

*Reinterpreting the function of a Historical Prison as a museum*

Cover image: Sinop, (own data, 2024)

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## RESEARCH QUESTION

*'How can the historical prison of Sinop with an iconic presence be more functional for the Faculty of Literature and the local population, alongside tourism?'*

*“What a torment it is to listen to the sea, only ten steps away, knowing that it leads to the greatest freedoms, and then to be forced to stare at the thick fortress walls in between, to see the sea only in imagination? Isn't it better to be locked up in a place where the only thing that reminds you of freedom is your breath, instead of watching a bird in the garden eating breadcrumbs at your feet, walking around left and right on the same soil without liberty, and then, with a flap of its wings, crossing these walls to embrace freedom?”*

*(Bütün öyküleri, Sabahattin Ali)*

*“On adım ötede en büyük hürriyetlere götüren denizi dinlemek ve sonra aradaki kalın kale duvarlarına gözleri dikerek bakmaya, denizi yalnız muhayyilede görmeye mecbur kalmak az azap mıdır? Bahçede insanın ayak ucuna inerek ekmek kırıntılarını toplayan ve aynı hürriyetsiz topraklarda sağa sola adım atan bir kuşun bir kanat vuruşuyla bu duvarları aşarak serbestlikle kucaklaşmaya gittiğini görmektense nefes almaktan başka hürriyeti hatırlatacak hiçbir şey bulunmayan bir yerde kapanmak daha iyi değil miydi?”*

*(Bütün öyküleri, Sabahattin Ali)*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This thesis has been the product of an intense and passionate journey. Motivated by my love for literature and a personal connection to the historic prison site in Sinop, I felt compelled to explore its potential for added value.

I am deeply grateful to several individuals without whom this endeavour would not have been possible, and I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to them.

Firstly, I extend my gratitude to my grandparents, whose stories and historical insights kindled my passion for this site, offering me a unique perspective as former locals.

I am also indebted to everyone I encountered during my initial visit to the site, whose insights and assistance proved invaluable. Special thanks to Fatmanur Özdemir, whose support enabled me to connect with architect Melike Yilmaz and access crucial information about the ongoing restorations.

I am immensely thankful to Bie Plevoets, my thesis supervisor, for her invaluable feedback and provision of source materials. Her unwavering support throughout the process greatly strengthened my project proposal and provided a solid foundation for my thesis.

To my studio supervisors, Nikolaas Vande Keere, Guillem Pons Ros, and Malinde Valee, I am grateful for your constructive criticism and guidance during the design process of my master's project. Your input continually inspired me and fueled my progress.

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## ABSTRACT

The Historical Prison of Sinop stands as a testament to the region's rich cultural heritage and serves as an iconic presence within the community. However, the site's current underutilisation presents an opportunity to enhance its functionality and significance for the Faculty of Literature, the local population and tourism. This thesis explores the potential of repurposing the Historical Prison, focusing on the integration of academic, community and tourism-related functions.

The proposed adaptive reuse of the Historical Prison includes the establishment of facilities tailored to the needs of the Faculty of Literature, such as a library, conference rooms and temporary accommodations for academics. By connecting the site with the faculty, the prison becomes a dynamic centre for intellectual exchange, research and cultural events, enriching the academic experience for students and faculty while preserving the site's historical significance.

Subsequently, the adaptive reuse enhances the site's appeal to tourists by offering guided tours, educational exhibits and immersive experiences that highlight the history and significance of the prison and the walls of the castle. By integrating tourism-related functions, the site becomes a destination that attracts visitors, stimulates economic growth and contributes to the overall development of the region.

In conclusion, this proposal for the Historical Prison of Sinop presents a transformative opportunity to unlock its potential as a multifunctional space that serves the Faculty of Literature, the local population and tourism. Through thoughtful planning, collaboration and innovation the site can emerge as a dynamic centre of education, culture and heritage that enriches the lives of all who engage with it.

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## **PART I**

*'Preliminary research of the site and it surroundings'*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The historical prison of Sinop has served as a museum since the prison closed. The city of Sinop is located at the northern tip of the Black Sea of Türkiye and forms a peninsula. This museum is a strong attraction in terms of tourism in the city. As a grandchild of a citizen from this city, I know how my grandfather was forced to migrate because of this problem. You were a fisherman, construction worker, or if you had the facilities you could be a farmer. But if you were none of them you had no work. Nowadays it is still like this. It's tough to start a small business and if you do, it is only a success during the summer because of tourism.

However, there is still a lack of opportunities for the local population. In my thesis, I argue that this site possesses untapped potential beyond its current designation as a museum. Its ample space suggests opportunities for expanded functions that could benefit locals and students, enhancing accessibility and attractiveness throughout the year.

Recently, a large part of the prison was restored due to decay. It has been decided that the former museum will be kept. Because of the great attraction in terms of tourism, this location is already getting great attention and the city also gets social-economic value from it. But in this case, the local population does not get any added value. Of course, it is impossible to see beyond the high city walls, but that is why it becomes an obstacle for the locals. It does not become a place you would visit more often. That's precisely why it became a challenge to keep both the tourist aspect and at the same time add a function where the locals get a chance to be involved, where literature students can have lectures and group works, and where people get the space to grow as researchers, writers, poets and so on. I am convinced that there is a better approach needed than just a restoration of the existing buildings. An approach that leans on the terms 'adaptive reuse' as in giving the site a new function or adding a few smaller functions to an existing heritage in order to preserve cultural and architectural values for the society of this historic environment.

Based on a broad literature search, a very extensive context was created about the rise of the city until the present. This will make it easier to understand certain changes throughout history. A short study is shown on the historical layering around the prison, which is completely surrounded by walls from the Pontus regime. Back then Sinop was well known as 'the walled city Sinope'. During different regimes in Türkiye, a lot of writers were captured in the prison of Sinop. One of those writers is Sabahattin Ali. His poems are an important aspect of Turkish Literature nowadays. His cell is visitable and the street that connects the sea with the entrance is referred to him. This is why I would like to connect the prison with more specifically the Faculty of Literature, which is located right outside of the city centre.

A site visit seemed a must to experience every nook and cranny. The layers of history, the informal meeting places, hangout spaces for the youth, and the presence and impact of the site will be clear by observing the site. While visiting there was certainly something different than before; the city felt more alive even though it was winter. When asking the citizens about this aspect, they confirmed the fact that the university and its students were a big win for local cafes and restaurants.

It is necessary to see how this heritage has been dealt with over time and to see how it works in the current situation as a museum. How can it evolve into something that is not season-related but can be functional during all seasons? How can it be a tourist attraction and meanwhile serve the local population? All this research will motivate a master project and provide an alternative solution for the problems I discussed in the paragraphs above.



## 1.1 Research Methodology

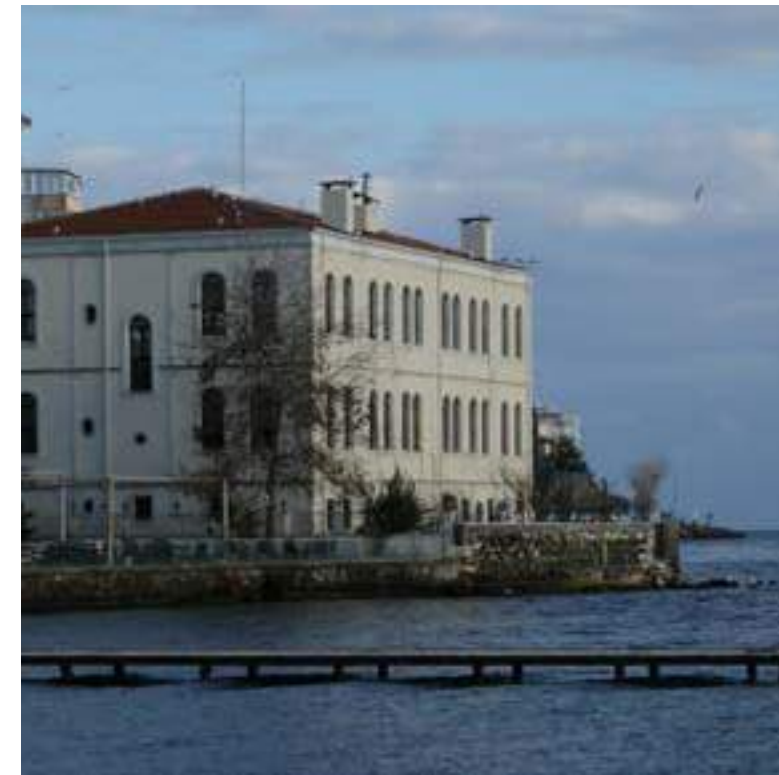
This thesis emerged from extensive and qualitative research, including literature review, site visits and analysis, personal interviews with residents and former inhabitants, and case studies. These findings serve as a guideline for the adaptive reuse project of the Historical Prison of Sinop. The literature review was conducted based on books found during the study trip while visiting the Riza Nur Library, as well as websites, articles, travelogues, and existing reports on the current conditions of the buildings regarding renovation initiatives.

Site visits were undertaken during a study trip to Sinop, where the site and its environment were studied in collaboration with Zeynep Selvi. This resulted in a photo report of the current situation, providing deeper insight into the environment and enabling the analysis of needs. Personal conversations with my grandparents, acquaintances, and locals encountered during the visits were valuable in understanding the atmosphere of the past and assessing the current state of the Historical Prison. It was also enlightening to gather opinions from the local population regarding the restoration efforts and their concerns.

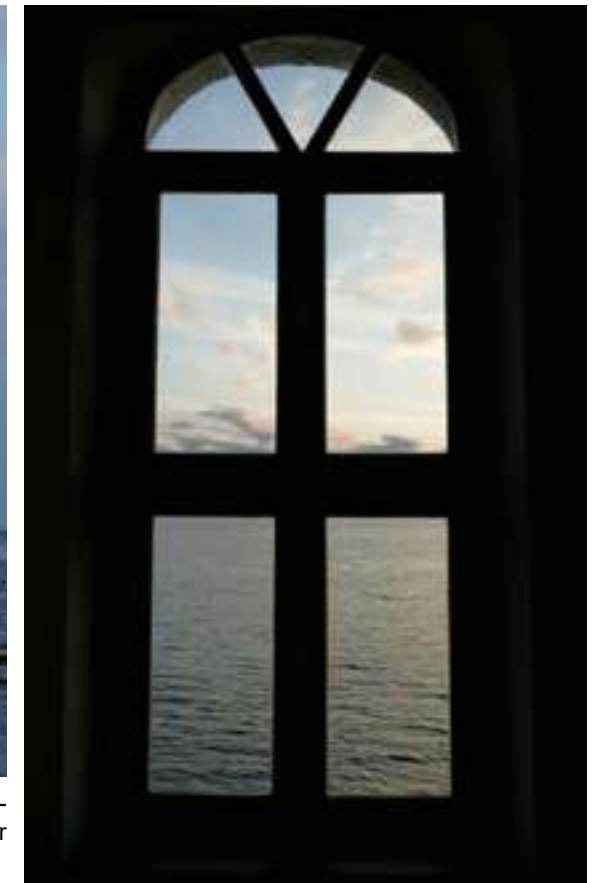
My thesis is structured in three Parts. PART I centres on the geographical context, tracing the city's historical evolution from its origins as a castle to its later function as a prison and the urban planning considerations relevant to the research. Next, PART II specifically focuses on the prison itself and its current restoration, explained using my photo report as a guide. Finally, in PART III, I elaborate on why I propose to involve the Faculty of Literature in the prison, citing a writer who had a major influence on Turkish literature and who was a prisoner in the Historical Prison of Sinop. This is followed by a brief chapter about solitary confinement and its impact on human emotions, illustrated with examples of prisoners' poetry. I discuss the reinterpretations of solitary confinement and how they can be repurposed today into spaces where people would want to stay.

