

EPsn: 338

Thesis – Final Year Project Research  
**[RE]CONSTRUCTING DOMESTICITY**  
Khiam Rehabilitation Center

*Prepared by:*  
**Ghassan Khoumassi**

*Advisor:*  
**Prof Jamal Abed**

## **Tale of Contents**

### **Khiam Rehabilitation Center:**

- Ex-detainees struggle
- Project Synopsis
- Torture: physical / psychological

### **Reconstructing Domesticity:**

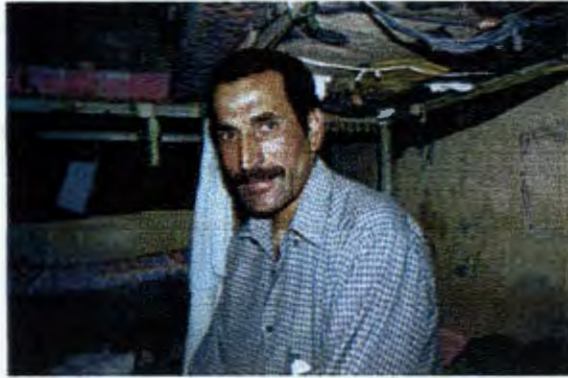
- Theoretical Framework
- Relevant Examples
- Empirical Investigation

### **Appendix**

- Testimonies: detainees who survived Khiam Detention
- Confronting Detention Consequences (*psychological study*)
- General report on ex-detainees conditions

**Khiam Rehabilitation Center**

## Lebanon's Forgotten Heroes *Khiam Detainees Struggle On*



In meeting Hassib Abdul-Hamid, 32, and Afif Hamoud, 36, one could never imagine that these healthy looking, deeply expressive men were former detainees at Khiam Detention Center. Their eyes, clear from any dark thoughts of revenge or deep depression, are a testament to the philosophical concept that "Freedom lies in the soul." Eager to discuss their lives during their imprisonment, Hamoud, who was imprisoned from 1988-1998, and Abdul-Hamid, who was detained from 1988-1991, shared their thoughts, feelings and memories without any reservation.

Hamoud was full of passion as he describes his 10-year incarceration in one of the world's most notorious prison camps. "It was a choice, between martyrdom and imprisonment. We had a clear enemy in the south that we had to struggle against -- the Israeli occupiers," he says. "The rest of the time was a matter of survival ... I had hope that one day, I would be freed, deep down inside I knew it and that is what kept me alive and sane throughout the ordeal," he adds.

Abdul-Hamid, sitting quietly next to his comrade, concurs and explains: "Surrendering psychologically was not an option. The experience makes you reconsider life and what it means. And, of course, the companionship inside the prison, that particular shared experience, allowed us to live through the difficult times." Khiam knew no confessional camps nor was segregated along political lines.

To describe the events inside Khiam as difficult is an understatement. Hamoud remembers the death of two fellow hostages when the prisoners attempted their own Intifadah, the continuous crying of a four-day-old baby brought in to be with his mother, and the slow deterioration and deaths of other prisoners. That is, of course, not to mention repeated torture, five or six prisoners sharing a 2.25-meter by 2.25-meter cell and no knowledge of the outside world or families. It was only in 1995 that the International Committee for the Red Cross and Red Crescent (ICRC) was allowed to visit the prison, bringing food, news, and international attention to conditions of the KDC.

Hamoud, released in 1998 as part of an exchange of prisoners, found life outside his prison walls very different and he felt alienated. "I felt lost and afraid," he says poignantly. "I could not think logically, I did not know how to

use the new currency nor to evaluate distances between myself and the cars when I crossed the street,” he says. He never admitted his fears, believing that it may negatively affect his relations with the outside world.

But Hamoud was lucky, in one sense. He was released during a time when the resistance movement was beginning to be understood and some help was available to him. He was hired at Ogero (the national telephone company) as part of a program initiated by Lebanese Telecommunications Minister Issam Nehman. The company also employed 74 of his fellow former inmates.



Abdul-Hamid, released in 1991, was not so lucky. He found it difficult making himself understood and even more trying to find a job. “We were looked at with shame back then ... especially the women who were perceived as unclean because of the rampant rape that took place in Kham,” he says. Abdul-Hamid, who is married with one child, currently works in a toy store.

The Lebanese government did very little to alleviate the prisoners’ conditions while they were confined and continues to be indecisive in its approach to the issue. For their heroic efforts, the former detainees are given US \$264 a month in compensation for a year – a practice that is to end soon – and the government has also awarded them US \$3,303 as a gesture for their heroism. This, according to Safa, is inexcusable. “It is a shame! The government promises to do something ... but we are still waiting. What the detainees need is recognition and employment. They need to be rehabilitated into society. The Council of Social Affairs has been promising to write up a report on their conditions...but we have received nothing yet. The former hostages just want to be independent, they want to be able to live normal lives,” he argues.

It is the nation’s duty to recognize and support the sacrifices that these men, women and children have made in the name of a cause that may help to unify a fractured society. As Hamoud eloquently puts it, “In Lebanon, we should live as nationalists.”

## **Khiam Rehabilitation Center**

### **Overview:**

Following the occupation and invasion of the Lebanese territories in 1978 by Israel, thousands of Lebanese citizens were thrown in Israeli prisons where they were tortured and many of them died in detention. Those detainees in the Israeli prisons were regular citizens with strong will but their private lives was totally destroyed after many years of detention in Israeli camps such as Ansar, Khiam, Askalan, Ayalon and Nafha. They were seriously affected on the physical, mental and emotional levels and they denied the right to pursue their careers or education.

### **Objectives:**

A human cause of such caliber requires without any doubt a human and social institution for the rehabilitation of the victims who survived tortures on psychological, physical and social level. The detention did not affect only the detainee himself but also his spouse, children and parents. That is why a rehabilitation process has to assist those who were arrested, tortured, deported or suffered from emotional traumas as a result of the Israeli practices and the arrest of their families or parents, to reconfirm their identity and to ensure their reintegration in society in order to carry on their lives like any normal citizens.

### **Funds:**

The project is of a regional scale yet it has national purposes. Most probably it would be an independent institution that seeks, for the fulfillment of its purposes, to cooperate and coordinate with governmental bodies and human organizations as well the Arab and international rehabilitation centers.

One valid scenario for the Rehabilitation Center would be a governmental institution that stands on equal distance from everybody irrespective of his/her sect or political affiliation. Such aspect of the project is crucial if the thesis seeks to take into consideration the different political, ideological and sectarian conflicts in the region.

However a second scenario should be regarded given the expected impotence of the Lebanese government to launch new social projects under its current economical crisis. A valid option would be to affiliate the project with a capable political party with a clear social agenda that would be interested in the issue. The most prominent NGO in the region is Hizbollah party especially after the clear diminish in its armed role in the country and the struggle to prove itself through a new social agenda.

**Activities:**

1. Establish centers for medical care, physiotherapy, psychiatry and social, professional and educational rehabilitation.
2. A documentation center specialized in building a complete archive and census of all the physical and psychological cases of the victims that survived torture in Israeli prisons.
3. The Center must also have a library, amusement and athletic equipment.
4. Follow up the medical treatment, social and educational progress of the members of the families who lost their providers.
5. Provide job opportunities to the released and handicap detainees after their rehabilitation.
6. Organize technical and professional training sessions (Computer- Internet and languages).
7. Organize educational and psychological circles.
8. Organize entertaining activities for the victims that survived torture and for their children and assist them in their reintegration into society.
9. Organize conferences and seminars on rehabilitation and issue books and brochures about the emotional and social impact of torture.
10. Organize workshops on human rights and struggle against torture.

## Torture in the Khiam Detention Camp

In April 1979, during an interview by "Maareef" Israeli newspaper with Moushi Dayan, the minister of defense at that time, he summarized the Israeli strategy towards the Arab detainees in the Israeli prisons by the following: "We will make of these detainees parasites in their societies, and we will not release them until they become like mummies, empty and full of holes from inside like Swiss cheese."



### What is Torture?

The aim of any form of torture is to break down the personality and to destroy the identity of the victims. Torture is always induced deliberately, it is always linked to both physical and psychological pain, the victims are unprepared, and the inflicted pain is acute and chronic. Torture always creates continuing after-effects in the victim, but these after-effects are normal reactions by normal persons to a pervert, cruel, abnormal act, and most importantly, can be treated and the victims rehabilitated.

