, which was aimed at organizing people towards a desire to participate in the left, had overstepped boundaries of power relations within the organization. While women in Ufuktepe wanted to be involved further, and accentuate their commitment, the organizers, Emine and a few women friends of the women's branch spoke for them. However, the organizational framework was limited, ideologically closed, and would not accept such intrusions into its power structure.

Later however, I asked her what would have happened had it been a group of men who wanted to get more active within the organization. Linking her experiences in Ufuktepe with the feminist movement of the post-1980 period, Emine gave an answer which pointed to some continuities and made connections between the life worlds of the organizations and that of the social world of Turkey during the 70s, which the feminist movement failed to make during the 80s. Having lived through the restrictive relations emanating from norms of chastity between the organization and society at large, having experienced the secondary role of being someone's wife in her revolutionary career, and having been ousted for having pushed the limits of the organization, Emine was now telling me that the organizational structures were reproducing the gender roles in the society, also in continuity with state practices. In practice, women's location within the organization was neither more nor less than what they would face in society at large and of course, in the eyes of the state. The continuities in question would precisely be the driving power of later discussions on feminism among women who had experienced

gender discrimination within the left (but who somehow saw the issue in terms of traditional-modern, feudal-revolutionary dichotomies, wishing to proclaim a strict rupture between the left and the rest, in spite of their ideological, moral continuities).

> -Peki erkekler böyle bir şey deseydi acaba örgütün böyle bir şeye açık kapıları olabilir miydi?
> - Zaten erkeklerle ilgili öyle bir problem yok. O ilk zamanlarda tamam kadın erkek eşit. Aynı görevlerde olabilirsin, bilmem ne yapabilirsin gibi bir yaklaşım, bir ideoloji olsa bile, hayat içerisinde, o toplum içerisinde aldığımız değerler bir şekilde gene de kadınla ilgili şeyin ihmal edildiğini görüyorsun. Zaten '80li yıllardan sonra feminist hareketin bu kadar böyle birdenbire şey olması bütün o yapılanma içerisinde geçirdiğimiz bir süreci ortaya çıkardığı içindi. Tabii ki üst düzey kadınlar da vardı. Parti üyesi de olabiliyorsun. Asker de oluyorsun,. Ama yine de, toplumda kadınla ilgili bir çalışma yaptığın ya da oraya baktığın zaman kadın gene işte evinin kadını; işte cephe gerisi, destekçi, koruyan, kollayan. Yasalarımızda da öyle.. Benim eşim tutuklandığı zaman ben önce sanık olarak aranıyordum. Ama sonra eşi oldugum icin tanık durumuna düştüm. (20)

Emine gave birth during her days in Ufuktepe. Ironically, it was the women in Ufuktepe, who had not been deemed adequate to be members of the organization that took care of her during her pregnancy, and took her to the hospital on the day of her labor. Her husband had not quite caught on to the urgency of Emine's appeals to be taken to the hospital.

After she gave birth, another era started in her life, when she would be less and less involved in organizational work, and would be traveling back and forth between Tunceli where her family was eager to see the new 'boy' in the family, and Niğde, where husband and wife had been transferred by the Ministry. Emine kept her job at the ministry, took care of the baby, and kept her efforts at organizing at the same time.

One of the most persistent critiques of the left by the post-1980 feminist movement concerned the fact that the organizations were intruding too much in people's

lives, in a way appropriating their 'private' spaces. The unfavorable views organizations had of motherhood became a significant point of critique, especially when the consciousness raising groups of the early women's movement revealed stories of forced abortions within the organization. Emine's story, however, reveals a more complex story in which we are confronted with Emine's reluctance and her husband's eagerness for a baby.

> O koşullarda, hele illegal yaşayan insanlar için çocuk pek önerilmiyordu. Ama benim eşim de çok inatçı bir adamdır. Kafasına koyduğunu yapan biriydi. Bir şekilde yaptık yani. Ve ben şimdi terapide de aynı şeyi yaşıyorum. Oğlumun da tedavi gördüğünü söyledim size. Esimle 3- 4 sene ayrı kaldıktan sonra hasta olarak döndü ve benim kötü bir dönemim. İkimiz o dönemde ciddi çatışma yaşadık. O kötü davrandı. Ben kötü davrandım. Terapistim bir rüyadan yola çıkıp bana senin için istenmeyen bir bebek miydi bu dedi. Hiç öyle düşünmediğim halde, çok tuhaf etkilendim. Ama şunu biliyorum. Evlilik öncesi Tunceli'de çevremde benle yaşıt ve benden küçük kız çocuklarının gözünde ben bir idoldüm belki de. 25- 30undan önce kimse evlenmemeli derdim. Ve hatta o yüzden erken evlendirilmeye kalkan kızlar aileleriyle kavga etmişler. . Sonra benim evlendiğimi duyunca Emine abla evleniyorsa biz de evlenelim diyenler çıktı.
> Gene o yapılanma içerisinde, illegal bir yaşamda her an her şeyi yaşayabilirsin. Yani bir gün tutuklanabileceğimizi, ölebileceğimizi, her şeyi yaşayabileceğimizi biliyorsun. Ve böyle bir durumda çocuk yapılmaması gerekir. Ama öyle bir döneme geldi ki, işte çocuk yapalım diye istedi eşim. Olmaz molmaz desen de sonuçta sen de 19 yaşındasın. Ne kadar bilebilirsin? Bir yerde yenik düşebiliyorsun. Ya da inanabiliyorsun. Sen de isteyebiliyorsun. (21)

And perhaps as a cumulative effect of all these ambivalences about motherhood, Emine told me that she could never quite call her son, "son":

> -Yani bunun ne kadar etkisi var artık bilmiyorum tabi. Yani bu saatten sonra olan olmuş gibi de bir durum. Benim için gerçekten istenmeyen bir bebek mi. ben onu nasıl bir yerlere koydum kafamda. Duygularımda. Ama şeyi biliyorum. Oğlum ve yavrum kelimesini kullanamadığımı biliyorum. Bu biraz belki genç oluşum, utangaçlık. Benim bebeğime hitap tarzım şeydi. Annem anneciğim, bebeğim o kadar. Oğlum diyemedim. Oğlum demek ne kadar ayıp geliyordu bana. sen daha küçücüksün yani nasıl oğlum dersin gibi bir şeydi benim için.(22)

The times in Niğde were difficult for Emine. Day care for children was only available for children above the age of four, and she had to organize her days meticulously to be able to work, to organize, and take care of her child at the same time. She would leave her baby with friends during the day, and arrange her hours of maternity leave and leave work early. A year later, the family moved to Kayseri, so she had to travel an hour and a half to work in Niğde. Until the age of three, Pir would be traveling frequently between Tunceli and Niğde, between his parents and his grandparents. After a three month period of staying in Tunceli, Emine remembers that he would refuse to go to his mother: "bakma sen! diye itiyordu yüzümü." After a while, Emine couldn't even go to the bathroom without the baby crying in panic. Her political involvement and her work had surpassed the time she wanted to give her baby. Perhaps for the first time in her narrative, strong feelings of guilt came to the fore.

The Coup: Living Alone; Coming of Age Again

In February 1980, the couple moved to İstanbul, in May they moved into their own place. In September 1981, Emine's husband was detained. In İstanbul, the organization was in deep trouble, arrests occurred like a chain reaction. As soon as the organization set up new teams, the police was at their door. And the arrests kept moving up the ladders of the organizational hierarchy.

Emine and her husband had to be very careful. Whenever one went to an appointment, they would arrange the times carefully so that if one were to be late, the other would immediately leave the house, taking the child. On the day of his arrest,

Emine says her husband was supposed to come back early the next morning. But at midnight, the police was at her door.

Her husband remained in interrogation for eight months. He was first taken to Elazığ, then sent to Kayseri. Emine couldn't go to look for her husband, because she soon found out that there was an arrest warrant for her, for keeping some documents and helping her husband. She was constantly in fear that she would hear news of his death, especially because it was important to claim the detainees, otherwise they tended to disappear more easily. Emine tried to send her father and her husband's relatives on a search for him. They wouldn't let her go, but always returned without news of his whereabouts. Her husband's family, and especially his brother who had also been involved in the left, were too afraid to go searching for him. Finally, Emine found him in Ankara Emniyet, dashing into the police station one day, practically insisting that she was there to see her husband.

Her relationship with the organization had been reduced to work they did protesting the conditions in prison.. "sadece destek olmak, korumak, daha az zararla yırtmak". The revolutionary zeal had turned into a strong support system, the members of which were mostly women whose husbands were arrested. On the one hand, for the first time in her life, she was completely alone, on the other, relations with her comrades from the organization had taken a new turn in which relations were looser, but perhaps more empathetic. "Birden bire dağılınca daha önce seni koruyan, kollayan, senin ihtiyaçlarını gideren örgütün dışında kalınca kendi başına bir hayat kurmak zorunda kalıyorsun. Sonra da bir çok insanla zaten birbirimize yardımcı olmak, iş bulmak için biz birbirmize destek olduk."

Through her connections with other prisoners' families, Emine became involved in the Human Rights Association, and initially joined the women's commission. She remembers that the debates which were started by the work of the commission soon evolved into larger discussions, and before long came the first women's assembly, where many women from different backgrounds expressed themselves, were questioning their relations with the left and its ideology. Many women who had participated in the left during the 70s were living through similar experiences during that time, trying to figure out their stance on their past and their future. Their work brought about a new era of political activism, which, this time around, was not accepted by most men with whom they had shared the same ideology regarding class inequalities.

> -Yani biraz kadınla ilgili şeylerden bahsetsen, erkeklerimiz hemen feminist misin? Diye saldırırlardı. kafan karışık ama bir şekilde kadın olmak zaten doğal olarak taraf olmanı getiriyor. Ama işte ben feministim demiyorsun henüz kendine. Erkeklerle az boğuşmadık bu dönemde Ve sonuçta kadın kurultayında da mesela erkekler alınmasın tartışması çok yapıldı. Bu da çok büyük tepki gördü. Aslında çok hızlı gelişmişti o zaman kadın hareketi. sol örgütler zaten darbeyi çok ağır yemişti. İllegal bir şeyler yapıyorlardı. Legal platformda çok fazla bir şey olmuyor. Yapamıyorlar. Ama kadınlar böyle böyle bangır bangır bir sürü şeyle ilgili eylemler yapıyorlardı. (23)

The rules of the organization, which had been determining factors in Emine's private life had now been replaced by the rules of the emergency state. After she told me about the women's movement, I asked her about her relationship with her husband during the eight years he was in prison. "Postponement" was a word that came up then, regarding their relationship, her womanly desires, and so in a way, life in general:

> -Mektuplarla. Ondan sonra arada görüşlerde elele tutuşarak. Bir aşkı yaşatmaya çalışıyorsun ya da bir beraberliği. Onun ötesinde tabi ki bir hayatı erteliyorsun. Cinsel hayatını askıya alıyorsun. Duygusal hayatını askıya alıyorsun. Bir çok şeyden kendini soyutluyorsun kalkanlar oluşturuyorsun kendine. evlisin, çocuğun var. Eşin cezaevinde. İlgi

> gösteren olduğu zaman ya da seninle ilgilenen olduğu zaman onu hemen koyuyorsun. Yaklaşamıyorlar sana. Yani bir nevi kadınlık durumunu iptal etmek gibi bir durum. Bir çoğunun travma olduğunu düşünüyorum tabi. Çok da sağlıklı bir şey değil. (24)

Emine associates the restrictions she put on herself and the postponement of her desires with her own will power, which, of course she realizes had to do with people's expectations from a mother, a married woman, and more importantly perhaps, of a woman whose husband was 'inside'.

Emine's narrative about this time of postponement ended quite abruptly. When I asked her about what happened then, she said, simply, "Sonra ne oldu?…. Sonra iş hayatı, koşuşturmacalar, gidip gelmeler, çocuk, sosyal faaliyetler derken 8 yıl bitti. Evimizi kurduk, bekledik, karşıladık". (25)

Emine's narrative about her husband's arrival eight years later was reminiscent of Perihan's in more than one way. Perihan had told me in detail how those ten years had passed, though Emine did not; however, the arrival of this person whose mother, lover, comrade and friend these women felt they had to become, was certainly a common point:

> -Ondan sonra birden bire bir yabancıyla birlikte olduğumu farkettim . Aynı evde yaşamışsın. Çocuğun var. Aynı idealler için kavga etmişsin. Hem yoldaşsın, hem eşsin, hem iş arkadaşısın. Neredeyse birlikte büyümüşsün gibi. Ama sonuçta bir şeyler değişmiş demek ki- bir yabancı. Bu arada birlikte paylaşmayı, birlikte bir hayatı yaşamayı unutuyorsun. Artı hayatın her şeyini sen omuzladığın için kararı veren, her şeyi yapan, her şeyi örgütleyen durumuna da geliyorsun. Ondan sonra bir şekilde yeniden onu başka türlü yaşamak zor geliyor. 8 sene geçti aradan. O kadar büyük bir zaman girdi ki, bardağı tutuşumuz farklılaşmış artık. Bu arada hayat devam ediyor çünkü sen de büyüyorsun bir yandan. yalnızlığı öğreniyorsun bir kere. Tek başına yaşamayı öğreniyorsun. En çok da bu sanırım zorluyor insanı. Yani sen artık tek başına bir birey olarak yaşamayı öğreniyorsun. Ve artık ikli bir yaşam için- onu – hep askıya aldığın bir şeyi yapamıyorsun. Gelecek bana sarılacak, bana sarılınca ben ne diyeceğim. Nasıl yapacağım ben? Nasıl yapacağım ben? (26)

Caught between her feelings of guilt and her sense of distance from her husband, trying to balance her new sense of self –alone, changed- with her past, Emine lived with her husband for eleven months. The times were difficult for her, beginning with the end of 1989. She'd recently been laid off from her work, and with half of the compensation money she received, she paid her first rent and collected what furniture she could from friends. She again found a job, and continued her activities with the Human Rights Association.

The Scars of the Next Generation and the Making a New Start

During this time, Emine began to allow herself boyfriends. Though she did not talk about the changes in her views of morality, much changed over the period when her husband was in prison. Her first boyfriend, who was from the same circle, was a very easy going man himself, but soon angered her with his insensitive approach to women: he could be with anyone, at any time. Although Emine herself was not interested in a monogamous long-term relationship, she found him disrespectful. One day, she invited him in, discussed what was important to her, and told him that the relationship would not continue, "Hemen geçiyorsun yatak odasına. Ben yapacağım seni dedim tamam mı. Ondan sonra burada kalmayacaksın, defolup gideceksin. Sana iyi günler. Dedim ve gönderdim adamı. Böyle bir ilk hikayem oldu". Emine was perhaps asserting her own views on how life should be for the first time since she had known herself as a sexual being .And then, for a while, she began living what she had refrained from for so many years.

Her only commitment was now to her son, whose absences from school had become a serious problem. Her son, who had always wanted to become a musician, failed

the conservatory exams twice, due to a system of acceptance which required the pulling of strings. He was disappointed, and by the time he was in middle school, he was not interested in his education anymore. His interest in heavy metal music grew with each year, and with two friends from a family from Emine's former organization, heavy metal slowly brought him into a world Emine couldn't follow anymore. At thirteen, the three kids ran away from home, beginning a new phase of hide and seek for Emine.

His friends were cousins, and the father of one of them had been killed under interrogation. The other man was "problematic and aggressive", he had no tolerance, especially "as a revolutionary" for the heavy metal subculture. The boys were afraid of him. He was also angry at Emine, who was not willing to send the other boys home to their parents, especially after hearing the father's violent threats on the phone

She kept the children at her place for a few days, and told them it was difficult to be independent at their age, and anyway, how would they earn a living? The boys told her they would record and sell tapes. Emine and her ex-husband came up with a brilliant plan, with the help of a psychologist. They gave the boys Emine's ex-husband's flat for a week, told them where the tape recorder was, and left. It took the boys two days to return to their respective homes.

Thinking back, Emine thinks that the boys had already given them warnings about what was wrong earlier, even through the name of the music group they had started. The boys, all three of them children of leftist activists during the 70s, were carrying the scars of a past of violence and terror.

> Üçü bir de grup kurmuşlardı. Benim oğlum grubun adını ısırgan koymayı düşünüyordu. Sonra torture koydular. Ben ingilizce bilmiyorum. Torture'ın ne anlama geldiğini de hiç sormuyorum. Oğlum resimler çiziyor. İşte kendi grubunun adını yazıyor. Duvara yazıyor. Bir gün bir

> arkadaşım dedi ki ama neden torture? Yani işkence demek. İnanılmaz mesajlar veriyor çocuklar tamam mı. Birinin babası işkencede öldürülmüş. İkisinin babası da uzun işkence görmüş insanlar. İşte cezaevi şu bu. İşkenceler. Bunlar evde anlatılıyor. Hikayeler dinleniyor. Televizyonlarda her gün bütün haberler gazetede yazıyor. Bizim ilgi alanımız orada. Biz bunları konuşuyoruz yanlarında. Çocuklar şeyi anlatıyorlar; evde sürekli, doğduğumuz andan itibaren, kendimizi bildiğimiz andan itibaren sürekli işkence konuşuldu. Cezaevleri ve işkence konuşuldu. Nefret ediyoruz, devrimcilikten de bu tür sohbetlerden de, gibi bir şey çıktı ortaya. (27)

Emine soon decided to cut all connections with these families. The problem was not solved, though. The kids kept on meeting in secret, and by the time his son was fourteen, Emine found some drugs in the house. Emine said she soon became like a detective in the house, trying to figure out what he was doing. She kept urging him to bring his friends home, just so she could at least get to know who they were, which soon brought pressure from the neighbors, about girls and boys with long hair and piercing frequenting the house, repeating the eighth grade for the third time, he was further alienated, his classmates being so much younger than him.

By this time, Emine had suspended all her political activities, she didn't even work for the foundation anymore. "böyle sağa sola koştururken dizimin dibinde çocuğumu kaybetmek üzereyim. Onu farkettim. Memleket işlerinin canı cehenneme. Politikanın da canı cehenneme. burada bir hayat var. ondan sorumluyum, deyip daha çok onunla olmaya ve ona vakit ayırmaya çalıştım." (28)

Although they frequently fought about his absences, mother and son were still close, and talked about many things. When one day he confessed that he used marijuana, she was even more worried, for she believed that it was a gateway to other drugs. When one of his friends died of a heroin overdose, tired of the fear she felt about what would happen to her son, she took him aside and told him of her plan:

> Güzel bir işim var. Evimiz kira da olsa, kurulu bir düzenimiz var. Anlattım. Her şeyi bir kenara atabilirim dedim. Gel çıkalım İstanbul'dan.. Kuşadası'nda bir arkadaşımızın oteli var. Birlikte gidelim. O arkadaşımızdan bir oda isteyelim. Gerekirse bulaşıkçılık yaparak başlayalım. Ama bu şu demek artık. Şunu bil ki yeni bir hata, yeni bir şey kurmak üzere gidiyoruz. Sıfırdan başlayacağız bunu unutma. Buradaki her şeyi bırakıyoruz. Sıfırdan bir hayat kuracağız. Ben bunu yapacağım. Sen de bunu istiyorsan gidelim. Evet beni kurtarın dedi. Gidelim buralardan. Hayır diyemiyorum. Girdim içine ve çıkamıyorum. (29)

Emine soon went to tell her ex-husband, who was at the time very busy with work on a new publishing company that she and her son were leaving. He was concerned and sorry, and soon arranged some capital with which Emine, her son and a friend, would be able to open a small motel down south. They soon started looking for available places, and found one in the Güzelçamlı village in Kuşadası.

Soon enough the three of them were working very hard on the pansiyon, and though at first Pir felt claustrophobic in this new place, he kept his promise and stayed. During their first season, his father came to stay with them for a few days, and told his son of his plans for a cultural center in which he didn't refuse his son's wish to have a music studio. This way, other people would be able to make music there, and Pir would be responsible for running it. He returned to İstanbul after a season, leaving Emine and Ayşen in Kuşadası to run the motel for another few years.

The rest of Emine's narrative was very upbeat, for things flew by for her and her son. The next time she came to İstanbul, her son had learned to play the drums, and was actively involved in his father's business. He soon got his high school diploma by studying at home. During this time, Emine fell deeply in love with a man, the only man whose name was ever mentioned during our interview. After another two and a half years in Kuşadası, she returned to İstanbul, and started running a tavern in Beyoğlu, in addition

to her active involvement in the Foundation for Human Rights. She has been doing both up to this day.

At the end of our interview, I kept remembering a comment she'd made while telling me about a very difficult time in her life: "bütün yaşadığım şeylerle cok fazla kendim başa çıkmaya çalışmışım. Şimdi anlatırken de bunu görüyorum ve içeri atmışım bunları hep." It was true, she'd walked this road by herself, always with an awareness of the intricate, overwhelming powers and influences that penetrated her life.

CHAPTER 3

FIGEN'S STORY:

FROM WITHIN THE CONFINES OF ILLEGALITY TO THE POWERFUL DETERMINATION OF A MARATHON RUNNER

> Benim babaannem üç çocukla dul kalmış 26 yaşında. Kocası ölmüş ve yoksul bir köylü kadını olarak iki erkek çocuğunu, bir kız çocuğunu büyütmüş. Onun bunun kapısında azaplık dedikleri o dönemde yaparak. Babaannemin deyimiyle el içine çıkaracak hale getirmiş çocukları. Ben dünyaya geldiğimde babam annesinin adını koymuş bana. ve babaannem itiraz etmiş. Ben babaannemi göremedim. Ben beşikteyken, altı aylıkken ölmüş o. İtiraz etmiş, koyma Hasan benim adımı kızına. diye. Garametli olur demiş. Garametli babannemin dilinde kötü kader demekmiş. Yani kaderi kötü olur. Gün görmez o da benim gibi. Ama buna rağmen babam - hani annesine duyduğu saygıyı kızında yaşatmak istemiş. Çünkü ne emeklerle büyüttüğünün farkındaymış. Hani baba yok başlarında. Tek başına, çalışarak, çırpınarak onları o hale getirmiş. Ve böylece benim ismim Figen olmuş. (1)

That is how Figen started telling me her life story. Though I did not take it as such at the time, rereading her narrative, I could not help but realize the subtle and metaphorical foreshadowing in this first paragraph of hers. Between the lives of Figen's grandmother and her own, there would be some parallels, some themes that would repeat themselves, very covertly perhaps, and with the inevitable and rich adaptations of their different times. "*Garamet*"/ "bad faith" was not a word she uttered again in her narrative, though it is but one representation of her share of Turkish social history. Then again "azaplık" would not be repeated in her narrative, but "sığıntı" would, and in many senses of the word. "Tek başına, çalışarak, çırpınarak" would also have implications for a reader of her narrative, though Figen never put it as such.

Homelessness is a theme which connects Figen's life to her grandmother's. But homelessness in Figen's case is very comprehensive; it is related to the household and the country, the two homes we tend to think of at the first instance when asked where we live. It also pertains to the organizations which were the homes of her generation, but also to a place in the world, where one is free to move, to decide and to say and change things. Figen is a woman who has a lot to say, but only after the age of 36, it seems, could she do that from her own home.

How do we define homes? Do homes have something to do with the freedom to move, with being recognized, to be allowed to speak? Do people who live in less democratic homes / countries feel like they have less of a home or that they are less at home? If we are not comfortable with the norms / rules / laws of the home we live in, do we feel homeless? Do we steadily long for a better, more accommodating home? What if we are, by way of what we are / what we do / think / say, excluded by the laws / rules /norms of our home? Can a home be transient, on the move? Are homeless people rendered powerless because they are homeless? How do they define their spaces of movement? How do they make up a space of their own?

Figen's life story calls for a reading of the home. Born to the only Alevi family in a Sunni village, at the age of fifteen she finds a home, closed and disciplinary as it may be, in an organization with people who long for a better homeland like she does. She soon meets her husband, her partner to be, and leaves her hometown never to live there again. Her new home is one in which she is more of a comrade, a student and a daughter than a wife, and it always needs to be on the move. Her husband is the leader of all homes in her life, organizational and to a lesser extent, domestic. With her husband, they have to live

in other people's homes, because what they want in their homeland pushes them to the margins where they are not allowed to live like their neighbors, relatives, fellow citizens . After a military coup, they are forced to leave that homeland. For seven years, they painfully miss their homeland, and a home. And when they finally come back to their homeland, and make themselves a home of their own for the first time ever, they are imprisoned, in a prison where people are situated within their organizational homes. Leaving that place, now registered and recognized by her homeland, she decides to make herself a home of her own. Today, she lives in her own home, with her daughter. She has no regrets about her unlawful, homeless years, but chooses to go out on the street, now in a way accepted by the law, to keep on working for a better homeland, and a self-sufficient, comfortable home for herself and her daughter.

First Impressions of Discrimination and the Sharpening of Distinctions

Born in 1960, Figen lived with her parents and her three siblings in the village of Erkilet in Tokat until she was three years old. Figen's family was the only Alevi family in Erkilet, a Sunni village. Her mother was working as an agricultural worker, and her father worked as a watchman at the Ministry of Forestry. When she was three, her brothers had already finished primary school, and the family moved to the center of Tokat so that they could continue their education in the city. When they moved to Tokat, they were living in the squatter areas. Her first memories of being an outsider coincided with her years in primary school. In Namık Kemal Elementary, she would get to know a future leader of an ultra nationalist group, disguised in the figure of a schoolmaster. Luckily for her, through

her mother's actions, she would also begin to find out about the possible ways of standing up to him.

> …Tokat'ın bir gecekondusunda oturuyoruz. Ve o gecekondu da Alevilerin oturduğu bir gecekondu. Bilinir öyle olduğu. Ve ben Namık Kemal'e yazdırılıyorum. Namık Kemal ilkokulunun müdürü Süleyman Bumin. Adını hiç unutmuyorum. Daha sonradan ülkücülerin de başıydı o adam. İstemiyor gecekondudan böyle bir şeyin gelip orada okumasını. İlkokul birdeyim. Bir gün koridorda kafama kocaman piposuyla küt diye vurdu. Böyle kabarmıştı kafam. Eve geldiğimde annem kafamdaki şişliği görüyor. Bu ne? Müdür vurdu. Niye vurdu? İşte koridorda koşuyorum diye vurdu. Ben henüz bir şeyin farkında değilim ama annem farkediyor. Yani bu çocuğa gecekondudan gittiğini ve Alevi olduğunu bildiği için vurdu diye. Ertesi gün okula geliyor -ki bizim zamanımızda böyle anneler ellerinden tutup çocukları okula götürüp getirmezler, bir ilk gün kayıda götürmüşlerdi, ondan sonra biz kendimiz gidip geliyorduk. Ertesi gün annem okula geliyor. Müdürün kapısını vuruyor. Giriyor içeriye. Tutuyor kravatından. Çok da dövüşken yiğit emekçi bir kadın. Bak diyor, bana bak müdür; bu çocuğa bir daha elini kaldırırsan, sen kendini ölmüş bil. Ben bu yaştan sonra daha fazla yaşayacak ve gün görecek değilim zaten. Bu çocuk burada okuyacak. Sen bir daha elini kaldır buna vur; seni diyor ben öldürürüm… Hiç kimseye de bırakmam. Gebertirim seni diyor. Oradan başladı bizim onlarla sınıf çelişkimiz aslında. Yani oturduğumuz mahalle, içine doğduğumuz kültür bizi daha küçük yaştan bir şeylere karşısında konumlandırıyor. Veya bir şeyler bize karşı, biz farkında olmadan. (2)

Like her mother, Figen was an outgoing child, she was active at school, "hani gecekondudan giden biri olmakla birlikte" (3), she adds. She was involved in many activities, such as folklore, theater, and music, especially as one of the few girls who played the *bağlama*.

The family's political inclination was towards CHP. Only during the fifties, their affiliation had been transformed towards DP especially because of Menderes's rhetoric regarding independence to minority religions and sects. Both her parents loved Ecevit, but her mother was more inclined towards the leftist revolutionaries during the 70s. The Alevi predominance in the movement was an important factor in the transition of her mother's affiliations, and the pervasiveness of the myths regarding the revolutionary

youth in their home, no doubt had a role in shaping Figen's later commitments to the movement.

> Bir gün okuldan geldim. evde insanlar ağlıyor, annem ağlıyor. O gençlerin asılmasına ağlıyorlarmış. Deniz Gezmişlerin, işte Hüseyin İnan'ın, Yusuf Aslan'ın. Bunlar Aleviler dedi. Bunlar bizim için çalıştılar diye. Devrimci- bunlara dev gençti diyorlar hepsine. bunlar için işte falan örgüt filan örgüt yok. Bizim için çalışıyorlardı. halkı kurtarmak istiyorlardı. Alevi çocuklardı. bunları idam ettiler diye ağlıyorlar. beni de mesela çok etkilemişti bu ve merak etmiştim kim bunlar? (4)

Kızıldere, where already Mahir and his friends were killed, is a village in Tokat, and Figen remembered the mourning which lasted days in her own village. By the time Figen wanted to find out more, all sort of documents about them were in circulation around her; their pictures and their life stories were all over the place. Everyone around her sang folk songs which had been written for them. Soon Figen felt like she had known them for years.

Her entry into the left was smooth. Her mother was very hospitable to the revolutionary students at the teachers' school across from their street. Soon came the educational groups, and landmark books such as *Sosyalizmin Alfabesi (The ABC of Socialism*), *Felsefenin Temel İlkeleri* (*Elementary Principles of Philosophy*), *Türkiye'de Proleterya* (*The Proletariat in Turkey*) ; books, she emphasized, which would teach her the theoretical vocabulary of what was already going on in her life.

Her Alevi identity, which was associated with a history of oppression since Ottoman times- enabled her to comprehend the notion and necessity of protest very easily. The humanistic approach inherent to Alevi philosophy, she emphasized, readily enabled her to digest an ideology which had no place for an omnipotent God.

> Ezilmişlik kültürü, ezilmişliğe karşı başkaldırı, o geçmişe dayanan Aleviliğin bastırılması. Bu ülke topraklarında Aleviliğin yok sayılması. Tabi özde var bu isyankarlık, bu baskıya karşın duruş. Bu içimizde. O yüzden hızla o yörede özellikle Alevi köyleri ve Alevi mahalleleri devrimcilerle buluştu. Zaten özde var olduğu için bir miktar; ona yakın fikirler de gelince, yukarıdan aşağıya, bunlar çabucak benimsendi. Aynı şartlarda Sunni kültüründe yetişip de, materyalizmle yani ateizmle geçmişte beynine işlenmiş dinsel fikirler arasında kalıp tercih yapmakta zorlanan birçok arkadaşımız vardı. Çünkü insanda somutlaştırır Alevi kültürü tanrıyı. Hak beni ademdedir diye bir tabirleri vardır onların. Rahat bir geçiş yaptık sosyalist harekete. (5)

The first year, when the Industrial Vocational Schools (Endüstri Meslek Liseleri) began to accept girls, Figen decided on the electrical department, becoming one of the very few girls in the department. Her family wanted her to join the departments for girls, but Figen insisted. "ben hayır dedim, gitmek istemiyorum kız sanata! Ben erkek sanata gideceğim."(6) A trend that would certainly follow her throughout her years of being a revolutionary, Figen told me how she felt like more like a boy than a girl, with all of its repercussions regarding work, games and marriage:

> Çok küçükten beri gelin olmak, çeyiz yapmak, kız işleri bana yabancıydı. Hep erkeklerin yaptıkları işleri yapmak, onların başardığı şeyleri başarmak. Oturup evde iğne iplik dantel yapmak yerine; işte tornavidayla şeyle uğraşmak. Kızardı annem otur çeyiz yap, yarın evleneceksin. Hayır ben çeyiz yapmayacağım derdim. Öyle de yaşadım gerçekten. Bu devrimci olduktan sonra bildiğim bir bilinç, bilgi değildi. O dönemde mahallede yetişirken bana verilmiş bir şeydi bu. Mahallenin kızlarından bu bakımdan farklı görüyordum kendimi. Yani aykırılık benim özümde vardı ve aykırı yaşamayı seviyordum. (7)

Figen's high school years were years of politicization, and of extreme separations between the factions of the right and the left. By the mid70s, Figen's choice of the left had become a given for her. In direct correlation with her involvement within the left, fights between her friends and the fascists almost every Friday also became a common piece in her life. Lines of separation were very clear, and sounded almost like one of the

defining factors of being someone. Her experiences are not only telling of the major rupture among the youth, but to the institutions of the state to which she would remain 'other' throughout her life.

