

THE EPIDEMIC, THE PRISON HOUSE AND THE GLOBAL CITY  
BELONGING AND IDENTITY IN BAYRAMPAŐA

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## Thesis Abstract

Pınar Yanardağ, The Epidemic, the Prison House and the Global City:

### Belonging and Identity in Bayrampaşa

This thesis is based on an ethnographic research conducted in Bayrampaşa, İstanbul. The thesis focuses on a group of Yugoslavian immigrants in the district and aims to display the simultaneous movement that this immigrant community constructs its national and local identity at the same time. To achieve this end, the thesis employs a historical perspective. It is aimed to show the reflections of historically significant events in the narratives of the people in Bayrampaşa, i.e. the title deeds, the cholera epidemic of 1970, and Bayrampaşa prison. This thesis basically asserts that the main issues in Bayrampaşa can be interpreted through two distinct positions. These are the sovereign position and subordinate position. Between these two positions, there is a constant oscillation through which the narratives of the people in Bayrampaşa construct local and national identities. This thesis focuses on this oscillatory movement within the contexts of migration, the cholera epidemic, the prison house and the global city

## Tez Özeti

Pınar Yanardağ, “Salgın, Cezaevi ve Küresel Şehir:

Bayrampaşa’da Aidiyet ve Kimlik”

Bu tez, İstanbul’un Bayrampaşa ilçesinde yürütülmüş olan etnografik bir araştırmaya dayanmaktadır. Tez bu ilçede yaşamakta olan bir grup Yugoslavya göçmenine odaklanmaktadır. Bu tezde, bu göçmen topluluğunun yerle aidiyet kurarken, yani Bayrampaşalılaşıırken, bununla eş zamanlı olarak nasıl ulusal kimlik kazandıklarını göstermeyi amaçlanmaktadır. Bunu yapabilmek için ilçeye tarihsel bir perspektifle bakılmaktadır. Tapu, 1970 yılında yaşanan kolera salgını ve Bayrampaşa cezaevi gibi ilçe tarihinde çok önemli yeri olan meselelerin burada yaşayan insanların anlatılarına nasıl yansıdığına gösterilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu tezde temel olarak, Bayrampaşa’nın tarihinde yer alan temel meselelerin iki belirgin pozisyon üzerinden anlatılabildiği savunulmaktadır. Bu pozisyonlar mağdur ve egemen pozisyonlar olarak adlandırılmaktadır. Bu iki farklı pozisyon arasında sürekli bir salınım vardır ve anlatılar sürekli olarak bir pozisyondan diğerine kaymaktadır. Bu salınım, bir anlatı aracı olarak yerel ve ulusal kimlikleri kuran bir stratejidir. Bu tez bu stratejiyi göç, kolera salgını, cezaevi ve küresel şehir bağlamlarında tartışmaktadır.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This current work is a result of an ethnographic journey. This thesis is not written with predeterminations and preconceptions, and since the first time I have decided to conduct this research to the end of this work, its skeleton was transformed several times. In this sense, the writing experience of this thesis is a joyful and creative learning process for the writer. Thus, in this introduction chapter, I would like to illustrate this ethnographic process with the hope that it would lead to a better understanding of the questions and arguments of this thesis.

I started the field research in the summer of 2007. In that period, the relocation of Bayrampaşa Prison was the agenda and there was a proliferation of the news on the prison and the debates on the relocation of the prison became widespread, people of Bayrampaşa are more frequently represented in the media. The narratives of the people of Bayrampaşa were very important since these news make Bayrampaşalılar visible in a larger public and they make Bayrampaşa a centre of attention. These narratives were also my motive to conduct research on Bayrampaşa. The first ideas that came to my mind were to conduct a research within the prison, that is, an ethnography on the ex-prisoners. I had attempts to contact with political ex-prisoners and I conducted some interviews. Those interviews led me to an ethnography on ‘the prison problem’ in Turkey, in a more general manner. However this was not compatible with my concerns. Though this was an important issue to scrutinize, I was thinking to conduct ethnography specifically on the “Bayrampaşa Prison House”. With this kind of hesitancy, I attempted to find other ways of

deliberating the prison. This led me to focus on the neighborhood located next to the prison and the people living in it. I concentrated on the news about the people living next to the prison. Based on the information of these news on Bayrampaşa, I was expecting to find a place where the main problem was the prison and the prison was seen as the source of all the maleficence. With these conceptions in my mind, I began my field research.

When I started my research in İsmetpaşa neighborhood, I had a very limited knowledge about the place. I didn't have any contacts or knew any person when I first went there. I went there just to walk about the streets and to gain some general idea of the neighborhood. It was Friday, and very cold. Without hoping to see anybody on the streets because of the weather, I went near the prison. It was a surprise to see that the street which adjacent to the prison was very crowded. There were more than a hundred people on the street. This crowd was the line of the visitors of the prisoners. People were waiting in those conditions for their turn to come. I went into the coffeehouse which is across the prison, to warm up. The coffeehouse was full of people including women; they were the visitors, waiting to get into the prison. Many coffeehouses on the street were similarly full with visitors. Seeing them, I supposed that the visitors were very important in this neighborhood. There was an economy in the neighborhood based on those visitors, the types and locations of the shops, coffeehouses were organized according to the use of the visitors. Furthermore, there was a propensity to reject the idea of the relocation of the prison among the shopkeepers and their employees. This was the opposite of my expectations but at the same time reasonable for me, because the reason of their presence in the district was predominantly economic.

After my initial attempts, I found opportunity to meet people who live in İsmetpaşa and conducted my first interviews. At this stage of my research, my objective was to understand the prison, from its exterior; my purpose was to grasp the prison by looking at it through the people living around it. One of the main questions in my mind was to discover, ‘the kind of subjectivities that were created through the experience of living next to a prison’. I was questioning the subjectivities and the socialites that were created by the existence of the prison and related to this, the meanings of the relocation of the prison from the district. Just like the shopkeepers I previously interviewed, this was the first question I asked to my first resident informants reside in Bayrampaşa. I asked them, how the existence of the prison was influencing them. Surprisingly, the women that I interviewed preferred to start the conversation with the phrase “we have never been influenced by the prison” or “it did not effect us ‘that much’”. I was very surprised and confused. While asking them how the prison had been influencing them, I was hoping to hear their complaints about the prison, and became very disappointed on getting these answers. They were insistently trying to convince me that the prison did not harm their lives. Their position was not “being indifferent” to the existence of the prison. On the contrary, like most people in the neighborhood, they had many stories to tell about the prison. Oddly, they needed to add the phrase that “it did not influence them”. Indeed the stories they told me were full of “action” and “terror”, but they were “not being influenced” by the prison, at all! I was trying to grasp the explanation of this divergence. In the first instance, I thought that they were not willing to talk about the prison. Obviously, this was not the case because during the conversation, they told me several different stories on prison. In the process of the relocation, the municipality played a role in articulating the disturbances the prison caused in

Bayrampaşa, the misrepresentation, how the psychologies of the people were being effected from the prison, etc. It is possible to encounter the same discourses in the media and in the statements of state authorities. This was one of the main problems that I encountered with, in the research process and it provided me to focus my attention to the other issues of Bayrampaşa, specifically the sense of locality and belonging to Bayrampaşa.

According to my interviews, one of the most important components of being a *Bayrampaşalı* is the immigration from Yugoslavia to Turkey. A great deal of my informants are Balkan immigrants and specifically from Yugoslavia. During my interviews, the most repetitive answer with regard to the question of what the basic characteristics of the district were the Balkan origins. The reference to Balkan origins comprises most of the people in Bayrampaşa. Balkan identity was the most frequent trait for defining “*Bayrampaşalı*”. Related to this, Nearly all of my informants mentioned that when they or their parents came to İstanbul, they bought the lands of their houses and had the possession of the title deeds of those lands. This emphasis on the title deeds was meaningless to me, since I could not explicate it. However, after reading the news on a very important event in Bayrampaşa’s history, the emphasis on the title deeds became more reasonable. That important event was the cholera epidemic, without question. The outbreak of the epidemic was in 1970 and unfortunately, the first cases were seen in Bayrampaşa (or with its old name, Sağmalcılar). With the disease, people living in Sağmalcılar were suddenly stigmatized and seen as the carriers of the disease. As a result of this stigmatization, the name of the district is changed from Sağmalcılar to Bayrampaşa, in order to erase the stigmatization. I found a similar pattern in the narrativization of these two important issues -the title deeds and the cholera epidemic-. Both events were being

narrativized in two separate positions. One was to some extent a submissive position without any claim of agency. In this position, the narrator grounded the unwanted event with “bad luck”, or “bad intentions of other people”. The second position was somewhat a ‘sovereign’ position, that the person claims an agency and positions him/herself in a potent condition. In this sense, the identity of being from Bayrampaşa is constructed within the oscillation between these two different but related positions. As I told above, my first concerns in the field was about the prison house. After I conceptualize the oscillatory structure in order to examine the history of the district, I will deal with the issue of the prison within the same structure. The relocation of the prison is an important corner stone, since it opened a space for new demands and desires. Clearly, Bayrampaşa has been through a transformation there are several symptoms of this transformation. Thus, in this thesis, I will try to consider the oscillatory movement with the debates on the global city. I will try to illustrate the debates of global city and their repercussions in İstanbul and Bayrampaşa. My claim is that, with the influences of the debates on globalization, Bayrampaşalılar might imagine becoming a part of the global city and obtaining a permanent sovereign position.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE ARTICULATION OF THE SENSE OF LOCALITY IN BAYRAMPAŞA

This chapter focuses on a neighborhood which is located next to the Bayrampaşa prison house. This neighborhood, İsmetpaşa, is predominantly inhabited by Yugoslav migrants who came to Turkey in the 1950's. The aim of this thesis is to trace these Yugoslav migrants' sense of locality and the formation of their belonging to this new location. For the reason that attachment to a locality and attachment to a nation are intertwined processes<sup>1</sup>, while scrutinizing their attachment to Bayrampaşa, I will try to elucidate their attachment to the Turkish nation. In other words, I will try to examine how these migrants become *Bayrampaşalı* and Turk, concurrently. In order to fulfill this task, I will illustrate the articulation of being from Bayrampaşa (Bayrampaşalılık) as an identity with two different moments. First is the migration from Yugoslavia, and the second is the cholera epidemic. With these moments, I will try to reveal the strategies of belonging to Bayrampaşa; becoming Bayrampaşalı and its attachment to the Turkish nation. First, I need to depict the theoretical framework of this chapter.

#### The Struggle over Representation in the Formation of Identity

For Stuart Hall, “[t]hough identities seem to invoke an origin in a historical past with which they continue to correspond, actually they are about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not ‘who we are’ or ‘where we came from’ so much as ‘what we might

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<sup>1</sup> Üstündağ, N. (2005). *Belonging to the Modern: Women's Suffering and Subjectivities in Urban Turkey*. Ph.D. Dissertation. Indiana University.

become’, ‘how we have been represented’ and ‘how that bears on how we represent ourselves’. Identities are therefore constituted within, not outside representation”<sup>2</sup>. “They arise from the narrativization of the self, but the necessarily fictional nature of this process in no way undermines its discursive, material or political effectivity, even if the belongingness, the ‘suturing into the story’ through which identities arise is partly, in the imaginary (as well as symbolic) and therefore, always, partly constructed in fantasy, or at least within a fantasmic field”. Following Stuart Hall, I argue that the identity of Bayrampaşalılık arises within the field of the imaginary. This field is composed of the imaginary of the Turkish nation and the imaginary of Balkan migrants’ community. Bayrampaşalı selves narrativize their identity and their belonging to Turkishness, with the invocation of an origin in a historical past. This historical invocation is related to their Balkan origins. The metanarrative<sup>3</sup> that ‘the Balkan Turks had been displaced from Konya to Rumeli in the Ottoman period’ is very prevalent among the Balkan migrants. This narrative is mentioned, in almost all of my interviews. This story is narrativized as a response to the prejudices about them that they are not Turks, and their aim is to prove that they are ‘actually’ Turks. In other words, the story of replacement from Konya to Rumeli, though it seems so, is not narrativized to emphasize who they are, or where they come from. Rather, this narrative is an outcome of the tension of the settlement in a new homeland, and it is closely related to the anxieties of “what might they become”, “how they have been represented and how that bears on how they represent themselves.”

The narrative of displacement from Konya, is an embodiment of the anxieties of the Balkan migrants, of how they have been represented. Similarly, the

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<sup>2</sup> Hall, S. (1996) “Introduction: Who needs identity” in Questions of Cultural Identity. Hall, S & Du Gay, P. (eds) Sage Publications, p 4

<sup>3</sup> Beltan, Sude Bahar, Citizenship and Identity in Turkey: The Case of The Post-1980 Turkish-Muslim Immigrants from Macedonia, MA Thesis, Boğaziçi University

issue of representation is a very important element of identity formation in Bayrampaşa. That is to say; Bayrampaşalılık as an identity is constituted within the field of representation. I can assert this by means of the empirical data I obtained from fieldwork. Generally the issue of “how they have been represented” is the most significant problem in the narratives of my Bayrampaşalı informants.

In the narratives, they complain about the prison because they think that the prison leads to the misrepresentation of Bayrampaşa and of course themselves. In addition, they believe that Bayrampaşa was misrepresented during the cholera epidemic, because the press exaggerated the event. They often state that there are prejudices about the Balkan migrants and they were being misrepresented because of those prejudices. What is more, in the statements of the Bayrampaşa Municipality, it is continuously declared that they struggle for the accurate representation of Bayrampaşa and at the same time for bringing Bayrampaşa to the position that it deserves. The matters of representation are frequently mentioned in the narratives. The people of Bayrampaşa have anxieties about how they are seen. Likewise, the issue of representation is at the center of this thesis. I argue that the anxieties that they have about how they are seen is the main element that constitutes the identity of Bayrampaşalılık. Within the narratives, this subject appears in two ways; one is the state of invisibility and the other is the misrepresentation.

In order to examine the invisibility, we need to look at the recent past of this locality. In the 1950's it (Sağmalcılar<sup>4</sup>) was a small village, and a lot of migrants (especially Balkan migrants) inhabited this place. They did not invade the lands upon which the houses were built but bought it. However the appearance of the district was not much different from the other *gecekodu* areas. Bayrampaşa was adjacent to

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<sup>4</sup> Sağmalcılar is the old name of the district.

industrial factories and the houses there resembled the shanty forms of *gecekondus*. People living in the district were employed in those factories, the geographical range of which expanded from Topkapı to Eyüp<sup>5</sup>. Considering the fact that the people in Bayrampaşa built their houses according to the self-help strategies which was prevalent during the time, it is not surprising that the houses resembled the *gecekondus* of the period. Accordingly, the infrastructure of the district was severely insufficient. The newspapers from the 1970s provide us with a comprehensive depiction of the district in the period. Due to the cholera outbreak, the news about the district displays the reasons attributed to the epidemic with lots of photographic and narrative depictions: open sewers, muddy and smirched streets, filthy and messy places full of garbage. From this particular perspective, Sağmalcılar was quite similar to the *gecekondus* areas which abounded with the same shortcomings. Until the incidence of cholera, Bayrampaşa had been mentioned only with reference to a few demonstrations held by workers employed in the region<sup>6</sup>.

Occupation which was started by 140 workers, 60 of which are women, still continues in Citi detergent factory, Sağmalcılar neighborhood. *Kimya-İş* union stated that their main motivation is to resist employer's will to stop union organization by discharging workers. In pursuant to notarized confirmation, the employer claims that 87 workers are making an illegal stay-in strike since they have not made collective negotiations yet. Moreover, the employer asserts that 4 workers were discharged due to the regular job cutback. (1-1)<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> "Kartaltepe Mensucat İşçilere Gıda yardımına başladı" Cumhuriyet, 24 October 1970,

<sup>6</sup> Sağmalcılar'daki Çiti Deterjan fabrikasında 60'ı kız olan 140 işçinin başlattığı işgal sürmektedir. Kimya-iş sendikası yaptığı açıklamada işgal nedenini, işveren tarafından sendikal örgütlenmenin işten çıkarma yoluyla durdurulmak istenmesi olarak belirtmiştir. İşveren ise fabrikadaki 87 işçinin noterlikçe yapılan tespite göre, kanunsuz bir oturma grevi yaptığını, daha toplu sözleşmeye oturulmadığını, çıkarılan 4 işçinin de devam edecek normal tensikat ile ilgili olduğunu ileri sürmüştür. Sağmalcılar, Çiti Fabrikasında Eylem, *Cumhuriyet*, 1970

On the other hand, the name of Sađmalcılar frequently appeared in the news because of the existence of the prison house. It is probably not wrong to say that, during the popular representation of the prison in the press, the people of Bayrampaşa remained invisible. The newspapers of the 1970's and 1980's, give us a clear proof of this. The news talk about "the events inside", "the gendarmes enclosing of it", "prisonbreaks", "protests", etc. but not the residences around it. For this period, this pattern has only one exception; "the cholera epidemic" which occurred in 1970. Unfortunately, this was an undesirable representation since the news mentioned "Sađmalcılar" and the people of Sađmalcılar as the source of the disease. Approximately for one month (beginning from 15 October) Sađmalcılar was mentioned in the cover pages of the newspapers, for an issue other than the prison, and soon after, the district became invisible again. As a twist of history, the next time they appeared on television and newspapers as the residents of the district (this time as people of Bayrampaşa), the issue was related to the prison. This time, the issue was related to the "relocation" of the prison, and microphones were pointed at them asking them about "the problems of the prison".

Understanding how Bayrampaşa became an identity for the settlers requires a thorough analysis of the social agency with which people in Bayrampaşa associates themselves. According to Chantal Mouffe, "the social agent is constituted by an ensemble of 'subject positions' that can never be totally fixed in a closed system of differences. Identity, in this context, is constructed by a diversity of discourses, among which there is no necessary relation but a constant movement of overdetermination and displacement." "The identity of such a multiple and contradictory subject is therefore always contingent and precarious, temporarily fixed at the intersection of those subject positions and dependent on specific forms of

identification.”<sup>8</sup> Departing from this point, it is clear that tracing the identity of Bayrampaşalı confronts us with a social agent which is an ensemble of various subject positions. For the comprehension of this subject abound with multiplicities and contradictions, we have to orient our emphases to the discourses and practices which construct the subjectivities of that subject –i.e. Bayrampaşalı. This task requires us to analyze how the immigrants make sense of Bayrampaşa and thereby their sense of locality and sense of belonging. Inspired from the definition by Jackson, Üstündağ defines the accomplishment of belonging as “an elusive balance which people try to strive between being acted upon and acting, between acquiescing in the given and choosing their own fate”.<sup>9</sup>

According to the narratives of people in Bayrampaşa, this balance can be sustained through the strategies they carry out against their misrepresentations in the public sphere. The people in Bayrampaşa strive to assume an agency and a position of power vis-à-vis the events to which they have been exposed. Immigration and title-deeds, cholera epidemic and renaming, or the relocation of prison are all the examples of this strategic conduct of accomplishing a belonging. All the incidents that I have encountered during my field work are narrated by two different subject positions which oscillate between the victim and the sovereign. When the victim or sufferer speaks, the predicaments they found themselves within are narrated –as in the case for cholera and the prison house. More important than the predicament itself, the narration of victimization constantly speak to the ways of representation of the event and to the feeling of injustice which is inflicted upon themselves by the public. In the voice of victim, the people in Bayrampaşa position themselves as

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<sup>8</sup> Chantal Mouffe, (1995) “Democratic Politics and the Question of Identity”, in *Identity in Question*, pp. 33-34

<sup>9</sup> Üstündağ (2005) , p. 81

passive subjects without any agency or influence and the responsibility of the misfortune together with its agency falls outside of the reach of the people in Bayrampaşa. I will call this victimhood as the subordinate position. Here the concept of subordination signifies both the material unpleasantness (poverty, exclusion and so on) and the powerlessness over how to be represented. The other position of is the sovereign position in which the people of Bayrampaşa narrate themselves as the primary agent who has responsibility and power over the narrated process or event. This sovereignty connotes both agency and the power over the representation. Only in this particular position, the people in Bayrampaşa assume, the representation they wanted to circulate within the public sphere corresponds to the real processes and events. Being from Bayrampaşa and belonging to the district oscillate between these two discrete positions and thus the narratives shift from one to the other constantly. This oscillation is the constitutive movement for the identity of Bayrampaşalı. The movement dominates the narratives from the recounting of the material practices in the past to the strategies in the present. In this chapter I will analyze the accounts about the immigration process, the settlement in Bayrampaşa, arguments about title-deeds, and the cholera epidemic as the moments of the oscillatory movement which are the constitutive gestures of the identity of Bayrampaşalı. To be more explanatory, I shall give the example of the cholera incident here.

At the very moment that the cholera epidemic started, the whole newspapers and government officials uttered the word “cholera” together with Sağmalcılar. Even the medical journals referred to the outbreak by referring to the district<sup>10</sup> and described the incident as “the cholera epidemic spreaded from Sağmalcılar”. After decades, even today the medical journals mention the outbreak

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<sup>10</sup> British Medical Journal, 14 November 1970, p. 435, [http://www.bmj.com/cgi/pdf\\_extract/4/5732/435-b](http://www.bmj.com/cgi/pdf_extract/4/5732/435-b)

as “the epidemic in Sağmalcılar”<sup>11</sup>. For the moment, I will analyze the issue at the level of representation without referring to the material conditions and architectural structure of the district of the time. Nearly all the newspapers reporting the incident represent Sağmalcılar as a place of dirt and filth and the people in Bayrampaşa as carriers of disease<sup>12</sup>. With respect to the question that I asked about the pejorative representation of the district at the time, my informants contends that “the issue was highly exaggerated by the media at that time”. They had neither the agency nor the power to convey their truths to the public and the any attempts in expressing themselves in the media backfired thoroughly. One of my informants, who was a primary school student at the time, stated that a journalist came to the district, took them to a far end of the area and took their picture in front of a garbage heap. Thereafter he said that the newspaper used the picture under the headline “Children in Sağmalcılar Play in the Garbage”. According to my informants it was just unfortunate that the epidemic started in Sağmalcılar and the media approached the issue with ill intentions and aimed to represent the district as the locus of disease. Consequently Sağmalcılar and the people therein were conceived as filth and contagious in general. This predicament put them into a subordinate position upon which they had no power. The renaming of the district as Bayrampaşa in the mid 1970s was a gesture of sovereignty that aimed to re-present the Bayrampaşalı vis-à-vis the subordinating representations in the form of filth and disease. According to the accounts of my informants, in that time, a referendum was held about the new name of the district and at the end the people in Bayrampaşa had chosen with a large

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<sup>11</sup> “Kolera Günlerinde ‘Bilim’, (İnfeksiyon Hastalıklarında Laboratuvar Tanı) Gökhan Aygün, Klinik Gelişim Dergisi, 164-166

<sup>12</sup> For more detailed information look at part on the “cholera epidemic”

majority the name “Bayrampaşa”<sup>13</sup> instead of “Fetihtepe”<sup>14</sup>. It was not a coincidence, I assert, that the people in Bayrampaşa made this choice according to their desire to power, considering the fact that the name Sağmalcılar means “those who milk cows” and the name Bayrampaşa connotes stately sovereignty. On the other hand, a hill (tepe) is not a strong sign of power though it refers to the conquest of İstanbul by Fatih Sultan Mehmet.

Having sketched the rudimental outline of the narrative oscillation that I have mentioned at the beginning, I tried to point that the movement between subordinate and sovereign positions makes possible what the people in Bayrampaşa call “*Bayrampaşalı*”. Yet these two ends of the movement hinge on the point that I want to call the “nodal point”. This point fixes the movement and gives the meaning of the contradictory characters of the two different position –i.e. subordinate and sovereign. For this purpose, I need to explain the meaning and the function of the concept that I call nodal point.

The social agent is constituted by an ensemble of ‘subject positions’ that can never be totally fixed in a closed system of differences. The “identity” of such a multiple and contradictory subject is therefore temporarily fixed at the intersection of those subject positions and dependent on specific forms of identification.<sup>15</sup> “So the identities are never unified, but increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions. They are subject to a radical historicization, and are constantly in the process of change and transformation”<sup>16</sup>. Identification is, then,

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<sup>13</sup> The Sadrazam in the period of IV. Murat, who slaughter Nef’i; one of most the important poets of the era

<sup>14</sup> Referring the conquest of İstanbul

<sup>15</sup> Chantal Mouffe, “Democratic Politics and the Question of Identity”, in Identity in Question, p. 33-34

<sup>16</sup> Hall (1996) p. 5

“a process of articulation, a suturing, an overdetermination not a subsumption. There is always ‘too much’ or ‘too little’ –an overdetermination or a lack, but never a proper fit, a totality”.<sup>17</sup>

We have already mentioned that it is not possible to totally fix a meaning. This, however, leaves us with the problem that if all social forms and meanings are contingent, how then is any identity possible? Correspondingly, Laclau and Mouffe point out; “the impossibility of an ultimate fixity of meaning (and identities) implies that there have to be partial fixations; otherwise, the very flow of differences would be impossible.” Even in order to differ, to subvert meaning, there has to be a meaning. Any discourse is constituted as an attempt to dominate the field of discursivity, to arrest the flow of differences, to construct a centre. They call the privileged discursive points of this partial fixation; nodal points. (“Lacan has insisted on these partial fixations through his concept of *points de capture*, that is, of privileged signifiers that fix the meaning of a signifying chain. This limitation of the productivity of the signifying chain establishes the positions that make predication possible.”)<sup>18</sup> In other words, as Chantal Mouffe explains this, “[t]here is therefore a double movement: on the one hand, a movement of decentering which prevents the fixation of a set of positions around a preconditioned point; on the other hand, as a result of this essentialist nonfixity, the opposite movement: the institution of nodal points, partial fixations which limit the flux of the signified under the signifier. But this dialect of nonfixity/fixation is possible only because fixity is not given beforehand, because no center of subjectivity precedes the subject’s identifications. For that reason we have to conceive the history of the subject as the

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<sup>17</sup> Hall (1996) p. 6

<sup>18</sup> Laclau, E. Mouffe, C. (1985) “Beyond the Positivity of the Social: Antagonisms and Hegemony”, in *Hegemony & Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, Verso: London, New York, p. 112

history of his/her identifications, and there is no concealed identity to be rescued beyond the latter.<sup>19</sup>

Zizek exemplifies the *point de captation* (nodal point) in accordance with communist ideology. “Several pre-existing and available signifiers (‘democracy’, ‘state’, ‘freedom’, and so forth) acquire new meanings by being articulated around the signifier ‘communism’, which occupies the structural position of the nodal point. Thus due to the intervention of this nodal point, these elements are transformed into internal moments of a communist discourse. Democracy acquires the meaning of ‘real’ democracy as opposed to ‘bourgeois’ democracy, freedom acquires an economic connotation and the role and function of the state is transformed. In other words, their meaning is partially fixed by reference to the nodal point ‘communism’.”<sup>20</sup> Like Zizek’s use of communism as a nodal point, in the case of Turkey, Turkishness stands as a nodal point or *point de captation*; it definitely gives new meanings to pre-existing and available signs. Democracy, freedom, justice, human rights, all acquires meaning in accordance with the nodal point of “Turkishness”. Likewise, ‘citizenship’ also acquires a meaning with Turkishness and with it, closeness to the state is determined, especially for migrant groups. With Turkishness, citizens’ positions to the state are determined. For example, it takes a meaning of pseudo (“*sözde*”) citizenship used for insurgent Kurds (who are claimed to be against the Turkish State), or it takes a meaning of proper (*makbul*) citizenship for Balkan immigrants who are accepted as ‘loyal’ and ‘obedient’ to the state. Thus, in this study, I prefer to use ‘Turkishness’ as a nodal point, to understand the belonging of the Yugoslav migrants to Bayrampaşa. Here, Turkishness remains as a

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<sup>19</sup> Chantal Mouffe, “Democratic Politics and the Question of Identity”, in *Identity in Question*, p. 37

<sup>20</sup> Howarth, Stavrakakis, “Introducing discourse theory” in *Discourse theory and political analysis*, p.8 From *Sublime object of ideology*, p.102

node between the two oscillating positions which determine Bayrampaşalılık; the subordinate and sovereign positions.

Up until now, I have showed that Turkishness as a nodal point fixes two different subject positions and reconciles them for the same person (Bayrampaşalı). Around this Turkishness, the identity of Bayrampaşalı oscillates. I have asserted above that the concept of citizenship, like any other concept, acquires new meanings around the nodal point of Turkishness. The name “proper citizen” is generally ascribed to the immigrants from the Balkans and in the studies focused on the immigrants from Balkans, the concept of “proper” citizenship is brought forth. Many studies on Balkan migrant communities analyzed them according to the category of “proper” (Beltan) or “accepted” (Şen) citizenship. Şen brings out Füsun Üstel and Mesut Yegen’s emphasis that, “in the name of being an ‘accepted citizen’ (*Makbul Vatandas*), the Balkan immigrants were subjected to many policies involving assimilation or settlement separate from the other immigrants<sup>21</sup>”.

