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UMI
SUBJECTIVE MEANING OF TORTURE AS A PREDICTOR IN
CHRONIC POST-TORTURE PSYCHOLOGICAL RESPONSE

by

MURAT PAKER

December 1999

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Political and Social Science of the
New School for Social Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Dissertation Committee:
Dr. David Shapiro
Dr. Sholomo Breznitz
Dr. William Hirst
DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Subjective meaning of torture as a predictor in chronic post-torture psychological response. Paker, Murat, Ph.D., M.D. New School for Social Research, 1999. Chair: David Shapiro, Ph.D.

This dissertation project, after conceptually delineating two types of subjective meaning of trauma, that are private and contextual, aims to explore the predictive role of contextual subjective meaning of torture (CSMT) in chronic post-torture psychological response. The project consists of two consecutive studies both of which were conducted in Turkey. Study I involved four groups: Tortured political activists (T/A, n=85), nontortured activists (n=55), nontortured nonactivists (n=55), and tortured nonactivists (T/NA, n=30). Various self- and assessor-rated instruments were used to assess the participants’ trauma history and psychopathology levels (PTSD, Anxiety, and Depression). It was hypothesized that: 1) Objective severity level of torture in T/A would be greater than that in T/NA; 2) Torture would increase the level of psychopathology in both T/A and T/NA; and 3) Paradoxically, psychopathology level in T/A would be less than that in T/NA. Results confirmed these three hypotheses. Study II, aiming to explore the role of CSMT in a more direct and in depth way, involved two groups: T/A (n=30) and T/NA (n=27). Besides the instruments used in Study I, an open-ended interview was also utilized to tap survivors' worldviews and CSMT. Based on these interviews, two new scales were devised to measure these two constructs. It was hypothesized that: 1) T/A could make sense of their torture experiences more easily than T/NA, based on deeper and more comprehensive meaning structures; 2) Torture would lead to increased
political commitment as measured by "worldview"; and 3) The less meaningful the
torture experience, the higher the psychopathology. Results, overall, confirmed these
three hypotheses. It is concluded that political activism moderates the risk for post-torture
psychopathology; and that CSMT, which is derived mainly from survivors' torture-related
worldviews, has a predictive power over post-torture psychological response.
"What is worse than torture is the silence about torture. As if torture does not exist in this society. Everybody should say 'stop' to torture."

A torture survivor

"When they were torturing me, I was thinking of the people behind those walls, outside the police station. People on the street were going about their daily business, kids were playing soccer. I could hear the voice of the city, but nobody heard me. I cried that much and nobody from outside heard me."

Another torture survivor
Dedicated to

all torture survivors,

all human rights defenders,

and

my son, Mavi,

who I hope will see a world that is free of torture.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

The psychological effects of traumatic events have long been studied. Especially during the last two decades, numerous studies have been conducted to understand the symptomatology, etiology, and effective treatment methods of post-traumatic stress responses due to various traumatic conditions. However, there have been relatively few studies on torture. Although torture is probably one of the most common traumatic events in the world, it has only recently received attention from the scientific community.

While there has more or less been a consensus on the symptomatology of post-traumatic stress, etiological accounts vary to a considerable extent. At one extreme is the "objectivist" perspective, which regards the external traumatic event or conditions as almost the sole cause of traumatic stress. Classic behaviorist and biological approaches share this basic assumption, which is heavily represented in the DSM classification systems. At the other extreme is the "subjectivist" perspective, which emphasizes the personal characteristics of the trauma survivor as the main etiological factor. Generally, psychodynamic, phenomenological and cognitive approaches share this perspective, in spite of their important differences. The debate between and within these two main camps—the objectivists and the subjectivists—has been going on for a few decades, without
reaching a reasonable solution.

State-induced torture, which is a form of political repression and violence, is the most widely encountered of the human-made traumas. It provides a unique opportunity to study the subjective meaning of trauma, especially how torture survivors perceive, process and structure their torture experience. By comparing political and non-political torture survivors, the importance of subjective meaning attributed to the trauma experience can be evaluated. This dissertation explores the role of subjective meaning of torture in the post-torture psychological response. It is based on two consecutive empirical studies both conducted in Turkey, where torture remains to be a legitimate and common, although illegal, practice of the state.

This dissertation consists of seven chapters: In the first chapter, the history, characteristics and psychological effects of torture are discussed. The second chapter provides a critical literature review on general psychotraumatology with a special emphasis on post-traumatic stress disorder and etiological concerns. The third chapter elaborates on theoretical issues and empirical research with regard to the “subjective meaning of trauma.” After the fourth chapter, which provides a brief introduction to the dissertation project and to the socio-political context in which it was conducted, the fifth and sixth chapters report the hypotheses, methodology, results and discussion of results of the dissertation studies I and II. The seventh and final chapter further elaborates study findings taken as a whole and discusses their possible implications.
CHAPTER I

TORTURE AS A TRAUMATIC EVENT

1. Brief History of Torture

The history of torture begins with ancient times. Either legally or illegally, torture has always existed as a means to punish, obtain information and confessions, and ensure order. Under the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and the Roman and Byzantine Empires, torture took place as a matter of law. Until the mid-18th century, torture was also legal in both Western and Chinese empires. In these periods, judicial convictions depended heavily on confession and eyewitness testimony; torture was used primarily to obtain testimony from unwilling suspects and witnesses, and also as a part of the penalty for extraordinary crimes (e.g., treason) (Peters, 1986). Psychological considerations are also evident in the first widely known handbook for torturers, Malleus Maleficarum [The Hammer of Witchcraft] (Sprenger & Kramer. 1486/1968). The authors of this book provided sophisticated guidelines to inquisitors investigating allegations of witchcraft. Among the interrogation methods they recommended were induction of fear and uncertainty, “good cop, bad cop” role play, the demonstration of torture instruments, to
exercise the victim’s imagination and increase terror, and the regulation of intervals of rest between torture sessions. Needless to say, these methods were listed in addition to classic, physical, and more blatant torture techniques.

The place of torture in Islamic countries was somewhat different. At least in theory, according to Islamic law, torture was illegal for obtaining testimony from suspects. Yet, at the same time, Islam legitimized the use of violent/cruel acts, which can easily be described as torture, as a means of punishment for a number of crimes. The Koran includes many detailed descriptions of violent punishment methods such as strokes (Akcam, 1992). Although illegality of torture during interrogation may be seen as an attempt to limit the arbitrary use of torture, in practice, realpolitik has always come before the legal systems. The limiting aspect of Islam with regard to torture has always been superseded by the needs of an absolutist state as in the case of Ottoman Empire, and those needs, in the eyes of rulers have always been to keep the status quo intact, by destroying the “deviant” elements of the society.

The age of Enlightenment made torture indefensible, starting from the mid-18th century, first in Western countries, and then in other parts of the world. As Foucault (1979) describes in detail, torture disappeared as a public spectacle in the 18th century. In other words, the body as the major target of penal repression disappeared. Instead, torture became an invisible part of the penal process. New technologies to inflict pain were invented and torture was reinstitutionalized behind closed doors, far from the public eye.

In the 20th century, except for a few anachronistic examples, torture has become illegal in almost all countries. Nevertheless, as an illegal practice, it has survived in the
nation-states of the modern age. The 20th century has been probably the bloodiest and cruellest period of human history, and state-induced torture has continued to be the most commonly used form of organized violence.

2. Current Prevalence of State-Induced Torture

Despite the United Nations Declaration Against Torture and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which prohibit any form of torture, the 1984 report of Amnesty International (AI) showed that since 1980 torture was a state policy in 66 countries with isolated episodes of torture being documented in an additional 32 countries. AI's 1991 Annual Report (AI, 1991a) continued to document the widespread use of torture. According to this report, 144 countries in the world abuse human rights, and at least 100 countries, including some Western European and North American countries, practice systematic torture. The most recent figures regarding the state of human rights violations worldwide provide further evidence that state-induced torture is the most commonly practiced human rights violation (AI, 1998). In 1997, at least 117 countries used torture, and in at least 47 of those countries, torture or ill-treatment, lack of medical care, or cruel, inhuman or degrading prison conditions were confirmed or suspected of leading to deaths in custody (see Table 1). It is worth noting that all of the types of human rights violations reported in Table 1, with one exception (Death penalty - active executions), were committed by Turkey, where the studies of this dissertation were conducted.
Table 1: Number of countries by region and by type of human rights violations committed in 1997.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Human Rights Abuses</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Americas</th>
<th>Asia/Pacific</th>
<th>Middle East N. Africa</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extrajudicial executions</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disappearances</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torture</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaths in custody</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prisoners of conscience</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfair trials</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detention without charge or trial</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death penalty (active executions)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death penalty (legal)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuses by armed opposition groups</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table was prepared based on the numbers AI reported in its 1998 Annual Report (AI, 1998).

In the beginning of the 1990s, there were 14 million refugees living in Western countries; 5% to 35% (700,000 to 4.9 million) of these are estimated to have been tortured (Baker, 1992). By 1995, the number of refugees worldwide has been estimated at 23 million, to which must be added some 26 million people who are displaced within their own countries (DeMartino & Buchwald, 1995). If Baker's 5% to 35% estimation of tortured people among refugees applies to the recent number (a total of 49 million people), it can be concluded that 2,450,000 to 17,150,000 of the refugees have been tortured worldwide.

When we add the non-refugee tortured population (prisoners, ex-prisoners,
detainees, ex-detainees, suspects, ex-suspects, who have not sought refuge), the real number of tortured people may be several times higher than the number of tortured refugees. In Turkey, for example, during the period from 1980 to 94, the number of persons who were tortured reached hundred thousands (Human Rights Foundation of Turkey, 1994). While this figure includes only political cases, non-political prisoners have been also reported to be at high risk (85%) for being tortured (Paker, Paker, & Yuksel, 1992).

3. Definition of Torture

Although there is no completely satisfactory definition of torture, all definitions are centered around deliberate infliction of severe pain or discomfort (Suedfeld, 1990b). The United Nations General Assembly (1984) defines torture as the intentional infliction by the agents of the state of severe physical or mental suffering. While the United Nations tends to limit the definition to agents of the state, this view is not generally taken for granted, especially by the mental health field. It is suggested that similar violent acts used by “non-governmental” political, terrorist and criminal groups, and even by individuals, should also be considered as torture (Suedfeld, 1990b)\(^1\). The most comprehensive

\(^1\) Although this report aims to focus mainly on state-induced torture, the discussion regarding the agent of torture may need more attention. It is clear that the above-mentioned non-governmental groups and even some individuals also use torture. However, the potential differences between state-induced torture and non-state torture may also be of interest. State-induced torture, of course, is far more massive than non-state torture. More important, in the case of state-induced torture, in most instances, the survivor remains within that country, constantly feels the presence of that state and feeling the continued threat of torture.
definition of torture can be found in the Tokyo Declaration of the World Medical
Association (1975): "... deliberate, systematic or wanton infliction of physical or mental
suffering by one or more persons acting alone or on the orders of any authority, to force
another person to yield information, to make a confession, or for any other reason." This
definition, too, is not absolutely clear-cut. But torture, in most cases, is starkly self-
evident.

4. Characteristics of Torture

Torture is one of the most extreme examples of absolute inequality in human
encounters. The tortured is in the hands of the torturer. To better understand the
psychological effects of torture, a brief overview of the characteristics of the tortured-
torturer (captive-captor) encounter is necessary. These characteristics can be outlined as
goals, components, targets, and techniques of torture.

The Goals of Torture

Suedfeld (1990b) classifies common motives for applying torture under five major
headings.

1. Information: Torture is used to force the captive to provide information
concerning criminal, political, or military matters of which she or he is presumed to have
knowledge.
2. **Incrimination**: The goal of torture in this instance is to force the captive to identify other individuals engaged in behaviors that the captor considers unacceptable or to confess to having engaged in such behaviors.

3. **Indoctrination**: The captor uses torture to establish conditions under which the captive will abandon previously held beliefs and attitudes and adopt others that are more acceptable to the captor.

4. **Intimidation**: Torture is used to deter the captive and others from behavior considered unacceptable by the captor. In general, the torturer ensures that the mistreatment of the detainee/prisoner is publicly known, as a means of frightening other potentially torturable individuals.

5. **Isolation**: The goal here is to convince both the captor and the captive that they have nothing in common, not even a common humanity. By dehumanizing the captive, the captor instills contempt and hatred of the group to which the prisoner belongs. The captive, on the other hand, learns the huge gap between omnipotent captors and helpless captives.

Suedfeld also lists a minor category of motivation for torture that he labels *irrational*. This includes the expression of personal sadism, a way to obtain other satisfactions (e.g., revenge or sexual satisfaction), a reflexive continuation of cultural tradition, and so forth.

Although Suedfeld's classification seems comprehensive, it omits some other
important goals of torture:

1. *Punishment*: In many cases, torture is used to punish people. This is especially common in torture of political individuals when it is known that there is no (more) information that can be obtained, when there is no expectation for collaboration, when there is no hope to indoctrinate or intimidate, and when isolation is already attained. The goal of punishment is tied to another important issue. Torturers do not act as independent agents of torture, but on behalf of the state. This implies the institutional and systemic nature of torture. Torture may be illegal, but it is certainly legitimate in the eyes of many states. Thus, some identified, deviant individuals can be punished accordingly.

Related to the institutional and systemic nature of torture, an overarching macro goal for the state in practicing torture can be identified: *To increase control in order to protect the status quo*. In this sense, torture, paradoxically, can also be seen as an indication of the powerlessness (helplessness) of the state (Arendt, 1970).

2. *Humiliation*: Humiliation is always an intrinsic goal of torture. The sense of powerlessness mentioned above leads the captors to display extreme and uncontrolled power on captives with the aim of devaluing them. To this end, captors try to make captives feel inferior and helpless. The flip side of the coin is that captors need to demonstrate their superiority and "omnipotence" to their captives.

3. *Destruction*: In the particular tortured-torturer encounter (micro level), the overarching goal of torture can be summarized as *to break down the captive’s will*
(Kordon et al., 1992) and ultimately to destroy his or her humanity (Stover & Nightingale, 1985). The aim is to make the captive surrender physically and more importantly, psychologically. Especially in some political cases, the ultimate goal of torture is to destroy the captive. The motive here is to turn the captive into a "living dead." The torture room is seen as a battlefield, and if the enemy-captive is regarded as "untreatable," then the captive should be ruined, so that he or she cannot function as previously.

The Component Characteristics of Torture

Suedfeld (1990b) defines four major components of torture:

1. Debility: The captor deliberately induces physical and mental weakness and fatigue. This is accomplished, along with more active methods of torture, by deprivation of food, water, sleep, and medical attention.

2. Dependency: The captive is made to believe that his or her fate is entirely within the hands of the captor. The captive is isolated and the acts of the captor are applied randomly. In this way, the captor attempts to breakdown the captive’s senses of predictability and controllability.

3. Dread: The captive is kept in a constant state of fear and anxiety. Many torture survivors report that the most unbearable things during or between torture sessions are: 1) not knowing what will come next (constant threat and the possibility of more torture); 2) witnessing the torture of others and even their deaths; and 3) knowing the high probability that torture or any other kind of maltreatment may occur against the captives’
relatives and friends. Torturers know these sensitivities very well and how to play them.

In general, death of a captive because of torture is exceptional. The goal is not to kill captives, but to keep them in a constant state of fear and anxiety. Although killing by torture is out of the ordinary, the number of captives killed during torture sessions is more than enough to induce a severe fear of death in captives.

4. Disorientation: The object is to arouse a state of confusion, uncertainty, and “lostness.” This issue is also directly related to the captors’ attempt to break down the captives’ senses of predictability and controllability. Captors deliberately try to surprise captives. Randomness of torture serves for this end. The goal here is to prevent the captive from developing effective coping techniques (Benfeldt-Zachrisson, 1985).

**Targets of Torture**

Although the first target of torture is the identified captive, the actual target is larger. Three more target circles can be described (in the order of significance): 1) Captives’ close relatives and friends are seen as potential “criminals” and can be prosecuted accordingly. They may also be used to induce more fear in the captive. 2) The political, ethnic, or religious group with which captives identify themselves or of which the captive is assumed to be a member is the second circle. The target here is the “dangerous” identity of the captive. 3) The society as a whole is also implicitly a target. All people are reminded that there is a possibility of torture if they go beyond certain limits. The message to society also seeks the collaboration of “ordinary” people by labeling the tortured as enemies who deserve what happens to them.
A more passive form of collaboration, in which society at large prefers to deny even the existence of torture, is also a target. The denial of the existence of torture by society is a mirror image of one of the goals of torture, namely isolation. While torturers try to isolate captives from their groups and society at large, society, in turn, tends to ignore the existence of torture. This is because should it be acknowledged that torture occurs, this is an extremely difficult phenomenon to live with, not only for the tortured, but also for the society in which it occurs. Acceptance of the existence of torture raises two conflictual possibilities: act against it or justify it. Denial, at least for some time, prevents society from having to face this conflict. Passive collaboration through denial is also directly related to the ultimate goal of all repressive regimes: depolitization.

Defining the targets of torture beyond the tortured also implies that suffering due to torture is not limited to the tortured. Torture affects the tortured in the first place, but also their children, families, relatives, friends, people who identify themselves with the attacked identity, and, finally, society at large.

**Torture Techniques**

Suedfeld (1990b) classifies torture techniques under six major headings:

1. *Active physical pain*: According to AI's (1984) list, the most common methods of torture are those that actively inflict physical pain. These include beatings, falanga, electrical torture, burning, pulling or drilling healthy teeth, the insertion of various objects into bodily orifices or under the nails, etc.
2. Passive infliction of pain: Pain is inflicted by passive means: being tied up, confined, or forced to remain in uncomfortable positions or spaces; forced violent and prolonged physical exertion; exposure to sun, cold, and rain; being tied or suspended by the hands or feet, etc.

3. Extreme exhaustion: These techniques involve forcing the prisoner to engage in strenuous physical activity until total exhaustion sets in. These include running, stationary exercises, lifting heavy weights, and spinning around until dizzy. Techniques under this heading can also take more passive forms such as deprivation of food, water, sleep, and medical care.

4. Fear induction. Some techniques are used to arouse fear of death. These include mock execution, near drowning or suffocation, having large quantities of liquid forced through the nostrils, being forced to drink large quantities of liquid, the administration of drugs that inhibit breathing or other normal bodily processes, and long periods of food and water deprivation.

5. Combined physical and mental torture. These include putting victims in completely dark or intensely lit cells without change in illumination; sleep deprivation; constant questioning; constant harassment by other prisoners; being deprived of clothing; sexual torture, including rape and the hurting or mutilation of sexual organs; and abrupt alternation between low and high stimulation, resulting in “emergence shock.”

6. Primarily mental torture: Among these are threats of death, mutilation,
castration, and indefinite captivity; forcing the prisoner to watch others being tortured or to overhear their screams (real or faked); mock executions; humiliations, such as being forced to engage in grotesque acts (e.g., eating excrement or drinking urine), or to be naked during interrogations or lineups; being given disorienting drugs or being constantly hooded or blindfolded; intense stimulus bombardment; violation of religious beliefs; devaluation of political and/or religious beliefs; being held incommunicado, solitary, and constantly in one's cell; unpredictable alternations of leniency and severity; unpredictable changes in regulations and conditions of confinement; the writing and rewriting of lengthy autobiographical confessions; forced criticism and self-criticism sessions; and withholding of information about one's family and other loved ones with knowledge that the latter are equally anxious about one's fate.

An additional category, sexual torture, should also be mentioned. Although methods of sexual torture can be classified in Suedfeld's above mentioned scheme, because of its very high intimacy level, sexual torture may need special attention. Sexual torture always includes a psychological component, and often a physical component too. Among sexual torture techniques are rape, threats of rape, fondling of genitals, electric torture to genitals, being stripped naked, sex-focused verbal abuse, twisting of testicles, etc. Sexual torture appears to be difficult to objectively define. In most instances, the subjective perception of the tortured person is crucial in deciding whether an applied torture method has a sexual component (Tasdemir, 1992).

While it may be useful to classify torture techniques for research purposes, actual
torture is experienced as a whole, not as separate methods. Also, many methods are used simultaneously. The following torture scene, actually described, is typical:

The captive is hung by his shoulders and arms. He is naked and blindfolded. Electrical torture is randomly applied through some electrodes tied to his penis and fingers. Some of the torturers, from time to time, beat him with sticks. He is constantly threatened with further torture of all kinds to himself as well as to his family and friends, unless he speaks up. He has been deprived of food, water, sleep, and medical care for some time. During the session, some of the torturers play the role of “good guys.” If they do not get any information from the captive, they suddenly become “bad guys.” At times, the captive’s testicles are twisted. The room is too cold to be naked. There is also very loud music in the room. When the music is off, the captive hears the screams of other captives being tortured in the same or nearby rooms. And all this happens within half an hour.

In this torture session, 16 different torture methods can be identified. The identification of applied torture techniques is one method for assessing the objective severity level of torture, but it should not be forgotten that the captive subjectively experiences this torture session as a whole.
5. The Scientific Study of Torture and Torture Survivors

Since the late 1970s, there has been an increasing interest in human rights issues, and numerous rehabilitation centers have been opened in many countries to help torture survivors. However, these developments, until recently, had not been adequately supported by the scientific community. Although torture is an epidemic problem almost globally, it has largely been neglected in comparison with the other types of trauma (e.g., natural disasters, war, domestic violence, accidents and rape). It is a risky and difficult task to work with torture survivors in developing countries because of political repression, indifference and lack of facilities and financial resources (Basoglu, 1992). Yet it should also be noted that there has been an increasing number of studies on the psychological effects of torture. As will be demonstrated later in this report, there is still a great need for studies regarding etiological factors of torture-related traumatic stress and therapy of torture survivors.²

² Reasons for studying torture from a psychological point of view can be listed as follows: First, since torture, like other traumas, may lead to serious medical and psychological problems, some torture survivors may need professional attention. Secondly, scientific findings could make a significant contribution to the political struggle against torture by increasing public awareness of the problem. Thirdly, as a result of the first two reasons, it seems possible that scientific studies in this area will help to limit and ameliorate organized violence and aggression. For example, empirical studies may show that torture and other violent acts will not work in the long run. Torture has continued to be practiced over the centuries because perpetrators believe in its effectiveness. If the scientific community can find reasonable ways to heal the psychological wounds caused by torture and, more importantly, find the protective factors against the harmful effects of torture, then psychologists can more confidently say to perpetrators: "It did not work and it will not work." Related to this is the issue of the vicious cycle of violence. It is clear that each violent act, including torture, leads to further violence. Torture like other violent acts is very likely to feed hatred and the need for revenge in at least some of the survivors. Sensible intervention methods may be expected to contribute to the breaking down of this vicious cycle. Finally, torture is a type of human-made and purposeful trauma. Although it has different characteristics from other types of traumas, it also shares many things in common with them, and thus the study of torture can help in understanding other trauma such as that resulting from combat, being a prisoner of war or in a concentration camp, rape, criminal (continued...)
6. Review of Psychological Studies on Torture Survivors

The psychological effects of torture are similar to those seen among Holocaust survivors and combat veterans. They include headaches, nightmares, night terrors, insomnia, tremor, dizziness, fainting, sweating, diarrhea, depression, anxiety, phobias, withdrawal, irritability, aggressiveness, impulsivity, sexual dysfunction, suicide attempts, confusion, disorientation, memory loss, and loss of concentration. Evidence suggests that these psychological problems may persist for decades in some survivors (Beebe, 1975; Kluznik et al., 1986; Miller et al., 1989; Tennant et al., 1986).

Studies on torture vary in the degree of control, kind of subjects, and results. Two major methodological concerns are noteworthy: 1) Most studies on torture do not involve any non-tortured, control groups; and 2) most of them were conducted on exiled torture survivors rather than non-exiled survivors. Lack of control groups represents a problem for the validity of study results. Also exile status can be another stressor or a traumatic experience in itself, thus it should be separated from torture. Following is a review of major research (see Somnier et al., 1992; for a more comprehensive review) divided up into categories based on degree of control and kind of subjects (exiled vs. non-exiled).

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2 (...continued)
assault, being hostage, etc.

Keeping in mind all the above-mentioned reasons to study torture from a psychological point of view, it is also important to realize the limitations of such an enterprise based on psychology. The struggle against torture cannot be won only in the domain of psychology. Attempts in psychology to this end give support to the political, social, cultural, and legal struggles against torture, and certainly is supported by them.
Uncontrolled Descriptive Studies

Studies of exiled survivors

Cathcart et al. (1979) showed that anxiety and sleeping difficulties were common in torture survivors. Warmenhoven et al. (1981), and Allodi & Cowgill (1982) reported a clustering of psychological symptoms related to previous torture experience. Cerebral atrophy in young torture survivors has been reported (Jensen et al., 1982; Somnier et al.; 1982), although a more sophisticated study did not confirm the results of these studies (Somnier et al., 1992), and there is no evidence of dementia or progressive cognitive impairment in torture survivors (Somnier & Genefke, 1986). Domovitch et al. (1984), in a study of 104 torture survivors, observed the following psychological symptoms in descending order of frequency: anxiety, insomnia, nightmares, depression, withdrawal, irritability, loss of concentration, sexual dysfunction, memory disturbance, fatigue, emotional lability, aggressiveness, impulsiveness, and hypersensitivity to noise.

Somnier & Genefke (1986) have reported the most common long-term symptoms, in descending order of frequency: Sleep disturbances with nightmares, headaches, impaired memory and concentration, fatigue, fear/anxiety, social withdrawal, vertigo, and sexual disturbances. Seventy percent of 148 torture survivors treated in the Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims (RCT) in Copenhagen, Denmark, from 1984 to 1987, showed symptoms and signs of changed identity, chronic anxiety, poor self-esteem, and depression (Ortmann & Lunde, 1988). Somatization has also been reported as an important characteristic feature of South-East Asian torture survivors (Mollica et al.,
1987). A recent follow-up study of female torture survivors (Fornazzari & Freire, 1990) suggested that indirect torture (e.g., threats of death) have less serious long-term effects than direct forms of torture (e.g., physical or more definite psychological).

**Studies of non-exiled torture survivors**

Lunde et al. (1980) found that 30% of Greek torture survivors had sexual dysfunctions including decreased libido and erectile difficulties. Furthermore, Lunde & Ortmann (1990) showed that sexually tortured survivors were more likely to have sexual difficulties than were non-sexually tortured individuals.

Abilgaard et al. (1984) and Petersen et al. (1985a) examined 22 Greek torture survivors 10 to 14 years after the torture experience and conducted a follow-up assessment one year later. They could not find any significant improvement in the survivors' health at the follow-up evaluation. Wallach & Rasmussen (1983), in a study of Chilean torture survivors living in Chile, found that the frequency of sequelae was the same as that reported for exiled survivors. This finding was consistent with other studies (Foster, 1987; Kordon et al., 1988; Pagaduan-Lopez, 1987). Among South-African survivors, blacks were more affected than whites, and women were more distressed than men (Foster, 1987). A study conducted in a prison in Santiago by a physician who had been a detainee in the same prison showed that the most commonly observed complaints were tension headaches, anxiety or depressive symptoms, and sleep disturbance (Jadresic, 1990).
Study of exiled and non-exiled survivors

Rasmussen (1990a) compared 111 torture survivors in exile with 89 survivors living in their native countries. He found that symptoms, in general, did not differ between the two groups, but impaired memory and concentration, nightmares, and depression were more frequent in survivors living in exile.

Additionally, there is some evidence that torture and other related oppressive behaviors affect not only torture survivors, but also their spouses and children. It was noted that withdrawal, depression, anxiety, irritability, aggressiveness, generalized fear, hypersensitivity to noise, insomnia, nightmares, nocturnal enuresis, excessive clinging and dependence on the parents, deterioration in school performance, distortions in the concept of family, vulnerability, and psychosomatic problems were common in torture survivors' children (Acuna, 1989; Allodi, 1989a; Allodi et al., 1989b; Cohn et al., 1980, 1985; Weile et al., 1990).

Descriptive studies of the effects of torture have had serious methodological shortcomings such as insufficient description of assessment instruments used or failure to report the diagnostic criteria on which conclusions were based (Goldfeld et al., 1988) and the time interval since torture took place. Studies claiming the existence of a "torture syndrome" have not been based on standardized diagnostic criteria and have not provided adequate descriptions of the subjective meaning of the trauma.
**Controlled Studies**

**Studies of exiled torture survivors**

A controlled study of exiled Latin Americans reported more symptoms among tortured people than among controls (Thorvaldsen, 1986). The differences were significant despite several controls having been imprisoned and ill-treated (but not tortured) in their countries.

In another controlled Danish study (Hougen et al., 1988), tortured Turkish political refugees living in exile were found to have more psychological problems than non-tortured Turkish political refugees. Although the findings of this study have important implications, certain methodological problems such as inadequate matching of controls, screening biases in sample selection, and relatively small sample size (n=14) preclude definitive conclusions.

**Studies of non-exiled torture survivors**

A prospective controlled study (Petersen and Jacobsen, 1985b) found that Spanish torture survivors were in a worse state of health than their controls, showing symptoms of depression, anxiety, emotional lability, sleep disturbance, nightmares, and memory and concentration difficulties. The controls, however, were not adequately matched and sample size (n=10) was too small for statistical analysis of the association between torture and psychological state.
All studies reported so far, with one exception (Jadresic, 1990), used clinical samples. The subjects in those studies are torture survivors who seek psychological treatment. The torture survivors who do not seek treatment are not represented in those studies. Thus, these studies are far from being representative of all torture survivors. Although studies based on clinical samples can be useful in describing psychological difficulties seen in torture survivors and may have some implications for treatment, the whole spectrum of post-torture psychological responses can be understood only by studying representative, i.e., non-clinical, samples of survivors. Clinical samples, by definition, disregard the non-symptomatic survivors, who may make the majority of all survivors. As a result, the findings of studies based on clinical samples, irrespective of being controlled or not, inevitably reflect more psychopathology. If some survivors do not develop psychopathology while some others do, then it is necessary to understand which factors contribute to such a difference. This is necessary not only because of a theoretical concern regarding human response to trauma, but also for developing more effective prevention and intervention strategies for the survivors of torture and trauma in general. There are three such studies which used non-clinical samples.

In a study by Paker, Paker, & Yüksel (1992), an attempt was made to overcome some of the methodological problems discussed above. First, the effects of torture were systematically investigated in a non-clinical sample of 246 prisoners (38 of whom were not tortured) in a prison for non-political prisoners in Turkey, thus controlling for the effects of imprisonment. Second, as the entire prison population satisfying the selection
criteria was studied, the sample was not biased by factors such as unavailability of subjects or refusal to participate in the study. Finally, data were obtained on a sizeable sample which afforded the opportunity for multivariate analyses (multiple regression).

This study, however, had some limitations. First, the time since torture last took place and the quality of the post-torture recovery environment were not taken into account. Another limitation concerned the definition of torture. The use of a categorical variable (tortured vs non-tortured) in this study may have obscured the (subjective and objective) severity of the torture event, which, in turn, might be critical in determining the severity of post-traumatic stress. The findings suggested a long-term psychological effect of torture and were thus consistent with similar findings in the literature (e.g., Hougen, 1988; Petersen and Jacobsen, 1985b). The predictor effects, though statistically significant, were relatively weak but they were nevertheless present despite methodological shortcomings. These results were further supported by the finding that 39% of the tortured prisoners had post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) whereas none of the non-tortured prisoners did.

Kaptanoglu (1991) compared 28 Turkish political torture survivors with controls. Although this study also has some methodological shortcomings (e.g., lack of a matching procedure between tortured and control groups, selection of non-political individuals as controls, lack of assessor-rated scales, and small sample size for conducting multivariate statistical analysis), Kaptanoglu found that 38% of the torture survivors had PTSD, that torture survivors were in a worse psychological state than controls (on all dimensions of
the Symptom Check List-SCL-90-R), that torture survivors with PTSD rated higher only on the dimension of depression of SCL-90-R than torture survivors without PTSD, and that the current psychological status was not correlated with sex, duration of torture, time passed since torture, severity of torture (except on the dimension of somatization), and duration of imprisonment.

**Comprehensive torture research project in Turkey**

The most comprehensive study on the psychological status of torture survivors has been conducted in Turkey by Basoglu, Paker, and their colleagues (1994a,b; 1995; 1996a,b). This is the only matched, controlled study with a sizable sample and using well-defined assessment instruments and diagnostic criteria. The study included three groups (N=55 in each group): 1) Tortured political ex-prisoners; 2) Non-tortured political activists; 3) Non-tortured non-political controls. The study was done neither in a clinic nor with patients seeking treatment, but rather as a field study open to all political tortured people. The subjects in the first group were recruited from the applicants to the human rights organizations. Thus an independent verification of their torture experience was also available, which is not the case in almost all the other studies on torture survivors. This study was also the first study on torture survivors to go beyond symptomatology and explore etiology. Some of the important findings of this study are as follows:

1. The objective severity level of torture was very high [a mean of 291 (SD=222, range=24-822) exposures to 23 (SD=7, range=9-41) forms of torture during 47 months
(SD=56, range=0 days-165 months) of captivity]. It was found that torture had some long-term negative psychological effects independent of those related to uprooting, refugee status, and other traumatic events in a politically repressive environment. Yet, that effect was far less than would be expected from the dominant literature, given the very high severity level of trauma. The survivors had significantly higher scores than the comparison subjects on most psychopathology measures, but more importantly all groups scored within the normal range on all measures. Regarding DSM diagnoses, the only diagnosis that discriminated tortured and non-tortured groups was PTSD; current PTSD was 18% in the tortured group vs 4% in the non-tortured group and lifetime PTSD was 33% for the tortured group vs 11% for the non-tortured group, respectively. The tortured-political survivors in this study seemed to have a resilience against the effects of torture (Basoglu, Paker, et al., 1994a).

2. The effect of the captivity experience on various life areas (e.g., family and social, economic, and employment status) and other post-captivity psychosocial stressors were associated with PTSD symptoms, anxiety, and depression. Perceived severity of torture was related to PTSD symptoms but not to anxiety and depression. Lack of social support predicted anxiety and depression but not PTSD. Family history of psychiatric illness correlated with higher scores on most measures. The impact of the captivity experience on the family was the strongest predictor of PTSD symptoms (Basoglu, Paker, et al., 1994b).

3. Objective measures of severity of torture (types of torture and number of
exposures) did not predict post-torture psychological problems whereas subjective severity ratings did (Basoglu & Paker, 1995).

4. The torture survivors differed from non-tortured political activists in having a more negative appraisal of the police and a more positive self-image. Torture had no effect on appraisals of others. The results also suggested that a strong belief system and lack of illusory beliefs about safety, trust, and justice might protect individuals against the traumatic effects of torture. (Basoglu, Paker, et al., 1996a).

5. With regard to personality/psychopathology, all mean MMPI scores were within the normal range in the three groups. Some MMPI scales showed significant between-group differences but few meaningful differences emerged in the item analyses of the scales. Torture and other stressful political experiences appeared to have very little negative impact on the personality/psychopathology profiles (as measured by MMPI) of political activists (Basoglu, Paker, et al., 1996b).

7. Summary

Most studies of torture survivors have been conducted on refugees living in exile. The psychological problems observed in refugees may be the result of imprisonment, expatriation, uprooting, refugee status or other related trauma before and after torture. Thus, it is necessary to control for the effects of these factors. Fortunately, there is now a sufficient number of such studies conducted in the countries in which torture took place,
thus excluding the effects of refugee status.

It seems that the psychological study of torture has just completed its first phase in which descriptive and methodologically problematic studies were common and attempts were made to understand the symptomatology of torture survivors. It is now known that being exposed to torture, independent of other related traumatic experiences, is a serious risk factor for psychopathology. However, this does not mean that torture necessarily leads to psychopathology. It has been shown that about one-third of torture survivors have an identifiable chronic psychological disturbance, which indicates a significantly higher rate of psychopathology than the non-tortured individuals. It should also be noted that all studies dealt with long-term effects of torture. It is very likely that acute post-traumatic responses are much more common and more severe.

Studies indicate that PTSD is the most common post-torture psychological response, as it is in other traumatic situations. PTSD consists of three symptom clusters: 1) Reexperiencing the trauma (intrusive recollections or recurrent dreams of the event, sudden acting or feeling as if the traumatic event were reoccurring), 2) persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma or numbing of general responsiveness (diminished interest in activities, feelings of detachment or estrangement from others, constricted affect), and 3) persistent symptoms of increased arousal (sleeping difficulty, irritability, concentration difficulty, exaggerated startle response). PTSD will be discussed in more detail in Chapter II.

In terms of prevalence, PTSD is followed by depression and other anxiety
disorders. Among the other associated symptoms reported are aggressiveness, impulsiveness, sexual problems, somatization, and emotional lability.

Researchers must now go beyond the symptomatology and ask etiological questions. Why do only some torture survivors develop psychopathology while most of them do not? What are the sources of this resilience? The answers to these questions are very likely to suggest new ways in treating the survivors who need psychological help. Studies of treatment of psychologically disturbed survivors will be the third phase of the psychological study of post-torture responses.