> Yetmişli yıllar hakikaten Türkiye'de devrimci hareketin hızla büyüdüğü yıllar. Her yerde, mahallelerde, okullarda, işyerlerinde, solcular yani devrimciler ve ülkücüler biçiminde ikiye bölünüldüğü, mahalle mahalle örgütlenildiği, okul okul örgütlenildiği yıllar. Yani bir okulda eğer solcu yada ülkücü değilseniz, yani belli değilse siyasi yapınız; adam sayılmazdınız. Böyle safların çok net bir şekilde bölündüğü yıllardı. Ve her mahallede artık devrimcilerin grup grup komiteler kurduğu, mahallelinin, halkın da katıldığı komiteler kurduğu yıllardı(…) Ve lise yıllarım hep kavga içinde geçti. Tam hareketin yükseldiği ve çatışmaların okullardan mahallelerden başlayıp, önce taşlı sopalı, sonra silahın da kullanıldığı boyuta geldiği yıllardı. Her Cuma çıkışında okul kapısında faşist çocuklarla, ülkücülerle bizimkiler birbirine girerdi. Bu kavgalar içerisinde de kızlardan en çok ben vardım. Ve üç kere atıldım liseden. Daha çok da bizi atıyorlardı. Yani kavgayı başlatan ülkücüler atılmıyordu. Solcular atılıyordu. 70li yıllarda hep bunu yaşadık. Bu haksızlığı sürekli yaptılar. Dayağı da yiyen biz oluyorduk çoğu kere. Atılan da biz oluyorduk. (8)

Figen mentioned no fear about these fights. In her narrative, they sounded merely like facts of life, as the whole of youth in the 70s found itself in similar circumstances. They were manufacturing their own weapons in the workshops at school; steel rods, screwdrivers, and big wooden sticks came in handy on Friday afternoons. Sometimes, older brothers from the teacher's school and professional revolutionaries would come to the school gates to accompany them, in which case there would seldom be fights, for the others believed then that there would be guns involved. Otherwise, Figen's mother was often there, backing up her daughter and her friends. Figen tells these stories of a distant past in a rather nonchalant manner.

> Okul çıkışında kaldırımın iki tarafındayız. Solcular diyelim ki bu kaldırımda yürüyoruz, sağcılar da toplu halde kol kola girmiş karşı kaldırımda yürüyorlar. Birbirimize baka baka yürüyoruz ama. Her an bir laf pat diye kavgayı başlatabiliyordu. (9)

The students' fights at school gates turned into killings in another year. By '77, ultra nationalists were killing leftist students and teachers, she remembered. The leftists,in return, did kill some ultra nationalist leaders in the region.

Ironically, amidst all the violence on the streets, the first time Figen mentioned fear regarding her revolutionary years was about her involvement with a boy three years older than her, who she later found out was an ultra-nationalist.

> …arkadaşlığımız, samimiyetimiz ilerlerken, o dönemde benimle birlikte okuyan, bizim mahalleden giden bizim devrimci çocuklar bir gün beni kenara çektiler. Ne yapıyorsun sen ya? Bu çocuk ülkücü, faşist. Sen onunla nasıl gezersin? Ben öyle olduğunu bilmiyordum. O da *Cumhuriyet* okuyor dedim. Hayır o numaradan okuyor dediler. Allah nasıl bir korku! Bu korkuyu gerçekten hissettim içimde yani. Yani nasıl böyle biriyle ben şey yaptım? Ya ben ona kapılırsam? Ya aşık olursam? O zamanlar bir ülkücüye aşık olmak ne demek!. Ama çok bilgili bir insan. Yakışıklı da biri. Sen solcu birisin. Nasıl bir ülkücüyle birlikte pastaneye, sinemaya gidebilirsin. Mümkün değil o. (10)

Figen refused to see him again, and warned him never to come by her neighborhood, "my friends would have beaten him" she added. By this time, Figen was one of the members of an Emeğin Birliği educational group, an extension of THKO in the region. They read together, asked questions to the older brothers, and tried to organize other students in school, hungry to learn more. Figen recalled that it was mostly the stories of Deniz and Mahir that spurred their curiosity and led them to read more. They were trying to figure out what exactly they had been trying to do, and why they had been killed. They were now finding out about the basic premises of revolution. Though they

did not quite understand the heavily theoretical writings, they would keep on attending the educational groups.

Contrary to many other stories, Figen's transition from being a sympathizer to being a member of the organization was smooth and inconspicuous. First, she belonged to the 3-4 person educational group at school, then they formed a school committee, and presently she found herself attending meetings with older revolutionaries in the neighborhood.

This was also the time when she would be handed illegal publications of the organization. This was a new era in her life. Now, revolution was becoming the primary aim; turning secrecy into a lifestyle and pushing her life to the outskirts of society in the following years. Regardless, the pride and excitement of being able to read "clandestine" material which others could not, coupled with her growing responsibilities, made this a very special time for her: "Bu sana güvenildiğini gösteriyor. Seni onlardan farklı gördüklerini gösteriyor. Sana ayrı bir değer verdiklerini gösteriyor. Sonra başlıyorsun, ne denirse onu daha iyi yapmaya ve o güveni daha pekiştirmeye; o güveni sarsmamaya."(11)

Having lived the post-1980 years of illegality, Figen finds their activities very youthful and inexperienced in hindsight. But no one seemed to know any better: "Biz de kendi kendimize illegalitecilik oynamışız aslında o dönemde." (12) Today, speaking of illegal publications is especially absurd for Figen, who strongly asserts that ideas should be handled legally, out in the open for everyone to share. Besides, illegality as such provided them with no more safety from the law than working openly. However, the organizational structures did not see the it the same way, partly because illegality was an important part of the myths which surrounded the ideology. In later years, when Figen

emphasized the need for legal publications, she was accused of 'legalism', one of the harshest accusations her organization could make.

Dilemmas of Belonging: On the Limits of Membership and Personal Decisions

Participation in the structures and practices of illegality would also mean having to forfeit many of her personal decisions and freedom. Mixed with the joy of having been given more responsibilities, Figen lived her first strong anxieties regarding the framework of illegality when she was sent to another village to organize. Being a member of the organization and living the illegal life required an immense amount of discipline. The dilemma was a great one, and its resolution would mean a lifelong decision.

> Çalışmalar yürütüyoruz. Bütün bunların yanında toyluk var gençlik var. Sorumluluklar üstlenmişsin ama arka plan dolu değil. Yani bilinç henüz çok yeni. Biçimsellik daha ön planda. Bir de ele avuca sığmayan bir tipim. Ve disiplinsizlikle de eleştirilmeye başlanıyorum. Ben orada sıkılıyorum mesela. Haber vermeden üstlere çekip, geri geliyorum eve. Anlamıyorlar. Diyorlar ki evet, bu yetenekli birisi. İyi bir militan olabilir. Ama küçük burjuva! Zoruma gidiyor, ne demek onu da tam bilmiyorum ama küçük burjuvalıkla da suçlanıyorum. Yavaş yavaş şöyle bir korku gelişti. Artık birilerine mi bağımlıyım? Birilerinden onay almadan hiç bir şey yapamayacağım. O zamana kadar hep kendi başıma buyruk yaşamışım. Anne babayı da çok fazla takmamışım. İlk defa birileri çıkıyor geliyor ve onların bilgisi dışında bir şeyler yapmanı istemiyorlar. Bana bir güven de duyuyorlar. Onların güvenini de sarsmamam lazım. Bu nasıl bir şey diye ilk şeyi yaşamıştım o dönem; korkuyu. İllegalite denen o yapıdan. (13)

Either she would choose the organization, work for the revolution and be part of the structure with all its encompassing rules and restrictions, or she would leave to be on her own. Being alone meant that she would have to take up the only apparent alternative in which she would have to start knitting, just like the other girls.

Soon enough, Figen lived an affair which made obvious the dilemma at hand. When she and her sister went to Istanbul to visit her sister's fiancé, Figen met someone. There were warm feelings involved, though neither said anything during that vacation. When Figen went back to Tokat, she received a letter from him, "a long beautiful letter" she recalled. In the letter, he talked about classes, about his involvement with Dev Yol, and said he wanted to keep the friendship. Figen wrote back, leading the way to a long distance relationship. They were soon in love. Before long, however, problems arose. Initially, very off putting for Figen was the fact that he sent his friends to Tokat, to 'organize' Figen into Dev Yol: Needless to say Figen was very angry, and they had tiresome discussions in their letters for a long time.

By the time he understood where Figen stood and they settled the dispute between them, however, there were the accusations and threats from her own organization which had found out about her relationship with someone outside of Emeğin Birliği. At 17 years of age, she also started finding out about the rules of love within the organization:

> Ondan sonra bu duyuldu. Benimle oturup konuştular. İşte devrime duyulan aşkın yanında insanın insana duyduğu aşkın önemi yok. Bir kere bu bilinç verildi. Biz dünyayı istiyoruz. Biz devrim istiyoruz. Yani aşka harcayacak zamanımız yok. Evlenme çağına gelince örgütten herhangi bir yoldaşla evlenebilirsin. Ama örgütün dışında başka siyasetten biriyle evlenmek doğru değil, mümkün değil, söz konusu değil, olamaz. Bir aşk uğruna –çok küçümsenen birşeydi o zaman aşk- seni kaybetmek de istemiyor örgüt. Dolayısıyla o arkadaşlığını bitireceksin. Ve benden söz isteniyor. Eğer onunla şey yapacaksan, örgütle ilişkin biter. Bunu da göze alamıyorsun o zamanlar. Şimdi olsa, ya biterse biter derdim mesela. Ama o zaman bunu diyemiyorsun. Asla diyemezsin.(14)

Figen lived through one of the most difficult dilemmas in her life at the time. On the one hand, she "had come to belong to a community, an organization, a structure", and

she was excited about the confidence people had in her, she was their 'bacı'. On the other, she loved this boy. Once again, she was faced with the same question, within almost the same parameters. The organization and involvement in the revolutionary movement required discipline and letting go of her individual rights over her private life and feelings. Figen's decision was for the organization, which provided her not only with a meaningful life, but also a place in the society, an identity and a lifestyle which was much better than the other alternative, sitting at home and sewing.

> -Ama istiyorum da o yapıda olmak. Yeni yeni insanlarla tartışıyorsun. Onun verdiği heyecan var. O toplantılar, gece nöbetleri, mahalle çalışmaları, gittiğin yerlerde halktan insanlar farklı davranmaya başlıyor. Yaşlı yaşlı insanlar sana saygı gösteriyor. 70li yıllarda böyle. Devrimciler geldi falan. Yemek çıkarıyor, yemeğini paylaşıyor seninle. Çayını paylaşıyor, sofrasını açıyor. Evini yatağını açıyor. Öbür tarafta da ot gibi bir yaşam var. Ya mahalledeki diğer kızlar gibi oturup çeyiz yapacaktım. Dantel örecektim. Yastık kılıfları işleyip, iyi bir kısmetimin çıkmasını bekleyip, işte beyaz gelinlik giyip evlenecektim. Ya da işte böyle değişik bir yaşam tarzı; illegal bir yapı, örgüt çalışması. Burayı tercih ettim. Oradaki tercihim bilinçliydi. (15)

Until 1980, Figen's life was full of fast paced, exciting organizational work. They organized protests in other cities, met with agricultural workers in their own region, worked for May 1st meetings, prepared the writings on the walls, and kept on holding educational meetings with youth. In 1979, Figen met her husband, or rather her partner to be, and made a final decision as to how she would live her life.

Figen's husband, who was one of the leaders of the THKO movement, epitomized for her all the stories she had heard regarding the 1968 generation. When they met, his identity as a leader, and her awe at that position shaped the rest of her life before she

knew it. When Tayfun Tura, "the organization's leader", and "a friend of Deniz", decided to come to Tokat, Figen was honored to be deemed trustworthy enough to be allowed to stay on the premises, and even to stand guard. After days of hard work and preparations, when he arrived in the neighborhood, tall and impressive in his suit, Figen felt an unprecedented excitement. His age, in her mind, also attested to the fact that being a revolutionary was serious business, not just a game played among the young. When he started an educational group which Figen attended, she was further impressed with his knowledge, his relaxed manner and self-confidence. He, on the other hand, was very attentive to her. Soon enough, Figen began feeling some a kind of love, mixed with respect, to which she could not put a name.

During those days, Figen's parents came to the region looking for their daughter, and she had to hide in the same house "Comrade" Tayfun did. That was the time when a conversation changed her life.

> O gece ben şeyle Tayfun 'la aynı yerde saklanıyorum. Aynı odada, onun kaldığı odada. Annemler gelip gidene kadar. Orada konuşuyoruz. Tayfun bana dedi ki, niye bunlar peşine düşüp duruyorlar?.Dedim ki onlar evlenmemi istiyorlar. Yani bir kız Anadolu gibi bir yerde evlenmeden evini terk edip gidemez bizim kültüre göre. Ya evlenecek, kocasının peşine takılıp gidecek. Ya da evinde babasının dizinin dibinde oturacak. Şimdi bunu kabul edemiyor, kaldıramıyorlar. Ee sen de evlen, deyivermişti bana. Ben de dedim ki, ya ben onların istediği, onların tasarladığı tarzda bir evlilik yapmak istemiyorum. (…). E nasıl biriyle evlenmek istiyorsun sen de? demişti bana. Ben mesela senin gibi biriyle evlenmek isterim demiştim. Ve bu Tayfun 'a evlenme teklifi oldu bu. Şimdi önce güldü. Benim senin yaşında kızım var dedi. Ama yani benim orada anlatmak istediğim şey seninle evlenmek istiyorum değildi tabi ki. Bu sonradan böyle yorumlandı. Ben de arkasından düzeltmeye çalışmadım. Yani senin gibi devrimci bir insanla evlenmek istiyorum demek istemiştim ben ona. (16)

In a few days, when news of Figen's 'proposal' was heard by the members of the organization, Figen could not /did not tell them that it was not as it seemed. The choice of

togetherness was hence Figen's choice, though only as far as choices regarding personal lives could be in the heated atmosphere of the late 70s. Tayfun Yoldaş seemed content as well. There were now discussions of whether the age difference would cause problems, or whether Figen could actually take such a hard and strictly illegal life. In a few days, it was decided that she could, and Figen became his wife.

Upon hearing a story like this one, one wonders where the limits of a personal decision really lies. As arbitrary as this life decision seems, Figen never talked about it with regret. Once again struck by the distinct differences between the mentalities of the revolutionary 70s and our times, and how individuals situate themselves within the parameters of the social world around them, I asked Figen how she felt, for she now had a husband to whom her feelings of respect superseded those of love. She replied once again in a very articulate and informative manner. The stern logic of the revolution, the *raison d'etre* of her life during those years were reflected as clearly and in as disciplinary a way in her narrative. That the level of productivity in this relationship –especially in terms of its historical significance- was much more crucial than any other personal longing was basically what she was telling me. Her new home, one and only, would be this relationship in which she remade herself as life-long revolutionary, and grew up, simultaneously contributing to the struggle. One could easily deem this relationship, which was one of comradeship rather than marriage, a productive and hence happy, partnership.

> Yani bir kere o dönemdeki devrimci duygular o kadar güçlü ki, o insana karşı duyduğun şey, bugünkü anlamda vücudun kimyasal aşkıyla alakalı bir şey değil. Farklı bir şey.. Tam izah edemiyorum. Tam tanımlayamıyorum. Saygı var. Yoğun sevgi var. Yoğun hayranlık var. Bir öğretmene duyulan şey var içinde. Bir baba rolü aynı zamanda. Çünkü yaş olarak tecrübe olarak senden çok ileride bir insan. Ve bir çok şeyi de

> öğretiyor sana aynı zamanda. 12 Mart'ta o Deniz Gezmişlere duyduğum hayranlık sevgi saygı var. Bütün bunların düğümlendiği, odaklandığı bir adam. Saygı daha ağır basıyor. Öyle ki ben gerçekten onun elinde yeniden şekillendirildim. Hocan durumunda. Asla sabırsızlık yoktu. Defalarca aynı şeyi rahatlıkla anlatabiliyordu.. Aşağılama yoktu. Cahil, genç, toy bilmiyor, anlamıyor diye düşünme yoktu. Anlatma, öğretme ağır basıyordu. Onun için de örgütçü yanı çok güçlü bir insandır onun. Malatya'da THKO'nun dağa çıkmasının sebebi de bu. Oradaki kitle ilişkileri, toplum ilişkileri. Yoksa Malatya'yı Deniz Gezmiş, Hüseyin İnan, Sinan Cemgil nereden tanır bilirler? Bilmezler oraları. Malatya Tayfun 'un memleketi, kendi köyü. Orada dağa çıktılar ilk. (17)

Becoming a leader's wife brought a plethora of new identities, new scenarios and new and transient homes into Figen's life. After her marriage with Tayfun Tura, for about twenty years, Figen never went back to her home town, and never had a home of her own. Almost no one knew her as Figen anymore. If camouflage became one of the main themes in her life, instrumentality became another one. She learned to type, to drive, and to write persuasive scenarios. She also learned to believe in her constantly changing nicknames, and to live in other people's homes:

> O konuda o kadar ustalaşmıştık ki sonraki yıllarda da gerçekten adımız o muydu? İsmim bu muydu? Çok kere takma isimlerimle özdeşleştiğim oldu. Yani çok doğal hale geldi yeni kimliğimin bilgilerini ve yeni kimliğimin kişiliğini üstlenmek. Taşıdığım sahte kimliklerin. Türkiye'nin çeşitli yerlerinde birlikte kalıyoruz., sabit bir mekan, sabit bir ev yaşamı yok. Birilerinin yanında kalmak biçiminde ondan sonraki süreç. Bu yeni evli bir çiftin yanı oluyor bazen. Onun bir büyüğü, bir akrabası, ailesi olarak kalıyoruz orada bir kaç ay. Ondan sonra başka bir bölgeye gidiyoruz. Orada başka bir kimlikle gerektiğinde kalıyoruz. İstanbul'da Adıyaman'da, İskenderun'da, Antep'te yani Türkiye'nin çeşitli yerlerinde kaldık böyle.(18)

The most difficult part, Figen reminisced, was staying in other people's homes. When she talked about her experiences in other people's homes, "sığıntı" was a word she used and she explained the implications of that position in detail. The most difficult part of illegal life was the realization that in no space, private or public, would she be able to

set up her own system, go about things her way. Living in other people's homes exacerbated what we take as the negative implications of being a housewife; Figen was a comrade, a student, a co-worker, but at home, which wasn't hers and in which she could not quite make her own decisions, her primary role had to be that of a housewife:

> Hep başkalarıyla paylaştık ev yaşamını. En zor bölümü odur aslında. Başkalarıyla ev yaşamını paylaşmak. Ortak mücadeleyi paylaşırsın. Ortak mekanlarda belli sürelerde belli zamanlar geçirirsin. Ama başka ailelerle aynı ev ortamında, onların yanında kalan aile olarak yaşamak zorluklarla doluydu. Her şeyi anormal zaten illegal yaşamın. Birlikte kaldığım insanların psikolojik sorunlarından tutun, başka sorunlarına kadar her şeyiyle içiçesin sürekli. Ve hep onların yanında yani sığıntı demesem bile, acaba rahatsız mı bizim varlığımızdan duygusuyla yaşamak. İşte poliste yakalanmışşın, gözaltına alınmışsın, şu olmuş bu olmuş. Bu değil. O birlikte paylaşılan ev yaşamı var ya, başkalarıyla birlikte paylaşılan ve sorunsuz götürmeye çalışmak için gereken çaba, fedakarlık. O yönü çok zordu. Ve o konuda çok fazla fedakarlık yaptığımı düşünüyorum.. Çünkü bir sorun çıkmasın diye o evin a'dan z'ye bütün hammaliyesini üstlenip götürüyordum. Enerjim de vardı, gücüm de vardı demek ki o zamanlar. Yani alışverişten, temizliğine, yemeğine, mutfağına, her şeyine koşturuyordum. Kendi evimde belki de kapatacağım kapıyı, yıkamayacağım o gün bulaşığı. Ama orada hiç durmaksızın çalışıyordum. Zoruma gidiyordu elbette. Bunu bazen paylaşıyordum eşimle de. Tayfun benim yükümü hafifletmeye çalışırdı. Kalkıp bulaşığı yıkamaya çalışırdı mesela. Ona da yaptırmak istemezlerdi. İşte örgütün lideri gelmiş, mutfakta bulaşık yıkamaya uğraşıyor. O zaman elinden almaya çalışırlardı. Öyle devam etti. (19)

Caught between the responsibility to help her husband for a safe life of illegality on the one hand, and the sense of being "spongers" upon others' lives, Figen had no choice but to be humble, hardworking and nonconfrontational. It was mostly her duty to negotiate and extend incredible amounts of effort. The picture is reminiscent of many women's lives who are primarily responsible for working for a smooth life for the whole family, but Figen's case was exacerbated by the fact that her husband was the leader of the organization, and his well-being mattered to many more than the core family.

They lived in many people's houses until the coup, after which the organization could not guarantee Tayfun Tura's safety in Turkey. Though neither of them wanted to leave the country, it was an irreversible decision of the organization. The leader would have to leave and so would his wife. Their marriage was unknown to everyone, the police, the families, and all members of the organization but a few. She went with him.

Collective Life Away from Home: Notions of Homeland, Notions of Revolution

Today, Figen believes that the seven years she spent away from Turkey were formative and crucial in many respects. Her narrative about Damascus and the Palestinian camps in Syria was wrought with many of the themes that are still important to her up to this day. She talked to me mostly about the sense of being away from her own country, about being a refugee, together with stories of the Palestinian people and their struggle. While she was comparing the stories of the camps in which revolutionaries from all around the world found a home in a collective form of life with the more traditional lifestyle in homes, she was once again making subtle references to the underlying connections of notions of home with being a leftist, a revolutionary.

Figen followed Tayfun who had left a few months earlier for Damascus. First they stayed at some other people's house, and when another couple from Turkey arrived, they moved into another small house. There were never many people from their organization, since TKEP's strategy was to keep its cadres within the country unless they expected crucial threats to the security of the organization.

Though from the first day on they both believed they would be going back anytime, Figen was anxious about not speaking the language, of restricting her relations to the household members and translators. She soon started Arabic lessons, and subsequently Russian lessons, "Russia was our Kaaba", she said. Before long, she could go around the city, able to do the little chores, at least. Regardless, she was not at peace. She missed Turkey. Homesickness was (once again) the primary feeling of her seven years in Syria:

> Ülkeni hem özlüyorsun, hem ondan kaçıyorsun. Ona hem dokunacak kadar çok yakınsın. Sınırdan geçmişsin. Sınıra geldiğin zaman Türkiye'nin havasını şeyini ciğerlerine çekiyorsun. Ama hem de uzanamayacak kadar uzaksın. Ülke hasreti. Onun her şeyini özlemek. Bu nasıl tarif edilir bilemiyorum. Değişik bir özlem, ne anne babaya duyulan özleme benziyor, ne sevgiliye duyulan özleme benziyor. Ve hiç bir şeyinden zevk almamaya başlıyorsun. Ne zaman döneceğiz? Bir an önce dönelim. Onun için örneğin, işte diyelim ki kış geliyor. Hani genellikle yapılır ya evlerde kışa hazırlık. İşte reçel yapılır. Bazen düşünürdük. Aman yok belki bu kış gidiyoruz Türkiye'ye. Niye yapalım, boşver. Hep böyle bir özlem içinde geçti günler.(20)

The area they stayed in was a transient place for many of the Kurdish revolutionaries. The border between Turkey and Syria was not difficult to pass, revolutionaries would remain in the area for a short while, and once the documents were prepared, they would leave for Europe. THKO/ TKEP had a different vision, though: they asserted the significance of the solidarity among revolutionaries in the Middle East and if anyone would have to leave Turkey, Palestine was the homeland for that solidarity:

> Türkiye'de devrim hareketiyle dayanışma ancak Filistin vasıtasıyla olur. Filistin aynı zamanda bölgemizde devrimci bir ocaktır. Böyle bakıyorduk. Dolayısıyla biz oraya gideceğiz. Eğitim göreceğiz. Yeniden ülkeye dönüp mücadele etmek için.(21)

The conditions of war in the area were ripe for those who wanted to keep up the revolutionary spirit. Unlike Europe, where there were more opportunities for political refugees to find jobs and produce alternative futures for themselves, Palestine furthered revolutionaries' skills and energies. In the Palestinian camps, revolutionaries would not be losing their cutting edge like their counterparts in Europe. In this sense, for revolutionaries like Figen, Palestine was like the homeland and in comparison "abroad" was Europe:

> Avrupa hiç bir zaman ufkumuza girmedi. Yani gidelim, oraya yerleşelim. Orda kalalım gibi bir yaklaşımımız olmadı. İyi ki de olmamış. Avrupa öğüttü. Türkiye devrimci hareketinin bir çok elemanını Avrupa çok kısa sürede düzledi. Ya Filistinli cephelerde savaşçı olursun, ya da Avrupa'ya gider, mülteci olursun. Başka seçeneğin yok. Silahlı mücadeleyi savunuyorsan bunun için tam bir derya denizdir filistin kampları, cepheleri. Her türlü malzemeyi tanıma, kullanma olanağı sunuyorlar. Bütün dünyanın başka yerlerinden gelen devrimcilerine, sadece Türklere değil. Artı başka ülkelerin devrimci hareketleriyle bir şekilde ilişkilenme, tanışma, onların koşullarını, mücadele yaklaşımlarını öğrenme olanağına kavuşuyorsun. Bunlar çok olumlu yanları şeyler Avrupa ile karşılaştırdığında. Türkiye'deki devrimci insanlara kattığı olumlu şeyler var Filistin'in. İşte enternasyonalist ruh, mücadele coşkusu. 80li yıllarının Filistin'inden bahsediyorum tabi ki. (22)

The 80s in the Palestinian camps, also in comparison with Europe where political refugees obtained property, found themselves jobs, and started lives anew, gave her a chance to reformulate what being a revolutionary meant for her. This theme, and the appreciation she had for the Palestinian cause and their ways of fighting for it, inherently held the themes of home and homeland, and of course belonging. As Turkish revolutionaries who were preparing themselves to fight at home, they were in a transient place. So were the Palestinians. Hence, no one but the Palestinians could get as clear a grasp on Figen's nostalgia for a home. With their determined and conscious

understanding of living in someone else's place, and the understanding that respect for your own home had to mean respect for everyone's. Palestinians, Figen asserted, had a holistic view of political activity.

> Lübnan'a gittik. Orada Ermeniler'in terketmiş oldukları evlerde yaşıyordu Filistinliler mesela. Orda güzel bir yanlarına daha rastladım Filistinlilerin. Ermeniler o savaştan kopmuş, canlarını kurtarmış, kaçmış gitmişler. Nebatya diye İsrail'in hemen sınırında bir kasaba. Burada Filistinliler kamp kurmuşlar. Yakın cephe savaşın yapıldığı yer burası. Hemen tepenin arkası İsrail. İlk orada başlıyor savaş. Gittiğimizde biz de bir evde kaldık. Orda diğer ülkelerdeki gibi bir kamp düzeni yok. Ama evlerde kamp biçiminde kalınıyor. Gittik baktık kaldığım eve yere iki tane sünger koymuşlar. İçeride salon dolu eşya ile. Bayağı zengin bir ev. Ama Filistinliler orası başkalarının yeri, geçici olarak orda bulunuyorlar diye o eşyaları kullanmıyorlardı. Bu benim çok dikkatimi çekmişti. Bunlar bizim değil diyorlardı. Bu çok hoşuma gitti. (…)Ülke özlemi onlarda çok yoğun. Kendi topraklarından kovulmuş, sürülmüş olmanın getirdiği şey. Ben diyor kendi ülkeme döneceğim. Ev alacaksam da orda alacağım. Bunlar hakikaten kendi ülkesi için yaşıyor ve savaşıyor. (23)

The in-between space the Palestinians occupied and their disinterested approach to private property elsewhere soon became an exemplary representation of the revolutionary ideology and lifestyle for Figen. Their way of life, which Figen further participated in when she stayed at the camps for long educational periods, also pointed to the positive sides of collective life in her mind. For a woman who had been 'homeless' for many years, the camps were in a way havens where conceptions of life-as-it-should-be was shaped further. These collective spaces not only gave her the chance to meet other revolutionaries, but also pointed to other ways of being, working and living together. To realize one's self as a revolutionary required more than guns, more than training. It required a sense of equality which Figen had experienced nowhere else. What she had

failed to experience in her own home and others', had materialized in the collective life form of the camps.

> Onların kamplarında çok güzel günlerimiz geçti. Eğitimleri çok canlı, hareketli ve dinamik oluyordu. Kadın erkek ayrımı yoktur. Cephede kadınla erkek aynı haklara ve aynı koşullara sahiptir. O bakımdan da bizden daha ileri yanlarını gördüm. Ama kamptan çıkıp evimize geldiğimizde evde iki kadın vardık. Bütün erkek yoldaşlar bekliyor. Kadınlar mutfağa girecek, bir şeyler yapacak, getirecek sofraya. Hep birlikte oturup yiyeceğiz. Yani herkes kadınlardan bekliyordu. Orada bile. Türkiye'de zaten bu hep böyle. (24)

The Palestinian camps presented her with new ways of being, ways in which women were expected to be as strong and responsible as men, and where men would have to share the responsibilities which were formerly allocated to women. She had the chance to rethink their organizational structures, which, regardless of where they stood, deemed the women housewives, and hence secondary to meetings and discussions. Her experiences in the camps led her to believe that the collective life was an important factor for militant women to resort to the mountains; all the PKK women she met there had actually come from much more restrictive environments, she asserted, and more than anything else, she remembered, "they were happy to find freedom in the mountains."

Figen also had a chance to rethink the years in which she was homeless, and lived in others' homes. "You can't be a revolutionary at home" she explained. She believed that a certain traditionalism was inherent to the ways of the home life in which women, and partly men, were 'imprisoned'. The sense of collectivity, on the other hand, called for a sense of equality which was difficult to understand within the hierarchical dynamics between husband and wife. The 'peace' and 'productivity' she felt in the camps were thus Figen's only consolation in her state of homesickness.

Attempts at 'Normalization': "You may choose to throw me out, or to punish me. I will leave regardless."

During her narrative about her years in Syria, Figen told me of many details which underlined her nostalgia for Turkey. From the teacups from home they cherished to the newspapers they read from beginning to end, from her sentimental approach to his car during Özal's visit to Syria to the long walks she took by the border, Figen was telling me of a nostalgia which grew more unbearable by the day. Seven years was her psychological limit, and by 1988, she decided she could no longer be away from her country. Each year, she had believed they would soon be returning, and each year they had stayed. Both she and Comrade Tayfun felt that the longer they stayed, the more irrelevant their stay became. "Biz buraya saklanmak için mi çıktık? Burda öleceksek, burda ölümüz kalacaksa ne işe yarayacak? O kadar emek o kadar mücadele o kadar şeyler bunun için miydi? Gelip buralarda ölmek için mi?" (25)

However, the organization believed that Turkey was still unsafe for Tayfun Tura, and Figen recalled that it had by that time become a matter of honor for the organization: they had been able to protect him for so many years, they would not risk an operation so far down the line. Figen insisted. And once again, over another major decision of her life, she was accused of being undisciplined.

> Bir plenum toplantısında söylüyorum bunları. Plenum dedikleri merkez komite üyeleri ve yedek üyeleriyle yapılan genişletilmiş toplantıdır. O toplantıda ben dilekçe verdim. Türkiye'ye artık döneceğiz, dönmek istiyorum diye. Valla ne yaparsanız yapın. İster örgütten atın, ister cezalandırın. Ben gideceğim. Kesin kararımı verdim. Olur mu öyle şey! İşte örgüt, disiplin, kararlar falan! Siz bilirsiniz. Karar alırsanız gideceğiz. Almazsanız da ben gideceğim. Çünkü biliyorum sınırı. (26)

Determined not to keep quiet over yet another important decision about her life, Figen defied the central committee members. By this time, she was twenty-eight years old, and had no more tolerance for decisions over her private life which she could not make sense of. Figen's efforts paid off.

She came back to Turkey alone, set up a house in Erenköy, told no one about its whereabouts, but merely showed the apartment keys to people from the organization. Tayfun came in a few months' time, and they started their first-ever home life. The apartment she found had an expansive view, which meant that they would be able to see the outside world, without having to close the curtains. In this space, they were on their own, they could use each room as they liked without worrying about what others thought of them, or whether they were making anyone uncomfortable. She remembered being ecstatic about setting up the house. She bought him slippers and pyjamas, with which he stayed up long nights, enjoying the silence of his home.