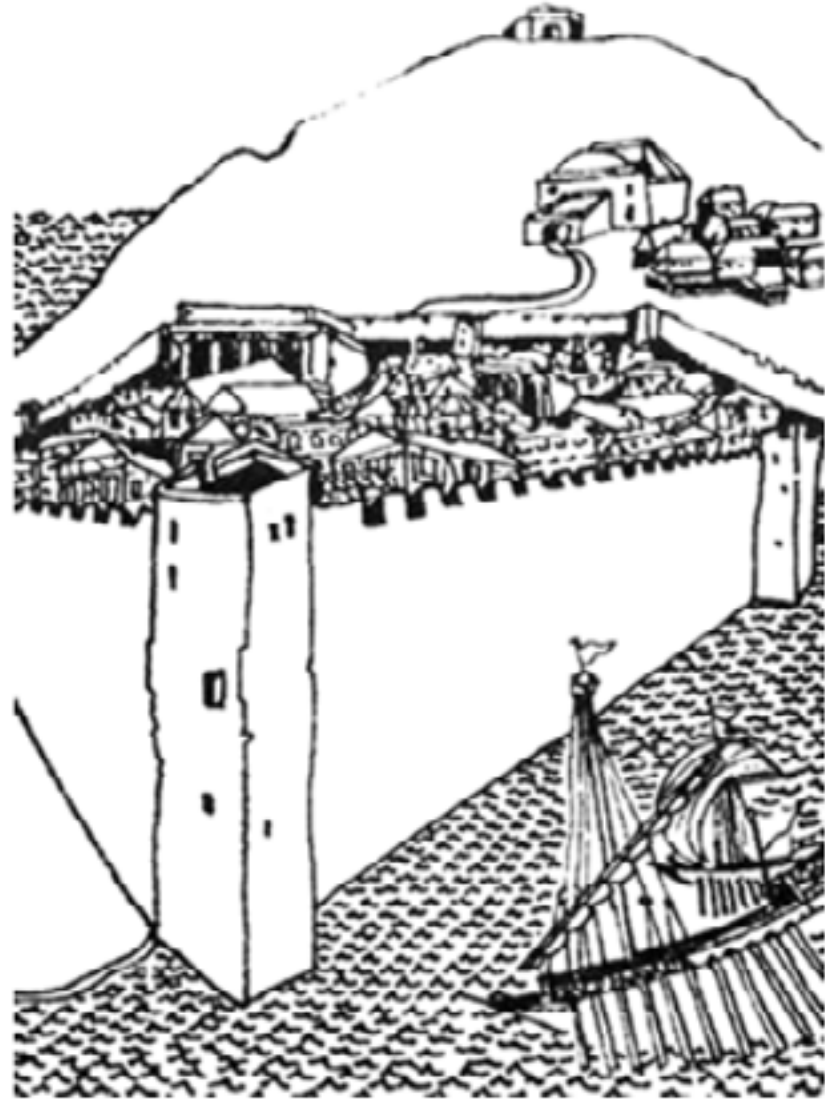
The three parts provide a strong foundation for further developments in designing a new program that, in my opinion, will unlock more potential for the site. In the final chapter, various cases are discussed, introducing the project and comparing it with the site of the Historical Prison. These cases have been instrumental in shaping the redevelopment of the Historical Prison. The thesis concludes with a chapter on adapting the Historical Prison in Sinop with a new purpose.

The figures in this thesis are all from my site visit, except where not, they will be referenced. All plans are hand-drawn by me and notification to current changes.



**Figure 1** As a public library, Riza Nur Library plays a crucial role in promoting literacy, education and learning. It is located in the historic city center of Sinop, near the Black Sea, from the interior it has a breathtaking view.





**Figure 2** This sketch of William G. Alan called 'Ancient Sinop' shows us how the walls used to be formed. It provides valuable insights into the historical appearance of the city.

## 2. GEOGRAPHICAL SITUATION

Sinop is located on a peninsula at the tip of Anatolia (Türkiye) stretching to the Black Sea. The peninsula is bounded on the east by steep ravines and has an inner harbour on the south-east and a second harbour called Akliman on the north-west. Both harbours were connected by a canal until the Seljuk period. The peculiarity of its geographical location has made Sinop a stop on trade routes and an important port opening Anatolia to the Black Sea since the early ages. The eastern walls of the city have been largely destroyed except for the area where the Saathane bastion is located. The first gate, which is predicted to be existing here, connected the interior of the castle to the island. The coastal road was built by filling the sea from the southern walls starting with the bastion on the south-eastern corner of the eastern wall to the present day. The south-east bastion of the castle separates the shipyard area from the city. Today, the southern walls of the castle do not reach further than the citadel. The western wall of the inner castle also constitutes the western wall of the castle. (Sinop Hapishanesi, Çakmakçoğlu A. own translation)

The sketch may depict the geographical features of Sinop, such as its location on a promontory jutting into the Black Sea, surrounded by water. We see how the sea borders the city walls, how inside the walls the city expands towards the higher part of the island. This geographical layout would have made Sinop naturally defensible and strategically important in ancient times. It illustrates the defensive walls, which would have encircled the city to protect it from potential invaders. The presence and design of these walls can provide insights into the city's defensive strategies and urban layout.

Ancient Sinop was a significant port city and this sketch of William G. Alan may depict the layout and activity of its harbor. It portrays how a ship approaches the walls. This includes docks, ships, and maritime infrastructure reflecting the city's role as a centre of trade and commerce in antiquity.

It showcases scenes from daily life including people engaged in various activities such as fishing, trading,... They provide glimpses of the socioeconomic dynamics and cultural practices of the inhabitants.

Overall, it serves as a visual representation of the city's historical character and urban landscape, offering valuable insights into its architecture, topography, and cultural life during ancient times.

### 3. FROM CASTLE TO PRISON

Following the fall of the Byzantine Empire, Sinop fell into the hands of the Seljuks in 1214. It was subdued through a naval siege and subsequently occupied. This period marked a significant advancement for the Turks in maritime endeavours. The construction of the citadel, which serves as the basis for today's prison, was built after this invasion of the Seljuks. The citadel, which was built to strengthen the defence, was later repaired with the contribution of orders, and a Turkish garrison was stationed here.

In the 14th century, a Moroccan scholar and traveller named Ibn Batuta documented his experiences and observations in a travelogue 'The Journey', stating, "Sinop is a superb city which combines fortifications with beautifications." This indicates that he admired the city's defensive structures as well as its aesthetic appeal. His remark suggests that Sinop was notable for both its strong defences and its visually pleasing aspects during his time.

In 1461, Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror annexed Sinop to the Ottoman Empire. The fortifications and the construction of the castle indicate its past use as a prison dungeon. However, the first recorded use as a prison dates back to 1568. During the 17th century, Evliya Çelebi (Dervish Mehmed Zillî) was an Ottoman explorer and travel writer. He is known for his travels throughout the Ottoman Empire and beyond its borders, documenting his journey in a comprehensive travelogue known as the *Seyahatname* (Book of Travels). Evliya Çelebi's writings provide valuable insight into the geography, culture, and society of the regions he visited, making him an important figure in Ottoman Literature and historiography. His work remains a significant source for scholars studying the Ottoman Empire and its territories. In his *Seyahatname* (Book of Travels), he provides vivid descriptions of Sinop during his travels. He praises the city for its strategic location, impressive fortifications, and natural beauty. Çelebi mentions the well-fortified citadel overlooking the sea, highlighting its importance in defending the city against invasions. He also describes Sinop's bustling port, its vibrant markets, and the diversity of its inhabitants.

Çelebi describes: "[...] the castle is situated on a flat place, with waves crashing against both sides of the walls. The castle is rectangular, but if you look from Boztepe Mountain, you can see a solid castle in the shape of a ship. The Sinop Prison fortress is a magnificent and formidable castle. It has 300 iron gates, cruel guards like giants, and many notorious prisoners with their arms wrapped around the iron bars. In its towers, patrols roam like monsters, never letting a prisoner escape, let alone a bird fly." (Çelebi, 1848) His statement suggests that the Sinop Prison is a highly secure and imposing structure, capable of withstanding external threats and effectively confining its prisoners. This portrayal implies that the fortress is not only physically formidable. Overall, the description of Çelebi suggests that the Sinop Prison fortress is a place of confinement where escape is impossible, reinforcing its reputation as a formidable stronghold.

On November 30, 1853, the Raid on Sinop happened during the Crimean War. This war has been characterised as a precursor to the raid. A squadron of Russian warships launched a surprise attack on the Ottoman naval base at Sinop. The Russian fleet bombarded the Ottoman ships and coastal fortifications, inflicting heavy damage. The Raid on Sinop did contribute to the broader geopolitical tensions and alliances that eventually led to the outbreak of the First World War. In 1923 the Republic of Türkiye was officially declared. This marked the end of the Ottoman Empire and the beginning of a new era for Türkiye as a modern, secular nation-state.

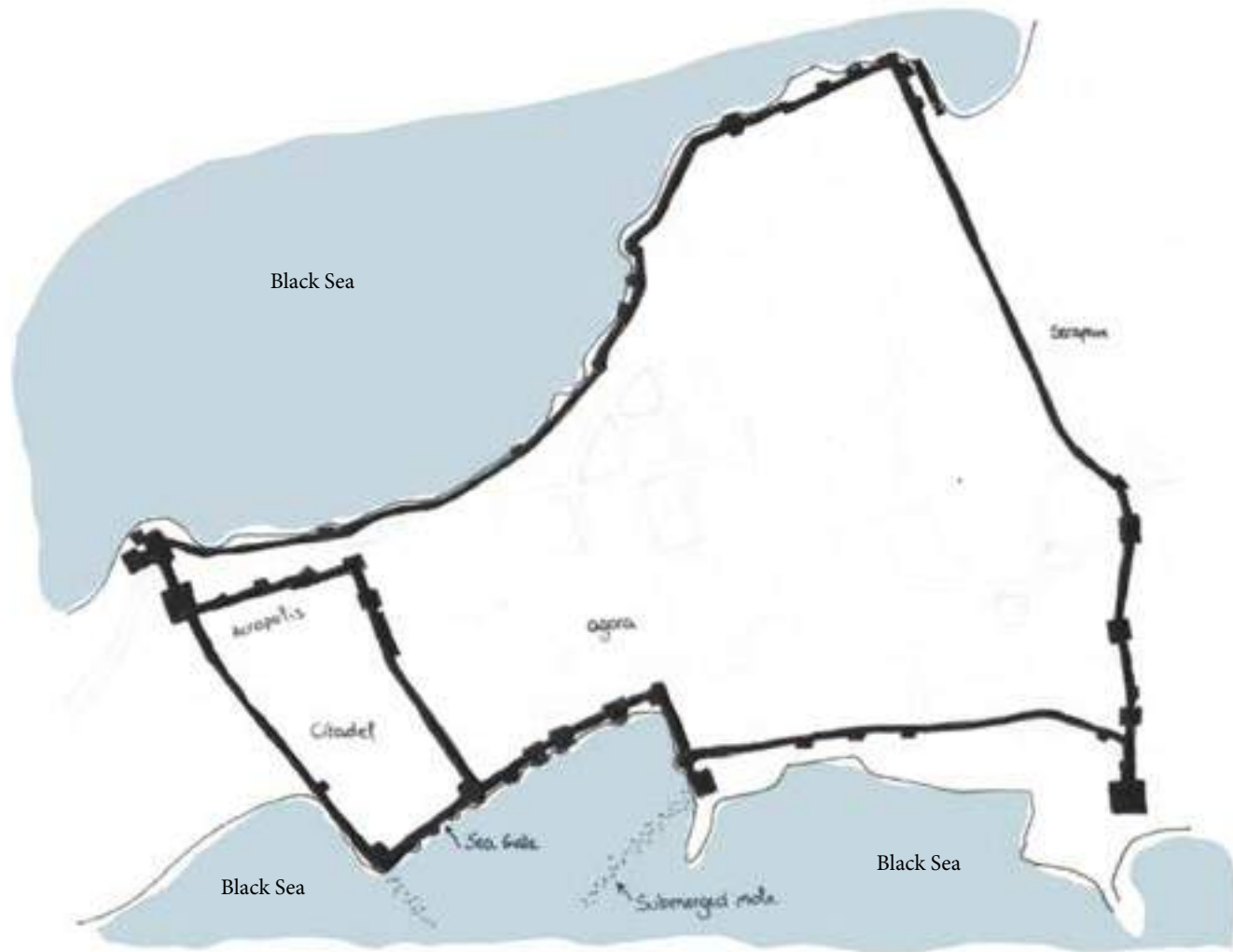
The transformation of a city from a fortified stronghold to a prison has given rise to a perception of stagnation, influenced by geographical factors. Despite this, a few cities in the Anatolian region have survived and tried to continue their existence without this stagnation disappearing and being erased. (Ersoy, 1997) This statement suggests that the transformation of a city from a fortified stronghold to primarily a place for incarceration reflects a lack of progress or development over time.

