A RESCUE TEAM IN THE MAKING: NEGOTIATING TIME AND KNOWLEDGE AGAINST THE EXPECTED ISTANBUL EARTHQUAKE

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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

A Rescue Team in the Making:

Negotiating Time and Knowledge Against the Expected Istanbul Earthquake

This thesis ethnographically explores an urban search and rescue (USAR) team in İstanbul, currently undergoing accreditation training for official recognition. It aims to critically engage with the existing literature on earthquakes in Turkey, which has so far revolved around technocratic solutionism, treating disaster knowledge as a product of neutral scientific accumulation. To offer another perspective, this work emphasizes how daily social interactions among (prospective) disaster professionals -who are also potential survivors in Istanbul's seismic riskscape- can generate an emergent disaster knowledge that exceeds a strict expert-victim polarity. Secondly, this work makes a humble contribution to the broader literature on impending emergencies, which dominantly dwells on the frameworks of risk and futurity to explain the governance of anticipated emergencies. It explores the limits of anticipatory logics in ensuring people's continued enrollment in risk mitigating behavior, in a context that is laden with the social trauma of recurrent devastating earthquakes, and an ongoing urban crisis which inhibits residents' capacities to take anticipatory action. This thesis will conclude by suggesting another possible disaster governance mechanism that pertains to social memory rather than risk. This rationale co-opts the prevalent discourses of forgetfulness that portray Turkish society as chronically amnesiac, in order to redistribute blame and responsibility in the context of recurrent disasters.

ÖZET

Bir Arama-Kurtarma Ekibinin İnşası:
Beklenen Büyük İstanbul Depremi'ne Karşı Zamanı ve Bilgiyi Müzakere Etmek

Bu araştırma, resmi olarak tanınmak üzere akreditasyon eğitim sürecinde olan İstanbullu bir arama ve kurtarma ekibi üzerine etnografik bir incelemedir. Öncelikli amacı, Türkiye'de depremlerle ilgili akademik çalışmalara eleştirel bir katkıda bulunmaktır. Mevcut literatürde afet bilgisinin ağırlıklı olarak objektif bilimsel birikim olarak değerlendirilmesine karşıt, bu çalışma afet bağlamında teknokratik çözümcülüğü sorunsallaştırmaktadır. Müstakbel arama kurtarmacılar arasındaki gündelik etkileşimlerin, -aynı zamanda bu kişilerin deprem bekleyen İstanbul sakinleri olduğunu da göz önüne alırsak- katı bir uzman-afetzede ikiliğini aşan bir bilgi üretebileceğini vurgulamaktadır. İkinci olarak, bu çalışma, henüz gerçekleşmemiş afetlerin yönetimini ağırlıklı olarak risk ve gelecek perspektifleri üzerinden tartışan uluslararası afet literatürüne de naçizane bir katkıda bulunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu araştırma, geçmiş depremlerin ve İstanbul'da süregelen kentsel krizin, gelecek odaklı risk yönetimi ritüellerinin ve teknolojilerinin sınırlarını görünür kıldığını iddia etmektedir. Son olarak bu çalışma, risk yerine toplumsal hafıza üzerinden işlev kazanan başka bir olası afet yönetimi rasyonalitesine dikkat çekmeye çalışacaktır. Bu durum, Türkiye toplumunu deneyimlediği felaketleri mütemadiyen unutan bireyler olarak tasvir eden yaygın unutkanlık söyleminin ekip üyelerince oldukça içselleştirilmiş olmasında belirgin hale gelecektir.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFAD	Afet ve Acil Durum Yönetimi Başkanlığı (Directorate of Disaster and Emergency Management)
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
EMASYA	Emniyet-Asayiş-Yardımlaşma (Security-Order-Cooperation)
INSARAG	International Search and Rescue Advisory Group
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
JAK	Jandarma Arama Kurtarma (Gendarme Search and Rescue)
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
PFA	Psychological First Aid
SAP	Sosyal Afet Platformu (Social Platform for Disasters)
SAT	Sualtı Taarruz (Underwater Offence)
TAMP	Türkiye Acil Durum Müdahale Planı (Turkish Emergency Intervention Plan)
TSK	Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri (Turkish Armed Forces)
USAR	Urban Search and Rescue

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

On 6 February 2023, a vast region including the cities in the southeast Turkey and the northwest of Syria was stricken by an earthquake of magnitude 7.8, resulting in the death of tens of thousands of people. Hatay emerged as one of the cities that suffered the heaviest damage, including its district of Iskenderun where I spent my entire childhood due to my father's military deployment. As a young researcher working on different aspects of social memory, it was a rather strange feeling to witness how once familiar places, with all the emotional charge they evoke, as well as their distinct scents, sounds and textures; are now spoken of as a pile of debris. The loss of a childhood town, for me, again was to witness the extent of this destruction from a position of comfortable yet perplexing distance, as all we could do was sit at home preparing some aid boxes, share informative posts on social media about the ongoing needs in the region, and give a call to our loved ones in Iskenderun to check if they were alright. Although many people in Hatay were waiting for rescue, citizens were advised to not flood the region as the urban search and rescue (USAR) teams were already struggling to make their way to the stricken area due to the damage to the roads. Therefore, we had to lend our affective burden to USAR personnel and incessantly followed on TV how the rescue efforts were unfolding. This was when my initial curiosity about rescuers started to flourish as, for the first time, I have become personally invested to their activities extending beyond their institutional identities and heroic representations. Who were these people? How did they feel? What were their personal limits? What motivated them to pursue this profession? Who trains them?

On the other hand, while survivors were still trying to recover amidst the devastation caused brought by the Turkey-Syria Earthquake, experts were quick to point out to a possibly more destructive earthquake that is expected to take place in Istanbul soon, as they did in the aftermath of other previous devastating earthquakes in Turkey (Angell, 2014). The residents of Istanbul were expected to take the destruction in Hatay as an object lesson to accelerate preparation efforts in Istanbul. It was in this context; I contacted a civil organization in Istanbul working on disasters to express my personal and academic interest in their activities. The person who responded to my e-mail was one of the founding members of the organization and he was also the leader of a rescue team currently undergoing accreditation training. By coincidence, the group were also present in Iskenderun to join rescue efforts, as most of the team members have already had fieldwork experience in earthquake-stricken regions. The team leader invited me to join one of their training sessions which eventually led to a four-month-long ethnographic fieldwork experience with a rescue team in the making. I took part in their theoretical and practical training sessions, as well as social gathering events attended by the team members, which involved various disaster communities.

As a result, my initial personal curiosity about rescue workers has developed into a more structured set of research questions taking departure from the emerging professional identity of rescuers. What are the character traits and skill-sets that prospective rescuers are getting accustomed to during their training process? How do they navigate their individual capabilities/limitations, as well as internal conflicts within the group, in contrast to the idealized image of the calm and hands-on professional they are expected to embody? What kind of daily social encounters characterize their professional environment? In general, how do they make sense of

their fieldwork experiences and professional pursuits as prospective professionals and potential victims? Those questions also germinated wider questions about the governance of disasters in Turkey, in relation to existing disaster pedagogies and their underlying assumptions about disasters as well as a temporal regime oscillating between anticipation and memory of recurrent catastrophe: How can we explore the often neglected daily social encounters that reproduce and challenge fully-fledged disaster pedagogies? What kinds of lay epistemologies are produced through first-hand testimony to disaster-induced suffering, and in what ways those encounters negotiate hegemonic bodies of knowledge? What are the functions of diverse temporal dispositions, ranging from memory to anticipation, in professionally enrolling people into disaster preparedness and response activities?

In guidance of those questions, this thesis aims to give a social-anthropological account on disaster preparedness/governance in Turkey by ethnographically exploring a rescue team in the making, within the unique social context shaped in the aftermath of the devastating Turkey-Syria Earthquake and at the dawn of the expected major Istanbul Earthquake. The organization of the thesis is as follows: The following chapter aims to contextualize this research by first giving a brief account on the studies problematizing earthquakes in Turkey. It will then discuss why new heuristic tools are needed in social study of disasters and introduce critical interventions of recent disaster scholars pertaining to knowledge and temporality in disasters contexts. It will finally touch upon the methodological prospects of ethnography in studying disasters and introduce the fieldwork setting in more detail.

The third section will explore how the team members negotiate disaster knowledge and expertise in their daily social interactions with other disaster

professionals from Turkey and abroad, as well as non-professionals. It will first discuss the figures of expertise in Turkish disaster scene and reflect on the ambiguous position of military, both as a real institution with real people and practices, and as a wider idea shaped around military subjectivity, exerting notable influence on the group's professional identity. Then it will focus on how team members' encounters with international disaster community create new visions and divisions shaped around an Occidentalist boundary work.

The last section will specifically focus on the temporal regime navigating the expected Istanbul Earthquake, visibly extending beyond anticipatory logics and practices due to the existing social memory of past earthquakes. Accordingly, I will first attempt to show, in light of my fieldwork findings, the limits and fissures of anticipatory disaster governance technologies in effectively enrolling people into the ideas of risk and rituals of safety. Due to the sustained testimony to the ongoing earthquake-precipitated suffering and structural immobilities stemming from the housing crisis in Istanbul, I will show how the residents' capacities and willingness to take anticipatory action might get hampered, as they are presented with a very limited repertoire of action to secure a best possible future amidst the seismic risks that they are exposed to. Therefore, I will conclude by considering possible governance tools that go beyond risk optimization discourses and will critically reflect on a specific discourse of forgetfulness that portray Turkish people as permanently amnesiac of the past calamities that they have suffered. I will suggest rethinking this discourse of forgetfulness as a disaster governance rationale where the governance of a future emergency involves subverting the active field of social memory, rather than solely relying on the mobilization of risk optimization discourses.

Before moving onto the main discussion, I would like to mention an existing study that has a similar thematic focus and informant profile as this one. Laura Neumann's (2018) master's thesis explores how Istanbul's earthquake professionals deal with the risks associated with an upcoming Istanbul earthquake through their professional practice and in their daily lives as residents. Neumann's research relies on in-depth interviews rather than ethnography and does not exclusively focus on USAR professionals. Another significant difference is that Turkey-Syria Earthquake had not yet taken place while Neumann was conducting her research, therefore Istanbul's earthquake risk was still being discussed with references to 1999 Marmara earthquake. But most importantly, while this thesis focuses on both social memory and anticipatory regimes in governance of future emergencies, Neumann's research solely relies on the frameworks of risk and futurity to discuss the expected Istanbul Earthquake.

Some of Neumann's implications strongly resonated with my own fieldwork findings as her informants were again simultaneously professionals and potential victims. However, there were times when our findings did not support each other, I believe, due to the differences in our methodological approaches, participant profile and the changes in the urban context of Istanbul in the last five years. I will continuously engage with Neumann's work in my fieldwork discussions and hope that the dialogue I try to establish between Neumann's research and mine will go further than the aggregate sum of our theses and can make a meaningful point regarding the politics of emergency governance in Turkey.

CHAPTER 2

ON STUDYING DISASTERS

2.1 Recontextualizing the earthquakes in Turkey

> "EARTHQUAKE: *Possible even*t that has been a *reality of nature* since the foundation of the city but has gradually become the occasion of more *paranoia and hysteria*" (Uzer, 2008, p. 86, emphasis added), Becoming Istanbul: An Encyclopedia

Earthquakes have long been a significant part of Istanbul's socioenvironmental context, both as a recurrent material reality periodically razing the city and a source of anxiety stemming from the anticipation of a future one. On the one hand, earthquakes have been *a reality of nature* in Istanbul, as the city lies dangerously close to the North Antolian Fault, a highly active tectonic system. On the other hand, with its fragile buildings, dense population and ineffective urban policies, Istanbul seems to await a catastrophe in the near future, triggered by an earthquake estimated to be over 7.0 in magnitude (Kalafat, 2023). Disaster experts, urban planners and geologists unequivocally raise their concerns to policymakers and residents to take the necessary steps to minimize the damage precipitated by the upcoming earthquake. Here, we are already dealing with the age-old tension in making sense of and acting upon earthquakes: Disaster as an act of nature versus disaster as an act of man.

The maxim that "there is no such thing as a natural disaster" is no longer a controversial one as it has been widely acknowledged that the causes and consequences of disasters are hardly "defined by an autonomous natural order" (Remes & Horowitz, 2021: 2). The idea that disasters are social constructs involve a crucial element of critique that emphasizes human agency in seemingly natural processes, inevitably denaturalizing and politicizing disasters. However, the same

maxim runs the risk of representing disasters as mere "interpretative fictions" (Remes & Horowitz, 2021, p.2) isolating human beings from their material geographies and overall more-than-human entanglements. Furthermore, this principle can be, and often is, co-opted by governance technologies to position people as the main protagonists of disaster (Saul, 2018), enrolling them into rituals of safety by prioritizing individual responsibility, even when the destructive outcomes might be triggered by a seismic agent. In other words, without corrective heuristic devices, "disaster as a social construct" paradigm may function as a rearticulation of the human hubris of taming the nature, while simultaneously rechanneling the responsibility in disaster contexts to individuals. Everything is a social construct as long as it involves human agency, and we need a more nuanced conceptual repertoire and theoretical position to situate disasters into their proper social, historical, and epistemological context.

This work starts by acknowledging the interwovenness of seemingly separate categories of natural and social by considering disasters as "acts of systems" (Hagen, 2021), produced through the complex interplay between human and non-human agencies (Farias, 2014). With this renewed analytical sensibility, the *paranoia and hysteria* prompted by the expected Grand Istanbul Earthquake can be considered as affective responses shaped within a larger set of socio-material relations, involving the social memory of past earthquakes in Turkey, Istanbul's demographic and cultural significance as Turkey's biggest metropolis, the ever-changing risk management and post-disaster governance technologies, the ongoing circulation of technocratic and local knowledges, the fragility of Istanbul's urban environment, and ambiguous seismic time. Grand Istanbul Earthquake as a *possible event*, as disclosed in the above quotation, comes into being by reimagining and working through the

lived experiences of past earthquakes in Turkey (Gülüm, 2024), as Istanbul centrifuges the earthquake-induced destruction in any other region into a heightened awareness of the city's worrisome future.

Simultaneous recognition of increased risk and Turkey's disastrous past has generated an inspiring body of research on disasters, and more specifically on earthquakes in Turkey, mobilizing many disciplines ranging from civil engineering to psychology. The bulk of academic work on disasters in Turkey comes from earth sciences such as seismology, geology, physical geography, or mapping (eg. Akkar et. al., 2018; Tan et. al. 2008; Zilio & Ampuero, 2023); and other largely technocratic corpuses of knowledge such as seismic evaluation of building materials and soil dynamics, urban risk mitigation strategies, damage scenarios simulations, and optimization of emergency response systems (eg. Bakır & Boduroğlu, 2002; Gözlükaya, 2023; Özmen, 2021). This, however, hardly indicates that those works solely address academics and professionals that are situated closer to their disciplinary boundaries. No matter how esoteric or exclusive their disciplinary homes might be, especially against the scholars of social sciences and non-academic audiences, many of those researchers actively sought ways to make their research findings communicable to a larger public:

> What will be needed, in the context of planning for or mitigation of these indicated losses [in Istanbul], is the dissemination of this urban earthquake loss data in understandable formats to increase the awareness of the general public […] We are afraid that if this dissemination activity is not properly and adequately conducted, the return of this comprehensive state-of-the art study will only be academic and marginal. (Erdik, et.al. 2003, p. 20)

The concerns of those researchers cannot be reduced to a mere challenge in science communication. An important shift in studying disasters came with the redefinition of risk, vulnerability, and resilience which started to problematize possible harms that may befall on individuals, communities, or larger social groups due to hazardous

events rather than denoting a neutral ability of ecological systems to adapt to or mitigate adverse conditions (Kelman et. al., 2016). Now, processes navigating disaster preparedness or recovery are considered less about optimizing emergency management systems than building resilient communities (Karanci & Akşit, 2000) and acknowledging the vulnerability of subaltern social groups (Miller, et. al. 2010). Therefore, even the most technocratic earthquake pedagogies in Turkey made references to social concerns by suggesting "examining Turkish culture closely in order to determine what keeps people from preparing for an earthquake" (Oral, et. al. 2015, p. 30), or adopting effective emergency preparedness protocols to create an "earthquake resistant city and society" (Erdik, 2005, p. 123). Yet, in the context of the Istanbul Earthquake, it has become apparent that those pedagogies of preparedness are often guided by contesting scientific truth claims[1] (Kayaalp & Arslan, 2021) despite their acknowledgement of being neutral, universal, and objective. We need a reflexive look at the disaster knowledge itself, and the everyday processes through which its relevance, credibility and practicality is negotiated. This thesis is an outcome of such an effort.

Despite the already existing efforts to integrate social concerns into the study of disasters, an exclusively social scientific approach to study earthquakes had not yet been developed in the academic literature in Turkey, until after the 1999 Marmara Earthquake. Simply put, social categories were treated as a supplement to the largely technocratic data rather than acknowledging the ordering function of social systems

[1] For instance, two of the most vocal geologists in Turkey, namely Prof. Naci Görür and Prof. Ahmet Ercan, have completely differing views on the likelihood of an upcoming earthquake in Istanbul. While Naci Görür complies with the dominant scientific conviction that the earthquake can take place at any minute in İstanbul, Prof. Ahmet Ercan goes against the grain and considers those warnings as a strategic speculation to inflate the construction sector without any scientific basis. For more, please see https://artigercek.com/guncel/istanbul-depremi-icin-gorus-ayriligi-ahmet-ercan-naci-gorure-karsi-cikti-286179h

in transforming hazards into disasters (Pampal & Özmen, 2009). This pattern started to be challenged after the 1999 Earthquake, which, unlike previous earthquakes has created "special characteristics of post-disaster social, institutional, and political environments" (Özerdem & Barakat, 2000, p. 437). The devastating earthquake of magnitude 7.6 resulted in an unprecedented extent of destruction as more than fifteen thousand people lost their lives and a city renowned for its industrial infrastructures collapsed overnight. Hundreds of thousands of people were left homeless and survivors were caught in between the trauma of dealing with their multi-layered losses and the protracted wait for reconstruction efforts[2]. The heavy circulation of the images of disaster-stricken regions in the mainstream Turkish media made visible the utter lack of institutionalized emergency management and preparation protocols. In such an environment gestate to political critique, a new line of research on earthquakes began flourishing, directly departing from the conceptual tools and methodological approaches of social sciences. Due to the sheer amount of academic works on earthquakes written after this critical juncture, my aim is to roughly categorize them by their theoretical dispositions with regards to disasters, especially where relevant to the scope of this research, rather than making an exhaustive review.

The first line of literature that took shape after this period considers disasters as *psycho-social constructs* that are both individually experienced and collectively shared. Therefore, this body of research heavily recruits the psychologized lexicons of emotions, trauma, stress, coping, and mental health, given the social devastation experienced after the 1999 Earthquake. But those works go beyond the disciplinary

[2] Please see the news report from BBC, titled "The Earthquake of August 17th: What happened in and after 1999, how many people lost their lives?" at https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-49322860

constraints of psychopathology by bringing new attention to collectively shared emotions and perceptions. For instance, there are number of works that scrutinize the processes of dealing with earthquake-led trauma through religion (Küçükcan & Köse, 2017; Kula, 2002), gendered experiences of post-disaster stress and anxiety (Başoğlu, et. al. 2002), or intergenerational transmission of earthquake trauma through literary texts (Tek, 2018) and oral work (Hıdırlıoğlu & Kotanlı, 2016). Distancing themselves from methodological individualism, which regards emotions and perception as largely individual processes, those scholars also engaged in discussions of representation, aiming at integrating individual sentiments to diverse social circuits. Inquiries on the emotional engagement of Internet users with earthquake related social media content, (Kırman, 2023; Tarakçı, 2023), the potential of Turkey's post-disaster landscapes for dark tourism[3] (Güncü & Güneş, 2017), and the cementing of collective memory through earthquake memorial ceremonies (Erdem, 2019) can be given as examples[4]. There are also a couple of recent works that are worth to mention, revolving around media ethics and post-disaster trauma, that problematize the emotive depictions of victimhood (Asa & Güllupınar, 2023), or heavy circulation of children's images after earthquakes (Erdem & Kaynar, 2022). Although this body of research makes an important contribution by socializing emotions and perceptions in the context of earthquakes, they privilege the commonly shared elements of post-traumatic sentiments and give little to no attention to the conflictual and contested aspects of the latter.

[3] This is a particularly interesting example as the Turkish academic term for dark tourism is *hüzün turizmi* (sorrow tourism), directly denoting an emotional experience.
[4] There are also a couple of recent works on media ethics in the context of disasters, problematizing the emotive depictions of victimhood (Asa & Güllupınar, 2023), or heavy circulation of children's images after earthquakes (Erdem & Kaynar, 2022).

On a different note, disasters often appear as a *crisis of governance* in many social scientific accounts on earthquakes after the devastation in İzmit. Offering an alternative to scientific technocratic solutionism, this line of literature, still dominating the ongoing academic discussions on disasters, highlights the interplay between people, civil society, and state institutions (Jalali, 2002; Kubicek, 2002; Öcal, 2019) as well as larger inter-state efforts (Ker-Lindsay, 2000) in preparing for and mitigating the damage caused by disasters. Those scholars often employ the concepts and methodological tools of business and management, and theoretically position themselves in alignment with key premises of the liberal market economy. For instance, effective crisis management, strategical planning, mitigation of risk, efficient use of resources emerge as central concerns to be addressed in those analyses (eg. Ünlü et. al., 2010; Özerdem & Jacoby; 2006).

One should acknowledge the significance of those attempts that call attention to the role of non-state actors as well as the concerns of vulnerable communities, in decentralizing (Hermansson, 2019) disaster governance, in the course and aftermath of emergencies. However, it is also important to remain cautious about the conviction that individual action and institutional processes are always rationally motivated (Wright, 1994). Treating emergencies as a problem of means-ends efficiency overlooks the instances in which individuals and institutions act in unpredictable and counterintuitive ways during emergencies (Halachmi, 1980). In addition, this understanding can obscure the crisis-ridden nature of socio-technological systems by framing their material and social byproducts as an optimization issue, i.e. a deviation from its well-functioning -and unsurprisingly Western- counterparts. Another problem with this theoretical vein is that it fails the grasp the complex temporality in which disasters unfold, as they heavily rely on a temporal compartmentalization

framing disasters as "temporally discrete events preceded by planning and proceeded by recovery" (Saul, 2018: 4). Then, disastrous pasts can only be relevant as an object lesson, an experience laden guide for adopting the right strategies against the future catastrophes. This is why "learning from past mistakes" (Çetin, 2013; Kadıoğlu & Özdamar, 2008, Steinberg & Cruz, 2004) has often been of great concern for those authors.

Lastly, a group of scholars, dominantly anchored in media and communication studies, regard disasters as an *epistemic problem* resulting in the disturbance of our familiar ways of knowing, mainly due to the infoglut, or the lack thereof[5], during political and ecological crises accompanied by heightened public panic. Here, earthquakes appear first as a source of epistemic cacophony characterized by the circulation of often conflictual or ambiguous testimonies, narratives, reports, images and any other source of information (Budak, 2023). Our capacities of knowing, or on a more nuanced note, our capacities to make truth claims, to be able to assert what we bear in thought, experience, intuition, testimony, or embodiment as a credible source of information, are respective of our position in social power relations (Hoagland, 2010). Unfortunately, most of the academic works problematizing the epistemic crises prompted by earthquakes in Turkey are short of recognizing this. This line of literature is comprised of efforts in increasing the circulation of disaster preparedness information to individual residents (Dedeoğlu,

[5] "We are facing a distressing process as the existing authoritarian government hides information and takes care to use information arbitrarily and manipulatively. We also experienced this during the [COVID19] pandemic. Unfortunately, during earthquakes, information was arbitrarily withheld and monopolized by the government. It has been transformed into a power apparatus, and it has seriously hindered the planning of steps to be taken, the appropriate use of resources, and the provision of support. It is necessary to oppose this as a priority and make efforts to make information transparent and share it equally with society. Because lately, unfortunately, we have seen that our right to information has been taken away from us." (Biçer, 2023, translated by the author) in Tarhanlı, T., Biçer, Ü., Bayhan, B., Adaman, F., & Yaman, M. (2023). Deprem, İnsan Hakları, Gelecek. *REFLEKTİF Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, *4*(2), 497-518.

2008; Koç, 20013) by adopting correct risk communication strategies (Tekeli-Yeşil et. al., 2019), assessing the relationship between the knowledge levels and earthquake attitudes of disaster relief staffs (Ocal, 2011), or creating effective education modules on earthquake preparedness for adult residents (Başıbüyük, 2004), students (Ersoy & Koçak, 2016), or future primary school teachers (Cin, 2013). In short, the primary concern of this body of research can be summed up as "raising public awareness" (Soydan & Alparslan, 2014) by facilitating the circulation of objective technocratic disaster knowledge to diverse audiences in understandable formats. Here we already see a short-circuit to the aforementioned concerns of disaster technocrats to communicate their findings to wider publics, as part of this is not just about communication but forming subjects that are responsible for/ operative in disaster response. This is the reason why those works remain narrowly pedagogical in focus, giving disproportionate attention to the circulation of knowledge, and lacking critical engagement with knowledge production processes. Recognizing this gap in the existing literature, this work will scrutinize the emergent disaster knowledge that shaped through the daily interactions among search and rescuers in relation to politics of emergency governance in Turkey.

2.2 A paradigm shift: Critical disaster studies as an emergent discipline

As I tried to demonstrate in the previous section, frames and conceptual tools that are dominantly utilized in the existing academic literature on earthquakes in Turkey cannot adequately politicize disasters. Earthquakes frequently emerge as sporadic destructive events that requires effective policy implementation, yet the everyday processes navigating how people make sense of, anticipate, recover from, get informed about, and negotiate disasters have not received much attention. Moreover,

most of the existing research on disasters in social sciences still privilege technocratic bodies of knowledge in addressing earthquakes while presenting their own work as an alternative at best, or as a supplement at worst. There is no sustained effort that offers a radical remaking in our understanding of expert disaster knowledge, as an epistemic realm that is constantly transformed through multi-level social interactions and contestations, rather than a universally valid and self-evident truth that is approximated through steady accumulation of scientific exchange. The latter conviction gets increasingly harder to hold onto in the context of the expected Grand Istanbul Earthquake, where we see that even the most technocratic discussions on ground characteristics, construction materials, seismically vulnerable regions, as well as risk maps and projections get heavily integrated into daily lexicons of inhabitants. Moreover, residents of Istanbul have long witnessed how expert discussions of earthquake risk are appropriated to justify controversial urban transformation projects (Angell, 2014). Therefore, the central contribution of this work to the existing literature on earthquakes in Turkey will be showing how the so-called expert knowledge on earthquakes are shaped through and challenged by everyday negotiations, going well beyond the discursive bubble of disaster experts. Consequently, such a work requires a different kind of effort where disasters are used "as a way of trying to answer different and broader questions about power and inequality", (Remes & Horowitz, 2021, p. 2) positing disasters first and foremost as a political problem par excellence. This fundamental premise will guide us to see Istanbul in the wake of catastrophe more than an isolated space cursed with a seismically overactive underground or a mere canvas for policy-implementation to optimize its best possible future.