### Methods of torture



Methods include both physical and psychological forms, such as:



Physical: Beating, whipping, burning, rape, suspension upside down, submersion into water almost to the point of suffocation, electric torture with shocks of high voltage on various parts of the body, very often the genitals

Psychological: Threats, deceit, humiliation, insults

## Consequences



Physical and neurological sequels include soreness of wounds, painful scars, stiffness of limbs and muscles, atrophy and paralysis of muscles, hearing and vision loss, persistent headaches, etc.

In addition to the physical wounds, torture victims suffer from psychological symptoms such as feelings of anxiety, guilt and shame, powerlessness in relation to the problems of everyday life, problems with concentration, poor sleep with frequent nightmares, impotence, etc.

Dr. Jamil Bachir, secretary of the Lebanese Psychology Association tackled the means of Psychological torture adopted in Israeli prisons such as: Putting the prisoner in solitary confinements. Reducing the number of meals to one. To be noticed that this meal did not contain necessary food substances. Making disturbing noises at night to prohibit prisoners from sleeping. Threatening the prisoner of committing aggression against his family members who live within the occupied territories (that threat was sometimes applied in a very ugly way). Refusing to present the prisoner before specialized physicians.

In fact, prisoners were given only painkillers, which are not in conformity with international characteristics and without referring to the laws related to the morals of the profession of medicine nor respecting the natural human right.

A clinic study done on the prisoners who followed a treatment after they were released revealed some troubles as well as the following problems: Psychological breakdown, neurotic phobia, which is manifested by the isolation phobia ( ie when a person feels that he is physically threatened because of his presence in an isolated place ). 63% of released prisoners suffer from the said cases in addition to hypochondrias (feeling scared of sickness), pathologic scruple, isolative

63% of released prisoners suffer from the said cases in addition to hypochondrias (feeling scared of sickness), pathologic scruple, isolative psychosis which is the most dangerous case resulting from the destruction of psychological and mental infrastructure of the prisoner through isolating him from the external world for many years and the periodical psychosis which is limited to pathological breakdown and the symptom of pathological ulceration.

Even now after a year of the liberation of the last detainee, more for those who were freed earlier, it continues to haunt them. Mahmoud suffers from stupor. He could stay for hours blank. Ayman Al Kays has lost his joy in life and become paranoid. Fayiz can no longer hear a happy tune without remembering the sad days of Khyam and gets depressed. Even 14 years after his liberation those two years and a half still haunt his dreams. Whenever he does not wake up terrified, his wife tells him of his trembling while asleep. Nightmares of his torture perpetually tormented Mohammed, "My daughter, whom I had practically never seen, spent several months asking her mother for me to leave, she's scared of me, and refuses to see me."

Psychological injury can be buried deep under the halo of the hero but it will still torture him for a long period of time. In one way or the other, Khyam has succeeded its role to destroy the enemy.

## **Reconstructing Domesticity**

## ANTHROPOLOGY

**Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,  
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home!**

*"Home, Sweet Home" John Howard Payne, 1833*

There's no place like home, but where/what/when is home? Most people when think of home they seek more than a house – they long to belong...



Plagiarism

### The Home: an Axiology

LC  
In the domestic sphere, relations of power are not only a discursive arrangement, but corporeally, spatially, and historically mapped. From the end of the nineteenth century the front door of the house constituted the interface between dichotomously defined civic, or public sphere and domestic or private sphere. In this paradigm, the domestic sphere is located in the home, the interior 'other' to the exterior world of paid work. In this period of history, the home, with a loving woman / wife / mother / nurturer at the hearth, represented a shelter to which the world-weary worker returned at the end of the day.

Quote

By the 1920s, the traditional idea that a house was a shelter was revolutionized by such proposals as that of Le Corbusier, who argued that a house was actually a machine for living. Seventy years later, in the age of micro-electronics, the house is not merely a machine for living, but an intelligent 'dwelling' machine. Would it be still called a "home"? The iconic use of the "home" image connects us to a set of cultural meanings and values. To call a house a home has the effect of conferring a certain desirable ambience, an elevated status.

Joan Borsa writes "Home, of course, is not a particular, fixed location but a metaphoric location - a place one both understands and needs to know more about, a space 'between' where distance is accounted for, constantly traveled and negotiated. But home is also an imaginary space - a projection, a desire, a fiction. Terms like home, local or local knowledge cannot be oversimplified.

and negotiated. But home is also an imaginary space - a projection, a desire, a fiction. Terms like home, local or local knowledge cannot be oversimplified. One does not necessarily find home or local knowledge in close geographical proximity. We may be able to identify several places where we would locate ourselves or that we feel closely aligned with.”

## *Fiolanoglu* **The Home as the Body**

According to Bachelard, our home is an extension of our being: “Our house is our hollow in the world. It is our initial universe.” The home is the place where our existence becomes visible, because we get in relation with life through our home, and our home is our root in the world, which presents us. Gaston Bachelard points out the words of Georges Spyridaki explaining the home as an elastic and alive prosthesis of the body, which has bizarre or changing borders like an organic structure. “[The house] transfers the light but it is not made up of glass. There must be something like gas in its structure. The walls become dense or loose according to my wish. I sometimes stick these walls on my body, like an armor. Sometimes I leave [the walls] in their own space which has the feature of infinitely widening and they spread around in this space.” According to Bachelard, the house is something that protects the body from outside effects and keeps its physical and intellectual properties together to provide continuity in life. John Ruskin considers a house as a shelter which protects us from outside effects but not just a piece of the outside world we just draw a roof on and burn fire in; he adds the concepts of the family and the holiness to the house. Richard Sennet stands by Ruskin’s house definition and describes the house as a shelter for a psychological progress; we run away from the outside world into the house where we realize that everything is clearer for us.

## **The Home as the Family**

Emile Benveniste, in his seminal work, *Indo-European Language and Society*, gives a documented historical substantiation of the common saying ‘a house is not a home’. He differentiates between the linguistic roots of the conceptions of ‘home as family’, that is, as an affective social unit, and ‘home-as-construction’, or what we refer to as house. In this sense, Ghassan Hage agrees that home-building is not necessarily, but can be, the equivalent of house-building or domestic space building: “House building does not necessarily include the attempt to build a familial, comforting and ‘homely’ space, and home-building does not necessarily involve house construction. It is on such a basis that I would like to suggest a definition of home-building as *the building of the feeling of being ‘at home’*”. It is in this sense that I am considering the home as an affective construct: an affective edifice constructed out of affective building blocks (blocks of homely feeling). For it to come into being, to be successfully erected, this homely affective structure has to be built with affective blocks that provide either in themselves or in combination with others four key feelings: security, familiarity, community and a sense of possibility. They are the feelings that it is the aim of home-building to foster and maximize, to put together into a livable structure.

## **Conclusion**

According to Bachelard, our home is an extension of our being: “Our house [home] is our hollow in the world. It is our initial universe.” The home is the place where our existence becomes visible, because we get in relation with life through our home, and our home is our root in the world, which presents us. As an elastic body, it is a protector from outside effects, a container keeping the body together as a body and a soul, a holly place having its own rituals and a silent moment to have an insight of ourselves, is an indication of my body; we exist and reveal ourselves in the world as beings by means of the house, as it is mentioned at the beginning of the text. Then we can conclude that the essence of any reconstruction for domesticity must be temporariness.

Everyday life must be able to [re] construct its own flux; the structure of the space must be active; and the designer must follow and structure traces of everyday life. The project should leave a variety of possibilities to the being to interact with the things and with the people around the being. And everyday life of the users will fill the voids of that structure.

## RELEVANT EXAMPLES

Issues related to Domesticity

*"Dear Faith: I'm coming home. Please keep the door unlocked and wax the threshold. I need to be able to slip in and out without any friction." Jones Amelia*

### Migration and the Collapse of Space: (Omar Khan)

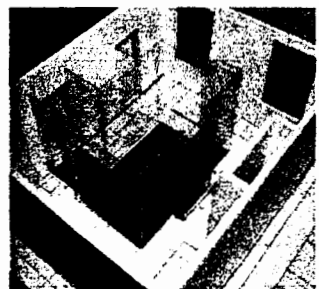
This project is a modeling of domesticity in migration. It deals with the idea of being rooted to place and culture, where identity forms the border between an "inside" and an "outside". The project shows how symbolic objects, clothes, and memorabilia transform a simple box into a home. An unfamiliar place can momentarily become home as these contents begin to occupy a space: a closet gets domesticated by clothes, a bathroom by a toothbrush, and the night table by a clock and a book.<sup>1</sup>



In detention centers all cells are alike, and every cell is occupied by a number of people. Yet after some time, little private objects of each detainee start to unfold and recreate the space and thus, little by little, to personalize it. This experiment shows the personal attachment to certain objects and how they can help any person settling in a new place/society he moves to.