Initially, the city might have been fortified for defensive purposes, indicating a need for protection against external threats. However, over time, as the need for such a fortification changed, the city's role shifted to that of a prison. This transition could imply stagnation or lack of advancement in the city's societal or economic circumstances. It also suggests that the physical characteristics of the city have played a role in shaping its development. This could imply that factors such as its geographical isolation or lack of resources have contributed to the city's stagnation or limited growth potential.

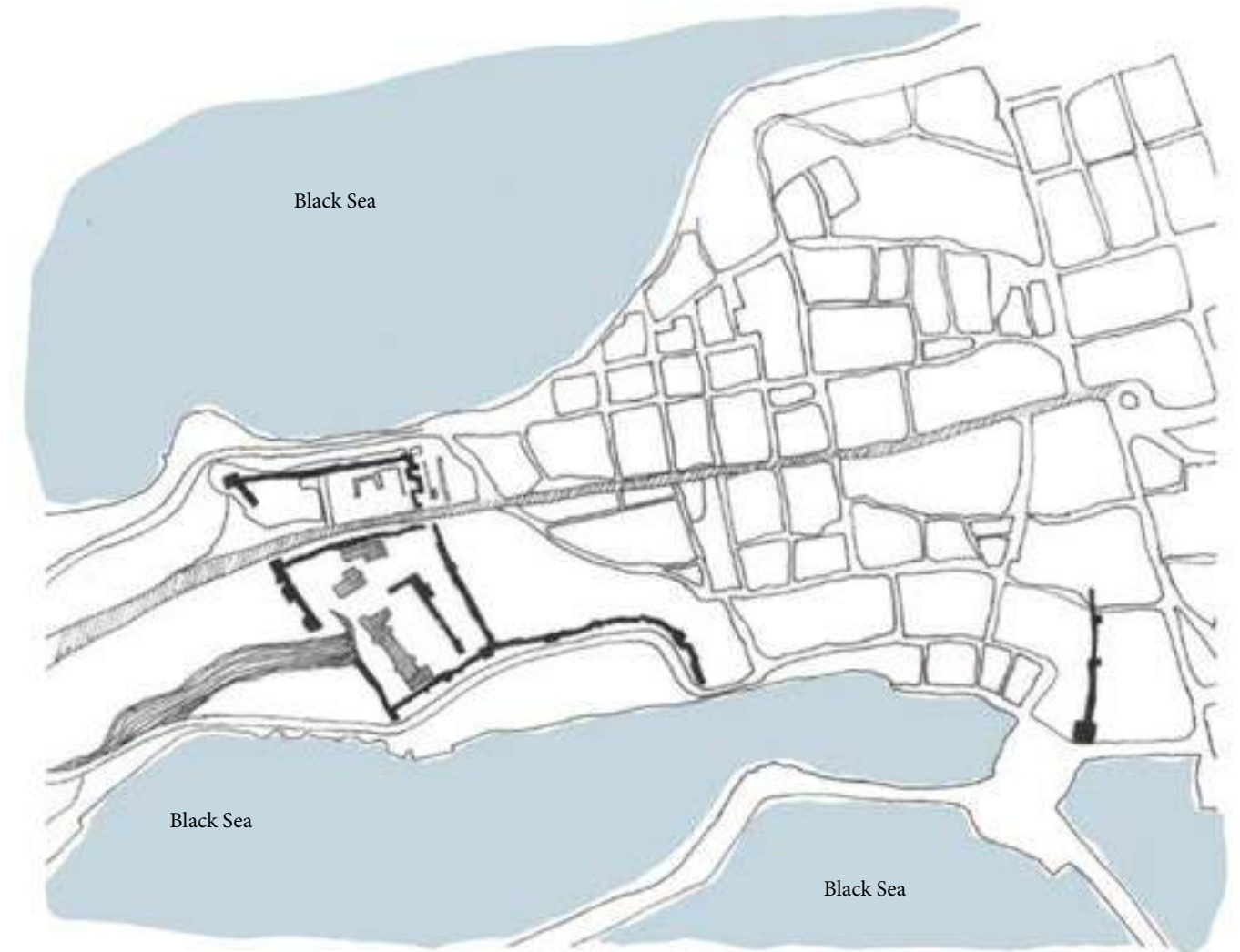
#### 3.1 Situationplans

To understand how the castle walls used to stand, I made a study clarifying this. The plans on the next pages are a comparison of the castle walls with the situation before and the situation now. One can notice that mainly the castle walls around the Historical Prison and the walls of the Citadel still standing.





**Figure 3** 'A plan illustrating the original castle walls' This situation plan illustrates how the walls stood from the Hellenistic period until the Seljuk period. Remarkably, the Citadel was built inside these city walls. This would have been built after the invasion during the Seljuk Period. The Walls Start from the narrowest point where the peninsula converges with the countryside. The Black Sea clearly borders the city walls so that the walls can provide protection. Sinop has been a city that endured many sea battles from its inception in 700 B.C. until the invasion of the Seljuks. After each invasion, damaged sections of the walls underwent reconstruction under the auspices of the prevailing empire.



**Figure 4** 'A plan illustrating the current situation of the walls' Presently, only the sections of the walls depicted in this plan are still standing. Parts of the walls of the citadel are exhibiting greater resilience. Of course, those were built a few centuries later than the outer walls. Some remains of the walls from the Hellenistic period are still clearly visible. Another conclusion is that there also has clearly been an infilling of the sea because the sea no longer borders the walls. Now pedestrian walkways and roads are flanking both sides of the walls, where the harbours once thrived.

## 4. THE URBAN ROLL OF THE PRISON

During my site visit, I studied the urban planning of the city closely. The connections between the prison and the university, and the prison and the restaurants were important for further research and for the project.

The Historical prison of Sinop has played several significant roles in the urban landscape and development of the city. As one of the oldest and most historically significant structures in Sinop, the prison serves as a symbol of the city's rich heritage. Originally built as a fortress during antiquity, it has undergone various transformations over the centuries, reflecting the changing needs and functions of the city. The prison's architectural features and historical significance contribute to the city's cultural identity and serve as a tourist attraction, drawing visitors to Sinop (Efe, 2018).

The prison serves as a prominent landmark within the urban fabric of Sinop, shaping the city's skyline and providing a point of reference for residents and visitors alike. Its imposing presence often serves as a focal point for cultural events, festivals (Kuzeyfest) and community gatherings contributing to the social cohesion and identity of the city.

The former prison had an economic impact on the local community, providing employment opportunities for prison staff, as well as generating revenue through tourism and related industries. Its presence contributes to the economic vitality of Sinop by attracting visitors, supporting local businesses and stimulating economic activity in the surrounding area.

Beyond its architectural and economic importance, the prison holds social and cultural significance for the residents of Sinop. It is often associated with local folklore, legends and historical narratives, enriching the cultural heritage of the city and fostering a sense of pride and belonging amongst its inhabitants.

### 4.1 The prison's connection with the University

Observing the placement of the University of Sinop, more specifically the Faculty of Literature, in relation to the prison, it becomes evident that the faculty is situated outside the city centre, in close proximity to the airport. This spatial arrangement may be attributed to the educational system in Türkiye. However, even considering this factor, it seems unusual to be so isolated and neglected from the city centre.

Both the prison and the faculty contribute to the rich historical and cultural heritage of the city. The prison, with its ancient origins and architectural prominence, symbolises Sinop's past as a fortress and centre of incarceration. In contrast, the university represents the city's commitment to education and innovation.

The connection between the prison and the faculty can lead to opportunities and social exchange between students and the wider community. Academic research, cultural events and community outreach programs organised by the university may engage with the history and significance of the prison, promoting dialogue and understanding among diverse stakeholders.

The distance between the historical prison and the faculty within the city's urban fabric contributes to their spatial integration and the overall coherence of the urban landscape. While I visited the site I found out that there are pedestrian pathways, public transportation routes and shared amenities connecting these landmarks that already enhance accessibility. They promote interaction, creating a sense of cohesion and vitality in the surrounding area.

The presence of the University of Sinop can offer opportunities for collaborative initiatives and partnerships that leverage the expertise and resources of academic institutions to address societal challenges and promote sustainable urban development. Collaborative research projects, joint academic programs, and community-based initiatives may focus on topics such as heritage preservation, cultural heritage tourism, and urban revitalisation, benefiting both the university and the wider community.

Overall, the urban connection between the Historical Prison and the University of Sinop reflects the multifaceted relationship between history, education and urban development in shaping the identity and livability of Sinop as a city. By fostering dialogue, collaboration and mutual engagement, these landmarks contribute to the dynamic and inclusive urban fabric of Sinop.

### 4.2 The prison's connection with the restaurants

The proximity of restaurants in the city centre allows tourists and locals alike to conveniently access dining options after exploring the prison, creating a symbiotic relationship between heritage tourism and culinary experiences.

Restaurants in the city centre often capitalise on the influx of tourists drawn to historical sites like the prison. By offering a diverse range of dining restaurants, including local traditional cuisine, these restaurants cater to the varied preferences of tourists seeking to immerse themselves in the local culture and culinary traditions of Sinop.

These restaurants provide opportunities for cultural exchange between locals and tourists, fostering dialogue and interaction over shared meals. Tourists to the Historical prison of Sinop may frequent these establishments to sample authentic local dishes, engage with local cuisine and interact with residents, thereby enriching their overall experience of the city.

The presence of the prison contributes to the economic vitality of the city centre by attracting tourists and generating foot traffic to nearby restaurants. As a result, the restaurants benefit from increased patronage and revenue, while the city as a whole benefits from the economic activity generated by heritage tourism and dining establishments.

As a conclusion, the urban connection between the historical prison and the restaurants in the city centre reflects the interdependence of cultural heritage, tourism and culinary experiences in shaping the identity and vibrancy of Sinop as a destination for locals and tourists.



## 5. HISTORICAL PRISON

The Historical Prison of Sinop was built by Abdurrahman Pasha, the governor of Kastamonu. It is known from an inscription on the door that its construction was started in 1885. According to some other opinions, it is stated that it was built in 1887, but it is argued that the construction of the building continued for many years and was even completed in the 1890s (Ersoy, 1997).

The prison is accessed from the gate located on the south side of the road at the 'Lonca Kapisı' of Cumhuriyet Street (Fig. 5). To the left, there is a two-storey administrative building (Fig. 6). To the right of the entrance are two buildings where the guards searched the prisoners and where the infirmary was (Fig. 7).

To the right of the entrance lies the fortification wall, which runs north-south and forms the eastern boundary of the citadel crowned with 5 bastions (Fig.5). The fortification body extends south to the inner harbour and north to the outer harbour, and architectural pieces (columns, architraves, etc) belonging to ancient buildings were used in its construction (Fig.8).