> Managers and technocrats often herald the goals of disaster response and recovery as objective, quantifiable, or self-evident. In reality, the goals are

> subjective and usually contested. Take the basic concept of "restoring order"; it seems common sense until one recognizes that the existing order served some people much better than it served others, and its restoration therefore represents a power play par excellence. Critical disaster studies attends to the ways powerful people often use claims of technocratic expertise about vulnerability, risk, and resilience to maintain their power. So-called experts have politics and ideologies, just like everyone else. (Remes & Horowitz, 2021, p. 3)

As Remes & Horowitz hints, subjecting technoscientific solutionist prescriptions to political critique is crucial, firstly because people or institutions can easily be corrupted and act against public good to maintain their positions of power. But even if there might be areas where the public interests of residents and private interests of the technocrats converge, this critique is still relevant because the claims of the former group on the disasters, that they have a first-hand experience of, are rarely recognized within the boundaries of knowledge. The truth claims of the inhabitants of disaster-stricken or high-risk regions are regarded as beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, or reactions towards disasters, not as credible or valid sources of information (eg. Karakuş, 2014; Çoban et. al., 2017). Therefore, superficial attempts to address the underrepresentation of non-professional voices in knowledge-making would be anemic without "a radical contextualization of the heuristic devices and frames that actors draw upon to make sense of hazards" (Auyero & Swistun, 2008: 10). This call becomes especially pressing in a global context where pandemics, wars, climate change and other forms of spectacular human failures have become routinized events rather than exceptions (Agamben, 2005). Under these circumstances necessitating new theoretical and methodological lenses, Jacob Remes and Andy Horowitz (2021), two influential disaster historians, offer to pursue a sustained critical engagement with our apriori assumptions about disasters, in the introductory manifesto of a collaborative volume titled "Critical Disaster Studies". Although the naming of the discipline as such is a very recent effort, its theoretical

and methodological kernels were already present in the social scientific accounts on disasters for more than three decades (Oliver-Smith & Hoffman, 2019), and its central premises could be traced back to the intellectual tradition of critical theory.

In his famous allegory of the Angel of History, Walter Benjamin invites us to rethink history as "one single catastrophe piling wreckage at its feet" (Knowles & Loeb, 2021, p. 12) not because of a crude pessimism that can offer nothing better than the existing status quo, but because he strongly believed that those calamities are the norm, thus having a revelatory power on the essence and functioning of the existing social structures. This does not mean that disaster is an "epiphenomenon", "a data-production catalyst useful for studying *something else*" (Knowles & Loeb, 2021, p. 13, emphasis in original). On the contrary, disasters have a continuous social life outside of the episodic periods of preparation and recovery as they "operate as realms of sensemaking, conflict, memory, cultural practice, and imagination that define and bind societies over long stretches of time" (Knowles & Loeb, 2021, p. 12). Such an idea also enables us to bridge the gap between the catastrophic and every day (Das, 2020) as they no longer occupy separate temporal planes. As much as spectacular destructive events shape everyday social relations as categories of thought and domains of action, the everyday life is also characterized by "small, recurring, repetitive crises" (Das, 2020, p. 21).

Scholars of critical disaster studies made great effort to problematize the often-misleading theory of time and space that is fostered by the previous research on disasters. Disasters, specifically the ones that are classified as "rapid" or "sudden" onset such as earthquakes, (Oliver-Smith & Hoffman, 2019) are generally represented as spectacular and explosive events that are expected to quickly dissolve into recovery. Sustaining the premises of the emergency-as-exception paradigm, this

line of thinking fails to grasp broader spatio-temporal logics identifying modern disasters and how the continuous suffering of people is governed through "a variety of techniques, strategies and rationalities of emergency" (Anderson et. al., 2020, p. 624). This is the reason why, recent accounts offered new frameworks informed by critical theories of time, such as "slow emergencies" (Anderson et. al., 2020), "anticipatory regimes" (Adams et. al., 2009) or "risk society" (Beck, 1992). Apart from those widely acknowledged conceptual contributions, many recent accounts have scrutinized the ordering function and contested aspects of time in disaster contexts. They have focused, for instance, on the socially heterogenous experiences of waiting in the aftermath of the Hurricane Katrina (Sou & Howarth, 2023), on the chronopolitics of navigating an anticipated oil-spillage (Weskalnys, 2014), or on diverse temporal dispositions made visible on the construction materials after the devastating Haiti Earthquake (Payton, 2021). Those contributions will greatly inspire the analytical lens of this research as temporal politics of recurrent earthquakes in Turkey is simultaneously informed by the tonalities of anticipation and social memory, challenging the linear chronological temporality or an understanding of disasters as exceptional destructive events situated outside of the everyday.

All in all, critical disaster studies have been making important theoretical contributions to politicize disasters, without reducing them into a canvas for policy implementation or representing them as destructive events isolated from the everyday. This intervention calls for new ways to reflect on disaster knowledge, going beyond the technocratic solutionism and exceptionalizing tendencies. The spatio-temporal plane of everyday as well as the truth-claims of non-expert voices have ordering functions in producing disaster preparedness pedagogies. Those go often unnoticed due to the limited engagement of the existing works in Turkey with

the processes underlying knowledge production in disaster contexts as they put disproportionate emphasis on the content as an isolated output. Therefore, this work's theoretical sensibility on space-timings of disaster knowledge necessitates new methodological choices to address the ways in which it takes shape through seemingly mundane processes.

2.3 On methodology

The extensive devastation in the aftermath of Turkey-Syria Earthquake revealed the ineptitude of emergency management efforts, creating an atmosphere of distrust to governmental institutions and rescue professionals they employ. Their command on disasters is being constantly called into question by multiple actors with different positionalities, raising concerns ranging from the lack of merit *(tr: liyakat)* or expertise to occupy positions related to disaster response, to their failure to adopt the latest approaches and technologies of disaster management/preparedness. On the other hand, search and rescue teams are an indispensable part of an almost universal disaster iconography where they are represented as heroic actors, giving a helping hand to those in need. Search and rescue teams exist in a dual way in this contentious context: Both as signifiers of heroic action and selflessness, and manifestations of institutional decadence. But beyond their dominant representations and institutional identities; who are these people, how do they make sense of disasters, and how do they get prepared for disasters both as trained professionals and residents of Istanbul? All these questions necessitate a new spatio-temporal lens to study disasters that can handle the tension between everyday rhythms of dwelling and disasters' perceived distance from the notion of normalcy. Ethnography is arguably one of the best

methodological approaches to navigate this pseudo duality, for many reasons that will now be elaborated.

2.3.1 Methodological prospects of ethnography in studying disasters

How can one ethnographically study a disaster yet-to-come? Perhaps the first option that comes to mind is to engage in the activities of a group involved in disaster preparedness procedures as a social researcher. This is exactly what I have done in this research by ethnographically observing a rescue team in-the-making, who seek to obtain official accreditation approved by the Turkish state, to be professionally relevant and called for in the event of a future disaster. There has been a notable body of research with a similar focus, as many ethnographers have observed groups, organizations, or communities with similar concerns before. For instance, Chika Watanabe (2021) conducts an ethnographic study on Chile and Japan's primary schools to observe how school children are taught skills for surviving an imaginary/anticipated disaster through interactive play. Watanabe concluded that, through the very form of what she calls "attentive play", the state buys time to tentatively channel its responsibility to individual residents. However, she also mentions that the ambiguous relationship of game with reality as a performative field of "as-if"s, exceeds the ideological effects of disaster education by opening new possibilities for imagination and negotiation. Through the power of ethnography, Watanabe was able to challenge the conventional understandings of disaster preparedness as a socially neutral transmission of a pre-given set of information. She also highlighted the everyday manifestations of apocalyptic imagery, by showing in what ways disastrous futures can shape social life in present. Another crucial contribution of Watanabe's research, and its ethnographic sensibility, is its ability to

show the fissures of governance technologies in fashioning fully compliant subjects. No matter how intimate or invasive the logics of emergency might become, they often fail to fully subsume "complex, critical and even contradictory individuals that it attempts to enroll in the safety ritual" (Simmons, 2003: 89).

Another inspiring ethnographic account on anticipated disasters is Michael Mills' (2021) work where he observed "doomsday prepping" rituals among residents of the United States, centered on storing water, food, or weapons. Mills highlights that doomsday preppers are not motivated by an actual apocalyptic threat with precision and certainty. Their actions rather seem to be driven by a precautionary attitude towards daily, recurrent, and small non-apocalyptic threats, as well as their uncertain anxieties around mostly speculative media content around disaster risks. This work challenges the existing idea that communal efforts of prepping are exercised in the presence of an actual threat, thus problematizing disasters' event status. Here, disasters emerge firstly as a product of the interplay between micro-level social interactions and larger structures of disaster risk communication in the form of speculative forecast. A sober ethnographic lens here gifts the researcher with the ability to move beyond the assumption that disasters are macro-scale events having adverse effects on the daily lives of the individuals. Here we see that disasters are not given but they are made by mobilizing diverse affective states such as anxiety, hope and fear which are harder to understand through methodologies relying on representational frameworks.

In both examples, we see that an ethnographic perspective opens up new possibilities to make sense of disasters, in parallel with the aforementioned theoretical interventions of critical disasters studies. First, ethnography addresses "how diverse temporal rhythms of disasters and cultural notions of time influence

understandings of and responses to disasters" (Sorensen & Albris, 2016, p. 66). Past earthquakes in Turkey often figure in the discussions of the expected Istanbul Earthquake among residents, not only as an object lesson in a linear temporal plane but as an integral part of the present daily life starting to resemble a slow and elongated rehearsal for the apocalypse. The lived experiences of destruction in other geographies turn into a possible event for the inhabitants of Istanbul, conflating past, present and future into the ambiguous temporal terrain of tectonic plates that could break at any minute, but also possibly never. Secondly, no other methodological approach takes lived and on-the-ground experiences more seriously than ethnography. It is one thing to treat those first-hand experiences as mere source of data to consider in reflecting on the macro-level. But what ethnography does is to show how those seemingly mundane interactions are constitutive of the processes through which larger social structures and categories of thought take shape. Therefore, it can produce critical outputs to revisit the monopoly of hegemonic disaster pedagogies, as well as their underlying assumptions about disasters, by showing how people, on a daily basis, engage with, challenge, and eventually transform those. Small but transformative social interactions concerning disaster knowledge cannot be grasped solely by relying on representational frameworks, for instance, the content analysis of disaster education modules. Besides, people's constant interaction with human and non-human bodies, including their material geographies and objects, creates an affective economy (Ahmed, 2004) around lived and possible losses in disaster contexts. Had I not been involved in an ethnographic inquiry, I could not have observed my informants', and my own, temporal, and affective entanglements with diverse disasterscapes of Turkey.

2.3.2 SAP[6]

Sosyal Afet Platformu (SAP, *en. Social Platform for Disasters*) is a non-governmental organization aiming at raising social awareness and provide humanitarian aid and rescue in the event of disasters in Turkey. The organization is co-founded by people from varying areas of expertise including professional search and rescue, public health, psychological support, architecture, survival and self-defense, security, as well as disaster communication. There are already a couple of officially recognized search and rescue teams affiliated with SAP, who specialize on urban and lowland search and rescue. There are also two prospective USAR teams within the organization who have been receiving accreditation training. My research primarily focuses on the experiences of one of the latter teams who are currently at the second stage of their three-staged accreditation training. Although members of this team were my main informants, I had a chance to encounter various groups from other disaster initiatives and engaged with people from different professional backgrounds apart from USAR professionals. I will use pseudonyms, including SAP, throughout this work to protect the identity of my informants. Other details that I bring up in the discussions are adjusted to stay relevant to the context of this research without jeopardizing their privacy.

The team I ethnographically explored has come together under the leadership of one of the founding members of SAP (Kerim), who is a professional search and rescuer, and an instructor. Kerim jointly works with other rescue organizations and trains USAR teams of a district municipality in Istanbul. Although many of the team members had already known Kerim thanks to his strong networks in search and rescue, the team as such has come into being in the aftermath of the Turkey-Syria

[6] The name of the organization is altered to ensure the confidentiality of the participants.

Earthquake. Most of the group were present in Iskenderun to join the rescue efforts along with Kerim, and upon their return they decided to proceed with the process of accreditation to become an officially recognized USAR team. Most of the team consists of volunteers, but some members already have professional expertise on disaster response including health workers, retired military staff, and therapists. Regardless of their varying levels of command, all team members display a strong motivation to become an accredited rescue staff.

I first sent an e-mail to Kerim to express my interest in the activities of SAP, especially pertaining to search and rescue, and he generously invited me to one of their training sessions with a prospective rescue team. Currently, they are on their second stage of accreditation as a mid-level USAR team, as designated in the AFAD accreditation guideline[7]. The team is comprised of more than 50 members, noticeably above the official limit of 38, as some of them cannot participate all training sessions due to their job schedule or other occupations, thus they are treated as backup members in case some of the main members quit the team in the process. The team regularly comes together for finishing online and face-to-face education modules on topics related to different kinds of disasters to qualify for certification. They also engage in intense practical training using different kinds of material and technologies ranging from drilling tools to first-aid equipment. Most of the face-to-face training sessions were on first-aid, as my fieldwork intersected that period in the team's accreditation process. But Kerim often organized additional gatherings to introduce new equipment or to discuss other issues such as post-disaster security or effective communication among USAR team members in the event of emergencies. Since not everyone can regularly attend face-to-face sessions, we would usually be

[7] https://akreditasyon.afad.gov.tr/upload/Node/41966/files/Kentsel_Arama_Kurtarma_Kilavuzu.pdf

10 to 15 people in a room for in-person gatherings. Online sessions generally hosted a lot more participants but were not exclusive to the rescue team in question. Besides, they were designed as lectures, leaving little room for participants to make contributions. As I had very limited engagement with the participants during the online meetings, they will be used as supplementary data in this work.

I also conducted in-depth interviews lasting around 45 to 90 minutes with six members of the team[8] whom I see the most regularly, to have a better grasp of their attitudes towards the expected Istanbul Earthquake in relation to their emerging professional identity. The questions I asked revolved around topics ranging from their living conditions as residents of Istanbul, to how they plan to mobilize their acquired expertise for the upcoming earthquake. I refrained from asking specific questions about their field experiences in post-earthquake Iskenderun, because very little time has passed since the Turkey-Syria Earthquake took place, and many members were expressing that they were in a kind of adaptation or recovery process, due to the amount of suffering they had witnessed there. Moreover, I wanted to observe how past and future disasters come together in their training and daily discussions naturally, rather than forcefully creating those associations myself by bringing Iskenderun, or any other past earthquake experience, into our interviews about the expected Istanbul Earthquake. Nevertheless, nearly all my interviews dissolved into a chat about previous fieldwork experiences of my informants' and I tried my best to lend an empathetic ear without being avoidant, but not losing touch with the ethical considerations of my research.

Overall, the team thankfully welcomed me as a researcher in their social circle and we gathered weekly for four months, except a couple of weeks, between

[8] See Appendix B for general information on the interviewees

December 2023 and April 2024. Our first encounter was during a session on evacuation procedures, where I joined them in their meeting place in Şişli and Kerim introduced me to the rest of the team.

> Kerim: Welcome all. Today we welcome a new friend here. This is Zeynep. She will join us today and possibly in the upcoming weeks. She is conducting a research at Boğaziçi University on the [expected] Istanbul Earthquake. Zeynep would you like to introduce yourself in more detail?
>
> Zeynep*:* Hello everyone. I am a research assistant at Boğaziçi University, Sociology Department. I am writing my thesis on the expected Istanbul Earthquake and I am here for my fieldwork now.
>
> Baran (interrupts): What exactly will your thesis be about? Which aspect of the Istanbul Earthquake?
>
> Zeynep: It will study how professional disaster knowledge is produced through daily exchanges among rescue staff.
>
> Baran: How do you think it is produced?
>
> Zeynep: Honestly, I don't know and that's why I'm here. I have my opinions, but I hope I will have a clearer picture after engaging with all of you.
>
> Baran: Okay. We will do our best to show you the reality of disaster. My wife works in AFAD and I can connect you to her if you wish. We are in touch with other disaster organizations as well. Just tell us and we will provide. (personal communication, APPENDIX A.1)

Baran's first question had a genuine element of curiosity while the second one was a direct confrontation stated in a civil manner. I was appalled to say the least, as I had prepared my own set of questions beforehand, but I was not expecting to be interrogated in return. This was what exactly Italian historian Alessandro Portelli had encountered with one of his informants during his research on Italian dialects. The moment they sat together, his interviewee asked Portelli "Well, what shall we talk about?" (Portelli, 1991, p. 29). Portelli got stumped. That momentary freeze compelled him to write a whole chapter on methodology in which he describes research "as an experiment in equality" where the roles of "'the observer' and 'the observed' are more fluid than it appears at first glance" (Portelli, 1991: 31). I was

there to observe but not recognizing that I was also going to be observed. Of course, I was excited to engage with a group that I was not familiar with, but I was not self-conscious about how I presented myself or about their first impressions of me. Later, I would find out that they had thought I was quite clueless about disasters, or at least I seemed so. For them, the language I used was euphemistic, sterilized, and abstract; far from acknowledging the "realities of disasters". But they are now convinced that SAP has transformed me, and they are correct. Not because I no longer rely on the social sciences lexicon that I often lavishly use, but because I consistently found myself in situations that challenged their and my own idea of a social researcher.

Establishing some kind of mutuality with my informants was my biggest concern at the beginning as I was having trouble to integrate myself to the rest of the group. They were more than welcoming, frequently asked questions and initiated conversations, and often stated, albeit jokingly, it was *as if* I was one among their rescue team.[9] Yet, I still felt the distance as they were strongly aware of how my researcher status would eventually turn everything that they tell into a source of data. For most of them, this was ultimately desirable as they regarded this research as an opportunity to make their voices heard by larger audiences and their efforts more visible. Although I tried my best to seize that opportunity throughout my thesis, I was still actively seeking for ways to overcome that kind of a dynamic as my goal was to engage with the team more intimately. As an early career researcher who has had very little fieldwork experience, I opted out for numerous strategies to form stronger bonds with my informants. Acting friendly, oversharing, forcefully creating moments of relatability, or trivializing my research were among those initial, and arguably humiliating, efforts to push myself into their social circle. The real

[9] "Takıma hoşgeldin akademisyen hanım" (*Welcome to the team Ms. Researcher*),"Bu gidişle seni de arama-kurtarmacı yapacağız" (*We will make a search and rescuer out of you yet*),

ethnographic experience for me started when I indulged myself into and felt genuinely curious of the tasks they were dealing with, rather than observing how they were undertaking them.

Thanks to the encouragement of Kerim, not only I actively joined the team in the lectures and events but also performed required exercises, got into exams with the rest of the group, and even got certified on first aid before finishing my thesis. I found myself in a completely different power setting as I got subjected further into the strict chain of command exercised by Kerim, that he proudly associates with the functioning of military units. Not only my occasional mistakes while doing certain activities were pointed out and corrected, but the team put quite an effort on me to cultivate required personality traits and attitudes deemed necessary to become a successful rescuer. On the other hand, my status as a social researcher proved to be a valuable asset for Kerim and the rest of the team, as they invited me to their working group on international projects. I enthusiastically agreed to join them in that endeavor and now we have a truly collaborative common agenda apart from my fieldwork. Therefore, as much as I benefit from my ethnographic observations on this prospective rescue team, I will also frequently use auto-ethnographic moments in my further discussions. Moreover, although I will usually refer the group consisting of my informants as "the team", I acknowledge that the latter is not a homogenous body. At times positioning them as distinct persons or addressing them as a collective will provide different opportunities for my research, as I will have a chance to reflect on the hierarchies, differences, and disagreements between the team members while sustaining my focus on a collectively pursued professional enterprise on disasters.

The tasks that I performed within the group range from highly technical ones such as using drilling tools to break the debris in a post-earthquake simulation, to the mundane ones we undertook alternately, such as cleaning up the room or bringing food to sustain our learning environment. I also had a chance to attend larger events as part of this team including meetups between different governmental and civil search and rescue staff and an earthquake and fire drills organized by a district municipality. Soon after I started to regularly attend the meetings and do my fair share to contribute to their efforts, the team started to invite me to their social events such as meeting up for breakfast or catching up a drink after an exhausting day. Not only did I make new friends but also I was able to better understand the daily context of a rescue team in the making which proved to extend beyond our lectures and practical training. To observe how they engage in heated debates of Istanbul's seismic risks, seeing the tensions between different members of the group, learning about their personal backgrounds in a much more informal setting was inspiring to say the least. The team members reflected on the Istanbul Earthquake in many ways and settings, including their personal traumas of past earthquakes, their emerging professional identity as rescue staff, and their seismic anxieties as residents of Istanbul. As my fieldwork progressed further, I was able to identify the patterns and recurring themes that came up within this whirlwind experience which will constitute the fieldwork discussion in the upcoming sections.

CHAPTER 3

NEGOTIATING DISASTER KNOWLEDGE: PROSPECTIVE PROFESSIONALS AND POTENTIAL SURVIVORS

3.1 Moving beyond the expert-victim polarity

> Which district are you residing in?
>
> Ortaköy.
>
> Ah we were the ones mapping the parks in Ortaköy. I know the district *like the palm of my hand*. Tell me on which street your house is.
>
> X street.
>
> Right beside the Y park?
>
> Yes.
>
> You know there is Z Architecture just behind the park. And W Hotel at the beginning of the street. (personal communication, Appendix A.2)

This was a dialogue between me and an urban planner working in Istanbul Municipality whom I met during an earthquake drill. He was explaining the ongoing micro-regionalization project of the municipality to me, as they now give utmost importance to earthquake risk assessment in Istanbul and have been revisiting the Istanbul Earthquake Master Plan[10]. They were compartmentalizing the city into different risk regions to create action plans initiated in prioritized areas. He was among the ones mapping the parks in the Ortaköy district that are designated as muster areas in the event of an emergency. When I told him that I reside in Ortaköy, he asked me on which street my house is, then dropped the name of the nearest park within a second. Then he went on describing surroundings of the park in more detail.

[10] The Istanbul Earthquake Master Plan was developed by Istanbul Technical University (ITU), Yıldız Technical University (YTU), Boğaziçi University (BU), and Middle East Technical University (METU) in the aftermath of 1999 Marmara Earthquake and was released to the public in August 2003. (Göksu, 2008, p. 89)

I felt seen and known in a way that made me uncomfortable. It was not because I was exposed but because he was extremely confident in his knowledge on Ortaköy although he resides in a different district. He used the Turkish idiom “Avcumun içi gibi biliyorum”, to emphasize the extent to which he was familiar to Ortaköy that, it was as if the district had become one of his bodily extensions.

After all, he was an expert, I was a local. While he could proudly flaunt his birds-eye perspective of the city uttering the names of buildings I have never heard of, I could only calculate an escape route to the said park going through narrow and dense streets of my neighborhood. I experience my spatial surroundings in human scale and through immediate sensory input rather than mediating it through abstractions and representations. Clearly, if I claim to know my neighborhood, it is a different kind of claim than his. His truth claims were universal, scientific, abstract, whereas mine were, experiential, and tangible. The problematization of this kind of duality has been present, in many forms, in disaster studies scholarship since the 1980s especially given the increasing uncertainty triggered by global environmental problems with their local manifestations, that techno-scientific accounts falling short of addressing (Lin & Chang, 2020). Top-down versus bottom-up disaster risk management, scientific versus experiential truth claims, technocratic versus participatory solutions, are a few among many polarities that enabled those critical accounts to challenge existing knowledge regimes (Lin & Chang, 2020).

While formulating the research questions and central problematique of this thesis regarding the production of disaster knowledge, I have emphasized the constitutive role of “local knowledges”, “lived and on-the-ground experiences”, and “lay epistemologies”. All those concepts are critical of what is called “technocratic solutionism” (Remes & Horowitz, 2021, p. 3) exclusively privileging techno-

scientific truth claims in shaping disaster knowledge. The prospects of this position in making sense of and addressing disasters have already been elaborated in light of the theoretical interventions of critical disaster scholars discussed in the previous chapter. Now let me briefly reflect on the caveats and possible pitfalls of the assumed binary between local and techno-scientific accounts to clarify the conceptual boundaries guiding this chapter.

In their statement, White et. al. acknowledged that, in the context of disasters, we are "knowing better but losing even more" (2001, p. 81). Despite the technological advances in early warning systems and disaster mitigation strategies, the losses induced by hazards have been continuously increasing. Why is it so? "Is nature getting more hazardous or is society becoming more vulnerable?" (Weichselgartner & Pigeon, 2015, p. 107) Those questions necessitate scrutinizing the relationship between the existing disaster knowledge and its expected culmination into effective risk reduction or recovery tools. Disaster scholars have differing views on the causes of this contradiction: (1) The available knowledge might still be flawed due to the areas of ignorance among experts. (2) The available knowledge is not used effectively; (3) although the knowledge is used effectively, it takes a long time to observe its effects; (Weichselgartner & Pigeon, 2015; White, et. al. 2001) (4) there is a lack of communication between scientific and local knowledges; (5) there is a lack of cooperation among various stakeholders (Lin & Chang; 2020); (6) there is strong informational uncertainty among institutional knowledge sources (Button, 2010). All those concerns addressing the disrupted knowledge landscape in the context of disasters, point to what Scott-Parrish (2021) calls a "disaster gap" where official and experiential ways of knowing are contained into separate discursive bubbles.

Opening a dialogue between those two fields of knowledge has been the focus of recent disaster research. For instance, Raymond et. al. (2009) proposes the concept of "hybrid knowledge" to seek ways to create a new kind of disaster knowledge at the interstices of the external and local, which is generated through social learning and integration. With a similar concern, Lin and Chang (2020) advocate for an "involuted" disaster knowledge, where local knowledge is redefined not as a closed system of knowledge resisting new contributions, but as a medium shaped through constant exchange with the external knowledges. There are also ongoing efforts to deconstruct the totalized epistemological categories by scrutinizing the nuances between facts, data, information, knowledge, and wisdom (Weichselgartner & Pigeon, 2015, p. 107), to bridge the gap between knowledge production and implementation processes in disaster contexts. From a more politicized perspective, Button (2010) analyzes the shortcomings of "sequestered knowledge" where the official sources attempt to create a false sense of certainty and reassurance during emergencies, just to be challenged by the first-hand testimonies, resulting in the dilution of their own scientific credibility.

Despite the notable contribution of these efforts to studies on disaster knowledge, most of the research emphasizing the importance of local disaster knowledge assumes a strict (potential) victim and expert polarity. In the majority of works, local knowledge merely refers to the coping strategies of immediate victims (Alam, 2006) and highlights the much-needed sensitivity to the everyday concerns of vulnerable communities. (Batterbury & Forsyth, 1999) Alternatively, local knowledge serves as a catchphrase to promote more inclusive and participatory disaster governance strategies by integrating local communities into decision-making processes (e.g. Allen, 2006; Dekens, 2007). However, disasters involve not only

various modes of knowledge but also a "multilogue of witnesses, including typically obscured witnesses" (Scott-Parrish, 2021, p. 137) who are hard to compartmentalize as "technocratic experts, on the one hand, and lay people afflicted by or especially vulnerable to disaster, on the other" (Scott-Parrish, 2021, p. 135). So, it is essential to consider how different groups with shifting positionalities and potential conflicts may become conscious of the riskscapes they collectively inhabit (Scott-Parrish, 2021).

For instance, Button (2010) observes the contestations between experts whose lives are directly affected by hazards and nonaffected ones. He finds out that disaster-affected experts, including nurses, physicians, scientists, attorneys, and technicians, often mobilize their lived experiences to challenge the assertions of other experts. In a way, they bridge the communicative separation between expert and affected communities, especially in contexts of increasing risk and uncertainty, where non-expert publics grow increasingly suspicious of the experts' scientific credibility. In some cases, due to the appalling contrasts between the official representations of disasters and the real toll they take on the everyday socio-material life, the affected experts become increasingly disenchanted with the rational culture in which their professional identities flourished (Button, 2010). Here, we see that disaster-affected experts occupy an ambiguous position between "problem solvers" and "problem laymen" (Clausen, 1992), opening up new possibilities to negotiate disaster knowledge.

I believe, doing a fieldwork with a rescue team with lived experience of disasters has provided me with a similar kind of an opportunity, in finding new ways to challenge so-called expert knowledge that might remain formulaic or hard to put into practice, especially in disastrous contexts characterized by sustained disaster

induced destruction, such as Turkey. But rather than remaining limited to a small group of people who unfortunately have been victimized by disasters, I will hopefully show that the team's multilayered testimony to the earthquake precipitated suffering is a constitutive part of the existing disaster pedagogy in Turkey, as well as the team's professional identity, rather than a mere source of disenchantment with certain bodies of knowledge. Nearly half of my informants have experienced an earthquake in the past and nearly all of them have participated in search and rescue efforts in a disaster-stricken region before. Most importantly, they are residents of Istanbul trying to minimize the future harm that may befall on them due to the anticipated earthquake.