The preliminary cues regarding the etiology of post-torture psychological response have already been reported (Basoglu, Paker et al., 1994b, 1995). Whereas objective severity of torture does not seem to have a predictive power; effect of captivity experience on various life areas (e.g., family and social, economic, and employment status), other post-captivity psychosocial stressors, subjective severity of torture, lack of social support, and family history of psychiatric illness appear to be potentially important predictors of post-torture psychopathology. Needless to say, these are just preliminary findings and they need to be replicated in further studies, which are likely to suggest some other important etiological factors. More important, these factors mentioned above should be redefined and the underlying psychological mechanisms on which they operate should be understood. It is relatively easier to identify the external, and thus, experience-distant etiological factors in post-traumatic responses, however, what we must find out how these factors are processed in the individual survivor's mind.
Another important issue is that much of our knowledge on the effects of torture is based on work with tortured political activists. Torture is only one of the many forms of organized violence. Other forms of organized violence (threats of arrest and torture, a violent environment created by state terror, threats of death from rival political groups, detention, unfair trials, imprisonment, going into hiding, bereavement, disruption of family and social ties, and loss of employment or educational opportunities) should also be taken into consideration. Furthermore, when studying political activists, the degree of political involvement, self-evaluation about survivors' attitudes during torture sessions, and, relatedly, how they make sense out of their torture experience should be considered. Another important point is to take into account the possible impact of other traumatic events such as the death of loved ones, injuries, illnesses, accidents, natural disasters, physical and sexual abuses in the childhood, which may interact with the trauma of torture. Finally, it seems impossible to understand the impact of torture (or any other trauma) on the individual survivor without knowing what kind of person she or he is. The significance of personality factors remains to be addressed in the psychology of trauma field. As mentioned earlier in this report, the psychological effects of torture are remarkably similar to those of other traumatic experiences. The study of post-torture psychological responses is a subsection of the general field of psychotraumatology. Some types of trauma (e.g., the Holocaust, combat, rape, natural disasters) have been extensively studied far more than torture. Thus, a brief review of the field of psychotraumatology is expected to enlarge the horizons of the psychological study of torture.
CHAPTER II

PSYCHOTRAUMATOLOGY

1. Definitions

Psychotraumatology may be defined as the study of psychological trauma, which includes the study of the processes and factors that underscore pre-, peri-, and post-traumatization (Everly, 1995a). It is also regarded as the study of post-traumatic stress responses. Since there has been conceptual confusion with regard to the key terms of this field, the preferred definitions for this report are summarized below:

*Traumatic event*: External (objectifiable) event which is likely to physically and/or psychologically overwhelm\(^3\) most people.

*Trauma*: Subjective perception of the external event as an overwhelming experience, which can be either physical or psychological, or both.

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\(^3\) "Overwhelm" is a key concept, which is included in almost all trauma-related definitions and refers to the state of being exposed to an excessive amount of aversive stimuli (external or internal). "Excessive" is used in the sense of intolerable in terms of one's processing capacities.
**Stress:** Perceived discomfort and tension, based on homoeostatic disequilibrium with physiological and psychological components.

**Stressor:** The cause of stress. It can be either traumatic or not.

**Traumatic stress:** Stress response due to an identifiable traumatic event and/or trauma.

**Traumatized or trauma survivor:** A person who experienced a traumatic event and/or trauma.

**Traumatization:** The process of being exposed to a traumatic event, or the perception of being extremely overwhelmed.

To schematically sum up, a traumatic event as a stressor leads to trauma; and trauma leads to post-traumatic stress.

As can be easily seen from the above-mentioned definitions, there is a tension between the first two concepts: traumatic event and trauma, in other words, the objective and subjective (also nomothetic and idiographic) aspects of traumatization. This tension is central to our etiologic understanding of post-traumatic stress and has colored all theoretical formulations in the field from the beginning.

Another important issue is related to the general term “psychotraumatology.” While there has been a strong tendency to include all post-traumatic responses in the diagnostic category of PTSD, psychotraumatology does not refer only to that diagnostic
category. It is known that PTSD is just one of many possible symptom clusters that may develop after being exposed to a traumatic event. Among the other syndromes reported to be related to traumatic experiences are mood disorders (especially depression), substance/alcohol abuse, panic disorders, dissociative disorders, brief psychotic disorder, borderline personality disorder, phobias, family disfunctions, various patterns of compulsivity, and various eating disorders (Everly, 1995a; Yehuda & McFarlane, 1995).

Although post-traumatic pathologic manifestations may take multiple forms, the focus of this report will be limited to PTSD, because it represents the unique symptom cluster for which a traumatic event is regarded as a necessary, though not always sufficient, condition. For the other syndromes mentioned above, such a strong statement cannot be made. Furthermore, PTSD has been shown as the most common pathological response following a traumatic event.

The types of traumatic events which have been studied under the heading of psychotraumatology have been listed: Combat, criminal assault, rape, accidental injury, industrial accident, automobile accident, hostage, prisoner of war, natural disasters, human disasters, witnessing homicide, witnessing sexual assault, sudden illness, and severe burns (March, 1993). It is clear that torture and other forms of organized political violence should also be included in this list.
2. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Although the official acceptance of PTSD as a diagnostic category is quite new, it has been used "non-officially" for a long period even if under different names (Battle fatigue, war neurosis, holocaust syndrome, etc.).

The diagnosis of PTSD as a clinical entity was recognized in DSM-III (APA, 1980). There had been clinical and conceptual precursors to this diagnosis in the earlier versions of the manual and in international nosology. However, previous classifications had tended to see stress disorders as acute, time-limited phenomena which diminish over time unless some preexisting character pathology contributes to symptom maintenance. For example, DSM-I contained a diagnosis called gross stress reaction, which was thought to diminish rather rapidly unless maintained by premorbid personality traits (APA, 1952). DSM-II contained a diagnosis called transient situational disturbance or anxiety neurosis, again implying that stress responses were, by nature, transient unless something else was wrong with the individual (APA, 1968). Thus an assumption was made that prolonged responses to stress had their roots in early individual history (Green, Lindy, & Grace, 1985). In DSM-III, on the other hand, premorbid or other personal characteristics were entirely ignored, and trauma was defined as externally and independent of the traumatized person. The ambivalence about whether to emphasize the traumatic event (the "objective" severity of an event) or the person (e.g., premorbid personal characteristics) has been going on for decades.

The diagnostic category of PTSD includes many symptoms similar to the
symptoms described by Holocaust survivors (APA, 1980). These consist of re-experiencing the trauma (intrusive recollections or recurrent dreams of the event, sudden acting or feeling as if the traumatic event were reoccurring), persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma or numbing of general responsiveness (diminished interest in activities, feelings of detachment or estrangement from others, constricted affect), and persistent symptoms of increased arousal (sleeping difficulty, irritability, concentration difficulty, exaggerated startle response). In DSM-III-R (APA, 1987), some new symptoms were added to the criteria, but the external event-focused mentality remained intact (see Table 2 for the DSM-III-R diagnostic criteria of PTSD).

When we come to DSM-IV (APA, 1994), the most significant change is the definition of a traumatic event (A criterion). Like DSM-III-R, DSM-IV keeps the emphasis on the external event, but adds a new condition to the definition of a traumatic event: the subjective experience of fear, helplessness, or horror during the event (see Table 3). As a result, someone may be exposed to an "objectively" traumatic event, but if she or he does not feel fear, horror, or helplessness during that event, then it is not regarded as traumatic. This change reflects the increasing tension between the objective and subjective aspects of the traumatization process. It appears that the authors of DSM-IV preferred to give up neither of them, resulting in a highly eclectic approach. This debate, which also has direct implications for or direct influences from the realism vs. relativism debate, is very likely to color the theoretical formulations and research efforts in the near future.
Table 2: DSM-III-R Diagnostic Criteria for PTSD (APA, 1987)

A. The person has experienced an event that is outside the range of human experience that would be markedly distressing to almost everyone, e.g., serious threat to one’s life or physical integrity; serious threat or harm to one’s children, spouse, or other close relatives or friends; sudden destruction of one’s home or community; or seeing another person who has recently been, or is being, seriously injured or killed as the result of an accident or physical violence.

B. The traumatic event is persistently reexperienced in at least one of the following ways:
   1. Recurrent or intrusive distressing recollections of the event
   2. Recurrent distressing dreams of the event
   3. Sudden acting or feeling as if the traumatic event were recurring
   4. Intense psychological distress at exposure to events that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the event

C. Persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma or numbing of general responsiveness (as indicated by at least three of the following):
   1. Avoidance of thoughts and feelings associated with the trauma
   2. Avoidance of activities or situations that arouse recollections of the trauma
   3. Psychogenic amnesia
   4. Markedly diminished interest in significant activities
   5. Feeling of detachment or estrangement from others
   6. Restricted range of affect
   7. Sense of foreshortened future

D. Persistent symptoms of increased arousal (as indicated by at least two of the following):
   1. Difficulty falling or staying asleep
   2. Irritability or outbursts of anger
   3. Difficulty concentrating
   4. Hypervigilance
   5. Exaggerated startle response
   6. Physiological reactivity upon exposure to events that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event

E. Duration of disturbance (symptoms in B, C, and D) of at least one month.

   Specify delayed onset, if the onset of symptoms was at least six months after the trauma.
Table 3: DSM-IV Diagnostic Criteria for PTSD (APA, 1994)

| A. | The person has been exposed to a traumatic event in which both of the following were present: |
|    | 1. Event or events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others |
|    | 2. The person's response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror |
| B. | The traumatic event is persistently reexperienced in at least one of the following ways: |
|    | 1. Recurrent or intrusive distressing recollections of the event, including images, thoughts, or perceptions |
|    | 2. Recurrent distressing dreams of the event |
|    | 3. Acting or feeling as if the traumatic event were recurring |
|    | 4. Intense psychological distress at exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event |
|    | 5. Physiological reactivity upon exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event |
| C. | Persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma or numbing of general responsiveness (as indicated by at least three of the following): |
|    | 1. Avoidance of thoughts, feelings, or conversations associated with the trauma |
|    | 2. Avoidance of activities, places, or people that arouse recollections of the trauma |
|    | 3. Psychogenic amnesia |
|    | 4. Markedly diminished interest or participation in significant activities |
|    | 5. Feeling of detachment or estrangement from others |
|    | 6. Restricted range of affect |
|    | 7. Sense of foreshortened future |
| D. | Persistent symptoms of increased arousal (as indicated by at least two of the following): |
|    | 1. Difficulty falling or staying asleep |
|    | 2. Irritability or outbursts of anger |
|    | 3. Difficulty concentrating |
|    | 4. Hypervigilance |
|    | 5. Exaggerated startle response |
| E. | Duration of disturbance (symptoms in B, C, and D) of at least one month |
| F. | The disturbance causes clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning |

Specify if: Acute: If duration of symptoms is less than 3 months
Chronic: If duration of symptoms is 3 months or more.

Specify if: With delayed onset: If the onset of symptoms is at least 6 months after the stressor
3. Research on Post-Traumatic Stress

A substantial body of case studies, and clinical and empirical literature currently exist on the psychological effects of extreme trauma focusing especially on the Nazi holocaust survivors, Vietnam veterans, rape survivors, and the survivors of other traumatic events (e.g., natural disasters). A brief review, emphasizing mostly etiological concerns, of some of this literature is necessary in order to discover which factors have been discussed as predictors of traumatic stress.

Research on Nazi Holocaust Survivors

The overriding assumption made by investigators of the Concentration Camp Syndrome was that an important relationship existed between, on the one hand, the brutalizing and infantilizing Nazi camp experiences, where death was imminent yet unpredictable, and, on the other hand, the psychological disabilities of survivors. Numerous investigations, most of which relied heavily upon psychoanalytic models, defined the symptoms characterizing the Survivor Syndrome: reduced energy and fatigue (Eitinger, 1971), disturbances in concentration and memory (Krystal and Niederland, 1968), mistrust of others, pathological expressions of mourning related to "survivor guilt," and depression (Chodoff, 1969), recurrent nightmares that revived the traumatic camp experiences (Tuteur, 1966), and the presence of a variety of psychophysiological disorders (Hoppe, 1968). Postwar experiences such as length of time spent in a camp, feelings of isolation of not being understood in one's new environment, and the disillusionment with postwar changes in the environment may have increased the
symptoms of an already very vulnerable severely traumatized group of people (Eitinger, 1980).

Although investigators generally agree in their description of the symptoms comprising the survivor syndrome, etiological theories vary. Most authors postulate a direct relationship between the traumatic camp experiences and later disordered behavior; others, fewer in number and more immersed in psychoanalytic theory, look at early childhood fixations (defense mechanisms) as determinants of how survivors manage excessive stress. Finally, some emphasize the neurobiological determinants of later aberrant behavior, citing the frequency of nutritional deprivations, head injuries, and chronic infectious diseases of camp inmates (Eitinger, 1971).

Research on Vietnam Veterans

Research on Vietnam veterans demonstrates that post-traumatic stress disorders are related to avoidance of discussions of the war upon return to the United States, the immediacy of release, severity of combat, exposure to death or injury, feelings of isolation upon return, guilt about surviving, negative attitudes toward the South Vietnamese, and concerns about events at home. In some of the studies, neither premorbid personality characteristics nor premilitary variables are considered as predictive of PTSD (Card, 1983). However, in a unique study, Schnurr et al. (1993) have shown that premilitary MMPI scores predict post-traumatic stress symptoms.
Predictors of PTSD

Until recently, the dominant conclusion to be drawn from most of the psychotraumatology studies was that the objective severity of the traumatic event (stressor magnitude) was directly proportional to the subsequent risk of developing PTSD (see March, 1993 for an extensive review). To March, 16 of 19 studies examining the question of stressor intensity endorse a dose-response relationship. This holds for combat (Foy, Sipprelle, Rueger, & Carroll, 1984; Kulka et al., 1990), increasing brutality of rape (Steketee & Foa, 1987), proximity to urban violence (Pynoos et al., 1987), and proximity to volcanic eruption (Shore, Tatum, & Vollmer, 1986). On the other hand, Davidson and Fairbank (1989a) have noted that certain pretrauma factors may increase the likelihood of PTSD, including a history of childhood conduct problems (Kulka et al., 1990), parental poverty (Davidson et al., 1989b), neuroticism, and previous psychiatric disorder (McFarlane, 1989), low level of post-trauma social support (Keane, Scott, Chavoya, Lamparski, & Fairbank, 1985; Solomon, Mikulincer, & Avitzur, 1988), and high rates of family psychopathology (Foy, Resnick, Sipprelle, & Carroll, 1987). Yet, Foy et al. (1987) have also pointed out that regardless of a family history of mental illness, veterans with high combat exposure developed high rates of PTSD.

On the other hand, there is some evidence for the importance of subjective perception provided by studies demonstrating that higher levels of perceived threat (Green et al., 1985), perception of suffering (Speed et al., 1989), cognitive perception of low controllability (Frye & Stockton, 1982; Mikulincer & Solomon, 1988), and coping
styles dominated by emotional responses or by denial (Green et al., 1985; Solomon et al., 1988) exacerbate the risk for or course of PTSD. Since these lines of research are post hoc, they are not accepted as validly as those that endorse a dose-response relationship (March, 1993). Nevertheless, the subjective perception of a traumatic event has found a place in the DSM-IV PTSD criteria as one of two A (entry) criteria, the other being an objective one (APA, 1994).

Additionally, it has been found that children and the elderly are more vulnerable to traumas than middle-age people (Allodi & Cowgill, 1982; Pynoos et al., 1987). This finding is interpreted as these age groups are more vulnerable because of their relatively limited resistance capacities and flexibilities.

4. Problems of the Conceptualization of PTSD

DSM-III (APA, 1980), unlike DSM-I and -II, conceptualized PTSD essentially as a normative response to a traumatic event. DSM-III-R and DSM-IV, to a great extent, remained within this normative paradigm. Severe enough traumatic events were considered sufficient to the development of PTSD in everybody. The understanding of PTSD as a normal response to an abnormal situation has been challenged on various levels. It seems that it is time to criticize this normative paradigm, which overemphasizes the external event at the expense of the personal characteristics. To do this, some important lines of research findings will be highlighted.
Epidemiology: Rariness of PTSD

Although PTSD, among all syndromes, is the most commonly seen psychological response following a traumatic event, epidemiological studies based on non-clinical samples have consistently shown that only some traumatized people develop PTSD. The reported PTSD prevalence rates are 15% current and 30% lifetime PTSD among Vietnam Veterans (Kulka et al., 1990); 9% of Desert Storm soldiers (Southwick et al., 1993); 4% of volcanic eruption survivors (Shore et al., 1989); 16% of volunteer firefighters exposed to severe bushfires (Mcfarlane, 1992); 19% to 72% among crime victims (Kilpatrick & Resnick, 1993); 47% to 50% among prisoners of war and concentration camp survivors (Yehuda, 1995); 39% among non-political tortured prisoners (Paker, 1992); 18% current PTSD and 33% lifetime PTSD among political torture survivors (Basoglu, Paker et al., 1994). Even for the most severe experiences, only one-third to one-half of the trauma survivors develop PTSD. Moreover, in the majority of PTSD cases, the symptoms resolve within a few years (Davidson & Fairbank, 1993). Thus, epidemiological data show that PTSD, especially chronic PTSD, is far from being a normative response to a traumatic event. Epidemiological findings further reflect the fact that, by and large, the focus of the researchers/theoreticians has been on psychopathology. Most studies have used mostly clinical samples, and made overgeneralizations about the psychopathology of all survivors.

Yet another line of research studies, conducted mostly on Holocaust survivors (DesPres, 1976; Hogman, 1983; Kahana, Harel, & Kahana, 1988; Lee, 1988; Leon, 1981;
Lobel, Kav-Venaki, & Yahia, 1985; Matussek, 1975; Shanan & Shahar, 1983), has provided contradictory findings when non-clinical samples were used. These studies showed that most Holocaust survivors, in the long run, live a very reasonable life (free from any kind of psychopathology) in spite of the very severe/intense trauma. To sum up:

1) Evidence, in general, suggests that the risk of Holocaust survivors developing a PTSD-like survivor syndrome is considerable. 2) Yet, only some of the survivors developed this syndrome and other psychological difficulties. 3) There is a considerable individual variation among the survivors who developed such psychological difficulties in terms of the severity of their complaints. In their mild and moderate forms, these psychological difficulties do not necessarily cause social malfunctioning. 4) Many of the survivors did not experience the long-term negative effects of Holocaust. As time goes on, the prevalence and severity of the Holocaust-related psychological difficulties tended to fade. 5) The survivor's mastery of prior extreme trauma may also be considered a coping resource that enhances a sense of competence and may lead to the perception of potential stressors as less threatening, if there is no threat to health or survival.

**Vulnerability Factors**

There has been increasing evidence that a traumatic event is not a sufficient determinant of PTSD. Many non-trauma factors have been reported as vulnerability factors, including genetic risk factors (McFarlane, 1989), family history (Breaslau et al., 1991), survivor's personality (Schnurr et al., 1993; Southwick et al., 1993), past history of trauma (Bremmner et al., 1993), other life events (McFarlane, 1989), previous
psychological problems (Helzer et al., 1987), parental relationships (Emery et al., 1991), lack of preparedness for trauma (Basoglu, Paker, et al., 1996a), post-trauma social support (Solomon & Smith, 1994), and exposure to post-trauma stressors (Yehuda et al., 1995). Moreover, it has been reported that objective severity of torture is not correlated with subsequent psychopathology, including PTSD (Basoglu & Paker, 1995).

Comorbidity

The prevalence of comorbid psychopathological conditions has been investigated in a number of traumatized groups with PTSD. These studies find that 50% to 90% of individuals with chronic PTSD also meet diagnostic criteria for another disorder, including especially substance abuse, all other anxiety disorders, and depression. (Freedy et al., 1992; Kulka et al., 1990). The findings suggest that it is the exception rather than the rule to develop chronic PTSD in the absence of another psychopathological condition.

Based on the findings regarding epidemiology, vulnerability factors, and comorbidity, Yehuda and McFarlane (1995) point out the possibility that the emergence of chronic PTSD following exposure to a traumatic event may represent the manifestation of an underlying diathesis rather than a normative adaptation to environmental challenge.

Universalism vs. Contextual Relativism

Apart from the above mentioned problems regarding PTSD, which have been elaborated mainly on empirical grounds, a radical conceptual critique of PTSD also exists and is very likely to gain more popularity in the near future. This critique emphasizes the
dominance of underlying Western culture-based assumptions for PTSD in the mental health field, and draws attention to the importance of addressing seemingly traumatic events in their cultural, social and political contexts (Bracken, Giller, & Summerfield, 1995). Two components of this critique are Western culture’s orientation toward the individual, which defines the individual as existing prior to society and culture, and its understanding of psychopathology, in which illness is seen to exist inevitably within the individual. According to this critique, these assumptions are not universally valid. In many cultures of the world, in contrast to Western culture, community or social relations are more important than the individual. People in non-Western cultures are more inclined to see themselves as a part of a social group, not as autonomous members. Thus, post-traumatic reactions, too, should be situated in their cultural, social and political contexts. Traumatic events in some contexts may not be perceived as “traumatic” in other contexts. Post-trauma symptoms may have different meanings in different contexts. The context in which trauma is experienced is the key component because it determines, to a greater and lesser degree, the subjective meaning of the traumatic event, which, in turn, influences the post-traumatic response.

The contextual relativist critique of PTSD is powerful and stimulating, not in the sense that we should abandon our current understanding of trauma, but in the sense of a serious warning to take into account the contextual variables in which traumatic events take place. This is also a warning for the significance of subjective meaning of trauma in post-traumatic responses, beyond the objective measures.
5. Concluding Remarks

The research line on which DSM-III and -IV PTSD conceptualizations are based emphasize the external traumatic event as the main causal factor, and as a result, predicts that the higher the objective severity of the traumatic event, the more severe the psychopathology (mainly PTSD) (March, 1993). It seems that this conclusion is based on an underlying assumption: *Traumatic stress is mainly a result of external conditions.* If the cause of traumatic stress is external, then the response to it should be seen as a normative one. Although this position has been increasingly challenged and criticized by other lines of research mentioned above, it still occupies an important place in the field of psychotraumatology. A new, comprehensive paradigm for psychotraumatology has not yet been created.

The starting point for such a paradigm requires rejecting the concept of trauma that is defined exclusively externally, without consideration of the traumatized. We can talk about a trauma in a certain context and that context, by definition, includes the traumatized. The traumatized person is not a black screen when she or he comes across a traumatic event. She or he is a person, in the first place, with his or her personality, past experiences, present preferences, and future hopes. She or he faces the trauma with his or her weaknesses and strengths. Thus traumatic stress as a response to a traumatic event should be understood as an interplay between the external traumatic event and the person, in the cultural/sociopolitical context.

The second step in creating a new paradigm for psychotraumatology requires
envisioning a working model in which all existing research findings can be phenomenologically understood. To briefly sum up these findings:

1. Traumatic events are serious risk factors for subsequent psychopathology.

2. PTSD is the most commonly seen post-traumatic pathological response, but not the only one.

3. Acute post-traumatic reactions are much more common than chronic ones. In most cases, acute reactions disappear in a relatively short time (months), whereas chronic reactions tend to persist for years or even decades. In this sense, while acute reactions can be seen as normative, chronic reactions are almost certainly non-normative.

4. Objective severity of a traumatic event is an important determinant of psychopathology, but only to a limited extent.

5. There are many possible contributing factors for post-traumatic psychopathology, including external factors (e.g., other stressors and lack of social support) and internal factors (e.g., genetic risk factors, personality, past history of trauma, previous psychological problems, and lack of preparedness for trauma).

6. Cultural, social and political contexts in which the traumatic event occurs are very likely to color the subjective meaning of trauma, which, in turn, may play a critical role in the development of the post-traumatic response.

Based on the above-mentioned findings, two recent attempts for a comprehensive
understanding of psychotraumatology (mainly PTSD) are noteworthy.

**New Models for Post-Traumatic Psychopathology**

**McFarlane’s two-stage model**

McFarlane (1996) proposes a two-stage model. In the first stage, after being exposed to a traumatic event, an acute distress reaction in the form of intrusive memories occurs. This reaction is regarded as a normative response to an adverse event. Yet even in this stage, in addition to the objective characteristics of the event, other factors also operate including support, personality, other life events, biological traits, and past experience. In the second stage, the picture may become chronic, again with the moderating effects of coping style, other life events, family history, personality, and environmental response. If a chronic response occurs, it should be defined as a psychological disorder, not as a normative response.

McFarlane’s model conceptually fits the critical findings in the literature, especially in the sense that it separates acute and chronic responses and their normative and pathological nature. It also incorporates some other contributing factors in both stages. However, it is not clear how he defines personality, and how and why he separates personality from some other variables such as past experience, coping style, and family history, which can be conceptualized under the construct of personality. Thus, it appears that personality characteristics can be regarded as the most crucial internal predictor, the others such as support, other life events, and environmental response as external
predictors. It should also be added that external predictors are actually moderated by personality. Every trauma survivor is very likely to perceive these other external factors somewhat differently, according to his or her personality characteristics. What lacks in this model is the role of subjective meaning of trauma.

**Everly’s two-factor model**

Everly’s (1995b) two-factor model is somewhat similar to McFarlane’s model. He also predicts that traumatic events lead to an initial shock-defense reflex (acute numbing), which is very common (normative). Then an interpretation phase comes in. The survivor, based on his or her affective-cognitive complexities, interprets the event and may recover from the acute numbing response. If this interpretation fails, neurologic and psychological hypersensitivities develop, and these two are the core elements of PTSD. Neurological hypersensitivity leads to the hyperarousal symptoms of PTSD and psychological hypersensitivity leads to the reexperiencing and avoidance symptoms. Everly defines psychological hypersensitivity as a pathognomonic inability to assimilate the traumatic event into the extant worldview.

Everly’s model is important on three accounts. First, he attempts to combine the biological and psychological processes of PTSD. Second, contrary to the majority of biological researchers, in his model, the biological response is not the cause but one of the two results of the cognitive-affective interpretation process of trauma. Finally, he gives crucial importance in his model to the individual (subjective) meaning of trauma. The main determinant of chronic stress response is how the survivor interprets the
traumatic event. Moreover, his definition of psychological hypersensitivity is directly related to the survivor's idiosyncratic worldview, which determines the meaning of traumatic event.

McFarlane's and Everly's models, taken together, imply that, among many predictors, two of them appear to be more important: 1) the survivor's personality, and 2) the subjective meaning of trauma: How she or he makes sense of traumatic event.

After very briefly reviewing the relevant literature on the relationship between personality and traumatic stress, this report will focus on its main topic, subjective meaning of trauma, in Chapter III.

**Personality**

In general psychotraumatology literature, the impact of personality in developing post-traumatic response has been widely neglected. In most of the studies investigating the predictors of post-traumatic stress, personality as a pre-trauma risk factor has been neither included nor found to be predictive (e.g., Card, 1987; Davidson et al., 1991; Shore et al., 1986, 1989). On the other hand, there are a few other studies indicating the importance of personality as a predictive factor. Various personality characteristics have been reported as predisposing factors in developing PTSD. Among them are neuroticism (Breslau et al., 1991; McFarlane, 1987); introversion (McFarlane, 1987); ego strength (Lindy, Grace, & Green, 1984); emotional immaturity, being obedient, and aggression (Hendin & Haas, 1984); narcissism (Wilson & Krauss, 1982); passive-aggressive and
avoidant personality styles (Hyer et al., 1991; Sherwood et al., 1990); schizoid and borderline personality organizations (Sherwood et al., 1990); passive-dependent, obsessive-compulsive, and immature characters (Ursano & Rundell, 1990); paranoia, psychasthenia, and schizophrenia (Long et al., 1989). In their unique study, Scchurr et al. (1993) have shown that premilitary MMPI scores predict post-traumatic symptoms in Vietnam veterans. Moreover, personality flexibility, resiliency, and the ability to tolerate passivity have been reported as the positive/effective coping styles for traumatic stress. So far there is no agreement on which specific personality characteristics are especially associated with PTSD.

\[4\] It is obvious that different authors used different personality-related concepts at different levels of abstraction. They all are mentioned here not to make a comparison, but to indicate that some enduring, trait-like personality characteristics may play a role in developing PTSD.
CHAPTER III

SUBJECTIVE MEANING OF TRAUMA

The "subjective meaning of trauma," as a crucial concept, has appeared in very different theoretical contexts. In general, two different types of "subjective meaning" can be identified in the trauma literature: (a) Unconscious, fantasy-based understanding; and (b) conscious or unconscious, cognitive (and affective) schema-based understanding of the subjective meaning of trauma.⁵ Although in this dissertation, the latter meaning is used, the former is also reviewed for conceptual clarification.

1. Fantasy-Based Understanding of Subjective Meaning of Trauma

Fantasy-based accounts of subjective meaning of trauma can be further divided into two subcategories based on their past- or present-orientation. While past-oriented accounts address the unconscious fantasies related to the traumatic event in the form of repressed memories of the past traumatic events (as if they are preserved in their more or

⁵ For the sake of simplicity, in the rest of this report, these two types will be referred as "fantasy-based" and "schema-based" understandings.
less original forms), present-oriented accounts focus on current fantasies which are presumed to organize the individual's whole subjective experience.

**Fantasy-Based and Past-Oriented Accounts**

The classical example of the fantasy-based and past-oriented understanding was elaborated by Freud (1918, 1939, 1940), and, with some revisions, was maintained by other psychoanalytic theoreticians who worked on trauma (Greenacre, 1967; Jacobson, 1959; Krystal, 1971, 1984, 1988; Kristal & Niederland, 1968). In this approach, unconscious meaning is the only source of subjective meaning and is defined in experience-distant metapsychological discourse, with reference to pathogenic fantasies developed in early childhood. As a result, a stressful event in adult life can be regarded as traumatic only if it triggers a pathogenic fantasy. In other words, trauma is a product of fantasy.

After initially formulating a traumatic theory of neurosis (seduction theory), Freud (1910) gradually abandoned this theory in favor of a more intrapsychic model that emphasized the role of oedipal fantasy in the genesis of neurosis. This second model views trauma as a complex psychological process involving disturbing visual and auditory impressions of the primal scene (parental intercourse and other adult sexual activity). These impressions are repressed and unconsciously organized in the form of pathogenic fantasies of sadomasochism and castration. Freud (1918, 1940) argued that the traumatic meaning of specific events can be understood only in the context of earlier and latently pathogenic impressions and the unconscious, repressed memories connected with
them. According to Freud, the child is not mature enough at the time of the initial impression to organize it into meaningful mental content. Rather, the child is overwhelmed by these perceptions and plunged into hypnoid states in which impressions are split off. These impressions are then unconsciously organized as affect-laden yet repressed memories. As a result of later occurrences (traumatic events), these memories are stimulated and break into consciousness where they press for immediate emotional discharge. Unconscious defense mechanisms are then called into play in an attempt to block out these memories.

Followers of Freud maintained his general understanding of the subjective (unconscious) meaning of trauma with different emphases such as the developmental place of trauma (Greenacre, 1967), the role of dissociation as a defensive process (Jacobson, 1959), and the role of subjective experience and the active/dynamic stimulus barrier (Krystal 1971, 1984, 1988; Kristal & Niederland, 1968).

Freud’s and his followers’ above-mentioned account of psychopathology has been sharply challenged both from within and outside psychoanalysis. The underlying assumption in Freud’s account with regard to human memory (and, thus, fantasy) is that past memories can live within the present in an encapsulated form constituting the pathogenic origin of the present condition. This basic assumption has been sharply challenged. Based on cognitive psychologists’ research on human memory (e.g., Brewer, 1986; Neisser, 1986) and other alternative psychoanalytic/psychodynamic understandings of personality/psychopathology (e.g., Shapiro, 1965, 1989; Stern, 1985), it seems much
more reasonable to assume that the past does not live within the present in an
encapsulated form, but that it is somehow carried into the present in an
assimilated/digested/reconstructed form. In this sense, the past cannot be distinguished
from the present.

To give an example, any repeated traumatic experience in the past (e.g., during
childhood) is important in the present, not because the memory of the experience is still
functioning as an objective and discrete entity. Rather, this experience is selectively
perceived by the individual at the time of the trauma, thus it is subjectively represented
onto the personality structure\(^6\) of the individual. If the subjective perception of this
experience is affectively (and cognitively) strong enough, it may distort the development
of personality\(^7\), and may lead to self-estrangement. Having assimilated this experience,
the traumatized person has a somewhat new (and distorted) personality configuration
which continues to function as a central processor and plays a primary role in
determining/reconstructing modes of affect, cognition (including remembering), and
activity. Thus, the memories of traumatic experience are not copies of actual events.
Rather, they are the reconstructed forms of actual events. They are the products of a new
personality configuration. In other words, current psychopathology is not the pathology of
the past (disturbing, encapsulated memories or fantasies), but of current personality.

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\(^6\) Or "self-schemata" from a cognitive point of view.

\(^7\) At this point Shapiro (1989) states: "... the lasting significance of [childhood] conflict resides in its effect
on development rather than its separation from development. Childhood conflict is not preserved intact, but it
may distort development in ways that are not easily reversed" (p. 173). What Shapiro says for childhood
conflict is also valid for childhood traumas.
Fantasy-Based and Present-Oriented Accounts

Although still within the general psychoanalytic approach, another line of theoretical formulations abandoned Freud's experience-distant metapsychology and replaced it with a more experience-near and present-oriented framework. Although these formulations differ from the Freudian account and seem much closer to the schema-based understanding, their understanding of the subjective meaning of trauma is still fantasy-based.

Kardiner (1941) and Rado (1942) formulated a view of trauma as a disturbance in adaptational functioning involving a pathological alteration in images of the self and the outer world. Similarly, Kelman (1945, 1946) stated that trauma is caused by the loss of and the failure to revive a neurotic character structure that organizes a basic sense of self. According to Kelman, certain people are particularly vulnerable to trauma owing to a specific form of character pathology. These are people whose character structure is organized primarily around an "idealized image of the self." This idealized self-image includes the need for self-control and external control in the service of a sense of uniqueness and need to be unique as well as a personal belief in being inviolate, invulnerable and unassailable. Kelman described the idealized image of the self as a neurotic illusion of the self, which is unconsciously maintained in order to act as a unifying force providing the individual a feeling of pseudo-equilibrium.

In a more recent attempt in constructing a theory of trauma from a self-psychological point of view, Ulman and Brothers (1988), following Kelman, analyzed
PTSD as a dissociative disturbance in the subjective world that is reflective of the shattering and faulty restoration of archaic narcissistic fantasies. Ulman and Brothers, contrary to Freud and his followers, contend that the traumatogenicity of fantasy does not reside primarily in the extent to which actual occurrences stimulate and arouse poorly repressed memories (of witnessing the primal scene and being threatened with castration) and associated pathogenic fantasies. Instead, traumatogenicity lies in the extent to which actual occurrences (traumatic events) shatter preexisting archaic narcissistic fantasies central to the organization and maintenance of self-experience. In other words, the unconscious traumatic meaning of an occurrence is not psychically determined or caused by the arousal of a pathogenic fantasy associated with repressed memories. On the contrary, the unconscious traumatic meaning is largely determined by the shattering and faulty restoration of central organizing fantasies of self in relation to selfobject.

In spite of their nuances, all of the above-mentioned fantasy-based, but present-oriented accounts of trauma address the subjective meaning of trauma as a direct derivative of central organizing fantasies or, more broadly, character structure. As mentioned earlier in this report, character/personality structure/characteristics seem to be one of the two most potent internal variables to be studied in the etiology of post-traumatic responses, the other being the subjective meaning of trauma. However, the

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8 Ulman and Brothers, by archaic narcissistic fantasies, refer to fantasies of grandiosity, omnipotence, self-sufficiency, invulnerability, impenetrability, inviolability, and so forth.

9 A selfobject is the person's experience of another person or object (animate or inanimate) as subjectively connected to and extended from self (Ulman and Brothers, 1988).
question of whether the subjective meaning attached to trauma can be a derivative solely of personality is not easily answered. In this dissertation project, it is assumed that the subjective meaning of trauma is not totally dependent on personality. In other words, to put it schematically, two individuals with the same or similar personality structures may respond to the same traumatic event somewhat differently, based on how they perceive/contextualize/structure the event. The difference between these two types of subjective meaning of trauma can be summarized as follows:

1. *Private subjective meaning of trauma:* The meaning here is derived from personality structure and, thus, is unique to the traumatized individual.

2. *Contextual subjective meaning of trauma:* The meaning here is derived from the social, political and cultural context in which the traumatic event occurs and is represented in the event-related schemas of the traumatized person. This type of meaning can be shared with others who experience the event in similar contexts, if they share similar event-related schemas. It is this second type of subjective meaning that is the basis of this dissertation project, and its background can be found in the schema-based literature on traumatic stress.\(^\text{10}\)

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\(^{10}\) In the rest of this report, "subjective meaning of trauma" will always refer to the second type (contextual or schema-based) unless otherwise indicated.
2. Schema-Based Understanding of Subjective Meaning of Trauma

Recent work in social psychology has stressed the importance of cognitive schemas for understanding people’s perceptions, memories, and inferences (Cantor, 1980; Fiske & Taylor, 1984; Markus, 1977). A schema is a cognitive structure that represents organized knowledge about a given concept or type of stimulus (Fiske & Taylor, 1984). We start interactions in the world with schemas and understand phenomena through these cognitive structures. Schemas are generally resistant to change. We persevere in maintaining our schemas: ordinarily we alter our perceptions and memories so as to render them schema consistent (Fiske & Taylor, 1984; Nisbett & Ross, 1980). Schemas can deal with “theories” of particular categories of people and events, as well as with more global theories or assumptions people hold about themselves and their world. Parkes (1971, 1975), for example, maintains that people strongly hold to a set of assumptions (“assumptive world”) that represents their view of reality, and these assumptions are built up, and confirmed over years of experience. Moreover, people are not necessarily aware of the content of these assumptions or schemas. Because they perceive the world through these assumptive lenses, it is very difficult to invalidate them. Their assumptive world provides us with a stable conceptual system that affords them psychological equilibrium in a constantly changing actual world.

Janoff-Bulman (1995), relying on the above-mentioned schema-based theory of assumptive worlds and working with violent crime survivors, argues that traumatic events represent a serious challenge to the assumptive worlds of traumatized people. According
to her, psychological trauma can be understood in terms of the potential breakdown of the assumptive worlds of trauma survivors. The threat to the survivor's assumptive world occurs because traumatizing event cannot readily be assimilated into his or her conceptual system. A cluster of assumptions (all of which relate to the general perception of relative invulnerability) is challenged by traumatization. A very common reaction following traumatization is an intense feeling of vulnerability. Janoff-Bulman relates the sense of vulnerability to three fundamental assumptions: 1) The world is benevolent; 2) Events in the world are meaningful; and 3) The self is positive and worthy. She suggests that these three vulnerability-related assumptions may form a central core of our assumptive world.