Immediately after the entrance, after passing the building on the right, turning to the right, after a low entrance carved into the lower body of the citadel wall, one passes into the area where the Youth Detention Center is located within the citadel (Fig.9). The detained children were often subjected to the same harsh conditions as adult inmates. (Ersoy, 1997) In this area, there is a two-storey, east-west oriented, rectangular planned, 9-bunker Youth Detention Center built in 1939 on the west façade. In the northwest corner in the background, there were detached buildings such as a furnace, kitchen, transformer, etc. There was a large door opening to the Cumhuriyet Street in this area. On the north side of this area bordering Cumhuriyet Street, there is a two-stage, two-storey observation building. There are a total of 64 cells with iron bars in the building, which is planned completely symmetrically (Fig. 10).

Just to the south of the dungeon, there is a visitor's viewpoint accessed by stairs. When you enter under the building where the viewing place is located, you come to a section called 'under the door'. After a thorough search by the prison guards and passing through a two-winged door, you enter the building formerly used as an infirmary. From there, you proceed to the citadel where the main building is situated. (Ersoy, 1997)

Opposite the administrative building to the left of the entrance, a bastion from the Seljuk period was used as a dungeon. It is known that these bastions were used as dungeons since the Seljuk period. In the recent period, those who committed crimes during their imprisonment were locked up in these dungeons by the prison administration (Fig.11).

It is known that the infirmary was originally a wooden building with 7 cells in this area and political prisoners were held on the upper floors. The staircase on the west side of the infirmary (Fig. 12) building leads to the main building of the prison with three large courtyards on the front.

The north-south located building, the main building (Fig. 13), consists of three sections. This is the place where a diverse range of inmates were housed, including political prisoners, criminals and those awaiting trials. Conditions within the prison were notoriously harsh, with overcrowding, poor sanitation and inadequate food being prevalent issues.



**Figure 5** The entrance from the north looking to the south. With the renovation the stairs are now accessible with wheelchair and the souvenirshops between the dungeon are removed.



**Figure 6** The picture show us the entrance towards the north. On the left is the administrative building. After the renovation it will be used as a museumshop.



**Figure 7** Right in front is where the search of the prisoner happened. By renovating the facades, they've also created a seating area out of wood.



**Figure 8** An obvious example. Different regimes reused architectural pieces to rebuilt the walls by showing their victory.



**Figure 9** Right through this gate carved into the walls of the citadel, the front facade of the Youth Detention is visible.



**Figure 10** This is a picture from the south facade of the Youth Detention (left) and the solitary confinement cell blocks (right).



**Figure 11** This is one of the dungeons where the chains are still hanging.



**Figure 12** The staircase leads to the mainbuilding (fig. 13). Due to ongoing restorations it is closed.



**Figure 13** The main building. Bottom left is the courtyard of the first section.





**Figure 14** Before the restoration this was the cell of Sabahattin Ali which could be visited.



**Figure 15** This picture was taken in 2017. Right inside the courtyard of the first section of the mainbuilding. (fig. 16)



**Figure 16** This is a picture of the first section of the mainbuilding after the renovations in 2023.



**Figure 17** Here is the southern facade of the Youth Detention center with in the back the building with the isolation cells.



**Figure 18** Looking towards the side, there is a view of the mainbuilding, its courtyards and the Black Sea above the castle walls.



**Figure 19** Walking further, there is a wooden path with a platform that leads to a viewpoint.



**Figure 20** This is the viewpoint built after the renovation of 2023, it represents the guardposts. and is on top of the building in fig. 21.



**Figure 21** This yellow building is the only way to access the main building. This one is currently closed but I took a sneak peak downstairs.



**Figure 22** This model was behind the closed doors of the building (fig. 21). It shows the situation with the work ateliers.

Inmates often faced brutality from guards and instances of torture and mistreatment were not uncommon (Yavuz Y. 2023, own translation). The structure is a U-planned structure. The facades of the prison feature cut stone pilasters positioned at the corners and in the center as in the original. It is a stone building and the exterior was plastered. After the recent restoration, the plaster was removed and the stone construction is now visible. Sections 1 and 2 are two-storeys and the 3rd section on the south side is ground + two storeys.

The section in the north is called section 1, the section in the middle is called section 2 and the section in the south is called section 3. Two dormitories on the first floor on the north side of the first section were converted into a Women's Dormitory in 1985. This quarter is bordered by a narrow courtyard on the north side.

On the ground floor of the third section, there are 21 disciplinary cells. On the west side of the ground floor of the main building, attached to its own courtyards, there is a hammam built on the same date as the main building. The hammam originally had 5 kurnas, but it was later changed to 7. In hammams, the round vessel usually made of marble or stone located under the faucet where water is collected is called 'kurna' (Kalan Mühendislik, 2008).

### 5.1 The prison as a museum

The Historical Prison of Sinop functions as a museum by showcasing exhibits and artefacts that depict the history, culture and significance of the prison and its role in the region. Visitors to the museum can explore various aspects of prison life, including architecture, living conditions and stories of inmates who were held there, such as the poet Sabahattin Ali (Fig.14). Guided tours, audiovisual presentations and educational programs were offered to enhance visitors' understanding and appreciation of the prison's significance within the broader context of Sinop's history. Overall the Historical Prison of Sinop serves as a museum by preserving and interpreting the cultural heritage of the region, educating visitors about the past and fostering dialogue and reflections on themes of justice and incarceration.

The tourism attracted to the Historical Prison of Sinop can also have several economic effects. Tourism brings in visitors who spend money on various goods and services, including accommodations, meals, transportation, souvenirs and guided tours. This influx of tourist spending can stimulate local economic activity and generate revenue for local businesses, contributing to the overall economic growth of the region (Ministry of Tourism).

The demand for tourism-related services creates employment opportunities for residents, including tour guides, hotel staff, restaurant workers and transportation providers. Job creation in the tourism sector can help reduce unemployment rates and improve the livelihoods of locals in the community.

Tourism can provide financial support for the preservation and restoration of historical sites like the Historical Prison of Sinop. Revenue generated from entrance fees, donations and government grants can be allocated towards conservation efforts, ensuring that these cultural heritage sites are maintained for future generations.



## 5.2 Restoration

During the recent restorations a few years ago, it was decided to make a walkthrough from the entrance to the coastline. This passageway is now completely open to the public. The entrance carved into the lower part of the citadel's wall that leads to the Youth Detention Center is closed with a metal gate. The ateliers on this passageway have been deconstructed and now the walls of the citadel are exposed. Because of that, it is possible to see the different layers of history on a lot of stones. Some have Old Greek scripts on them, some have another texture, colour, etc.

The main building of the Historical Prison was renovated in 2023. There are still some constructions going on. With the assistance of the report written by architect Melike Yilmaz while studying the current situation of the buildings, I can summarise some details about the restorations.

If we look at the materials used in the U-shaped main building of the prison, we can distinguish 4 different materials. According to the traces in the building, it had a wood veneer floor and ceiling with volta flooring. Except for the door wings of some cells, wood was used in the moulding that flows the building's walls as a transverse belt.

The 19th-century Ottoman cast iron technique was applied in the building (to overcome large openings and meet the loads with a lighter construction). Due to later renovations, the structure was converted to reinforced concrete. Naturally, iron was also used for the bars on the windows, the main entrance and the doors of the cells.

Stone was used to a great extent in the construction of this building. Almas and stone walls were formed by laying uneven rough stones and bricks with mortar. Smooth-cut stones were used in the facades, in the jamb arches of windows and doors and the inscription frames. In addition to being used in the complex wall systems of the building, it is also used in the building as the flat arches of the pediments above the ground floor and first-floor windows. The rows of brackets also follow the round arch of the main entrance door. Due to the repairs it had undergone, most of the brick arches have disappeared in our time.

Different damages were observed in the Youth Detention Center. These damages include crusting, efflorescence, salinisation and humidity, spalling, moisture-water problems and detachment (Fig. 23-25). As architect Melike Yilmaz states in her report, in order to analyse the problems observed on the facade, it is necessary to evaluate the deterioration of the main building of the prison next to the Youth Detention Center building, which has reached more advanced dimensions. There are 50 years between the construction of the main building and the Detention Center building. They were built using the same construction system, materials and ornament.

Therefore, if the detention centre is not restored for another 50 years, its appearance will not be very different from the main building (before restoration). This is why I think it is better to start renovating now, instead of waiting for even worse decay. Because right now, more qualities could be preserved and kept. When we look at the building of the detention centre,

stone was used to a great extent on the exterior facade.

When we look at the wall surfaces the plaster fragments we come across in places show that the surfaces are plastered and painted. Smooth-cut stones were used on the edges and corners of the facades, as well as on the plaster, window and door jamb arches that border the middle section.

Due to physical, chemical, biological and mechanical effects, stones have deteriorated. Humidity is the most important factor leading to deterioration. Since the building is located so close to the sea, this rate is higher around the building. There are cracks in the facade and foundation due to moisture and settlement (Fig. 23 - 25). It is essential to preserve the foundation and facades in place and extend the service life of the stone (Yilmaz M., 2023).

For this purpose, depending on the condition of the stone, first surface cleaning and then reinforcement applications can be made with reinforcing-water repellent chemicals when necessary. It has been observed that these applications, which will also increase durability, penetrate better when solvent-based sealers are used and fill some macro voids by better matching the porous structure of the natural stone; they are less affected by water and moisture. The aims of using this method are aesthetic preservation of the natural stone surface, increased durability, on-site applicability and compliance with ecological demands. Due to the proximity of the detention centre to the sea, the high humidity levels have caused efflorescence and subcrustal efflorescence that occur with evaporation on the wall surface or the inner surfaces of the wall. This disrupts the physical and chemical structure of the walls.

The first intervention on the facade should be cleaning the plastered and painted parts. Cleaning on stone surfaces has been addressed by many researchers. New applications such as atomised water washing, sandblasting with controlled micro-sized special aggregates and



**Figure 23** This is the front facade of the Youth Detention Centre. An example of efflorescence and spalling.



**Figure 24** The corners of the building with the isolation cells and the facade is an example of the detachment.



**Figure 25** The western facade of the detention centre shows us the moisture-water problems.



## **PART II**

*'Own research, a potential answer and preliminary study leading to my master's project'*

## 6. CONNECTING THE FACULTY OF LITERATURE WITH THE HISTORICAL PRISON

The Historical Prison of Sinop is a significant landmark with a rich history that spans centuries. By connecting the Faculty of Literature with this historical site, students and faculty members can gain a deeper understanding of the region's past, including its cultural, social and political dimensions. This connection fosters a sense of historical awareness and appreciation among students, enriching their academic experience. The connection will also contribute to the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage. Through educational programs, research projects and cultural events, students and faculty members can actively engage with the site's history and significance, ensuring that it remains a valued part of the region's cultural landscape for future generations.

By studying literature in the context of historical events, the students can gain insights into the ways in which literature reflects and shapes society. Likewise, historians can explore the role of literature in interpreting and preserving historical narratives. Students and faculty members may draw upon the site's history, architecture and stories to improve their research, writing and artistic endeavours. By immersing themselves in this unique environment, they can uncover new insights, perspectives and narratives that contribute to the academic discourse.

One of the most important aspects of connecting the Historical Prison with the Faculty of Literature is that throughout history, many renowned literary figures - such as Sabahattin Ali - have been imprisoned for their beliefs, writings or political activism. Those imprisonments of poets and writers serve as a powerful symbol of resistance, courage and intellectual integrity. Exploring the lives and works of poets and writers who were imprisoned sheds light on the historical context in which they lived and the challenges they faced. By studying their experiences, students gain a deeper understanding of the societal and political forces that shaped their writing and activism, enriching their appreciation of literature as a reflection of its time.



**Figure 26** An urban plan illustrating:  
A. The Airport of Sinop  
B. The Faculty of Literature  
C. The bus station  
D. The Historical Prison site

## 6.1 Sabahattin Ali

Sebahattin Ali was born in 1907 and was murdered in 1948. He is known as the unfortunate poet and novelist. In his fictional stories, he aimed to bring unresolved conflicts. He does not grant the reader even a small sign of hope at the end of a dark story. His political ambition encouraged him to write about dark situations on which he had a strong opinion. He used his fictional stories as a weapon of his political hostility against a one-party state. In 1926, he began publishing poems. Additionally, he started writing novels and published his first novel 'Bir Orman Hikayesi' in 1930. Another poet quoted: "This writing is a newer kind that is not common in our country. In his writing, the author gives us an intelligent and clear standpoint so that we can see things like the whole conservative and progressive sides of the psychology of villagers, how the capitalists destroy traditional village life to make it their original capital, and ultimately the ambiguous forest life is a beautiful part of nature."