Though they were still leading an illegal life, having a home of their own had made it partly more 'normal'. Soon Figen decided to have a child. She had not even considered having a child when she was living abroad, for it was too painful to be homesick, and she wanted her child to be speaking her own language. Sevgi's birth was also a normalizing factor in their lives:

> Biraz da normalleştiren bir şeydi yaşamımızı. Çünkü öyle oldu ki evde sadece sırf ikimiziz. Hiçbir akraba ilişkimiz yok. Olmaması da gerekiyordu zaten illegaliteyle. Sancılar başladı. Ne yapacağız. Tayfun Tura beni Zeynep Kamil Hastanesine yatırdı. Normal bir insanın yaptığını yaptı. O da o kadar haz aldı ki bundan. Normal bir insan gibi oldu. Onun için de çok müthiş bir heyecandı. Sonradan da hep anlatıyordu. Hastanenin kapısında o da doğum haberi bekliyor. Unutuyor illegaliteyi, bir tanıyan çıkar mı falan. Ondan sonra kızımız oldu. (27)

Five years after they had come into the country, in 1993, a major police operation hit them. Tayfun was taken in first, and when Figen came from shopping one day, her neighbors told her that the police had already broken into their apartment. Not knowing whether Tayfun had already been captured, or whether they were intending to use her to get to him, Figen tried to leave the neighborhood, but in vain. The watchman of the apartment complex told the police that she was leaving, and she soon found herself in the police car, with Sevgi on her lap.

Though she soon found out that they had already taken Tayfun Tura in, and there was no physical torture involved because the very top cadres of the organization had already been captured, the first few days in the station were very difficult. Sevgi was there with her, and that already meant too much was at stake. The day they called Figen's brother to come and get Sevgi, Figen slept like a baby on the hard bed in her cell.

Though her arrest would mean two years in prison for Figen, it also meant the onset of a certain kind of freedom, as a 'citizen' and hence as a 'person'. From then on, Figen would not lead a life of illegality, which, for two decades, had restricted her life to the outskirts of society, alone with Tayfun Tura, under the protection and rules of the organization. Their opposition to the state meant that the state defined them merely as 'terrorists', and not as 'citizens', and that, regardless of what they did and where they were, had also left them devoid of the 'normal' networks of social life. The parameters of

this world had been defined by an anxiety which left the no space to act as they liked, like 'normal' people.

> Ladesteki gibi, hep "aklımda" diyerek yaşamak tek cümleyle özetlemek gerekirse bu illegal yaşamı. Devletle bir lades çekişmiştik biz. Devlete baş kaldırırken, biz seni istemiyoruz, yeni bir düzen istiyoruz, farklı bir dünya istiyoruz diye, onunla bir lades çekişmiştik aslında. Çünkü onun bütün bu başkaldırılara karşı olduğunu biliyorduk. Onun yasalarının, onun güvenlik kuvvetlerinin, her şeyin, her şeyin karşımızda olduğunu biliyorduk. Bunu bile bile aklımızda diyerek bir lades çekiştik ve bu ladesi yıllarca sürdürdük illegal. Hep her adımda aklımda diye hareket etmek randevuya giderken aklımda, bir yerde buluşacaksın, bir pastanede oturacaksın hep arkanı kollayacaksın, çevrene bakacaksın, gelirken acaba takip edildim mi korkusunu yaşayacaksın. İşte... bir mekan toplantısı 3 gün 4 gün sürecek bir mekana kapalısın. Dışardan bakkaldan ekmek alırken aklımda diye alacaksın. Diyelim ki her zaman o ev 3 ekmek alıyorsa o gün 5 ekmek 6 ekmek almayacaksın o bakkaldan. Çünkü noluyor bu her zaman 2 ekmek alıyordu ya da 3 ekmek alıyor. Niye şimdi 5 ekmek aldı.Bazen şizofren durumlar diyorum ben ona. Çok monoton bir yaşam. Tiyatro yok, sinema yok. Yani şu anda normal bir insanın yaşaması gereken hiçbir şey yok hemen hemen. Çok kapalı bir yaşam. (28)

Years of Retrospection in Prison: "On this path to save humanity, the human is obliterated"

The two years Figen spent in Bayrampaşa prison were years of introspection, of looking back, of self-critique. Alone and cut from her ties to the organization, this was the first chance she got, she emphasized, to stop and think about her life, her organizational involvement and her future. Looking back, Figen could also begin to figure out where they had gone wrong organizationally. In 1993, the times, the police and the social networks had changed so extensively that introspection also required a questioning of the strategies of the movement, if not the philosophy. Perhaps most

important to her was a critique of the illegal position they had been in and which had so extensively shaped their world.

> Çünkü aynı zamanda bir de yaşadığımız süreç var. O süreç içinde gördüğün ama bir türlü dile getirme fırsatı bulamadığın bir dizi hatalar var. Tepe aşağı bir gidiş süreci yaşıyorsun. İlişkiler daralmış o 12 Eylül öncesi koşulların geniş kitle ilişkilerinden dar hücre evlerine tıkılmışsın. Eskiden o evden o eve, o evden o eve sıçrama yani halk ilişkileri vasıtasıyla sıçrama olanağı varken, onun için seni polis aradığı hiçbir yerde bulamazken, artık polisin aradığı yerlerde kalmak zorunda kalmışsın. Onun için en sıkı illegaliteyi uyguladığını söylese dahi bugün isim vererek de söylüyorum TİKKO'su, TKP'si , Dev-Sol'u, DHKP-C'si, hepsi ama hepsini polis istediği an enseler. 12 Eylül'den sonra toplumdaki yerimiz farklılaştı. Bundan önceki yerimiz kayboldu. Silindi. Yokuz. Soyutlanınca kendimize ait başka bir dünya kurduk. O dünyada ne kadar kendimizi sıkı güvenlik içinde ördüğümüzü düşünsek de, aynı şekilde devlet örgütünün kadrolarının elemanlarına da açık bir dünyaydı aynı zamanda. Çünkü o da bir güvenlik örgütü nihayetinde. Sen de saf güvenlik örgütüyle ayakta durmaya çalışıyorsan üstün olan daha çabuk senin güvenlik sistemini darmadağın ediyor. (29)

Illegal life had also brought a sort of compartmentalization, a restrictive sense of distinctions within the limits of her organization, and now that she was out in the open, her thoughts were more geared toward personal decisions. Though Figen appreciated the collective forms of life as practiced by the communes within the prisons, their strategies of keeping individuals committed to the organizations seemed outright wrong to her. The inmates would eat together, hold educational meetings, organizational meetings, but live their lives with many more restrictive bonds than the walls of the prison. The aim was to keep the spirit of the struggle, which everyone knew might falter after too many years in prison. The downside, however, was that she was once again singled out for accusations regarding her undisciplined stance:

> Tek tipleştirme içerde daha yoğun olarak devam ediyor. Benim özel olarak çatışmam bir süre sonra başladı cezaevinde. Çatışmanın ekseni de benim

> rahat davranışım, özgür davranışım. İşte diyelim ki PKKlı kızlar asla gömleği pantolonun içine alıp giymezler. İlla üzerine bırakılacak bolca. Yani kadın vücudunun tam ortaya çıkmasını istemezler. Dev Solcular'da da benzer yukardan aşağıya kararlar alınır. Zaten tutsak, bir de örgüt kararlarının tutsaklığına sokanlar vardı, hapsedenler. Bunu çok somut olarak görüyordum. 20 yaşında pırıl pırıl genç kızlar gözleri ışıl ışıl, tam da böyle sevda çağındalar hepsi. Ama böyle durmak zorundalar kaşlar çatık ciddi. Militan surat tarzı. Nasıl acırdım onlara biliyor musun böyle. Cezaevinde zaten devlet onları toplamış... terörist örgüt militanları diye. Bir de örgütün sorumluları onların tepesinde baskı kurmuş. (30)

The first large scale conflict between Figen and the 'prison council'- a judiciary and administrative force consisting of representatives of all organizations inside- arose after their decision to cut all political and social ties with the Dev Sol members. In the men's ward, a 'traitor' had been killed by some members of Dev Sol, and the council issued a decree which called for the cessation of all relations with the organization's members. The decision was forwarded to the women's ward, after which time it was enforced by everyone. That is, except Figen. "Böyle bir mekanda siz hiçbir örgüt kararı adına benim kiminle insani ilişki kurup kiminle kuramayacağıma karar veremezsiniz," (31) she asserted. They accused her of breaking the discipline within the ward, and threatened her with expulsion from the ward. Especially during this time of questioning the limits of her organizational commitments and her personal space, Figen viewed the order of the council as, more than anything else, an attack on her personality: "dün olsa örgüt kararlarına uymak zorundayım diye düşünürdüm, ama orada kararları da sorgulayarak neresine uyup neresine uymayacağıma karar vermek gibi bir bireysel özgürlüğe kavuşmuş oldum." (32)

Though in the beginning Figen's stance was very much appreciated by the Dev Sol girls, soon, her views on personal freedom and the conversations she held with the

girls became a threat to the organization. This time Figen was accused of trying to organize the girls into TKEP, her own organization. Figen told me that that was a ridiculous accusation, but she also attested to the fact that the more they talked about the place of individuals within these organizational structures, the more they began to question the all encompassing power of the organization over them: "insanlık adına çıkılan bu yolda insanın nasıl hiçleştirildiğini konuşuyoruz."(33) Conversations regarding humanism and the basic principles of socialism led to the rupturing of ties between the girls and Figen. Their superiors had decided that she was trying to dissolve the organization from inside, and forbade the girls from talking to her.

There were other decisions which Figen did not partake in. She would not quit wearing her shorts although there was a decree of the council which banned it. Figen would also allow the prison guards to use the ward's bathrooms, though there was a decision not to let the "enemies" in. She believed that the guards were as much of the laboring class as anyone else. After a while, the council did not even tell her of the decisions they had taken regarding the rules of life in prison; they knew she was of a different mind.

Figen kept on reading and writing in prison, and exercised as much as she could. She lived a very self-disciplined life. Coupled with her new insights regarding the power these organizations practiced over individuals, she began to see her personal life differently as well. For twenty years she had been persistently criticized, by her husband and her organization, about talking and laughing out loud, expressing her views, being different, and not looking solemn enough. Most importantly perhaps, she had not lived a relationship of love and desire in her youth. She believed she had lost her joyousness, her

recklessness. Regret, she emphasized, was not what she felt. However, she did believe that she had to reproduce herself, remake her life from scratch when her term ended. Life would have to be extremely different when she came out, and her two years in prison was a landmark in that sense.

A home of One's Own: Free to Choose her Love, her Path and her Pace

When she came out of prison, though she enjoyed the rain, the sky, and even the crowded buses, she also knew that she would immediately have to find a job, and start living on her own in a way she had never done before. Her brother suggested that she stay with them until her husband came out of prison, but she refused, saying she would not be living as a "sığıntı" (sponger) anymore. In the few months she stayed with them, she was confronted with old patterns; they would go to work, and she would be doing the housework.

This was also the time she decided to break up with her husband, partly because she now realized that more than anything else they were comrades, and partly because his "lawfully" wedded wife had appeared, blaming the new woman, "yuva yıkan kadın". She first told her decision to her family, her brothers and her sister in law. They said it would be an unfortunate decision, that she should think longer before she left him in prison. Her conscience was disturbed, but she knew that their togetherness belonged to a different time. She finally wrote to him saying that they would remain comrades and that their common struggle would continue. They had Sevgi who would also keep them together. However, their marriage had to end. He wrote a note saying "I wish you happiness" and would never speak to her again. Today, Figen believes that being a man, and perhaps being a leader, he took it harder than he should have:

> Yani sonuçta sosyalist de olsa erkekler farklı bir şekilde kendini ortaya koyuyor. Anadolu'dan yetişmiş, feodal yanlarını aşamamış bir erkek kültürü böyle bir beraberliğin bitirilmesini kaldıramadı. Kendisine ait bir mal, bir eşya, bir can ama sonuçta ona ait bir şey olarak kendisini dışarda beklememi istedi. Öyle olsa daha saygı duyacaktı, daha çok sevecekti, daha kutsal bir şey olacaktı.(34)

Regardless of the criticism she received from people all around, she said she was not interested in playing the "holy virgin" at that point. She had postponed her desires for long enough.

A new love with a man from the party was a factor in her final decision. He was involved in ÖDP, where she had started her involvement since the beginning of its inception. He saw her at meetings, and admired her strength as a single mother, and also by her persistent work, both for politics and for financial independence. Soon, she was also interested, falling in love for the first time in many years. Of course there were problems involved, because there were people who had a few words to say about their relationship. ÖDP, despite its rhetoric of individual freedom, held the remnants of the restrictive ideology which deemed people's private lives part of their commitment to the party. By now, however, she had resolved to live openly.

> Başka bir süreç yaşadım, başka biriyle o duygusal beraberliği de onun için son derece açık ve rahat bir şekilde yaşadım. Gizleyerek, saklayarak kendimden utanarak değil. Yine de geri toplumsal gelenekler kendini modern bir parti olarak kurduğunu söyleyen ÖDP'de bile etkili oldu ve bu ilişki siyasi partinin gündeminin tartışma konusu haline getirildi. (35)

From 1996 to 2000, until she saw that her daughter was rightfully demanding more of her time, Figen was running between her political involvements and her jobs. While she found herself jobs ranging from waitressing to writing in local newspapers, she was also heavily involved in the establishment of the legal leftist party BSP, content to be finally doing political work on a legal platform. To this day, her involvement with ÖDP,

which soon connected with BSP, is active. It was only when Sevgi was old enough to voice that she wanted to spend more time with her mother, and Figen became aware of her daughter's fear of losing her mother again, that she began to take her political involvements more lightly. She says that when her daughter is old enough to meet with her friends after school, she will be back on the run.

Figen finds her experiences within the left, in Syria and in prison to be invaluable assets, which she has the responsibility to put to use. In that sense, she feels indebted to her organization and to the revolutionaries she worked with. She says she loves doing political work on legal grounds where she is able to reach many more people than she used to.

> Yani bu yolun bir maratonculari vardır bir de 100 metre koşucuları vardır. Şimdi ben hiçbir zaman 100 metre koşucusu olmak istemedim bu yolda. Yani 100 m.de koşup bütün enerjiyi bitirip ondan sonra yarış dışı kalmak değil. Ben kendimi biraz daha maraton koşucusu olarak görüyorum. Yani uzun soluklu bir koşu ve bu hayatın demirbaşı kendimi böyle niteliyorum. Sağlığım yerinde olduğu müddetçe ben her zaman bu yolun içinde olacağım. (36)

Her final words attested to the fact that her indebtedness to her organization and the left was not merely for what it had preached. She was also transformed by what it restricted, by what it had failed to grasp, and mostly by what it had not been able to change. Her view of politics was an accumulation of her experiences, negative as well as positive, leading her to a realistic but idealistic, revolutionary but humanistic perception of the world she lived in.

> Dünyayı ve insanı değiştirmek dedik... bu süre içinde kendimizi ne kadar değiştirdik onu da sorgulayarak devam etmek gerekiyor tabi ama dünyada en zor şeyin insanı değiştirmek olduğunu gördük. Halk kurtarmak değil benim amacım bu değildi şimdi de bu değil. ben kendim için böyle bir düzende yaşamak istemiyorum. Soru sorup cevabını bulduğum için varım. Şuna buna ezildiğini sömürüldüğünü anlatmak ve ezilmekten kurtarmak

değil benim amacım. Ezilenlerle birlikte kendisi için birşeyler yapmak isteyen insanlarla birlikte problemi problem olarak ortaya koyan ve çözüm arayan insanlarla birlikte varsa var. Deneylerle de gördük ki, bir süre sonra halk kurtarıcılarından kurtulmak için mücadele ediyor. Dolayısıyla ben kendim kişisel olarak konuşuyorum burada. O kadar kötü bir dünyadayız ki böyle bir dünyada bu kadar şeyin kötü gittiğini görüp bu çelişkileri çok somut olarak görüp buna rağmen hiçbir şey yokmuş gibi yaşamak mümkün olmadığı için hala bu yolda hissediyorum kendimi… (37)

CHAPTER 4

NURAN'S STORY: A HOLISTIC VIEW OF POLITICS AND RESISTANCE TO TRADITIONS: "NOW, I MERELY WANT TO BE MYSELF"

I met Nuran for the first time at Perihan and Salih's house in Datça. Perihan and I had just finished our interview and turned off the tape when Salih arrived with Nuran and her boyfriend. "She's from our tradition", Salih simply said as he introduced us, meaning MLSPB. That's all he knew about Nuran, and that was why he wanted to host them in his home when he heard they had come to town.

The hour we spent together had an awkward feel to it though. Salih was curious about her past, trying to find out who Nuran was, and whom she belonged with. Nuran somehow sidetracked most questions regarding old acquaintances. Perihan, Salih and I had been talking about the movement for long hours during the last three days and were keen on hearing more of her stories, for probably varying reasons. Nuran did not seem as interested in the topic.

Nuran was quiet and very lean, but seemed tough as well, in a very stubborn and tired way. I left, not having figured out where she stood, not in the sense Salih was curious about, but in a more general sense; it seemed she was reluctant to answer *any* questions about herself, not merely regarding the movement days, but any questions which would help anyone place her in any sort of category. She was not reticent, but she seemed to choose not to say things.

I ran into Nuran again in my neighborhood in İstanbul, in front of the frame shop Nuran and İrfan were running. Instantly, I told her that I'd be interested in hearing her life story. She told me that it would be the first time ever, but she would not mind. She liked talking to young people; they understood her much better. The next day, I went to pick her up from the shop, and we walked over to her place, where we started the interview.

Nuran's narrative is unusual. Her sentences are often cut short, as if before she says something, she cuts the sentence, not saying the whole thing, but giving merely a feeling about what she means. She often replaces words with, "*şey*", once again not saying the particular word, but leaving it like a blank to be filled in by the listener. She never quite answers a question in a straightforward manner, but talks around it, seldom giving hard facts, as if not to be trapped even by the momentary positioning an answer requires.

At many points, especially when we were talking about her organizational involvement, I found myself having to ask too many questions because she would not carry on the narrative on her own.

After I listened to the interview tapes over and over again, I realized that what she chose not to talk about in detail referred to a period in her life which today she identified herself against, and not being pinned down by my questions was one of the ways she could express that rupture between Nuran today and Nuran at the time. It was as though she was avoiding certain narratives and certain words which were representative of the social contexts they had been formulated in.

What was missing in her narrative, what she avoided talking about was mostly the "tradition", cutting her ties with which had transformed her life and her sense of self, as she reiterated many times during our interview. She'd given fifteen years of her life to the movement and the ensuing years of imprisonment, and today, she was different in many respects. She would rather talk around the "tradition", and not pin herself down within its socially charged words and narratives. When she was talking about her childhood years before the movement, or her experiences after she divorced herself from her organizational ties and her husband from the 'tradition', her narrative was much more fluid than when she was talking about the fifteen years in between.

Keeping in mind that Nuran was a member of the MLSPB for fifteen years, one of the most radical organizations of the time, and that she spent eight years in prison, her evasive narrative regarding these years gives important clues as to how strongly she objects to that way of being today, and to begin to understand what 'that' way of being implies for her.

Experiences of Inferiority and of Difference: Being Alevi, Immigrant, Poor.

Nuran was born in 1959 in Erzincan as the youngest of two brothers and two sisters. Her parents had got married very young, an arranged marriage between her father who had been living in Istanbul since he was a child, and her mother who was much younger than him. Nuran's mother never loved her husband much, Nuran recalled, it was probably his background in the big city which had motivated her parents. She does not

remember much about Erzincan; the only vivid memory in her mind is her mother taking her children to Istanbul in a crowded black train, trying to keep them from the cold.

Her mother was "an illiterate rural woman" she said. Her father, on the other hand, had become a "man of the city", and that was the reason why the family moved to İstanbul by the time Nuran was five. He had gotten used to the ways of Istanbul, and had the family move to there as soon as he found a job at the municipality.

Nuran said that the feeling of being migrants, coupled with the family's Alevi background gave them a distinct sense of difference during their early years in İstanbul. Their difference was also translated into a sense of early politicization:

> Yani hem o göçmenlik duygusu –kırdan kente göç etmiş ve orda tutunmaya çalışan bir işçiydi benim babam, fakir bir ailenin kızıydım yani. Hem tutunma çabaları işte, hem de Alevi olmak… O büyük şehirde Alevi olmak… O tabii hayatımda çok önemli birşey... Öyle de politik bir yapısı vardı ailemizin. Ramazanlarda sürekli kaç göç yaşamamız, etraftan korkmamız… Zaten
> Alevilerde öyle birşey var, doğal olarak solculuğa bir eğilim vardır… Aleviliğin felsefesinde de vardır çünkü öyle birşey… (1)

Situating her early political inclinations amidst the fear of the majority and the inborn tendency which she believed most Alevis had, the propensity for the left seemed almost spontaneous for Nuran. Their class background was also a factor in their political involvements. When she was in primary school, her eldest brother who was seven years older than her had already started working as an apprentice in an electrics shop, and going to a night school. Soon he became a member of a union, Yapı-İş. From her first years in İstanbul, Nuran recalled her brother reading the newspaper to the family, *Akşam* Gazetesi, and especially Çetin Altan, as she emphasized.

The mood she set for these early years was one of politicization towards the left; and she placed the parameters of that in her father's intellectual stance, as well as the family's differences from their surroundings. Ironically, her father's open minded stance which paved the way for the children's political inclinations within the left was also a reason for being ostracized by those who were from their village. It was her father's desire to provide his daughters with an education which set them apart, and perhaps left them devoid of the networks of their past.

> … babamın bütün köylüsü dışına itti. Kızlar okutulmaz diye. Selamı sabahı kestiler ve bizim de onlarla hiçbir zaman hiçbir ilişkimiz olmadı. Bizim köylülerimiz ve yakın çevredeki köylüler Fikirtepe'de otururlardı. Biz Samatya'da oturuyoruz. Çok istisnai olarak hastanelere falan gelirlerdi, o zaman uğrarlardı ama babam hep soğuk davranırdı o insanlara, hep uzağında durmak istedi yani o çevrenin. Aydın bir adamdı. Böyle sol bir hava vardı… (2)

Thus, İstanbul was a place in which the family was forming completely new relations. From her primary school years, Nuran remembered her neighborhood, Samatya, where she felt safe and was always playing outside on the street with her friends from the neighborhood. However, she did not feel good at school. Her family's poverty, coupled with Nuran's shy temperament made her school experiences tough. Oruç Gazi Elementary was situated right opposite the Emlak Bank Housing Blocks, from where rich kids came. She remembered her teacher fondly though, especially for helping her cover up her poor family background, and even making her feel proud. Her teacher's rhetoric regarding the working class and its pride was perhaps one of the initial connections formulated between the experience of poverty, and the ideology of the left.

> … O utangaçlığımı bildiği için, hep onu ekarte etmeye çalıştı. Çok iyi bir öğretmendi, şimdi düşünüyorum mümkün değil. Mesela okul önlükleri veriliyordu fakir aile çocuklarına. O çaktırmadan beni bir aileye yollardı, ama hiç kimse bilmezdi bunu sınıfta. Ben Nuran'nın ailesini çok takdir ediyorum çünkü onun babası bir yerde işçi olarak çalışıyor ve bütün çocuklarını okutuyor, diye böyle anlatırdı kadın! .Hep bana koltuk çıkardı. (3)

She studied the first two years of middle school in an old mansion building in Samatya, after which she and her sister transferred to İstanbul Kız Lisesi, where once again her classmates were rich kids, "kids who spoke even better English than the teacher did". The transition was not easy for her, leaving the cozy atmosphere of the neighborhood for the crowded and cold high school had negative repercussions on her studies as well. She could not quite adapt, and soon failed a class because of English.

Although Nuran was not very clear about how her involvement in institutional left politics started, she remembered that during her middle school years, she started frequenting the union her brother was involved in and the Association for Middle Schools. Soon enough, her activities in the union became much more appealing to her than her activities in school. She soon quit school and never went back again.

At that point, I wanted to backtrack a little, for her to tell me more of what was happening in these associations and the union. The excerpt that follows could be a good example as to what kinds of experiences about which she would not be speaking in detail in her narrative:

> -yine biraz geri dönücem… sendikada ne yapıyordunuz?
> -hiçbir şey…
> -oturuyordunuz…
> -hm hm
> -ve dinliyordunuz?

> -onları dinliyordum… bir yerlerde grevler vardı… ne olmuş ne bitmiş falan… öyleydi yani… birşey yapmıyordum…küçüğüm yani.. (4)

Was it that she didn't remember any details, or that she found them superfluous? Was it that after her many experiences with interrogations, she was not interested in naming things, activities, relationships? Or was it that she believed that an oral history project of which she would be a subject could afford to exclude these details, which today she didn't feel affiliated with? Whatever the reason, the positive aspects of these new spaces which attracted her at the time were lost to her at the time of our interview.

She was more expressive about the changes that took place in her character during these years. When she started talking about her days in the Association for Middle Schools, she remembered the first changes that took place in her youth, changes which would remain with her throughout her ideologically oriented years, and perhaps even longer.

> -Sonra işte ortaöğrenim derneğine daha çok gitmeye başladım. Bir de şey bir kızdım yani -mesela düğünlerde falan çok güzel dans ederdim, dansözlük yapardım. Böyle kına geceleri falan olur ya çocukluğunda insanın. Beni çıkartır oynatırlardı falan. Çok iyi oynardım. O kesildi mesela, asla oynayamıyorum şimdi. O çok kötü bir kayıp yani hayatımda. O solculuk havasına girince… Mesela makyaj yapmayı çok seven bir kızdım, kısacıktı böyle saçlarım da . Açık falan giyinirdim böyle… Sonra bir iki kez öyle gittim derneğe, çok kötü baktılar bana. Sonradan evlendiğim biri vardı.Kötü kötü bakıyorlardı bana böyle. Dışarıdan biri falan muamelesi görünce…giderek o yanlarınızı törpülüyorsunuz, o iyi olan şeyleri törpülüyorsunuz…. Olumsuzluklar tabi bunlar… Ama önemli bunlar hayatımda yani, söylemem gereken şeyler. (5)

Thirty years later, it seemed, Nuran's memories regarding her days within the left concerned its homogenizing aspects. In this sense, she was more inclined to talk about

what she had to change, what she had to forfeit. By way of this topic, Nuran told me how important it was, and still is, for her to afford to be different, to go her own way:

> Çocukluğumdan beri farklı olmaya karşı birşeyim vardı benim…Farklı olmak, sürüden biri olmamak…. Yani baya da inatçı bir insandım, şimdi öyle değilim, törpülendim falan, daha hoşgörülüyüm. Çok da inatçıydım, metazori şeyleri de sevmiyordum. Özgürlüğümü seviyordum. çünkü bu merak duygusunu da beraberinde getiriyor. Ancak merak duygusu olan bir insanlar, kendilerini farklılaştırmaya yöneliyorlar gibi geliyor bana. (6)

In this respect, her relationship with and the distance she later had to establish to her organization and her family resembled one another. Though all her siblings were active in the left, Nuran insisted she was always more independent.

> Mesela biz dört kişiyiz ya ailede… Bayağı çatışıyorum ben kardeşlerimle çocukluğumdan beri. Hep çatışan bir yanım vardır. Ben şeye bağlıyorum onu, en küçük olduğum için, bir de şehirde büyüdüğüm için, birtakım değerlerim farklı onlarda. …O solculuğa rağmen, o ortak mile rağmen, aslında çok farklı insanlardık … Bunu o zaman da biliyordum, bugün de biliyorum. (7)

The "common ground" associated with the leftist ideology and involvement in the 70s'leftist organizations came up many times during the interview. Mostly coupled with the word "tradition" and "traditional", "the common ground" was what also what characterized most of her relationships during these times. However, what exactly constituted that common ground was much less frequently articulated than what in Nuran's character later made it impossible to fit in to that common ground: either she did not quite remember anymore, or because whatever it was, she did not believe in it anymore.

Her answer to my question regarding their activities in the Association for Middle Schools was a bit more extensive. Their primary concern was support for the students in schools, at the gates of which there would frequently be fights between the right wing and the left wing students. They also organized students in high schools, especially during the founding days of the association. She was younger than most, but was curious and excited nevertheless.

Though she did not choose to talk about it in detail, her involvement in the Association and the labor union had completely replaced her life as a student. At the age of fifteen, she would also severe her ties with her family:

> Babamdan gizli Ankara'ya gittik, çok büyük bir miting vardı. Babam öğrenmiş bunu bir yerden. Kitaplarımızı yaktı. Ben de çok asi bir tipim. Ayrılıyorum evden dedim. Küçücüğüm aslında, şimdi düşünüyorum da. Ama o zaman tabi yüklenilen sorumluluklar nedeniyle daha farklıydı, yaşla ölçülmeyecek şeyler… Ablam dedi ki tamam ben de ayrılıyorum. Ayrıldık evden. (8)

Many people from that generation have heartbreaking memories of having to burn their books, especially after 1978. Still, the episode she recalls, with her father burning their books because he wanted them to 'get an education' would sound absurd to anyone unfamiliar with the ambivalent relationship between reading books and getting an education in Turkey. Later on in her narrative, however, Nuran told me that today she understood her father; he was a 'different' kind of man -just like Nuran- and certainly not a traditionalist. All he wanted was that his children graduate from university.

The times were of further factionalization, and during the days of her departure from home, the only place they could stay was a house where people from Halkın Birliği

stayed. Nuran's friends from the Association, however, were mostly from MLSPB. Nuran's sister returned home after a couple of days, leaving Nuran in a house where she would have to avoid speculations regarding her stance, and spend most of her time outside, and go home only to sleep, so as to avoid what she feared most, "acaba beni kafalamak mı istiyorlar?" (9) she told me laughing. Though she was not yet a member of any organization at that point, seeming affiliated with the wrong group would have been a threat to her friends, she knew.

Her narrative concerning the difficulties in this strange house started a conversation regarding the emergence of factions, and I asked her whether the separation of Halkın Birliği was of a crucial importance to her. This question resulted in one of her first criticisms of the Turkish left at the time:

> O ayrılık bayağı kitleselleşmenin yaşandığı bir ortamda yaşanan bir ayrılıktı. Ama daha sonra giderek deformasyona uğradı. 77'den sonra aslında anlamsızlaştı ayrılıklar. 77'ye kadar toparlanma, gözden geçirme, bu ülkede ne yapmak lazım falan deme aşamasıydı. O aşamada normal birşeydi. Ama 77den sonra düşünsenize kaç tane sol örgüt vardı. Bütün bunların hepsi aslında gereksiz. Mesala Nicaragua'daki gibi değişik grupları bir çatı altında toplayabilecek siyasi olgunlukta,bir yapı olsaydı o yıllarda, bu ayrımların çoğu yaşanmayabilirdi. (10)

Life Within the Organization: A Brief Narrative

Her relationship with MLSPB started when there was need of a home: a friend of hers from the Association had been shot, and they needed to take care of him. She, having already left her parents' home, rented an apartment, and that was the beginning of

her relationship with the organization. When I asked her whether he was a close friend of her, she casually told me, in one sentence, that he was the man she later married. She did not mention him again however, until towards the end of the interview when she was talking about her divorce.

Nuran's interest in the organization mostly concerned theoretical issues: they held educational groups of four or five people, read and discussed. They were also organizing in schools and in neighborhoods. She simply said she was never attracted to guns, and added that that would be one of the reasons for her break away from the organization many years later.

Trying to make her speak more in detail regarding her membership in MLSPB, I found myself getting pushy. I tried turning the tape off, and asking whether I was making her uncomfortable. She said no, but that there wasn't really so much to talk about. It was only when I read the following excerpt afterwards that I realized her reluctance to speak, or perhaps what she chose not to talk about, would be as crucial to underscore:

- … ilk aldığınız sorumluluklar ev tutmak, eve gelenlere bakmaktı, değil mi?
- Öyle başladı en azından… öyle başladı…
- Ondan sonra ne oldu?
- …. Ondan sonra örgüt üyesi oldum yani (laughs).
- Örgüt üyesi olduktan sonra yani, sorumluluklarınızda değişmeler nasıl oldu?
- E atıyor tabi sorumluluklarınız.
- Artması ne demek oldu sizin hayatınızda?
- …..yani nasıl anlatabilirim bunu bilemiyorum…
- anlatmak istemiyorsanız.. her an teybi kapat-(tape off and on)
- en büyük sorumluluk şey… siz şeysiniz yani… bu sistemi değiştirmek için yola çıkmış bir insansınız…
- hm hm…
- bunun için de ne gerekiyorsa yapacaksınız… siz bu –devamını anlayabilirsiniz yani. İşte eylemin planlanmasından tutun da, işte teorik bir çalışma yapmak… bir yerde çatışmada ölmek… ne bileyim, herşey bunun

içinde bence…bu sorumluluğu aldıktan sonra… herşey kabulunuz demektir yani o noktadan sonra… …

- peki siz "bir noktadan sonra örgütlü oldum" dediniz. Örgütlü olmakla öncesi arasındaki fark neydi?
- Sevinilecek birşeydi benim için örgütlü olmak…ben böyle birşeye layığım diyorsunuz… çünkü herkes olamıyor ki onu… sizin gibi bir sürü insan var ama herkes işte o örgütlülük kısmına giremiyor…
- Örgüte kabul edilmek mi sözkonusu?
- Sonuç olarak siz…değerlendiriliyorsunuz yani…tamam diyorlar… bu da benim için sevindirici birşey oldu… … …
- Peki sonra hayatınız nasıl değişti?
- Sonra hayatım nasıl değişti?…şimdi cezaevinde kaldım 8 yıl… (11)

We are talking about the years 1974 to 1980, a period of six years, when she was occupied with MLSPB and the left movement. She had quit school, and was an active member of the organization, everything in her life was geared towards this commitment of hers, on account of which she was later sentenced to eight years. Her narrative about her involvement was curt and unenthusiastic, however. Though there were many unknowns in the story, Nuran's narrative also made me confident that subjects become telling subjects not only by way of what they choose to tell, but also by way of what they choose not to say, to omit, to not give away. And it is only through the gaps in the narrative, that one can begin to imagine the effects of trauma, the lived experience people choose to erase and, in an interview, expect the listener to fill in.