> [Responding to my research topic] Wow, Istanbul Earthquake huh? Let me tell you, you are in the perfect place [to study this topic] Look at me, I was there during '99 Gölcük Earthquake, '99 Düzce Earthquake, 2011 Van Earthquake, İzmir Earthquake, Iskenderun… [after the Turkey-Syria Earthquake] I was there during all of them. You know, many of us went to Iskenderun. (Rüstem, personal communication, Appendix A.3)

Rüstem was juxtaposing earthquake after earthquake like a chronicler, but for the most recent ones he did not mention their date assuming that I was familiar with them due to my age. At first, I thought it was a showoff of expertise and experience to convince me to take the activities of the group seriously. Later I found out that he was present during Düzce Earthquake not as a rescuer but as a survivor.

> Why do you think I organized this training session? I do not even expect a compensation. As a resident of Istanbul, I want someone who is capable, hopefully you, to save me if something bad happens. I can just wish that you will come out safe [after the earthquake], first save your loved ones, then hopefully come for me. (Kerim, personal communication, Appendix A.4)

> I mean, I saw SAP for the first time at a fair. It was April, the Hatay Earthquake had just happened. Then with a leap of faith, I said, I will be a part of this, someone needs to do something. We see earthquake after earthquake. The situation in Istanbul is no different. We are trying our best to serve a purpose, but once the earthquake takes place in Istanbul, we are already a victim. Maybe if a few of us could come out safe, we might

> communicate on the group [Whatsapp] and do something. Otherwise, we are dependent on the outside. (Yağız, personal communication, Appendix A.5)

While reflecting on their motivation to engage in search and rescue, Kerim and Yaşar acknowledged that they are already a potential survivor. It is a disarming awareness that the expert knowledge circuit they throw themselves into would hardly come handy, especially when the extent of the destruction they anticipate will likely overtake their personal skills. Not being particular to them, the whole team displayed a similar tendency during my fieldwork where they both strongly invested in professionalization while actively recognizing the limits of expert knowledge. I suggest considering this founding tension not as a problem, but as a critical chance to observe how certain gaps, voids, displacements, contestations, and contradictions are constitutive of this emergent knowledge. In other words, distancing myself from the argument of perspectivism which takes contesting truth claims in disaster contexts as "an epistemic problem of having different perspectives" (Kayaalp & Arslan, 2022, p. 1579), in the following discussion, I aim to explore the functions of those conflictual positions in cultivating and asserting expertise and in crafting "domestic" disaster knowledge, respectively.

3.2 Figures of expertise

3.2.1 Certificates, uniforms, and equipment

Before engaging in fieldwork, I was hardly aware that a significant part of this experience would be devoted to following things rather than following people. A rescue team in the making is as much about collecting equipment, uniforms, and certificates as it is about the culmination of knowledge and expertise. This recognition than necessitates that I need to redirect my analytic gaze toward the materiality of social life (Miller, 2005), that is, how certain social differences and

hierarchies are mediated, negotiated, and reproduced through objects. Some of those objects are a medium through which "a legally valid value with respect to culture" (Bourdieu, 1983, p. 246) is established. The process towards official accreditation requires the circulation and appropriation of those credentials of professionalism (Collins et. al. 2019), generally in the form of academic or professional certification, that are recognized by state institutions. These processes endow rescuers with an authorization to intervene in the event of emergencies in contrast to bystanders who may try to act and save others, without the necessary qualifications.

> Look, you show this ID card and say, "I am a first-aid professional. Please move away the injured [person]. Let them breathe". Sometimes, the relatives of the victim give us a hard time, they want to intervene themselves. Once they see the card, they stop bothering us. Also you can keep away the curious ones. God forbid, something bad can happen, the injured might *go Ex,*[11] [die]. We don't want you to get in trouble. (first-aid instructor, during lecture, personal communication, Appendix A.6)

The certification processes usually take place through consecutive rounds of intensive training and examination, culminating in different kinds of ID cards and online authorized documents on e-*Devlet*[12]. Lectures and exams are both theoretical and practical, but heightened scrutiny is put on the latter by instructors and examiners. Written examination takes place in a classroom setting where the team answers multiple choice questions while an authorized person supervises the exam. Apart from highly specialized areas such as first-aid, the team considers written

[11] "To go Ex" (Tr. Ex olmak) is a widely used term among medical professionals in Turkey referring to death, deriving from the Latin phrase "excitus letalis" which means "deadly exit" in English. It is worth to mention that nearly all of the team frequently uses this term, even in non-medical contexts, arguably in order to cultivate a sense of proximity to the exclusive social chamber of medical experts. This usage especially becomes apparent while reflecting on their observations during their field experiences. "O kadar uğraştık ama kadıncağız ex oldu", "Ortalığı görmeniz lazım her yer ex dolu", "Hiçbir şeyi yoktu bir saat içinde Ex oldu adam" (en: "We tried so hard but poor woman went Ex," "You had to see it, every inch was full of Exs", "He was doing just fine and then went Ex in an hour." However, they abandon this medical jargon while referring to people they know in person.

[12] Turkish government's online citizen portal.

exams as a piece of cake. They put little effort in memorizing details and largely proceed through common sense and general knowledge.

Practical training and examination, on the other hand, are much more demanding. A typical training on a given subject, say debris examination, takes between three to four full days, nearing 30 hours to complete. If the subject can be accommodated in a classroom-like environment, the team meets at SAP's place in Şişli or at a park in Ulus. If the context of the training requires a different setting, for example search and rescue in the wilderness, it turns into a whole event often including camping and group travel. Those events are covered through team members' monthly contributions *(Tr: aidat)* and with the help of Kerim's strong personal networks within rescue teams of AFAD and district municipalities. During a typical practical examination, an authorized person, usually appointed by the Turkish Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Education, is there to observe but rarely interferes. The instructor is the one who guides the students, ask questions and demands tasks to be performed. If the supervisor wants to assess in more depth, they demand additional details or oral reflection on the task. This specific exam structure generates different circuits of approval with students trying to impress their instructors, and the latter acknowledges that their teaching skills are also tested by the external supervisor. This further complicates the team's relationship with the state since SAP constitutes itself as separate from the state institutions but still addresses them through certification engendering official or more intricate circuits of approval.

While displays of certification serve to attest to competence on a given subject based on standardized official criteria, they also create a sense of belonging among bearers based on the exclusivity of the expertise. Uniforms function in a similar way by simultaneously creating exclusion and inclusion. Ranging from

official uniforms to codified civility mostly visible in workplace dress codes (Craik, 2005); uniforms reproduce social clustering and stratification. However, this hardly means that social groups wear uniforms uniformly (Craik, 2005) as heterogenous social positions that people occupy are at odds with the homogenizing tendencies of uniforms. Moreover, within the same group of uniforms, there are also ongoing hierarchies (Bourdieu, 1983). Military uniforms, for instance, exhibit clear markers of hierarchical ranking between different groups within the military. When it comes to the uniforms of search and rescue teams in Turkey, I can comfortably state that the tokens of professionalism reside in their practical use value rather than symbolic hallmarks of authority.

A search and rescue uniform is basically an outdoor outfit usually manufactured from polyester fabric, with the team member's name and blood type embroidered on it. Although polyester as a clothing material is infamous for retaining moisture and odor, it is more durable against tearing and puncturing. This is crucial in search and rescue circumstances, which usually involve sharp broken objects that might cause injury and other health risks like infections. On the other hand, rescuers spend long hours, even days, without changing clothes while in the field, making them prone to develop rashes and fungus. This is why, most of the professional search and rescue clothing involve two or three inner layers to provide insulation and circulation of air in alignment with the expected heat and humidity conditions of the field. The clothing items are also equipped with accessories including knee and elbow pads, protective gloves, work-safe shoes, and hard hats. The color and highlights of the overall outfit depend on whether the team member needs to be easily identifiable or camouflaged. Although those are the essential components of search and rescue wear, they vary greatly in quality and price, as well as in their

functionality. As those features are unlikely to be noticed by outer-group publics who are not familiar to search and rescue hubs, I had mostly observed the negotiations over uniforms during events that hosted multiple search and rescue teams.

> Those who have uniforms, wear them. Those who have not must wear an outdoor outfit and thick sole boots. I DO NOT WANT TO SEE ANY JEANS AND SNEAKERS, OR ELSE. If you do not have an outdoor fit, you can wear a black tracksuit. (excerpt from a checklist Kerim shared with the group before a wildfire drill, emphasis original, Appendix A.7)

I already had reservations about attending this event but when I saw Kerim's strong warning about outfits I decided just not to go. All I had was a cargo pant in military green that could remotely look like an outdoor outfit, but I was not willing to negotiate its color with Kerim after such a clear warning. I thought he must have witnessed a dangerous situation before with one of the participants in such an event. As the leader claiming responsibility for the whole team, it would be best if no one gets injured or is put in any kind of risk due to inappropriate clothing. Why should the tracksuit color be black then? I thought, may be Kerim was trying to convey a strong sense of discipline to the rest of the team.

> Do not answer to the pressing questions, if any, from other teams ang NGOs, like "can you perform this, do you have that certificate" etc. Just say, "You can ask our leader Kerim (*Kerim Başkan*). We are advised to not speak about our internal affairs". (end of the same checklist, Appendix A.7)

Later, I found out that although he often reflects on those concerns in his practice, for this specific event, underlying this insistent warning was an unpleasant encounter Kerim had had with another rescue professional during a previous event. Namely, a team member under Kerim's leadership once attended a drill with jeans and white sneakers. A member of another very well-funded rescue team started to grumble about the odd one out, using expressions like "Who would come to a drill dressed like that?". Kerim later found out that he kept gossiping about Kerim's teams' unprofessionalism by reciting this example. So, that day, as much he wanted his team

to be safe, he also wanted them to blend into this environment of visible expertise and not jeopardize his credibility as an instructor/team leader.

> When you see him, you'd think he runs the place. Walking all proudly, checking around. Looking like a disco ball with all shimmers and shine [of his equipments]. He wore the equipment all day just to use them healf-heartedly for fifteen minutes. Are you here to show-off or what? We are all here for the same reason. They are always like this; they don't even interact with others in the field. They communicate to eachother on the radio even when they are apart. They are all snobs. (Aslı, personal communication, Appendix A.8)

Aslı was giving me a heads up to manage my expectations before an event where we were heading to a joint training session that involved other rescue teams. One of them was particularly well-funded, thus well-equipped, and its members were strongly aware of the allure of their belongings in the eyes of other rescue teams. While describing this seemingly cocky character, Aslı likened him to a disco ball, reimagining his uniform as a kind of costume. While uniforms "ask to be taken serious" (Fussel, 2002, p. 3) with suggestions of expertise, courage, and obedience; costumes represent "a lack of concern with the standards of one's group" (Joseph & Alex, 1972, p. 719). When faced with an exclusionary attitude from people that Aslı situates herself within the same professional group, she recontextualizes this exclusion by stripping visible cues of professionalism, such as state-of-the-art equipment and clothing, from their authorizing properties. Here we see that uniforms and equipment can work in counterintuitive ways: While uniforms are generally treated as totemic entities with self-evident claims to authority; in the context of search and rescue hubs, they often attain this power through their practical properties. On the other hand, while we tend to consider equipment as a mere practical technology, they can ooze "shimmer and shine", signifying higher level of expertise and command within specific social circles, but also possibly lose their practical value as objects.





Figure 1 & 2. Team members posing behind their equipment (faces cropped, photo taken by another member of the group)

Before each big event, the group took a photograph posing behind all the equipment they brought to the field including first-aid kits, hard hats, tents, ropes, as well as cutting and drilling tools (Fig. 1&2). I have cropped the faces due to confidentiality, but the original photo includes gazes lingering on the items and proud smiles. An accredited rescue team, no matter which level, should possess their own equipment; however, a standard inventory is not delineated in AFAD's USAR Accreditation Guideline. Accordingly, even in the relatively short period of four months that I spent

together with this team, I periodically witnessed a new addition to the inventory, ranging from small objects to bigger technologies necessitating acquiring new kinds of skills. A more advanced technology engendered in a new search and rescue tool does not automatically translate into increased expertise, unless the group puts effort to have a better command of said technology. Kerim sometimes opens sessions by introducing a new equipment and he reflects on through which interactions he could acquire it.

> Normally it goes like this. Let me show you. [rips off the protective layer of a standard plaster] Look, it got stuck to my medical glove. How can one even apply it to the patient? And considering my surroundings might be dirty [switches to the new plaster] But this… You are lucky, I am disposing one just for you. You press it on the sides like this and it becomes ready to be applied on its own. Once you apply it to the patient, you pull the rest of the protective sheet. It is easy to apply without all this hassle. […] Don't get fooled by how simple it looks, one box used to cost around 200 Turkish liras in 2019. Though, a colleague gave me those for free during our fieldwork in Germany. Once I added it to my first-aid kit, the first thing I did was to show it to the medical suppliers I know here. They said, this kind had yet to arrive in their inventory. It is my favorite item now. Those came especially handy while I was in Iskenderun [after the Turkey-Syria Earthquake]. (Kerim introducing a new plaster, personal communication, Appendix, A.9)

Culmination of skills is a process guided by the entanglements of our bodies and objects. No matter how small or mundane the task in question is, it requires us to see our bodies and its surroundings under a new light, and heightens our awareness of our corporeality that we often experience in a state of indifference (Ingold, 2000). But apart from being functionalized in a momentary performance serving a specific purpose, objects, "like persons, have social lives" of their own. (Appadurai, 1986: 3). They travel across time and space, encounter many actors, bear their marks, and shape them in turn. Here, directing our attention to, borrowing the term from Kopytoff (1986), an "object biography" of a plaster may help us to trace the convolutions of expertise between Kerim, his German colleagues, medical suppliers, his students, and survivors. In such a complex environment where even a plaster can

become a token of expertise to be negotiated, I was not expecting to find a consensual ground on which team or organization held the most advanced practical tools, expert knowledge, highest discipline, and the best attitude. But I was wrong.

3.2.3 Footsteps of the military

An evening at Ulus. We were at the park that we usually met, with another group affiliated with Ziyaretçiler *(en: Visitors),* a search and rescue society initially organized under SAP but have recently gone independent. We were gathered to have dinner together and discuss how those two rescue teams can stay in contact in meaningful ways. Many ideas emerged, including creating a new schedule to accelerate the progress of both groups. To make a reference to dedication, the team leader of Ziyaretçiler asked: "What is the best search and rescue team in Turkey?". From the tone of his voice, one could understand that it was rather a rhetorical question. A couple of people simultaneously said "JAK" (Jandarma Arama Kurtarma, en: Gendarme Search and Rescue). They were not guessing; they were just reciting what is already known to keep the conversation going.

I find "footsteps" a good metaphorical device to describe my informants' relationship to the military, both as an institution comprised of real people and things, and as a ghostly figure that could only be traced through its apparitions. First, the team was dedicated to follow the footsteps of the military, especially in terms of organization, strong discipline, and strict adherence to the chain of command. Although the team is quite heterogenous in their political/ideological positions, even the ones that proudly associate themselves with an anti-militaristic worldview acknowledged the need of a military-like organizational structure and attitude in the context of search and rescue. Many members regularly made passing references to

the full day rescue trainings (9-5 eğitim) in military schools that mostly take place in dire conditions to challenge trainees, when they see the energy of the team dwindling. They also openly associate the expected personality traits of a successful rescuer with that of military staff, as those should “refrain from asking many questions”, “leave their personal egos aside and learn to take orders”, “try not to be overly creative”, “act quickly in urgent situations”, “be resilient in emotionally challenging conditions”, “not be picky over given tasks”, and “not display in-group favoritism” and “act in coordination with other team members”.

One of the team members (Nihat) is a retired naval officer who decided to proceed as a search and rescuer after finishing his duty in the military. He holds a quite ambiguous position within the group, as Kerim makes an exception for him and does not attempt to exert his authority as the team leader over him. This dynamic is not openly stated but well known to the rest of the group through Kerim’s open acts of reverence towards Nihat. For instance, Kerim only allows him to interrupt during sessions without asking first, and does not attempt to challenge any of his contributions. He also frequently appeals to the expertise of Nihat during lectures by actively inviting him to reflect on a given issue. The rest of the group also acknowledges Nihat as an authority figure. They ask their questions to him if Kerim is not present and watch the language they use around him out of respect. Therefore, to some degree, the military experience that Nihat had results in the negotiation of the hierarchies among the team.

Apart from the collectively acclaimed authority of Nihat, the expertise and experiences of military personnel outside the team have also been of great interest to the group. Kerim regularly invites his acquaintances from the military to online sessions to seek guidance on topics related to terror events and post-disaster security.

The talks generally spark great excitement among the group although they were held late in the evening at 10 p.m. The session that held the most participants involved a presentation by a former SAT commando (Sualtı Taarruz, en: Underwater Offence), speaking volumes about the group's curiosity about the military institutions and their investment to military expertise. In the instances where the guest is a military officer, the online sessions, that were initially designed as lectures, have quickly turned into heated Q&A sessions where participants tried to catch a glimpse of what real-life military practice looks like, especially in circumstances that they deem exceptional.

The military appears in other ways in the team's training sessions, as Kerim and other instructors often incorporate military jargon into their sessions to describe a particular situation or practice in clearer terms. For instance, while referring to the evacuation procedure where the responsible family member leads the rest of the family out by checking around if there is any possible danger, one instructor likened the father figure to a "mayın eşeği", a donkey that is used to spot mines. On a similar note, one trainer described the ideal position to take to protect oneself from harm during terror events, by using the term "sütre arkasına mevzilenin" referring to how soldiers position themselves behind objects for cover. The daily usage of those terms is strictly gendered, as women are not subjected to mandatory conscription, thus less familiar with those terms. The lecturers were aware that they were exclusively addressing to a male audience in those moments, thus they often used preambles such as "gentlemen will know" or "ladies might not be familiar" to set the scene.[13] As seen, the circulation of military masculinities (Woodward, 2003) remain neither limited to military institutions nor to the discussions directly revolving around the military.

[13] "*erkek arkadaşlar bilir", "beyler bilir", "bayanlar biraz yabancı kalacak ama"*

While the military, as an organizational structure, epitomized command and expertise for the team, noticeable in their constant remarks on and examples of the said expertise, the team mainly relied on word of mouth rather than first-hand testimony to formulate their understanding of this expertise, arguably due to the black-box status (Az, 2014) of military institutions affiliated to TSK (Turkish Armed Forces). The exception to this is lived experiences of male members during their compulsory military service. Consequently, the team's insights on the military are largely based on what they hear from a friend of a friend, a relative in military school, or Kerim reflecting on his on-field encounters with military personnel. I noted, surprisingly, that the more they engaged with military staff through the sessions held in SAP, the more speculative their discussions about the existing equipment and practices within TSK have become.

A speculative object that is worth to mention here is a submarine system using pressure to break large rocks to make its way underwater, that supposedly belongs to the Turkish navy. The equipment is believed to be stored nearby Iskenderun Harbor, and can be used for debris removal, but out of use for various reasons. Two team members who mobilize this claim believe that either the equipment is timeworn, or there is no one in the Turkish navy capable of commanding it. The rest of the team finds this claim overly conspiratorial or outright absurd. Yet it might be good to think about how this theme mobilizes issues of competence, failure, and who bears the responsibility in post-disaster contexts. In a similar vein, the most frequently raised speculative theme among the group regarding the Turkish military, is the absence of TSK forces in Hatay, the southernmost city of Turkey, during the immediate aftermath of the Turkey-Syria earthquake, a period that is deemed the most critical to access potential survivors. Unlike their shared

fascination with the military as an epitome of expertise, it is almost impossible to find any consensual ground among my informants regarding this topic that also stirred hot debates in the mainstream Turkish media[14]. Both themes, regardless of the number of team members invested in them, reflect a recognition of a gap between the existing capacities of TSK and its failure to culminate in live-saving practice. Contestations around this theme, therefore, will provide indicators to the ways the group negotiates wider ideas pertaining to agency and responsibility in disaster contexts.

> Let me tell you something. If the army had been present within the first three days after the earthquake, it would all be totally different today. They were afraid of a coup d'etat, I why they held off the army.
>
> Bro, do not say it like that.
>
> I am not talking about the guys [within the military]. They had a hard time staying home doing nothing. If one of them had come down all by himself with his uniform on, he would be imprisoned for life wouldn't he[15]?
>
> Look, in a horrendous disaster like this even if you had all the search and rescue teams in the world, people still would die.
>
> I know, but this amount? What could the teams of municipalities or AFAD possibly achieve on their own? After all they say they educate their personnel but essentially make them mop the floors. Is search and rescue even possible without the army?
>
> You might be right bro but how would the army be even mobilized? What would they bring with them? Roads, runways all ruined.
>
> Who has all those off-road vehicles other than the army? They have a whole naval unit in Iskenderun for god's sake.
>
> But they are survivors too. (a dialogue between two team members, personal communication, Appendix A.10)

[14] The public reaction towards the issue has amounted to such an extent that the Turkish Directorate of Communication issued a statement in its bulletin against disinformation (dezenformasyon bildirim servisi), claiming that the military staff was present in the region since the initial hours proceeding the earthquake. Please see, https://dbs.iletisim.gov.tr/hakikat/266

[15] Here the team member is making a reference to the military students who have been imprisoned after the 2016 coup attempt, after appearing on the Bosphorus Bridge in their uniforms without being officially called onto duty. For many Turkish citizens, those students were only catering to the commands of their immediate superiors, thus have no real agency over how things unfolded later.

I would like to conclude this section by briefly reflecting on this dialogue that, I believe, concentrates the central ideas that I tried to develop so far in this discussion. On the one hand, expertise in the context of search and rescue, is not a sum of a given set of resources and skills, but is a contested field shaped through daily social mediation of the tokens of expertise. The objects themselves, such as credentials, uniforms, or equipment, have no intrinsic value but they come to signify authority, command, and expertise within the social context in which they are appropriated. In the above dialogue, a uniform emerges not as a token of professionalism but as a political threat to its bearer, paralleling larger political events and transformations reshaping civil-military relations in Turkey in the last two decades. On the other hand, we see that my informants do not attribute responsibility in disaster contexts to a monolithic source such as the state, but rather acknowledges how its components and actors might have differing agendas and levels of expertise, visible in their contrasting remarks on the USAR teams of the municipalities, AFAD, and the army. The military holds a critically ambiguous position in their understanding of competence and failure since it is considered, albeit through hearsay, as a timeless bearer of expertise and an absent figure failing to perform lifesaving practice. The above dialogue never develops in a way questioning the skills and resources of the TSK personnel, yet it quickly takes the form of a whodunit, obscurely referencing possible actors that hindered the military personnel from seizing the opportunity to intervene.

Beyza, a university student studying disaster management, growing increasingly tired of this never-ending discussion, attempts to put a stop to those ruminations by reminding the team Turkey's domestic post-disaster intervention

guideline (TAMP, Türkiye Afet Müdahale Planı).[16] It seems that, the whole situation boiled down to the dissolution of EMASYA[17] Protocol after the 2016 coup attempt, that had categorized the military as a joint component of the national search and rescue. From then on, TSK has not been listed as a main partner in intervention (ana çözüm ortağı) regarding large scale emergencies, but as a supporting actor that can intervene only when it is requested by AFAD. Although AFAD is stated as the authorized institution to call military to duty, they cannot take this decision under complete autonomy as they need to notify and receive approval from the Ministry of Internal Affairs in such situations. Accordingly, the delayed intervention of the military to the devastated region was mainly prompted by the bureaucratic processes within AFAD and the central government. After stating all facts, Beyza said "Now, do whatever you do with this information"[18], taking pride in knowing Turkish regulations in disaster preparedness and management.

Beyza's contribution that brought the heated debate among team members to a definite end, had significance extending beyond the content of the protocol she recites. Making an almost historical revisionist remark on state-military relations in Turkey, Beyza reminded us that those official regulations are products of multi-actor political processes (Levi-Faur, 2011), so one should remain cautious in taking them face-value. Moreover, we can see from the above exchange between Beyza and other team members that, those protocols are received and circulated in extremely diverse ways among their audiences, involving prospective disaster experts, USAR team members, and social researchers like me who happened to cross paths with those issues. In the next section, I will try to shed a critical light on what I call "domestic

[16] Please see, https://www.afad.gov.tr/kurumlar/afad.gov.tr/e_Kutuphane/Planlar/TAMP.pdf
[17] Abbreviation for "Emniyet-Asayiş-Yardımlaşma" (en: Security-Order-Cooperation)
[18] Tr: *Al bu bilgiyle ne yaparsan yap*, a trendy social media expression used in Turkey, after providing a very niche piece of information.

disaster knowledge" by ethnographically engaging with contested appropriations of the national and international guidelines, standards, regulations, and educatory modules among rescue personnel. I will try to reflect on how the often-neglected international encounters among rescue professionals and their subsequent pedagogies, create new forms of visions and divisions among rescuers in Turkey.

3.3 Domestic disaster knowledge: Local circumstances and international encounters

Earthquakes are territorialized events, whose material effects rarely extend beyond of the stricken region, unlike the apparent global or trans-national challenges triggered by climate change or pandemics. The affected countries are considered central sovereign actors in governing emergency operations after earthquakes; thus the international scope of the latter is by no means self-evident (Revet, 2020). However, in many contexts, they are made international by creating new links between people, tools, and language (Revet, 2020) such as soliciting international aid if the hazardous event cannot be addressed merely relying on the resources of the stricken country or mobilizing discourses of trans-national humanitarian action based on a universalized disaster iconography consisting of victims, rescue workers, and hazards (Revet, 2020). The aftermath of Turkey-Syria Earthquake was exemplar of both processes through which earthquakes can be rendered international. Consequently, while reflecting on domestic disaster knowledge that requires site-specific skills and resources, one should keep in mind that an international disaster community that rescue professionals encounter on the field, as well as a universalized set of standards and regulations are integral in shaping this specialized knowledge. In this section, I aim to reflect on how those encounters with international disaster community and pedagogies bear on the professional identity of this rescue team.

The team puts quite an effort into strengthening their international networks by contacting disaster professionals abroad from different specialization areas such as geology, public health, security, communication, and psycho-social support. Kerim often emphasizes the international and domestic experts that he had sought guidance from, to revise, if not design from scratch, the modules that they use in training sessions. SAP has recently created a working group for international projects, in which they also included me due to my academic skills in social sciences and my language proficiency in English. Moreover, JICA's international protocols, such as (Japan International Cooperation Agency) earthquake risk mitigation project for Istanbul that is prepared after the 1999 Marmara Earthquake, is frequently mentioned by team members as a good example of effective international disaster cooperation. Regarding the global credentials of expertise in disaster conduct, international frameworks of standardization, such as the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG), remain ultimate sources of recognition among the group, shadowing state-level institutions and their procedures, in claiming their professional identity.

> Just because it is state sponsored, sometimes AFAD doesn't even want any other player in the field. They control the coordination efforts and assign you with the most insignificant tasks. But as long as you are recognized by INSARAG, there is no difference between different teams. They all can actively work on the field and save lives. (Rüstem, personal communication, Appendix, A.11)

INSARAG[19] is a global network established by the United Nations in 1999, through the efforts of USAR teams that worked in coordination during 1985 Mexican Earthquake and 1988 Armenian Earthquake. Its primary goal is to ensure that USAR teams are properly trained, equipped, and coordinated to respond rapidly and

[19] For more detail, please see https://www.insarag.org

efficiently to emergencies worldwide. The organization implements globally recognized standards and establishes specific modules and guidelines to be used in training USAR teams worldwide, under three region-groups that are Africa/ Europe/ the Middle-East, North/ South America, and Asia/ Pacific. The USAR activities in Turkey falls into the first group-region and both governmental and non-governmental rescue organizations, such as AFAD and SAP respectively, are subjected to the standardized criteria implemented by INSARAG. They also adhere to the International Organization for Standardization's (ISO) principles, such as ISO 31000 Risk Management Guideline, to effectively assess and address hazard risk.