Sabahattin Ali was arrested in 1932 and sentenced to one year in prison on charges of writing a poem in which he 'insulted the president'. The poem, titled "Memleketten Haber" or "News from Homeland", is indeed a satire written in a 6-5 syllable metre.

He spent several months in different prisons and one of them was the Historical Prison of Sinop. His time in prison was marked by hardship and suffering, as he endured harsh conditions and mistreatment. Despite his imprisonment, Sabahattin Ali continued to write, producing some of his most enduring works while behind bars. One of his most famous novels, 'Madonna in a Fur Coat', was written during this period. The novel, which explores themes of love, alienation and identity, remains a classic in Turkish literature.

Sabahattin Ali's time in prison came to an end when he was released in 1947. However, his freedom was short-lived, as he was tragically murdered under mysterious circumstances in 1948, just a year after his release (Daily News, 2021). During my studies, I already did get a chance to do a small research about the famous poet Sabahattin Ali. This was a research about how connections can be associated between a poem, an interior and a verb. Of course, the poem was 'Melânkoli', one of Sabahattin Ali's. I came across this poem when I was reading Sabahattin Ali's book 'Bütün şiirleri' wherein all his poems are gathered.

## 6.2 About his poetry

Ali does not write with a fixed structure. He has various poems, some of which consist of three stanzas, quatrains, and others. But some of his poems are written in clear rhyme form, some of which he called 'prison songs'. In this research, I will focus on his work during his imprisonment in Sinop. In the prison's main building, the cell of Sebahattin Ali is visitable. In commemoration, 5 poems were hung in the cell. The prison was adjacent to the Black Sea. In the courtyard, they could hear every stroke of a wave against the outer walls. In the poem 'Aldırma gönül', he wrote how that sound made him fantasise and kept him 'busy' during his captivity.

The poems 'Aldırma Gönül' and 'Melânkoli' by Sabahattin Ali both reflect the poet's introspective exploration of human emotions and experiences, but they also do so in different ways. When I read 'Aldırma Gönül' the poem clearly focuses on resilience and inner strength in the face of adversity. It encourages the heart not to succumb to despair or sorrow and to maintain hope despite the bad circumstances, despite his captivity in this situation. 'Melânkoli', on the other hand, delves into the darker aspects of melancholy and existential fear. It portrays a sense of existential despair and reflects on the pain and uncertainty of his imprisonment. The mood of 'Aldırma Gönül' is relatively uplifting and hopeful, despite acknowledging the hardship in the prison. It carries a tone of resilience and encouragement, urging the reader to persevere through difficulties. In contrast, 'Melânkoli' evokes a sombre and introspective mood, characterised by a sense of human suffering and introspection, without offering a clear resolution or consolation.

'Aldırma Gönül' employs imagery related to nature, particularly the imagery of waves crashing against walls, to convey the tumultuousness of challenges inside the prison. It suggests finding solace and strength amid nature's relentless force. 'Melânkoli' also utilises imagery, but it tends to evoke more abstract and internal landscapes. It delves into the inner workings of the poet's mind, portraying a sense of isolation within the confines of a prison cell.

As a conclusion, while both poems explore themes of human emotions and resilience, 'Aldırma Gönül' adopts a more uplifting and encouraging tone, whereas 'Melânkoli' delves into the darker thoughts, grappling with themes of despair and existential uncertainty. I want to discuss these thoughts and the controversy in them, while explaining the impact of solitary confinement. Because I believe that all of his best work was written during a period full of suffering and pain. In addition to that, it is important to understand that Sabahattin Ali had and still has a great

*Aldırma Gönül*

*Başın öne eğilmesin  
Aldırma gönül aldırma  
Ağladığın duyulmasın  
Aldırma gönül, aldırma*

*Dışarda deli dalgalar  
Gelip duvarları yalar  
Seni bu sesler oyalar  
Aldırma gönül, aldırma*

*Görmesen bile denizi  
Yukarıya çevir gözü  
Deniz dibidir gökyüzü  
Aldırma gönül, aldırma*

*Dertlerin kalkınca şaha  
Bir sitem yolla Allah'a  
Göreceğ günler var daha  
Aldırma gönül, aldırma*

*Kurşun ata ata biter  
Yollar gide, gide biter  
Ceza yata yata biter  
Aldırma gönül, aldırma*

Sabahattin Ali, 1933

*Do not mind, heart*

*Let not your head bow down  
Do not mind, heart, do not mind  
Let not your crying be heard  
Do not mind, heart, do not mind*

*Outside, the wild waves  
Come and lick the walls  
These sounds distract you  
Do not mind, heart, do not mind*

*Even if you don't see the sea  
Turn your eyes upwards  
The sea bottom is the sky  
Do not mind, heart, do not mind*

*When your troubles rise high  
Send a complaint to Allah  
There are better days ahead  
Do not mind, heart, do not mind*

*Even if bullets keep coming  
Even if roads keep going  
Even if sentences keep passing  
Do not mind, heart, do not mind*

Sabahattin Ali, 1930

*Melânkoli*

*Beni en güzel günümde Se-  
bepsiz bir keder alır.  
Butun ömrümün beynimde  
Aci bir tortusu kalır.*

*Anliyamam kederimi,  
Bir ates yakar derimi,  
İcim dar bulur yerimi,  
Gönlüm dağlarda bunalır.*

*Ne kis ne yazı isterim,  
Ne bir dost yüzü isterim,  
Hafif bir sizi isterim,  
Ağrılar, sancılar gelir.*

*Yanım duser kollarım, Gorun-  
mez olur yollarım,  
En sevgili emellerim  
Onume ölü serilir...*

*Ne bir dost ne bir sevgili,  
Dünyadan uzak bir deli...  
Beni sarar melankoli:  
Kafamin icerisi ölü.*

Sabahattin Ali, 1933

*Melancholy*

*In my finest hours of glee,  
Unfounded sorrow captures me.  
Throughout my life, deep inside,  
A bitter residue does abide.*

*I cannot grasp this melancholy,  
A fire burns, consuming wholly.  
Within, I find no room to breathe,  
My heart amidst the mountains seethe.*

*Neither winter nor summer seek,  
Nor a friendly face I beseech.  
Just a gentle sigh, I plea,  
But pains and aches come to me.*

*My arms fall by my side, forlorn,  
My paths obscure, lost and worn.  
My dearest dreams, now so near,  
Lie lifeless, before me appear...*

*No friend, no love, no kin I find,  
Just a distant, wandering mind.  
Melancholy wraps around, unfurled:  
Within my head, my soul's world.*

Sabahattin Ali, 1933



influence on Turkish literature.

### 6.3 His impact on Turkish literature

Sabahattin Ali was known to be a dedicated and passionate teacher who deeply cared about his students' education and well-being. Before embarking on his literary career, he worked as a teacher. His commitment to education and his belief in the transformative power of learning are evident in his writings and personal philosophy (inkilap, own translation 2022).

He likely sought to inspire his students, encourage critical thinking, and foster a love of learning. Sabahattin Ali may have emphasised the importance of empathy, curiosity and intellectual curiosity, instilling in his students a sense of social responsibility and a desire to make a positive impact on the world.

Sabahattin Ali made significant contributions to Turkish literature through his thought-provoking poetry, insightful novels and courageous political stance. His literary style was marked by its simplicity, depth and resonance with common experiences of ordinary people. Ali's ability to capture the complexities of human emotions and societal issues resonated deeply with readers.

Through his work, he addressed pressing social and political issues of his time, including injustice, oppression and the struggle for freedom. Despite facing censorship and persecution for his political views, Sabahattin Ali remained steadfast in his commitment to truth and justice. His willingness to speak out against injustice inspired many and earned him respect as a principled writer.

His works are characterised by their profound humanism and empathy for the struggles of ordinary people. He portrayed characters from diverse backgrounds with compassion and understanding, fostering empathy and connection among readers. Sabahattin Ali's impact on Turkish literature extends beyond his own lifetime. His works continue to be widely read and studied, inspiring new generations of writers and readers (Ersoy, 1997. own translation).

To conclude, Sabahattin Ali's enduring legacy in Turkish literature is rooted in his ability to transcend boundaries, challenge conventions and speak truth to power. His works continue to resonate with readers for their timeless themes and universal appeal. To give more clarity and encourage universal appeal, I would like to include some of his works I've read during the past few years.

His first novel I've read is 'Madonna with a Fur Coat', which is perhaps Sabahattin Ali's most famous and enduring work. The novel has had an impact on Turkish literature for several reasons. It also has been written in different languages such as English, French and German. 'Madonna with a Fur Coat' introduced his work to a global audience. At its core, the novel is a poignant love story that transcends cultural and geographical boundaries. The characters are richly drawn and multifaceted. Their complex relationships and inner conflicts add depth to the story. Sabahattin Ali's prose is characterised by lyrical beauty, emotional depth and understated elegance. His evocative language captivates the readers. 'Madonna with a Fur Coat' stands as a statement to Sabahattin Ali's enduring impact on Turkish literature.

'Kuyucaklı Yusuf' (Yusuf the Well-digger) is considered one of his masterpieces. It portrays the struggles of the character Yusuf with societal expectations, personal identity and the clash between tradition and modernity. Sabahattin Ali explores themes of social inequality, rural life and the human quest for dignity and freedom. The novel's realistic depiction of village life and its nuanced characters have made it a classic of Turkish literature.

'İçimizdeki Seytan' (The Devil Inside Us) is a collection of short stories that showcases Sabahattin Ali's ability to delve into the depths of the human psyche. Through tales of love, betrayal and moral dilemmas, he explores the complexities of human relationships and the darker aspects of human nature.

Besides these novels, his poems are also very impactful. His poetry often reflects his deep concern for social justice and his critique of societal norms and injustices. Sabahattin Ali's poetry also delves into themes of introspection, existential fear and complexities of human emotion.

Atilla Özkırımlı, a Turkish literary historian and writer, has articulated Sabahattin Ali's Poem in the book 'Bütün şiirleri' in this way;

"Sabahattin Ali's poetry is the poetry of a simple completion of 'I'. Love, loneliness, despair, and pessimism are the main themes of his poetry. Urban life and the hypocrisy in interpersonal relations overwhelm him and push him to seek refuge in the mountains. For him, the mountains symbolise freedom, freedom from the bonds that limit human beings. It is the sign of an inhibited, enthusiastic personality, a talent that is satisfied with what he has and wants to rise. His love is negative because it is unrequited, he loves but is not loved. He is lonely because he has been abandoned, he is friendless, and there is no one he can trust. He is pessimistic because he lives in a world dominated by lies because everything is a sham, a show. He is hopeless because the more he gets to know people; the further he gets from them. In the end, he relies on himself. From this point of view, it is as if his poetry is an instrument to express his feelings." (own translation)

## 7. THE EFFECTS OF SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

Researching solitary confinement within the context of adaptive reuse of a historical prison is essential for understanding its historical significance, impact on design and function and ethical implications. By rethinking the design of these prison buildings I want to make a comparison with positive solitude and how this can be a potential function for my master's project. Positive solitude is embraced as a meaning of self-care, self-discovery and personal enrichment. By intentionally seeking out moments of solitude in alternative functions, individuals can cultivate a deeper understanding of themselves, find inspiration and nurture their well being in transformative ways.

### 7.1 Solitary confinement

The definition of solitary confinement from the Cambridge Dictionary:

*Solitary confinement*

*“a punishment in which someone is kept in a room alone, usually in a prison”*

Nowadays, according to Metzner & Fellner (2010) solitary confinement in a prison refers to the practice of isolating an individual prisoner in a cell for 22 to 24 hours a day, with minimal human contact or environmental stimulation. This form of imprisonment typically involves keeping the person confined alone for extended periods, sometimes weeks, months or even years. It's often used as a disciplinary measure or for the protection of the inmate or others.

