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TURKISH PEASANT VIS-À-VIS THE REPUBLIC

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ABSTRACT

The Turkish Republican Revolution followed the National Struggle for the independence of the remaining Turkish sections of the former Ottoman State. The republican material gains as well as social changes and opinions made scene on city centers soon after if not all at once. But republican ways' and gains' "leaking into" villages were to take much more time, overcoming resistance and natural obstructions on the way. The Trial of village institutions and the mechanization of agriculture are two important events on the way to modernization of the countryside.

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INTRODUCTION

After the First World One Anatolia gave a war of independence under the leadership of Mustafa Kemâl and this despite the sultan ruling in Istanbul under foreign occupation and assuming a policy of staying on friendly terms with the occupants. The Turkish Republican Revolution followed after victory and the Ottoman dynasty got expelled. The Revolution has been said to effect then urban Turkey and penetrate into rural regions (which represented more of a geography and population in proportion with respect to the present situation) slowly. Such statements are only too true to deny. Indeed, the traditional Ottoman State's Anatolian remnants had a hard time getting used to the modern ways and this came about in increments and over decades only.

Some History: Ottoman Fief System

[In the Ottoman state] *The bulk of the population consisted of reayas (lease farmers) who managed the state land (mirî ltoprak). They cultivated and used the land given to them and were considered the constant inheriting leasers (Keskin 1981: 12 with reference to S. Aksoy 1969: 28). The right to cultivate and exploit were inherited by the sons, who, however, could not sell or donate the farms to a third person (ibid).*

The inheriting (eldest) son had to be of sound mental judgment. He, in return, raised mounted soldiers for the state. Those mounted soldiers (*sipahi*) constituted about 90 % of the army near the few-in-number but fierce-and-effective-in-fighting-spirit Janissary corps, the elite warriors. Those consign-holders who did not or could not manage the land properly used to loose it to other able leasers. The land was attributed as prize to heroes of the battles and high government officials (\*) of the palace. The required number of mounted

\* As an exception, the head of the religious affairs (*seyhülislâm*) was not distributed any fief at all. While a high school student we read all this knowledge from *Emin Oktay's* history textbooks. On an April first day our history teacher *Recep Ülke* (an immigrant boy and so an expert in Greek history thanks to his knowledge of the Greek language as well as a contributor of related articles to encyclopedias) got disappointed with the spoiled behavior and horse play of the students. What upset him specially was the ringleader-like zealotness of a certain studious classmate, *Selim*. The next day, the teacher introduced some Arithmetic into the history course and set up a trap for this boy. He specified the number of *akçe*-income per *sipahi* and required the reply for some land pieces accordingly. "For a land piece which brings an annual revenue of so many *akçes*, the required number of mounted soldiers demanded by the Palace is what?" *Selim's* anxiousness to obtain a pardon and achieve reconciliation with the teacher as the former favored student was only too conspicuous.

*Recep Bey* noticed this during the warming up questions and pointed out to his arithmetical talent. Then he directed a problem to him specifically (as an *overhead* question as they call it in

soldiers to be raised were in proportion to the size of the land in question. The later era notables (*eşraf ve âyân*) were to emerge mainly after the deterioration and degeneration of this formerly perfect fief system. *Keskin (1981: 12 with reference to Barkan and S. Aksoy) points out, there were also provinces in the Ottoman state which were like personal belongings of local feudal lords much before the other âyân emerged. Most European and (Kurd-populated) eastern provinces are given as examples.*

In any case, eventually these notables came to form the *ağalık* system as an institution. They grew strong enough to bargain with the previously all-powerful sultanate.

*The first written contract in the Ottoman history came in 1808 between those provincial notables (âyân) and Mahmud the Second at Kâğıthane: "According to this Document of Agreement (sened-I İttifak) the provincial governors confirmed their loyalty to the sultan and in return the sultan promised to levy taxes justly and fairly" (Shaw and Shaw 1992: 2). In the opinion of Üçok (1978: 57) some Turkish Law scholars accept this document as the first (primitive) constitutional text.*

One consequence (good or bad?) of the *ağalık* system may be the hindrance of further division of land as an asset. Weddings and other transactions and measures are arranged accordingly. It is a worry to think about the division of land. Similar practices ensuring the wholeness of property are deliberately enforced by the civil law in some European countries. In America, *primogeniture* [the right of the firstborn son to inherit the entire property] is outlawed and in most states customarily the property or the income from it is distributed to surviving close relatives; "if a farm cannot be divided without serious impairment of its value, a court may rule that it be sold as a unit and the proceeds divided" (Robertson w.date p. 49).