It is possible to find the traces of accepted/acceptable citizen within the accounts of my informants. In the narratives, acceptability connotes ethnic and class traits alongside with obedience and loyalty to the state or hardwork and honesty. These ethnic and class traits include being Turk (public declarations of being a Turk), being modern, (sometimes) wearing no headscarf, middle class life style, being cultivated, using proper Turkish language and so on. These connotations are the tools through which my informants frequently use to confirm their properness. By means of these tools, my informants differentiate themselves from Kurds, Anatolians or Easterners and make a cohesive and proper identity for themselves. As Parla&Danış emphasize, they express this superiority as the ‘merit’ of Balkan

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<sup>21</sup> Şen (2007)

migrants. According to the narratives of Balkan migrants, this merit of properness is based on some characteristic features like, being hardworking, honesty, etc. But more than that, their evidence for properness is related to the state; they express themselves with the pronoun “we” or “our people” to refer to Balkan migrants, as obedient, respectful, and responsible toward ‘their’ state. The narratives on the properness are sometimes ridiculously exaggerated. Parla and Daniş present the expressions of a BTKYD<sup>22</sup> representative about the properness;

Our people pay debts on time. Any immigrant leaves her bill payment to the last day; we are the first payers. I always tell this story; once they go to pay their bills all together, literally everyone in the neighborhood, and the electricity board could not take all the bills. Total confusion and everyone in flurry! It was even before the final date for payment, that is why they could not pay!<sup>23</sup> (1-2)

It is certainly clear that the claim of Balkan migrants that they have a merit of ‘properness’ as an essential feature or characteristics, is not acceptable within the context of this thesis. It is obviously a discourse, and we are supposed to analyze the construction of this discourse, and the subject positions that are being created with this discourse. My informants tend to explain this properness with their experience in a communist country. Sadi *Bey*, for example relates the possession of title deeds (as an evidence of properness) with “living in a communist administration” in the past:

But there was no unlawful, shanty settlement in here. Our people, precisely those who had migrated from Rumelia, are afraid of the State and have total respect to it. Specifically because they had lived under communist regime, the concept of state awakes

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<sup>22</sup> Balkan Turks Culture and Solidarity Association (Balkan Türkleri Kültür ve Yardımlaşma Derneği)

<sup>23</sup> “Bizim insanımız borcunu zamanında öder. Hiçbir göçmen son güne faturasını bırakmaz, ilk gününde öder. Hatta o kadar ki, ben hep anlatırım, bir keresinde tüm mahallece ödemeye gitmişler de, elektrik dairesi ödemeyi almamış. Bir telaş bir telaş, ortaya çıkıyor ki, ilk ödeme tarihinden önce geldiler diye ödeme almıyorlarmış!

Daniş, D., Parla, A.(2009) « Nafile Soydaşlık : Irak ve Bulgaristan Türkleri örneğinde göçmen, dernek ve devlet », Toplum ve Bilim, Vol 114, p. 150

different feelings in them. Therefore, any of our person does something without land registry.<sup>24</sup> (1-3)

The same trend is true for Bulgarian migrants. The BTKYD representative expresses that there was a double effect of “communism” on “our” people. On the one hand, it intimidated “our” people and on the other hand, led them to be loyal to their states. They believe that the Turkish state, which is not aware of their value, is missing the chance to benefit from them.<sup>25</sup> In order to understand the properness of Balkan migrants, first of all, it is necessary to recall Stuart Hall’s remark on identities, the tension of identity making process is not ‘who we are’ or ‘where we came from’, on the contrary, “what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we represent ourselves”. That is to say, when Balkan migrants express that they are obedient to the state, that does not occur from their experiences in their former communist experience. This is definitely related to the anxiety of “what they might become” in the country which they migrated to. Especially for the case of Yugoslav migrants of the 1950’s, this makes sense because this exodus is not publicly known and it is defined as the “silent migration”.

Between 1950-67, 176,360 people migrated from Greece, Rumenia, Turkistan and other countries. However, the number of migrants from Yugoslavia in the same period was 175,392. In spite of this, the press was not interested in this migration wave and their migration did not become a publicly known event. Likewise, the migrants did not receive any assistance from the government. For these reasons, the Yugoslav exodus of the 1950’s is named as “Silent Turkish Migration

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<sup>24</sup> Ama burada kaçak hiçbir yapı yoktu. Bizim insanımız özellikle Rumeli’den göç eden insanlar devletten korkar artı saygı gibi bir pozisyonları var. Özellikle komünist bir idareden geldikleri için devlet kavramı onlarda farklı şeyler uyandırıyor. Dolayısıyla burada hiçbir insanımız tapusuz hiçbirşey yapmamıştır.

<sup>25</sup> Parla Danış, (2009)

from Yugoslavia.”<sup>26</sup> The main difference of Yugoslav migrants, is about in the role of the government in their migration and settlement. Yugoslav migrants in this period did not receive any financial, or legal benefit from the government. “*Türkiye Göçmenleri ve Mülteci Dernekleri Federasyonu*”, and the “*Rumeli Türkleri Kültür ve Dayanışma Derneği*” (an association founded for the care of the problems of Yugoslav migrants) presented to the government a petition in 1967, demanding the legal conditions of the Yugoslav migrants, to the prime minister and cabinet. In this document;

“It is stated that Yugoslavia immigrants who come as a free migrants did not take any assistance from the authorities. And those who had applied after August 1961, could not take residence permit in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir. Yet, since more than half of the immigrants are workers and manufacturer, and most of their relatives were living in these cities, they were demanding to get residence permits in these cities again. Since they did not have IDs and their acquirement of full citizenship takes more than two years, they could not do any of their legal works on time; and they wanted to expedite their legal works. Those who were working and retired officials in Yugoslavia, and whose rights were not recognized in Turkey wanted to hasten necessary processes.”<sup>27</sup> (1-4)

### Migration from Yugoslavia and Title Deeds

In the previous part I have mentioned that the immigrants from Yugoslavia in the 1950s confronted some difficulties regarding their legal status. In this section I shall

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<sup>26</sup> H. Yıldırım Ağanoğlu, (2001) *Osmanlı’dan Cumhuriyet’e Balkanların Makûs Talihi: Göç, Kumsaati*, İstanbul p. 328

<sup>27</sup> Serbest göçmen olarak gelen Yugoslavya göçmenlerinin devletten herhangi bir iktisadi yardım almadıkları belirtilmektedir. Ayrıca Ağustos 1961 tarihinden sonra başvuranlara Ankara, İzmir ve İstanbul’da ikamet izni verilmediği, halbuki, gelenlerin yarısından fazlasının sanayici ve işçi oldukları, ve bunlara yardım edebilecek akrabalarının bu üç büyük şehirde bulduklarından bu yerleşim izninin tekrar verilmesi istenmekteydi. Vatandaşlığa alınmaları iki seneden fazla süren göçmenlerin, hüviyet cüzdanları olmadığından, ne askerlik, ve ne de diğer işlerini normal surette yapamadıklarından muamelelerin hızlandırılması istenmektedir. Yugoslavya’da memur ve emeklilik hakları olanların, hukuklarının Türkiye’de tanınmadığı ve bunun için gerekli işlemlerin yapılması istenmekteydi. H. Yıldırım Ağanoğlu, *Osmanlı’dan Cumhuriyet’e Balkanların Makûs Talihi: Göç*, 2001, Kumsaati Yayınları s. 326, İstanbul; Naim Özktem, “Rumeli Türklerinin dilekleri”, *Türk dünyası dergisi*, İstanbul, 196, sayı: 9 s. 47.

focus on the process of immigration and settling in the motherland in detail. It is not that I try to provide the reader with a comprehensive account of the history of the people in Bayrampaşa but I aim to scrutinize the role of the history of immigration and the predicaments during the process in making the sense of locality in Bayrampaşa and belonging to the district. My primary purpose is to analyze the function of oscillation between two positions within the historical narrative of settlement. In other words, I shall examine the subordinate position in which the people in Bayrampaşa had been during the immigration process and the respective strategies they articulate in their narrative accounts for assuming a sovereign position.

One of the most important component of being a Bayrampaşalı is the immigration from Yugoslavia to Turkey. A large proportion of the people in Bayrampaşa call themselves “*muhacir*”, which literally means in Turkish “immigrants” and it is using for Balkan immigrants at large. Accordingly a great deal of my informants are Balkan immigrants and specifically from Yugoslavia. During my interviews, the most repetitive answer with regard to the question of what the basic characteristics of the district were the Balkan origins. The reference to Balkan origins comprises most of the people in Bayrampaşa. Balkan identity was the most frequent trait for defining “*Bayrampaşalı*”. One of my informant answers the question “What makes this place yours” in the following way:

The most significant thing for the society in here is their immigrant status. Even new comers from the East or Trabzon settle down here. The main bus station is close to Bayrampaşa that is why they choose to settle down here. Only reason is that Bayrampaşa is the closest neighborhood to the main bus station. We are overpeopled in here that is why the land is ours. Our aunts, uncles, all relatives are here. We say that it is “ours”. For instance, Nimet Street is

full of immigrants. ... Though we are not relatives, we appropriate here. For better, for worse...28 (1-5)

Another informant answers:

Most of the people migrated from Anatolia, specifically from Middle Black Sea region or Roumelia. In Bayrampaşa, there is a center which is composed of migrants from Roumelia... Traditions are still valid. In soldier's farewells, we all together play our own games, sing our songs.

P: Can we say that immigrant culture is dominant in Bayrampaşa?

Nusret: More than dominant. When Black Sea people migrate, they also reconcile with us. They also learnt our games and songs.29 (1-6)

During the election campaigns the significance of immigrant population in Bayrampaşa was apparent. Nearly all candidates of all political parties in the 2009 local elections were of Balkan origins. For example Muharrem Çınar, the DSP (Democratic Leftist Party) candidate for the mayor of Bayrampaşa, says in his campaign bulletin that he is a child of a Macedonian immigrant family. Five out of seven candidates for the members of the municipal council, state that they are of Macedonian origin. The CHP (Republican Peoples Party) candidate for mayor, Bahri Sipahi, is also of Bosnian origin. My interviewees supported this tendency by saying that it is nearly impossible for someone not of Balkan origin to be elected in Bayrampaşa. The current mayor of Bayrampaşa, Hüseyin Bürge, is also of a Balkan

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<sup>28</sup> Buradaki toplumun en önemli şeyi, göçmen olması. Yani yeni yeni doğulu ve Trabzonlu vatandaşlarımızın buraya geliyor. Otogarın burada olduğu için bütün doğudan ve Karadenizden gelen vatandaşlar Bayrampaşa'ya, en yakın Bayrampaşa'ya yerleşmelerinin tek sebebi, otogarın Bayrampaşa'da olması. Burada bizim nüfusumuzun daha fazla olmasıyla, yani bizim diyebiliyoruz. Teyzemiz burada, amcamız burada, işte akrabamız burada. Bizim diyebiliriz yani. Mesela, Nimet Sokak tümüyle göçmen. ... Yani akraba olmasak bile tümüyle sahiplenirler. Düğünde kötü günde, cenazede.

<sup>29</sup> ... İnsanların çoğu anadoludan özellikle orta karadenizden ya da rumeliden, göç etmişler. Daha çok Rumelililerin oluşturduğu bir çekirdek var bayrampaşada ...Gelenekler sürdürülüyor. Askere gidişlerde, hep bizim oyunlarımız oynanıyor, hep bizim şarkılarımız söyleniyor.

Pınar: Yani Bayrampaşa'da göçmen kültürü hakim diyebilir miyiz?

Nusret: Fazlasıyla hakim. Karadenizliler geldiği zaman onlar da bize uyum sağlıyorlar.

Onlar da bizim oyunlarımızı, şarkılarımızı öğrendiler.

origin and he has been mayor for 15 years. He recurrently underlines that 45% of the people in Bayrampaşa are from the Balkans like himself. In an interview, he says of Bereket (Blessing)<sup>30</sup> Convoy:

(As an answer to the question concerning *Bereket Konvoyu*)... In a district, 45% of whose population is composed of Balkan-origin people, head of municipality (who is also of Balkan-origin) states that R.T. Erdoğan's statement "We ignored Balkans, we owe to those people" has increased their awareness and they felt the urge to move.<sup>31</sup>(1-7)

It is obvious that for the people in Bayrampaşa, the identity of immigrant is constitutive of the sense of locality. Of course here, their pre-migration experiences in Yugoslavia, undoubtedly remain very important, However I will not go in detail about those conditions. My focus will be on their settlement in Bayrampaşa and establishing this place as a locality. As I have just mentioned above, my informants express themselves as members of "the Balkan migrant community". In spite of this, I need to separate Yugoslav migrants who migrated in the 1950's and the 1960's, from other Balkan migrant groups. Because, even though they were subjected to the privileges and exclusions that all Balkan migrants faced<sup>32</sup>, they differ from Greece and Bulgarian migrants on the issue of legal status.

There was a small flow of migration from Yugoslavia to Turkey until the 1950's. With the foundation of Socialist Federal Yugoslavia Republic, the migration wave noticeably increased, the main reason for this increase being economic restrictions. For example, it was legally restricted for a person to possess land larger

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<sup>30</sup> Blessing Convoy is an activity of the municipality for Ramadan. Blessing Convoy will be examined in Chapter 4.

<sup>31</sup> (Bereket Konvoyuna dair sorulan bir soruya cevaben)... Nüfusunun yüzde 45'i Balkan orijinli bir ilçede, kendisi de Balkan kökenli bir belediye başkanı olarak bu tesbit (R.T. Erdoğan'ın "Balkanları çok ihmal etmişiz, bizim buralara borcumuz var" tespiti) bizde farkındalık meydana getirdi ve hareket etme ihtiyacı duyduk. İstanbul Bulletin, Metropolitan Municipality

<sup>32</sup> Parla and Danış (2009) ; Tanıl Bora (1995) Türk Milli Kimliği, Türk Milliyetçiliği ve Balkan Sorunu, in "Milliyetçilğin Kara Baharı, Birikim, İstanbul

than 100 decares. The muslim population was anxious about the expropriations. This also led to social and cultural anxieties and they all triggered the increase of the migration.<sup>33</sup> Between 1950 and 1958, 104,372 migrants came from Yugoslavia to Turkey. 56,624 of them settled in İstanbul. In the same period, an exodus occurred from Bulgaria and the Bulgarian migrants in this period were settled by the government. Unlike the invited Bulgarian migrants, provided with designated homes, Yugoslav migrants had the status of independent migrants (münferit göçmen) and for this reason, they were invisible in the press and did not receive a public attention<sup>34</sup> and they were under very difficult conditions:

These people who do not take any assistance from authorities, are trying to go beyond negative conditions of being immigrants with their own efforts and diligence. When they first came, they stayed with their relatives and then they moved to their own houses. Even just one of immigrant story show the gravity of situation. In the midst of impossibilities, Yugoslavian immigrants were using cans instead of plates.<sup>35</sup> (1-8)

The immigrants who came from Yugoslavia to Bayrampaşa had experienced these difficulties. It was easy to acquire the status of Turkish citizenship for those who had a family member in Turkey; yet for those who did not, it would take a couple of years. However, what is so repetitive and striking is that my informants' historical

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<sup>33</sup> After the "Independent Migration Agreement" between Adnan Menderes and Josip Broz Tito at the beginning of the 1950s, immigrants could migrate to Turkey by applying to the Turkish Consulate in Skopje, renouncing their former citizenship. The Independent Migration Agreement aimed to unite the divided Turkish families in Yugoslavia and Turkey. In this manner, immigrants' families in Turkey could send 'vesika's (necessary documents) to their families in Yugoslavia. Those vesikas guaranteed that the Turkish families would be cared for by their immigrant families from Yugoslavia. Also, the immigrants who had skin in Turkey could obtain Turkish citizenships with them". Şen B. (2007) Nationalism and Migration: The Post-1950 Balkan Immigrants From Yugoslavia, MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, p. 80;

<sup>34</sup> Aġanođlu (2001) p. 325

<sup>35</sup> Hiçbir devlet yardımı alamayan bu insanlar, kendi gayretleri ve çalışkanlıklarıyla muhacirliğin getirdiđi zor şartlardan sıyrılmaya çalışmışlardır. Gelenler önceleri akrabalarının yanında kalmış ve daha sonra kendi imkanlarıyla evlerine çıkabilmişlerdir. Bu dönemde gelenlerin anlattıklarından sadece bir tanesi bile durumun vehametini ortaya koymaktadır. İmkansızlıklar içinde Yugoslavya göçmenleri konserve kutularını yemek tabađı olarak kullanmaktaydılar. H. Yıldırım Aġanođlu, Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Balkanların Makûs Talihi: Göç, 2001, Kumsaati, İstanbul

narratives refer to the issue of “title deeds”, that I found no relevance at the first sight. At the beginning I thought that this was only an anomaly and meaningless at large. However as I heard the story from many different people in a similar way and in a similar narrative structure, it became necessary to consider the issue seriously. While talking about the first settlements in this region, they insistently told me that before they built their houses, they obtained title deeds for the lands. Sadi *Bey*, for instance tells me that;

“But there was no unlawful, shanty settlement in here. Our people, precisely those who had migrated from Rumelia, are afraid of the State and have total respect to it. Specifically because they had lived under communist regime, the concept of state awoken different feelings in them. Therefore, any of our person does something without land registry.”<sup>36</sup> (1-9)

P: Was there any shanty settlements in those years?

Demir Bey: No, absolutely. Absolutely. There was never shanty settlement in here. In here, houses have always been registered. Everyone got their land registry and built their homes on their own lands. I mean our fathers, grandfathers built these houses with their own efforts, under bad conditions. Absolutely not on other’s land. There had never happened such a thing.<sup>37</sup> (1-10)

Or in another interview;

P: In which year did you come?

Ümran Teyze: We came in 1958.

P: There was no Prison in those times, right?

ÜT: It was under construction

P: Why did you come here?

ÜT: Because all Albanian were coming to here. There was only Prison, there was no house, and it was all fields. In Alibeyköy district, there were many unregistered houses. We did buy here

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<sup>36</sup> ...Ama burada kaçak hiçbir yapı yoktu. Bizim insanımız özellikle Rumeli’den göç eden insanlar devletten korkar artı saygı gibi bir pozisyonları var. Özellikle komünist bir idareden geldikleri için devlet kavramı onlarda farklı şeyler uyandırıyor. Dolayısıyla burada hiçbir insanımız tapusuz hiçbirşey yapmamıştır.

<sup>37</sup> P: Peki o yıllarda burada gecekondulaşma var mıydı?/Demir Bey: Hayır kesinlikle, kesinlikle. Burada hiç gecekondulaşma olmadı. Burası zaten imarlıdır. Herkes tapusunu aldı evini yaptı. Biz evimizi hep kendi arazilerimize yaptık. Yani bizim babalarımız, dedelerimiz, kendi imkanlarıyla, güç koşullarda yaptılar. Ama öyle başkasının arazisine filan, hiç öyle birşey yapılmamıştır.

with our own money! ... We have 3.5 million liras to the registration.<sup>38</sup> (1-11)

As can be seen in the accounts, the issue about the title deeds is far from being just a legal matter. The emphasis on title deeds and proper appropriation of land can gain meaning only in comparison with the state of having no title deeds, being improper. The existence of the class of impropriety renders the category of proper citizen in which they place themselves possible. In the years when they arrived, they had to cope with the predicaments of being an immigrant (*muhacir*) and moreover they were foreigners in a place full of preconceptions against them. They had no chance of taking assistance from the government to soothe the grief of their (un)belonging. Their historical accounts are means to anchor, to secure their existence as well as legitimize their status as proper citizens. Regarding the fact that the residents of Bayrampaşa predominantly came here in the 1950's, this decade is quite important for the urbanization of Turkey because the migration from rural areas to the cities began in this period. Especially İstanbul became a destination for rural migrants. Those migrants, commonly occupied state or municipality lands and built their houses (*gecekondu*) illegally. Almost all of my informants told me that they were not like those 'rural invaders'.

Consequently the title deed is a narrative tool through which they can create an identity, as proper person. The historical predicaments that my informants refer to so much are the narrative components of what I call the subordinate position. The reason that I choose to call it subordinate is not because they faced real historical

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<sup>38</sup> P: Kaç senesiydi geldiğinizde?/ Ümran Teyze: 58'de geldik./ P: tabi cezaevi yoktu o zamanlar./ÜT: cezaevi var, inşaattı./P: Neden buraya geldiniz?/ÜT: Bütün Arnavutlar buraya geliyordu da ondan/Sadece cezaevi vardı hiçbir tarafta evler yoktu, hep tarlaydı. Alibeyköy taraflarında hep varmış öyle tapusuz evler. Biz var ya hep parayla aldık buraları. ....3,5 milyon da tapusuna verdik.

disadvantages, the relevance of which is not of interest for me here, but the “strangeness” that imbues all the accounts of my informants. To make clear the concept of “strangeness” and “stranger”, let me explain it in detail.

According to Simmel, the state of being a stranger is a completely positive relation; it is a specific form of interaction. For him, “if wandering, considered as a state of detachment from every given point in space, is the conceptual opposite of attachment to any point, then the sociological form of “the stranger” presents the synthesis, as it were, of both these properties”<sup>39</sup>. Thus the stranger is in a way liberating. The stranger is free and in a sense objective because s/he has no traditions and preconceptions in which the native is indulged. Pace Simmel, Bauman states; “friendship and enmity, and only they, are forms of sociation; indeed, the archetypal forms of all sociation, the two prolonged matrix of sociation. ...Being an enemy and being a friend are the two forms in which the other may be recognized as another subject, construed as a ‘subject like the self’, admitted into the self’s life-world, be counted, become and stay relevant.”<sup>40</sup> For Bauman, strangers are not however, the ‘as-yet-undecided’; they are, in principle, undecidables. The sociality is determined according to the friend/enemy relations. The friend/enemy opposition sets apart truth from falsity, good from evil, beauty from ugliness. It makes the world readable and thereby instructive. Within oppositional structure friends and enemies are determined”.<sup>41</sup> The stranger stands between friend and enemy, order and chaos, the inside and the outside. For this reason the threat of the stranger is much more frightening than the threat of the enemy. The stranger threatens the sociation itself –

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<sup>39</sup> Simmel Georg (1971) *On Individuality and Social Forms*, ed. Donald Levine, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, p. 143

<sup>40</sup> Bauman, Z.(1995) *Modernity and Ambivalence*, Polity Press, p.54

<sup>41</sup> Bauman, (1995), 53-55

the very possibility of sociation.<sup>42</sup> Within the matrix comprised of enemy and friend, Yugoslav immigrants are neither friends nor enemies but ambivalent, stranger, as-yet-undecided. Undecidables, in Derrida's words, 'can no longer be included within philosophical opposition, resisting and disorganizing it, without ever constituting a third term, without ever leaving room for a solution in the form of speculative dialectics.'<sup>43</sup> As for this structure, the Yugoslav immigrants are as-yet-undecided, neither Turk (because they are Albanian) nor Yugoslav (because they are Muslims). In this point of my argumentation it is quite useful to turn to Derrida. One of his concepts which generally refer to undecidability like pharmakon, Hymen etc. is Supplement. In French, the supplement means both a substitution and an addition. Therefore the supplement is the other who 'joins in', the outside that enters the inside, the difference that turns into identity.<sup>44</sup> In this sense, immigrants from Yugoslavia are supplements. They are substitutes for non-Muslims who were expelled from the country during the 6-7 September events<sup>45</sup>. On the other hand they were expected to be added to the Turkish nation and amalgamated within. They were allowed to immigrate to the country because they averred their intentions to live in a Turkish culture even though they were not Turk in their ethnic origin<sup>46</sup>. It is the supplementary nature of the relation that explains the paradoxical fact that while condoning the immigration of people from Yugoslavia during the great exodus of the 1950s, the governments of the time did not provide any resources for these new comers.

As the supplement which refuses to go away, the stranger turns his/her temporary abode into his or her own country in a gradual manner. "Simultaneously

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<sup>42</sup> Bauman, (1995), 53-55

<sup>43</sup> Jacques Derrida (1974) *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, p. 143

<sup>44</sup> Jacques Derrida, (1981) *Positions*, trans. Aln Bass, University of Chigaco Pres, pp 42-43

<sup>45</sup> Tanıl Bora, (1995); Çağlar Keyder (2005) *Türkiye'de Devlet ve Sınıflar*, İstanbul: İletişim, p. 114

<sup>46</sup> This statement is especially relevant for Albenians.

his/her original country withers away from his/her history and even disappears. For this very reason, the appropriation of the native culture and turning-native by assimilation is alluring for the stranger although there are countless discrepancies. Mostly the lack that the stranger bears appears to the eye and this melting into the native provides the stranger with a possibility of having an abode which is not ambivalent but safe and sound. Destitution makes what is absent more enchanting. Thus it is expected from the stranger to be much more intimate, loyal and in rapport than the native. At the same time the stranger is bound to overtly declare the identity which s/he wants to be associated with so much and it is demanded that the stranger should extol the symbols and creeds of the community to which s/he wants to enter.”<sup>47</sup>

“Therefore, to be a stranger means to be refused, to make a self out of native categories, and to give up all the rights of recognition. This means that the stranger should identify himself/herself with the inspecting gaze of the native. The loyalty which is simply taken for granted in the case of natives (and then understood not as decision to be loyal, but as commonality or faith), calls for suspicious and vigilant scrutiny in the case of yesterday’s stranger; and forever so, as his commitment has been compromised from the start and beyond the hope of redemption by the original sin of being freely chosen. The loyalty of the stranger will always remain doubtful.”<sup>48</sup>

The stranger had been promised that full ‘acceptance’ would follow cultural reform; that refinement of manners, correct and etiquette-conscious public demeanour, careful avoidance of everything even remotely alien-sounding would suffice as the membership ticket to the exclusive club of native trend-setters. “The

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<sup>47</sup> Bauman (1995), 107

<sup>48</sup> Bauman (1993), 78-79

bluff of this promise is called the moment it has been seriously and match with a behaviour it ostensibly required”<sup>49</sup>

The case I have in my field is not exceptional to Bayrampaşa because the promise I have mentioned above was given to all immigrants from the Balkans. My informants, as far as my field research indicates, embrace this promise with such enthusiasm that they believe in the possibility of being a proper citizen and a member of the ‘exclusive club of the native trend-setters’;<sup>50</sup> they thus perform the necessary protocols of proper citizenship. It is this context that makes the title deeds in Bayrampaşa so important. They thought, and assert today in a disappointed manner, that if they were to buy the land to build their houses, they would be different from those who invade lands, that if they were in total accord with the rules and regulations, they would be accepted as proper citizens.

The natives, Turkish people in the motherland, have one important claim that makes them rightful owners of their statuses –Turks- and it is that they had shed blood for the lands upon which the Turkish state reigns. The property of the public lands, which generally composes the parcels of *gecekondu* districts, is in a sense their own property. They are Turk and this status is gained by the mythic fight against foreigners during the independence war. On the other hand, immigrant people assume the same identity –rightful owners of the status of being a Turkish citizen- through excessively obedience to the rule of sovereign, that is the formal law. Private property is a means through which these immigrants can prove their loyalty in place of the war they have missed. Thus they believed in the promise of property and propriety, at the end of which they were supposed to be accepted.

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<sup>49</sup>Bauman (1995), p. 80

<sup>50</sup> Bauman (1993) p. 82

The immigrants from Yugoslavia did understand, to some extent, that the promise is not that genuine. They thought that they were not *gecekond* people to the extent that they own the property of the land that they occupy. Yet the cholera epidemic of the 1970s showed that the acceptance was not that smooth and easy. All the newspapers and government spokespersons labeled them *gecekond* dwellers and showed no interest in their title deeds. Moreover as the *gecekond* pardon was announced by Tugut Özal<sup>51</sup>, the only claim to propriety that they had was to be cut off and their proper distinction from “invaders” withered away.

I have stated above that the “subordinated” position led the immigrants to buy title deeds. Here I provide the reader with the preliminary structure of the issue of title deeds with regard to the strategies of coping with strangeness. In the narratives of my informants the issue of title deeds arises as a supplement for the strangeness and ambivalence that the immigrants feels and yet fails to fulfill its utmost promise, that which is to be native, to be one of “us”, to be accepted as proper citizens. If this failure can be read as a fall into the subordinate position, an oscillatory structure which makes an identity cohesive in its dissolution, then there is a concurrent sovereign position. I will now turn to examine the sovereign position.

As I mentioned above, the title deeds have failed to be an anchor for proper citizenship, through which my informants put a distance and difference towards the mass of *gecekond* people. Yet it is still important that my informants emphasize so much that they had title deeds during the period and it was such a merit that everyone missed its significance in an unjust manner. My informants use this document, which failed to differentiate them from the improper natives in the past, in order to re-inscribe this difference belatedly today. They argue that the title deeds are

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<sup>51</sup> Tahire Erman, (2001)

the artifacts of their propriety without alluding to the material exigencies and the predicaments of being stranger. This very propriety is the locus of sovereignty.

The invisible and silent position of Yugoslav immigrants brings ambivalence to the narratives of my informants. The strangeness of the newly arrived immigrants was a source of their invisibility and silence. The vagueness of this silence and invisibility resulted in ambivalence that they have been haunted so far. The historical tradition of the xenophobia in the country was exacerbated with the labeling of Yugoslav immigrants as pigs, bastards of Tito, spies, and so on. This tradition of hatred was an impending source of exclusion from the domain of propriety and thereby enhancing the danger of having no abode. The property titles are the key for the promise of nativity. Following Bauman, the stranger has to display excessive sincerity, loyalty, emotional attachment, and devotion in order to dispel the doubts of preconceptions and xenophobia. The role of propriety had a double function in this manner; on the one hand it allayed the danger of exclusion and on the other hand, concurrently, integrally and necessarily it provided the immigrants with the discourse of sovereign – being more appropriate than the others and thereby more rightfully fitting for position of sovereign.