Solitary confinement often leads to various psychological consequences, including increased levels of anxiety, depression, hallucinations, paranoia and deteriorating mental health. These effects can be particularly severe when individuals are isolated for prolonged periods without meaningful social interaction or mental stimulation. (Wright et al., 2023) The article 'Solitary confinement and the well-being of people in prison' delves into specific patterns of psychological effects observed in individuals subjected to solitary confinement, shedding light on the profound impact of isolation on mental well-being. It provides more detailed insights into the psychological ramifications of solitary confinement as a documented academic research.

Article 17 of the Constitution of Türkiye enshrines the right to life and the protection and development of both material and spiritual existence for everyone. It also prohibits any interference with a person's bodily integrity without medical necessity or legal grounds, and it prohibits subjecting anyone to scientific or medical experiments without their consent. Furthermore, the article explicitly prohibits torture, inhumane or degrading treatment, or punishment that is incompatible with human dignity.

*“Article 17 - Everyone has the right to life, protection of their physical and mental integrity, and to improve their living standards.*

*Except for medical necessity and cases stipulated by law, no one's bodily integrity can be violated, and no one can be subjected to scientific or medical experiments without their consent.*

*No one shall be subjected to torture or ill-treatment that violates human dignity, and no one shall be subjected to a punishment or treatment that is inhuman or degrading.*

*The provisions of the first paragraph do not apply in cases of (1) legitimate defence, the execution of arrest or detention orders, prevention or the escape of a detainee or convict, suppression of a riot or rebellion, or (2) the use of force in situations of exceptional necessity, as determined by competent authorities in accordance with the law.” (own translation of article 17 of the Constitution of Türkiye, last modification 2017)*

It is also known that during the imprisonment of prisoners during the 20th century these laws weren't always as controllable as now. Even nowadays, solitary confinement is a subject that is a topic of discussion.

To keep the focus on the Historical Prison I want to give an example of the conditions from the book "Sari Mestan" by Yilmaz Yavuz. This novel is based on a diary of a former prisoner. Yilmaz Yavuz delves into the life of a young man from a village in Sinop who is wrongfully accused of murder. The novel explores themes of injustice, justice and the human spirit's resilience in the face of adversity. Through the prisoner's experiences, the novel also examines broader societal issues and challenges prevalent in Türkiye. "Sari Mestan" becomes a compelling narrative that captures the complexities of the human condition and the quest for truth and redemption.

Yilmaz Yavuz provides readers with insights into the conditions of the Historical Prison of Sinop. He describes the harsh realities faced by prisoners, including the cramped living spaces, lack of basic amenities and the oppressive atmosphere within the walls of the prison. The writer sheds light on the psychological toll that incarceration takes on individuals, highlighting the struggles and challenges they endure on a daily basis. Through his narrative, readers can gain a deeper understanding of the hardships faced by prisoners in the Historical Prison of Sinop back then and the urgent need for reform within the prison system.

## 7.2 The effects on Sabahattin Ali

Solitary confinement, as experienced by Sabahattin Ali during his imprisonment in the Historical Prison of Sinop, likely had profound effects on his mental and emotional well-being, which could be reflected in his poetry.

In the chapter connecting the Faculty of Literature with the Historical Prison, I discuss how two poems of Sabahattin Ali are completely different. I want to connect these differences with the isolation, loneliness, depression, the urge to express himself, and his emotional rollercoaster during his imprisonment.

Solitary Confinement often leads to feelings of extreme isolation and loneliness, with little to no human interaction. This isolation can intensify existing emotional struggles and make coping with imprisonment even more challenging. In his poems, Sabahattin Ali expresses sentiments of loneliness, longing for connection and the pain of being cut off from the outside world. At one point he even sees the freedom of a bird as torment and writes:

“Isn't it better to be locked up in a place where the only thing that reminds you of freedom is your breath, instead of watching a bird in the garden eating breadcrumbs at your feet, walking around left and right on the same soil without liberty, and then, with a flap of its wings, crossing these walls to embrace freedom?” (Bütün öyküleri, Sabahattin Ali)

The monotony and lack of stimulation in solitary confinement can exacerbate feelings of depression and despair. Sabahattin Ali grappled with overwhelming sadness, hopelessness and a sense of futility, which is reflected in the themes and the tone of his poetry but also in the letters he wrote.

However, Sabahattin Ali's most successful and best-known poems for today's readers are the ones he wrote in various prisons. In five of his poems with the general title “prison song”, especially in the fifth one with the refrain “Aldırma gönül aldırma”, the poet expresses the feeling of imprisonment and the longing for freedom. In the work he depicts in the Historical Prison of Sinop, he shows an identity that does not lose hope despite everything, that resists but is also deeply saddened. (Bezirci A., 2006)

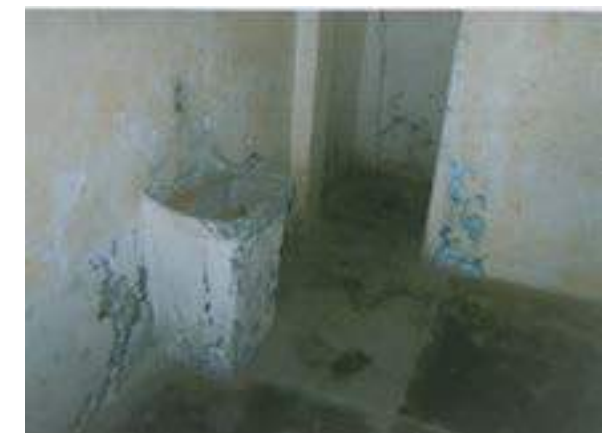
Despite this, the poet is not always so hopeful, determined and resilient. In one of his poems, “Cypress”, which can be traced through his letters, Sabahattin Ali makes this symbol of death speak and says “Comfort is beneath me / Don't hit your head / Comfort is beneath me”. In a deeply pessimistic letter he sent to Ayşe Sitki İlhan on the ship on his way to the Historical Prison of Sinop, in which he included the poem in question, Sabahattin Ali wrote that “the cypresses are always telling me sweet and attractive things, inviting me to a long and comfortable sleep.” (Bütün Siirleri, Ali S., Arslan G. N., 2006)

Solitary confinement often forces individuals to confront existential questions about life, purpose and identity. Sabahattin Ali delved into introspection, exploring themes of existential fear, personal identity and the meaning of existence in his poems. Despite the hardship of confinement, Sabahattin Ali used poetry as a way to process his emotions and preserve his sanity in a situation of powerlessness. He used it as a form of resistance by expressing a longing for freedom through his poems, subtly challenging the oppressive conditions of his confinement.

Here are some pictures of the situation of the isolation cells in the Historical Prison of Sinop (Kalan Mühendislik, 2008)



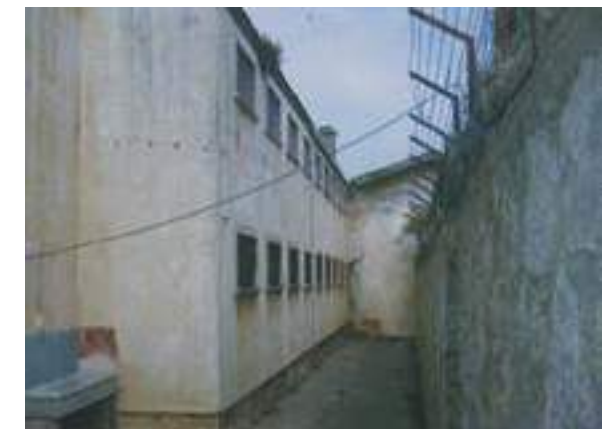
**Figure 27** The hallway in front of the cells of the southern facade. (Kalan Mühendislik, 2008)



**Figure 28** This is inside a cell with a washtable and the toilet behind it. (Kalan Mühendislik, 2008)



**Figure 29** This view is right before turning to the hallway in fig. 26. (Kalan Mühendislik, 2008)



**Figure 30** This is the facade from the south of the first block with the isolation cells. (Kalan Mühendislik, 2008)





**Figure 31** A close up of the toilets integrated in every cell. (Kalan Mühendislik, 2008)



**Figure 32** Looking towards the hallway from inside of a cell. It had no access to sunlight and was closed up as shown in fig. 33. (Kalan Mühendislik, 2008)



**Figure 33** The demolished facade on the eastern facade. (Kalan Mühendislik, 2008)



**Figure 34** The hallway in front of the cells of the northern facade. (Kalan Mühendislik, 2008)

### 7.3 Rethinking solitary confinement

While speaking of solitary confinement, today the Historical Prison doesn't function as a prison. What exactly can a rethinking of 'solitary confinement' mean and how could it be a place we would want to be?

Solitary confinement is when someone gets to be isolated from a group of people because of being a threat or being threatened. Very shortly said. To rethink this concept in use for my research about the Historical Prison and following my Master's project, I will focus on the part 'solitude' and how this can be a positive aspect.

In the article 'The Virtues of Isolation' Crane (2017) writes "Under the right circumstances, choosing to spend time alone can be a huge psychological boon." Solitude can foster creativity and innovation by allowing individuals to explore their thoughts and ideas without external distractions. Many thinkers and artists throughout history have valued solitude as a catalyst for their creative endeavours.

Solitude could provide an opportunity for self-reflection and introspection, allowing individuals to delve into their inner thoughts, emotions and values. By spending time alone, people can gain a deeper understanding of themselves and their place in the world. (Long & Averill, 2003)

Crane (2017) discusses how solitude can serve as a form of self-care, providing a break from the demands of daily life and allowing individuals to recharge mentally and emotionally. He explained the benefits of connecting with nature during periods of solitude. Spending time alone in natural settings can promote a sense of awe and wonder, as well as a feeling of interconnectedness.

In conclusion, the exploration of positive solitude in various contexts highlights the potential for the Historical Prison to house researchers seeking solitude and reflection. Just as retreat centers, artist residencies and mindfulness retreats offer environments conducive to focused work and personal growth, the Historical Prison can provide a unique setting for scholars to engage in deep thought, research and writing. By repurposing historical prison spaces into accommodations for researchers, institutions can offer a retreat-like experience that combines the benefits of solitude with the rich historical in the quietude of former prison cells, courtyards

## 8. CASE STUDIES

In the previous chapters, research has been conducted into the urban connections in the city linked with the Historical Prison of Sinop. This became possible after my site visit and on-site research at the beginning of this process. From this research, a conclusion has been drawn that summarises the needs and potentials of the site. Based on this preliminary research, a program is proposed in the next chapter. These functions provide an answer to the reinterpretation of the Historical Prison, which is currently only used as a museum.

After presenting a program, a selection of case studies will be discussed that align with the proposed program. These case studies will have various similarities but also differences with the site of the Historical Prison and can therefore serve as a great source of inspiration.

1. Academia Belgica, Rome
2. The Faculty Club, Leuven
3. Home for Senior Citizens by Peter Zumthor, Switzerland

Starting with a few case studies for inspiration, I conclude this chapter with my project proposal.

### 8.1 Case Study 1. Academia Belgica

Academia Belgica is a research institute and cultural centre located in Rome, Italy. It was established in 1939 with the aim of promoting scholarly exchange and research collaboration between Belgium and Italy. Academia Belgica hosts a variety of academic events, including conferences, seminars and lectures and it provides facilities for researchers and scholars from both countries to pursue their studies in various disciplines, including art history, archaeology, literature and philosophy. The institute also houses a library and archives focused on Belgian-Italian cultural relations.

Their vision is to foster academic excellence and cultural exchange between Belgium and Italy by providing a platform for interdisciplinary research, collaboration and intellectual engagement. Through its programs, activities and resources, Academia Belgica seeks to support researchers, facilitate academic partnerships and enrich the academic community both locally and internationally.