### A room in the room: (jaecho lee)

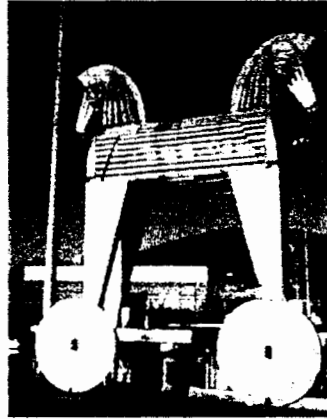
Room within a room –as an experimental exercise- raises the issue of invisible boundaries, which are implicit in our everyday psychological and social interaction with society. Visitors enter the inner room to share visual and aural experiences, but they cannot physically cross the boundary. Techniques of spatial occupation, of territorial mapping, of invasion and surveillance are seen as the instruments that define enclosures, the range of social and individual control.<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Omar Khan, Migration and the Collapse of Space

<sup>2</sup> Jae-Chol Lee, A Room in The Room

## Double-Headed Horse of Troy:



The Double-Headed Horse of Troy tries to construct a bridge between Tijuana and San Diego as an expression of the border/borderless. Turning both north and south simultaneously, the two-headed horse visualizes the struggle to belong. This martial emblem represents a separation between the dueling forces of desire and location: a whole horse body knitted together and tearing apart but always facing “home”. This work shows that some borders are constructed solely mentally, requiring only an acknowledgment from a communal “within”<sup>3</sup>.

## Nostalgia:



The poet Adrienne Rich said that nostalgia is amnesia in reverse. Instead of forgetting the past, one remembers it too much. The eternal underpinnings of belonging are revealed in the metaphorical elephant that never forgets: within what remains of their habitat, an elephant’s survival depends on being able to find watering holes. They will journey across dry savannas in search of oases they once visited as toddlers. Because they trust their memories, they also die in search of these watering holes; due to the duration of time, many wells will have dried up or have been destroyed. Too much memory can be as dysfunctional as too little memory. This, too, is a meaning of nostalgia.

---

<sup>3</sup> Teddy Cruz, Two-Way Journey



## Domesticity and Internet:



"Home" is a complex concept that appears to be mythic and inescapable. Even on the Internet, one can't help noting the references to (virtual) domestic architecture, place and process: "World Wide Web," "home page," "domains," "windows," "Netscape." The incommensurability of virtual space is made user-friendly by such allusive designations. Humans seem to need to carry home with them, to make themselves at home wherever they go.

## Websites: Office at Home



Recent web sites and computers are presenting a new image of social relations through technology, an image that reconfigures the relation between public and private space. The home page is now a hybrid site of home and work, where it is possible to make tele-deals while sitting in your kitchen. Even while the homework model of domestic space finds a place for women, it does not really break down the traditional distinctions between male and female, public and private. Instead, it renegotiates these distinctions through new metaphors. For some of the more utopian, this new form of social relation offers liberation. Women don't have to be women; men don't have to be men; races don't have to be races. People can make up identities, occupy new dwellings, reinvent themselves.

## Domesticity and technology:



In the 1950s, when television first came homes, domestic space was reconfigured as theatrical space. Whereas the cinema, with its darkened exhibition spaces, offered the fantasy of being alone while in public, TV reversed this. With TV, you could be in public while alone in your home. With television, domestic boredom and isolation were totally transformed into exciting nights.

However, there were always fears concerning TV's more alienating and threatening potential. Would TV interrupt women's household chores? Would it cause fights between family members or disrupt the gendered power dynamics of family life? Some studies even warned that fathers might lose their authority at home as television became the new center of knowledge and wisdom in the home. Others argued that women would have to compete with TV to get their husbands' attention. In these scenarios, TV became the "other woman".

## Guest Room:



The stranger who is invited to see the house is usually called the guest. The "guest room" has a long tradition in middle and upper middle class houses as the showroom, which is only used upon the arrival of a guest. Modern living, on the other hand, externalized many activities, such as parties and work related meetings, which previously took place at home. Hence, as one architect put it,

showroom, which is only used upon the arrival of a guest. Modern living, on the other hand, externalized many activities, such as parties and work related meetings, which previously took place at home. Hence, as one architect put it, the guest room had turned into an “unnecessary luxury”. Hence as the house becomes an increasingly privatized domain, anybody who is not a regular inhabitant can be considered a stranger. It seems paradoxical therefore, that domestic spaces built for private comfort are, at the same time, spaces on display for the stranger’s gaze.

## [RE]CONSTRUCTING DOMESTICITY

Empirical study on domesticity in KDC<sup>4</sup>

*"The world is all-seeing, but it is not exhibitionist – it does not provoke our gaze. When it begins to provoke it, the feeling of strangeness begins."*

Jacques Lacan

Despite all studies done on the detainees very little was said about the other side of detention by which I mean the social life between detainees within the *Mo3takal* and the cells in particular. To investigate this issue one has to look at the methods and daily practices adopted by the detainees trying to domesticate and create a sense of home within their cells.

So it is very important to view this process of construction of the domesticity and its development according to different experiences. Look at the way detainees used to organize their lives, spaces, relationships with each other and with South Lebanese Army soldiers, trying to see if a detention cell with all the difficult circumstances that surrounded its existence could become a home for the detainees. In trying to depict traces of domesticity within the detainees life, I heavily rely –in the theoretical framework- on Ghassan Hage's reading "At home in the entrails of the west" from which I took his main components of domesticity –security, familiarity, community, possibility- trying to project them on a cell's life.

### Adaptation to the new space



At the beginning, we could examine the situation of a new coming detainee to be presented to his new "home" and the facilities offered to him in his new space. Each one starts to examine the new space in his own way and according to his previous experience. Then the detainee starts questioning ways to accommodate himself within the space, go to the bathroom or defend oneself from the cold weather. As Dawoud Faraj describes his first hours of settlement in the single rooms where there is no body to learn from. He says,

"It is very cold in February, I tried to sleep on the blanket however I felt the cold weather penetrating into my bones, I started to shiver and I thought of a way to

<sup>4</sup> Detainees Testimonies Ressources: personal meetings/[www.Khiam.org/reading-writing-places](http://www.Khiam.org/reading-writing-places)

*Megharis*

become warm but how? I reached a solution that satisfied both my back and chest so I will put half the blanket underneath me and the other half above me.”

and then he added, “Like anyone else I wanted to go to the bathroom. So I asked the neighboring cells what should I do in such a case?” So the more experienced and the older detainees replied, “you have a bathroom within your cell, you have a bucket within your cell and that is your bathroom”

Dawoud Faraj adds, “By this I have discovered the first landmark of the prison.”

In addition he was given advice to make his sitting position on the bucket most comfortable by putting his slipper on the edges and thus it becomes a “WC.” The detainee starts to use previous experience of fellow older members to get accustomed to the new lifestyle. Later on comes a more developed stage of learning, where the detainee is moved into a cell with several people with a lot of knowledge of the space and the life style. Inside the new space one starts learning techniques of communication from one cell to another, techniques of storage, techniques of hiding things, even techniques of classification (where one starts to be taught how to differentiate between a loyal detainee and a spy).