Along similar lines, Horowitz (1976), in an attempt to integrate psychodynamic and cognitive approaches to trauma, argues that until the trauma is resolved (i.e., integrated into the worldview), the person becomes engaged in a reiterative cognitive process called the "completion tendency": the trauma survivor experiences a persistent, intrusive cascade of recollections of the traumatic event and tries again and again to seek resolution or integration. Horowitz also defines the completion tendency as the tendency to integrate one's inner models with reality.

Horowitz’s "inner models" are compatible with Bowlby’s "working models" (1969). Developmentalist Bowlby places extreme importance upon an individual's need to create working models of the environment (environmental model) and of one's self (organismic model). The achievement of any predetermined life goal, including safety and security, requires a functional environment model continually interacting with an
organismic model. When major changes in the environment or the organism occur, then major changes of the models are called for. Necessary revisions of these models are not always easy to achieve.

From this general schema-based perspective, the key to the survivor’s recovery process is the reestablishment of an integrated, organized set of assumptions or schemas (Janoff-Bulman, 1995). The traumatic event must be assimilated into the survivor’s assumptive world, or the assumptive world must accommodate the new data (Piaget, 1971). Running parallel to Janoff-Bulman’s framework of assumptive worlds is the “just-world hypothesis.” According to this hypothesis, people generally believe that the world is a just and orderly place where people usually get what they deserve (Lerner & Miller, 1978).

The subjective meaning of trauma in this approach is also defined through the lenses of core assumptions or schemas. What is lacking in both the “assumptive world” and the “just world hypothesis” approaches is the possibility of the development of a different set of assumptions in the pre-trauma period, based on different social, political and cultural contexts. It is reasonable to assume that people’s fundamental assumptions about the world or self are rather diverse than similar. Moreover, it can be argued that assumptive worlds may differentiate in the face of different (traumatic) events. The assumptive world approach deals mostly with the post-trauma period as if all people hold the same core assumptions before facing the traumatic event. The core assumptions Janoff-Bulman describes are hardly universal and would very likely be colored by context
in an event-specific manner. The question then becomes whether it makes a difference if one faces the traumatic event with a different set of assumptions which do not involve, for example, a just or benevolent world.

Everly's somewhat similar approach seems more appropriate as he employs a more comprehensive concept, worldview (1995b). He argues that human beings are engaged in a never-ending struggle to make sense out of the world around them. Events are very often perceived not as singular or isolated, but as having a larger significance. This results in holding a perspective/assumption about the world, which can be called a worldview. Events that are consistent with the worldview may be viewed as ego-syntonic for the person experiencing those events. Events that are discordant or contradictory to the worldview may be viewed as ego-dystonic, threatening, or stressful. Two essential aspects of the overarching worldview are (a) safety and security, and (b) sense of self. With regard to psychotraumatology, Everly (1995b) suggests that trauma challenges previously constructed assumptions, meanings, and understandings regarding the world and oneself, and this creates the devastating impact of the trauma. If this position is true, then we would expect that meaningful ("ego-syntonic") traumatic experiences lead to less or no psychopathology in the long run.

From an existentialist point of view, Frankl (1959), based on his own experiences in Nazi concentration camps, argues that the failure to find meaning and a sense of responsibility in one's life lies at the root of psychopathology. Frankl states that it is not necessary for one to know why he or she suffers, but it is essential that one derive
meaning from the experience of suffering. More contemporary followers of the existential approach continue to use Frankl’s framework by offering search-for-meaning-based psychotherapy for trauma survivors (Harmand, Ashlock, & Miller, 1993).

Lifton (1988), based on his experiences with the Holocaust and nuclear explosion survivors, concludes that survivors of trauma retain an indelible image of the trauma because of a continuing struggle to master and assimilate the traumatic event into some meaningful context. Lifton conceptualizes trauma as the antithesis of order, protection, and security. Trauma may also represent a devastation to one’s self-perception.

Lifton’s conceptualization of trauma is very common throughout the literature. On the one hand, there is one’s routine (non-traumatic) life characterized by order, justice, safety and security. On the other hand, there is a traumatic situation characterized by chaos, injustice, malevolence, threat and insecurity. Although this polarized view of trauma and non-trauma may be valid for most people and for most traumatic situations, there may also be exceptions to this rule. What if a person does not view the world or the society in which he or she lives as an orderly, just, safe and secure place, even before a traumatic event occurs in that person’s life. What if this person is struggling for a more just world/society which, according to him or her, is not currently available. And, what if this person sees the traumatic events (e.g., torture) that he or she is exposed to during the struggle as a “natural” price of this effort. These “what ifs” bring us to the main question of this dissertation: Can contextual subjective meaning of trauma (in this case, torture) predict the post-traumatic response? Three pieces of previous work regarding this
question should be mentioned.

First, Bettelheim, on the basis of observations (1943, 1961) in the Nazis' Dachau concentration camp, suggests that two groups of people were the least psychologically vulnerable: Communists and religious people. Common to both groups was a strong ideological commitment and religious beliefs that provided them with a clear explanation for why traumatic events happened to them. These were the two groups of people who had identified themselves with the German State and official ideology to the least degree. In contrast to these two groups were middle class Jews who were the most psychologically vulnerable in the concentration camps and who had identified themselves with the German State much more than the other two groups.

Second, Hendin and Haas (1984) in their study of combat adaptations of Vietnam veterans with and without PTSD, make some inferences about their distinctive character traits. Although this is not a controlled study, which precludes definitive conclusions, some of its findings are remarkable: Veterans without PTSD declared that impulsive behaviors in combat were wrong, even if these kinds of behaviors were rewarded by their army superiors. For veterans with PTSD, the war was experienced, in general, as a chaos, which they could never control and which they could never understand. They were unconditionally obedient to the orders of their superior officers. On the other hand, veterans without PTSD may have responded critically to the same orders. Moreover, they did not act aggressively against civilians. This finding was interpreted by the authors as a result of being self-confident and showing self-initiative. It is also reasonable to assume
that these veterans came to Vietnam with a different worldview in which they did not identify themselves with the rationale of the war. In other words, the meaning of war was different for them. This detachment may have played a protective role against the psychological traumatization.

Third, Punamaki (1996), in his study with 385 Israeli adolescents, showed that exposure to political hardships (war or warlike hardships) did not increase the presence of psychosocial symptoms among children who showed strong ideological commitment.\textsuperscript{11} In contrast, among children with weak ideological commitment, exposure increased these symptoms. He also found a mediating role of ideological commitment, showing that political hardships increased the ideological commitment that, in turn, was related to a low level of psychosocial problems.

All these three studies suggest that the worldviews of people who are exposed to traumatic events in certain contexts play a significant role in the development of post-traumatic response. Another important common characteristic in these studies is that worldviews of survivors, except for religious people in the Holocaust, are defined as being traumatic event-specific. Aside from the religious worldviews which provide general explanations across situations such as fate or god’s will, the other, less general worldviews (mostly ideological positions or attitudes) provide convincing explanations or interpretive tools only for certain events. Being a communist in a Nazi concentration

\textsuperscript{11} "Ideological commitment" in this study is defined as glorification of war, patriotic involvement, and defiant attitudes toward enemy."
camp, being a patriot or nationalist in a nationalist conflict or being a critical/detached soldier in a war which was later proved to be totally unjust, seem to protect people from the psychological aftereffects of trauma to a significant degree. A reasonable explanation of this phenomenon might be that those event-specific worldviews in those contexts allow people to make sense of their traumatic experiences more easily. In a sense, they have more cognitive equipment to process and structure those traumatic events which are experienced as chaotic by other people without such equipment.

Worldview, even if event-specific, is still an experience-distant concept. The experience-near concept related to worldview is the contextual subjective meaning of trauma, since people with similar event-specific worldviews may develop divergent subjective meanings regarding the traumatic experience. In other words, the subjective meaning of trauma is the experience-near, actualized derivative of the event-specific worldview. For example, a dissident in a repressive regime would presume the risk of being detained, imprisoned and tortured. However, to what extent the dissident’s worldview would affect his or her response in the face of a real torture session is another question. To sum up, worldview is thought to determine the subjective meaning of trauma to a great extent, but there remains room for individual variation.
CHAPTER IV

DISSERTATION STUDY

As shown in this report, the field of psychotraumatology is about to make a paradigm shift. It seems the nature of this shift will be determined by studies on the etiology of traumatic stress. The study of torture survivors from this perspective (especially questioning the significance of personality and subjective meaning of torture) is very likely to contribute to the general field of psychotraumatology. Leaving the study of personality for future projects, this dissertation addresses the etiological role of contextual subjective meaning of torture in post-torture psychological response.

The study of political and non-political torture survivors from the above-mentioned “meaning” perspective provides a unique opportunity. It can be argued that in many countries politically committed individuals/groups are at risk of being tortured. They have to take into account this possibility from the beginning. This may induce a sort of predictability, perhaps even expectation of torture at some point in their political career. Torture has a meaning in their worldview. They tend to see torture as a “natural”
price of their struggle. Therefore, can we expect less psychopathology in political torture survivors than in non-political torture survivors, based on the different subjective meanings these two groups attribute to their torture experiences?

This dissertation consists of two consecutive studies. While Study I deals with the interrelationships among torture, political involvement, and worldview regarding the agents of torture and psychopathology; Study II directly addresses the issue of contextual subjective meaning of torture in relation to political involvement and psychopathology.

Since "context" has been constantly emphasized throughout this report, before describing the studies, a brief picture of the socio-political context in Turkey, with regard to torture and the general human rights situation, is presented.

1. Socio-Political Context: Torture and Turkey

Since 1980, Turkey, the country in which this study is conducted, has had one of worst human rights records in the world (Al, 1988a, 1988b, 1988c, 1989, 1990, 1991a, 1991b, 1996a, 1996b, 1996c, 1998; International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights-IHF, 1997; IHF, 1998; Refugee Health Care Center, 1988; Roth et al., 1987). Violation of fundamental rights and freedoms has been characteristic of the period starting with the September 12, 1980 military coup d'etat. During the three-year military dictatorship and the period under the consequent civilian governments until 1994, 14,000 people died, 420 of whom were tortured to death; 650,000 people were detained for political reasons;
65,000 of them were convicted and served various sentences; more than 500 people received the death penalty and 50 people were actually executed; 388,000 people were banned from receiving passports; 30,000 people fled the country; a law was passed that banned speaking Kurdish was banned through a law prepared (thus, Turkey became the first and only country to ban the use of a language); tens of thousands of books were burned; 937 films were banned; all political parties. 23,667 associations or similar organizations were closed down. During this 14-year period, the deaths of the 420 people who died because of torture occurred in detention places or prisons, or because of hunger strikes, or because of illnesses due to torture. Hundreds of thousands of people were tortured and survived while thousands became disabled. At least 37 people, ascertained to have been detained, disappeared. And the vast majority of those tortured were from revolutionary or progressive or left-wing political organizations (Human Rights Foundation of Turkey-HRFT, 1994). Non-political prisoners have also been reported at high risk (85%) of being tortured (Paker et al., 1992). Human rights organizations have reported that the human rights situation in Turkey has been worsening since the early 1990s (AI, 1996c; IHF, 1997; IHF, 1998).

Moreover, since 1984, Turkey has been experiencing an undeclared civil war mostly in its East and southeast regions, that is, so-called Kurdistan. The conflict started between the PKK\(^{12}\) (Kurdistan Workers Party) and the Turkish Military, but increasingly

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\(^{12}\) Kurdistan Workers Party. It has an eclectic discourse of Kurdish nationalism and socialism. Its own human rights record has also been subjected to severe criticism.
claimed thousands of civilians, too. It has been reported that, between 1984 and 1994, more than 25,000 people have been killed, most of whom were civilians. The Turkish Army has forcefully evacuated more than 3,000 Kurdish villages, claiming the villagers supported the PKK. This forceful evacuation has created an internal refugee population of about 3 million Kurdish people (HRFT, 1994). The death toll of this conflict, which started in 1984, has reportedly reached 35,000 in 1998 (Sabah, 1998). This conflict has gradually reached the big cities even out of the Kurdish region, in which hundreds of thousands of local or refugee Kurdish people reside. During this period, the traditional state oppression of the Kurdish ethnic minority has more than doubled.

Another traditionally oppressed subcultural group in Turkey is the Alewiat sect followers of Islam. As a radically heterodox sect of Islam, the Alewiat have always been secular and for the last 30 years, have mostly been sympathetic to left-wing parties or groups, covering a spectrum ranging from social democrats to communist revolutionaries.

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13 The population of Turkey is 62 million out of which 15 to 20 million are believed to belong to the Kurdish ethnic minority.

14 Alewiat population in Turkey makes up about 20 million, or one-third of the national population. About one-fifth of the Alewiat is also of Kurdish origin.

15 This tendency has started to change in the recent years. The Turkish state now tends to see the Alewiat’s secularist sensitivities as a buffering factor against the rising Islamic sensitivities. Although it is true that the repression on Alewiat has been decreased recently, they still do not enjoy an equal status with the followers of the dominant Islamic tradition, namely Sunnis. They are not represented in the Office of Religious Affairs, a huge state institution that has a hegemonic control over the religious issues and life in Turkey. It allocates all its resources to Sunni Islam. Moreover, the attitude change at the top of the state toward Alewiat does not necessarily and automatically translate into corresponding attitude changes of the rank-and-file police or army officers. At this level, being an Alewiat is still a risk factor for being (continued...
Turkish/Kurdish children as young as 12 have reportedly been subjected to torture, including electric shocks, hosing with cold water and beating. Testimony of sexual torture has been received from children as young as 14 who describe being stripped naked, sexually assaulted and threatened with rape. In many cases, the torture testimony of children and juveniles is supported by medical evidence. Children have also disappeared after eye-witnesses saw them taken away by police. In the context of the conflict between the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) and state forces in the southeast, children have been the victims of abuses by both sides. Children have been killed in village massacres committed by the PKK, but also by state forces in bombardments of villages carried out by soldiers or aircraft (Al. 1996a).

Prison/detention conditions in Turkey have also been subjected to severe criticism. Torture, ill-treatment, and insufficient medical care have been well documented. As a result, prisons have traditionally been one of the main focuses of political protests. To illustrate the severity of this problem, the following example should suffice: On May 27, 1996, a hunger strike began at the Diyarbakir\textsuperscript{16} Prison and spread throughout the Turkish prison system. By June 26\textsuperscript{th}, 2,174 prisoners were on indefinite hunger strike and 355 on death strike at 43 prisons in 38 cities. The hunger strikers were mainly protesting the "violence experienced during transfers to hospitals and courts." They issued demands for the "ending of violence and detentions directed against the

\textsuperscript{15} (...)continued

\textsuperscript{16} The main Kurdish city in the southeast of Turkey.
families of prisoners"; "allowance of publications (which were not banned) inside the prisons"; "unimpeled social relationships among the prisoners"; "a delegation to inspect whether legal rights are being experienced or not"; and other demands. The Turkish Government insistently refused to negotiate with the hunger strikers until July 28th, when the 12th prisoner had died during the death fast (International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights. 1997; Paker. 1996).

The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (ECPT) has described the incidence of torture and ill-treatment in Turkey as widespread. The UN Committee on Torture used the term "systematic." In 1995, a UN working group stated that Turkey had been the country with the highest number of reported disappearances in the world in 1994 (Al. 1996b).

To sum up, torture, along with other types of human rights abuses, has been a very serious and common political, social, and "public health" problem in Turkey. As briefly summarized above, a study on torture in Turkey would have to select its subjects exclusively from three main groups: 1. Socialists/revolutionaries, 2. Kurds/Kurdish nationalists, and 3. Alewiat, and, of course, all possible combinations of these.
CHAPTER V

STUDY I

Study I is, to a large extent, based on the data of the Comprehensive Research Project in Turkey (Basoglu, Paker et al., 1994a, b. 1995, 1996a, b; see also Chapter I).

This study aims to examine the possible impact of being tortured and being politically involved on torture survivors' psychological status. The ultimate concern of this dissertation project, the contextual subjective meaning of torture, is not directly addressed in Study I. However, taking the unique opportunity provided by the design of the Comprehensive Torture Research Project, which also included non-tortured groups, the study will also examine whether or not political activism moderates the post-torture psychological response. Study I paves the way for a more in depth study of the subjective meaning of torture, which will be dealt with in Study II.

1. Hypotheses

H-1-1. Objective severity level of torture in political torture survivors is greater than that in non-activist torture survivors.
H-1-2. Torture increases the level of psychopathology in both political activist and non-activist survivors.

H-1-3. Paradoxically, psychopathology level (PTSD, anxiety, depression) in political torture survivors is less than that in non-activist torture survivors. In other words, political activism moderates post-torture psychopathological response.

2. Method

Design

The full study design included four groups:

Group 1 (G1-1) (N=85): political activists who had been subjected to systematic torture.

Group 2 (G1-2) (N=55): non-tortured political activists.

Group 3 (G1-3) (N=55): non-tortured individuals with no political involvement or commitment.

Group 4 (G1-4) (N=30): non-activist, tortured individuals who had no strong identification with the ideals, normative culture, and belief system of a political group or organization, and who did not actively participate in the activities of a political group to promote a certain cause or belief system.
Interviews with all participants were done in Istanbul, Turkey. Data for the first three groups (N=55 for each then) were collected in 1992, and for the fourth group in 1995. An additional 30 participants were added to the first group in 1995. With these four groups, a 2x2 factorial design was achieved, the first factor being torture status (tortured vs. non-tortured) and the second being political status (political activist vs. non-activist).

Sample Selection

This study was carried out in collaboration with the Istanbul Branch of the Turkish Human Rights Association, the Turkish Medical Association, and the Istanbul Chamber of Medicine. These organizations are widely known and trusted by survivors of torture for their stance against human rights violations and for their support of rehabilitation programs for survivors in Turkey. The support provided by these organizations was therefore critical in gaining access to and establishing a trusting relationship with survivors of torture.

The appeal for participation in the study stressed the three main aims of the project: 1) to deliver psycho-social help to those in need; 2) to provide an opportunity for survivors to give testimony about their torture experience and speak out against human rights violations; and 3) to investigate the physical and psychological aftereffects of torture. The appeal made it clear that any survivor of torture could participate in the study, regardless of their political motive and whether or not they thought they had any psychological problems related to their torture experience.
fashion so as to avoid biases as much as possible in referral patterns. Media
announcements were sent to both left- and right-wing newspapers, inviting survivors
from all political groups to take part in the study. However these appeals were published
only in the left-wing press, except for one Islamic magazine.

Strict confidentiality was emphasized and subjects were reassured that their
identity would not be revealed to any source under any circumstances without their
permission. Participants were free to remain anonymous or to use a pseudonym.

Criteria for selection of torture survivors

1. Age 18 to 65

2. Past history of systematic torture

3. No history of past or present psychotic illness

4. At least three months since the experience of torture (given the serious nature
of personal, social, economic, and legal problems following detention/imprisonment and
torture, it would have been ethically questionable to conduct this study in the acute period
following torture, despite the survivor's consent)

5. Written consent to participate in the study, which explained the study's aims.

Group 1-1 (political activist torture survivors)

Group 1-1 originally consisted of 92 (58 in 1992 and 34 in 1995) consecutive
persons referred to the study. Eighty-seven torture survivors were referred by human rights organizations, lawyers, or friends who had heard of the study, and five were self-referred in response to articles in the media. All Group 1-1 participants were from left-wing organizations.  

Of the 92 referrals, all agreed to take part in the study. Seven survivors, however, failed to keep their appointments after the initial interview. Sixty-two survivors revealed their name to the interviewers while 23 preferred to use a pseudonym.

Validation of 80 of the survivors’ accounts of torture came from independent information provided mainly by human rights organizations.

_Group 1-2 (non-tortured, political activists)_

Group 1-2 consisted of 55 activist individuals who had not experienced torture. Referring agents (e.g., a friend, a lawyer, or an official of a human rights organization) were asked to find non-tortured activists similar on socio-demographic variables to the torture survivors they referred. Participants in this group were matched to the first 55 participants in the first group on socio-demographic variables (sex, age, and education). All Group 1-2 participants were drawn from left-wing groups; 17 of them had been arrested and detained at least once. However, none of them had been subjected to physical violence or other ill-treatment.

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17 In this report, the terms left-wing, socialist, communist and revolutionary are used interchangeably. The purposes of this study and the political context of Turkey do not necessitate distinguishing these concepts with regard to torture.
Information regarding political group membership could not be elicited from controls due to the sensitive nature of such information. Political orientation was confirmed indirectly through referring agents: a list of demographics was given to agents who then searched for suitable candidates, or through questions regarding past and present political activity during the interview. Group 1-2 participant candidates with a history of torture were excluded (e.g., beatings not defined as torture by the interviewee). In Group 1-2, 51 participants revealed their name to the interviewers while four preferred to use a pseudonym.

**Group 1-3 (non-tortured, non-activist individuals)**

Fifty-five participants of Group 1-3 volunteered as controls in response to announcements by word of mouth. They included acquaintances, friends, or friends of friends of the project workers or the study participants in Groups 1-1 and 1-2. None had been subjected to torture. In addition, they had no history of political involvement (e.g., membership in political organizations), no commitment to a political ideology, or history of detention or imprisonment. They were matched to the second group on demographic variables (sex, age, and education).

**Group 1-4 (non-activist torture survivors)**

As mostly used for Group 1-1, the "snowball" method was used. First, a list of potential participants was drawn up, based on information from various referring sources, including the Istanbul Human Rights Association (IHRA); a Kurdish-based, left-wing
political party; and the project workers themselves. To minimize referral bias, each referring source was asked to list all persons they knew who had been tortured, regardless of their psychological status. The referring source then identified the torture survivors who were suitable for the study and available for contact. Reasons for unavailability (e.g., living out of town, address not known, etc.) were noted and care was taken to establish contact with every available person on the list, often indirectly through the referring source.

Of the 150 “non-political” survivors of torture listed initially, 60 (40%) were excluded for unavailability (address not known or left town) and 10 (7%) for illiteracy. Of the 80 torture survivors who were contacted, 46 (57%) refused to be interviewed for reasons that included fear of retaliation by the authorities, reluctance to talk about their torture, and living too far from the study site. Thirty survivors agreed to participate in the study (20% of those included on the initial list). Five of them preferred to use a pseudonym. Due to the greater difficulties in recruiting participants in this group, no attempts were made to match this group’s participants demographically with those in the other groups.

None of the participants in Group 1-4 strongly identified with the ideals, normative culture, and belief system of a political group. Nor did any of them have any past or present active participation in the activities of a political group to promote a certain cause or belief system. Nevertheless, a few of them were members of a trade union or a left-wing (legal) political party. They were not, however, active members with
a strong ideological commitment. They had been tortured either for non-political reasons or because of their association with politically involved friends or relatives.

An additional selection criterion, no past forensic history due to non-political causes, was added for Group 1-4. This was included to avoid the confound of a possible effect of “criminal-type” personality. Although some non-activist torture survivors were charged with certain crimes, none of these alleged crimes was confirmed by a court conviction.¹⁸

The circumstances leading to arrest and torture included allegations of manslaughter, theft, murder, kidnapping or being an accessory to kidnapping, possessing firearms, or involvement in a fight (n=6); argument with a government official (n=2); association with or having information about friends or relatives who were involved in political activity (n=11); attendance at a mass demonstration as a sympathizer, uninvolved observer, or a passerby (n=6); allegations of illegal political activity (n=3); possessing political (but legal) publications (n=1); and homosexuality/transvestism (n=1).

**Assessment Instruments**

The following assessment instruments were used for Study I:

1. *Semistructured Interview for Survivors of Torture* (SIST) (assessor-rated)

¹⁸ The “no past forensic (other than political forensic) history” criterion was not applied to the first three groups in advance because it was not seen as a potential problem for those groups. This turned out to be accurate: none of the subjects in the first three groups had forensic history other than for political reasons.
(Basoglu, Paker et al., 1994a). It includes sections on: a) Demographic information, personal history, and forensic history (political); b) Pre-torture psychological functioning, e.g., previous psychiatric illnesses and hospitalizations; c) Events leading up to torture, e.g., political activities leading to arrest and detention, and degree of political involvement; d) Types of torture and assessment of its magnitude and meaning to the survivor, e.g., methods of torture used and subjective perception of their stressfulness (0-4 ratings), preparedness for the torture experience, availability of help and social/emotional support from spouse, parents/relatives, and friends during imprisonment, and post-prison (0-4 ratings).

2. Structured Clinical Interview and Diagnosis Form (SCID) (assessor-rated): This is a structured screening form for psychological disturbances, based on the DSM-III-R. This form was developed by Spitzer & Williams (1983), and translated into Turkish by Solias et al. (1988). The DSM-IV-based SCID could not be used in this study, since it was not available in Turkish when the interviews were being conducted (1992 and 1995).

3. MMPI (self-rated): This widely used personality inventory was developed by Hathaway and McKinley (1943). The Turkish standardization of the MMPI was done by Savasir (1981). For the purposes of this study, only the results of the validity scales of MMPI will be reported.

4. MMPI PTSD Scale (MMPI PTSD) (self-rated): This is a self-rated scale for PTSD, developed by Keane et al. (1988), by drawing significant items from the MMPI.
The Turkish standardization of the MMPI was done by Savasir (1981). Since it is not trauma-specific, it was used for all groups. [49 items, range: 0-49.]

5. Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) (self-rated): This is a cognitively oriented, self-rated scale of mood, developed by Beck et al. (1961). The Turkish version of this scale was standardized by Hisli (1987). [21 items, range: 0-63.]

6. State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) (self-rated): This is a self-administered scale of anxiety developed by Spielberger et al. (1970). The Turkish standardization study of this scale was done by Öner & LeCompte (1982). It measures two types of anxiety. While state anxiety is defined as the subjective fear at the moment, trait anxiety is defined as a general tendency to experience anxiety. [20 items for both, range: 20-80.]

7. Hamilton Depression Rating (HAM-D) (assessor-rated): This is an assessor-rated scale of depressive symptoms, developed by Hamilton (1969). It is a widely used depression scale in Turkey, but its translators are unknown. [17 items, range: 0-52; 0-13: no depression, 14-27: mild, 28-41: moderate, 42-52: severe.]

8. Hamilton Anxiety Scale (HAM-A) (assessor-rated): This is an assessor-rated scale of anxiety symptoms developed by Hamilton (1959). It is also a widely used anxiety scale in Turkey, but its translators are also unknown. [14 items, range: 0-56; 0-5: no anxiety, 6-14: mild, 15-56: severe.]

9. DSM-III-R Severity of Psychosocial Stressors Scale (OTH-STR) (assessor-rated) (APA, 1987): This was used to assess stressful life events other than torture,
including 1) loss, arrest, detention, torture, or imprisonment of a loved one; 2) serious physical injury; 3) accidents; 4) exposure to political violence (e.g., physical violence during demonstrations, bomb explosions). [Scores range from 1=none to 6=catastrophic, for each stressor reported.]

Interviews

The first set of interviews were carried out in 1992 with the first three groups and were conducted by two physicians\(^\text{19}\) who were also master’s-degree students in clinical psychology and four psychiatrists. All were trained in the use of semi-structured interviews. A pilot study was conducted on 10 subjects in order to test inter-rater reliability. This study yielded a concordance rate of 92% for psychiatric assessment (SCID; Spitzer and Williams. 1983: Solias et al., 1988) and 95% for assessment of torture experience (SIST).

The interviews with the fourth group and with 30 additional participants for the first group occurred in 1995 and were conducted by one physician who was also Ph.D. student in clinical psychology (M.P.) and seven psychiatrists. Two interviewers had also worked on this project in 1992. The other interviewers were trained in the use of semi-structured instruments by the interviewers who had conducted the interviews in 1992. Inter-rater reliability for both instruments was over 90%.

The interviews were conducted in two sessions about one week apart, each lasting

\(^{19}\) One of whom is the author of this dissertation.
about 2.5 hours. During the first session, the SIST was administered. In the second session, the SCID, Hamilton Anxiety and Hamilton Depression Scales were administered. Due to time pressure participants had to complete their self-ratings at home between the two interviews. These were then checked and verified by the assessors at the second interview.

Data Analyses

1. Index scores for psychopathology were computed as follows (See Appendix A):

   a. Depression Index Score (%). based on BDI (self-rated) and HAM-D (assessor-rated).

   b. Anxiety Index Score (%). based on STAI-S (self-rated) and HAM-A (assessor-rated).

   c. PTSD Index Score (%). based on MMPI-PTSD.

   d. General Psychopathology Index Score (%). based on Depression, Anxiety and PTSD Index Scores.

2. Chi-square tests (for categorical variables) and one-way ANOVAs (for continuous variables) were used to compare the four groups on their socio-demographic characteristics, and characteristics of experiences in detention, prison, and political involvement.

3. Chi-square tests were used to compare the four groups on their SCID diagnoses.
4. One-way ANOVAs were conducted to compare the four groups on psychopathology index scores.

5. Two-way (2x2; torture status and political status) ANCOVAs were performed to compare the four groups on psychopathology indexes and MMPI validity scales.

3. Results

Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Comparisons of socio-demographic characteristics of the four groups are presented in Table 4. The groups did not differ on sex, age, and marital status, while there were significant between-group differences on education, occupation, ethnic origin, and income level. The tortured non-activist group (Group 4) was least educated and the most disadvantaged economically among all groups. Correspondingly, the most common occupations of this group's participants were found to be laborer, small business owner, and unemployed, whereas higher status occupations were more frequent in the other groups. The tortured non-activist group also included a significantly higher number of Kurdish participants than did the other three groups. This finding reflects the extent of state violence on even non-activist people in the Kurdish sector of the society. It is also worth noting that the unemployment rates in the two tortured groups were much higher than those in the non-tortured groups. This finding suggests that risk of being unemployed increases after being tortured/imprisoned, probably due to survivors'
Table 4: Socio-demographics (Study I)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>Group 3</th>
<th>Group 4</th>
<th>p  (^1)</th>
<th>Sign. pairs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tortured activists</td>
<td>Non-tortured activists</td>
<td>Non-tortured nonactivists</td>
<td>Tortured non-activists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Age (sd)</td>
<td>30.6 (5.8)</td>
<td>30.9 (5.3)</td>
<td>31.3 (5.8)</td>
<td>31.6 (9.9)</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Status (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below High School</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University or more</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean # of years in school (sd)</td>
<td>12.8 (3.3)</td>
<td>13.1 (3.1)</td>
<td>12.7 (3.5)</td>
<td>7.5 (4.3)</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>4&lt;1,2,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.0002</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborer</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government employee</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small business owner</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional/manager</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed(^2)</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic origin (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>87.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurdish</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income level (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below moderate</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>74.5</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above moderate</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) Chi-square tests for categorical variables and one-way ANOVA for continuous variables were performed.

\(^2\) Including housewives (one in Group 2, one in Group 3, and five in Group 4).
difficulties in adjusting to social life and also employers' negative attitude toward survivors, who no longer have a "clean" forensic record anymore. All socio-demographic variables reported in Table 4 will be used as covariates in subsequent statistical analyses (ANCOVA).

**Mental Health-Related Background Characteristics**

Comparisons of mental health-related background characteristics of the four groups are presented in Table 5. The groups were not significantly different on family history of psychiatric illness and past psychiatric illness. The prevalence of family history of psychiatric illness were rather high in all groups, ranging from 22% to 42%. The prevalence of past psychiatric history ranged from 7% to 13%.

In terms of self-ratings of other stressful life experiences based on DSM-III-R Axis IV scores, two activist groups showed significantly higher exposure to other stressful events than did the non-activist groups. In addition to the difference between activist and non-activist groups on other stress scores, the tortured non-activist group showed significantly higher other stress scores than did the non-tortured non-activist group. The participants in the tortured non-activist group were also exposed to higher levels of other stressful events mentioned above than their non-tortured controls.

All variables reported in Table 5 will be used as covariates in subsequent statistical analyses (ANCOVA).
Table 5: Mental health-related background characteristics (Study I)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>Group 3</th>
<th>Group 4</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Sign. pairs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family history of psychiatric illness (%)</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past psychiatric illness (%)</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean total other stress score (sd)</td>
<td>10.8 (10.6)</td>
<td>12.7 (8.3)</td>
<td>2.9 (3.4)</td>
<td>7.2 (6.1)</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>3&lt;1,2,4 4&lt;1,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Chi-square tests for categorical variables and one-way ANOVA for continuous variables were performed.
2 Including second-degree relatives.
3 Excluding the torture period for tortured subjects.
4 Based on DSM-III-R Axis IV stress scores [0=None...6=catastrophic], excluding torture-related stressors.

Forensic History

Comparisons of forensic history characteristics between activist and non-activist tortured groups are presented in Table 6. All participants in both groups were taken into custody at least one time. Tortured activists were taken into custody on average 4.2 times as compared to tortured non-activists who were taken in 3.5 times, which is not a significant difference. However, the differences between the two groups on all other forensic history characteristics were highly significant. The tortured activist group was found to be much more severely persecuted than the tortured non-activist group, as indicated by the mean number of total days spent in custody (40 vs 17), exposure to a court trial (93% vs. 50%), being convicted (52% vs. 13%), being imprisoned (81% vs. 31%), mean number of total months spent in prison (38 vs. 4), the mean number of total months spent in captivity (custody plus prison) (39 vs. 5), currently having some legal
Table 6: Forensic history. Comparison of tortured activist and non-activist participants (Study 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forensic history characteristics</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 4</th>
<th>p¹</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tortured activists (n=85)</td>
<td>Tortured non-activists (n=30)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taken into custody (%)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean # of times taken into custody (sd) [range]</td>
<td>4.2 (7.0) [1-50]</td>
<td>3.5 (5.3) [1-20]</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean # of total days spent in custody (sd) [range]</td>
<td>39.9 (36.1) [1-200]</td>
<td>16.6 (22.0) [1-87]</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tried in court (%)</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean # of times tried in court (sd) [range]</td>
<td>2.2 (1.6) [0-7]</td>
<td>0.7 (0.9) [0-3]</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convicted (%)</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean # of times convicted (sd) [range]</td>
<td>0.9 (1.1) [0-5]</td>
<td>0.2 (0.5) [0-2]</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imprisoned (%)</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean # of times imprisoned (sd) [range]</td>
<td>1.2 (1.0) [0-5]</td>
<td>0.4 (0.6) [0-2]</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean # of total months spent in prison (sd) [range]</td>
<td>38.0 (50.5) [0-164]</td>
<td>4.3 (10.3) [0-48]</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean # of total months spent in captivity (custody + prison) (sd) [range]</td>
<td>39.3 (50.9) [0-166]</td>
<td>4.8 (10.5) [0-50]</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of subjects imprisoned although not convicted</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current legal status (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.0011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No legal burden</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some legal burden</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conditional release</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>waiting for the court hearing</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persecuted</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>waiting for the court's decision</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Chi-square tests for categorical variables and t-tests for continuous variables were performed.

burden (e.g., conditional release from prison or waiting for the court hearing/decision) (61% vs. 27%). The number of subjects imprisoned without being convicted was rather high in both groups (33% vs. 17%), with a strong indication that this is a more frequently encountered situation for the tortured activists. This finding demonstrates that one-third of activists and one-sixth of non-activists were imprisoned in the absence of sound
charges and were subsequently acquitted.

**Politics- and Torture-Related Characteristics**

Comparisons of tortured activist and non-activist participants on level of political involvement, preparedness for torture, perceived social support, impact of captivity, professional help sought, and probability of being tortured in the near future, are presented in Table 7. Two subscales of SIST revealed that tortured activists, as expected, had significantly higher levels of political involvement and pre-torture preparedness for torture than did the tortured non-activists. Tortured activists’ mean scores on both subscales were close to the upper limit whereas tortured non-activists’ mean scores were quite low. However, the range of scores on both scales also showed that there was an overlap between activist and non-activist survivors on the level of political involvement and the level of pre-torture preparedness for torture. This finding suggests that some, even if just a few, activist survivors were less politically involved and also less prepared for torture than were some (again, just a few) non-activist survivors, and vice versa.

Tortured activists also reported that they received much more, although at moderate levels, social support (from spouse, relatives, and friends/comrades) during the torture period (detention and/or prison) than did the tortured non-activists. The average level of social support non-activists received during the torture period was quite minimal. Interestingly, there were no significant differences between the two groups regarding the social support they received in the post-torture period. It appears that tortured activists can mobilize their social support system at moderate levels even when they are in
Table 7: Comparison of tortured activist and non-activist participants on level of political involvement, preparedness for torture, perceived social support, professional help sought, and probability of being tortured in the near future. (Study I)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 4</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tortured activists (n=85)</td>
<td>Tortured non-activists (n=30)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of political involvement [0=none-11=highest]</td>
<td>8.5 (2.7) [2-11]</td>
<td>2.5 (2.3) [0-8]</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of pre-torture psychological preparedness for torture [0=none-14=highest]</td>
<td>9.6 (3.1) [2-14]</td>
<td>3.5 (2.6) [0-10]</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean total perceived social support during the torture period (sd) [range 0=none-12=highest]</td>
<td>6.8 (3.2) [0-12]</td>
<td>3.4 (3.7) [0-12]</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean total perceived social support after the torture period (sd) [range 0=none-12=highest]</td>
<td>6.6 (2.8) [0-12]</td>
<td>6.2 (3.1) [0-12]</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean total perceived social support during and after the torture period combined (sd) [range 0-24]</td>
<td>13.4 (5.2) [4-24]</td>
<td>9.6 (5.4) [1-22]</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional psychological help after being released from custody/prison (%)</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean perceived probability of being tortured in the near future (sd) [range 0=none-4=almost certain]</td>
<td>2.3 (1.2) [0-4]</td>
<td>2.4 (1.2) [0-4]</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Chi-square tests for categorical variables and t-tests for continuous variables were performed.