> What really separates us from the rest of the teams is twofold. First, we are building one of the best trained search and rescue teams in Turkey. We have training modules on really specific topics that no one in Turkey even heard about before. The head of team, Kerim, is always doing field work out in Ukraine or in Germany. He also connects with the academics there. You see, we benefit from many resources. Second, we have a team that can read and act upon on society's dynamics. You know the Turkish mindset… we know how people would act, and why they act in that way, in case a disaster happens in Turkey. There is no other team that focuses on disaster psychology (afet psikolojisi) as much as we do here. (Baran, personal communication, APPENDIX A.12)

Baran repeats that the team strongly invests in international standards, pedagogies, technologies, and practices to be taken seriously as professionals both in Turkey and among international disaster communities. They actively try to engage with the professionals abroad, not limited to search and rescue teams but expanding to academics and trans-national organizations that employ universally recognized credentials of disaster management in their practice. On the other hand, the same group often acknowledges the limits of the latter in addressing the specifities of disasters in Turkey and makes an explicit knowledge claim that is exclusive to the Turkish context, as noticeable in Baran's statement above. This is why they seek

ways to create context-specific modules based on their field experiences without losing touch with the universal standards.

Departing from this sustained effort, I will first explore how the gaps between totalistic bodies of knowledge and localized contexts unfold in the field of literal and cultural translation. Then, I will trace how these gaps and tensions between international and domestic disaster pedagogies become manifest in the Occidentalist boundary work that my informants employ to reaffirm their professional identity, which relies on shifting self-positionings within a dynamic Eastern-Western matrix. I will argue that the notion of the "disasterland" (afet ülkesi) as a real and imaginary space, has an ordering function in this boundary work, demarcating the team's internal boundaries that separate them from the domestic non-professionals and its external boundaries that distinguish them from the international disaster community.

3.3.1 Translating disaster knowledge

The international frameworks for disaster preparedness and response, seek to establish uniform guidelines, and protocols by standardizing procedures, equipment, training, and coordination mechanisms to increase the "interoperability" among response agencies[20] "regardless of disciplinary, cultural, political, economic, or environmental differences (Watanabe, 2021, p. 166-167). To put it differently, those frameworks instituting a global set of terms and methodology among international disaster community, attempt to create "a common ground to 'see the same disaster'" (Revet, 2020). However, the territoriality of earthquakes, and many other disasters, necessitates new preparedness and response strategies tailored to the (potentially)

[20] INSARAG also navigates the administrative processes between national and international response agencies and evaluates their capacities. For more detail, please see, INSARAG External Support and Recognition Process. https://www.insarag.org/non-categorise/insarag-external-support-and-recognition-process/

stricken region's unique geographical and urban characteristics. Moreover, disaster knowledge is not just technical; it also involves understanding social, cultural and contextual factors that influence how communities respond to and recover from disasters. Therefore, the viability of establishing a universal code of conduct for disasters becomes questionable, firstly because "the recipient culture" is not a static entity, neither the concepts they utilize to express themselves or to make sense of phenomena in specific contexts. A very good example of this is the changing lexicons of first-aid in Turkey that the team tried to make sense of. For instance, I witnessed instances in which some team members displayed a congratulatory attitude in replacing largely humanized colloquial Turkish terms such as "kiss of life" (Tr. *Yaşam öpücüğü*) with more impersonal ones such as "artificial respiration" (Tr: *suni teneffüs*), on the grounds that the latter sounds less eroticized and more professional, following the changing lexicons of first-aid worldwide.

Other times, although there are no noticeable changes in the vocabulary of the international disaster community, some concepts have undergone an "intralingual translation" process or "rewording" where the verbal signs of a given concept are interpreted through other signs of the same language (Zethsen, 2009), paralleling recent political-ideological transformations in Turkey. A very good example to this, is the changing Turkish equivalent of the CPR (cardio-pulmoner resuscitation), a medical term referring to helping people who show no vital signs breathe and circulate blood. The Turkish equivalent of the term has long been *yeniden canlandırma* (En: revitalization) and it is still widely used among medical professionals. However, in the official modules of first-aid education that were designed by the Turkish Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, we see that the term is replaced with *temel yaşam desteği* (basic life support), positioning the

first-aid practitioner as a helping hand, not as a deity-like figure resurrecting the dead. This rephrasing, beyond any doubt, is reflective of the top-down shifts in the daily cosmology of Turkish citizens and its corresponding lexicon, imposed by the existing Islamist regime in many different fields of action and thought. The fact that one of the team members, who is a devoted practicing Muslim, once mentioned the former version with the preamble "Haşa"[21] parallels the wider political significance of this switch.

Overall, one needs to carefully consider the political and cultural transformations in localized contexts; otherwise, there is a risk of representing them as static entities that are either detached from, or exclusively shaped by, the dominant discourses and practices adopted by international disaster agencies. But there are other challenges in creating a universal code of conduct for disasters, not only stemming from the dynamism, but also diversity of the local cultural contexts that cannot be exhausted into a totalistic knowledge body. There will always be an insurmountable gap between the international guidelines, that is the original text, and its culturally bounded recipients. This is evidenced in Kerim's statement, where he described how the initial verbatim translation of INSARAG's modules had proven ineffective for his previous trainees.

> Kerim: These are in fact the modules of INSARAG. Yeditepe University helped us translate them to Turkish in 2019. The Ministry of Health and Education also use those in designing their own modules for AFAD.
>
> Zeynep: Who in Yeditepe University helped you to translate ?
>
> Kerim: We were collaboratively undertaking a project with the academics in Yeditepe University. Voluntary students from the linguistics department translated the modules for us. We used the initial version in trainings for

[21] "Haşa" is a colloquial expression that is more commonly used within Muslim religious circles in Turkey. Generally, one drops the word just before mentioning an act or thought that is deemed strictly intolerable. In its exclusively religious reappropriations, the expression is used in relation to the acts of blasphemy, for instance attributing the exclusive characteristics of one and only Allah, to fallible and feebile human beings. This is the exact context in which the team member used this expression.

> some time. But it came off as, how should I say, robotic. People could not make sense of it. So, we Turkified it a little bit. (personal communication, Appendix A.13)

Although the translation of INSARAG'S modules and guidelines were made by well-equipped translators, there has been an inevitable gap between the original text and the translated version, not as a matter of "bad translation" but as an ontological feature of the act of translating trying to bridge the distance between two distinct universes of meaning. Therefore, when Kerim expressed his disappointment with the ineffectiveness of the literal translation, he was making a reference to a lay audience that is culturally distant, therefore not susceptive to the language and style of INSARAG's modules. The idea that translations happen, not despite of incompleteness, but rather through "gaps, slippages, and excesses" (Watanabe, 2021, p. 166) is not a novel one, for scholars that scrutinize the intricacies of language. Watanabe (2021), invites us to rethink the generative capacities of linguistic incompleteness in the context of disaster pedagogies, exploring the translation of disaster training modules that are designed for primary school children, from Japanese to Chilean. According to her, half-translations engendered in "shortage of information or contextual knowledge, misunderstandings, or miscommunication, […] create spaces for people across different countries to take ownership of the tool in question" (2003, p. 166). In other words, incompleteness in the translative work does not emerge as a problem to be addressed in Watanabe's framework, but as an enabling force that initiates cross-cultural negotiation of disasters. Departing from a similar point about the analytical potential of half translations, I would like to explore how Kerim's efforts to "Turkify" INSARAG's modules reflects a broader mindset shared by the team members, that involve culturally essentialist ideas on what they call "Turkish people" (Neumann, 2018).

Kerim needed to "Turkify" the modules to make them more communicable to an audience that is inevitably constrained by the "Turkish mindset" that Baran previously mentioned. When I asked Kerim to clarify what he means by Turkifying the modules, he gave several examples such as adding nuances that speak to the current context of the Turkish USAR efforts. For instance, he showed me an axe that is used for breaking debris and it needs to be held in 45 degree angle in order to maximize its impact on concrete, as stated in INSARAG USAR Guideline. He claims that there is no additional detail depending on the personal capacities of its users. Acknowledging the increasing proportion of women in Turkish USAR teams, Kerim developed a different approach where one does not rely on brute force but momentum while using the tool. He also advocates for utilizing daily tools (Fig. 3) that are more familiar to Turkish citizens rather than standardized professional ones, as they are rarely available to ordinary residents in the event of emergencies.



Figure 3. First-aid instructor using a prayer rug to show how to make a medical splint *[Tr: atel]* out of daily available objects, photo taken by the author)

Kerim later proceeded to ponder on more general themes such as effective usage of humor, not so much so that it dissolves the integrity of the classroom environment, but just to keep people present and involved. He finds humor, especially inside jokes addressing Turkish people, not only a binding element among the team members but also the best way to keep their sustained attention on the module. Although I would very much prefer a warmer learning environment to a strictly professional, or in Kerim's words "robotic" one, I could not help but think that asserting humor as a pedagogical necessity reflects a quite infantilizing attitude towards the group that is to be educated. The audience is positioned in such a way that, they can only deal with the rational, abstract, and systematic content, if they somehow get emotionally invested. This brings me to a more general discussion on how the team members envisioned the characteristics of the "Turkish people/culture" and in what ways they tried to differentiate themselves from, or proudly identify themselves with these attributes.

3.3.2 Occidentalist boundary work: Disasterland as a maxim

Occidentalism refers to "discursive and non-discursive strategies that [people] employ in order to answer to the West" (Ahıska, 2010: 41), these people being, in one way or another, excluded from the civilizational chamber of the latter. It is a way of positioning the Oriental self to navigate the tension between the "desire for and denigration of what is essentialized […] as the West" (Ahıska, 2010: 41). Therefore, Occidentalism involves a simultaneous reappropriation and challenging of values and practices that are labeled as Western, to generate and cement a certain social identity and group. Most importantly it demarcates a field of power through which new hierarchies are created among different segments of the society, in relation to

their position in this essentialized Western-Eastern matrix. According to my fieldwork observations, which I will elaborate shortly, this kind of Occidentalist interplay where the West becomes both "an object of desire" and "a source of frustration" (Ahıska, 2003, p. 351) is integral to the making of the professional identity of this rescue team in question. They frequently mobilize certain themes and attributes that are associated with Western and Eastern ways of being and knowing, to demarcate their internal boundaries separating them from domestic non-professionals, as well as their external boundaries separating them from the international disaster community. I will argue that Turkey's reappropriation as an almost exceptional "disasterland" (*afet ülkesi)* plays a crucial role in the formation and reproduction of this Occidentalist boundary work.

When I asked my informants about their main motivation to be in a search and rescue team, almost all of them mentioned that they could not keep a blind eye to the realities of the disasterland (*afet ülkesi*) they inhabit. Disasterland is an interesting concept in many respects. Firstly, it indicates the almost timeless persistence of disasters in a real territory and their eventual inevitability as no intelligible measures can be taken to "prevent" them. In the face of those recurring catastrophes, being part of a search and rescue team signifies an awareness of this continuous chain of suffering. But also, it involves an element of acceptance that a devastating earthquake will likely happen again in the not-so-distant future, thus, shows a preference for being prepared to respond rather than seeking preventive measures. This exhausting state of awareness can be observed in the partnerships that the team hectically seeks to establish with international disaster agencies, academics, and experts. However, much more than devoted professionals striving to do their best in a country continuously afflicted by disasters, my informants often express their

frustration stemming from feeling left behind as they cannot always keep up with the dynamism of the "developed" countries in disaster preparedness and response.

The team's sustained attempts at internationalization are often coupled with a sense of urgency stemming from their recognized delay in catching up with the latest technologies and pedagogical approaches. This frustration becomes specifically visible when the group makes subtle references to Western rationalities by holding up certain practices from "developed" countries as models (Ahıska, 2010) for Turkey in implementing effective disaster management strategies. The detailed theoretical and practical modules on terror events (school shootings) designed for primary school children in the US, fully equipped drills for nuclear meltdowns in the UK, or meticulous site investigation conducted by Japanese seismologists, are a few of the many examples that the group recruits while complaining about why no similar technologies and practices are adopted in Turkey.

> Now, tell me, what would happen if this [Maraş] earthquake had taken place in Japan? Okay, a couple of people may have died, but it wouldn't be more than a handful. They design such buildings that ours look like shacks, like a monstrosity. I asked Mr. X [referring to a Japanese senior architect on the advisory board of SAP] he said they would demolish such buildings [in Japan] before an earthquake even hits. That is also a disasterland, just like ours. You can't prevent an earthquake, okay, understood, but at least make sure the buildings you construct doesn't shatter into pieces after just a couple of shakes. (Kerim, personal communication, Appendix A.14)

This strongly resonates with Ahıska postulated as "time lag", the ordering temporal disposition of Occidentalism that she develops through the metaphor of "catching the train of modern civilization" (2003, p. 352). While the Western universe is characterized by speed, dynamism, and interrupted progress; The East is contained into a timeless state of being left behind as the Oriental subject is "always already late" (2003, p. 354). This also reminds us that the West and the East are socio-historical constructs than mere geographical locations; as, in Kerim's statement

above, the Japanese seismic experts and their practices are perceived as part of the leading Western civilization rather than a country situated in the far east. It is also important to note that Kerim again mobilized the notion of disasterland, but this time rather than exceptionalizing Turkey's situation, he utilized it to make a political critique.

The celebration of West as a model to be followed with a recognition of a permanent delay, generates new modes of depreciation regarding one's own culture or social group, through attributes such as fatalism, ignorance, and indifference. Those were the themes that were frequently mobilized in our discussions about the "curses of the Turkish culture" that prevents any meaningful change from being made to alleviate the troubles of the disasterland.

> Our people are fatalistic, submissive. Just like the people from the rest of the Middle East. They be losing their children to earthquakes and accept God's plan. We say that Istanbul will turn into a rubble [in case of an earthquake], but this too is in God's plan they say. This mentality won't get us too far. What we do here can only be a band-aid to the real problem.
> (Aslı, personal communication, Appendix 1.15)

> Look, we have this thing… No matter what the temperature is outside, we always see aid trucks full of blankets travel to the stricken region. Its 35 degrees out there what are they are going to do with the blankets? Naturally those get dumped on the sides of roads and rot out in the open. (Yağız, personal communication, Appendix 1.15)

> Normally disaster drills are mandatory in building complexes that employ, although as a work safety protocol. I try to explain this to my neighbors in my apartment building, but no one gives a damn. Actually, no one [in our country] does. What can I possible do for someone who don't care about their own life? (Beyza, personal communication, Appendix 1.15)

In the above excerpts, we can trace again an ahistoricized and decontextualized way of looking at people's (in)action, and an essentialized version of Turkish culture. While the first quote could be seen as micro-level manifestations of the existing Islamist government's tendency to escape accountability by appealing to godly predestination, the second one could be thought together with the dominant

representations of victimhood being always in need of swaddling and reassuring, and the last one could be interpreted as a behavioral outcome of the dysfunctions and loopholes in the implementation of official protocols. However, once one critically engages with wider political processes bearing on people's attitudes and behavior, it becomes impossible to hold onto a crystallized dichotomy of ambitious professionals and cumbrous citizens, eventually subsiding the ground on which the group's exclusive professional identity flourishes. Therefore, exclusion of non-professional citizens in Turkey, on the grounds of being indifferent and ignorant towards the realities of a disasterland, is integral to the formation and reaffirmation of the team's professional identity.



Figure 4. Trainees watching a funny video on YouTube on first-aid, photo taken by the author

The making of this internal boundary among the professional and non-professional inhabitants of the disasterland gets much clearer in the following example. In the

beginning of our initial first-aid session, the instructor dimmed the lights and showed us a short video on YouTube[22] in a cinema-like immersive atmosphere, to break the ice and set the initial context for the importance of first-aid skills (Fig. 4). It was an excerpt from a newscast, showing people's ridiculous attempts to help a woman who fainted due to elongated hunger, while waiting in line for a free dinner during Ramadan in Konya. While she is lying unconscious, everyone around her shouts "Move away!" (Tr. *Açılın*) yet keeps densely surrounding her. Then a woman loudly asks for a metal spoon to unlock the jaw of the sufferer. And eventually it turns into a whole nightmare that includes a guy using his house keys to open her mouth, someone exhaling cigarette smoke into her mouth, and a very experimental CPR performed simultaneously by three people. The shitshow, for the lack of a better term, ends when the professional first-aid practitioners finally arrive to intervene.

The whole team, including me, found the video hilarious and we all burst into laughter. Yet, our shared joy in watching others comically fail in first aid signals the constitution of another boundary, this time within the social group that is essentialized as Turkish people, between professionals and non-professionals. As future first-aid practitioners, the very act of laughing at this video enabled us to take distance from the impulsive and ignorant ones, as we would be expected to remain calm and collected during a similar situation. We were already associating ourselves with the saviors, the first-aid squad that finally arrived, rather than with the panicked crowd running around trying to help, but actually making things worse. Ahıska argues that "the infantilization of national identity that desperately needs the West to survive" (2003, p. 355) is an integral component of the Occidentalist imaginary. Although the first-aid practitioners in the video are categorically Turkish citizens,

[22] The video clip titled "Bilinçsiz İlk Yardım" (En: Clueless First-Aid) can be found here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhuj1e_Ti_Q

they engender what is essentialized as the West in this particular context, as bearers of timeless information and saviors of the non-Western.

Neumann (2018), in her research on the attitudes of disaster professionals in Istanbul, makes similar observations about their culturally essentialist ideas on "Turkish people", that they associate with fatalism and ignorance in the context of disasters. She also employs the concept of "Occidentalism" to reflect on their relationship with non-professional groups. However, in Neumann's research (2018), Occidentalism emerges as a misleading idea that disaster experts seem to invest in, that can be problematic for future disaster preparations as it obscures the real source of the problem and eventually depoliticizes, and to some extent justifies, inaction, through essentialized short-cuts such as "Turkish people/culture". I believe this approach reduces Occidentalism to a mere coping strategy against inaction, stemming from an internalized inferiority, missing its greater significance as a discursive field with power effects that can demarcate the boundaries of certain social groups. Occidentalism in Ahıska's framework, do not correspond to a misrecognition due to "internalized Orientalism, […] instead it points to the specific mechanisms that 'Orientals' employ to create their subject status" (2003, p. 365). In the context of my research, Occidentalist boundary work serves to reaffirm the team's emerging professional identity, thus the subject status of the team members, vis a vis domestic non-professionals.

On the other hand, Occidentalism is a founding feature of the "spatio-temporal imagining of modern Turkish national identity" (Ahıska, 2003, p. 353), therefore, the essentialized construct of "Turkish people" that the team frequently mentions serve more than a discursive tactic to belittle non-professional groups. The team members' subject positions are informed by the hegemonic Occidentalist

national imaginary, “that attempt to destroy the undesired difference with the West in temporal terms, by catching up with the modern civilization, while maintaining the desired difference as authenticity in its national space” (Ahiska, 2010, p. 42). In other words, fascination with Western logics and apparatuses as the signifiers of uninterrupted progress, and the sustained humiliation of one’s own culture, is only one part of the Occidentalist imagination. Turkish nation building project and its founding Occidentalist encounters, also rely on a projection of what is threatening, undesirable, or intolerable in the Western universe, that is tried to be contained, managed, or subverted in the authentic realm of national coexistence. This emphasis is missing in Neumann’s (2018) research as she exclusively relies on the celebration of Western values and practices among professionals, coupled with humiliation of the Eastern ones that they project to non-professional groups. Neumann does not reflect on how, or if, those professionals challenge certain ideas, attitudes or practices associated with the West, eventually reducing Occidentalism into a simple fascination with the West and sustained belittlement of the East.

In the following discussion, I will address this missing point in Neumann’s research by taking into account how Occidentalism designates “at the same time what subject desires to be and refuses to be” (Ahıska, 2003, p. 366). In light of this emphasis, I will discuss how the essentialized category of Turkish culture/people is also mobilized by the team members to take a desired distance from the signifiers of the West, and to create an aura of authenticity, through the attributes such as courage, spontaneity, and empathy, indicating a higher-level “affective command” of real-life disasters.

3.3.3 From the underdogs to the stars of the field

> Our teams have this thing of becoming the stars of the field. […] Imagine a German rescuer lacking a single piece of the protective equipment. They will not be on the field. And I am not even talking about something important like a helmet or something. Now what happens in our case? The rescuer would throw himself out on that field without thinking about the protocol even for a second. He would take the risk but eventually overcome his task. One time, I saw a young man using his bare hands to dig the debris to find his way around the victims. Around all that steel ropes, iron bars… But you know what, after a few hours they pulled out an old lady out of that little hole in the wreck. (Kerim, personal communication, Appendix A.16)

This story is a mirror image of the YouTube video that we had collectively watched, but this time it does not end up in ridicule. It is almost impossible to not notice the parallels between calm-calculative professionals, and impulsive-emotive people, but the latter now signifies courage and spontaneity rather than ignorance. Most importantly, what identifies the West in this renewed perspective is a fruitless rule abidance and risk aversion that does not culminate in real life-saving practice. The Western claims to authority and expertise through standardization and guidelines start to function counterproductively, hindering its own abilities to address the exceptionalities in post-disaster contexts. The grammar of a disaster-stricken field, it seems, seizes to be codified through the signifiers of Western rationalities and remains ultimately guided by the affective command of the East. Kerim's identification of Turkish rescuers with courage, risk acceptance, and spontaneity is definitely informed by the "myth of the military-nation" (Altınay, 2004), an indistinguishable dimension of the Occidentalist national imaginary, that attributes Turkish people a primordialistic warrior essence, evidenced by the popular saying "Every Turk is born a soldier"[23]. This characterization is frequently echoed by other team members as well, who use expressions such as "spirit of a fighter" or "being

[23] "*Her Türk asker doğar"*

foolhardy"[24] to describe the selflessness of Turkish rescuers, which combines recklessness towards the risks they might face with an immense courage.

Ahıska states that "the knowledge of the West in Occidentalism is not neutral; it is not only instrumental and pragmatic, but also infused with affect when politically distinguishing the 'good' and the 'bad' West in order to negotiate the authenticity of the nation and foreground nativism" (2010, p. 43). Therefore, those remarks on the risk-laden courage of Turkish rescuers not only designate a quantitatively better outcome in being able to save more lives, but also demarcates an authentic enclave of a social group that cannot be penetrated by the Western logics and apparatuses. This is observable in how the team members now proudly position themselves within the categories such as "our people", "Turkish people" rather than envisioning themselves as distant or distinct from those. They regard themselves as naturally percipient to the realities of disasters as they are continuously exposed to the suffering caused by and the risks associated with disasters, specifically earthquakes. The notion of the disasterland afflicted with recurrent earthquakes has again an ordering function in this imaginary. More earthquakes in Turkey practically means more first-hand fieldwork experience for the rescuers, which inevitably culminates in increased context-specific skills and knowledge. But much more than a practical concern, the idea of co-habitance involves an element of proximity where the rescuers relate to the rescued through self-identification. Acknowledging that they as well could have been the one under the rumble, they take spontaneous action or put themselves under risk, regardless of what is imposed by the official protocols, when they hear an uncannily familiar cry for help.

[24] "s*avaşçı ruhlu", "gözü kara olmak"*

> Our teams get along best with the Greeks because we're so similar. I noticed that they are the ones who feel the most sorrow for what they see, more so than a German or Japanese team. Of course, they [German and Japanese teams] are also human, I don't mean to say they're robots or anything like that. But there's this sense of neighborliness, you know, they understand your situation. [...] Of course, if you don live in a disastrous geography, you can never fully understand. It's like you're looking at your job a bit more professionally. You don't think, "It could have been my child asking for help, or my mother." You might feel sorry for those people, but you can't fully internalize what you see. (Aslı, personal communication, Appendix A.17)

Aslı's reference to neighborliness is a very good example of how disasterland is both a real and an imaginary space, as Greek rescue teams are considered as neighbors due to their geographical and cultural proximity to Turkey. However, Aslı mentions that there is still a gap that those who do not inhabit a disasterland cannot bridge due to their emotional distance. Here, being emotional is not treated as a weakness of having one's judgement affected by the outside, but rather it emerges as good or even better than thought "insofar as [it is] represented as a form of intelligence" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 3). Turkish USAR team's susceptibility to others' pain appears as a faculty that shapes another form of competent self (Ahmed, 2004), "the stars of the field" as Kerim mentioned above. This assertion on an exclusive emotional capacity is not only mobilized through claims to courage, selflessness, and spontaneity; but also claims to intimacy where team members consider themselves more in touch with the suffering of the other through self-identification.

While pain is generally described as a private or even lonely experience due to the impossibility of knowing precisely what someone else's pain feels like (Melzack & Wall, 1996, in Ahmed, 2004, p. 29), what my informants describe is otherwise, making an implicit distinction between sympathy and empathy. While sympathy refers to feeling sorry for someone, as evidenced by Aslı's treatment of the international USAR teams, empathy refers to feeling one's sorrow and pain (Koopman, 2010), which is a capacity that is deemed exclusive to Turkish USAR

teams in this particular context. Based on this distinction, the team members again cement their external boundaries separating them from the international, but ultimately Western, disaster communities and their subsequent pedagogies, on the grounds of being emotionally distant to and out of touch with the socio-material realities of a disasterland.

> Women, our friends, did something very important there. We were also trying to ensure female survivors' wellbeing, asking about how they were doing in general. But you just can't understand their language [in those situations]. Sometimes, they feel ashamed to say what they need, like if they need sanitary pads, for example, they feel ashamed to say it. But beyond that, what can I say to a woman who has lost her child or husband? How can I extend a helping hand? But our [woman] friends sat down with them, they cried and cried together. It was as if their own children had died. Our hearts were broken too, but if you can't hold their hand and cry together, you can't heal anything. After all, those who are gone are gone. Of course, for example, when someone is found alive, we all hug and shed tears of joy together, but when bad news comes, no one can share their pain except women. (Rüstem, personal communication, Appendix A.18)

On a different note, Rüstem makes an interesting point that shows how the affective charge of this authentic enclave is not homogenously available to all its inhabitants. Mobilizing (Turkish) women as the most percipient of and responsive to other's pain, Rüstem was showing that the suffering in question produced "uneven effects" as "[that] pain does not produce a homogeneous group of bodies who are together in their pain" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 31). While women in the team had the ability to cry with the survivors, to some extent appropriating and internalizing their losses as their own, they were also able to "understand their language", in a way establishing a feminine venue to represent what those losses might signify in the social life of a woman. I acknowledge that Rüstem's statement can be considered as a rearticulation of the gendered conviction that women are naturally more emotional, or they are more suitable for care work. I believe, the patriarchal affirmation describing emotions as a feminized sphere ultimately informs Rüstem's statement, but this does

not develop in a way that positions emotions/feminine as a faculty beneath reason/male (Ahmed, 2004). Rather, the exclusive emotional capacity of women team members, that is authentically sharing one's pain, endows them with a new kind of agency and command that no one else on the region seem to bear.

All in all, in this discussion, I attempted to illustrate how the team members reaffirm their professional identity by creating shifting categories of "us" and "them" organized along Western-Eastern dichotomies and their related attributes such as progress-backwardness and rationality-emotiveness. However, those (self)positionings are neither reducible to a simple fascination with Western logics and practices, nor to a sustained belittling of the so-called Eastern ways of being and knowing, as the essentialized category of "Turkish people" is reappropriated by the team members as indicative of indifference, ignorance, fatalism, as well as courage, spontaneity, and intimacy. This is why I relied on the framework of Occidentalism, rather than Orientalism, to understand the ways in which the group negotiates domestic disaster knowledge vis a vis domestic non-professionals and the international disaster community, not only as real people and their practices, but also as an imaginary listener. I tried to explore this boundary work in light of the concept of "disasterland" which was both a source of frustration for the team members due to their recognized lag or failure in alleviating its continuous suffering, and also an authentic domestic space which involves an element of co-habitation and intimacy that is emotionally unavailable for the outsiders.

CHAPTER 4

NAVIGATING AMBIGUOUS SEISMIC TIME: IN BETWEEN MEMORY AND ANTICIPATION

> "TIME: A vehicle of thought to review the intense and interconnected metric space in urban everyday life in İstanbul; a dimension" (Deviren, 2008, p. 86), Becoming Istanbul: An Encyclopedia

4.1 On ambiguous seismic time

In the previous chapter, I tried to reflect on how the team members operationalize the notion of "disasterland" as a lived and imaginary space, to reassure their professional identity by demarcating the boundaries that separate them from both the domestic non-professionals and the international disaster community. In this section, I aim to shift my analytic gaze to temporality and explore the coexisting, and often contradictory, temporal dispositions inherent in the notion of disasterland and its daily manifestations in search and rescue practice.