Years of Emergency State Prison: Between the Need for Solidarity and the Solitary Life

In January 1980, Nuran was arrested. The uppermost cadres of the organization were arrested in one night. "The September coup came full force", Nuran said. It seems

there was no way of knowing what exactly happened, but they followed someone, and took fifty-six people in one night.

Nuran's interrogation, characterized by violent torture in those years, lasted seventeen days: "bunu anlatmıyorum artık, o herkesin yaşadığı şeyler olduğu için… tabi orası da ayrı bir süreçtir belki yani, onu da belki ayrıca konuşmak lazımdır da." (12) She never returned to the topic.

After those seventeen days in interrogation, she was taken to Sağmalcılar, which was a prison for common criminals. Nuran recollected that the place was miserable; they slept on tables, with broken windows, in cold winter nights, "nothing very interesting" Nuran said. The only thing she stressed about her life in Sağmalcılar was the fact that she used to cover her bed with a piece of cloth, so as to have privacy, "kişiselliği seven bir insanım gerçekten." She said she did not talk to many people in Sağmalcılar. She wanted to be alone.

Her Selimiye experiences were important, however, for that was where she encountered the military coup, which, almost overnight, changed the strategies of the prison administration.

> -Selimiye önemliydi ama –darbeyi orada karşıladığım için… Bir gün bir subay geldi- oranın Kara Murat diye bir müdürü vardı… İzbandut gibi bir adam ama–burdan tavana kadar, iri yarı, şişman… Artık dedi, bundan sonra dedi, her koyun kendi bacağından asılacak, dedi…Bizim bireyselliğimiz orada başladı yani. Ben, bundan sonra öyle siyasi temsilci falan tanımıyorum dedi. Ne demekti, bundan sonra sen… tekbaşınasın. Tek başına sizi alabilir, size işkence yapabilir, ki yapıldı da tabi daha sonra bunlar. Sen… şey düşünüyorsun artık, ben yalnızım… Çünkü sen örgütlü bir insansın, binlerce insan var bir de senin gibi… O yılların en önemli şeyi… arkadaşlık duygusu… Ve olmayan birşeyi gerçekleştirmeye çalışma duygusu çok güzel duygu…Çok karşılıksız bir duyguydu… Onu daha sonraki hayatımızda hiç bulamadık… (13)

Nuran's narrative of her experiences of the coup in Selimiye was her most fluid so far. This was also the first time she was referring to her organizational experiences in the first person plural; the "we" of comradeship was coming to the fore in a stronger way than before. As she was telling me of the state politics geared towards breaking the movement through leaving individuals devoid of their organizational support systems, she also talked about a sense of solidarity which she had neglected to articulate until that point in the interview.

> …Diyelim bir yerdeyiz.. Kırk kişi kalıyoruz, on tane arkadaşım var orda, bizi ayrı yerlere dağıtıyorlar… Gözümün içine bakıyor arkadaşım… Mesela daha küçük biri, daha tecrübesiz biri… Yani ben herşeyi yapabilirim onun için. Öyle hissediyorsunuz yani, bu çok önemli birşey. Hiçbir çıkarım yok ondan, onun da benden hiçbir çıkarı yok. Hani gözlerimiz birbirine değdiğinde, herşeyi okuyabiliriz biz karşılıklı, öyle birşey vardı arkadaşlık duygusunda… (14)

The violence of the post 1980 military regime did not merely target the individuals' bodies and their psyche, but through attacks on social bonds and their cultural implications, aimed at a society anew, displacing the culture of resistance which had strengthened throughout the last two decades. It was an understood fact that stripping the prisoners of their networks of organizational support would make it even easier to strip them of their rights as individuals: in this post-1980 atmosphere of lawlessness, generally speaking, prisoners would be deprived of all that made them subjects before the coup; their networks, as well as their rights to at least protect their bodies from torture, pain; "things everyone lived through" Nuran stressed.

Nuran also told me that she was the cell representative in Selimiye, the first one to speak when Kara Murat told them that from then on, they would each be alone.

Nuran, who, since the beginning of our interview, had been emphasizing her sense of individuality was then the first one assert her togetherness with her comrades:

> …Orda temsilciydim ben, bayanlar bölümü temsilcisiydim Selimiye'de… Yani ilk konuşanlardan biriydim adam bize öyle dediğinde, artık bundan sonra, her koyun kendi bacağından asılacak dediğinde. Hayır biz böyle birşeyi kabul etmiyoruz, dedik. Biz bir bütünüz dedik, biz siyasi mahkumuz, adi suçlardan gelmedik buraya –çok önemliydi o da.. (15)

All that was solid, especially in terms of self-identification, was to be melted into air, and Nuran firmly stated her opposition to that transformation. The oppressive strategies of the emergency state were perhaps most obviously articulated in the efforts to turn political prisoners into common criminals, trying to annihilate their relations, their past, and eventually their ideology. When Nuran was first captured, she believed she would be tried on the grounds of 146/1 article of the penal code against political prisoners who encumbered the workings of the parliament in the ways stated in the constitution. She was, however, tried for article 168, for setting up guerilla organizations. The prisoners' efforts to assert their position as political prisoners would be one of the most important struggles of Nuran's ensuing years in prison, and those against which they would receive some of the harshest measures.

The idea was to leave the prisoners on their own, by themselves. No books to read, no wool to knit with. However, as Nuran says, "insan iradesi çok şeye muktedir" (16):

> Koğuşta. Örgü örmek istiyorsunuz yok, kitap yok, gazete yok… Sizi sizinle başbaşa bırakmak istiyorlar … İşin özü buydu aslında. Biz tabii bir sürü şey uydurduk o sıralar. İnsan iradesi çok şeye muktedir. Çünkü o yokluktan çok şey çıkıyor. Ne tiyatrolar yapmadık, ne… herşey ya, aklınıza gelebilecek herşey… Çok mutlu bir cezaevi süreci yaşadım ben (gülme)… Çok

> mutluydum gerçekten, çok mutluydum… Zor yanları şöyle vardı… Mesela binbir çeşit adam bir araya gelmiş…Tamam sol görüşlü ama, farklı yerlerden geliyorsunuz. Onlarla ortak birşey kurmaya çalışıyorsunuz… Arada tabi kafayı yiyenler falan da var, onları da idare etmeniz gerekiyor. Öyle bir ortamda yaşamış olmak da, sonuç olarak sizi hoşgörülü bir insan olmaya zorluyor. Yani o olumsuzluktan olumlu birşey çıkıyor aslında. Karşı tarafa karşı birlik olmak zorundasınız, sürekli onun mücadelesi var bir de… (17)

The efforts of the prison administration to leave prisoners stripped of any ties with others -the past and the future- turned into a force which brought on efforts to stay together, and perhaps more importantly to play and create together.

It was also the state which provided many people with a stronger sense of righteousness, a more solid belief in their own ideology than ever before. Regarding the days she spent in the isolation cell, alone and sometimes for fifteen days at a time -in every season, Nuran emphasized- she recalled thinking a lot, but never flinching -especially in the face of the inhumane attitudes of the administration when taken in conjunction with the good things that happened regardless, and the memories and images of others who walked the same path. The inexorable practices of the prison administration were leading to further articulations of the humanistic ideals of the left, perhaps in much purer and more sentimental ways than before :

> -Zaten düşünesiniz diye koyuyorlar onlar da… Birşeye inanmak çok önemli gerçekten ya… Yani beni hiç etkilemedi gerçekten… Hep ne kadar haklıyım ki bunlara maruz kalıyorum diye düşündüm. Çünkü çok mantıksız, gayri insani şeyler yapıyorlar, yani insan gibi görmüyorlar zaten sizi… Mesela üstünüze başınıza birşey giyiyorsunuz, onu çıkarıp almaya çalışıyorlar falan. Onu vermemek için direniyorsunuz ve dokunuyor insana bu tip şeyler. Çok fazla duygusallaşıyorsunuz cezaevinde. Başka hikayeleri de biliyorsunuz, dünyanın başka yerlerindeki insanlar… Nasıl yaşamış, neler yaşamışlar, ben de onlardan biriyim diyorsunuz … (18)

Breaking Away: A New Sense of Politics

One of the most crucial landmarks in Nuran's life story, one which would lead to irrevocable transformations in her sense of self and her sense of the world, occurred during the last year of her imprisonment. This was the time when theoretical and personal conflicts arose among the members of the organization, and her in-between stance in all of these disputes, coupled with her understanding of what was happening in the world, became a period of rupture initially in her relations with her organization, and later on in other areas of her life. She could no longer accept the uniform and immutable conceptions of the world as fixed by the left.

> -…Sonra bizim örgüt içi ayrılıklarımız başladı. Sürekli bir didişme vardı. Hep şey oldu bizim örgütümüzün içinde… Daha teorik yaklaşmak isteyenlerle daha böyle silahı seven, eylemi seven insanlar arasında her zaman bir çelişki olmuştur. Ben ikisinin de olmasından yanayım gibi bir yaklaşımım vardı her zaman. Dolayısıyla o arada kaldık, yani o ikisinin arasında bir yerde kaldık ben ve birtakım arkadaşlarım. Bu ayrılıklar, teorik şeylerin tartışılmasından çok kişisel şeylerdi… Sonra, dünyada bir sürü olay oluyor ya! Dünya bizim dünyamız değil, bambaşka bir dünya, oturup senin bunları konuşman lazım değil mi? Seni bu hale getiren varlık şartı ortadan kalkmaya başlıyor yavaş yavaş. Senin de bu yeni duruma adapte olman gerekiyor, en azından anlamaya çalışmak gerekiyor ya. Şimdi ikiz kuleleri uçurdular. Bunu anlamaya çalışmamız lazım değil mi, hiçbirimizin inanamıyacağı birşey bu…En azından çok güçlü bir devlet diyorduk Amerika, ama kağıttan kaplan gibi düştü yani kuleler…. (19)

The persistent orthodoxy regarding ideologies, and the teams formed around different viewpoints as to how to handle that orthodoxy was partly what turned Nuran away from her organization. Hard as it may have been to break from the networks of solidarity which gave her strength through the last decade or so, Nuran was mostly disturbed by the never-ending demands within the organization to take sides. In 1988,

when the world was taking a different turn especially in terms of the relationships between the communist states and their citizenry, "the old discourses could no longer explain the day" she stressed. Personal disputes which frequently overrode the theoretical ones seemed petty to Nuran and her few friends with whom she still engaged in stimulating theoretical discussions. "Biz ne boktan şeylerle uğraşıyoruz arkadaş… hay lanet olsun dedim.." She finally quit. "ondan sonra örgütten ayrıldım, kocamdan ayrıldım, ço- bu hayatımın çok önemli birşeyi benim için… işte bu ikisi çok önemli ve çok sevdiğim şeyler yani ikisini de çok seviyorum. (she laughs) iki kararımı da çok seviyorum…(she laughs) çok çok seviyorum bu iki kararımı…" (20)

The two topics which had hitherto not been articulated in detail in Nuran's narrative, that of her relations and activities within the organization, and almost as a tangent to that, her relationship with her husband, reflected one of the main points of rupture in Nuran's life. The breaking point of that "common ground"/ "ortak mil", which held things together between the people of the organization, was no longer a common ground for Nuran, and she emphasized that she loved her decision to break away. "sonra daha kişisel yaşamaya başladım herşeyi… çok önemli bir süreç o süreç benim için… tamamen kendi kararlarımla, yani bilinçli bir şekilde hayatıma yön vermeye başladım…"(21)

When I asked her how that decision changed her life, she replied in terms of breaking limits, back to the solitary way she loved so much, speaking her own words when and as she liked, and even falling in love.

> - "Hayatımı nasıl değiştirdi?… Bir kere önyargılarım kalktı, daha özgür bir insan oldum… Yani herkese ve herşeye karşı…O çok önemli birşey,

> özgürlük duygusu … öteki türlü tamam birşeye inanıyorsunuz, ama işte sınırlarınız var. Ben aklıma gelen herşeyi karşımdakiyle konuşabilmeyi öğrendim… Sonra mesela bir sevgilim oldu, öyle konuşuyorduk biz ya! Yani aklıma o anda ne eserse… Yani örgütlüyken yapamazdın bunu… Ben herkese aşık olabilirim …Çok güzel birşey… (22)

Although up to that point Nuran had not told me much about her husband, when talking about this point of rupture, I realized that her relationship with her husband was somehow tangential to her involvement in the organization. He was a more conservative person than Nuran, in organizational and theoretical issues as well as more personal viewpoints. The way Nuran puts it, "sonra dedim ki…ben… Nuran olarak yaşamak istiyorum. MLSPB'li Nuran… ya da bilmemkimin karısı olan Nuran değil. Çünkü o da bir bela yani…böyle tepeden sizi buraya koyuyorlar ya… o biraz tepedendi yani… bütün siyasetten bir sürü insana rağmen sizi seçiyor ya… o işte…. Yani yapacaksınız onu, mecbursunuz o noktada…" (23)

Her comments about her husband were reminiscent of what in those years was termed "devrim nikahı", deemed an "unchaste" sort of relationship by the anti-left circles, and a difficult form of relationship in many women activists' lives. Was Nuran evading a conversation about this very cliché understanding? Was she avoiding talking about what still intimately bothered her? Or perhaps, she was merely avoiding the topic like she avoided most things related to the tradition. It might as well be that her husband was a name she did not want me to inquire about. Regardless, that "common ground" was shaken, bringing down the relationships which tied her to that common ground, leaving a Nuran who cherished her late-found individuality, who could now begin to make sense of her womanhood, and who could now define, in her own words, the traditionalism of the tradition.

It was only later in the interview, when Nuran was talking about her own history of women's consciousness, that she mentioned that what she termed "kadınlık bilinci" had a lot to do with affording to break away:

> -… (o kadınlık bilinci de) o zaman oluştu… yani mesela mektuplaşıyorduk, o zaman aynı ruh halini taşımadığımızı farkettim ben. O ortak milin artık yetmemeye başladığı bir dönemde yaşıyorsunuz ve bunu farkediyorsunuz. Bambaşka insanlarız gerçekten. Çok gelenekçi bir ailesi var onun… Ruh halimiz bambaşka… Hiç benim hayatta beraber olamayacağım bir insan gibi mesela şu anda. (24)

Individuality never comes easy : "I wanted to change my life, that was my excuse!"

Only after that rupture was she able to define her own values, she felt. But then again, Nuran told me that this time of rupture also brought on one of the most difficult phases of her life. Her divorce brought on reactions she did not know how to handle, especially because she had chosen a path of individuality, the conceptions of which seemed non-existent in the leftist vocabulary, and likewise, in her family's vocabulary:

> - … Değişimin ilk yılları çok sancılı oluyor. Bir kere mesela eşimden ayrıldığımda, niye ayrıldın diye soruyorlar… Aileniz soruyor, arkadaşlarınız soruyor, bütün sol çevre beni tanıyor. Düşünsene üstümdeki baskıyı. Benim evlendiğim bir adamı sevmiyorum demem gerekçe değil insanlar için ya… Şok etkisi yaratıyor insanda…Ve yapayalnızdım yani orada, yapayalnızdım.
> - Ailenizin yaklaşımı neydi?
>
> -Annem kafayı yiyecekti… Resimlerimizi yan yana koyup fotoğraflar yapıyorlardı falan… Sevmiyorum da ne demek ayrıca, sevmek mi önemli bu toplumda… Herkes severek mi evleniyor yani (gülmeler)… Aşk da neymiş! Hafife alıyorlar. İnsanın hayatındaki en önemli şeyi hafife alıyorlar.… (25)

When Nuran came out of prison, she started living with a friend of hers, who had a job and supported her. She would not go back to her family's house, and immediately

needed a job. During the ensuing years, she worked in many places such as an accounting office, a co-op, a journal, and a grocery shop.

These were the times she was finding out about the changes that had taken place throughout the last decade; and most were disappointing, leading her to confirm her belief that she was all alone now. People were afraid of her past, especially when she told them who her husband was. And then there were people who wanted her to repent for her past, to declare that her ideologically oriented years were merely a kind of "infantile malady". Especially when she received these attacks from people with a leftist background, she was deeply disappointed - for that sense of togetherness was nowhere to be found.

Soon after Nuran came out of prison, she fell in love. "Love is very important in my life", she asserted laughing. The new man in her life was an intellectual, a change lover, and in touch with his feminine side. "Simply tailored for me", she said. For three or four years, they were in love, and Nuran says she learned a lot from him, and spoke in detail about the transformative powers of love. They lived together in Galata. He didn't work, she did. Once again, however, she had to face another version of traditionalism, this time from her father whom she had trusted to be very open-minded all her life:

> -Babam mesela bir gün, sen metres hayatı yaşıyorsun dedi bana (gülmeler)… Ben dedim, metres hayatı yaşamıyorum. Bana kimse bakmıyor baba. Ben bir yerde çalışıyorum, çok da güzel maaş alıyorum. Kendi evim var, kendimi geçindiriyorum… O da sevdiğim insan… işte kalıyoruz öyle, dedim. Çok kızdı. Hep böyle karşı çıkıp sonra kabullenmek zorunda kaldılar. Belki de kabullenmedi babam hiç. Mesela çocuğumun olmamasını da kabullenmedi babam. Birgün bana çocuğu olmayan insan sıfırdır, dedi. Kimseyi sevemez dedi, çocuğu olmayan insan. Gerçekten zor yani bunlarla karşılaşmak. (26)

Choosing not to get married and not to become a mother also meant challenging traditional women's roles; obtaining a kind of individual freedom, and/but simultaneously defying positions of relative power this society endows women with. Major changes of perspective brought conflict with her loved ones, dislodging the last bits of support that remained. Hence, most taxing was to carry all that change by herself, and Nuran said she found herself in a serious depression -with panic attacks, shivers and nausea- about two years after she was out of prison. She could not quite name what was happening then;

> O zaman farketmedim de…Depresyonda olduğumu… Ne bileyim ben çünkü depresyon nedir…Hep birşeye inandık ve direndik ya… Böyle şey gibi oluyorsun … senin duyguların yok sanki, sen şey değilsin…Gerçekten öyle çok çelişki yaşamıyorsun yani… Öyle çok inandın mı ama… (27)

People who knew her were surprised, they had always known a Nuran who was very strong. Regardless, it was very difficult for her to overcome the turn in her life, "bir de bütün güvendiğin şeyler ortadan kalkınca… kendini şeyde hissediyorsun, yani dayanacak birşeyin yok gibi hissediyorsun." (28)

It was time for another change, and Nuran decided to move to Paris, where her brother had been living as a political refugee. Documents of her years in prison easily brought her asylum rights in France. She only stayed with her brother's family for a short while, fifteen days perhaps, and had to leave when once again she felt they were inviting her to be like them.

A change of cities did not immediately resolve the problem though. In France, she had a very limited social life, mostly refugees she knew from Turkey. Once again, she remembers having to face condescending comments about her depression and inquisitive

remarks about her will to keep making changes in her life. Nuran was disappointed by the conservativeness she faced in Paris where she had gone thinking 'Europe', would be open-minded.

> Ondan sonra anlatıyorsun. Sürgün gitmiş mesela kendisi. İnsan sanki hayatını yalnızca sürgünlükle değiştirebilir… İnsan hayatını her biçimiyle değiştirmek isteyebilir… Bu şehirden kalkıp başka şehre gidebilir, başka şeyler yapabilir, iş değiştirebilir. Bireyselliği kavramak böyle birşey işte… ya sırf politika nedeniyle ordan oraya atlamak değil, ben de hayatımı değiştirmek istedim, işte en büyük gerekçem bu! Gerekçe arıyor adam mesela ya! Gerekçe arıyor yani…Onun için ketumumdur birazcık, yani layık olmayanlarla konuşmam çok fazla…(..)bir kere çok geri buldum Paris'i. (29)

Once again, traditionalism, in Nuran's experience, seems to have come with restrictive questions. To choose not to speak, especially with the knowledge that if she spoke, she would be pinned down with more inquisitive questions sounds as much a political decision as it is a personal strategy. And in her speech, Nuran carries the inbuilt defenses of absent words against that kind of harassment. Within the limits of the 'tradition' and 'traditionalism' she was faced with, Nuran knew that her depression, or her weak position at the time, would be associated with her alternative life style: "yani sen de herkes gibi birisiyle evlenip şöyle iki çocuk yapsaydın…" (30)

Today, Nuran believes making her own decisions as to how to live her life brought her in a way a solitary life, for she knew that being with people who were not willing to understand her would have restricted her freedom.

Still in Paris, Nuran moved in with a friend, and soon met İrfan who would be her next boyfriend. They were both in bad condition when they met; İrfan could hardly walk after an accident, he had no money and had lost his job. She was depressed, trying to figure things out, and she had no job. Luckily, a Greek friend of İrfan's offered them both

jobs in his restaurant, İrfan as a manager and Nuran as a waitress. They soon rented a place, finally on their own feet. Meanwhile, they started selling İrfan's paintings in front of a church, and then bought and sold others'. Nuran mostly enjoyed the 'freedom of the streets' (*sokak özgürlüğü*) in Paris. In Paris, she started wearing mini skirts and low cut shirts again. She also realized that sex was important for her, distantly recalling the days when she did not have any desire to have sex with her husband.

Financially they were comfortable as well, and what brought them back to Turkey eventually was their restricted social life, among the political refugees, very few of whom thought and lived like them : "yani çok geri bir çevre, gerçekten çok geri bir çevre vardı." (31) The end of her narrative about Paris brought what she had refrained from articulating through her narrative, and perhaps filled in the gaps of her stories regarding the movement.

> Solcular toplumdan daha geri, onu söyleyeyim. Çünkü solcular belli klişelere bağlı kalmak zorunda oldukları için, hep o klişeler ışığında bakıyorlar herşeye. Ama toplum değişiyor, değiştikçe de kabulleniyor. Toplumun daha çok ilerleme şansı var solculardan. Solcunun kriteri var, şablonu var, yirmi yıl önce de oradan bakıyordu, bugün de oradan bakıyor… Bana orospu gözüyle falan bakıyorlardı… Yani bir kadın nasıl özgür olsun bu toplumda? (32)

She told me that she had not been involved in politics since she had come out of prison. That it was different now, not like the 70s when being conscious of the world involved participation in that massive movement. Though that movement had positive end results and she had no regrets, she was no longer interested in "daily politics".

Nevertheless, one could sense that she had changed her conception of politics, and in a sense had acquired a new notion, which is more encompassing that the leftist ideology of the 70s. Her notion of women's consciousness, which simultaneously lead to

and was formulated by her divorce, her love, her movement on the streets, and her ability to break away from 'tradition' eventually motivated her to identify 'politics' in much broader terms.

> Gündelik politikayı sevmiyorum artık…Politik bir insanım, sadece o bildiğimiz politikayı sevmiyorum. Yoksa hayatımın herşeyinde … aşkımda da işte… herşeyimde politika var… Başka türlü kavrıyorum artık ben… (33)

For the last five years, Nuran and İrfan have been running a frame shop in İstanbul and living together. Nuran says they don't have plans for the future, but that ideally, she would like to live in two places –in Paris and in İstanbul- around the year, to break the monotony.

CHAPTER 5

PERIHAN'S STORY: MORALS OF THE REVOLUTION, MORALS OF A PATRIOT, MORALS OF WOMANHOOD: STRONG CONVICTIONS, AN 'HONORED' WOMAN

In the one week I spent in Datça, where I spent most of my time among Perihan's community of friends and neighbors, I seldom met people who did not call her "Perihan Abla". The respect she received from those around her was reminiscent of the respect traditionally called upon for elders in Turkish society. She was a 'good' woman in the eyes of many around her; people frequently dropped by her house either for good home cooked food and a cup of tea or for a short chat and some advice. Though I was initially confused about what won her such distinctive respect in the eyes of many in the Datça community, I soon realized that it was her very set ways of going about things, her emphasis on acting primarily in line with her morals, and through these, the mother figure she became for many more apart from her daughter in Datça.

In her narrative of her life story as well, "Ben haklıydım"/ "I was right" was a phrase Perihan repeated many times. A woman of strong convictions, through her emphasis on notions of 'right', justice and honor, Perihan was often emphasizing her situatedness in her moral conceptions, and simultaneously making references to what kinds of norms and conceptions she situated herself beside and against. The intricate

articulation of her sense of righteousness was all references to the forces and meanings which infiltrated her subjectivity and made up the 'rights' and 'wrongs' of a lifetime.

Her narratives on conceptions of justice and honor were simultaneously addressing situations in which she was faced with the oppressive and exploitative aspects of the world, and had to put up a struggle; violent at times, violently exhausting at others. Generally speaking, Perihan's articulation of her life story presents the reader with a pattern of constant opposition to the dominant orders of state and society, and sacrifice for the ideals shaped by her enduring sense of morality. The parameters of 'revolutionary morality' which -in Perihan's own words- has been a constant in her life, also refer to the levels, actors and forces of formation for that morality on a variety of levels. Within the expression of that morality, one can detect the opposition to the paternalistic strategies of the Turkish state as well as a patriotic rhetoric regarding the republic, defensive and offensive attitudes towards hostile attacks of the ultra nationalist youth, and expressions of 'honor' as articulated within the boundaries of an Alevi family. The entangled threads of meaning among these different levels also point to the continuities between what is deemed 'public' and 'private'.

In this chapter, a reading of Perihan's narrative, with special emphasis on her sense of morality and its implications will be studied. In these terms, her approach to being an Alevi, a leftist, a revolutionary, a patriot, and perhaps most ambivalently a woman, -the narratives regarding which are densely intertwined- will be our leading paths to the social history in which these conceptions were formulated and circulated.

Primary Identities and Coming of Age: Conceptions of Honor, Opposition and the Left in an Alevi Family (and Beyond) / "This is a hypocritical society"

Perihan was born in 1955 in Erzincan to a family of seven, with two sons and three daughters. Her first words in the interview -abrupt and concise- represented the primary aspects of her self-identification, underlining what would constitute the enduring parameters of her life story.

"Ben köylü bir ailenin kızıyım. Alevi kökenli bir ailenin kızıyım ve ben ateistim. Ailem Alevi, demokrat, ateist bir aile." (1)

As she would make sure to emphasize several times during our interview, Perihan's family, and her early life experiences as articulated and commented upon within the confines of that family have been the main influences regarding her self-identification, her ideology and her stance regarding how life should be. As would become obvious later in her narrative, Perihan's family were never part of the majority, and on more than one level, being in the minority confronted by an often oppressive majority was what shaped her oppositional character. Their positioning in the minority, however, was not merely conditioned by their Alevi background, but as Perihan's initial remarks insinuated, also involved their class background, and their religious and political stance as well. All in all, the beginning of her narrative was telling of what made the majority deem them different, and what would call for either dissimulation or else an

oppositional stance as they expressed their identity and their political and religious stance in public.

The need for dissimulation, as Perihan experienced it early in life, was also inherent in her parents' approach to the Kurdish language. When I asked her what she remembered from her childhood in Erzincan, the fact that the children were not allowed to speak Kurdish was one of her first comments. Rather, they had to learn to speak Turkish without an accent:

> "Bize hep savundukları şey oldu, eğer şiveniz bozulursa, insanlar sizinle olan ilişkilerine sınır koyacaklar, sizi siz olarak kabul etmeyecekler… O da köyden, köy kökenli oldukları için, hep horlandıkları için, küçümsendikleri için, dışlandıkları için; bizim dışlanmamızı istemediler."(2)

The assimilationist politics of the Turkish Republic had been internalized by the people who surrounded them, and Perihan's parents were aware of that. The parents would speak Kurdish with each other, but with the children, they simply avoided the topic; "Konuştuklarında, işte ne konuşuyorsunuz, diye sorduğumuzda, İngilizce konuşuyoruz, ya da Fransızca konuşuyoruz derlerdi." (3)

Perihan remembers her early childhood years vaguely but fondly. In a large house with eight rooms, they lived rather comfortably in Erzincan where her father was working at the Office of Agricultural Production. When Perihan was six years old, her father decided to move to Ankara for the children's education. He was illiterate himself, and wanted his children to graduate from university, to be able to "defend themselves", and "do good work" for society. Though eventually none of his children could take their studies far, Perihan today believes he was proud of his children nevertheless.

Early in her narrative, Perihan also pointed to the fact that her notions of pride, and of how to be a good person originated in her parents' approach to their children.

Perhaps in the same way that they did not want their children to speak Kurdish, her parents cautioned her not to perceive herself as a 'woman'.

> "bana hiç kız çocuğu gibi davranmadılar. Bizde kız-erkek ayrımı olmadığı için ailede, kendimi erkek çocuğu gibi gördüm. Hala da kendimi erkek gibi görüyorum. Yani kadın olarak görmek istemiyorum… Toplumda kadınlar üçüncü sınıf vatandaş. Kadının yeri yok. Kadın lafından nefret ettiğimden kaynaklanıyor… Kadın olmak… aslında güzel. Kişi olarak baktığında, bir bütün olarak baktığında, yani insan olarak bakılırsa çok güzel. Ama insan olarak bakılmadığı için karşı çıkıyorum kadın olayına. Feminist değilim. Yani onu açıkça söyliyim. İnsan olgusu var; kadın-erkek diye bir ayrım gözetmiyorum. Kadınlara da o yüzden kızıyorum. Kendilerini insan olarak görsünler, insan olduklarını hatırlasınlar. Hep babam bize onu öğretti. Sen.. çocuksun, büyüdüğünde, sen.. insansın; kendini insan gibi gör. Kadın gibi görme, ya da erkek gibi görme, insan gibi gör. Beni yetiştiren ailem oldu." (4)

Before anything else, she was to be a 'person', and ask to be regarded as such. Once again, the awareness of a subordinate position in society, this time of women, required a call for equality under the rhetoric of personhood, and if need be, just like the forgetting of a mother tongue, the obliteration of the gender difference which would cause her painful experiences in society.

Politics were introduced into Perihan's life with the executions of the Democrat Party leaders. In Perihan's narrative, their move to Ankara coincided with the first time Perihan ever saw her father cry. He had served in the Turkish army for four years, and knew the pain families endured in the face of sudden death. "He wasn't even a supporter of DP", Perihan added. That was the time when she knew she should take a stance against capital punishment. The memory was vivid in her mind, and gave her reason to formulate her feelings regarding violence as well, a theme which would be inherent in her relation to the movement, the fascists and the state.

> "İdamlara karşı ordan gelen birşeyim var. Bebekken, Sıdal'ın[3] yaşındayken, idamlara karşıydım..İnsanların öldürülmesine karşıydım. Şiddete karşıydım. Halen de karşıyım ama şiddete şiddetle cevap vermek gerektiğini de düşünüyorum… … İnsanlar ölmeye başladıkça, işte o cenazelerdeki şeylerde, şiddetten yana olmaya başladım ve öyle de gidiyorum. Öyle de gidiyor. Yani biri beni döverken yanağımı uzatamam. O haksızlık gibi geliyor bana. Yani öbür yanağıma da vur, gibi…" (5)

When they first arrived in Ankara, they moved into a very run down house, and lived there for a short while until her father sold the house in Erzincan, and the family moved into a larger house where they lived rather comfortably until 1969.

1969 was an important turning point in the family's life, and perhaps the formative year of Perihan's politicization. In 1969, her father was in a car accident, his hipbones were smashed, and he had to quit work. All economic assets of the family were spent on hospital expenses. As the youngest daughter of the family who would later be able to return to her studies, Perihan quit school to take care of her father for three years, while her mother started working as a cleaning woman in other people's houses; "düşün evde işçi çalıştırırken, ev işçiliğine başladı annem"(6). On days when her mother was sick, it was Perihan who replaced her mother and went to clean houses, just so her mother would not lose the job they needed so much.

These years were formative for Perihan, she says, because at this time she found out what poverty was all about, and how it was so very difficult to stay 'proud' in such situations. "I even had to beg" she remembers, and tells me of a landmark episode which established her rage against the state:

> "Kızılay yardım veriyor bu tür durumlara… Bir kere gittiğimizde, devletten o zaman nefret ettim. Annemle gittim… Sıdal'dan biraz daha serpilmiştim; göğüslerim yeni çıkmıştı… Oradaki memur, kiralık yerin var mı, dedi. Annem anlamadı. Köy kadını, e yok, dedi. Var ya yanında, dedi.