Police-stations or in prisons, and they can maintain it afterwards, whereas tortured non-activists do not have such a support system during the torture period and can receive moderate levels of social support only in the post-torture period.

Only 10% of each group reported having had professional psychological help after being released from custody/prison. Activist and non-activist torture survivors' perceptions of the probability of being tortured in the near future were also very similar, reported as slightly above moderate levels.

Frequencies of the torture methods applied to the activist and non-activist
survivors are presented in Table 8. The table shows a remarkably wide variety and high
frequency of torture methods. The most commonly encountered forms of torture in both
groups (greater than 80%) appeared to be: verbal abuse, extreme rudeness, beatings to the
body, and beatings to the head. Some other more drastic forms of torture were also
reported frequently in activist and non-activist groups: electrical torture (77% vs. 43%);
threats of rape (77% vs. 73%); falaqua (beating the soles of the feet with a stick/baton)
(59% vs. 57%); hanging by wrists/shoulders (suspension) (58% vs. 33%); beatings to the
genitals (52% vs. 37%); blows to ears (43% vs. 43%); sham executions (38% vs. 23%);
and asphyxiation (28% vs. 13%).

Comparisons of the frequencies of the torture methods applied to activist and non-
activist survivors revealed that in 17 out of 45 forms of torture, activist survivors were
exposed at significantly higher levels than were the non-activist survivors. These
included: 1) disorienting methods: blindfolding (94% vs. 73%); alternating gentle/rough
treatment (89% vs. 43%); 2) specifically humiliating methods: being stripped naked (69%
vs. 40%); threats of rape (64% vs. 30%); prevention of urination/defecation (62% vs.
33%); denial of privacy (60% vs. 40%); excrement in food (9% vs. 0%); 3) severe pain-
inducing methods: being pulled by the hair (84% vs. 63%); electrical torture (77% vs.
43%); hanging by wrists/shoulders (58% vs. 33%); 4) fatigue- and illness-inducing
methods: forced standing (87% vs. 67%); prevention of personal hygiene (81% vs. 50%);
deprivation of medical care (62% vs. 43%); restriction of movement (58% vs. 20%);
vermin-infested surroundings (55% vs. 30%); and 5) isolating methods: isolation (64%
vs. 30%). Activist survivors also received more threats of further torture than did the non-activist survivors (87% vs. 67%). These results suggest that although there does not seem to be a qualitative difference between activist and non-activist survivors in terms of the torture methods they were exposed to, activist survivors appear to be tortured in a more cruel and systematic way.

Comparisons of activist and non-activist survivors on the measures of severity of torture are presented in Table 9. Although both groups were exposed to severe torture, there were significant differences between them in terms of the severity level of torture. Two main measures were used to tap the severity level of torture. The first was simply the total number of torture methods each subject was exposed to in all torture instances. Since survivors can be exposed to each torture method at largely varying frequencies, a second measure was added to better tap an objective level of severity. This measure was based on the total number of exposures to all sorts of torture methods in all torture instances. In calculating total number of exposures, uncountable torture exposures, such as verbal abuse and extreme rudeness, were excluded. Based on these two measures of objective severity of torture, total number of methods and total number of exposures, activist survivor were found to be much more severely tortured than were the non-activist survivors. Activist and non-activist survivors were, on average, exposed to 25 vs. 19 different torture methods, with total exposures numbers of 601 vs. 243, respectively. Since there was a very high variance on the number of exposures for both groups, this variable was converted into an index score on a 1-5 scale, based on the 20th, 40th, 60th,
Table 8: Applied torture methods. Comparison of tortured activist and non-activist subjects (Study I)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applied torture methods (%)</th>
<th>Group 1 (n=85)</th>
<th>Group 4 (n=30)</th>
<th>p(X²)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tortured activists</td>
<td>Tortured non-activists</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal abuse</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme rudeness</td>
<td>97.6</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beatings to the body</td>
<td>97.6</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blindfolding</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>.00200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternating gentle/rough treatment</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>.00000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forced standing</td>
<td>87.1</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>.01294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats of further torture</td>
<td>87.1</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>.01294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beatings to the head</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being pulled by the hair</td>
<td>83.5</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>.02113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention of personal hygiene</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>.00094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical torture</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>.00084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats of death</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witnessing torture</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being stripped naked</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>.00438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleep deprivation</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats of rape</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>.00151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolation</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>.00151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention of urination/defecation</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>.00604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deprivation of medical care</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>.07012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denial of privacy</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>.05846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falaqua (beating the soles of the feet)</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanging by wrists/shoulders</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>.02199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restriction of movement</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>.00039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats against family</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to extreme cold</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermin-infested surroundings</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>.01717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beatings to the genitals</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water deprivation</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8 cont’d

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applied torture methods (%)</th>
<th>Group 1 (n=85)</th>
<th>Group 4 (n=30)</th>
<th>$p(X^2)$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tortured activists</td>
<td>Tortured non-activists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold shower</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food deprivation</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to loud music</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blows to ears</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fondling of genitals</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sham executions</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forced standing with weight on</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asphyxiation</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to bright light</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burning with cigarettes or heated sticks</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submersion in water</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Throwing of feces/urine at detainee</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needles under toenails or fingernails</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excrement in food</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>.08150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stretching of extremities</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rope bondage</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other methods</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>.01251</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi-square tests.

and 80th percentile cutoff scores of the overall sample. Statistical significance between the two groups was maintained with the converted index score, and this new variable was selected as the measure of objective severity of torture for the further statistical analyses. These results confirmed the first hypothesis of this study: The objective severity level of torture in political torture survivors is greater than that of non-activist torture survivors.
Although objective measures revealed that activist survivors were tortured much more severely than non-activist survivors, survivors' subjective ratings of severity of their torture experiences showed the reverse pattern. Non-activist survivors rated their torture experiences as being significantly more severe than did the activist survivors. Based on this discrepancy between objective and perceived severity of torture, a new variable was computed, subtracting the perceived severity score from the objective severity score. This new variable clearly showed that most of the activist survivors (61%) estimated (perceived) the severity of their torture experience relative to its objective severity within reasonable limits (compatibility between objective and perceived severity of torture), whereas only 27% of the non-activist survivors made a similar reasonable estimation. By the same token, the number of survivors who overestimated the severity of their torture experiences was significantly different in the two groups (31% in the activist group vs. 73% in the non-activist group). These results suggest that activist survivors were much more aware of the realities of the torture chambers.

Regarding the time passed since the most recent release from custody/prison and the last torture episode, there were no statistically significant differences between the two groups. At the time of assessment, the mean time since release from custody/prison was 37 months for activist survivors and 38 months for non-activist survivors. The mean time since last exposure to torture was 52 and 40 months for those groups, respectively.
Table 9: Measures of severity of torture (Study I)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Group 1 (n=85)</th>
<th>Group 2 (n=30)</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean total # of methods applied (sd) [range]</td>
<td>25.4 (8.6) [3-45]</td>
<td>18.5 (10.6) [4-43]</td>
<td>.0006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean total # of exposures to all torture methods</td>
<td>601 (504) [8-1847]</td>
<td>243 (211) [2-791]</td>
<td>.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean objective severity of torture (sd) [1=low, 5=extreme]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low [1-87 exposures] (%)</td>
<td>3.2 (1.4)</td>
<td>2.3 (1.1)</td>
<td>.0014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-moderate [88-239 exposures] (%)</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate [240-481 exposures] (%)</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-moderate [482-889 exposures] (%)</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme [&gt;889 exposures] (%)</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall mean perceived severity of torture (sd)</td>
<td>3.8 (0.9) [1-5]</td>
<td>4.4 (0.7) [3-5]</td>
<td>.0017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (%)</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-moderate (%)</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate (%)</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-moderate (%)</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme (%)</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimation of severity of torture (Mean difference between objective and perceived severity of torture) (sd) [-4=extreme overestimation, 4=extreme underestimation]</td>
<td>-0.6 (1.6) [-4.4]</td>
<td>-2.1 (1.0) [-4.0]</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme overestimation [-4, -3] (%)</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate overestimation [-2] (%)</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasonable estimation [-1, 0] (%)</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate underestimation [2] (%)</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme underestimation [3, 4] (%)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time between the last torture episode and interview (in months)</td>
<td>52.0 (43.4) [3-168]</td>
<td>39.8 (50.4) [3-185]</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-6 months (%)</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-12 months (%)</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-18 months (%)</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-24 months (%)</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 years (%)</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 years (%)</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-7 years (%)</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;7 years (%)</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time between the last release from custody/prison and interview (in months)</td>
<td>37.4 (41.3) [1-168]</td>
<td>38.2 (49.0) [2-185]</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. t-tests.  
2. Uncountable torture exposures are excluded. They include verbal abuse and extreme rudeness.  
3. Total number of exposures were converted into a 1-5 scale based on the 20th, 40th, 60th, 80th percentile cutoff scores of the overall sample.
**Psychological Status**

Psychological consequences of torture were addressed through two different approaches in this study: categorical (DSM-III-R diagnoses) and dimensional (psychopathology scales).

DSM-III-R Axis I diagnoses of the four groups are presented in Table 10. Current and life-time PTSD appears to be the most commonly encountered diagnosis, closely followed by current and life-time major depressive syndrome, in tortured groups. These were also the only diagnoses that revealed any statistically significant differences among the four groups. PTSD had been present at some time in 35% of the activist and 40% of the non-activist torture survivors as opposed to 11% in activist and 0% in non-activist controls. Currently, 20% of the activist and 30% of the non-activist survivors as opposed to 4% of the activist and 0% of the non-activist controls had PTSD. The prevalence rates, in the same order, were 29%, 13%, 24%, 7% for past major depression; and 8%, 23%, 0%, 4% for current major depression. The four groups did not differ significantly in the prevalence of any other psychiatric disorders, which were relatively low. However, when the other anxiety disorders (Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Panic Disorder, Agoraphobia, Simple Phobia, and Social Phobia) were combined, prevalence rates were significantly higher in the tortured groups (21% and 27%) than in the control groups (9% and 2%).

DSM-III-R Axis II diagnoses of the four groups are presented in Table 11. All groups showed low rates of personality disorders and they did not differ significantly.
### Table 10: DSM-III-R Axis I Diagnoses (Study 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diagnoses (%)</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>Group 3</th>
<th>Group 4</th>
<th>p(X2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tortured activists (n=85)</td>
<td>Non-tortured activists (n=55)</td>
<td>Non-tortured non-activists (n=55)</td>
<td>Tortured non-activists (n=30)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Major Depressive Syndrome</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>.00060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Major Depressive Syndrome</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>.00999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Manic Syndrome</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Manic Syndrome</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dysthymia</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bipolar Disorder</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol Abuse/Dependency</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse/Dependency</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panic Disorder</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agoraphobia without Panic Disorder</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Phobia</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple Phobia</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obsessive Compulsive Disorder</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generalized Anxiety Disorder</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current PTSD</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>.00002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life-time PTSD</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>.00000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somatization Disorder</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypochondriasis</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustment Disorder</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Other Anxiety Disorder(^{1})</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>.00158</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{1}\) Including Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Panic Disorder, Agoraphobia, Simple Phobia, Social Phobia.
Table 11: DSM-III-R Axis II Diagnoses (Study I)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diagnoses (%)</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th></th>
<th>Group 3</th>
<th></th>
<th>Group 4</th>
<th></th>
<th>p(X2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tortured activists (n=85)</td>
<td>Non-tortured activists (n=55)</td>
<td>Non-tortured non-activists (n=55)</td>
<td>Tortured non-activists (n=30)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidant Personality Disorder (PD)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent PD</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obsessive Compulsive PD</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive Aggressive PD</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paranoid PD</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hysterionic PD</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borderline PD</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Any Cluster A diagnosis</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Any Cluster B diagnosis</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Any Cluster C diagnosis</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Axis II diagnosis</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparisons of the four groups on psychopathology measures and MMPI validity scales are presented in Table 12.

For each psychopathology measure, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. These analyses revealed highly significant differences between-groups, although mean scores of all groups for all measures did not indicate any severe psychopathology. On all psychopathology index scores (PTSD, depression, anxiety, and general), the four groups were consistently ranked as follows (from highest to lowest psychopathology scores):

Non-activist torture survivors, activist torture survivors, activist controls, and non-activist controls. Post-hoc analyses for depression, anxiety, and general psychopathology index
scores also revealed: 1) that tortured groups had significantly higher scores than the control groups; 2) that non-activist survivors had significantly higher scores than the activist survivors; and 3) that there was no significant difference between activist and non-activist control groups. Post-hoc analyses for the PTSD index score produced somewhat similar results, except the fact that there was no significant difference between tortured and non-tortured activist groups.

The same analyses were also conducted on three MMPI validity scales to evaluate whether there was any significant difference between the four groups in terms of the credibility of their self-reports. The L (lie) scale reflects a tendency to put oneself in a favorable light. The F-scale is a measure indicating severity of maladjustment or exaggeration. The K-scale is generally regarded as a measure of defensiveness (Friedman, Webb, & Lewak, 1989). On the L-scale and K-scale, mean scores of all groups were within the normal range, and there were no between-group differences. On the F-scale, although mean scores of all groups were within the normal range, there were the same between-group differences as those found on the PTSD index score. The non-activist survivors group had the highest score on this scale, followed by activist survivors, activist controls, and non-activist controls. The non-activist survivor group differed significantly from all other groups, and the activist survivor group differed only from the non-activist control group. Findings on the F-scale were totally consistent with the differing levels of psychopathology between the four groups. Taken together, results of the three MMPI validity scales supported the credibility of study participants' self-reportings.
Table 12: One-way ANOVA between-group comparisons on psychopathology measures and indexes, and MMPI validity scales (Study I) (See also Appendix A)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>Group 3</th>
<th>Group 4</th>
<th>Sign. Pairs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tortured activists</td>
<td>Non-tortured activists</td>
<td>Non-tortured non-activists</td>
<td>Tortured non-activists</td>
<td>p²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n=85)</td>
<td>(n=55)</td>
<td>(n=55)</td>
<td>(n=30)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m (sd)</td>
<td>[1-34]</td>
<td>[2-25]</td>
<td>[2-35]</td>
<td>[2-34]</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[range]</td>
<td>[range]</td>
<td>[range]</td>
<td>[range]</td>
<td>2&lt;4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMPI-PTSD [0-49]</td>
<td>14.5 (8.7)</td>
<td>12.1 (6.4)</td>
<td>9.6 (6.8)</td>
<td>19.8 (9.5)</td>
<td>3&lt;1&lt;4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[2-69]</td>
<td>[4-51]</td>
<td>[4-71]</td>
<td>[4-69]</td>
<td>2&lt;4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTSD Index [0-100]</td>
<td>29.6 (17.7)</td>
<td>24.7 (13.1)</td>
<td>19.8 (14.0)</td>
<td>40.4 (19.5)</td>
<td>3&lt;1&lt;4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beck Depression [0-63]</td>
<td>9.7 (7.5)</td>
<td>6.3 (5.6)</td>
<td>5.7 (6.1)</td>
<td>17.0 (12.3)</td>
<td>3&lt;2&lt;1&lt;4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[0-31]</td>
<td>[0-25]</td>
<td>[0-29]</td>
<td>[1-46]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton Depression [0-52]</td>
<td>5.5 (5.1)</td>
<td>2.9 (3.4)</td>
<td>2.9 (3.6)</td>
<td>8.1 (7.1)</td>
<td>3&lt;2&lt;1&lt;4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[0-22]</td>
<td>[0-14]</td>
<td>[0-17]</td>
<td>[0-24]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression Index [0-100]</td>
<td>13.0 (9.9)</td>
<td>7.8 (6.8)</td>
<td>7.3 (7.6)</td>
<td>21.6 (15.3)</td>
<td>3&lt;2&lt;1&lt;4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[0-37]</td>
<td>[0-28]</td>
<td>[0-39]</td>
<td>[2-50]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Anxiety [20-80]</td>
<td>41.4 (10.9)</td>
<td>38.0 (9.4)</td>
<td>34.6 (9.4)</td>
<td>47.3 (9.0)</td>
<td>3&lt;2&lt;1&lt;4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[22-67]</td>
<td>[24-63]</td>
<td>[20-59]</td>
<td>[32-62]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton Anxiety [0-56]</td>
<td>8.1 (7.6)</td>
<td>3.9 (5.1)</td>
<td>4.6 (5.3)</td>
<td>12.5 (11.5)</td>
<td>3&lt;2&lt;1&lt;4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[0-35]</td>
<td>[0-25]</td>
<td>[0-27]</td>
<td>[1-44]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety Index [0-100]</td>
<td>24.9 (13.6)</td>
<td>18.5 (10.7)</td>
<td>16.4 (11.0)</td>
<td>34.1 (15.2)</td>
<td>3&lt;2&lt;1&lt;4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[4-60]</td>
<td>[3-52]</td>
<td>[0-57]</td>
<td>[13-70]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Psychopathology Index [0-100]</td>
<td>22.5 (12.5)</td>
<td>17.0 (8.6)</td>
<td>14.6 (9.9)</td>
<td>32.5 (15.7)</td>
<td>3&lt;2&lt;1&lt;4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[3-51]</td>
<td>[5-43]</td>
<td>[1-53]</td>
<td>[8-61]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMPI Validity Scales</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L-scale</td>
<td>48.3 (9.5)</td>
<td>47.7 (9.0)</td>
<td>49.9 (8.9)</td>
<td>49.2 (11.2)</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[30-70]</td>
<td>[33-65]</td>
<td>[35-70]</td>
<td>[30-68]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-scale</td>
<td>54.0 (8.2)</td>
<td>51.5 (6.9)</td>
<td>45.8 (8.6)</td>
<td>62.7 (11.8)</td>
<td>3&lt;1&lt;4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[40-81]</td>
<td>[37-73]</td>
<td>[32-70]</td>
<td>[45-95]</td>
<td>2&lt;4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-scale</td>
<td>50.2 (8.6)</td>
<td>51.3 (8.4)</td>
<td>51.6 (9.2)</td>
<td>47.7 (9.3)</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[30-76]</td>
<td>[37-70]</td>
<td>[35-73]</td>
<td>[33-70]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Ranges of the measures are shown in brackets.

2 One-way ANOVA.
The Impact of Torture and Political Activism Status on Psychopathology

To assess the impact of torture and political activism status (and the interaction between them) on psychological status, 2x2 (tortured vs. non-tortured and activist vs. non-activist) ANCOVAs were conducted on PTSD, depression, anxiety, and general psychopathology index scores. Covariates included in these analyses were sex, age, ethnic status, marital status, number of years in school, income level, family history of psychiatric illness, past psychiatric illness, occupation, and cumulative severity of other stressors. ANCOVA was the statistical analysis of choice: 1) to tap the independent effects of torture and political activism status (and the interaction between them) from the possible confounding effects of covariates; and 2) to test the second and third hypotheses of this study. The results of ANCOVAs are presented in Table 13.

Torture, independent of political activism status and of covariates, was found to have a robust main effect on all psychopathology indexes. Torture appears to be a risk factor for subsequent psychopathology.

The results, indicating the significant main effects of torture on all psychopathology indexes, confirmed the second hypothesis of this study: Torture increases the level of psychopathology in both political activist and non-activist survivors.

Political activism status appeared to have significant main effects on the depression and general psychopathology indexes, a marginal main effect on the anxiety
index, and no main effect on the PTSD index. Main effects of political activism status on
the depression and general psychopathology indexes were much more modest than those
of torture. Significant main effects of political activism seem to stem from the significant
differences between activist and non-activist survivors rather than those between activist
and non-activist controls. Activist survivors had significantly lower scores than did the
non-activist survivors on all indexes, whereas there were no significant differences
between activist and non-activist controls (also see Table 12, Chart 1, 2, 3, and 4).

Interactional effects between torture and political activism status were of special
interest as they provided the opportunity to test the third hypothesis of this study, which
asserts that political activism moderates the risk for post-torture psychopathology. It was
found that interactional effects were significant for the PTSD and general
psychopathology indexes and marginally significant for the depression and anxiety
indexes. Visual illustrations of those interactions are presented in Charts 1 to 4. The
findings indicated that torture increased psychopathology levels in both groups, but more
so for non-activist survivors than for activist survivors.

*This finding confirmed, at least partially, the third hypothesis of this study:*

*Political activism moderates the risk for post-torture psychopathology.* It appeared that
political activism limited the increase of the level of psychopathology among torture
survivors.
Table 13: The impact of torture and political activism status on psychopathology index scores: 2x2 ANCOVA Results\(^1\). (All groups pooled, N=225) (Study I)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANCOVA Results</th>
<th>PTSD Index</th>
<th>Anxiety Index</th>
<th>Depression Index</th>
<th>General Psychopathology Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main effects and interaction</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>16.30</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>26.34</td>
<td>26.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p(F)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect Size</td>
<td>.073</td>
<td>.108</td>
<td>.112</td>
<td>.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>.980</td>
<td>.999</td>
<td>.999</td>
<td>.999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Activism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>6.80</td>
<td>4.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p(F)</td>
<td>.184</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect Size</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.017</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>.262</td>
<td>.477</td>
<td>.735</td>
<td>.567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>4.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p(F)</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.090</td>
<td>.096</td>
<td>.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect Size</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>.218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>.542</td>
<td>.396</td>
<td>.384</td>
<td>.560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Model</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>5.57</td>
<td>5.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p(F)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R2</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect size</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>.101</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td>.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>.699</td>
<td>.917</td>
<td>.920</td>
<td>.883</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

\(^1\) Covariates in these analyses include: sex, age, ethnic status, marital status, number of years in school, income level, family history of psychiatric illness, past psychiatric illness, occupation, and cumulative severity of other stressors.
Chart 1: Impact of Torture and Political Activism on PTSD Index Score

Chart 2: Impact of Torture and Political Activism on Depression Index Score
Chart 3: Impact of Torture and Political Activism on Anxiety Index Score

Chart 4: Impact of Torture and Political Activism on General Psychopathology Index Score
4. Summary Findings

1. The two activist groups showed significantly higher exposure to other stressful events than did the non-activist groups. Additionally, the tortured non-activist group reported a significantly higher other-stress score than did the non-tortured non-activist group.

2. The tortured activist group was found to be much more severely persecuted than the tortured non-activist group, as indicated by the mean number of total days spent in custody (40 vs. 17), exposure to a court trial (93% vs. 50%), being convicted (52% vs. 13%), being imprisoned (81% vs. 31%), mean number of total months spent in prison (38 vs. 4), mean number of total months spent in captivity (39 vs. 5), currently having some legal burden (e.g., conditional release from prison or waiting for the court hearing/decision) (61% vs. 27%).

3. Tortured activists, as expected, had significantly higher levels of political involvement and pre-torture preparedness for torture than did the tortured non-activists. However, the range of scores on both scales also showed that there was a certain overlap between activist and non-activist survivors on the level of political involvement and the level of pre-torture preparedness for torture. This finding suggested that some, even if a few, activist survivors were less politically involved and also less prepared for torture than were some, even if a few, non-activist survivors, and vice versa.

4. It appears that tortured activists can mobilize their social support system at
moderate levels even when they are in police-stations or in prisons, and they can maintain it afterwards, whereas tortured non-activists do not have such a support system during the torture period and can receive only moderate levels of social support in the post-torture period.

5. Activist survivors were exposed to 17 out of 45 forms of torture, significantly more than were the non-activist survivors. These methods appeared to have been used to induce disorientation, humiliation, severe pain, fatigue, illness, and isolation. Activist survivors appear to be tortured in a more cruel and systematic way.

6. Although objective measures revealed that activist survivors were tortured much more severely than did the non-activist survivors, survivors' subjective ratings of severity of their torture experiences showed a reverse pattern.

7. Regarding the time passed since last release from custody/prison and since the last torture episode, there were no statistically significant differences between the two groups.

8. Currently, 20% of the activist and 30% of the non-activist survivors as opposed to 4% of the activist and 0% of the non-activist controls had PTSD. The prevalence rates, in the same order, were 29%, 13%, 24%, 7% for past major depression; and 8%, 23%, 0%, 4% for current major depression. The four groups did not differ significantly in the prevalence of any other psychiatric disorders, which were relatively low.

9. On all psychopathology index scores (PTSD, depression, anxiety, and general),
the four groups were consistently ranked as follows (from highest to lowest psychopathology scores): Non-activist torture survivors, activist torture survivors, activist controls, and non-activist controls. On all indexes but PTSD, there were significant differences between all pairs but the latter two. On PTSD index, there was also no significant difference between tortured and non-tortured activists.

10. Results of the three MMPI validity scales supported the credibility of study participants' self-reportings.

11. Torture, independent of political activism status and of covariates, was found to have a robust main effect on all psychopathology indexes. Torture appears to be a risk factor for subsequent psychopathology.

12. Political activism status appeared to have significant main effects on depression and general psychopathology indexes. a marginal main effect on anxiety index, and no main effect on PTSD index.

13. Political activism moderates the risk for post-torture psychopathology.
CHAPTER VI

STUDY II

Results of Study I suggested that political activism moderated post-torture psychological response. However, Study I was not designed to address the question of how political activist survivors could be psychologically better off in the face of more severe torture, in comparison to non-activist survivors. Study I provided the framework to ask this question, but did not answer it. Study II, based on the differences between activist and non-activist survivors established by Study I, goes further and answers this question. Does the difference between activist and non-activist survivors on post-torture psychological response stem from how differently they make sense of their torture experiences? If a group of people has a political worldview that helps them better understand why and how they are tortured, does this render them less vulnerable to psychopathological response after being tortured?

Study II is, also, able to move beyond the dichotomous activist vs. non-activist description. Although Study II also has two groups (activist and non-activist survivors) of
participants, unlike Study I, its main focus is on how individuals process their torture experiences, rather than on group-based, presumed, general categories of meaning. This approach makes it possible to take into account overlaps (gray tones) in terms of subjective meanings between activist and non-activist groups. For example, some non-activist survivors may heavily rely on their ethnic identity in making sense of their torture experiences. They may not be activists, but, through the lenses of their ethnic identity, they may still have somewhat comparable meaning structure with the activists for torture. On the other hand, some activist survivors, due to various reasons, may have difficulties in making sense of their torture experiences. Although subjective meaning of torture is assumed to be influenced by survivors' political activism status, there is no reason to assert that the correlation between subjective meaning and political activism is perfect or very high. This was a limitation of Study I and discussed in the final chapter (see Table 7 and Discussion/Study I Section of Chapter VII). To eliminate this problem, the statistical analyses that aim to show the predictive value of the subjective meaning of torture were conducted by pooling the two groups together.

Study II aims to tap and compare contextual subjective meaning of torture in both political activist and non-activist torture survivors. Then, the possible links between meaning, worldview and psychopathology are presented.

Contextual subjective meaning of torture is operationalized and measured according to the following components:

1. Comprehensibility of the torture experience ("What was going on, how and
2. *Assimilation of torture experience* ("Why me?") [for example, the survivor assimilated the price of his or her activities].

3. *Perceived reason of being tortured* ("Why me?"); but not necessarily assimilated) [Possibilities include: unknown, criminal acts, ethnic identity/activities, political identity/activities].

4. *Perceived aim of torture* ("Why?") [Possibilities include: information, incrimination, indoctrination, punishment, intimidation, isolation, humiliation, destruction, satisfaction, money, etc.].

5. *Perceived personal responsibility* ("In what ways was torture related to me?") [Possibilities include: none, indirectly (in the absence of overt acts, because of friends, relatives, or just ethnic identity). or directly (because of his or her acts)].

6. *Evaluation of torturers* ("What kinds of people were they?") [Possibilities include: animal, monster, sick, pawns of the state, indoctrinated, etc.].

7. *Evaluation of his or her behaviors during torture sessions* ("How did I behave during torture?") [negative vs positive evaluation; search for self-blame, shame, and guilt.

---

20 "Perceived personal responsibility" (item no: 5) is different from "assimilation of torture experience" (item no: 2) and "perceived reason of being tortured" (item no: 3) in the following way: Item 2 aims to assess how well the torture experience is assimilated, disregarding type or level of survivor's activity. Item 3 aims to assess perceived reason of being tortured in terms of type of activity, disregarding the level of assimilation. Finally, item 5 aims to assess perceived personal responsibility in terms of activity level, again disregarding the level of assimilation.
helplessness, pride, sense of challenge, struggle, etc.]

These seven components are assumed to reflect both the contextuality and subjectivity of the torture experience because they address the meaning of torture within the given political/ethnic conflictual contexts and also from a subjective perspective. Along with an experience-distant worldview, these seven components provide an experience-near approach: Whatever the survivor’s general worldview regarding torture and state, these seven meaning components search for how he or she personally experiences torture events in the here and now. The general assumption is that higher (more complex) meaning structures reflect a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the torture experience: and better understanding, in turn, moderates post-torture psychological response.

Subjective meaning of torture is further operationalized as the degree of meaningfulness of the torture experience. It is assumed that the higher the meaning structures in the above-mentioned seven components, then the higher the meaningfulness of the torture experience. Higher meaningfulness is defined as having a greater potential to comprehend/process/structure the torture experience.

A torture-related worldview in this study is operationalized and measured as having the following components:

1. Level of political consciousness with regard to the political system and the state: assumptions of the benign nature of the state vs. consciousness of its repressive
nature and the necessity to struggle against it.

2. Level of attachment to a political and/or ethnic identity (and a group): none vs. highly attached (identified).

3. Level of political involvement: none vs. very active, militant.

A person’s worldview, as evaluated by these three components, is expected to color his or her subjective meaning of torture. And, in turn, especially for less politically committed survivors prior to torture, torture is expected to increase their commitment, as Punamaki (1996) showed for Israeli adolescents in a war context.

1. Hypotheses

H-2-1. Activist torture survivors can make sense of their torture experiences more easily than non-activist survivors. Based on deeper and more comprehensive meaning structures. In other words, torture is more meaningful for activist survivors than for non-activist survivors.

H-2-2. Torture leads to increased political commitment as measured by “worldview” (political consciousness, involvement, and attachment).

H-2-3. The less meaningful the torture experience, the higher the psychopathology (PTSD, anxiety, depression, and general psychopathology). Controlling the other relevant variables.
2. Method

Design

The study design included two groups:

Group 2-1 (G1) (N=30) consisted of political activists who had been subjected to systematic torture. The participants in Group 2-1 of Study II were the last 30 survivors in Group 1-1 of Study I.

Group 2-2 (G2) (N=27) consisted of non-activist torture survivors. The participants in Group 2-2 of Study II were the first 27 survivors in Group 1-4 of Study I.

Both groups in Study II were interviewed in 1995 in Istanbul, Turkey.

Sample Selection

Study II was also carried out in collaboration with the Istanbul Branch of the Turkish Human Rights Association. Validation of all study participants’ accounts of torture came from this association. The sample selection procedure was the same as described for Study I.

Criteria for selection of torture survivors

Selection criteria were exactly the same as described for Study I.

Group 2-1 (political activist torture survivors)

Group 2-1 originally consisted of 33 consecutive persons referred to the study.
All survivors were referred by human rights organizations, a Kurdish-based, left-wing political party, or lawyers. All of them were from left-wing organizations.\(^{21}\)

Of the 33 referrals, all agreed to participate in the study. Three survivors failed to keep their appointments for the second interview. Two of the 30 survivors preferred to use a pseudonym.

**Group 2-2 (non-activist torture survivors)**

Group 2-2 consisted of the first 27 participants of Group 1-4 in Study I. Thus the sample selection procedure for this group was the same as described for Group 1-4 in Study I.

**Assessment Instruments**

In addition to the instruments used for Study I, the following instruments were added for Study II:

1. *The Clinician Administered PTSD Scale* (CAPS): This scale was developed by Blake et al. (1990) and has been widely used in trauma-related studies since then (Weathers & Litz, 1994). CAPS was translated into Turkish by the project team. CAPS includes frequency and severity ratings for each PTSD symptom and also for associated features. It also allows a score translation for a SCID-based PTSD diagnosis.

2. *The open-ended interview*: An interview guide (see Appendix B), which

\(^{21}\) "Left-wing" here includes Kurdish nationalists, who also use a socialist-sound discourse.
included seven broadly articulated questions, was devised. Open-ended questions were
asked of the survivors, and when necessary, further probing questions were added during
the interviews. All interviews were tape-recorded. Interviews lasted on average 45
minutes (range: 25-90 minutes). The aim of the open-ended interview was to understand
the torture experience from the survivors' perspective by allowing survivors maximum
freedom to answer within the interview framework and by eliciting their torture stories.

Interviews

The interview process in Study II was the same as in Study I, except for the open-
ended interview. All of the open-ended interviews were conducted by the author in the
first interview session.22 The participants were then interviewed by the other project
workers in two more sessions, as described for Group 1-4 in Study I. All interviews were
completed in three sessions within one to two weeks.

Coding of the open-ended interview

A coding scheme was developed to quantify interview data (see Appendix C). It
included ratings for the following: the components of subjective meaning of torture
mentioned-above, objective severity level of torture, pre-torture expectancy level of being
tortured, prior information about torture, reasons for detention/torture on ethnic and/or
political grounds, level of political consciousness, level of attachment to an ethnic and/or

---

22 The first interview session, in fact, included the administration of Rorschach Inkblot Test and the
open-ended interview. Since the Rorschach data is not used in this dissertation, it is not mentioned among
the assessment instruments.
political identity, level of political involvement, and current risk of being tortured. The coding scheme further includes separate ratings of the first, the most severe, and the last torture episodes for the relevant items mentioned above. Interviews were coded using the coding scheme by an M.A.-level graduate student in psychology, who was trained in the coding scheme and who was blind to the study hypotheses and group membership of the study participants.

Inter-rater reliability of the coding of the open-ended interviews

Twenty-five percent of the interviews (n=14) were also coded by the author. Interrater reliability analyses showed that percentages of agreement varied from 93% to 100% for the items which are used to assess worldview (three items for pre-torture worldview and three items for current worldview) and subjective meaning of torture (seven items).

Data Analyses

1. Index scores for psychopathology were computed as follows (See Appendix D):

a. Depression Index Score (%), based on BDI and HAM-D.

b. Anxiety Index Score (%), based on STAI-S and HAM-A.

c. PTSD Index Score (%), based on CAPS.

d. General Psychopathology Index Score (%), based on Depression, Anxiety and PTSD Index Scores.
2. Chi-square tests (for categorical variables) and t-tests (for continuous variables) were used to compare the four groups on their socio-demographic characteristics, and characteristics of experiences in detention, prison, and political involvement.

3. Correlational analyses were performed to evaluate the associations between worldview and subjective meaning of torture.

4. Factor analyses and reliability analyses (Cronbach's alpha) were conducted to test the internal reliabilities of the general "meaning" and "worldview" constructs.

5. After the reliability analyses, total scores for the constructs of worldview and subjective meaning of torture were computed by summing up their components. Higher "meaning" scores indicated a more complex meaning structure (or higher meaningfulness) with regard to the torture experience. Similarly, higher "worldview" scores indicated a greater degree of political commitment.

6. T-tests were conducted to compare the two groups on worldview, subjective meaning of torture, and psychopathology index scores.

7. Correlation analyses were conducted to assess the associations between worldview, subjective meaning of torture, and psychopathology index scores.

8. Multiple regression analyses were conducted to test whether "meaning" contributed to psychopathology measures, while controlling the other relevant independent variables (two groups pooled).
3. Results

Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Socio-demographic characteristics of the activist and non-activist survivor groups are shown in Table 14. The two groups were remarkably similar on all but one of the socio-demographics and on other features as well. Females made up 50% of the participants in the activist group and 33% in the non-activist group, not a statistically significant difference. Mean age was 30 and 32 for activist and non-activist groups, respectively. There were also no significant differences on marital status, ethnic origin (almost half of the participants were Kurdish in both groups), family history and past history of psychiatric illness, and mean other total stress score. However, activist survivors were found to be much more educated than were the non-activist survivors, which reflected a reality of the political climate in Turkey. Mean number of years spent in school was 12.3 and 7.5 in activist and non-activist groups, respectively. Given the fact that, in Turkey, primary school is five years, secondary school three years, and high school three years, study findings suggested that activist survivors, on average, continued their education beyond high school, whereas non-activist survivors, on average, had only a secondary-school level education.

All variables shown in Table 14 will be used as control variables in the subsequent multiple regression analyses.
### Table 14: Socio-demographic characteristics (Study II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>p¹</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tortured activists</td>
<td>Tortured non-activists</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n=30)</td>
<td>(n=27)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean age (sd)</td>
<td>29.5 (6.2)</td>
<td>32.3 (9.9)</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean # of years in school (sd)</td>
<td>12.3 (4.0)</td>
<td>7.5 (4.5)</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic origin (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurdish</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family history of psychiatric illness</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past psychiatric history</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean total other stress score (sd)²</td>
<td>8.0 (9.1)</td>
<td>7.7 (6.2)</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Chi-square tests for categorical variables and t-tests for continuous variables were performed.

² Based on DSM-III-R Axis IV stress scores [0=none...6=catastrophic], excluding the ones experienced in the detention/prison period.

---

**Torture- and Detention/Imprisonment-Related Characteristics**

Torture- and detention/imprisonment-related characteristics of the two groups are presented in Table 15. Consistent with the findings of Study I, in Study II, also, activist survivors were much more severely tortured than the non-activist survivors as indicated by mean total number of torture methods applied (26 vs. 19) and mean total number of exposures to all torture methods (837 vs. 246). The same converted index
score (described in Study I) to assess the objective severity of torture on a 1-5 scale was also used in Study II. This index score revealed that activist survivors, on average, were tortured at an above-moderate severity level (3.8), whereas non-activist survivors were at a below-moderate severity level (2.3).

Again consistent with the findings of Study I, regarding the time passed since last release from custody/prison and since the last torture episode, there were no statistically significant differences between the two groups. At the time of assessment, the mean time since release from custody/prison was 31 months for activist survivors and 42 months for non-activist survivors. The mean time since last exposure to torture was 35 and 44 months for those groups, respectively.