Turkey as a disasterland, in this context, denotes a space of inherited trauma and a collectively inhabited riskscape due to the long-term persistence and perceived inevitability of earthquake-precipitated catastrophe. How would then, a temporal regime oscillating between memory and anticipation, position its subjects during their preparation and recovery efforts regarding past and future disasters? What kind of temporal leaps, shifts, or subversions characterize the daily lives of those subjects? And on a more general note, what could those "simultaneous but non-synchronic" (Torres, 2021, p. 137) temporal orientations reveal about the functions and failures of governance technologies in addressing emergencies yet-to-come, that are so far discussed dominantly in reference to futurity and anticipatory registers of time (eg.

Adey & Anderson, 2020; Weszkalnys, 2014)? Let me pose it in much simpler terms in relation to the context of this research: How can one be expected to invest in individual preparedness protocols, witnessing the extent of destruction in the previous earthquakes and knowing that the apocalypse looming in the near future will annihilate all those micro-efforts? Is there a way to keep people enrolling into individual and communal rituals of safety, despite their shared testimony on the sustained and spectacular earthquake-induced destruction in Turkey? In the following discussion, I will seek answers to those questions by scrutinizing my informants', and at times my own, relationship to what I call "ambiguous seismic time", that I tried to trace from our training sessions, group activities, and personal conversations.

4.1.1 Anticipatory regimes

The time of the disasterland replete with razing earthquakes is ambiguous, partly because the behavior of the tectonic plates is yet fully legible to seismic experts. When it comes to Istanbul, The North Anatolian Fault has long been a contested site of multilayered scientific uncertainties, all failing to predict the exact date, location, and magnitude of the expected earthquake (Kayaalp & Arslan, 2022). Here, as temporally unreliable agents, the tectonic plates trigger a new scientific imagery relying on "the modes of prediction and instrumentality" (Adams et. al. 2009, p. 260) rather than claims to certainty and precision. To navigate uncertainty, those experts utilize various tools and technologies such as comprehensive risk maps and advanced computer models (Kayaalp & Arslan, 2022) to come up with more precise numerical data. For instance, some of them claim the grand Istanbul Earthquake "will take

place within our lifetimes, sometime between now and 30 years later, at a possibility ranging between 66[+/-15]%" (Uzer, 2008, p. 86).

It is one thing to try to reach a scientific consensus, but to render a catastrophic future palpable in the present (Adams et. al. 2009) among non-expert groups, one needs to employ a more accessible jargon. Trying to distance themselves from the prophetic role they have been ascribed by the public regarding when exactly the earthquake will take place, the language of probability replaces that of factuality in their statements. Accordingly, they often point out the limits of their predictions and revert to various simplifications to make their calculations more intelligible to the general audience such as tossing coins or drawing straws[25]. However, those expressions bearing the tones of speculative forecast are often accompanied by the expressions of increased probability such as "accumulating stress over fault lines"[26] or phrases triggering a strong sense of urgency such as "depremin eli kulağında"[27]. They go further by making detailed projections for Istanbul including the estimated death tolls, the number of buildings to be collapsed, and areas at risk of secondary environmental hazards. Apart from those macro-level data, they also provide detailed descriptions of the course of the apocalypse from the perspective of the residents. The provocative statement of Prof. Naci Görür, the most vocal geologist after the Turkey-Syria Earthquake, still haunts many Istanbulites: "If two houses collapse on the street corner, forget about that place. You can neither bring help nor save anyone

[25] Please see, "Naci Görür: İstanbul'da her an deprem olma ihtimali yüzde 47, neredeyse yazı tura atacaksın." (*The probability of an earthquake in Istanbul at any moment is 47 percent, you can almost flip a coin)*, retrieved from https://artigercek.com/guncel/naci-gorur-istanbulda-her-an-deprem-olma-ihtimali-yuzde-47-neredeyse-yazi-tura-276068h

[26] See the remarks of Serhat Durmuş (2023, December 5), geophysical engineer, in "Zaman verdi! Ünlü Deprem Uzmanından Korkutan İstanbul Depremi Sözleri" (*He Told the Time! Frightening Remarks of the Famous Earthquake Expert on the Istanbul Earthquake*), SÖZCÜ Televizyonu. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zAmGM_sGI0Q

[27] "Eli kulağında" is a Turkish idiom that means on the verge of happening. See the remarks of Celal Şengör, in "Celal Şengör (2023, February 20): Depremin Eli kulağında" (The [İstanbul] Earthquake Can Happen Anytime) https://www.indyturk.com/node/611516

from there. A minister may not be able say this, but we are scientists, we always tell the truth".[28]

I do not intend to portray seismic experts as mere doomsayers who do nothing but to create public panic by exploiting their widely acknowledged scientific authority. Those experts become implicated subjects, a la Rothberg, in creating, and at times challenging, wider discourses and practices organized along shared risks and threats (Beck, 1992), "whose precise 'when' and 'how' we can only speculate on" (Cooper, 2006, p. 117). First of all, territorialization of the risk (Rebotier, 2012), by delineating Istanbul as a fragile riskscape, calls for and makes possible greater control over and intervention in space (Angell, 2014) by mobilizing various legal and institutional tools such as earthquake focused legislation proposals, micro-regionalization work, formation of local eviction zones, clearance of high-risk buildings, and securing sites that stock flammable-combustible material (Göksu, 2008, p. 90). Those logics of optimization and risk mitigation also penetrate into the relationship of the residents with their home environment and social surroundings. Residents are advised to identify the indoors high-risk areas and create an evacuation plan to follow in the event of an earthquake. All in all, discursive effects of disaster prediction and preparedness, exceed the unreliability of tectonic plates and create new futurescapes where people try to negotiate the multilayered risks they face, oscillating between a sense of uncertainty and the inevitability of the future.

Ambiguous seismic time, therefore, is in direct conversation with anticipatory regimes, and their subsequent logics of security, optimization, and simulation, that "bring future disasters into the present in order to know how to organize ourselves

[28] Naci Görür (2023, August 6): "Sokak başında iki ev yıkılırsa orayı unutun. Ne yardım götürebilirsin ne de kurtarabilirsin. Bakan belki bazı şeyleri net söyleyemez lakin biz bilim insanıyız net söyleriz" https://gazeteoksijen.com/turkiye/prof-dr-naci-gorur-bizim-ulkemizde-depreme-hazir-bir-kent-yok-185576

for the inevitable disasters they predict" (Adams et. al., 2009, p. 248). The coexistence of uncertainty and inevitability gives anticipatory regimes their unique affective coloring, engendered in "mass fear or a politics of hope" (Adams et. al., 2009, p. 249), the very sites and stakes not only in governing the emergencies, but also in governing people through emergencies, (Adey & Anderson, 2015) by mobilizing certain practices and discourses around disaster risk and preparedness. In doing so, anticipatory regimes may rechannel the responsibility regarding emergencies to non-state actors and single individuals (Neumann, 2018) but nevertheless keep the fantasy of a protective and competent state intact (Adey & Anderson, 2015).

No matter how limited our individual capacities might be or no matter how big the awaited catastrophe is, the very attempt to predict a possible event and to optimize a best possible future against it, is symptomatic of a progressive gaze (Torres, 2021) putting an exclusive hope to the impending future that is already being made in the present. Therefore, anticipation is not just a reaction to an ambivalent threat, it denotes "a particular self-evident 'futurism' in which our 'presents' are necessarily understood as contingent upon an ever-changing astral future that may or may not be known for certain, but still must be acted on nonetheless" (Adams et. al. 2009, p. 247). This dynamic entanglement of present futures and future presents is peculiar to the anticipatory logics and technologies that seek to govern upcoming emergencies. Although the primary context of this work is the daily life in the wake of a destructive earthquake, complex temporality of awaiting disaster is hard to contain into a mere anticipatory state, considering Turkey's bitter social memory laden with lived experiences of, as well as vivid testimonies to, the losses and destruction triggered by numerous past earthquakes. Therefore, anticipatory logics

weaving a catastrophic future in an anxious present is only one dimension of residents' relationship with the upcoming earthquake. What happens than, when a retrospective gaze is introduced into the tools, rituals, and practices that are fashioned along anticipatory temporalities?

4.1.2 Limits of futurity

Although anticipation and memory may seem divergent, if not opposite, temporal dispositions, Stepp and Turvey (2015, p. 104) refer to the difficulties they encountered while attempting at such a sharp distinction as "the muddle of anticipation". With a similar kind of concern, the entanglements of, or the tension between, anticipation and memory has been elucidated by many scholars who largely focus on the individual processes behind decision-making in different contexts, ranging from sports to consumer behavior. (eg. Afonso et. al., 2012; Bernheim and Thomadsen 2005; Elster & Loewenstein, 1992) Much more than an academic niche, those works investigating how memory and anticipation figure in and guide the individual cognitive processes, have already culminated in a systematic research program within psychology and its subfields. However, the attempts to socialize the relationship between memory and anticipation have been relatively recent and scarce in the social sciences literature. In the opening section of his chapter titled "Memory, Cultural Systems, and Anticipation", Andrea Cossu (2023, p. 140) sums up his overarching argument by stating that "the future is a real territory for memory studies beyond the current state of the art". The sheer boldness of this statement hopefully will give the reader an idea on how neglected an emphasis on the future is in the studies on social memory (Gutman et. al., 2010). Cossu (2023) further claims that, memory work that takes anticipation into account can elucidate "how different

aspects of culture at the cognitive and pragmatic level are translated mutually within cultural systems and *how they transfer into consideration of possible courses of action*." (p. 147, emphasis added) This is the reason why Cossu (2015) finds this void in memory studies regarding futurity surprising, considering the abundance of the literature on the transformative and constitutive role of remembering that go hand in hand with the "future-oriented, civic and normative goals of the social work" (p. 144).

Disasters have been a sustained object of inquiry for the latter, with references to ensuring social development and increasing the resilience of the communities that are at greater risk of facing the approaching emergencies. In many contexts, the vulnerable communities have already been subjected to disaster-induced harm in the past, due to the recurrence of disasters, sometimes in the same territories. Therefore, many disaster scholars sought ways to bring together the temporal planes of memory and emergency, by deploying urban heritage discourses in disaster risk management processes (Le Blanc, 2016) to transform post-disaster recovery into preventive opportunities (Moatty & Vinet, 2012). Others critically engaged with the discourses of learning from the past and adapting to an unforeseeable future, by highlighting the temporal complexity of memory work through concepts such as "prospective" (Kroepsch et. al., 2018) or "pre-emptive" (Mazzucchelli & Panico, 2021) memory in disaster contexts. All those works made an important contribution to extend our understanding of the relationship between social memory and disasters by tracing how the former gets informed by our perceptions of the future. Here, I am attempting to a similar task, albeit in reverse, by exploring how a retrospective look is imminent to the residents' perceptions and actions facing an upcoming emergency. Ambiguous seismic time, in that sense, not

only engenders the ongoing uncertainty and increased risk with references to futurity, but also includes an orientation towards a catastrophic past, a memory work in progress, to make sense of the present.

In his illuminating research, Erol Gülüm (2024) explores the catastrophic Istanbul Earthquake scenarios circulating among the social media users in Turkey, to analyze the ways in which the collective future-oriented thinking takes shape in disaster contexts. He finds out that those speculative scenarios make direct references to past earthquakes, most frequently to the 1999 Marmara Earthquake[29], to imagine the possible course of events, the extent of destruction, and the details of the daily socio-material life following the grand Istanbul Earthquake (Gülüm, 2024). He concludes that, in the context of disasters, "memory serves as a valuable resource for imagining the future, while future thinking can trigger conscious or unconscious acts of recollection" (p. 12). The time of the disasterland is ambiguous, as "its on-goings and their effects are stretched across time and space, therefore often [they remain] latent and invisible until they materialize as symptom; sometime, somewhere." (Adam & Groves, 2007, p. 179) In the context of Gülüm's research the posts on a specific social media platform disseminating elaborate earthquake scenarios were symptomatic of the fragmentations and multiplicities inherent the *chronotope* of disasters in Turkey that could go unnoticed otherwise. Adopting a similar critical theoretical position, I would like to explore the limits, failures, or fissures of the emergency governance technologies in both addressing the material destruction caused by disasters and in keeping people engaged into the micro and macro level

[29] The data for Gülüm's research is retrieved from the social media forum called EkşiSözlük where the users have long been discussing the expected Istanbul Earthquake, dating way back to 2002 and amounting to more than 9000 entries in total. Vast majority of the entries were written before the Turkey-Syria Earthquake and this is primarily why 1999 Marmama Earthquake emerges as the main mnemonic epicentre in those posts.

protocols of preparedness and safety, by looking at the symptomatic temporal shifts displayed by a search and rescue team in the making.

Search and rescue, by nature, denotes a post-emergency practice but as can be seen in my fieldwork discussion so far, the pedagogies of search and rescue is inseparable from the discourses of preparedness, if not prevention, in Turkey given the recurrence of razing earthquakes. This is why, the search and rescue professionals in Turkey strongly invest in institutionalized disaster preparedness protocols in their training sessions but they also bear hands-on testimony on, or has been personally a victim of, the past earthquakes in Turkey and their destructive outcomes. Their shifting positionalities as rescuers and (potential) victims in preparing for and recovering from disasters also become manifest in how they temporally situate themselves with regards to impending emergencies.

In the upcoming sections, I will discuss three temporal shifts that I have identified, figuring in the professional practice as well as the daily social life of my informants in alignment with the entangled temporal tonalities of emergency and memory. In each section I will extend my level of analysis by analyzing my informants' engagement with seismic time as search and rescue staff, as residents of Istanbul, and citizens of Turkey; respectively. The first section will discuss the temporal leaps within what I call "as-if" performances, i.e. the tasks that are pre-determined in light of an elaborate emergency scenario that aims to prepare search and rescuers for real emergency situations in advance. I will show that unexpected apparitions of the past, past earthquakes specifically, can destabilize those scenarios by pointing out to their limits in exhausting the multiplicity of possibilities in real emergency scenarios, or by directly challenging its relevance for disaster preparedness.

The second section will follow another temporal shift, in which my informants as residents of Istanbul, seem to have switched from a state of emergency to a state of endurance, due to the structural limitations they face in improving their "non-earthquake resistant" living conditions. Here, I will first emphasize the contrast between their sustained enrollment into individual rituals of safety; and their expressions of helplessness, hopelessness, or acceptance, that go against the logics of emergency identified with heightened awareness and a stronge urge to take immediate action. I will argue that, rather than resulting in mere inaction, my informants' experiences of arduous wait and multilayered immobilities generate new social interactions that reveal the limits of, if not challenge, the legal and institutional frameworks trying to govern not only the deepening housing crisis and but also the ways in which the residents behave in the context of a looming earthquake.

In the last section, I will explore how the team engages with a specific discourse of forgetfulness that portray Turkish citizens as permanent amnesiacs, arguably the most frequently mobilized theme recently in Turkey in the context of disasters. I will show that the team members do not recognize themselves as remembering subjects although they regularly engage in memory work, due to the existing memory discourses in Turkey attempting at redefining what forgetfulness refers to. I will show how the latter gets inflated in time and scope, noticeable in the widely accepted claim that "people have forgotten about the earthquake", that implies both moving on from the past sufferings and being unaware of the future seismic risks. I will explore how this specific discourse of forgetfulness can be considered as a disaster governance tool, where the state not only redistributes responsibility but also blame to individual citizens, striving on their guilt from being, or their fear of becoming, forgetful of earthquakes.

4.2 As-if: Rehearsing the catastrophe



Figure 5. A first-aid dummy in SAP's classroom, photo taken by the author

This is Osman (Fig. 5). Although I struggle to refer to him as an "it", since Osman has been an active part of our daily social interactions in the classroom, it is a first-aid dummy. As its metal joints have gotten loose and its chest region has collapsed for having been used so frequently, given that it is the only available dummy with full limbs at SAP's place, Osman always looks like he is on the verge of fainting or straight up sad. Sitting right on the classroom entrance, Osman does not go without being acknowledged by the team members either with a greeting, or by jokingly checking out if he is okay, when we meet for our training sessions.[30] He has a life of his own among the team, even a tragic background story.[31] But Osman stops existing

[30] "Vay Osman özleştik ha" (*Hey buddy, I missed you*), "N'oldu biraz efkarlı duruyorsun", (*Are you okay? You seem a bit depressed*)

[31] A group of three women, who regularly see eachother besides the team meetings, mentioned how they imagine Osman as suffering from a major heartbreak because his parents did not let him marry the girl he loved. They say, "Yazık, karasevdadan meczuba dönmüş" *(Poor thing, he lost it because of bad romance)*

as a worn out character when he is literally called onto duty[32] by the instructor, to shapeshift into a hypothetical victim that needs to be helped. Once the first-aid practice starts, Osman can become someone, for example, suffering from a heatstroke after spending hours in sauna, or a careless teen that jumped into the sea headfirst and may have broken his neck.




Figure 6 & 7. (6) the author practicing recovery position, (7) the instructor fixing a broken knee using mops

The whole first-aid practical training after going over theoretical modules is based on those mini-scenarios where the team members are invited to engage into a kind of roleplay, not only as future first-aid practitioners (Fig.6) but at times also finding themselves at the receiving end of first-aid (Fig. 7). The roleplay in question not only includes the right procedures to be followed but also the right attitude to be displayed during emergencies. Therefore, following the script is not sufficient, one needs to immerse themselves into the act *as if* there is a real emergency. For instance, I immensely struggled in performing the roleplay in a post-accident scenario where I

[32] "Osman seni buraya alalım" (*Osman, we need you here)*

was expected to calm down survivors and fend off bystanders to provide first aid to those in need. Of course, there was no real accident in question, and I was just speaking to the wall I was facing. Not feeling a genuine sense of urgency, my voice was weak and void of excitement. It was as if I was repeating the lines I had memorized. A member clapped her hands, not to applaud but to warn me:

> "Zeynep! Zeynep! Believe in it. [pointing at the dummy] Look, she is lying unconscious, there is blood oozing from her ear. You won't be able to stand so calmly [in the event of an accident]. You will hear people shouting, you will have to deal with curious ones. You are not lecturing at school; it is an emergency. Let's try it once again." (Aslı, personal communication, Appendix A.19)

The details of the script can change, so does the required intervention, but still there is an overarching scenario that is expected to be relied on regardless of the context, which can be summarized in the maxim of "Look, Listen, and Feel" *(Bak, dinle, hisset)*. This is where the first-aid practitioner sensorily engages with the injured person to assess the degree and the type of damage that they have endured. So, the standard procedure goes like this: First, one gives vocal stimulus to the person lying down: "Are you okay?" If there is no answer, one gives tactile stimulus by firmly tapping on the victim's shoulder. If still no response, one proceeds to lean over the victim's chest, to hold their hand beneath the victim's nose, and to observe if their chest goes up and down to make sure if there is a heartbeat and if the person breathes. Each stage of the scenario strictly depends on if the patient responds to the stimuli or not. As first-aid dummies have no such capability[33], the trainees answer on their behalf, disrupting the otherwise immersive atmosphere of the roleplay.

[33] The first-aid instructor mentioned some latest technology first-aid dummies that have light sensors on, to let the trainees know if they apply correct amount of pressure to the correct place. It would be fruitful to think about how those new interactive technologies would figure in the execution of those scripts.

Those moments are when the gaps between a real emergency and a "persuasive game" (Bogost, 2007) become visible, partly because the "as if" character of play in this context "is maintained by some degree of metacommunication, i.e., of exchanging signals" (Bateson, 1969, p. 179) which would carry the message that the undertaken activity is indeed play. While my lack of enthusiasm did not go along with the groups' shared signals settling the boundaries between play and real life, ventriloquizing the dummies to follow the required procedure is a collectively recognized signal where the team temporarily answers to the question that the very form of attentive play raises: "Is this real?" (Watanabe, 2021, p. 242); by collectively saying "No this is play". This shows the reader that those gaps between real life and play, as well as the extent to which the readymade scripts can exhaust real life contingencies, hardly go unnoticed by the team members. Often someone asks a question to the instructor adding a new challenge or detail to the given scenario, taking departure from their real-life experiences or just out of curiosity. For example, one of the team members reflected on his personal experience in post-earthquake Iskenderun, and asked the trainer how to put someone into recovery position if there is very little space around. Coming from a similar place, another member inquired how to preserve severed limbs if there is no ice or cold material readily available. But nonetheless, those interruptions did not amount to a strong sense of derealization among team members that radically dismantles the practical applicability of the procedure. Those remarks of team members largely appear as an attempt to have a stronger command on first-aid by covering as many scenarios as possible, rather than openly challenging the soundness or the relevance of the practice.

Erving Goffman provides thought provoking insights on the performative aspects of social interactions through the concepts of "theater" (1959) and "ritual" (1967). On one hand, social interactions are akin to theatrical performances where individuals engage in constant impression management to present themselves in favorable ways to others. (Goffman, 1959) Rather than an endeavor of an "active, prior, conscious, and performing self" (Gregson & Rose, 2000, p. 433) on a neutral *stage,* those performances are exchanges among socially constructed selves in a performative field saturated with power. This change in perspective can be elucidated in our activities described above, simultaneously containing the "Performance" (a pre-given scenario) where the subjects deliberately condition themselves to follow a given script; and their lay performances, that could easily fall off one's radar, where the participants try to impress the instructor or monitor others' engagement with the collaborative task to reassure their acceptance among a professional group. The performative edge of the search and rescue practice was again present in my previous discussions concerning how different USAR teams sought to manage the outsiders' impressions of them, by negotiating and contesting their tokens of expertise during their joint fieldwork experiences. On the other hand, performance is not a singular event isolated in time, as certain behaviors and interactions become standardized and repetitive in rituals, eventually serving to establish and reproduce social norms, roles, and expectations, thus, providing a sense of order and predictability (Goffman, 1967). In our case, the repetition of the performative tasks not only help the members in getting accustomed to the professional practice that is expected from them, but also create a common code of conduct within the team ranging from minor stuff like inside jokes to deeper levels of intimacy around shared struggles.

I will now move on to describe a much more elaborate "as-if" scenario, a joint earthquake and fire drill, an epitome of preparing for a disastrous future as if it is "already 'here' as a site for active intervention". (Adams et. al., 2009, p. 259) The drill in question took place in a neighborhood of Istanbul, on a debris of a building that was deliberately demolished, as part of the urban transformation program of the district's municipality clearing out high-risk buildings. Across the debris, lies conveniently an empty site that was designated as the coordination and gathering place for the rescuers. The whole area was closed to traffic as of 10 a.m. in the morning, so that the participants can arrange their equipment and explore the debris beforehand. Majority of the participants were employed in the municipality, either directly as USAR personnel or working in related fields such as environmental/geological engineering and urban planning. But there were also other independent groups, for instance, a mini team comprised of bikers, and a couple of civil initiatives including SAP.

Imagine a group, including me, arriving at the scene as early as 11 a.m., quickly taking a tour in and around the debris, meeting and greeting new people, and getting eventually charged with the duty of staying in the coordination tent due to having no command on cutting drilling tools, as well as little knowledge of the individual safety issues working in a debris. As coordination problems are emergent and contingent upon the complex and often unpredictable interactions between USAR teams and other actors in the immediate aftermath of disasters, it was a nominal duty for the drill since the latter generally relies on a pre-given scenario. The coordination tent and its surroundings, therefore, were filled with non-USAR staff such as urban planners and engineers, doing nothing but chatting with each other while watching the well-equipped teams testing their equipment, doing a rehearsal of

a rehearsal in a sense. The two rescue dogs of the municipality's USAR team have quickly become a source of joy for the ones in the coordination site, watching their trainers play fetch with them (Fig. 8). Positive remarks were circulating on how well thought out the event was, regarding logistics such as meals and snacks (Fig. 9), as well as its realism since one could notice that the so-called survivors were applying fake blood and coal residues on their clothes, as if they were theater actors getting prepared in the backstage. Overall, everyone agreed that the municipality had put much attention to even the smallest details and did not act stingy in making necessary expenditures for this drill, that they seemed to take very seriously.



Figure 8 & 9. (8) A trainer playing fetch with a rescue dog, (9) Participants having lunch, photos taken by the author

After this initial context that will hopefully give the reader an idea of the general atmosphere of our drill setting, let me now describe how the main event unfolded. Here is the complete drill scenario that was disseminated to the participants a day before, coupled with my fieldwork notes (on the right side of the table) depicting what we were actually doing during the timestamps marked in the official script.

Scenario: On February 18, 2024, at 13.05, an earthquake with a magnitude of 6.3 takes place, with the epicenter in the Marmara Sea region. The earthquake has an impact throughout Istanbul. In the X district, 5 buildings are completely collapsed, and it is reported that there are residents trapped under the rubble. A secondary fire starts in one of the collapsed buildings. The incident was declared as Stage 1 by AFAD.[34]

Table 1. Flow of Events

Timestamp	Original Script	Fieldwork Notes
13.05	The earthquake takes place.	Just had our second meal of the day, two hours after our breakfast
13.10	USAR teams and the fire department are notified.	Chatting with people nearby the coordination tent while watching a group play with a rescue dog
13.25	USAR teams and firefighters arrive at the scene.	Waiting for the mayor to arrive
13.30:	Firefighters intervene to the fire.	Still waiting for the mayor to arrive, fire rescuers are testing their equipment.
13.50	The fire gets put out and a survivor is evacuated.	Someone says mayor will arrive in a couple of minutes, so we start to line up to welcome him
13.55	Debris site is assessed, and the required procedure is decided.	Still waiting for the mayor, taking group pictures
14.00	Search efforts are initiated.	Still waiting
14.05	Rescue efforts are initiated for three victims who were found alive under the rubble.	Still waiting
14.30	Two of the survivors are rescued and transferred to the paramedics on stretchers.	Mayor finally arrives. He is giving a brief thank you speech to the participants.
14.35	The remaining survivor who could not be evacuated on a stretcher is carried to the upper floors with the help of a tripod.	The debris starts burning, hard to see what is going on due to smoke.
15.00	The survivor is transported to the ground via overhead line.	Firefighters put the fire out.
15.15	End of the scenario	Search begins.

[34] Stage 1: Local resources are sufficient, Stage 2: Support of joint provinces is needed, Stage 3: National level support is needed, Stage 4: International support is needed.

One could quickly say this was just a “bad drill”, as many of the participants complained throughout the day, indicative of a lack of discipline visible in our failure to stick with the timeline in the script from the get-go. Indeed, the so-called search and rescue just started around 3 p.m., that is, the moment which was indicated as the “end of the scenario” in the official program, revealing an appalling delay. On one hand, delay is imminent to the logic of response, stemming from the tension between “acting in an ‘interval’ as a space-time of emergence and the generation of ‘intervals’ for action.” (Anderson, 2015, p. 14) This logic is already crystallized in the official script where USAR teams arrive at the scene fifteen minutes after the earthquake takes place, and then we see succeeding intervals with specified plans of action, using different tools and approaches for evacuation. Hence, no matter how small, delay is an integral, and arguably inevitable, component of response; but the one we see here necessitates a new discussion on the politics of delay that goes beyond the ones that are pre-defined in the scripts of intervention, or delays after real emergencies. What can an apparent delay in a drill, that was designated to arrest time in the first place, tell us about the daily politics of emergency governance in Turkey?