Demir Bey, argues;

As a result, everyone did but everything she has. There is noone who seized other's land or state's land; yet it may be unplanned. Everyone did on the basis of her budget. Some bought 80m2, others bought 60; or some bought 120 m2 and halved it again according to one's own money. I mean, this is again about what I said before. Roumelian people have different understanding of state. Someone says "you can enclose here", but these people did not enclose any land. We need to emphasize this reality. Today, this is almost fact for Bayrampaşa. Istanbul was empty in these years, yet these people got squeezed themselves in houses of 60 square meters. They were all content with that.<sup>52</sup> (1-12)

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<sup>52</sup> Sonuçta burada herkes, şeyini satın almıştır, hazine arazisine, başkasının arazisine konan yoktur, ama nedir, plansızdır. Kendi parası kadar, kimisi almış 80 m. Kimisi almış 60

Sedat Bey, one of my oldest informants;

An acquaintance told us. Apparently, a guy goes to Küçükköy; he says she should coop up a piece of land to build a house for his children. Of course everywhere is vacant at that time. He goes, checks it around and sees that people are building squatters (*gecekond*). One of the guys up there grabs a stone from the ground and throws it to a distance. He goes: up to that distance it's all mine, go build beyond that place! It is this way how they cooped up more than they needed, and now when there's demolition they cry saying my house is being torn down. So much so that you already covered a square for three houses, why are you crying? (1-13)<sup>53</sup>

### The Cholera Epidemic as a Constituting Moment of Identity Formation in Bayrampaşa

In the previous section, I have dealt with the Bayrampaşalı's failure to create difference with the possession of the title deeds, and at the end how they formed a sovereign position with the narratives of the title deeds. After their migration from Yugoslavia, they were expecting to be different from *gecekond* residents, but the title deeds did not prevent them from being labeled as *gecekond* inhabitants. In the subsequent part, I will try to ascertain how the same structure operates in another incident, the cholera epidemic. I argue that the epidemic is a very crucial case showing how they swung from a subordinate position, to a sovereign one, a process at the end of which they could create *Bayrampaşalık*. Thus, here, I aim to show

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veyahut da 120 almış 60-60 bölüşmüş ama parası kadar. Yani şimdi bu biraz da demin sözünü ettiğim, Rumeli insanının devlete itaat boyutu farklıdır. Birisi işte gelir der ki şurayı çevir, çevirmez. Bu realitenin altını çizmeniz lazım. Bugun Bayrampaşa'ın böyle bir şeyi var. Bomboş İstanbul'da bomboş hazine arazileri varken, 60 mlik yerlere kendini sıkıştırmış. Benim hakkın bu kadar demiştir.

<sup>53</sup> Bizim bir tanıdık vardı, o anlatıyordu. Adam gitmiş Küçükköy'e, demiş bir arazi ben çeviriyim, çocuklarıma bir ev yapayım. Tabi o zaman her yer boş. Gitmiş, bakmış, adamlar *gecekond* yapıyorlar. Oradaki adam yerden bir taş almış, uzağa fırlatmış. Demiş, Oraya kadar benim, git ordan öteye yap! İşte böyle ihtiyaçları olandan fazlasını çevirdiler, şimdi de yıkım olunca ağlıyorlar, benim evim yıkılıyor diye. Sen zaten o zaman üç evlik arsa çevirmiştin ya, niye ağlıyorsun! (1-13)

how the oscillation between sovereign and subordinate positions are revealed within the incident of the cholera epidemic.

As I mentioned before, the people of Sağmalcılar remained invisible during the popular representation of the region through the prison. The epidemic was a break in this invisibility in that, the disease was frequently mentioned with the name of the district. Sağmalcılar in 1970 was a highly populated filthy slum where drain waters flowed below the ground. The El Tor Cholera Epidemic occurred in the beginnings of 1970<sup>54</sup>; it spread to Turkey in October of the same year. Unfortunately, the first cases appeared in Sağmalcılar and for this reason the epidemic was named as the “Sağmalcılar Epidemic”. For this reason, cholera epidemic is a very important incident for Bayrampaşa and it had many important effects on the articulation of the identity of *Bayrampaşalılık*. This epidemic is shown as the reason for the name to change from Sağmalcılar to Bayrampaşa in mid the 1970’s. According to the site of the head of the district (*Kaymakamlık*), this change was held in order to make to forget the deleterious memory of the epidemic. At first sight, it may seem strange to change the name of a place because of a disease. However it is possible to understand this by looking at the crisis of the epidemic within the national public and the trauma it led to in Sağmalcılar. They suddenly became the carriers of the disease and were equalized with the cholera bacterias (microbes); nevertheless, at the end of the process, they ended up with a name change in order to forget the unpleasant memories of cholera. This is a short summary of what had happened in 1970 in Sağmalcılar, though the story deserves extensive scrutiny. In this part, while expounding the history of the cholera epidemic, I will also draw a picture of Sağmalcılar in 1970. Firstly, I will show how the disease erupted and how it was represented in the press.

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<sup>54</sup> Hays, J. N. (2005) *Epidemics and Pandemics: Their Impacts On Human History*, Santa Barbara, California, ABC-CLIO, Inc., p. 421

In the 1970, the (El Tor) cholera epidemic, first appeared in Russia in August. According to the newspapers, the governor (*valilik*) immediately declared the measures that had to be taken in order to prevent the spread of the pandemic to İstanbul.

The following decisions were taken in the meeting: Vaccination will be applied and is obligatory to all in Istanbul. The Ministry of Health and Social Aid will send 500 kg of vaccination at the beginning. The process of vaccination will start by Wednesday. (Cumhuriyet, 16 August, 1970) (1-14)<sup>55</sup>

According to the measures, every İstanbul resident had to be vaccinated. There were long queues for the vaccination, and the minister of Health Vedat Ali Özkan declared that they had enough stocks of the vaccine. At the same time, as the epidemic spread to Syria and Libya, the government determined the North Eastern region of Turkey as the first priority for precautions.(*Cumhuriyet*, 17-18-19-20-21 August, 1970).

Until October, the disease was not observed in Turkey. However on the 14<sup>th</sup> of October, the newspapers declared from the cover page that there was an epidemic in Sağmalcılar and the authorities stated that it was not cholera. According to the text, 12 people from Sağmalcılar were put in quarantine. In the papers of October 15, the disease in Sağmalcılar was still on the front page and it occupied a larger place. The news exposed the anxiety felt about the undefined disease:

Istanbul in fear

The number of patients who got infected by the obscure disease has approached to 100. Squatter areas are being scrutinized, no case detected. Suspected that the number of infected by the obscure and not yet diagnosed disease, which went off in Sağmalcılar and spread to the slums of Zeytinburnu, Eyüp and Silahtarağa, has approached to 100. (Cumhuriyet 15 October 1970) (1-15)<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Toplantıda aşı kampanyası tüm istanbullulara uygulanması ve mecburi tutulması kararlaştırılmıştır. Sağlık ve Sosyal Yardım Bakanlığının ilk ağızda göndereceği aşı miktarı 500 kilodur. Aşılama çalışmaları, Çarşamba gününden itibaren başlayacaktır. (Cumhuriyet 16 Ağustos Pazar, 1970) (1-14)

<sup>56</sup> İstanbullular endişe içinde/Meçhul hastalığa yakalananların sayısı 100'e yaklaştı. Gecekondu semtleri taranıyor. Hastalık Teşhis Edilemedi Önceki gün Sağmalcılar'da

The following day, the epidemic reached the headlines of the newspapers and it was announced that the undetermined disease was “Cholera”. The death toll was 14 and 500 people were under control in hospitals. In *Cumhuriyet* newspaper, there was a picture of a hospital room under the headline, with an explanation saying that “sick people from Sağmalcılar are under treatment”. According to medical authorities the bacteria was not cholera but a similarly contagious and dangerous one which could be treated as cholera. (16 October 1970). The name of the disease was cause of debate, because some other scientists or officials claimed that this was a lighter type of cholera, and named it “para-cholera”. Another newspaper, *Milliyet* newspaper reported it as;

Para-cholera (a less severe form of cholera) Spread:  
Medical authorities state the disease resulting from the vibrio called El Tor does proceed rather slightly and is not pernicious as Asian cholera. (*Milliyet*, October 17, 1970)<sup>57</sup>

Days passed and meanwhile, the epidemic spread. Within a few days, the *gecekondu* areas in Esenler, Küçükköy, Şişli, Alibeyköy, Silahtarağa were infected. However, because the disease initially occurred in Sağmalcılar, in all the texts on the epidemic, it became a common thing to use the phrase “the cholera epidemic which broke out in Sağmalcılar”. Additionally, with this interest on Sağmalcılar, the government officials and the media concentrated on the conditions in Sağmalcılar.

Dangerous shafts in Sağmalcılar, Esenler and Küçükköy all of which embrace a total population of 150,000 people, are neither closed up nor disinfected. Avenues and streets are filthy. As there

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başlıyan ve Zeytinburnu, Eyüp ve Silahtarağa gecekondu bölgelerinde de yayıldığı görülen ve henüz teşhis konulamayan meçhul hastalığa yakalananların sayısının 100’e yaklaştığı sanılmaktadır. (*Cumhuriyet* 15 October 1-15)

<sup>57</sup> Para-kolera (koleranın hafif türü) Yayıldı

Tıp otoriteleri, EL TOR VİBRİYONU’ndan ileri geldiği tespit edilen hastalığın hafif seyrettiğini ve ASYA kolerası gibi öldürücü olmadığını söylüyor. (*Milliyet*, 17 October 1970) (1-16)

is no garbage collecting facilities at work, little children still play among the accumulated garbage.

The stream of Cicoz which is a border between Sağmalcılar and Esenler and to which many cesspool and channels are connected constitutes an open home for germs. Yesterday, there was seen people who carry water for construction from the stream. The disease is spreading in Murat and Yenimalle neighborhoods which are located on the both sides of the stream.

Precautions:

All of the hospitals in Istanbul are alarmed starting from yesterday because of the epidemic that went off in Sağmalcılar. A 50-bed service was opened in Bakırköy Mental Asylum due to the epidemic. The hospital within Sağmalcılar Prison which had been inactive so far was opened for service. In addition to these, a team visits the households in Sağmalcılar sending those of infected to the nearby hospitals.<sup>58</sup> (1-17)

In October 18, *Milliyet* ran an article by İsmail Cem entitled “Büyük Şehrin Lanetlileri”

The reality of squatter housing is somewhat the outgrowth of disparities. Old dwellers of squatters make the comparison of their situation not with their past but with other city dwellers. They evaluate their dumpsite-like surrounding, the drain water they drink and other city dwellers’ despise differently.

Perhaps it is not a coincidence that the cholera-like disease threatening all emerged in Sağmalcılar. Just like it is not a coincidence that workers whose movement is being ever suppressed with violence and avarice, semi-unemployed such as street vendors or shoe shiners who are exposed to constabularies’ show of force and unemployed who tremble in front of daily-labor markets come from those vicinities of squatters.

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<sup>58</sup> Toplam olarak 150 bin nüfuslu Sağmalcılar, Esenler ve Küçükköy’de tehlike doğuran kuyular kapatılmamış ve ilaçlanmamıştır. Cadde ve sokaklar pislik içindedir. Çöp toplama işi yapılamadığından biriken çöplüklerde hala küçük çocuklar oynamaktadır./Sağmalcılar’la Esenler arasında sınır teşkil eden ve birçok foseptiğin ve kanalın bağlı olduğu Cicoz deresi açıkta bir mikrop yuvası teşkil etmektedir. Dereden dün inşaatlara kullanılmak üzere teneke teneke su alanlar görülmüştür. Aynı derenin iki yakasında bulunan Murat Mahallesi ve Yenimahalle’de hastalık yayılmaktadır. /Tedbirler: Sağmalcılar’da çıkan bulaşıcı hastalık yüzünden ... İstanbul’daki bütün hastaneler dün alarma geçirilmişlerdir. Hastalıkla ilgili olarak Bakırköy Akıl Hastahanesinde 50 yataklı bir servis dün çalışmaya açılmış, Sağmalcılar Cezaevindeki çalıştırılmayan yüz yataklı hastane derhal servise sokulmuştur. Bunlardan ayrı olarak Sağmalcılar’da bir ekip evleri dolaşarak hastaları en yakın hastanelere sevk etmektedir. (1-17)

(İsmail Cem, 'In the Trace of Events', *Milliyet*, October 18, 1970) (1-18)<sup>59</sup>

While the disease was spreading rapidly, Sağmalcılar remained at the center of all debates about the disease:

Cholera is bringing death to Sağmalcılar where necessary precautions are demanded to be taken immediately due to dangerous health conditions observed from 1966 and onwards. The people of Sağmalcılar are struggling for survival. The photo shows some dwellers from the neighborhood who started to migrate to other cities. (*Cumhuriyet*, October 18)<sup>60</sup> (1-19)  
The residents of Sağmalcılar started to whitewash the foreparts of their houses and shops for they cannot disinfect the open-flowing drain water. (*Cumhuriyet*, October 1970, photograph subtitle)<sup>61</sup>

In another newspaper;

According to the investigations, environmental conditions are very defective in squatter areas especially in Zeytinburnu and Sağmalcılar. There is not even drainage system. Use and drinking water are obtained from shafts that do not qualify security conditions. An excessive number of population live in these unhealthy dwellings. Children play with unknown filthy water in the streets. On the other side, the level of population movements at

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<sup>59</sup>“Süt, yumurta, et gibi besinlerin kimi yerlerde bol bol tüketilmesi ve vesikaya bağlı olmaması, başka yerlerde hemen hiç tüketilmemesiyle mümkündür: Sağmalcılar ve benzerleri gibi. Bu gecekondu bölgelerinin çeşitli hastalıkların kaynağı ve ilk hedefi olması rastlantı sonucu değildir.

Gecekondu gerçeği, bir yanıyla da büyük eşitsizliklerin ürünüdür. Yıllanmış gecekonduculular, kıyaslamayı artık kendi durumlarıyla geçmişleri arasında değil, öteki şehirlilerle yapmaktadır. Çöplük benzeri çevrelerini, içtikleri lağım sularını, öteki şehirlilerin horlamalarını başka türlü değerlendirmektedir.

Herkesi tehdit eden kolera benzeri hastalığın Sağmalcılar'da ortaya çıkması herhalde rastlantı sonucu değildir. Gene rastlantı sonucu olmayan, giderek daha büyük bir şiddetle ve hırsla hareketleri bastırılan işçilerin, Belediye Zabıta'sının üzerinde gövde gösterdiği seyyar satıcı, ayakkabı boyacısı gibi yarı işsizlerin ve gündelikçi pazarları önünde titreyen işsizlerin bu gecekondu çevrelerinden gelmeleridir (İsmail Cem, Olayların İzinde, *Milliyet*, 18 October, 1970).

<sup>60</sup> 1966 yılından bu yana sağlık koşulları yönünden tehlikeli görülen ve gerekli tedbirlerin süratle alınması istenen Sağmalcılarda kolera ölüm saçıyor. Sağmalcılar halkı şimdi can derdinde. Fotoğrafta bazı semt sakinlerinin başka illere göçe başladığı sağmalcılar görülüyor. *Cumhuriyet*, 18 October (1-19)

<sup>61</sup> Sağmalcılarda oturanlar açıkta akan lağımaları dezenfekte edemedikleri için evlerini ve dükkanların önlerini kireçlemeye başladılar. *Cumhuriyet*, 18 October (1-20)

those places significantly contribute to the emergence of epidemics. (*Milliyet*, October)<sup>62</sup> (1-21)

The issue was on the agenda of the government. On the 28 of October, primeminister Demirel visited Sağmalcılar:

Demirel: “Disasters are from God’s will”  
Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel went to Sağmalcılar with his cabinet stating: “I would like to witness my citizens’ suffering closely. That is why I will immediately go to Sağmalcılar and be with my citizens.” Giving a speech in front of Sağmalcılar dispensary, Prime Minister addressed to the citizens who demanded “water, electricity and channel” as the following: “This time I came to offer my recuperation wishes to Sağmalcılar that has always embraced us. The work to be done against disasters is to eliminate the damage that they bring about. The disasters such as fire, earthquake or disease are from the will of God. If God permits, this issue passes off without any further damage. My condolences are to you for the deceased.” (*Cumhuriyet*, October 28 1970)<sup>63</sup> (1-22)

Cholera was later seen in many different places of İstanbul and Turkey.

Sağmalcılarlıs were seen as responsible for the spread of the disease. Meanwhile, the disease was stuck on these people and stigmatized them. The main reason for this stigmatization was their representation in the press; there were titles like ‘cholera hunt’, ‘microbe migration’, and stories about disease carrying Sağmalcılarlıs trying to ‘infiltrate’ a ‘clean’ location being ‘caught’ and ‘taken under control’. The

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<sup>62</sup>“Yapılan incelemelerde, bilhassa Zeytinburnu ve Sağmalcılar gibi gecekondu bölgelerinde çevre şartları çok bozuktur. Kanalizasyon bile yoktur. İçme ve kullanma suları kuyulardan temin edilmekte olup güvenlik şartlarına uymamaktadır. Burlardaki gayri sıhhi meskenlerde haddinden fazla nüfus yaşamaktadır. Çocuklar sokaklarda, menşei belirsiz pis sularda oynamaktadır. Diğer taraftan bu bölgelerdeki nüfus hareketlerinin fazla oluşu epidemilerin çıkmasında mühim rol oynamaktadır. (*Milliyet*, October) (1-21)

<sup>63</sup> Demirel: “Afetler Cenab-ı Hakkın takdiridir.” “Ben vatandaşımın ıstırabını yakından görmek istiyorum. Onun için hemen Sağmalcılara gidip vatandaşlarımla beraber olacağım.” diyen başbakan Süleyman Demirel, bakanlarla birlikte Sağmalcılar’a geçmiştir. Sağmalcılar dispanseri önünde yaptığı konuşmada Başbakan kendisinden “su, elektrik ve kanal” isteyen halka şöyle seslenmiştir: “bizi her zaman sinesine basan Sağmalcılar’a bu defa geçmiş olsun demeye geldim. Afetler karşısında yapacağımız iş bunların meydana getirdiği zararların ortadan kaldırmaktır. Yangın, zelzele, hastalık gibi afetler Cenab-ı Hakkın takdiridir. İnşallah bu hadise bu kadarıyla geçiştirilir. Hayatlarını kaybeden vatandaşlarıma Cenab-ı Haktan rahmet dilerim.” *Cumhuriyet*, 28 October 1970 (1-22)

language of the news were reducing these people to the position of vermins and the cholera was attributed to Sağmalcılarlıs. I want to present some examples from the news on cholera.

#### Hunt For Cholera

The people of Sağmalcılar region who had gone to the different parts of the country after the outbreak are begun to be put under control. After the report of the midwife of the village, a family consisting of 3 people, coming to Yeniköy of Uzunköprü was removed to hospital by force, being placed under observation. Additionally, in the Oğulpaşa village of Havza district, some people coming from Sağmalcılar, passengers in the bus who came to take the bride were not allowed to get off and the bride was taken to the bus and sent off. Upon the warnings from the people around, some people coming to the villages of Mersin, Aydın, Amasya, Trabzon, Tokat, and Manisa from Sağmalcılar were captured and placed under quarantine wherever they are located. After Havva Kartal and her son Yılmaz from the Demirciler village of Samsun were placed under observation with the suspicion of cholera, 5 people more have been taken under treatment. The number of the people from Sağmalcılar who have been taken under quarantine in the Karşıyaka Hospital in İzmir amounted to 15. In Balıkesir, people coming from Sağmalcılar have been under quarantine and the status of Nizami Özdemir from the village of Bayramiç have been designated as dangerous.<sup>64</sup> (1-23)

On the other hand, people coming from Sağmalcılar to different parts of the country are continued to be placed under control. Meanwhile, Nazım Önder, who came to Bayramiç village of Balıkesir a week ago, has been diagnosed with cholera. Hereupon the village has been put under quarantine.<sup>65</sup> (1-24)

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<sup>64</sup> Koleralı avı/Kolera salgınınından sonra yurda dağılan Sağmalcılar bölgesi halkı, gittikleri yerlerde kontrol altına alınmaya başlanmıştır. Uzunköprünün Yeniköyüne gelen 3 kişilik bir aile, köy ebesinin ihbarı sonucu, jandarmalar tarafında zorla hastaneye yerleştirilerek müşahede altına alınmışlardır. Ayrıca Havza ilçesinin Oğulpaşa köyünde yine sağmalcılardan gelen bazı kişiler, gelin almaya gelen otobüs içindeki yolcular, köy muhtarı tarafından indirilmemiş, gelin de otobüse bindirilerek yolcu edilmiştir./Mersin, Aydın, Amasya, Trabzon, Tokat ve Manisa köylerine Sağmalcılardan gelen bazı kişiler, çevredekilerin uyarımları üzerine yakalanarak buldukları bölgede karantinaya alınmışlardır. Samsun'un Demirciler köyünden Havva Kartal ve oğlu Yılmaz kolera şüphesiyle müşahade altına alınmalarından sonra, 5 kişi daha tedavi altına alınmıştır./İzmirde Karşıyaka hastanesinde karantinaya alınan sağmalcılarlıların sayısı 15'i bulmuştur. Balıkesir'de Sağmalcılar'dan gelenler karantinaya tutulurken bunlardan Bayramiç köyünden Nizami Özdemir'in durumu tehlikeli görülmüştür." *Cumhuriyet*, 21 October 1970

<sup>65</sup> Öte yandan dün yurtda, Sağmalcılar'dan yurda dağılanların buldukları bölgelerde kontrol altına alınmaları devam etmektedir. Bu arada Sağmalcılar'dan bir hafta önce Balıkesir'e bağlı Gönen'in bayramiç köyüne gelen 61 yaşındaki nazım öndere kat'i olarak

### Microbes Migrate From Sağmalcılar

After it was understood that it is cholera which authorities avoided for days to make mention of, the panic arising in Sağmalcılar exceeded the boundaries of Istanbul. As a matter of fact, after the inspection made in this region yesterday, it was understood that most people began to migrate to Anatolia and Thrace where their relatives and acquaintances live. It is thought that these people who left the place without going through any examination may take the cholera microbe alongside themselves.<sup>66</sup> (1-25)

### Cholera Begins to Spread in the Marmara Region

It is certainly understood that the cholera outbreak has pervaded into Balıkesir, İzmit, Adapazarı, Düzce, and Tekirdağ. It was stated that the cholera microbe was transmitted by those people once living in Sağmalcılar, and going to their relatives' places after the outbreak.<sup>67</sup> (1-26)

### Suspicious Death

Sadife Arabacı (45), from the Yoğunbağ village of Hayrabolu was sent to the State Hospital of Tekirdağ with the suspicion of cholera and died there. It is stated that ten days ago Sadife went to the wedding of her acquaintance and that upon her return she got ill.<sup>68</sup> (1-27)

### Enumerators identify 17 people with cholera

Yesterday, enumerators got suspicious about the fact that 17 people they got into contact in Sağmalcılar and Esenler suffers from

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kolera teşhisi konmuştur. Bunun üzerine köy karantina altına alınmıştır. *Cumhuriyet*, October 1970

<sup>66</sup> Sağmalcılar'dan Mikrop Göçü/Yetkililerin günlerce ismini açıklamaktan çekindikleri hastalığın kolera olduğunun anlaşılması üzerine, Sağmalcılar semtinde başgösteren panik İstanbul sınırlarını da aşmıştır. Nitekim dün, bu bölgede yapılan inceleme sonucunda çoğu çoğu kişilerin Trakya ve Anadolu'ya akraba ve tanıdıklarının yanına göç etmeye başladıkları anlaşılmıştır. *Cumhuriyet*, October 1970

Üzerlerinde en ufak bir inceleme ve kontrol yapılmadan Sağmalcılar bölgesini terk edenlerin beraberlerinde kolera mikrobunu götürmeleri ihtimali üzerinde durulmaktadır. *Cumhuriyet*, 23 October 1970

<sup>67</sup> Kolera Marmara Bölgesinde Yayılmaya Başladı, Sağmalcılar bölgesinde çıkan kolera salgınının Balıkesir, İzmit, Adapazarı, Düzce ve Tekirdağ'a yayıldığı kesinlikle anlaşılmıştır. Kolera mikrobunun Sağmalcılar'da yaşayan ancak salgından sonra akrabalarının yanına göç edenlerce taşındığı bildirilmiştir.

<sup>68</sup> Şüpheli Ölüm, Hayrabolu'nun Yoğunbağ köyünden Sadife Arabacı adında 45 yaşında bir kadın, kolera şüphesiyle Hayrabolu Sağlık Merkezinden tedavi için gönderildiği Tekirdağ Devlet Hastanesinde ölmüştür. Sadife'nin on gün önce Sağmalcılar'daki bir tanıdıklarının düğününe gittiği ve dönüşünden sonra hastalandığı belirtilmiştir. *Cumhuriyet*, 24 October 1970

cholera and reported this to the relevant authorities. Upon this people at issue were removed to hospitals.<sup>69</sup> (1-28)

#### Dead Bodies Abducted from Istanbul

It is alleged that cholera was diffused by people coming from Sağmalcılar<sup>70</sup> (1-29)

#### Dead Bodies Abducted

According to a news of the Turkish News Agency, upon the fact that Istanbul Governorship did not give over the mortal remains and wanted to lime them, the relatives and acquaintances of those killed by the epidemic in Sağmalcılar are abducting the dead bodies. Thus, after the sick people, a dead body, the cause of which was disguised, was taken to Tekirdağ yesterday. It is also known that sick people are taken in private to Hayrabolu which is in close relation with Sağmalcılar. (1-30)<sup>71</sup>

When the residents of Sağmalcılar came to this place 10-15 years ago, were expecting to be accepted to the ‘exclusive club of the native trend-setters’<sup>72</sup> Nevertheless, they ended up with a representation of carriers of disease, and even, the microbe itself. Their wandering within the city without any restriction led to many reactions, and from that moment, the name Sağmalcılar meant only one thing; ‘cholera’. Unlike the popular representation of the prison, they had remained invisible; and it is with the epidemic that they became highly visible in the press. This visibility equated them with the dirt, sliminess<sup>73</sup>, disease, microbes, repulsion, etc. Sağmalcılırlıs were stigmatized and after that, Sağmalcılar meant ‘cholera and death’ in many people’s minds. Blaming Sağmalcılar for the disease was so

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<sup>69</sup> Sayım memurları 17 koleralı tesbit etti, Sayım memurları dün sağmalcılar ve esenlerde onyedı kişinin koleralı olduğundan şüphelenerek ilgili makamlara ihbarda bulunmuşlar ve bunlar hastaneye kaldırılmışlardır.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Cenazeler İstanbuldan kaçırılmaya başlandı. Kolerayı yurda, Sağmalcılardan gidenlerin yaydığı öne sürülüyor. *Milliyet*, October 1970

<sup>71</sup> Cenazeler kaçırılıyor, Türk Haberler Ajansının bir haberine göre İstanbul Valiliğinin cenazeleri vermemesi ve kireçlemek istemesi üzerine, Sağmalcılar’da salgından ölenlerin yakınları, cenazeleri kaçırmaktadırlar. Böylece hastalardan sonra, Tekirdağ’a dün akşam nedeni gizlenen bir cenaze getirilmiştir. Sağmalcılar’la yakın ilişkisi olan Hayrabolu’ya da hasta kaçırıldığı bilinmektedir. *Cumhuriyet*, October 1970

<sup>72</sup> Bauman (1995) p. 80

<sup>73</sup> Douglas, M. (2008) *Purity and Danger*, Routledge: London and New York

prevalent that, even in a text, written to criticize the poor infrastructure, people of Sağmalcılar were being blemished.

#### The Lessons from Cholera

As usual, people are desparate and sorrowful, and did nothing other than conforming to the general turmoil. They could do nothing either. They drank galores of vinegar, ate lemons, paid heed to the official announcements, and conformed to some of them, not taking heed to some of them. Certainly, people could not know the circumstances driving them to live in gecekondu (shantytowns). They could not know why all contagious diseases appear there and why also this epidemic arose there. As long as these gecekondu exist, they could not know these diseases and these epidemics will not disappear.

The people of Sağmalcılar was downcast. They were ashamed of the fact that they were the ones who transmitted the epidemic to the whole country. However, they did not know that it is some other people who should be ashamed. And if they knew this fact, there would be no problem anyway.

Erdal Atabek, Head of the Association of Turkish Doctors.<sup>74</sup>  
(1-31)

Erdal Atabek, on the one hand expressing that the issue had to be examined within a social dimension, on the other hand, he was affirming that Sağmalcılar were the ones who disseminated cholera to all the country. From this moment onwards, the 'name' Sağmalcılar and the cholera were mentioned in the same sentences and Sağmalcılar were recalled as the cholera spreaders.

#### Outbreak of El Tor Cholera in İstanbul

The epidemics caused by *Vibrio Cholerae* biotype El Tor reached the southern and eastern frontiers of Turkey in 1965. Unfortunately, in spite of all efforts to prevent the entrance of the

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<sup>74</sup> Koleranın verdiği ders – Halk her zamanki gibi çaresiz, üzgün ve genel karışıklığa uymaktan başka birşey yapmadı, yapamazdı da. Bol bol sirke içti, limon yedi, resmi beyanları dinledi, bazısına uydu, bazısına uymadı. Halk tabi kendilerini gecekonduya yaşamaya iten şartları yaratan nedenleri bilemezdi, neden bütün bulaşıcı hastalıkların o bölgede bulunduğunu, bu salgının da neden orada yayıldığını bilemezdi, gecekondu var oldukça bu hastalıkların, bu salgınların ortadan kalkmayacağını bilemezdi./Sağmalcılar halkı üzgündü, *bütün bir ülkeye salgın bulaştıran bölgenin kişileri olmaktan utanıyorlardı*, oysa utanması gereken kişilerin çok başkaları olduğunu bilmiyorlardı./Zaten bilseler, mesele kalmıyacaktı. Erdal Atabek/ Türk Tabipleri Birliği Başkanı

disease into Turkey , an epidemic of El Tor cholera started in Sađmalcılar, a suburb of İstanbul in October 1970.<sup>75</sup> (1-32)

...lays bare the mistake of WHO: “The reason of the epidemic disease in Sađmalcılar was *Vibrio eltor*. WHO distinguished this paracholera, coming to being with this microbe, from cholera in the 10. page of its International Classification of Diseases as the following: “cholera does not include paracholera which results from Eltor vibrio.”<sup>76</sup> (1-32)

The epidemic was the misfortune of the people of Sađmalcılar, it could have erupted in any one of the other slums in İstanbul, unfortunately it started in Sađmalcılar. The reason of the epidemic was declared that “there was a sewer leak to the fresh water channels which were built by the Architect Sinan”. Whatever the reason, Sađmalcılar became tainted, as a result of the epidemic. The people of Sađmalcılar were suddenly stigmatized with the disease and it would be difficult for them to get rid of this plight. In order to understand how they got rid of the stigmatization of cholera, first we need to glance the term stigma.