Activist survivors, as in Study I, were found to be much more severely persecuted than the tortured non-activist group, as indicated by mean number of total months spent in captivity (custody plus prison), which was 20 months vs. 5 months.

The significant difference between the two groups on perceived level of social support, found in Study I was also found in Study II. Activist survivors reported having received more social support than did non-activist survivors, especially during the period when the torture took place.

All variables shown in Table 15 will be used as control variables in the subsequent multiple regression analyses.
Table 15: Torture- and detention/imprisonment-related characteristics (Study II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>p (^1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean total number of torture methods applied (sd)</td>
<td>26.4 (10.1)</td>
<td>18.9 (10.8)</td>
<td>0.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean total number of exposures to all torture methods (sd)</td>
<td>837 (538)</td>
<td>246 (202)</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean objective severity of torture (1-5) (sd)</td>
<td>3.8 (1.4)</td>
<td>2.3 (1.0)</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time btw last torture and the interview (in months) (sd)</td>
<td>35 (37)</td>
<td>44 (52)</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time btw last release from custody/prison and the interview (in months) (sd)</td>
<td>31 (37)</td>
<td>42 (50)</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean number of months spent in captivity (sd)</td>
<td>20 (33)</td>
<td>5 (11)</td>
<td>0.027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean social support score</td>
<td>13.0 (5.9)</td>
<td>9.8 (5.6)</td>
<td>0.044</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) t-tests were performed.

Reliability of the Constructs of Worldview and Subjective Meaning of Torture

Factor analyses examined the factorial structure of the constructs of pre-torture worldview, present worldview, and subjective meaning of torture. Only one general factor was extracted for each construct. The general factors explained 72% of total variance with high positive loadings (.66 to .93) of the three items for pre-torture worldview; 72% of total variance with high positive loadings (.71 to .92) of the three items for present worldview; and 57% of total variance with high positive loadings (.34 to .92) of the seven items for subjective meaning of torture. Additionally, Cronbach’s alphas revealed high internal consistency (.80 for pre-torture and present worldview; .86 for subjective meaning of torture). Based on these findings, the three constructs proved to be internally reliable. The results of inter-item correlational analyses are presented in Tables 16 and 17.
In computing the total construct scores, initially two separate approaches were utilized: 1) General factor scores were computed based on item score coefficients in the factor analyses; and 2) items in each construct were simply summed up. Correlational analyses between two total scores extracted from above-mentioned two approaches produced almost perfect correlation (.99 for all three constructs). As a result, the simpler approach (summing up item scores) was used for the total construct scores. Higher scores meant higher political commitment for worldview constructs and greater meaningfulness (increased ability to comprehend/process/structure) of the torture experience for subjective meaning of torture construct.

Group Comparisons on Psychopathology, Worldview, and Subjective Meaning of Torture

Group comparisons on psychopathology, worldview, and subjective meaning of torture are presented in Table 18. As expected, activist survivors had significantly higher pre-torture and present worldview, and subjective meaning of torture scores.

The significant difference on subjective meaning of torture confirmed the first hypothesis of Study II. *Activist torture survivors can make sense of their torture experiences more easily than non-activist survivors, based on deeper and more comprehensive meaning structures.*

The results on worldview scores indicated that activist survivors had been highly politically committed (higher pre-torture worldview score) before they were tortured. It appeared that they maintained that high level of political commitment in the post-torture
Table 16: Intercorrelations between the items on the worldview scales (Study II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>1b</th>
<th>1c</th>
<th>2a</th>
<th>2b</th>
<th>2c</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-torture Worldview</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a. Political consciousness</td>
<td>.40*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.73**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b. Attachment to a political/ethnic identity</td>
<td>.42*</td>
<td>.86**</td>
<td>.87**</td>
<td>.35*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1c. Political involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td>.40*</td>
<td>.89**</td>
<td>.34*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Worldview</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.79**</td>
<td>.35*</td>
<td>.86**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a. Political consciousness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.47**</td>
<td>.81**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b. Attachment to a political/ethnic identity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c. Political involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.01; ** p<.001

Table 17: Intercorrelations between the items on the subjective meaning of torture scale (Study II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>1a</th>
<th>1b</th>
<th>1c</th>
<th>1d</th>
<th>1e</th>
<th>1f</th>
<th>1g</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Subjective meaning of torture</td>
<td>.90**</td>
<td>.90**</td>
<td>.82**</td>
<td>.68**</td>
<td>.86**</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.47**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a. Comprehensibility of the torture experience</td>
<td></td>
<td>.92**</td>
<td>.69**</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td>.74**</td>
<td>.29*</td>
<td>.38*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b. Assimilation level of the torture experience</td>
<td></td>
<td>.69**</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>.78**</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.41*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1c. Perceived reason of being tortured</td>
<td></td>
<td>.69**</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>.78**</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.41*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1d. Perceived aim of torture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>.72**</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.36*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1e. Level of perceived personal responsibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.61**</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1f. Evaluation of torturers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1g. Evaluation of own behaviors during torture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.01; ** p<.001
phase (at the time of the interview), without any significant change. Non-activist survivors' level of political commitment, on the other hand, had been below-moderate before they were tortured, and increased to moderate levels after torture. The change in the level of non-activist survivors' political commitment implied a marginal significance (t=1.89, df=26, p=.070; see also Chart 5). These findings partially confirmed the second hypothesis of Study II, which predicted that torture would lead to increased political commitment.

Another important finding shown in Table 18 was the range of worldview and subjective meaning scores indicating there were some overlaps between groups. This finding supports the hypothesis that political activism status should be treated dimensionally rather than dichotomously. Subsequent correlation and multiple regression analyses provided the opportunity to use the dimensional approach.

Unlike Study I, there were no significant differences on psychopathology index scores between activist and non-activist survivors in Study II, except a marginal significance on the depression index (p=.055). Although non-activist survivors consistently had higher scores on all indexes, the difference between groups did not reach the significance level. The possible reasons of this unexpected finding will be explored in the Discussion Section.
Table 18: Comparison of psychopathology index, worldview and subjective meaning scores (Study II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Tortured activists (n=30)</th>
<th>Tortured non-activists (n=27)</th>
<th>p'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PTSD Index Score (CAPS) (0-100)</td>
<td>21.1 (20.3)</td>
<td>25.1 (19.7)</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression Index Score (0-100)</td>
<td>14.3 (10.8)</td>
<td>21.1 (15.4)</td>
<td>.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety Index Score (0-100)</td>
<td>28.4 (14.6)</td>
<td>33.1 (15.2)</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Psychopathology Index Score (0-100)</td>
<td>21.0 (14.6)</td>
<td>26.8 (15.3)</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-torture Worldview Score (0-12)</td>
<td>9.8 (2.5) [2-12]</td>
<td>4.5 (2.3) [0-8]</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Worldview Score (0-12)</td>
<td>9.9 (1.9) [6-12]</td>
<td>5.1 (2.3) [0-9]</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective Meaning of Torture Score (0-28)</td>
<td>22.8 (2.8) [14-27]</td>
<td>12.9 (5.1) [3-23]</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

p'-tests were performed.

Table 19: Intercorrelations between psychopathology index, worldview and subjective meaning scores (Study II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Subjective Meaning of Torture Score</td>
<td>.79*</td>
<td>.80**</td>
<td>-.31*</td>
<td>-.30*</td>
<td>-.35*</td>
<td>-.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Pre-torture Worldview Score</td>
<td>.85**</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Present Worldview Score</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. General Psychopathology Index Score</td>
<td>.94**</td>
<td>.91**</td>
<td>.94**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. PTSD Index Score</td>
<td>.75**</td>
<td>.81**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Depression Index Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.81**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Anxiety Index Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.01; **p<.001
Intercorrelations between the psychopathology index, worldview and subjective meaning scores are presented in Table 19. It was found that there were very strong associations between pre-torture and present worldview scores (.85) as well as between both worldview scores and subjective meaning of torture (.79 and .80). Correlations between PTSD, depression, and anxiety indexes were also very strong (.75 to .81). The general psychopathology index score was also very strongly correlated with all of its three components (.91 to .94).

Both worldview scores did not show any significant correlation with the psychopathology index scores. However, subjective meaning of torture scores were significantly correlated with all psychopathology indexes except for anxiety at moderate levels (-.30 to -.35).
Predictors of Post-Torture Psychopathology

Results of multiple regression analyses performed to find out the predictors of subjective meaning of torture and psychopathology indexes are presented in Table 20. For each multiple regression analysis, a fixed set of independent variables was used for control purposes. They included: sex, age, education (years in school), ethnic origin (Turkish vs. non-Turkish), family history of psychiatric illness, other stress score, objective severity of torture, recency of last torture episode, recency of last release from custody/prison, duration of captivity, and perceived social support. Two other control variables were excluded for the following reasons: “marital status” (married vs. unmarried) due to lack of correlations with psychopathology measures; and “past psychiatric history” due to negligible prevalence in the study groups (one member of the activist group and two of the non-activist group). In all multiple regression analyses except for the anxiety index score, PIN was .05 and POUT .10. For the anxiety index, PIN and POUT were set up for .10 and .15, respectively, to allow more than one independent variable to enter into the regression equation.

For the present worldview, the pre-torture worldview along with the set of control variables were entered into the regression analysis. Pre-torture worldview turned out to be the only predictor of the present worldview, explaining 71% of the variance. It appeared that the present worldviews (political commitments) of the torture survivors were largely influenced by their pre-torture worldviews and resistant to influence by any other factors taken into account in this analysis.
Table 20: Predictors of psychopathology index scores and subjective meaning of torture: Multiple Regression Analyses (Study II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variables and predictors</th>
<th>Adj R² Change</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Model Adj R²</th>
<th>Model p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PTSD Index Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower subjective meaning</td>
<td>.072</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.316</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More severe torture</td>
<td>.168</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More recent torture</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorter captivity</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression Index Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.203</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower subjective meaning</td>
<td>.104</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More severe torture</td>
<td>.053</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorter captivity</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety Index Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.240</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower education</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorter captivity</td>
<td>.030</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More severe torture</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower social support</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.044</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More recent release from detention/prison</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More other stress</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.141</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Psychopathology Index Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.229</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower subjective meaning</td>
<td>.081</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More severe torture</td>
<td>.079</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorter captivity</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.026</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective meaning of torture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.675</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present worldview</td>
<td>.636</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher education</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present worldview</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-torture worldview</td>
<td>.710</td>
<td>.846</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
For the subjective meaning of torture, present worldview along with the set of control variables were entered into the regression analysis. It was found that present worldview (current higher political commitment) was the best predictor of the higher subjective meaning, followed by higher education. The two variables together explained 68% of the variance.

For the psychopathology indexes, subjective meaning of torture along with the set of control variables were entered into the regression analyses. Lower subjective meaning was the first variable entered into the regression equation for all but the anxiety indexes. This finding largely supported the third and last hypothesis of Study II: *The less meaningful the torture experience, the higher the psychopathology, controlling the other relevant variables.*

More severe torture and shorter captivity were consistently found to be predictive of all psychopathology indexes.

A higher PTSD index was predicted by lower subjective meaning of torture, more severe torture, more recent torture, and shorter captivity (Adj $R^2=.32$); higher depression and higher general psychopathology indexes were predicted by lower subjective meaning of torture, more severe torture, and shorter captivity (Adj $R^2$s=.20 and .23, respectively).

The anxiety index was found to be somewhat deviant from the general trend: its higher scores were predicted by lower education, shorter captivity, more severe torture, lower social support, more recent release from detention/prison, and more other stress.
4. Summary Findings

1. Activist survivors were found to be much more educated than were the non-activist survivors, which reflected a reality of the political climate in Turkey. On other socio-demographic variables, the two groups were remarkably similar.

2. Like in Study I, activist survivors were much more severely tortured and persecuted than the non-activist survivors.

3. Activist survivors reported having received more social support than did non-activist survivors, especially during the period when the torture took place.

4. The three constructs that were developed and assessed in this study, pre-torture worldview, present worldview, and subjective meaning of torture, were found to be internally reliable.

5. Activist torture survivors can make sense of their torture experiences more easily than non-activist survivors, based on deeper and more comprehensive meaning structures.

6. The level of political commitment for activist survivors did not increase after torture. They maintained their very high level of political commitment. However, a change in the level of political commitment of non-activist survivors indicated that torture tended to increase their political commitment.

7. Unlike Study I, there were no significant differences on psychopathology index
scores between activist and non-activist survivors in Study II, except a marginal significance on the depression index (p=0.055).

8. Pre-torture and present worldview scores did not show any significant correlation with the psychopathology index scores. However, subjective meaning of torture scores were significantly correlated with all psychopathology indexes except for anxiety at moderate levels.

9. Subjective meaning of torture was found to have a predictive value for psychopathology. A higher PTSD index was predicted by lower subjective meaning of torture, more severe torture, more recent torture, and shorter captivity; higher depression and higher general psychopathology indexes were predicted by lower subjective meaning of torture, more severe torture, and shorter captivity. The anxiety index was found to be somewhat deviant from the general trend: its higher scores were predicted by lower education, shorter captivity, more severe torture, lower social support, more recent release from detention/prison, and more other stress.

5. Sample Excerpts from the Interviews

The translated transcriptions of the interviews with four selected torture survivors are presented in Appendix E, F, G, and H. Survivors’ activism status (activist vs. non-activist) and psychological status (with severe psychological difficulties vs. relatively free of such difficulties) were two criteria in the selection of these four interviews. Some
significant characteristics of these four survivors are presented in Table 21. Although the transcripts of the full interviews with those four survivors are attached in the appendices, some relevant excerpts from those interviews will be presented below to highlight each survivor’s story, emphasizing their worldviews and subjective meaning of torture. The excerpts were slightly edited and reordered to ensure the smooth flow of the survivors’ account of torture.

X6 (26 Years Old, Kurdish, Activist Male)

I was involved in various activities, cultural activities, or democratic, my communication with democratic mass organizations was good. Of course they [state, police] could not accept it. [Another reason is that] they could not accept the developing revolutionist movement in Turkey. They try to destroy people with fascist oppression, to disturb people’s sleep, to induce fear, death in people. For example, the torture I was subject to was not a torture made to me individually. It was done as an example to a people or to many persons. The torturer knows it...

When we examine Kurdish history, there are 20-30 massacres, in each massacre 15 to 20 thousand people were killed.... I mean, nowadays people are kidnapped in Istanbul and get killed, their bodies are found 20 days after. This person, in fact this action is not against him. It’s to propagate fear. It’s to make people stay home...It is a very wild State, it is such a State that I can’t express it, I mean, it’s very difficult to express it in words. Because there are things that I experienced, not that I heard but that I experienced....
Table 21: ID numbers and significant characteristics of the four survivors whose interviews are attached in the Appendix E, F, G, and H (Study II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>ID numbers of the survivors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activism status</td>
<td>Activist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic origin</td>
<td>Kurdish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>Single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total other stress score</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of detentions</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of months in captivity</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective severity of torture (1=lowest, ..., 5=highest)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time since last torture (in months)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-torture Worldview Score (0-12)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Worldview Score (0-12)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective Meaning of Torture Score (0-28)</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General psychopathology index score (0-100)</td>
<td>16.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[After I was tortured in the police-station.] I went to prison, friends from various groups, from various leftist movements, came to visit me there, they came to see my situation. When I explained them the situation, they said nobody was tortured like me. It was very intense. But I always thought I should absolutely resist, I should absolutely not give any secret. If I die, I die with dignity, but if I do what they tell me to do, if I lose my dignity, I live but how much do I live. The only
thing, the only thing I thought, stand a little bit more, these tortures will end. Either I die or I survive, these tortures will be over. I mean I did not imagine anything, but resisting people came to my mind... I resisted so that they [his friends] wouldn’t be tortured like me and eventually I didn’t make a statement against anybody... So after the torture I had high morale, I mean, I had nothing to be ashamed of, I was proud of myself, I could smile before other people. Because I did not say any word that could worsen the position of those dejected people in pitiless men’s hands...

Their [torturers’] goal is to break down people, to bring them here and torture them, if a man can think honorably under torture, if he chooses something honorable, his duty is to resist... The torture created just the opposite effect on me, my conviction was reinforced... my conviction was better, I came to know people better... I became more committed to political ideas... For example, you burn a person, he burns himself with oil in prison to protest the oppression. According to me this is the utmost resistance, this is one’s referring to one’s own deeds. Your power does not meet the other party’s oppression, your hand, your arm do not rise, and referring to your own deeds you burn yourself to protest that oppression, or you begin hunger strike to death. I learnt somewhat to die for living’s sake. I learnt somewhat to be. to die there for living’s sake...

I couldn’t see them [his torturers] physically, I couldn’t see them. They are very wild people. I personally think, these people .. don’t know about socialization,
parenthood, neighborliness... These people are deprived of love, I think they are street corner boys. The State takes them, educates them at schools, provides them shelter at dormitories. The State molds his brain, I mean, nationalism, patriot, nation, 'a Turk is equal to the whole world,' things like that are continuously injected into his head... He sees anyone who does not share his views as a robot, as an animal, I mean he takes it appropriate, very appropriate to torture you.

X31 (21 Years Old, Turkish, Activist Female)

I think it was almost evening, the policemen came, plainclothes policemen, they took me to the security\textsuperscript{23}, during the trip everything in my mind was set anyway, everything can happen to me. I have to be cold-blooded in that respect, I have to prepare myself for everything. Like what am I fighting for... I am defending people's rights, these people [police] represent something in that respect. They defend oppression, exploitation of people, and they do this job for money. An expression of not giving up in front of them is not to be dissolved in front of them. Being dissolved means letting them step on the truth. I mean, not being dissolved, I mean honor too, the honor of a human being lies there. I mean that side of my mind was clear. I completed everything until we arrived at the security. We went to the security, I am very calm, like before every time I imagined, I mean every time I imagined a systematic torture in my mind it would, like how would I be afterwards, I used to think that I would be very much excited. But there, even I

\textsuperscript{23} "Security" refers to the headquarters of police at any level, excluding the simple police-stations.
myself was very much surprised thereafter, I was very calm, I can't tell how calm I was... But controlling yourself is very essential there. Their purpose is to intrude your psychology, like to insert fear in you. Fear stems from lack of knowledge. Knowledge gives you power. I was in control of myself at that point and I was self-confident and they couldn't succeed at the end... I was even subject to sexual harassment there, but even if I had been raped, it would maybe have had an effect on my psychology, but the essence was to resist against it. I mean if I had not resisted them I would have deserved what they were doing. I mean I saw how disgusting they were. I saw how precious we were, at that point my confidence was enhanced... I have a political identity, this is what I am, I am a revolutionary. I am revolutionary in that respect, and these [torture, imprisonment] are natural aspects of my life like eating and drinking...

All the torturers are conditioned to protect the current order and to hate the people who have a democratic way of thinking. I mean they were educated like this, they are people educated in that direction... I mean at the end it's a policy of the state.

X37 (33 Years Old, Kurdish, Non-Activist Male)

We were heavily tortured there together with my cousin. We were subject to every kind of torture. And then questions that were asked to us, 'you give support to the organization'... We said that was not true. We don't know the organization... There... always they do, they do torture, they do whatever they can. Because I don't know anything, I said, I don't know anything, I mean, I don't know what
you are talking about. I am Kurdish, if my crime is Kurdish then let him take me. I came to the world as a Kurdish and I am a human being. He says you will talk, you belong to the organization. I said I don’t belong to the organization, I don’t know the organization. When you caught me you didn’t catch the organization, I don’t have any connection with the organization...

These people [torturers] assault you like [a ferocious] animal. I mean if they really had a human soul, they would not apply that torture. They are murderers, they are not human beings. And this is the kind of people who create terror...

[For the period before he was tortured] Sometimes I read it in newspapers, there is torture in Turkey... torture in prisons ... how many people lost their lives, sometimes we read it in newspapers, we heard it from television, but it never came to my mind. I mean, like this ... that I would be tortured, caught, randomly. It never came to my mind...

I know myself, because I am not guilty. I haven’t committed any crime. At this age, I have never committed any crime, I didn’t do any. I am a person working for his children. I go to work in the morning, I come home in the evening, I don’t go anywhere else. I guess I was tortured because I am Kurdish... Our village was destroyed by the state. What should we do, we have to come here, we had to come to big towns, to the metropolis. And when we come here if we are tortured where we should go. We have to ... live in this country, I mean we can’t go anywhere else. If the situation were well, if our village were not destroyed, I personally
would not stay here, what do I have to do here.

X46 (23 Years Old, Kurdish, Non-Activist Male)

I told them only what they told me. And thanks to a couple of friends they imputed these actions on us. I mean we were thus involved in the process. I couldn’t do anything, I mean, they would impose them on us. [They said] ‘be a confessor,’ ‘work with us’ etc. They threatened us. Since we hadn’t heard of anything we didn’t know anything. We are not people to be able to give you information. we are just innocuous people. We are working, we are doing farm work. We don’t have anything to do with what you are talking about. … It is not possible to explain it to them. Furthermore, whatever you tell them, it is not valid for them. They do whatever they want, they behave as it pleases them...

I considered it [suicide], I mean, rather than enduring it, than being offended like this, suicide is better. because there was no humanity left. … We lived in wildness. This kind of incidents, because when they tie a person to the main shaft of the car, to tie a person with a rope to the rear part of an armed vehicle and then pull him, … one hates oneself...

We couldn’t anticipate torture since we don’t have things like that [meaning political activities]. I mean we faced a sudden violence. They impose on us, for example ‘you are not Kurdish,’ we couldn’t even [say] our Kurdish origin. I mean we denied it. They would not be satisfied though. The reason [why I was tortured]
was only because as a young man I remained in that village, and also I was tortured because I was Kurdish."
CHAPTER VII

DISCUSSION

1. Study 1

Study I aimed to examine the possible impact of being tortured and being politically involved on torture survivors' psychological status. The main question of this study was whether or not political activism moderates the post-torture psychological response. Study I tested three hypotheses and produced several significant results. Confirming the study hypotheses, it was found that: 1) torture was a serious risk factor for subsequent psychopathology; 2) although political activists had been exposed to much more severe torture, they did not have more psychopathology than non-activist survivors; and 3) political activism moderated the risk for post-torture psychopathology. These and other significant results are discussed below. When relevant, an excerpt from the interviews with the survivors will be inserted into the text as an illustration.

Results Related to Torture and Political Activism Status

The two activist groups showed significantly higher exposure to other stressful
events than did the non-activist groups. This finding supports the hypothesis that being a political activist is a risk factor not only for being tortured and imprisoned, but also for experiencing other forms of stressful events such as persecution and death of comrades, other forms of police violence (for example, in demonstrations), and participating in or witnessing armed conflicts with security forces or with rival groups. Additionally, the tortured non-activist group reported a significantly higher other-stress score than did the non-tortured non-activist group. This finding is not surprising given that most participants in the tortured non-activist group were either friends/relatives of political activists or from generally repressed/persecuted sectors (e.g., Kurdish or Alewiat) of the society.

As expected, the tortured activist group was found to be much more severely persecuted and tortured than the tortured non-activist group. Confirming the first hypothesis of Study I, activist group was clearly exposed to torture in a much more systematic and cruel way. These findings support the idea that the repressive regimes’ human rights abuses spread like circles. The middle/central circle that is targeted by the state most violently and immediately is consisted of political dissidents. Their friends, families, and relatives consist of the second circle, which is the non-activist tortured group in this dissertation study.

Although tortured activists, as expected, had significantly higher levels of political involvement and pre-torture preparedness for torture than did the tortured non-activists, the range of scores on both scales also showed that there was a certain overlap between activist and non-activist survivors. This finding suggested that some, even if a few,
activist survivors were less politically involved and also less prepared for torture than
were some, even if a few, non-activist survivors, and vice versa. A similar type of overlap
was also found in Study II in terms of subjective meaning of torture. These findings
clearly indicates the superiority of the dimensional approach over categorical approach. It
seems that dichotomies such as activist vs. non-activist or political vs. non-political are
somewhat arbitrary and that it would be more appropriate to talk about the different levels
of political activism. This is especially true when there is a political struggle that has a
popular support, such as the Kurdish movement in the context in which this study was
conducted. In such contexts, the boundaries between activists and non-activist supporters
or sympathizers appear to get further blurred. Although it may still be possible to assign
people into activist vs. non-activist groups based on a detailed criteria and, thus, to find a
between-group difference on certain scales, it seems crucial to take into account the
dimensional nature of these constructs.

Another significant finding that distinguished activist and non-activist groups
concerned their respective use of social support. It appeared that tortured activists could
mobilize their social support system at moderate levels even when they were in police-
stations or in prisons, and they could maintain it afterwards, whereas tortured non-
activists did not have such a support system during the torture period and could receive
only moderate levels of social support in the post-torture period. This is also not a
surprising finding given that activist survivors showed a significantly higher pre-torture
preparedness for torture. This finding suggests that torturers could be more successful in
isolating non-activist survivors from their social world than activist survivors during torture. It is reasonable to assume that torture chambers, police-stations, prisons represent a sharply contrasting environment of non-activist survivors' daily/ordinary lives. For the activist survivors, though, the level of this contrast is not as sharp as it is for non-activists. Activist survivors enter the torture chambers much more prepared. Torture is rather a predictable phenomenon for them and they have more information about the procedures of the torture chambers. Thus, receiving social support, which is believed to be a protective factor, can be much more easily imagined and expected by them than is true for non-activist survivors. Another, but related, mechanism, might involve activist survivors' strong commitment to a political cause and group, which prevents them from seeing themselves totally alone and helpless in the torture chamber, even if in an imaginary way. Even if they do not receive emotional support from their comrades when they are under torture or when they are waiting to be tortured, imaginary social support in such forms as legends or rules of the political group they belong to. The following excerpt from the interview with one of the activist survivor study participant summarizes this phenomenon.

[During torture] I constantly thought about the revolutionaries who had resisted to any kind of torture for months, no matter what. They did not give in. This gave me incredible strength. I thought I had to follow their path. And I

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24 "Social support" refers to physical, emotional, legal, medical, financial support received from the other people.
Another interesting difference between activist and non-activist survivors was that between objective and subjective ratings of severity of their torture experience (See Table 9). Although objective measures (e.g., number of torture methods used and number of exposures to torture) revealed that activist survivors were tortured much more severely than did the non-activist survivors, survivors' subjective ratings of severity of their torture experiences showed a reverse pattern. Results of a derivative index, estimation of severity of torture (mean difference between objective and perceived severity of torture) showed that activist survivors estimated (perceived) the severity of their torture experience relative to its objective severity within reasonable limits (compatibility between objective and perceived severity of torture). much more successfully than non-activist survivors (61% vs. 27%, respectively). By the same token, the number of survivors who overestimated the severity of their torture experiences was significantly different in the two groups (31% in the activist group vs. 73% in the non-activist group). These results suggest that activist survivors were much more aware of the realities of the torture chambers, which is also related to their higher pre-torture psychological preparedness for torture.

I knew all the torture methods they applied to me beforehand. I wasn't surprised that much. Of course, it is somewhat different when you really experience it, but I had read books about this, I had talked to some friends who were themselves tortured. I knew their tactics.
Results Related to Psychological Status

The relatively low prevalence of severe psychological problems among the severely tortured survivors in this study may be related to the fact that only non-clinical samples were employed. About 10% of the survivors in both survivor groups had received psychological help for their torture-related problems at some point in their lives.

Consistent with the psychotraumatology literature, the most prevalent diagnosis among torture survivors was PTSD, followed by major depression. Given the very high exposure level to torture, the survivors’ rates of PTSD and depression were relatively low. At the time of the interviews, 20% of the activist and 30% of the non-activist survivors as opposed to 4% of the activist and 0% of the non-activist controls had PTSD. The prevalence rates, in the same order, were 29%, 13%, 24%, 7% for past major depression; and 8%, 23%, 0%, 4% for current major depression. The four groups did not differ significantly in the prevalence of any other psychiatric disorders, which were relatively low (See Table 10). These results, once more, confirmed that chronic PTSD was not a normative response to trauma, but rather was seen in the minority of the survivors. Even the rates of life-time PTSD, which can be regarded as including more acute, thus more normative cases, were 35% and 40% for activist and non-activist survivors, respectively. In other words, more than half of the survivors in both groups did not meet the DSM-III-R PTSD criteria even very shortly after they were exposed to torture. This finding poses a challenging question to the general field of psychopathology: Can we maintain that acute PTSD (or Acute Stress Disorder in DSM-IV) is a normative
response to a traumatic situation?

In addition to the categorical approach of DSM, a dimensional approach involving several psychopathology indexes was also used in this study. On all psychopathology index scores (PTSD, depression, anxiety, and general), the four groups were consistently ranked as follows (from highest to lowest psychopathology scores): Non-activist torture survivors, activist torture survivors, activist controls, and non-activist controls. On all indexes but PTSD, there were significant differences between all pairs but the latter two. On PTSD index, there was also no significant difference between tortured and non-tortured activists.

For the PTSD Index in Study I, only MMPI-PTSD scale was used since it was the only scale administrable to non-tortured (non-traumatized) groups, too. This scale is not aimed at specific symptoms of trauma, but at non-specific symptoms or associated features of PTSD. Its use was necessary in Study I in order to compare tortured and non-tortured groups, but its non-specific nature may explain its failure to display a significant difference between tortured and non-tortured activists. On the other hand, results obtained from all other scales were as expected.

Confirming the second hypothesis of Study I, torture, independent of political activism status and of covariates, was found to have a robust main effect on all psychopathology indexes. This finding, in line with a wide literature, clearly established that torture was a risk factor for subsequent psychopathology.
Unexpectedly, political activism status, independent of torture status and of covariates, appeared to have significant main effects on depression and general psychopathology indexes, a marginal main effect on anxiety index, and no main effect on PTSD index. It is reasonable to assume that political activism status per se has no effect on PTSD and that only if activists are exposed to traumatic situations such as torture, then the risk for PTSD increases. However, findings on depression and anxiety present a complicated phenomenon that requires explanation. Based on the results of this study, it seems that political activists are less anxious and less depressed than non-activist individuals, controlling torture status and other important socio-demographic variables. A closer look to the results, however, reveal that this difference mainly stems from the difference between tortured groups. There were no significant differences on any psychopathology index scores between non-tortured activists and non-activists controls. Thus, in the absence of torture, activists and non-activists are comparable with regard to psychological status.

As confirming the final and most critical hypothesis of Study I, political activism status appeared to moderate the risk for post-torture psychopathology. Torture increases the risk for psychopathology, but less so among activist survivors than among non-activist survivors. It seems that torture affects activist and non-activist survivors with different intensities. This finding suggests that political activism is a protective factor against developing post-torture psychopathology. Study results also indicate that the protective role of political activism is stronger for PTSD than for depression and anxiety.
This is an interesting finding that deserves further research.

How can political activism play a protective role? What are the underlying mechanisms? Political activism seems to be a very complex phenomenon with many inter-related aspects. In this study, political activism was found to be associated with higher education, higher (pre-torture) psychological preparedness for torture (PPT), more social support, objectively more severe torture, subjectively less severe torture, and higher exposure to other stressors. The possible impact of two of these variables, education and other stressors were statistically controlled in the ANCOVAs (2x2, torture x activism) conducted in this study. In spite of controlling these and some other variables, political activism produced interactive effects with torture status on psychopathology measures, suggesting that the protective role of political activism is, at least relatively, independent of education and other stressors experienced. The specific design of this study (2x2; involving non-tortured groups) did not permit control of the other possibly confounding variables, namely PPT, severity of torture, and social support. The latter two variables, severity of torture and social support, were statistically controlled in Study II, which did not involve any non-tortured groups as Study I did. However, PPT deserves some more attention at this point.

Unlike the other confounding variables mentioned above, PPT was conceptualized as an "umbrella" variable, consisting of three components, in the larger study in which Study I was embedded (Basoglu, Mineka, Paker, et al., 1997): (a) prior experience with traumatic stressors and opportunities for training in mental and physical stoicism during
political activity; (b) expectation of traumatic events; and (c) a belief system (or worldview) whereby torture is appraised as merely an instrument of repression used by the regime to protect the interests of the ruling class. PPT was also the most significantly discriminating variable between activist and non-activist survivors. In a sense, PPT was the defining feature of political activism. In that study, high PPT was also found to be a protective factor against psychopathology. Thus, it is reasonable to assert that the moderating effect of political activism operates through PPT.

Corresponding to the three components of PPT, political activism may be protective through three different mechanisms:

1. Controllability hypothesis: Political activism may provide prior immunization to stressors that involve state violence (e.g., through participation in violently repressed protests/demonstrations or some mental/physical training for torture-like hardships). Repeated exposures to stressors coupled with prior learning of effective coping responses may have enhanced survivors' sense of control during torture, which is believed to be a critical factor for post-torture adaptation (Basoglu & Mineka, 1992).

2. Predictability hypothesis: Political activism may also provide a certain predictability for torture. It is known that unpredictable stressors often have more aversive impact than do predictable stressors (Seligman & Binik, 1977; also for a review, see Basoglu & Mineka, 1992). However, there are strong individual differences in coping style which may moderate this preference for predictability. with some individuals (low monitors/high bluntners), doing better by distracting themselves than by attending to the
stimulus information (Miller, 1980, 1989).

3. Worldview hypothesis: Political activism may provide an appropriate interpretive framework (worldview) in which survivors can understand and make sense of the torture experience more easily and effectively. The significant role of worldview is known in the general psychotraumatology literature (Lifton, 1988; Lerner & Miller, 1978; Janoff-Bulman, 1992), but not in studies on torture trauma.

Although it is reasonable to assume that all these three hypothetical mechanisms are at work simultaneously and that they are also highly intercorrelated, there seem to be fundamental differences between the first two and the last one. Controllability and predictability hypotheses appear to operate at the behavioral level of analysis through conditioning, whereas worldview hypothesis operates at the cognitive level. The point of departure from Study I to Study II lies on this difference. Study II aimed to explore the worldview hypothesis rather than controllability and predictability hypotheses, because:

Controllability and predictability of the torture experience are not present-oriented, but past-oriented accounts. These hypotheses emphasize the controllability of the torture experience during torture and predictability of the same experience before torture. The current controllability and predictability of the past torture experience are non-issues within the controllability/predictability framework. To test these hypotheses reliably, highly controlled, experimental designs are needed. However, since this would not be ethical at all for human subjects, the only way to get a sense about the role of these variables on torture survivors is a retrospective inquiry, which is, inevitably, colored by
survivors’ present day situation. Worldview, on the other hand, can be evaluated here-and-now. It is reasonable to assert that political activists’ worldviews and related political activities allow them to have a high sense of control over and a high level of predictability of their torture experiences. Thus, worldview appears to be a more comprehensive construct than the other two. It also allows to describe a potentially critical factor for the purposes of this dissertation study: Contextual subjective meaning of torture, which is explored in Study II.

Strengths and Limitations of Study I

Inclusion of a non-activist tortured group in a 2x2 (torture x activism) group design appears to be the most significant contribution of this study. It allowed exploration of the interaction between torture and political activism, which was not dealt with in the previous studies in a methodologically sound way. The detailed inquiry of the study also made it possible to statistically control many possibly confounding variables. The sample size of the study (N=225. in four groups) is also rather large in compare to any previous study on torture and to most of the studies on other types of trauma.

It is also important that this study was conducted on non-refugee torture survivors and their controls, thus allowing the exclusion of the confounding effects of refugee status, which has been a shortcoming for many studies on torture, conducted especially in Western (host) countries.

Another strength is the use of MMPI validity scales, heretofore not used in any
studies on torture. Results of the three MMPI validity scales supported the credibility of study participants' self-reportings.

The problems of Study I are largely related to the composition of the non-activist survivor group and sample selection procedures.

It may be argued that the time difference between the data collection of activist and non-activist survivor groups, which happened in 1992 and 1995, respectively, has biased the nature of study population. From 1992 to 1995, the political climate in Turkey had been somewhat changed. Specifically, the armed conflict between Turkish Army and the Kurdish guerilla group, as well as the official repression on Kurdish population had been intensified. The non-activist survivor group was indeed different from the activist group in some characteristics (e.g., less educated and more Kurdish), but these differences were statistically controlled. Furthermore, the same methodology and sample selection procedures were used in both data collection phases and the interviewers were trained for inter-rater reliability across phases.

An attempt was made to minimize the chances of obtaining a sample which either over- or under-represented the psychological effects of torture. However, the rejection rates for the participation in the study were very different for activist and non-activist survivor groups: 8% vs. 57%, respectively. Given possible associations between rejection rate, more severe torture-related symptoms and the reasons for refusal (e.g., fear of retribution, fear of re-arrest and torture, reluctance to talk about past torture, unwillingness to have anything to do with authorities), it is likely that the non-activist
survivor group under-represented the psychological effects of torture. This problem, however, is unlikely to affect the validity of the study results because the groups differed in psychological status despite a sampling bias that minimizes between-group differences. A more representative sample might well have yielded stronger between-group differences.

Finally, Study I does not clarify which underlying construct in political activism (or, psychological preparedness for torture) plays the most critical role in mitigating the effects of trauma. As mentioned above, this problem is dealt with in Study II.

2. Study II

Study II aims to tap and compare contextual subjective meaning of torture in both political activist and non-activist torture survivors. The links between meaning of torture, worldview and psychopathology were explored. The main question of this study was whether contextual subjective meaning of torture had predictive power over post-torture psychopathology. Study II tested three hypotheses and produced several significant results. Confirming the first and third hypotheses, it was found that: activist torture survivors could make sense of their torture experiences more easily than non-activist survivors, based on deeper and more comprehensive meaning structures; and contextual subjective meaning of torture (CSMT) had a predictive value for psychopathology. Partial support was found for the second hypothesis: The level of political commitment for
activist survivors did not increase after torture. They maintained their very high level of political commitment. However, a change in the level of political commitment of non-activist survivors indicated that torture tended to increase their political commitment. The significant results are discussed below.