## Security



The feeling of security is of course one of the most basic feelings we aim to foster in our homely space. This feeling derives from the availability of what we consider as necessary to the satisfaction of basic needs and from the absence of harmful threatening otherness. However Ghassan Hage states that we can be in such a space without being in our own homely space: “A deeper sense of security and homeliness emanates from the space where we not only have but where *we feel empowered to seek* the satisfaction of our needs and to remove or exclude threatening otherness.”<sup>5</sup>

After several hours or days of detention and especially in the phase of early torture and questioning, the cell becomes a space where the detainee is returned after torture. This at least means no physical torture for a while although the psychological torture is always there. The cell becomes a space where one starts to relieve his pain after hours of physical torture and that is usually in single cells in which new detainees are put during the early phase of detention. The cell gains a sense of security at least from physical torture. Later

<sup>5</sup> Ghassan Hage, At Home in the Entrails of the West, Home/World

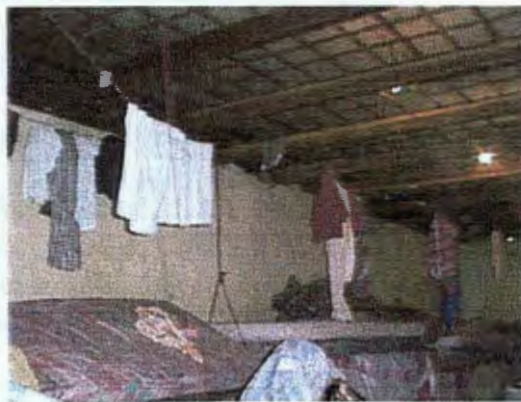
on, a detainee is moved to group cells where new concepts of security arise. Another form of security can be detected where detainees feel secure in the sense that they know there is someone by their side on whom they could rely on in case of emergency, illness, fainting, and other fatal cases... At least someone who could call for help. A detainee knows that there is a group of loyal friends who are willing to do anything to help even if that help would cost them hours of torture and abuse. As a Shiite detainee from Amal says while hugging another Druze ex-detainee (Naef Al Monzer),

“That guy saved my life once while we were in that room” pointing to the room they were in. “All members of the cell did not stop shouting for help till one of the guards came. And Naef volunteered to carry me all the way to the car although I was about 50 kg heavier than him”.

Naef comments on those words by saying, “Yes, we really felt secure within our cells, not like now (meaning after liberation) at least you know what your worries are torture and when are we going to be released, where would one be secure more than in the arms of his brothers. Even the torturers we got used to them where as after liberation you never expect where problems can come from.”

On the other hand Ali an ex detainee from Hizbullah stated, “How could we not feel secure at any time, we are always under the eyes and between the hands of God. God is the only one who could deprive our security and freedom and not a human being like us.”

### **Familiarity**



According to Hage, the feeling of familiarity is generated by a space where the deployment of our bodily dispositions can be maximized. It is where we feel in possession of what Bourdieu would call a well-fitted *habitus*.<sup>6</sup> This involves the creation of a space where one possesses a maximal practical know-how: knowing what everything is for and when it ought to be used. It also involves the creation of a space where one possesses a maximal spatial knowledge: knowing almost unthinkingly where one is, and where one needs to

---

<sup>6</sup> Ghassan Hage, At Home in the Entrails of the West. Home/World

go for specific purposes and how to get there. This sense of familiar knowledge implies spatial and practical control, which in turn creates a sense of security.

Where could a person be more familiar to a space more than the cell in which 99% of his time is spent? Not only knowing where one could find anything in the cell but even every particle in that space and surrounding it. The detainee is not only familiar with the physical material around but also familiar with the knowledge stored in each others' minds. The detainees have reached a very high level of knowledge exchange in all fields including personal issues. As Ahmad Yehia says

“Before the intervention of the International Red Cross there was nothing to do except talk and talk.”

And what if that situation extends over months and years. A detainee becomes familiar to a very high percentage with the other's thoughts, beliefs, ideologies personal stories, etc..

That familiarity with the context was a major concern for the SLA soldiers. Either for psychological impact or for military reasons, they tended to separate detainees from each other from time to time. However that was an advantage to a lot of detainees where they got to meet new detainees, new ideas, new beliefs, etc... and thus become more and more familiar even on a wider scale. While traveling from one cell to another familiarity takes also a new dimension where the detainee becomes familiar with new techniques and life styles; which he/she can adopt and move to other cells. After experience within the *mo3takal* this familiarity engulfs the SLA soldiers within the system. The detainee becomes familiar with the voices, appearances, and even footsteps of the soldiers being able to differentiate between the steps of different soldiers walking within the courts. As Souha Bshara says,

“I was able to differentiate between Abou Nabil's (Head of the SLA soldiers in the *Mo3takal*) shoes and other soldiers from the slit under the door.”<sup>7</sup>

Those peeking moments that were stolen by the detainees gave them as some indicated a great sense of control over the place. Suha Bshara says that since she occupied one of the first rooms in the women's jail she was able to map and trace all the movements in the court.

## Community



<sup>7</sup> Souha Bechara, *Resistante*, Jean-Claude Lattes, 2000

Michel Foucault writes: "I think it is somewhat **arbitrary** to try to dissociate the effective practice of freedom by people, **the practice** of social relations, and the spatial distributions in which they **find themselves**. If they are separated, they become impossible to understand. Each **can only** be understood through the other."<sup>8</sup>

Thus the feeling of community is extremely crucial **for** feeling at home. Above all, it involves living in a space where one recognizes people as "one's own" and where one feels recognized by them as such. "It is crucially a feeling of shared symbolic forms, shared morality, shared values **and** most importantly perhaps, shared language."<sup>9</sup> Hage says. He adds "A home is imagined as a space where one possesses maximal communicative power in Bourdieu's sense - that is, the capacity to speak appropriately in a variety of recognizable specific situations."

Any cell in Khiam Detention Camp was an ideal **space** to illustrate communal relations. It is a space where everybody knows **that** at least some people can be morally relied on for help. All groups were **one** hand as Suha Bshara says,

"Whether Christian or Moslem or belonging to any particular party. They were all combined in one direction against the Israeli invaders."<sup>10</sup>

Different names but all inform about the ideal relationships (*Ikhwan* [brothers], *Rifak* [comrades], *zumala'* [colleagues], etc...) Although at certain instances there were a lot of conflicts between different ideologies or directions which were usually exploited by the SLA to trigger further conflicts between the parties. They used to put detainees of different political affiliations with each other intentionally to make use of that for some Israeli benefits. Whereas an ex-detainee from Hizbullah called Ali said,

"If there weren't any prayer time we would have forgotten that we were of different religions within the same cell. In addition I taught a Christian guy how to pray and he taught me his prayer. Hoping that at least one of the prayers would make us get rid of such a horrible situation."

In addition to the discussions, other types of debates used to take place such as *Souk 3okaz* [competition through reciting traditional Arabic poetry] as they used to call it or *Nakabet Al sho3ara'* [the poets' syndicate] As where the debate is in the form of poetry or *zajal* [a traditional form of improvised sung dialogue].

Later on within the life of the *Mo3takal* with experience new practices became known between the walls of the *Mo3takal*. Inventions were made either to fulfill certain needs such as writing, sewing, drawing, storing communication or just for the sake of leisure such as inventing swords out of rulers, *Masabeh* [string of beads used by Moslem men mainly] out of olive seeds etc... All those issues

---

<sup>8</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline And Punish*

<sup>9</sup> Ghassan Hage, *At Home in the Entrails of the West*

<sup>10</sup> Souha Bechara, *Resistante*, Jean-Claude Lattes, 2000



were very successful in creating an interactive community in which the members shared knowledge, experience, pain, etc...

After some time of detention, detainees realized that even though rules were imposed on them such as times for eating, sleeping, shower, smoking, etc... There was still empty time to impose their own rule or at least to manage their time and space among themselves like any community.

As Naser Al Monzer says,

“Each cell had its own rules for cleaning, sleeping, smoking, eating, chatting and other daily activities. If a new member joined a cell one of the two choices was adopted, the most common was that the new member had to obey by the new rule. However at some instances the new member came with new and more developed rules from other cells and thus those rules were adopted or manipulated and reconstructed according to the circumstances of the cell. Mainly the rules were established due to the agreement of all the members or at least the majority within the cell. If the vote for a rule was equal some cells agreed upon each other to test both cases and see which is better.

One of the rules as an example dealt with sleeping space within the small rooms (there was no room for all the members to sleep at the same time) so they managed to divide the night into intervals and each group slept while the other group stood waiting for their time. Another thing is deciding who would sleep next to the WC bucket. In some cells that were decided according to volunteers every day at other instances turns were taken. However in cells where there were elderly people or detainees with hard cases such as diseases they were given privilege over others such as wider spaces for sleeping, more hours of sleep, less duties of cleaning etc...