The villa features a historic library specialising in humanities [...] with more than 80,000 volumes and various archive and library collections from prominent Belgian researchers (such as Pierre Bautier, Franz Cumont, Nicole Dacos, [...]) It also features sixteen rooms and two studios, an artist's studio, two fully equipped conference rooms, two meeting rooms and a reception area. (Wie Zijn We | Academiabelgica.it, z.d.)

The Academia Belgica, situated within close proximity to the former Park Borghese likely embodies the architectural typology of a Renaissance Villa. Renaissance villas were characterised by their elegant and symmetrical designs, often featuring spacious gardens and courtyards integrated with the surrounding landscape. (Sellers & Taylor, 1AD)

Located amidst the lush greenery of Borghese Park, Academia Belgica would have enjoyed a serene and inspiring environment conducive to scholarly pursuits. The villa's architectural typology provides ample space for academic activities such as research, writing, and contemplation, echoing the Renaissance ideals of humanism and intellectual curiosity. (Sellers & Taylor, 1AD)

Furthermore, the connection to Villa Borghese adds a historical and cultural dimension to Academia Belgica, enriching its academic atmosphere. The park's expansive grounds provide a tranquil retreat for scholars to immerse themselves in their work while also offering opportunities for leisure strolls and contemplation amidst nature.

In my opinion, the Academia Belgica offers insights that could be useful for the site of the Historical Prison of Sinop, particularly in terms of understanding architectural typologies and their implications for the redevelopment or repurposing of the site.

The typology highlights certain architectural features and design principles that could be relevant to the Historical Prison. Characteristics such as elegant and symmetrical designs, spacious gardens, and integrated courtyards speak to the potential of creating a harmonious and inspiring environment within the prison complex. The Academia Belgica offers possibilities for reimagining the site as a cultural or educational centre. For example, integrating elements of symmetrical design and spacious outdoor areas could enhance the usability and appeal of the Historical Prison of Sinop for academic or artistic pursuits.

Drawing parallels between the architectural typologies of Academia Belgica and the Historical Prison can inform thoughtful approaches to redevelopment or repurposing of the site, emphasising principles of functionality, cultural enrichment and integration with the surrounding environment.



Figure 35 (Du Brulle C. 2022)



Figure 36 (Van Sprang & Bossu, 2023)



Figure 37 (Van Sprang & Bossu, 2023)



## 8.2 Case Study 2. The Faculty Club

Before becoming the Faculty Club, the building in Leuven located around Begijnhof served various functions over its long history. Originally, it was part of the university infrastructure, likely used for academic or administrative purposes related to KU Leuven, one of the oldest universities in Europe. Additionally, historic buildings in Leuven often underwent changes in functions over time but the architectural style and facades of the building were mostly kept. (KU Leuven: An Eventful History, z.d.)

The Faculty Club in Leuven, Belgium, serves as a meeting place and social hub for members of the academic community, including professors, researchers, and staff affiliated with the KU Leuven University. The concept of the Faculty Club revolves around providing a space where members can network, collaborate and engage in academic and social activities. The program of the Faculty Club encompasses various elements aimed at fostering a sense of community and supporting the academic mission of the university. The Faculty Club hosts regular events such as receptions, dinners and lectures where members can interact, exchange ideas and build professional relationships. These events often feature guest speakers, cultural performances and discussions on academic and societal topics. The club provides meeting rooms, conference facilities and event spaces equipped with modern amenities and technology. These facilities are available for academic meetings, workshops, seminars and conferences organised by university departments, research groups and external organisations.

The Faculty Club offers dining options ranging from casual lunches to formal banquets, with menus featuring seasonal and locally sourced ingredients. Members can enjoy meals in elegant dining rooms, outdoor terraces or private event spaces. Additionally, the club provides catering services for meetings, receptions and special events held on or off campus. They also offer accommodation options for visiting scholars, conference participants, and other guests affiliated with the university. These accommodations typically consist of comfortable guest rooms or suites equipped with amenities such as Wi-Fi, work desks and ensuite bathrooms.

In addition to academic events, the Faculty Club may organise cultural outings, recreational activities and leisure programs for members and their guests. These activities include guided tours of Leuven's historic sites, wine tasting, art exhibitions and sports events.

In conclusion, the Faculty Club plays a vital role in supporting the academic community by providing a welcoming environment where members can connect, collaborate and celebrate the achievements of the university. (Faculty Club - Vergaderen, Feesten en Gastronomisch Dineren, 2024)

The establishment of Beguinages in Flemish cities reveals insights into urban development and spatial organisation rooted in mediaeval principles that had international resonance. According to a report of Unesco, two primary typologies emerge: the 'city' type, characterised by a structured 'chessboard' layout typical of new towns, or a more organic development shaped by local topography. Meanwhile, the 'courtyard' type aligns closely with rural settings, featuring a central meadow or square surrounded by public, religious, civic and private structures.

Both typologies emphasise enclosure, often employing walls and sometimes even moats and gates, to delineate these miniature towns and demarcate the boundary between urban and

non-urban spaces. The multifaceted roles of Béguinages – religious, socio-economic and cultural – shape their evolution, evident in the overall layout and specific architectural features. Drawing from regional traditions, the architectural form utilises local materials, proportions, and design elements to create a harmonious integration with the surrounding environment.

“Removed from the increasingly commercialised historic centres and humdrum historic centres, the béguinages preserved a respect for habitat as an essential function and have thus retained, apart from certain generally superficial modifications, the characteristic organisation and simple functional architecture that gives them their particular atmosphere of a utopian setting in which a sense of community and respect for individuality are finely balanced.” (ICOMOS, 1998)

Regarding the Historical Prison of Sinop, this Beguinage and its reuse can be highly relevant as it offers valuable insights into the architectural typologies and principles of spatial organisation that could inform its preservation and redevelopment.

In my opinion, considering the historical context and architectural significance of the prison, the typologies mentioned in the summary – particularly the 'city' and 'courtyard' types of Beguinages – can provide inspiration for potential adaptations or extensions of the site. For example, the 'city' type could inform the organisation of new facilities or public spaces within the prison complex, allowing for efficient use of space while maintaining historical coherence. This typology could also inspire the integration of walls and gates to delineate different areas within the site, emphasising its historical character.

The 'courtyard' type, with its focus on a central open space surrounded by various structures, could influence the design of communal areas or courtyards within the prison, fostering a sense of community and providing opportunities for outdoor activities. The emphasis on utilising local materials and design elements aligns with the principles of historic preservation and sustainable development, ensuring that any interventions respect the site's heritage while contributing to its revitalisation.



**Figure 38** (The Faculty Club) This is a conference room inside the beguinage that belongs to the Faculty Club.



**Figure 39** (The Faculty Club) This is the courtyard of the beguinage where outdoor gatherings can take place.

### 8.3 Case study 3. Home for Senior Citizens by Peter Zumthor, Switzerland

Peter Zumthor's design for the "Home for Senior Citizens" is characterised by its simplicity, functionality and harmony with its natural surroundings. The concept revolves around creating a tranquil and homely environment for the elderly residents while ensuring their comfort, safety and well-being.

The program of the home includes residential units, communal spaces and facilities catering to the needs of the senior citizens. These include dining areas, lounges, recreational spaces and gardens. Zumthor's design emphasises a close connection between the residents and nature. The architecture is integrated into the landscape, with careful consideration given to natural light, ventilation and views. The design prioritises privacy and dignity for the residents while promoting social interaction and a sense of community.

Zumthor often employs natural materials such as wood, stone and glass in his designs. These materials not only contribute to the aesthetic appeal of the building but also create a warm and inviting atmosphere. Additionally, they are durable and sustainable, ensuring the longevity of the structure.

The floor plan of this design is likely to be organised around a central atrium/courtyard, which serves as a focal point for the residents to gather and socialise. Residential units may be arranged along corridors or clustered in smaller groups, with common areas strategically located to encourage interaction. It is designed to be intuitive and accessible, with ample space for circulation and mobility aids. (Atelier Peter Zumthor & Partner AG: Homes For Senior Citizens (orthoslogos.fr), z.d.)

The building caters to independent residents capable of self-care, overlooking Kronengasse and Masans' old centre. Adjacent to the existing old people's home, the layout forms a relaxed suburban "farmstead" around a spacious courtyard, integrating existing features like a low wall and a shed into a new entrance. The design aims for an informal, rural ambience, evident in the 21 apartments, guest room and staff room connected by external corridors. Utilising A triad of materials - exposed concrete, tufa, and larchwood - the construction emphasises craftsmanship and clarity. Despite their compact size, the apartments feel spacious, with disappearing bedroom doors and familiar elements from village life, such as timber flooring and wooden panelling. Each unit includes features like an integrated veranda and oriel window, offering views of the valet and private patios. The building's layout is structured around solid elements within a flowing spatial continuum, promoting a sense of stability and continuity. (Homes For Senior Citizens, Peter Zumthor, z.d.)

In my opinion, Peter Zumthor's design offers valuable insight into architectural design principles and typologies that could inform the redevelopment or adaptation of the Historical Prison of Sinop. The design 'Home for Senior Citizens' exemplifies simplicity, functionality and integration with natural surroundings. These could be applied to the Historical Prison site to create an environment that prioritises the well-being and comfort of the hosts.

The concept of residential units, communal spaces and facilities catering to the needs of residents could be adaptive to provide a supportive and inclusive environment for the new function of hosting researchers, writers, academics etc.

Zumthor's design is organised around a central atrium or courtyard, which promotes social interaction and a sense of community. This could encourage communication and collaboration between visitors, hosts, students and locals of the site of the Historical Prison.



Figure 40 (Schiemann J., 1999)



Figure 41 (Schiemann J., 1999)

“Every individual who has not lost his humanity is free,  
even in prison. Freedom is the very essence of human life.”  
Yilmaz Yavuz (2023)

## 9. CONCLUSION

The Historical Prison of Sinop holds immense potential to serve as a multifunctional space beneficial for the Faculty of Literature, the local population and tourism. In my thesis I focus on the part that is not renovated yet. Several studies made by other authorities have shown that the tourist aspect is something that can not be ignored. Also the main building of the prison has already been renovated and will start its function as a museum soon. That is why I want to show that there is still more potential in the part of the site with the detention center and the solitary confinement cells.

By reimagining its purpose and integrating it into the fabric of the community, the site of the Historical Prison of Sinop can become a vibrant hub of learning, culture and social engagement.

Connecting the Faculty of Literature with the Historical Prison is compelling, particularly in light of the esteemed poet Sabahattin Ali's connection to the site. His literacy adds cultural significance to the site, making it a fitting location for academic pursuits. Establishing a library and conference rooms within the Youth Detention Center can provide valuable resources for students, researchers and the broader community, fostering intellectual exchange and promoting literacy.

Moreover, offering temporary stays for academics – as discussed before in the first case study of Academia Belgica – can contribute to rethinking solitary confinement as positive solitude. The case studies emphasise the integration of historical sites into contemporary functions, the historical prison site can be revitalised as a dynamic space serving outdoor cultural activities, attracting the local population and creating a community atmosphere.

By embracing its iconic presence and historical significance, the Historical Prison of Sinop has the potential to become a transformative space that enriches the academic, cultural and social landscape of the region. Through thoughtful planning and collaboration, it can emerge as a beacon of innovation, creativity and community engagement, leaving a lasting legacy for generations to come.

## **PART III**

*'My proposal for the site as my Master's Project'*

## 10. Master's Project

In the summer of 2023, I learned that the renovation of the Historical Prison of Sinop was nearly complete and that it was partially open for visits. This fact encouraged me to visit the site. However, I was disappointed with the outcome of the visit, which led me to decide to base my thesis on the Historical Prison of Sinop and its adaptive reuse.

Growing up while spending most of my summer vacations in and around Sinop, I developed a great passion for this city. Besides the beautiful natural landscapes, waterfalls and the fierce Black Sea, this city has a historical heritage namely the Historical Prison. Remarkable for the immensity of the walls surrounding the historical site.