Results Related to Torture and Political Activism Status

Activist survivors were found to be much more educated than were the non-activist survivors, which reflected a reality of the political climate in Turkey. On other socio-demographic variables, the two groups were remarkably similar. Education was statistically controlled in the multiple regression analyses of this study. It was found to be a significant predictor of anxiety, but not of depression, PTSD, and general psychopathology. However, education was a predictor of CSMT, along with present worldview. It appears that education has rather an indirect effect on psychopathology through the mediation of CSMT.

In parallel with the results of Study I, it was again found that: 1) activist survivors were much more severely tortured and persecuted than the non-activist survivors; 2) activist survivors reported having received more social support than did non-activist survivors, especially during the period when the torture took place. These results have been discussed above.

Results Related to Worldview and CSMT

As expected, activist survivors had significantly higher pre-torture and present
worldview, and CSMT scores than non-activist survivors. The significant difference on CSMT confirmed the first hypothesis of Study II: Activist torture survivors can make sense of their torture experiences more easily than non-activist survivors, based on deeper and more comprehensive meaning structures. This finding gave firm empirical support to the assumption that activist and non-activist survivors make sense of their torture experiences in quite different ways (e.g., Basoglu, Paker, et al., 1994a, 1994b, 1995, 1996a; Basoglu, Mineka, Paker, et al., 1997).

I am a revolutionary, and these are natural aspects of my life like eating and drinking.

Torture was a price we paid for our struggle.

The level of political commitment for activist survivors did not increase after torture. Their political commitment was already very high and they maintained this high level. However, a change in the level of political commitment of non-activist survivors indicated that torture tended to increase their political commitment. This finding is especially important on several accounts. It shows that, at least on this study sample, the state’s aim of making dissidents or suspects ineffective through application of torture produced a reverse effect. Activist survivors maintained their high level of commitment and non-activists became even more committed.

I am so angry now, they tortured me for nothing. I had done nothing wrong and they tortured me, because I am Kurdish... I saw how this state worked. I
saw it with my eyes. I felt it on my skin. I know this state now. It made me more conscious. I can easily go up to the mountains\textsuperscript{25} now.

Becoming more committed to a political cause after being exposed to torture appears to be a successful coping mechanism, at least for some survivors. It is reasonable to assume that for some other survivors becoming less committed may serve as a coping mechanism. This finding is consistent with cognitive schema theories of trauma (Everly, 1995b; Horowitz, 1976; Janoff-Bulman, 1995; Lifton, 1988), in the sense that non-activist survivors try to assimilate the "ego-dystonic" torture experience by becoming more politically committed. Nevertheless this is an overall (average) finding, it is very likely that strong individual differences are at play on this issue.

Results Related to Psychological Status

Unlike Study I, there were no significant differences on psychopathology index scores between activist and non-activist survivors in Study II, except a marginal difference on the depression index (p=.055). Although non-activist survivors consistently had higher scores on all indexes, the between-group difference did not reach the significance level. The mean psychopathology index scores of the activist and non-activist survivor groups in both studies are quite compatible. The loss of significance from Study I to Study II on psychopathology indexes should be explained by the reduced sample size (Ns for activist survivors reduced from 85 to 30 and for non-activist

\textsuperscript{25} "Going up to the mountains" refers to joining to the Kurdish guerilla group.
survivors from 30 to 27). Although there was no significant between-group differences on psychopathology measures, when groups pooled for correlational and regression analyses, the significance of activism through worldview and CSMT became apparent.

**Predictors of Torture-Related Psychopathology**

When groups pooled, pre-torture and present worldview scores did not show any significant correlation with the psychopathology index scores. Thus, worldview (political commitment) appears to have no direct influence on psychopathology. However, subjective meaning of torture scores were significantly correlated with all psychopathology indexes except for anxiety at moderate levels. These findings, together with the high correlation between present worldview and CSMT, suggest that worldview has an indirect impact on psychopathology, mediated through CSMT. Thus, schematically: Pre-torture Worldview $\Rightarrow$ Present Worldview $\Rightarrow$ Contextual Subjective Meaning of Torture $\Rightarrow$ Psychological Outcome.

CSMT was found to have a predictive value for psychopathology. For all psychopathology indexes, except for anxiety index. CSMT was the first predictor entered into the regression equation. This finding confirmed the main hypothesis of this dissertation study. It appears that post-torture psychological outcome is influenced by how survivors subjectively make sense of their torture experiences in a certain socio-political context. This is again in line with cognitive schema theories of trauma (Everly, 1995b; Horowitz, 1976; Janoff-Bulman, 1995; Lifton, 1988) and also follows the research line of Bettelheim (1941, 1961), Hendin & Haas (1984), and Punamaki (1996), all of
whom, in different contexts, suggested that CSMT was a critical factor in determining post-traumatic psychological outcome.

Among the other predictors of psychopathology that deserve some attention here are more severe torture, more recent torture, and shorter captivity, all of which entered into regression equations, along with CSMT, for depression and general psychopathology. Severity of torture directly refers to the dose-effect hypothesis which had been the dominant, if not only, etiological paradigm in psychotraumatology until recently (March, 1993); although diathesis paradigm, which emphasizes individual vulnerability factors along with event characteristics, has become more prominent recently (Yehuda & McFarlane, 1995). Among the studies on the psychological effects of torture, a few studies explored this issue and reached to mixed results, ranging from reporting no dose-effect relationship (Basoglu & Paker, 1995) to a strong relationship (Mollica et al., 1998). Present finding situates severity of torture in a middle position: It is neither absent nor the only and/or strong predictor of psychopathology. Severity of torture appears to be a significant predictor along with some other variables. With regard to recency of torture as a predictor of post-torture psychopathology, this finding is consistent with the general psychotraumatology literature. It is well known that the prevalence rates of post-traumatic reactions tend to decrease over time (Blank, 1993; for an extensive review).

Shorter captivity was also found to be a predictor of psychopathology. This finding was surprising, at least at the first glance. However, a long stay in prison after the
experience of torture can help recovery from the effects of stress, especially in a predictable and emotionally supportive environment. The solidarity among the prisoners may provide sufficient emotional support for the tortured prisoners. It should also be noted that, for political prisoners in Turkey, prisons are another medium for intense political struggle. Collectivist group spirit during this struggle may also provide an appropriate framework in which making sense of all hardships and reinforcing worldviews might be easier and more efficient.

After years of imprisonment, when we were released [from prison], it was very hard to adjust. We were more active in the prison. Now I have to survive economically for example. I cannot fully concentrate on politics now. The struggle is much weaker out of the prison anyway. My friends in the prison were living with and for politics. Not much people seem to care about politics anymore.

The four variables mentioned above were found be predictors of PTSD, depression, and general psychopathology indexes. However, the anxiety index was found to be somewhat deviant from the general trend: its higher scores were predicted by lower education, shorter captivity, more severe torture, lower social support, more recent release from detention/prison, and more other stress. This is partly because the PIN and POUT in the multiple regression analysis for anxiety index were set up for .10 and .15, respectively, to allow more than one independent variable into the equation. If the PIN and POUT were to set up for standards (.05 and .10, respectively), then only education
would be the predictor in the equation. Although education was also found to be one of
two predictors of CSMT, the other being present worldview, this finding still deserves
further research. This finding might indicate that, regarding predictors, PTSD looks like
depression rather than anxiety, at least for the study population. If replicated and verified,
this finding might have significant implications for the conceptualization of PTSD, which
is now regarded a type of anxiety disorder in the DSM classification and which includes
both anxiety and depression symptoms along with its core reexperiencing symptoms.

In the multiple regression analyses conducted to test the predictive value of
CSMT while controlling other relevant variables, only 20% (depression) to 32% (PTSD)
of the variance (Adj. R²) was predicted by the variables entered into regression equation.
Although these figures represent a substantial amount of prediction for regression
analyses, there is still a need for other predictive factors that were not explored in this
study.

Strengths and Limitations of Study II and Implications for Future Research

Since Study II, samplewise, was embedded in Study I, most of the strengths and
weaknesses mentioned for Study I are also valid for Study II. Thus, only those specific to
Study II are discussed here.

The most significant contribution of Study II was its use of open-ended interviews
to tap CSMT through survivors' stories of torture. No previous, systematic, controlled
study on torture survivors' psychology has used such a methodology. Study results
demonstrate the value of such interviews. It was also observed that survivors appreciated very much the opportunity to tell their torture story to an empathic and interested listener.

Study II was also the first study to systematically demonstrate the significance of socio-political context for the subjective meaning of torture. Study results clearly indicate that contextual subjective meaning of torture should be taken into account in the assessment and treatment of torture survivors.

Study II moved beyond the dichotomous activist vs. non-activist description: its main focus is on the individual processing of torture experience, rather than on group-based, presumed, general categories of meaning. This approach makes it possible to take into account variability of subjective meanings both within and between activist and non-activist groups.

The three constructs that were developed and assessed in this study, pre-torture worldview, present worldview, and CSMT, were found to be internally reliable. However, further conceptual and empirical work is needed on these constructs. This was a first attempt to assess the torture-specific worldview and CSMT; thus these scales may need further development and verification. More qualitative work is needed to better understand the components of CSMT. For example, political consciousness was assumed here to be more significant for CSMT than ethnic consciousness, but ethnic identification itself may, in certain instances, be equally significant.

It is clear that post-torture psychological status is determined by multiple
variables. After delineating the single/independent effects of predictor variables on the dependent variable, the next step in such a complex system should treat all variables simultaneously and take account of their interrelations. This may be done with the procedure of structural equation modeling.

Contextual subjective meaning of torture might be seen in direct relationship with its social/collective meaning. The social meaning of torture in different cultural and subcultural contexts should be studied. From that perspective, community-based rehabilitation approaches might be developed for torture survivors.

Predictors of torture-related psychopathology appear to be multiple, and only some of them were revealed in this study. Future research efforts should be directed to examine other etiological factors and relatedly therapeutic factors. For example, contextual subjective meaning of trauma is just one of two parts of subjective meaning of trauma. Individual subjective meaning which is derived from survivor's personality structure should be systematically studied.

Future research in this field should avoid the traditional assumption of PTSD as the post-traumatic norm. Although PTSD is still the most encountered diagnosis after being exposed to a traumatic event: (a) comorbidity rates are very high; (b) acute or chronic PTSD are not actually normative; (c) most survivors do not meet any DSM diagnostic criteria, although they may have psychological difficulties. Categorical approach to psychological status (e.g., DSM) should be complemented with a dimensional approach, as well as with a qualitative methodology, which would allow in-
depth analysis of survivors. The secrets of survivors hide in the details, and strictly quantitative approaches may not be able to tap these details.

Future studies with similar methodology to examine contextual subjective meaning of torture should be conducted in other socio-political contexts to verify the study results.

3. Conclusions

Several conclusions may be drawn from this study:

1. In repressive regimes like that of Turkey, human rights abuses such as state-sponsored torture targets first political dissidents; then their friends/relatives; then political or ethnic or religious groups; and finally, the society as a whole. The results of this study highlight the nature and extent of the torture experiences and point to the need for more effective action\textsuperscript{26} against torture.

2. Exposure to torture is a serious risk factor for subsequent psychopathology. However, especially chronic forms of torture-related psychopathology are exceptional rather than the norm. Furthermore, the current study results raise serious doubts about the normative nature of acute stress reactions. Thus, exposure to a traumatic event is a necessary, but certainly not a sufficient, condition for post-traumatic pathology.

\textsuperscript{26} Political, legal, cultural, and professional action.
Normative paradigm in psychotraumatology should be replaced by an interactive paradigm, which takes into account contextual, subjective, personal, as well as objective (event-related) characteristics in understanding post-traumatic psychological response.

3. Political activism moderates the risk for post-torture psychopathology, and contextual subjective meaning of torture which is derived mainly from survivors' torture-related worldviews has a predictive power over post-torture psychological response. Political activists have an interpretive framework which allows them more effectively to make sense of their torture experiences, and this cognitive mechanism appears to be a protective factor against psychopathology. Non-activist survivors' level of political commitment tends to increase after torture, suggesting an effort to acquire a coping mechanism which was not available for them before torture.

4. Contextual subjective meaning of torture should be taken into account in the assessment and treatment of torture (and possibly all trauma) survivors. This result indicates that behavioral therapy or pharmacotherapy, which do not deal with "subjective meaning," may, by themselves, not be sufficient in the treatment of trauma survivors. Therapies that operate through subjective meaning, such as cognitive, psychodynamic/psychoanalytic, and phenomenological approaches, might be used as a part of an integrative approach.
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APPENDIX A

CONVERSION FORMULAS FOR THE PSYCHOPATHOLOGY INDEX
SCORES USED IN STUDY I

- PTSD Index is only based on MMPI-PTSD scale, since it is the only scale that is
  applicable to the non-tortured subjects as well.

\[ \text{PTSD Index} = (\text{MMPI-PTSD} \times 100 / 49) \].

- Depression Index = \([(\text{BDI} \times 100 / 63) + (\text{HAM-D} \times 100 / 52)] / 2.

- Anxiety Index = \([(\text{STAI-S} - 20) \times 100 / 60) + (\text{HAM-A} \times 100 / 56)] / 2.

- General Psychopathology Index = \([(\text{PTSD Index} + \text{Depression Index} + \text{Anxiety Index})] / 3.\]
APPENDIX B

OPEN-ENDED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
ASKED OF TORTURE SURVIVORS

1. Where, when, and how many times were you tortured?

2. Can you tell me what happened?

3. The people who tortured you. what kind of people were they?

4. Were you expecting to be tortured before these events?

5. What do you think about why you were tortured?

6. Before you experienced these events, what did torture mean to you?

7. What did you experience psychologically after these events, positive or negative, and was anything different than before?
## APPENDIX C

### CODING SCHEME FOR THE INTERVIEWS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<tr>
<td>I001</td>
<td>Subject ID</td>
<td>1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I002</td>
<td># of torture experiences</td>
<td>4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I003</td>
<td>The time between the 1st torture experience and the interview (in months)</td>
<td>6-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I004</td>
<td>The time between the most severe torture experience and the interview</td>
<td>9-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(in months) (IF relevant)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I005</td>
<td>The time between the last torture experience and the interview</td>
<td>12-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(in months) (IF relevant)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I006</td>
<td>Which torture episode was the most severe? (IF relevant)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1=1st one, 2=one of the middle ones, 3=last one</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
*** Objective severity of torture

1 = mild; 2 = mild moderate; 3 = moderate; 4 = severe moderate
5 = severe/catastrophic/strong possibility of death

I007- For the 1st episode 16
I008- For the most severe episode 17
I009- For the last episode 18
I010- Global (cumulative) 19

*** The most difficult things to bear during torture

I011- For the 1st episode

I012- For the most severe episode

I013- For the last episode
*** Sense of internal controllability during torture [1-5]
1=no control at all... (e.g., “I couldn’t control myself; I did many things against my will”) ...
5=Full control (e.g., “I didn’t lose my control; I didn’t do anything that I didn’t want to do”)

<table>
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<td>For the 1st episode</td>
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</tr>
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<td>I015-</td>
<td>For the most severe episode</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I016-</td>
<td>For the last episode</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I017-</td>
<td>Global</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Effort to have internal control [1-5]
1=no effort...5=extreme effort

<table>
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<th>Description</th>
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</tr>
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<td>I019-</td>
<td>For the most severe episode</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I020-</td>
<td>For the last episode</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I021-</td>
<td>Global</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** Sense of external controllability during torture period [1-5]
1=no control at all (e.g., “I couldn’t control/influence/orient the torturers/interrogators at all”) ...
5=Full control (e.g., “I was totally controlling the situation”)

<table>
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<td>I022-</td>
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<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I023-</td>
<td>For the most severe episode</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I024-</td>
<td>For the last episode</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I025-</td>
<td>Global</td>
<td>31</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*** Effort to have external control [1-5] (regardless of success)
1=no effort...5=extreme effort

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I026-</td>
<td>For the 1st episode</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For the most severe episode 33
For the last episode 34
Global 35

*** Sense of hopelessness [1-5]
1 = no hope; death is seen as imminent or death actively sought... (e.g., "It’s over,” "they will kill me,” “To get rid of this unbearable pain, I should kill myself”)
5 = no loss of hope (e.g., "It will be over anyway,” "they cannot kill me,” “they cannot keep me here so long”)

For the 1st episode 36
For the most severe episode 37
For the last episode 38
Global 39

*** Coping strategies during torture

For the 1st episode

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

For the most severe episode

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
**General pre-torture expectancy level for being tortured [1-5]**
1= Totally unexpected...5= Fully expected

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I045</td>
<td>For the 1st episode</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I046</td>
<td>For the most severe episode</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I047</td>
<td>For the last episode</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I048</td>
<td>Global</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Immediate expectancy level for being tortured (event-specific/just before the event) [1-5]**
1= Totally unexpected...5= Fully expected

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<td>For the most severe episode</td>
<td>53</td>
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<tr>
<td>I051</td>
<td>For the last episode</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I052</td>
<td>Global</td>
<td>55</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Prior information about torture (what torture is like) [1-5]**
1= No information/awareness at all...5= Very informed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I053</td>
<td>For the 1st episode</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I054</td>
<td>For the most severe episode</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I055</td>
<td>For the last episode</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I056</td>
<td>Global</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
*** Objective reason for detention and torture on political grounds
(regardless of the subject's political identity)
1 = Not known to the subject  2 = entirely non-political  3 = mildly political
4 = moderately political  5 = entirely political

I057 - For the 1st episode  ______  60
I058 - For the most severe episode  ______  61
I059 - For the last episode  ______  62
I060 - Global  ______  63

*** Objective reason of detention and torture on ethnic grounds
1 = Not known to the subject  2 = no ethnic involvement
3 = mild ethnic involvement  4 = moderate ethnic involvement
5 = full ethnic involvement

I061 - For the 1st episode  ______  64
I062 - For the most severe episode  ______  65
I063 - For the last episode  ______  66
I064 - Global  ______  67

*** Pre-torture level of political consciousness with regard to the political system and the State [1-5]
1 = No political consciousness (lack of interest or knowledge, or having illusions about the nature of the State)...
5 = Very high consciousness (being aware of the repressive nature of the State and having an agenda to struggle against the State)

I065 - For the 1st episode  ______  68
I066 - For the most severe episode  ______  69
I067 - For the last episode  ______  70
I068 - Global  ______  71
1069- Present level of political consciousness with regard to the political system and the State

1 = No political consciousness
(lack of interest or knowledge, or having illusions about the nature of the State)...
5 = Very high consciousness
(being aware of the repressive nature of the State and having an agenda to struggle against the State)

*** Level of attachment to a political identity (and group)

1 = None...5 = Highly attached (identified)

1070- For the 1st episode 73
1071- For the most severe episode 74
1072- For the last episode 75
1073- Global 76
1074- Now 77

Data entry line 2

*** Subject ID

1-3

*** Level of attachment to an ethnic identity (and group)

1 = None...5 = Highly attached (identified)

1075- For the 1st episode 4
1076- For the most severe episode 5
1077- For the last episode 6
1078- Global 7
1079- Now 8

*** Level of pre-torture political involvement

1 = None...5 = Very active, militant

1080- Before the 1st episode 9
1081- Before the most severe episode 10
1082- Before the last episode
1083- Global

*** The nature of this political involvement?
1084- For the 1st episode:

1085- For the most severe episode:

1086- For the last episode:

***
1087- Level of current political involvement
1= None... 5 = very active, militant

1088- The nature of current political involvement:

1089- Post-torture coping strategies

1090- Current risk of being tortured
1= no risk... 5 = Very strong possibility
Subjective meaning of torture / components

*1* Level of comprehensibility of the torture experience ("What is going on and why?")
1 = totally incomprehensible (no comprehension about why it is done and how it can be done)...
5 = totally comprehensible (whys and hows are very clear)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I091-</td>
<td>During the 1st episode</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I092-</td>
<td>During the most severe episode</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I093-</td>
<td>During the last episode</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I094-</td>
<td>Now</td>
<td>18</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*2* Assimilation level of the torture experience ("Why me?")
1 = none: victim for nothing; no link between torture and him/herself.
2 = a mildly assimilated price of his/her acts or of his/her political/ethnic identity
3 = a moderately assimilated price of his/her acts or of his/her political/ethnic identity
4 = a highly assimilated price of his/her acts or of his/her political/ethnic identity
5 = a fully assimilated price of his/her acts or of his/her political/ethnic identity

<table>
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<td>I096-</td>
<td>For the most severe episode</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I097-</td>
<td>For the last episode</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I098-</td>
<td>Now</td>
<td>22</td>
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</table>

*3* Perceived reason of being tortured
1 = Unknown / unclear
2 = a non-political "criminal" act
3 = belonging to an ethnic group
4 = 2 + 3
5 = belonging to a political group/political activities
6 = 3 + 5

<table>
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<td>I099-</td>
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<td>I100-</td>
<td>For the most severe episode</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>I101-</td>
<td>For the last episode</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I102-</td>
<td>Now</td>
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**4** Perceived aim of torture [The more aims captives articulate, the more likely they have a more advanced meaning structure for their torture experience]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived aims</th>
<th>1st episode (0-1)</th>
<th>Most severe episode (0-1)</th>
<th>Last episode (0-1)</th>
<th>Now (0-1)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not known</td>
<td>1103- _ 27</td>
<td>1116- _ 41</td>
<td>1129- _ 55</td>
<td>1142- _ 69</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>1104- _ 28</td>
<td>1117- _ 42</td>
<td>1130- _ 56</td>
<td>1143- _ 70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Incrimination</td>
<td>1105- _ 29</td>
<td>1118- _ 43</td>
<td>1131- _ 57</td>
<td>1144- _ 71</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indoctrination</td>
<td>1106- _ 30</td>
<td>1119- _ 44</td>
<td>1132- _ 58</td>
<td>1145- _ 72</td>
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<tr>
<td>Punishment</td>
<td>1107- _ 31</td>
<td>1120- _ 45</td>
<td>1133- _ 59</td>
<td>1146- _ 73</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intimidation</td>
<td>1108- _ 32</td>
<td>1121- _ 46</td>
<td>1134- _ 60</td>
<td>1147- _ 74</td>
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<tr>
<td>Isolation</td>
<td>1109- _ 33</td>
<td>1122- _ 47</td>
<td>1135- _ 61</td>
<td>1148- _ 75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Humiliation</td>
<td>1110- _ 34</td>
<td>1123- _ 48</td>
<td>1136- _ 62</td>
<td>1149- _ 76</td>
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<tr>
<td>Destruction</td>
<td>1111- _ 35</td>
<td>1124- _ 49</td>
<td>1137- _ 63</td>
<td>1150- _ 77</td>
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<tr>
<td>Satisfaction*</td>
<td>1112- _ 36</td>
<td>1125- _ 50</td>
<td>1138- _ 64</td>
<td>1151- _ 78</td>
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<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>1113- _ 37</td>
<td>1126- _ 51</td>
<td>1139- _ 65</td>
<td>1152- _ 79</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1114- _ 38</td>
<td>1127- _ 52</td>
<td>1140- _ 66</td>
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<td>1153- _ 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total # of aims</td>
<td>1115- _ 39-40</td>
<td>1128- _ 53-54</td>
<td>1141- _ 67-68</td>
<td>1154- _ 5-6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* of torturers (personal sadism, sexual gratification, etc.)

**5** Level of perceived personal responsibility

[To what extend they see their torture experience(s) as related to them]

1= None (by accident, luck, etc.; no connection between torture and self)
2= Indirectly (because of friends or relatives; in the absence of any overt acts)
3= Indirectly (because of his/her ethnic identity; in the absence of any overt acts)
4= 2+3
5= Directly (because of his/her political activities)

I155- During and right after the 1st episode _ 7
I156- During and right after the most severe episode _ 8
I157- During and right after the last episode _ 9
I158- Now _ 10
*6* Subject's evaluation of the torturers
1=Unable to articulate; 2=Animal, monster, "they are not human"
3="Sick people"; 4="Pawns of the State"
5="indoctrinated people with an opposite ideology."; 6=Other

I159- For the 1st episode __ 11
I160- For the most severe episode __ 12
I161- For the last episode __ 13
I162- Now __ 14

*7* Evaluation of his/her behaviors during torture
(search for self-blame, shame, and guilt, helplessness, pride, etc.)
1=Extremely negative (e.g., "I did/said many things that I shouldn't have done/said")

I163- For the 1st episode __ 15
I164- Main feeling: __ 16

I165- For the most severe episode __ 17
I166- Main feeling: __ 18

I167- For the last episode __ 19
I168- Main feeling: __ 20

I169- Global __ 21
I170- Main feeling: __ 22
APPENDIX D

CONVERSION FORMULAS FOR THE PSYCHOPATHOLOGY INDEX SCORES USED IN STUDY II

- PTSD Index = [(CAPS * 100 / 136)].

- Depression Index = [((BDI * 100 / 63) + (HAM-D * 100 / 52)) / 2.

- Anxiety Index = [((STAI-S - 20) * 100 / 60) + (HAM-A * 100 / 56)] / 2.

- General Psychopathology Index = [(PTSD Index + Depression Index + Anxiety Index)] / 3.
APPENDIX E

TRANSLATED TRANSCRIPT OF THE RESEARCH INTERVIEW27
SAMPLE I (CASE ID: X6)

26 years old, single, unemployed, Kurdish, political activist male

Q: Let's begin with when and where you were tortured. When did it happen, in what kind of a place, you don't need to tell names, but in what kind of a place did it happen?

A: To tell them, let me tell the date, it was in 93 ... in 1993. The first place I was taken to, they took me by main force, they shot at me. They shot at me, there was no warning, they took me. The place they took me, I guess it was at a 2 hours distance, ... I was taken at Bakurkoy, ... I was put in a van, it was a 2 ½ hours driving distance, I was in a van with the rear door closed, and the trip lasted about 2-2 ½ hours. ... I think after about 1 ½ hour of driving. I heard no noise coming from the vehicle. I noticed the car was on an unfrequented road. Certainly we were in the city. So we proceeded on this unfrequented road for an hour. After 1 ½ hour, the car proceeded for an additional hour. Of course I was blindfolded, my hands were bound. ... I got out of the van, 1 ½ hour, after a total of 2 ½ hours I got out of the van. ... I tried to see through the blindfold, ... there was a stone building, it was a stone building, or that was all I was able to see, or when I raised my head like this I was able to see through here a little bit like this. It was about 3 or 4.

Q: It was night time, I mean towards morning?

A: No, it was daytime, it was daytime then.

Q: Daytime. Do you remember which month was it? 93.

A: Month, July, it was in July. I was taken to a stone building. Of course they took me inside, they took

---

27 In this interview and in the following three interviews, identifying information of the survivors have been omitted from the transcripts. The inaudible parts of the taped interviews are shown as [???].
me inside. After I was inside, they took me down to the basement floor. ... As soon as I was down, they stripped me of my clothes. While I was nude, first they exposed me to pressurized cold water. After cold water, they began to beat me, then came falanga.28 They lifted ... my legs with a wooden beam, bound them [??], others beat my feet’s soles. ... After that beating, I was again exposed to pressurized water. ... To my feet, they wanted me to rise to my feet and walk, they got me to walk back and forth. Of course they laid me on the floor, they only beat my hands, one person held my hands, others, another person beat me with a club. One of them like that, the other like that, they beat me from two sides. ... This beating was not only in terms of club, there were also blows, they hit me, they bumped my head against the walls. I guess I lost consciousness two times there, during the first day, during the first day I lost consciousness two times. With the torture method they distressed me most, most as a, I mean, they pulled my genitals, they squeezed them, they twisted them. Then two people held me in a standing position. Or they, I mean, two times they put 2-3 tires one over the other, they placed me inside, one of them stretched out his hand through the tires, and he pulled and twisted my genitals constantly so that I [??]. ... So I ... So I remained there for 4 days. During these 4 days they did not let me sleep, day and night beating continued, beating, kicks, slaps, blows, they laid me on the floor, they sat over me, they bumped my head against the wall, ... I was nude, blindfolded, it was dark. ... However, there were other people. I heard their sounds, there were screams. When they frequently came we are counterguerrilla, we will kill you, we abducted you illegally, nobody saw you while we abducted you, ... tell us what you know and what you did, we kill you anyway whether or not you talk, but if you talk perhaps we consider the situation and may release you, because nobody saw you when we took you here, we abducted you illegally. They waged such a psychological war, they implanted death fear. ... This continued for 4 days, it continued for 4 days.

Q: Was that your first encounter with the police, was that the first time you were taken into custody?

A: The first one.

Q: You say it never happened before.

A: Of course, never, it never happened before. I have never been taken into custody.

Q: You never went through torture before.

A: No, no I didn’t. ... It continued for four days, day and night. They took me somewhere at night, at 1 o’clock, after 2 o’clock there was a guardian, I waited next to the guardian, I remained there, they wouldn’t let me sleep. I was blindfolded, my hands were bound, I was nude, I was totally nude, waiting. On the 4th day, they dressed me, they put me in a van, rear door closed, van with the rear door closed. They took me to that, to that section so-called Gayrettepe29[?]. I was blindfolded, when I was in, I saw a sign with Gayrettepe[?] section written on it.

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28 Beating the soles of the feet with a stick.

29 Headquarters of the Istanbul Political Police (who is in charge of politics-related “crimes” or activities). It is known as the worst place to be tortured in Istanbul.
Q: You weren't blindfolded, were you?
A: I was blindfolded, I was blindfolded.

Q: You saw it through the blindfold.
A: When I raise my head, here the blindfold becomes like that, when you raise your head, sometimes you can see something if there is light, in the dark you can’t see anything, in the dark you don’t see anything anyhow. Of course when I was there, I was undressed again, immediately, it was as if 4-5 wolves surround a sheep and immediately pull it to pieces, so they pull my dresses into pieces, kicks, slaps, blows, they undressed me completely. ... There was again someone so-called their chief, of course they don’t call each other using real names, there are [?] names, 72, 14, 14, sergeant, commander, scorpion, dog, dressy, professor, ... peshmerge³⁰, [?], they called each other using such nicknames. ... Sometimes when they approached me, they hit me [????]. There was a smell, a smell of alcohol. I guessed they were intoxicated. And ... since I was not upset yet, I could ... still observe ... a little bit what they were doing. ... When I came here at Gayrettepe, the torture was even worse than before. There torture was more detailed. First I was suspended. My arms which were bent backwards were tied, they were tied to a wooden beam, ... I was again [?] blindfolded, I stood on, on a chair, then they removed the chair, I stayed like this, the arms rise backwards like this, all body weight upon here, this part is almost dislocated, you think your arms will break off. While doing it there, you remain suspended ... they connect two wires to your genitals, or to your toes, or to your wrist, or to whatever part of your body, one to your genitals, and the other to your toe or to your wrist and they apply continuously electrical current... Of course while I refer these to you it is not easy, lightning flash, you hear thunders, the world collapses on you. It's pure violence. At that moment you feel something different, death... you look favorably upon death, I mean, I wish this ends up soon and I die, one thinks. I mean I wish this ends up soon and I die... you don’t expect to survive. It depends somewhat on one’s will, those without a sound will may surrender, I mean they may do whatever they are told, whatever they tell them... When they began torturing me, when they began torturing me systematically, what they asked me, admit that you are Armenian.

Q: Armenian?
A: Yes, admit that you are Armenian, admit that you’re not Kurdish, admit that you’re not circumcised, you’re not circumcised. However that is not true, though [????]... I guess there were some incidents in Istanbul. I can’t remember names, names of incidents. Assume responsibility for such and such incidents, there were some of them, there was murder, murder of political figures... assume responsibility for these, and also admit you are Armenian.. admit that you are of Armenian origin... we will give you a paper, you will read it and learn it by rote within a few days, then you will appear on TV channels, you will speak on TV as it’s written on the paper. This was the point they emphasized most. The second point was, admit you are PKK³¹ member and admit your position, you

³⁰ Guerilla in Kurdish.

³¹ Partiya Kerkeren Kurdistan (Kurdistan Workers’ Party). An illegal, armed, nationalist, “leftist”
will tell it to TV cameras, I am a high rank member of PKK, my position, they told me, my position was financial officer, admit you are a financial officer, you are a financial officer in that area, you provide new members for the organization, you will admit all these. During torture, I had been remaining on that suspension and electricity for 15 or 18 minutes, I had been remaining for 18 minutes. That current, they applied continuously electrical current... I guess it was magneto, they would wind it very frequently, it was painful. Sometimes they would wind it completely, then something internal breaks off, something breaks off. Screams, screams even when one does not want to utter any, different kind of noise comes out. It is very strange, I mean, these are things you don't have control over. You say to yourself I will not scream, but you scream, that noise comes out from you. These 15 or 18 minutes, the first time they tortured me I estimated it perfectly, I wondered how much time would I stay there, I estimated it correctly... As soon as they take me down from suspension, then immediately water, cold water, you're in front of pressurized cold water, you're still blindfolded, your hands tied. After pressurized cold water comes falanga again, they apply falanga again. Beatings, offenses... Five or ten minutes after, they come again. Now they came and they played various torture sounds from recorders... There were other people that I came to know during that period, people taken before me, I knew them over there, they tortured those people while I was present, they even took my blindfold away. and they tortured these people... They did it very frequently. Every 1 or 2 hours they suspended me, that backwards suspension, they connected wires to your genitals, and to your toes, they wound magneto without stopping. Usually this would recur 4 or 5 times a day, 5 or 6 times within 24 hours, 6 times within 24 hours.

Q: How many days did it last?
A: I was there for 25 days.

Q: At Gayrettepe.
A: I remained there for 25 days. I can't say I have been tortured during all these 25 days. I have been tortured for 18 days.

Q: They let you probably during the last 7 days for your wounds to heal.
A: They put me in a cell during the last 7 days for my wounds to heal. The last 7 days... when it was 7 days, I was not blindfolded, they put me in a cell, almost lost consciousness. These tortures have been always going on, the systematic tortures I mentioned. Sometimes when they suspend you, suspension, reverse suspension, they called it plane something, they called it Palestinian suspension, they called it Palestinian suspension, when they applied Palestinian suspension... they would put a buckle on your head, a metal piece... or they tied a rope, a wire, there was a wire on the metal, they put a piece of cloth, they put a metal here, there were wires on the metal, they would connect a wire here also, they

31 (...continued)
organization, which has been in armed conflict with the Turkish State since 1984, with the interchangeable aims of independence and autonomy. Since 1984, more than 25,000 people have been killed in this conflict. Recently (in the beginning of 1999), its leader, Abdullah Ocalan, has been captured and sentenced to death in Turkish State Security Court. Since his capture, Mr. Ocalan has changed his strategy and has been constantly calling for a peaceful political solution for Kurdish problem within the existing borders of the Turkish Republic.
put it from here, here just on right hand side, right hand side, another one from genitals, one wire there and the other there. Of course when they apply it here, when they apply it on your head, you don’t see anything, when they apply current there you can’t see anything, eyes [?], especially your eyes, I mean, your eyes are disturbed, your ears, it continued of course. Then comes plain suspension that they call plane, again a wooden beam, they lean a wooden beam against your back, a long wooden beam, to tie the arms, they tie the arms, they wind a rope round the arms, they lift you up, again the same thing, to the chair, they remove the chair, you remain suspended. This is the reverse of it, I mean that stuff remains over you, ropes are tied. The same torture from here, electrical current using the same method, from genitals, from toes, that recurs again and again... Admit organization membership, you are a member of the organization, admit that you are Armenian, you are Armenian... various offenses, insults, insults to Kurdish people, always insults to your family, everything, everything you can imagine, I mean everything we couldn’t imagine but that they could, their violence continued. This suspension on the other hand, this suspension was better than the other I guess, because I said how I am lucky to myself when I saw it. They did this kind of suspension during the last 5 days, otherwise always reverse suspension... And when this led nowhere, they applied various tortures, then they put us in the coop.

Q: Coop?
A: Coop, do you know chicken coop by chance, you don’t know it. There was a chicken coop, I mean perhaps a little higher than that, higher. They put you inside, you stay there folded, you stay in there.

Q: Are there any chickens inside?
A: There are no chickens inside. I mean it looks like a chicken coop.

Q: Some place like coffin-cell.32
A: Exactly, it’s like chicken place33 coop, we call it coop, a small coop.

Q: Coffin, they call it coffin-cell.
A: No, we call it chicken coop. Perhaps others call it coffin-cell. You stand there bent down, you stay there 3 hours, 4 hours, 2 hours... There was, there was water [?], water was salty... In the water there were pieces of glass, sharp pieces of glass, the water was very salty. You were blindfolded, they throw you in water. If you stay in water, if you stay among pieces of glasses, the glass doesn’t cut, and also they pricked a needle into the wooden beam, two people, the water level was like this, it was very cold. They immersed me in water frequently, to get me to run in the water, feet, the pieces of glass are there to cut your feet. The water, cause the water is salty, so that it hurts. They repeated it frequently, after each torture they did it, after each suspension they did it... There was also another thing, they brought a tire... in fact, when I inquired about it in prison, they applied it to two friends,

32 Tabutuk is a Turkish word deriving from tabut (coffin) and is a cell so small that a prisoner may stand upright in it but not sit or otherwise move around; there is no English equivalent.

33 The interviewee misunderstands tabutuk and takes it as a neologism, namely tavuklu (literally, chicken place).
this torture method... The tire, what you see is a tire, there are metal pieces over it, here, the metal pieces were over the tire, like this. it looks like this over it. Now suppose this is a man, this one, from here this comes to that, the body goes this side, legs, I mean below the waist goes that side. This stays there like this, like this, like this, this goes like this, you got it? They place the tires, these are my legs, this is my head, inside the tire, the tire rises, while you... this, this is the wooden beam, the metal comes here, so you can't fall, and also this sticks to your back here. [?].

Q: So your body and your legs, your head and your legs go through the tire downwards...
A: Yes, exactly.

Q: It is probably a big tire.
A: Of course, it's a big tire.

Q: Is it something like a tractor tire?
A: It's not a tractor tire.