### Possibility



Ghassan Hage argues that the sense of possibility is something often forgotten in theorizations of the home, a home has to be a space open for opportunities: “Most theorizations of the home emphasize it as a shelter but, like a mother’s lap it is only a shelter that we use to rest and then spring into action, and then return to spring into action again. A space which is only a shelter becomes, like the lap of the possessive mother, a claustrophobic space and loses

its homely character.”<sup>11</sup> Consequently, a homely space has to be open enough so that one can perceive opportunities of ‘a better life’: the opportunity to develop certain capacities and skills, the opportunity of personal growth and more generally, the availability of opportunities for ‘advancement’.

With respect to the sense of possibility, opportunities were very scarce in the cell. However detainees started to overcome this problem and had the “opportunity to develop certain capacities and skills” they started to make use of each other’s knowledge whether religious, poetic, artistic, linguistic, and other modes of knowledge. As Ahmad Yehia says

“A lot of illiterate people went out of the *Mo3takal* knowing one two or even three languages that is besides the artistic skills, some of the detainees as he said have become experts in needle production, others in drawing on cloth, others in poetry and many others.”

Possibility as Naef Al Monzer says,

“It was always on our minds It was one of the three; either possibility of escaping from the *Mo3takal*, or either being released due to a military action by the resistance freeing all the detainees in the *Mo3takal* al Khyam, or the third choice was to be exchanged by Israeli corpses or live captives with the resistance and as you have seen we were released due to a fourth possibility which was never in our minds.”

---

<sup>11</sup> Ghassan Hage, At Home in the Entrails of the West

## Appendix

**Live Testimonies** — mention clearly the reference.  
(detainees who survived the KDC)

**1. Tawfic Mansour** (from Aitaroun)

Held in the Khiam Detention Camp from November 13, 1989 to January 28, 1994.

"I was beaten with a rough stick during the interrogation period which resulted in breaking three of my vertebrae. I used to be interrogated up to 15 hours per day.

The interrogators wanted me to confirm their suspicion that I cooperate with the resistance. I told them, however, that I was only a member in the syndicate for tobacco farmers. One of the interrogators, Jean Homsy, asked me about a release that I distributed on March 8, 1989. The release, demanding for a rise in tobacco prices, was considered by Homsy as supportive to the resistance!

After my interrogation period, I was taken to a cell with other detainees. Our struggle for better conditions in the Khiam camp became a daily routine. Having access to the sun and getting the minimum level of nutritious food were our main demands.

To achieve our demands, we did a hunger strike for five days starting on April 12, 1991. As a result, many detainees were brutally beaten that two of them were taken to Marjayoun Hospital. The quality of food has become better since. Still they do not contain the minimum level of nutrition. Having access to the sun was allowed though far from sufficiency.

In July 1993, I told one of the detainees to be aware that there were collaborators in the cells. Twenty days later, I was questioned about what I had said and was told that the word 'collaborator' was prohibited from being said. I responded: 'But to me it is not prohibited.' So the one questioning me said: 'You want a resistance in the camp?' He quickly brought a metal whip and started hitting me so hard that my fingernails were displaced. I was put in a solitary confinement for 15 days as a punishment. I was then transferred to the section where they confine whom they consider detainees with riotous behavior. It is a section in which the sun can't enter. I stayed there for eight months. As a result of darkness and humidity, I suffered from severe backaches to an extent where I lost the ability to stand up.

The Khiam detention camp is a grave for the living.

**2. Daher Nasrallah** (from Houla)

Detained in the Khiam camp from April 7, 1992 to January 7, 1994.

One of the SLA security men, Ali Ayyoub, came to the Kfar Kila public school where I teach and said: "We need you in the Khiam." They took me to the Khiam camp where I was accused of provoking students against the Israeli occupation forces and organizing resistance cells. I was beaten with a whip all over my body and electricity was applied on my fingertips. I was then tied to a post with cold water thrown on me where I had to keep wearing my wet clothes for four days.

I was put in a solitary confinement for two months. I was then taken to a cell with other detainees where I started having an unpleasant burning feeling in my stomach. I asked for medicine but was given a painkiller. They even sometimes refused to give me anything. My body became feeble and my nerves were too loose. I had a continuous feeling of nausea due to the food that lacked the basic elements of vitamins and proteins. In addition, we had no access to the sun. My

so paid from ... Khiam ...

... the ...

heartbeats had speeded up and I had become very pale from anemia. I reached a stage where I couldn't stand up except with the help of two of the detainees. My deteriorating health state forced them to take me to Marjayoun Hospital, which is located inside the occupation zone. I suffered from an extreme case of anemia where I was given units of blood. I later knew that the blood was taken from other detainees. When I had an inflammation of my chest, I was released and the International Red Cross transferred me to Hammoud Hospital in Saida and then to Bhennes Hospital. I am now continuing my treatment from home.

### **3. Kamil Daher** (from Shebaa)

Detained in the Khiam camp from October 4, 1989 to December 12, 1991.

I bought the books for the school year that was about to begin. But on the same night, I woke up by a loud voice. It was my father shouting, "There is nobody in this room." The Israelis did not allow me to change my night garment. They took me and I spent the first night in a room full of mice. I was taken in the morning to the Khiam camp. I was ordered to stand there near a wall until late at night. I was then taken to a room and a person started questioning me. I told him I was student. So he asked me, "Do you know what is this?" I tried to touch it since I was blindfolded. It turned out to be a scourge made by a collection of electric wires. He ordered me to kneel down and started whipping my back and my bare feet for three hours until I fell helplessly on the ground. After dragging me and tying me to a post, he started throwing cold and hot water on my naked body. I was then put in a solitary confinement that had no access to the sun for one week. During the second session of torture, the interrogators wrapped a metallic wire between my fingers, ordered me to kneel down and spilled water on my body. As I felt the electric current flowing to my blood, my whole body started shaking uncontrollably. They put the electric wire on my genitals and between my teeth.

Each day carried a new way of torture with it. The interrogator whose weight was over 100 kilograms had walked over my back. He once hit me hard with a rough stick on my head that my sight was weakened. Whenever I asked to see a doctor, their answer was "We have no doctors here." I threatened them of doing a hunger strike to death. So, an Israeli doctor examined my eyes and said there was no treatment for my eyes. He added that he would give me a walking stick because I was going to lose my sight in a short period as he said.

I tried to go back to school following my release but was unable to read or see what was written on the board. I couldn't continue my education.

### **4. Mohammed Yassine** (from Taibeh)

Detained in 1985 in the Khiam Camp and released in 1991. The Lahd members who took me to the Khiam camp chained my hands and put a sack on my head. When we reached the camp, I was lashed by two different kinds of whips all over my body and with no caution to the sensitive areas. An extremely loud siren was placed very close to my ear and was turned on. Then they threw hot and cold water over my body. I was then dragged to the interrogation room with my hands because I was unable to move. There were two interrogators waiting for me. One was an Israeli and the other was Lebanese. They applied electricity on my hands where I lost my conscious several times. They threw very cold water on me each time they wanted to wake me up. After I did not give them any confession, they told Lahd's police inside the camp to take care of me. Lahd's police chained my hands to a post upwards where my tiptoes barely touched the ground. While I was hanged on the post, they started whipping me hard. They threw cold water on me every 15 minutes before resuming their whipping. My

blood ran down and I had slashes across my body.

I was then put in a solitary confinement for 20 days where I was allowed to wash my face only once. The cell was two meters in height and 90 centimeters in width and had no toilet.

I was then joined to the other inmates. We were five in a cell that was two meters in height and 1.5 meters in width. We had in our cell a wastebasket and a kettle of water. I remained in such a situation for five years. We were allowed to have a shower once a month and to have access to the sun once every 10 days and for five minutes only.

#### **5. Rabah Shahrour** (from Kfar Hamam)

Detained on March 23, 1988 and released on May 16, 1989.

I was detained from my school in the village of Kfar Shouba. SLA members entered the classroom and asked me to go with them. I was only 13 years old. They took me to the Khiam camp where I had to stay in a cell that was one meter long and half a meter wide during the interrogation period which lasted for one month and the half. They used to interrogate me late at night, usually with my hands chained and a sack on my head. They applied electricity on my fingers, my tongue and other sensitive areas of the body. I used to faint. But the interrogator would wake me up by throwing me with cold water. He would wait for 10 minutes before throwing hot water on me. The interrogator used to say to me after the interrogation session was finished: "We were not tough on you because you're very young." During my detention, my mother and two sisters were also held in the camp.