The history of the term stigma reaches ancient Greece. Ancient Greeks used the term stigma to describe a mark cut or burned into the body that designated the bearer as someone who was morally defective, such as a slave, a criminal, or a traitor.”<sup>77</sup> Erving Goffman used the term in a sociological manner. The contemporary usage of the term is like the original literal sense of the word, however, now it is applied more to the disgrace itself than to the bodily evidences of it.<sup>78</sup> He defined

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<sup>75</sup> British Medical Journal, 14 November 1970, p. 435, [http://www.bmj.com/cgi/pdf\\_extract/4/5732/435-b](http://www.bmj.com/cgi/pdf_extract/4/5732/435-b)

<sup>76</sup> ... Dünya sađlık Örgütü'nün hatasını ortaya koymaktadır: “ Sađmalcılar'daki salgın hastalığın etkeni *Vibrio eltor* idi. Bu mikropla husule gelen parakolerayı Dünya Sađlık Örgütü 1961'de yayımladığı Uluslararası Sađlık Tüzüğü'nün 10. sahifesinde “kolera Eltor vibriyonundan ileri gelen parakolerayı kapsamaz” cümlesiyle koleradan ayırmıştır. “Kolera Günlerinde ‘Bilim’, (İnfeksiyon Hastalıklarında Laboratuvar Tanı) Gökhan Aygün, Klinik Gelişim Dergisi, 164-166

<sup>77</sup> “Stigma”, Encyclopedia of Social Psychology, ed. Roy F. Baumeister, Kathleen D. Vohls, Vol. 2, p. 944.

<sup>78</sup> Erving Goffman, (1968) Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity – Harmondsworth: Penguin, , p. 2

stigma as “an attribute that spoils a person’s identity, reducing him or her in other’s minds “from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one”<sup>79</sup>.” Stigma, thus, is a social attribute which is discrediting for an individual or a group.

The concept can be applied more widely to all cases when an observable – documented and indisputable- feature of a certain category of persons is first made salient by being defined as flaw, iniquity or moral turpitude. “An otherwise innocuous trait bearing this character is easily recognizable as less desirable, inferior, bad and dangerous. They are also armed with the information about the virtual social identity of the members of the stigmatized category; an identity difficult to be subsequently disproved, however hard the stigmatized try to assert the actual identity they defined.”<sup>80</sup> “Stigma cannot but be a thorn in its flesh; it restores dignity to the fate and casts a shadow on the promise of limitless perfectibility. It is therefore, at odds with everything modernity stands for and everything that modern society must believe in in order to reproduce its existence in the only shape it knows of and is trained to cultivate”.<sup>81</sup> The situation for the residents of *Sağmalcılar* was exactly like this. As the troublesome disease and dirt were stigmatizing them, all their anticipation of properness and perfection collapsed. After that moment, they were remembered not with the fastidiousness and cleanness of the Balkan migrants, but with the disease and as the carriers of the disease.

Stigma is a very traumatic incident for stigmatized people, and if this trauma coalesces with the anxieties of exclusion for being stranger, it is magnified. I am not trying to claim that the stigmatization of *Sağmalcılar* is related to their migrant origins, it would be ridiculous to say so, since there is no reference to their

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<sup>79</sup> Erving Goffman, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* – Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), s. 12., Bauman (1995) p. 3

<sup>80</sup> *ibid*, p. 67

<sup>81</sup> Bauman, 68

Balkan identities in the newspapers of the time of the epidemic. The reason I relate the trauma of cholera with their migrant past is that, I think the two incidents are similar, in the sense that both set of events broke their anticipation of being proper and accepted into smithereens.

As it can be easily seen from the news texts quoted above, the disease marked *Sağmalcılar* as ‘wandering microbes’. This marking alarm quite a perilous situation for the stranger. Since, when these people were stigmatized as ‘microbes’, this stigmatization calls for intervention. The ones without stigmatization demand from the state to control these irresponsible wanderers, disease porter, vermins. The texts above can be read as the expression of this demand for intervention. This demand for intervention is very perilous because, “defining the other as vermin harnesses the deeply entrenched fears, revulsion and the disgust in the service of extermination. But also, and more seminally, it places the Other at an enormous mental distance at which moral rights are no longer visible. Having been stripped of humanity and redefined as vermin, the Other is no more an object of moral evaluation. The inventory of reactions to the stubborn presence of strangers can be glimpsed from the standard catalogue of responses to ‘sliminess’ as such. Most items in such a catalogue refer to the attempts to defuse the ‘slimy’ by depriving it of its ‘sliminess’. All such attempts follow the logical yet implausible strategy of separating again what the anomaly, pregnant with semantic ambiguity, blends; and that of removing the resistant residue out of sight – either physically or spiritually.”<sup>82</sup>

We learn from the newspapers that the spread of the epidemic was taken under control within 1,5 months. In spite of this, the people of *Sağmalcılar* carried the social influences of the microbes for a long time. Because, the main issue of the

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<sup>82</sup> Bauman (1995), 65-66

stigmatized individual's situation in life is a question of "acceptance". "Those who have dealings with him fail to accord him the respect and regard which the uncontaminated aspect of his social identity have led them to anticipate extending, and have led him to anticipate receiving; he echoes this denial by finding that some of his own attributes warrant it."<sup>83</sup> Even if the disease was taken under control, the stigma of cholera was going to haunt them for a long time. The people of Sağmalcılar were longing to become proper citizens, and the epidemic was an obstacle. On the other hand, because the signs of stigma cannot be concealed, and the only way to get rid of stigma is a reinterpretation of the signs of stigma, or to repudiate the sign in order to make it socially invisible<sup>84</sup>, they preferred a radical solution. I argue that the moment of the realization of this solution is the moment of oscillation which I try to designate. The people of Sağmalcılar, who were exposed to precarious living conditions and the stigmatization of the disease, oscillate to a sovereign position from a subordinate position. In addition to this, they were emancipated from the stigmatization. This solution was the renaming.

The name Sağmalcılar was changed in mid the 1970s. It is possible to find both names (Sağmalcılar and Bayrampaşa) in the newspapers of late 1970's. In the web site of the district governor (*Kaymakamlık*), the reason of the name change is mentioned as "in order to erase the deleterious memory of the cholera epidemic". As far as the name, Sağmalcılar was equated with cholera, they chose to change the name of the district and eventually, the name Sağmalcılar became Bayrampaşa. Furthermore, naming is an authoritarian illusion that negates the former presence of the thing that it names.<sup>85</sup> It pre-supposes a starting point of the absence of

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<sup>83</sup> Goffman, (1968) 8-9.

<sup>84</sup> Bauman, (1995) 93

<sup>85</sup> Babül, E., (2003) *Belonging to Imbros: Citizenship and Sovereignty in the Turkish Republic*, MA Thesis, Boğaziçi University, p. 6

everything, a position of “from nothing,” and is both about mastering and annihilating.<sup>86</sup> The name change was the promise of emancipation from the stigmatization of cholera. My informants pointed out that before the name change, the authorities asked the local people about the new name offering two alternatives; Fetihtepe and Bayrampaşa. The people did not prefer Fetihtepe, the name was decided as ‘Bayrampaşa’. Bayram Paşa is a historical figure and he was Sadrazam of IV. Murat. His fame comes from the murder of Nef’i, one of the most important Divan poets. It has been told that Nef’i wrote a satire on Bayram Paşa and in response to this, Bayram Paşa murdered him, and threw his body to the Bosphorus. They offered his name as a choice because Bayram Paşa had livestock farms in this region. I think that the appropriation of his name, instead of the other is related to Sağmalcılar’ ambition for sovereignty, rather than the historical importance of Bayram Paşa. After Sağmalcılar (which means the one who draws milk from the cows) a name with a word “Paşa” in it, presents the sovereignty that they desired.

The important question is, to what extent the name change was successful in erasing the unpleasant blemish on the people of Sağmalcılar. According to Goffman, a stigma can only be removed with a cosmetic intervention. If this happens, what often results is not the acquisition of fully normal status, but a transformation of self from someone with a particular blemish into someone with a record of having corrected a particular blemish.<sup>87</sup> In order to grasp the meaning of the cholera epidemic for Bayrampaşa, like Goffman, we have to consider them as a group of people ‘transformed into someone with a record of having corrected a particular blemish’. This corrected blemish appears in two different genres in the

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<sup>86</sup> Blanchot, M. (1981) “Literature and the Right to Death” in *The Gaze of Orpheus*.  
Barrytown/Station Hill

<sup>87</sup> Goffman, (1968) p. 9

narratives; victimization and humour. In the victimization genre, the plot is set on unfairness and non-Bayrampaşalı' bad intentions. The following expression is an example of the victimization genre;

The cholera epidemic appeared in 1974, around the time when we were going to the secondary school. It was a big injustice attributed to Bayrampaşa. The conditions in Bayrampaşa were harsh. Not only were the conditions of Bayrampaşa, the conditions prevailing in most of the localities of Istanbul harsh as well. Istanbul itself is not a city, it is becoming a village. There occurred such an epidemic in that period. But the figures were not as high as overstated by the media. Especially, at schools, it manifested itself with debility and headaches and I think, considering the conditions of the day, measures were taken very quickly. But I never forget. For instance I and my friends had never been in a junkyard. Yet in those times, journalists called us and took our photos in the trash dump of the school. And in the news of the following day it was stated that cholera spread like this. We were really saddened. Our district is not a district like that.<sup>88</sup> (1-33)

The other genre, the genre of humour appears to alleviate the burden of the epidemic with the use of humour. By making jokes about it, they tended to designate the plight of disease as a mundane event:

I should say that in those days of cholera we were really at ease in Bayrampaşa. For instance, the number of the municipality buses was very limited. I mean the buses from Eminönü to Bayrampaşa. People who would go to Topkapı used to get on our buses and we used to walk all those roads while coming from Şehremini. It takes a real distance from Şehremini to here. We were very lucky when cholera arose. Nobody would come close to our buses. When our buses draw near to the stops, when the Bayrampaşa buses came, everybody winced. Indirectly speaking, we in fact derived much benefit from cholera. Cholera was useful to use in different ways.

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<sup>88</sup> Kolera salgını, bizim ortaöğretime gittiğimiz yıllarda, yani 1974'te oldu. Bayrampaşaya atfedilmiş büyük bir haksızlıktı. Bayrampaşa'da şartlar zordu. Yani sadece Bayrampaşa değil İstanbul'un pek çok semtinde zordu. İstanbul'un kendisi bir kent değil, gittikçe köyleşmeye kayıyor. O dönem öyle bir salgın oldu. Ama medyanın abarttığı kadar rakamlar değildi. Özellikle halsizlik baş ağrısı ile kendini belli etti okullarda, ve bence çok da çabuk, yani o günün şartlarına göre çok çabuk önlem alındı. Ama ben hiç unutmuyorum. Mesela ben ve arkadaşlarım yaşamımızın hiçbir alanında biz çöplüğe girmedik. Ama o dönem, gazeteciler bizi çağırıp okulun çöplüğüne sokup fotoğraf çektiler. Ertesi günkü haberleri de Bayrampaşa'da kolera böyle yayıldı dendi. Biz üzüldük. Bizim semtimiz öyle şey bir semt değil.

For example, in that time our mayor was brother Muzaffer and his brother Mukadder Öztekin was the Minister of the Transportation Department. Under the Justice Party government, you would see machines sweeping the roads of Istanbul. Bayrampaşa didn't have such machines. But as it didn't have any road, they gave them back to the Metropolitan Municipality. I mean, while the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality didn't have any such equipment, they granted us those tools just because there is this cholera. We did not have asphalt-paved roads then.<sup>89</sup>

In a similar story, Sedat Amca telling me his experiences while laughing:

One day I went to Topkapı. Exactly when there was this epidemic. I was not ill, but I try to inspect myself whether I have any nausea or whether my stomach aches. Of course, there is the fear of death. Anyway, there was the bus numbered 32T which comes here from Topkapı. That path is stil runned by Topkapı Cevatpaşa bus. When the bus drew alongside the stop, I walked toward it and the people around me fled in confusion, shouting, “go away, there is cholera!”<sup>90</sup>

In this chapter, I tried to scrutinize the belonging, the sense of locality and the identity formation in Bayrampaşa by delving into two different events in Bayrampaşa's history. These events are migration and the cholera epidemic. With these incidences, I tried to show how the identity of Bayrampaşalı oscillated between subordinate and sovereign positions, in order to become Turks, and thus localized. In

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<sup>89</sup> Biz kolera döneminde çok rahat ettik Bayrampaşa'da onu söyliyim. Mesela belediye otobüsleri çok sınırlıydı. Eminönü Bayrampaşa otobüsleri. Eskiden Topkapı'ya gidecek insanlar bizim otobüslere binerdi ve biz Şehremini'den gelirken buraya hep yürüdük onca yolu. Şehremini'den burası baya uzak bir mesafe. Kolera çıktığı zaman biz çok şanslıydık kimse otobüslerimize yanaşmıyordu. Otobüsümüz yanaştı mı durağa, Bayrampaşa otobüsü geldi mi, herkes bir geri kaçıyordu. Dolayısıyla aslında biz koleradan çok faydalandık. Koleranın bize değişik faydaları oldu. Mesela bizim o dönem belediye başkanımız Muzaffer abi, onun abisi Mukadder Öztekin ulaştırma bakanıydı. Adalet Partisi hükümetinde. İstanbul'da şu anda yol süpüren makineler görürsünüz. O zaman Bayrampaşa'nın o aletleri oldu. Ama yolu olmadığı için Büyükşehir Belediyesine geri verdiler. Yani İBB'de o aletlerden yokken, bizde kolera var diye o aletlerden hibe olarak verdiler bize. Asfaltımız yoktu o zaman.

<sup>90</sup> Ben birgün Topkapı'ya gitmiştim. Tam salgının olduğu sıralardı. Hasta değilim ama ara ara kendimi yokluyorum, midem bulanıyor mu, karnım ağrıyor mu diye. Ölüm korkusu var tabi. Sonra Topkapı'dan buraya 32T otobüsü vardı. O hat hala çalışıyor, Topkapı Cevatpaşa otobüsü. Otobüs durağa yanaşınca ben de otobüse doğru yürüdüm. Etrafimdakiler bir anda kaçıştı, “Kaçın kolera” diye.

this oscillatory structure, the meaning of citizenship, properness and “the proper citizenship” are determined according to the nodal point of Turkishness.

## CHAPTER 3: THE PRISON

*Etdikçe tâli'imle recâ-yı muvâfakat  
Her va'de-i dürûgına bin yıl zamân verir.*

Nefî<sup>91</sup>

In this chapter, I will try to focus on the influences of the Bayrampaşa Prison and its relocation in the formation of *Bayrampaşalılık*. Like the previous chapter, I argue that, it is the gesture that I called ‘the oscillation’ between subordinate and sovereign positions which shapes the identity of *Bayrampaşalılık* and this gesture is still relevant to understand the problems about the prison and the ways they deal with it. The reason why I deal with the issue of the prison in a different chapter is the central role of the prison in the lives of *Bayrampaşalıs*, now and before. Actually, the Bayrampaşa Prison has had a very crucial influence on Bayrampaşa. In this chapter, first I will expose the historical background of the prison. After that, I will focus on the issue of relocation and the debates around it. Finally, I will try to elucidate the influences of the prison on belonging and the sense of locality in Bayrampaşa.

### The History of the Bayrampaşa Prison

Bayrampaşa prison is a very important locus in the recent history of Turkey. It is not largely known that there were two prisons within the walls of the prison; one is Bayrampaşa Special Type, the other is Bayrampaşa E Type. Most of the times, the

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<sup>91</sup> Ölümün üçyüzzellinci yılında Nefî, s.96 (Talihime bana iyi davranması, benimle uyuşması için yalvardıkça o / yalandan söz verir ve her sözün gerçekleşmesi için de bin yıl ileride bir sınır belirler)

prison was over-populated, it was like a town, sometimes there were 5-6 thousand prisoners.<sup>92</sup> With its leading political prisoners, mafia leaders, well-known convicts, this prison was without a doubt, at the center of the political agenda of the country for its forty years' presence in Bayrampaşa. It is now relocated to Silivri Prison Campus; nevertheless, its military operations, hunger strikes, clashes, are still haunting the political life of Turkey. It is necessary to indicate the history of the Bayrampaşa Prison, in order to understand its importance.

The construction of Bayrampaşa prison began in 1955 and the prison started to operate in 1967. When it was inaugurated, it was the largest prison of Turkey, and it was presented as a “modern” prison. The old attorney general of Bayrampaşa Prison, Necati Özdemir signified that the prison was constructed in accordance with the contemporary prisons of the time;.

Under the circumstances of the day, the models around the world were analyzed and one of the best models of the 1960s was tried to be built. They planned it to be very modern. In the left and right side there are two separate parts of the prison. The part where there are wards. The building is three-storeyed and in the middle sections there are places where people work and produce. Bayrampaşa Prison is original. Among the prisons I have ever seen, it is the most beautiful building. I have seen some prisons in Europe. Other prisons are very complicated. More like the E type prisons which are prevalent in Turkey. But functionally, architecturally, and inspectionally speaking, not good as this one. It is very beautifully built. If there were a contest, it would be one of the best prisons of the world.<sup>93</sup> (2-1)

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<sup>92</sup> “Bayrampaşa Kapatıldı”, Yürüyüş, 2008.07.27

<sup>93</sup> “o günkü şartlarda dünya modelleri incelenmiş ve 1960’ların dünyadaki en iyi örneklerinden biri yapılmaya çalışılmış. Çok modern düşünülmüş. Sağında ve solunda iki ayrı cezaevi bölümü var. Koşulların olduğu bölüm. Bina üç katlı, orta alanlarda da çalışma ve işyurtları yapılmış. Bayrampaşa cezaevi, nevi şahsına münhasır. Benim tüm cezaevleri yapılanması içinde gördüğüm en güzel bina. Avrupa’da da bazı cezaevlerini gördüm. Diğer cezaevleri çok karışık. Daha çok Türkiye’de yaygın olan cezaevleri E tipi. Ama bunun kadar, hem işlev açısından hem mimari açıdan hem kontrol açısından bunun kadar iyi değil. Çok güzel yapılmış. Yani bir yarışma olsa mimari olarak dünyanın en iyi cezaevlerinden birisi olarak çıkar.” Personal interview, Necati Özdemir (Bayrampaşa Prison Old Attorney General)

We learn from İsmail Oğuz, an old prison guard, that there were workshops, sport facilities, mosque, libraries, a hospital and etc. in the prison. Moreover, there was a bakery in the prison and the bread produced in this factory met the need of prisoners in Bayrampaşa, Paşakapısı and Topbaşı Prisons. In his memoire, İsmail Oğuz indicates the first years of the prison;

Prison was clean enough and it has working areas in dormitories for prisoners. It looks like a modern prison. Prisoners felt them secure and in peace. Prisoners behave respectfully towards guardians and managers also they esteem to the other prison staff.<sup>94</sup> (2-2)

It is not clear how this realm of “peace and confidence” became a corrupt and obtrusive place. Nevertheless, it is clear that after the mid1970’s, the prison has been represented in the press as a troublesome institution, in which clandestine incidents were taking place. There was an article written by Sadun Tanju published in *Cumhuriyet* in 1979, titled as “*Sağmalcılar’ın İç yüzü*”, and the text gives us clues about the condition of Bayrampaşa Prison at the end of the 1970’s.

Inside story of Sağmacılar:  
Dinning halls used as dormitory. The modern prison in Sağmacılar which is praisedly opened by responsible people from Ministry of Justice. It become a place that too many important events occurred however it is newly opened. The escaped prisoners number reach a record level however it has been showed as a difficult to escape building like Sing-Sing. Moreover some prisoners disappear by walking through the gate of prison.<sup>95</sup>

Sadun Tanju was asking the same question that we have raised:

The Prison in Sağmacılar was opened with an imposing speech to the honor of getting rid of some prisons like Sultanahmet Prison

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<sup>94</sup> Cezaevi gayet temizdi ve tutukluların çalışacağı iş yurtlarına sahipti. Modern bir cezaevi görünümündeydi. Tutuklular güven ve huzur içindeydi. Gardiyan ve idarecilere karşı saygılı davranılıyor, görevlilere itibar gösteriliyordu; İsmail Oğuz,(2004) Babalar Koğuşu ve Cezaevi Magazin Raporu, Akis: İstanbul

<sup>95</sup> Sağmalcılar’ın iç yüzü: Yemekhaneler Koğuş Olarak Kullanılıyor/Adliye Bakanlığında sorumlu kişiler tarafından övülerek hizmete açılan Sağmalcılar’daki modern cezaevi, henüz çok kısa hizmet süresi içinde bulunmasına rağmen yığınla önemli olayın geçtiği bir yer haline geldi. Sing-Sing kadar kaçılması güç bir bina gibi gösterilen cezaevinden birkaç ay içinde kaçanların sayısı rekor seviyeye ulaştı. Hatta cezaevinin kapısından elini kolunu sallayarak çıkıp kaybolan mahkumlara bile rastlandı.

which are described as a heaven for prisoners. The prison in Sağmacılar somehow become a place without discipline, secure and satisfaction for insiders also there exist every kind of threads for outsiders. I stayed in Sağmacılar Prison for three months. It is shameful that I see and live inside that prison. This kind of disordered management style does not exist in the most primitive countries in the world.<sup>96</sup> (2-4)

Tanju interviewed an ex-prisoner who was recently released from the prison. The man was expressing his experience in the prison:

I stayed in Sağmacılar Prison for three months. It is shameful that I see and live inside that prison. This kind of disordered management style does not exist in the most primitive countries in the world. Dormitories are in a great disorder. They can easily put 60-65 prisoner to the 48-person dormitories. Every dormitory has a dining hall become dormitory. Prisoners eat their meal on their beds. Prisoners eat without spoon because of absence of spoon, moreover existing spoons are hidden (hide) to make weapon. It is impossible to opening dormitory doors, going baths, library. Books are not given because of tearing them, sport saloon is used as depot, 25 Kuruş payment is taken for cinema which have to be free, doctor does not believe your sickness, can not go to the hospital if you have not money also stay without medicine. On the other hand one layer hashish is 5 lira and you can find as much as you want. It is free to make skewer with long nails. Blusters close the embrasures however it is forbidden and gamble. Blusters gives punishment of bastinado to the killjoys. Heating and cooling systems reversely works. Cools in winter, heats in summer. Sağmacılar Prison is this kind of a place.<sup>97</sup> (2-5)

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<sup>96</sup> Mahkumlar için bir “cennet” olarak tarif edilen ve Sultanahmet cezaevi gibi .... yerlerden kurtuluş şerefine pek gösterişli nutuklar atılarak açılan Sağmacılar’daki cezaevi nasıl oldu da bu derece disiplinsiz, güvensiz ve içindikiler için hoşnutsuz, dışarıdakiler için her türlü tehditin kol gezdiği bir yer haline geliverir.

<sup>97</sup> Sağmacılar Cezaevinde üç ay kaldım. Gördüklerimden ve başıma gelenlerden utanç duyuyorum. Dünyanın en iptidai memleketlerinde bile böyle düzensiz bir idare tarzı görülmemiştir. Koşullar bir alem. 48 kişilik koşullara rahatça 60-65 kişiyi doldururlar, her koşunun bir yemekhanesi vardır ve onları da koşu haline getirmişlerdir. Mahkumlar yemeklerini yataklarında yerler. Kaşık yetişmediği için tabağı başlarına dikerler, mevcut kaşıklar da saklanıp silah haline getirilir. Koşu kapılarını açtırmak, hamama, kitaplığa, spor salonuna gidebilmek mümkün değildir. Yırtılıyor diye kitap vermezler, spor salonu depo olarak kullanılır, bedava olması gereken sinemaya 25 kuruş ücret alırlar, doktor hastalandığınıza inanmaz, parası olmayan hastaneye gidemez, ilaçsız kalır. Buna karşılık, esrarın bir tabakası 5 liradır ve istediğiniz kadar bulabilirsiniz. Uzun çivilerden şiş yapma imalatı serbesttir. Mazgalları kapamak güya yasak olduğu halde kabadayılar, mazgalları

Bayrampaşa prison, in spite of its promises of modernity, became a primitive (*iptidai*) place, a place of disorder and as Sadun Tanju emphasized, there were serious security issues in the prison. There were several escape attempts from the prison, and most of them were successful. For example, in 1979, a group of *ülküciis* escaped from the prison, and soon after one of them was caught.<sup>98</sup> There were other fugitives who ran away in the dustcart. In 1977 two leftist convicts, Arif Kılıç and Hıdır Aykır and three felons Ali Balcı, Ahmet Mirzan and İdris Demir, in 1978 one political prisoner (Cabir Aygün) and four felons ran away from the prison through hiding in the dustcart.<sup>99</sup> Besides the escape attempts there were many riots in the prison.

2000 prisoners rebelled in Sağmacılar.

Almost 2000 prisoners rebelled in İstanbul Region Prison which in Sağmacılar in the tomorrow afternoon. Hundreds of prisoners which are get out from the dormitories at the right block of prison about 12 o'clock started to protest the prison management attitude. This protest change into a rebellion in a short time and Central Gendarme Troop(?) Unity was alarmed immediately. Fully armed Gendarmes blocked the prison immediately than got in to the prison about 16.00 and stopped the rebellion. This rebellion started by the thieves and ended with prisoners withdrawing to their dormitories at 17.00<sup>100</sup> (2-6)

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örterler ve kumar oynarlar. Oyunbozanlık eden mahkuma falaka cezası yine bu kabadayılar tarafından verilir.

Modern cezaevinde ısıtma ve soğutma cihazları da ters işler. Kışın soğutur, yazın ısıtır. Sağmacılar cezaevi işte böyle bir yerdir. / *Sağmacılar'ın İç Yüzü*, Sadun Tanju, Cumhuriyet, February 1979

<sup>98</sup> “*Bayrampaşa'dan kaçan 13 ülkücüden birisi olan Veli Can Oduncu Zeytinburnu'nda saklandığı evde yakalandı*” .Cumhuriyet, 9 February 1979

<sup>99</sup> Hürriyet <http://www.mimdap.org/w/?p=9266>

<sup>100</sup> Sağmacılar'da 2000 Mahkum Ayaklandı / Sağmacılar'da bulunan İstanbul Bölge Cezaevinde dün öğle saatlerinde 2000 kadar mahkum ayaklanmıştır. Saat 12 sıralarında cezaevinin sağ blokunda bulunan koşu alanından dışarı fırlayan yüzlerce mahkum, cezaevi idaresinin tutumunu protesto etmeye başlamışlardır. Kısa zaman içinde bu protesto ayaklanmaya dönüşmüş ve merkez Jandarma Alay birliği derhal alarma geçirilmiştir. Tam teçhizatlı jandarmalar cezaevini derhal ablukaya almışlar ve saat 16 sıralarında içeri girerek ayaklanmayı bastırmışlardır. Özellikle hırsızların elebaşı olduğu bildirilen ayaklanma saat 17'de mahkumların koşu alanına çekilmeleriyle sona ermiştir, Cumhuriyet, 15 Ağustos, 1970

Another riot was:

As known, some prisoners in Bayrampaşa Prison at night of 22 January rebelled and hold guardians as hostages and they made a big financial damage in the prison. However managements of prison said the reason of this rebellion as prisoners who are uncomfortable because of taken hard measures after the last escape events. (23 January 1979, *Cumhuriyet*)<sup>101</sup> (2-7)

Another source about the Bayrampaşa Prison in the 1970's is a film that can give an opinion about it. The film was written by Oliver Stone and directed by Alan Parker. This was the film, "Midnight Express" (1978) which has been a national trauma for Turkish people that they never accepted the events in the film; it is generally accepted as a calumny, in order to defame the Turks. The film was about the true story of a man, William Billy Hayes, who came to Turkey in 1970. He was arrested at the Yeşilköy Airport for having drugs in his possession. He was put in jail in Bayrampaşa Prison and then transferred to İmralı. Hayes escaped from İmralı and returned to his country. The film was mainly on his story, especially focusing on the tortures that he was inflicted within Bayrampaşa Prison.<sup>102</sup> Prison guard İsmail Oğuz mentions the foreigner prisoners and the film:

Foregein prisoners who made wine in the prison.  
Some foregein prisoner who catched in the Turkey come to the Bayrampaşa Prison. These prisoners stays in the tourist dormitory. Foregein Prisoners were tolareted because of their tourist situation. But foregein prisons commit an offence worst than local ones. The wines which are made from the grapes that taken from the cafeteria were obtained after the every dormitory search. These were sending to the other dormitories. The wines which are made from the grapes that taken from the cafeteria were obtained after the every dormitory search. These were sending to the other dormitories. The wines which are made from the grapes that taken from the cafeteria were obtained after the every dormitory search.

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<sup>101</sup> Bilindiği gibi, 22 Ocak gecesi Bayrampaşa Cezaevi'nde bazı tutuklu ve hükümlüler, akşam yoklaması sırasında gardiyanları rehin alarak ayaklanmışlar ve cezaevi içinde büyük çapta maddi hasara yol açmışlardır. Cezaevi yöneticileri ise, isyana son firar olaylarından sonra alınan sıkı önlemlerden rahatsız olan bazı tutuklu ve hükümlülerin yol açtığını bildirmişlerdir. (23 Ocak, 1979, *Cumhuriyet*).

<sup>102</sup> Midnight Express; <http://www.imdb/title/tt0077928/>

Bunları diğer koğuşlara da gönderiyorlardı. These were sending to the other dormitories. Moreover they were sending the caught syrup that have the crashed drug in it. They both commit offence and teach how nto do these to other prisoners. These foreign prisoners denigrate us after turn back to their countires and made these a story for Midnihgt Express<sup>103</sup> (2-8)

After September 12 military coup, Bayrampaşa Prison became the central prison for political prisoners movement, as many leftist revolutionaries were imprisoned in it. During the 1980's and the 1990's, the prisons, but especially Bayrampaşa Prison remained very important for the revolutionary movement in Turkey. After the military coup, political prisoners were more often held in Metris Military Prison. Metris Prison was a centre of torture and imhumane conditions. In 6 July, 1983, some of the prisoners who had health issues were being transferred to Bayrampaşa Prison Hospital. After this transfer, prison authorities tried to impose uniforms for prisoners in Bayrampaşa.<sup>104</sup> This was the plan of reducing the resistance of the political prisoners. Not surprisingly, this uniform policy was rejected among the prisoners, and on 13 April 1984, Revolutionary Left and TİKB<sup>105</sup> prisoners went on a hunger strike. During the hunger strike Abdullah Meral, Haydar Başbağ, Fatih Öktülmüş and Hasan Telci died, and as a result, the government drew back its proposals about uniforms.