### 10.1 Concept

The adaptive reuse of the Historical Prison site seeks to transform it into a dynamic hub for academic pursuits, provide housing for researchers and offer cultural activities for the local community. By repurposing this historic space, we aim to preserve its heritage while fostering innovation, collaboration, and community engagement. The renovated site will feature academic facilities, including Conference rooms, a library with a broad archive of literature and writers/poets who were prisoners at the prison and housing for researchers and writers. These spaces will be designed to facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration, intellectual exchange, and innovative research projects. With access to cutting-edge resources and technology, scholars and students alike will have the opportunity to engage in research and academic endeavors. In addition to academic facilities, the site will offer housing options for researchers, scholars, and visiting academics. These accommodations will provide comfortable living spaces equipped with modern amenities, creating a conducive environment for focused study and intellectual exploration.

The Historical Site will serve as a cultural hub for the local community, offering a diverse range of cultural activities and events. From art exhibitions and musical performances to film screenings and literary festivals, the site will host a variety of cultural programs designed to enrich and inspire residents and visitors alike.

The adaptive reuse of the Historical Site represents a transformative opportunity to create a dynamic center for academic excellence, research innovation, and cultural enrichment. By preserving the site's heritage and repurposing its spaces for contemporary use, we aim to honor the past while building a brighter future for generations to come. Through collaboration, innovation, and community engagement, I want to unlock the full potential of this historic site and create a lasting legacy for the benefit of all.



## 10.2 Program

The Historical Prison holds an iconic presence. The decision for the program stemmed from prior research. From my personal perspective, I saw much more potential in the site than just being a museum. This led me to ask questions such as, "How can the site benefit the local population?" and "Could it benefit the students of the Faculty of Literature?"

Currently, by the entrance starts the passage way (1.) that connects the Cumhuriyet Str. with the walkway along the southern walls. The main building (2.) and the courtyards of the Historical Prison has been fully renovated and will soon open its doors to the public. Visitors will have access to the communal cells, the cell of Sabahattin Ali and the torture chambers below. The renovated main building continues to serve as a museum, preserving its historical significance while maintaining its singular entrance. The old infirmary (3.), meeting rooms (4.) and sickbay have only been restored on the exterior facade. They have been given the same yellowish paint and the roofs have been renewed. Inside the administrative building (5.), there are plans for a museum shop at the entrance building, but no further information is available.

This proposal for a new program creates a space where literature students can engage more closely with an important part of their curriculum and learn about poets within such a site. Additionally, cultural activities can take place around the green area of the Youth Detention. The Youth Detention (6.) will be repurposed to enhance academic and cultural endeavors, fostering a dynamic hub for research and reflection. The ground floor of the Youth Detention will house a specialized library focused on writers and poets who were once prisoners, as well as contemporary literary figures. This space will provide resources for research and inspiration. Upstairs in the detention center, a conference room with a capacity of approximately 70 people will facilitate academic discussions and events. Adjacent to it, a reflecting room will offer a tranquil space for contemplation and introspection.

The observation buildings (7.) were all formerly isolation cells, leading me to envision transforming these cells into a reinterpretation of solitary confinement where researchers, writers, and poets,... can temporarily reside and continue their work. Alongside an accompanying library, workspace and collective living areas, this building can attract researchers from outside or even from the University of Sinop itself. The isolation cells will be transformed into 6 duplex housing units, providing comfortable accommodation for researchers. These spaces will offer privacy and quietude, conducive to scholarly pursuits. A communal living area with a kitchen will foster a sense of camaraderie among residents. Additionally, an expanded archive will support research efforts, housing a wealth of literary resources and historical materials. Residents will have access to their own outdoor area, providing opportunities for relaxation and recreation.

The surrounding outdoor space will be open to the public (8.), hosting cultural activities and events to engage the local community. By repurposing the historical site in this manner, I aim to create a vibrant center for academic exploration, literary study, and cultural exchange, enriching the lives of residents and visitors alike.

## 10.3 Design

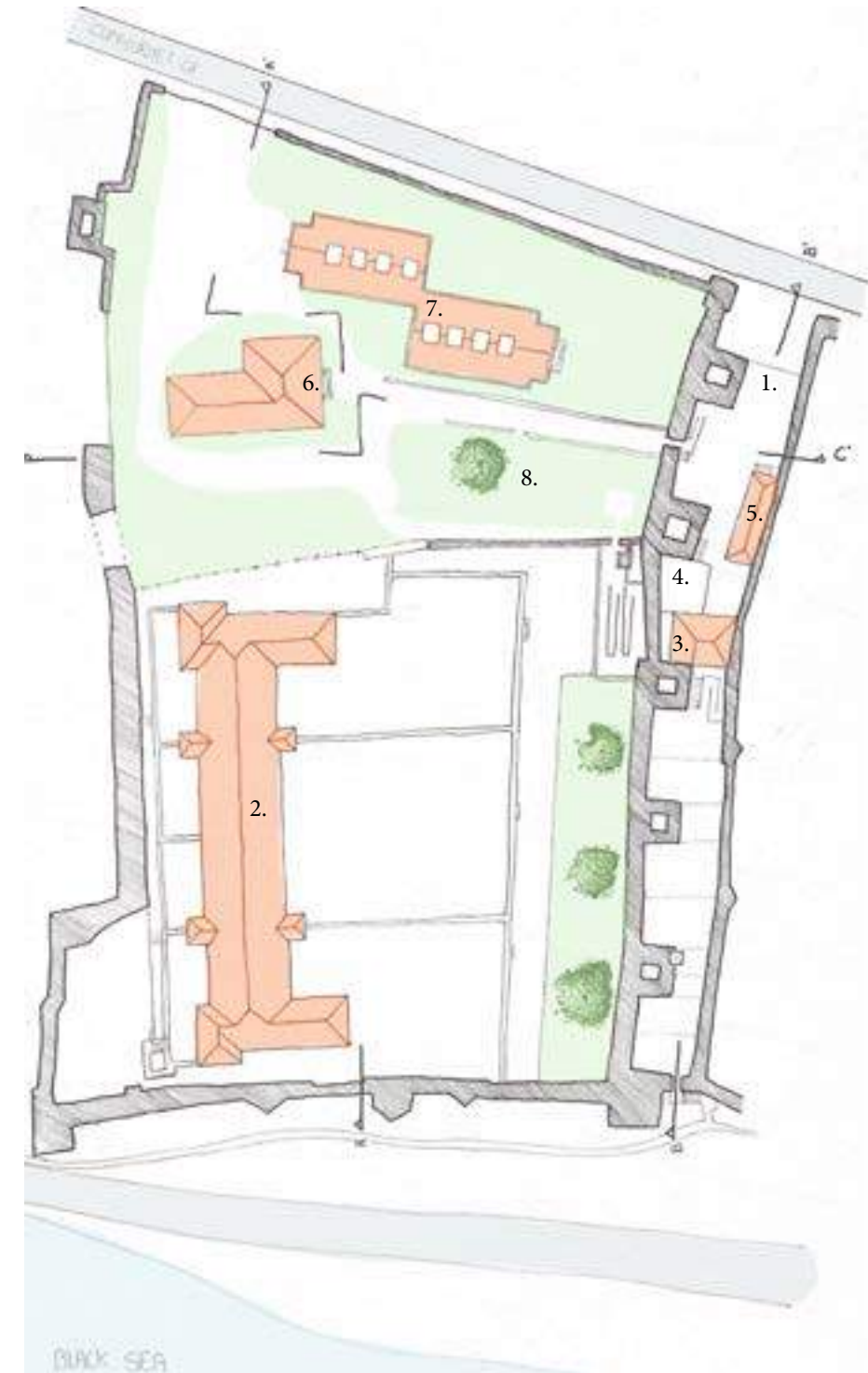
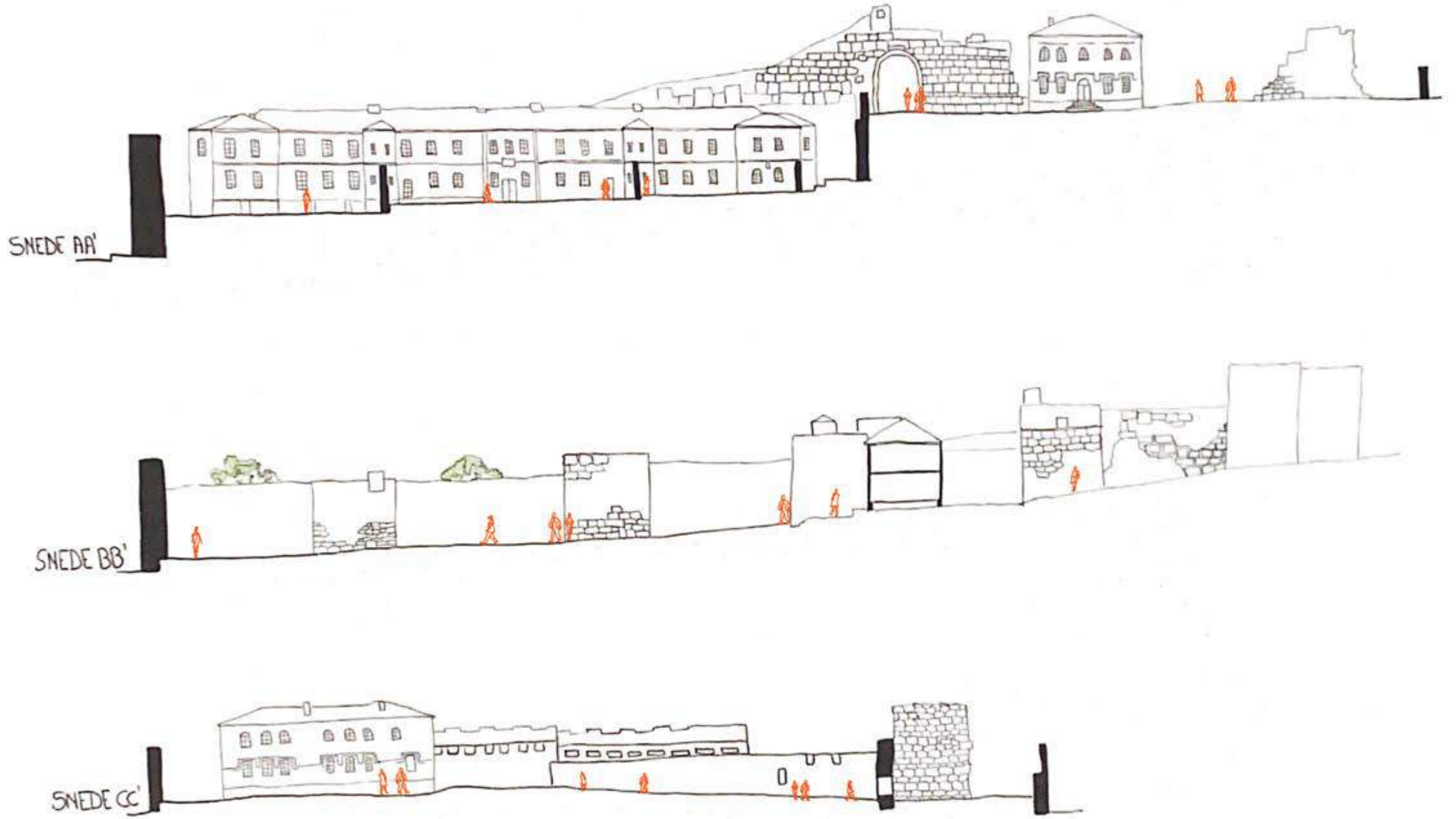


Figure 42 'Situationplan of the Historical Prison'

Figure 43 'The sections'





**Figure 43** (8.) As explained by '10.2 Program' on page 58 this sketch shows a possible cultural activity like open-air concerts, but also theatrical scenes or poetry reading can take place at this area. The platform was made after the recent renovation in 2023. It refers to how the youth had group sessions on this area. Furthermore, there is a wall partially demolished which can also be used as a seat by repeating the same wooden structure as the platform.



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