The Ottoman dynasty had distinguished little if any between the Anatolians and the other Muslim subjects (mainly Arabs and some Balkan people) indigenous to lands farther away from the palace. Moreover; like any cosmopolitan empirical power-holders, they also had to extend their caring and protecting hands out to the non-Muslims under their rules. Accordingly; building bridges, caravansaries, pious foundations, mosques etc. did not pertain to Anatolia and Eastern Thrace alone. Once those places broke off, the substructure investments were also lost to new countries. One reason for the backwardness of Anatolia is this neglect by the

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*educational studies): "Well, now, a şeyhülislâm obtaining a land piece of so many akçes is obliged to provide how many soldiers?" he feigned to ask. The poor boy made a quick mental calculation but alas, he only received a disapproving look. "Didin't I say in the beginning of this class that a şeyhülislâm is not liable to receive any fiefs whatsoever? Isn't it written in your textbook, besides?" (Indeed it was). So, your mind is not working so well I suppose?". A common laughter broke out as an immediate scape goat was pinpointed by the hilarious class. As Selim blushed with embarrassment confirmations poured out: "He is always absent-minded, sir!". "He only thinks he is careful!" etc. Our history teacher got his intellectual revenge in a very subtle way in decorum and got even with the student he had resented.*  
s.ç.

Dynasty or the alternative overanxious attitude towards other places to the detriment of Anatolia. Realistic Mustafa Kemâl Pasha was the first to proclaim this recognition. Before the disaster of the First World War was over and the imminent disintegration came about, he overtly expressed the importance of yielding non-Turkish regions honorably and profitably and saving the futile waste of Turkish blood. For the triumvirs (*Enver, Talât and Cemâl*) and other Union and Progress men holding the palace in their grip, this concept was equivalent to treachery. Being patriotic meant clinging to the non-Turkish regions and especially to Moslem regions at all cost. The occasion arose and Mustafa Kemâl Pasha personally advised the heir to the throne on a train trip to Germany as his aid-de-camp. When Sultan *Reshad* died and the advanced-aged *shehzadé* took the throne as *Mehmet* the Sixth, he wrote and advised the new *padişah* to act at least at the very last moment. During the days of truce (*mütareke*) he ascended the palace and renewed his insistence before everything was lost.

### Building of the Republic

Once the proclaimed national boundaries (*Misak-ı Millî*) were saved through the war of independence under the leadership of Mustafa Kemâl Pasha, it was this ruined and worn out peninsula which was in hand. The radical reforms, or rather, revolutions followed. Any revolution is a drastic change enforced by a leader and his close followers onto a people. Unlike a social evolution, it is by no means a slowly-"digested", incremental trend towards change. In fact, as *T.Z.Tunaya* said *the revolutionist* [sometimes] *resembles a child hitting his mother with his fist!* But; after all; a novelty, even if carried out in a small organization comprising well-educated staff, is bound to meet resistance. The traditional countryside was slow to accept the later political and social developments, which even some associates of the national hero (Navy Officer *Rauf Bey; Karabekir, Cebesoy, Bebe* pashas; Dr. *Adivar* and his wife *Halide Edip Hanım*) considered too hasty and extreme.

The reforms and renovations introduced by now-Atatürk (hat and western attire; western calendar, weights, measures; secular jurisprudence and education, improvements in agriculture, health and industry; renouncing a pure fatalist and lethargic world outlook to acquire a mundane opinion etc.) meant to compensate for centuries' losses. As *Toynbee (1954: 2)* put it, *their sum was equivalent to squeezing the Renaissance, the Reform, the Illumination and the Industrial Revolution into a decade!*

The republican administration took radical steps to boost the state-owned plants, increase the level of education and improve general health and hygiene conditions. Under the guidance of the Health Minister Dr. *Refik Saydam*, tuberculosis, malaria and trachoma epidemics were soon subdued.