As seen in the above table, much of the time of the participants were spent waiting for the mayor to arrive at the site. This delay, first of all, stretched the period that we have spent in this liminal environment that is catastrophic on one hand, hosting cosplayers of survivors, USAR teams, ambulances, and fire trucks; and strangely mundane on the other, consisting of playful moments and small chats (fig. The disastrousness of our setting, albeit artificial, triggered new conversations among us where we exchanged our ideas on and experiences of earthquakes. But at the same time, our initial heightened awareness of our surroundings began to gradually dissolve into a sense of familiarity as we waited for hours before the real scenario

begins. The following example will further clarify this liminality: I listened carefully when, a member of the biker group, also a fellow compatriot (*hemşehri)* from Iskenderun, started to describe me some devastating post-earthquake scenes that he had witnessed at first-hand in Hatay. Blood, stench of dead bodies, severed limbs and many more details that would make someone sick to their stomach. He said he could not find the words to explain the sense of terror he had felt. Then he noticed an acquaintance, a woman cosplaying one of the survivors, and waved his hand to invite her to join us. She came by limping with a clear expression of pain on her face. "How was it?" she asked, for us to rate her roleplay portraying an injured person. When an actor acting injured jumps into our conversation about the real ones drenched in blood; the irreconcilable gap between a real emergency and its rehearsal gets uncannily exposed. Now under full awareness of the play status of this activity, the biker said: "And this is our beloved injured (person)"[35], to introduce her to me.

As our waiting period got elongated, those who have a smaller role in the unfolding of the scenario began to question why they were present at the scene doing nothing at all for hours. Starting as relatively small complaints due to boredom, some participants eventually made more general remarks about the ineptitude and nonchalance of state institutions in Turkey. "How can one believe that the state would act timely during disasters when it cannot even make it to a drill?"[36] said one of them. Beyond a mere hindrance to the event in question, the mayor gets to perceived as an embodiment of the state and its inaction when it comes to disasters in Turkey. A relatively insignificant delay in a drill now triggers a familiar political imagery of absent state, that become manifest in the immediate aftermath of the Turkey-Syria Earthquake, in victims' three days long arduous and hopeless wait for

[35] "*Aha bu da bizim yaralı"*
[36] *"Daha tatbikata yetişemeyen devlet afete mi yetişecek?"*

rescue. Another significant component of this political imagery is the desperate attempts of Turkish governmental institutions to keep the fantasy of the competent state intact. As the drill progressed, it has gradually turned into a caricature of the state attempting to compensate its delay through conspicuous displays of grandeur.



Figure 10 & 11. Drone shots of the municipality

When someone told the crowd that the mayor will be arriving in a couple of minutes, the general mood of our environment has drastically changed. We lined up to welcome him and the drones of the municipality started to fly above our heads taking videos (Fig. 10 & 11). Team leaders made their team members all wear their helmets, even if most of them had nothing to do with the debris area. Then the mayor has finally arrived, first apologized for being late, and gave a very brief thank you speech to all comers. He shook hands with the team leaders and proceeded to the

debris area to watch the rescue, along with a couple of administrators from the municipality accompanying him. After he left the coordination area, someone said "anyways, it was worth coming after all"[37], not referring to the initiation of the actual drill but to the fact that the mayor himself arrived in the scene. We removed our helmets and made some self-depreciating jokes to deal with feeling useless, as our only engagement with the real drill scenario was those couple of minutes when we lined up and listened to the mayor's speech. I took out the walkie-talkie from my pocket that Rüstem had given me beforehand, and jokingly said, of course without pressing the button, "emergency, there is an emergency" as if I was someone in command. Meanwhile at the debris area, the rescuers were evacuating the survivors through a tunnel system (Fig. 12 & 13) while the mayor and his committee were standing right at its exit. They were watching the survivors coming out as if they were watching a baby emerging from the womb.



Figure. 12 & 13 (12) The tunnel system from the inside of the building, (13) Exit of the tunnel system, photos taken by the author

At that point, it became clear that the drill was less about acting *as-if* an earthquake took place, than behaving *as if* there is a hands-on state in a disaster-stricken region.

[37] "*Neyse geldiğimize değdi en azından"*

Through the delayed arrival of the mayor, the participants first became hyperaware of the "not-real" status of the drill, as they had more free time to engage with the liminalities of a catastrophic everyday. And secondly, the drill turns into a reenactment of a belated state sporting a make-believe sublime, as past disasters triggered familiar political imageries through their evocative power. This is how eventually, a preparedness protocol which is by nature instrumental and instructive has turned into a self-referential performance for the participants, completely losing its touch with its wider goals for disaster preparedness. Perhaps this is why before leaving the area, Kerim approached me and said apologetically: "You may have not had the opportunity to see much, but at least you've experienced the atmosphere"[38]. Although the drill hardly contributed to my practical knowledge on search and rescue, what I saw offered me invaluable ethnographic insight that I have tried to illustrate in this section.

4.3 From State of Emergency to State of Endurance

Earthquakes do not only emerge as destructive forces in Istanbul's urban life but as a fundamental "terrain of urban politics" (Angell, 2014: 676) through which residents and various institutions negotiate their capacities to recognize and act upon existing precarities in Istanbul. Each time a destructive earthquake takes place in Turkey no matter where its epicenter is, Istanbul, with its fragile buildings and dense population acts as a centrifuge absorbing the existing realities of the destruction in another geography into an anticipatory state. Right after the 1999 Marmara Earthquake, 2011 Van Earthquake, and 2020 İzmir Earthquake, disaster experts have been quick to point out a more destructive earthquake expected to take place in Istanbul (Angell, 2014). After a surge of public panic accompanied by intense circulation of possible

[38] "Belki çok bir şey görmeye fırsatın olmadı ama en azından bir havasını soludun ortamın"

micro and micro level earthquake risk mitigation strategies, those anxieties generally gradually dissolve until another earthquake took place. This cycle was also present in the aftermath of the Turkey-Syria earthquake, where earthquake-resistance tests, ground characteristics and construction materials became a hot topic for Istanbulites[39]. As months passed by, those heated debates eventually lost their momentum and ceased to be an alarming topic fully exhausting residents' daily discussions, although the upcoming earthquake still sporadically emerged in social media debates and in other venues. Acknowledging this familiar pattern, keeping people alert to the earthquakes have been a paramount interest to disaster professionals in Turkey, both in the immediate aftermath of an existing destruction and after its reverberations subside; through projects such as "sustainable earthquake awareness" (Budak & Kandil, 2023). However, to what extent they could escape from this cycle of heightened awareness and familiarization becomes questionable, as we will shortly see in the remarks of my informants. In this section, I will be focusing on the experiences of the team members in dealing with their non-earthquake resistant living conditions as residents of Istanbul, where they seem to have shifted from a state of emergency to a state of endurance.

The widespread devastation after the Turkey-Syria Earthquake, unsurprisingly enabled a ground for Istanbulites to take "anticipatory action […] that render specific futures present" (Anderson, 2010, p. 777) by mobilizing imaginaries of a post-apocalypse Istanbul in the ruins, through previously mentioned tools such as risk maps, projections, and detailed descriptions. That logic also figures in the

[39] Please see the social media forum discussion initiated a day after Turkey-Syria Earthquake took place. It starts by the question: "After the last earthquake, 5775 buildings have collapsed and countless buildings became unusable. Celal Sengör [geologist] said once again that a devastating earthquake will take place in Istanbul. So, how do you know that the building you inhabit is earthquake resistant?" https://www.technopat.net/sosyal/konu/oturdugunuz-bina-saglam-mi.2376548/

residents' relationship with their home environments as they are again invited to reimagine their households and their surroundings as a potential debris, to identify the high-risk areas and to create a plan of action. Presented with endless catastrophic possibilities and a relatively limited repertoire of action for the reasons that will be elaborated shortly, the residents are advised to enroll their buildings into earthquake resistance tests, prepare emergency kits, rearrange and bolt their pieces of furniture, get informed about nearby open spaces for assembly, and collaborate with neighbors to create a plan of action; within the scope of "non-structural risk mitigation" (Angell, 2014, p. 670).

This was visible in my informants' risk-mitigation practices regarding their living environment. For instance, if their house is closer to the ground floor, the windows or balconies become their potential escape routes, yet if a collapse takes place they will most definitely not survive. If it is on a higher floor they must stay indoors during the earthquake and crouch down in a relatively secure area, that is generally near the main column of their flat. If the building collapses on its own, they still have a chance but if it collapses forward or back, again they are not likely to survive. Even people living in the same apartment complex need to adopt different strategies to secure a best possible outcome depending on the floor they reside. Some members have also organized mini drills with their families and flat mates and invited their neighbors to make an evacuation plan with all the residents in the apartment complex. They adopted different strategies to increase their scenarios proximity to a real earthquake by either detailing the steps or trying to simulate an earthquake's unpredictability.

> We don't have a special earthquake bag, we put the supplies in my cat's carrier bag. We also keep wet food in it so that when there is an earthquake, it can somehow find us. We decided to try it at home once, as a family, to see if we could make him come near us. He flew away when he heard the sound of

> the food bag (laughs). But I don't know, in such a situation, he will probably hide in the cupboard or something because of the noise, I don't think he will come. Still, they somehow save themselves, I think people are slower anyway. For example, there was one in the rubble in Hatay that got fat because it tore apart the food bag (laughs) (Beyza, personal communication, Appendix A.20)

> It's not perfect when you plan it in advance. You are conscious of it after all. It doesn't create the same effect. We tried something else once. We turned on the alarm section of our phone, closed our eyes and set an alarm for a random time. Then, when that alarm went off, we immediately stood ready, no matter what we were doing. It doesn't matter whether you're in the shower, on the toilet, or sleeping. The moment you hear the alarm, you will rush out. (Baran, personal communication, Appendix A.21)

Here we see that, Istanbul and its buildings are socio-scientifically constructed as a "faulty environment" not only in a physical, but also in a normative sense; as an expected devastating earthquake is "inimical to the constructions of place and home in terms of values such as security and well-being" (Simmons, 2003, p. 81). Rather than being a safe space where one relaxes, the home environment of the residents now becomes a possible source of danger that they need to address, but most importantly assess, as the urban context of each building may differ from one another. Therefore, they require a more nuanced understanding of the extent of their building's earthquake resistance than relying on a universal script of earthquake preparedness. Accordingly, they use various criteria and indicators to evaluate their apartments' earthquake resistance including the age of the building, the suitability of ground material for construction, settlement density around the household, what floor is the flat on, and visual cues such as cracks and sheddings. Even their flat is relatively recently constructed[40] a ground-level shop that removes its main colon to

[40] "Real estate listings [in Istanbul] frequently emphasize that an advertised building is 'deprem sonrası', [built] after the earthquake, or compliant with "deprem yönetmeliği", earthquake regulations." (Angell, 2014, p. 670)

gain extra space can jeopardize all inhabitants, as many buildings have collapsed due to this exact practice in the Turkey-Syria Earthquake. Some members expressed that they were once content with their flats' location and surroundings, and enjoyed spending time in their household with friends, before the earthquake of the February 6th took place. But in the weeks following the earthquake their home environment suddenly became suffocating, claustrophobic, and unsafe for them. This shows that the sense of panic, anxiety and fear that they have experienced are "affects generated by space and the non-human environment" (Navaro-Yashin, 2012, p. 161), as much as they are byproducts of traumatic events and their accompanying discourses of risk management.

> I couldn't sleep for a few days when I returned from [Iskenderun], I mean, from what I saw there, one feels as if one is lying in one's own coffin. I couldn't even take a shower comfortably, wondering how I could throw myself out naked if an earthquake took place. I was a stinker for a week. […] Also, I had just moved into a brand new flat. But you can never fully trust who did it and how. […] Then you get used to it somehow, otherwise you'd go crazy. (Beyza, personal communication, Appendix A.22)

> I went down to our basement looking for seashells[41], if you saw it you would think I was crazy (laughs). […] I kept asking things like if the ceiling collapses this or that way and the cabinet fell down here or there[…] would there be a life triangle? The inside of the house was like a grocery store, with chips and crackers in every corner. Then my wife was done with it and said, "I'm tired of cleaning up after you." I mean I don't do it for the pleasure of it, but she did not listen after all. She made me pick them all up, for, you know, in case a guest came and saw the house messy. We're going to die just wondering what the world will say. […] But on the other hand, after what I saw [in Iskenderun] I find myself saying, what's the use of chips and chocolates once the building collapses over you. (Kerim, personal communication, Appendix A.23)

[41] Rüstem is making a reference to the widely circulating images from post-earthquake Hatay that display pieces from the debris with seashells in it. Finding seashells in a building's construction material is indicative of the fact that the contractors added cheap material, such as sand, to the construction mix to reduce their costs but eventually jeopardizing the safety of the inhabitants. Please see the news titled "Seashells Have Been Discovered in a Debris in Hatay" (H*atay'da Bina Enkazından Deniz Kabuğu Çıktı)* bhttps://www.diken.com.tr/hatayda-bina-enkazindan-deniz-kabugu-cikti/

So far, we have seen a picture perfect representation of how anticipatory logics enroll people into rituals of safety by not only mobilizing micro and macro level tools for risk mitigation, but also creating an affective economy of hope and fear (Adams. Et. al., 2009). Therefore, on one hand, one can see how the team members have reconfigured their material living conditions along an anticipatory temporality, invoked by an apocalyptic imaginary of a disaster yet-to-come. However, the above excerpts hint at another state of inhabiting a faulty space that cannot be solely explained by calculative and risk averse action. Both members describe their mental state in the immediate aftermath of the Turkey-Syria earthquake as a descent into madness but later express a sense of acceptance and moving on. While Beyza considers moving on as a coping mechanism that prevents her from going totally off the rails, Baran disarmingly accepts his vulnerability facing a catastrophe whose damage will inevitably exceed his personal efforts. This shift in attitude became crystallized for me when I was having a small chat with Kerem in the backyard of SAP's place. He pointed at the wall of the building across us (fig. 14) and started to explain:

> Look, see that building over there? All the buildings in Kağıthane are like this, including ours. Normall, just because a building is tall does not mean that it is more likely to collapse. They construct those accordingly. So it can take that momentum when it swings. But when two different buildings share a single wall like this, it cannot make that oscillation. The better scenario would be if it collapses on itself. But usually they collapse forward or backward, demolishing its surroundings like dominoes. (Yağız, personal communication, Appendix A.24)

I learned that Kerem was residing in a high-risk flat that would probably collapse but also create secondary destructive effects on its surroundings once a major earthquake takes place in Istanbul. But it was just a passing remark that he made, to explain to me the structural dynamics of buildings in terms of seismic risk. When I asked him if they had considered moving out, he said they have been residing in the same flat for

many years and it was very close to his brother's school. He did not mention anything about the earthquake or exuded any sense of urgency. Rather what he was focusing on was the mundane details that each person would take into consideration when choosing a place to inhabit.

In her study on how disaster professionals who reside in Istanbul deal with earthquake risk, Neumann (2018) discussed a similar emotional landscape oscillating between anxiety and cynicism. Inspired by Sara Ahmed's conceptualization, she invites us to consider those experts as "affect aliens", bearing sustained awareness of and anxiety for the upcoming earthquake, that they failed to communicate to their non-expert acquaintances who remain cynical and fail to take purposeful action (Neumann, 2018). There were many times that Neumann's informants laughed facing what they could not accomplish in dealing with the future catastrophe, but this laughter again served to "fight against feelings of fear and anxiety in their daily jobs […] as a type of release valve" (2018, p. 50). Anxious experts on one hand, and indifferent non-professional residents on the other; those professionals presented themselves as figures attempting to raise awareness among those immersed in cynicism. Neumann (2015) acknowledges that this is an essentialized way of seeing people, paralleling my previous remarks on the Occidentalist boundary work between professional and non-professional circles in the context of disasters. However, Neumann still argues that there is a notable emotional distancing and communicative gap between disaster experts and non-expert locals in Istanbul, as she frequently mobilizes the concept of "affect alien" to describe their relationship.

My fieldwork findings do not fully support this perspective, as my informants, despite their continuous attempts to invite their loved ones to get prepared, do not attempt to distinguish themselves emotionally or complain about

how their loved ones are not aware of the risks that the earthquake generates. Their remarks on fatalism, unawareness, or ignorance nearly always operate through larger categories such as Turkish people (we/ our people) or Turkish culture, rather than specifically targeting the non-professional residents of Istanbul. Although at times they get disappointed when people around them do not care to take action, such as Beyza's previous statement on how she failed to convince her neighbors to perform a drill, those remarks do not set the tone when it comes to their reflections on their precarious living conditions in Istanbul. I strongly believe that this difference between Neumann's and my own findings stems from the deepening urban crisis in Istanbul in the last years that strictly limits residents' options to take meaningful preemptive action, and the extensive destruction caused by the recent Turkey-Syria earthquake that hampered people's belief in the relevance of individual precautions.

My informants seem to adopt a language of common suffering, such as "it is impossible to move out in these circumstances", "no one can buy a house in İstanbul right now"; rather than emotionally distancing themselves from the other locals. They resort to expressions such as "elim kolum bağlı"[42], to reflect on their multilayered immobilities in the midst of an ongoing urban plight in Istanbul. They often express their inability to change their existing status quo, say, by moving into a more earthquake resistant flat, due to the turmoil stirring the housing market in Istanbul. The latter becomes manifest in the unaffordable property prices, stemming from a combination of reasons, including but not limited to the construction boom resulting in overdevelopment in certain areas many of which so far escaped legal regulations, urban transformation projects triggering stark controversies among residents (Angell, 2014), refreshed concerns about housing quality due to the

[42] A Turkish idiom that literally translates as "my arms and hands are tied"

expected earthquake, and the wider economic instability in Turkey with rising inflation rates and ongoing currency depreciation.

On paper, Istanbulites have room for maneuver at the dawn of the Istanbul Earthquake, not solely by micro-managing their daily practices but through new institutional and legal arrangements designed to increase their safety. The most obvious one is to enroll one's building in an earthquake resistance test, that is performed by a variety of actors including municipalities, state-sponsored city planning organizations, and independent private construction firms (Keskin, 2023). While the latter option is not affordable for most of the residents, state institutions have a track record of deliberately circulating unreliable data to appease the public outburst in many instances such as the number of COVID cases[43], inflation rates,[44] and lastly, the death toll of the Turkey-Syria Earthquake[45]. Moreover, if one lives in an apartment complex with other residents and if they do not have the luxury to afford individual testing, more than half of the inhabitants should agree to undertake the test. Even if everything goes well and the building is registered for testing, the residents are legally forced to leave their household in case it turns out non-earthquake-resistant after testing. Unsurprisingly, none of my informants, whom I asked, enrolled their flats in a resistance test due to a combination of those aforementioned setbacks.

> At first we thought we'd have a core drilled, but then we heard core drilling was might damage the building, so we changed our minds. Though I later asked a professional about it, he said there was no such thing, that it was a lie.

[43] "Bütün anlatılanlar 'koca' bir yalan" (All that has been told [about COVID] is a big lie) *Hekim Sözü*, Istanbul Medical Chamber. (2020) https:// www.istabip.org.tr/site_icerik/2020/aralik/hekimsozu/h2_12.pdf

[44] Please see, "TÜİK'in enflasyon verileri neden tartışılıyor?" (What makes TUIK's inflation data polemical). *BBC News Türkçe.* https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler- turkiye-59779335

[45] "Depremde hayatını kaybedenlerin sayısı açıklanandan çok daha yüksek" (The death toll of the earthquake is much higher than announced). *Independent Türkçe.* https://www.indyturk.com/node/609596/haber/depremde-hayatını- kaybedenlerin-sayısı-açıklanandan-çok-daha-yüksek

> An engineer, Msci. But if you apply to the municipality, who knows when your turn will come? Also, our building was built after the [1999] earthquake, and the contractor is someone we know. That's why we considered it [core drilling] at first, but then we didn't bother with the issue. (Rüstem, personal communication, Appendix A.25)

> Of course not. My mother was very insistent about us getting it done. [knowing that our apartment building was built more than 40 years ago] But no one in the building will agree to undertake it anyway. At the end of the day if they say that the building is damaged, what will we do? Will we stay on the streets? At least, I am a tenant and there are people the apartment who reside in flats that they own. […] It's not possible, you can't convince them at all. (Aslı, personal communication, Appendix A.25)

On the other hand, after the Turkey-Syria Earthquake, many people started to search for newly built flats fearing the upcoming Istanbul Earthquake. The rise in demands led to a dramatic increase in prices of recently constructed flats and many landlords tried to seize the opportunity by forcing their tenants to leave, to rent the flat at a much higher price to newcomers. An empty flat is exempt from the newly implemented price regulations in the housing market and first-time renters need to pay whatever amount that the landlord demands. Aware of the deepening social conflict between tenants and landlords, the existing government implemented new regulations concerning housing prices, setting 25% as the maximum rate of yearly increase in rents for the landlords[46]. The tenants will have the legal upper hand if their landlord forces them to leave or increases the rent above the stated rate. Ironically, the Ministry of Finance claims that this intervention is designed in accordance with the current inflation rates, which proved to be understated from the onset of the financial crisis, accounting for nearly a third of the real inflation rate[47]. Therefore, those regulations cannot effectively function as a conflict resolution

[46] Ya evi boşalt ya fark öde! (Either Vacate Your Flat or Pay the Difference) in *Sabah.* https://www.sabah.com.tr/ekonomi/ya- evi-bosalt-ya-fark-ode-6423763

[47] Yıllık enflasyon TÜİK'e göre yüzde 43, ENAG'a göre yüzde 105: Verilere tepkiler ne oldu?. (Yearly inflation rate is 43% according to TUIK, but 105% according to ENAG: What do people say about the data?) *BBC Türkçe.* https://www.bbc.com/turkce/articles/cmj7yvz6v6ro

mechanism while new flats are outright unaffordable for the majority of the residents, the officially allowed limit for rent increase makes long-term renters suffer. That is the reason why, most of the tenants and landlords revert to informal and extralegal means to bargain on a reasonable rent that is more in touch with real economic circumstances.

For instance, I have the privilege to inhabit a freshly built flat in a central location in Istanbul with my partner, not because we are financially that well-off, but because we managed to form a friendly relationship with our landlord over the last couple of years. We live in the same apartment complex, and we often share meals and chat about the ongoings of our daily lives. Most importantly, as an older woman living alone, my landlord finds a sense of security and solace in neighboring young capable adults, in her own words, who can assist her for hospital visits and other daily struggles. I have been told numerous times how lucky I am to have such an understanding lady as my landlord, as currently, many landlords try to manipulate, intimidate, discourage, or even threaten their tenants to make them leave. This year, we collectively agreed to double our rent, which is still below the real inflation rate but dramatically above the officially allowed limit. Some residents, including me, have a chance to set our rents through a relatively peaceful process guided by social debt. For others, however, navigating their housing situation might be trickier.

> He [Aslı's landlord] is the mafiatic type, you know. Actually, I don't know if he has something to do with the mafia, but he's such a rude guy. He has been monitoring [our household] to see who's coming in and coming out. […] Look, we were giving 5000 [Turkish liras for rent] last year, he said, let's increase it to 15000 this year. Dude are you being serious? Okay, look, if he says 10000, we will agree, we are aware of the circumstances. But they [some landlords] have become carrion crows now, they are crazy. […] There was a period where he was constantly fighting us, shouting, threats… Then, my sister who is a lawyer, prepared something like a draft petition, showing everything regarding our housing situation. It had only been 2 months since we renewed the lease agreement, he had no right to force us out. So after that, he had to calm down a little. (Aslı, personal communication, Appendix A.26)

> He [Baran's landlord] said his son was going to move [into our flat]. For God's sake, who do you think you are trying to fool? The guy is married and started his own business in Germany, what will he do here? On the other hand, he also knows that if he forces me out and I prove that his son is not moving, everything will fall apart for him. But it is still nerve ranking to keep hearing "when do you think you can move out". You know what I did in the end? I said, I owned a flat in Üsküdar and my tenant will vacate the flat in a few months, so we can move there eventually. I asked for his understanding as it is nearly impossible to move out in these circumstances, and added that let's not upset each other and get in touch again after my tenant leaves. No, of course, there is no such house. […] Anyways, at least we had peace of mind for a few months. (Baran, personal communication, A.27)

Aslı endured harassment and threats that intersected her precarities regarding housing with patriarchal violence, when her tried to make her forcefully move out from the household she had every legal right to inhabit as her lease was valid for the rest of the year. But she was able to navigate her situation by appealing to the professional and bureaucratic undertones of "legal action" mentioning her sister who is a lawyer. Baran on the other hand, organized his wait around an ongoing exchange of small lies with his landlord, claimed to own a flat that is basically non-existent, just to keep him going for a couple more months. As Baran's, Aslı's and my own experiences with the ongoing housing crisis will hopefully show, the spatio-temporal effects of waiting in disaster contexts are heterogenous across individuals and groups occupying diverse positions in a myriad of power relations. However, those effects are not reducible to fixed positions across race, class, or gender, as they are also shaped through the complexities and contingencies of daily social interactions. Furthermore, those experiences not only destabilize the social relations among residents but also reveal the limits and loopholes of the existing regulatory frameworks in governing emergencies, the latter not only referring to a looming catastrophe but also to the ongoing housing crisis.

This multilayered urban crisis in the wake of the Istanbul Earthquake is now experienced by my informants not with "a perceived need to move fast, to act quick, to fix, to save, to repair, to restore" (Bonilla, 2020: 450) all symptomatic of an expectation of change. It seems that the inherent logic of emergency where it is expected to quickly dissolve into recovery (Bonilla, 2020), i.e. emergency as a temporary and unbearable state, does not hold anymore for most of the Istanbulites. Rather than a sharp shock reserved for an uncertain future, residents experience Istanbul Earthquake as a slow and structured spatio-temporal violence that compels them to live here and now (Heidbrink, 2022). But their spatio-temporal experiences of waiting and endurance in this context, are not mere catalysts of inaction (Sou & Howarth, 2023) as the wait of disaster does not imply suspension of time, nor it takes place "outside of doing things" (Gray, 2011: 421) but instead, it is an active process imprinting on the everyday social practices of the individuals. Hence, people's complex and often unpredictable interactions around their perceived stasis generate or point out to the fissures of the legal-institutional arrangements that attempt to predict and regulate their behavior in the first place.

> Sometimes I say we have done all what we could, the rest is resignation to God.[48] (Rüstem, personal communication)

Adams et. al. state that (2009, p.252), "if optimization entails the effort to secure one's own, one's family's, one's group's, or even one's population's 'best possible future,' it also entails the sense that it must be continually expansive in orientation to do so. That is, optimization means not only maximizing one's chances for a best possible future but also that the pursuit of the 'best possible' is legitimately infinite in its scope and always ongoing." (Adams. Et. al, 2009, p. 252). But Rüstem's

[48] *"Yapacağımızı yaptık diyorum bazen, gerisi biraz da tevekkül."*

statement makes us to rethink one of the central premises of anticipatory regimes that delineate optimization as an ever-going process without a definite end, since his resignation to God is a direct result of his lack of options to secure a better outcome, as much as it is about his religious devotion. All in all, in this brief discussion, I attempted to show how Istanbul residents' wait for disaster cannot solely be explained through anticipatory logics of emergency governance that push people to take quick action and ensured their sustained enrollment into micro and macro level safety rituals. While risk averse and optimizing behavior is one part of their relationship to the upcoming earthquake, they eventually shift into a state of endurance, not totally abandoning their safety protocols but recognizing their structurally enforced immobilities.

4.4 Subverting social memory

Before embarking on this research, I was primarily interested in the earthquake preparedness protocols and different kinds of pre-emptive behavior that search and rescuers invest in, in relation to their professional training. As I stated in my methodology section, I purposefully refrained from initiating conversations about the group's experiences in post-earthquake Iskenderun, or about any other past earthquake, thinking that those questions might trigger some unpleasant sentiments that they still seem to be struggling with. I also believed that, by not deliberately bringing up the past, I could observe how previous earthquakes naturally appear in my informants' training and daily discussions, rather than forcefully creating those associations myself. Regardless of my reservations, the Turkey-Syria Earthquake had a sustained presence in the daily social life of this team, as I also presented in the previous discussions, ranging from the smallest mundane exchanges, say about a

camping event that they were planning (Fig. 14), to their wider ideas about disaster preparedness and response. The interviews that I conducted with some of my informants about the expected Istanbul Earthquake, also eventually dissolved into unstructured chats where they reflected on their testimonies and personal experiences of post-earthquake Iskenderun. Therefore, it became clear to me that the Turkey-Syria Earthquake not only served as a "cataclysmic event" (Feuchtwang, 2000) that enabled the formation of this team, but also constituted a memory work in progress, that is constantly negotiated among the team members.