Q: Truck?
A: It's a truck tire. It's even smaller than a truck tire. Because there was a lot of squeezing. I mean a lot. They let the body down first, from here, and afterwards they let the legs down here. The legs pass through it because they are thin, your buttocks remain up... The tire rises one meter, of course you remain in the same position. the buttocks here, legs here, head here, the head come between the legs. Of course this is worse. They lift it upwards one meter, there are ropes on the sides, on the sides of the tire, there are hooks. the hooks lift the tire up. During the first... phase, ... because of the electricity, it hits you from one wall to the other continuously, to one wall and then to the other wall, to one wall and then to the other wall. They placed you inside the tire with difficulty, one can't fall down... here is the wooden beam, it would not let you fall.

Q: [??]?
A: No, it's not. Oh, I am sorry it is suspended.

Q: How is it, do they push you to the wall, what do they do?
A: Yes... I mean I guess it is electrical, it's a room like this one, the tire hits one wall and the other wall. It bumps one wall, and then the other, it bumps one wall and then the other.

Q: So it is automatic, I mean, they...
A: Yes, it's automatic. It's hung on a chain. the tire is automatic. I mean, the tire moves with the speed of the electricity.. with the... with the current.

Q: So it is a well designed mechanism. I mean, it's not something simple.
A: No, it's not something simple. it's not something simple [?], because the tire lifts you up, all of a sudden the tire is up.

Q: Probably a crane lifts it up. It is [?] with a motor.
A: I could not conceive what it was. That is certain, because if there were no motor, it wouldn’t bump the wall by itself, because, I mean, no human pushes it. It’s not something like, you know, you are on a swing and people push you. It’s a real mechanism.

Q: This is the first time I hear about this.

A: Yes. This one... it bumps one wall and then the other, for a certain period of time, for about 10 minutes. Then they take you again for cold water, they immerse you in that cold water... again falanga, falanga, they tread on you, they tread on your back, people sit on you, they sat, they sat on you, they chat away to each other. 2-3 people sat on my back, they laid me on the concrete, a wet surface, they sat and chatted away to each other, once in a while they hit my head, they hit my legs with clubs, they burnt me with cigarettes, here there are cigarette scars, there are still cigarette scars, here on the hip, water [??].

Q: I saw it, I saw it.

A: They did this... They would apply a second time the tire, again they would apply the tire in the same manner. This time... you know, the familiar clothespin, a pin a little bit smaller than the clothespin, [?], a little smaller than the one we are familiar with. Your head comes between your legs, while your head is between your legs, the tire lifts you up, to my tongue, they fastened my tongue with it, they held it to your tongue. There is electrical current at the end of the pin, there is electrical current. They torture from here, another one attached it to my ear, one to my ear, and another to my tongues, and torture from here, I mean, they applied electricity. Of course my tongue was swollen, I couldn’t talk... See, I couldn’t see well due to that stuff, to that electrical current... They tortured me for some time in this manner. Of course they didn’t do them, I mean, they didn’t do them intermittently, tortures were one after the other. Just after the tire, there were beatings, after beatings comes water, from water to the coop, from the coop to the suspension or reverse suspension, [?] they go on like that. It went on like that during these 15-16 days. Among these there is also... there are 4 scars, there are scars you see here, of course there are dozens of small points.

Q: Are these scars due to electricity?

A: No. There are small points, do you see them?

Q: Yes, I see them.

A: Four metal rods, a little thicker than this pen, they pass these four rods through here, however the rods are hot, they are heated, you see, there are burns here, there are slight burns here, there are scars. They pass four rods like this, they pass them, red-hot metals, on flame... Passed them, they passed four metals, they put it on a vise, do you know vise, vise?

Q: Yes, I do.

A: They use a vise and metals press, they press tightly. After the metals press, of course this is very [??], after they press tightly, now electrical current is applied. When they apply electrical current, both pressure and electrical current, there was bleeding, a lot of bleeding... There was also this one, they also did it. They did it 4 or 5 times, a [??]. They did it 4 or 5 times, to my hands. They continuously hit my hands, they hit your head against the wall and that kind of torture continues. Of course there
was water, pressurized water, hot water, coop, falanga. These tortures, these tortures I told you... I think it went on for 17, 17-18 days.

Q: After those four days.

A: Yes, after those four days. Those four days, the first four days under detention, there were only beatings, only beatings and cold, pressurized cold water. After those four days, those I mean...

Q: Gayrettepe part.

A: Yes, this was the Gayrettepe part, these detailed tortures were applied, more technical tortures were applied... When I asked for water, for instance a couple of times I asked for water, they gave me salty water. Two times I asked for water, they gave me salty water, after tortu..., after suspension, when suspension was over... of course the suspension makes one extremely thirsty, I mean, they applied continuously electrical current. one gets extremely thirsty, they took me to the fountain, they turned on the tap, water came out... they removed the blindfold, two people stood behind, you are facing the fountain, they turned on the tap, water came out. This was another torture.

Q: You aren’t allowed to drink it.

A: Of course you aren’t allowed to drink it, no drinking. If you admit all they say, you can drink it, if you don’t, then you can’t drink water, we will give you water if you confirm what we di... said. [??] I don’t know. And also I was taken to, ... once during these 15-16 days I was taken two times to the forest. Half an hour, 45 minutes from Gayrettepe in the night, because when I was taken there once, when I was back, when I was there I heard the call to prayer, when I was there, after a little while, they made tortures etc., then I heard the call to prayer, let’s say it was about 4-5 o’clock, I think that was the time.

Q: A.M.?

A: A.M., It was a half an hour, 45 minutes trip from Gayrettepe, we were in a cab, in the cab I was in the cab back seat, I didn’t see anything.

Q: Probably they took you to Fatih forest.

A: I don’t know which forest was it. I guess it was Belgrade forest, I think it was that forest.

Q: It’s the same thing, Fatih Forest is on that side too.

A: I don’t know very well, it may be Fatih Forest. There was sewer water there, they threw us in that water, they tread on us. Sewer water was shallow, it was high like this, when we were in, our back remained outside, they pressed their feet, their guns against us, they hit our back, they laid us in the sewer water like this. They took us out, again falanga, they brought wooden beams, they brought trees from that forest for the falanga to my feet, they beat with those trees. They threw us again in water, and they took us out again... They put a gun against my head. You laid me on the ground, nude, you are nude, blindfolded, they got you to lay on the ground... one of them took his foot out of that water, out of that sewer water, and tread on my nose, he put the gun on my head, admit what we say... if you don’t admit all we’ve said we kill you. They put the gun, of course the gun is charged, you can’t know it’s not charged. However, once in a while there was a gunshot [?].
Q: You mean they pull the trigger?

A: I mean a couple of times they pulled the trigger. And the previous day they had said we will kill you... when I first went there, they said we will kill you, he said escape from the forest. Escape he said, we let you go and we leave. I got the point, I, when I escape from them, they shoot me from behind, I threw myself on the ground, one of them came as before and trod on my throat, he shot around me.... [??] He shot at the ground, he again trod on my throat, he said, look, we will kill you. From one side, from the right side, to my head, I mean, next to me bullets. Two bullets were there, other two, he did ... he shot next to my head. During other times, when they tortured me a couple of times again.... the day after, he shot a few times, he pulled the.... They induced death fear, psychological, I mean, death, I mean, they tried to make me experience death so that I admit what they say. And there was a pit over there, after those tortures they threw me in there, they filled the pit with earth. We will kill you, we will kill you over here, nobody can see you, they did also this. And later on they also brought my family, they brought my family, they brought my sister to me and she was nude, they brought her, they untied the blindfold. When I opened my eyes, my sister was blindfolded and stood by the wall, they [??] me. You stood over there your hands tied, your legs tied. They sexually abused her, we will rape her if you don't speak.... They touched my sister's breast, they touched other parts of her body... they tortured her before me. A couple of times they tortured her next to me... they suspended her, the suspension called plane suspension.

Q: How old is your sister?

A: My sister is 22 years old, 22 years old. She was tortured too. Not of course as much as I was, but suspension, electrical current. For instance, electrical current was applied to her from her, from her breast, from her nipples, because they did it before my eyes on purpose. The current was applied to her nipples, another wire was connected to her toes, they suspended her, they tortured her continuously, they sexually abused her... they did it repeatedly. Normally, during this last week, they did not torture me any longer, during that week they did not torture me, but this time they tortured my sister... Not beating, only there was... there was... those detailed tortures, electrical current, sexual abuse,... they beat various parts of her body so that she does not see, I [?]. They took my brother also, they applied the same tortures to him... In my buttocks. I mean, I mentioned it earlier, I missed it, when my buttocks were up in the tire. with a club they raped me once with a club. They lowered the tire a little bit, they inserted the club into by buttocks,... a couple of times,... they did it. I remained 26-27 days under detention. .. While I was taken to SSC34, while I was taken to State Security Court, policemen, I mean, they held my arms and took me to SSC on a stretcher. I was not taken to any doctor, they did not take me to a doctor, none of them. When I was arraigned at the SSC, though I was taken there on a stretcher, the public prosecutor though he knew the story they made, basing on those things they did, he released my sister and sent me to prison. To cover tortures applied to me,... till then no political convict had been sent to Gebze prison. Since Gebze Prison was far away from Istanbul, since it was [?] from Istanbul, to cover these tortures they sent me to Gebze Prison, Gebze. I went to Gebze, I was the only political convict there. Others are all ordinary convicts. I stayed there 10 days, alone. I mean I can neither walk, nor stand, on the ground, they threw me on a bunk bed. I

34 State Security Court.
stayed 10 days like this. After these 10 days, there were friends from various groups, leftists, revolutionists, who came to me, I knew them in prison. Three people, they brought them [?]. Then, supposedly for treatment purposes they took me to Bayrampaşa Prison. I did not apply any treatment there, I was not given any treatment there. It just meant hiding from public opinion... At the first trial I was released. After I stayed 3-4 months, 4 months in prison I was released. I was released, I received some treatment through Human Rights Association Foundation, I had some treatment with my own means... After I was released, 7 months after, my hands began to function, [??]. Friends know it, physicians, I was given treatment at Çapa Medical Faculty for a long time, there are physicians, you may know them. They know the situation better, the situation... After 1 year and a half my hands began to function. Now this one is a little numb, and there is atrophy in the other, atrophy. I can’t unclench this hand more than that. In cold weather, it becomes, it becomes like wooden. I prick my hand with a needle and I don’t feel anything. However, in hot days like today, it burns, I can’t cut my fingernails. I was not able to cut my fingernails for 20 days, they were very long like this, I cut them yesterday [?]. Now I am disabled. I can’t do anything, I can’t lift any weight, that nerve system has been destroyed... There is no longer previous mechanical power, during that process that power disappeared. Or else I have to be treated in Europe, I heard that there is a torture treatment center in London. I need to be treated. I can’t go abroad because the process still continues, it isn’t over.

Q: The process still continues!

A: The process still continues. Since the process is not over, they can’t take me abroad, I can’t go abroad... Since I brought, I brought legal charges against, I brought legal charges against tortures I suffered, I have also medical reports. Since I brought legal charges against them, police threaten me. They threaten my family, they threaten me, they threaten with phone calls. They take into custody people I never knew, I never saw, they force these people to witness against me. And what is it, I filed a complaint against them. And what I complain is, I mean, anything... I don’t, I mean, I don’t think I will obtain anything, anything, because to whom I complain about whom. The one torturing me is the State and the one arraigning me is the State itself. Eventually though I initiated legal proceedings, though I initiated legal proceedings while I was in prison, I am summoned 2 years after, it is only one month and a half that I was summoned. 2 years after, they bring a suit against me. I mean such is the adjudicative system in Turkey, such is the injustice. A State which summons me two years after. Police files a complaint against me. What is it, the reason why we shot at him is that he did, he resisted to us, they file a suit against me, within 15 days they take me from prison while I am in that condition [?], they take me to the court. Police [?] files a suit against me, he resisted us. What did I resist with, is there a gun, is there a stone, how did I do it. And the public prosecutor summons me again within 15 days. But I file a suit, two years and three months later he summons me, [?]. And now, because of that suit, they raid the house where my sister stays, recently they took my sister, we will kill you, they daunt the family, because of me, we will kill him, shoot him, is he not ashamed, we will do the same things to him again, this is a period when I was not at home. Now they take into custody people I don’t know at all... say Xxxxx35 is a PKK member, say Xxxxx acts on behalf of PKK, say it and we will go and take him. I face a [?] situation. In addition, you know the situation in Turkey better, at any time I may be the victim of a murder by an unknown perpetrator. Though the perpetrator is unknown

35 Subject’s name.
as far as the State is concerned, but the perpetrator is known. Because as far as the State is concerned there is following, there is [?], there is [?], there are reports you get for torture. However, in the court the judge, the public prosecutor tells me, identify them, do you know them. I was blindfolded, I don't know anybody, you don't know whom to identify. [??], this is just formality. To defend such a right in Turkey, to defend such a thing in court, I mean, police is the uppermost establishment of the adjudicative system, adjudicative power is in police's hands. Things happen according to whatever the police writes down in the records. The situation is somewhat like this, torture, the situation is somewhat like this. After that torture... I was of course affected. I know the psychological influence in myself, I've become much more sentimental, I've become much more sentimental... I don't tolerate any mistakes, sometimes when someone makes a mistake, I distress him. But later on, later on I become immediately, I mean, mistakes can just happen, why did I distress him so much.

Q: Your tolerance decreased, this is what you mean?

A: My tolerance, I regret immediately. I regret on the spot and sometimes I don't forgive myself... I've become extremely sentimental. For instance I didn't have such a thing before, before the torture. Now at the slightest occasion I begin to cry. Sometimes I myself sometimes something, I make a mistake, I don't forgive myself sometimes. I think perhaps two hours, one hour about why I made this mistake. The influence of that torture is partially that sentimentalism. I've become more sentimental. Sometimes I cry without a reason, something comes to my mind and I cry. Psychologically its influence is partially this one. On the other hand, physically it is disability, a disability.

Q: Psychologically is there any other problem, symptom other than this sentimentalism that you mentioned?

A: ... There is nothing other then sentimentalism, but during prison period, while I was in prison, that prison, while I went to prison from that torture, during 15-20 days I had nightmares. I screamed while sleeping, ... I was fearful at night, those tortures came before my eyes. I experienced these episodes for 1 month, 20 days. Then nothing of that sort happened... The torture created just to me just the opposite effect on me, my conviction was reinforced... my conviction was better, I came to know people better... Rather, [?] more committed to political ideas, affected me more, affected me and my commitment, made me more committed. I became more committed.

Q: You say your political views have been reinforced.

A: They have been reinforced. It is like when you train someone, his horizon opens up, he can see everything, that is what happened to me.

Q: It was like a training to you.

A: Of course, as if these people gave me vitamin, I am stronger. I witnessed what they did, I witnessed how they distressed people, for nothing. They torture people for days, admit you are Armenian, admit you are not Kurdish, admit you swear at Kurdish people, they tell you to swear, swear at your mother, swear at your father, swear at [?]. Such illogical things. He tortures me, he tells me swear at Apo, swear at such and such person. I mean I told him, the situation seemed comical to me. I realized there
how simple, how poor they were, I realized it better... For two days a team insisted, swear at Apo\textsuperscript{36}. And I said I don’t swear at him, why I should swear at a person I don’t know, I can’t do it, I don’t do it. Finally he said to me, I swear at Atatürk\textsuperscript{37} and you swear at Apo. These tortures for a couple of days, the tire torture began after this. We go and come back, I should tell it, they torture me... He said I will swear at Atatürk and you swear at Apo. I said [?]. And he began to swear at Atatürk. He told me now you swear. I said I told you in the first place, I mean, I will not swear, it is not [?] to swear at a person I don’t know, I mean, I don’t swear. Upon this they began tire torture.

Q: He got angry with you?

A: Yes, he began to swear at Atatürk. [???] They took me to the tire from there. And this technique continued for 3-4 days. The problem is partially this one.

Q: Well... can you tell me about people who tortured you, the torturers, what kind of people they were?

A: I couldn’t see them physically, I couldn’t see them. They are very wild people. I personally think, these people don’t know about socialization, parenthood, neighborliness... this is my view. These people are deprived of love, I think they are street corner boys. The State takes them, educates them at schools, provides them shelter at dormitories. He doesn’t know child love, parent love, fraternal love, sister love, he doesn’t know neighbor, or rights. He wakes up, his education is under the auspices of the State and the State molds his brain, I mean, nationalism, patriotism, nation, a Turk is equal to the whole world, things like that are continuously injected into his head and it feeds these nationalist feelings into them, and they don’t know love, they are left out, they grow under the auspices of the State, and under its auspices he only learns patriot nation and things like that, so he is pitiless, he sees anyone who does not share his views as a robot, as an animal, I mean he takes it appropriate, very appropriate to torture you. You know, they torture you and as you scream they laugh, they burst into laughter, they gain extreme pleasure. Or they take another person by you and torture him or her. And three people, as an animal, when we were young children we caught animals, we tied two animals, one pulled in one direction and the other in the opposite direction. we watched them, we watched two animals. That is exactly what they do. They bring by me people I don’t know, of course there were people under detention that I didn’t know. they suspended 3-4 people simultaneously, screams and voices of 3-4 people intermingle and they gained extreme pleasure from it... They brought a woman, they undress her completely, they say you sit on her and she sits in you, they say humiliating insults. They say touch her breast, do this. a woman from differing opinions, they want to do this. Unimaginable things, these people are deprived of love, deprived of parental love, very deprived of neighborliness, of people’s love and of common life with people, and also they are people... with State’s nationalist feelings. They definitely consider as an animal a person having an opinion differing from their own. I think when I say this, it is like an insult to animals, I mean these people are wild. Because a human being can not get pleasure, can not laugh like that, he can not laugh at all while

\textsuperscript{36} The leader of the PKK.

\textsuperscript{37} The founding father of the Republic of Turkey and its official state ideology which identifies three major enemies: Communists, Islamists, and Kurdish nationalists. “Ataturk” means the father of the Turks.
torturing another human being. It's just impossible.

Q: Well, were these people as you expected them to be, have you had information about these people previously, about torture and the torturers? Were you surprised?

A: Let me tell you this, yes, yes I was. Let me refer it to you. In fact I wasn't surprised much, I wasn't surprised. I heard about them previously, but I hardly believed them. I mean, is it possible, how a person can undergo such torture, or they tell me, look, it is so and so, sometimes I read books, I read it was so and so. For instance, in the eighties period, there were books written by some people, torture books, I read them, but I hardly believed them. But after I witnessed them myself, after I experienced them myself, the State will not refrain from doing anything to people like me. I can even say that if I am told the State ties one leg of a person to a tractor and the other leg to another and pull him to pieces, I believe it. If they say a tractor pulls one leg and another pulls the other leg and the person is torn to pieces, I believe it, and the State makes it, it makes even more. I mean, it is a very wild State, it is such a State that I can't express it. I mean, it's very difficult to express it in words. Because there are things that I experienced, not that I heard but that I experienced.

Q: Yes. Well,... as far as you tell me you have been subject to heavy torture. I have heard many torture stories, many stories, I have interviewed many people, however this is the first time I hear about some of the techniques. You have been heavily tortured... I want to ask you something, while you were being so heavily tortured, what did you feel, what did you think, what did you do, how did you endure it. Did you do anything to endure it, to alleviate your pain?

A: There was nothing, nothing that I did to alleviate the pain, because I did not have any choice anyway. However, there were names they asked me, just as they take now people for me but that don't know me, they say give a statement against Xxxxxx, and these people tell me, admit that these people are terrorist, we will take them, admit that these people did such and such things together with you. Since I was tortured, I resisted so that they wouldn't be tortured like me and eventually I didn't make a statement against anybody. They asked me... I guess 37 names, I don't remember exactly, 37 names. 37-40 people, I wrote down their names later on, names of people they asked me... They asked 37 names, I did not give a statement against them. I mean [?] these people didn't do anything, they are normal people living ordinary lives, they deal with their economy, with their own business, but he is not a man of the current order and I mean he does not like the current order. If you like the current order, just as you like the current order, he does not like it, he is such a man. However, this man did not realize any action, he does not have politically different action practice, he does not have anything, he is a man living an ordinary life. Now, there, I did not have any choice to protect myself from torture. They only thing there was. I wished other people did not experience the pain I experienced. My wish was not to admit what they said. If I, after torture I bethought, if I admitted what they said may be my hands would not still work. Because perhaps I would experience, experience less pain, but I would feel utmost shame before those people. I could not accept later the fact that people experienced pain because of me, perhaps I could have gone maid, that could have happened, I would not have forgiven myself. So after the torture I was, after the torture I had high morale. I mean, I had nothing to be ashamed of, I was proud of myself, I could smile before other people. Because I did not do anything, I did not say any word that could worsen the position of those
dejected people in pitiless men's hands. I mean, I did not have anything to do there, the only thing that I could do, their goal is to break down people, to bring them here and torture them, if a man can think honorably under torture, if he chooses something honorable, his duty is to resist. His goal is to break down, torture people, such is his mentality, he has a wildness oriented State structure, he is from there. And your goal is, to have people be tortured less, to have people not come to such place, you resist or you don't make any concession.

Q: Okay, some people say in order to alleviate torture pain or to resist, they attempt, they apply certain methods under torture. For instance some say I swore at them back, I looked at them, some say they used their imagination, they tried to imagine they were outside, they tried not to hear and not to see what happened there, they closed themselves; some say they counted, they did something else, and so on, some people do such different things. Did something similar happen to you? Did you develop any special method for yourself?

A: I did not develop any special method for myself, during that intensity, perhaps I guess after I went to prison, friends from various groups, from various leftist movements came to visit me at Bayrampaşa, they came to see my situation. When I explained them the situation, they said nobody was tortured like me. It was very intense, perhaps I did not have time to think such things. But I thought always, I mean, for him to solve this problem, I should absolutely resist, I should absolutely not give any secret. If I die, I die with dignity, but if I do what they tell me to do, if I lose my dignity, I live but how much do I live. The only thing, the only thing I thought, stand a little bit more, these tortures will end. Either I die or I survive, these tortures will be over. I mean I did not imagine anything, but resisting people came to my mind. For instance, before 1980, that torture, that Diyabakır violence came to my mind, you may have read it, in books. When I read it, those people came to my mind. There were people who died on a 67 days hunger strike.. there were people who were forced to eat rats. Many of them resisted. Such things came to my mind, they gave me much power... Various people that resisted, people, I heard about them when I was out, of course they are a source of [?], you remember them. For example, you burn a person, he burns himself with oil in prison to protest the oppression. According to me this is the utmost resistance, this is one's referring to one's own deeds. Your power does not meet the other party's oppression. your hand, your arm do not rise, and referring to your own deeds you burn yourself to protest that oppression, or you begin hunger strike to death. I mean, in brief...

Q: All these gave you strength?

A: They gave me strength and I learnt somewhat to die for living's sake. I learnt somewhat to be, to die there for living's sake.

Q: Well... though you mentioned it, though you talked a lot about it, can you capitulate why have you been tortured according to you, what would you tell?

A: Why did they torture me, I mean. I've always been involved in, let me tell you this, I've always been involved in [?], and then DEP was established, I worked for DEP also. I was involved in various activities, cultural activities, or democratic. my communication with democratic mass organizations was good... Of course they could not accept it, they could not accept that I worked [?]. A second reason is that they could not accept the developing [??] [?]. I mean they could not accept the
developing revolutionist movement in Turkey. They try to destroy people with fascist oppression, to disturb people’s sleep, to induce fear, death in people. They do it to cow people. For example, the torture I was subject to was not a torture made to me individually. It was done as an example to a people or to many persons. The torturer knows it. I mean, nowadays people are kidnapped in Istanbul and get killed, their bodies are found 20 days after. This person, in fact this action is not against him. It’s to propagate fear. It’s to make people stay home. I mean ... it’s to make people work like machines [?] and do nothing else. He should not think any other thing. Fear, look, if you do the same thing, this is what your end will be. I mean that action was not done solely ... to a Rıdvan Karakoç, to a Hasan Koçan or this other [?] to me. This is valid for people thinking freely in Turkey, for all intelligentsia. I mean this death is their death. I mean this is to cow them, to finish them, to threaten them, to induce fear in them, to daunt them, to intimidate them, to establish their own domination.

Patriot, nation, a Turk is equivalent to the whole world. I am happy to be Turkish, it is to accept these. And a person thinking differently, no I can’t accept you. He tortures me for many days, he treats me so violently, he does me... he tells me to appear on TV, admit what they tell, tell this on TV and I will let you free, he lays down it as a condition. He tears off your ties with the society, he tears off your ties with other people, he prevents these ties from developing. Of course these are the reasons.

Q: Okay, before you were tortured, before this incident, what did torture mean to you, what was its meaning?

A: As I told you before, as I told you before, the one who reads tortures before 80, even if you read them, I thought whether they were true. I mean, I thought whether or not this State makes them. Of course torture is ... violence for me. I mean, it is an inhuman practice, I mean, I can’t even say it is anim..., an animal, animals don’t do this, such a torture I mean. But unfortunately it’s practiced in our world, I mean Turkey does what Hitler did, they do what Mussolini did. They burnt people alive, but they also burnt them at Sivas. I mean torture is an inhuman method according to me, nothing gets obtained with it. They may obtain something, in fact they may obtain something, how can they obtain it, they may kill a person, destroy him. shoot him, take him. It’s a success for them, for them. But the process we have been going through during the last years, they also know perfectly that this is not a remedy, but they do it still, they do it obstinately. What happened to Nazis [?], what did Hitler do, what did Mussolini do. What happened in Turkey. When we examine Kurdish history, there are 20-30 massacres, in each massacre 15 to 20 thousand people were killed. Babies in mothers’ wombs were bayonetted. And now is it over, no it’s not over. Is the problem resolved, no it’s not. It’s written down in history, it gains historicity, it becomes a monument, it gains monumentality. 37 people were burnt in Sivas. But these 37 people had 1,000 friends. But now the number became 10,000, 10,000 for each person. They can’t be exterminated. Torture methods’ aim is to daunt, is to break down... to obtain something [?]. Because the torturers are not human beings, I don’t see them as human beings, I tell you frankly. I am frank on this, I pity them. I’ve pitied my torturers and this is what I told them. I said I pity you to him, you are a poor, you are poor man. How am I poor. Of course I have not been able to tell this during torture. While they were taking me from SSC to prison, now they talk to me, they assess my psychological status. They ask me questions, children, while they were passing by, a child was there to sell bagels, he took bagels from him, two bagels, the child waited for money, he slapped the child, he slapped him... Then they went away. Of course he asked me, whether or not he should give him money, what do you say about it. They try to assess my tension... I said I mean I don’t
expect you to give money to that child, you are a poor dejected, a poor, pitiable man, you are not pitiable, you are poor, you can't be a human being. I said that child sells bagels with what labor, you slapped him, you didn't give him his money, you are poor, you are cat's paw, you let yourself utilized as cat's paw, you are nothing else, nothing else. One day or another you will be shot and killed, nothing else will happen. Either the State retires you, perhaps you don't die, perhaps the State retires you, you go to your corner, and then you wait for death, you don't get any affection from society, you don't love people, you don't know the meaning of love, you are people deprived of everything. Of course [??] I was beaten for that word, still while I was in that condition.

Q: Okay, thank you very much.
APPENDIX F

TRANSLATED TRANSCRIPT OF THE RESEARCH INTERVIEW
SAMPLE II (CASE ID: X46)

23 years old, laborer, married, Kurdish, non-activist male

Q: Let's begin with when and where did the incident happen.
A: I was in village, in Erzurum.

Q: Year?
A: ... in 93. I was reaping my land. ...

Q: When and where did you say 93, which month?
A: It was the 8th month.

Q: August.
A: No 9th I think it was the ninth month.

Q: September.
A: It was in September. They got me at home. Before I finished my land, I was reaping my land, they got me before I finished harvesting. They took me to the counterterrorism section. There ... I have been tortured for 4-5 days constantly, I mean every kind of torture, both psychological and physical. I wasn't asked, I mean, any questions at the time. They tortured us ... for sheer pleasure. ... After these 4-5 days ... some incidents had occurred in the surroundings. ... Special team members imposed these incidents on us. ... [?] you [?] these [?]. ... One of them even said how they would earn their living if not through us, one of them kept saying this to me. You did it, you are terrorists, your village is terrorist, you feed terrorists. ... Or else, collaborate with us. ... They proposed us to be informant. They tortured us because we did not agree. Though we don't agree we write it on your file. ... We do what behooves us, we can arrest you again. Thus, give us information, we did not realize any action,
nor any dialogue, so we didn’t know, … we had … a couple of friends there who, not enduring torture, assumed certain actions. … They told them, talk about all people here and we release you and they gave unfavorable statements about us, supposedly we did this or that, … so they followed us, we were sent to prison.

Q: Prison?

A: Yes, to prison. I stayed in prison for 20 months.

Q: 20 months?

A: Yes, 20 months. Of course, a lot of actions have been imputed to us, actions in the surroundings, even colored press wrote about us. They said they captured four separatist terror organization members. This referred to us. … We have been arraigned according to the 120. 5. article for capital punishment. I guess the process still continues. … Later on, I mean, because there was no evidence, I mean, we were acquitted on these. And in 94 … on the evening of August 15 … in the prison also, I mean, they made a raid on us. There were many injured people there, … for instance in that … in that violence I took my share. … There, … prison manager, guardians, especially people from MHP38 were there, this was the sort of people who assaulted us, a couple of people burnt themselves, … a couple of people, I mean, attempted hanging themselves. For that kind of violence to stop, I mean, it was not possible to stop it. No press or nobody from a democratic publication could attempt to do something there, it was just impossible. … People there. I mean, day and night in water, in cells. I mean, there were screams, there was torture.

Q: We will come back to that later, now, that custody, you have been taken into custody for 3-5 days, haven’t you?

A: I have been under detention for 9 days.

Q: 9 days?

A: Yes.

Q: Could you tell me what happened during those 9 days?

A: During those 9 days, I told it before. I was subject to every kind of torture, both psychological and physical.

Q: What kind of torture?

A: For example we had current, we were given electrical shock. … There was, you know, sort of ra… raping with clubs, … there was sort of tying rope to our sexual organs and pulling us. There was sort of Palestinian suspension. They laid us on the floor and stretched our limbs. … [?] they were [?]. … For example they laid us, and they took us to …, to rural area [??] they took us to [?] section, there were incidents at some places, you did it, they took us there and then laid us on the floor and sort of shooting just next to us. We said they will kill us. They were just next to us shooting down. We had

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38 Milliyetci Hareket Partisi (National Movement Party). The ultra-nationalist party of Turkey.
lost consciousness, we couldn’t gain consciousness, because we were there unconscious, … each one would hit us. … They would play music, just to our ears, I mean, we were forced to put them on, we couldn’t do otherwise. … Each one hit us with clubs. … They hit us with pickax handle. There was again sort of taking us back into water. They threatened us, we will cut you with blades and then we will put salt on your wound. In fact they wounded a couple of our friends at their foot and chest and put salt on the wounds.

Q: With blades?

A: Yes, they did it with blades. And then they suspended us, applied Palestinian suspension 5-10 times a day, left us suspended for one minute and then suspension again, they left us suspended for 1 or 2 minutes. They took us down from suspension, we were then unconscious, and they applied electrical shock. Then they tie you to a chair. to the heater, they made that kind of torture. … Of course they used all kinds of words, they told outrageous words. … Since we knew nothing, I mean, again that kind of raids, I mean, only where we were, we didn’t know anything, because we lived in that region as Kurdish, these things, I mean, they do, I mean, they even say this, I mean, go to the mountains, even if you don’t go to the mountains we will kill you. You are terrorists, you are Armenian. They told us that kind of things. We couldn’t pull ourselves together. … I mean, we couldn’t stay healthy as we are now. They gave no bread, no food during torture. …

Q: While you have been going through all this, during those 9 days, what did you do or think to alleviate your pain, to endure it?

A: I didn’t have anything to think, because … since I didn’t know anything, I just stayed there. I told them only what they told me. And thanks to a couple of friends they imputed these actions on us. I mean we were thus involved in the process. I couldn’t do anything to do, I mean, they would impose them on us. (he coughed) Be a confessor, work with us etc. They thus threatened us. As I said before, since we hadn’t heard of anything we didn’t know anything. We are not people to be able to give you information, we are just innocuous people. We are working, we are doing farm work. We don’t have anything to do with what you are talking about. … It is not possible to explain it to them. Furthermore, whatever you tell them, it is not valid for them. They do whatever they want, they behave as it pleases them.

Q: Some people say, in order to alleviate, to reduce pains during torture, I daydreamt, I imagined I wasn’t there, I imagined my beloved ones, I counted, I tried to divert my attention to other things, I swore at them too, I responded, I screamed. Did you do such things?

A: … Of course, there was screaming. I screamed, I mean, I couldn’t do, I couldn’t endure, I screamed too. People think death is preferable, you know, I mean, the only escape is death. I mean, people hate their own personality, their own humanity. Because people are nude in water, subject to every kind of torture, they swear at you, say humiliating words, do humiliating tortures. So people for the time being, I mean, their own, I mean, as a human being. I mean, you don’t want to live. Then one says, rather than being exposed to it again in an hour, I mean, if I am exposed to it again, if I die before, then death is more important to me. One feels offended when one knows nothing. There are people who attempt suicide. And they also do. I mean, they also force these things, I mean, suicide, they say we execute you, we kill you and so on.
Q: Did you attempt committing suicide?
A: I ... did not attempt it, because I didn’t have the means to do it.

Q: But you considered it?
A: I considered it, I mean, I considered it, I mean, rather than enduring it, than being offended like this, suicide is better, because I would prefer it for myself. ... Because there was no humanity left. ... We lived in wildness. This kind of incidents, because when they tie a person to the main shaft of the car, I mean, (?) to tie a person with a rope to the rear part of an armed vehicle and then pull him, ... one hates oneself.

Q: Did that happen to you?
A: Of course. We were three-people. They did it to all three of us.

Q: When you were in prison.
A: Not in prison, I mean, under dat.. under detention.

Q: Not at the police station then.
A: (coughed) They did it to us while they took us to the police station.. Then they took us to the police station, they did it then.

Q: And you have talked about an incident at the prison. Can you tell me what happened then?
A: In prison, on August 15, 94, of course they have been oppressing prisoners earlier. I mean, prisoners’ demands were to preserve human rights. ... I mean, we wanted them to do what the duty of human being is. We wanted to live in prison as human beings. We did not want to have anything to do with anything. We are only prisoners, we want to live like prisoners, prisoners have certain rights. I mean, when we want these rights, we would be tortured. For example, there people said particularly that ... we had to be given such rights, these rights had to be given back to us. The attitude of the prison management, the attitude of the public prosecutor, they would come to search us and undress us with the pretext that (coughed) they would make a search. When we did not allow them to do it we were tortured. We said ... if you come make a normal search ... you do it and leave, I mean, we don’t undress, and they say no, you will take your dresses off. ... You are in our hands, you will do what we want you to do and so on. We acquiesced. And then some people said it’s better if you don’t behave in such a humiliating way, I mean, we also are human beings. And then they assaulted us. ... They assaulted ... with wooden beams, with chains; both the Military and prison management including guardians, manager applied such coercion. Once, I mean, even the public prosecutor was among the aggressors. There was no, I mean, for intervention. ... They would undress people completely, and then there in the kitchen, I mean, immersed their heads in water, then beat them, laid them on the floor and trod on them. The manager told it personally, he said fetch me a blade, I will wound their feet, and he did it actually to some of friends, he said fetch me salt, I will put salt on the wounds. The prison manager, a MHP member himself, he worked as the manager. (coughed) Later on, I mean, some of our friends who could not endure these attacks, attempted committing suicide. ... Some of them did, I mean, a couple of friends attempted burning themselves. And they tortured these
people again and asked them to be confessors, they applied every kind of torture to those who burnt themselves, who hung themselves and they made them confess. ... On the other hand, prison management took everything back from us, I mean the rights that we, prisoners had. When all rights were taken away, then political prisoners would sleep, wake up, or sweep the floor, work as guardians instructed them. ... If one objected saying he was a human being, he would face torture, he would stay in a cell for months, there were all kinds of torture. ... The kind of torture at counterterrorism section was also present at prison (coughed). ... When people were set free, when they were released, the prison gives information to the police station so that policemen take this person to the police station, torture him there. ... This was what we said, I mean, we had demands so that this did not occur. I mean, we were tortured whenever we had such demands. They always responded us with torture. ... I mean this is their stand, their approach. Furthermore, there is no discrimination, this is a lady or this is ..., I mean, no different practice, they would hit her totally undressed equally, for men there is the same treatment, I mean, the practices are the same. ... Since there was no establishment in prison, press was not aware of all these. Even if there were an establishment, since the environment there, I mean, was fascist, I mean, they would not provide them opportunities, I mean, to democratic establishments.

Q: OK, before this incident ... let me ask this later. The people who tortured you, policemen or those in prison, what kind of people they were, how could you describe them?

A: ... The manager in prison especially tortured me, he was the manager. Guardians tortured me also. The military, those in administration, sergeant major, sergeants, that kind of people tortured me. And also special teams were present, you know.

Q: What kind of people were they, how would you describe them?

A: I mean, ..., I don't know, I mean, people on whom they imposed, ... for example, the prison manager would impose on us that we would be confessors, he said there was no Kurdish, that all of us were Turks.

Q: Look, here is my question, how do you see people who tortured you, how would you evaluate them, how would you describe them?

A: I myself, as myself, I mean, I ... a man torturing another man as, I mean, I myself suspect their humanity. I can't see them as human beings. because when a man is born, I mean, if his single Creator is Allah, only Allah can take his life. These people said we will let you live, the torturers, they said they would be the ones to kill us. You will be like us. ... I myself, I mean, I suspect their humanity, I mean, because a man treating another man like that. I mean exposing, exposing him to torture, I myself, from their, I mean, I evaluate them somewhat differently.