But when it came to doing something for the material well being of the peasant directly, one might as say that many temporizations and distractions followed. Debates and promises in the Parliament led to nothing. A wide scale land reform never happened. Some scholars attribute this to the moderate support provided to the national struggle by the land owners. Feelings of gratitude prevented it they mean to

express. In any case the important men were mostly landlords. Except for few artisans a social layer of bourgeois was non-existent. (The commerce had been mainly in the hands of the non-Muslim minorities. It has been said that a Turk becomes either a farmer or a soldier or a clergy man and nothing else). Some scholars also couple the reluctance of the new regime to divide the lands with the previous general nonchalance of the peasants to take arms. A desire for penalizing the villagers' customary indifference they mean to say. (The official simplified version of everyone's voluntarily pooling their efforts came late if at all. Deserters from the newly formed regular army were many and had to be prosecuted through the courts of independence).

Despite a relative improvement in agriculture during 1923-1929 period, the constant property ownership relations impeded a fast product increase and modernization. In east and southeast, villagers are under the burden of drudgery and informal taxes for the. Even after the deportation (\*) of some landowners did not change the situation and their remaining relatives and henchmen kept gathering such revenues. In west and mid Anatolia, though feudal relations collapsed, the dependant situation of the peasant lives on, sharecropping staying in extended use (Avcioglu 1968: 230). Here a definition of sharecropping comes handy. "Sharecropping (\*) is normally defined as the combination of factors of production (usually land, implements, inputs and labor) from different individuals for the purpose of specific production. The output is shared among the contributing parties in mutually agreed proportions" (Cheater 1987: 77-78). After Atatürk passed away, the single party continued to hold power under the presidency of İsmet Paşa (İnönü). A year later the Second World War broke but Turkey, thanks to the wise diplomacy the President İnönü, did not get drifted into hostilities despite insistent efforts from both rivaling factions. The war's decimating effects were especially on the economic dimension: "Even though Turkey did not enter the war, the working population were conscripted and considerable shares

\* When my mother was a girl such an expelled landowner, *Ahmet Bey* the Kurd from *Diyarbakır*, lived in *Luleburgaz* in deportation for a time with his wife *Emine Hanım*. He rented my maternal grandfather's house. Houses were rent were a scarcity and grandfather had two. As my mother mentions, *Ahmet Bey* was a rich, noble man with good manners. His cadet daughter *Üşper* — a very different name for Thracians — was my mother's peer. The elder daughter *Nermin* attended university in Ankara

\* A female Swiss journalist, Schwarzenbach (1938, 1992: 89) finds sharecropping no different than the former slavery for he case of cotton picking Blacks in American southern states. She says that *after being 'freed' following the Civil War and then sort of being forced by the circumstances to make a new contract with the former masters called 'sharecropping' (Ernteteilen) they were no better off. Until the cotton harvest the sharecropper lived off the credit of the plantation owner, bought his needs at his shop; his mule, equipment, cabin belonged to the planter; when accounts were settled it turned out that he was in debt to the planter from harvest to harvest, from generation to generation.* The journalist visited the country during the big depression. The planters themselves were ruined at the time. In accordance with the aristocratic hospitality, the once-rich offered to her good hospitality, gave corn whisky, talked of family silverware and the costly clocks, the three hundred slaves General Sherman took away and the monument erected for their heroic General Robert L. Lee.

from the national income were allocated to military expenses. Productivity in economy and foreign trade volumes shrank down. Wheat production fell down. Inflation of prices went up. The onus of all those developments went on the shoulders of masses. The load of the newly instigated tax of agrarian products hit especially the small farmers, most of whom had already been in difficulty regarding daily bread. Commercial capital, big farmers and owners of wide lands could come up with important gains under the speculative and black-market-favoring circumstances of the war economy" (M.C. Ecevit 1999: 16).