When I was released, the military official there said: "We are releasing you because of your young age and your sickness." I was suffering from fractures in my thoracic cavity that was resulted from kicking. I was expelled after my release with other members of my family. My sisters and my mother were also expelled from our village after their release.

#### **6. Maroun Qazzi** (from Jieh)

Computer Science Student

Detained in the Khiam camp on October 13, 1991 and released on January 5, 1995.

I was arrested from the Casino Ahirom Restaurant from Ain Ibel village. The charge, as they claimed then, was spying on the pro-Israeli militia calls. When they took me to center no. 17, Akel Hachem told me that my real charge was swearing at the pro-Israeli militias. They hit me with stones and rocks on my teeth and one of them inserted his shoe into my mouth from 6:00 p.m. till 10:00. When I fainted and could not see anything anymore, I was taken inside Israeli territories.

One of the Israeli Generals asked me to work for them or he will throw me to prison: "You are Christian, Maroun, we should be friends... cooperate with us and we will give you better salary..." I refused and told him that if the KDC was the alternative, then so be it. They took me to the KDC at night with my head covered with a bag. There, they put my fingers to electricity, stripped me naked and threw cold and hot water on my body. They hanged me on the pole and kept me there for 45 days, where soldiers came up and hit me on my stomach until my ulcer that was under medication before my detention, exploded. When I started spitting blood, they asked me to work with them and in return, they would let me go... I refused... They presented me a visa to any country that I

may want but to get out of Lebanon... I refused again... They said I was stupid or insane.

I was then put to solitude cell for teaching a fellow detainee the French language, and teaching others to read and write. We used to tell some theatrical stories, or tell jokes to kill the time and help our spirits remain high.

#### **7. Zeinab Al-Haj** (from Armata)

Detained on July 14, 1988 and released on March 24, 1993.

The first time I was detained was for two days in 1986. In 1988, I was held for eight months in the Kham camp. But after four days of my release, the collaborators came to me demanding me to cooperate with them. I refused and thus returned to the camp.

SLA policewomen would order me to take off all of my clothes. They would then put a sack on my head, blindfold me with a piece of cloth and handcuff me. During the interrogation period, I would be put in a solitary confinement. Still, I could hear the other prisoners' screaming and moaning.

The interrogator slapped me so hard that my eye kept hurting me for a month.

When I was put in a cell with the other girls, I was relieved. We were not allowed to talk in a loud voice. The low illuminated cell was completely turned off at 8:00 p.m. We were not allowed to go to the toilet at night. We used to defecate on a nylon tissue or an empty sack of bread that would remain in the cell until the next morning. We were never allowed to take a shower properly. The policewomen would rush us by opening the doors after 10 minutes where we would get out with soap still over my bodies. This resulted in skin diseases to many of the girls.

#### **8. Ali Shirrie** (from Khirbit Silim)

Teacher in Toulin Governmental School.

Detained on 19/02/86 at 21 years of age, and released on 21/07/96, more than 10 years later.

"I was cross-examined by official Israeli lieutenants. The continuous beating of the body, especially on the head area, used routinely during the investigations done by the Israelis, have resulted in my degradation in my eyesight. In 1989 my loss of eyesight was already 3 degrees, and increased drastically to 15 degrees in 1992, and reached 20 by the year 1997. My cellmates used to feed me because of my loss of eyesight. I also suffer urinary bladder infections, intestinal infections due to mal-nutrition, and severe reduction of my white blood cells. It was my parents who brought me medical spectacles in 1989, which they had to bring without any doctor's consult since there was no doctor in the KDC or any kind of medical care".

#### **9. Ali Haidar** (from Markaba)

Detained on 08/10/85, and released about 11 years later on 21/07/96.

"I used to work as a door-to-door sales man. Ever since I was taken to the KDC, I was beaten up on the head and chest areas, electrified in the genital area and fingers, hung on the pole and thrown hot and cold water at. I spent 2 months in a 90x90 cm<sup>2</sup> solitary dark room, 7 years in the 'punishment' division with no lights at all. I now suffer from disordered neurological system, curved vertebral column, torn nerves of the neck, weakness in the right hand, mal-function in the right leg, urinary problems, stomach problems and eyesight weakness".

#### **10. Ramadan Mahmoud (from Yarine)**

Detained from December 3, 1990 to January 1, 1997.

Seven years in the Khiam camp, including two and the half years in solitary confinement were enough to make it difficult for Mahmoud to merge in society. "I got used to loneliness; I refused to go out with my relatives. I was always afraid of the step that I wanted to take, thinking that I might fail. Failing might be that I wouldn't be able to have a conversation with somebody, or that people would see something wrong in me or in my pronunciation of the words," Mahmoud said.

He tried to escape the camp with three of his friends. He was caught after a landmine exploded, wounding him in the chest, hand and face. Two of his friends succeeded in running away while the third was also caught. The tardy treatment of the inflammation in his wounded hand led to cutting it. His eye had to be gouged out for the same reason.

After his escape attempt, he was put in a solitary confinement for two and the half years. He had a serious psychological crisis. He was frequently losing his consciousness and tearing the letters from his family. His hearing ability was weakened and his eye bled. He was admitted to the Marjayoun Hospital inside the occupation zone and then released and expelled outside the zone.

When Ramadan was admitted to The Middle East Hospital in Beirut directly after his release, he was so confused that he tried to jump from the window. He thought those holding mobile phones, agents working for different parties. He also refused that his heart be tested with an electrocardiograph equipment thinking it was a torturing machine. The doctors who examined Mohamad decided to get him the psychiatric help he needs to first, convince him that he is out of the KDC so that he would start accepting treatment, and second, and as importantly to help him regain his memory. His situation is until today unstable.



clearly  
reference  
source

## **The urgency to confront detention and occupation consequences** (Dr Mona Fayad, professor of psychology at Lebanese University)

The occupation factor came to add insult to injury to our almost 20 years civil war, consequently left its negative effects on our lives. Perhaps one of the most notable consequences of this occupation was the difficult existence that reigned among all the citizens. Such needy life style drawn the majority into stress and enhanced the tremendous global and complex immigration movement. Literally the economic, demographic and social conjunctures in Lebanon were altered. In this frame, we must not deny the children agony in such turn of events, and the core problem that is the detainees and the liberated heroes from the occupant concentration camps and prisons besides the instability engendered by such circumstances from which many of them still suffer.

Actually, the end of the occupation makes us face a new promising yet bleary situation that requires to be wisely handled and treated on a global civil and public scale, being beyond the simple efforts contribution of individuals and institutions. We will in this term, lay a light on the most important priority which is the urge to offer the required support to the liberated detainees and their families because this need constitute a moral commitment towards them and on the other hand an incumbent national duty.

Still, should we treat this matter on a pragmatic scale, we find out that the care about the ex-detainees and the contribution to develop their situation and their families ones, can be a profitable and necessary investment for the whole country, considering that the rehabilitation of the ex-detainees transforms them into new adapted entities satisfied from themselves and their country which reduces in parallel their wounds and bitterness. Consequently, we could never reach a successful transformation concretized by a true common living between all the Lebanese, yet the creation of a social amalgamation, unless all Lebanese categories, most notably these that have agonized from the occupation and its sequels, offer their contribution in this process.

why?

In effect the development of the South Lebanon citizens life styles engenders undeniable positive reflects on Lebanon.

### **The liberated detainee**

Each liberated detainee, whom was subject to horrendous forms of external (body) or internal (psychological) torture, may suffer from a trauma that affects his entity, and engenders instable self-estimation and acceptance, yet agitate his internal harmony and external adaptation, and consequently hinders his adaptation mechanism with his relevant society.

We call Post-traumatic stress disorders the group of phenomena that the victim manifests subsequent to the shock. In effect these disorders may occur after a short term or even long stagnation period and require a specialized medical-psychological attention for each individual apart.

Besides, we can identify the following:

### **Post effects of the detention**

Undeniably, the most painful post effect of the detention is the instability and fissure in the heart of the family especially the one of the married ex-detainee. Detention causes an obligatory and violent reorganization in the core of the family, and engenders numerous agitations and reassignment of responsibilities

clearly  
reference  
source

**The urgency to confront detention and occupation consequences**  
(Dr Mona Fayad, professor of psychology at Lebanese University)

The occupation factor came to add insult to injury to our almost 20 years civil war, consequently left its negative effects on our lives. Perhaps one of the most notable consequences of this occupation was the difficult existence that reigned among all the citizens. Such needy life style drawn the majority into stress and enhanced the tremendous global and complex immigration movement. Literally the economic, demographic and social conjunctures in Lebanon were altered. In this frame, we must not deny the children agony in such turn of events, and the core problem that is the detainees and the liberated heroes from the occupant concentration camps and prisons besides the instability engendered by such circumstances from which many of them still suffer.