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<sup>103</sup> Cezaevinde şarap yapan yabancı tutuklular Bayrampaşa'ya bazen yabancı uyruklu olan ama Türkiye'de yakalanan tutuklular geliyordu. Bunlar, Turist koğuşunda yatıyorlardı. Yabancı oldukları için idare bu tutuklulara daha hoşgörülü davranmaya çalışıyordu. Ama onlar yerli tutuklulardan daha beter suç işliyorlardı. / Her koğuş aramasında, kantinden aldıkları üzümden yaptıkları şarapları ele geçiriyorduk. Bunları diğer koğuşlara da gönderiyorlardı. Ayrıca doktorun verdiği öksürük şurubunun içine ezdikleri uyuşturucu haplarını katarak diğer koğuşlara gönderdiklerini öğrendik. Hem kendileri suç işliyor, hem de diğer tutuklulara bunların nasıl yapıldığını öğretiyorlardı. / Yabancı tutuklular ülkelerine döndükten sonra da bizi kötileyip Geceyarısı Ekspresi filmine konu ettiklerini gazetelerden okumuştuk; İsmail Oğuz,(2004) Babalar Koğuşu ve Cezaevi Magazin Raporu, Akis Kitap: İstanbul, p. 133

<sup>104</sup> Bayrampaşa Kapatıldı", Yürüyüş, 2008.07.27

<sup>105</sup> Turkey Union of the Revolutionary Communists

Towards the end of the 1980's, another strategy became prevalent among the political prisoners. Several political prisoners escaped from the prison. Some of them were among the important cadres of political organizations. In 1989, Dursun Karatas and Bedri Yağan escaped from the prison. It is claimed that they escaped on the dustcart but how they escaped is still unknown. This was the beginning of the escape period. In 1994, seven political prisoners escaped in the guise of prison guards.<sup>106</sup> Likewise, in 1990 five political prisoners escaped:

One of these freedom actions were realized by the Revolutionist Left prisoners in June, 1990. Four Revolutionist Leftist whose one of them was the one of the leader of Revolutionist Left Aslan Tayfun Özkök and the other one is İbrahim Erdoğan escaped from Bayrampaşa Prison. This prisonbreak also an example of revolutionist solidarity. One of the TKP-ML TİKKO leaders Baba Erdoğan had a role in this escape action.<sup>107</sup> (2-9)

Another way of escape was the tunnels. The longest tunnel found up until that point was 80 meters and this was being excavated from the outside to the inside, from a pseudo textile workshop. The tunnel was exposed in October 19, 1998<sup>108</sup>. This tunnel was on the street my informants live in and they remember it very clearly.

Ümran: In the past they entered the house which is opposite side of us and digged a tunnel. We are also the same homeland, grocer said that they bought 20 breads every day, and the old women asked : „What you are going to do with these breads? And they

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<sup>106</sup> <http://www.haber7.com/haber/20080719/Bayrampasa-cezaevi-kimleri-agirladi-neler-yasadi.php>

<sup>107</sup> [http://www.ozgurluk.org/kitaplik/webarsiv/kurtulus/eskisayilar/H-ICIN86/BU\\_TARIH.HTML](http://www.ozgurluk.org/kitaplik/webarsiv/kurtulus/eskisayilar/H-ICIN86/BU_TARIH.HTML) ; İşte bu özgürlük eylemlerinden biri de 1990 Haziran'ında Devrimci Sol tutsakları tarafından gerçekleştirildi. Aralarında Devrimci Sol önderlerinden Aslan Tayfun Özkök ve İbrahim Erdoğan'ın da bulunduğu dört Devrimci Sol'cu buldukları Bayrampaşa hapisanesinden firar etti. Bu firar aynı zamanda büyük bir devrimci dayanışmanın da örneğidir. TKP-ML TİKKO önderlerinden Baba Erdoğan da bu firar eyleminde yer aldı.

<sup>108</sup> <http://www.haber7.com/haber/20080719/Bayrampasa-cezaevi-kimleri-agirladi-neler-yasadi.php>

answered: „We have guests, and this house is our bride’s aunt’s house. She will hire out the house. Tenant is digging tunnel. Minibus closes in the evening, bags are getting out. .We do not know what there is inside them, they are loading them to the minibus.

P: They are filling earth !

Ü: They are filling earth. This situation which is they are getting 15 breads, call attention of grocer. And asked himself „ How they are living on. Finally who ever called the police, this situation is lightened. They open a machine of weaving because of hiding the noise of digging. Then we saw the street. They said they are almost done, if they could dig little bit more all the Prison was emptied.<sup>109</sup>(2-10)

The escapes led to many criticisms. The Minister of Justice of the time, Oltan Sungurlu commented on the prisonbreaks, saying "I cannot understand how they escape"<sup>110</sup> and the press was announcing that there were no leading cadres of Dev-Sol (Revolutionary Left) left in Bayrampaşa Prison.<sup>111</sup> There was a political balance between the political prisoners and the prison administrators, during 1990’s. This period went on the one hand with the riots, protests, hunger strikes, etc. of the prisoners and on the other hand operations, oppressions of the prison administration. All through the 1990’s, the strengthened political prisoners struggled for a space of power. In this struggle, the political prisoners made use of the protests and the prison administration made use of operations. The most important locus of this struggle was the control of the doors and the wards and this was closely related to the tension of

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<sup>109</sup> Ümran: Eskiden mesela bizim şu karşımızdaki eve girdiler tünel kazdılar. Onlar da bizim memleketliler, bakkal diyor ki işte 20 tane ekmek alıyorlardı her gün, teyze diyordu napıyorsun bu kadar ekmekleri? İşte diyor misafir geliyor misafir geliyor. Bizim gelinin halasının evi. İşte evi kiraya veriyor, Kiracı tünel kazıyor. Minibüs yaklaşıyor akşam, torbalar çıkıyor. Biz bilmiyoruz ki ne var içinde, dolduruyorlar minibüse.

P: Toprak dolduruyorlar!

Teyze: Toprak dolduruyorlar. Aa bir bakıyor bakkal, hergün 15 tane ekmek, diyor bakkalcı nasıl geçiniyor bunlar, demiş misafir var misafir var. En son işte kim ihbar ettiyse, ortaya çıkıyor.

Ümran: Gece, dokuma makinesi gibi bir makine çalıştırıyorlar, ses gitmesin diye. Kazıyorlar ya. Sonra caddeyi gördük. Dediler, baya bir yaklaşmışlar, birazcık daha şey yapsalarmış kaçıyorlarmış yani, Boşalıyormuş cezaevi.

<sup>110</sup> Yürüyüş, 2008.07.27, “nasıl kaçıyorlar, akıl sır ermiyor”

<sup>111</sup> Yürüyüş, 2008.07.27, "böylece Bayrampaşa’da Dev-Sol Örgütü'nün beyin takımından kimse kalmadı"

who would control the organization of daily life. It is not possible to claim that any side had the upper hand in controlling these locations. Most of the time, control changed hands between the administration and the prisoners.

However, it would not be wrong to say that during the 1990's, the revolutionary organizations were powerful and they could convince the prison administration to realize their demands. This, nonetheless, was a very controversial situation according to the governments, and they were uneasy about it. The Bayrampaşa prison in the 1990's was at the centre of the political struggle in Turkey. İstanbul Republican attorney general of the time Ferzan Çitici expresses this situation:

Bayrampaşa Prison has a feature that the terrorist organizations in Turkey are managed from here, central committees are here. They talk with me when a problem occurred. So that I make the coordination of all the other prisons in the Turkish Republic at the same time. Let's say there is an event in Burdur prison, they criticize, why is the attorney of İstanbul intervening the situation. They wait for order from them. Now, the press criticises us. "Why the official fax of Bayrampaşa is used for terrorists. Why it is used, the man says that:"We do not finish the action if we do not get the fax message". What you can do; we are going to say that:"finish the action" by force.. Without this, it is impossible. They do not finish actions in the other prisons. We also examine this while there were death fests and other holding hostage actions.<sup>112</sup> (2-11)

The F type prison was seen as a solution for the problem of order in the prison, and the first attempt to test the isolation cells took place in Eskişehir, in 1996. The

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<sup>112</sup> "Bayrampaşa Cezaevinin bir özelliği var Türkiye'de cezaevlerindeki terör örgütleri buradan yönetilir, merkez komiteleri buradadır... Bir sorun oluyor, benimle görüşüyorlar. Yani ben burada, aynı zamanda, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Devletinin diğer cezaevleriyle koordinasyonunu sağlıyorum. Mesela diyelim ki Burdur'da bilmem nereden olay oluyor da, İstanbul Başsavcısı niye konuşuyor kardeşim, ne alakası var; bizim cezaevimizde bir şey yok ki diyorlar. Bunlardan talimat bekliyorlar... Şimdi efendim, basın eleştiriyor. Bayrampaşa'nın resmi faksı, teröristler için kullanılıyor. Niye kullanılıyor, ne nedenle kullanılıyor? Adam diyor ki "bize faks gelmezse biz eylemi bitirmeyiz", Ne yapacaksınız; mecburen eylemi bitirin diyeceğiz. Yoksa mümkün değil. Diğer cezaevlerinde eylemi bitirmezler. Biz bunu ölüm oruçlarında da yaşadık, diğer rehin almalarında da yaşadık. İlla ki buradan kendilerine bir bilgi verilecek. Dolayısıyla da eylem orada bitecek.", Bayrampaşa Cezaevi Gerçeği, Zeki Bingöl, Togan: İstanbul

minister of Justice of the time Mehmet Ađar published a proclamation (*6 Mayıs Genelgesi*) that launched the introduction of F-type prisons. The proclamation defined the “Eskişehir Special” prison as a pilot execution of the F type prisons. Immediately after that, transfers began to this prison. In response to this, the political organizations in prisons established an association named as the “Prisons Central Coordination” and they declared the following announcement on 19 May 1996<sup>113</sup>:

We are the political prisons of DHKP-C, MLKP, TKP(ML), TİKB, THKP-C/HDÖ, TKP/ML, TKEP/Leninist, October, The Resistance Movement and by the decision of The Prison Central Coordination, we are starting our Indefinite Hunger Strike in order to stop the fascist attacks against revolutionary prisoners, to annul the notice of coffin houses, to remove the obstacles against the medical treatments of prisoners and going to the trials, to stop the attacks against the relatives of prisoners.<sup>114</sup> (2-12)

As a result of the hunger strike 12 prisoners died and after that, the government accepted the demands of the prisoners. Eskişehir Özel, or “the coffin house” (prisoners’ gave this name to the prison) prison was shut down. Three of the deceased prisoners; Altan Berdan Kerimgiller, İlginç Özkeskin and Yemliha Kaya died in Bayrampaşa. The period after the hunger strike was relatively peaceful for the political prisoners. Nevertheless, the governments of the period used this period of silence to construct F type prisons in many locations of the country. The tension in the prisons increased with the operation in Ankara Ulucanlar prison house. The result of this operation was the killing of ten political prisoners. In 2000, while

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<sup>113</sup> Yasemin Okuyucu (1998) *96 Ölüm Orucu, Ölümün Ufkundaki Zafer*, Yar: İstanbul

<sup>114</sup> Bizler, Sağmalcılar Cezaevi’ndeki DHKP-C, MLKP, TKP(ML), TİKB, THKP-C/HDÖ, TKP/ML, TKEP/Leninist, Ekim, Direniş Hareketi tutsakları olarak, faşizmin devrimci tutsaklara yönelik saldırı politikalarını boşa çıkartmak, tabutluk genelgesinin iptali, Eskişehir ve diğer tabutlukların kapatılması, tutsak ailelerine yönelik saldırıların durdurulması, tutsakların tedavilerinin ve duruşmalara çıkarılmalarının önündeki engellerin kaldırılması talepleriyle, Cezaevleri Merkezi Koordinasyonu’nun kararıyla, Süresiz Açlık Grevi’yle Genel Direnişimize başlıyoruz.

the construction of F type prisons was in progress, the “Prisons Central Coordination” in Bayrampaşa declared the decision of the “hunger strike”. With the hunger strikes, the debate around the F type prisons became popular. A committee was gathered in order to provide a negotiation between the hunger strikers and the government. In this committee, there were Yaşar Kemal, Orhan Pamuk and many other important names. Can Dündar was also in this committee and he was narrating his expressions in an article.<sup>115</sup>

With the public pressure exerted by the demonstrations, negotiation efforts, etc, the minister of Justice of the time, Hikmet Sami Türk, declared the postponement of the transfers to the F type prisons. In his statement, he pointed out that the prisons would not be inaugurated until a negotiation is provided among the public. Only ten days after this statement, the government executed a bloody prison operation and transferred the prisoners to F type prisons. The most violent intervention took place in Bayrampaşa. In the December 19 Operation Back to Life, 12 prisoners were killed, 57 were seriously wounded in the C Block, where the political prisoners were imprisoned, and hundreds of them were cruelly transferred to F type prisons. The Operation Back to Life not only ended the political hegemony of the political prisoners in Bayrampaşa prison but also erased the history and the meaning of their existence in Bayrampaşa.

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<sup>115</sup> Ölüm, içeride bir kararlılığın adı, bir çarenin silahıydı. Bir "kurtarılmış bölge" olduğunu yıllardır duyduğumuz Bayrampaşa'nın uzun, karanlık ve kirli koridorlarında birkaç demir kapıyı geçtikten sonra bize eşlik eden gardiyanlarca içeridekilere teslim edildik. Sakallı bir genç, heyeti kibarca "içeri buyur etti" ve yine birkaç demir kapıdan geçirdikten sonra "görüşmeleri yapacağımız" geniş koğuşa aldı. Koğuş duvarını dev bir Dursun Karataş resmi ile parti ve cephe bayrakları süslüyordu. Karşı duvara bir gitarla bağlama asılmıştı. Yerler halı ve kilimlerle kaplıydı. Köşelere saksı çiçekleri yerleştirilmişti. Koğuşun en uç noktasında bir akvaryum, ortamla ilgisi olmayan bir dekor oluşturuyordu (2-13)

This was the brief story of political prisoners in Bayrampaşa Prison. In addition to this, there were several incidents among the felons, commonly, among the mafia members. I do not want to go in detail to all of those events. However, I will mention some important names, imprisoned in Bayrampaşa; Dündar Kılıç, Hasan Heybetli, Alaattin Çakıcı, Sedat Peker and Sedat Şahin were some of those important figures. In 20 September 1999, there was a clash between the gang of Kenan Ali Gürsel, the nephew of Alladdin Çakıcı and the gang of Hakan Çillioğlu. The result of this clash was 8 deaths. One year later, another clash took place between the men of Alaaddin Çakıcı and Kurban Yazoğlu, and 2 men died. Apparently the mafia groups were very strong in the prison and they could easily obtain revolvers and bullets. Likewise, it has been told that another mafia leader Dündar Kılıç established a supposedly court and judged the prisonguards and Sedat Peker furnished his ward like a ‘home’<sup>116</sup>. Bayrampaşa Prison was on the news almost everyday with these kinds of stories. As a result of this, Bayrampaşa became one of the most famous places in Turkey.

Midnight Express was not the only movie about Bayrampaşa Prison. “*O Şimdi Mahkum*” was shot in Bayrampaşa Prison. “*Bayrampaşa Ben Fazla Kalmayacağım*” was the last film shot in the prison. This film was the product of SENDER’s (Senaryo Yazarları Derneği) workshop “*Hayal Kurmak Serbest Film Atölyesi*” (June 2006) with prisoners.<sup>117</sup> The script was written by the prisoners and they also acted in the film. In addition to these, the gala premiere of Ferhan Şensoy’s film on the innocent prisoners, “Pardon”, was screened in Bayrampaşa Prison.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> “Bayrampaşa’nın 45 yıllık cezası bugün doluyor”, *Referans*, 18 July 2008

<sup>117</sup> <http://www.yeniaktuel.com.tr/top103,137@2100.html>

<sup>118</sup> <http://www.haber7.com/haber/20080719/Bayrampasa-cezaevi-kimleri-agirladi-neler-yasadi.php>

Up until now, I have tried to designate the history of Bayrampaşa Prison and its representation in the public. Now it is time to return to the main focus of this thesis; the people living around the prison. The Bayrampaşa Municipality carried out an important role in the relocation process. Hüseyin Bürge, the mayor of Bayrampaşa has been elected for four election periods. In 1994, when for the first time he was elected, he declared the relocation of the prison as one of his goals as. However until 2001, there was not any serious attempt to realize this goal. In January 19, 2001, one month after the Operation Back to Life, a municipality led campaign was launched, the campaign was named “Cezaevi Değil Üniversite İstiyoruz”. The campaign was also being supported by several NGO’s in Bayrampaşa. In order to announce the campaign, meeting, marches were organized, posters hung on the walls of shops and so on. <sup>119</sup>

In accordance with the wishes of *Bayrampaşalıs*, the story of Bayrampaşa prison ended with the relocation which took place in July 2008. The prison was closed on July 21, 2008 with an official ceremony. In this ceremony, the minister of Justice Mehmet Ali Şahin said that:

Why we make a ceremony for the closing of a prison? Firstly , Bayrampaşa Punishment Execution Assosiation(instution) is a symbol of our history. It has a 40 year history. Today we are closing Bayrampaşa Prison, abandon it. Infact, We are not only abandon the Bayrampaşa Punishment Execution Assosiation(instution) but also abandon the outdated punishment execution system in itself.120 (2-14)

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<sup>119</sup> “Bayrampaşa’da Sevinç”, Demet Bilge, Radikal, 09.12.2003

<sup>120</sup> <http://www.arkitera.com/h31928-bayrampasa-cezaevi-park-ve-kultur-alanina-donusuyor%E2%80%A6.html>, Neden bir cezaevinin kapanışı için tören düzenliyoruz? Bir defa, Bayrampaşa Ceza İnfaz Kurumu, bizim cezaevi tarihimizin sembolüdür. 40 yıllık geçmişi var....Bugün Bayrampaşa Cezaevini kapatıyoruz, terk ediyoruz. Aslında sadece Bayrampaşa Ceza İnfaz Kurumunu terk etmiyoruz, onun şahsında çağ dışı kalmış olan bir ceza infaz sistemini de terk ediyoruz.

Bayrampaşa Prison was inaugurated as a modern penitentiary, nevertheless, within time it became an outdated place which had to be abandoned. Moreover, the mayor of İstanbul Kadir Topbaş, gave the good news and told that the land of Bayrampaşa will be transformed into a recreation center:

We want that in here: a beautiful place transformed the bad memories to the beauties appears. Here become a place that the region can breath, people are rearing to come, without heavy buildings with its green fields, culture-art activity centers, underground auto-parks. We are dreaming a history that the new generations speak with it. They will tell sotry of prison ,that served 41 years with its good and bad memories, how it become a beautiful place. We will see all together how this prison, that many people said “God save you”, transform a beautiful place. If God pleases we will be all together. I know that citizens of Bayrmapaşa are restless but we do not get here a density of building. There will be surrounded auto-parks and cultural activity places in here. We will make a project real that the trees on the laden region will be kept. This field that region people had too many troubles with it become a place that they can breath and become happy. We do not think to build any thing here. This project only has places of recreation, culture-art activity and underground surrounded autoparks.<sup>121</sup> (2-15)

This broad historical background provides us with the necessary knowledge to understand why Bayrampaşalı people felt uneasy about the prison. In the previous chapter, I argued that belonging to Bayrampaşa and the sense of locality is

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<sup>121</sup> <http://www.arkitera.com/h31928-bayrampasa-cezaevi-park-ve-kultur-alanina-donusuyor%E2%80%A6.html>, İstiyoruz ki burada, kötü hatıraların güzelliklere dönüştüğü güzel bir mekan ortaya çıksın. Burada yeşil alanlarıyla, kültür-sanat aktivite merkezleriyle, yeraltı otoparklarıyla bölgenin soluk aldığı, insanların gelmek için can attığı, ağırlıklı yapıların yer almadığı soluk alınacak bir alan ortaya çıksın. Burada gelecek kuşakların konuşacağı bir tarih düşünüyoruz. 41 yıl acı tatlı hatıralarıyla hizmet veren cezaevinin nasıl güzel bir alana dönüştüğünü anlatacaklar. İnsanların ‘Allah kurtarsın’ dediği bu cezaevinin nasıl modern bir alana dönüştüğünü hep birlikte göreceğiz. İnşallah böyle bu mekanın açılışında da birlikte olacağız. Bayrampaşalı vatandaşlarımız tedirgin, biliyorum. Ama buraya bir yapı yoğunluğu getirmeyeceğiz. Yeraltına yer yer kapalı otoparklar, kültürel aktivite alanları bulunacak. Ağırlıklı bölgedeki ağaçların korunacağı yeşil bir projeyi hayata geçireceğiz. Bölge insanların yıllardan beri sıkıntı yaşadığı bu alanı, gelip soluklanabilecekleri, mutlu olacakları bir alan haline getireceğiz. Bu alan içersine konut düşünmüyoruz. Parkların, rekreasyon alanlarının, kültür-sanat aktivite alanlarının ve yeraltında kapalı otoparkların bulunacağı bir proje.

constructed through an elusive balance, an oscillation, between two opposite positions; namely, victimization and sovereignty. I attempted to show how this oscillation works, in the process of migration and the cholera epidemic. In addition to this, the story of the transformation of the prison has its own repercussions in the narratives of the people in Bayrampaşa and I want to follow the traces of the prison in those narratives that I have gathered during my field research. Additionally, I have already argued in the previous chapter that, in spite of the popular representation of the prison, the people of Bayrampaşa remained invisible. There were two exceptions for this situation; one was the cholera epidemic and the other was the relocation process of the prison. When the debates of relocation became public, they suddenly became visible. The journalists interested in Bayrampaşalıs' experiences (and this was a quite new phenomena), asked them "what kind of an experience is it to live next to a prison", "what kind of disturbances did you live because of the prison" and so on. In the subsequent part of this chapter, I will try to find out the formation of Bayrampaşalılık, with the issues around the prison. First I will give a brief run down of my fieldwork.

### Understanding the Prison

Gun reports were heard from inside the prison. While the prisoners were taken out of the prison, even roads and shops were obliged to be closed. We need to show our identity cards while going to our homes. Events experienced were not nice, there were always polices and gendarmes around. Especially our children were badly affected from the tense environment. We do not want to be remembered with the prison anymore. Bayrampaşa will rank among the preferred districts. Psychology of the next generation will be better than ours. Commerce will be revitalized. Why would not Bayrampaşa be a Levent or Etiler?<sup>122</sup> (2-16)

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<sup>122</sup> "Bayrampaşa'da Sevinç", Demet Bilge, *Radikal*, 09.12.2003 İçeriden sürekli silah sesleri geliyordu, mahkûmlar çıkarılırken yollar, dükkânlar bile kapatılıyordu. Evlerimize giderken, kimlik göstermek zorunda kalıyorduk. Yaşanan olaylar hiç hoş değildi, etrafta hep polis ya da jandarma vardı. Özellikle çocuklarımız gergin ortamdan çok etkileniyordu. Artık cezaeviyle anılmak istemiyoruz. Bayrampaşa artık tercih edilen semtler arasına girecek.

After the campaign of the municipality became popular and the debates on the relocation of the prison became widespread, people of Bayrampaşa are more frequently represented in the media. The quote above is an example of Bayrampaşalı's narratives in the press. These narratives are very important since these news make Bayrampaşalı visible in a larger public and they make Bayrampaşa a centre of attention. Honestly, these narratives were also my motive to conduct research on Bayrampaşa. Based on the information of these news on Bayrampaşa, I was expecting to find a place where the main problem was the prison and the prison was seen as the source of all the maleficence. With these conceptions in my mind, I began my field research.

When I started my research in İsmetpaşa neighborhood, I had a very limited knowledge about the place. I didn't have any contacts or knew any person when I first went there. I went there just to walk about the streets and to gain some general idea of the neighborhood. It was Friday, and very cold. Without hoping to see anybody on the streets because of the weather, I went near the prison. It was a surprise to see that the street which adjacent to the prison was very crowded. There were more than a hundred people on the street. This crowd was the line of the visitors of the prisoners. People were waiting in those conditions for their turn to come. I went into the coffeehouse which is across the prison, to warm up. The coffeehouse was full of people including women; they were the visitors, waiting to get into the prison. Many coffeehouses on the street were similarly full with visitors. Seeing them, I supposed that the visitors were very important in this neighborhood. There was an economy in the neighborhood based on those visitors, the types and

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Gelecek nesillerin psikolojisi bizlerden daha iyi olacak. Ticarethaneler hareketlenecek. Bayrampaşa da neden bir Levent ya da Etiler olmasın.

locations of the shops, coffeehouses were organized according to the use of the visitors. Furthermore, there was a propensity to reject the idea of the relocation of the prison among the shopkeepers and their employees. This was the opposite of my expectations but at the same time reasonable for me, because the reason of their presence in the district was predominantly economic.

Luckily, after my initial attempts in İsmetpaşa, I was introduced to a family, thanks to my friend Bayram. Bayram's aunt and his cousins are living in İsmetpaşa. His aunt and her two sons live in the same building. This is a three storey building, and like many other buildings in İsmetpaşa, each storey belongs to one son. It was like a single residence, rather than a three apartment building; we took off our shoes just at the entrance of the building since inner stairs of the building were carpeted. This was not particular to them, since I saw many similar buildings in İsmetpaşa. Bayram's cousin, Mesut Abi, lives on the third storey with his wife, Elif and two small sons. Their house is located on the second street after the prison and the window of their kitchen is just across the prison wall and one of the watchtowers. In my first visit to their house, they welcomed me warmly. I was served a dish of *börek* (this was a common thing for most of my female informants), we had a conversation on the prison, Mesut Abi told me many anecdotes, especially the ones to prove the difficulties of living next to a prisonhouse. While I was leaving, I saw a red flag, a double-headed black eagle out of the apartment door. Mesut abi joyfully told me that they were Albanian", and they told me that, recently, they – Bayrampaşalılar- made an event in a wedding hall to celebrate the independence of Kosovo.

After this first visit, with the help of Bayram's aunt-in-law Elif, I found opportunity to meet people who live in İsmetpaşa and conducted my first interviews.

At this stage of my research, my objective was to understand the prison, from its exterior; my purpose was to grasp the prison by looking at it through the people living around it. One of the main questions in my mind was to discover, ‘the kind of subjectivities that were created through the experience of living next to a prison’. I was questioning the subjectivities and the socialites that were created by the existence of the prison and related to this, the meanings of the relocation of the prison from the district. Just like the shopkeepers I previously interviewed, this was the first question I asked to my first resident informants reside in Bayrampaşa. I asked them, how the existence of the prison was influencing them. Subsequently, Elif organized a rendezvous with her neighbor for me. They were elder women, who Elif thought could tell me about the past of the neighborhood more knowledgably. They were living on the same street and were distant relatives at the same time. There were tea and cakes, and they treated me in a very friendly way. I asked my questions about the prison and its effect their lives. Surprisingly, they preferred to start the conversation with the phrase “we have never been influenced by the prison” or “it did not effect us ‘that much’”. Ümran teyze insisted that the prison had never disturbed them:

P: There were those riots, operations, skirmishes.

Ümran: No, those had no effect on us, seriously. Believe me.

P: I am really curious about this issue.

Ü: Hmmm. It didn’t harm us at all, believe me. As they say that prisoners escaped, they used to come here and inspect our basement, but didn’t harm us at all. No, I mean for all these years, no harm. I mean, we had no complaint about them. I have a bride from the outside of the district, when she first heard of rumors about the prison, they say, she did not want to come here. Her mother called me a few days ago and said “it would be better off if the prison is relocated, my daughter have been very unease about it”. I replied that here is prison but there has been no danger for us at all.<sup>123</sup> (2-17)

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<sup>123</sup> P: Cezaevinde böyle isyanlar oluyor, operasyonlar oluyor, silahlar atılıyor.  
Ümran: Yok bize hiçbir zararı olmadı güzelim. İnanın ki.

I was very surprised and confused. While asking them how the prison had been influencing them, I was hoping to hear their complaints about the prison, and became very disappointed on getting these answers. They were insistingly trying to convince me that the prison did not harm their lives. Their position was not “being indifferent” to the existence of the prison. On the contrary, like most people in the neighbourhood, they had many stories to tell about the prison. Oddly, they needed to add the phrase that “it did not influence them”. As I was puzzled, I kept asking my question again. But the answers were the same.

P: Your house is so close to the prison, and you are saying that there is no unease for your account?

T: no, not at all. We have no problem with that. Granted, there were many armed conflicts once but it was a long time ago, it was in the 70s.

P: What kind of conflicts were they?

T: The people were shooting at each other. Policemen were shooting from inside.

P: Were policemen shooting from the inside of the buildings of this street?

T: Not from the inside. I couldn't figure it out to tell you the truth. My children were too small. For taking care of them, I could not figure out from where they were shooting, I just heard the gun reports.

Ü: Of course there had been shootouts inside of the prison. The prisoners were getting to the roof and trying to escape.<sup>124</sup> (2-18)

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P: Bu konuyu gerçekten merak ediyorum.

Ümran: Hı, bize hiçbir zamanı olmadı, inan ki. Bak kaçtı diyorlardı, geldiler bizim bodrumlarımıza filan baktılar ama hiç bize bir zarar vermediler. Yok, yıllardır yani. Hiç böyle onlardan yana bir sıkıntımız olmadı yani. Ben gelin aldım da, geline cezaevi deyince istememiş gelin. Annesi de aradı işte geçenlerde, dedi ki, inşallah kalkar da, benim kızım hiç istemedi dedi yani. Yok dedim, yani cezaevi var da bize hiçbir zararı olmadı cezaevinin dedim.

<sup>124</sup> P: Cezaevine bu kadar yakında oturuyorsunuz. Yani, hiçbir rahatsızlık hissetmiyor musunuz?