"The wheat-producing family farming constituency [of the single party] was further alienated as the rigors of the war were compounded by the National Defense Law of 1940, through which the government could confiscate 'idle economic resources' —and did so extensively in the case of draft animals, with disastrous results for peasant families" (Margulies and Yıldızoğlu 1987: 277). The single (Peoples Republican) party rule is known as an iron handed administration but the war should justify this practice. Even in western democracies strict control on press and other somewhat oppressive techniques are not totally absent. In any case "the mere sight or even pronouncing the name of the police in a building or a public place suffices to hush down the breath of thousands of middle class city-dwellers" (Savant 1944: 128). According to Ahmad (1986: 255), it is an irony of the history that the peasantry supported the party which first challenged a possible land reform against the party which appeared to advocate the land reform. The reason for that was the promise of the new party to save them from the despotism of the state.

The agha, the tax-collector and the gendarme triumvir were said to represent the bad guys for the villager. In the novel *Yusuf* from *Kuyucak*, *Sabahattin Ali* uses the tax-collector as his hero and depicts him as a victimized man worthy of sympathy in the eyes of the reader. In the novel series *Memed My Hawk*, aghas like *Abdi*, *Hamza*, *Ali Safa* and *Mahmut* were all given in despicably portraits. Bun in *Murder in the Ironsmiths Market*, this time *Yaşar Kemâl* describes the declining authority of the last feudal agha (*Derviş Bey*) vis-à-vis the gendarmes. His henchman whom he compels to kill the head of the opponent *Akyollu* family is tortured to death at the gendarme station. That is to say, the agha figure is forgiven and even sublimated by the author in this novel. *Derviş Bey* is a heroic figure with his racing horses, his gold broided pants brought from *Halep*, his heroic resolution in not surrendering to his enemies a man seeking asylum in his mansion. Nevertheless, the gendarme is again strongly negated.

### A Turning Point: Mechanization and Migration

In 1950 the government changed hands to the newly founded (Democrat) party, a splinter of the old block by itself. Swift integration with the western world came about. Foreign aid flooded into the country, especially from America. In order to revolutionize the mostly agriculture-based stagnant economy, and to promote production and consumption at the same time, the new government tried to better the farmers' life all of a sudden. It subsidized products and abolished taxes and gave credit through state banks.



Fig.1. A Thracian rural coffee shop. In such places politics is a common debate topic among men. (Photo by the Author—S.Ç.)



Fig.2. A thresher (*bateur*) now used only as a decoration in a café. The Country is getting urbanized more and more (Photo by the Author—S.Ç.)



Fig. 3. A tractor-driven hoe in a Thracian village (Photo by the Author—S.Ç.)



Fig. 4. Return trip to village on an open tractor-trailer (The younger woman in pants represents the social changes in the direction of modernism. Also the traditional peak-cap of the man is replaced by a white baseball-cap) (Photo by the Author—S.Ç.)

It also inaugurated mechanization (Yalman 1957: 269). The Democrats' government accomplished with zeal a gigantic effort to transform the economic and social aspects of the country. Wheat, cotton, tobacco, rose essence, chromium, copper productions and exportations registered unprecedented levels (Başgil 1963: 93). But this sudden excitement and hopeful outcomes soon made it look incentive to have better conditions. Everybody inclined towards luxury and consumption. That in turn pumped imports enormously. It is in this time that masses began moving onto cities. The former discouragement through coercive measures (\*) was gone anyhow. As Pauli (1990: 30) notes, the land fugitives, who comprises land workers who had lost their bread through

\* In 1994's when incoming peasants got off the train in *Haydarpaşa* station security forces of the government used to lead them to the harbor in military marching tempo with pleasantly harsh commands to introduce with the sea. Then they would say "if you can swim across then you will land on the other side and stay in Istanbul or else you will all get drowned! Ready to jump?". Then they used to get their free return tickets (*sülüs*) and sent back with the wish "hopefully we will not meet in these places once more" (Çupi 28.05.1995).

mechanization of the agriculture as well as peasants with insufficient land, today belong to the urban working classes and try to find jobs in city centers. Their number keeps increasing. They do not possess the strike and union organizations or they do to a very limited extent. They provide cheap man power as daily wagers in construction works, markets and in plants. Now, this is just what had happened to many Turkish peasants, starting from 1950's onwards. Many social changes ensued. For instance, *This development caused a partition of the large village family and a labor division within the village family. Grocer, barber tasks in the village or other jobs in the city are examples* (N. Erdentuğ 1977: 134). Considering that Turkish people are essentially without any true trades (as *Çetin Altan* always stresses in his chronicles), in that respect one can speak of a positive result.