Actually, the end of the occupation makes us face a new promising yet bleary situation that requires to be wisely handled and treated on a global civil and public scale, being beyond the simple efforts contribution of individuals and institutions. We will in this term, lay a light on the most important priority which is the urge to offer the required support to the liberated detainees and their families because this need constitute a moral commitment towards them and on the other hand an incumbent national duty. Still, should we treat this matter on a pragmatic scale, we find out that the care about the ex-detainees and the contribution to develop their situation and their families ones, can be a profitable and necessary investment for the whole country, considering that the rehabilitation of the ex-detainees transforms them into new adapted entities satisfied from themselves and their country which reduces in parallel their wounds and bitterness. Consequently, we could never reach a successful transformation concretized by a true common living between all the Lebanese, yet the creation of a social amalgamation, unless all Lebanese categories, most notably these that have agonized from the occupation and its sequels, offer their contribution in this process.

why?

In effect the development of the South Lebanon citizens life styles engenders undeniable positive reflects on Lebanon.

**The liberated detainee**

Each liberated detainee, whom was subject to horrendous forms of external (body) or internal (psychological) torture, may suffer from a trauma that affects his entity, and engenders instable self-estimation and acceptance, yet agitate his internal harmony and external adaptation, and consequently hinders his adaptation mechanism with his relevant society.

We call Post-traumatic stress disorders the group of phenomena that the victim manifests subsequent to the chock. In effect these disorders may occur after a short term or even long stagnation period and require a specialized medical-psychological attention for each individual apart.

Besides, we can identify the following:

**Post effects of the detention**

Undeniably, the most painful post effect of the detention is the instability and fissure in the heart of the family especially the one of the married ex-detainee. Detention causes an obligatory and violent reorganization in the core of the family, and engenders numerous agitations and reassignment of responsibilities

in the same, especially in the rural traditional community life style that is still adopted in the South. In this frame, let us expose some **major responsibilities** incumbent to the spouse during the husband absence:

- She is compelled to find a job in order to subvention a financial source.
- She must strives to provide all her family needs, most notably to do the shopping, to assume the global responsibilities pertaining to the children schools, to supervise their relation with the environment, and try to solve their problems.
- She endeavors, along with the other detainees families and wives, to free her detained husband out of the concentration camp or to insure his essential needs while he is still in there. In the same context, she get no tired from calling all the human rights associations and concerned organizations.

The herein mentioned responsibilities forge a new woman, who as soon as her husband is free and tries to reassign duties in the family, faces a complete contradictory being from the one she was used to during her husband detention. The same reflects on the children (for incidence the 10 years old ones), who did usually accustomed the permanent absence of the father yet bared early some paternal responsibilities, yet grows in a parallel stream as the assignments he/she newly got towards his/her younger brothers/sisters. Still, none of the above mentioned, proofed it success to keep away fear from him/her.

Detention engenders either a second interruption or sustains a prior one to be written in the personal history of the detained or in his collective one, which got its roots with

The oppression, than the process of detention, yet the ability to support it or not that engenders a compulsory reaction between the victims' personality, his history, and his psychological reactions towards this horrendous event.

Each detainee lives a psychological mooring state related to all his acquaintances: wife, parents, relatives, or martyred companions. All of this could engender the loss to his social and institutional appurtenance.

As soon as he is liberated, none of these could recover completely its initial state, because the wife may refuse sometimes to reassume her previous basic responsibilities as wife, which leads promptly to numerous litigations centered on the distribution of roles in the family.

Literally, we cannot deny the agony of the child during the absence of his father in detention: he/she used to live with him away. Therefore these children may refuse to remain children or to grow up yet to act as the younger.

Consequently, we could face a possible loss of the vocational or craft training, yet the chronic pathological illness caused by the torture.

Therewith a many level prevention scheme should be carried on:

§ The primary prevention:

1. The social assistance encloses every activity and act that may help to have a decent and acceptable life in a community, therefore each citizen (How about the liberated detainee) have the right to a decent residence and adequate job.
2. Also we should provide a better quality of life which include:

- The affective security (a familial assistance in the house, kindergartens...)
- Insure education (schools, vocational schools...)
- Insure health (social security, dispensaries, hospitals...)
- Provide culture and fun: libraries, cinema, exhibitions, café...

§ The specialized prevention:

In this frame we can define the social psychological and health cures. First the social prevention requires specialized institutions for the private needs yet provide a home support. Literally to search for a psychological and social sustain for the deteriorated case concretized by the detainees, the liberated detainees, their families, as well as the family of a martyrs, their children or the one of these who were bind to have disabilities or disfigurements. The prevention should also cover the families of the fugitive cooperators with the occupant and their children due to the social and psychiatric grief they are suffering from, as the proverb says the father sows and the child harvests, we must support them to reintegrate and amalgamate in their national community. We can include in the same context every one who compel to exodus in general and most particularly the children.

The objective of such assistance is to enhance the social life yet help the in question persons to be self-dependant and develop their cultural and individual entity. The assistance should rely on the field works pertaining to the social and educational cities, individuals, and villages; an individual-social intervention should be carried out especially for individual groups, most notably the children yet the young threatened by marginality and to live beyond the just social, cultural and financial networks. We must carry on the stipulated objectives to the better the lives of these persons and in order to erase once for all the social or psychological incompatibility and torture.

Our concern shall carry out, and be focused on the hereinafter categories and levels:

- To recover the basic social principles and develop it in the agglomerations whether in the cities, villages or the same area.
- To improve the social (cultural) life in the areas.
- To enhance and sustain the qualifications and skills of the residents.
- To built up a new way of existence in which the collaboration between the same village residents or the area become a must, and to enhance the relation between the civil organizations and the governmental ones.
- To get accustomed and be open to most organizations, and social, cultural and entertainment activities.

Therefore, hope is the only weapon we are armed with to achieve this mission properly in the best conditions. We cherish the contribution of both civil and public sectors to sustain this process, which will insure a national collaboration and a social merger concretized by the building up of a groups' dynamism susceptible to make a change yet erase the occupation sequels threw the social development and the initiation to take a global collective decision.

## **A report about their living and sanitary standards**

*(A study about ex-detainees by Mona Fayyad)*

Based on the annual report of the Follow -Up Committee For The Support Of The Lebanese Detainees in The Israeli Prisons, and based on the report prepared about their standards which is consisted of 51 pages executed by the Ministry of Social Affairs, the following study of the situation can be presented:

-The total number of detainees in the Israeli prisons included in this study according to this report is 5200 detainees: 32% from Khiam Prison, 48% from Nsar Prison, and the remaining 19.3 % from prisons inside Israel.

-Most of the detainees are men (94.8%). The percentage of those who passed away is 2.9%, and care must be provided to their families. 32% of them (1662 liberated detainees) come from Khiam prison. (There is an estimation of some reporters that the number of Khiam prisoners is 3000 detainees).

-Most of the detainees ' origins are centered in the South (88.3%: from Saidon, Nabatiah , Tyr , and Bint Jbeil provinces; and 23.3% from Marj-oyoun and Hasbiah provinces. It should be pointed that the greatest center is in Tyr porvince (26.6%).

-It is noticed that most of the ex-detainees (92.4%) live in the south provinces previously mentioned: Saidon, Nabatiah, Tyr, Bint Jbeil, Marj-oyoun, and Hasbiah. That is why it is very important to take care of these ex-detainees in their dwelling places with enormous earnestness because this procedure may participate in the reduction of their private problems and in the resolution of some of the coming problems of the liberation, particularly in the concerned districts of the South.

When we take into consideration that most of the liberated detainees live with their families whether they are fathers or sons (90.1%: 83.7% of them are married and family supporters), the issue of sanitary caring and providing the decent job becomes an issue of extreme importance, for it contributes in the resolution of a big number of individual problems. That does not mean neglecting those living alone who constitute 5.9%, but may be a closer look to their situation is recommended due to their lack of psychological comprehension essential in their conditions that may be more difficult.

### **Educational standards:**

-5.6% distributed between illiterate (7.5%), literate, and those who have completed the elementary stage.