T: Yok yok, hayır. Bir rahatsızlık hissetmiyoruz. Ha, çatışmalar çıktı çok eskiden, yani 70 seneleriydi.

P: Nasıl çatışmalardı?

T: Karşılıklı ateş atıldı. İçeriden polisler attı.

P: nasıl yani polisler buradaki binalardan içeri mi ateş atıyordu?

T: İçerden değil, ben de anlayamadım valla nasıl oldu. Çocuklarım ufaktı benim. Onlarla uğraşıcım derken nerden atıldı bilmem de yalnız silahların patladığını duyuyordum.

This tendency to claim that “the prison was not a cause of disturbance” persisted in my other interviews, too. In another interview which I conducted soon after the one above, I had a conversation with three middle-aged ladies who were born and grew up in Bayrampaşa. They also told me that “the prison did not harm them”.

P: There are lots of campaigns for the relocation of the prison. Are you uncomfortable to live beside the prison?

G: No. The prison had no harm for any of us. On the contrary, if they will build something which is unnecessary for Bayrampaşa and for us, I think they would have keep the prison.

P: So you had no problem with the prison.

G: No we hadn't. Only when there were riots. I am in favor of the prison in case that a better thing will not replace. 125 (2-19)

They also told me the stories of the “tunnels”, which I would be hearing in different versions from many other people during my field research. One of them was the tunnel from the textile workshop that I mentioned above. But there were many others.

Elif: I know that there were tunnels dug from both sides. For example the rear side of our building. Many people were living there. Even a fire conflict took place. They were coming from both sides and they were caught. They were digging from both sides. Both from here and there. Two sides argued within the tunnel and shot at each other, as far as I know, and so they were caught.

P: When did this event happen?

E: A long time ago. I am married for ten years and it happened before my advent.<sup>126</sup> (2-20)

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Ümran: tabi cezaevinin içinde çatışmalar oluyordu. Çatıya çıkıyorlardı, kaçıyorlardı. (2-18)

<sup>125</sup> P: Cezaevinin taşınması için bir sürü kampanya yapılıyor. Siz cezaeviyle yaşamaktan rahatsız mısınız?

G: Yoo, hayır. Bize hiçbir zaman zararı olmadı cezaevinin. Aksine, eğer oraya başka bir şey yapılacaksa bize yaramayan, Bayrampaşaya yaramayan, cezaevinin kalması bence daha hayırlıdır yani.

P: Yani cezaevinden bir rahatsızlık duymuyordunuz?

G: Duymuyorduk. Sadece, olaylar olduğu zaman. Eğer ondan daha olumlu bir şey

<sup>126</sup> Elif: O taraftan iki taraftan kazdıklarımı biliyorum. Mesela bizim o arka tarafta. Orda da baya insan kalmış. Orda çatışma çıkmış hatta. İki taraftan geliyorlarmış, yakalamışlar. Hem

Indeed the stories they told me were full of “action” and “terror”, but they were “not being influenced” by the prison, at all! Why did they keep telling me this? In the first instance, I thought that they were not willing to talk about the prison. Obviously, this was not the case because during the conversation, they told me several different stories on prison. In the process of the relocation, the municipality played a role in articulating the disturbances the prison caused in Bayrampaşa, the misrepresentation, how the psychologies of the people were being effected from the prison, etc. It is possible to encounter the same discourses in the media and in the statements of state authorities.

These women uttered the discourse of the municipality campaign, just like it appeared in the media; they also told me that “their psychologies were effected” from the prison. But, at the same time, they were insisting that they were not disturbed by the prison. Surprisingly, after a period of time in the field, I realized that, unlike my female informants, male informants did not express that ‘they were not disturbed by the prison’. I argue that the reason for this difference is that, the men could easily appropriate the municipality’s discourse and reproduce it. Whereas, for the reason that the women could not appropriate that powerful position, they kept telling me that they were not disturbed by the prison. Obviously this is related to the oscillation of belonging to Bayrampaşa. The women were being hesitated to determine which position creates sovereignty for them. In the subsequent part, I will deal with the oscillation structure in detail.

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bu taraftan, hem de cezaevinden geliyorlarmış. İki taraf arasında tünelde tartışma çıkıyor. Tartışma çıkınca silahlar patlamış bildiğim kadarıyla, o zaman yakalanıyorlar.

P: Ne zaman olmuş bu olay?

Bu olay baya önce olmuş. Çünkü ben on senelik evliyim, daha önce olmuş. (2-20)

## The oscillation of Bayrampaşalılık through the Prison

Bayrampaşalıs, from many different aspects, were victimized because of the prison. Due to the security measures of the prison, its surroundings were exposed to strict surveillance and measures. In order to understand these difficulties, we need to look at the everyday experiences of living adjacent to a prison. In this part, I aim to describe the period which the prison was still operating in Bayrampaşa. The data that I make use of in this part, are largely based on my observations and the interviews that I conducted with the shopkeepers and their employers, at the very beginning of my fieldwork. Unlike my later informants, they were against the relocation of the prison for economic reason; still they told me many problems that they had because of the prison.

First of all, I want to depict the landscape of the surroundings of the prison. The main street of İsmetpaşa carries the same name as the neighborhood. It reaches from a gas station to the formerly used main entrance of the prison. The prison stands at the end of İsmetpaşa Street and divides it into two bystreets. The street on the right extends as far as the prison wall and opens to a boulevard and a street (Tuna), on which there is a big statue of an artichoke. There isn't any agricultural activity in Bayrampaşa anymore but this statue represents the agricultural past of the district. Tuna Street seems more modern and shiny than the austere streets of İsmetpaşa. The left bystreet leads to the connection by-way to the E6 highway; one of the main arteries of İstanbul. On this street there are the old houses of the prison guards, the Bayrampaşa State Hospital and several pharmacies. These two streets were remaining as the borders of the civil settling area.

In my opinion, during the existence of the prison in the neighborhood, İsmetpaşa Street remained as an extension of the Bayrampaşa Prison, basically, for two reasons. First; because the prison did not have a waiting room for visitors, the street remained as a waiting room in other words as a unit of the prison. During the visiting hours, the street was full of visitors. The spatial order of the coffeehouses and other shops were organized according to the needs of the prisoners and their visitors. Secondly, the street was an extension of the prison because the state exercised its authority just like it did in the prison. The police had the right to control, to check, to search homes, to conduct surveillance, to restrict access. Just like a prison cell, every single house in this neighborhood was subjected to searches and investigation. During the Operation Back to Life, one of the basic measures to take control of the area was to cut off the traffic on this street, starting from the gas station; in other words the whole street was out of service. Additionally, the police set a checkpoint on the street during the operations. In the hotel owner's words,

Of course it was terrible. The road was blocked from the gas station at the upper side. No one was allowed to enter and people had hard times to get their homes. The hotel was inspected in a scrupulous manner. We could not get to our shop and open it.<sup>127</sup> (2-21)

Officially the street was not a part of the prison but it was spatially contiguous to it. In a state of emergency, it became much more obvious that the street was an extension of the prison. However, in everyday practices, even though less visible, the street was still an extension of the prison. An informant, Dilek, told me that, there were undercover police officers, who patrolled all day along the street. They were generally invisible but became visible whenever they wanted.

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<sup>127</sup> “Çok kötüydü tabi, bu caddeyi yukarıdaki benzinlikten itibaren kestiler, kimseyi sokmadılar, insanlar evlerine zor gittiler. Otelin içini didik didik aradılar. Buraya gelip de dükkanımızı açamadık ”

There are undercover polices everywhere, but everywhere. You cannot understand that he is a policemen: casual outfit, with moustaches etc. They come and greet us, asking about the business. Only then you understand that they are policemen. They pass here by with cars all the day.<sup>128</sup> (2-22)

In our conversation in the hairdresser, Özlem told me about her displeasure with the prison. She complained about the control and surveillance from the watchtowers.

And the soldiers from those towers make a pass at the passerby. Please note it to your homework. I don't know, they whistle, pass a word. You look around and cannot see anything, only if you look upside and you see. And those who dwell in that street cannot get to their roofs. Soldiers immediately say "get down". For people throw weapons, drugs, cell phones from the roofs to the prison. Once two prisoners escaped and they inspected those houses to the roofs. (2-23)

Ahmet is an official in the Bayrampaşa Municipality whose house is next to the prison. He used to be a journalist.

The police watch every house separately. They know everything about who comes to whose house. Such that you know you are being watched constantly. A couple of years before, my relatives were staying in our house. One day, a plain cloth policeman came and asked many questions like who they are, why they are coming and going. They also asked to my relatives who they are and why they are coming to the district.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> "Her yerde sivil polisler var. her yerde. Yani normalde baksan anlamazsın polis olduğunu. Sivil kıyafet, bıyıklı filan. Gelip selam veriyorlar, işleri soruyorlar, o zaman anlıyorsun sivil polis olduğunu. Bütün gün arabayla buradan geçerler." (2-22)  
"Bir de askerler o kuleden gelen geçenlere laf atıyorlar. Bunu da lütfen ekle ödevine. Ne biliyim ıslık çalıyorlar, laf atıyorlar. Etrafına bakıyorsun, görmüyorsun nereden geldiğini. Ancak yukarı bakarsan görüyorsun."  
"Ha bir de o sokakta oturanlar çatıya çıkamıyorlar. Askerler hemen inin diyor. Oradan içeriye silah atıyorlar, uyuşturucu, telefon atıyorlar diye. Bir keresinde iki kişi kişi firar etmiş, o binaları çatılarına kadar aramışlar"

<sup>129</sup> "Burada polis, her evi tek tek izler. Kimin evine kim giriyor kim çıkıyor hepsi bilindir. Öyle ki sürekli izlendiğinizi bilirsiniz. Birkaç yıl önce, benim akrabalarım bizim evde kalıyorlardı. Bir gün bir sivil polis geldi, kim bu insanlar, niye senin evine girip çıkıyorlar diye bir sürü soru sordu. Akrabalarım da sormuşlar siz kimsiniz niye buraya geliyorsunuz diye"

Ahmet was also a witness of the Operation Back to Life. He told me similar things to what Özlem said to me about the watchtowers.

Everyone in the district had certainly been influenced from it. Three years before, we could not speak with our cell phones at our homes. They were jamming the signals for preventing the prisoners of speaking with cell phones. And we could not speak at our homes. Naturally it is easier now because there are no politicians. Yet the people of that street cannot get to the roof. As someone gets to the roof, the soldier warns him/her. For people throws cell phones and drugs from the roofs to the prison. Now they have covered the prison with net so as to prevent this kind of violations.<sup>130</sup> (2-26)

The other way the prison was extended in to the street the presence of the visitors. As I mentioned above, on weekdays, hundreds of people were coming to İsmetpaşa and spending the day on this street. Because of the organization of the visiting system, the visitors had to come to the main entrance (A Door) of the prison to get a number. After taking the number, they had to wait for long hours. Obviously, there was an economy in the neighborhood based on those visitors, the types and locations of the shops, coffeehouses were organized according to the use of the visitors. The visitors were the main economic resource in the neighborhood. Without them, İsmetpaşa would *die*.<sup>131</sup> In spite of this, the visitor was not very welcomed; they were suspect and unreliable because they were “not from” İsmetpaşa. The visitor is mobile and impermanent but s/he’s not like a tourist. One reason for this untrustworthy situation was because of the ethnic register. As my interviewees told me, it was usually East Anatolians and gypsies who came as visitors. In İsmetpaşa, with a partially

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<sup>130</sup> “mahallede herkes bundan etkilenmiştir mutlaka. Bundan üç yıl öncesine kadar bizim evimizde cep telefonu çekmezdi. İçeriden konuşulmasın diye şebekeyi engelliyorlarmış. Biz kendi evimizde cep telefonlarımızla konuşamazdık. Tabi şu anda siyasiler olmadığı için biraz daha rahat. Ama yine de o sokakta insanların çatıya çıkmasına izin verilmez. Birisi çatıya çıktığı zaman asker hemen uyarır. Çatılardan telefon, uyuşturucu, atılıyor içeri diye. Şimdi bir de ağ gerdiler o tarafa, bu tip şeyleri engellemek için.”

<sup>131</sup> *Bu çarşı değil ki, bu çarşı ölü, Bayrampaşanın en ölü çarşısı burası. Bayrampaşa Cezaevi olmasa, gelenler olmasa burası ölü. Cumartesi gel burada hiç kime yok ölü.*”

homogenous population of Balkan origin, it is not very surprising that they were distant to the Kurds and gypsies. Visitors were ‘strangers’ for them not only because they were Kurds and gypsies, but also relatives of the criminals at the same time. (Dilek) the hairdresser told me that Kurds and gypsies often came to the neighborhood. Her expressions were highly racist and she was dehumanizing the visitors because of their ethnic origin and outlook:

Those who are gypsies and easterners in their origins come to the district in great numbers. I have seen many kinds of people. Yesterday I have seen them at the bus stop. They were like niggers, gypsies par excellence. But they were so ugly that I thought whether they are really human.<sup>132</sup> (2-27)

I also asked (Salim), the waiter, I had talked to, if they develop any intimate relation with the visitors who came regularly. He told me that they lived not to get too close to them.

We treat every customers in the same way. In the last analysis, we are tradesmen. You chat with them today, they would like to buy things on credit, it is not appropriate I mean. These people are transitory here. The man goes and never comes back again; they release his relative and you wouldn’t even notice. Therefore you cannot form such a relationship with them.<sup>133</sup>

In another interview (the keeper of “Akar Köfteci”)Turgut, told me why he was working in İsmetpaşa. Previously, his nephew was running the restaurant but he could not stand the behavior of the visitors.

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<sup>132</sup> “Doğu kökenliler ve çingeneler çok geliyor. Öyle çeşit çeşit insan gördüm ki. Geçen gün otobüs durağında gördüm. Zenci gibiler, tam çingene yani. Ama o kadar çirkindiler ki maymuna benziyorlardı, ay bunlar ne biçim insan böyle dedim.” (2-27)

<sup>133</sup> “Buraya gelen her müşteriye aynı davranırız. Sonuçta esnaflık yapıyoruz. Bugün sohbet edersin yarın veresiye ister, olmaz yani. Bu insanlar burada geçici olarak bulunuyorlar. Adam gider, bir daha gelmez, yakını tahliye olur bilemezsin. O yüzden o tip bir ilişki kuramazsın.”

It is not easy to work here, it is not for anyone. Every kind of man comes here. You cannot tolerate everyone, you have to adjust yourself to the kind of man you encounter. We are old enough to endure but young guys cannot take. Man comes and says “give me that, bud (lan)”, he speaks with bud (lan), he says “come on! Where is my order?”, we are used to it, we have learned how to deal with these kinds of man.<sup>134</sup> (2-29)

As I mentioned above, visitors were the relatives of the criminals. They were being identified with their criminal relatives. They were the only ones who had access to the inside of the prison except for the prison guards and lawyers. They could enter the mythically constructed ‘inside’. Legally, they did not commit a crime nor were they sentenced to imprisonment but through their bodily contact with the criminal, the crime as a label stuck on their bodies. Their existence in the street was reminiscent of the criminal. I asked Salim if they heard different stories of the visitors in the coffeehouse. He said yes and added that nobody accepts guilt.

No one is guilty here. No one accepts his crime. The son of a man is sentenced for theft, you ask about it and he says that they cast aspersion on him. He does not admit.<sup>135</sup> (2-30)

The visitors were identified with the convict and their existence in the street and I argue that they were the *miasma*<sup>136</sup> of crime, which was circulating on the street as the extension of the criminal. These were some of the difficulties of living next to a prisonhouse. Obviously, the Bayrampaşa Prison was a troublesome place since the 1990s. All the problem that I have tried to mention had crucial effects on the neighborhood. Living adjacent to a prison, especially in the period between the

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<sup>134</sup> “Burada çalışmak kolay değil herkesler yapamaz. Çeşit çeşit insan gelir. Herkesin nefesini koklayamazsın. nabza göre şerbet veremezsin. Biz yaşımızı aldık, çekiyoruz, ama genç adam çekmez. Adam geliyor “versene lan diyor, lanlı konuşuyor. “hadi ya nerde kaldı” biz duymuyoruz, kulak asmamamayı öğrendik artık”

<sup>135</sup> “burada kimse suçlu değil zaten. Kimse suçlu olduğunu kabul etmiyor. Adamın oğlu hırsızlıktan girmiş yatıyor, soruyorsun iftira attılar diyor. Kabul etmiyor.”

<sup>136</sup> Taussig, Michael, 2004. *My Cocaine Museum*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press

1970's to the end of the 1990's, was identical with living adjacent to prisonbreaks, clashes, house searches, etc. These events were a part of the daily life and not surprisingly this led to many problems. In spite of this, the emergence of the “discourse of the relocation of the prison” is a notably new discourse, when we consider the long history of the prison and the neighborhood. As I mentioned above, the discourse of the problems from the prison started to circulate with the municipality-led campaign “cezaevi değil üniversite istiyoruz” in 2001 soon after the Operation Back to Life. I argue that with this discourse, Bayrampaşalıs claim an agency on the issue of the prison and besides, it shows the efforts of Bayrampaşalıs to oscillate from a victimized position to a sovereign one. Eventually, the process ended in 2008 and in July, Bayrampaşa prison was relocated and officially closed. The highly valuable land of the prison was under the control of the ministry of Justice. This land was exchanged with the land of İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality in Çağlayan. The ministry of Justice has been constructing the largest courthouse of İstanbul on this land and the plan is to bring all the smaller courthouses together in this building. The new prison; was built in Silivri, this is a high security prison with highly technological security systems. The prison area is named “The Silivri Prison Campus”, and there is a court house in the campus.

I argue that the process of the relocation campaign and the positions that Bayrampaşalıs appropriate, reflect the same pattern that I described in the previous chapter. The material difficulties, the invisibility and the misrepresentation both led to the ‘victimization’ of the Bayrampaşalıs and at the same time remained as the obstacles that blocked their way of becoming proper citizens. The existence of the prison can also be read as a failure of the process of ‘becoming native’<sup>137</sup>. After the

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<sup>137</sup> Bauman, (1995)

epidemic, they changed the name of the district with the anticipation of propriety, but unfortunately the name Bayrampaşa left them in an improper condition, again. In the cholera outbreak, they were stigmatized with the disease and in order to get rid of the stigma, they needed to change the name of the district. Likewise, the case of the prison prepared a similar setting for the people of Bayrampaşa and this time, they were stigmatized with the name of the prison. Now they were not people “who reside in the place where the disease break out” but the people “who live in the place where the prison exists”. Nevertheless, this time, they preferred the relocation as a strategy to become sovereign instead of the name change. In the third chapter of this thesis, I will try to elucidate in detail why they chose the relocation as a strategy, instead of the other choices. In my opinion, this is very closely related to the perspective of the neoliberal era (or let’s say the postmodern city, following Harvey) that allows them to anticipate the transformation of the place without any name change but with a radical alteration of the place and its meanings. According to David Harvey, with the postmodern era, city designers left the modern obsession of the use of the buildings. The architecture of the postmodern era was more interested in the appearance and the style of the buildings than their practical use. For this reason, many old buildings like old factories, prisons, etc transformed into hotels, art galleries, universities, and so on. In this way, the place is being uprooted from its old meanings and is fixed with a new and totally different meaning. In the case of the relocation, Bayrampaşalı’s expectation was the total obliteration of what prison bears. While doing this, they oscillate from a subordinate position to a sovereign one. In order to clarify what I mean, I will present some of the demands of Bayrampaşalıs for the prospective constructions on the land of the prison.

There was an article entitled “the bleeding wound” in one of the local papers of Bayrampaşa, ‘Bayrampaşa Gündem’. The article was written in the winter of 2008 (vol. 20 January – 5 February) and it was about the relocation of the prison. The writer summarized the invisibility and misrepresentation caused by the existence of the prison, in one sentence:

For years Bayrampaşa has been remembered with prison. This remembering has been always troubled those residing in Bayrampaşa, and even embarrassed them. Being a prison at the city center took everybody’s attention. Of course it should not be ignored that when the prison was established here, here was a place outside of the city.<sup>138</sup> (2-31)

Whatever good has been done in Bayrampaşa, convention centers of culture or sport complexes, the most little happening took place in prison, an uprising, a revolt, a fire, erases all good things that have been done and we come to the fore with these happenings.<sup>139</sup> (2-32)

In this article, the writer brought out the question of “what should be constructed on the land of the prison”. There was an interview with Bayrampaşalıs in the same issue of the newspaper, asking them the same question. (“*Cezaevinin Yeri Ne olsun? Bayrampaşalı Konuşuyor*”). The answers were wide-ranging and it is very difficult to grasp a systematic thread among them. This situation confused the writer and with this confusion he tried to categorize the demands of Bayrampaşalıs. According to him, this variety of demands was a result of the economic problems. He says:

The answers are indeed confusing. Our people have no information about what will happen. It has been talked in reference to hearsays and rumors. The reason for is of course that the question of what

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<sup>138</sup> “Cezaevi Güle Güle, Hoş geldin?”, Mehmet Ceylan, Bayrampaşa Gündem, 20 June – 5 August 2008, Yıllardır Bayrampaşa cezaevi ile anıldı. Bu anılma hep Bayrampaşalıları tedirgin etti, hatta utandırdı. Şehir merkezinde bir cezaevi olması herkesin dikkatini çekti. Tabi bu cezaevi yapıldığı zaman burası şehir dışında bir mevki olduğu da gözden uzak tutulmamalıdır.

<sup>139</sup> “Kanayan Yara” Süleyman Uçak, Bayrampaşa Gündem, 20 Ocak – 5 Şubat 2008, Bayrampaşa’da güzel olarak ne yapılırsa yapılsın, kültür salonları ya da spor kompleksleri cezaevinde meydana gelen en ufak bir olay, bir ayaklanma, bir isyan, bir yangın, bütün yapılan güzel şeylerin hepsini siliyor ve ülke gündemine bu olaylarla oturuyoruz.

will happen is kept like a secret of the state. Shopkeepers are for housing construction, the people are for the utilization as green fields, social facilities, hospital or university. These results are the results of to what extent the economy of the town had deteriorated. The shopkeeper is thinking that let new people come and our sales will increase a little, property owners are saying our properties will increase in value if there will be a university, elderly are tired of waiting in front of the doors of the hospital, they are for the establishment of a hospital for them, women, youth want to utilize as a space for social facilities.<sup>140</sup> (2-33)

This categorization seems reasonable however when we have a look at the actual demands, it will be clear that it is not that easy to categorize them according to age or vocation. The accounts in the newspaper reflect a tendency to list similar demands. I have selected some of them:

40 years onwards I have been residing in Bayrampaşa. What will happen to the prison is indeterminate. I am for the making of a green field that will help Bayrampaşa and İstanbul breathe. (Yaşar Hep)<sup>141</sup> (2-34)

I do not have any information about the fate of Bayrampaşa prison. I only heard that it will be abolished. It would be better to make it use of as an education place. To me it would be more appropriate make it a university. I think it would be beneficial both for the youth and the country. (Türkan Avcıoğlu)<sup>142</sup> (2-35)

More than 40 years I have been living in Bayrampaşa. I really want Bayrampaşa prison to be abolished. I know that this year it will be

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<sup>140</sup> Cevaplar aslında kafa karıştırıcı. Halkımız ne olacağına dair bilgisi yok. Kulaktan dolma ya da rivayetlere göre konuşuluyor. Bunun sebebi ne olacağı konusu bir devlet sırrı gibi saklanması tabii ki de. Esnafın konut yapılmasından yana, halk ise yeşil alan, sosyal tesis, hastane ya da üniversite olarak değerlendirilmesinden yana. Bu sonuçlar ilçe ekonomisinin ne kadar kötüye gittiğinin bir sonucudur. Esnaf yeni insanlar gelsin, satışlarımız biraz artar düşüncesinde, mülk sahipleri üniversite olursa mülklerimiz değerlenir diyor, yaşlılar ise hastane kapılarında beklemekten yorulmuş, kendileri için hastane yapılmasından yana, kadınlar, gençler ise sosyal donatı alanı olarak kullanılmasını istiyor.

<sup>141</sup> 40 seneden beri Bayrampaşa'da ikamet etmekteyim. Cezaevinin ne olacağı meçhul. Bayrampaşa'ya ve İstanbul'a nefes aldıracak bir yeşil alan yapılması taraftarıyım.

<sup>142</sup> Bayrampaşa cezaevinin akıbeti konusunda bir bilgim yok. Sadece kaldırılacağını duydum. Cezaevi yeri eğitim konusunda değerlendirilirse daha iyi olur. Bence üniversite yapılması daha uygun olur. Hem gençlerimiz için hem de ülke için hayırlı olacağını düşünüyorum.

abolished. I have heard that cluster housing will be constructed. Housing has both benefits and disadvantages. My opinion is that a very large hospital should be established in place of the prison. We are very much in need of hospital. Even though Bayrampaşa is an old residence, unfortunately it fell behind the neighboring towns Gaziosmanpaşa and Esenler. (Şaban Güler)<sup>143</sup> (2-36)

I have absolutely no idea what will replace the prison. Considering the position of the prison, that is its proximity to TEM highway, to the airport, and to the subway, it seems to me that the most appropriate option is to build a big hotel. Today Istanbul is the centre for exhibitions and fairs. It is necessary to provide the city with the befitting infrastructure for this role. When the final match of the European Championship League is played in İstanbul, the hotels could not afford enough rooms for visitors. While striving to attract more and more tourists, we leave the room capacities of our hotels as it is. We have to stop this once and for all. Furthermore, this will lead new employment opportunities for our youth. (Hüseyin Şen)<sup>144</sup> (2-40)

I have heard that the prison will be relocated within this year. I absolutely reject the idea of housing in place of the prison. I think that a touristic hotel or museum would be more suitable. Thus our district would provide İstanbul with a gift of **cultural centre**, the city chosen to be the European Cultural Centre for 2010. Thus Bayrampaşa would be an international brand. (İbrahim Beşkardeş) (2-41)<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> -40 yılı aşkın bir süredir Bayrampaşa'da yaşıyorum. Bayrampaşa cezaevinin kalkmasını çok istiyorum. Bu yıl kalkacağını biliyorum. Toplu konut yapılacağını duydum. Konutun faydası da var zararı da var. Benim fikrim cezaevi yerine mutlaka çok büyük bir hastane yapılmalıdır. Hastaneye çok ihtiyacımız var. Bayrampaşa eski bir yerleşim olmasına rağmen, maalesef komşu semtlerimiz Gaziosmanpaşa'dan ve Esenler'den geri kalmıştır.

-Bayrampaşa'nın bir adliye sarayına ihtiyacı var. Gençlerin spor yapabileceği, insanların aileleri ile birlikte zaman geçirebileceği bir yeşil alan olabilir. (İrfan Yıldız) (2-37)

-Spor salonları yapılsın. Gelecek nesillere hiçbir şey bırakmıyoruz. Onların beyinsel ve fiziksel gelişimlerine yardımcı projelere imza atılmalı. Üniversite için de çok müsait bir alan ama kesinlikle konut istemiyorum. Büyük bir hastane olabilir. (Halit Deniz) (2-38)

-Cezaevi bu sene kalkıyor. Yerine konut olacağını duydum. Bence de konut olması uygun olur. Ama herkesin aksine bence lüks daireler yapılmalı. Bayrampaşa yeni bir şehre kazanmış olur. Eğitimli ve nitelikli insanların gelmesi bize fayda sağlar. (Murat Bali) (2-39)

<sup>144</sup> -Cezaevinin yerine ne olacağı konusunda bir bilgim yok. Cezaevinin konumunu göz önüne alırsak yani TEM yolu kenarında olması, havaalanına yakın olması ve metro hattının oradan geçmesi burada büyük bir otel yapılması mantıklı geliyor. Artık İstanbul fuar merkezi oldu. Bunun da altyapısını sağlamak gerekiyor. Bir şampiyonlar ligi finali oynandı, otel kapasiteleri yetersiz kaldı. Hem daha çok turist istiyoruz hem de yatak kapasitemizi arttırmıyoruz. Artık buna bir son vermeliyiz. Hem bu sayede gençlerimize de iş imkanı sağlanmış olur.

<sup>145</sup> -Cezaevinin bu yıl taşınacağını duydum. Ben kesinlikle konut istemiyorum. Cezaevi yerine bence güzel bir turistik otel ya da bir müze yapılabilir. 2010 Avrupa kültür başkenti

Certainly it is very easy to understand the reason of the confusion of the writer. It is not easy to grasp how they can demand ‘courthouses, parks, luxury apartments, sport facilities, hotels, museums’, concurrently. In my interviews, I encountered a similar pattern. At a time before the relocation, when I was in the *muhtarlık* and interviewing the *muhtar*, İsmet Çelebi, a woman (Birsen) interrupted my interview and asked me why I don’t ask people, who were there. Suddenly, everybody in the office paid attention to conversation and told of their demands about the process. Birsen said that she wanted nice residences with shopping malls, sports facilities, etc.<sup>146</sup> Likewise, the *muhtar*’s imagination was a social facility with swimming pools, sports facilities, etc. A man said that he wants a park, another said they needed a hospital.

Otherwise they can bring the hospital (Çapa Hospital) to Bayrampaşa. If they bring it here, the district makes a mint. They were about to locate the hospital in Bahçeşehir but they have changed their mind because it is too far... If Çapa is located here, the road will certainly be enlarged so that ambulances can pass along easily. Then they will have to demolish the houses around the road. In anyway, there will be a subway underneath. It will start here and end there at İkea, all the way under this place. (Turgut)<sup>147</sup>  
(2-42)

That day, I went to a unit of Bayrampaşa Municipality that gives courses to the children of İsmetpaşa (*Bayrampaşa Belediyesi Bilgi Merkezi*) During the break, while I was waiting for the director of the unit to come, children came around me

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seçilen İstanbul’a bir kültür merkezi kazandırabilir. Bu sayede Bayrampaşa’nın ismi uluslararası bir marka olabilir.

<sup>146</sup> “Bizim de oturabileceğimiz güzel daireler olsun.”