Q: Before this incident, have you ever thought you would be tortured, did you anticipate being tortured?

A: ... We couldn't anticipate torture since we don't have things like that, I mean we faced a sudden violence. I mean, since we didn't have anything.

Q: You did not anticipate it then.
A: We did not think of torture at all, we did not anticipate it. However, in this region recently we noticed everywhere, I mean, especially at Kurdish stuff torture began. I mean, that we would take our share, we, I mean, ... knew it later.

Q: Before this incident?

A: I mean... it was a month before the incident. We noticed, I mean, in neighboring villages coercion, I mean, especially a lot of torture for our village. We noticed, I mean, they did not recognize, I mean, our right to live here. I mean, we understood the torture, I mean, they are taking us somewhere, but different, I mean we did not anticipate such torture, I mean, we did not anticipate such ways of torture, using such means, I mean, even if we are tortured, even if they shot us, at least they are human, ... they are human beings knowing their own humanity. In this way, I mean, they will give us an advice, but those whom we met later, I mean, since they lacked a feeling of humanity we could not talk of humanity. ... They had other attitudes. ... They impose on us. for example you are not Kurdish, we couldn't even, I mean our Kurdish origin, we couldn't find it possible to, I mean we denied it, I mean, they would not be satisfied though. ...

Q: Generally speaking, why according to you have you been tortured?

A: The reason was this, I mean, only because as a young man I remained in that village (coughed), and also I was tortured because I was Kurdish. The only reason, I mean, why I was tortured is that I am Kurdish.

Q: Well, before you went through this experience, what did torture mean to you?

A: I have just explained it, torture, these people, I mean, I interpreted torture as something inhuman earlier, I mean, because people as human being. I ... can't. I mean, I can't endure the fact that a human being gets tortured. ... This is my personal opinion, this the only thing I can say.

Q: What does torture means to you now?

A: Now, when I hear about torture, I shiver. I mean, because I went through it (coughed). I mean, at any time, I mean, it is violence, I mean. ... when people go through it, they become a little bit, I mean. I mean, he becomes more aware of himself, I mean, because why I am a human being, why am I being tortured, ... otherwise, I was born as a human being. ... The human being. I mean, people may have attempts, wishes against this kind of practices. ... I can tell it now that way.

Q: Well, after you went through all this, what did you experience psychologically, what kind of problems, changes did you experience psychologically?

A: Psychologically, I mean, ... there was depression. ... Because, when one goes through this process, ... he experiences something like, you know, like stress, an emotional crisis. ... Also, I mean, family ties are broken. ... Now, I am here, my family is in village. If I remained in village, either I was in prison again, or I would be a missing person. ... People psychologically, if there are in their village, I mean, every moment they will beat me again, these influences are present. Or, they will take me and I will be a missing person. When I just walk, would they take me there and repeat the same practices. ... This is the stress we experience. I am currently experiencing it. ... People dare, I mean, I can't dare working, because I say to myself, if something happens, they would take us without reason and I
will be tortured for days, or else they kill me. This is the psychology I experience.

Q: Well, that is all I wanted to ask for this interview. Do you have anything to add?

A: I have nothing to add. I have already told everything. I mean, there were these practices. This is what I want. ... To all your research colleagues, to democratic communities, I mean ... to stop that kind of violence, ... so that people don't experience all these, I mean, it is the duty of humanity, because, really because we went through it, ... perhaps some people did not experience it, perhaps some people may find it...because they may not find it correct. I mean we say all democratic people, in order to stop that kind of violence, I mean, this is the request I make. I don't have anything else to add.

Q: Thank you.
APPENDIX G

TRANSLATED TRANSCRIPT OF THE RESEARCH INTERVIEW
SAMPLE III (CASE ID: X31)

21 years old, single, government employee, Turkish, political activist female

Q: O.K., if you like, let's start with where and when this incident happened.
A: Uuhm, in Bursa.\(^{39}\)

Q: If you can talk little louder, I'll close this window.
A: O.K. In Bursa, in the police department.

Q: When?
A: I was taken in on 2nd of March.

Q: 95.
A: This year, recently.

Q: How many days did you stay?
A: I think 6 days, it must be 6 days.

Q: Anything like that before?
A: I was taken in, I was taken in also before, but uuhm this last one I went was a more systematic torture.

Q: When before..

\(^{39}\) A big city in the Northwest of Turkey.
A: Before, it was formed more on psychology and rough beating.

Q: Those are also torture.
A: Yes they are, but like heavier.

Q: Would you like?  
A: Sure, I’ll take.

Q: Uuhm, when were those, the ones before?
A: I don’t remember their dates. I was taken in 8-9 times.

Q: 8-9 times?
A: Yes.

Q: You'd remember the first. When was the first?
A: I’d remember the first. The first, I don’t know the exact date but it was the summer term and the universities were going to close, there was this Bornova\textsuperscript{41} march.

Q: What year?
A: 92, 93. I went in 92, 93, since it was summer it must be 93.

Q: Those 8-9 times, are they all 1 or 2 days, short ones?
A: It was like that before. 2 days, 3 days, it was mostly 3 days. I mean the third day we would be released. Uuhm later, my last arrests were 5-6 days. It was not more than that, like it was not more than 6 days.

Q: But you are saying that the heaviest was the last one.
A: Yes, it was the last one.

Q: O.K. Let’s take up the last one little later. Those before, typical, can you pick up a typical one among those and tell what happened?
A: A typical one. Actually one of them, I was kind of taken by mistake, like because I was walking alone in a neighborhood. Uuhm mistake, I mean I wasn’t taken in by the political wing\textsuperscript{42}, uuhm the thing took me, the morality police took me, because I was walking alone.

Q: Were you political at that time?
A: I was political. Actually we were coming out of a night, to avoid the police, I was walking alone

\textsuperscript{40} Cigarette.

\textsuperscript{41} A middle size town in the West of Turkey.

\textsuperscript{42} Police department in charge of political affairs.
(laughing). Of course because of thoughtlessness, there is also something created by our thought, that because we had destroyed the thing whether women should walk alone or not, actually I was thoughtless in that sense to walk alone. I was just walking down the road alone, one policeman started following me. They took me then, first they took me as a thing, of course I did not realize. Like, since I thought, they took me because of the events that night or because they knew me, I was confused. So were they. They called, uuhm I think they called the morality division. They took me to an apartment. The apartment was a student apartment. Like there, they called to ask, I mean there is such an such person, like they figured out that I didn’t have anything to do with the morality side. I had anyway told them, I am a communist, I had said.

Q: What did you say?
A: I had said, I am a communist.

Q: To the morality police?
A: Yes. After that..

Q: What did they do then??
A: Like, where do you live, we have to get it from you, like uuhm we will get it from you bla bla, they said. You can’t get it, I said, I mean I was very self-confident in that issue. But this incident had happened after that thing. I’d told the last arrest.

Q: 21st March?
A: Ha, this happened after 21st March.

Q: Happened after that.
A: Happened after that. Uuhm, but it is interesting, like because it was different for me, it is somewhat lasting in my life, my psychology was messed up, because for example if I knew that it was the political police we would be stiffer, also I would adjust myself, my state of mind accordingly, but (laughing) confusion now, why did they take me in, I mean how shall I behave, like at the end your way of behaving is clear to some extent, but I experience confusion anyway. Like they tried to take my address. I said, I am staying in the dormitory bla bla. Then we’ll take you to the dorms. After that thing, after that clash, I said I am staying there without permission, I mean I will sleep outside at the end, I realized that I could not shake him off (laughing). They had taken me to a room, one person. Uuuhm, there was this bed, uuhm from a more sexual point of view, uuhm, they tried it. I of course threatened them at that point, like they tried this thing, but it did not, I mean it did not happen. But it

43 "Thing" here refers to "suspicious woman" in the eyes of moral police. It can also be understood as "potential prostitute." Here, instead of using the exact terms, she prefers to utter just "thing", which does not make the exact sense in English.

44 She refers to a political meeting.

45 Pointing with her arm as if there is a bed in the interview room.
has a lasting effect on your psychology anyway. Uuhm, before I was more in this respect, uuhm there is this thing in the society, uuhm like this feeling of shame, sexually, like sense of not being able to digest such a thing, although I got over it, I mean there I had in my mind like I had thought about the possibility of such a thing, uuhm and I am the victim46 there, I mean it is not an event that evolved under my thing, it is an event that can happen without my will. I had taken it under my control there, but their purpose, nevertheless as a political, they knew that I was a political, during, in that process. Uuhm they said like, with such a practice they tried to pry it out of me. They were unsuccessful of course. Because they were, because they weren't exactly political police, it remained at the level of an attempt. But I came to a conclusion then, if such a thing had happened I really would have been affected a little, like this also comes from our family structure, growing up in such a thing, I would have been a little affected but I am sure that my psychology can get over it because my self-confidence at this point is endless, I mean I can think in a materialistic way. I mean I can get the logic of it. At the end, it is not much different from rough beating or electricity or this and that. The purpose is the same, the purpose is to, to get something from you, to figure out something. At that point, we overcame it like that. But it anyway had a more lasting effect on me, because in my mind it was as if it had almost happened. (Laughing) Somehow..

Q: You got uneasy?

A: Aah, uneasiness happens, but I could control myself. Even if such a thing happens they can not get the least little bit out of me. But of course it affects your psychology to some extent.

Q: O.K. If we come back to the one you described as the heaviest, can you tell about it, what happened?

A: Sure, they took me on 21st of March. Do I have to tell everything like...?

Q: As you wish.

A: While they were taking me, in my mind, everything was settled down.

Q: How were you caught?

A: How was I caught? Actually in that period there was an operation toward us47, after that, after the Gazi incidence48, they started an operation in the area where I lived. I was at the school, they took me from

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46 The word she uses is actually less severe than “victim.” The word she uses really means “unfairly defeated by being exposed to something.”

47 Referring to her illegal leftist (revolutionary and probably armed) organization. “Probably armed,” because the name of the organization is unknown. These kinds of details were, purposefully, not asked during the interviews.

48 “Gazi incidence” is a social/political “riot” happened in April 1995 in a poor neighborhood of Istanbul, namely Gazi, and partially spread to other similar neighborhoods and lasted a week. It started after secret state or fascist forces attacked a cafe in Gazi and killed four people. Gazi is predominantly an Alewiat (a secular/esoteric and mostly left-wing sect of Islam) and left-oriented neighborhood, and that (continued...)
school. There are of course certain accusations, but basically it is an operation toward one organization. I think I waited one day long in the gendarmerie, I mean I was made wait in a cold place. When we are in we start with the hunger strike. Uuhm, I think it was almost evening, the policemen came, plainclothes policemen, they took me to the security\(^49\), during the trip everything in my mind was set anyway, everything can happen to me, I have to be cold-blooded in that respect, I have to prepare myself for everything. Like what am I fighting for, right now my standpoint is correct, I am defending people's rights, these people\(^{50}\) represent something in that respect. What is it, they defend oppression, exploitation of people, and they do this job for money. In that respect they have certain personalities, certain values. An expression of not giving up in front of them is not to be dissolved in front of them. Being dissolved means letting them step on the truth. I mean, not being dissolved, I mean honor too, the honor of a human being lies there. I mean that side of my mind was clear. I completed everything until we arrived at the security. We went to the security, I am very calm, like before every time I imagined, I mean every time I imagined a systematic torture in my mind it would, like how would I be afterwards, I used to think that I would be very much excited. But there, even I myself was very much surprised thereafter, I was very calm, I can't tell how calm I was, like this clear thing, like sea or a tranquil water, that calm, I was very clear. They of course took me to, 5th floor, as soon as I arrived. I got blindfolded [??]. Entering the 5th floor they put me in a room, blindfolded. They asked my name, etc. Like my attitude was that of the organization\(^{51}\), I don't have anything to talk about. Then their voices got tired and I was immediately taken to the electricity\(^{52}\). First they did not ask any questions, they didn't ask. They gave me electricity from my fingers. It's very interesting that I didn't raise a single voice, because I had prepared myself that much, I was also very surprised, because I always used to hear that you shout when they give you electricity. They resist these things, I mean, not to raise any sound used to seem so alien to me in those days. Maybe what is it that the electricity gives, maybe it's because I had not known, to be able to really control your will in the first instance probably stems from, I mean to know yourself very well and trust yourself at that point, uuhm believe in what you defend. This is the basic. In that respect that happened, like nothing they requested was accepted, was realized, they also were astonished at that point. That in a way is a boost to your morale. For example this thing happened, this keeping quiet, they gave electricity for instance, there is not a single sound, he says "bravo girl!" for example. They are so surprised that much. Then

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\(^{48}\) (...continued)

attack was perceived as one of the constant attacks against Alewiats and leftists. Attack created a considerable social reaction in this neighborhood and similar ones. Twenty more people were killed by police during demonstrations aimed to protest the attack. Many leftist organizations were also involved in those demonstrations.

\(^{49}\) “Security” refers to the headquarters of police at any level, excluding the simple police-stations.

\(^{50}\) Refers to the police.

\(^{51}\) Almost all revolutionary organizations define the rules for their members regarding how to behave under police custody or prison. This is called as “organization attitude.”

\(^{52}\) Meaning electrical torture.
they do, like they bet, like some of them say she will be dissolved\textsuperscript{53}, some she will not, they had bet at the first place, before they gave the electricity. Like some of them say while they are giving it, "come on speak up so that we'll eat the apples." Like they have this logic that you don't value. Some of them say "she won't give up, we'll eat the apples", etc. This stupid, like your psychology is confused, are you going to laugh there, I mean such a weird thing (laughing). Anyway, they gave me electricity, they saw that it didn't work, in the beginning they had tried this thing, like while they were taking me to the electricity they said, an 80kg man would be subject to electricity, we would to this and we would do that. But controlling yourself is very essential there, like never, their purpose is to intrude your psychology, like to insert fear in you. Actually where does the fear originate from, I mean to me, my conclusion was, fear stems from lack of knowledge, like knowledge gives you power. Uuhm, in that sense, my confidence at that point, certainly what they are trying to do, to intrude my psychology, they couldn't succeed to influence me, because I was in control of myself at that point and I was self-confident and they didn't succeed at the end. Of course they never stopped the thing\textsuperscript{54}, like they lost from the beginning form the first thing on, but they continued anyway, saying maybe, maybe. Then they took me to the ice. I mean this time they took my clothes off. In between two ice blocks, like a toast. Uuhm, there is this thing, I mean a blanket, the surface of the blanket..., there is a very dirty blanket, its smell is disgusting, ice on top, like first they first did with cold water, uuhm I should say they washed me, then they put me on ice, they also put ice on me and they are turning around the blanket, you are like dead, I mean I felt like dead in a coffin. In the past one of the ways to die I thought most about was and one of the ways I disliked most is to be drowned. Now they water you with the hose and I get water in my mouth, like you cannot breathe (laughing). At that point this thing came into my mind, you should never stop and think, like as soon as you start thinking this, am I going to die, what is it like to die or what's going to happen to me, what is my end going to be like, as soon as you start thinking about that you've lost and they don't even need to do anything to you. But, in basic sense, if you think about the events more objectively, when you think in relation to reality something like that doesn't affect you, like at that point I didn't think of being drowned uuhm, as something difficult. I mean now I can die drowning, to die is not that difficult (laughing). At that point such an idea came to my mind. Uuhm, it's such a period, shall I say 10 minutes I don't know, we\textsuperscript{55} don't have a watch, was it 15 minutes? I think usually it's 20 minutes that humans can stay under ice, but of course I don't know, I can be mistaken in measuring this short time. Uuhm, after such a thing he takes me, I am taken to the electricity again. Ice again, electricity again, ice again, it continued like that. Uuhm besides that there is of course beating and sexual harassment, but as I said I was very much in control of my psychology and nothing worked for me, nothing worked. They are the same [?], in my opinion, being dissolved of a person is something psychological, definitely psychological, I mean it does not stem from a physical strain. I mean from the moment you intrude

\textsuperscript{53} Meaning "surrender" and "speak up."

\textsuperscript{54} Here "thing" refers to torture.

\textsuperscript{55} At times, she uses "we" instead of "I," which is not a very unusual thing, but in her case, this indicates, I believe, a collective identity. we as detainees, prisoners, revolutionaries, or members of a certain political organization.
her psychology, the job is over there.\footnote{In fact, she means “from the moment they intrude your psychology, the job is over.”} Uuuhm on the second day, they would especially do the thing to me, it continued in the same way from morning until noon, uuuhm more so psychologically, I mean the man says, “come we'll talk about the thing, like talk about your past, uuuhm I mean, we will talk about anything but politics.” But I didn't talk a word from the beginning with them. I mean at the beg., I told, I don't have anything to talk with you, after that point I absolutely did not talk to them and I did absolutely not have anything, I mean asking them for something or this and that, I mean it's like they are making me sit down or stand up. I mean I realized, there was such a thing in my mind anyway, such a thing, but I had thought I could do it to such an extent only at later stages but I could apply it there. Like in the evening of the second day like together. Like they are sitting there, trying to talk to you, I mean we are not going to talk about anything political, like talk, he says we will talk about the thing, like what’s your family like, but there is still no talk, he starts on his own life, I did this, I want to marry that, this and that, looking for a common thing with you to get a word from your mouth, he is trying to pull you to a conversation. Actually I had heard something like that, somebody uuuhm does not give in during torture but they try such a method, what does he say for example, he is not going to talk about anything political anyway, I should talk comfortably, the guy pulls him into conversation, like he talks about his mother and father, is talking about his lover, talking about this and that, then starts moving into political arena, says that those are like this, you had done this he says. He says no we didn't do this, I wasn't there he says even, I mean he takes everything from him, something like that happens, too. As I said, it's all psychological. I mean because I knew this, I specifically didn't fall into something like that. In that respect, uuuhm that thing happened, now he said talking like that it's enough already he said, get off my back. But really your nerves break down I mean something nagging you. I had tried this counter method, against him, I answer him in my mind, O.K. That way my boredom, because there you are bored terribly, like your hands are tied, my eyes closed, you don't know where you are. There is somebody sitting next to you and talking incessantly. After all I tried such a method, I got rid of its effect. Actually at a certain point this finding a counter method to their method, I mean there is this thing, there is such an aspect. Their purpose, for example they attack you in such an organized, planned way, for example what do they say these people might have this thing, I mean a weak side, uuuhm intruding this side, how do you intrude, you can intrude by using such an such methods. If you are alert at this point, you manage a method against that, O.K. Like what I did there. For example this guy, I was so much bored, I was about to say, enough get off here. Uuuhm I developed such a method, I mean I was giving an answer, I, in my mind, was giving foolish answers despising him bla bla, I mean I was killing time. Because you are so much bored (laughing). Anyway, such a method developed again in a systematic way..., to tell the truth it didn't affect me and they themselves were astonished. That was the most beautiful aspect, after all, to a person uuuhm to me resisting during torture is really an honor. What, whatever is done, I was even subject to sexual harassment there, but even if I had been raped, it would maybe have had an effect on my psychology, but the essence was to resist against it. I mean if I had not resisted them I would have deserved what they were doing. In that respect, that did not happen, I mean it went over. (Laughing).

Q: Those people who tortured you, the police, what kind of people were they, how can you describe them?
A: Very stupid, they have absolutely no personality, no personality at all I mean. One of them for example comes and says I have a daughter your age whatever, I mean think about that you are a student after all, uuhm a young person, maybe a person having dreams about the future and you torture her and you have a daughter the same age and how can you love her at the same time. I mean it's disgusting actually, his personality does not have the least bit of it actually. Torturing a living creature uuhm does not leave a personality in you. It does not leave any value. Their minds are occupied with women, they have a lot of this women thing for example. They look so much down on women and they look in a sexual manner. I mean for them a woman is an object to sleep with, it does not mean anything else. Somebody to look after the children, somebody to serve. A friend was even telling, they first tell him, you are what, are you a man he said, something like that, then if you are not inferior to women tell the truth he said, inferior to women you saw, something like that. Their point of view is to such extent, you can see how much they downgrade the women. In that respect their relation among themselves is the same, uuhm there is a woman for example, laughing like hahahah, I mean it's obvious what the woman is like, she is a police too, political police, she comes and they usually participate more in men's interrogation, they are using her too, for example, method, as I said they are trying out methods. I mean today Turkish men have this certain thing towards women, a position, to be superior. That a woman laughs at him, for example if that person has such a weakness, they bring her, let her laugh in front of him, O.K. Like you are like this, like that, it maybe concentrates on the sexual thing. Uuhm to create the inferiority complex in the person, bla bla. Uuhm, there is this woman there, she is laughing, for example. They can say, look Fatma too, even Fatma is laughing at you. And think about it at the end it is their own friend, even she I mean, even Fatma is laughing at you. Something like that. I mean their friendship relations among them, they can use up each other, I mean you, I had even heard during a phone conversation I mean they let me wait there always, like I stole away your wife and everything, this and that. he is talking to his friend. I mean can they have any values? I mean it's very disgusting. I mean I cannot describe him as a human. When I was taken in such a thing, I mean this to me beside the wall, I mean the wall, was done. Ha those, I mean it doesn't matter. Since I had such a psychology nothing affected me and actually they were helpful in keeping my psychology straight. I mean I saw how disgusting they were. I saw how precious we were, at that point my confidence was enhanced. Just like that, we came until today (laughing).

Q: O.K. Were you expecting to be tortured before these events?

A: Sure, I every time, every time, I mean at the end I have a political identity, this is what I am, I am a revolutionary I say. I am revolutionary in that respect, and these are natural aspects of my life like eating and drinking. At that point...

Q: Were you thinking like that even before the first event?

A: Before the first event, you mean the first time I was in?

Q: Yes first.

A: Of course, I mean before we had known about the lives of revolutionaries. But maybe at my first arrest, actually at my first arrest too, I had a very clear attitude, yes. (laughing).

Q: Were you expecting it, before your first arrest?

A: At the first arrest I think I wasn't expecting torture, I wasn't expecting such a thing. I mean for me at the
first arrest the main thing was that, then there were these student actions, the MGK\textsuperscript{57} resolutions had been issued, it was an action to protest it. I mean what were the MGK resolutions then, like the changes in the textbooks, to inform faculty, I mean agent, it was a kind of proposal to people to be agents, it was a thing, a procedure to prevent people from being informed. In that respect uhm there were people after all to conduct such an action. They came to me and said like, there is this thing, there is a march in Izmir\textsuperscript{58}, would you participate in this march, like this, this purpose is this and that. O.K. I said, I will participate, after all this is an anti-democratic practice, I will also participate, we had gone there with such a logic. Then the arrest happened of course, it was a crowded arrest and crowded arrest. Most of the people had a tremendous morale, especially those who were directing the action there had a very high morale, there really was this thing to boost there psychology. When they stuffed the cars, we again had gone to the security then, the gendarme is in charge of our area. We had gone to the security, I mean I hadn't thought that much, that means I didn't think again then, they are now forcing us to get off but I had anyway never imagined in my life that I could be beaten. I go inside relaxed, O.K. Of course the police is arranged in rows on two sides [?]. One of them hits you fall into the lap of the other, the other one hits, something like that, uhm what is it called, like a ceremony. Then with a kick you fall somewhere else. They again had made us sit on our knees, I wasn't feeling my knees anymore, I mean they became numb. They had done such a thing. Uuhm so, what I remember from that time is that I mean I hadn't done so much in my mind..

Q: But didn't it surprise you, when you weren't expecting such a..

A: No I wasn't surprised, I mean I wasn't expecting it because, actually I wasn't expecting it because I didn't think, I mean not because I thought they wouldn't do it, to tell the truth I didn't think I mean. I mean there me as basic, I mean principal, basic principal, the rightness of the incident and where do I stand at this point, am I on the side of the just, am I on the side of the unjust, do I have to be silent, do I have to participate in this action, since this was my basic line of thought I acted at this point.

Q: Uuhm you were expecting it in the later ones probably.

A: Sure, I was more conscious at the later ones.

Q: O.K. If you tell in general, why were you tortured?

A: To me uhm first of all the torturers are, conditioned to protect the current order and to hate the people who have a democratic way of thinking, I mean they were educated like this, they are people educated in that direction. Uuhm and they are specifically selected, I mean most of them are rough, not having any values, because uhm someone having values and transforming later would have psychological

\textsuperscript{57} Milli Guvenlik Konseyi (National Security Committee). It is one of the top bodies of the Turkish State. It consists of the President, the Prime Minister and some ministers, and also top rank army officials. It is supposedly responsible for the policies of “national security,” which has always been a high priority issue in an overly suspicious way. Thus, the influence of this committee has been far beyond than it should have been in a democratic country, because it equalizes the elected government members and non-elected army officials.

\textsuperscript{58} Izmir is the third biggest city of Turkey, located at the west coast.
problems, I mean I cannot imagine him doing it, maybe one in thousand but, I think they choose those people who have been rough and valueless all their lives. Uuhm since there is such a thing, I mean at the end it's a policy of the state, such a method, it's one of the methods to dissolve but there is also this special thing I mean, the guy can also do it because of his hatred against you.

Q: O.K. Before you experienced these events, let's take up the time before the first event, uhhm what did torture mean to you?

A: Torture before experiencing these events. Actually before I went into the struggle I hadn't thought that I could be subject to torture and I was afraid of truncheon can you believe, of being beaten with the truncheon. After I was beaten with the truncheon, my fear waned. Uuhm, it was bad, humiliating for me, because I wasn't exactly I mean I hadn't imagined the personalities of the torturers as such I mean I used to think that everybody was humanitarian. Uuhm objective conditioning, I mean today the existence of the classes uhhm and the enemies of the proletariat, rightness, because I could not imagine the existence of enemies of the present rightness. That day to be beaten up by somebody was humiliating to me, because I was never beaten up by anybody in my life. Uuhm I had this thing in that respect, aa am I going to be beaten up, this and that, I would be very much. But then...

Q: How was this broken?

A: As I said I was beaten once with the truncheon (laughing). Think about it, I mean at the end I was here I think it was May 1st, it was May 1st, it's the day where the workers express their rights after all. What are the workers' right today, to live free, equal, what's wrong with that? And I am here at this point, I defend this. Then nobody has the right to hit me. I mean however wrong a person is, uhhm to torture somebody, the act itself is wrong. In that respect I think my hatred deepened toward them and I started understanding their mind set better. I mean this was a result that life brought up. I mean this was the struggle of some trying to protect their status quo, others being not content with their status quo defending their rights and wanting them to be there where they should actually be. And where am I at this point? If you answer this clearly, then you are done.

Q: O.K. Actually you mentioned this a couple of times but what did you experience psychologically after these events, can you tell? It does not have to be anything negative. Negative, positive, when you consider everything what kinds of changes.

A: First of all my self-confidence increased very much, my self-confidence definitely increased. Uuhm formerly I was maybe magnifying the State to some extent, but I mean now I don't magnify it that much, I believe that we are stronger. Uuhm the vent of dying for example, I was regarding death to be more mysterious before, maybe I was considering it to be more distant, but death is very close and it's nothing like I mean nothing unknown, it's not like you wonder what there is in this. Like I can regard it as these people's organs not functioning, them loosing their consciousness after that point. I mean I

“Struggle” is the jargonic version of “political struggle.”

60 In fact she means “objective conditions,” instead of “objective conditioning.” Yet interestingly enough the words, “conditions” and “conditioning” in Turkish have the same grammatical similarity, and she uses “conditioning.”
can better put it in the correct place now I mean it's nothing unknown either, to fade, it's like fading. At this point death does not seem to be frightening to me. Uuhm at this point more upon training myself, for example I can come up with this conclusion, I mean these methods were practiced on me but when I am arrested next time I will encounter heavier methods. Therefore I have to prepare myself. It's really very important that you prepare yourself. Uuhm what was it, a lot of '80, I especially have the experience of '80, [?]. In that experience there were a lot of tortures, there are books about that, reading those books or learning from other people's experiences you can very easily imagine it in your mind and in terms of the practiced methods you can either yourself or with the help of other people's suggestions you can do the thing, you can protect yourself. I mean something like that, but I haven't done that yet.

Q: It probably would be very useful to start doing it. (Jokingly)

A: Absolutely (laughing)

Q: OK. I don't have any more questions, is there anything you would like to add?

A: There is nothing I want to add.

Q: OK. Thank you very much.

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51 1980 was the year of implementaion of the last military coup in Turkey. 1980-83 period is regarded as the worst time in terms of torture practices of the Turkish State. During that time, hundreds of thousands people were tortured in an extremely harsh way.
APPENDIX H

TRANSLATED TRANSCRIPT OF THE RESEARCH INTERVIEW
SAMPLE IV (CASE ID: X37)

33 years old, married, small business owner, Kurdish, non-activist male

Q: Let us begin with when and where did it happen, this incident?

A: Now... this incident [?]. One day... I had pains. while I was going home from the coffeehouse, I closed the coffeehouse at 10 o’clock or so.

Q: When did it happen, which year?

A: In 92.

Q: 92. Which month?

A: Month... it was in fall.

Q: In Istanbul?

A: Yes, in Istanbul. When I got home... I sat down, I sat down 10-15 minutes. Then the door bell rang. There were... my cousins living there, we lived together, we shared the housing. My cousins were in the garden, in the house garden; immediately who are you and so on. [?] the door bell rings. He opened the door. As soon as he opened the door, we are policemen, they rushed into the house, plainclothes policemen, they got in with guns. They said to us you are members of the organization, of PKK. No, that is not true. And he said to me, you have a gun. I said that is not true. If I have one, come and search the house. They searched the house, they couldn’t find anything and they took me to the coffeehouse. They searched the coffeehouse also. When they couldn’t find anything, they took one of my cousin and myself to Gayrettepe. At Gayrettepe... we have been heavily tortured there.

Q: Can you tell me what were you subject to?

A: They suspended us, they poured water on us, they applied electrical current. With praska [?], with
clubs, kicks, slaps and we were blindfolded. They put us in a place like a basement. They cooled the room and then they warmed it. We were heavily tortured there together with my cousin. We were subject to every kind of torture. And then questions that were asked to us, you give support to the organization... We said that was not true. [?] okay, we acquiesce in accusations whatever they are, but that is not true at all, we don’t know the organization, and that is not true either. [?] us in vain, if we had any crime, I said that was to come from there, to come from Southeast. Then after we stayed there for 4-5 days... I think it was four days and four nights, they released us. And I have been followed for about one year. Always next to my house, where I go, what I do, for about one year I have been always followed.

Q: This incident occurred in 92, didn’t it?
A: Yes, it did.

Q: Did any other incident occur after this one?
A: Negative.

Q: Negative. You said they did every kind of torture. Could you describe them giving more details, if it doesn’t distress you? If it distresses you drop it.
A: .. Always like this... they suspended us, they applied electrical current and they poured water on me like this, cans of water. After that, they release us from suspension, there is some place like a basement there, we were blindfolded so we don’t know it, we didn’t see it, after that, 24 hours music, full volume. I mean it blows your brain. Of course haphazard kicks, slaps, club, they use them. And frequently they say lay down, stand up, insults, I mean unimaginable things are said. I mean, [??]. I mean that’s it. And even now, though 2-3 years have elapsed in the meantime, I still hate that high volume. Now for instance, at home, or at another place, when there is high volume voice, sound from TV set, radio, that place comes to my mind immediately and I feel low-spirited. Either I have to turn it off or I have to leave. Or there is a psychological irritation in me, I mean after the torture.

Q: Okay. While you have been tortured, while you were there, what did you do or think to alleviate your pain, to endure it?
A: There... always they do, they do torture, they do whatever they can. That is [?] one is [?] that is what I am, I belong to the organization, [?] that is it. Since that is not true, because I don’t know anything, I said, I don’t know anything, I mean, I don’t know what you are talking about. I am Kurdish, if my crime is Kurdish then let him take me. I came to the world as a Kurdish and I am a human being. He says you will talk, you belong to the organization. I said I don’t belong to the organization, I don’t know the organization. When you caught me you didn’t catch the organization, I don’t have any connection with the organization. If there is any evidence present it, that is not true. They insist and they torture by force so that you say I belong to the organization, they imprison you immediately, I mean that is their goal as far as I realized. And to imprison all Kurdish people, or to disable them by means of torture, or to destroy them completely.

Q: And these torturers, what kind of people were they, how would you describe them?
A: I haven’t seen them, I was blindfolded. But ... they talk like ... calling each other colonel, sergeant,
major, or they tell numbers, for instance 21, 73, 53, they call each other in this manner. We couldn’t see their faces, we were blindfolded.

Q: I don’t refer only to their faces, to their appearance. What kind of people they were, even if you didn’t see their faces?

A: I can say they were wild people. These people ... I don’t think a human being among other human beings could apply such torture. I mean anyone who assures himself of being a human being can’t do that kind of torture. I see them as, how could I say, as aggressive, ... For example, you go to a forest... pardon my expression, you face a very ferocious animal [?]. And these people assault you like that animal. I mean if they really had a human soul, they would not apply that torture. That is what I believe in. They are murderers, they are not human beings. And this is the kind of people who create terror. I mean if actually these people do haphazardly such things, everybody opposes the state. It makes us, the state makes such things to us, what, what should we do, where these people could refer to. If the state behaves so, if a state treats a man like this, if a government employee haphazardly stretches (?) people, what these people should do.

Q: Before this incident, have you ever thought of going through torture?

A: No, no, I did not expect it at all.

Q: You never thought such a thing could occur to you.

A: No, no, I didn’t expect it at all, it never came to my mind.

Q: Have you ever had information about torture.

A: No, I hadn’t.

Q: I mean there is torture in Turkey...

A: Sometimes I read it in newspapers, there is torture in Turkey... torture in Diyarbakır62 prison ... how many people lost their lives. sometimes we read it in newspapers, we heard it from television, but it never came to my mind, I mean, like this ... that I would be tortured, caught, randomly. It never came to my mind.

Q: With respect to what you said you read in newspapers, you heard, how different or similar were what you experienced, how much were you surprised? Before the incident you knew something about torture. And you experienced it in reality. Could you compare these two.

A: Now, when I make a comparison, few is written in newspapers, I mean we are not told the reality, I mean thousand times more is actually done that what is written, because I went through it and I witnessed it. I was even blindfolded, a woman’s voice was heard, almost no voice came out from her, but I don’t know what kind of a person was she, only her voice was heard... There were sounds of beatings. And no voice came out from her neither. She said I have internal bleeding, she said call a

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62 The biggest city of the Kurdish region. “Capitol” city of the Kurds. Its prison has a reputation of being the most violent and bloody prison in Turkey.
doctor. Doctors they ..., I don’t know whether or not this person died, whether or not she survived, I don’t know whatever happened. Only a weak voice was heard and beatings were heard. The voice that was heard from her, I have internal bleeding, call a doctor. This was the only thing she wanted.

Q: Why have you been tortured?
A: According to me ... because my identity is Kurdish, because I am Kurdish. Otherwise I know myself, because I am not guilty, I haven’t committed any crime. At this age, I have never committed any crime, I didn’t do any, I mean. I am a person working for his children. I go to work in the morning, I come home in the evening, I don’t go anywhere else. I guess I was tortured in the same way because I am Kurdish.

Q: Before you went through all this, what torture meant to you, what was its meaning?
A: When he tells me about torture in my expression .... it came to my mind, I mean, a man kills another, he is then tortured or after smuggling, these came to my mind. I never thought of such random torture.

Q: And what does torture mean to you now?
A: Now for me ... we want that torture stops, no more torture. All manhood should live within the frames of brotherhood. I mean without discrimination. That is what we want. If our identity is Kurdish, if we came here from Southeast, it is because of mere pleasure, I mean from there to here. Our village was destroyed by the state. What should we do, we have to come here, we had to come to big towns, to the metropolis. And when we come here if we are tortured where we should go. We have to ... live in this country, I mean we can’t go anywhere else. If the situation were well, if our village were not destroyed, I personally would not stay here, what do I have to do here.

Q: After this incident, what did you experience psychologically, what kind of different problems did you experience?
A: As a problem .. for example when I ... see a government official, a policeman, I say to myself he can assault me again, I mean when I pass him by. I feel still that kind of pressure. Whether they should take me again and interrogate me, whether they should beat me. I feel still that kind of pressure.

Q: Anything else?
A: Else, I mean I detest wherever I see them. I say this man ... why he is so pitiless, aren’t they human beings. I mean if I begin on the street, if I am able to do it I change my direction. I don’t want to face him, to be in front him, because I feel fear. I still feel that fear. I say whether this one can take me randomly. If they take me again I will still remain under detention for at least 3-4 days, they will beat me. I mean that is why I don’t want to see them, I mean, if possible, my direction, another direction, he comes from that direction, I go towards that direction.

Q: How is your sleep?
A: My sleep, sometimes I am unable to sleep, I feel disturbed.

Q: Do you have any nightmares?
A: Nightmare, I had some previously, now rarely. Soldier, I've always dreamt soldiers attacking me. Now it's well, I mean it's normal.

Q: Did anything similar occur, I mean soldiers attacking you?
A: No, no it didn't. After I got out of that thing, it continued for 2-3 months, sometimes [??]. After that, I don't have them now I mean.

Q: You mentioned earlier a sensitivity to high volume, high volume disturbs you.
A: Yes, now...

Q: Does it still continue?
A: Yes, it does, but not as extreme as it was previously.

Q: You startle.
A: Yes, exactly.

Q: Do you feel yourself sadder, more depressed, more exhausted than before?
A: Sometimes, sometimes I do.

Q: Perhaps a despair relating to future.
A: That despair exists, there is also despair. What I complain about is that sound, beginning with that sound. I gradually overcome it I mean. Sometimes I say to myself, it was a nightmare and it's over now. I mean I don't remember all the time. I mean I don't do much.

Q: When you see policemen on the streets or elsewhere, does anything like sweating, palpitation, or distress happen?
A: No, it doesn't.

Q: It doesn't. You just don't want to see him, you try to change your direction.
A: Yeah, I don't want to see him.

Q: I don't have any other question for this interview. Do you have anything to add in this context?
A: No, I don't. That is all I have to say.