Figure 14. A screenshot from the team's Whatsapp group. One member offers to reserve some of the discounted camping equipment for those who might be interested. Another member responds by saying mobile toilets will come handy in the event of an earthquake as they were not available in post-earthquake Iskenderun.

4.4.1 Uchronic pursuits

On our second in-person gathering for training at SAP's place, Rüstem approached me and handed me a piece of paper during the break (Fig. 15), having heard that I was doing research on earthquakes. He introduced it as his "humble report on the Maraş Earthquake from the perspective of a volunteer",[49] and said he decided to share it with me, hoping that it could contribute to my research in some way. At first glance, I thought it was a breakdown of casualties and demolished buildings in Hatay, hence a kind of damage analysis. But there were also some numbers that Rüstem had calculated himself, where he presented, for instance, the number of search and rescue personnel and diggers required to respond simultaneously to those in need in Hatay. As I struggled to understand what Rüstem's report was really about, I kept on asking some additional questions to clarify what he tried to achieve by writing these out. Was it a simultaneous damage and needs analysis? Or was it about learning lessons from Hatay to avoid repeating the same mistakes in Istanbul?

[49] *"Bir gözlemcinin gözünden Maraş Depremi üzerine naçizane bir rapor"*

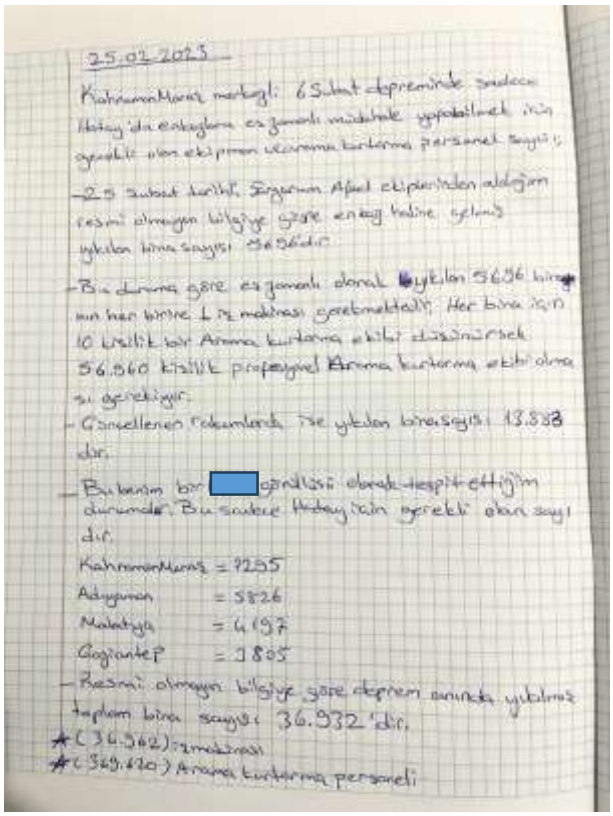


Figure 15. Rüstem's personal report on post-disaster Hatay, photo taken by the author.

Rüstem clarified it for me. What he was doing was imagining a post-disaster scenario in Hatay, where the extent of destruction has remained the same but not a single debris was left to its own fate. In other words, he was doing a retrospective projection about post-earthquake Hatay, trying to second guess how things would have unfolded if there had been enough search and rescue personnel and equipment immediately available in the affected region. Although it was the most evident in Rüstem's report, this kind of retrospective counterfactual thinking was present among the team members as to different aspects and details of the Turkey-Syria Earthquake, culminating in different kinds of discussions, some of which I have already touched upon: What if the army had been present in the field immediately after of the earthquake? What if this earthquake had taken place in Japan instead of Turkey? What could have gone differently if every citizen in Turkey had already

received mandatory training on basic first-aid? The examples can be multiplied but all of them involve an alternative version of a past experience. This kind of imagination that is made manifest in those diverse "what if" questions, is different from the anticipatory counterfactual thinking that is evident in the multiple "as-if" scenarios that the team regularly performs, where the team members engage in a "creative sabotage of the future" (Cooper, 2009) to imagine possible escape routes under the shadow of an ambiguous future. This time, they are destabilizing an otherwise stable past experience, thus, engage in a creative sabotage of the past, by altering the course of events, location, or apriori context of a past earthquake. I believe these alterations facilitate us to reflect on "the processes of distortion that constitute memory, in order to identify recurrent mechanisms and agents involved in them." (Zamponi, 2013, p. 2).

I suggest to explore this kind of retrospective counterfactual thinking through the concept of "uchronia"[50] which refers to the representation of "an alternative present, a sort of parallel universe in which different unfolding of a historical event had radically altered the universe as we know it" (Portelli, 1991, p. 100). Although the concept has its origins in science-fiction authorship, Portelli (1991) argues that similar temporal dispositions can be found in oral historical narratives. These narratives often emphasize not how a specific historical event unfolded, "but how it *coul*d, or *should* have gone, focusing on possibility rather than actuality" (p. 100, emphasis original). To some extent, this kind or imagination can help subjects to release their personal frustrations associated with the actual event (Portelli, 1991). This sentiment was prevalent among my informants, as they regularly expressed an

[50] The concept is coined by replacing the spatial emphasis of "utopia", which refers to a "nowhere place", with the Greek word "chronos"(time), hence defining "uchronia" as a nowhen event (Portelli, 1991).

unfulfilled or interrupted desire to have been able to do more in Iskenderun. They mentioned that, all too often they felt useless due to the sheer lack of coordination efforts, which inhibited them from taking meaningful action. Also, the extent of destruction they witnessed made it difficult for them to prioritize whom to help first, as there were thousands of people under the rubble and they could not offer a helping hand to everyone simultaneously.

Apart from helping subjects to come to terms with their personal frustrations, those uchronic imaginations reserve wider political critiques about a collectively witnessed historical event, as "the uchronic form allows the narrator to 'transcend' reality as given and to refuse to be identified and satisfied with the existing order" (Portelli, 1991, p. 108). The critical potential of uchronic imagination can be observed in both Rüstem's report and the periodically emerging "what-if" questions, as one can discern subtle assertions about how things ought to be from them. Those questionings could easily be transformed into clear political demands such as, for example, "the government should effectively mobilize the army during disasters regardless of its political reservations", or "every citizen of Turkey should be educated on first-aid". These uchronic narratives therefore involves not only a creative engagement with the past but also a critical engagement with the present. But the fact that those concerns are dominantly expressed in a uchronic form rather than direct statements, is symptomatic of a kind of social "aphasia", where a language that constructs a memorable past to make sense of present gets severely limited or distorted (Stoler, 2011). It might further indicate that the team struggles to produce narratives that "present political action as an intelligible mode of being" (Irzık, 2019, 425), acknowledging the reduction of political field in Turkey into the contentious, unreliable, and unfruitful party politics, that reached a full-blown

turmoil in the recent general elections. I believe, this is why the team members almost never refer to political parties or specific political actors while collectively discussing disaster preparedness and response efforts in Turkey. Although they have certain political affiliations that they mention in private discussions, they find public debates on parties and their subsequent agendas on disasters unmeaningful. This is primarily because they do not expect much from party politics in terms of public good and they want to maintain peace among each other.

Rüstem used these exact words to describe his goal in preparing a report: "[I did this], just so they can see, so they can see the magnitude [of the destruction], so they can see our shortcomings, so that none of this is forgotten, so they consider what could have gone differently."[51] His claim was again strictly political, pointing out the shortcomings of the existing efforts in addressing the extensive suffering caused by the Turkey-Syria Earthquake, although his invitation to testimony was not made to an explicit addressee. He was also aware of the transformative potential of remembrance, considering his report as a humble attempt to prevent these experiences from fading into oblivion and inviting his reader to imagine an alternative and better present.

> It's essential that these [sufferings] are not forgotten. The pain of the families of those who have been died, the young lives lost, and the suffering of their loved ones should not be forgotten. It's almost incomprehensible, one needs to witness it to understand. Just when I think I've resolved the issue within, something suddenly comes to my mind, and I ask what am I going to do with this pain, where should I put it, how can I make sense of it? They say the fire burns where it falls, but that fire could fall on any of us at any moment. That's why it's important to talk about it everywhere, to say it everywhere, not to let it be forgotten. So that things can change even a little bit, and so that the blood of those people doesn't remain on the ground. (Aslı, personal communication, Appendix A.28)

[51] "*Görsünler diye yani. Hem olayın büyüklüğünü hem bizim eksikliğimizi görsünler. Tüm bunlar unutulmasın diye. Bir düşünsünler neler farklı olabilirdi diye*."

Not only Rüstem but many team members pointed out in one way or another, the importance of an active field of memory in the pursuit of a better present and future, as evidenced in Aslı's statement above. Aslı also make clear links between remembrance and striving for justice, implying that seeking vengeance for the ones who suffered is possible insofar as one does not forget, paralleling Yerushalmi's well-known statement, "The antonym of 'forgetting' is not 'remembering', but 'justice'" (1996, p. 136). On the whole, the team members vividly remember what has happened in Iskenderun with its most immediate sensory and affective colorings, invite others to bear witness, negotiate the experience with each other, thus regularly engage in collective memory work. They are, par excellence, remembering subjects. However, as I will present in the following discussion, they still take the blame for being forgetful, as their subject positions are ultimately informed by the official discourses on social memory in Turkey which characterize Turkish citizens as permanent amnesiacs.

4.4.2 Manufacturing amnesia

The conviction that Turkish society is forgetful of the past calamities that they experienced or witnessed, is perhaps one of the most frequently mobilized themes in Turkey, not only in the context of disasters, but also regarding other forms of social and political crises that had detrimental effects on people. Özyürek (2007, p. 3) makes a similar observation when her friends congratulated her for authoring a book on public memory by saying: "It is important that you write a book on this topic. Lack of memory is one of the most important problems that we have in this country." Özyürek (2007) then goes on the discuss how this perceived amnesia does not refer to the absence or lack of memory, but a byproduct of the "administered forgetting"

persisting since the early republican period, where the newly emerging Turkish state has been trying to come to terms with its Ottoman legacy. This agenda of enforced forgetting thus necessitates repressive apparatuses, such as state archives, that mobilize new foundational myths to enable the "fabrication of a national memory" (Ahıska, 2014, p. 3).

How people make sense of disasters in Turkey, is inseparable from this dimension of the existing memory regime, where the state mobilizes its disciplinary tools to regulate the circulation of facts, images, opinions, and data to give the final verdict on what is worth to remember and what is not. After political and ecological crises, Turkish governmental institutions engage in certain attempts to reorganize the field of social memory, by manipulating factual data, increasing censorship, mobilizing discourses of "disinformation", or establishing institutions for "fact-checking"[52]. But in this discussion, I would like to draw attention to another dimension of the existing memory regime in Turkey that positions subjects as already forgetful, or prone to forget, to redistribute guilt and responsibility during collectively witnessed traumatic events such as disasters. Manufacturing permanent amnesiacs out of remembering subjects requires the production and circulation of discourses of forgetfulness revolving around disaster-induced catastrophe that I will touch upon shortly, rather than directly limiting the discursive sphere (Yalçınkaya, 2011) in which disasters are publicly negotiated. This points to a different form of power which is productive rather than repressive, that is more in touch with the notion of "governmentality" rather than "discipline" as Foucault (1991) famously distinguishes[53]. Therefore, reflecting on the power effects of those specific

[52] See for instance, "Dezenformasyonla Mücadele Merkezi" (Center for Combating Disinformation) operating under the ministry of Communication https://www.dmm.gov.tr

[53] Foucault (1991) differentiates governmentality from discipline by emphasizing the broader mechanisms of power and control within society that go beyond repressive tools of the state. While

discourses of forgetfulness in the context of the expected Istanbul Earthquake will be fruitful in broadening our perspective on temporal regimes governing future emergencies. As I previously suggested, alongside the anticipatory rationalities of security and optimization, the registers of memory can be deployed in governing the disasters that are yet to come. In the context of my fieldwork, governing future emergencies through social memory becomes manifest in people's guilt of being, or a fear of becoming, forgetful of earthquakes. But most importantly, the content of this forgetfulness is radically inflated in scope, as it simultaneously interpellates subjects who quickly move on from the past sufferings triggered by devastating earthquakes, and those who seem unaware of or indifferent to the seismic risks that they are exposed to.

The idea that Turkish society has a memory like a sieve[54] is a widely accepted claim among my informants. In almost every discussion about earthquake preparedness and response, this theme comes up in one way or another. One part of this characterization is based on their observation that, people who were not directly victimized by the Maraş Earthquake have already moved on with their lives. Unlike the atmosphere in its immediate aftermath characterized by a collective grievance, the bystanders now seem to enjoy their lives, go to vacations, celebrate events, or share funny posts, while survivors are still struggling with their multi-layered losses. The team members use phrases such as "The earthquake is already forgotten"[55] to express this particular situation, paralleling similar remarks that have been widely

discipline operates through institutions and techniques to regulate individual behavior, governmentality encompasses a wider array of practices aimed at governing populations and shaping their conduct through various strategies, including norms, policies, and technologies of governance.

[54] *"balık hafızalı toplum"*

[55] *"Deprem çoktan unutuldu bile"*

circulating on social and mainstream media platforms[56]. But this claim is mostly made with shame and guilt, not confidence, as noticeable in Yağız and Kerim's statements. This is because the team members consider themselves also forgetful in that respect, as they get carried away with their daily tasks and can find joy in their lives.

> But of course, just like everything else this [Maraş Earthquake] has been forgotten it gets forgotten. […] You have to forget a little because otherwise, it gets very challenging. For example, two weeks after I came back [from Iskenderun], I had a midterm, and honestly, I sat down and studied. It would come to my mind, of course, but when you return here, you switch to a different routine. Your surroundings change, and everyone continues with their normal lives. You see that. Someone makes a joke, and you laugh, you think about what to eat for dinner. There's also a sense of guilt, like you can't just order an Iskender kebab, for example, it feels wrong. After all, three days ago, you didn't even have soup to drink. But unfortunately, the fire burns where it falls. At some point, you do eat that Iskender and even have a barbecue. (Yağız, personal communication, Appendix A.29)

> The pain comes out later; honestly, you don't feel much while you're there. The real issue starts when you return here. At first, you can't get used to it, it feels strange. It feels like this isn't the place you knew. But you eventually adapt within the daily rush and forget. […] My son had a birthday party at home, and we celebrated like normal, we did not bring the sorrow in his party. But while people were still dealing with their devastated lives, we didn't go around sharing it. I believe there's a time and place for everything. (Kerim, personal communication, Appendix A.30)

What Aslı and Kerim refers as "forgetting" in this context, is a mix of narcotization and familiarization that they do not find compatible with the spectacular amounts of suffering that they witnessed. They also describe this kind of forgetting as an unpleasant necessity so that they can keep going with their lives. Kerim's remark on not sharing his son's birthday party on social media, again involves an element of guilt associated with moving on too early. In both statements the so-called forgotten object is a specific event, namely the Turkey-Syria earthquake. This perspective associating forgetting with moving on, is strongly paralleled in a news file in Sözcü

[56] See, for instance, the thread titled "The fact that the earthquake is forgotten" (*Depremin unutulması*) on EkşiSözlük. https://eksisozluk.com/depremin-unutulmasi--6213532?p=17

newspaper[57], where they asked professionals and the public if they think the (Turkey-Syria) earthquake is forgotten. One of the interviewees answer by saying "We, as a society, forget too quickly. We feel the pain in the moment, but after a while, we procced with our normal routine lives"[58]. Another person also makes a similar point by saying "The earthquake is forgotten because everyone has other things in mind now. People continue their lives somehow"[59]. The most interesting remark belongs to a professor who is the supervisor of Istanbul Technical University's Building Materials Laboratory. Prof. Dr. Hasan Yıldırım states that: "It will never be forgotten in the affected region, but in Istanbul and elsewhere it has been somewhat forgotten. […] The state has not forgotten the earthquake either; I know they are working diligently in the affected areas."[60] Yıldırım makes a clear distinction that delineates bystanders as the main forgetful subject. While immediate victims do not have the luxury to move on due to their ongoing suffering, the state cannot be considered forgetful either, since it is still present on the stricken region with its institutions and actors. Bystanders, on the other hand, are afflicted with amnesia as they are neither present in the affected region nor directly victimized by the earthquake. Here, we clearly see the redistribution of blame from state actors to individual human beings by effectively mobilizing a discourse that identifies forgetfulness with the absence of visible signs of sorrow or terror.

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[57] Please see the news file titled "The earthquake is forgotten in Istanbul too", (*İstanbul'da da Deprem Unutuldu) and "*Current Earthquake Risk is Forgotten" *(Güncel Deprem Riski Unutuldu)* https://www.sozcu.com.tr/istanbulda-da-deprem-unutuldu-wp7870269 https://artigercek.com/guncel/deprem-riski-unutuldu-dayaniklilik-testi-basvurusu-gunde-300den-haftada-10a-dustu-287966h

[58] "*Toplum olarak çabuk unutuyoruz, acıyı o an yaşıyoruz ve belli bir süreden sonra normal rutin hayata geçiyoruz."*

[59] *"Deprem unutuldu çünkü şu anda herkes başka şeylere kafasını yoruyor. İnsanlar bir şekilde hayatlarını sürdürüyor."*

[60] "*Deprem olan bölgede hayatta unutulmaz ama İstanbul ve yakın zamanda deprem olmayan yerlerde geçmişe göre bir miktar unutuldu. […] Devlet de depremi unutmuş değil, harıl harıl çalışıyorlar bölgede."*

The claim that "people have forgotten about the earthquake" is also mobilized in another way, both by the team members and in Turkish media outlets; no longer referring to a specific past event as the object of amnesia but referencing earthquakes as a more general threat. This can be observed in the news titles such as "The earthquake risk has been forgotten: The number of applications for earthquake resistance testing has dropped from 300 per day to 10 per week"[61], or "The reality of earthquakes has been forgotten: demand for building tests has dropped by 90%." Here, we see that the scope of amnesia now encompasses the expected Istanbul Earthquake, a future event, as evidenced by the rapidly decreasing number of applications for earthquake resistance tests. While those numbers peaked during the immediate aftermath of the Turkey-Syria earthquake, people seem to be quickly losing interest as time passes. Therefore, it again describes a sense of familiarization, not with sorrow and suffering caused by, but with dangers, risks, and threats associated with earthquakes. In other words, the forgetfulness in question is a problem of ignorance, indifference, and unawareness, rather than a failure to fulfill a moral duty. This is why it invites the forgetful subject to take action and assume responsibility over the upcoming disaster while the former mode of forgetting was redistributing the blame.

> I believe it's important to remind people of the reality of earthquakes because it's easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of daily life. Work, kids, and other responsibilities make you forget. […] But once you get involved, you realize there's a long way to go. (Baran, personal communication, Appendix A.31)

> This thing [Istanbul Earthquake] is likely to happen, we'll probably see it in our lifetime. I hope we don't, of course. But you sometimes forget it in the midst of mundane life. That's why I take this place [SAP] seriously. (Beyza, personal communication, Appendix A.31)

[61] "Deprem riski unutuldu: Dayanıklılık testi başvurusu günde 300'den haftada 10'a düştü", retrieved from https://artigercek.com/guncel/deprem-riski-unutuldu-dayaniklilik-testi-basvurusu-gunde-300den-haftada-10a-dustu-287966h

As one can see in the above statements, the team members do not consider themselves immune to this kind of forgetting although they engage with the issue of earthquakes practically and intellectually on a weekly basis as striving professionals. Earthquakes have long been a professional matter for Baran as he was employed in AFAD for several years and his wife still works there. In a similar vein, Beyza is a prospective disaster professional besides her efforts in SAP, as she currently studies disaster management for her bachelor's degree. But we see that they make sense of those pursuits not as an indication that they are remembering subjects, that is naturally aware of the seismic risks, but as a precaution to take for not forgetting about the earthquakes. While Baran "reminding people about the earthquakes" indicates that he tries to distance himself from those immersed in amnesia, he is by no means exempt from forgetfulness as he does not exclude himself from those who get carried away with their daily tasks. A similar emphasis is present in Beyza's statement, as she also considers herself at least prone to forget once she gets carried away with her mundane life.

Team members' reflections on their own susceptibility to forgetfulness that reject a strict binary between remembering professionals and amnesiac non-professionals becomes especially visible in this following example. After each online training session, as an ongoing tradition at SAP, the participants are invited to propose a motto that summarizes the gist of the lecture and the one that has the most votes becomes the catchphrase of that specific module for future trainees. In doing so, the participants are expected to transform the lecture content into a meaningful message about disaster awareness. In three out of the seven sessions where I have been present, the chosen slogan pertained to remembrance and forgetting : "Forget

grudges, do not forget about earthquakes"[62], "Remember the realities of terror, do not get terrorized"[63], "Test your memory, or the disasters will test you".[64] Considering that those sessions are a kind of echo chamber between current and prospective disaster professionals, they are warning themselves, not the non-professional groups, about the dangers of forgetfulness in the context of disasters. Their professional pursuits become a protective barrier against this amnesia they believe they are prone to, paralleling Beyza and Baran's statements above.

I would like to recite two guiding questions that I asked at the beginning of this chapter. How can one be expected to invest in individual preparedness protocols, witnessing the extent of destruction in the previous earthquakes and knowing that the apocalypse looming in the near future will annihilate all those micro-efforts? Is there a way to keep people enrolling into individual and communal rituals of safety, despite their shared testimony on the sustained and spectacular earthquake-induced destruction in Turkey? I hope the discussion I presented above partially answers this question as I firstly showed the limits of anticipatory logics and apparatuses in shaping people's behavior in the context of Istanbul's multilayered urban crisis. Considering that residents of Istanbul currently have a very limited set of preemptive options, most of which are inherently dysfunctional, there must have been something else refraining them from quitting their preparation efforts altogether or from collectively revolting against the direfulness of their situation. They do not reach a state of full-blown desperation as visible in the team's sustained efforts but neither

[62] "Küslükleri Unut, Depremi Unutma" The slogan of a session on post-disaster security where we discussed keeping peace among social groups that have hostility towards each other in disaster stricken regions.
[63] "Terör gerçeğini hatırla, terörize olma" The slogan of a session on terror events where we discussed what to do if we encounter an armed or bombing attack.
[64] "Hafızanı yokla yoksa afet seni yoklar" The slogan of a session on post-disaster trauma conveyed by a therapist. She shared her professional encounters with survivors in post-earthquake Maraş.

do they organize a sustained collective political resistance. This shows us that although the existing government fails to govern Istanbul's urban crisis, it still has tools to govern the social crisis prompted by an upcoming earthquake. The latter partly relies on successfully subverting the active field of social memory to a manufactured amnesia, by mobilizing certain discourses to convince people that they are forgetful or prone to forget. This ensures that the individuals have their fair share of the guilt regarding past catastrophes and keep assuming responsibility over the impending ones.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This ethnographic exploration of a rescue team in the making, initially starting as a matter of personal curiosity which later turned into a more grounded academic pursuit, had two complementary aims: First, I tried to make a humble contribution to the existing works problematizing earthquakes in Turkey, still investing in technocratic solutionism either by exclusively privileging techno-scientific expert accounts in disaster preparedness and response, or by treating the concerns of affected communities as a necessary supplement to those. In guidance of the recent approaches of critical disaster scholars, I tried to show how this rescue team produces an emergent knowledge in the context of Istanbul Earthquake that cannot be contained into a strict victim-expert polarity. Exploring how team members regularly negotiated expertise with domestic and international groups, I tried to make a more general reflection on the political systems, discourses, and transformations in Turkey informing their subject positions. Their contradictory and consensual narratives on the capacities of state institutions such as TSK, municipalities, or AFAD, have shown that their perception of expertise and responsibility in disaster contexts cannot be contained into a monolithic singular source or actor. Likewise, their interactions with the international disaster community were replete with similar tensions oscillating between professionalism and spontaneity, or rationality and emotiveness in disaster contexts, arguably informed by the hegemonic Occidentalist national imagery. Portraying "Turkish people" as ignorant, indifferent and fatalistic, the team members expressed a sustained pursuit of Western standards in disaster knowledge, thus took distance from those signifiers of the East. On the other hand,

same group of people also distinguished themselves from the Western disaster communities by mobilizing the notion of *afet ülkesi* as an authentic and intimate space, to which they have stronger affective affinity than those who do not inhabit it.

After reflecting on how the team, as prospective professionals and potential victims negotiated disaster knowledge and expertise, I shifted my focus on how they have been specifically dealing with the issue of the expected Istanbul Earthquake. However, the team members' collective first-hand testimony to the extensive destruction and suffering in post-earthquake Iskenderun, created an ambiguous temporal terrain in which they discussed the impending earthquake. From the onset of my fieldwork, I became aware that I could not effectively reflect on their relation to a disaster yet to come, by solely relying on the frameworks of futurity, anticipation, and risk. This brings me to the second goal of this research, that is, making a humble contribution to the broader literature problematizing how future emergencies can be governed in the present. Acknowledging their critical remarks on the individual and collective rituals of safety that anticipatory regimes mobilize, I tried to explore what happens when a retrospective gaze is introduced to the tools and technologies attempting to regulate people's behavior in preparing for an uncertain future threat. First, I observed that, the unexpected apparitions of the past earthquakes often destabilized, if not annihilated, the relevance and practical applicability of the preparation protocols that my informants get accustomed to during their training sessions. Moreover, the deepening urban crisis in Istanbul, particularly manifest in the unavailability of earthquake-resistant housing, severely limited my informants' options to take anticipatory action, just like the majority of Istanbul's residents currently.

One could quickly go on to argue that this is a governance crisis, where the residents get increasingly disenchanted with individual preparedness protocols and seek ways to work around legal-institutional arrangements that were designed to alleviate the housing crisis. The governing regime seems to fail in subscribing people into the micro and macro level risk management practices. However, my informants do not completely quit their preparation efforts, neither do they direct a systematic political critique to the governing state institutions, although they often express their discontent with Turkey's continuous "testing with the earthquakes".[65] Sometimes they use essentialized categories such as "Turkish people" to vent about how nothing meaningful is being done, but they avoid from directly blaming a specific group of people such as the residents of Istanbul. Besides, most often than not, they coin some "what if" questions about the recent Maraş earthquake to open a space to negotiate past disasters with each other, but nonetheless refrain from bringing in their political-ideological positioning regarding parties, state officials, and other political actors into those discussions. Besides the absence of a sustained and direct political critique, the teams' motivation to professionally engage with disaster preparedness and response dominantly remain unhampered by the current state of things. Therefore, I could not comfortably state that the social and political crisis prompted by the upcoming earthquake fails to be governed. Then what was the main impetus driving my informants to sustain their activities?

I suggested that a specific discourse of forgetfulness which portrayed Turkish citizens as permanent amnesiacs can be considered as a disaster governance rationale which pertains to social memory rather than risk. It became apparent in how frequently the team members made references to forgetting about the earthquakes,

[65] "Türkiye'nin depremlerle imtihanı"

surprisingly not only about those in the past. They seemed simultaneously taking the blame for past sufferings and fearful to forget about the risks that they are exposed to. Their professional pursuit became meaningful insofar as it can help them resist to amnesia. This was by no means a smooth conclusion that I came into, since I was also constantly being interpellated by this specific discourse. I was so desensitized to the word "unutmak" that, I could only notice how frequent and inflated its usage has become in the context of earthquakes, once I collected all my fieldwork notes and took a broader look. Nevertheless, this governance rationale has also its limits, as many other also have (Watanabe, 2021), in subscribing people to the idea that they are forgetful. This becomes evident in Aslı's statement below:

> What do they want, really? Should we be stuck in that pain, sitting at home crying all day? This isn't about forgetting, ask me and I can recount everything in detail. These memories don't just vanish from my mind; I'm just trying to live. We're doing what we can, but it feels like they want us to hate life, to sit around all day suffering. That's not going to happen, sorry. Before pointing fingers at us, they should ask themselves how much they remember. Will a couple of social media posts fix this issue? Is that what remembering means? It's not, sorry. (Aslı, personal communication, Appendix A, 32)

I would like to conclude by stating that we need to insist on social memory as a valid analytical domain to understand the politics of disaster governance in Turkey, without reducing it into an analysis of social trauma or romanticizing it as a collectively shared field of resistance. I hope this thesis was able to shed a light on how the field of social memory is laden with contradictions, dissensus, and conflicts, as much as it involves socially shared aspects. Those gaps and tensions in social memory can give us valuable insight on not only the governance of the past disasters, but also of the future ones. Therefore, a more sustained effort on the complex temporal regime navigating disaster governance in Turkey can produce valuable insights on how people negotiate responsibility, complicity, blame, testimony, knowledge, and expertise in disaster contexts.