<sup>147</sup> “Veyahut da anlaşılırsa hastaneyi buraya getirebilirler. (Çapa Hastanesi) Hastaneyi getirirlerse burası darphane olur. Bahçeşehir’e yapacaklardı ama orası uzak diye istememişler... Çapa gelirse bu yolu mecburen genişletecek, ambulans geçecek, o zaman bu karşıdaki evleri yıkarlar. Zaten buraların altından tünel geçecek. Buradan başlayacak, İkea’nın ordan çıkacak, yerin altından.”

and and asked me what was I waiting for. I asked them their ideas about the prison. Just like the discussion at the *muhtarlık*, the children began to discuss about the future construction. One of them wants a playgroud, another, a hospital or a university...

Briefly, I predominantly encountered fantasies of luxury apartments, hospital, university, park, etc. Obviously, the image of clean places with swimming pools, playgrounds... are propagate through media and advertisements and it is presented as the desirable and good way of living. However, even though most of my informants complained about the unemployment in the district, they could not imagine a factory instead of the luxury apartments. In order to clarify their puzzling insistence on a hospital, university, park, etc., Demir Bey's statement would be useful. Demir Bey expresses his wishes as:

Demir: ...I would like, let's say, an academic concept.

Pınar: You mean a university?

Demir: Yes, why not we are mentioned with a university. Or, let's say, it would be a place where world championships are held and we are mentioned with them. Or, if the central bank will be located in İstanbul, why shouldn't we use the land for that.<sup>148</sup> (2-43)

What Demir Bey said is an important key to understand why Bayrampaşalı's demands are varied. Demir Bey told me that he wants a university or a stadium for the world championship, or the Central Bank 'to come' to Bayrampaşa. The reason for these different desires to be together is that he wants Bayrampaşa to be remembered with these edifices. He does not desire anything specifically. His main concern is to be at the centre of attention in a positive way. I think that this is also the case for the other interviewees. In this chapter, I have tried to prove that

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<sup>148</sup> Demir: ...yani gönül istiyor ki, atıyorum, akademik bir konsept olsun.

Pınar: Üniversite mi?/Demir: Evet, niye biz onunla anılmayalım, ya da işte atıyorum, dünya şampiyonalarının yapıldığı bir yer olsun, onunla anılalım, ya da işte Merkez Bankası İstanbul'a taşınıyorsa, neden o alanı değerlendirmeyelim. (2-43)

Bayrampaşalıs perceive the prison as the mere reason for their misrepresentation in the public and the failure on the route to belonging. Üstündağ points out that the migrant women in Esenyurt, who have the possession of their own houses ended their narratives with the establishment of a stable “home,” irrespective of when this was actually achieved. After they concluded their narratives, they had difficulties to answer the question about the “afterwards. “Their future desires were, a cleaner neighborhood with more easily accessible roads, hospitals with increased technology, and parks for children to play in and women to stroll around.”<sup>149</sup> When we consider the statements of Bayrampaşalıs, we find a similar structure. Thus, the relocation of the prison is the instant when Bayrampaşalıs perceive success on the route to belonging. After the position of victimization for being stranger, for the disease and for the prison, they oscillate to the sovereign position. The common point of all different and divergent desires is that they all make Bayrampaşa a central place, a well-known and desirable place. These desires of course bear economical interest, but more important that that, these desires reflect the fantasies of Bayrampaşalıs to become proper citizens, natives, Turks, etc. I would like to focus on the Ramadan festivities in the old prison which provides evidence for the sovereign position of Bayrampaşalıs.

After the relocation of the prison in June 2008, Bayrampaşa municipality utilized the area of the prison for the Ramadan Festivities, between 1-29 September 2009. The land of the old prison transformed into a festival area, with a *iftar* tent, *Yörük* tent, LunaPark, cafeterias, shopping areas and visiting ward with a disgust smell, bunks and writings on the walls. The activities were named as “In the Prison

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<sup>149</sup> Üstündağ, N. (2005). *Belonging to the Modern: Women's Suffering and Subjectivities in Urban Turkey*. Ph.D. Dissertation. Indiana University. p. 129

in Ramadan” (Ramazanda Cezaevindeyiz). In the program, there were ‘regional concerts’, not only “Rumeli” but also Çankırı, Aegean, and so on. There were also classical Ramadan activities like shadow shows (*karagöz-hacivat*) and etc. On important activity was the screening of “Bayrampaşa Ben Fazla Kalmayacağım”, hundreds of people watched the movie in the acitivity tent.

In the activity brochure of the festival, the mayor Hüseyin Bürge says that:

Bayrampaşa Prison; like a nightmare it fell upon Bayrampaşa and stayed there for a long time... It turned out to be the wound of Bayrampaşa, the source of pain and relentless agony. For a long time, Bayramapaşa had been suffered from the gloomy atmosphere, being despondent about any hope, having no hopes for bright futures. ...44 days after the closure of the prison, the old Bayrampaşa Prison became a Ramazanevi (The house of Ramadan). This year it will host the blessing and grace of 15<sup>th</sup> Ramadan Program of Bayrampaşa. We deliberately picked the slogan “We are in prison in Ramadan”. The ironical language of our slogan conveys, on the one hand, the meaning that we got rid of “prison” at last, and on the other hand, the feeling of retribution that we had felt so strong for so many years.<sup>150</sup> (2-44)

As the mayor expresses, the relocation of the prison represents the retaliation of the undesirable memories of the prison for the people of Bayrampaşa. I have argued above that they were victimized because of the prison, and after the relocation they moved to a sovereign position. This sovereignty gives them the power to devastate the old edifice, to erase its memories and pain. The place where lost of prisoners murdered now became a carnivaleque place, where dead and alive remain together. Unlike Bakhtin’s carnivale, the old prison was not a liberating carnivalesque. The entertainment was odd. They were eating in the *iftar çadırı*, shopping from the

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<sup>150</sup> Bayrampaşa Cezaevi; bir karabasan gibi Bayrampaşa’nın göğsüne çöküp kaldı, yıllarca... Bayrampaşa’nın sürekli kanayan yarası, acısı ve ızdırabı oldu. Bayrampaşa, Türkiye’nin bu en büyük ceza ve tutukevinin yaydığı karamsar, kasvetli, umutsuz ve geleceksiz havanın mahkumu oldu, yıllar yılı. ... Kapatılışından 44 gün sonra eski Bayrampaşa Cezaevi, Ramazanevi oldu. Bu yıl, ramazanın 15. yıl programının hayır ve bereketine ev sahipliği yapacak. “Ramazanda Cezaevindeyiz!” bu sloganı özellikle seçtik. Sloganımızın ironik dili bir taraftan “ceza”dan kurtuluşumuza, diğer taraftan da yıllar içerisinde biriktire biriktire geldiğimiz rövanş alma duygumuza tercümanlık etmektedir.

counters in row, amusing in the Ferris Wheel and then visit the wardroom. The municipality did not simply utilized the “empty land” of the old prison for the Ramadan festivities. On the other hand, the festival contained the old prison with its malodorous wards, bunks, blankets, wall writings, etc. There were a signboard in the entrance of the prison says “The Activity Area”. Under that title, the activities were listed; There were *iftar çadırı*, *Yörük çadırı*, *otağ çadırı*, shopping areas, LunaPark and the visiting ward. The ward was a part of the entertainment. Surprisingly, the people were very enthusiastic to visit this noisome building, oddly with the company of their children. Even there were somebody trying to go inside the wardroom with their infants. This curiosity, I argue, is closely related to the idea of the participation to this monumental happening. Because this carnivalesque festival is a reflection of the sovereignty of Bayrampaşalı, after many years of subordination with the image of the prison, they had the power to decide on it. Definitely, this imagination is related to the neoliberal transformation of the city and the image of the ‘global city’ which led them to this concoction of radically different elements together, in the festival area. Notwithstandingly, this is the matter of the next chapter, I will go in detail the issue of the global city and its influences in the establishment of Bayrampaşalılık, in the third chapter.

In this chapter, I have tried to give the brief history of the prison and the disturbances that it led to. My aim was to elaborate the oscillation structure between subordinate and sovereign positions. I argue that after the relocation of the prison, they perceive that they were successful in the process of belonging and nativization. The Ramadan festivities are an evidence for this position. This brings us to a point to deal with the issue within the context of neoliberalism and the global city. Eventually, this will be elaborated in the sunsequent chapter.



## CHAPTER 4:

### A CITY AT THE HEART OF THE LIFE: BAYRAMPAŞA<sup>151</sup>

In this chapter, I shall focus on the transformation of Bayrampaşa as a part of the urban global transformation. I argue that the transformation process and the desires about Bayrampaşa are concomitant with the new iconography of the global cities. In the previous chapters, I have tried to reveal that in spite of their victimization with the material impediments and the difficulties of migration, they place themselves in a sovereign position within their narratives. They use this oscillation as a strategy for their belonging to the locale. It is clear that my abstraction of oscillation reflects the dual structure which I tried to designate in the first and second chapters. However, the oscillation is not fixed; obviously it has been changed through time. This change is related to the class structure of *Bayrampaşalıs*, as well as related to the larger socio-economic conditions and trends. In this chapter my claim is that, Bayrampaşalıs are expecting to gain permanent sovereign positions since their migration, through globalization, The image of global city promises them a middle class life-style in which they can freely manifest their Balkan origins. And more importantly, their performance of Balkan identity is a way of affirming this middle-class life style as being a part of larger community than their local one.

It is obvious that the class structure in Bayrampaşa has been changing. During 1970s, Bayrampaşa was a working class neighborhood that the majority of the residents were working in the factories near the region. The population in Bayrampaşa is becoming middle class and this is noticeable from my field research. Thus, we necessarily need to investigate the background of this transformation. First of all, the characteristic of this transformation is related to the global transformation

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<sup>151</sup> The name of Bayrampaşa Municipality advertising video

of the economy. The large-scale industrial enterprises are relocated to the newly constructed industrial areas in the peripheries of the city.<sup>152</sup> As a result of this, the workers of those factories led to the service sector and the trade business.<sup>153</sup> There are several small-scale industrial enterprises; however most of the employees in these enterprises are the Kurdish migrants who came to Bayrampaşa after 1990s, as a result of the forced migration.<sup>154</sup> As all my informants indicated during my field research, one of the other reasons that the class structure is transformed in Bayrampaşa is that the children of the first comers are more educated and they were employed in more qualified white-collar jobs. In addition to this, the possession of their houses and the increasing value of the lands in the district are also related to their becoming of middle class. Parents and their married children share the apartments of their family buildings. The filthy slum<sup>155</sup> of 1970s turned into a middle class neighborhood in 2000s<sup>156</sup>. The socio-economical transformation in Bayrampaşa is closely related to the process of globalization process in Istanbul. The globalization process sets and dominates all the registers and perceptions about the urban sphere. It is almost impossible to talk about the city without using the words “mission, vision, image” etc<sup>157</sup>. In order to grasp the globalization of Istanbul and its repercussions in Bayrampaşa, we need to glance over the debates around the global transformation in the urban sphere and the global city.

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<sup>152</sup> Hacısalihoglu, Y. (2000) Küreselleşme, Mekansal Etkileri ve İstanbul, İstanbul: Akademik Düzey

<sup>153</sup> Keyder and Öncü, İstanbul Yol Ayrımında, *İstanbul*, vol. 7 October 1993, pp. 28-34

<sup>154</sup> interview with the president of DTP Bayrampaşa

<sup>155</sup> Milliyet, Cumhuriyet, October 1970

<sup>156</sup> [www.bayrampasa.bel.tr](http://www.bayrampasa.bel.tr) (burada temel aldığım yer, Bayrampaşa'nın eski cezaevinin yanında yer alan ismetpaşa mahallesidir.)

<sup>157</sup> TMMOB Mimarlar Odası ve İstanbul Büyükşehir Şubesi (2006) “Küreselleşen İstanbul ve Haydarpaşa”, p. 39

## Globalization and the City

During the 1990s the traits of the world economy has radically changed “as a result of privatization, deregulation, the opening up of national economies to foreign firms, and the growing participation of national economic actors in global markets”<sup>158</sup>. The dominance of information technologies and the increase in the mobility and liquidity of capital are the characteristics of the contemporary capitalism. “A number of different perspectives may be identified which refer to different dimensions of a complex but unitary phenomenon: de-industrialization, post-Fordism, globalization and, perhaps the most comprehensive rubric, the transition from national developmentalism to neoliberal capitalism.”<sup>159</sup> Whatever the name, in this new economic system, the flow of capital made social, cultural and economic dimensions of a certain place being integrated to the extent that global, regional and local actors and institutions cohabit and cooperate extensively. Within the articulation of the new economic system the strategic territories are rescaled and it led to the ascendance of other spatial units or scales. Sassen indicates that, these spatial units as; “the sub-national, notably cities and regions; cross-border regions encompassing two or more sub-national entities; and supra-national entities, that is, global digitized markets and free-trade blocs.”<sup>160</sup> In this territorial rescaling, the cities became more significant.

With the global social and economic transformation, the cities began to change in a global scale, and there are several conceptualizations to name this transformation: world cities<sup>161</sup>, “supervilles”<sup>162</sup>, “informational city”<sup>163</sup>. In addition

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<sup>158</sup> Sassen, S. “The Global City”(2007) in *A Companion to the Anthropology of Politics*, ed. Nugent and Vincent, Blackwell Publishing, p. 170

<sup>159</sup> Keyder, C. (2005) Globalization and Social Exclusion in İstanbul, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, Volume 29.1 March 2005 124–34, p. 128

<sup>160</sup> Sassen, (1991)

<sup>161</sup> Friedman and Wolff (1982) World City Formation: An Agenda for Research and Action, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 6: pp. 309-344; Hall, P. (1996) *The World Cities*, New York: McGraw Hill.

to these conceptualizations; Saskia Sassen coins the name “global city” to the new urban space of globalization.<sup>164</sup> According to her, the cities of the contemporary capitalism are “sites for the production of specialized services by complex organizations for running a spatially dispersed network of factories, offices, and service outlets; and the production of financial innovations and the making of markets both central to the internationalization and expansion of the financial industry”.<sup>165</sup> The Global cities are node points of the global economy and they are shaped in accordance with the global dynamics and processes. In the new global era, the global cities are constructed according to the new conceptual architecture of the globalization<sup>166</sup>. The global cities, thus create an affluence for the qualified service sector employees, managers, etc. Yet it also creates a large amount of poverty and disadvantagedness. The inequality in the city leads to different opinions in the politics, because the global city is a site where “global corporate capital and multitudes of disadvantaged can engage with each other, where place-based politics (e.g. anti-gentrification struggles) becomes a form of global politics.” The global city makes possible the emergence of new types of political, as yet not formalized subjects.<sup>167</sup> The loss of power at the national level produces the possibility for new forms of power and politics at the subnational level<sup>168</sup> and globalisation is often conceptualised as entailing local and global relations, offering opportunities for cities

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<sup>162</sup> Braudel, F. (1992) *The Perspective of the World*, trans. Siân Reynolds, Los Angeles: University of California Press

<sup>163</sup> Castells, M. (1989) *The Informational City*, Oxford: Blackwell.

<sup>164</sup> Sassen, (1991)

<sup>165</sup> Sassen, (1991), p. 5

<sup>166</sup> Sassen (2007), 17

<sup>167</sup> Drainville, A C., (2004) *Contesting Globalization: Space and Place in the World Economy*, New York: Routledge, p. xiii

<sup>168</sup> Brenner, N. (1999) “Beyond State-Centrism? Space, Territoriality and Geographical Scale in Globalization Studies”, *Theory and Society*, vol. 28: 1 (February) pp. 39-78

and regional units to reconstitute themselves<sup>169</sup>. Citizenship is realised not just on the national level as a condition secured by the state but is also relevant to subnational levels, such as local and regional levels. In this regard, what is particularly important is the level of the city as a basis of citizenship.<sup>170</sup> Thus, the globalization offers the chance to the migrants “become native”. This makes the global city more attractive for the migrant groups like Bayrampaşalıs, who suffered from being stranger in the previous era.

According to the statement of Sassen, the global cities are the actors of global economic activity and cities like Tokyo, London, New York, play an important role in the global economy, since they are the nodes of the global economy. For Sassen, global cities necessarily carry specific characteristics. Still, Taylor<sup>171</sup> opposes this statement. He on the other hand argues that it is “misleading to identify a small subset of ‘global cities’ if this is interpreted as meaning cities in which global processes are concentrated.” He insists instead that under conditions of contemporary globalisation *all* cities are global: they operate in a contemporary space of flows which enables them to have a global reach when circumstances demand such connections. Hence, while many urban geographers continue to use the term ‘global city’ for those leading metropolises that articulate global flow, work of this type suggests it is no longer possible to talk of ‘non-global’ cities.”<sup>172</sup> Taylor’s disapproval of Sassen’s categorization of global cities, is very important for our context, for the reason that this allows us to think Bayrampaşa –as a district- as a part of the global city discussion. At the beginnings of 1990s, İstanbul was at the

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<sup>169</sup> Işın, E. (2000) *Democracy, Citizenship, and the Global City*. London and New York: Routledge

<sup>170</sup> Hudson and Slaughter (eds) (2007) *Globalisation and Citizenship, The transnational challenge*, New York: Routledge, p 26

<sup>171</sup> Taylor, P. J. (2004) *World City Network*, London: Routledge

<sup>172</sup> Hubbard, P. (2006) *City*, New York: Routledge, p. 185

threshold of globalization era. During this 15 years, the decentralization of capitalism reached a level that, even the districts of İstanbul have become sub-units of the global city debate. Today, Bayrampaşa claims and desires to be a “global city”.

In order to make sense of the developments and discourses in Bayrampaşa, it is necessary to clarify how a global city is being articulated. Allen Scott argues that one characteristic of contemporary capitalism is the increasing importance of sectors whose outputs are permeated with significant cultural or symbolic content and these sectors are predominantly located in large cities.<sup>173</sup> The image of the new city is associated with the post-industrial era, the future, the new, the clean, the high-tech, the economically upbeat, and the socially progressive.<sup>174</sup> The globalization enforces the reconstruction and restoration; the reconstruction of a city can take many forms. There are several different attempts to realize this goal. One attempt is to change the image of the city for external consumption. The other is the physical construction of new buildings and the renovation of existing ones. Another one is the promotion of new imaginer for external consumption is a cause and a function of a changing internal debate between different groups within the city. Crucially, the conscious physical transformation of a city is both a demonstration and consequence of economic and political power, it is an attempt to reinforce, change, or contest the social and political meaning of the city.<sup>175</sup> In other words, these are the attempts to change the iconography of the cities<sup>176</sup>, and if the city is an old industrial region like Syracuse (or Levent, and even Bayrampaşa), to overcome the city’s limiting

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<sup>173</sup> Scott, Allen (2001) “Capitalism, Cities, and the Production of Symbolic Forms” , *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series*, Vol. 26, No. 1, pp. 11-23, p. 11

<sup>174</sup> Short, Benton, Luce, and Walton (1997) “The Reconstruction of a Postindustrial City”, *Journal of Architectural Education (1984-)*, Vol. 50, No. 4 (May), pp. 244-253, p. 249;

<sup>175</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>176</sup> Hartman and Carnochan (2002) *City for Sale: The Transformation of San Fransisco, Los Angeles*, University of California Press. P. 30

industrial image; the city planners focuses on a revitalized downtown. In their desire to outcompete other cities, these leaders initiated or proposed a series of public-private partnerships designed to create an “amenity infrastructure” and a “new city look”.<sup>177</sup> In addition to this, “the cities across the world acquire the new iconography of convention centers, cultural centers, stadiums, festive malls, and “theme retail districts”. Terms like renaissance and rebirth often appeared in project names, (as well as frontier and pioneer) and water (as an amenity rather than industrial commodity) is a common motif.”<sup>178</sup> This new iconography of the global city simply reflects the formulation of the project of “future Bayrampaşa”. Furthermore, the new shopping and entertainment center “Forumİstanbul” which I will be scrutinizing below, stands as the manifestation of this new city outlook, especially with its catchline of “pioneer of İstanbul with its eight thousand square meters aquarium, similarly using water as a chief motif.

### Bayrampaşa as a Global City

As it is mentioned in the last part of the previous chapter, with the relocation of the prison, the structure of oscillation reached a new phase. In this new phase, people of Bayrampaşa appropriated the sovereign position to the extent that they speak as they succeeded in the process of becoming native. This expression of success can be read within their answers to the question of what should be built on the land of the prison. The answers were varied, nevertheless, I argue that they have a common point; they all emphasize the desire of “living in a desirable Bayrampaşa”. Their choices were ranging from ‘recreation lands’, ‘sports facilities’, to ‘cultural centers’ or ‘hotels’.

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<sup>177</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>178</sup> *ibid.* ; Aksoy and Robins, (1993) “İstanbul’da Dinleme Zamanı”, İstanbul, 7, October 1993, pp 56-61, p. 58

All the answers were grounded with the conversion of the ‘image of Bayrampaşa’.

How can we construe this tendency? What is the meaning of this demand of ‘image’ transformation? The common point of all different and divergent answers is that they all make Bayrampaşa a central place, a well-known and desirable place. These desires of course have economical interest, but more important than that, these desires reflect the fantasies of Bayrampaşalıs to become proper citizens, natives, Turks, etc. The relocation of the prison is the instant when Bayrampaşalıs perceived success on the route to belonging. After the position of victimization for being stranger, for the disease and for the prison, they oscillate to a sovereign position. Their answers are closely related with the global transformation of the city and its sociological repercussions within the society. Obviously, the process of globalization has certain implications on the localities and “globalization entails the reconstruction and ‘the production of “home”, “community” and “locality””<sup>179</sup> Thus, the main focus of this chapter is to understand their Turkification and its relations with the global city and the globalization. I will try to present what possibilities they attain in the process of becoming native, by making use of the imaginations of the global city. My basic data will be on the practices and the speeches of Bayrampaşa municipality. I will also make use of the interviews that I have conducted with the municipality attendants.

First of all, I need to clarify why I give this much importance to the deeds of the municipality of Bayrampaşa. I argue that the peripheral position of Bayrampaşa is closely related to this. The modern middle class in the city is less interested in the local politics, albeit the groups living in the peripheries of the city

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<sup>179</sup> Robertson, R. (1995) “Globalisation or Glocalisation?” *Journal of International Communication*, vol. 1, pp. 33-52

are much more involved in the local politics.<sup>180</sup> This divergence is because the state institutions connived with the *gecekondu* districts in their earlier period. The state institutions were opened in a relatively late period and in spite of this, the municipalities were established in these districts. Of course Bayrampaşa is different from other squatter districts because they had the title deeds of their houses and they had a legal base for their existence in the region. At the same time, as a result of the existence of the prison, the electricity, the state institutions (i.e. the state hospital) were brought to Bayrampaşa in a relatively earlier period than the other squatters. In spite of all these, Bayrampaşa municipality (in 1963) was established in an earlier time and the municipality attributed the role of representing the residents of this squatter area.<sup>181</sup> This historical aspect of the local politics in Bayrampaşa gives an important role to the municipality in producing discourses and policies on Bayrampaşa. Besides, with the new legal acts on the local administrations, strengthened the political positions of the municipalities and at the same time give them the opportunity to become social service suppliers. All these things are improved the position of the municipalities in the periphery. Thus, I will try to analyze the transformation in Bayrampaşa around the discourses and practices of Bayrampaşa municipality.

In parallel with the global developments, Istanbul has been in a very rapid transformation process since 1990s. At the beginning of 1990s, while the debates on İstanbul were mainly about how to become a global city, there was not even a congress center in İstanbul. As in the other globalizing cities of the third world, “Istanbul also experienced the shock of rapid integration into transnational networks and markets and has witnessed the emergence of new social groups since the

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<sup>180</sup> Köksal, S. (1993) “Küresel Düzlemde Yeni Eğilimler”, İstanbul, vol. 7: pp. 50-55, p. 52

<sup>181</sup> [www.bayrampasa.gov.tr](http://www.bayrampasa.gov.tr)

1980s”<sup>182</sup> and yet, at the end of the first decade of the 2000s, İstanbul was, without question, already a global city. According to Keyder and Öncü, “urban growth coalitions in İstanbul have been committed to the image of the global city as an ideal and a project, with policies aimed at making İstanbul a gentrified city pleasing to the tourist gaze.” They have sought to “accelerate de-industrialization or, more accurately, the expulsion of manufacturing, while promoting service sector investments, preferably oriented to the global market”<sup>183</sup> The articulations of globalization in the city composed many social, economical, financial, cultural, commercial preconditions. The economic aspects of the transformation are evident in the relocation of the large scale industry out of the city and the service sector expanded, several shopping malls were opened. İstanbul became a city that can self-market itself and make advantage of its social and cultural characteristics in the global audio-visual stage.<sup>184</sup> İstanbul hosts many international organizations from F1 Grand Prix to art festivals, bienal, international congresses, etc. As Öncü expounds, “most of the physical transformation associated with globalization in İstanbul has taken place since the mid-1980s: gated communities, five-star hotels, the city packaged as a consumption artifact for tourists, new office towers, expulsion of small business from the central districts, beginnings of gentrification of the old neighborhoods, and world images on billboards and shop windows”<sup>185</sup> Besides, the globalization process determines the urban perception in İstanbul. The globalization of the city leads to the various formulations of the city by different groups according

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<sup>182</sup> Keyder (2005)

<sup>183</sup> Keyder and Oncu (1993)

<sup>184</sup> Öncü, Ayşe, (1992) “İstanbul’u Nasıl Anlamalı”, İstanbul, 2, July, s. 73

<sup>185</sup> Öncü, A. (1997) “The myth of the ideal home travels across cultural borders to İstanbul” In A. Oncu and P. Weyland (eds.), *Space, culture and power: new identities in globalizing cities*, Zed Books, London

to their identities.<sup>186</sup> In Bayrampaşa, the desire to become a global city presents them the possibility to “become native” to the migrant groups. Because a global city gathers the ethnic and cultural origins together and integrate them to an economical network. The dream of becoming a global city promises the economic prosperity, social status, prestige, etc. to the middle class groups.

The debate about the globalization of İstanbul has been enured to the peripheral districts of the city and it sets the template of the urban perception. This explains the transformation process in Bayrampaşa. At the beginning of 1990s, the globalization was taken as a strategy to transform the center, whereas now the local administrations of the districts in the peripheries of İstanbul can imagine the globalization, independent from the metropolitan policies, mentioning the globalization or becoming a global city. Bayrampaşa in my opinion, the most suitable place we can observe this situation, without question. This is evident in most of the discourses and practices of the Bayrampaşa municipality. For instance, the mayor Hüseyin Bürge expresses his projections for the future of Bayrampaşa:

We are preparing Bayrampaşa for the celebration of the 101th year of our republic. From now on, there should be national and international smokeless industry in Bayrampaşa. We say here should be a center of commerce and we have achieved these ends with your support. You will be able to climb the ladder of a career with the help of the training you acquired here. You have elected us for 4 terms as your servants. And we promise that we will represent you for every matter. A lively, human oriented mentality of municipality is our mission and we will achieve our objectives with our youth. They (our youth) are every thing for us<sup>187</sup>. (3-1)

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<sup>186</sup> Aksoy and Robins, (1993) “İstanbul’da Dinleme Zamanı”, İstanbul, 7, October 1993, pp 56-61

<sup>187</sup> Cumhuriyetimizin 101. kuruluş yılına hazırlıyoruz Bayrampaşamızı. Artık Bayrampaşa’da dumansız sanayi olmalı, yerli- yabancı sanayi olmalı diyoruz. Artık ticaret merkezi olmalı diyoruz, ve bugün bunların hepsini başardık sayenizde. Şimdi, bu eğitimler sonucu gireceğiniz işlerde, azmederek, yavaş yavaş yükseleceğinize yürekten inanıyorum. Sizler, bizleri, hizmet için 4 dönemdir hamalınız seçtiniz. Bizler de, her konuda sizlere referans olacağımıza söz veriyoruz. Canlı eksenli, insan merkezli bir belediyeçilik anlayışıyla, hedeflerimize, gençlerimizle ulaşacağız. Onlar bizim her şeyimiz.  
[www.bayrampasa.bel.tr](http://www.bayrampasa.bel.tr)

In the last part of the previous chapter, I have tried to mention that they transformed the old prison building as an entertainment park. My focus is on how did the Ramadan festivities in the old prison played a role in the appropriation of a sovereign position, instead of a subordinate one, within the oscillation of belonging in Bayrampaşa. Since the migration, this migrant group was striving to become native, yet most of their attempts to become proper citizens they failed several times. The story of the title deeds, the cholera epidemic and the prison prove my assertion. I argue that they found the key for becoming native, with the globalization. The image of a globalizing İstanbul promises them a future projection of belonging to the nation and a middle class life style. It also allows them to depict themselves without concealing their Balkan origins. For that matter, I will analyze the effects of the global transformation in Bayrampaşa from two different aspects. These are the economic and cultural aspects of the transformation. With these aspects, I aim to demonstrate the activities of the municipality in order to be a part of a globalized İstanbul. It is very important to keep in mind that these practices are for the purpose of adopting a sovereign position.

#### Economic aspects

It is necessary to think on the economic dimension of the district life in order to understand the contemporary reflections of the global transformation on Bayrampaşa. The place had been designated for a long time and until recently as a district whose dwellers coming from working class. Those who work in the large line

between Topkapi and Eyüp resided in Bayrampaşa<sup>188</sup>. However, in parallel with the withdrawal of large industry to the periphery of the urban sphere, those large scaled factories were replaced by small or medium scaled workshops. According to the report by the head office of the district (Kaymakamlık), the workshops employing 1-9 workers comprise the majority of the production in Bayrampaşa<sup>189</sup>. Despite this fact, the 34% of all people in Bayrampaşa is categorized wage-laborer<sup>190</sup>.

Unfortunately we have no sufficient data to deduce what proportion of the population is employed in industry and what proportion in the service sector.

Nonetheless my field research left me the impression that the service sector and commercial enterprises composes a large portion for the income of the inhabitants.

Departing from the data provided by the head office of the district, the main share of the economic activities in the district belongs to the small scale retailing (%55). Out of the retail trade, the units employing 1-3 workers keep nearly 79% of the sector.