[3] Her daughter who was 11 years old at the time of the interview.

> Resmen beni göstererek. Annem gözyaşları içinde çıktı. Çocuktum. Ne dediğini anlamamıştım. Verdikleri işte un ve pirinç. Bulgur veriyorlar. Onu hiç unutmuyorum. Devlete karşı orda isyan başladı içimde." (7)

The episode not only embarrassed the fourteen year old young girl unable to grasp what exactly was happening, but put forth other connections between different forms of exploitation and shame once her father decided to go back to Kızılay, to find the man who shamed his family:

> Sonra bir gün babam ayağa kalktı. Bu olayı annemle babam konuştu. Babam bana dedi ki yürü gideceğiz. O adamı bana göster…Annem sarı bir elbise dikmişti, kırmızı biyeleri vardı, kolsuz, yeni bir elbise… Dikmen'den Kızılay'a indik. Kızılay derneğine gideceğiz. Otobüsten inerken, babam tabi sakat oturuyor, koltuk değnekleriyle, kadının biri elime ikibuçuk lira para verdi. Ve çok ağladım. Yani dilencilik dediğim o. Ben dilenci değilim dedim, almiycam o parayı. İşte babamı kolundan tutup kaldırıp indiriyorum, oturuyor yanımda… ve çocuğum, o cüsseyi kaldırmak çok zor… Babamın bir gözyaşını da orda gördük. Çok zoruna gitti. Hadi dedi, eve gidiyoruz… O parayı benden aldı –ki ihtiyacımız olan o parayı- bir başkasına verdi… …. Eve geldik ve adamın yanına gidemedik. Yani babam o gücü kendinde bulamadı. (8)

This landmark episode was the first of many where her body and hence her status as a woman replaced others' perception of her as a 'person'. This kind of harassment was precisely what her parents had warned her about, but they had not been able to protect their daughter from what they knew so well. The experience, which took place at a time when Perihan was barely moving out of childhood into womanhood, connected many parameters for her: poverty, the social services of a paternalistic state, her father's pride, and although she doesn't comment on it in detail, the shame and embarrassment she had to face when confronted with the violent harassment of others' eyes on her maturing body. As will be evident further in her narrative, her notions of pride and ideology of opposition are wrought within all these parameters. Perihan was finding out at an early

age that hierarchies of inequality and exploitation encompassed a wide range of relationalities with devastating consequences for a 'proud' family.

As Perihan remembered those painful days, she added that now, many years later, she was not ashamed to tell this story, as many others would be. She found these experiences, the striking contrast between their lives during the years of comfort and poverty, as well as the physical and psychological hardships her family endured to be the foundation of her political stance later on. Through her narrative of this episode, Perihan was also revealing what for her constituted a strong impetus to participate in the left movement, emphasizing her family's notion of pride and a continuous thread from her family into the left.

> "(Babam) çok yiğit bir adamdı; yani onur duyduğum, yaşamım boyunca tek onur duyduğum… bir Che'ye hayranlık duydum, bir Mahir'e hayranlık duydum, en sonunda da babama hayranlık duydum… (..) o yüzden aileme minettarım… belki ondan dolayı, yılgınlık yaşamıyorum. Yaptıklarımdan ve yapacaklarımdan pişmanlık yaşamıyorum, hepsinin arkasında duruyorum."(9)

This episode, which Perihan told me was crucial regarding the formation of her political stance, was linked to two other narratives, which both point to experiences when Perihan felt she had to resort to physical violence in order to advocate what she knew was right, to uphold the sense of pride, with all its implications.

> …eve çok şikayet gelirdi benden. Çok yaramazdım. Okulda çocukları döverdim. Birgün böyle okula geri döndüğümde, okulda Kızılbaşlar… işte çingeneler, ana bacı tanımıyorlar, babalar kızlarıyla yatıyor, gibi lafları duyunca, benden büyük bir kız… onu dövdüm. Çok kötü dövmüşüm ki, akşam annesiyle şikayete geldiler… … annem böyle –akşam yemek yiyorduk masada- yemek yiyene kadar sesini çıkarmadı… yemek bitti, masayı topladıktan sonra –birlikte topladık- annem bana birşey yapmiyacak. Çünkü ben haklıyım, gelip evde de anlattim. Eline bir bıçak aldı annem, ben sana dedi, eve olay getirme, dışardaki olay dışarda kalacak, ne yapıyorsan

> yap ama evine şikayet getirme benim kapıma diye beni dövmeye kalktı. Ama dövemedi, elini kaldıramadı... (10)

That night, Perihan ran away from home, and stayed at her sister's for a few nights. In the meantime, however, when she went to school the next day, she beat that girl harder: "sen neden benim evime şikayet getiriyorsun… niye benim evimin huzurunu kaçırıyorsun?!" (11) When the matter was finally taken to the school administration, she did not mind it as much. Perihan emphasized that this was the first time she had heard these insults, and was confronted with the 'hypocrisy' of the society she lived in. Children at school who would play with her when she had money, would turn their backs on her when they started talking about Alevis in religion class. Perihan was exempt from the class, and had no way of defending herself in the classroom. She believed she should stand up to the offense somehow and felt she had to resort to physical violence, because she knew -just like her parents did- that she was right.

In Perihan's narrative, there was always a sense of the household -the family grounds- as almost a holy site, apart from the rest of the world she had to inhabit. As she went ahead with what she thought was the right action to protect her family from the indignity posed on them, the main problem involved would be the displeasing interventions her home would have to bear from the outside world. She was not afraid of the consequences of what she did, unless those consequences arrived home, breaking the peaceful unity of her family.

Perihan's sense of duty regarding the protection of her family's reputation was also evident in her sense of duty to protect the honor of the leftist revolutionaries. As mentioned before, her respectful indebtedness to her family, and especially to her father

was also closely related to her respect for the left movement, whose members she categorized with her father as the epitome of 'pride'. Hence, her future activities within the left, and even those struggles she put up in her younger years, were at one with the views and norms of her family, and were almost never disapproved by them. What was forbidden in state schools would be acceptable on family grounds which, anyway, stood apart from the meanings and ideologies endorsed by those schools.

> Denizler asıldığında ortaokuldaydım. İlk eylemimi orada yaptım. Müzik hocasını dövdüm. Bir bayandı. Onlara, işte komünistler… böyle asılır hergeleler, deyince, ben de öğretmenin üstüne yürüdüm. Bir hafta okuldan uzaklaştırma aldım. Çocukça bir eylemdi, ama güzel bir eylemdi… Ailem hiç tepki vermedi. Haklıydım çünkü. Ben haklı olduğum şeyin arkasında hep kaldım. Bana öyle öğretildi çünkü. Haklıysan, sonuna kadar hakkını savun. Babam gitti müdürle konuştu, bu okuldan uzaklaştırmayı gerektiren bir neden değil, Türkiye olağanüstü durumlar yaşıyor. Uzaklaştırmadan, konuşarak halletmek varken, uzaklaştırmanın daha büyük tepkilere neden olacağını söyledi… Ondan sonra, halkevlerine gitmeye başladım. (12)

Perihan's indebtedness to her family, in terms of the formation of her values, is perhaps the utmost indebtedness in her life, one which seems to have caused a smooth journey for Perihan from within the confines of her family into that of the People's Houses, and the left. Likewise, her approach to violence seemed to be another continuity in her life, from the norms of the family, into that of the left. Pointing towards an understanding of justice, Perihan told me early in her narrative that her mother would never beat one child at a time, but would give a beating to all of them if one of them made a mistake: "Tek tek dövmezdi; o yüzden de hata yapmamaya çok özen gösterirdik. Çünkü herhangi birimizden dolayı diğerlerinin dayak yemesi, vicdani bir rahatsızlık vermeye başlıyordu. O annemin bir terbiye şekliydi belki, eğitim şekliydi bize karşı.. …" (13) Rather than the problematic sides of violence as such, Perihan, and probably her parents, saw violence as an issue related to justice, to be implemented when needed. That

sense of justice not only included punishment, but also called for a strong sense of solidarity among children, and in Perihan's future experiences, among the oppressed people of the country. Perihan, most probably like her parents, would be victim to different forms of violence throughout her life; and had had to take a defensive, and proud stance against it.

After her father recovered, throughout Perihan's middle school years, her father accommodated boys from the villages who had immigrated to Ankara for their university education. Perihan's introduction to the theories of the left, and her first feelings of love coincide with these years. Reminiscent of many stories of first love told by members of her generation her first interaction with an older boy from the left involved a mix of feelings, ranging from respect to love, for Perihan, who was not quite sure where to situate herself with him:

> "Evimizde kalan üniversite öğrencilerinin çok büyük etkisi vardı. O insanların konuşmaları beni etkiliyordu. Türkiye politikasını konuşuyorlardı, Denizler konuşuluyor, Mahirler konuşuluyordu. Hayranlık duyuyordum. O ilk aşkım da o hayranlıktan gelen birşeydi… cinsellik yoktu, ama onun yanında kendimi çok mutlu, güvende, koruma altında. O beni eğitecek, bana birşeyler öğretecek. Hiçbir zaman elimi tuttuğu zaman haz almadım, yani bir mutluluk duymadım. Farklı bir duyguydu yaşadığım, ama..aşıktım adama… Daha yaşım çok küçük, ama onun yanında, ne ismini söyleyebliyordum, ne abi diyebiliyordum. (14)

The norms of her revolutionary years were being established in her father's house, in an all-encompassing way. Although today she sees it as disconnected from her sexual desires, ("yani, devrimci olması, sosyalist olması, yurtsever olmasıydı benim hayranlığım") (15), her first feelings of attraction to the opposite sex, also involved learning and growing into the symbolic world of the left. The 'older brother' in question would urge her to keep reading everything, but especially books "on the laboring classes,

surplus value, people, and workers" Perihan said. Her first love also took her to a nightclub one day where people were drinking and dancing, "is this the life you wanted to see, is this the life you miss?" he would ask. Perihan hated the nightclub, and the people in it.

When Perihan told her father about her love, she received her first answers regarding how to use her now mature body. She was sixteen at the time, but has a vivid memory of the conversation which coupled the fact of an hypocritical society and a woman's need to protect her body :

> "Babama anlattığımda babam beden senin bedenin dedi. Yapacağın en ufak bir hata bedeninle dedi, yaşamın boyunca acı çekersin dedi. Bu toplum dedi, iki yüzlü bir toplum dedi, yani seni sen olarak kabul etmez, bakire olmazsan gittiğin, evleneceğin insan bunu başta kabul etse bile, ilerki yıllarda bunu başına kalkıcaktır dedi. Ona göre arkadaşlığını belirle, dedi. Yani sınırı ona göre koy. El ele tutuşabilirsin, öpüşebilirsin, ama bedenini paylaşma. Eğer kaldırabileceksen bunu, bedenini paylaş, beni ilgilendirmiyor, dedi. Ve o hep, işte, karşı cinslen dostluklarımda, babamın o lafı hep kulağımda kalmıştır. (16)

However, when Perihan got too involved with the boy, and began to neglect her classes, her father told her he didn't want her to see him anymore. After she failed her classes in eighth grade, she was sent to her uncle's house in the Black Sea region for the summer vacation. Her uncle was a very political man, active especially in the labor union circles. Her uncle's comments regarding Perihan's involvement with the boy needs attention, especially because they point to the shifting forms of morality throughout the 70s regarding the notion of chastity and honor, at least in certain circles:

> Amcama gönderdi, amcama söyledim, sevgilimle görüşmemi engelliyor… Amcam iki arada kaldı, bir çocukla tanışalım, dedi. Amcama birlikte gittik, tanıştırdım. Amcam çocuğu çok sevdi… çok beğendi. O zaman Dev Genç'liydi çocuk..THKP-C'liydi.. Yatmak istiyorsan yat kız! dedi.. Kaybedecek hiçbir şeyin yok, dedi. En azından onurlu bir insanla birlikte

> olmuş olursun. Bakireliğin hiçbir önemi yok, dedi, zar parçasının hiçbir önemi yok, dedi. Sen kendini iyi göreceksen, yap, dedi… Oğlanın yanında bana söyledi ne yapacağımı. Senin namusun iki bacağının arasında değil, dedi… Senin namusun yüreğinde ve beyninde, dedi. Bakire olmadığın için seninle evlenen insan evlenmiyorsa, dedi, siktir et dedi, pezevengi –aynen bak- pezevenktir, dedi çünkü insan değildir hayvandır, dedi. Yatmadım… (gülmeler) (17)

In a country where uncles traditionally do not tell their nieces to go sleeping with boys before marriage, Perihan's uncle seems to shift the parameters of 'honor' from the girl's virginity, to the boy's pride as a leftist youth. It is perhaps still the man's standing which defines the 'pride' involved in the relationship, but the episode seems important because Perihan was allowed a choice regarding her chastity. Perhaps because of her father's earlier comments, however, and also because her feelings toward him were more about respect than sexual love, she still chose not to.

Acting 'right' within the institutions of the left: People's Houses, Labor Unions, MLSBP and Marriage.

That year was another turning point for Perihan. After her first love left for Zonguldak to work as an intern in the coalmines, she attended her first protest and burned an American flag. She was detained by the police, and Perihan tells the story in a nonchalant manner: "polisten ilk falakamı orda yedim… ayaklarımın altı çok kötü şişmişti. Sonra çocukça bir olay olduğunu görünce –onlara göre çocukçaydı- bıraktılar beni.." (18) Though this was her first public protest, it was certainly not the first time she was confronted with violence.

Soon after that, she left school because she had to work, not willing to be dependent on her family. She started working at the Ministry of Trade, initially as a security guard, later as the secretary of one of the directors. This would be the place where she would learn about unionization, and would soon become a member of the Tiftik-Sen. She was soon leading educational groups among the workers, on a wide number of subjects, ranging from issues of health and safety to "the awareness of how much profit the capitalist owners were making off of them."

Simultaneously, she started frequenting the People's Houses, and later the CHP Youth Branches. In People's Houses, she emphasized, it wasn't only the political activities such as the educational meetings and the organizational activities of the slum areas, but also those courses for self- sufficiency (reading, writing, knitting and sewing) that attracted her.

During these years she was detained several times, although she chose not to talk about these experiences in detail, merely saying that she was usually beaten, interrogated and then let go. One of these detentions happened while she was sitting in the People's House in Dikimevi, with her identification card on her. She remembers her amazement at the hostility towards the young people who were doing good work in the very institutions the state had established itself:

> Halkevinde oturuyorsun.. Atatürk'ün kurduğu halkevleri… ve ben Atatürk hayranıyım. Atatürk'ü severim, yani Mustafa Kemal'i.. Kemalist değilim. Ama Atatürk'ü severim, yaptıklarından dolayı. Atatürk'ün kurduğu bir halkevi, ve TBMM'nden bu halkevlerine ödenek çıkıyor… Halkevleri üyesisin ve bundan dolayı gözaltına alınmak çok kötü… Halkevlerinin üyesinin, gidiyorsun orada kitap okuyorsun, sohbetler yapıyorsun, çayını kendin götürüp demliyorsun, içiyorsun…. İnsanlarla bir oluk içindesin… Gecekondulara gidip yardım ediyorsun, okuma yazma kursları açmıştık kendimiz, inşaat yapanların inşaatlarını yapıyorduk… Bahçesi bellenecek

> insanların bahçelerini belliyorduk, kadınlar işe gidiyorlarsa çocuklarına bakıyorduk. Halkevlerinin kuruluş amacı oydu… Halkın bir arada olması, halkın paylaşımı, varolanın paylaşımıydı… Bundan dolayı ilk alındığımda çok tepki koydum …polis geldi, apar topar hepimizi aldı götürdü. (19)

Perihan's confidence in the foundational principles of the Republic as epitomized in the deeds of Atatürk, and as such in the existence of the People's Houses, also points to important continuities between the ideology of Kemalism and the 70s' left. The ideal of a collective family of citizens, inherent to the ideology of the Republic, was one Perihan and many others of her generation shared. As Perihan told me later in that interview, she was not against the Turkish Republic and its ideology, but she was opposing "those few people who held state power in their hands" at the time.

Regardless, Perihan's bewildered disappointment also refers to a point of rupture in the 70s, when young people of the left plainly became the 'other's of the state, to the point of destruction what belief they had left in its authority. The People's Houses, where the citizenry would come together as a family, had now become threatening spaces to the state, and would be dismantled hastily, and if need be, violently. The Turkish Republic, which for the last fifty years had advocated a political rhetoric in which the state was the father and the citizenry were its children, was now fiercely turning against its own children, leaving them devoid of the already weakened ties of belonging they had with those in authority.

The perceptions about the People's Houses were not the only continuities between the foundational ideologies of the Republic and the radical left. CHP, with its post-1960 rhetoric of the 'left of center' politics was supported by many in the left. Its new ideology, in conjunction with the party heritage dating back to the founding years of the Republic, was embraced by many who belonged to the leftist factions. Perihan's memory

regarding her dismissal from her job because she was reading Mahir Çayan's writings at the Ministry of Trade, is an example of the expectations within the left of Ecevit's CHP, expectations, however, which were often articulated with the words and attitudes of the radical left.

> "Bir gün genel müdürlükte kadının biri elimde Mahir Çayan'ın Toplu Yazılar'ı vardı… onu okuyordum… fabrikada… beni işten uzaklaştırdı, attı… sendikacıydım yapamazdı… araya bir sürü insanlar girdi. Sonra Genel müdürün masasına bir yumruk vurdum. Sen CHPlisin, sen aydınsın, sosyal demokratsın, ama işçiyi sömürüyorsun, sen örgütlenmeden yana değilsin, sen CHP'nin parti tüzüğüne aykırı davranıyorsun….Sen sağda yer alan birisin, bu makamı terk edeceksin, diye masasına yumruk vurdum, cam kırıldı…Beni tekrar işe aldı…" (20)

Perihan was twenty at the time, and after this experience, she decided to become a lawyer. Her intention was to fight for the rights of the working class. At twenty, she returned school and started Anıttepe Night School.

At the age of twenty, her sense of right and wrong, and of evildoers and good people had been strongly formulated. In line with the growing tension between the right and the left everywhere in Turkey, the 'fascists' in Perihan's words, had become her primary enemies. In her mind, they could not be deemed civilians; they were much more closely connected to the "few people who held the state power in their hands". Her revolutionary identity was shaped in opposition to the ultra nationalists, at least as much as it was shaped by what she had lived through vis-à-vis the state in her youth. Confronted by violence, the perpetrators of which were the ultra nationalists and the state which supported them, the leftists, according to her, were merely asking for their right to a peaceful, fair and equal life.

> Faşistlerin taradığı… taramalarda arkadaşlarım öldü, çatışmalarda öldü… Bizde silah yoktu… Silahı hiçbir zaman elimize almadık yani ben silahı elime almadım. Çünkü silaha karşıydım… Ama arkadaşlarım… bir korsan gösteride polisin kalkıp onlara silah sıkması… çok kötü bir olay… Yani onların elinde hiçbirşey yok. Bir tek yürekleri vardı…elleri ya, parmakları… çocuktuk ama o eylemler… ee.. çok temizdi eylemler, yani bağımsız Türkiye istiyorduk… Genel af istiyorduk, asgari ücretin yükselmesini istiyorduk, işte sağlık koşullarımız düzelsin diye eylemler koyuyorduk… Faşistler ve polislerin karşımızda olmaması gerekiyordu… Yaşama hakkı istiyorduk, insan gibi yaşamak istiyorduk… Hastane köşelerinde insanlar ölmesin istiyorduk, kadınlar bedenlerini satmasın istiyorduk… genelevler kapatılsın istiyorduk, kadın meta olmasın….İşte 5-6 genç, kızlı erkekli, tepkilerimiz dile getirelim diyorduk. (21)

At Anıttepe Night School, Perihan also became affiliated with MLSPB. Though she also said that among the reasons of her affiliation was the organization's commitment to reaching large masses among the laboring class and the state workers, her narrative regarding MLSPB was strangely reminiscent of the feelings she had for her first love.

> "Oraya (MLSPB) nasıl geçtin diye soracaksın şimdi bana… dedim ya ben hayatımda bir babama, bir Mahir Çayan'a aşıktım, Che'ye aşıktım… Che'nin duvarda kocaman resmini oyarak yapmıştım, duvara oymuştum… ve ona tapıyordum, hala öyle benim için çok büyük bir kahramandır. Mahir'in toplu yazılarını okuyarak… Ve mahir'i sahiplenmek, onun düşüncelerini sahiplenmek, onun düşüncelerini hayata geçirmek…" (22)

Throughout her narrative, entangled around the word "love" was her commitment to the left. Sexuality, just like in her relationship with her first love, could be detected in a secondary position, if at all. Continuities in Perihan's life could be easily traced through her situatedness in an almost ideological non-sexuality. Her father had warned her about the hypocrisy of the society she was living in and told her to keep her 'womanhood' to herself, in the background. Her uncle had in a sense carried that warning to another level by telling her that though she had a choice regarding her sexuality, she would have to connect the morals of her mind – i.e., her commitment to the leftist ideology – with the

activities of her body, and at moments of conflict, the morals of her mind would have to supersede the desires of her body.

Now, within the limits of the movement, sharing, communal life and friendship were the primary ideals, leaving issues related to sexuality to the limited space of marriage: "yani..yarin yanağından gayri hep beraber sözü vardır ya…"(23) The trustworthiness of the friendships within the organization were also based on this fact, and the norms they established for revolution were in a sense even more rigid than the ones her father and her uncle had formulated.

> Yok kavgamız olmazdı… Yani tartışırdık, ama küsme aşamasında, birbirimize tavır koyacak aşamada kavgalarımız olmadı. Ancak şey olurdu- yani muhbirler olursa aramızda. Ona karşı tavrımız vardı, yani işte onu dışlardık… görüşmezdik.. yani haber verirdik, nereye gittiyse, bu insan muhbirlik yapıyor… dikkat edin… mesela herhangi biri bir kız arkadaşımıza farklı baktıysa… işte ona karşı, kardeşim eğer ciddiysen ilişkinde, bu insanla evlenmek zorundasın… ama bu kızla gönül eğlendiremezsin, ya da bu oğlanla gönül eğlendiremezsin… yani dostluklar cinsellik üzerine kurulmamalıdır. (24)

The world of the organization was new for Perihan, but it also replicated the norms about sexuality which she had heard of and accepted before. The organization, in that sense, did not require much of a rupture in the way she perceived her womanhood; the space in which she would participate in comradeship was one which required an obliteration of gender differences:

> "yani, kadın olarak erkek olarak bakılmıyordu…orası çok güzeldi… hem güzeldi hem de kötüydü… yani bir kadın –bir kız, kendini bayan olarak görmüyordu…erkek gibi görüyordu… ya da bir erkek, işte bizim yanımızda kendini kız gibi görüyordu." (25)

They had no time to "waste" on personal and sexual desires, occupied as they were with the protests against violence in prisons, the deaths and the overall struggle for revolution. Even at the time of our interview, one could sense that Perihan was a sound proponent of revolutionary morality, which tied in with all components of life, regulating all relations which could go against the revolutionary purposes, their reason for existence.

Bonds of Marriage, Bonds of the Revolution: "Commitment to Share Life"

Perihan's narrative of her first engagement to a man reveals her sternness regarding these ideals and her strong opposition to anything outside of these parameters. For a year and a half, she remained engaged to this man, whom she did not love, but respected. He was a member of TİP and well informed about the theories of the left. Perihan believed that marriage would enable her to learn a lot from him, attend his discussions with the students, and most importantly, she would be able to devote more time to her revolutionary activities; since she could then afford to quit work, and start organizing around the clock, night and day. Only later, when she came home one night having been beaten violently by the ultra nationalists, that she realized life with him would be no better than without him. What he wanted was a wife like an accessory, and he certainly was not respectful enough of her political commitment. Perihan would have none of that.

> ...birgün MHP'lilerden çok kötü dayak yedim. Hayatımda yediğim – MHP'lilerden yediğim- ilk dayağımdı… Bir buçuk ay yataktan kalkamadım…Belimdeki fıtığın bir tanesi o dayaktan kalma… gece… …. Afişten geliyordum… Dikmen'de kendi bölgem, kendi evimin olduğu yer, tam evimin kapısı- yani annemlerin eviyle dayak yediğim arasındaki yer bir on metre var… Herhalde bir on kişi falan varlardı… Hepsi erkek… Ve dayak yedim, silah kabzalarıyla… Kulağım falan yarıldı, suratım gözlerim şişti..Çok kötü dayak yedim, tek yaptığım, işte kahrolsun faşizm diye

> bağırmak… Slogan atarak sesimi duyurmaya çalıştım, "annem yapmayın etmeyin" diye değil… Komşum ışığı yakınca bırakıp kaçtılar, eve sürüklenerek girdim. O zaman nişanlıydım…nişanlım kalktı, bana sen, dedi , bir bayansın… bu saate sokakta senin ne işin var, iyi olmuş dedi… Ben de çıkardım parmağımdaki alyansı, suratına attım. Siktir ol git dedim… İstemiyorum seni. Eğer ben dayak yiyip de sen içerde maç seyrediyorsan, senle paylaşacak hiçbir şeyim yoktur….(26)

Perihan believed that getting engaged to this man was the biggest mistake of her life. Especially because she believed that in marriage, people should not hide anything from each other and that they should share everything, she had also chosen to share her body with him and was no longer a virgin. Though it was easy for Perihan to break up after that episode, she said she regretted having shared her body with him. Not because virginity was an important issue for her, she said, but because she had not enjoyed a moment of it. .

By the age of twenty, Perihan's struggle for the revolution had become the centerpiece in her life, and all her experiences were geared towards this identity. That identity involved a "sensible" decision for marriage in which she would be more free to pursue her revolutionary activities, it meant no womanly (and "bourgeois") desires regarding sex or appearances, it involved a socialist man as a husband, and it meant that she would never be crying out for her mother, but would be screaming slogans, even when she was being beaten violently. The story also refers to a righteous Perihan, who would be coming home late at night and would legitimately and sternly be expecting support from her husband-to-be, unlike many women even today who need a very good reason to be out late at night. Perihan was more of a revolutionary than a woman, and could expect to be treated as such, against the grain of traditional hierarchies of the institution of marriage.

Although Perihan had decided never to get married again, she soon met her husband to be, Salih. Though at first, she did not know that they were in the same organization, she frequently saw him in protests, in front of schools and People's Houses. When Salih was detained for a few months, Perihan was among the prisoner's support group, and brought him food, clothes and books. Though they had never revealed their feelings to each other, she was aware of his interest. He once sent her a new years' card, with slogans about a "free homeland". He also kept a distant but protective eye on her, and sent warnings with friends: "ya Perihan'a söyleyin işte şununla bununla gezmesin." (27)

She knew him in the struggle she said, where one can get to know a person thoroughly. When they met in Kırıkkale, Perihan's organizing area at that time, they realized they were both from MLSPB. She liked their conversations, and Perihan added, his handsome moustache. Soon, she asked him to marry her, "in spite of the traditional understanding that women should not be the ones to ask men for their hand in marriage." Salih agreed to the proposal, in spite of Perihan's father's warnings regarding the days he would have to pick her up from the police station. They were soon planning to go ahead with the marriage procedures.

However, at this time, there was a detention warrant for Salih, and they decided to flee to İstanbul where hiding would be easier. However, things did not work out as expected. Salih's mother, who was not particularly happy with her son's relationship with an Alevi woman, told the police of their whereabouts. The couple were captured in Istanbul, detained for over a month, and then taken to Kırıkkale where they had been

working for the organization earlier. The police soon found out that Perihan had nothing to do with the illegal activities Salih had been detained for, and set her free.

Yet Perihan chose to stay with her husband, and remained handcuffed to a bench in the police station since there were no wards for women. She remembers feeling like an animal. "işte… gelen geçen – işte bekçi geliyor tü yapıyor, insanlar görüyorlar… ilk defa Kırıkkale'de onların deyimince bir komünist kadın yakalanmış, seyirlik… işte bir hayvan gibi…" (28) It was her sense of loyalty to her husband, and via her husband to the revolution, which kept her there with him until they were sent to Mamak. Now, her ideals regarding the revolution and her notions regarding partnership in marriage had materialized in Salih, and from then on, she deemed it impossible to leave him. Perihan would be a relentless caregiver; not only because she was a wife, but also because her husband was a revolutionary.

> … Salih benim gözümde o kadar büyük bir insandı ki o zaman, acaba yani – öldürülürse vicdanen, onu terk ettim diye düşünürdüm… Evliliğe karar veriyorsun, bir hayatı paylaşıyorsun, onu bırakmak ihanettir. Yani devrime ihanet etmiş gibi, düşünceme ihanet etmiş gibi bir duygu… Bırakmadım… Bir gece aşağıda Salih'i hırpalarlarken, suratımın yandığını hissettim… Sanki o vurdukları benmişim gibi… Kendimi ona o kadar kitlemişim ki… O dayak yerken, o acıları sanki ben yiyomuşum, işkenceyi ben yiyormuşum. Fenalaştım, nefesim daraldı, beni dışarı çıkardılar… Ben Salih'i istedim, yani öldürdünüz onu diye… Ve 20 gün daha gözaltı süresi varken o olayın üstüne bizi hemen Mamak'a gönderdiler… Böyle bir sevgi görmedim dedi polisler… ne kadar çok seviyorsunuz ya… (29)

Once they arrived in Mamak, they were transported to different wards. In the women's ward, Perihan was the only one who would refuse to go into the doctor's office to prove the fact that she'd been tortured, because she found that the soldiers were masturbating while the women prisoners took their clothes off, "yani o psikolojik bir işkenceydi, bilinçli olarak yapılan bir işkence kızlara…" (30). She also made a fuss about

her photo being taken: “artistik pozlar mı vericem yani hangi dergide yayınlanacak? Ben kendimi suçlu görmüyorum” (31) Her sense of righteousness, now coupled with her strong determination to keep her body from the gaze of men, caused her some difficult times, not merely with the prison administration, but also with the other women who believed Perihan was overreacting.

After another month and a half in Mamak, Salih and Perihan were interrogated. After Salih had given his statement, Perihan was taken in, and gave the same statement she had delivered at the police station, saying she was a state official at the Ministry of Trade, a member of a union, and of the People’s Houses, and that she’d been tortured throughout her interrogation. The prosecutor wanted to know about her fiancée’s activities as well. Perihan, infuriated by his attempt to use her as a witness for Salih’s prosecution, was adamant about not falling into the category of the weak wife he deemed her. The conceptions regarding a family’s honor, the norms she had been so closely attuned to all her life, would now be manipulated by Perihan to reverse the balance of power in the courtroom.

> Bana döndü dedi ki savcı, peki dedi kocanın ne yaptığını biliyor musun, kimlerle görüştüğünü dedi.. siz dedim –çok zoruma gitti- burada benim ifademi alırken karınız, hangi erkeğin kollarında olduğunu biliyor musunuz? Atarekil bir toplumda geliyorsunuz bir kadının erkeği neredeydi, kimleydi- sorusu yok. Biz aynı okulda okuyoruz, aynı okulda öğrenciyiz, tanıştık ve evlenmeye karar verdik. Onun kimlerle gündüz ne yaptığını ya da gece kimlerle birlikte olduğunu nereden bilebilirim. Israrla bana isim vermemi istiyorlar.. emniyette verdiğim ifadenin aynısını verdim…. Dedim ki, İnsanlar Yaşadıkça diye bir kitap okuyorum, işte bir askerin karısının ilişkilerini anlatıyor. Onu okuduysanız, sizin karınız hangi birinin koynunda şu an? Siz benim ifademi alıyorsunuz ama karınızın kimlerle yattığını biliyor musunuz? Siz bana ne biçim soru soruyorsunuz? İnsan önce kendine bir soruyu sorar sonra bir başkasına sorar. (32)

It was her lawyer's persistent efforts that freed Perihan from a month in the cell after this episode. At the hearing a month later Perihan was set free. Before she left the prison grounds, however, she remembers being warned by the prison manager. He said she was young, that she had a life ahead of her and that she should end her relationship with Salih. She simply nodded. When she saw Salih for the last time before she left, she promised him that she would return with a wedding officer, and that she would never leave him.

The minute she arrived home, however, she realized that her sense of loyalty to her husband and to the revolution was actually superseded by her mother's:

> Eve geldiğimde annem kapıda suratıma tükürdü. Sen oğlanı nasıl bırakıp geliyorsun, dedi. Bu mu senin kavgana sahip çıkman? Ve beni eve almadı annem. Yani cezaevinde sen nasıl bırakıp geliyorsun, yani bugüne kadar beraberdiyseniz nasıl bırakıp geliyorsun? O annemin bana yaptığı en büyük kazık!… Elin oğlunu tutup beni eve almaması… Beni eve almadı. Almadı gerçekten. (33)

Perihan spent the night at her sister's, and immediately the next day, she started the procedures for marriage. However, because Salih was now a political prisoner, marriage was legally out of question. Perihan was persistent. She traveled to Ankara Commandership of the Emergency State, the Air Force Headquarters and the General Staff, insisting that her marriage was crucial, that it was a matter of honor, that her family would be disowning her if she could not get married. Finally she got the permission. By this time Salih was under threat of a death sentence.