Limitations and Future Work

One of the most significant shortcomings of this work stems from the limited number of participants with whom I had a chance to engage deeply. Although the team is comprised of more than fifty people, I could only regularly meet with a few of them since the members attended sessions based on their expected roles in the team and some sessions were repeated with different sub-groups. This means that in each session, I was introduced to new people, but rarely I saw most of them again, if at all, so, the deeper reflections in this thesis came from a couple of people who I saw more frequently. I believe this is why there were times I was not sure if they were speaking on behalf of the team or if they were just stating their personal opinions, a methodological questioning that seems yet to be resolved within the scope of this thesis. Moreover, I could not effectively reflect on the team members' personal backgrounds, thus underexplored their intersectional positions in facilitating or inhibiting their professional pursuits. Therefore, some of my bigger inferences rather came from anecdotal sources but nonetheless, I tried my best to describe to the reader the general mood, attitude, and the pursuits of the team as a whole. The reader might benefit from a cross-reading with the existing research in Turkey on search and rescue teams, that focuses on their organizational structure (Güler, 2023), their trauma responses (Yılmaz & Şahin, 2007), or their aptitude for team work (Özkar, 2019).

The second limitation pertains to a specific fieldwork finding that I did not have a chance to develop further. During the training sessions, I frequently witnessed remarks of the team members on the ineffectiveness or inaccuracy of the psychology modules on post-disaster trauma. They often criticized those frameworks and practices including "self-care", "long-term and short-term recovery", "healthy

mourning", and "breathing techniques", on the grounds that those seem to be prepared by the ones who did not experience a real trauma in their lives. As I presented earlier, there is an enormous body of academic work in Turkey focusing on post-disaster trauma but not enough work on how those pedagogies of trauma is received among diverse group of people. I believe, an ethnographic exploration of the encounters between search and rescue personnel and mental health professionals could provide invaluable insights on the affective regimes that navigate disaster governance in Turkey.

APPENDIX A

LONG QUOTES IN TURKISH

1. Rıdvan: Arkadaşlar hoşgeldiniz. Bugün aramızda yeni bir arkadaş var gördüğünüz üzere. Zeynep bugün ve muhtemelen önümüzdeki haftalarda bize katılacak. Beklenen büyük İstanbul Depremi ile ilgili Boğaziçi Üniversitesi'nde bir araştırma yapıyor. Zeynep sen kendini daha detaylı tanıtmak ister misin?

   Zeynep: Herkese merhaba. Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Sosyoloji Bölümünde araştırma görevlisiyim. Şu an yüksek lisans tezimi beklenen İstanbul Depremi üzerine yazıyorum ve tez saham için buradayım.

   Baran (sözünü kesiyor): Teziniz tam olarak neyle ilgili? İstanbul Depremi'nin neyine bakacaksınız?

   Zeynep: Arama kurtarma personeli gündelik etkileşimlerle afet bilgisini nasıl üretiyor ona bakacağım.

   Baran: Sizce nasıl üretiyor?

   Zeynep: Açıkçası bilmiyorum. Biraz da bu yüzden buradayım. Kendimce fikirlerim var ama sizlerle görüştükçe daha net bir resme sahip olacağım diye umuyorum.

   Baran: Tamamdır. Biz elimizden geleni yaparız size afet gerçeğini göstermek için. Benim eşim AFAD'da çalışıyor, isterseniz sizi onunla da görüştürebilirim. Diğer afet örgütleriyle de temas halindeyiz. Sadece söylemeniz yeterli.

2. Nerede oturuyorsunuz?

   Ortaköy'de.

   Aa oradaki parkları hep biz haritaladık. Avcumun içi gibi biliyorum Ortaköy'ü. Hangi sokak?

   X sokağı.

   Y Parkı'nın oradaki?

   Evet.

   Biliyorum tabi ya, Z Mimarlık var hemen arkasında. W Oteli var sokağın başında.

3. Ooo İstanbul Depremi. Valla bir şey diyeyim mi en doğru yerdesin. Bak bana 99 Düzce Depremi, 99 Gölcük Depremi, 2011 Van Depremi, 2020 İzmir Depremi, İskenderun. Hepsinde oradaydım. İskenderun'da ekipçe oradaydık.

4. Ya ben bu eğitimi niye veriyorum şu an? Para da istemiyorum. Çünkü istanbulda yaşayan bir vatandaş olarak sizin gibi işi bilen birileri beni de kurtarsın istiyorum. [Depremi] kazasız belasız atlatırsanız önce yakınlarınızı kurtarın, sonra da bana yardıma gelin istiyorum.

5. Yani ben bir fuarda gördüm SAP'ı ilk kez. Nisan ayıydı, daha Hatay Depremi yeni olmuş. Sonra bir gaz, dedim ben de katılacağım buna, bir işe yaramak lazım. Habire deprem oluyor zaten, İstanbul'un durumu malum. Bir umut bir şeyler yapıyoruz ama İstanbul'da bir deprem olunca biz afetzedeyiz zaten. Belki birkaçımız sağlam çıkarsa [Whatsapp] gruptan haberleşiriz de bir şeyler yaparız. Öbür türlü tamamen dışarıya bağımlıyız. (Yağız)

6. Bakın bu kartı gösterip diyorsunuz ki, "Ben ilk yardım görevlisiyim. Lütfen yaralının başında çekilir misiniz? Hava alsın." Bazen özellikle yaralıların yakınları sorun çıkarıyor, kendileri müdahale etmek istiyor başta. Kartı görünce susuyorlar. Bir de meraklı tipleri uzaklaştırmış oluyorsunuz. İnsanlık hali bir şey olur, ex olur yaralı [ölür], sonra sizin başınız yanmasın.

7. Üniforması olanlar üniformalarını giysin. Olmayanlar mutlaka outdoor kıyafet ve kalın tabanlı bot giysin. KOT PANTOLON VE SPOR AYAKKABILI KİMSEYİ ALANDA GÖRMEYECEĞİM. Outdoor kıyafetiniz yoksa siyah eşofman giyebilirsiniz. Diğer ekip ve STK'lardan gelecek soru ve sıkıştırmalara pek cevap vermeyelim. (Şunu biliyor musun, şu belgen var mı vs.) Böyle konularda ekipçe konuşmadığımızı, sorularını Kerim başkana sorabileceklerini söyleyebiliriz.

8. Görsen hayırdır buraların ağası mısın dersin. Böyle bir yürümeler, etrafı kesmeler. Disko topu gibi geziyor ortalıkta. Şıkır şıkır sesler geliyor her yerinden. Herif 15 dakika göstermelik kullanacak diye ekipmanı bütün gün taşıdı üstünde ya. Hayır yani kime neyin şovunu yapıyorsun, biz başka bir şey için mi buradayız? (…) Hep böyleler, alanda hiç kimseyle muhatap olmazlar, ayrıyken bile habire telsizlerinden birbirleriyle konuşurlar, aşırı snob bir tayfa.

9. Bakın normalde ne olur? Bakın göstereyim. [standart bir plasterin koruyucu katmanını soyuyor] Bakın eldivenime yapıştı. Neresinden tutacağım da hastaya yapıştıracağım. Bir de düşünün ortalık toz toprak. [Yeni plasteri eline alıyor] Ama bunda bakın… Hadi yine iyisiniz bak sırf sizin için açıyorum bir tane. Bakın şöyle kenarlardan bastırıyorsunuz, tak hemen kendi kendine yapışacak hale geliyor. Yapıştırdıktan sonra da bu şekilde kalan kısmı çekiyorsunuz, elinize hiç değmeden yapışmış oluyor. […] Bakmayın öyle basit göründüğüne, 2019'da bir kutusu 200 liraydı bunun. Gerçi bana Almanya'da sahadayken bir arama-kurtarmacı arkadaş hediye etti bunu. Hemen ilkyardım çantama ekledim, ilk iş geldim burada tanıdık tıbbi tedarikçilere gösterdim, valla daha bize gelmedi bu üründen dediler. İlkyardım çantamın baştacı oldu valla, İskenderun'da da çok işime yaradı.

10. Bak ben bir şey söyleyeyim, asker ilk üç gün sahaya inseydi bugün bambaşka bir manzara görüyor olurduk. Bilerek müdahale edin demediler, darbe marbe yaparlar diye.

    Yok abi sen öyle deme yine de.

    Ya ben çocuklara bir şey demiyorum. Zar zor yerlerinde durmuşlar. Bir üniformasıyla gitse oraya kendi kendine, müebbet yemek var.

    Abi bak böyle bir felakette, bak dünyadaki tüm arama kurtarma ekiplerini yığ oraya, yine insan ölür.

    Yav ölür de bu kadar ölür mü? Belediyenin AFAD'ın ekibi napsın orada. Eğitim veriyoruz deyip yer paspaslatıyorlar. Asker olmadan arama kurtarma olur mu?

    Abi haklısın ama gözünü seveyim asker gitse nasıl gidecek ne götürecek? Yol mu kalmış? Pist mi kalmış?

    O arazi araçları başka kimde var? Koskoca deniz birliği var ya İskenderun'da.

    Abi onlar da depremzede.

11. Bizi diğer ekiplerden ayıran en önemli iki şey bence şu. Bir, biz burada Türkiye'nin en iyi eğitimli arama-kurtarma ekiplerinden birini kuruyoruz. Türkiye'de normalde esamesi bile okunmayan çok spesifik konullarda modüllerimiz var. Kerim Başkan zaten habire Almanya'ya Ukrayna'ya sahaya gidiyor. Oradaki üniversite hocalarıyla da iletişime geçiyor. Çok yerden besleniyoruz yani. İkincisi de şu. Toplumun reflekslerini, ülkenin kodlarını iyi çözümleyen ona göre hareket eden bir ekibiz. Türk kafası var ya hani... Afet psikolojisine bizim kadar önem veren bir ekip daha yok. İnsanların Türkiye'de afetlerde nasıl davrandığını, niye öyle davrandığını önceden kestirip buna göre aksiyon alabilen bir ekibiz.

12. Kerim: Bunlar aslında INSARAG'ın modülleri. Biz bunları 2019'da Türkçe'ye çevirttik Yeditepe Üniversitesi'nde. Sağlık Bakanlığı ve Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı da AFAD'a modül hazırlarken bunları kullanıyor.

    Zeynep: Yeditepe Üniversitesi'nde kime?

    Kerim: Biz o dönem beraber bir proje yapıyorduk oradaki hocalarla. Çeviri bölümü var, oradaki öğrenciler gönüllü çalışıp çevirdi. […] Bir süre eğitimlerde bu ilk haliyle kullandık ama nasıl desem, biraz robotik geldi. İnsanlar pek bir şey anlamıyordu. Sonra biraz Türkleştirdik olayı.

13. Bazen gördük yani AFAD kendinden başka bir star olmasın istiyor alanda. Koordinasyonu da genelde onlar yaptığı için seni daha önemsiz işlere yönlendiriyor. Ama yani INSARAG tanıdığı sürece senin benim (takımımın)

bir farkı yok. O da gayet alanda senin gibi iş yapabilir, can kurtarabilir. (Rüstem)

14. Şimdi bu deprem Japonya'da olsa böyle mi olurdu, sen söyle. Hadi yine insan öldü diyelim, bir elin parmaklarını geçmezdi. Öyle binalar tasarlıyorlar ki bizimkiler baraka gibi kalıyor yanında. Bizim X abiye sordum (SAP'ın danışma kurulunda yer alan Japon bir yüksek mimarı kastederek) bizde böyle binaları depreme kalmadan yıkarlar zaten dedi. […] Yani o da afet ülkesi, bu da afet ülkesi. Depremi engelleyemiyorsun, tamam anladık, ama bir zahmet yaptığın bina da iki sallantıda tuzla buz olmasın yani.

15. Bizim toplum kaderci, biatçı. Ortadoğu coğrafyaları genel olarak böyle. Depremde çocuğu ölür Allah'tan der. İstanbul yerle bir olacak dersin o da Allah'tan der. Böyle oldukça bir arpa boyu yol alamazsın.

    Bizde hep şu vardır. Hava kaç derece olursa olsun afet bölgesine battaniye dolu tırlar yola çıkar. Hava 35 derece ne yapsın insanlar battaniyeyi. Onlar sonra yol kenarında birikir çerçöp olur tabi.

    Aslında personel çalıştırılan sitelerde afet tatbikatı zorunlu tutulur, iş güvenliği protokolü olarak tabi. Ben herkese anlatıyorum apartmanda şöyle böyle diye, kimse beni iplemiyor. Kendi canını umursamayan insan için ben ne yapabilirim yani.

16. Bizimkilerin olayı sahada starlaşması. […] Mesela Almanlar bir tanecik koruyucu ekipmanı eksik olsun, çıkmaz sahaya. Bak öyle baret filan gibi önemli şeyleri demiyorum. Ama bizde ne olur? Atar kendini ortaya. Protokolmüş bilmemneymiş dinlemez. Risk de alır ama sonunda becerir o işi. […] Ya bir çocuk gördüm çıplak eliyle girişmiş (bir enkaza), her yer kopmuş demir halat. Ama sonra, saatler sonra bir genç kız kurtardılar o küçücük delikten biliyor musun? (Kerim)

17. En iyi Yunanlarla anlaşıyor bizim ekipler, aynıyız çünkü. Benim gördüğüm en çok da onlar üzülüyor gördüklerine ne bileyim bir Alman ya da Japon ekip yerine. Tabi onlar da insan yani robot değller o anlamda demiyorum. Ama işte bir komşuluk meselesi var ya, halinden anlıyor senin. […] Tabi bir afet coğrafyasından gelmiyorsan hiçbir zaman tam anlamıyla anlayamıyorsun. Nasıl diyeyim biraz mesleki bir mesele olarak bakıyorsun yaptığın işe. Burada yardım isteyen benim çocuğum olabilirdi annem olabilirdi diye düşünmüyorsun. Acıyorsun belki o insanlara ama o kadar da içselleştiremiyorsun gördüklerini. (Aslı, personal communication)

18. Kadınlar, kadın arkadaşlar çok önemli bir şey yaptı orada. Biz de gidiyorduk kadın afetzedelere halini hatrını soruyorduk ama işte dilinden anlayamıyorsun. Neye ihtiyacı var hem söylemeye utanıyor bazen, işte ped lazımsa mesela söylemeye utanıyor. Ama onun da ötesinde ben gidip çocuğunu kocasını kaybetmiş kadına ne diyebilirim, nasıl el uzatabilirim? Ama işte kadın arkadaşlar oturdu onlarla, bir ağladılar bir ağladılar. Sanki kendi çocukları ölmüş gibi. Bizim de içimiz parçalandı ama işte elini tutup beraber ağlayamadıktan sonra merhem olamıyorsun hiçbir şeye. Zaten giden

gitmiş, hani tabi mesela birisi canlı çıktığında hep beraber sarılıp ağlaşıyorsun ama kötü haber gelince kadın arkadaşlardan başka kimse paylaşamıyor onların acısına.

19. Zeynep! Zeynep! İnanarak yap. Bak kadın yerde yatıyor. Kulağından kan gelmiş. Gerçekte böyle sakin kalabilecek misin sanıyorsun. İnsanlar etrafında bağırıp çağıracak. Her şeye burnunu sokmaya çalışan tiplerle uğraşacaksın. Okulda ders vermiyorsun acil durum bu. Hadi bir daha dene bakalım.

20. Bizde mesela özel bir deprem çantası yok, benim kedinin taşıma çantasına koyduk malzemeleri. İçinde yaş mama da tutuyoruz ki bir şekilde bulsun bizi. Bir kere evde bir deneme yapalım dedik ailece bakalım yanımıza çağırabiliyor muyuz diye. Bizimki mama poşetinin sesini duyunca uçtu valla (gülüyor) Ama bilmiyorum öyle bir durumda gürültüden dolap içine filan saklanır herhalde, geleceğini sanmıyorum. Yine de bir şekilde kendilerini kurtarıyorlar, insan daha hantal bence her türlü. Hatay'da enkazda mama poşetini delip şişmanlayan bir tane vardı mesela (gülüyor)

21. Önceden planlayınca tam olmuyor ya. Yani biliyorsun ya sonuçta. O aynı etkiyi yaratmıyor. Biz şey yaptık bir kere. Açtık telefonun alarm bölümünü gözümüzü kapatıp rastgele bir saate alarm kurduk. Sonra o alarm çalınca napıyor olursak olalım hemen hazırola geçtik. İşte artık duşta mısın, tuvalette misin, uyuyor musun hiç fark etmez. Alarmı duyduğun an fırlayacaksın.

22. Uyuyamadım dönünce kaç gün [iskenderundan] yani hem orada gördüklerimden hem de insan kendi tabutunda yatıyormuş gibi hissediyor. Duş bile alamıyordum rahat rahat, ulan depreme duşta yakalanırsam çıplak nasıl atıcam kendimi dışarı diye. Leş gibi gezdim bir hafta. […] Bir de yeni taşınmıştım daha, sıfır daire diye. Ama işte hiçbir zaman tam güvenemiyorsun kim yaptı nasıl yaptı. […] Sonra alışıyor insan ama bir şekilde, yoksa kafayı yersin.

23. İndim bizim bodruma deniz kabuğu arıyorum, görsen delirmiş dersin (gülüyor). […] Yok tavan şöyle çökse, dolap buraya devrilse yaşam üçgeni olur mu sorup duruyordum. {…] Evin içi bakkal gibiydi bir ara her köşede cips kraker bir şeyler. Sonra hanım kızmaya başladı bıktım arkanı toplamaktan diye. Ya dedim sanki keyfimden yapıyorum, ama dinletemiyorsun işte. Misafir gelir de evi dağınık görürse diye hepsini geri toplattı bana. Elalem ne der diye ölücez gitcez valla. […] Gerçi bi yandan da gördüklerimden sonra diyorum ki yani bina yıkıldıktan sonra cipsmiş çikolataymış hak getire.

24. Bak şu binayı görüyor musun? İşte bizim Kağıthane'de bütün binalar böyle, bizim ev de dahil. Normalde mesela bir binanın yüksek olması kolay yıkılacağı anlamına gelmiyor, çünkü ona göre inşa ediliyor. Sallandığında o momentumu alabiliyor yani. Ama iki farklı bina böyle tek duvarı paylaşınca o hareketi yapamıyor. Yine kendi üzerine çökse iyi, bir de öne ya da arkaya düşüyor, domino taşı gibi etrafındakileri de götürüyor.

25. Depreme dayanıklılık testine soktunuz mu binayı?

Karot aldıralım dedik ilk başta, sonra karot aldırmak sıkıntı yapıyor binaya diye bir şey çıktı, biz de vazgeçtik. Gerçi ben sonra bir hocaya sordum, yalan öyle bir şey yok dedi. Yüksek mühendis. Ama işte belediyeninkine başvursan te ne zaman sana sıra gelecek. Bir de bizim bina depremden sonra yapılmış, müteahhit de tanıdık birisi. O yüzden başta bir düşündük ama sonra sıkıntı yapmadık meseleyi.

Ay yok tabi ki. Annem çok darladı yaptırın yaptırın diye. [40 yıllık bir apartman bizimkisi]. Ama zaten kimse yanaşmaz yani bu bina hasarlı deseler ne yapacağız, sokakta mı kalacağız. Yine ben kiracıyım bir de kendi dairesinde outran insanlar var. […] Mümkün değil ikna edemezsin.

26. Adam mafyatik bir tip bir kere. Yani mafya mı bilmiyorum ama böyle kaba saba bir tip. Zaten kim giriyor çıkıyor diye dikizleyip duruyor. […] Bak geçen sene 5000 veriyorduk, bu sene 15000'e çıkartalım dedi. Yuh yani. Tamam bak 10000 dese razı olacağız, biz de biliyoruz durumu. Ama bunlar iyice leş kargası olmuş artık, gözü dönmüş yani. […] Rahat vermedi bize bir dönem habire kavga gürültü tehditler. Sonra işte ablam avukat, o böyle taslak bir dava dilekçesi gibi bir şey hazırladı bizim her şeyi gösteren. Çünkü daha 2 ay olmuş kontratı yenileyeli, asla çıkartamaz evden. Ancak ondan sonra biraz pıstı.

27. Oğlum yerleşecek diyor (bizim daireye). Ya allah aşkına kimi yiyorsun, çocuk Almanya'da evli barklı işini kurmuş, ne yapsın burayı. Bir yandan tabi o da biliyor beni çıkartırsa sonra da ben oğlunun taşınmadığını ispatlarsam fitil fitil gelir her şey burnundan. Ama geriliyor insan yine de habire birileri ne zaman çıkacaksınız diye soruyor. […] Ben en sonunda ne yaptım biliyor musun. Dedim benim bir ev var Üsküdar'da. Benim de oradan kiracım çıkacak birkaç aya, biz de oraya geçeriz. Bu devirde başka türlü taşınmamız çok zor anlayışla karşılayın. Kiracım çıkınca oraya geçeriz, birbirimizi üzmemiş oluruz, birkaç ay sonra tekrar haberleşelim dedim. Yok tabi öyle bir ev ortada. […] Neyse ama en azından birkaç ay kafamızı dinlemiş olduk.

28. Bunların unutulmaması lazım. Bu kadar yitip giden çoluğun çocuğun, gencecik insanların, onların ailelerinin sevdiklerinin çektiği acıların unutulmaması lazım. Bunu görmeyen çok zor anlar. Tam hallettim meseleyi diyorum içimde, öyle beklenmedik bir anda aklıma bir şey geliyor ki ben bu acıyı alıp ne yapacağım nereye koyacağım nasıl anlamlandıracağım diyorum. […] Ateş düştüğü yeri yakıyor diyorlar ama işte o ateş her an senin benim üstüme de düşebilir. O yüzden her yerde konuşmak, her yerde söylemek, unutturmamak lazım. Hem bir nebze bir şeyler değişsin diye hem de o insanların kanı yerde kalmasın diye.

29. Ama her şeyde olduğu gibi bu da unutuldu, tabi unutuluyor. […] Biraz da unutmak zorundasın çünkü başka türlü çok zor. Ben mesela döndükten iki hafta sonra vizeye girdim, ne yalan söyleyeyim oturdum çalıştım da. Ha aklıma geliyordu tabi ama buraya dönünce başka bir düzene geçiyorsun artık. Etrafın değişiyor herkes normal hayatına devam ediyor. Görüyorsun onu. Biri bir şaka yapıyor gülüyorsun, akşam ne yesem diye düşünüyorsun filan. Bir

suçluluk da oluyor tabi yani ne bileyim bir İskender de söyleyemiyorsun yani, ayıp geliyor. 3 gün önce içecek çorban yoktu sonuçta. Ama işte ateş düştüğü yeri yakıyor maalesef. Sen de bir noktada İskender de yiyorsun mangal da yapıyorsun. (Yağız)

30. Acısı biraz sonradan çıkıyor, oradayken pek de bir şey hissetmiyorsun açıkçası. Asıl mesele buraya dönünce başlıyor. Alışamıyorsun başta, bir garip geliyor herkes. Sanki tanıdığın bildiğin yer değilmiş burası gibi. Ama sen de işte o gündelik telaşenin içinde alışıyorsun bir süre sonra, unutuyorsun. […] Benim oğlanın doğumgünü vardı mesela evde 135arke kutladık, hiçbir şey hissettirmedik. Ama insanlar daha canının derdindeyken de gidip orada burada paylaşmadık yani. Bir yeri zamanı olduğunu düşünüyorum her şeyin. (Kerim)

31. Deprem gerçeğini hatırlatmanın önemli olduğunu düşünüyorum çünkü insan kaptırıveriyor gündelik hayatın hengamesinde. İş, çoluk, çocuk, 135arken unutuveriyor […] Ama işin içine girince kat edecek çok yol olduğunu anlıyorsun. (Baran)

    Bu şey yaşanacak muhtemelen, biz hayatımızda göreceğiz bunu. Umarım görmeyiz diyeyim. Ama işte gündelik hayatın içinde unutuyorsun bazen. O yüzden burayı ciddiye alıyorum ben. (Beyza)

32. Ne isteniyor bir yandan da anlamıyorum. Saplanıp kalalım mı o acıya, evde oturup ağlayalım mı bütün gün? Aslında unutmak değil bu, sor bakalım saniye saniye anlatırım. Beynimden silinip gitmiyor bunlar, yaşamaya çalışıyorum sadece. Elimizden geleni yapıyoruz ama sanki istiyorlar ki nefret edelim hayattan, çilekeş çilekeş oturalım bütün gün. Böyle bir şey yok kimse kusura bakmasın, bize sıra gelene kadar önce kendilerine bir sorsunlar bakalım onlar ne kadar hatırlıyor? İki post paylaşsam mı hallolacak bu mesele, bu mu hatırlamak? Bu değil kimse kusura bakmasın.

APPENDIX B

BACKGROUND OF THE INTERLOCUTORS

Aslı: 37 years old. Graduated from technical academy. Works as an electrical technician in a private company. Started her search and rescue activities in a volunteer group under the political party that she is a member of. Met Kerim during one of the training sessions of the municipality and decided to proceed with SAP. Resides on the first floor of a 40 year-old apartment building with a roommate.

Baran: 34 years old. Has been working under a municipality's disaster management unit for more than 6 years. Studied public management in his bachelor's. Has known Kerim for many years through municipality's events. Actively joined search and rescue efforts previously, contributed to the formation of SAP. Resides on the sixth floow of an apartment building in a recently established housing estate with his wife and one small kid.

Beyza: 23 years old. Studied child development for two years and then switched to disaster management in 2021. Got to know Kerim through the training sessions he gave at her university. Has been a member of SAP since 2022. Resides in a recently constructed studio flat on the second floor with a roommate.

Kerim: 39 years old. Former extreme sports enthusiast. Studied economic for two years then dropped out of university. Works as a rescue trainer under a district municipality. One of the founding members of SAP. Resides on the third floor of a 25 years-old apartment complex with his wife and two small kids.

Rüstem: 52 years old. Highschool graduate. Owns a furniture store. Got to know SAP through one of his common friends with Kerim. Resides on the eighth floor of an apartment building that was built 20 years ago with his wife and mother.

Yağız: 21 years old. Studies nursing for his bachelor's degree. Got to know SAP through a fair that his university brought them to. One of the recent members of the team. Resides on the second floor of an apartment building that was built 30 years ago with his family.

APPENDIX C

APPROVAL OF THE ETHICS COMMITTEE[66]

T.C.
BOĞAZİÇİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (Sbinarek)

Sayı : E-84391427-050.01.04-172965 21.03.2024
Konu : 2024-11T Kayıt Numaralı Başvurunuz Hakkında

Sayın Doç. Dr. Bülent KÜÇÜK

Tez danışmanlığını yürüttüğünüz öğrenciniz Müzehher Zeynep Küçük'ün "From State of Emegency to State of Endurance: Negotiating Time Against Upcoming Grand Istanbul Earthquake" başlıklı projesi ile Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (SBİNAREK)'e yaptığınız 2024-11T kayıt numaralı başvuru 14.03.2024 tarih ve 2024/02 sayılı kurul toplantısında incelenmiş ve projeye etik onay verilmesi uygun bulunmuştur.

Bu karar tüm üyelerin toplantıya on-line olarak katılımıyla ve oybirliği ile alınmıştır. Onay mektubu tüm üyeler adına Komisyon Başkanı tarafından e-imzalanmıştır. Bilgilerinizi rica ederiz.

Saygılarımızla,

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Işıl ERDUYAN
Kurul Başkanı

Bu belge, güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.
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[66] The title of the thesis has been finalized after the thesis defense.

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