This retail trade mostly consists of food sector. After the food sector, the retail trade of furniture and accessories is the second major branch of trade in Bayrampaşa<sup>191</sup>.

That two large centers of the wholesale reside in the district is another reason that Bayrampaşa has a central position in trade networks. These are İstanbul Marketplace of Vegetables and Fruits (İstanbul Sebze ve Meyve Hali) and Megacenter (İstanbul Gıda Toptancıları İmalat Sanayi ve Depocuları Toplu İşyeri Yapı Kooperatifi).

İstanbul Chamber of Commerce has a service centre within the building of Bayrampaşa Municipality. Hüseyin Bürge, the mayor of Bayrampaşa, explains this centre as the outcome of their ambition to facilitate the conduct of business matters

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<sup>188</sup> Bilgin and Karaören, (1993) “İkili Yapıda Bir Şehir, *İstanbul*, vol. 7, October, pp. 36-39, p. 36

<sup>189</sup> [www.bayrampasa.gov.tr](http://www.bayrampasa.gov.tr)

<sup>190</sup> These are the datas of 1990. This was before the period of Kurdish migration to the district. Kurds who came to Bayrampaşa in the 1990’s work in small scale industrial enterprises.

<sup>191</sup> [www.bayrampasa.gov.tr](http://www.bayrampasa.gov.tr)

for the entrepreneurs of Bayrampaşa<sup>192</sup>. During my field work, it was an apparent fact for me that the commercial activities are very important in the economy of Bayrampaşa.

The economic structure of the district, which I have tried to depict above, resulted in the transformation of socio-economic identities in the district from the working classes in the 1970s to the middle classes of the 2000s. Yet it needs to be stated that the inauguration of FDIs (Foreign Direct Investments) in Bayrampaşa have already started to disquiet the local inhabitants due to the fact that the middle class life style in Bayrampaşa heavily depends on the small scale retail which is now challenged by the foreign enterprises. Today the international capital invests in many huge shopping centers including Bauhaus, Carrefourre, İKEA, and Forum İstanbul the construction of which was still ongoing during the period I have written this thesis and it is about to be the second largest closed shopping mall in the Europe. The monumental shopping malls are the necessary ornaments for a global city<sup>193</sup>. On the other side of the coin, these shopping malls have deleterious effects on the small scale retailing activities. This is especially relevant for the furniture sector whose existence is now at the edge of total disappearance for being unable to compete with İKEA. One small scale retailer in Bayrampaşa recounts the predicaments caused by large shopping malls as following:

We have been here for last fifteen years and strived to serve the people here with all that we have. After the advent of shopping malls our business was deteriorated to the limits. Not only us that have lost so much but all the sectors and all the people. We are to complain these malls... They have to be removed to the outer sphere of the city. There were the people who shop on credit; we

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<sup>192</sup> “Bayrampaşa Municipality, 5th year brochure, p. 64

<sup>193</sup> Diren, Murat, “İstanbulun Bilinci Belirleyici Olacak”, İstanbul, 7, October 1993, pp. 40-49

were to give them what they need and they were to repay after a month. Now these people go to the malls thanks to credit cards. And we watch... These malls have no benefits in employment either. How many people from Bayrampaşa are employed in them? I am neither convinced that they were inspected properly. Maybe they are paying taxes less than we are<sup>194</sup>. (3-2)

Notwithstanding the fact that the small scale retailers have been negatively influenced by the large shopping malls, many of my informants assert that these malls ameliorated the image of Bayrampaşa in the eyes of people and large amount of people around İstanbul constantly comes to the district and now knows Bayrampaşa better and more correctly, which is, as argued by all my informants, in contrast to the previous periods. We can affirm this statement in a certain sense: the shopping malls gave the opportunity to the district municipality to present Bayrampaşa as a global city and a part of the world known in TV. Forum İstanbul is a significant example for the further analysis of our concerns, especially the economic dimension of the global transformation of Bayrampaşa. Following Harvey, I propose to construe Forum İstanbul as the product of the postmodern conceptualization of space. According to Harvey, “modernism approached to space as a malleable category which is to be shaped in accord with the social projects. On the other hand, the cultural logic of late capitalism sees space as something independent of any social project but subject to the aesthetic whims and impulses”<sup>195</sup>. Harvey’s conviction discloses the ‘iconography’ of the new capitalism, which I tried to point above. Forum İstanbul is the typical edifice of the articulation of the global city. Because Forum İstanbul is not an ordinary shopping mall. It is planned to be a complex constructed upon an area of 495,000 square meters and

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<sup>194</sup> Ahmet Çilesiz, Bayrampaşa Gündem, 5-20 February 2008, “Hipermarketler esnafı nasıl etkiledi?” pp. 6-7

<sup>195</sup> Harvey, D. (1989) *The Condition of Postmodernity*, Oxford: Blackwell, p. 66

thought to be a center of entertainment, shopping, culture and art activities, and a tourist attracter. Nearly 8,000 square meters of the complex allocated to a huge aquarium and its uniqueness in the county has been specifically emphasized. Additionally, there will be a ferris wheel whose diameter is 65 m in order to present to the guests a complete view of İstanbul. In the website of Forum İstanbul, the shopping mall is advertised as:

...with the exotic, exciting and entertaining activities which will be performed by national and foreign groups, Forum İstanbul is going to be center of attraction...  
Forum İstanbul will be the host for fascinating shows of water plays that will surprise the spectators, for the special concepts for the New Year, and for the art works as the other shopping malls and residences offers .(3-3)

From this perspective, Forum İstanbul seems the embodiment of the dream of global city for Bayrampaşa. It will be possible to find everything from art to entertainment, from shopping to tourism et cetera. It is expected that there will be an impending need of qualified labor force for such an exhaustive and large global islet. This kind of labor force requires a certain level of training for it is stated that the mall will be a sign of quality. As it was mentioned in the debates at the beginning of the 1990s, the unqualified migrant labor force in the cities was unable to provide the need of the expanding service sector. Diren asserts that one of the main problems of the city is the unqualified marginal population and for him there should be a plan to rapidly increase the capacity of this population.<sup>196</sup> According to him, the marginal groups are the people living in the old squatter neighborhoods which are now apartmentalized. When Diren wrote the mentioned article, the term “varoş” was not commonly used. This term became prevalent after the 1 May demonstrations in 1996. The demonstrators destroyed the tulips in the boulevard and the press

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<sup>196</sup> Diren (1993), p. 47

represented this as the “anger of the *varoş*”<sup>197</sup> and the word is identified with crime and marginalization. Even though he did not use the word *varoş*; he meant a similar meaning. Likewise, Bayrampaşa was an old slum and in order to attract the attention of the capital, they encountered the problem of educating the unqualified population for the service sector. Forum İstanbul, for example is planning to employ 3000 workers. Bayrampaşa Municipality and Forum İstanbul associated for the purpose of educating the workers inhabiting in Bayrampaşa. The education program is named as the “the retail sale training for employees”.

The requirements for the eligibility for the program were to reside in Bayrampaşa, being between 16 and 35 year-old, graduated at least from middle school, and unemployed. 3069 people applied to the program and 686 of them obtained a certificate after 2 days training. I infer from the titles of the courses that these courses are far from aiming to provide the attendants with technical proficiency but with the basic knowledge of service sector. The titles of the courses are considerably meaningful in this sense: “Shopkeeping as a vocation,” “discipline in business,” “the basics of perfect customer services,” “welcoming costumers,” “smiling at the service,” “image,” “introduction to the product knowledge,” “concluding the sale,” “appropriate parting.” It is stated that Forum Istanbul will give priority for those who have the certificate in employing people. In stating his happiness about the training activities in Bayrampaşa, the mayor Bürge explicates his projection about the economy of the district and the ongoing effects of globalization therein.

We are working for being worthy to 2010 European Cultural Capital, İstanbul. The next to that which is Turkey’s largest and

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<sup>197</sup> Erman, T (2001). The Politics of Squatter (Gecekonu) Studies in Turkey: Changing Representations of Rural Migrants in the Academic Discourse, *Urban Studies*, Vol. 38(7): 983-1002

Europe's second largest food and commerce centre, Mega Center, there will be Forum İstanbul. It will host 7 thousand square meter sea aquarium, Madam Tusso Museum. In addition to that, there are IKEA and Praktiker shopping malls. On the other hand, there will be a show tent with a capacity of 8 thousand people, a park with a Disneyland theme, Crown Plaza (4 stars Congress Center), Holiday Inn Hotel with 3 stars, and the biggest outlet shopping center of İstanbul. The whole complex will be finished in May 2010. When all these projects are finalized, over 10 thousand unemployed people of Bayrampaşa will be employed and İstanbul's vision of being Cultural Center will be furnished.<sup>198</sup> (3-4)

In addition to the aforementioned training program, Bayrampaşa Centre of Youth (BAYGEM) also conducts projects with respect to the burgeoning need for "qualified" employees. For example, in activities like "Career Workshop" held by BAYGEM, the top executive staffs of various companies inform young attendants about the business life. The attendants have also got certificates for the workshop<sup>199</sup>.

#### Cultural Aspects

In the process of the globalization of the city, there is an important emphasis on the cultural features of the city. As I mentioned above, one of the characteristics of contemporary capitalism is its permeation with cultural or symbolic contents.<sup>200</sup>

Thus, the cultural aspects compose the image of a city. It also avails the city to be

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<sup>198</sup> Bayrampaşa'nın 2010 Avrupa Kültür Başkenti olan İstanbul'a yakışır bir hale gelmesi için çalışıyoruz. Türkiye'nin ilk ve Avrupa'nın ikinci büyük gıda ve ticaret merkezi olma özelliğini taşıyan Mega Center'ın yanındaki alana, yine Avrupa'nın en büyük alışveriş merkezlerinden Forum İstanbul adlı tesis içinde 7 bin metre kare deniz akvaryumu, Madam Tusso Müzesi gibi önemli bölümler de yer alan IKEA ve Praktiker alışveriş merkezi faaliyete geçti. Öte yandan Bauhaus ve CarrefourSa'nın bulunduğu araziye Maydanos Showland'den daha büyük, 8 bin kişilik bir gösteri çadırı, Disneyland tarzı temalı bir park, dört yıldızlı bir Crowne Plaza (Kongre merkezi), üç yıldızlı bir Holiday Inn otel ile İstanbul'un en büyük Outlet satış merkezi'nin yer alacağı büyük bir kompleks inşa edilecek. Kompleks, 2010 yılının Mayıs ayında tamamlanacak ve hizmete girecek. Bütün bu projeler gerçekleşince 10 binin üzerinde işsizimize istihdam sağlayacak ve İstanbul'un Kültür Başkenti vizyonuna önemli katkılar sağlayacak.  
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<sup>199</sup> [www.bayrampasa.bel.tr](http://www.bayrampasa.bel.tr)

<sup>200</sup> Scott, Allen (2001) "Capitalism, Cities, and the Production of Symbolic Forms", *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series*, Vol. 26, No. 1, pp. 11-23, p. 11

differentiated from several other resembling global cities.<sup>201</sup> Presently, the cities need to have constituted their own identities. For this reason the culture centers, entertainment parks, shopping centers are designed to demonstrate local patterns in order to be marketed in the international arena<sup>202</sup>. In other words, the city is adorned with the cultural features in order to appropriate an image and an identity. This adornment is sometimes provided with ethnic diversity or sometimes with historical legacy. In the global cities of the third world countries like İstanbul, this trend inevitably tends to be in an orientalist manner. The insistence on representing İstanbul as a cultural mosaic in order to emphasize the ethnic pluralism is the embodiment of the same trend. Obviously, this is a strategy of marketing İstanbul in the world. In addition, the analogy of ethnic and cultural mosaic is highly ideological and it conceals the antagonism of the clashes on the ethnic minorities in Turkey. Whereas, the marketing experts of the city envisages what a global city requires and use it with a view to attract the attention of the global audiences. We can consider the ceremonies of the conquest of İstanbul as a symptom of this mentality. These ceremonies are the recall of the Ottoman legacy and they are gradually becoming as splendid activities. I argue that these are closely related to the concern of constituting an image and an identity to the city. For Harvey, the city of postmodern times gathers many different elements in a schizophrenic way and normalizes this bizarre palimpsest. The advertisement video of İstanbul in which “the janissaries and the *semazens* were flying over the sky on the Bosphorous Bridge” is an example of this schizophrenic state. The film was produced by the Ministry of Tourism.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Diren (1993) , p. 44

<sup>202</sup> Hartman and Carnochan (2002) p. 30; Aksoy and Robins (1993) p. 58

<sup>203</sup><http://www.kultur.gov.tr/TR/BelgeGoster.aspx?F6E10F8892433CFFFE5C29E16A7D3808B0B3F062CA1037C7>

We need to examine how did this transformation process effect Bayrampaşa and how did it reverberated in this district. İstanbul's globalization project defined İstanbul as a mosaic and different groups in the city try to formulate and disclose their identities and images compatible with the metropolitan projections.<sup>204</sup> Bayrampaşa, in this respect, utilizes the Balkan identity and the district represents itself with this Balkan image. Obviously, this is a shift in the way of representing Bayrampaşa because, as I have told in the previous chapters, up until now the Balkan origins had not been used in the public for representation. They already faced with exclusion and prejudices because of their Balkan origins, especially in the first years of migration. Today, not only people of Bayrampaşa, but also the local and the national media represent Bayrampaşa with the Balkan image. With the discourse of properness, Bayrampaşa is displayed as a desirable place for the middle-class life style. This is related to the proliferation of the people who recall their Balkan origins and express them publicly, at the beginning of 2000s. Many people declared that their families were *muhacir*, many memoirs were published, having Balkan origins presented as a worthwhile and legitimate identity<sup>205</sup>. The TV series, "Farewell Rumelia" (Elveda Rumeli) for example is the first representation of the Balkan characters in the popular media. This TV show became very popular and as a result of this popularity, the touristic visits to Balkan countries exploded.<sup>206</sup> Certainly, this trend influenced the transformation of the image of Bayrampaşa in recent times. As I mentioned many times in this chapter, the most important actor in

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<sup>204</sup> Aksoy and Robins (1993), p. 59

<sup>205</sup> There are several evidences for this proliferation, these can be some examples: Berkan, İ, "Annem Muazzez Aruoba...", *Radikal*, 13.05.2006; Özkök, E. "Cumartesi Günü Bir Oyum Olsaydı", *Hürriyet*, 23.06.2005; Yamaç, Z. (2007) Mehmet Balkan Muhaciri, Heyamola Yayınları, İstanbul

<sup>206</sup> <http://www.medyafaresi.com/haber/26555/televizyon-elveda-rumeliyi-izleyenler-balkan-turuna-cikiyor.html>

this process is Bayrampaşa Municipality and it plays an important role in the cultural representation of Bayrampaşa.

The most significant activity of the municipality is the “Blessing Convoy” (Bereket Konvoyu) that is organized in Ramadan. Every year (since 2005) a convoy of trucks were sent to Balkan countries from Bayrampaşa. These trucks are loaded with food and these are served as *iftar* to Muslims living in those countries. Mayor Bürge defines the aim to the convoy;

Nearly 40% of the population of Bayrampaşa is comprised of the citizens whose place of origin is Balkans. Taking this trait of Bayrampaşa as a point of departure, we embraced the mission of strengthening and invigorating our bounds with Balkans rather than letting them forgotten and erased. Therefore we will continue our project of “Ramadan in Balkans”, the first of which was held in 2005, by enriching the project.<sup>207</sup> (3-5)

Along with large trucks carrying food in the Blessing Convoy (Bereket Konvoyu), there was also a car which did broadcast live in the cities that they stopped by. Especially Islamic media displayed great affection and concern for the Convoy and these media channels made a bridge between Balkans and Bayrampaşa as it is stated by my informants. Rumeli TV, which is watched by those who are Balkan in origin, had a significant function during the time. The municipality published a book and produced a DVD, which is named “The Neighbor Cuisine” and contains recipes from the visited cities. In the introductory part of the book, it is underlined that some of the recipes are already parts of the contemporary food culture of the district. Having emphasized the fact that some of the recipes are forgotten, it is mentioned that it was

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<sup>207</sup> İlçe nüfusunun yaklaşık yüzde 40’ını Balkanlardan göçen vatandaşlarımız oluşturmaktadır. Biz Bayrampaşa’nın bu yapısal özelliğini bir çıkış noktası olarak değerlendirip, bu coğrafyayla aramızdaki derin tarihin ve kültürel bağların çürüyüp gitmesine göz yummak yerine bu bağları güçlendirmeyi, sağlamlaştırmayı en önemli görevimiz olarak kabul ettik. Bu sebeple birincisini 2005 yılında gerçekleştirdiğimiz “Balkanlarda Ramazan” projesini 2008 yılında da daha zenginleştirerek sürdürüyoruz.

necessary to publish the book. For this reason, the people had seen the convoy an opportunity to resuscitate the customs and culture of long forgotten mother lands. However we have to mention that the revival of the memories of homeland was concomitant with the proclamation of existing citizenship. The municipal authorities paid a visit to Ankara, to the President Gül, and gave him an oil paint depicting the Mostar Bridge. Despite the fact that the visits to Balkan cities are predominantly culture-oriented, there were also some political objectives. The State Minister Egemen Bağış pointed that the projects about Balkans conducted by Bayrampaşa Municipality are contributory for Turkey's admission process to the EU. In this line of policy, Bayrampaşa municipality has a large package concerning Balkans. There is a Balkan Culture Central in the district. There is also Bosnian and Albanian language courses in the Youth Center so "the grandfather and grandchild can be intimate easily."<sup>208</sup> It is also unconventional that a new park in Bayrampaşa has been named "Adem Yaşari", one of the founding members of the UÇK<sup>209</sup>. Moreover the most iconographic image of the Balkan identity in Bayrampaşa is an overpass, planned as Mostar Bridge;

Through the project "Ramadan in Balkans" conducted by Bayrampaşa Municipality in Balkan region, our historical and cultural ties with the region were resurrected. We have witnessed how the people there identify themselves with Turkey and how they embrace our common historical legacy. It has been clearer that how much we have in common with the people from Bosnia, İşkodra, Pirlepe and Gümülçine. Thus we are bringing to Bayrampaşa a historical monument that all the people from Hakkari to Bosnia shares, namely The Bridge of Mostar. We will build a copy of the Bridge of Mostar on the Avenue of 50<sup>th</sup> Year as an immortal signature of the fraternity between us.<sup>210</sup> (3-6)

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<sup>208</sup> "dede ile torun arasında rahatça halleşebilmeleri için"

<sup>209</sup> "Kosova'ya selam olsun! Şehit Adem Yaşari Parkı", Bayrampaşa Municipality 5th year brochure, p.10

<sup>210</sup> ibid, p. 45; Bayrampaşa Belediye'sinin Balkanlar'da yürüttüğü "Balkanlarda Ramazan" projesi ile bu coğrafya ile aramızda var olan derin tarihi ve kültürel bağlar yeniden canlandı. Bu yolculuklar sırasında, insanların ortak tarihi mirasa ne kadar sahip çıktıklarına, kendilerini Türkiye ile nasıl bütünleştirdiklerine şahid oldu. Saraybosna'da İşkodra'ya,

Mostar Bridge is a well-known icon in Turkish public. It has a lot of historical and geographical meanings. Its image brings back the memories of the Bosnian War and the massacres. Besides, in another level, it recalls the Ottoman existence in Balkans. Yet, more than all these meanings, it is a Bosnian figure that whenever/wherever it is seen, it illustrates a Balkan image; in other words it is a Balkan figure. Bringing a model of it to Bayrampaşa as an overpass is obviously related with the image-making of Bayrampaşa. Bayrampaşa Municipality expects to represent Bayrampaşa as a Balkan sub-center of İstanbul, with its Balkan themed parks, Mostar Overpass, Balkan Culture Center, etc. What makes this expectation possible is an important feature of globalization (or postmodernity): Time and space compression.

In the postmodernist era, the experience of ‘space and time’ is an important mediating link between the “dynamism of capitalism’s historical-geographical development and complex processes of cultural production and ideological transformation”.<sup>211</sup> Giddens<sup>212</sup> explains space and time compression in terms of two processes; ‘distanciation’ and ‘disembedding’. Distanciation refers to “the conditions under which time and space are organised so as to connect presence and absence”<sup>213</sup>, while disembedding concerns the ways in which social relations are lifted out of their

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Pirlepe’den Gümülcine’ye kadar bütün kentlerde yaşayan insanlarla; ortak geçmişi paylaştığımız, onlarla bir komşu, bir akraba, bir aile, hasılı kardeş olduğumuz daha da belirginleşti. Bütün bu gerçeklerden hareketle, Hakkari’den Saraybosna’ya kadar uzanan bu coğrafya üzerinde yaşayan insanların, üzerinde tereddütsüz ittifak ettiği önemli bir tarihi varlığı, bir şaheseri; Mostar Köprüsü’nü Bayrampaşa’ya taşıyoruz. Mostar Köprüsünün bir maketini, aramızda var olan kardeşlik bağlarının ölümsüz bir simgesi olarak, 50. Yıl Caddesi üzerinde inşa ediyoruz.

<sup>211</sup> Harvey (1989) p. viii

<sup>212</sup> Giddens (1990)

<sup>213</sup> ibid. p. 14

local contexts and restructured “across indefinite spans of time-space”<sup>214</sup>

Additionally, according to Harvey, “time-space compression has ‘undermined older material and territorial definitions of place’. The ‘collapse of spatial boundaries’ has crucial consequences for the relationship between general processes and individual understandings since there is a ‘renewed emphasis upon the interrogation of metaphorical and psychological meanings’ leading to ‘new material definitions of place by way of exclusionary territorial behaviour’<sup>215</sup>.” The construction of Mostar Bridge in Bayrampaşa is an indication of space and time compression, in the sense that it is lifted from its local contexts and is restructured in Bayrampaşa with a totally new meaning. This provides the possibility of piling different layers of history and territories at this point of the global city.

In this chapter, I have tried to designate some symptoms of the globalization process in Bayrampaşa. I have illustrated the debates of global city and their repercussions in İstanbul. My claim is that, with the influences of these debates, Bayrampaşalılar may imagine becoming a part of the global city.

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<sup>214</sup> *ibid.* p. 21

<sup>215</sup> Harvey (1993) p. 4

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

In this study, I have analyzed how the sense of locality and belonging to a place is produced among a Yugoslav migrant group. I have structured an oscillatory movement within the narratives of the people of Bayrampaşa. The oscillation occurs between “the subordinate position” and “the sovereign position”. In the first chapter, I have tried to reveal the ethnographic experiences of this thesis; the process that led me to focus on the current study. In my opinion, this ethnographic experience is very important, so long as the path of this study is modified several times in accordance with the ethnographic research. This thesis focuses on a transformation of a district of İstanbul and obviously, many studies about transformation processes are retrospective, they examine the processes, afterwards. I feel myself very lucky that I had I chance to experience the transformation, while it was taking place. When I started to the research, the prison was in use; however I observed its relocation and the following circumstances. This is an invaluable experience for the writer of thesis to be an eyewitness of a transformation.

In the second chapter of this thesis, I focused the historical issues, which are very important in the structuring of an identity of being from Bayrampaşa. This chapter focuses on two important problems that Bayrampaşa had. These are the migration and title deeds, and the cholera epidemic. These two events played a very important role in the construction of the sense of locality in Bayrampaşa. The outbreak of the cholera epidemic was in 1970 and unfortunately, the first cases were seen in Bayrampaşa (or with its old name, Sağmalcılar). With the disease, people living in Sağmalcılar were suddenly stigmatized and seen as the carriers of the

disease. As a result of this stigmatization, the name of the district is changed from Sağmalcılar to Bayrampaşa, in order to erase the stigmatization. I found a similar pattern in the narrativization of these two important issues -the title deeds and the cholera epidemic-. Both events were being narrativized in two separate positions. One was to some extent a submissive position without any claim of agency. In this position, the narrator grounded the unwanted event with “bad luck”, or “bad intentions of other people”. The second position was somewhat a ‘sovereign’ position, that the person claims an agency and positions him/herself in a potent condition. In this sense, the identity of being from Bayrampaşa is constructed within the oscillation between these two different but related positions. As I told above, my first concerns in the field was about the prison house. After I conceptualize the oscillatory structure in order to examine the history of the district, I will deal with the issue of the prison within the same structure. The relocation of the prison is an important corner stone, since it opened a space for new demands and desires. Clearly, Bayrampaşa has been through a transformation there are several symptoms of this transformation. Thus, in this thesis, I will try to consider the oscillatory movement with the debates on the global city. I will try to illustrate the debates of global city and their repercussions in İstanbul and Bayrampaşa. My claim is that, with the influences of the debates on globalization, Bayrampaşalıs might imagine becoming a part of the global city and obtaining a permanent sovereign position.

## APPENDIXES



Fig. 1. A picture from the municipality 5th year brochure



Fig. 2. A picture from the municipality 5th year brochure



Fig. 3. The Martyr Ahmet Yaşari Park

1943... 1944... 1945...  
GEMERLERİN  
HEP SİYAHINI  
LİK İÇİ.  
**ATOM**  
TRAS BİÇANLARIN  
RÜLLANMI  
İÇİ İZALANSA  
TRASINI  
RANAT OLSON

# Cumhuriyet

Kurucusu: KURTULUŞ NADİ

47. yıl sayı : 16604

Ticari ve matbuat adresi: Cumhuriyet Yolu No 96  
Ticari Adres: 34 41 00 - 22 43 00 - 23 45 00

İstanbul No 96  
E: 07 - 32 43 00 - 22 43 00

16 Ekim Cuma 1970

**İSLAM ANSİKLOPEDİSİ**  
Fahrihin 10.000  
Bütün İslamın en büyük eseridir. 100 ciltte yayınlanmıştır. 1. cilti İstanbul'da yayınladık. 2. cilti İstanbul'da yayınladık. 3. cilti İstanbul'da yayınladık. 4. cilti İstanbul'da yayınladık. 5. cilti İstanbul'da yayınladık. 6. cilti İstanbul'da yayınladık. 7. cilti İstanbul'da yayınladık. 8. cilti İstanbul'da yayınladık. 9. cilti İstanbul'da yayınladık. 10. cilti İstanbul'da yayınladık.

**HASTALIK TEŞHİS EDİLDİ**

**KOLERA**

**ÖLÜ SAYISI 14'E, TEDAVİ ALTINDAKİLER 500'E ÇIKTI. AŞI KAMPANYASI AÇILIYOR**



**KOLERAYA KARŞI ALINACAK TEDBİRLER**

Kolera hastalığı için bazı tedbirler alınması gerekmektedir. Hastalığın yayılmasını önlemek için hijyenin sağlanması ve aşıların yapılması önemlidir.

**Bir Rus yolcu uçağı Trabzon'a kaçırıldı**

**Hostesi öldüren Rus baba-oğlu, 2 pilotla telsizciyi yaraladı. 46 yolcu ve uşak, iade ediyor**

**CUMHURİYET HABER SERVİSİ**

Rusya'dan İstanbul'a gelen bir Rus yolcu uçağı Trabzon'a kaçırıldı. Uçakta bulunan 46 yolcu ve uşak, iade ediyor. Hostesi öldüren Rus baba-oğlu, 2 pilotla telsizciyi yaraladı.

Fig. 4. Cumhuriyet, the cholera epidemic



Fig. 5. Cumhuriyet, the cholera epidemic



Fig. 6. Milliyet, The Prison after the Operation Back to Life





Fig. 8. *Milliyet*, Bayrampaşa Prison



Fig. 9. *Milliyet*, The Prison after the Relocation



Fig. 10. *Milliyet*, The Prison after the Relocation



Fig. 11. Ramadan Activities in the Prison



Fig. 12. Ramadan Activities in the Prison



Fig. 13. Ramadan Activities in the Prison



Fig. 14. Ramadan Activities in the Prison



Fig. 15. *Milliyet*, Ramadan Activities in the Prison



Fig. 16. The Prison after the Relocation

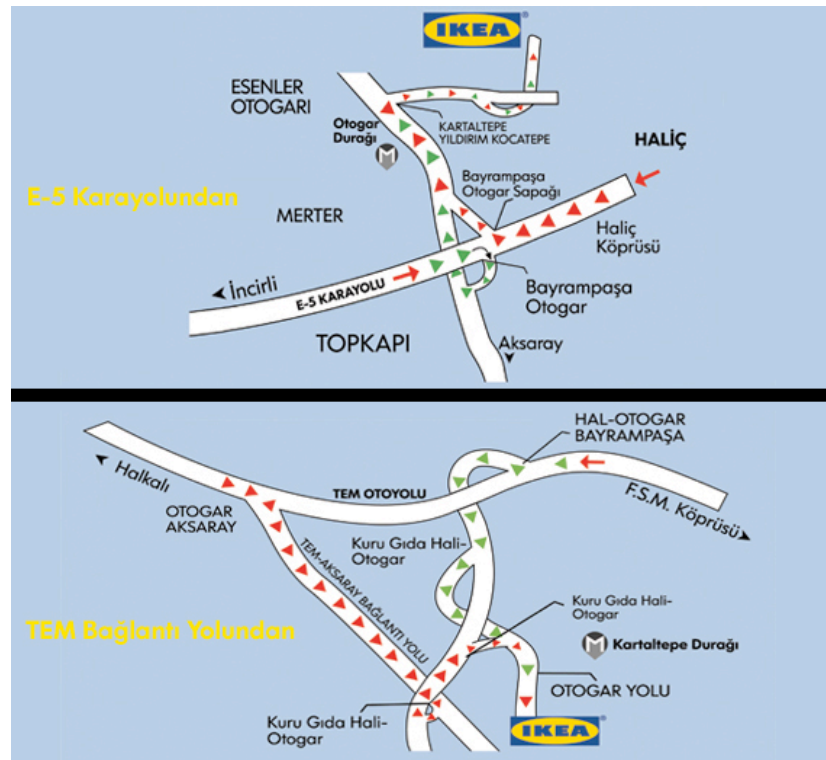


Fig. 17. IKEA

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