They got married in prison, and that was the beginning of her years of waiting and working for Salih, which soon made her a symbol of a wife of the revolution, not only in the eyes of Salih but among all the prisoners in Mamak whose ties to the outside world were enlivened by her ceaseless visits to Mamak.

Being a prisoner's wife: Ten years of waiting, working and protesting: "You are a prisoner's wife, you are available, a whore"

The ten years Salih spent "inside", were also ten years of "open air imprisonment" for Perihan. The years were of visits to Mamak every Tuesday, sexual harassment at the gates, protests against the conditions in the prisons, beatings by the soldiers, support for the hunger strikes in prisons, and laundering bloody clothes delivered to her at the gates. The relatives of those outside the prison, mostly women, Perihan emphasized, suffered as much as those inside. The violent practices of the prison administrations, and the assault they endured at protests for prison conditions, were actually conscious efforts geared towards "wiping out a generation," she emphasized.

> Düşünebiliyor musun binlerce insan gidiyor. Binlerce insanın ailesi bunu yaşıyor. Binlerce insanın ailesi de cezaevinde. Böylelikle 80 kuşağı yapıldı. Yani bilinçli bir politika uygulandı. '70'te onu yapmadılar, acemilerdi. Ama '80'de kurslar aldılar. Askeri aldı, polisi aldı. Mitçisi aldı. Hepsi eğitimden geçti. Böyle bir politikayla bir nesli yokettiler. Yani anne babayı çocuğu abi kardeşi anayı eşi sevgiliyi yok ettiler. Toplu katliam yaptılar ya. Öldürmediler ama insanları yaşayan ölü yaptılar. Konuşmaktan korkan, nefes almaktan korkan insanlar yaptılar. Onların haklarını savunmaya kalktığında tutuklanan insanlar, coplanan insanlar. Işte orospular gidin kocalarınız gelsin! Çok dayaklar yedik cezaevi kapılarında. (34)

Hence, the years of Salih's imprisonment for Perihan were also defined by an unprecedented feeling of togetherness and *sine qua non* political activism with other prisoner families. They were no longer fighting for a better Turkey, Perihan emphasized, but the new identity they had acquired, that of prisoner's families, was stronger than any identity they had held because of the urgency which stemmed from the constant threat on

prisoners' lives. Each day, they would hear news of 'suicides' from prisons. And each day, the circulation of news at the gates would be enhanced by the official statements on TV and newspapers, producing new anti-propaganda regarding those who had been arrested at the coup. Perihan stressed a phrase which would take hold of the social memory produced in those years: "Ne yani onları asmayalım da besleyelim mi?" (35) Those outside had dual responsibilities; they had to prevent deaths by their presence at the gates, and they had to make their voices heard, protesting in front of the Parliament and on the streets. Their lives were to be lived around the prisoners' lives.

Perihan worked as a baby sitter, as a cleaner, and did some other menial jobs before she could find a lasting job as a secretary; "O zamanlar," she remembers, "devrimcilerden korkuyorlardı. İçeride insanı olan insanlardan korkuyorlardı." (36) Being a prisoner's wife was difficult, not only in terms of the state, the soldiers, and the employers, she adds, but in the eyes of the whole society.

> "Bir kere mahkum karısısın. Sana toplumun bakış açısı farklı. Müsaitsin. Dul kadın. Mahkum karısı. Toplumda öyle bir imaj var. Yani mahkum karısıysan orospusun. Mahkum karısı müsait kadındır. Yani dedim ya askeriyle polisiyle bakkalıyla çakkalıyla duraktaki insanıyla, herkesle bir kavga içindeydik." (37)

In the meantime, she was constantly writing to Salih, trying to make sense of the outside world, in order to be able to tell him. Salih was not her only concern, though. She had become a source of life, a hopeful connection for the inmates who heard her name being called every Tuesday without exception. She had become "Perihan Abla" for them, the symbol of support and sacrifice they believed revolutionaries deserved. "Hep tahliye

olduklarında yanıma gelirlerdi. Abla sen olmasaydın, çok daha farklı olurdu. Senin adın okunmadığı zaman merak ediyorduk, niye gelmedin, diye".(38)

Perihan stressed that the ten years of imprisonment made her a much tougher person, but also someone who had no confidence in people. Perihan now believed that evil was a much stronger trait of the human constitution. Conjoining her experiences of those years with the silence of the Turkish public in the face of the cell type prisons and the hunger strikes during the days of our interview, Perihan felt fully justified in her view of Turkish society as a hypocritical society.

And then, Life? : "They left us crippled"

It was ten years before the couple could live together again, and both of them had changed during the ten years Salih was in prison. Through the ten years of excruciating worries Perihan experienced regarding his life, Salih had become an idol, a hero for her.

Perihan said she was extremely disappointed the minute they arrived home, and that this Salih was certainly not the Salih who'd been arrested ten years ago. Now, life within their newly established household presented them with new problems of married life, which were exacerbated by the violence and the trauma both had lived through in the ten years they were apart. The idol Salih had been, was now her husband, aggressive and unsupportive.

> Faşistler karılarına evlerinde çok daha demokratik davranıyorlar. Yardım ediyorlar. Yani bir adam yediği bir şeyi kaldırmalı. Bu beni makine gibi görüyor. Yani robot gibi görüyor. Yorulmayan, oturmayan, hastalanmayan, her işi kendi başına götüren bir makina gibi. Ama makineyi de arada yağlamak lazım. Bu da sevgiyle olur. Bir şeyleri paylaşmak ile olur. Yok benim kocamda. Onu tamamen kaybetti. Salih dedi ki ben çok çektim. Yani

> bizim insanlar hele çok çektiler cezaevinde. Bir sürü evlilikler bitti. Cezaevinde nikah kıydırıp, yirmi küsür senedir sürdürenlerden bir tek biz vardık. Çünkü yaşam hem dışarıdaki için çok zor, hem içerideki için. (39)

Soon after his acquittal, there was talk of divorce between them. Perihan felt she'd delivered enough throughout the years, and found it unfair to have to deliver more Salih felt that Perihan had taken him out of one prison, only to place him in another one. They were both crippled, not only personally, but as a family which had to endure the make-do world of the military regime, and all the unhealthy imaginings it brought with it.

> 12 eylül sonrası evlilikler de pek sağlıklı gitmiyor. Bizim kuşağı yaşayan insanlar arasında, ikili ilişkileri çok güzel gidiyor diyen insan yalan söylüyordur. Çünkü fırtınalar esiyor. Geçmiş hesaplaşması.. Her şeyi düşünüyorsun. Toplumu görüyorsun.. O ikili ilişkileri etkiliyor. Bedeninin etkiliyor. Cinsel olarak etkiliyor. Yani her şeyini etkiliyor. Sakat yaptılar bizi. Koltuk değnekleriyle yaşıyoruz. Bir gün o koltuk değnekleri diyecek ki; artık sizi taşıyamıyorum. (40)

Sexuality also became a problem for the couple. For the ten years they were apart, Perihan had no interest in other men. Once again emphasizing her all-encompassing notion of honor, Perihan told me that "Benim hayatıma Salih içerideyken girecek insan, benim beynime ihanetimdi. Kavgama ihanetimdi. Yani yaşam kavgama ihanetimdi." (41) Over the years, sexuality had become alien, initially to her mind and gradually to her body. Aware of the frustrating consequences of what she called "the accumulation syndrome" (*birikim sendromu*), Perihan had provided the money for many of Salih's fellow inmates to go to brothels when they came out of prison. However, it was much more difficult for her to satisfy her own husband who had similar problems, and was striving to refigure his 'manhood'. Disappointed in herself for not being able to recover their relationship, Perihan simply said, "Cinselliği de sevmiyorum. Kendimi kullanılmış hissine kapılıyorum. Belki emniyette yaşadıklarımdan kaynaklanıyordur."(42)

During her pregnancy which was accidental, the couple had already moved to Datça, due to Salih's difficult case of tuberculosis which he had developed in Mamak. She was going through an extremely difficult pregnancy, having developed cists in her womb. Labor was especially difficult. At the hospital she fell into the hands of a doctor who was a sympathizer of MHP and who had overheard her conversations with the janitors. She should have had a caesarean section, but he would not let her. After she gave birth to Sıdal, she remembers him saying, "Here comes another communist into the world".

These were also difficult times for the couple, and Perihan went to see a psychologist. The couple, traumatized by the circumstances of the decade, had difficulties reconciling their past, even in the privacy of their relationship.

> Salih ile uyum sağlamakta zorlanıyorduk. Salih'in haberi olmadan psikoloğa gittim (…) Ne yapabilirim yani bu evliliği? Cezaevinden çıktı. Işte hem ona annelik yapacağım, hem babalık yapacağım. Hem karısı, hem yoldaşı, hem sevgilisi, hem dostu, hem metresi… olmam gerektiğini. Bir en az bir on sene vermem gerektiğini, özveriyi daha sürdürmem gerektiğini. Eğer bunu yapmadığım takdirde onun bunalıma gireceğini, işte yaşama küseceğini, çünkü çok zor şeyler yaşadı. Cezaevi koşulları çok kötüydü. Ben bunu terkedersem, buna sahip çıkmazsam; eğer bu adamın yanında yer almazsam, hayatım boyunca vicdan azabı çekeceğim. (43)

Caught between the alienated relationship she had with her husband, and the responsibility she felt for the pain he had endured in prison, Perihan once again chose to sacrifice her personal longings. Though Perihan told me that she'd now "let things go" with her husband, she still added with the same stern voice "Ama mesela bir kavgaya girerse, o kavgada onun yanında yer alırım. Onunla birlikte dayak da yesem, onunla birlikte dayağı yerim. Yani eğer onu orda bırakırsam, kendime ve beynime ihanetimdir bu. Onu orada bırakmam." (44) Perihan still believes in her responsibilities as a wife, and

tells a life story of self-sacrifice, not merely around her husband, but around all those ideals which were shaped around the 60s and the 70s, tying families, workers and revolutionaries together.

> Bana yakışmıyor dedim. Ve bekledim. Evliliği de sürdürdüm. Sürdürüyorum. Eğer Salih'ı cezaevinde terketseydim, cezaevindeki insanlara bir yıkım olacaktı. Çünkü onlar için ben bir semboldüm. Cezaevinde nikah kıydım. Bir mahkuma, tutukluya sahip çıkmak. Işte onla birlikte diğerlerini sahiplenmem. Çıktığında ayrılmış olsaydım, on sene bekleyip neden ayrıldım? Bana duydukları güven ve saygıyı yitirmekti. En azından kendime duyduğum saygıyı kaybederim. Hiç bir zaman halka, insanlara devrimcileri karalayacak, devrimcileri küçük düşürecek bir imkan tanımak istemedim. (45)

"Bugün" she says, "hayattaki tek amacım iyi yürekli ve yurtsever bir çocuk yetiştimek. Yani yüreğiyle beyniyle namuslu ve temiz bir çocuk yetiştirmek. İnsanları seven. Insanlar için bir şeyler verebilen. Bencil olmayan, paylaşmasını bilen ve ülkesini seven. Özellikle ülkesini çok seven bir çocuk yetiştirmek. Ben ülkemi çok seviyorum".(46) As a revolutionary, a wife and a mother, Perihan sees herself, at the base of all things, as a patriot. Connecting her powers of reproduction and of motherhood to the power of opposition, in her anger, she likens the undemocratic strategies of the Turkish state to those of Hitler's Germany.

> … Ana rahmini kazısınlar o zaman! Bunlar türemesin! Yani benim çocuğum olmamasını istiyorlarsa, benim rahmimi kazımaları gerekiyor. Benim çocuğum benim gibi olur. Yani ezilen bir ailenin çocuğu, onun gibi olur. İsyankar olur. Hitler'in yaptığı gibi yapın. Kazıyın rahimlerimizi! (47)

Perihan, Salih and Sıdal have been living in Datça for more than a decade now, where Perihan runs the municipality amphitheater and organizes the activities which take place there. Salih takes odd jobs, which usually Perihan helps him with. Though Perihan says she always feels very tired, she is known as a very hard working woman in Datça.

And though in our interview she cited people saying “Perihan Abla, when are you going to become a woman?”, she knows she is respected as a symbol of strong femininity, defined, as conventionally as it may seem, through her powers of survival, support and sacrifice.

“Perihan Abla” who still carries the identity of a ‘revolutionary’ is also the wife of a revolutionary, the mother of a future patriot and a powerful figure for many in Datça.

CONCLUSION

LIFE STORIES, SOCIAL LANDSCAPE, AND THEORETICAL REFORMULATIONS

Life stories are overwhelming. They can never be quite captured, neither at the time of narration, nor at the time of representation. Nonetheless, the preceding chapters which have hurtfully shortened the much richer narratives of the four women I interviewed starkly reveal that beyond the macro events of political violence during the '70s and the military coup of 1980, lie narratives of desire, commitment, opposition, motivation and fear. They also expose the intricate threads of hope and disappointment which combine the dissolution of the left and the emergence of a new feminist movement after 1980. In this sense, Emine, Figen, Nuran and Perihan provide new understanding regarding readings of Turkish social history through these two decades.

This conclusion primarily aims at an outline of Turkish social history of the two decades with an emphasis on the themes of gender and political participation. Doubtless, each narrator's choice to participate in the left, as well as her decision to break her ties with her organization many years later provide important landmarks through which to make a reading of that social landscape. The similarities among the four women's narratives of early childhood experiences, their years of commitment to their organizations, and of breaking away from them – the significant landmarks of rupture in their narratives – refer not only to the ideologies and aspirations behind the widespread

commitment to the illegal political organizations of the 70s, but, perhaps more importantly, reveal the intricacies of the life worlds in which these women formulated their identities as revolutionaries and as women.

The second aim of this chapter is to emphasize the continuities between the life worlds of these organizations in connection to the networks and discourses outside of the organizations. An analysis of the narratives in the preceding chapters, and the complex web of relationalities in which they were formulated require that the stories pertaining to the microcosms of these organizations should not be written as those of insulated life worlds. The discourses which infiltrate these women's lives have a historicity within macro frameworks ranging from kinship networks to discourses of nationalism.

Finally, a perspective which takes these relationalities as central to readings of social history proposes the emergence of theoretical questions and epistemological propositions. It is suggested that oral history with an emphasis on the processes of subjectification has repercussions on questions of historiography, especially in terms of recognizing women's agency.

Ruptures and Continuities: A Gendered Reading of Social History through Women's Narratives

In all the narratives in this thesis, women's enlistment in the left and their eventual decisions to break away from it present important landmarks in their life stories. As such, these narratives tend to categorize the life stages of these women into three parts. Narratives regarding childhood may be seen as a groundwork for their participation

in the left, while their years of involvement within the left prepare the outline for their rationale and reasons for breaking away. Though it may seem to be a rough categorization, these landmarks attest to the common life experiences related to the social and political landscape which designate a 'moral universe' for their generational identity.

The narratives all begin with articulations of the sense of being 'other'. They represent the difficulties of being Alevis in the Sunni dominated landscape of Turkish society. The childhood narratives point to the first recognition and experience with the extant power dynamics of the world around them.

As Emine remembered her childhood among the closely knit Alevi community of Tunceli, she expressed the memory of a distant state whose presence in town could be felt only when it exiled her teachers from Tunceli, and banned plays with political content. The intrusions of that state in Tunceli provided Emine with her introduction to the prevalence of violence and torture. The intrusions of the state also gave her an understanding regarding the disadvantages of belonging to a religious minority – with affinities which identified her own.

Figen's first memories in Tokat were related to being a member of the only Alevi family in a Sunni village. When her family later moved into a squatter area populated by Alevis, it was her experiences at school which revealed to her that she was still an outsider. The poor and the Alevi were not welcome at her primary school.

Nuran remembered feeling comfortable in her neighborhood in Samatya, but was nervous among the rich children at school. Her family had to hide the fact that they did not fast during the month of Ramadan, and Nuran emphasized that they always lived with a sense of being migrants, different from the people around them. Nuran stressed that her

family did not have close ties with people of their own background either, for the other people from her village were angry with her father for sending his daughters to school.

Perihan's childhood comes across as full of anger: against a hypocritical society who insulted her family as '*Kızılbaş*' for being Alevi, against her friends at school who turned their backs on her after they attended religion classes from which she was exempt, and against a state which humiliated its citizens in the very institutions it set up for social welfare. Perihan recalled that her family's sudden fall into poverty when she was fourteen changed the way her environment perceived her, and, accordingly, the way she perceived the world around her.

Within these early childhood narratives, there were also similarities in their parents' approach to their daughters and to life in general. Uneducated though they all were, they all decided to move to cities so their children would get an education to prepare them for upward mobility, believing that the state – despite the various forms of discrimination they suffered under its auspices – would provide their children with a future. Though these parents were disappointed, hurt, and enraged when the military regime of 1971 executed the leaders of the student movement, they all believed that their daughters would become better citizens with the education that the state provided them. The executions of Mahir, Deniz and İbrahim – christened as the Alevi leaders of the people – and the days-long mourning that took place in homes all over the country seems to have fuelled a new kind of patriotism. For the parents, it was a patriotism mixed with a sense of fear regarding the atrocities the following decade would bring their own children. For the youth, it was a patriotism strengthened by new myths to idealize and follow in their own lives.

Hence, with so much to say for their childhood experiences which provided these women with a sense of being the underdog, the minority and the 'other' whose subservience was required by the state and the majority, their involvement within the left was not to come as a surprise. The left upheld a rhetoric of resistance to the system, and advocated equality among people. As Alevis were moving in large numbers to the left, they also found a new community and new words with which to identify their own belief systems. The politicization of the Alevi religion provided them with ways to translate different aspects of their religious and cultural background into activism, which they could now express without shame.

The days were of a choice between the left and the right; and as Figen articulated, one had to belong to one of these two groups to be recognized as a person. Perihan's experiences in the People's Houses, Nuran's involvement at the Association for Middle Schools, and Figen and Emine's responsibilities in the educational groups would only add to their sense of belonging, and provide them with the words and theories with which they would tend to use in explaining their early childhood memories. Their early involvement in the institutions of the left eventually attracted them into the illegal sphere of existence where they would get more respect by their status as 'professional revolutionaries'. Throughout the '70s, with a strong aura of commitment, solidarity and secrecy, the organizations of the left would become homes to people who knew they were outsiders. The world they had grown into was unjust. Within the limits of their new identities as revolutionaries, they took the responsibility upon themselves to make it better. The state, which had hitherto been distant, or at the very least unresponsive to their needs, now became the designated enemy.

Their enlistment within the illegal organizations of the left also provided these women with means to transgress the boundaries of the hierarchical gender roles with which they were traditionally faced. In the Turkish society of the '70s, especially for girls and women, the appropriation of a militant identity meant new space for movement, an unprecedented respect from the community, and new friendships around the clock. The militant woman could afford to leave her hometown at the age of eighteen – even without her parents' permission. She could organize and attend protests and educational meetings, participating in guerilla warfare and revolutionary camps. She could justifiably stay out all night, working for the cause in which she believed.

In this sense, while Figen and Perihan's explicit narratives of "feeling more like boys than girls" point to the homogenization of political militancy under the sphere of the masculine, it also attests to the fact that being more like boys than girls was perceived by them and others as a 'safer' or, perhaps, 'freer' position to inhabit. The respect Emine received from the community of Tunceli during her early years of political involvement, and the ambivalently gendered but respectable status in which Perihan placed her 'personhood' as a revolutionary, were not merely limited to the boundaries of their particular life stories. During the '60s and the '70s, Turkey witnessed a new identity of 'woman' whose definition as a militant surpassed that of the 'girl to be married'.

However, the new world of organizational life had restrictive rules alongside this new identity. Being a revolutionary meant full time, all-encompassing commitment and allegiance to the formal procedures of revolutionary activity. Being a member required

utmost secrecy. Members had to sever their ties from their other networks of community and from family, both not to endanger them and to maintain organizational secrecy.

Within the microcosms of the organizations, formalistic procedures of revolutionary activity and commitment were enhanced by their ideological and hence moralistic rhetoric. The individual was to be replaced by the militant, and their private choices were to be encapsulated within the boundaries of the organization. Life choices – practical, ideological and moral – were to be determined by the exigencies of the revolution, an event foreseen by the revolutionaries as imminent with total conviction. In a now apparent contradiction in terms, the revolution required every person to submit to the "morals of the people".

Figen was the one who articulated her concern about forfeiting her individual freedom most explicitly. Being under the control of others was not something to which she was accustomed. Nuran recalled the restrictions brought to her body; she was no longer able to move or to dress as she wished. Emine remembered breaking ways with her best friend: being a member of an organization brought with it secrets to be hidden, and people in other organizations had to be kept at a distance.

The relevance of the post-1980 feminist critique regarding these organizations' attitudes towards love and sexuality can be followed in the narratives of Emine, Figen and Perihan's explicitly and in Nuran's implicitly. Love would come after the revolution. It could only be experienced with people of the same organization, and with the organization's permission. Figen's romantic involvement with an ultranationalist frightened her more than the violent Friday afternoon fights with the ultranationalists, and her love affair with a boy from another leftist faction brought threats from her own. She

quit her love. Emine could not express her feelings when she fell in love with a friend from another faction; she said she knew that the relationship did not stand a chance. Perihan, on the other hand, pointed towards the strength of moralistic views on the notions of marriage within the norms of revolutionary morality. In our interview, Nuran chose not to detail the way she was married to her husband, a man from her own organization, at a very young age.

In this sense, the organization took the grounds of the personal, and placed it within the restrictions of the political. In other words, the limits of the members' private lives were encompassed not only by the necessities of clandestine political commitments which had to accommodate communal life within the domestic, but also confined women's identity and sexuality within the norms advocated by the organization, and thus their conception of "the people". Experiences within the left were hence a lopsided representation of the feminist conception of the private as political. The private, as dictated through the ideology of the revolution was invaded by the political, segregating experience of the personal to within a conception of the 'bourgeois'.

It was precisely these restrictions that lay at the base of the feminist criticism during the 80s. Feminists who emphasized the existence of 'feudal' structures within the organizations asserted that the left confined women's sexuality within the boundaries of revolutionary morality, and demolished whatever space women had to express their sexuality. These feminists saw the 'feudal' in the enhanced significance of honor as a notion, and the degradation of women's separate identities. Therefore, Nuran's comments regarding her desire "to be herself" and Figen's critique of the "elimination of the

individual on the path to save people" in a sense articulate the same concerns as do the feminist critique of the left.

The narratives of breaking away from the organization, which for Nuran and Figen coincided with years in prison, and for Emine, outside while waiting for her husband's release from prison, all deliver articulations of self-reflection. The dilemmas of prison life made obvious the restrictive and formalistic perspectives of the organizations. Equally, the effort to survive and keep one's own ground outside prison provided Emine with the strength to formulate new commitments according to her own desires. These years of breaking away were another landmark of coming of age and of a new way of living the political.

In each narrative, there were differing representations for this time of transcendence. In Emine's life it was her decision to put an end to postponement of life as she wanted it, and in Figen's, it involved making a home of her own. Nuran phrases it as a rupture which involved two divorces – one from her organization and one from her husband; the two decisions she "loves most in her life". Breaking away for these women meant aloneness, or rather a realization of aloneness. It also coincided with new forms of happiness, often pertaining to their new struggles and paths. Soon after, Figen, Nuran and Emine all fell in love.

The simultaneous narratives of breaking away from their organizations and divorce from their husbands bring to mind the continuities between the political and the private. Narratives combine them. Be it a love affair with a married man, an abrupt decision to leave the country or a stubborn insistence on helping troubled children, these women's narratives after this landmark are accompanied by struggle against others'

ongoing condemnation, and new formulations of womanhood, life and politics. From within a rather masculine world of political militancy, and with the experiences of politics within it, emerged new personal politics. Though none of these women chose to name their own experiences within the framework of feminism, they were at least conscious first person witnesses to the rise of feminism.

Therefore, the emergence of the feminist movement after 1980 could be placed within the parameters of the changing subjectivities following women's experiences in the left. Though in the beginning, the connection between the feminist movement and the leftists of the '70s comes across as one of hostility and harsh critique, the articulation of these women's subjectivities provides us with a sense of historicity which make these two movements continuous and complementary despite their differing visions of politics.

Continuities between the microcosms of the organizations and the outside world: The meta narratives of chastity, honor and patriotism.

Emphasizing the common ruptures articulated in these life story narratives presents us with the certain contours of being women activists in the '70s in Turkey. The landmarks of enlistment, and the women's subsequent breaking away from the organizations, point to and detail the processes of subjectification these women lived through. However, attention should also be paid to the continuities in these narratives, both in a chronological and discursive sense.

An analysis of Perihan's life story and her approach to the revolutionary morality as an all encompassing norm of her life is a good representation of continuities.

Throughout our interviews, Perihan never criticized the restrictive and homogenizing aspects of her involvement in the left, nor did she mention a significant landmark period during which she broke away from her organization. Instead, she stressed that the revolutionary morality, which she had been eager to partake of during the '70s, was to be the guiding light throughout her life. In this sense, Perihan's life after her years of involvement within the left did not change her worldviews in the ways that it changed that of the other narrators. As bitter as she was during the decade after the coup, she remained a stern advocate of the norms formulated through the '70s.

Perihan stressed that she owed a lot to her family, particularly regarding the prevalence of the strong notions of pride and honor in her upbringing. These notions involved the parameters of being a good person and a good citizen, simultaneously comprising the norms of being a good woman. Perihan was to see herself as a strong person capable of serving her country and protecting her family. Before her, she had the mythical examples of Chef, Mahir and her father as perfect representations of opposition and survival in the face of injustice. As a strong person who would be standing on her own two feet, Perihan learned early in life that her chastity as a woman, and her stance as a patriot were complementary. She would not live by her desires, but lead the life of an honorable woman – a respected patriot – with her mind.

Thus, her entry into the left, which involved a total abandonment of the 'vanities of bourgeois pleasures', was congruous with her early notions of how to live. The norms of comradeship excluded the possibility of flighty sexual encounters; the revolutionaries were preoccupied with a total commitment to make the world a better place. The betterment of the world, as articulated by Perihan, involved leading honorable lives for

others, especially the poor and the women. Sexuality, as such, did not play into the formula, instead, proud families and new generations of patriots did.

Her narrative also calls for questions regarding the continuities of those norms with other discourses formulated since the beginnings of the Republic in Turkey. The continuities between Perihan's family's sense of honor, and that of the left are also connected to the notions of honor and chastity as formulated by the ideologues of the early Turkish Republic. The Turkish modernization project, which deemed the state the father, and citizens the children of the state, also formulated a new identity of the Turkish woman as the hardworking, patriotic, and often sexless citizen of the Republic. The replacement of the Muslim family law with the Swiss Civil Code, woman's suffrage, the campaign for women's education and the shedding of the veil may easily be viewed as part and parcel of the coupling between the modernization project and the use of women's changing identities as a ground for that project. (Parla, 2000)

If we are to recognize the significance of the reforms pertaining to women within the modernization project of the new Republic, the inseparable relationship between the Republic's notions of citizenship and those of womanhood come to the fore. Between the political and civil culture formulated by the ideologues of the new republic, and the private lives of its citizens, lay the identity of the new Turkish woman. (Arat, 1998; Kandiyoti, 1998, Bora, 2001). Atatürk and the founding fathers had to fashion a non-threatening public image for women, downplaying female sexuality to the point of invisibility. (Durakbaşa, 1988)

Hence, Perihan's narrative of revolutionarily morality presents us with an insight regarding the continuities between the gendered notion of citizenship through the history

of the Turkish Republic, its representations within families, and its repercussions in the '70s' left. The very similar ways in which the leftist ideology invaded the private domain, and Turkish nationalism appropriated the familial domain by the national/official domain (Göle, 1997) will provide one of the means to follow the continuities between the cosmos, the microcosm, and the levels of discourse in between.

Perihan's self-control regarding her own chastity and stern belief in the notions of honor related to chastity do not merely mirror the morals of her organization. They also refer to the requirements from the Turkish woman as formulated in the civil code that marks the modernization project. Her experiences of disappointment at the People's Houses also attest to her commitment to the ideology which designated these spaces a household for the nation; a household for the family of the Turkish nation. (Şerifsoy, 2001) The meta narratives of patriotism, revolution and honor, which since the formation of the Republic continuously influence the blurry boundaries of the division between the private and the political (Altınay, 2000; Şerifsoy, 2000, Parla 2001) also point to the continuities of the 'microcosm' of the movement with the world outside, be it the family, the ethnic community, the neighborhood or the nation.

In this respect, an understanding of the left's affiliation with the gendered notions of honor may pave the way to further research regarding its continuities with the ideology of the Kemalist state. In a striking example, the news of American soldiers' alleged rape of Turkish women during the protests against American marines in 1968 (Feyzioğlu, 1993), which marked a turning point for the Turkish left, present us with the prevalence of discourses regarding women's honor. These continuities between the morals of the revolution and the morals of the modern Turkish Republic attest to the fact that the

deterministic factors which infiltrated the lives of militant women during the '70s were not only on account of the 'feudal' structures within the microcosms of these organizations, but the relationalities between these organizations and the national history of the republic on a discursive level. As such, while these narratives provide us with these women's perspectives on what they experienced within the confines of their organizations, they also enable us to follow the continuities inherent to their symbolic worlds introduced by other communities.

These complex levels of analysis need to be employed while studying the other narratives of this thesis as well. The methods of surveillance and control attributed to the 'feudal' structures of these microcosms were always enforced by other familial, communal and national discourses which infiltrated the social worlds of the organizations and their members. Different networks, and the narrators' sense of belonging and opposition to these networks lie at the basis of the changing dynamics of power they had to negotiate.

It should be noted that the restrictive space Emine inhabited after she lost her virginity in Ankara was not merely on account of the norms of her organization. On the contrary, the difficult time she had to live through – unable to tell anyone of her sexual encounter – was marked by the urgency of the notion of 'honor' as established by kinship networks as well as the norms of women's chastity as translated into the norms of the 'people'. When she decided to get married to the man with whom she had had sex, she was actually aiming to salvage her reputation as a chaste woman, and had to partly forfeit her reputation as a committed member of her organization.

It was Figen's respect for the student leaders of the former generation that prepared the grounds of her marriage. Being a leader's wife, her life was confined to organizational relations because of the exigencies of utter illegality and secrecy. However, it was never merely revolutionary norms which obliged her to the never-ending responsibilities she had to undertake. Rather, it was living in other people's homes which exacerbated the unfortunate division of labor within the home to her disadvantage.

Nuran's notions of the 'traditional', which later in her life motivated her to break away from her organization were in synch with the values of her family and even the Alevi community of her background. In her narrative, the conservative aspects of the Turkish family were coupled with the perspectives of men within and without her organization. Today, as Nuran chooses to remain silent on certain issues she deems private, she is not merely trying to avoid accusations from her former networks within the left, but is actively opposing a world of conservatism which she believes surrounds Turkey.

Thus, the gendered experiences of illegal life should be analyzed from within a perspective which keeps in mind the continuities with other networks and discourses of morality. Ranging from love to sexuality, from marriage to status within the organization, and from freedom to violence, these women's experiences were informed by the specific but interrelated notions of 'womanhood' connecting these microcosms with the world around them.

Forms of Violence and Agency

It is through an understanding of the relationalities underlying the dynamics of power that we can begin to articulate different forms of violence these women encountered throughout their years of activism. Underneath the violence which took place on the streets, in prisons and between different factions lies different levels of violence, side by side with political violence. In fact, as these narratives portray, the years of utter political conflict during the '70s exacerbated what has been termed the "violences of everyday lives". (Kleinman, 2000) Hence, a gendered perspective on the social history which takes the micro as a starting point also makes clear that the explosions of political violence were intensified by differences of gender; extending from one unfolding event to another, and often deepening them. On a personal level, there were – and will always be – more than one level of dynamics in which individuals will have to negotiate opposition and survival. Thus, studies on social history should underline the existence of micro relations at the crossroads of morality and meanings.

On the other hand, a close look at the different forms and levels of violence these women endured also calls for questions as to how they survived and negotiated these different levels and networks. A reading of violence in this vein requires an understanding of the agency it invests subjects with (Das, 1998). Power is not unidimensional, and is conducive to new knowledge and discourse, endowing subjects with new forms of agency. Within the public sphere where relations of power are multi-dimensional, and subjectivities are interactive (Bruner, 1991), power and violence not

only repress the groups or individuals they perpetrate, but are also appropriated, transformed, reflected, articulated and put to use by its victims (Foucault, 1980; Butler, 1990)

Most articulate representations of the agency induced by violence were articulated in narratives regarding the few years following the military coup of 1980. As the military confined thousands to prison, tortured and convicted them, new networks of solidarity were formed both inside and outside prison. These networks involved much more organic ties than the former organizations; they were often formed naturally because of the urgent need for survival. As Nuran was talking about the post-coup days in prison, she expressed a notion of camaraderie which had been missing from her narrative until that point. Emine spoke of the natural coming together with old friends who had all lost their networks, and a form of support which had been missing from her narrative regarding her organizational years. Perihan spoke in great length about the psychological torture prisoners' families had to undergo, the new identities of opposition they acquired, and detailed the dual responsibilities they hastily undertook. People outside prison had to prevent the deaths inside by their presence at the gates, and had to persuade the public of the innocence of the imprisoned. For many women whose husbands had been arrested, the times were a beginning of politics without men.