The application of the etatism did not lead to any significant change in the distribution of professions. The percentage of agrarian population continued to be 80 %. The industrial population grew slightly but did not exceed 8 %. This in turn does not mean a radical change even in the industrial professionalism. Part of the labor force employed in the government sector stayed as half-peasants. As far percentages go, even the *Tanzimat* movement had been stronger in industrial and commercial developments, leading to fast urbanization in *Selânik*, *İzmir*, *Zonguldak* and *Samsun*. The slum areas around many states is due to further falls in agricultural productivity under population boom rather than a result of industrialization (Berkes May 1975: 112-113). (While I was working for a state-owned pulp and paper plant in *Çay-Afyon* as late as in 1980, a laborer at the craft master position once complained that the unskilled workers were mostly former shepherds and farmers from nearby villages (like *Karacaören* or *Akkonak*) and thus unable to cope with the required technology). (Once we attended a circumcision feast in the latter village and were treated to various delicious dishes. But a dessert like milk pudding was followed by a salty liquid meal and than plum syrup and then another salty liquid meal and so on. In cities sweet dishes come at end and terminate the lunch). In parallel to the industrialization of the lands, the percentage of landless peasants just increased on the whole. While in 1950 14.5 % of the entire peasant population were landless; in 1967 29.8 % and in 1977 32.6 % were in this condition (Roth and Taylan May 1981: 49-50 with reference to Beşikçi 1969).

[Nevertheless] the fact must be conceded that mechanization paid in as a whole to the country: "Wheat production has doubled (Turkey imported wheat in 1950 and now plans to export two million tons in 1953); cotton production has trebled [tripled] (Stevenson 1954: 17). "Most spectacular has been the gain in cereal production, up to 50 %, from 9 million tons in 1948 to 13.5 tons in 1953. Wheat has become Turkey's main export, with cotton and tobacco in second and third place. A basic element in this growth has been a tremendous program of road-building, which has gone far to eliminate isolation for most of the 40,000 villages where most of Turkey's 22 million people live" (Chamberlin 1954: 38). Historian Toynbee, while affirming the incredible revolution of the new Turkey, leaves a question mark in the case what he call the social plane: "On the social plane, which matters even more than the political plane, have Turks succeeded in raising the mental and material

standard of living of that vast majority of the Turkish people that lives in the countryside, in villages, working on the land?" (Toynbee 1954: 38). As Roth and Taylan (May 1981: 49-50) put it; according to *Bülent Ecevit* (prime minister in 1977-1979), upon fulfillment of the Village-City Program, the villagers would possess strong and democratic cooperatives. Credits would henceforth be granted to the villagers directly. Technical means would also be obtained cheaply over those cooperatives without the intervening of go-betweens. State attempts to enhance irrigation would be increased. A conglomeration of villages, with the nearest town assuming the directing role as the center of activities, was foreseen. Thanks to this community-reform of combining the villages together advanced productivity would be obtained. For instance, it would not be necessary for each farmer to buy a separate tractor or a mower; instead it would be possible to lease such means of production. The model seemed promising at first sight. However, in a country like Turkey, it was doomed to fail due to lack of finances. With time, it proved to be no more than a good intention. Among western foreign aid not a single project advocating the mentioned project came to be known.