-42.8% has completed the intermediate, secondary, or vocational stages.

-5.1% has completed the university stage.

This indicates that most of them are not educated or specialized, and they need a certain training that helps them adapt and find a job or a profession.

### **Professional Standards:**

-Most of the liberated detainees work as employees (43.3%), and those who work independently, meaning that they work for their own credits, constitute 39.3% without the formation of any idea about the meaning of this independency.

-12.3% of them express a desire to learn a certain profession which requires providing what helps to satisfy this need.

### **Age and Profession:**

-The percentage of the detainees who were detained between the ages of 15 and 20 is 23.6% which explains their low educational level because of their inability to complete their education or possess a serious profession, especially if we add that the percentage of the released after the age of 20 and 24 is 33.6% which increases this problem and imposes their custody at this level as a national responsibility.

-As for the percentage of those detained between 20 and 30, it reaches 52.2%, which means that they were detained during the peak period of their professional productivity level. Their detention caused a rupture between them and their professions. This obligates a professional rehabilitation or providing the suitable job. Concerning the percentage of those who were detained at or above the age of 40, it is about 10.1% which means that their health and family stability have been ruined.

-As for the percentage of detainees whose ages lie between 25 and 50, it reaches 39.1% (approximately 40%). We assume that their families (wives and children) have suffered on both economical and emotional sides. They needed specialized care in the past and are in desperate need for it today, not only for healing their previous wounds but also for the process of merging them as citizens and making them feel this membership in reality and not only by words.

The percentage of the liberated detainees whose ages range between 35 and 39 is 32.7%. Imagine men at this age, most of them married with an average number of family members exceeding 5, without a job, a profession, or a salary that suits them and with no care from their government.

### **Financial Standards:**

-The percentage of those who live by minimum wage or even less (meaning 400,000 LL or less) is 30% (29.8%). If we added the percentage of those who get 500,000 LL or less, the total percentage becomes 51.7%.

This indicates that more than half of the liberated detainees live on the edge of sufficiency, especially that there are no health and social guarantees that include them.

-The percentage of those who live by 1,000,000 LL or less is 35.8%. As for those who live by an amount ranging between 1,000,000 and 1,500,000 LL, they constitute 5.8% only. However, 6.7% do not give an exact answer about their financial standards. Therefore, and due to the high cost of living that Lebanon is

facing based on the studies that indicate the poverty line by an amount of \$500 per month for a family of 5 members, we find that most of the liberated detainees live under this poverty line. This is what the following paragraph will explain.

### **Family Standards and number of Family Members:**

-73.6% of the liberated detainees support their families by their own, and only 10.7% of them do not support a family.

-The family is constituted of 4 members or less in 30% of the cases. While the families containing between 5 and 8 members constitute 57.6%. As for the percentage of families having 9 or more members, it reaches 10.9%.

This means that more than half of the liberated detainees (68.5%) support big families with an average of monthly salaries that do not exceed the minimum wage limit.

### **Political Membership and Type of Resistance:**

When concerned about acknowledging the reason of detention, we find that 30.8% of detainees were detained because of civil resistance and 42.8% of them do not belong to any party organization, and 70.2% do not belong to any association.

We conclude that it is the duty of the Lebanese government to take care of its citizens who were not detained for political reasons (which may scare some people some times) but only for their belonging to their country Lebanon, meaning that they will not get any support from anyone except that offered by the government and its institutions.

### **Annual Income and the Distribution of Family Expenditure:**

-There are 15.8% of the families with no income at all.

-10.5% earn an income ranging between 250,000 and 2,500,000 LL a year.  
57.5% earn an income ranging 3,500,000 and 7,000,000 LL a year. How do these families spend their income?

### **Averages of Incomes; how the family spends the Income:**

The average annual income for these families is 4,875,000 LL.

#### **FOOD:**

- 24.9% of the families spend less than 1,500,000 LL on food annually.
- 21.7% expend less than 2,500,000 LL on food.
- The rest (50.4%) spend less than 7,000,000 on food annually.

#### **CLOTHES:**

More than a quarter of the families (meaning 26.9%) spend less than 250,000 LL



on clothes, and 62,7% spend less than 1,500,000 LL on clothes.

#### EDUCATION:

58.4% of the families spend what is equal or less than 750,000 LL on education with an average of family members reaching more than 5 members for 68.5% of the families. (No statistics of a certain number of children).

#### MEDICAL TREATMENT:

62.9% of the families spend on medical treatment what is equal or less than 750,000 LL annually, and there is a percentage of 30.2% that spends between 1,000,000 and 2,500,000 LL on medical treatment annually.

#### RESIDENCE:

A percentage less than 10% spends between 750,000 and 1,500,000 LL on residence.

#### WATER AND ELECTRICITY:

It is remarkable that water and electricity cost a considerable amount of money ranging between 250,000 and 750,000 LL a year for 75.7% of the families.

#### COMPARISON BETWEEN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE:

When we considered the least average of expenditure taken into consideration for the liberated detainees' families, it appeared that the average income for all these families is 4,875,000 LL; while the average expenditure reaches 8,500,000 LL. The question that poses itself is: How can these families survive in such conditions when the expenditure of the families is double their income?

#### **Sanitary Status and Handicapped Cases:**

2378 detainees suffer from diseases, constituting a percentage of 45.7%. Their diseases range between chronic: diabetes, glands, heart diseases, and digestive system diseases forming 34.3 % of the cases, back diseases and calcification forming 22.3%, 11.4 % suffering from nervous diseases and 11% suffering from different diseases; All these diseases are related to detention. It is also remarkable that for 62.9% of the cases, the diseases appeared before the age of thirty and for 74.1% they appeared before the age of thirty-five. 10% of the detainees suffer from one major handicapped condition (495 liberated detainees). There is at least a percentage of 5% physically paralyzed. The handicapped cases appeared before the age of 25 in 56.6% of the cases, and before 30 in 72.1% of them. The report mentioned that the reason is physical in 58.8% of these cases, which cannot be explained but as a result of detention itself. The report also mentions that 76.2% of the handicapped cases and diseases are results of detention.

-Page 27: it is not clear what is meant by physical damage, for whom?

#### Materialistic Damages in Residential Areas and Other Properties:

53.8% of the ex-detainees have been harmed due to damages in their houses and

properties.

Indemnifications:

25.4% of the ex-detainees have been given indemnifications that reached 5,000,000 LL or even less.

74.0% of them claimed that they were not considered, meaning that they got no aid.

The report mentions that 84.9% replied that they are not concerned about a question concerning the salary meant for helping them. Does that mean that they do not benefit? 13.8% replied yes about getting a salary

Ranging between 100,000 and 500,000 LL.

## **Conclusion**

We conclude that the liberated detainees need aid at different levels:

-Donations that are offered to the families to cover health and educational insurance for family members.

-Professional and social rehabilitation for those who desire it associated with encouragement.

-Providing decent jobs for the liberated detainees based on their original specialization or on the training that training that they got or will get, and offering them the priority in all ministries and sections of the government.

-When it is difficult to find the liberated detainee a job or he is unable to perform it, we suggest that we treat him like a retired soldier with all family indemnifications, or preserve his right for a salary equivalent to its ex-job before detention (if it exists) and performing this job if he is able or exempt him when he has a permanent handicapped case.

## **BILIOGRAPHY**

Ghassan Hage, At Home in the Entrails of the West, Home/World, Pluto Press Australia 1997

Omar Khan, Migration and the Collapse of Space, BeLonging, Massachusetts Inst. of Tech. 2000

Man Ellin, At Home Everywhere and Nowhere, BeLonging

Teddy Cruz, Two-Way Journey, BeLonging

Jae-Chol Lee, A Room in The Room, BeLonging

Leonie Sandercock, Unsettling "home" in settler societies, BeLonging

Gulsum Baydar, Drawing Boundaries, Sites of Recovery Conference 1999

Esra Fidanoglu, To Embody Home, Sites of Recovery


Leoni Schmidt, House/Home in a Contact Zone, Sites of Recovery

Souha Bechara, Resistante, Jean-Claude Lattes, 2000

Nader Oussayran, Can a Cell Become a Home, Reading / Writing 2001

Michel Foucault, Discipline And Punish, Penguin Books

### **Electronic References:**

  
[www.khiam.org](http://www.khiam.org)

[www.follow-up.org](http://www.follow-up.org)