In a more general sense as well, these women's varying choices in the face of the dynamics of power point to the very specific processes of subjectification each lived through. Whether they involved opposition, evasion, postponement, escape, struggle or negotiation, each episode and decision to assert their own needs and desires point toward the different representations of their subjectivity and agency. Emine's decision regarding

marriage, Nuran's choice of silence on certain topics, Figen's insistence on exercising politics legally, or Perihan's reliance on her non-sexual self-identity are all means to infiltrate the plethora of unexpected ways in which subjectivities are formed under dire conditions.

It must be noted that adjectives such as emancipatory or reactionary, and categories like oppressed or marginalized remain inadequate to explain the intricacies of these women's choices. These terms, once fixed within historical writing, obliterate the many differences among these women and their choices, confining them to spaces in which they are merely objects of a study where there is a 'powerful' and a 'powerless'. Instead, we should be able to recognize that Perihan's appropriation of her identity as a non-sexual woman was one possible way of negotiating the violence in which she grew up, and one which won her respect in her community. Along the same lines, as much as Figen's semi-conscious choice to marry the organization's leader restricted her life choices for years to come, she based the principles of her eventual home on the tools she gained throughout those years. Though Nuran's insistence on not becoming a mother weakened her ties with her familial networks, it was also a choice which gained her own ground in which to exist. No doubt Emine's early years within the organization were marked by the postponement of her own desires, however, the way she so comfortably engages in her sexuality today is probably an outcome of that patience.

Epistemological Suggestions on the Writing of History and Feminist Theory.

Studies on the conflict ridden decades of recent Turkish history, be they from an official state perspective, or from the perspective of socialists or feminists, supply us with an overview of the ideologies and structures these organizations upheld. Official state history defines its actors as 'terrorists' relegating them to a space of illegality. Socialists define them as the repressed patriots of recent history. Feminists point towards the 'feudal structures' within these organizations which oppressed women.

However, along the lines of the narratives within this thesis, I would like to suggest that oral history provides us with the means to map the relationalities between different networks of power, expanding our knowledge regarding the motivations, hopes and fears of the actors' of this history. The uncategorizable within these narratives and the differences among each women's processes of subjectification also reveal the problems underlying the grouping of these actors within the standard categorical frameworks. Instead, these conceptual frameworks should lend themselves to an understanding of the historicities inherent in the fluid relationships between people, networks and discourses.

Oral history, which requires an interdisciplinary approach to narratives, also calls for theoretical interdisciplinarity. Narratives which present us with complex relations of power between different networks and the interrelationality of changing subjectivities also call for a historiography which emphasizes the multidimensionality of oppression and violence, and thereby of gender relations. In this vein, though it is important to locate and criticize the uneven dynamics of power and oppressive discourses of hegemony,

historiography should be able to stress the agency of all parties to these dynamics and discourses.

An emphasis on relationalities points toward the significance of liberating women from the epistemologically limiting categories of the 'oppressed' and the 'marginalized'. This is one of the main reasons why researchers should take the time to listen to women's words. This will not only reveal the historicity of discourses and meaning, but will also highlight the interactive formations within the public sphere. It no longer suffices to assume that women are oppressed by men. Neither is it advised to situate women within the fixity of the margins. Instead a recognition of the socio-historical account of patriarchal relations in the public sphere. A study of political action, and by way o political action, of agency, requires that "historical ghettoes of women" are demolished (Garcia, 2000).

We need to keep in mind that the post-1980 feminist movement's critique of the left came at a time when the feminist movement was trying to assert its own autonomy, and that its strength came from women's personal experiences within it. However, as scholars who are interested in a past time, we need to discern this critique from an overall proposition regarding the varying experiences of the women who lived the times. Especially because these women negotiated their life conditions in very different ways, I suggest that it would be a form of epistemological violence to leave them within the fixity of the margins of history where their articulations of their agency will be overshadowed by sympathetic but objectifying notion of "the oppressed".

APPENDIX 1
TRANSLATIONS OF EMINE'S NARRATIVE

(1) They were more conservative, more closed-minded, more of moralists. In Tunceli, as girls and boys, we used to play around and go places, but that was impossible in Elazığ. You wear a dress, you don't wear anything underneath it, just shoes. In Elazığ, they would immediately make us wear pyjamas or pants. You wouldn't be able to reveal any part of your body, "don't show your ass or your arms", they would say. In my grandfather's village –my grandmother wouldn't say anything- but my grandfather would just give a look, go down to the city, buy some flowery facbrics, and give it to my grandmother; "sew something for this girl", he would say, "so she doesn't go around with bare legs." It would be sewn immediately, and that's how we would go out.

(2) I am also the daughter of an Alevi family, I should say. But I learned many of the things related to being Alevi during my high school years, when the political discourse began to take hold. I mean, I don't remember my family talking about being Alevis or anything like that. But there is something else. For example, Kurdish was spoken around there. In Tunceli, there are the Zazas. The Zaza language is the language my family spoke. None of us, the six children ever learned that language. Because they never spoke it at home. Perhaps because my father was a state officer, or other things like that, I mean education, city life. I never used that language much.

(3) The whole of Tunceli was gathered to watch the Pir Sultan Abdal play, and just as the play started, the governor banned it. People reacted to that. See, everyone had paid for their tickets, taken their seats. It was rude of them. But no, the security forces would not allow it. Then a group of people, you know some lawyers, some respected elders decided to go speak to the authorities. A crowded group began to walk towards the police station. Some others followed for support. When they approached the station, there was this respected but alcoholic elder of Tunceli. He turned to the others, and said, "you wait here, I will go talk to them" and took a couple of steps ahead. And the police shot the man right there. When he was shot, of course, people reacted strongly. There was a big chaos. There wasn't anyone else shot, but people were really sad, and things were chaotic

(4) Thanks to the police, we had a new hero, Ali the Infidel. Ali was from Tunceli, he had a grocery shop there. He was one of those arrested. He was either a member or a sympathizer of the Labor Party. He was begging the police to stop when he was being tortured. "Enough please, for the love of Allah, for the love of the Prophet!" and the police would shout "Oh! So you have an Allah, too?!", and they would beat him harder, "so you have a prophet, too?!" and harder. Ali – because he was hurting so much- began to scream "If my Allah is different than yours, damn your Allah, if my prophet is different than yours, damn your

prophet!" He started swearing harder as they beat him harder. And then, he was Ali the Infidel. The started the 12th of March period of the early seventies. I remember an episode like that. I was in high school then.

(5) It was the beginning of the coup. There were constant news of arrests and torture in the papers. My mother was a sensitive person, she was very sad, my father was very concerned, he was always talking about this with his friends. We used to talk about this at home, at school, we talked of nothing else. We were following the news regarding the executions of Deniz and his friends. I know my parents stayed up till the morning on the last day. My father, for the first time –he was not a conservative person, but he'd been a believer, he used to fast. They wouldn't pray, but they would fast for three days during Ramadan. My father based his faith in god to these kids' executions. If there is a god, if there is a power and justice, he said, these kids should not be hanged. He kept his last fast, and prayed for them. And when the final word on the executions was passed, I remember him saying "There is no such thing for me! there is no Allah, there is no faith!" The whole neighborhood was outside, on their doorways, talking to each other, passing on the news. Until the last moment, they believed it could be stopped, they did not lose their faith. But of course, the executions did happen.

(6) As I said, those were the years when we were meeting new people, our elder brothers who had been in and out of prison. Before we could quite ask questions about what was happening, about how many different factions there were, we'd taken sides, or at least many had. Because you think to yourself, "being a revolutionary is being a revolutionary". I mean you're against the system. The system is a corrupt one because there is injustice in the world. You start dreaming about changing the world, about making it a more just, a more livable place where there isn't so much exploitation. Slowly, this understanding leads you toward them. You like being with them. You catch them, ask them questions, you try to learn. This is how we all lived.

(7) I think we were found to be clever, we learned fast. They started to give us tasks little by little.

(8) That night, we were coming back from our village to Tunceli, it was late afternoon. The roads were closed, there was chaos. From my father's conversations and what people were saying around us, I gathered that someone called Ibrahim Kaypakkaya had been tied to the back of a military jeep and dragged down to the city. His foot had been frozen. After he was arrested one of his feet was cut off, or maybe both of them. I remember this story. I remember a story like this about Ibrahim. Afterwards, when I found out that he was the author of all those writings, it became much more important for me. And history recorded him as someone who would not utter a word during torture. Not a word. But they destroyed him, they killed him.

(9) –What did being a professional revolutionary mean for you?
- Before that, I was merely a sympathizer. As a sympathizer, you can only take supportive action, little tasks. Being a professional revolutionary means you give your whole being to your work. It becomes your job, your career. You can no longer be a student. You will not work anywhere else. You will sever your

familial ties. You are now a member in a certain structure. The professional revolutionary gives 24 hours to the work. Only works for this.

(10) Before I left, I even told them what I was going to be doing... don't call me, I will call you. Don't call the police, it'll be worse if you do.

(11) You go to a city you don't know, you're with people you don't know. In the meantime, something starts to happen with the person you've travelled with, the person you live with. You don't quite understand what's happening. This is the first time a man shows interest in you. You feel strange, you get excited, you feel embarressed, you blush, you ask yourself what you're doing. You feel guilty. You inhabit a very narrow space. You are three people living in a few square meters. At the time, I also got together with him.

(12) Since she got back, there is a change even in the way she walks.

(13) I came here to get married, he said. But he was from *Halkın Birliği* (The Union of the People). I accused him of opportunism and said something like that would no longer be possible. At the time, psychologically, I was living through some other stuff. I'd left home for fifteen days. I'd left for my ideals. But then, I got together with a man. I was still eighteen. I could no longer look at other men, because I'd done something like that. You are not a virgin anymore, and you can't tell anyone about it. Still, I felt the spirit of militancy at its utmost. I kept it as my secret, inside me. And of course he came, and that night we were waiting for a funeral at the banks of Munzur. He came and found me there. I didn't pay him much attention. Because he was an opportunist. Because he was defending something else. Apparently he'd told the whole story. All hell broke loose. Then you should get married, they said. It's impossible for us to be together, I said. You took sides with the others, and I am here. At the time, people from different factions could not marry each other. Why not? Because you are a bundle of secrets, part of an organization full of clandestine information. If you get into a relationship with someone from another faction... it can't happen. We said we would still discuss this. If you persuade me, he said, I will be here. If I persuade you, you'll take sides with us. And we will solve this tonight. And we went to a friend's house who lived close by. We started an ideological debate.

(14) My husband was working on the more political side. I began to find myself in a position in which I was a camouflage for him. I kept working. Here and there, when we were renting an apartment and all, there was a legal looking, acceptable front. I was still a member of the organization, taking up jobs. But he was more active, and I began to continue work in a more passive position. At work, we started work for the association regarding the workplace. And we started organizing women.

(15) He asked me how I would be able to manage to leave him. How will you survive here, he asked. Will you be going back to your father's house? Why should I, I insisted, I am a member of this organization. I have comrades here. I have a region I have work, I will not go back. Why should I have to go back? Eventually, the organization will arrange a place for me. If we can't get along, we break up. And I will keep on working.

(16) I'd come there to be a professional revolutionary. We were living in a house which belonged to the party, we lived an affair, and no one knew about it.

We were confronted with criticism, they told us that this was not the right thing to do. My husband was especially attacked harshly about this. I was invited to one of the meetings too. When asked what I thought about the matter, I remember merely saying that it should not have been discussed to the extent that it was, that it all felt wrong to me. And I remember feeling really bad in front of all those people. They even told my husband that this relationship would not last long, that it wasn't healthy. Maybe my husband needs to question this aspect, for he turned out to be rather obstinate about keeping this relationship going. He kept saying that we were different, that we loved each other a lot, that our love would last forever. This used to suffocate me, and I know think that his efforts to hold onto the relationship might have stemmed from that pressure. Yes, we did live through such things. They really laid the pressure on him. They monitored him for a while. How is he at home? How is his relationship with his wife? Does he fullfill his share of the home life?

(17) You've already given everything. So, you don't really ask them why they come into your house, who they are, why they live with you; there is no such thing. One shouldn't really take it as surveillance over marriage. Let's say that they were monitoring his stance on life. That if he were demanding his wife to fetch things for him around the house, they would warn him that this would not go well with the notion of being a revolutionary. Basically, they were monitoring how much we were living by our ideals, watching what our weaknesses were, and what was lacking in us.

(18) The aim was to have people to be aware of the revolutionaries within the struggle and the organization. That they should be aware of what could happen to them if they were hiding someone in their house, to act accordingly.. It was also an effort to win over different regions.

(19) But the women turned out to be real fighters. They were rapidly gaining political consciousness. And then they started saying that they wanted to do more than bake bread and keep revolutionaries in their homes, they wanted to take up tasks. Let's say that in a certain region there will be a protest. We went postering, to disseminate declarations, we participated in meetings. Everyone was working hard in their own region. The women's group turned out to be fast movers, they wanted to take up tasks. But within the working party system, there was nothing beyond that for them. We were stuck. And we were not entitled to allocate tasks. Those people were seen as only back up forces, behind the front. We prepared a detailed report, underlining that there were problems, a serious lack in this working system. That it was inadequate. Perhaps we were to have further authorization. That the result of our own work was putting us in a difficult situation. When we were confronted with such hardships, we opened up discussions about this, and we were ousted.

(20) - What if the men had come up with such requests? Would the organization open its doors to them?

- Anyway, there isn't a problem of the sort regarding men. In the beginning,

men and women were equal, OK. Though there was an attitute, an ideology which allowed you to take up the same jobs, to do this and that, in life itself, because of

the values we attained in society, something about women was always neglected. Anyway, the outburst of feminist movement after the eighties was because it revealed a phase we lived through in that structure. Of course there were women in the upper cadres of the organization. You could become a party member. You could also become a soldier. But still if you did work regarding women, you would see the woman of her home, behind the fronts, a protective back up force. It's the same in our law. When my husband was arrested, I was initially sought as the accused, but then, since I was his wife, I was later seen as just a witness.

(21) In those circumstances, especially for people who were living illegally, having children was not advised. But my husband is a very obstinate man. He used to do what he set his mind on. We did it somehow. And I live through the same things today in therapy. I also told you that my son has been through therapy. After I and my husband were apart for three four years, he came back sick, and I was going through a difficult phase at the time. We had a lot of conflicts then. He was treating me badly. I was treating him badly. My therapist asked me –via a dream I spoke of- whether my son was an unwanted child for me. Though I had never thought of it that way, I was strangely effected. But I know one thing for sure. Before I got married, in Tunceli, I was like an idol for young girls my age and younger. I used to say that no one should get married before the age of twenty five or thirty. Girls who were being married off at an early age even used to have fights with their parents. .. Then, when they heard that I'd got married, there were girls who said, "if Emine Abla is getting married, we might as well" Again in that organizational structure, within the limits of an illegal life, you could be confronted with anything. I mean, you know that one day you could die, get arrested, that you might experience anything. And one shouldn't have children under such circumstances. But we came to a point when my husband insisted that we have a child. Even if you say no and such, at the end of the day, you're only nineteen years old. How much could you know? You end up yielding at some point. Or you end up believing him, wanting a child.

(22) Actually I don't know how much of an influence this had. I mean after a point, what's done is done. Was he really an unwanted child for me? Where did I place him in my mind? In my emotions? But I know one thing. I could never call him "my son" or "my child". Maybe it was because I was very young, I was shy. I called my baby "my mother" or "my baby". Never called him "my son"; it seemed almost rude to me. It was like, I was way too young, to small myself, how could I call him my son?

(23) If only you spoke of something remotely related to women, men would attack you, "what! are you a feminist?" You yourself are confused, but being a woman, you naturally take sides. But at that point, you don't call yourself a feminist. We had to struggle a lot with men at the time. At the first women's convention, there was a lot of debating about whether to allow men to participate. There was serious reaction against this. Actually women's movement developed very rapidly at that time. The leftist organizations had taken the blow real badly; they could only work illegally. There wasn't much going on on the legal platform, anyway. They couldn't. But women were taking action here and there, really loudly.

(24) Through letters. Holding hands during visit hours from time to time. You try to make your love survive. Beyond that, of course, you postpone life. You suspend your sex life. You suspend your emotional life. You detach yourself from a lot of things and build walls for yourself. You're married, you have a child. Your husband's in prison. When someone shows interest in you, you immediately put up that wall. They can't approach you. In a way, it's a suspension of your womanhood. Of course I think most of this was traumatic. It's really not a very healthy thing.

(25) Then what happened?.... Then, work life, running around, the kid, social activities, and the 8 years was over. I set up the house, waited for him, and greeted him at the door.

(26) Then, suddenly, I realized I was with a stranger. You've lived in the same house, you have a child together. You've fought for the same ideals. You're comrades, spouses and collegues. It's almost as though you've grown up together. But in the end, some things have changed- a stranger. In the meantime, you've forgotten to share life, to live life together. Plus, because you've been taking on most of life's burdens by yourself, you become the one to make the decisions, to work things out and to organize everything. Afterwards, it becomes difficult to live life in a different way. It'd been eight years. It was such a long time period, that even the way we held a glass of water had grown different. But life goes on, you grow up and first of all, you learn about being alone. You learn to live alone. That is perhaps the most difficult part. I mean, you've learned to live life as an individual alone. And you can't do that -- for a life of two persons – that thing you've suspended for years. He'll come and hug me. What will I say when he hugs me? How will I do it? How will I do it?

(27) The three of them had formed a music group. My son wanted to name the group "nettle". Then, they named it "torture". I don't speak English. I didn't ask what torture meant. My son used to draw pictures, writing the name of his group on his bedroom walls. One day, a friend of mine asked me "but why torture?". She told me what it meant in Turkish. Kids actually give you incredible messages. One of the kids' father had died during torture. Both of their fathers had remained in interrogation and torture for a long time. Prison, torture and all that. These were always spoken of at home. Stories were told. On TV, in the newspapers, it was always mentioned. It's our field of interest. We spoke of these when kids were around. The kids then told us that since the day they were born, there was constant talk of torture in the house. Prisons and torture. We hate it, they said, we hate the revolutionary stance, we hate these conversations.

(28) I realized that I was about to lose my child as I was running around right and left. To hell with the the country's problems! To hell with politics! There is life here, and I am responsible for it. Then, I tried to spend more time with him.

(29) I have a good job. Though our apartment is rented, we have a set system. I told him. I told him I could push it all aside. Let's leave Istanbul, I told him. A friend of ours had a hotel in Kuşadası. Let's go there together. Let's ask for a room. Let's start by washing the dishes, if need be. But you should remember that we're going there for a new life, we're going to be starting from zero. I'll do it, if

this is what you want as well, let's go. Yes, he said, save me. Let's leave this place, I can't say no, I've got entangled and I can't quit.

APPENDIX 2
TRANSLATIONS OF FIGEN'S NARRATIVE

(1) My grandmother was widowed at the age of 26, with three children to take care of. Her husband died, and as a poor village woman, she raised two boys and a girl. Working as what they called *azaplık* at other people's homes. In her own words, she raised them to be respectable people. When I was born, my father named me after his mother. But my grandmother objected to that. I never saw my grandmother. When I was still in the cradle, six months of age, she died. She objected saying, no Hasan, don't name your daughter after me, she will be *garametli*. *Garamet*, in my grandmother's language, meant bad fate. She will have bad fate. Just like me, she won't get to see good days. Despite that, my father wanted to keep up his respect for his mother in his daughter, because he was aware of the pain she lived through raising them. Without a father, always alone, working. That's how I was called Figen.

(2) We used to live in a squatter area in Tokat. Predominantly, there were Alevis living there. The neigborhood was known as an Alevi neighborhood. And I was enrolled in Namık Kemal. Thre headmaster of the Namık Kemal Elementary School was Süleyman Bumin. I never forget his name. Later on, he baceme the leader of the ultranationalists. He didn't want that kind of thing from the squatter areas to study in that school. I was in first grade. One day, he hit me hard on the head with his huge pipe. My head was swollen like this. My mother saw the bump on my head when I got home. What is this? The headmaster hit me. Why did he hit you? Because I was running in the hallways. I wasn't aware of anything at that point, but my mother knew. That he hit me because he knew I was from the squatter areas and that I was Alevi. Next day, she comes to school- and in our times, mothers didn't take their children to school by hand; they'd taken us to school for the registration day and after that we always used to go by ourselves – the next day my mother comes to school. She knocks on the headmaster's door. She goes in. Grabs him by the tie. She was such a fighter, so brave, a woman of the working class. Look, she says, look here headmaster, if you ever raise your hand against this kid again, consider yourself dead. It's not like I'm going to live so long after now anyway. This child will go to school here. Raise your hand and hit her again, I'll be the one to kill you. I'll slaughter you. I won't leave it to others. That's when our class struggle against them started, really. I mean the neighborhood we lived in, the culture we were born into situated us against some things. Or certain things were against us, even before we knew it.

(3) Though I was someone from the squatter areas...

(4) One day I came home from school and everyone was crying, my mother was crying. They were crying about the hanging of those kids. Deniz Gezmiş, Hüseyin İnan, Yusuf Aslan and others. She said they were Alevis. She said they'd been working for us. Revolutionaries, she called all of them the Revolutionary Youth *(Dev-Genç)* Factions and all that, it didn't matter. They'd been working for us, they wanted to save the people. They were Alevis. They'd executed them, that's

why they were crying. I was effected a great deal at the time, and I wondered who these people were.

(5) A culture of oppression, of struggle against being oppressed, the historical oppression of the Alevi. The denial of the Alevi on these lands. Surely in our nature there is this rebellion, the stance against oppression. It's in us. That's why many Alevi villages and neighborhoods came together with the revolutionaries so quickly. Since those ideas were already in our nature to a degree, when similar ideas came through, from top to bottom, they were easily adopted. We had a lot of friends from a Sunni background who ended up caught between materialism, atheism, and the religious ideas they had been brought up with. Because the Alevi culture personifies God in the human. They have a saying; the god is in the human, they say. Our transition to socialism was smooth.

(6) No, I insisted, I don't want to go to girls' school for art, i'll got to boy's.

(7) Since I was very young, things to do with being a bride, to prepare for marriage, all those things were foreign to me. I always wanted to do the things the boys did, to succeed in the things they succeeded in. I'd rather be working with screwdrivers and things like that instead of sitting at home sewing. My mother used to get angry at me, you'll get married soon, you should prepare your dower, she would say. No, I am not going to prepare a dower, I would say. That's how I ended up living my life. This was not a form of conscousness, a form of knowledge I attained after I became a revolutionary. It was something given to me while I was growing up in that neigborhood. In this respect, I used to see myself as different from the other girls in the neighboorhood. I was oppositional in nature, and I loved to live differently.

(8) The seventies are really the years when the revolutionary movement grew rapidly. Everywhere, in neighborhoods, schools, work places, people were divided between the leftists, or revolutionaries, and ultranationalists, and in every neighborhood, in every school, there was organizing. You wouldn't be respected as a person if you weren't an ultranationalist or a leftist, or if your political formation was not clear. They were years when lines between the two sides were clearly drawn. In those years, revolutionaries organized committees in every neighborhood, committees the neighborhood people joined. (..) And my high school years were full of fighting. It was the time when the movement grew and clashes which started with stones and sticks were replaced by guns. Every friday afternoon, after school, the fascists, the ultranationalists and our friends used have fights. I took part in those fights more than any of the other girls did. And I was expelled from high school three times. They used to expel us mostly. They never expelled the ultranionalits who started the fights. Leftists were expelled. We lived through this throughout the seventies. They were always unjust. We were often the ones to be beaten up, and the ones to be expelled.

(9) After school, we're walking on two sides of the street. Us leftists walking on this side of the road, and the rightist are walking arm in arm on the other one. We look at each other while we walk, though. A bad word, and there goes the fighting.

(10) While our friendship kept growing, revolutionaries from my neigborhood and school took me aside one day. What are you doing? He's an unltrantionalist, a fascist. How could you be going around with him? I didn't know he was like that.

He also reads *Cumhuriyet*, I said. No he's just pretending, they said. God, what a fear! I felt this great fear. How could I do something like this? What if I get carried away? What if I fall in love? What did it mean to fall in love with an untranationalist in those times!? But he was a very knowledgeable person, he was good-looking too, but you are a leftist. How could you go to a pastry shop or to the movies with an ultrantionalist. That's strictly not possible.

(11) This shows that they trust you. That they see you differently from others. That they value you differently. So you start trying to do every task they give you even better, to be able to enforce the trust they have in you, not to shake their confidence.

(12) We played the illegality game by ourselves in those years.

(13) We had working areas. And we were all young, naive. I had responsibilities, but the background was empty. The consciousness was still too new. Formalities were on the foregorund. And I was the restless type. Then I began to receive criticism for my undisciplined behavior. Let' say I am bored in my working area, I pack up and come home without letting the upper cadres know. They don't understand. Yes, they think I am talented, that I could be a good militant. But she is a petit bourgeois, they say. I take that hardly – I don't quite know what it means- but I am accused of it. I slowly began to be afraid. Am I now accountable to other people? Won't I be able to do anything without getting authorization from others? Upto that point I'd always lived according to my own rules. I hadn't really taken notice of my parents either. For the first time in my life, some people had come into my life telling me not to do things without their knowledge. They also had some confidence in me, I felt I shouldn't shake that confidence. That was the first time I lived that fear. From that structure called illegality.

(14) Then people heard about this. They came and talked to me. They said that next to the love one felt for the revolution, the love a person would feel for another had no significance. Firstly, we acquired this consciousness. We want the world, we want the revolution, we have no time to waste on love. When you come of age, you may marry some comrade from the organization. But it's not right to marry someone out of the organization, from another faction, not right, not possible –out of the question. For the sake of some love – at the time love was really belittled- the organization does not want to lose you. So you will have to finish that friendship. And they wanted my word. If you're going to do something with him, your relationship with the organization will end. You can't afford that then. If it were now, I would say, let it end. But then, you can't. You could never say that.

(15) But I wanted to take part in that structure. You get to discuss things with new people. You feel excited about that. Those meetings, keeping guard at night, neighborhood sessions, people looking at you differently wherever you go. Old people begin to respect you. That's how it was during the seventies. When revolutionaries visit people's homes, people bring them food, they share their food with them. They share their tea, invite them to their table. They open up their homes, their beds. On the other side, there was a life like a vegetable. Either I was going to prepare my dower, sew laces, make pillow covers and wait for my destined man to wear a white bride's dress and get married, or I would take this

different lifestyle, an illegal structure, organizational work. I chose to be here. That was a conscious decision.

(16) That night I was hiding in the same place Tayfun was. In the same room, the room he stayed in. Until my parents came and left. We were talking in there. Tayfun asked me, why are there following you? I told him that they wanted me to get married. In Anatolia, according to our culture, a young girl can't leave her home without getting married. Either she'll get married, and leave with her husband, or she'll stay home at her father's feet. My parents can't take this now. So, why don't you get married, he said all of a sudden. I told him that I didn't want thekind of marriage they planned for me. He asked me what kind of a person I would have liked to marry. Someone like you, for example, I said. And that turned out to be a marriage proposal to Tayfun. First, he smiled. I have a daughter your age, he said. But of course I hadn't acuallly meant that I wanted to marry him. But it was perceived like that. And I didn't try to correct it. I had meant to say I want to marry someone who's a revolutionary like you.

(17) First of all, the revolutionary emotions of that time were so strong that the feelings you have for that person are not related to the body's chemical love. It's something different. I can't quite explain it. I can't quite define it. There is respect. There is intense love. There's intense appreciation. There is the respect one feels for a teacher. He's simultaneously a father figure. Because both with his age and his experience, he's so far ahead of you. There is the respect and love for Deniz Gezmiş and his friends during March 12. He's a man in whom all of these are entangled, focused. Respect is dominant. Such that I was reshaped in his hands. He's like your teacher. There is no impatience. He could tell me things time and time again. Never a deragotary word. He never thought that I was ignorant, young, naive, that I wouldn't understand. He was primarily teaching. That's why he is such an organizer. That's why THKO went up to the mountains in Malatya; because of the relations he had with the masses and the people there. Otherwise how would have Deniz Gezmiş, Hüseyin İnan and Sinan Cemgil known about Malatya? They wouldn't. Malatya's Tayfun's homeland, his village. That's where they first took to the mountains.

(18) We were such experts in that; we didn't even think twice what our original name was. Was this my name? Many times, I identified with my names. It became natural to take on the information and the personality of my new identity, of the fake identities I carried around. We used to stay together in different parts of Turkey, there was no stable space or home life. After that, there was the phase of living with others, sometimes with a newly wed couple, we stayed there as their elders, relatives or family for a few months. Then we used to go to another region where –if need be- we have different identities. We stayed in Istanbul, in Adıyaman, in Iskenderun and Antep like this.

(19) We always shared home life with others. That is actually the most difficult part. You may share the common struggle, you may spend time together within common spaces, but staying with other families within the same home was full of difficulties. Everything about illegal life is abnormal anyway. You're always entangled in other people's problems, pyschological and otherwise. You live like a –should I say- sponger in their lives, always worried about whether you're

making them uncomfortable. You get arrested by the police, this and that, but that's not the problem. The effort you expend to have a smooth running relationship while you share the home life is so difficult. And I believe I've made a lot of sacrifice in that respect. To avoid problems, I used to take upon myself all the drudgery of the housework, from A to Z. It seems I had the energy, the strength to do it at the time. I used to run around for everything, from shopping to cleaning, the cooking, the kitchen, everything. If I'd been in my own house, maybe I would get a chance to shut the kitchen door and avoid the dishes on some days. Bu there, I used to work incessantly. I did take it hardly, of course. I sometimes used to share it with my husband. Tayfun tried to ease my workload, like he would get up and try to wash the dishes. But they wouldn't let him do that. You know, the leader of the organization washing the dishes in the kitchen - they would try to take it away from him. That's how it went on.

(20) On the one hand, you miss your country, on the other, you run away from it. You're close enough to touch it –you've just crossed the border. When you get to the border, you smell the air, but you are too far to reach. Missing your homeland, missing everything about your homeland. I don't know quite how to explain it. A different kind of missing, it's not like missing your parents or your lover. And you can't get pleasure out of anything. When will we go back? Let's go back as soon as possible. You never prepare for the next season –you know how you prepare jams for the winter- we didn't. Maybe next winter we won't be here, we thought. Our days were full of missing.

(21) Support for the revolutionary movement in Turkey could only be realized through Palestine. Palestine was the revolutionary hearth in the region. That's how we saw it. So, we thought, that's where we would go, and get an education. So that we could come back to the country and continue our struggle.

(22) Europe never became a frontier for us. I mean, we never had an incentive to go and live there. I'm glad we didn't. Europe softened people up. It pacified many revolutionaries from Turkey in a short while. You either became a fighter in Palestine or a refugee in Europe. You had no other choice. If you supported armed struggle, the Palestinian camps and fronts were an ocean for these things. They gave you the opportunity to learn about and use all kinds of materials. Not only to Turkish revolutionaries, but to revolutionaries from all around the world. You also had the opportunity to meet revolutionaries from other places in the world, you got to find out about their strategies and conditions for the struggle. These were the very positive sides of Palestine in comparison to Europe. Palestine has made significant contributions to the revolutionaries from Turkey as it tcontributed to their internationalist spirit, their dedication for struggle. Of course, I'm talking about the Palestine of the eighties.

(23) We went to Lebanon. There, Palestinians were living in the houses abandoned by the Armenians. That's where I encountered another positive aspect about Palestinians. Armenians had left the war zone, abandoned their homes. Nabatiyya is a border town. Palestinians had set up camp there. It was a close fire war zone. Just beyond the border, there is Israel. When we went there, we stayed in a house as well; there is no camp system there. But people stay in the houses like they do in the camps. I went and saw that they had arranged two mattresses for

themselves to sleep on the floor though the living rooms were full of furniture. This caught my attention. These don't belong to us, they said. I liked that a lot. (..) They too have a strong nostalgia for their country. Especially because they were exiled from their lands, as well. They said they were going back to their land, and that they would own houses there, if anywhere. Those people were really struggling and living for their own land.

(24) In their camps, we had a lot of good days. The educational sessions were very lively, fast and dynamic. There was no discrimination between men and women. On the front, women and men have the same conditions and the same rights. That's another aspect in which they are ahead of us. But when we left the camp to come home, we were two women there. We would all sit around to eat, but everyone would be waiting for the women to go into the kitchen. Even there it was like that; in Turkey, it's always like that anyway.