Autarky [self sufficiency] and economical self-development opposed the western policies towards Turkey Donating some land to landless peasants was supposed to be a part of the project as well. But this land-giving promise was too good to come true. It is interesting to note that following the 1960 coup, the so-called land reform perhaps came nearest to anything like reality in the sense that the ruling iron hand could be considered strong enough to put it into life. National Union Committee, that is, the junta holding the power; even undertook some expulsions of landlords again. (The first such expulsions occurred in early republican years as mentioned before). Burnouf (1967: 86) narrates the following: After sixty five landlords are deported from the east for their retrograde mentality, a peasant appeared in Ankara in front of the authorities and demanded his own landlord's return. He said: "You took our landlord away. It is no secret that he used to exploit and beat us. You even claim to donate us the fields which he made us cultivate for his own sake. Well, now? Who will then give us the grains to sow? Our landlord could buy grains. He took away half the harvest but at least we kept the other half.

After your intervening the fields are not even sown. Since you took the landlord away, nobody represents us in front of the governor. His staff forgot all about us!" The villager went on with his litany: "Our landlord used to cure the sick. Don't tell me that only the doctor can achieve this! How do we pay a doctor? Our landlord accepts wheat and eggs as payment. Moreover, do you think the pharmacist will give us the medicament as a present? And, who will take the sick, who are unable to walk, to the doctor? Our landlord lives in the very village. I know as well as you do, that blowing one's breath into the mouth of a sick person or wrapping a wounded arm in horse shit or saliva or urine or hammering a nail into a beam while reciting a prayer or I-don't-know-what-else would not do a great good; but at least, those practices give hope to the sufferers! Who gives you the right to deprive us of our hope?"

*Dr. Tuğrul Tanyol* once in his graduate class said that

feudalism is more merciful than capitalism. Indeed, a feudal lord feels ashamed if he can't care for his men. At least he provides them free room and board if necessary. The philosopher was probably in his right mind when he said that nations obtain the administrations that they deserve. In this context, let us note that even in the agricultural sector, temporary paid-farmlands, who are mostly migrants as well, are regarded much differently by the land owners in comparison to sheer sharecroppers as far as responsibility feelings for their well being is concerned. In this case the landlord is behaving like any capitalist plant owner in industry: "With the disappearance of sharecropping and the coming of wage work, landlords lost interest in all types of personal, face-to-face relations with the tenant and a new impersonal anonymous relationship replaced the old one" (Kıray 1982: 109). While we are at it let us also note that the formation of slums (*bidonvilles*) around the city's and their attributes make up a gigantic topic beyond the scope of this dissertation. It is interesting to specify a pertaining fact though. As *Ruşen Keleş* once said in his graduate class, the attitude of the government for a very long time was a denial of their existence. On official papers the word *gecekondu* appeared very late. Instead, the description "not-permitted constructions" (*izinsiz yapılar*) was preferred.

### The Village Institutes Trial of Turkey

Just after the republic rendering the nation literate was a main social problem despite that the Latin script adapted in 1928 was easier to learn. Peoples' Schools then could only process a certain fraction of the adults. (Atatürk ordered the authorities "to teach it to everyone, including "the porter and the boatman"). Basically, the already literate population changed to the new Latin script. Under the circumstances, Atatürk first paved the way to a gigantic campaign of education for the children at schooling age with the application of 'educators' (*eğitmenler*). This was a very swift and practical first-aid-like solution. The educators were recruited from among newly discharged literate, intelligent soldiers with ranks (one or two red stripes on their arms). Around seven thousand are known to be charged with this salaried educational duty. As *Behçet Kemal Çağlar* narrated it in his literature class, they were given a speech following their short preparatory course. When the ministry representative addressed the opening rhetoric "dear / honorable educators" the former soldiers, in accordance with the recent conditioning immediately began to count the row call from the right hand side onwards as one, two, three and so forth. ("Sayın" means honorable but it also means the imperative form of the verb count. Maybe if instead of this new word the Ottoman word *muhterem* had been employed this confusion would not have happened).