(25) Did we come here to hide? If we end up dying here, what is the point? So much effort, so much struggle, where did it really get us? Was it all so that we die here?

(26) I said all these in a plenary meeting. A plenary meeting is an extended meeting with the central committee members and associates. In that meeting I filed a request declaring I wanted to go back to Turkey. Whatever you choose to do, you may do; you may choose to throw me out of the organization, or to punish me. I will leave regardless. I made up my mind. How is that possible?! The organization has a certain discipline, it has formal decision making processes, they said. Do as you like, I said. If you pass the decision, we'll leave, if you don't, I will. Because I know the border.

(27) That was also something that normalized our lives. It was just the two of us in the house. We had no relatives. Because of illegality, it had to be like that. The convulsions started. What are we to do? Tayfun Tura took me to the Zeynep Kamil hospital, like a normal person would. He took so much pleasure out of it. He was like a normal person, he was so excited. He would talk about it the whole time later on. He was simply waiting at the hospital door, waiting for news of a new child, forgetting illegality, for the first time stopping worrying whether anyone knew him. Then, we had our daughter.

(28) It was as though we'de held a bet. That's the gist of illegal life. We'd made a bet, the state and us. When we rebelled against the state, when we said, we don't want you, we want a new system, a different world, we'd actually made a bet. Because we knew the state was against rebellion. We knew that its laws, its security forces, everything, but everything was against us. We knew all this, but we took the bet, always aware of it. We had to be aware the whole time, when moving around, going to an appointment, meeting somewhere, sitting at the pastry shop, we always had to be aware, watch our backs, feel the fear of having been tracked down. Let's say you'll hold a meeting in a house for 3-4 days. When you go to the gorcery's to get bread, you should remember to be aware. If for that house generally bought 3-4 loaves of bread everyday, you are not supposed to buy 5-6 that day. Because then, people will ask questions, why five? I call it the schizophrenic condition. It's a very monotonous life. No theater, no movies. I mean there is almost nothing of how a normal person is expected to live. A very closed life.

(29) Because there is also the phase we lived in. There are so many mistakes which you could see but could not express during that phase. You're experiencing a downward fall. Your network of relations has shrunk, your conditions have vastly changed; instead of the wide mass networks you used to have, you've been limited to small cell type relationships. In the past, we used to be able to travel from house to house and avoid the police, now we were restrained within the very places which the police was after. That's why today, even if they say they are practicing the utmost measures of illegality, organizations –and I can even name them- TIKKO, TKP; Dev-Sol, DHKP-C- they could all be captured overnight. After the 12th of September, our position in society changed. Our position before that was obliterated, it disappeared. We were no longer there. When we were pushed out, we made ourselves a different world. However safe we perceived ourselves in that world, it was acually just as open to the state cadres' members. Because at the end of the day, that's a security force as well. If your survival depends merely on your security forces, then the strong one can quickly destroy your forces.

(30) Inside, "monotyping" continued even more intensely. My personal conflicts started after a little while. The gist of the conflict was my relaxed manners, my free attitude. For example the PKK girls always wear their shirts over their pants. They have to leave it over the top. They don't want the women's bodies showing. In Dev Sol, similar decisions are taken at the top and followed through to the lower levels. They were prisoners anyway; and they further made themselves prisoners of the organizations' decisions. I saw this clearly. Girls just around twenty years old, eyes all bright, they're at the perfect age for love. But they have to stand with their eyebrows crossed, serious. The militant face. I used to pity them so. They're already brought in to prison by the state, as terrorist organization members. And then there are the organizational representatives' pressure on them.

(31) Under no organizational decision can you determine with whom I'm going to have personal relationships.

(32) Had it been yesterday, I would have thought that I should obey the organization's decisions, but in there, I ended up acquiring a personal freedom which allowed me to question decisions and make up my own mind as to what to take and what not to take.

(33) We talk about how, on this path to save humanity, the human is obliterated.

(34) At the end men, even if they're socialists, express themselves in a different way. Raised in Anatolia, a culture of men which couldn't quite overcome its feudal aspects – he couldn't take that this relationship was ended. He wanted me to wait for him outside as something that belonged to him. That way, he would have respected me more, he would have loved me more, it would be something more sacred.

(35) I was living through a different phase, that's why I took that relationship with such ease and openness. I didn't hide it, I didn't hide, I wasn't embarrased. Still however, once again the backward social traditions were dominant within ÖDP, the party which said it was established as a modern party, and this relationship was made an issue in the political party agenda.

(36) On this path, there are the marathon runners and hundred meter sprinters. I never wanted to be a hundred meter sprinter on this path. I didn't want to expend all my energy in the first hundred meters, and fall out of the race. I see myself more as a marathon runner. I mean it's a long distance run, and it's the key element of life. As long as I'm healthy, I'll be on this path.

(36) We talked about changing the world and the people... We do need to take into account how much we ourselves changed of course, but we did realize that changing people is the most difficult thing in the world. My aim was never to save the people, not then, not now. It's for myself, it's because I don't want to live in a world like this. I asked a question once, and I found the answer. I don't intend to tell people that they are oppressed or to save them from oppression. I can only do this with people who want to do things for themselves as well as the oppressed, who see the problem as the problem and look for solutions. We saw through experiments that after a while people struggle to save themselves from their saviors. So I speak here for myself. I feel like I am on this path because it's impossible to live like nothing's happening while we are in such a an incredibly bad world in which you can easily see so many conflicts.

APPENDIX 3
TRANSLATIONS OF NURAN'S NARRATIVE

(1) It's that sense of being immigrants- my father was a worker who'd migrated from the rural areas to the city and was basically trying to stay alive; I mean I am a poor family's daughter… the effort to stay alive, and being Alevis.. That is very significant in my life…My family had a tendency for politics... the way we felt we had to hide during the month of Ramadan, the constant fear we felt of others…The Alevi have this natural tendency toward the left… It's inherent to its philosophy, as well…

(2) My father's fellow villagers ousted him.. Because girls are not to be educated. They even stopped greeting him, and we never had anything to do with them. People from our village and its surroundings used to live in Fikirtepe, we used to live in Samatya. Very rarely, they would come to the hospitals in our neighborhood, and they'd stop by. But my father was always cold towards them, he always wanted to keep away from that environment. He was an intellectual.. .There was that leftist feel at the time…

(3) Because she knew I was shy, she always tried to disguise that… She was a very good teacher; these days, it seems it's impossible. For example, schools uniforms were distributed among poor family's children. She would secretly send me to family, but no one in class knew about this. She tell the class that she appreciated my father a lot, for he was working in a factory and providing education for all his children. She always backed me up…

(4) – I will backtrack a little…what did you used to do at the union?
- Nothing…
- You used to sit around?
- Hm hm.
- And you used to listen?
- I used to listen to them… There were some strikes somewhere… You know, what happened here and there…That it was it… I mean I was very young.

(5) Then I started going to the Middle Schools Association more often. And I used to be … I mean I used to dance at weddings and everything, I used to be a dancer… You know how there are those *kına* nights, they always asked me to dance at those…I used to dance very well…That abruptly ended, for example, I can never dance anymore...When I became a leftist… I used to love wearing make up, for instance, and my hair was short like this… I used to dress daringly… then I went to the association like that a few times, and they glared at me…There was this person I married later on… They were all looking at me badly. When you are treated like an outsider, you rub away parts of you, you rub away those very good parts… These are unfortunate things, of course.. But they have been significant in my live, I have to say these things…

(6) Since my childhood, I have this thing for being different… to be different, not to be one of the mob…I used to be a very stubborn person, I am not like that anymore, I have been softened, I am more tolerant now. I was very stubborn, I never liked

compulsory things. I used to love my freedom. It brings curiosity…I think that only people with curiosity try to change themselves, make themselves different…

(7) There was four of us in our family… I have been conflicting a great deal with all my siblings since my childhood. I've always had a conflicting side…I think it's because I was the youngest, and I grew up in the city that some of my values are different from theirs. Despite being leftists, despite that common ground, we were very different people

(8) We went to Ankara without telling my father. There was a very big protest. Then my father found out about it. He burned our books. I used to be a very rebellious type. I said I was leaving home. Actually, now that I think about it, I was very young, too young. But everything was different then, especially because of the responsibilities one carried, you can't measure them with age. My sister said she was leaving too. We did.

(9) Are they trying to fool me?

(10) That separation came at a time of a massive movement. But later on, things deteriorated, they were deformed. After '77, all factionalizations lost their meaning. Until '77, it was a time of organizing, of reevaluation, and of questioning what could be done in this country. At that stage, factionalizations were to be expected. But just imagine, there were so many leftist organizations after '77. They were all unnecessary. If only we had a structure mature enough to organize the many different groups under roof like the one in Nicaragua, those separations could be avoided.

(11) - your first responsibilities involved renting the apartment and taking care of those who came there, right?

- That's how it started at least… that's how it started.
- Then what happened?
- Then I became a member of the organization… (she chuckles)
- And, after you became a member, were there any changes in your responsibilities?
- Of course, you have more responsibilities.
- And what did that mean in your life?
- … I really don't know how to put all this.
- If you don't want to talk about it, I can switch off- (tape off and on)
- The greatest responsibility is… I mean, you are… you are someone who started on a path to change this system..
- Hm hm.
- And you will do everything that is necessary… you- you can figure out the rest by yourself… I mean from the planning of an action to doing theoretical work… to dying in combat somewhere… I don't know, everything was geared towards this cause… once you took that responsibility… after that point, you have to accept everything.
- At some point, you emphasized that you became a member of the organization, what was different after that?
- For me, becoming a member was something to be joyous about… You think to yourself that you deserve it. .. because not everyone gets to become member… there are many people like you, but they can't all become members.
- Was there an admission process?

- At the last instance, yes you are evaluated… they say ok… and that made me happy.
- And how did your life change?
- How did my life change? Well, I was in prison for eight years.
-

(12) I'm not going to talk about that now; since those are things everyone lived through. Of course, it may be necessary to talk about that since it is a totally different process on its own.

(13) Selimiye was important though –since that's the place I lived the coup. One day, an officer walked in. The manager's name was Murat the Black… a huge man, from here to the ceiling, he was big, fat. From now on, he said, each will be onto himself… That's here our individuality started. I recognize no more political representatives, he said. That meant that from that point on… you are alone. On your own, he can take you, torture you, and these things did happen later on… You think to yourself… I am alone… Actually you are an organized person, there are thousands like you… That was the most important thing in those years… that feeling of comradeship, of friendship.. . and that sense of making the impossible happen… We never found those in our later lives..

(14) Let's say we're in this place… There are forty of us staying there, and ten of them are my friends, they scatter us into different wards. My friend is looking at me in the eye… especially if she's younger, less experienced… I mean I could do anything for her. That's how you feel, and I think that's very significant. I have no personal interests, and neither does she. If our eyes touches each other's, we could read anything in them, that is what that sense of friendship involved.

(15) I was the representative there, I was the women's ward representative. I mean I was one of the first people who spoke when Murat the Black said those things, when he said that each would be onto himself from then on. No, we said, we don't accept such a thing. We are one, we are political prisoners, we did not come here because of common crimes –that was very significant, as well.

(16) The human will has the power to undertake a great deal.

(17) In the ward. You want to knit, there is no wool. There are no books, no newspapers. They want to leave you alone with yourself… That was the gist of the matter. Of course, we made up so many things at that point… The human will has the power to undertake a great deal… Out of nothingness, comes out a lot…What plays, what games! Everything you can think of…I had a very happy time inside (she laughs)… I was really very happy, very happy. Of course, there were difficulties. There were many kinds of people in there. You try to formulate something common… there are those who go mad, you have to know how to handle them… and having lived in such a place makes you a more tolerant person… I mean out of all that is negative, something very positive comes out. You have to be together against the opposite side, and you are constantly in a struggle…

(18) They want you to think, that's why they put you there in the cell. It is really important to believe in something.. I mean I was not really effected. I always thought about how right I was, especially because I had to endure all that. Because they do very irrational, very inhumane things, they don't see you as humans anyway… For

example, you wear something, they try to rip it off of you. You find yourself struggling not to give that and these things hurt… You become over sentimental in prison… And you also know about other people's stories, people in other places of the world… How they lived, what they had to endure, and you think to yourself… I am one of them.

(19) Then started conflicts within the organization. There was always strife. In our organization, there had always been conflicts between those who had a theoretical approach and those who loved guns and protests. I always thought both were necessary. So I and a few of my fiends were caught in between. But these separations were more personal than theoretical… And also, so much was happening in the world! The world had changed, it was not like it was in our time anymore, don't you think you have to be discussing all that? The powers that lead you here are no more. You have to adapt to the new conditions, you have to at least try to understand it! no they've blown away the twin towers; don't we have to make an effort to understand this? This is something we never would have believed… We at least believed America was a super power, but don't you see how they fell like paper tigers?

(20) What shit are we dealing with here! Damn this! …and then I left my organization, my husband – these two decisions are very significant decisions in my life, very significant. They are very significant and I love them… I love these two decisions of my life…

(21) And then I started living everything as an individual… that is a very important phase in my life… I began to give direction to my life consciously, with my own decisions.

(22) How did it change my life? First, I got rid of my prejudices, I became a free person… I mean about everything and everyone… that is very significant, that sense of freedom… Otherwise, you believe in something completely, and you have limits. I learned to speak my mind… Then I had a lover, we used to take about everything! Whatever used to strike us, we used to talk about it… You can't do that when you are member of an organization… I could then fall in love with anyone I wanted… that was beautiful…

(23) And then I said… I… want to live as Nuran, not as Nuran from MLSBP, not as Nuran who is someone's wife… because that is a nuisance as well.. The top cadres place you in a spot… that was a decision of the top cadres… because he has chosen you from among many other people in the same organization… you have to do it, you have no choice…

(24) That was the time when I began to feel that kind of women's consciousness… I mean we used to writ letters to each other, and I realized that we did not share the same views. You live in a time period when that common ground is no longer adequate and you tale notice of that. Our mindsets were completely different. Now, I see that he 's someone I could never get together with.

(25) - The initial years of change are extremely painful. Firstly, when you divorce our husband, they ask you why… Your friends, your family, everyone in the left circles knew me… Imagine the pressure on my shoulders… It is not taken as good enough excuse if I tell them that I don't love this man I married…That's a shock! And I was totally alone at that time, totally alone…

- How did your family react?

- My mother was about to go mad… They used to put our pictures together to make new photographs… What do you mean you don't love him?! Love really doesn't count for much in this society…It's not like everyone makes love marriages! What the hell is love anyway? They take it lightly… They take the most important thing in life lightly…

(26) One day my father told me that I was living the life of a mistress (she laughs). I don't, I said. Nobody takes care of me, father. I work and I get paid well. I have a place of my own, and I make my own living… And that is the person I love… and we live together, I said. He was furious. They always protested first, and then had to accept me later. Though I'm not sure that my father ever accepted this. Like he never accepted the fact that I did not have a child. One day he said to me that a person without a child is a zero in life. She can't love anyone, he said. It was very difficult to confront things like this.

(27) And I did not realize it at the time… that I was in a depression, I mean. How could I have know what depression was… because we always believed in something and we were always in a struggle…You feel as though you have no feelings, like you are not a … I mean you don't have dilemmas… when you believe like that….

(28) And then, when everything you have come to trust just vanishes… you feel like you have nothing to lean on..

(29) Then, you tell them your story… Let's say they went there as political refugees.. They make it as though a person can only change her life by being a political refugee...A person may choose to change her life in every way…She may leave this city and go to a new one, she may change her job…That is what is meant by individuality…I wanted to change my life, and that was my excuse; I did not want to just change places because of politics! He was looking for an excuse! An excuse! That's why I am a bit to discreet, I don't talk to people who don't deserve it…So I found Paris very backward…

(30) If only you got married and had children like everyone else…

(31) It was a very backward circle, a very backward circle…

(32) The leftists are always more backward than the rest of the society, I should say that. Because that feel the need to remain loyal to certain clichés, they can only see through the light of those clichés. But society changes, and as it changes, it accepts new things. Society has a better chance for progress than the leftists do…The leftist has criteria, a pattern; that's how he viewed life twenty years ago, and that's how he views life today… they looked t me as though I was a prostitute… How can a woman be free in this society?

(33) I don't like daily politics anymore. I am a political person, I just don't like politics as we know it… But in every piece of my life… even in my love… there is politics. I see things differently now…

APPENDIX 4
TRANSLATIONS OF PERIHAN'S NARRATIVE

(1) I am the daughter of a rural family. My family's background is Alevi and I am an atheist. My family is an Alevi, democrat and atheist family.
(2) They always told us that if our accents were not good enough, people would keep a distance, that they would not take us for who we are… And that was because they were from the rural areas, they were villagers, always belittled, ostracized… They did not want us to be ostracized.
(3) When they spoke Kurdish and we asked them what language they were speaking, they would say they were speaking English or French.
(4) They never treated me like a girl. Because in our family, girls and boys were never separated, I always thought of myself as a boy. I still think of myself as a man. I mean I don't want to see myself as a woman. In society, women are third degree citizens. Women have no place. It is because I hate the word woman… To be a woman… Actually, it's beautiful… When perceived as a whole, as a person, it is beautiful to be a woman…But I'm against the whole 'woman' thing because women are not perceived as people. I am not a feminist. I should say that openly. There are human beings, I don't discriminate among people as men and women. That is why I get angry at women. They should see themselves as people, they should remember they are humans. That is what my father taught us. You.. are a child, and when you grow up, you will be a person; you should primarily see yourself as a person. Don't think of yourself as a woman or a man; only as a person. It was my family that brought me up to be who I am.
(5) That is why I am against capital punishment. When I was a baby, when I was Sıdal's age, I was against capital punishment. I was against killing people. I was against violence. I am still against violence, but I think one needs to respond to violence with violence. When people started dying, when we had to go to our friends' funerals, I started thinking that way, and I still do. I mean when somebody is beating me up, I can't turn the other cheek. I think that's unfair. Almost like asking to be hit on the other cheek as well.
(6) Imagine, she used to have maids at home, and then she started working as a maid herself.
(7) Kızılay (Red Crescent) aids people in these condition. When we went there once, I hated the state… I went there with my mother… I was a little older than Sıdal, my breast had just begun to grow. .. The officer there asked my mother whether she had a place for rent… My mother did not understand. She was a villager, she said, "um, no." He said, "yes, there is, she is standing right beside you." He was really pointing at me. My mother left the building with tears. I was a child. I did not understand what he meant. All they were giving out was flour, rice and bulgur. I never forget that. That day, for the first time I felt this strong urge for rebellion against the state.
(8) Then, one day, my father started walking. My parents talked about this episode. My father said to me, "Come on, we'll go there, and you'll point that man out to me." My mother had sewn a yellow dress for me, a new short sleeved dress. We went from Dikmen to Kızılay. When we were getting off the bus –and of course my father was

crippled and was sitting there with his crutches- a woman gave me two and a half liras. I cried a lot. That's what I mean by begging. I said I wasn't a beggar, that I would not take that money. I was trying to pick up my father by the arms and all that.. but I was a child and he was too heavy for me… that's when I saw my father crying again. He took it very hard. "Come on", he said, "we're going home." And he took the money from me –that money we needed so badly- and gave it to someone else. We came home, and we couldn't go to find that officer. I mean my father could never gather that strength.

(9) My father was a very brave man. All my life I was proud of him, I admired him. In my life, I admired Che, I admired Mahir and eventually I admired my father… that is why I am grateful to my family…. And perhaps, that is why I don't feel daunted. I don't regret anything I did or anything I will do; I stand behind all of it.

(10) My parents would always get complaints about me. I was a trouble maker. I used to beat children up at school. One day, when I came back from school… well, at school, when I heard an older girl calling us bad names like the *Kızılbaş* and gypsies, when I heard that they were saying that our fathers were sleeping with their daughters… I beat her up. I must have beaten her up very badly, because her mother came to complain… My mother –and we were having dinner at the table- did not say anything until we were finished eating. When we were finished and the table was cleared –we cleared it together- I knew that my mother would not do anything to me. Because I was right, I'd already told them about it earlier. My mother took a knife in her hands, and said "Didn't I tell you not to bring complaints to my home? Whatever you do outside is your business, but I don't want complaints at my door!" And she proceeded to beat me up. But then, she didn't, she couldn't lift her hand.

(11) How dare you bring complaints to my house… how dare you disturb the peace in my home!?

(12) When Deniz and his friends were hanged, I was in middle school. That was my first protest. I beat up the music teacher. It was a woman. When she said things like, they were the communists, they should have been hanged, I walked all over her. I was suspended from school for a week. It was a childish protest, but it was a beautiful protest I thought. My parents did not do anything to me. Because I was right. I always stood up for what I believed. That was what they taught me. If you are right, you should defend your cause till the very end. My father went to see the principal, and told him that the episode did not call for a suspension; that Turkey was going through an extraordinary time. That these things should be talked about, without suspending children. .. Then, I started going to the People's Houses.

(13) She would never beat us up one by one, that's why we always tried hard not to make mistakes. When the rest of us were beaten because of what one of us did, it used to hurt our conscience. That was my mother's training method, that's how she educated us.

(14) The university students who used to stay in our house had a significant effect. The things they talked about impressed me. They used to talk about Turkish politics, about Deniz and Mahir. I used to admire them. My first love stemmed from that admiration as well. There was no sexuality, but I used to feel very happy, secure and under protection when I was with him. he was going to educate me, teach me things. I never felt desire when he held my hand, I never particularly enjoyed it. It was

omething else, but I was in love with him…. I was way too young then, I didn't even know how to address him.

(15) It was because he was a revolutionary, a socialist, a patriot that I admired him so.

(16) When I told my father about him, he said "the body is yours". "Your smallest mistake with your body will cause you a lifetime of suffering," he said. "This society," he said, "is a hypocritical society." "They will not take you as who you are, and if you are not a virgin, even if the man you marry accepts it in the beginning", he said, "he will make you pay for it later. That's what you should keep in mind when you decide upon the level of your friendship. Determine your limits You may hold hands, you may kiss, but don't share your body. If you think you can handle it, go ahead and share it, I don't care," he said. And that conversation remained with me throughout all my relationships with the opposite sex.

(17) He sent me to my uncle, and I told my uncle that my father forbade me from seeing my boyfriend. My uncle was caught in between, and he wanted to meet the guy. So we went to my uncle's together, and I introduced them. My uncle loved him… he really liked him. At the time he was from *Dev-Genç* (Revolutionary Youth).. My uncle said, "if you want to sleep with him, go ahead and do it, girl! You've got nothing to lose. At the very least, you'll have slept with someone honorable." He said. "Virginity has no significance, that piece of hymen has no importance, if you're going to feel good about yourself, just do it!" he said. He told me what to do while the guy was there with us. "Your honor is not between your legs," he continued. "Your honor is in your heart and in your mind. If someone does not marry you because you are not a virgin, fuck him! That means he's a pimp, he's not even a person, he's an animal!". I did not sleep with him.

(18) That was my first beating from the police… my feet were so swollen… and then, they realized it was a childish protest – they though it was childish- they let me go.

(19) Imagine, you are sitting at the People's Houses… The People's Houses founded by Atatürk… and I am an admirer of Atatürk. I like Atatürk, I like Mustafa Kemal… I am not a Kemalist, but I like Atatürk because of all that he accomplished… a People's House founded by Atatürk, and every year the parliament reserves a certain budget for these places…..You are a member of the People's Houses, and you get arrested for it. Now that's so bad. You go there to read books, you chat with your friends, you make your own tea and drink it.. You are one with others.. You go to the squatter areas to help them out, you work on people's gardens, you teach people how to read and write. When women went to work, we used to take care of their children… Those were the founding goals of the People's Houses… that people would come together, that they share whatever they had… I reacted a lot when I was arrested because of that for the first time. The police came, wrapped us up and took us away..

(20) One day, I was reading Mahir's Selected Writings in the factory. This woman came in, saw that and had me suspended from work… I belonged with the union, so she could not have done that.. Lots of people tried to intrude.. Then, I went to the manager's desk, and I smashed his desk with my fist.. I said you are from CHP, you are an intellectual, you are a social democrat, but you exploit the workers, you don't support organized labor, you are not acting in line with the party program… you

belong with the right, and you are obliged to leave this post… I hit the table and the glass was broken… He hired me again..

(21) Several of my friends died when they were gunned down by the fascists… We had no guns… we never took up guns, I mean I never took up guns… Because I was always against guns.. But my friends… When the police started shooting at them at an illegal protest… that's bad… I mean they had nothing in their hands. They only had their hearts…their hands, their fingers… we were only children, but those protests.. they were all very pure protests. We wanted an independent Turkey, we wanted general amnesty, we wanted increase in the minimum wages, we wanted better health conditions… Those fascists and the police should not have been against us. We wanted our rights to live as people… We insisted that people don't die in hospital corners, that women don't sell their bodies…We wanted the brothels to be shut down, that women not be objectified… We were only 5-6 young people, girls and boys, who wanted to express their reactions….

(22) Now, you're going to ask me why I joined the MLSPB… As I said, all my life, I only fell in love with my father, Che and Mahir… I had carved Che's portrait on my wall, and I adored him… I still do. I read Mahir's *Selected Writings*, and I wanted to appropriate him and his thoughts. I wanted to bring his ideas into life.

(23) We shall share everything but our lovers.

(24) No, we never fought. I mean we used to argue, but never had fallings out, never took a negative attitude towards each other… only when we had spies among us, we would ostracize them, we would not talk to them at all…We'd warn others as well… Or if a guy looked at one of girl friends with a bad intention.. Then, we'd tell that guy, "Look, if you are serious about this relationship, you have to marry this girl… but you can't just have a good time with her"… I mean friendships should not be based on sexuality…

(25) People were not perceived as man or women.. that was very good… it was both good and bad…I mean a woman did not think of herself as a woman, she saw herself as a man… or a man would think of himself as a woman when he was with us…

(26) One day, I was beaten really badly by the MHP people.. that was my first beating – my first beating by the MHP people… I could not get out of bed for a month and a half… That's when I had hernia…I was coming back home from putting up posters.. Dikmen, my own region, my neighborhood, my own house's gates… I mean there were at most ten meters between where I had the beating and my mother's house… I think there were about ten of them, all of them men. They hit me with their guns.. my ears were smashed, my eyes and my face were swollen… I mean I had an awful beating, and all I did was to shout slogans "To hell with fascism!"… I tried to make my voice heard by shouting slogans, I did not call out for my mother or anything… When the neighbors turned on their lights, they were scared and they fled… I stumbled home… I was engaged at the time… my fiancé walked up to me and said, "you are a woman… what were you doing out at this time of the night, you deserved it." so I took my ring off and threw it at his face.. I said, "Fuck off! I don't want you! If I am out at this time of the night getting beaten, and you are inside watching a football game, I have nothing to share with you!"

(27) Go tell Perihan, she should not go around with those people..

(28) Passers by… the watchmen were spitting at my face…this was the first time a communist woman -in their words- was captured in Kırkkale, it was a scene for them.. just like an animal…

(29) Salih was such a hero for me then.. I thought that if he were to be killed, my conscience would kill me, I would feel like I had left him… You decide to get married, you share a life together… To leave him there would mean betrayal… I would have felt like I betrayed the revolution, my own principles… I didn't leave him.. One night, as they were harassing him downstairs, I felt a burn on my face…As though they were actually hitting me… I was so connected to him… As they were beating him up, I felt like they were beating me up, like they were torturing me… All of a sudden I lost it, I couldn't breathe anymore, so they took me outside… I demanded to see him, telling them that I knew they had killed him… So although he was supposed to be there for another twenty days, they sent us to Mamak… The police said they had never seen love like this…

(30) I mean that was psychological torture, a consciously manipulated torture for the girls…

(31) Am I supposed to pose like an actress? Which magazine are they going to publish them in? I don't think I am guilty!

(32) Then, the prosecutor asked me whether I knew what my husband had been doing, whom he had been in contact with. I said –I took it very hard- "while you are interrogating me here, do you know what you wife is up to, do you know whose arms she is in? In this patriarchal society, you have the guts to ask a woman where her man has been, who he has been seeing. No. We study at the same school, we're students at the same school, we met and decided to get married. How am I supposed to know who he sees during the day, or what he does at night?" They insisted that I give them names. I gave the same statement I had given at the station. And I said, "I'm reading this book called *As People Live,* it is about the relationships of a soldier's wife. If you've read that, can you tell me whose arms your wife is right now? Here you're taking my statement, but do you know who she is sleeping with? How dare you ask me a question like that? One must first ask himself that question, and then proceed to ask others."

(33) When I came home, my mother spat at my face at the door. "How can you leave the boy alone and come home? Is this how you take care of your struggle?" she said. And she would not let me into the house. "If you've been together till this day, how can you leave him in prison and come home?" That's the worst my mother has ever treated me! She sided with a stranger's son, and would not let me in… she would not let me in… She really didn't.

(34) Can you imagine, there were thousands of people arrested. Thousands of families had to live through this. Thousands of families in prisons. That is how they created the generation of '80. They actually carried out quite conscious strategies. They were not able to do that after the 1970 coup, they were fledglings at the time. But in 1980, they took special courses; the soldiers and the police did, the national security agency did…They were all trained. With that strategy, they destroyed a whole generation. They destroyed families, mothers, fathers, children, lovers, husbands, wives, brothers and sisters. It was like a pogrom. They didn't kill, but they made zombies out of us. They turned us into people afraid of speaking and even of breathing. People who

were trying to defend the others' rights were arrested and beaten. At the prison gates, they would scream at us: "You sluts! You go home and send us your husbands!" We had so many beatings at prison gates.

(35) What?! Should we feed them instead of hanging them?

(36) At the time, people were afraid of revolutionaries, people were afraid of those who had loved ones in prisons.

(37) First of all, you are a prisoner's wife. Society looks at you differently. You are available. A prisoner's wife. I mean if you are a prisoner's wife, you are a slut. Prisoners' wives are sluts. As I said, we were in a struggle against everyone, ranging from the police, the soldiers to the grocer's and the random man at a bus stop.

(38) Whenever they were released, they would come to me. They would say "Abla, without you, it would have been much worse. If for some reason your name wasn't called, we all used to wonder about you."

(39) Fascists treat their wives much more democratically than he does. They help their wives. I mean a man should pick up after himself. He thinks of me as a machine, a robot. He thinks of me like a machine which doesn't need to sit, doesn't get sick, or tired, who can do everything by itself. But you need to oil machines. And that, you can only do with love. With sharing. My husband can't do it anymore. He lost it. He says he's suffered too much. Especially our people suffered a lot in prisons. Most marriages ended. We are the only couple which remained from those years. because life was incredibly difficult, both for the one inside and the one outside.

(40) After the coup of 12 September, marriages have not been healthy. If anyone from our generation tells you that their relationship has been fine, they are lying. Because there are storms. The past haunts. You think about everything. You see the society. That has effects on personal relationships. That has effects on your body and your sexuality. It effects everything. They left us crippled. We live on crutches. One day, those crutches will not be able to carry us anymore.

(41) If a man had come into my life while Salih was inside, I would have betrayed my struggle. It would be a betrayal of my life's struggle.

(42) I don't enjoy sexuality either. I feel used. Maybe it's because of my experiences at the station.

(43) Salih and I could not adapt. I went to a psychologist without telling him. What can I do with this marriage? He's out of prison. I now have to be a mother and a father to him. I will have to be his wife, his comrade, his lover, his friend and his concubine…That's what the psychologist told me. That I would have to give him at least another ten years of my life, to upkeep the sacrifice. That unless I did that, he would fall into a depression, would disconnect from life… because he suffered a lot. The conditions in prison were awful. If I leave him, if I don't take care of him, if I don't stand by him, my conscience will disturb me all my life.

(44) But if he gets in a fight somewhere, I stand by his side. Even if I get beaten up with him, I remain by his side. If I leave him, I will have betrayed my mind.

(45) I said to myself, that is not who I am. And I waited. And I continued my marriage. I still am. If I had left him while he was in prison, it would have been a blow for the people in there with him. Because I was a symbol for them. I got married in prison. I had to stand by him, I had to take care of a prisoner. And I took care of the others as well. I couldn't have left him when he came out; why would I have waited those ten

years? And I would have lost the confidence and respect they had for me. I would have at least lost my self-respect. I would never want to give anyone a chance to belittle revolutionaries.

(46) Today, my only aim in life is to bring up a proud and good-hearted child. I mean a pure child with a pure heart and mind. A child who loves people. A child who likes to give to people, a child who is not selfish, and who loves her country. Especially a child who loves her country. I love my country.

(47) They should scrape our wombs, then! They shouldn't let us reproduce. I mean if they don't want me to have a child, they should scrape my womb. My child will be like me. An oppressed family's child will be like her parents. She will be rebellious. Just do what Hitler did! Scrape off our wombs!

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