Then came the village institutes into being. Village institutes represent an education movement unique to Turkey on the world. They got established in 1940 under the planning of bureaucrat *İsmail Hakkı Tonguç*, with the consent of the minister of education *Hasan Âli Yücel*. The project of the Village institutes became a success. Primary school <sup>(\*)</sup>

\* Until a decade ago compulsory primary education in Turkey was five years. At this time junior high schools got abolished and primary schooling went up to eight years. s.ç.

graduates originating from villages received a further five year training in those establishments and got appointed to villages as teachers. Boys and girls got academic as well as practical training (masonry, bee-keeping, carpentry, basics of hygiene etc.) here. A graduate is known to have said "after graduation my first task in my village was to wear the overalls and build a school building" (Akarsu 2009: 7). "Because they understood the environment and the mentality from which they themselves hailed [come from], and communicated in a similar idiom, such people were natural teachers for the village" (Ahmad 1993: 82-83). "By their eighth anniversary on 17 April 1948 there were twenty institutes with fifteen thousand pupils. A twenty-first was opened in Van in November of the same year" (B.Lewis 1961: 471).

*Konya-İvriz, Çifteler-Eskişehir, Düziçi-Adana, Kızılçullu-İzmir, Hasaoğlan-Ankara* (The husband of a distant cousin of mine studied there; this institute had a higher institute section also), *Savaştepe-Balıkesir* (a female colleague of mine studied at the Teachers' Lycée which is a later modification of this institute), *Kepirtepe-Kırklareli* were some of those institutes. (My mother has her diploma from *Kepirtepe*'s later-transformed Teachers' Lycée version). Among some indirect contributions of the institutes mentioned by *Tütengil* are benefits like promoting equal opportunity understanding, removing the contrast between the ordinary people and the intellectuals, favoring co-educational study, instigating the holistic campus-style schooling model (Hatipoğlu August 2009: 17). "After the Second World War village institutions became a liability to the government, while the opposition accused them of spreading communist propaganda, they got turned into ordinary teacher-training establishments" (Zürcher 1993: 202-203). Many scholars suggest that the elitist authorities regretted the try soon after it had started and being only lip-service providers for the peasantry they were only all glad to cooperate in the abolishment of the institutes at the first possible pretext thus hindering the awakening of the countryside.

(After all, as sociologist Gans puts forward, the poor and the under-privileged have their function in society like performing the difficult, physically dirty and dangerous tasks). On a television program an invitee was a professor who had graduated from an institute at the time. He talked about the wonderful feeling of camaraderie they had enjoyed. He said: "When we returned from a vacation we shared the good food we brought. We knew who had hazelnuts, who had walnuts and who had scorched wheat (*kavurga*) in his locker". In his book on schooling in villages, educational inspector *Şaban Bey* talks about two industrious village teachers without openly specifying their origins but there is almost no doubt they are graduates of institutes:

*In a certain village the teacher and the students were whitewashing the school building together upon my arrival. We began talking. The headman had sent some lime and brushes so they had plunged into work. A mason was expected to come but he was late. They had made the locker and the blackboard themselves before. This teacher did not even bother the headman for such trifle! They had weaved a waste basket from branches. They had obtained a glass-cutting apparatus too. The building was all shiny as if made of*

*mother-of-pearl from the distance when I finally left the village* (Sunar 1961: 33).

I visited a village far away from the district. Water was scarce. Laundry washing was done with primitive methods (\*). So, insects infected the students. The teacher went to the district and obtained some insecticide (DDT) and a pump from the health officials. Each morning he sprayed the medicine on the students. With a cropping machine he shaved their hair and with a pair of clippers he cut their fingernails. He obtained a tank equipped with a tap and placed it in the yard. That is a role model now. To know is not the same as to do! (Sunar 1961:35).

## Conclusion

A revolution, as opposed to a social and political evolution, represents a sudden radical change; commencing literally "overnight". The Republican revolution of Turkey had also been abrupt and pragmatic without previous preparations and planning. This made the periphery accept it with reluctance and resistance. What was achieved in short time in urban regions took much more time to occur in the rural side at the cost of more time and effort.

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\* In his same book on another page such a primitive laundry method is also described along with the remedy for correcting it: *When entering a village (on my horse) I noticed the women's way of washing laundry at the bank of a creek. Cold water from the stream and argil from the ground was used and a stick was employed to beat the cloth. This was a primitive way to do it. I found the teacher and we concentrated our attention at this topic. The next day a cauldron full of water got heated at the yard and students learned by doing how to wash clothes properly* (Sunar 1961: 36).